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Shri Narendra Modi Prime Minister



Shri Mohan Charan Majhi Chief Minister, Odisha

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# leisure



### **SCARLETT JOHANSSON IN** TALKS FOR *THE BATMAN 2*

Scarlett Johansson is in talks to feature in The Batman Part II alongside Robert Pattinson. If the actor joins the project, it will also be the first collaboration for Johansson and Pattinson. Directed by Matt Reeves, the movie is set to release in 2027

### **CATTRALL MARRIES THOMAS** IN INTIMATE WEDDING

Hollywood icon Kim Cattrall has married her long-time partner, Russell Thomas, in a private ceremony at London's Chelsea Old Town Hall. The intimate gathering saw just 12 guests witness the couple exchange vows. Cattrall looked elegant in a Dior skirt suit, while Thomas sported a sharp custom black suit



 $^{\mathsf{TA}}$  Ganesha  $\mathsf{S}$  peaks.com

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A favourable day as any can be, says Ganesha, You are happy and content with what you have, and you've planned and are working towards what you want. A romantic date may prove interesting or throw up a controversy — decide where you want to take it.

#### **TAURUS**

There is every possibility that you will enjoy a good rapport with people around you, predicts Ganesha. You will think with your stomach today, craving for delicacies. Such a feeling might be because of repressed hunger Something refreshingly different might be on the cards today, says Ganesha.

**GEMINI** 

You will witness a marked improvement in your emotional quotient, says Ganesha. This change may either come through watching a film. listening to a song or just a simple insight. At the work place, people will be lavishing praise on you for your excellent performance.

**CANCER** 

There is a fat chance that vou will take pleasure in the company of your close friends and relatives, predicts Ganesha. You may have an awesome time with your mate. There may be a few minor problems here and there, but your family will rally behind you and will help you in solving

It may be that the best

daffodils bloom early in the morning, but good ideas can come any time of the day, says Ganesha. So spruce up your management skills, as you shall need them to help organise and cash in on the multitude of ideas that will bombard you today. Remember, says Ganesha, a good idea can change your you win a wife! So, if it is some love that you are fishing for, then express yourself without inhibitions today.

A la Sisyphus, you may realise the futility of your efforts and constant failure in achieving success. But do not despair, says Ganesha. Recharge your imagination, inquisitiveness and intelligence and focus on your long-term goals, says Ganesha

It sure is tiring to run with the herd. You may feel the desire to get away from the rat race at work today. Maybe it is the monotonous and stressful environment in office that is

### **SCORPIO**

There is a big black hole in your pocket, and it's high time you looked for remedies there. Loved ones will make use of your money as suntan cream - liberally and carelessly. You are most likely to burn the holes larger by spending lavishly, especially to impress a member of the opposite sex.

**SAGITTARIUS** 

A la a phoenix from the ashes, find vourself reborn as the perfect family person. You are bound to shower love and care on your betrothed. Children, too, will receive your share of love, and they will love it. Enjoy spending quality time with your loved one, says Ganesha.

### **CAPRICORN**

Work will suck you dry of your energy today, says Ga-nesha. Business rivals will go out of their way to mar your reputation and project you as incompetent. But to their dismay, you will prove to be way too smart to let them succeed in their sinister motives. In fact, you will hit where it hurts most and show your foes that you have all it takes to be a winner.

### AQUARIUS

You get a pat on the back due to your brilliant academic standing. People will admire your business acumen and may imitate your choices. But this doesn't mean you become haughty and unapproachable. Carry on the good work with a humble attitude, says Ganesha.

### **PISCES**

Anticipation is all the fun. Sadly, this only alludes to your months-in-preparation travel plans that are most likely to be delayed today on one count or the other. Though, if this is any consolation, your trip, when it finally occurs, will bring you as much pleasure and satisfaction that you expected out of it, if not more, says Ganesha.



rough patch in love

Mumbai: Actors Sonakshi Sinha and Zaheer

Iqbal, who tied the knot in 2024, are often seen as

one of Bollywood's happiest star couples, thanks

largely to their adorable social media PDA, from

affectionate posts to playful pranks. But behind

the picture-perfect moments, their long rela-

tionship had its own challenges. Before getting

married in a civil ceremony, the two dated

for seven years. And while many couples talk

about the 'seven-year itch,' Sonakshi recently

revealed that she and Zaheer experienced

Speaking on Soha Ali Khan's podcast,

the actress shared that around the third

year of their relationship, they hit a rough

patch. She described it as a phase where

they constantly clashed and struggled to

understand each other's perspectives. De-

spite the frustration, both knew deep down

that they wanted the relationship to work.

It was Zaheer who suggested couples ther-

apy, expressing his determination to save

Sonakshi confessed she was open to

the idea, and surprisingly, just two

sessions made a remark-

able difference. Therapy

helped them under-

stand each other's

communication

styles, intentions,

and emotional trig-

gers. It taught them

not to take things

personally and to

see where the other

bond

grow

person was com-

ing from. Those

simple insights

strengthened

and helped

their

them

closer.

something different, a 'three-year itch.'

### Aish rejects 'comeback' terminology Mumbai: Aishwarya Rai, one of Indian cinema's most celebrated actor,

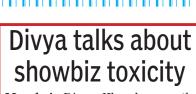
has noticeably stayed away from frequent film appearances in recent years. The ongoing conversation around her absence and the idea of a 'comeback' recently surfaced again, prompting the Dhoom 2 star In an interview, Aishwarya shared that she does not believe in terms

like 'comeback,' explaining that an artist remains an artist regardless of time away. She added that audiences consistently reaffirm this belief through their unwavering support

Her comments come amid increasing curiosity about her next project, especially since she has been selective about her work post-Fanney Khan in 2018. After a brief pause, she returned to the screen with Mani Ratnam's Ponniyin Selvan I (2022) and Ponniyin Selvan II (2023), where she played dual roles; Nandini, a woman fueled by revenge, and Mandakini Devi, a mysterious mute figure. Aishwarya has often prioritised her life as

a mother and her family commitments, openly acknowledging that her choices reflect what feels right for her at this

stage. Despite fewer public appearances and limited releases, her global fan base remains deeply loyal. Aishwarya expressed heartfelt gratitude for their constant love and encouragement, noting that they continue to be her greatest strength. While anticipation grows, she has yet to announce her next film.



### Mumbai: Divya Khossla recently engaged with fans through a candid

AMA session on Reddit, where she answered questions about her career. personal beliefs and experiences in Bollywood. During the session, Divya made a bold statement about the film industry, describing it as a place "with crocodiles all around," where one must constantly navigate challenges to survive. Her remark reflected the unpredictability and competitive nature of showbiz. Talking about how she maintains

her mental and emotional balance, Divya stressed the importance of staying grounded. She shared that she never intends to compromise her values for work, adding that

remaining true to oneself and carrying good karma is more important than any professional When asked about her most

memorable experience, Divya instantly named Savi. She recalled shooting in the UK in freezing temper atures of nearly minus 10 degrees for 42 days. Despite the extreme conditions, the exceptional production quality made the experience stand out and set bench-

mark for her future projects.

#### Badshah set to create history ber forever," he said in a New Delhi: Badshah is hits, cult favourites and

set to become the first Indian rapper to perform at The O2 Arena in London, where he will have his concert March 22.

The event is produced and promoted by TCO Group, in partnership with TM Ventures and Rock On Music. "Fans can expect a

landmark live spectacle as Badshah commands the arena with an expansive three-hour performance, featuring his chart-topping recent anthems from across his decade-long catalogue," according to a press release.

Badshah said performing at The O2 is "more than a milestone" for him. "It's a dream I've carried for years. Desi hip hop belongs on the global stage, and this show is our declaration. London, we're about to make history together — louder, prouder and bigger than ever. 22nd March 2026 will be a night we remem-

OOSL

Across

1 Warty hopper

racehorse

proficient, like a

3 Pedigreed

surgeon 10 Office stations

13 Shell wearer

16 Cash in, as a

coupon

18 Adders

11 Mongrel

9 Highly

statement.

The general ticket sales will start December 12. Neal Karia, managing director of TCO Group, added, "This concert is a historic milestone for South Asian music globally. Badshah leading The O2 demonstrates the scale, ambition and global appeal of Indian music. It's a celebration of talent, culture and the movement Badshah has built over generations.

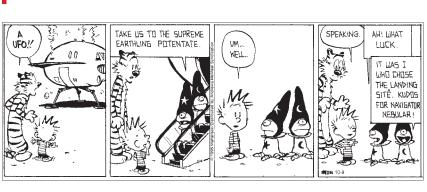


SUDOKU

### **PEANUTS**



### **CALVIN AND HOBBES**



### BREVITY



### **CROSSWORD**

7 Two tablets.

8 Skirt feature

12 Informal wear

17 Baby's wear

19 Beer garden

22 Flower feature

23 Young newts

24 Opera chant

25 Blue yonder

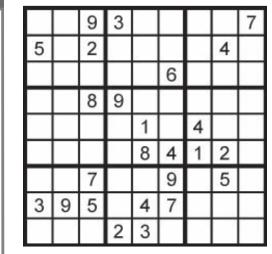
20 Chaperone

maybe

14 Wrath

15 Query

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**

0 E I OMANNUMER

21 Argentine 6 Firmness of starter grassland 26 Use acid purpose

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.c 23 Subsides

28 Pariah

29 Barren

30 Lake, in

1 Deep-six

farewell

4 Modernise

5 Pillow filler

2 French

**Down** 

27 Like krypton

Aberdeen

# D E F T T H A N K F U L



Ash on comeback tag Actor Aishwarya Rai addresses her long screen absence and

responds to talks about her

so-called comebacks

www.orissapost.com

**LEISURE** 



**Operation Equalise** 

Indians among 171 delivery riders caught working illegally in a UK-wide crackdown have been detained for deportation

INTERNATIONAL | P8



### **Markets rally**

Sensex and Nifty rally after the Reserve Bank of India cuts kev benchmark interest rate for the first time in six months

BUSINESS | P9



### Series decider

India look to avoid another embarrassing series loss to South Africa in the must-win third and final ODI today

**BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY | DECEMBER 6, 2025** 

SPORTS | BACK PAGE



Sangrahalaya, in Bhopal, Friday

### State set to revise school curriculum

Bhubaneswar, Dec 5: The Odisha government is moving forward with its ambitious plan to revise the entire school curriculum from Class I to Class XII in alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This major overhaul, announced by School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond in the Assembly Friday, confirms that students across the state will soon transition from the existing textbooks to newly reformed learning materials.

Responding to a question from MLA Ranendra Pratap Swain, Gond said, "The government has a plan to revise the textbooks for Classes I through XII in schools operating under the Department of School and Mass Education. The implementation will take place in a phased manner to ensure a smooth transition, thorough review, and effective adaptation for both teachers and students.

Gond further noted that the curriculum revision process



new content is finalised. The initiative aims to modernise classroom learning, introduce timely reforms within the education system, and provide students with higher-quality academic resources.

Once introduced, the up dated curriculum will impact every learner-from primary to higher secondary—ensuring that students across the state benefit from refreshed and upgraded textbooks. The transition, however, will not be immediate, as the government has planned a structured, phased rollout to ensure effective implementation.

### SHORT **TAKES**

### **Matric examination** from February 19

examination for 2026 will begin February 19 and conclude March 2, the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha said in its schedule released Friday. The First Language (mother tongue) paper is set for February 19, followed by the Second Language (English/Hindi) exam February 21. Students will take the Third Language paper February 23. The Science examination is scheduled for February 25, while Social Science will be held February 27. The final paper, Mathematics, is slated for March 2. The BSE has also announced that students appearing for the Mathematics exam will be given an additional 15 minutes to

### **Temple money belongs** to deity: Supreme Court

New Delhi: The Supreme Court

Friday said that money belonging to a temple deity cannot be used to prop up financially distressed cooperative banks. The sharp observations were made by a bench comprising Chief Justice Surva Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi while hearing appeals filed by a few cooperative banks challenging a direction of the Kerala HC asking them to return the deposits to the Thirunelly Temple Devaswom, "You want to use the What is wrong with directing that the temple money, instead of being in a cooperative bank which is breathing with great difficulty, should go to a healthy nationalised bank which can give maximum interest," the CJI asked. Temple money belongs to the 'saved, protected and utilised only for the interests of the temple" and it cannot become a source of income or

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



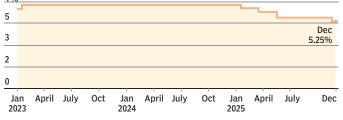
# Sanchar Saathi mandatory but only for our own people

# RBI cuts repo rate to aid tariff-hit economy

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reduced the repo rate by 25 bps, its fourth cut since February 2025, in a bid to cushion the economy from the shock of the steep 50 per cent tariff imposed by the United States. The high US duties have severely hit India's export-oriented sectors, particularly textiles, pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, and IT-enabled services, disrupt ing supply chains and denting business confidence. With external demand faltering, the RBI opted for a proactive monetary response to support liquidity, lower borrowing costs, and stimulate domestic demand. The rate cut is also aimed at easing financial stress for small and medium enterprises that rely heavily on exports and have been disproportionately affected by the tariffs

Mumbai, Dec 5: Home, auto and other loans are likely to cost less as the Reserve Bank

### **REPO RATE**



of India (RBI) Friday cut key benchmark interest rate for the first time in six months and vowed to provide ₹1 lakh crore liquidity boost to banking sector to support a 'goldilocks' economy in the face of high US tariffs.

The six-member monetary policy committee, led by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, voted unanimously to lower the repurchase or reportate by 25 basis points to 5.25 per cent and retained a neutral stance, which gave room for further rate cuts.

The step is being seen as lending support to the economy that has been hit hard by the

steep 50 per cent tariff US President Donald Trump slapped on Indian goods.

The move had already led to

a dip in export and widening of trade deficit as well as pushed rupee to a record low. RBI's move will supplement

government efforts in lending support to the economy in form of biggest GST reforms, relaxing labour rules and easing financial sector regulations.

A cut in the repo rate will lead to lower borrowing costs for individuals as well as corporate because it reduces the interest banks pay to borrow from the RBI.

### India, Russia firm up ties amid US tariffs, sanctions

New Delhi, Dec 5: India and Russia Friday firmed up a five year plan to bolster economic and trade ties in the face of Washington's punitive tariff and sanctions regime even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveyed to President Vladimir Putin that the war in Ukraine must be brought to an end through peaceful means.

Following their summit talks that generated global attention, Modi and Putin demonstrated their keenness to impart a fresh momentum to the over eight-decades-old India-Russia friendship with the prime minister saving that it remained steadfast like a "pole star" notwithstanding geopolitical churn.

Besides finalising the 2030 economic programme, the two sides signed several agreements to expand cooperation in a number of sectors including health, mobility and migration, food safety, shipping and people-to-people exchange.

The Russian president landed in New Delhi last evening to a red-carpet welcome with Modi personally receiving him at the airport and later hosting a



private dinner for him that largely set the tone for the 23rd India-Russia annual summit.

The visit has generated attention in the capitals of the Western nations as it has come amid their sustained efforts to hit Moscow economically including by cutting Russian crude oil supplies as part of initiatives to force it to end the war in Ukraine. "The world has witnessed

many ups and downs over the past eight decades. Humanity has faced numerous challenges and crises. And through all this, the India-Russia friendship has remained like a pole star," Modi said in his media statement.

Putin said both sides are looking at increasing the volume of annual trade to USD 100 billion from the present USD 64 billion and that Russia is a "reliable supplier of oil, gas, coal and everything that is required" to address India's energy requirement.

### over ANM exam question paper leak PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Bhubaneswar, Dec 5: The

**Uproar in Assembly** 

Odisha Assembly Friday wit nessed uproarious scenes as the Opposition BJD and Congress members protested against the question paper leak for the Auxiliary Nurse Midwifery (ANM) examination three hours before the test scheduled to be held at 2 pm during the day, leading to cancellation of the exam.

The claim was made by Con gress MLA CS Raazen Ekka through a point of order in the Assembly when the House was discussing the unemployment issue in the pre-lunch session. "It has come to our notice

that the question paper for the written examination of the ANM examination was leaked at 11 am ahead of the 2 pm written test," Ekka informed the House.

The issue was again raised by senior BJD member Ranen dra Pratap Swain when the House reassembled after the launch. He demanded a reply from Chief Minister Mohan Charan Maihi over the frequent irregularities in conduct of examinations in the state.

### Mumbai-Bhubaneswar flight ticket costs ₹84K

Mumbai, Dec 5: Airfares reached levels never seen before on Friday, with a one-way one-stop economy-class SpiceJet Kolkata-Mumbai flight ticket for December 6 costing up to ₹90,000, and a similar ticket of Air India for Mumbai-Bhubaneswar going up to ₹84,485, according to the airlines' websites

A similar trend was noted on many other high-traffic routes. With IndiGo cancelling over

1,000 flights Friday owing to crew shortage as the second phase of the pilots flight duty and rest period norms kicked in, huge capacity was out of the market, leading to airfares tripling and quadrupling from over the normal range, a travel industry executive said. "The situation is such that you can't predict what are going to be the ticket prices when you book a flight. It may be two times. three times or even more than the normal fare range," he said. P9

### Indigo disruption: Newlyweds attend reception online

AGENCIES

Hubballi, Dec 5: The venue was all decked up and a delicious spread ready for the invitees. But Megha Ksheerasagar and Sangam Das could not be present for their own wedding reception, thanks to the national flight disruptions that has sent many passengers across the country into a tizzy.

