



LEISURE | P2



INTERNATIONAL | P10

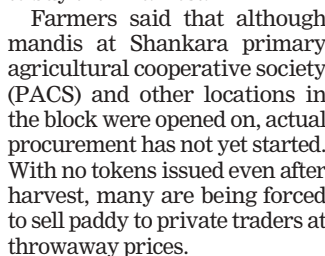
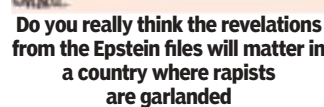


BUSINESS | P11

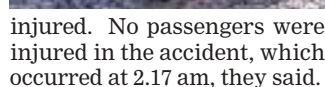
SPORTS | **P12**

RAJDHANI MOWS DOWN 7 JUMBOS

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Seven elephants, three adults and four calves, were killed after a herd was mowed down by the Sairang-New Delhi Rajdhani Express in Assam's Hojai district Saturday, once again highlighting the deadly risks at the intersection of railways and wildlife habitats. At least 79 elephants have been reported killed in train collisions across India in the last five years, according to data provided by the Environment Ministry to the Lok Sabha. Assam accounts for the most train-related elephant deaths in the country, followed by West Bengal and Odisha.



village is suspected to have occurred due to heavy fog in the area.

He claimed that the accident took place at a location which is not a designated elephant corridor. "The train driver, on observing the herd of elephants, applied emergency brakes. However, the jumbos dashed with the train," he added.

Meanwhile, the chief minister ordered a thorough enquiry into the accident.

“We are deeply saddened by the death of seven elephants - three adults and four calves - in a tragic train collision earlier today,” he said in a post on X.

Keeping the deteriorating air quality in mind, the Commerce and Transport Department has initiated strict measures to curb pollution caused by motor vehicles that violate motor vehicle rules. Acting on the directions of Transport Minister Bibhuti Bhushan Jena, the department has formally communicated the decision to oil marketing companies.

According to the official communication, petrol pumps have been instructed not to provide fuel to any motor vehicle that does not possess a valid pollution certificate. The move aims to improve air quality standards across various districts of Odisha and significantly reduce pollution caused by the transport sector.

Under the Motor Vehicles Act, it is mandatory for all vehicles to carry a valid pollution certificate, which must be obtained through regular checks at registered pollution testing centers. Vehicles found without valid certification will face legal action as per existing laws.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: A minor girl was allegedly gangraped by two persons in Saheed Nagar area in Bhubaneswar after being lured with the promise of a job offer, police said Saturday.

According to the police complaint, one of the accused called the 17-year-old girl to his rented accommodation in Saheed Nagar as promising her a data entry job December 18. However, when the unsus-

pecting girl reached the location, the accused along with his accomplice raped her.

The next day, a complaint was lodged at Saheed Nagar police station.

Police registered a case under relevant sections of the POCSO Act and arrested the accused, both reportedly belonging to Khurda district.

The incident comes days after another 17-year-old girl was reportedly gangraped in front of her male friend in Dhauli area.

AGENCIES

Nagaon/ Guwahati, Dec 20: Seven elephants were killed, and one was injured after a herd of jumbos was hit by the Sairang-New Delhi Rajdhani Express in Assam's Hojai district early Saturday, officials said. Five coaches and the train's engine also derailed, they said.

Initially, all eight elephants were reported to have been killed, though later it was said that one of the calves was found



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ROURKELA

JEYPORE

SAMBALPUR

JEE ADVANCE & JEE MAIN 2025

01.	SAI SPANDAN NAYAK	IIT, KANPUR
02.	SAI AMRIT SAGAR	IT, KHARAGPUR
03.	AYUSHMAN SAHOO	IT, KHARAGPUR
04.	SUDRA PRASAD PATRA	IT, KHARAGPUR
05.	ASHESHA MOHANTY	IIT, RUDRE
06.	SUBHALAXMI SAHOO	IT, BHUBANESWAR
07.	ADITY MISHRA	NIT, ROURKELA
08.	SATYAM KALAPAHAD	NIT, ROURKELA
09.	ANSH LENKA	NIT, PATNA
10.	NAMRATA SAHOO	IT, BHUBANESWAR
11.	SAENA SAHOO	IT, BHUBANESWAR

NEET 2025

01.	ADITYA K. SAHOO	AIIMS, GUWAHATI
02.	KASHESH GUPTA	SCB MEDICAL COLLEGE, CUTTACK
03.	SAI PRATIK ROUT	SIN MEDICAL COLLEGE, KORAPUT
04.	PRAYAS BISWAL	SIN MEDICAL COLLEGE, KORAPUT

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

Decisions about career and finance will keep you preoccupied today. After a hectic day, all you may want to do is relax. In that case, Ganesha may send a short but pleasurable trip your way, which is sure to rejuvenate you. Group activity suggests you will make more friends, says Ganesha.

TAURUS

This is not a day when you should be fooling around with your health. Do not take your health and fitness for granted, warns Ganesha. You will be feeling lazy and listless all day long. Chances are that you could fall ill on account of carelessness. Both physical exertion as well as mental stress should be meticulously avoided.

GEMINI

Today, the bond that you share with your friends will get stronger. You are also likely to fall in love. If you are already in a relationship, you will plan to validate your bond either through an engagement or marriage. If you are a student, this is a good phase for you. Along with love, you will also get good grades.

CANCER

There is every possibility that today, you will be probing and prying about your future, predicts Ganesha. A visit to a well-known astrologer cannot be ruled out. Also, you are likely to consult a doctor. It is all due to your bad lifestyle and habits. You had better improve your lifestyle.

LEO

Fortune smiles on but a few, and when it does, it can take you to places you have never even dreamt of. Today is an exceptional day, in the sense that Lady Luck is backing you in all earnestness. So go with the flow and take your chances. You will find, much to your delight, that success is easy to achieve when you are willing to work hard and have luck guiding you.

VIRGO

Reflect on past glories and assemble the machinery for accomplishing more in the future. New relationships will mark the road to progress. You easy-going nature will help you get along famously with people.

LIBRA

Today might be a good day to invest in that body armour you saw on the telly last night. At least find one that will shield you from being at the receiving end of your seniors and the daily grind of life. If you happen to be a job aspirant, be prepared to slog it out for your success.

SCORPIO

House renovation is in the offing. You may furnish it with portraits and artefacts. Today, you may also feel like playing the stock market game and stake your bets, says Ganesha. Have a great time at home by hosting friends over.

SAGITTARIUS

Personal grooming will be on your mind today. A small fortune may be spent on enhancing the way you look, especially on a new hair-do. Retail Therapy is on the cards, and you may indulge spending on clothes and jewellery.

CAPRICORN

It's difficult to keep calm and have a control over your temper in times of distress, but today, you will prove all who surrendered to the whims of adversity wrong, foresees Ganesha. You will be unfaltering in dealing with problems, and will overcome them with ease.

AQUARIUS

The day seems normal as you are unlikely to encounter unpleasant situations, says Ganesha. The high point of the day will be your consummate skill with which you will handle mundane tasks. Ganesha reminds you of the saying, "Success is one percent inspiration and 99% perspiration."

PISCES

Fear is a part and parcel of life, and while it can not be eliminated, it can certainly be tamed, and that is what you will be doing today. All your suppressed audacity will be on full display, says Ganesha.



SYDNEY SWEENEY LOVES FILMS EMBRACING 'FEMALE RAGE'

Hollywood star Sydney Sweeney has shared she likes movies that “have just fully embraced female rage”. The 28-year-old actress stars alongside Amanda Seyfried in *The Housemaid*, their new psychological thriller film. The actress relished smashing things and going off the rails for the movie, reports *Female First UK*.

SHEERAN ADMITS TO LIVING UNHEALTHILY WHEN YOUNG

English singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran has become more disciplined in his approach to performing. The 34-year-old pop star admits to living an unhealthy lifestyle during his younger years. However, the singer is now making a conscious effort to live more healthily, reports *Female First UK*.



Society constantly judgemental about women: Maanvi

Mumbai: Actress Maanvi Gagroo, who is all geared up for her latest of-fering, *Four More Shots Please*, has put forward her strong stance on society being constantly judgemental about women.

Talking to this agency, the actress questioned why it is always women who are under scrutiny for their choices and why men are rarely questioned at all, even when their actions are illogical.

“I feel there is constant judgement around what women do whether they drink or not, smoke or not, or party or not. Nobody seems to judge men for things like peeing on the roads. So why aren’t men being judged in the same way? They should be, right?!” asked Maanvi.

“My issue is with the clear

difference in judgement be-tween the two genders. Actually, firstly, let’s get both the genders on an equal level. Before even discussing whether the judgement is right or wrong, we need to

ask whether judging anyone is fair in the first place, to be honest,” Maanvi concluded.

Maanvi Gagroo, in *Four More Shots Please*, essays the role of Sid-dhi Patel – a relat-able, no-nonsense voice in her strong-head-ed, crackling friend group, juggling am-bition, friend-ships, and life’s chaos while call-ing out hypocrisy with wit and hu-mour.

IAN S

Madhuri on her plans about turning director

Mum-bai: Actress Madhuri Dixit, who is known to have given some tremendous performances during her career spanning around 4 de-cades, opened up about her plans to try her hand at direction next.

Speaking exclusively to this agency,

Mad-huri revealed that although she has a lot of experi-ence, she does not feel ready for direction at the moment.

She was asked, “As an actor, you have done multiple projects, today woman directors are also doing really well. Do you have any such plans to turn to direction?”

To this, Madhuri said, “Well, a lot of people ask me that because I have been working for 40 years, so that brings with it the kind of experience because you have seen so many di-rectors, worked with them, learned from them, but I think I have to be ready for it, and right now I am not, but at some point maybe.” During the conversation, Mad-huri also reflected on the evolution of filmmaking from her debut movie *Abodh* to *Mrs Deshpande*.

The *Dhak Dhak* girl revealed that things are much more organized these days, which was not the case back then.

IAN S



ANANYA'S aspirations

Mumbai: Ananya Panday continues to draw attention ahead of her upcoming film *Tu Meri Main Tera, Main Tera Tu Meri*. From her screen presence in the recently released trailer to the growing buzz around the film’s songs, audiences have responded positively to every new glimpse.

In a recent interview with an entertain-ment portal, Ananya shared how she en-visions the next two to three years of her career.

The *Liger* actress said, “Hopefully, in the next 2-3 years, I still want to be at the top of my game the way that the best actor that I can possibly be.”

She continued: “You know when I started out, success looked very different. And it’s like I wanna be seen on posters and everything and of course all of that is still there and you want to do it and you get excited about it. But I think for me my goal has shifted towards being a better actor and focusing on that. I’m hun-gry for the craft.”

She also pointed out that she is yet to step into areas such as biopics, action films, sports dramas, and horror, adding that she is keen to explore them in the future.

As she prepares for up-coming projects across dif-ferent genres, she shows no signs of slowing down. With several unexplored avenues still ahead, audi-ences remain eager to see how her journey would con-tinue to unfold and what new facets of her talent she would reveal next.

IAN S

Dhurandhar enters all-time top 10 worldwide

Mumbai: *Dhurandhar* has officially cemented its place in Bollywood box office his-tory, emerging as the 10th highest-grossing Indian film of all time worldwide with a staggering Rs. 751.98 crore global haul. In doing so, the Ranveer Singh starrer finds it-self in elite company, sharing space with some of the most iconic and culturally defining blockbusters Indian cinema has ever produced.

At its current worldwide total, *Dhurandhar* has edged past long-standing global



performers and now sits just below PK, which amassed Rs. 769.89 crore worldwide. Topping the all-time world-wide list remains *Dangal*, an unprecedented phenomenon with Rs. 1968.03 crore, followed by modern-day juggernauts *Jawan* (Rs. 1148.32 crore) and *Pathaan* (Rs. 1050.3 crore). Films like *Bajrangi Bhaijaan*, *Animal*, *Secret Superstar*, and *Stree 2* dominate the upper half of the chart.

In comparison, Dhur-andhar’s global performance stands out for its balance.

While its domestic numbers have remained extraordinar-ily strong, the film has also shown impressive traction overseas, helping it surpass major worldwide hits such as *Chhaava* (Rs. 797.34 crore) is now firmly within striking distance of overtaking it in the coming days.

With sustained momentum still visible, *Dhurandhar*’s global box office story appears far from over, and the possibil-ity of climbing higher on this historic list now feels increas-ingly inevitable.

AGENCIES

THE LIST

Movie	Collection (in INR)
Dangal	1968.03 cr
Jawan	1148.32 cr
Pathaan	1050.3 cr
Bajrangi Bhaijaan	918.18 cr
Animal	917.82 cr
Secret Superstar	875.78 cr
Stree 2	874.58 cr
Chhaava	797.34 cr
PK	769.89 cr
Dhurandhar	751.98 cr

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

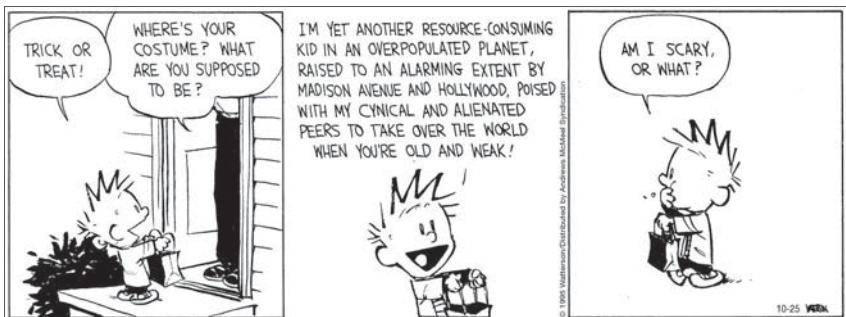
C	U	B	E	I	D	I	O	T	I	C	
R	L	J	S	R	P	N	E				
O	X	I	D	I	S	E	T	I	G	E	
N	M	G	D	I	R	A					
Y	A	P	S	A	G	A	C	I	O	U	
			A	E			W	E			
D	I	S	O	W	N		H	O	R	N	E
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F	A	N	T	A	S	T	I	C	G	A	P
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2	8	5	4	1	3	7	9	6
7	1	3	2	9	6	5	8	4
4	9	6	8	7	5	2	1	3
8	5	7	3	6	9	4	2	1
1	6	4	7	5	2	9	3	8
3	2	9	1	8	4	6	7	5
6	3	1	5	2	7	8	4	9
9	7	8	6	4	1	3	5	2
5	4	2	9	3	8	1	6	7