The newlyweds' reception was fixed here December 3, but the couple was forced to attend their grand event only via video conference due to the disruptions in top carrier Indigo's operations, mainly due to crew woes.

Not meaning to miss the important day, the couple appeared on a large screen at the venue through video conferencing from Bhubaneswar, greeted the guests and apologised for not being personally present.

Instead, the bride's parents graced the occasion at



the scheduled reception venue--Gujarat Bhavan, here, on behalf of the couple that had tied the knot November 23 in Bhubaneswar

According to the family, the couple, both software engineers, work in Bangalore. The reception was arranged at the bride's native place in Hubballi Wednesday.

To be part of their special day, the couple had booked tickets on the Bhubaneswar-Bangalore-Hubballi route for December 2. Some relatives had booked tickets on the Bhubaneswar-Mumbai-Hubballi route. However, due to operational disruptions, IndiGo flights were continuously delayed from 9 am December 2 un-

til early morning December 3, and were eventually cancelled.

"My daughter's wedding happened November 23 and we had organised a reception at our native place in Hubballi for people here. The flight kept getting delayed and at the last moment, at around 4 am. it got cancelled. Now what could we do after that. We had to come up with some solution. Then I decided to do the reception online. I immediately arranged for a screen and asked my daughter and son-inlaw to join the reception online. the bride's father Anil Kumar Ksheerasagar told PTI Videos.

He urged the central government to take corrective measures so that public, being the tax pay ers, don't suffer. Relatives had come for the reception from across the country--Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Bagalkote, Davangere and Belagavi.

"I didn't know what to do as relatives and guests had come from so many places. I was stressed, but then I quickly decided to do it online,' Ksheerasagar said.

As the couple could not travel to Hubballi, the bride's parents sat in place of the newly-weds at the reception venue and conducted the rituals, while the bride and groom, dressed up in Bhubaneswar, attended their grand reception online.

### Singh Deo for climate-resilient farming technique adoption



Bhubaneswar, Dec 5: Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo Friday appealed to farmers, scientists and other stakeholders to adopt natural and climate-resilient farming techniques to preserve soil fertility for future generations.

Speaking at the state-level celebration of World Soil Day here, Singh Deo said healthy soil is the lifeline of agriculture, the foundation of food security and the bedrock of sustainable development.

"I would like to urge farmers, scientists, and other stakeholders to adopt sustainable practices like reduced use of chemical inputs, promotion of organic matter, and wider adoption of natural and climate-resilient farming techniques to protect soil fertility for future generations," Singh Deo, who is also the Agriculture and Farmer Empowerment (A&FE) Minister, said.

This year's theme - Healthy Soils for Healthy Cities - focuses on how soil health plays a key role in ensuring food security, environmental balance, clean air, clean water, and better living standards in expanding urban spaces.

'I was privileged to join farmers and policymakers in reaffirming our collective responsibility to nurture and protect this vital resource," Singh Deo said in a post on X.

On the occasion, Soil Health Cards were distributed to farmers to promote scientific soil nutrient management, Singh Deo said the initiative empowers cultivators with the precise knowledge of their soil's nutrient status, enabling crop-wise recommendations for balanced fertiliser use. "Together, let us pledge to

enrich our soil, strengthen our agriculture, and secure a prosperous future for Odisha," he said. Speaking on the occasion, A&FE department Principal Secretary Arabinda Padhee highlighted the state government's efforts to bridge knowledge gaps and strengthen soil testing facilities across the state.



RAISING VOICE: Members of Prathamika Shikshak Mahasangha take out a rally at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Friday, to press for fulfillment of several demands, including upgradation of basic post with a revised salary of ₹35,000, ₹4,200 as basic pay, inclusion of the initial contractual period of service into regular appointment, and others

### Odisha leads 'unsatisfactory' PMGSY roadmap in India

New Delhi, Dec 5: Inspection of rural roads under Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) during the last three vears and 2025-26 revealed that the maximum number of completed road projects of unsatisfactory quality was reported from Odisha, the Rajya Sabha was informed Friday

Minister of State (MoS) for Rural Development Kamlesh Paswan told the Parliament that during this period, the National Quality Monitors (NQMs) checked 3,986 completed works under PMGSY and found 510 of them as of unsatisfactory quality

He said the inspection reports related to 2025-26 are based on the exercise undertaken till November 30

Out of the 9,214 ongoing works inspected by monitors under the PMGSY in the country, as many as 783 were reported as unsatisfactory, said

New Delhi: BJD MP Subhasish

Khuntia Friday urged the Cen-

tre to ensure a hassle-free 'dar-

shan' mechanism exclusively

for permanent residents of Puri

at Srimandir, saying they are

struggling to access the shrine

amid overwhelming tourist con-

Hour in Rajya Sabha, Khuntia

said, "Puri is not just a city but

an international tourist and pil-

grimage hub and the living pres-

tage Corridor was built because

The Jagannath Temple Heri-

ence of Lord Jagannath.'

Raising the issue during Zero

The quality of at least 252 bridge works was graded as unsatisfactory by the NQMs after inspection of 1,888 projects, the MoS said.

He said to ensure that quality monitoring is being done properly on the ground, it has been made mandatory to set up a Quality Monitoring Cell under each State Rural Road Development Agency (SRRDA) and State Quality Coordinators (SQCs) have been entrusted with the task of scrutinising all reports of SQMs and giving a certificate to this effect to the ministry.

Paswan said, "The maximum number of completed road projects of unsatisfactory quality was reported from Odisha. In the state, 66 works out of 304 were faulted by monitors. Assam had the second-highest number of 53 unsatisfactory quality projects - out of 242 inspected by NQMs."

The data shared by the MoS showed that in Bihar, 324 completed road projects were

local residents made immense

sacrifices, losing land, homes

and livelihoods, yet standing

firmly behind the project with

dan Yatra, from daily rituals

to emergency arrangements,

it is the people of Puri who

shoulder the responsibility so

the world can have darshan.

But ironically, the same people

who have protected, preserved

and served the temple for gen-

erations can no longer access

their own Lord without strug-

gling through overwhelming

"From Rath Yatra to Chan-

devotion, he said.

inspected and out of these, 37 were of poor quality. In Uttar Pradesh, 479 completed projects were inspected and 35 were graded as unsatisfactory.

In Uttarakhand, 143 road projects were inspected and out of these, 33 were found to be of poor quality, he said.

In West Bengal, 138 were inspected and 19 were graded unsatisfactory; in Meghalaya 146 were

32 found unsatisfactory: in Maharashtra inspect ed and 13

MP said

inspected

found of poor quality; in Karnataka 153 were inspected and 21 found unsatisfactory and in Jharkhand 170 were inspected and 34 found unsatisfactory in quality.

Paswan said to promote transparency and effective monitoring, the PMGSY programme

BJD seeks special 'darshan' for locals at Srimandir tourist congestion," the BJD

> Khuntia said repeated appeals have been made and delegations have spoken, yet the Odisha government has not created a special darshan system for permanent residents. He recalled that the previous government under Naveen Patnaik's leadership ensured a dedicated entry arrangement for local residents through the Western Gate on showing ID proof, recognising their traditional and daily connection

# Drop colonial title 'Lord' from textbooks: BJP MP

New Delhi: During Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha, BJP MP from Odisha, Sujeet Kumar, called for an urgent review of school textbooks, government documents, and

> official websites that continue to refer to British Governors-General and Vicewith colonial Kumar said

he had conducted a random check of NCERT history textbooks for Classes 8 and 12, as well as websites of ministries such as the Ministry of Culture, Press Information Bureau, and Archaeological Survey of India, and found "dozens of references" to figures like Lord Curzon, Lord Mountbatten, and Lord Dalhousie.

He noted that even Rai Bhavan, Bihar's official portal, had used the term "Lord" to describe colonial administrators.

"It is unfortunate that even after 78 years of Independence. we continue to place these colonial rulers on a pedestal by calling them 'Lord', despite their horrendous and barbaric crimes against our people,"

guidelines provide that the Superintending Engineer of a zone/ region will request the concerned

Member of Parliament and Zila

Kumar said.

He argued that such usage perpetuates a colonial mindset, undermines social equalitv. and goes against the spirit of the Constitution.

Drawing parallels with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's renaming of Rajpath to Kartavya Path, Kumar said the move was not merely symbolic but reflected a shift from colonial attitudes to civic responsibility and national pride.

He recalled the Prime Minister's Independence Day address from the Red Fort, where PM Modi urged citizens to liberate themselves from the 'slavery mindset" as part of the vision for Amrit Kaal. 'Why should we continue

to glorify titles given by the British to themselves for their imperialistic designs? Our freedom fighters are not referred to with such reverence. A vibrant democracy like ours must shed these remnants of slavery," Kumar asserted.

His intervention adds to the growing calls for decolonising India's education system and official discourse, align ing with the government's broader push to eliminate colonial symbols and promote indigenous narratives.

Panchayat Pramukh representing the zone/region, once in six months, to select any PMGSY project(s) for joint inspection.

# Prez lauds Lakshmi Bai's ₹3.4cr donation to AIIMS

Bhubaneswar, Dec 5: President Droupadi Murmu Friday conveyed her warm wishes to Prof K Lakshmi Bai on her 100th birthday and lauded her extraordinary gesture of donating her self-earned savings of ₹3.4 crore to AIIMS Bhubaneswar for cancer care.

In an official letter to Lakshmi Bai, Murmu appreciated her noble contribution and expressed confidence that AIIMS Bhubaneswar will make the best and most effective use of her generous supservices for the poor and underserved. Murmu said the partici

port to strengthen cancer care

pation of compassionate and responsible citizens like Prof Lakshmi Bai serves as an in spiration for others across the country to come forward and support the government's initiatives in public health and social welfare.

AIIMS Bhubaneswar, in a statement, expressed gratitude to the President for her encouraging words and for recognising the exemplary act of generosity.

### 8 ragging plaints from 2 colleges in 16 months

Bhubaneswar, Dec 5: The Higher Education department has received eight ragging complaints from two government-run colleges in the past 16 months, Higher Education Minister Suryabanshi Suraj informed the Assembly Friday.

Replying to a question from Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Rama Chandra Kadam, Suraj said four complaints were received from BJB Autonomous Degree College in Bhubaneswar and another four from Government Autonomous College, Rourkela.

He said the complaints from BJB Autonomous College were "resolved amicably between both parties," while those from the Rourkela institution were settled after "appropriate action was taken against the accused students

ti-ragging cell". The minister said the an

ti-ragging cell is vigilant and taking swift action for redres sal of such complaints. Suraj further informed the House that the department is in the process of collecting information regarding ragging incidents reported from engi neering and medical colleges across the state.

To prevent ragging in educational institutions, the concerned departments have issued instructions from time to time to colleges and uni versities in line with UGC guidelines, he said.

### MAHANADI WATER DISPUTE

### Prioritise non-monsoon water flow: MBA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 5: Mahanadi Bachao Andolan (MBA), Friday called on the state government to prioritise securing non-monsoon continuous water flow and establish a clear basis for any bilateral negotiations with Chhattisgarh regarding the Mahanadi river water dispute.

Following Thursday's discussion in the state Assembly and Friday's technical committee meeting in Raipur, the movement's leaders stressed that the state interests must be safeguarded through an all-party consensus before any talks proceed.

MBA members highlighted several critical issues that the government must address internally before engaging with Chhattisgarh. "The government must first resolve disagreements within the state by calling a meeting of all political parties, expert organisations, and stakeholders working on the Mahanadi," they said.

"The government, which has spoken of solving the dispute through an 'amicable solution',



must clearly define the basis for such a resolution. Will the Odisha government exert pressure on Chhattisgarh to release the required amount of water for the Hirakud reservoir and Mahanadi lower reaches during the non-monsoon season?" the members noted.

"The government must clarify its strategy for managing the risk to life and property in the Mahanadi basin if Chhattisgarh opens its barrages and dam gates for self-protection during cloudbursts, posing a threat to Hirakud," the outfit stated.

While states receive a water share, a portion of the water must be reserved for the river itself, known as the Environmental Flow or 'E-Flow'. The movement demanded to know the government's specific policy and approach toward securing this vital E-Flow.

### Harichandan lambasts previous govt over 'undeclared recruitment ban'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 5: Odisha Law Minister, Prithiviraj Harichandan. Friday delivered a fiery response in the State Assembly to an adjournment motion on government vacancies, unemployment, and youth migration. The Minister squarely blamed the 24-year rule of the BJD government for the backlog of 2.35 lakh vacancies, calling it a direct result of "policy paralysis" and an "undeclared recruitment ban.

Minister Harichandan launched a severe attack on the previous administration, accusing them of systematically dismantling the regular recruitment process to implement an exploitative "outsourcing system.'

He alleged that this system was a deliberate conspiracy to induct party workers through the 'backdoor' without any exam, sacrificing merit for favouritism.

The Minister claimed that human resource agencies, often controlled by the then-po-

litical class, became a "prof-

itable business" that brutally

exploited low-paid workers by

snatching a large part of their

wages as "service charge." He vowed that the current government has freed the state from this "dark chapter of outsourcing governance" and moved towards "statuto-

ry recruitment.' Responding to the opposition's figures, the Law Minister presented a comparative analysis of job creation, vehemently denying that the current job crisis was a recent phenomenon.

Harichandan highlighted key policy changes made by the new government to address the distress of the youth. He said the government has taken the "historic step" of raising the upper age limit for government jobs from 32 years to 42 years. This, he said, is an "act of kindness" to give a new opportunity to the generation that "aged out" due to the previous government's recruitment delays.

Minister said that the inhumane "Points System" introduced in the Odisha Civil Services (Rehabilitation Assistance) Rules, 2020, which mechanically rejected thousands of applications, has been revoked. The more humane 1990 rules will be reinstated, focusing on a genuine "Distress Certificate" to provide justice to bereaved families.

On the ongoing Police SI scam, the Minister stated that calling the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was a "surgical strike" against a high-tech fraud network with inter-state links. "The exams that we have cancelled in the last 18 months are not our failure but a 'surgical strike' against corruption," he asserted, adding that a corrupt foundation cannot build a healthy administration. Harichandar informed that the government is actively considering resuming regular recruitment for Group-D posts (Peon, Chowkidar), which the previous admin istration had declared a "Dying Cadre," thereby restoring the dignity of work for the poor.

Concluding his address, Harichandan reassured the youth of Odisha, stating, "The era of 'smuggling' recruitment is over." He promised that the government is committed to filling 1.5 lakh vacant posts in the next 5 years based only on merit and transparency, not "money."





WEATHER			
	BBSR	СТС	FORECAST
Max Temp	29.2°	26.6°	Fog/mist in the
Min Temp	14.0°	13.2°	morning and partly cloudy sky later
Humidity	69%	83%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

### 2 teachers suspended after boy found chained at hostel



Jatin Kumar Parida Raghunath Bugudai

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nilagiri, Dec 5: The headmaster and an assistant teacher of Begunia UGUP School in Nilagiri block of Balasore district were suspended Friday after a video showing a Class IV boy chained to his bed in the school hostel went viral.

Acting on the direction of the Nilagiri Sub-Collector and the District Education Officer (DEO), Block Education Officer (BEO) Satyaranjan Bhuiyan suspended headmaster Raghunath Bugudai and assistant teacher Jatin Kumar Parida for dereliction of duty.

The order stated that both teachers would receive only 50 per cent of their salary until further instructions. Parida has been transferred to Mitrapur Nodal School, while Bugudai has been posted at Kathapal

The 40-bed hostel accommodates children from nearby villages. The incident surfaced Wednesday when a video showed the boy - from Kumarakhali village — with a metal chain around his leg. The visuals triggered public outrage after Balasore MP Pratap Chandra Sarangi alerted the District Collector, the District Welfare Officer and the Nilagiri Sub-Collector, seeking an immediate inquiry.

Following the MP's intervention, the Balasore Collector formed a probe team and assigned the investigation to the Sub-Collector and the DEO. Further action will be taken after the inquiry report is submitted to the district administration.

## 2 Andhra trawlers seized for violating annual fishing ban

Berhampur, Dec 5: Forest officials in Ganjam district have seized two fishing trawlers from Andhra Pradesh for alleged illegal fishing near the Rushikulva river mouth, violating the seasonal ban, an official

The trawlers, containing over 70 kg of fish catch, were seized and eight fishermen handed over to the Marine Fisheries department, he said.

To protect the endangered Olive Ridley turtles during their breeding and mating season, the state government has imposed a 7-month ban on sea fishing within 20 km of the coast at the Rushikulya, Dhamra and Devi river mouths from November 1 to May 31.

During joint patrolling by forest staff, police and fishery personnel, the Andhra Pradesh fishermen were found operating in the prohibited zone, said Dibva Shankar Behera. Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF), Khallikote.



"After thorough verification. we have handed over the seized items along with the detained fishermen to the Fisheries department to take action." Behera said.

"We have registered a case against the fishermen under the Odisha Marine Fishing Regulation Act (OMFRA), 1982," said Devadutta Mohanty, Assistant Fishery Officer, Ganjam.

Rushikulya mouth is considered one of the major rookeries for the Olive Ridley turtles as thousands of the marine creatures visit the area for mass nesting.

### **Admin demolishes illegal** eco-retreat at Talamali

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Dec 5: In a decisive action against land encroachment, the Koraput administration has demolished an illegal eco-retreat that had come up at Talamali, a major tourist attraction in Semiliguda block, officials said Friday.