PEANUTS



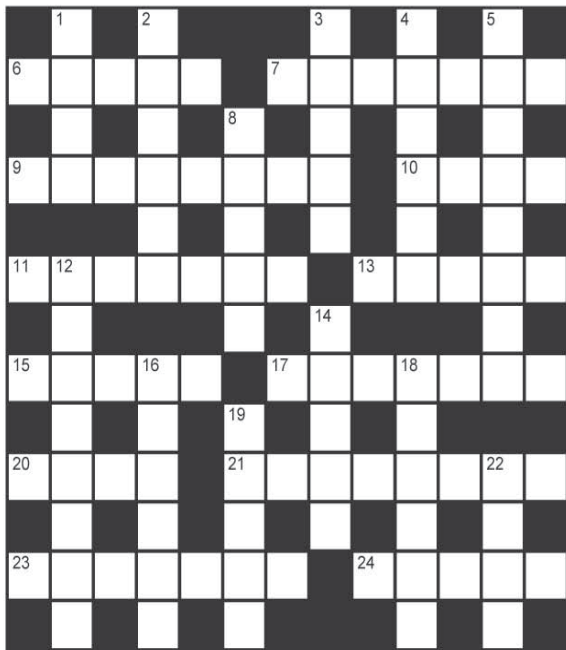
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



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Across

- 6 Stratagems
- 7 Pie fillers
- 9 Long-legged carrion-eating hawk
- 10 Mah-jongg piece
- 11 Pertinent
- 13 Jostle
- 15 Sharp narrow ridge

Down

- 1 Dog biter
- 2 Go-getter
- 3 Fit for a king
- 17 Small bag
- 20 Forearm bone
- 21 Snail, for one
- 23 Bakery buy or pet name
- 24 Argus-eyed

Across

- 4 Savage
- 5 Steak order (4,4)
- 8 Eagle’s claw
- 12 Fraught with danger
- 14 It holds water
- 16 Hypnotic state
- 18 Baby’s bed
- 19 Chinese boats
- 22 Diversify

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



EVICTIION AFTERMATH: Makeshift fruit shops lay in disarray at Badasankha Bazar as Puri district administration carries out an eviction drive, Saturday

Two held for brown sugar sale in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: Laxmisagar Police arrested a woman and her male accomplice for selling brown sugar near Lotus Hotel Lane, seizing 10 grams of the drug along with cash, mobile phones, and a scooter, officials said Saturday.

The arrests followed a written report filed by Sub-Inspector Sambhunath Patra, leading to a case being registered at Laxmisagar police station and an investigation initiated.

According to police, acting on reliable information about brown sugar sales, a team raided Lotus Hotel Lane December 19. During the operation,



25-year-old Sushree Nayak was caught selling the drug in small polythene packets, while her 25-year-old associate, Sagar Behera, was collecting money from buyers.

On spotting the police, both accused tried to flee but were over-

powered and detained. A personal search recovered 10 grams of brown sugar from Sushree, along with ₹1,000 in cash, two mobile phones, and a scooter.

During interrogation, both accused reportedly confessed to knowingly selling brown

◀ Acting on reliable information, police raided Lotus Hotel Lane December 19, targeting brown sugar sales

◀ During the raid, 25-year-old Sushree Nayak was caught selling the drug in small packets, while her associate, Sagar Behera, collected money from buyers

◀ The duo was booked under Section 21(b) of the NDPS Act and forwarded to court

sugar for illegal profit. They were booked under Section 21(b) of the NDPS Act and forwarded to court. Further investigation is ongoing to trace the source and network behind the illegal trade.

Ouat hosts comb honey awareness programme

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: In response to rising consumer demand for quality and purity in food products, a one-day state-level awareness programme on comb honey production was organised here Saturday by the AICRP on Honeybees and Pollinators, department of Entomology, Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT).

Addressing the gathering as chief guest, OUAT Vice-Chancellor Pravat Kumar Roul underscored the importance of maintaining honey purity, noting that comb honey remains completely pure as it involves no processing or refining amid rising food adulteration. He highlighted its strong national and international demand and urged farmers to adopt modern scientific practices to boost comb honey production and incomes.

Joining as chief speaker, ESS-ICAR former emeritus scientist and MIDH project technical advisor CR Satapathy elaborated on the medicinal and health benefits of comb honey, and underlined the importance of maintaining its purity, improving market access, and adopting attractive packaging to ensure better returns for farmers. Satapathy also highlighted the role of awareness generation in promoting the regular use of comb honey for health benefits.

College of Agriculture Dean Bijaya Kumar Mahapatra at-



tended the programme as guest of honour and advocated for strengthening capacity building efforts by providing appropriate technical knowledge and skills to beekeepers.

On the occasion, a book titled ‘Comb Honey Production: A Potential Endeavour for Enhancing Family Income through Beekeeping’ was released. An exhibition showcasing different types of honey was also organised to educate participants about honey diversity and quality.

The programme commenced with a welcome address by OUAT’s Director of Research Niranjana Panda, while the vote of thanks was delivered by AICRP on Honeybees and Pollinators principal investigator Pravasini Behera. Beekeepers from different parts of the state actively participated in the programme and interacted with scientists, sharing their experiences and challenges related to honey production.

Madhu Babu Memorial Museum to come up in Cuttack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: A Madhu Babu Memorial Museum will be set up on the campus of Shailabala Women’s Autonomous College, Cuttack, to honour the life and contributions of Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das, popularly known as Madhu Babu. The decision was made at a high-level meeting Saturday, chaired by Higher Education, Sports & Youth Services and Odia Language, Literature & Culture Minister Suryabanshi Suraj.

The museum will be developed by the Odia Language, Literature and Culture department at a site of historical significance within the college premises, where Madhusudan Das’s conference hall and residential office once functioned.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Suraj said, “Madhusudan Das and Shailabala Das laid a strong foundation for women’s education in Odisha. The proposed memorial museum will serve as a source of inspiration for future generations and keep alive Madhu Babu’s vision, values and legacy.”

City seminar focuses on regional variations in migration patterns

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for Development Studies (NCDS) hosted a seminar on ‘Regional Differences in Migration Pattern, Adaptation Behaviour and Wellbeing in Odisha’ here Saturday, bringing together senior government officials, eminent scholars, and researchers to discuss actionable strategies for inclusive migration policies under the guidance of Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary and NCDS chairperson Anu Garg.

Welcoming the dignitaries, NCDS Director Prakash Chandra Mohanty emphasised the transformative potential of an evidence-driven research and sighted a survey of over 650 households, which delves into regional variations in migration patterns, adaptation behaviours, and wellbeing outcomes. “Migration is not a problem to be solved. It is an opportunity to improve lives, enhance social security, and empower families,” Mohanty remarked, highlighting the silent challenges faced by older persons and children, and



the structural nature of forced migration, urging policies to be human-centred and region-specific.

At the event, NCDS project director and associate professor Sandhya Rani Mahapatra shared her groundbreaking research which reframes migration as a multidimensional wellbeing issue, moving beyond economic perspectives to explore social, emotional, and health dimensions.

“Migration is a story of resilience, adaptation, and opportunity,” Mahapatra noted. Her findings reveal regional inequalities in migration trajectories and the need for migrant-sensitive policies tailored to local realities.

Speaking from policy implementation perspective, Odisha Labour Commissioner Indramani Tripathy highlighted state’s

proactive initiatives and said, “We are working towards making migration safer and more rewarding.” Tripathy cited toll-free helpline (18003456703), help desks in destination states, portability of welfare schemes, and creation of a comprehensive migrant database. He also pointed out that these initiatives help ensure timely compensation, grievance redressal, and access to social protection for Odisha’s migrant workforce.

International Institute of Migration and Development Chairman and former professor at Centre for Development Studies, Kerala, S Irudaya Rajan stressed the critical importance of robust data in shaping policies. Citing references to Kerala’s pioneering migration surveys and Odisha’s own 15,000-household study, he underlined the value of numbers in guiding evidence-based decisions.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Kesinga, dated 19.12.2025, I, Kashinath Sharma, At/P.O.- Kesinga, Ward No.- 07, P.S.- Kesinga, Dist.- Kalahandi (Odisha) declare that I have changed my minor daughter’s name from Sajal Sharma to Sejal Sharma. Henceforth, she shall be known as Sejal Sharma for all purposes. Kashinath Sharma

Inception workshop to formalise CSA Alliance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: In a major push to strengthen climate resilience in agriculture, the Odisha government, through the Department of Agriculture & Farmers’ Empowerment, Saturday convened a high-level inception workshop to formalise the Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) alliance for the state, in collaboration with the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP) and Catalyst Management Services (CMS).

The Alliance brought together senior government officials, research institutions, private sector partners, civil society organisations, development agencies and policy experts to jointly scale up climate-smart agriculture practices across the state.

Principal Secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee said climate change cannot be addressed in isolation and requires concerted efforts to mitigate and adapt to its adverse impacts. In this direction, the Odisha Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance



(OCSAA) will serve as a platform to showcase and implement climate-smart technologies prioritised by CSTEP across the state through various partner organisations.

The Alliance aims to integrate climate resilience into agricultural planning and programmes, promote climate-resilient crops, diversified farming systems and horticulture, and mobilise public, private and blended finance for scalable climate-smart agriculture solutions, Padhee said.

Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) Vice-Chancellor Prof Pravat

Kumar Roul said the impacts of climate change are real and increasingly evident, underscoring the need for collective efforts to make agricultural fields climate-smart. Such measures, he said, are essential to mitigate adverse impacts and ensure food and nutrition security for the growing population, both globally and in the state.

Soil Conservation and Watershed Development Director Subrat Kumar Panda said at the workshop that climate-smart agriculture is no longer optional but is central to safeguarding farmer livelihoods, ensuring food

security and securing long-term agricultural sustainability.

Sector Head at CSTEP Indu K Murthy said, “The CSA Alliance places farmers at the centre of climate action. As part of the Climate Resilience Cell and anchor of the Alliance, CSTEP aims to co-create solutions that are locally relevant, economically viable and scalable, ensuring climate resilience directly enhances livelihoods while safeguarding natural resources.”

Co-founder and Director of Catalyst Management Services (CMS) Shiv Kumar said, “The Alliance draws its strength from its partners—each bringing distinct capabilities, experience and commitment—and together forming a collective capable of delivering climate-smart agriculture at a scale no single institution can achieve alone.”

He added that by standing together, partners reduce risk, accelerate learning and unlock statewide impact and finance, ensuring climate-smart solutions move beyond pilots into sustained adoption across Odisha.

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	27.8°	25.6°	Fog or mist in the morning and mainly clear sky later
Min Temp	14.0°	13.6°	
Humidity	94%	88%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

SARGIFUL 2025 CONCLUDES

Festival unveils students’ hidden talents: Min Gond

Minister highlighted the event’s aim of providing a valuable platform for departmental schools and hostels while promoting skill development

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: Sargiful symbolises purity and offers a valuable platform to discover and nurture children’s hidden talents, School and Mass Education and ST & SC Development, Minority and Backward Classes Welfare Minister Nityananda Gond said Saturday. Speaking as chief guest on the concluding day of the three-day state-level festival, he noted that the enthusiastic participation of students made the event more vibrant and dignified.

At the valedictory programme, several senior officials were present, including ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare Commissioner-cum-Secretary B Parameswaran; Scheduled Castes Welfare Director Laxman Kumar Mallick; Director (OBC) Jugaleswari Dash; SC-STRTI Director and Member Secretary (ATLC) Sudhakar Sabaro; Special Secretary Sujata Mishra; Financial Advisor-cum-Special Secretary Banita Das; and Additional Secretary Debendra Kumar Nanda.

Addressing the gathering,



- School and Mass Education Minister highlighted government efforts to reduce school dropout rates, including financial support for students through the Madho Singh Haath Kharcha Scheme
- Initiatives like the Child Tracking Survey and the “Aasa School Jiba” campaign are helping reintegrate dropout children, the Minister stressed
- The festival featured 1,160 students and teachers participating in 22 competitions

Minister Gond encouraged the students and wished them a bright future. He emphasised that the festival’s main objective is to showcase the talents of students from departmental schools and hostels and support the development of their skills.

He also congratulated the department’s officers and staff for successfully organising the

state-level event.

Highlighting government efforts to reduce school dropout rates, Minister Gond said students are receiving financial support through the Madho Singh Haath Kharcha Scheme. Initiatives like the Child Tracking Survey and the “Aasa School Jiba” campaign are helping reintegrate dropout children, and he stressed that the collective efforts of all stakeholders are crucial for their success.

The festival saw participation from 1,160 students and teachers across 22 competitions. Meritorious students were awarded by the chief guest, while five top-performing Eklavya Model Residential Schools were felicitated. Ten students who excelled in CBSE board exams from Eklavya schools were also honoured. Additionally, the department recognised 50 best high schools and 10 best higher secondary schools under its administration.

OEC KICKS OFF AT RDWU

‘Gender justice crucial for climate and environment’

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: Emphasising the inseparable link between gender and environment, former Kerala Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Prakriti Srivastava said, “Without gender justice, environmental protection and solutions to climate-related challenges cannot be achieved,” during the inaugural session of 16th Odisha Environment Congress (OEC) at Rama Devi Women’s University (RDWU) here Saturday.

Women are more adversely affected by environmental imbalance and climate change, but existing gender inequalities further aggravate their vulnerability, Srivastava noted. “There is an urgent need to integrate gender justice into environmental governance. Out of 3,100 Indian Forest Service officers, only 284 are women. Similarly, out of 2.5 lakh field-level forest staffs, women count only 5,000. This is deeply concerning when women play a vital role in forest protection,” she said.