Revenue officials and police personnel jointly carried out the enforcement drive.

Around 70 cottages spread across nearly 30 acres of government land were dismantled. The structures, operating under the banner 'Go Koraput Eco Retreat', had been set up without any official approval. Located close to Deomali, Odisha's highest peak, Talamali draws hundreds of visitors every week, and the unauthorised resort had begun restricting access to regular tourists.

A group of businessmen from Semiliguda had erected the cottages about a month ago. Authorities found multiple violations, including unauthorised digging, dumping of waste, use of heavy construction materials, and poorly built sanitation units-activities that threatened the fragile forest environment.

Following repeated complaints from locals and public representatives, the district administration ordered an inquiry led by Koraput Sub-Collector Premlal Hial.

### Cyber scam: UP man held for duping Angul resident

Bhubaneswar, Dec 5: A man from UP was arrested by the Odisha Police for allegedly duping a resident of Angul district through an online fraud, officials said Friday.

The accused, Md Adil, was arrested from Prayagraj district in Uttar Pradesh, they said. In his complaint, the victim Sukanta Kumar Pradhan alleged that he received an APK file named 'RTO Challan' from an unknown WhatsApp number, and of Rs 7.20 lakh was fraudulently debited from his bank account. He subsequently deleted the WhatsApp chat and the file and lodged a police complaint.

lice team from Angul conducted a raid in the Pravagraj area and arrested the accused.

Adil was brought to Angul on transit remand. The police have seized a mobile phone, a debit card, and other documents from him.

### Forester held for taking bribe

POST NEWS NETWORK

Brajarajnagar, Dec 5: Vigilance officials Friday arrested a forester attached to the Bandhahahal section of the Braiarainagar forest range in Jharsuguda district for allegedly accepting

a bribe of ₹5,000. According to Vigilance sources, Forester Gauranga Sahu had demanded the bribe from a resident for per-

mitting the cutting and transportation of dried eucalyptus trees. The complainant had earlier informed the Vigilance department, following which a trap was laid.

Sahu was caught red-handed within his office

premises while accepting the bribe. A team from the Rourkela Vigilance Division conducted the raid. Officers said the forester attempted to flee but was quickly overpowered and taken into custody.

The Rourkela Vigilance Zone has registered a case in connection with the incident. Sahu was arrested and produced in a Vigilance Court.

transferred to the district police headquarters, as they were in volved in a fight inside a police station, an official said. After analysing the money trail and SIM card details, a po-

Superintendent of Police Yash Pratap Shrimal transferred Alkund police station Inspector-In-Charge (IIC) De bashis Satpathy and Assistant Sub-Inspector Prakash Kumar Singh as they were involved in a fight inside the police station Thursday over the closure report of a dowry case, the official said.

2 cops fight inside PS

in Jajpur; transferred

Jajpur, Dec 5: Two police

officers in Jajpur have been

PNN & AGENCIES

According to reports, Satpathy had asked Singh to prepare a closure report of a dowry case filed by a woman of Basudevpur village.

When the IIC asked the ASI to submit the report, the latter allegedly replied in a high voice. This led to heated exchanges of words between the two, followed by a fight inside the police station. The IIC al legedly physically assaulted the ASI in front of other cops inside the police station.

"I have transferred both the IIC and the ASI to the district police headquarters and asked Jaipur SDPO Prasant Kumar Majhi to inquire into the inci dent and submit a report. Nec essary action would be taken once the inquiry report is received," said the SP.

### 3 suspected B'deshi infiltrators identified

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, Dec 5: During an ongoing verification drive aimed at identifying suspected Bangladeshi immigrants in this coastal district, law-enforcement authorities have so far identified three individuals believed to be illegal settlers, officials said.

Police sources confirmed that the verification of several other suspected immigrants is

still underway. According to Kendrapara Superintendent of Police Siddharth Kataria, two of the identified individuals were traced to Garapur under the Kendrapara Sadar police station, while the third was located in Chhapali, under the Jamboo Marine police station.

Last month, the state government directed all departments to intensify verification and identity checks in five coastal districts as part of a broader initiative to detect illegal immigration. District Collector Raghuram R Iyer stated that a three-step process, detection, deletion of identity records, and denortation, will be followed for individuals found to be residing illegally after verification.

It may be recalled that in January 2005, the district administration had issued Quit India notices to 1,551 immigrants, placing them under the threat of deportation.

### FEMALE ELEPHANT CARCASS FOUND IN KEONJHAR

Keonihar: Forest officials Friday discovered the carcass of a female elephant, estimated to be 8-10 years old, near Kasada village under the Suakati section of the Bhuyan Juanga Pirha range in the Keonjhar forest division. Although the exact cause of death has not yet been confirmed, preliminary observations by the Forest department noted that the elephant's mouth and tongue had turned dark blue. Officials also reported signs of involuntary urination and dung near the spot, indicating the animal may have collapsed suddenly. Initial suspicion pointed to possible electrocution; however, forest officers said no evidence of electrocution was found within a radius of 1.5

13<sup>th</sup> Convocation

6<sup>™</sup> DECEMBER 2025 at 9.30 a.m.



km. "The elephant is believed to have died early this morning. There were no signs of significant struggle, though it appears the animal lay down at a couple of places before dying. Rigor mortis is still present," said Dhanraj HD, Divisional Forest Officer, Keonjhar. A post-mortem examination will be conducted Thursday morning by a team of veterinarians as per protocol. The cause of death will be determined after the post-mortem and analysis of samples at the Centre for Wildlife Health in Bhubaneswar, the DFO added.

Ceremony

### **FORGOTTEN MONEY IN YOUR OLD BANK ACCOUNTS?**



### RBI will help you recover what's yours

Money in Inoperative Accounts (inactive for more than 2 years and up to 10 years) lying with your bank / Unclaimed Deposits (Beyond 10 years) is transferred to DEA Fund of RBI. You or your legal heirs can claim it anytime.



### **3 EASY STEPS TO CLAIM YOUR MONEY**

1. Visit any branch of your bank, even if it's not your regular branch

2. Submit a form with KYC documents (Aadhaar, Passport, Voter ID, or Driving Licence)

3. Receive your money with interest, if any, after verification

### To find your unclaimed deposits

Search your bank's website or check RBI's UDGAM portal (https://udgam.rbi.org.in) covering 30 banks currently

Official WhatsApp No.

99990 41935

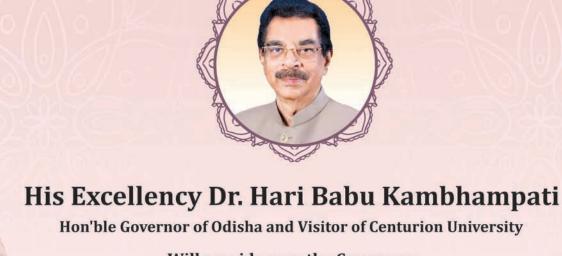
For more details,





www.rbi.org.in





Will preside over the Ceremony

The Commencement and Convocation Address will be delivered by the following Distinguished Dignitaries



Dr. V Narayanan Secretary, Department of Space, Chairman,

Space Commission

and ISRO



Dr. BK Das

Director General (ECS), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)



Prof. Amit Chakma

Vice Chancellor, The University of Western Australia



**Prof. Yogesh Pratap Singh** 

Vice Chancellor, National Law University, Tripura



Centurion University of Technology and Management, Odisha **Bhubaneswar Campus** 



### power post





What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows; the rest is appearance, prejudice and opinion





### 'Smooth Transition'

ndhra Pradesh seems to have decided that the safest way to navigate the future is to stop time itself, at least for its top babus. Chief Secretary K. Vijayanand, who was supposed to retire on 30 November, is now set for a comfortable extension. When the Chief Minister and the Prime Minister are getting along famously, even the DoPT tends to behave like a courteous guest, nodding along.

The state has asked for Vijayanand to stay till February 2026, which is practically an entire political era in Andhra terms. The official line is that continuity will help governance. The unofficial line is that Naidu knows exactly whom he trusts, and he's not eager to shuffle the deck just because the calendar says so. However, the more telling subplot is the succession script. It has been announced that G. Sai Prasad, a 1991-batch officer with a reputation for being calm under pressure, is the heir apparent. He's currently overseeing Water Resources and is largely seen as reliable, discreet, and not given to bureaucratic theatrics. In other words, Naidu-compatible.

Of course, Sai Prasad's own retirement in May 2026 looms, but that's hardly a problem. If there's one thing Indian governments have mastered, it's stretching service tenures like rubber bands in the name of "administrative stability." And by the look of it, Andhra is ready to stretch this one too.

What emerges is a governance model built on predictability: no surprises, no experiments, no brave new faces. Just seasoned administrators who know the system, know the leader, and know better than stirring the pot. Whether that steadiness translates into better outcomes or merely bureaucratic comfort is a debate for another day. But for now, Andhra has made one thing clear: the top job is staying in familiar hands.

#### **Barmer's parallel realities**

It can only happen in India. Only in Indian public life can a district be both a "national model for digitisation" and a scene straight out of a family intervention meeting, within the same week.

First came the glowing headline: Barmer, under Collector Tina Dabi, has reportedly achieved 100 per cent digitisation of SIR mapping, Rajasthan's own version of the "moon landing." A milestone and a badge of honour. And then came the Disha meeting video.

Suddenly, the district didn't look like the poster child of digital trans-

formation; it looked like a place where the MP, the MLA and half the officials had shown up with a long list of complaints. Watching local MP Ummedaram Beniwal and MLA Ravindra Singh Bhati quiz Dabi was like watching a vivisection



done in slow motion—civil, polite, but with that unmistakable "something's not adding up" energy. She answered a few questions, let others hang in the air, and generally radiated the vibe of someone wishing the WiFi would go down, so the meeting could be declared inconclusive!

To be fair, Indian governance has always excelled at parallel realities. One arm announces historic success; another arm, often in the same room, wonders aloud if the basics are even working. Maybe Barmer has digitised everything. Or maybe the only thing our babus have perfected is the art of turning administrative achievement into political theatre.

Either way, the contrast is priceless. We can only marvel at babudom's uncanny ability to simultaneously deliver headline-friendly victories and live-streamed awkwardness. Now that is a skill worth documenting

### Telangana's worrying experiment

The question posed by the Telangana High Court recently – why are IPS officers holding IAS-level administrative posts — isn't mere legal nitpicking. It cuts to the heart of what makes India's civil service structure more than just a resume list: the carefully carved allocation of roles that reflect differences in training, mandate and institutional logic.

At issue is a recent government order under which senior IPS functionaries such as Stephen Ravindra, Shikha Goel and CV Anand have been posted as ex officio principal secretaries or Special Chief Secretary in departments typically reserved for IAS officers. The court, acting on a petition, has asked the state government to explain by 10 December.

To shrug this off as an inside-game reshuffle is to misunderstand the gravity. The IAS and IPS are not interchangeable; they're separate services precisely to ensure checks and balances. Administrative oversight requires a perspective untainted by the chain of command of policing. When the same police officers overseeing investigations suddenly become the administrative bosses, the firewall of neutrality and review gets dangerously compromised.

The petitioner's contention that such appointments may run foul of statutory mandates like the IAS (Fixation of Cadre Strength) Regulations, 2016, deserves not just court scrutiny but wider public debate. Especially in a state where past controversies have included allegations of unauthorised phone tapping, the optics of "police running the show" rather than "civil servants overseeing the police" cannot be ignored.

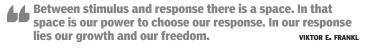
Governance isn't only about efficiency; it's about institutional safeguards. Rules and cadre distinctions may appear arcane, but they exist to prevent concentration of power, ensure independent review. and preserve democratic accountability. The Telangana High Court's intervention is a welcome pause for reflection.

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

### WISDOM CORNER

Power is given only to those who dare to lower themselves and pick it up. Only one thing matters, one thing; to be able

Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul - and sings the tunes without the words - and never stops at all.



### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1917: Finland declared itself independent of Russia, following the Bolshevik Revolution.
- 1921: Representatives of the British government and Irish leaders Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins, and others signed the Anglo-Irish Treaty this day in 1921, concluding the Irish War of Independence and establishing the Irish
- 1933: In what was considered a landmark ruling, a U.S. federal judge held that James Joyce's Ulysses was not obscene, thus allowing for greater freedoms in literary works.

### **FOCUS UNCLAIMED DEPOSITS**

# **GOVT'S SERENDIPITY**

apki Punji, Aapka Adhikar, ⊾capital, your right." This is a laudable statement the Finance Minister made on 4 October while launching the three-month campaign seeking people to take back their money lying unclaimed in various financial institutions like banks, insurance companies, mutual funds. shares and dividends aggregating to Rs 1.84 lakh crore as of 31 August, 2025. She will surely get bigger applause when this money, not only this much, but much bigger, Rs 3.5 lakh crore in about 9.22 crore accounts, is in the hands of its true owners.

Unfortunately, it is unlikely to happen anytime soon, with the method being adopted to achieve the pious goal of being 'asteya' (non-stealing) or adhering to a precept, 'par dhan nav jhaale haath re' (one should never touch others' wealth) in Gandhi ji's most favourite Bhajan, 'Vaishnava Janato.' Governments have eyed long back the huge pile of unclaimed or inoperative deposits in financial institutions and somehow wanted to have control over them. To be honest, returning money to whom it belonged was not the honest intention of the government; instead, it proposed to use it for what it considered useful purposes.

PSM Rao

**GOVERNMENTS** 

**LONG BACK THE** 

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**HAVE EYED** 

Although it said the money would be used for public benefit, it ignored the fact that this was the hard-earned money of some people, not its own, to spend the way it liked. Despite the widespread objection, the RBI in 2014 created a Depositor Education and Awareness Fund (DEAF) Scheme, enabling banks to deposit the unclaimed money with them into it. The Banking Laws (Amendment) Act. 2012. through which Section 26A had been inserted in the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, which facilitated the DAEF Scheme, evidences the government's intent to grab people's money that they had left in the banks



Why don't banks or other agencies keep the details of depositors to return the money to them? Don't they keep the record of their borrowers from whom money is due to them?

without any transactions for more than 10 years.

Similarly, an Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF) for collecting unclaimed shares and dividends and a Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund for unclaimed insurance and small savings proceeds were set up by the government. As the demand from the people heightened, the government started expressing its intent to find and disburse the money back to depositors. An intensive drive '100 Days 100 Pays' of RBI resulted in a minuscule payout of Rs 1,433 crore.

The finance minister rightly asserts, "Unclaimed deposits are not mere entries on paper; they represent the hard-earned savings of ordinary families,' and hints that it should not be just another eyewash campaign when she proposed a 3As Strategy of Awareness, Accessibility and Action. The avowed intent is to let people know that there is money to their credit, make them easily access it and make the government machinery act quickly.

The campaign started in October, will continue till December end and spread to all the districts in the country. It aims to involve all agencies concerned to ensure the return of unclaimed money to its true owners. The Department of Financial Services (DFS) in the Ministry of Finance is tasked to bring on a common platform the RBI, the SEBI, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), and the IEPFA, together with banks, insurance companies, mutual funds, and pension institutions.

All these measures to give back the unclaimed money to its owners, and not to grab it, taking advantage of the people's forgetfulness or short memory, have not yielded any tangible results so far; money keeps piling up year after year. The methods the government has chosen do not align with its blatant boasts.

True, as it asserts, the government, the banks, and other agencies that are holding the money are the trustees of the people who own it. It is the people's money and should be given back to them, is what government circles repeatedly say.

But, how do people who have deposited and forgotten know that they had the money in a particular bank? There could be many cases where people deposited money and died without disclosing it to anyone; how can the legal heirs know that there is some money belonging to them lying in the banks to make a claim? They

they operate because they did not know the existence of the money; then, which nine crore (the reports say there are nine crore accounts) people among India's 146 crore people can guess about the money due to them and lying in which bank?

Yes, the RBI opened a couple of years back a centralised portal for unclaimed bank deposits, Unclaimed Deposits-Gateway to Access Information (UDGAM). It facilitates registered users to search unclaimed deposits/accounts across multiple banks at one place in a centralised manner.

But the people's experience says it is not easy to provide the requisite information and register with the portal to verify if there is any amount due to any individual. It could be possible to search if the portal allows to verify simply with the surname or the first name of any individual to find if there is any money available for a claim. Since it may pertain to anyone, you or me, may be our deceased elders may have deposited some money, it should allow all of us to search with our surname without any registration; the portal doesn't allow this. So, the exercise will continue to be futile un-

less the RBI suitably modifies it.

More than all this, why don't banks or other agencies keep the details of depositors to return the money to them? Don't they keep the record of their borrowers from whom money is due to them? Don't they go to their residence or find it through the last known address to recover their money? They certainly do that. When that is possible, why can't they return the money due from them to their depositors? The answer: lack of will. Yet, they say the money is yours, and we are only your trustees. Trustees forever!

The writer is a development economist and commentator on economic and social affairs.

### **SPECTRUM**

### SUSTAINABILITY

### The triple-return ocean economy



Peter Bryant &

**IF IT WAS A COUNTRY. THE OCEAN WOULD** BE THE WORLD'S **FIFTH-LARGEST ECONOMY** 

hen investors are deciding where to put their money, they ask fundamental questions about the nature of the opportunitv. its risks, and the expected return. When it comes to the ocean, the answer to the last question is particularly compelling: investing in a resilient and sustainable blue economy offers immense environmental. social, and financial returns.