Luna River’s dipping water level worrisome

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Dec 20: The falling water level of Luna River, which flows through Kendrapara district, has raised concerns over the town’s drinking water supply and the future of agricultural land along its basin.

Officials said the intake feeder near Kalapada has been dry since November. To ensure uninterrupted drinking water supply to Kendrapara town, the Public Health Engineering Organisation (PHEO) is digging a canal — 700 metres long, 25 feet wide and 10 feet deep — into the riverbed to channel water to the intake point.

Despite this temporary measure, the river’s water level continues to decline rapidly. Residents fear that the situation could worsen during the summer, leading to a complete disruption of drinking water supply. Agriculture in the downstream areas is also at risk, with an estimated 10,000 hectares facing potential crop failure.

Local environmental concerns have further intensified due to illegal sand mining, which residents say, is altering the river’s natural course. Intellectuals in the district argue that interlinking Kendrapara’s rivers could offer a long-term solution.

Manoj Kumar Singh of Khadianga said the PHEO and Water Resources department draw drinking water for the town from the Luna River at Kalapada. “The pump house area has remained dry since October. Even the 150-metre channel dug



earlier has now dried up. If this continues, the town will face a severe water crisis in summer,” he said.

Local villager Santosh Kumar Kar noted that check dams at Padagayasapur, Gayasapur, Thauri, Chadheiguan, Rajagarh and Angulai were built to support irrigation and drinking water needs. But the declining water level has put both objectives at risk.

Former Zilla Parishad member Ganesh Chandra Samal said the 73-kilometre-long Luna River once served as a navigational route during British rule. “Lack of maintenance, illegal sand and soil lifting, and encroachment have diverted the river’s path. There is no arrangement for draining waterlogging from 850 hectares of farmland. Likewise, 32,350 hectares of agricultural land in the district are saline. In addition, during the rainy season, floodwater inundates 34,952 hectares of land. A total of 84,910 hectares in the district have been declared drought-prone. De-

spite repeated demands before the district council for proper water management of the rivers and main canals, no effective results have been achieved.

Social activist Banambar Sahoo added that earlier, the river supported cultivation of paddy, rabi crops, sugarcane and vegetables. “Water levels have been falling for years. Dams built upstream in Chhattisgarh along the Mahanadi have contributed to this crisis,” he said.

Farmer leader Bidhubhusan Mohapatra stressed the need for interlinking the district’s seven rivers and building barges at strategic locations. “This would solve irrigation issues across the district. But neither the administration nor political leaders have taken concrete steps,” he said.

Executive engineer of the Water Resources department Umesh Chandra Sethi said several proposals to rejuvenate the Luna River are in progress and funds have been sanctioned. “Residents will soon begin to see the benefits,” he said.

JUMBO CALF ELECTROCUTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Odapada, Dec 20: An elephant calf was electrocuted Friday night at Mahadia village under Gadashila forest section of Odapada block in Dhenkanal district, forest officials said.

According to sources, a herd of elephants had moved out of the Matharagadi forest in search of paddy crops when the calf came in contact with a solar fence erected around a farmland to protect crops. The calf reportedly got entangled and failed to free itself, leading to its death.

Officials suspect the fence may have been illegally connected to a power supply line or was carrying high voltage. The exact cause of death will be confirmed after the postmortem report, forest personnel said.

After the incident, the mother elephant was seen staying near the calf for some time. She later pushed the body with her legs for a short distance towards a mango orchard in the Mahadia village and left it inside the grove before moving away. Forest personnel remained at the spot, keeping watch on the mother elephant’s movement.

Dhenkanal Divisional Forest Officer Sumit Kar, along with other forest officials, visited the site, conducted an inquiry and carried out the postmortem Saturday afternoon. The carcass was later buried at the spot after a post-mortem.

Forest officials said appropriate action would be taken against those responsible once the postmortem report is received.



Elderly woman’s charred body found in Rayagada



POST NEWS NETWORK

Ambadola, Dec 20: The charred body of a 75-year-old woman was found inside her house at Kumudabali village under Ambadola police limits in Muniguda block of Rayagada district Saturday, with police suspecting a premeditated murder linked to gold theft.

The deceased was identified as Chandana Tula Dangari, who lived alone in the house. Villagers became suspicious after noticing a strong burning smell from the house Saturday morning. On entering the house, they found the door broken and discovered her burnt body inside.

Police said the body was almost completely burnt.

Ambadala IIC Kalpana Behe-

ra initiated an investigation. Later, Muniguda IIC Saudami Behera and SDPO Santoshini Oram also visited the scene. A scientific team and sniffer dog squad were deployed to assist the probe.

Preliminary findings suggest the woman may have been killed before her body was set on fire to destroy evidence. The broken door and intact condition of the house have strengthened suspicions of murder.

According to locals, the woman used to wear gold ornaments. Police suspect the crime was committed to loot her jewellery.

The recovered remains were sent to FM&T, Berhampur, for post-mortem examination. Police said further investigation is underway.

Miscreants loot 4 temples in a night

Chhatrapur: Miscreants have posed a challenge to Chhatrapur police after looting four temples in a single night in Ganjam district. The targeted temples are located near the newly-constructed police colony, which houses residential quarters for police personnel. The robbers allegedly stole silver valuables, including crowns, cobra figurines and necklaces, from four temples within a span of a few hours. When priests opened the doors of the Lord Bireswar, Sri Sai, Lord Ganesh and Goddess Durga temples Friday morning, they found that valuables attached to the deities were missing. The incidents were immediately reported to Chhatrapur police, who have launched an investigation. Police have collected CCTV footage from the temples and sent it for further examination. A scientific team and a dog squad were also deployed to analyse the pattern of the robberies. The Chhatrapur MLA inspected the affected temples, assessed the situation and directed police to expedite the investigation and arrest those responsible.

3 of family from Gajapati killed in Andhra accident

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, Dec 20: Three members of a family from Gajapati district were killed in a road accident near the foothills of Simhachalam in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh while returning after offering prayers at the shrine Saturday.

The deceased were identified as Kantarao, his wife Sandhya and their daughter Maheswari— residents of MN Peta village under Gosani block in Gajapati district.

Kantarao had been working for the past few years at a private company in Visakhapatnam to support his family. Kantarao, his wife and daughter Thursday travelled to Simhachalam on a motorcycle to offer prayers. While returning, their motorcycle met with an accident near Goshala Chhak at the foothills. Kantarao died on the spot, while his wife and daughter succumbed to their injuries while being shifted to hospital, police said. The deceased couple’s 11-year-old son, Gurunath, survived as he had not accompanied them on the trip. With the death of his parents and sister, the child has been left orphaned. Sources said the family has no other immediate members. Pendhutti police in Andhra Pradesh have registered a case and launched an investigation to ascertain the exact cause of the accident.

Post-mortem examinations of the bodies were conducted Saturday.

Man held for raping 12-year-old disabled

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Dec 20: Police in Malkangiri district Saturday arrested a man accused of raping a differently-abled minor girl, authorities said.

Police produced the accused identified as Deepak Baroi, 45, in the court from where he was remanded to judicial custody after his bail pleas were rejected.