Historically, the ocean has been treated as an open-access resource to be fished, drilled, polluted, and, ultimately, forgotten. This outdated view is both dangerous and costly. As the world's largest carbon sink, a biodiversity hotspot, and a climate regulator, the ocean underpins food systems, economic growth, and weather stability. Advancing regenerative ocean solutions thus provides a hedge against systemic instability by protecting one of Earth's most

powerful stabilizing forces. According to the OECD's The Ocean Economy to 2050 report, the ocean economy has doubled in real terms from 1995 to 2020, when it contributed \$2.6 trillion to global GDP and employed more than 100 million people. If it was a country, the ocean would be the world's fifth-largest economy. Marine sectors that build resilience including offshore renewables, sustainable aquaculture, carbon sequestration, and blue tech are poised for rapid growth.

Forward-looking investors, recognizing that the ocean is the next frontier of innovation and climate adaptation, will act decisively. According to a report by the World Wide Fund for Nature, in collaboration with the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance and Metabolic, continued ocean degradation could jeopardize up to \$8.5 trillion of value at 66% of globally listed companies over 15 years. Commercial fisheries, coastal real estate, tourism, maritime infrastructure, and ports are among the most exposed industries. A more sustainable trajectory could reduce this risk by more than \$5.1 trillion.

Investors tend to respond to climate and biodiversity risks by hedging their losses and closing their positions, causing market downturns. As a result, they have not yet taken advantage of the multi-trillion-dollar opportunity offered by a regenerative ocean economy. Less than 0.01% of total investments, less than 1% of international philanthropic funding, and less than 1% of official development assistance go to the ocean economy.

future where healthy markets, thriving coastal communities, and flourishing ocean ecosystems create a virtuous cycle. Sustainable seafood production is possible only if habitats are protected from industrial pollution, wild catch and aquaculture are practiced responsibly, and consumer behavior is aligned. But investors are stuck behind the "transition wall" - the mismatch between short-term return expectations and long-term value creation. Institutional capital is currently constrained by seven- to ten-year horizons and risk-averse structures. Against this backdrop, high-

It is not hard to imagine a

net-worth individuals, whose wealth reached \$90.5 trillion dollars in 2024, represent an untapped investor base. Moreover. baby boomers are expected to transfer \$83 trillion to their children and grandchildren over the next two decades, reshaping asset allocation. Many of these individuals manage their wealth through family offices, which are well-positioned to deploy capital across the spectrum, from philanthropic to market-rate, and have the tools and flexibility to generate returns while driving positive change in the ocean economy.

In June, the Blue Economy and Finance Forum in Monaco,

a special event of the third United Nations Ocean Conference, demonstrated the investability of ocean-positive projects. The COP30 in Belém, Brazil, has built on that momentum, further positioning the ocean as both an important climate regulator and a vital investment opportunity.

To seize this opportunity, we must build the foundational architecture for ocean finance: early-stage support, de-risking instruments, and new business models that align investments with the ocean's regenerative potential. We need blended finance structures, concessionary capital, and tailored vehicles that serve investors across the continuum - from

philanthropic to institutional. Ocean health is planetary health, which is the foundation of all economic value. That means the main question capital managers - whether at family offices, philanthropies, pension funds, or other private investment vehicles - should be asking themselves is how to gain exposure to the blue economy.

Peter Bryant is Oceans Program Director at Builders Vision. Sindre Østgård is Managing Partner at We Are Human.

### Airline agony

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:

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

known for its punctuality, courtesy and service though comfort isn't exactly its forte. But in its eagerness and enthusiasm to spread its wings pan India, and reap profits, the leading Indian domestic airline is paying the price. Over 1,000 flights cancelled or delayed over a period of three days, and counting, has the potential to seriously damage the reputation and operation of the airline because trust takes years to build but only seconds to break. Although IndiGo has broadly blamed the weather and technology for the present impasse, it's clear that the Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) setin by the Indian aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), has pushed

the airline to a corner. Obviously, IndiGo hadn't

prepared itself well to face the impending reality.

Sir, Of all low-cost airlines in India, IndiGo is

### Inhuman pressure

Sir, Thanks to the Supreme Court for stepping in to address the growing concerns over the stress caused by the increased workload being borne by the Booth Level Officers (BLOs) engaged in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in addition to their regular duties. The immense workload and pressure associated with SIR of electoral rolls have escalated from logistical challenges to a severe public health crisis among BLOs, resulting in serious health concerns, including a reported cerebral attack on a BLO in West Bengal, which tragically highlights the human cost of the rushed exercise. The deaths and health crises of BLOs underscore a critical failure in the planning and support structure for the SIR, turning a crucial democratic exercise into a high-risk assignment for the frontline workers responsible for its execution. The rushed nature of the revision, compressed from a period that previously took years into just a few months, is structurally flawed and dangerous, potentially leading to the mass exclusion of eligible voters. Needless to say the ECI puts inhuman pressure on the ground staff to meet politically motivated timelines.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI



### TWO STATES





**CULINARY HERITAGE TAKES SPOTLIGHT** 

### U'KHAND HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

### **UP set to launch 'One District, One Product' 2.0** Over 900 lives lost since 2000

The aim of ODOP 2.0 is to ensure that the state's traditional products become a strong foundation for larger markets, increased exports, and sustainable livelihoods

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Dec 5: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Friday underscored the need to implement the "One District, One Cuisine" (ODOC) concept to give each district a unified identity through its distinctive culinary heritage.

Adityanath, in a high-level

meeting here, said, "The 'One District, One Product' (ODOP) initiative, now a defining feature of 'Brand Uttar Pradesh', is set to advance to its next phase, ODOP 2.0, which will further boost local industries, self-employment, and exports"

He noted that in the context of evolving global markets, modern consumer expectations, technological progress, and new benchmarks for quality and packaging, ODOP must be expanded in a more comprehensive, commercial, and outcome-driven manner.

Together, ODOP and ODOC will propel Uttar Pradesh firmly on the path of "local to global", the chief minister said.

"The aim of ODOP 2.0 is to ensure that the state's traditional products become a strong foundation for larger markets, increased exports, and sustainable livelihoods," he added.

"ODOC reflects the cultural essence of Uttar Pradesh, where



ODOC reflects the cultural essence of Uttar Pradesh, where every region boasts a unique food tradition, some renowned for their 'halwa', others for their 'dalmoth'

highlighted that since its

launch in 2018, the ODOP initia-

tive has become the backbone

of Uttar Pradesh's exports and

According to the statement,

over 1.25 lakh toolkits have

been distributed, loans exceed-

ing Rs 6,000 crore have been

sanctioned, and more than 8,000

entrepreneurs have received di-

Thirty Common Facility

Centres (CFCs) have been ap-

proved, and 44 ODOP products

have been granted Geo tags.

ODOP products are now sold on

leading e-commerce platforms

and account for more than 50

per cent of the state's total ex-

The scheme has also earned

ports, the statement said.

rect marketing support.

local industries.

YOGI ADITYANATH | CHIEF MINISTER, UTTAR PRADESH

every region boasts a unique food tradition, some renowned for their 'halwa', others for their 'dalmoth'," Adityanath said in an official statement.

Mapping each district's signature dishes, he emphasised, should be accompanied by efforts to improve their quality, hygiene, packaging, branding, and marketing.

Meanwhile, Lucknow city was officially inducted into UNESCO's Creative Cities Network (CCN), under the 'Gastronomy' category, marking a global acknowledgement of its culinary heritage. UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay designated 58 cities October 31 as new members of the CCN.

During the meeting, it was

a national award for the second consecutive year, it said.

Speaking about ODOP 2.0, the chief minister said, "It is no longer just a scheme but a powerful catalyst for sustainable employment, local enterprise development, and export growth."

He stressed the importance of prioritising the units and entrepreneurs who performed exceptionally well in the first phase, further enabling them to scale their businesses.

He added that future plans must empower Uttar Pradesh's products across four key areas -- technology, packaging, quality, and market reach.

The Common Facility Centres under ODOP will be made more effective, the statement said. The chief minister directed that each CFC should have expert involvement so that small entrepreneurs can access comprehensive support, including technical guidance, design, packaging solutions, and production assistance, all under one roof.

The chief minister further instructed that ODOP products must not remain confined to traditional markets but should be integrated into major retail chains

and modern marketplaces.

He directed the establishment of dedicated ODOP sections in Unity Malls being set up across various states and emphasised the need to coordinate with major retail networks to ensure prominent placement of Uttar Pradesh's products.

Additionally, the ODOP products will receive certification and enhanced brand value through reputed institutions to strengthen their identity in global markets, the statement said.

PRESS TRUST OF IND

Dehradun, Dec 5: Attacks by tigers, leopards, bears and other animals has claimed more than 900 lives in Uttarakhand in the last 25 years, highlighting alarming levels of human-wildlife conflict in the hilly state, according to government data.

The latest such incident occurred on Thursday when a 45-year-old man was killed in a leopard attack in Gajald village in Pauri -- a district that has seen the highest animal attack cases, prompting its administration to take several measures.

According to government data, human-wildlife conflict has claimed over 900 lives in Uttarakhand over the past 25 years with leopard attacks claiming 548 lives, elephant attacks 230 lives, tiger attacks 106 and bear attacks 70.

Snakebites claimed 260 lives in the state during this period, the data showed.

Meanwhile, 2,127 people were injured in attacks by leopards, 2,013 injured in bear attacks, 234 in elephant attacks and 1,056 were injured due to snake bites, it stated.

According to experts, leopard attacks are seen in almost every part of the state throughout the year, with bear attacks peaking between October and December.

The Uttarakhand government has announced that the state will bear the entire cost of treatment for the injured and will provide a compensation of Rs 10 lakh to the families of those killed in the attacks.

Rajendra Nautiyal (45) was killed in a leopard attack in Gajald village of Pauri district Thursday, prompting the administration to order the shooting of the animal and declare a two-day holiday for schools in the area, officials said.

The incident sparked panic in the area, and residents took to the streets in outrage. Villagers protested against the local MLA and forest department personnel.

Seeing the growing resistance among the villagers, the district magistrate has immediately ordered the installation of a cage in the village. Schools and Anganwadi centres have been temporarily closed as a precautionary measure.

According to the district magistrate, two shooters have been deployed at the scene and have been given permission to kill the leopard.

The villagers have alleged that the department attempts to hush up the situation with formal action, while the leopard menace continues to grow in the area. Instead of relief, villagers are experiencing growing anxiety.

Accusing the state government of not giving a concrete and permanent policy to prevent human-wildlife conflict.

they said that this lack of a solution is leading to a steady increase in casualties in hilly villages.

Schoolchildren also expressed their anguish and said that due to the school being far from the village, they are forced to stay at home due to fear of leopards.

Uttarakhand Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force) Ranjan Kumar Mishra acknowledged that Pauri is a district with the highest human-wildlife conflict in Uttarakhand -- especially in terms of bear and leopard attacks.

He appealed to people not to throw green waste, rotten fruits, or food waste in the open in the villages.

Mishra added that several bears were recently seen on garbage dumps in Joshimath, and such conditions affect animal behavior and make them aggressive.

The Forest Department has initiated the installation of solar and fox lights at several locations. Meanwhile, the Congress has accused the BJP-led Uttarakhand government of negligence regarding wildlife attacks.

DSPL-401

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# national



We still have a lot to cover. Whatever we could do this year, it is before you. Our opponents will always tell you that this or that has not been done, but they will not tell you what has been achieved

### HC REJECTS MOSQUE'S **PLEA TO USE LOUDSPEAKER**

The Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court refused to grant relief to a mosque seeking permission to use loudspeakers, noting it was not entitled to use the device to practise religion as a matter of right. The court, while relying on Supreme Court judgments, said that no religion mandates prayers to be offered through voice amplifiers or beating drums



ensure that the tional products

foundation for larger markets, increased exports, and sustain able livelihoods

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

The vision of a fully developed India includes the well-being of every citizen. and in order to achieve that goal, focusing







### SHORT **TAKES**

#### Five engineering students killed

Chilakutpeta (Andhra Pradesh): Five engineering students who were observing Ayyappa Swamy deeksha (penance) have been killed in an accident here in Palnadu district when their car crashed into a truck from behind, said a police official. Police said the accident occurred late Thursday on the new bypass road in Chilakutpeta after the truck driver allegedly slowed down his vehicle suddenly.

### Tributes paid to Jayalalithaa

Chennai: Rich tributes were paid to late Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalalithaa on her death anniversary Friday. On the occasion, AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami appealed to the party cadres to end the "family rule" in Tamil Nadu. Former AIADMK leader K A Sengottaiyan, who recently joined actor Vijay-led TVK, recalled the late leader's 'sacrifices" and said her fame will last forever.

### Scindia participates in Hornbill fest

Kohima: Union Minister Jyotiraditya M Scindia Friday took part in the traditional Angami Naga stone-pulling ceremony at Tuophema village, the home of Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio in Kohima district, as part of the 26th Hornbill Festival. Scindia, dressed in traditional Angami attire, along with his son, joined Rio, deputy chief ministers Y Patton and T R Zeliang and thousands of people in the traditional stone pulling ceremony.

### Protest in Gangtok

**Gangtok:** The Citizen Action Party Sikkim Friday held a dharna in Gangtok, alleging that the process for the police sub-inspector recruitment was "severely compromised" with most selected candidates having links to the ruling SKM. The dharna was held near the district administrative centre in the state capital, with agitators raising slogans denouncing the Prem Singh

### J'khand Assembly adjourned

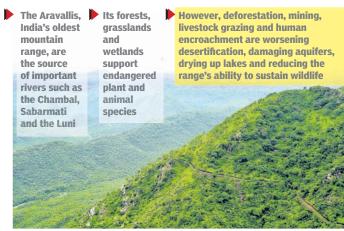
Tamang government.

Ranchi: The first day of the winter session of the Jharkhand Assembly was adjourned Friday after obituary references were made to eminent personalities who died recently. The session will now be convened Monday and will conclude December 11, with five working days

### Aravali's 100-metre rule may harm its ecosystem, experts warn

New Delhi, Dec 5: The Aravali Hills – one of the oldest mountain ranges in the world that spans approximately 700 km in length - has long served as a natural shield for blocking sand and dust from the Thar Desert while also aiding groundwater recharge and sustaining rich biodiversity for multiple states, including the Delhi-NCR region.

But, with the Supreme Court recently accepting a new government definition that only hills taller than 100 meters will count, experts have warned that many parts of the ecologically vital Aravalis may no longer be protected and thus could expose many regions, including Delhi, to harsher weather and drought conditions. Expressing disappointment over the Supreme Court's decision, Harjeet Singh, founding director, Satat Sampada



Climate Foundation, highlighted that labelling only hills that surpass 100 metres as 'Aravalis', "erases the landscape that keeps North India breathing and feeds

"Aravali Hill" will be defined as any landform in designated Aravali districts with an elevation of 100 metres or more "Aravali Range" will be a col-

While the Supreme Court directed the authorities to identify permissible areas for "mining and ecologically sen-

above its local relief, and an lection of two or more such hills within 500 metres of each other.

sitive, conservation-critical and restoration priority areas within the Aravali landscape where mining shall be strictly prohibited or permitted only under exceptional and scientifically justified circumstances," Environmentalist Vimlendu Jha said that the decision risks the disappearance of the Aravalis by 90 per cent.

In March 2023, the government launched the Aravalli Green Wall initiative to tackle these issues.

The project aims to establish a five-kilometre-wide green belt buffer, covering 6.45 million hectares across Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi. Noting that the fundamental drivers of wind-blown dust that are overwhelming the NCR and other states are not truly being addressed, Executive Director of the Centre for Science and Environment, Anumita Roy Chowdhury, stated that the role of the Aravalis, the forests, and the green belt becomes crucial, "because this natural barrier is essential for protecting air quality.' Terming the Aravali hills as

one of the last armours against dust, Environmentalist Bharati Charturvedi stated that the new government definition is going to have a very severe effect on the health of the children, the elderly, outdoor workers, people living in inadequate quality housing, as well as various other vulnerable populations.

The issue of pollution and the top Court's decision on the Aravali have also been echoing within the Parliament and amongst political leaders, as the Congress parliamentary party chairperson Sonia Gandhi Wednesday alleged that the government has now "nearly signed a death warrant" for the

### **ED** attaches fresh assets of **Reliance Group**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 5: The Reliance Centre, a guesthouse and some residential assets in Mumbai, apart from 231 plots of land in Chennai, are among the fresh assets worth Rs 1,120 crore attached by the ED as part of its ongoing money-laundering probe against the companies of Reliance Group chairman Anil Ambani.

The properties belong to Reliance Home Finance Limited (RHFL) and Reliance Commercial Finance Limited (RCFL), and the probe is linked to an alleged fraud at the Yes Bank, the federal agency said in a statement Friday.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) earlier froze properties worth more than Rs 8,997 crore of the business group With the latest action, the total value of attachment of the Reli ance Group stands at Rs 10,117 crore, it said.

Among the 18 immovable assets provisionally attached under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) are the Reliance Centre in Ballard Estate, a commercial office build ing of Reliance Infrastructure Limited in Andheri East and residential properties and a guesthouse of Reliance Infrastructure Limited in Santacruz (all in Mumbai).