The matter came up before police after the girl’s family members lodged a complaint at the Malkangiri police station. Police registered a case (666/25) and took the accused into custody. Further investigation is underway.

The incident occurred when the girl’s parents were away from home December 15. Deepak entered their home when the girl was alone and raped her, police said. The girl’s elder sister and a neighbour noticed the act and raised an alarm.

The accused allegedly threatened to kill the girl if she disclosed the incident and fled the scene, the complaint states.



INTERSTATE RACKET BUSTED

24 kg ganja seized from hidden chambers in car

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, Dec 20: Bolangir Town police busted an interstate ganja trafficking racket with the seizure of 24 kg of the contraband hidden inside specially-built secret chambers in a car during a routine patrol and vehicle check Saturday morning.

Police said the operation was carried out near a truck terminal on National Highway 26 along the Bolangir–Boriguma stretch. A Hyundai Creta (CG-04-LU-0011), coming from the Sinakhman side, raised suspicion after the driver attempted to turn back on noticing the police check.

The patrol team chased and stopped the vehicle and found two youths inside. Though nothing suspicious was visible initially, their behaviour prompted a thorough search of the car. Upon detailed inspection, police detected two concealed chambers—one inside the front dashboard and another beneath the rear seat.



A mechanic was called to open the hidden compartments, from which sealed packets of ganja were recovered. The total quantity seized was 24 kg. Police said the accused were transporting the contraband from Boudh district to Chhattisgarh using the modified vehicle. The car and the contraband were seized and the two occupants were arrested. They were identified as Manish Vyas, 19, and Jabahir Singh, 24, both residents of Pasa village under Chandini police station limits in Chhattisgarh. The accused were later produced before a court. The seized ganja is estimated to be worth more than Rs 12 lakh, police said. Bolangir Sadar SDPO Saroj Upadhyay Saturday disclosed the details at a news conference held at the town police station. Town police IIC Abani Sahu, along with other officers and personnel, were present during the operation.



UP IN SMOKE: Firemen douse a fire which broke out after an overhead 11-kv transmission wire snapped and fell on a paddy field at Talapada village under Gopalpur police limits in Balasore district late Friday night. The blaze destroyed paddy crops worth Rs 3 lakh on 5 acre of farmland.

OP PHOTO

Harassment, inaction alleged at Mayurbhanj varsity

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Dec 20: Allegations of harassment involving a postgraduate student and a guest faculty member have surfaced at Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University in Baripada, raising questions about administrative inaction despite findings by the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC).

Complaints were filed against two faculty members with the ICC, which reportedly examined the cases and submitted its findings to the university authorities. However, no disciplinary action has been initiated so far, the

complainants alleged. The issue has drawn attention in the wake of statewide outrage following the death of an FM College student in Balasore, who allegedly set herself on fire after authorities failed to act on harassment complaints against a teacher.

According to sources, a guest faculty member in the Department of Sanskrit, who is also pursuing a Ph.D. under the supervision of the head of department (HoD), lodged a complaint with the ICC October 25, alleging harassment by the HoD. ICC Chairperson Prof. Sanghamitra Sahu said the committee submitted its

report to the Vice Chancellor and Registrar within 35 days after examining all evidence. However, no action has been taken even 20 days after submission of the report.

Separately, a postgraduate student of the Odia Department filed a complaint with the ICC December 1, alleging harassment by an assistant professor. Two more students later came forward with similar allegations against the same faculty member. The inquiry in this case is ongoing, sources said.

The complainants said the delay in action has caused them severe mental distress.

Tourists disappointed over lack of facilities at Punjisl waterfall

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Dec 20: Tourists visiting the scenic Punjisl Waterfall in Koraput district have expressed strong disappointment over the lack of basic amenities, raising concerns about the condition of tourism infrastructure in the region.

Several visitors who had come to enjoy the picturesque waterfall recently were seen leaving the spot dissatisfied. With the peak tourist season underway, a large number of travellers from both within Odisha and outside the state are arriving to explore Koraput’s natural attractions. After vis-

iting popular destinations such as Deomali and Talamali, many tourists are heading to Punjisl with high expectations.

However, the absence of essential facilities such as proper pathways, resting areas, clean spaces, drinking water, safety arrangements, and signboards is causing major inconvenience to visitors.

Ramesh Chandra Mishra, a tourist from Bhubaneswar, said, “The waterfall is beautiful, but the approach road and surroundings are not maintained. Without basic facilities, it becomes difficult for families to spend time here comfortably.”



Anita Rao from Visakhapatnam shared her disappoint-

ment: “We had heard a lot about Punjisl and came here

after visiting Deomali, but there is no safety railing, no sitting space, and the area looks neglected. Such a spot deserves better development.”

Local residents and tour operators echoed similar concerns, stating that while Punjisl has the potential to become a major tourist hotspot, development work has not kept pace.

Tourists have appealed to the district administration and tourism department to take immediate steps to improve infrastructure so that Punjisl Waterfall can become a safer, cleaner, and more enjoyable destination in Koraput.

COURT NOTICE
IN THE COURT OF THE DISTRICT JUDGE-VI CUM MOTOR VEHICLE CLAIM TRIBUNAL AT JAMSHEDPUR
M.A.C.T. CASE NO. 15/2024
RAKESH BHAKAT APPLICANT
VERSUS
THE NEW INIA INSURANCE CO. LTD & OTHERS OPP. PARTIES
To,
Rabindra Das, S/o Bishnu Pada Das
R/o C/o Susanta Sahu, At: H.No. 22,
Raghunathpur, P.O. & P.S. Baripada,
District - Mayurbhanj, Pin No. 757001
(..... Owner of vehicle bearing No. ODT1-3423)
Whereas above named applicant instituted a motor Accidental claim case U/s 166 M.V. Act 1988 (Amended) against you but you did not appear before Hon'ble Court on fixed dated. You are hereby directed to appear before my Court in the above named case personally on 05.01.2026 at 10:30 A.M. and filed reply.
Take notice and if you fail to appear before my court on the date filed the motor Accidental claim case will be hereby ex-parte against you.
Give under my hand seal of this the 25th day of August 2025.
Sd/- District Judge VI
East Singhbhum, Jamshedpur

COURT NOTICE

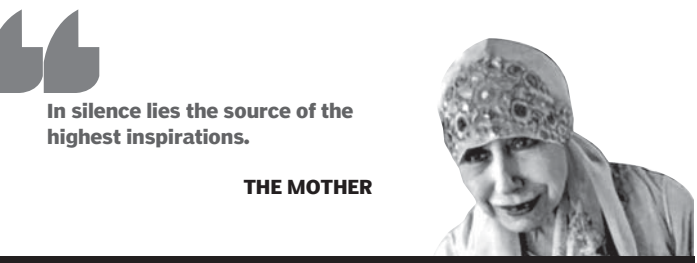
NATIONAL CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL COMMISSION (Constituted under Consumer Protection Act 1986)
UPBHOKTA NYAY BHAWAN, F Block, General Pool Office Complex INA, New Delhi-23
REVISION PETITION NO. 1761 OF 2022
(Against the order dated 14.09.2022 in First Appeal No. 394 of 2016
Of the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, Orissa)

International Cars & Motors Limited &Anr.,
...Petitioner
Vs.
Sri Partap Kumar Pattnaik & Ors.,
...Respondent
To
1. Sri Pratap Kumar Pattnaik s/o Late Naba Kishore Pattnaik r/o Village Bhagbanpanur , Plot No 216/1561, PO Patrapada, PS Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Distt Khordha.
2. M/s Ananta International Cars & Motors, Plot No 94, Pahal, Bhubaneswar, Distt Khordha. Represented through Director Shri B.Raj Sekhar Subudhi.
3. M/s Maa Bhagabati Auto Centre, Authorised Service Centre Sonalika International Car & Motors Pvt Ltd, Plot No 26 Pahl, Bhubaneswar, Distt Khordha.