A total of 231 plots of land and seven residential flats in Chennai, belonging to Reliance Value Services Private Limited have also been attached as part of the same order, the ED said. The movable assets that have been at tached include fixed and bank de posits, shareholding in unquoted investments of the Reliance Ani Ambani Group, apart from some other entities.

The total value of the attach ment is Rs 1,120 crore, the agency said. Reliance Group companies have repeatedly said Ambani was not involved in the day-to-day management of the conglomerate. The industrialist has once been ques tioned by the ED as part of the money-laundering investigation linked to an alleged Rs 17.000-crore bank fraud against his group companies

### **LoPs not invited to Putin banquet: Cong**



**Congress' media** 

and publicity

department

**head Pawan** 

of breaking

**Khera accused** 

protocols daily

in democratic

principles

and not believing

the government

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 5: The Congress Friday said Leaders of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi have not been invited to the banquet for Russian President Vladimir Putin, and took a swipe at its own MP Shashi Tharoor for accepting the invite.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "There has been speculation whether the

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha have been invited for tonight's official dinner in honour of President Putin. The two LoPs have not been invited."

Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera accused

the government of breaking protocols daily and not believing in democratic principles.

'There is no invite to both the LoPs, Mr (Mallikarjun) Kharge and Mr (Rahul) Gandhi. This comes as a surprise but I don't think we should be surprised. This government is known to be breaching all protocols. What else to say, ask the government," he told PTI Videos on the sidelines of an event.

Asked about party MP Tharoor getting invited to the banquet and accepting the invitation, Khera said, "Ask Mr. Tharoor. All of us who are in the party, if our leaders don't get invited and we get invited. we need to question our own conscience and listen to our conscience. Politics has been played in inviting or not inviting people, which in itself is questionable and those who accept such an invite is also questionable," Khera said.

Earlier, Tharoor said there was a time when the chairman of the external affairs committee was routinely invited but that practice seems to have stopped from some years.

On the LoPs reportedly not getting an invite, Tharoor said, "I don't know on what basis invitations were sent. I think

the custom that usually used to be followed was for a wide representation. Certainly, I remember in the olden days they used to invite not only the LoPs, (but) various other cross section of representatives of different parties. It conveys a good impression." Gandhi Thursday had alleged that the government tells visiting foreign dignitaries not to meet the Leader of the Opposition due to its "insecurity"

### **Lok Sabha clears** pan masala cess Bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 5: The Lok Sabha Friday passed a Bill to levy a cess on manufacturing units of pan masala, and utilise the fund for strengthening national security and improving public health.

Replying to the debate on the Health Security se National Security Cess Bill, 2025, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the cess will be shared with the states, as public health is a state subject. The Bill was later passed by voice vote by the Lok Sabha.

The bill seeks to augment the resources for meeting expenditure on national security and for public health by levying a cess on the machines installed or other processes undertaken to manufacture pan masala and similar goods. The purpose of the bill is to create a "dedicated and predictable resource stream" for two domains of national importance -- health and national security. she said. Sitharaman said pan masala will be taxed at the maximum 40 per cent rate under Goods and Services Tax (GST) based on its consumption, and there will be no impact of this cess on GST revenues.

### SC: Temple money belongs to deity not become a source of income or

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 5: The Supreme Court Friday said that money belonging to a temple deity cannot be used to prop up financially distressed cooperative banks. The sharp observations were

made by a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi while hearing appeals filed by a few cooperative banks challenging a direction of the Kerala High Court asking them to return the deposits to the Thirunelly

Temple Devaswom. "You want to use the temple money to save the bank? What is wrong with directing that the temple money, instead of being in a cooperative bank which is breathing with great difficulty, should go to a healthy nation alised bank which can give maximum interest." the CJI asked. Temple money belongs to the deity and hence, the money has to be "saved, protected and utilised only for the interests of the temple" and it cansurvival for a cooperative bank, the CJI said. The pleas against the high court order were filed by Mananthawady Co-operative Urban Society Ltd and Thirunelly Service Cooperative Bank Ltd. The high court had directed five cooperative banks to close the Devaswom's fixed deposits and refund the entire amount within two months, following repeated refusals by the banks to release the matured deposits. The bench was unconvinced

with the submissions of the banks that the abrupt direction of the high court was causing difficulties. The bench said the banks should establish credibility among the people. The top court refused to entertain the pleas. It, however, permitted the banks to approach the high court for extension of time to comply with the impugned order. The case arose from a plea filed by the Thirunelly Devaswom after several cooperative banks refused to repay the temple's fixed deposits despite repeated requests.



Farmers sit on railway tracks during a statewide 'rail roko' protest called by the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, Punjab Chapter, against the central government's draft Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2025, and other issues, at Devi Das Pura near Amritsar

### World Book of Records honours Nitish for 10th term as CM

Patna, Dec 5: The World Book of Records, London, Friday recognised Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's "milestone" of having taken oath as chief minister for the 10th time.

Announcing the development, Janata Dal (United) national working president Sanjay Jha posted on X, "It is a matter of great joy and pride to share that the World Book of Records, London, has recognised the extraordinary milestone achieved by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar, who has taken oath as Chief Minister for the 10th time."

He described it as a "truly rare distinction" in the country's

democratic journey. JD(U) chief Kumar first be-

came chief minister in 2000. though he had to step down within seven days after failing to prove a majority in the floor

Since 2005, Kumar has continued as CM, except for a brief period of less than a year when he handed over the post to Jitan Ram Manjhi in the wake of the party's poor performance in the Lok Sabha elections in 2014.

Kumar's third oath came after a sweeping mandate in the 2010 assembly elections, and his fourth came ahead of the 2015 state polls, as he took over the reins from Manjhi following a political tussle.

His political journey has in-



cluded alliances with both the NDA and the Mahagathband-

han. In 2015, Kumar formed a grand alliance with his rival

Lalu Prasad of the RJD and the Congress, taking oath for the fifth time. He resigned in July 2017, citing corruption charges against Lalu's son and deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav.

Within 24 hours of his resignation, he was sworn in for the sixth time with the BJP's support, returning to the NDA fold.

After the 2020 Bihar polls, he took oath for the seventh time, but as tensions grew over caste census and alleged dominance by the BJP, he walked out of the alliance in 2022.

Kumar rejoined the RJD and Congress and was sworn in for the eighth time.

Mahagathbandhan 2.0 lasted for 17 months before Kumar quit the alliance ahead of the

2024 Lok Sabha elections, saying "things were not right". He again allied with the NDA before the 2024 polls, taking

oath for the ninth time. Kumar took the oath for the 10th time after the recent as-

sembly elections, wherein the NDA swept the polls, winning 202 out of 243 seats. Jha said the "organisation's

commendation notes that this remarkable feat is a reflection of his unwavering public ser vice, stable governance, and the enduring trust reposed in him by the people of Bihar. To lead a state across ten terms is not merely a personal achievement; it stands as a historic moment for Bihar and a testament to its democratic strength."

# national



The overall punctuality of Railways has touched 80 per cent, which is a significant achievement. In 70 railway divisions, the punctuality is more than 90 per cent. The Indian Railways is better in punctuality than several European countries ASHWINI VAISHNAW | RAILWAYS MINISTER

### TRANSFER OF HC JUDGES MADE IN PUBLIC INTEREST

All transfers of high court judges are made in "public interest" for promoting better administration of justice and there is no timeline for such transfers, the government said Friday



Let there whatsoever that the project to vilify Jawaharlal Nehru is the main objective of the rul-

ing establishment today. Their goal is not just to erase him; it is actually to destroy the social, political, and economic foundations on which our nation has been founded and built

SONIA GANDHI CONGRESS LEADER

Before Magh Bihu. I feel we will complete our discussion with AGP regarding poll alliance and seat sharing agreement

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA





state's power to restrict expression does not overshadow the citizen's right to think, to speak and to participate freely in the democratic set-up

BR GAVAI FORMER CJI





criminalisation of marital rape is an urgent necessity my Private Member's Bill today

to amend the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and remove the marital rape exception, reaffirming that marriage cannot negate the woman's right to grant or deny consent. India must uphold its constitutional values and move from 'No Means No' to 'Only Yes Means Yes,'. Every woman deserves the fundamental right to bodily autonomy and dignity within marriage, protections our legal system fails to provide. Marital rape is not about marriage but about violence. The moment for action has arrived.

@ShashiTharoor

### SHORT **TAKES**

### Meeting fails to resolve **Tezpur varsity deadlock**

Tezpur: In a dramatic turn of events at Tezpur University, which has been under complete shutdown for the last seven days, the senior-most faculty member assumed charge as acting vice chancellor suo-motu Friday, citing the varsity's laws. The new 'acting VC' Dhruba Kumar Bhattacharyya said he is making arrangements to hold the stalled end-term exams from December 8, though the agitating students declared that the shutdown would continue till their demand. the ouster of incumbent Vice Chancellor Shambhu Nath Singh, is met.

### Police book TN BJP chief, 112 others

Madurai (Tamil Nadu): The police Friday registered a case against 113 people, including Tamil Nadu BJP President Nainar Nagenthran, senior party leader H Raja, and six women, who participated in a protest December 4 to push for the lighting of a lamp at the top of the Thiruparankundram hill, officials said.

### Delhi court extends **Bishnoi's NIA custody**

New Delhi: A Delhi court Friday extended the NIA custody of deported gangster Anmol Bishnoi by seven more days. Special Judge Prashant Sharma ordered the extension during a hearing conducted at the National Investigation Agency's (NIA) headquarters here amid high security.

# IndiGo cancels over 1K flights

New Delhi/Mumbai, Dec 5: IndiGo cancelled over 1,000 flights Friday and said operations are expected to normalise in the next 10 days, as the country's largest airline received flight duty norms relaxation from watchdog DGCA, which will probe the disruptions that have impacted thousands of passengers for four straight days. As a large number of flights

got cancelled and delayed, chaos continued at major airports across the country, with frustrated passengers scrambling for updates and searching for their baggage. Many passengers vented out their anger on social media, and airfares also sailed northwards for many routes.

The operations of IndiGo, which controls about twothirds of the country's domestic traffic and generally operates around 2,300 flights daily, failed to plan properly for the new flight duty norms that provide for increased rest periods and lesser night landings.

With air travel chaos continuing for the fourth consecutive day, DGCA Friday provided temporary exemption from the Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) norms, including on night landings and definition of night time, to the airline, which had sought the relaxations to normalise its operations.

The airline was required to implement the FDTL norms from November 1.

Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu Friday said various operational measures. including keeping new flight duty norms in abeyance, will help address the IndiGo flight disruptions, and complete restoration of services is expected in next three days.



Stranded passengers search for their luggage near a counter after IndiGo cancelled more than 400 flights, at the Kempegowda International Airport,

### NORTHERN RLY INCREASES AC COACHES

NEW DELHI: The Northern Railway Friday decided to increase 3AC and Chair Car coaches in four premium trains for the convenience of travellers in view of the disruption of Indigo airline's flight services. Himanshu Shekhar Upadhyay, Chief Public Relations Officer, Northern Railway, said that one 3AC coach each in 12425/26 Jammu Rajdhani express and 12424/23 Dibrugarh Rajdhani express have been increased after experiencing a surge in passengers' travel needs. According to sources, the railways is working to increase the number of all types of AC coaches in several premium trains running between New Delhi and Patna, Mumbai and New Delhi, and Ahmedabad and New Delhi nong many others due to a sudden surge in the passengers' demand.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has constituted a four-member panel to ascertain the reasons that have led to the disruptions and also said that prima facie, the situation indicates deficiencies in internal oversight, operational preparedness, and compliance planning, "warranting an independent examination"

The FDTL relaxations have been provided for only Indi-Go's A320 family planes, which account for the majority of its fleet, till February 10, 2026, officials said. "This exemption has been granted solely to facilitate operational stabilisation and in no way amounts to dilution of safety requirements. During this period, DGCA would review after every fifteen days, the action taken by IndiGo to address the situation including hiring of adequate crew to ensure FDTL compliance," the civil aviation ministry said in a statement.

Earlier in the day, the regulator eased the FDTL norm. saving leaves can substitute weekly rest periods for pilots. These moves mean that more pilots will be available for operations and that will help in stabilising the situation.

On a day when IndiGo cancelled more than 1,000 flights, IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers on Friday said the situation is anticipated to normalise between December 10-15.

since the disruptions began, El bers apologised for the major inconvenience caused to the passengers due to the disruptions.

"Regrettably, earlier measures of the last few days have proven not to be enough. So we decided today for a reboot of all our systems and schedules, resulting in the highest number of cancellations so far, but imperative for progressive improvements starting tomorrow onwards.

'With these actions, we expect tomorrow to have cancellations below 1,000. The support of DGCA, in providing specific FDTL implementation relief, is of great help," Elbers said.

The issue of IndiGo flight dis ruptions was also raised in the Parliament. Pilots' body Airlines' Pilots Association (ALPA) India Friday took "strong" objection to safety regulator DGCA's "selective and unsafe" relief to domestic carrier IndiGo, saying the decision sets a dangerous precedent.

The civil aviation ministry has taken urgent and proac tive measures to address the ongoing disruption in flight schedules, particularly those of Indigo airlines, Naidu said in a statement. According to him, the operational measures have been initiated to ensure that normal airline services are restored at the earliest.

The DGCA also issued an ap peal to all the pilots and pilots' associations to extend full cooperation amid the flight disruptions, and in view of the large-scale traffic demand due to winter holidays and marriage season.

In a rare move, IndiGo, which said it is rebooting the systems and schedules, Friday suspended operations of all departing domestic flights from the Delhi airport, which is also its key hub, till Friday midnight.

# 'No deadline extension for Waqf registration'



New Delhi, Dec 5: Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju Friday ruled out extending the deadline for registering Waqf properties on the UMEED portal but said the his ministry, recognising the concerns of 'mutawallis' or caretakers, will not impose any penalty or take strict action for the next three months as a humanitarian and facilitative measure.

He also said that 1.51 lakh properties had been registered by Friday morning. The minister stressed that those 'mutawallis (Waqf property caretakers) who have not registered on the portal at all can approach their respective Waqf tribunals.

The Centre launched The Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency, and Development (UMEED) Act central portal on June 6 to

create a digital inventory. According to the provisions of the portal, details of all registered Waqf properties across the country must be uploaded within six months. The six-month deadline for registration ends at 11:59:59 pm December 6, 2025.

The six-month deadline mandated under the Waqf Amendment Act cannot be extended due to the provisions of the act and clear directions of the Su preme Court, the minister said

However, recognising the concerns of 'mutawallis', the minis ter assured that the ministry will not impose any penalties or take strict action for the next three months as a "humanitari an and facilitative measure".

### PURI-522, Dt. 28.11.2025 Name of Work: SIGNALLING ZONAL

OR LESS IN THE SECTION UNDER JURISDIC-TION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER SIGNAL (SSES)/PURI OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION, EAST COAST RAILWAY FOR ONE YEAR. Tender Value: ₹ 33,63,014.57, EMD

₹ 67,300.00, Bidding Start Date: 08.12.2025.

Tender closing Date & Time: At 1100 hrs. of 22.12.2025. Fax or in person shall be accepted agains

Complete information including e-tende documents are available in website www.ireps.gov.in

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Enginee

PR-870/Q/25-26

MECON LIMITED

H.O.: Doranda, Ranchi - 834002, Phone: 0651-2483000 CIN No.: U74140JH1973GOI001199

**EMPLOYMENT NOTIFICATION** 

#### S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER For & on behalf of the President of India

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRS), South Eastern Railway, Bondamunda invites open E-Tender for the under mentioned work. Manual offers are not allowed against the tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored E-Tender Notice No.: TRS-BNDM-03-2025-26, Dated: 04.12.2025. Description of defective parts of different types of fire extinguishers under jurisdiction of ELS/Bondamunda for a period of 02 vears. Approx. Cost of work: ₹ 7.74.405.50. Earnest Money: ₹ 15.500. Date & time for closing of E-Tender: 15.00 hrs. of 26.12.2025. Website particulars & details: www.ireps.gov.in. The complete particulars of the E-Tende will be available on website.

#### EAST COAST RAILWAY File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/25-26/

Description: ALL REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE OF P. WAY ZONAL WORKS FOR A PERIOD LIPTO 30/09/2026 FROM KM PALASA STATION UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (SSE) (P.WAY)/SOMPETA OF

eriod : 12 (Twelve) Months. (2) Tender No.: eTender-SouthKUR-300-

2025, Dtd. 21.11.2025 ption: PROPOSED CONVERSION & DING OF ARCH BRIDGE NO. 1111 (UP), 1166 (UP), 997 (UP) AND RCC SLAB

BRIDGE NO. 919 DN INTO RCC BOX ROAD-PALASA OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 185.32 akhs, EMD: ₹ 2,42,700.00, Com period : 10 (Ten) Months.

Tender closing Date & Time: At 1500 hrs. of 12.12.2025 (for both tenders). No manual offers sent by Post/Courier Fax or in person shall be accepted agains uch e-tenders.

Complete information including e-tender locuments of the above e-tender is available n website : www.ireps.gov.in

Note: The prospective tenderers are advise to revisit the website ten days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.

Sr. Divisional Engineer (South), PR-875/Q/25-26 Khurda Road

#### EAST COAST RAILWAY E-PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS Tender Notice No. PCMM/EP/2025-26/17 Dated: 02.12.2025

SL. NO. 01: TENDER NO. 02251446, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: SET OF CYLINDRICAL ROLLER BEARING.

QUANTITY: AS PER TS. SL. NO. 02 : TENDER NO. 03251794A.

ABSORBER, QUANTITY: 1000 NOS. SL. NO. 03 : TENDER NO. 09253605A. SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : M S FLAT SIZE 40 MMx6 MM IN LENGTH OF 3 MTRS. QUANTITY: AS PER TS.

SL. NO. 04 : TENDER NO. 03253925B. SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: BRAKE CALLPER UNIT. QUANTITY: 104 NOS.

SL. NO. 05: TENDER NO. 03251470A, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: KNUCKLE OF CBC COUPLER FOR LHB

COACHES. QUANTITY: 233 NOS. SL. NO. 06: TENDER NO. 04251001A, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: VALVE REGULATED LEAD ACID BATTERIES. QUANTITY: AS PER TS.

SL. NO. 07: TENDER NO. 06255429, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: 1 IN 8.5 WELDABLE CMS CROSSING B G. QUANTITY: AS PER TS. SL. NO. 08: TENDER NO. 02251711, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: OVER HAULING KIT FOR CONTROL

PORTION ER 787776-1994. QUANTITY: SL. NO. 09 : TENDER NO. 04254313A.

HORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : RUSHLESS SENSOR LESS DC RAILWAY CARRIAGE FANS. QUANTITY: 3906 NOS.

Tender Opening date: 15.12.2025 (for l. no. 1 & 5), 18.12.2025 (for sl. no. 2 &

3), **16.12.2025** (for sl. no. 4), **29.12.2025** (for sl. no. 6 & 7), **17.12.2025** (for sl. no. B) and 05.01.2026 (for sl. no. 9). Regarding detailed notice, EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions

please visit website www.ireps.gov.in and www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in Principal Chief Materials Manager PR-873/Q/25-26 Bhubaneswar

### Assam govt relaxes two-child norm for SC, ST, other communities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Dec 5: The Assam government Friday diluted the two-child norm for ST, SC, tea garden. Moran and Matak communities. amending its policy in this regard.

According to a notification, members of these groups having up to three children are eligible for government employment, contesting elections and receiving incentives for Self Help Groups (SHGs).

In the notification, the Health and Family Welfare Department Commissioner and Secretary Patibandla Ashok Babu said the order regarding abolishing the two-child norm for some select communities and relaxing it to three children has come into effect immediately.

"The Governor of Assam is pleased to enunciate the Population and Women Empowerment Policy of Assam (Amendment), 2025," he said. The order stated that the Population and Women Empowerment Policy of Assam, 2017 has been amended accordingly. On October 23, the Assam Cabinet had decided to abolish the two-child norm for ST, tea garden, Moran and Matak communities in respect of getting government jobs, and the notification came Friday.

Addressing a press conference after the state cabinet, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had said the government took the decision to keep these groups outside the purview of population control norms to protect them from extinction. "If we stick to the policy, these populations will lose their distinct identities and gradually become extinct in the next 50 years," he had added.

### Delhi's AQI remains 'very poor'

New Delhi, Dec 5: A thick veil of smog descended over the capital Friday, with the average AQI settling at 327, in the 'very poor' category, while the city shivered on its coldest December morning so far this year with the mercury dipping to 5.6 degrees Celsius.

The 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) was recorded at 327, after clocking 323 during the morning hours when 30 monitoring stations across the capital logged 'very poor' air quality. Bawana reported the worst AQI at 373, according to the Central Pollution Control Board

(CPCB) data. By 6 pm, 31 of the 39 stations assessed had fallen into the 'very poor' range, with R K Puram registering one of the highest AQI readings at 370, the CPCB's Sameer app showed. According to the CPCB standards, an AQI between 0 and 50 is classified 'good', 51-100 'satisfactory', 101-200 'moderate', 201-300 'poor', 301-400 'very

poor' and 401-500 'severe'. Meanwhile, according to the Decision Support System (DSS) for Delhi's air quality management, vehicular emissions remained the highest local contributor at 15.3 per cent.

#### **Government of Odisha** Office of the Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Jharsuguda

Email: eerw\_jharsuguda@yahoo.co.in, Tel.: 06645-271643 Bid Identification No. Online - SEJSG - 12 of 2025-26 NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR ROAD WORK IN ODISHA NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

Name of the work Road works as per DTCN available

2 Total No. of Work Estimated Cost Rs. 5.04 Lakh to 31.93 Lakh Period of completion 01 (One) & 03 (Three) Calendar

Dt 08.12.2025 at 11.00 A M to 5 Period and Time of

availability of bid document in 18.12.2025 upto 05.00 P.M. the portal for bidding Date and Time of bio

7 Name and address of the : S.E., R.W.Division, Jharsuguda officer inviting Bid (1) Other details can be seen from Detailed notice Inviting Tenders, available

website www.tendersorissa.gov.in (2) Corrigendum if any shall only be published in the above website.

OIPR-25104/11/0047/2526

### File No. 35/59/2020-DC (Pt-I) **Government of India**

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change Subject: Advertisement for the engagement of Consultant B on contractual basis in M/o Environment, Forests & Climate Change.

Applications are invited for (01) One Consultant E in Desertification Cell, National Afforestation & Eco-Development Board (NAEB), Ministry of Environment Forests & Climate Change on payment of Consolidated monthly fee Rs.80,000/- for Consultant B. Full details of the vacancy circular are available on Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change website www moef.gov.in under the link Circular.

The last date of receipt of application is 21 days from the date of publication of this advertisement in the

> Deputy Inspector General of Forest (NAEB) cbc 13101/11/0023/2526



### INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL **SERVICES CENTRES AUTHORITY**

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Pragya Tower, GIFT City, Gandhinagar, Gujarat ile No.73/IFSCA/Consultants/2020-21

**VACANCY NOTIFICATION** 

International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) statutory unified regulatory body under the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India invites applications from eligible Indian citizens for filling up various positions of Young Professionals/Consultants Grade 1 Consultant Grade 2 on contract basis. The place of posting is GIFT City, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

ifsca.gov.in/career for detailed vacancy notification. The last date for receipt of application along with requisite documents by post is 16.12.2025 by 6.00 P.M. **General Manager** 

CBC 15228/12/0006/2526

2. The candidates willing to apply are requested to refer www

Dept. of General Administration

### MECON Limited requires 44 (Forty Four) Nos. of Experiend by No. 11.73.4.3/2025/Reg./07 Dated: 06.11.2025) as folio Junior Engineer (Civil) - 1,20,000/-MECON Limited requires 01 (One) No. of Experienced Professional on contract basis as follows

Advertisement No 11.73.4.1/2025/Cont/05 Dated: 18.11.2025

MECON Limited, Vivekananda Path CBC 40110/12/0018/2526 Doranda, Ranchi - 834002, Jharkhand

#### No. A.40011/05/2023-Ad. VII ) ||-|-Government of India **Ministry of Finance Department of Economic Affairs Admin VII Section**

Invitation of application for appointment as Young Professionals and Consultants on contract basis in the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, New Delhi The Department of Economic Affairs proposes to engage

Young Professionals and Consultants for specific assignments on contract basis. The detailed guidelines and Terms of Reference for applying for the posts are available on the website of the Department (https://dea gov.in/offerings-vacancies). Interested candidates may apply on web portal: https://mofapp.nic.in/cadre within 21 days of publication in the Newspapers. Under Secretary to the Government of India

CBC 15201/11/0008/2526

यूरेनियम कांपेरिशन ऑफ इंडिया लिमिटेड URANIUM CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD.

विभिन्न परीक्षुओं के लिए भतो सूचना RECRUITMENT OF TRAINEES विज्ञापन सँख्या: UCIL-07-2025 Advertisement No. UCIL-07-2025 युरेनियम कॅापारिसन ऑफ ईंडिंया लिमिटेड निम्नलिखित पदों के लिए भारतीय पदों के

ज्ञारखंड - 832 102 Jharkhand - 832 102 (CIN: U 12000 JH 1967 GOI 000806)

Website: www.uraniumcorp.in

लिए भारतीय नागरिकों से ऑनलाइन आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है। Uranium Corporation of India Limited has invited online applications from Indian citizens for various posts, as follows:

1. Mining Mate - C 2. Winding Engine Driver - B

3. Boiler cum Compressor Attendat - A

रिकितयों का पूरा विवरण अर्थात योग्यता, अनुभव, वेतनमान आदि यूसीआईएल की

वेबसाइट <mark>www.uraniumcorp.in</mark> पर उपलब्ध है। इस विज्ञापन से संभंधित कोई भी प्रश्न / सूचना / विस्तार / सुद्धिपत्र आदि केवल युसीआईएल वेबसाइट **www**. uraniumcorp.in पर उपलब्ध कराया जाएगा। Full detials of vacancies viz. Qualifications, Experience, Scale

of pay etc. are available at UCIL website www.uraniumcorp. in. Any queries/information/extension/corrigenum etc. with respect to this advertisement shall be made available on the UCIL website www.uraniumcorp.in only. ऑनलाइन आवेदन जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 31.12.2025 है।

Last date of submission of online application is 31.12.2025.

cbc 48134/12/0033/2526

\* > 36

# international



Our relationship with Japan continues to grow from strength to strength underpinned by close strategic alignment, mutual ambition and enormous potential

RICHARD MARLES I

### **MILITARY STEPS UP RELIEF** FOR FLOOD-HIT SUMATRA

Indonesia's military stepped up its relief efforts in three provinces on Sumatra island devastated by deadly floods and landslides, with many residents still stranded without access to government aid. The death toll from last week's cyclone rose to 867 people Friday evening with 521 listed as missing. The storm systems also killed about 200 people in southern Thailand and Malaysia 





ter Takaichi's remarks about stamoved us all very,

CHO JUNG-TAI | PREMIER, TAIWAN

Unity between Americans and **Europeans on the** Ukrainian issue is essential. And I sav it again and again, we need to work together



EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

tic terrorists or the threat of vi olence to advance political and social



anti-capitalism, or anti-Christianity PAM BONDI ATTORNEY GENERAL, USA

#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### EU slaps X with €120M fine

London: European Union regulators Friday fined Elon Musk's social media platform X 120 million euros (\$140 million) for failing to comply with the bloc's digital regulations. The European Commission issued its decision following an investigation it opened two years ago into X under the 27-nation bloc's Digital Services Act. Also known as the DSA, its a sweeping rulebook that requires platforms to take more responsibility for protecting European users and cleaning up harmful or illegal content and products on their sites, under threat of hefty fines.

#### Iran fires barrage in hormuz drill

Tehran: Iran launched massive missiles in the Sea of Oman and near the strategic Strait of Hormuz during the second day of a naval drill, state TV reported Friday, The report said the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard launched the missiles from the depth of Iran's mainland, hitting targets in the Oman Sea and neighbouring area near Strait of Hormuz in a drill that began Thursday. It identified the missiles as cruise Oadr-110. Qadr-380 and Ghadir that have a range of up to 2,000 kilometers (1,250 miles.) It said the Guard also launch a ballistic missile identified as 303, without elaborating.

#### Saudi extends \$3bn pakistan deposit

Islamabad: Saudi Arabia has extended the maturity of its \$3 billion deposit placed with Pakistan's central bank for another year, continuing a financial lifeline that has helped bolster the country's foreign exchange reserves amid ongoing liquidity crunch, a media report said Friday. While some analysts framed Saudi assistance as something that may carry future geopolitical expectations tied to defence cooperation, others argued that the rollover reflects weakness, not success, for Pakistan.

### NDRF completes rescue op in cyclone-hit SL

Colombo: India's National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams left for home Friday after successfully completing search, rescue and relief operations in cyclone-hit Sri Lanka, according to the Indian mission here. The island nation has been grappling with widespread flooding, landslides and severe infrastructure collapse following Cyclone Ditwah, which has left over 600 people dead till Friday.

# **US sets 2027 deadline for Europe-led NATO defence**



Washington, Dec 5: The United States wants Europe to take over the majority of NATO's conventional defense capabilities, from intelligence to missiles, by 2027. Pentagon officials told diplomats in Washington this week, a tight deadline that struck some European officials as unrealistic.

The message, recounted by five sources familiar with the discussion, including a US official, was conveved at a meeting in Washington this week of Pentagon staff overseeing NATO policy and several European delegations.

The shifting of this burden from the US to European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would dramatically change how the United States, a founding member of the post-war alliance, works with its most important military partners

In the meeting, Pentagon officials indicated that Washington was not vet satisfied with the strides Europe has made to boost its defense capabilities since Russia's expanded invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

US could withdraw from some NATO planning mechanisms if unsatisfied with progress

> **Unclear how US would** measure progress

**Trump rhetoric towards** alliance runs hot and cold

#### **NO CLARITY ON HOW US WOULD** MEASURE NATO'S PROGRESS

Conventional defense capabilities include non-nuclear assets from troops to weapons and the officials did not explain how the US would measure Europe's progress toward shouldering most of the burden.

It was also not clear if the 2027 deadline represented the Trump administration position or only the views of some Pentagon officials. There are significant disagreements in Washington over the military role the US should play in Europe

Several European officials said that a 2027 deadline was not realistic no matter how Washington measures progress, since Europe needs more than money and political will to replace certain US capabilities in the short term.

Among other challenges, NA-

TO allies face production backlogs for military equipment they are trying to purchase. While US officials have encouraged Europe to buy more US-made materiel, some of the most prized US-made weapons and defense systems would take years to be delivered if ordered today.

The US also contributes capabilities that cannot simply be purchased, like unique intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance that have proven key to the Ukrainian war effort.

Asked for comment, a NATO official speaking for the alliance said European allies had begun taking more responsibility for the continent's security. but did not comment on the 2027 deadline.

need to invest more in defense and shift the burden on conventional defense" from the US to Europe, the official said.

"Allies have recognized the

The Pentagon and the White House did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

European nations have broadly accepted US President Donald Trump's demand they take more responsibility for their own security and have pledged big increases in defense

### **Asim Munir officially** appointed as Pak's first **Chief of Defence Forces**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Islamabad, Dec 5:** Pakistan's defence ministry Friday offi cially notified the appointment of Field Marshal Asim Munir as the first Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), a move aimed at the major restructuring of the military command since the 1970s.

The development came a day after President Asif Ali Zardari approved Munir's appointment

The "president, on the advice of the prime minister, is pleased to appoint Field Marshal Asim Munir (NI) M as the chief of army staff, concurrently the chief of defence forces for a tenure of five years." Dawn re ported, citing the notification.

Last month, the parliament passed the 27th Constitutional Amendment, creating a new post of CDF with the objective of a unified command and expediting decision-making in critical situations.

The CDF replaced the Chair-



Committee (CJCSC), a position now abolished. The new arrangement consolidates operational, administrative and strategic authority in a single office - CDF.

Munir was appointed as Army Chief in November 2022 initially for three years. but his tenure was extended in 2024

Munir, who was promoted to the rank of Field Marshal just days after the four-day conflict with India in May, is only the second military officer in Pakistan's history to be elevated to the position, after Field Marshal Ayub Khan in the 1960s.

### Indians among delivery riders detained for working illegally in UK



The UK Home Office **Immigration** *Enforcement teams* undertook an 'Operation Equalise' over seven days last month, which involved stopping to check the documents of delivery riders operating in villages, towns and cities across Britain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Dec 5: Indians are among 171 delivery riders caught working illegally in a UK-wide crackdown and have been detained for deportation from the country, the British government has said. The UK Home Office Immi-

gration Enforcement teams undertook an 'Operation Equalise' over seven days last month. which involved stopping to check the documents of delivery riders operating in villages, towns and cities across Britain. Those found to be working

illegally, which also included Bangladeshi and Chinese nationals, were arrested on the spot and detained for removal to the countries of their origin.

"On 17 November, officers were deployed to the High Street in Newham (east London). Four riders of Bangladeshi and Indian nationality were arrested for illegal working. All four were detained for removal," the Home Office said in a statement Thursday, giving some breakdowns on a total fig ure of 171 arrests.

"And on 25 November, of ficers attended Norwich city centre (eastern England) where they conducted a crime reduc tion operation. Three riders of Indian nationality were arrested with two detained for removal. The third individual was placed on strict immigra tion bail," it stated. The Home Office said the

crackdowns form part of Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood's 'sweeping reforms" to tackle illegal migration in Britain which includes increasing de portations. According to its lat est data, the government claims its enforcement action to disrupt illegal working last year reached "record breaking levels", with over 11,000 checks and 8,000 ar rests – a 51 per cent and 63 per cent rise, respectively.

Nearly 50,000 people with no right to remain in the UK are said to have been removed since July 2024, with people smuggling arrests, convictions and seizures reportedly up by 33 per cent in the past 12 months.

"These results should send a clear message: if you are working illegally in this country, you will be arrested and removed," said UK Border Security Minis ter Alex Norris.

Last week, Norris held meetings with food delivery majors Deliveroo, Just Eat and Uber Eats to discuss action being taken to tackle illegal working on their platforms and further

steps required.

### **GERMAN PARL BACKS** MILITARY SERVICE LAW

Berlin, Dec 5: Germany's parliament approved a controversial new military service law Friday that aims to boost Bundeswehr numbers and meet NATO targets as tensions with Russia spur calls for stronger defence capabilities across Europe.

The legislation, backed after months of heated debate, introduces a dual-track system: a more lucrative voluntary service is intended to attract young recruits, but if enlistment falls short, lawmakers can activate needs-based conscription.