NOTICE
WHEREAS International Cars & Motors Limited has filed a Revision Petition No 1761 OF 2022 against the order dated 14.09.2022 in First Appeal No. 394 of 2016 the State Commission, Orissa. The above mentioned Revision Petition is pending before the National Commission, New Delhi wherein you have been arrayed as Respondent.
WHEREAS this Commission has ordered vide order dated 18.03.2024 to effect service upon you by this Publication
NOW, THEREFORE, TAKE NOTICE that you are hereby directed to appear before this Commission in person or through your counsel/authorised representative on **26.12.2025.** at 10.30 a m., failing which the Petition will be disposed of ex-parte on merits.

Dated this 18 th March, 2024.

SECTION OFFICER



Rushed Laws

On December 17, Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra asked the Lok Sabha to send the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee For Rozgar And Ajeevika Mission Bill, 2025, to the Standing Committee for suggestions and changes. Opposition MPs said that the Bill was made available on the members' portal at 5 pm, and amendments were sought by 545 pm. MPs said that they should be given at least one day to first read and understand the Bill.

The requests were turned down and the bill was passed by voice vote on December 18. MNREGA, one of our most important laws, has been finished off and we do not really know why.

This passing of bills without parliament, including the treasury benches, having any real understanding of what they contained through any rigorous process has accelerated through the Modi era. In the 14th Lok Sabha (2004-09), 60 per cent of the bills were referred to committees for scrutiny. In the next Lok Sabha (2009-14), this number was 71 per cent. In the first Modi government, this fell to 25 per cent. In the second Modi government (2019-2024) this fell to 16 per cent. It wilfully undid the parliamentary convention of referring bills to department-related parliamentary standing committees for scrutiny and examination.



Aakar Patel

MNREGA, ONE OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT LAWS, HAS BEEN FINISHED OFF AND WE DO NOT REALLY KNOW WHY. THIS PASSING OF BILLS WITHOUT PARLIAMENT, INCLUDING THE TREASURY BENCHES, HAVING ANY REAL UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THEY CONTAINED THROUGH ANY RIGOROUS PROCESS HAS ACCELERATED THROUGH THE MODI ERA

The Right to Information law was gutted similarly by pushing through changes in 2019 without sending it to a committee. As a direct consequence, India's global ranking on the RTI index fell from 2nd to eighth and then ninth. In 2019, Telugu Desam MPs had joined MPs from the Congress, Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party, and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to express concern at the 'hurried passing' of bills without scrutiny. They wrote that public consultation—in which groups and individuals engaged with particular subjects are invited by legislators to put forward their views on prospective legislations—had also stopped. 'Public consultation is a long established practice where parliamentary committees scrutinise bills, deliberate, engage and work towards improving the content and quality of the legislation,' they wrote. This had no effect on Modi, and in 2020, not a single bill was sent to a committee for scrutiny.

What is the point of writing this now? It is that the government must learn that often this haste and arrogance produces outcomes that are unwanted.

On 20 September 2020, ordinances that had cleared the Lok Sabha were pushed through the Rajya Sabha on a 'voice vote' and not a division vote, meaning an actual vote where a 'yes' and 'noes' are counted.

The excuse given then was that the individual in control, deputy chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh, was distracted by the disorder in the House and did not notice that a division vote had been demanded. Rajya Sabha television stopped its live broadcast while this was happening and the microphones of the MPs were switched off. (The BJP took the cue and followed the same pattern elsewhere. In the Karnataka Legislative Council, where it lacked a majority, the BJP passed its anti-cow slaughter bill through a voice vote, ignoring the demand for a division vote.)

The two laws given birth in this manner were the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020 and the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020. To remind readers: The first law removed the monopoly of government-run agriculture markets, or mandis, and allowed the sale of produce outside these. It also forbade the taxing of these new spaces. This meant that, over time, the mandis, which are taxed, would become redundant.

This would damage the interests of farmers in those states where the mandis were efficiently run and procurement happened to the satisfaction of farmers. The second law made contract farming possible. However, the law said that aggrieved farmers could not move court in case the buyer defaulted—they could only approach the State bureaucracy for resolution. A third law undid the banning of hoarding of essential commodities, allowing corporations to stock up as much grain as they wanted.

The Modi government said it had the farmers' interests in mind when it wrote up these legislations (the intent, it was said, was to double the incomes of farmers, which had stagnated over years). But if that was the case it was unexplained why the laws had provisions which seemed to deliberately go against the interest of the farmers. Other than the manner in which they were passed, the laws also appeared to violate the Constitution under which agriculture is a state subject. It is for the states to legislate laws on the subject and not the Union. Here, the excuse given was that these laws really regulated trade and not agriculture itself. The bills were signed by the president a week later and became law, triggering a protest that became a mass movement.

Like MNREGA, these were laws that would deeply impact the lives of crores of Indians. The government did not consider what the reaction from these Indians would be. It was at first surprised and taken aback that there was any pushback at all.

When it became clear that it could not actually get the laws implemented, the prime minister ignored the fallout for a full year. Eventually he apologised and retreated. But why get into this position in the first place? Why mess with the lives of crores of people with this level of casualness and arrogance? It is hard for the writer and indeed for the reader to say. One has to believe one has been gifted unlimited power and authority to consider such moves and only one person in this country thinks in that fashion.

WISDOM CORNER

- I pay no attention whatever to anybody's praise or blame. I simply follow my own feelings.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
- Music is the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
- Faith is the bird that feels the light when the dawn is still dark.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

FOCUS

POLITICS

CIVILIZATIONAL SUICIDE

Earlier this month, the Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov offered a succinct description of the Trump administration's new National Security Strategy (NSS), calling it "largely consistent with our vision." He's right. The NSS offers not even a hint of criticism of Russia, neither for its increasingly authoritarian domestic policies, nor for its blatant military aggression against Ukraine. Instead, it singles out Europe – America's longstanding democratic friend and ally – for special abuse.

True, when the first Trump administration issued its NSS in 2017, there was plenty of talk about national sovereignty trumping everything else. But that document still recognized the value of America's allies, stating that "the United States and Europe will work together to counter Russian subversion and aggression." Moreover, this effort fit into a broader strategy of "great power competition," wherein China loomed large.