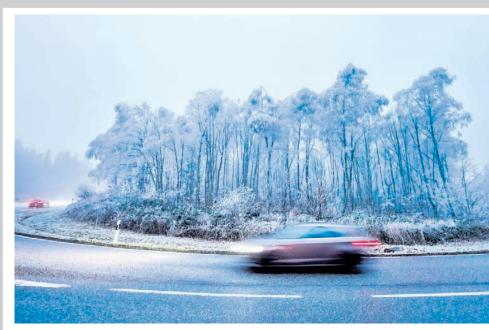
This would require a separate Bundestag vote and

could involve random selection if more are eligible than needed.

The defence ministry will report recruitment figures to parliament every six months. The bill sets ambitious expansion goals for the Bundeswehr, targeting up to 260,000 active soldiers - up from 183,000 currently - and at least 200,000 reservists by 2035.

In a move not seen since conscription was suspended in 2011, all men born after January 1, 2008, will undergo medical evaluation, phased in as capacity allows.

Both 18-year-old men and women will receive requests to declare willingness to serve, though only men must respond.



Cars drive along frozen trees in the Taunus region near Frankfurt, Germany, Friday

PTI PHOTO

### **DIPLOMACY** French first lady reunites with Panda Yuan Meng

French First Lady Brigitte Macron visited China to meet Yuan Meng, the beloved giant panda she helped send from France years ago, marking a warm reunion that highlights ongoing cultural and conservation ties

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chengdu, Dec 5: French first lady Brigitte Macron caught up with an old friend — a giant panda born in France — at the tail end Friday of a visit to China with President Emmanuel Macron.

At a panda reserve in southwest China that Yuan Meng now



She helped chose his name which means "accomplishment of a dream" - when he was born in a French zoo in 2017.

"When they're born, they're like this," she said, holding up two fingers a short distance

apart. Meanwhile, the chunky male roamed in his enclosure. feasting on bamboo and ignor-

"They have a very independo only what they want.

ing bystanders who cried out his name, hoping to elicit a reaction.

dent character," she said. "They For decades, China has de-

da diplomacy" to smooth and promote relations with other countries, gifting the animals to friendly nations and loaning pandas to zoos overseas on commercial terms Emmanuel Macron's state vis-

ployed what's often called "pan-

it this week to China, his fourth as president, included meetings with Chinese leader Xi Jinping and other officials, discussing Russia's war in Ukraine, trade ties and other issues The China Wildlife Conser-

vation Association said during the visit that it signed a letter of intent to send two of the animals to the Beauval Zoo south of Paris in 2027 under what would be a new 10-year round of panda cooperation with France.

The French zoo sent two 17-year-old pandas — Huan Huan. a female, and her partner Yuan Zi

- back to China last month after 13 years on loan in France.

Yuan Meng was their cub, conceived using artificial insemination. Despite being made in France, he officially belonged to the Chinese government. Yuan Meng bid 'adieu' to France in 2023, sent off to a new life in the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding in southwest China where Brigitte Macron. considered to be his "godmother," dropped in to see him.

Huan Huan and Yuan Zi also produced female twins in France

Huanlili and Yuandudu are also expected to leave the Beauval Zoo for China in the future. The China Wildlife Conservation Association has previously said that it expects them to remain at the French zoo until January 2027.

### **PAK-SINDH PROBES** ALLEGED FORCED **CONVERSIONS**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, Dec 5: Some Hindu girl students in Pakistan's Sindh province have allegedly been told to convert to Islam to continue their studies, prompt ing the government to order an inquiry, an official said Friday

In late November, parents of some Hindu girl students at the Government High School in Mirpur Sakro in Sindh told the media that the school's headmistress had allegedly asked the Hindu students to convert to Islam to continue their education

It sparked outrage as the parents alleged that the Hindu students were being forced to recite the Kalma and being mocked for their faith.

The parents also claimed some students were sent home after refusing to convert to Islam or reciting the Kalma.

Minister of State for Reli gious Affairs Kheeso Mal Kheal Das told the Senate Thursday that the provincial education minister had ordered an inqui ry into the matter.

A spokesperson for the Sindh Minister for Education Sved Sardar Ali Shah confirmed a committee had been formed to visit Mirpur Sakro and un earth the truth. "The committee members have already recorded statements from the affect ed students, their parents, the headmistress, and other teachers," he said Friday.

He said no one is allowed to use coercion or threats to force conversion. Sindh, which has the highest population of Hin dus in Pakistan, mostly belong ing to the lower income groups is already dealing with frequent cases of abduction of young Hindu girls and their marriage to older Muslim men.

# business



We are now talking to about 7-8 countries, including many in East Asia. to have UPI transactions

M NAGARAJU I

### **MEESHO DRAWS \$28BN IN IPO**

Indian e-commerce platform Meesho received bids worth about Rs 2.5 trillion (\$27.79 billion) for its \$604 million initial public offering, becoming one of the most sought-after public issues in the country



**3RD TIME IN 6 MONTHS** 

disrupts ops of Zerodha, Groww, other platforms

New Delhi, Dec 5: A glitch in

content delivery service firm

Cloudflare due to the roll-out

of a system update disrupted

operations of several online

platforms, including trading

apps like Zerodha and Groww

and graphic designing tool

This was the third major

disruption for Cloudflare us-

ers in India within a period of

six months between July and

Internet platform down-

time tracker platform Down-

detector showed several users

complaining about outages of

Cloudflare during the after

noon. "Due to a cross-plat

form downtime on Cloudflare,

Kite is currently unavailable

Please use the Kite WhatsApp

backup to manage your trades

while we investigate," Ze

rodha, which operates the Kite

app, posted on X at 2.25 PM.

**Glitch in Cloudflare** 

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Canva.

the Union Budget 2025-26 and the

landmark GST 2.0 reforms, this creates strong enablers for further enhancing affordability and accessibility

SHAILESH CHANDRA | PRESIDENT, SIAM

The success not only strengthens **IIFCL's ability to** channelise longterm internationa capital into priority projects but also paves the way for other institutions to tap global



not only strengthens **IIFCL's ability to** channelise longterm international capital into priority

projects but also paves the way for other institutions to tap global funding more effectively ASHWANI GUPTA | CEO & WHOLE-TIME DIREC-

### SHORT TAKES

#### Forex reserves drop Mumbai: India's forex re-

serves dropped by \$1.877 billion to \$686.227 billion during the week ended November 28, the RBI said Friday. In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had declined by \$4.472 billion to \$688.104 billion. For the week ended November 28, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, decreased by \$3.569 billion to \$557.031 billion, the data showed. Value of the gold reserves increased by \$1.613 billion to \$105.795 billion during the week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up by \$63 million to \$18.628 billion, the apex bank said. India's reserve position with the IMF was also up by \$16 million to \$4.772 billion in the reporting week.

New Delhi: Hours after the RBI slashed key policy rate, state-owned lenders. Bank of Baroda and Bank of India, announced an interest rate cut on loans linked to repo rate by 25 basis points, a move expected to be followed by other lenders too. Bank of India reduced Repo Based Lending Rate to 8.10 per cent from 8.35 per cent effective. Bank of India said. Baroda Repo Based Lending Rate to come down to 7.90 per cent as against the existing 8.15 per cent, BoB said.

### SBER launches fund tracking Nifty50

Mumbai: Russia's largest bank Sberbank and JSC First Asset Management have introduced a new mutual fund -- First-India -- offering investments linked to the performance of the Nifty50 index, providing Russian retail investors direct exposure to India's stock market. The launch of the fund was announced at an event at the Nationa Stock Exchange of India (NSE) by Sberbank CEO and Chairman of the **Executive Board Herman** Gref during his business visit to India, the bourse said in a statement on Thursday. "We are opening another window of investment opportunities for our Russian clients, this time to South Asia. Our new product provides a convenient way to gain exposure to one of the world's key economic markets -- the Indian stock market," Gref said. NSE MD and CEO Ashishkumar Chauhan said the initiative reflects strong confidence in India's markets and deepens

the India-Russia

financial cooperation.

# Repo rate cut to boost growth: Experts

RESERVE BANK SLASHES KEY BENCHMARK INTEREST RATE BY 25 BASIS POINTS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SIX MONTHS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 5: The Reserve Bank has sent a clear and reassuring signal that policy instruments are being actively deployed to safeguard India's economic growth amid persisting global headwinds, said experts Friday.

Home, auto and other loans are likely to cost less as the RBI cut key benchmark interest rate for the first time in six months and vowed to provide Rs 1 lakh crore liquidity boost to the banking sector to support a "goldilocks" economy in the face of high US tariffs. The experts were comment-

ing on the central bank's decision to reduce short-term lending rate by 25 basis points and continue its neutral monetary policy stance.

President of industry body Ficci Anant Goenka said this calibrated easing will help stimulate credit offtake, reduce borrowing costs for industry and consumers, and reinforce the current growth momentum. "Today's monetary policy

sends a clear and reassuring signal that policy instruments are being actively deployed to

Mumbai, Dec 5: India's stock

benchmarks closed Friday with

gains after the Reserve Bank of

India lowered key lending rates

by 25 basis points and left room

for further cuts, helping bours-

es nearly erase weekly losses

from profit-taking in recent

The Nifty rose 0.6% to

26,186.45 and the Sensex added

0.5% to 85,712.37 Friday. They

The central bank has now

cut rates by a total of 125 basis

points since February 2025, the

most aggressive easing since

this as supportive rather than

surprising since expectations

for a cut had already strength-

ened after the recent CPI prints

softened," said Sonam Srivas-

tava, founder and fund man-

ager at Wright Research PMS.

1%, while other rate-sensitive

sectors like auto and real estate

gained 0.7% and 0.3%, respec-

Lower rates make borrowing

cheaper, aiding loan demand

and reducing funding costs,

which help banks and non-bank

tively, on the day.

Heavyweight financials rose

"Markets are likely to read

ended flat for the week.

sessions



Today's monetary policy sends a clear and reassuring signal that policy instruments are being actively deployed to safeguard India's growth trajectory and support economic expansion amid a challenging global environment

Rate cut helps D-St

pare weekly losses

lenders. Cheaper loans also

help improve the affordability

Eleven of the 16 major sectors

fell for the week. The broader

small-caps and mid-caps also

lost 1.8% and 0.7%, respective-

US rate reduction next week

could fuel a short-term market

rebound, supporting a so-called

Santa Claus rally, analysts said.

panies, which derive a substan-

tial share of revenue from the

United States, jumped 3.5% this

week on rising bets for a Fed

Foreign Institutional Inves-

tors (FIIs) offloaded equities

worth Rs 1,944.19 crore Thurs-

day, while Domestic Institu-

tional Investors (DIIs) bought

stocks worth Rs 3,661.05 crore.

according to exchange data.

Information technology com-

The RBI rate cut and a likely

of vehicles and homes.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Repo rate reduced by 25bps to 5.25% • 4th rate cut, totalling 125 bps, since Feb 2025
- MPC also decided to continue with neutral stance
- GDP growth forecast for FY26 raised to 7.3% from
- Inflation estimates lowered to 2% from 2.6% Policy space exists to support growth momentum
- High-frequency indicators suggest economic activity holding up in Q3
- RBI to conduct OMO purchases of G-secs of ₹1L-cr RBI will also conduct 3-year USD/INR buy-sell
- Asset quality, profitability of banks continue to
- Guv says committed to provide sufficient durable liquidity to banking system
- Current Account Dedicit expected to remain mod est during 2025-26
- As on November 28, forex reserves stood at

jectory and support economic expansion amid a challenging global environment," he said.

President of Assocham Nirmal Minda said the RBI rate cut, coming after cumulative reduction of 125 bps this year, will lower borrowing costs, spur industrial expansion, and create significant employment opportunities across sectors.

A repo rate cut will lead to lower borrowing costs for individuals as well as corporates

banks pay to borrow from the RBI. With cheaper funding, banks can lower lending rates such as MCLR and base rates, making home, auto, and business loans more affordable. This reduces EMIs, encour-

ages consumers and businesses to borrow more, and supports economic activity. SC Ralhan, President of ex-

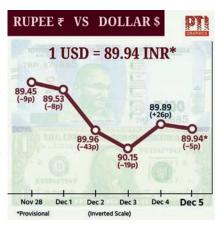
porters' body FIEO, said a 25bps cut in the repo rate will significantly lower the cost of credit for exporters, enabling them to invest more freely in working capital, technology upgradation, and international marketing efforts.

Next meeting of the MPC is scheduled for February 4-6,

### RBI does not target any band for rupee, allows it to find its own level: Governor

the day lower by 6 paise at 89.95 against the US dollar

Governor Sanjay Malhotra Friday said the central bank does not target any band for the rupee in the forex market, and allows the domestic currencv to find its own correct level. The governor's statement came at a time when the rupee breached the 90-mark against the US dollar, and is hovering near that level. 'We don't target any



price levels or any bands. We allow the markets to determine the prices. We believe that markets, especially in the long run, are very efficient. It's a very deep market," he said while replying to a question on rupee depreciation at a post-monetary policy press meet. Malhotra said fluctuations in the market keep taking place, and the effort of the RBI is always to reduce any abnormal or excessive volatility. "And that is what we will continue to endeavour." he added. In its bi-monthly monetary policy, the RBI announced three-year USD/INR Buy Sell swaps of \$5 billion this month. When asked if the USD-INR swap is aimed at checking rupee depreciation, Malhotra said, "It is a liquidity measure. It is not to support the rupee". Stressing that RBI does not target any level of rupee against the US dollar, he said the central bank allows "the rupee find its correct position, correct level". Foreign portfolio investment (FPI) to India recorded a net outflow of \$0.7 billion in 2025-26, so far (April-December 03), due to unabated withdrawal from the equity segment.

### Rupee Friday gave up its initial gains and settled for

The trading platform updat ed that the problem had been resolved at 2.45 pm. Later in the evening, Ze rodha Co-founder Nithin Kamath posted on X that not just the company's trading plat form was affected, but sever al other fintech platforms were down too. "Cloudflare powers approximately 20-25 per cent of all in

ternet traffic globally. It's the infrastructure behind millions of websites and apps — from content delivery and DDoS protection to DNS services When Cloudflare has an out age, it doesn't just affect one company; it impacts a signif icant chunk of the interne simultaneously. Today, they had a brief outage that affected Kite along with numerous oth er brokers, fintech platforms and online services world wide," Kamath said.

He said that the company is also working on reducing de pendency on Cloudflare.

"I'm really sorry for the inconvenience today," Kamath

Online graphic design tool Canva also shared an update

after its services were re sumed. "We're really sorry for the

interruption and appreciate your patience while we got things restored," Canva said in a message to its users after an outage.

When contacted, Cloudflare said the disruption on its network was not due to any cyber attack but due to the imple-

mentation of an update. "A change made to how Cloudflare's Web Application Firewall parses requests impacted the availability of Cloudflare's network at approximately 8:47 GMT and concluded approximately 9:13 GMT. This was not an attack; the change was deployed by our team to help mitigate the industry-wide vulnerability

### Airfares skyrocket after IndiGo fiasco Shares of InterGlobe Aviation, the parent of IndiGo, dropped over 7% in the past

**COMPLETE CHAOS** 

four days ever since a crisis engulfed the airline, where it cancelled a large number of flights, leaving thousands of passengers stranded

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 5: Airfares reached levels never seen before on Friday, with a oneway one-stop economy-class SpiceJet Kolkata-Mumbai flight ticket for December 6 costing up to Rs 90,000, and a similar ticket of Air India for Mumbai-Bhubaneswar going up to Rs 84,485, according to the airlines' websites.

A similar trend was noted on many other high-traffic routes.

With IndiGo cancelling over 1,000 flights Friday owing to crew shortage as the second phase of the pilots flight duty and rest period norms kicked in, huge capacity was out of the market, leading to airfares tripling and quadrupling from over the normal range, a travel industry executive said.

"The situation is such that you can't predict what are going to be the ticket prices when you book a flight. It may be two times, three times or even more than the normal fare range," he

IndiGo operates around 2,300 flights a day and has been can-



celling flights in hundreds over the last four days as it struggled to secure adequate crew to operate its widespread and dense network.

"The last minute fares are generally 2-3 times of the normal average fares. But in this situation, we have seen them surging even six times," the source said.

"If a Rs 10,000 ticket is being sold at Rs 60,000, at any place, I would call it black marketing, profiteering. So there is a dire need to look at it." said Nomad Travel CEO and Travel Agents' Association of India former president, Ajay Prakash.

Slamming the surge in airfares, he said it appears that the business of civil aviation is aimed only at making money. A market where one airvocating for capping of fares to prevent such high fares in times of crisis. Delhi-based Stick Travel's Founder and Former President

market share is as good as a

monopoly, Prakash said, ad-

of Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) Subhash Goel said, "I have written to the civil aviation ministry that there should be capping on airfares like it was during the Covid-19 pandemic." he said. In November, IndiGo had

already recorded more than 1,200 cancellations across its

On Thursday alone, over 500 flights were cancelled nationwide, making this one of the carrier's most severe operational breakdowns in recent years.

disclosed this week in React Server Components," the

company said.

### Hollywood shakeup: Netflix eyes Warner Bros acquisition

Washington, Dec 5: Netflix Friday agreed to buy Warner Bros Discovery's TV, film studios and streaming division for \$72 billion, a deal that would hand control of one of Hollywood's most prized and oldest assets to the streaming pioneer.

The deal represents a dramatic plot twist for Netflix, which rewrote the Hollywood script, upending how and when consumers watch movies and television shows. Suddenly, it has become the thing it disrupted - a mainstream studio.

"I know some of you are surprised that we're making this acquisition - and I certainly understand why," Netflix Co-CEO Ted Sarandos said on a call with investors. "Over the years, we have been known as builders, not buyers ... but this is a rare opportunity that's going to help us achieve our mission to entertain the world, and bring people together through great stories." The agreement follows a

weeks-long bidding war in which Netflix offered nearly \$28 per share, eclipsing presumed front-runner Paramount Skydance, which made a series of unsolicited bids to acquire all of Warner Bros Discovery, including the cable TV assets slated for a spinoff.

Netflix, which has spent a decade developing such original series as "Stranger Things." "Bridgerton" and films like "KPop Demon Hunters," will gain access to Warner Bros' vast trove of content, built over the last century, including marquee franchises such as "Game of Thrones" and "Harry Potter," and DC Comics' roster of superheroes, including Batman and

The two companies together will "help define the next century of storytelling," said Sarandos, who had once said "the goal Netflix's \$27.75 a share bid tops Paramount's offer

is to become HBO faster than HBO can become us. Warner Bros Discovery

shares rose 3.2% to \$25.33, while Netflix fell about 0.2% and Paramount 6.1%.

Paramount offered \$30 a share for Warner Bros Discovery, CNBC reported. Reuters could not verify the report and it was not immediately clear when the offer was made.

The Netflix deal, however, is

likely to face strong antitrust scrutiny in Europe and the US as it would give the world's biggest streaming service ownership of a rival that is home to HBO Max and boasts nearly 130 million streaming subscribers.

'There will be resistance from parts of Hollywood and various unions," said Tom Harrington, head of television at Enders Analysis in London, "HBO, the creative jewel, would be terribly exposed within Netflix, although it has survived difficult owners for a lot of its existence."

David Ellison-led Paramount. which kicked off the bidding war with a series of unsolicited offers and has close ties with the Trump administration, had questioned the sale process earlier this week and alleged favorable treatment to Netflix.

Even before the bids were in, some members of Congress said a Netflix-Warner Bros Discoverv deal could harm consumers and Hollywood.

Cinema United, a global exhibition trade association, has said the deal poses an "unprecedented threat" to movie theaters worldwide, while former WarnerMedia CEO Jason Kilar said he could not think of "a more effective way to reduce competition in Hollywood than selling WBD to Netflix."

Looking to allay some concerns, Netflix said the deal would give subscribers more production and long-term spending on original content and create more jobs and op portunities for creative talent

The company argued in deal talks that a combination of its streaming service with HBO Max would benefit consumers by lowering the cost of a bundled offering.

Netflix's Co-CEO Greg Peters told investors the company could package the streaming services together in a bundle - or find ways to introduce HBO Max to Netflix subscribers. The stream ing service has a long history of building audiences for television series, as it did for "Breaking Bad" or the legal drama "Suits.

ner Bros Discovery it would keep releasing the studio's films in cinemas in a bid to ease fears that its deal would eliminate another studio and major source of theatrical films according to media reports.

The company has told War

# BoB, BoI slash interest rate

**FIH HOCKEY MEN'S JUNIOR WC** 

# Colts enter semis



India beat Belgium 2-2 (4-3 SO) in a thrilling QF; sets up semifinals with seven-time champions Germany

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Dec 5: Princedeep Singh was India's cynosure in defence while Sharda Nand Tiwari struck thrice in the shootout as a spirited Indian junior men's hockey team held its nerves to beat Belgium 2-2 (4-3 SO) in a high-octane quarterfinal clash at the FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup Tamil Nadu 2025 in Chennai Friday.

Princedeep Singh was the hero of the match with some incredible saves in the shootout that brought about glimpses of his coach, PR Sreejesh, the former custodian of the Indian senior team.

Awarded the Player of the

Match, Princedeep was extremely effective in the regulation time too, keeping Belgium at bay - particularly in the third quarter when they won back-toback PCs. "Have learnt a lot from Sreejesh and the confidence is up watching him, learning from him. It was a sensational match, and the crowd support in Chennai has been incredible,"

expressed Princedeep. Sharda Nand Tiwari too stood tall in India's shootout, with his insatiable penalty strokes that kept India in the hunt. He scored thrice while Ankit Pal scored the winning goal for India, taking the scoreline to 4-3 in the tense shootout.

Earlier in the match, India had remained patient until they snatched the lead from Belgium in the 45th minute when Captain Rohit broke the gridlock with a sensational dragflick that equalised the score 1-1.

Belgium had scored in the 13th minute of the match through a field goal by Gaspard Cornez-Massant, giving them a roaring start and putting India on the back foot early in the game. The following quarter, Belgium put on a brilliant defensive structure that kept blocking away any chance India could create.

But the third quarter was where all the action unfolded when India returned from the half-time break with new vigour. India custodian Princedeep, meanwhile, was on absolute fire, making some splendid saves - almost reminding one of his coach PR Sreejesh's style of safeguarding India's post. In the 48th minute. Sharda Nand Tiwari put India ahead by 2-1 with a well-executed PC. The goal brought up big celebrations across the stadium in Egmore. But it was short-lived as Belgium found an equaliser in the 59th minute, through Nathan Rogge.

Next up, India will take on seven-time champions Germany in the Semifinal December 7.

**ASHES TEST** 

### Australia take lead as England fumble

Brisbane, Dec 5: Australia dominated day two of the second Ashes test Friday with a punishing batting assault on a lifeless Gabba pitch as England shot themselves in the foot with five dropped catches.

Five dropped catches and some wayward bowling dented England and allowed the batters to capitalize.

Half-centuries for top-order batters Jake Weatherald (72), Marnus Labuschagne (65) and Steve Smith (61) made light work of England's first-innings 334 as Australia went to stumps at 378 for six with a 44-run lead.

Wicketkeeper Alex Carey (46 not out) and tailender Michael Neser (15 not out) held firm through the last half-hour under the floodlights and will look to press home Australia's advantage on day three.

"It was a crucial last hour there for us," said number three batter Labuschagne, who scored his second fifty of the series. "To get to the end of play six (wickets) down, it gives us a bit of time in the morning session and obviously pushes our bowling later into the night."

While England grabbed three wickets in the final session, they also spilled four catches under the lights. Ben Duckett grassed two chances, the first reprieving Carey on zero after Carse sent a delivery pinging off the batter's gloves.

Moments later, number seven batter Josh Inglis (23) sent a shot flying through Duckett's hands in the gully. The fumbling continued as Carse dropped Neser on six off a Jofra Archer ball before Joe Root reacted late to a nick in the slips from Carey when the wicketkeeper was on 25. Root dropped the one-handed chance, denying pacer Gus Atkinson a first wicket in the series

### AMID CHAOS, TICKETS SOLD OUT AT BARABATI



Cuttack: A familiar scene of Indian cricket mania unfolded in Cuttack Friday, as thousands of eager fans gathered outside the Barabati Stadium for tickets to the first T20I between India and South Africa December 9. Odisha Cricket Association officials informed that all 10,000 tickets made available for general public sale have been sold out. Accordingly, the box office will remain closed, and no further tickets will be available for purchase Saturday. What began as a routine offline sale quickly spiralled into chaos, with a viral video showing a frenzied crowd pushing, sprinting and squeezing through gaps to get ahead in the queue - all for a chance to watch the Men in Blue live. Barabati Stadium, a venue known for cricket-crazy crowds, last hosted an international fixture in February - the second ODI against England, which India won by four wickets. With the feverish response Friday, it is clear that the demand for international cricket in Cuttack remains as

### Another 'Ro-Ko' show on cards in series decider

After Test debacle, Men in Blue look to avoid another embarrassing series loss to South Africa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Visakhapatnam, Dec 5: The spotlight, like most times, will be on Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma but the pressure would also be on India's younger crop when the home side looks to avoid another embarrassing series loss to South Africa in the must-win third and final ODI here Saturday.

A Raipur-like fumbling by India will see South Africa bag the ODI series too, closely after their 2-0 triumph in Tests.

Consecutive series defeats are unthinkable for India in the current scenario, particularly when the dressing room is perceived to be pulling in different directions.

A victory in this rubber can quell the chatter around the team for a while, and for that, Kohli and Rohit have to do the heavy lifting once again.

Both have been the undisputed masters of the 50-over format, and no strangers to such tight situations. After all. their legacy is built around taking down difficulties -- an exhilarating ride in itself in the last decade and half.

Now, standing at the door that opens only to the sunset. Kohli and Rohit will want another glorious chapter to be added to the long book of achievements. It's not a mere ambition either.

Kohli has two hundreds and a fifty in his last three innings, while Rohit has a hundred and two fifties in his last four outings.

Those numbers tell about their touch, class and hunger even in late 30s, indicating that they can still save the day for the team.

But they would not complain about some meaningful support from the younger batters like it came forth in the last match through Ruturaj Gaikwad, who struck his maiden ODI hundred.

But Yashasvi Jaiswal is still to find his range in this series as an opener, and the gifted young man will be keen to convert his starts into a bigger score, for his and the team's sake.

There is an obvious flaw in his batting against left-arm quicks, be it Jayden Seales of the West Indies or Marco Jansen and Nandre Burger in this

He has been dismissed by left-armers 30 times (9 in Tests, 19 in T20Is and 2 in ODIs) in his career, predominantly while attempting a cut and its many versions, his staple diet outside the off-stump

Jaiswal and the team management cannot remain oblivious to something so obvious, and the work might have already begun to rectify it.

But if the trend continues the management might just be forced to look at other options, and they have a genuine opener in Gaikwad in their ranks.

A training session under lights Friday will help India understand the conditions and thereby decide the combination a bit better.

Irrespective of that, India will hope that their young pacers Prasidh Krishna and Harshit Rana will tidy up their act and strongly support the impressive Arshdeep Singh.

### SHORT **TAKES**

### **India-Netherlands Davis Cup tie in Bangalore**

Bangalore: Bangalore was on Friday awarded the hosting rights for the upcoming India-Netherlands Davis Cup Qualifiers tie February 7-8, pipping Delhi in the bidding. Delhi Lawn Tennis Association (DLTA), that hosted Togo in February this year, had also expressed interest in conducting the crucial tie. Bangalore last hosted a Davis Cup tie back in 2017 against Uzbekistan with the hosts winning 4-1. Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association (KSLTA) had recently hosted the Billie Jean King Cup Playoffs in the city. India beat Switzerland in round one of World Group I in September to reach the Qualifiers stage while Netherlands lost by the same margin to Argentina in the second round of the Qualifiers. It was India's first victory on European soil since 1993. Led by Sumit Nagal and Dhakshineswar Suresh and the result was India's best since the Davis Cup format overhaul in 2019.

### Senthilkumar, Anahat emerge champions

Chennai: National champions Velavan Senthilkumar and Anahat Singh clinched the men's and women's titles respectively at the Squash Indian Tour 4, which concluded at the Indian Squash Academy, here Friday. Top seed and World No 46 Senthilkumar overcame Egypt's Adam Hawal 11-7, 11-9. 9-11. 11-4 to lift the men's crown. The Chennai player displayed superior control in the closing stages to quell the challenge of the rising Egyptian. In the women's final. Delhi teenager and World No 29 Anahat Singh battled past former World No. 10 and veteran compatriot Joshna Chinappa in a pulsating fivegame contest, winning 11-8. 11-13, 11-13, 11-6, 11-8, This was Anahat's second straight victory over the seasoned campaigner after the Dalv College Indian Open last month. "Nice to see rising talent from here." said Joshna, 39, acknowledging Anahat's impressive run. Senthilkumar, Anahat, Joshna and Abhav Singh will represent India at the Squash World Cup

beginning here next week.

### during Messi's GOAT India Tour New Delhi: Minerva Academy FC's youth team that won

**Minerva Academy to be honoured** 

three titles in Europe earlier this year will be honoured during the Delhi leg of Lionel Messi's 'GOAT India Tour' later this month. The Under-14/15 squad of 22 players toured Europe in July-August and won three trophies including the Gothia Cup in Sweden, the Dana Cup in Denmark and the Norway Cup in Norway, During Messi's stopover in Delhi. these young players will be honoured in the presence of the global football icon. Following the felicitation ceremony, the children could get to play a special 9-v-9 match with Messi. Minerva Academy FC is owned and managed by Ranjit Bajaj, who also runs I-League club Delhi FC. The tournaments in the Scandinavian region are considered among the most prestigious youth football competitions around the world and Minerva Academy FC's team, which remained unbeaten in 26 matches. scored as many as 295 goals while conceding very few.



### **LeBron's dominant 1,297-game** double-digit scoring streak ends



Toronto: LeBron James' streak of 1.297 consecutive double-digit regular-season scoring efforts ended when the NBA's career points leader was held to eight points in the Los Angeles Lakers' 123-120 win over the Toronto Raptors. James could have tried to win the game — and extend the streak — on the final possession, but he instead passed the ball to Rui Hachimura in the left corner Thursday. Hachimura's 3-pointer dropped as time expired, and James — who has said countless times over his 23-year career that he always tries to make the right and smartest play - threw his hands in the air in celebration. "Bron told me right before this. I got you. It's going to come to you," Hachimura said in an on-court televised interview. With that, the streak ended. The win was all that evidently mattered.

### It's not the Nobel, but Trump finally gets a peace prize Washington: US President Donald Trump's mission of winning an international peace

prize may finally come to an end Friday. Instead of the coveted Nobel Peace Prize, however, he is likely to be awarded the inaugural FIFA Peace Prize. Trump, who has openly campaigned for the Nobel Peace Price, had been heavily favoured to win the newly created FIFA prize. He and FIFA president Gianni Infantino are close allies, and Infantino had made it clear that he thought Trump should have won the Nobel for his efforts to broker a ceasefire in Gaza. "This is your prize, this is your peace prize," Infantino said. He has repeatedly spoken about soccer as a unifier for the world, but the prize is a departure from the federation's traditional focus on sport. Trump told reporters



upon arriving at the Kennedy Centre that he didn't know whether he was going to get the award, and added: "I don't need prizes. I just want to save lives." FIFA has described the prize as one that rewards "individuals who have taken exceptional and extraordinary actions for peace and by doing so have united people across the world."

### Formula One revs up for a three-way title showdown

### F1'S THRILLING FINALE ECHOES A HISTORY OF DRAMATIC CHAMPIONSHIP DECIDERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Dec 5: A thrilling Formula 1 season ends Sunday in Abu Dhabi with precisely the kind of showdown race fans want to see: three drivers in title contention and the championship leader under mounting pressure.

Over the years, F1 title deciders have seen deliberate crashes, unexpected heartbreak and perhaps the most controversial finish of them all, when Max Verstappen beat Lewis Hamilton on the final lap in 2021.

### **Final race scenarios**

McLaren's Lando Norris is 12 points ahead of Red Bull driver Verstappen, who is chasing hard for a fifth straight F1 title, and 16 ahead



of teammate Oscar Piastri. Norris will win the title if he finishes on the podium Saturday, regardless of what Ver-

stappen and Piastri do. If Verstappen takes the race win, he needs Norris to be

fourth or lower. If Piastri wins

the Grand Prix, Norris would have to finish sixth or lower.

### Three-way fights

Kimi Raikkonen won the 2007 title with Ferrari, despite trailing both Fernando Alonso and

rookie Lewis Hamilton two rac-

es before the end. The Finnish driver won both to clinch his

Sebastian Vettel won the 2010 title for Red Bull at the last race of the season in Abu Dhabi. Vettel entered the race behind teammate Mark Webber and Ferrari's Fernando Alonso, who was the heavy favorite.

Vettel won the Abu Dhabi GP from pole and clinched the title along the way, mainly because Alonso was stuck behind another driver following a Ferrari strategy error.

In 1986, a three-way battle ended in heartbreak for a British standings leader. Nigel Mansell was ahead of Alain Prost and Keke Rosberg on points ahead of the final race in Adelaide, Australia, but had to stop with a puncture

### Tanvi shines bright at Sub-Jr Nat'ls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 5: Local star Tanvi Patri has electrified the 37th National Sub-Junior Badminton Championship held at the Dalmia Bharat Gopichand Badminton Excellence Centre (Shuttle) within the Kalinga Stadium Complex, by securing a spot in the finals of both the Girls' Singles Under-15 and Under-17 categories Friday.

The fifth day of the prestigious tournament saw all final line-ups determined across both age groups, setting the stage for a thrilling finale Saturday.

Odisha's own Tanvi Patri delivered a high-calibre performance to ensure her dual final appearances. In the Girls' Singles U-15 semi-final, Patri defeated Hamsini Chadaram of Telangana in straight games with scores of 21-12, 21-19. She will face Avani Vikram Govind of Telangana in the final, who overcame Inavat



Gulati of Punjab (21-14, 21-13).

Tanvi continued her dominant form in the Girls' Singles U-17 semi-final, displaying class to beat Hasana Shree of Andhra Pradesh 21-11, 21-4. She is set to clash with Deeksha SR of Tamil Nadu in the final.

The local success extended to the doubles category, where the Odisha pairing of Swati Navak and Nimisha Ojha fought hard to reach the Girls' Doubles U-15 final. They will face the Maharashtra duo, Sarayu Ranjane and Soyara Sellare, who de feated a Tamil Nadu pair in the other semi-final (21-14, 21-12).

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