Since then, Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and China has loomed only larger. But the second Trump administration is bowing to Russia, criticizing the Europeans, and describing the threat from China only in economic terms. Apparently, great-power competition has given way to great-power camaraderie. The US now says it is more interested in "stability," which supposedly can be achieved by working with Russian President Vladimir Putin and through a "G2" with Chinese President Xi Jinping. The implicit message is that great powers think alike. Each wants its own sphere of influence and prizes power over principle.

As many commentators have noted, the NSS represents



Carl Bildt

ALIGNING WITH TRUMP IS NOT EXACTLY A WINNING ELECTORAL STRATEGY, SO US EFFORTS TO MEDDLE IN EUROPE MAY PROVE TO BE AS UNSUCCESSFUL AS RUSSIA'S HAVE BEEN



By heaping abuse on Europe and handling Russia and China with kid gloves, the Trump administration's National Security Strategy represents a radical departure from past US policies. But even as America rejects everything it once stood for, Europeans' only choice is to double down on their own principles

That includes the country with the largest share of Muslims: Russia.

Such vile rhetoric comes directly from European extremists. It is simply astonishing that it will form the basis for how America will treat its strongest and closest allies. The Trump administration is now prepared to interfere in European countries' domestic policies and politics to promote "patriotic" forces – meaning those peddling the same racist garbage. Not even Russia has been so blatantly open about its intention to interfere in European democratic processes.

It remains to be seen what will come of this. Aligning with Trump is not exactly a winning electoral strategy, so US efforts to meddle in Europe may prove to be as unsuccessful as Russia's have been. They could be far more damaging, though, considering how much the transatlan-

tic relationship has already soured.

To be sure, we Europeans have our fair share of problems. We urgently need to revive our entrepreneurial, competitive, and global trading spirits, beef up our defenses, and extend our successful project of integration across the continent. Managing migration is certainly a challenge, just as it is for the US.

Overall, though, we are extraordinarily successful societies, and we must not lose sight of that. Assassination attempts and political violence are extremely rare here. We do not have politicized mobs storming our parliaments. Our democracies remain open and vibrant, most of them topping global rankings for press freedom. The share of our people in prison is one-fifth that of the US, and our murder rates are a small fraction of America's. We don't have a massive trade deficit with the rest of the world. Our health systems deliver better outcomes and longer lives than anywhere else, and overall, EU member states have better-educated populations.

We certainly are not at risk of going "extinct," as the NSS absurdly puts it. Few places on Earth provide a better quality of life for a larger share of the population than Europe does. Rather than trying to placate Trump's America, we must stand taller, re-commit to our own values, and hold out hope that the ideological confusion across the Atlantic soon passes. Barring that, it is not us who will be committing civilizational suicide.

The writer is a former prime minister and foreign minister of Sweden.

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SPECTRUM PERSONAL FINANCE

IPO mania: Check fresh issue before investing



Chander Gupta

INFUSION OF MORE CAPITAL IN THE COMPANIES, WHICH IS POSSIBLE THROUGH FRESH ISSUE, IS A GOOD SIGN

A constant spate of Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) has been hitting the Indian markets steadily. A layman investor would think that more and more money is being infused in the companies' balance sheets with mobilisation of funds through IPOs. A naïve investor would presume that Indian companies are expanding their operations with the infusion of funds gathered through IPOs. But do all the IPOs really strengthen the company's balance sheet?

Every company going public must file a Red Herring Prospectus (RHP) with ROC. The RHP can be viewed on SEBI's website 'sebi.gov.in'. An RHP is a voluminous document generally consisting of more than 500 pages. But the most critical information is contained on page 1 of RHP itself. Even a small retail investor intending to apply for shares in an IPO should look for key pieces of information in the RHP.

The equity shares which are offered to public through an IPO can be either i) Fresh Issue or ii) Offer for Sale (OFS). An IPO can be exclusively Fresh Issue or exclusively Offer for Sale or even a combination of both. Only the Fresh Issue subscription money goes to company's balance sheet. Fresh Issue amount expands the capital base of the company, thereby helping it to grow and diversify. Fresh Issue amount enhances the Net Worth of a company. Fresh Issue means money being poured into the economy, in a broader sense.

In the case of OFS, the promoters/ investors are only divesting their stake through the IPO. Sometimes, the size of the IPO is split between Fresh Issue and OFS. An IPO can be a Fresh Issue of equity shares or Offer for Sale (OFS) of equity shares by Promoters/ Investors, or a combination of both.

If you go through the RHPs of companies which have

floated IPOs during the current Financial Year (2025-26) so far, you will notice that 65% to 75% of the equity shares offered through IPOs have been OFS. Only 25% or so has been Fresh Issue. What is more concerning is that not only Investors, but Promoters too have been exiting the companies by selling their stake through IPOs. Why would a promoter exit the company which has a promising future?

A retail investor looking to invest in IPO must see whether it is a Fresh Issue or an Offer for Sale. Further, promoters selling their stake, through the medium of IPO, in the company they promoted is a negative signal. Do not think that IPOs necessarily mean more capital for the companies. Infusion of more capital in the companies, which is possible through Fresh Issue, is a good sign. But sadly, there are more of OFS than Fresh Issue in the IPOs hitting the stands. Further, equity shares under IPOs are sold at hefty

premiums. In the cases where IPOs are OFS, the premium is pocketed by selling promoters/ investors.

The other thing that a small retail investor must know is whether the company launching IPO complies with Regulation 6(1) of the SEBI (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements). A Regulation 6 (1) company meets with laid down requirements of assets, profit, and net worth. A company which does not meet with 6 (1) requirements is classified as Regulation 6 (2) company. A Regulation 6 (2) company - which does not meet basic requirements of assets, profit, and net worth – is obviously a risky proposition to invest in.

The best option to invest in an IPO, for small retail investors, is a company both offering Fresh Issue and also complying with Regulation 6 (1) of SEBI (ICDR Regulations)

The writer is a retired banker

Wallets without choice

Sir, The IRCTC e-wallet, projected as a convenience tool, has instead become a source of avoidable inconvenience. Users are required to park money in advance, creating a large idle float, yet are charged an additional Rs 10 for every booking. While IRCTC freely holds and uses these deposits, no interest is paid to customers. More troubling is the absence of on-demand withdrawal; even when funds are urgently needed, users are told that balances can be refunded only after closing the wallet altogether. This one-sided arrangement neither aligns with customer convenience nor with fair practice. If advance deposits are mandated, interest-free float and transaction charges are unjustifiable. At the very least, IRCTC should allow partial withdrawals, remove the wallet usage fee, or credit nominal interest on idle balances. Digital convenience must empower users, not bind them.

Gopalaswamy J, CHENNAI

Fair elections

Sir, The reported deletion of nearly 97 lakh names in Tamil Nadu and 74 lakh in Gujarat from electoral rolls points to grave electoral irregularities that border on vote theft. Such manipulation is usually carried out through silent mass deletions, faulty data matching, misuse of Aadhaar linkage, and bureaucratic opacity that keeps voters unaware until polling day. These practices strike at the very root of democracy by denying citizens their constitutional right. Credit must go to whistleblowers and vigilant critics whose timely intervention prevented a far bigger erosion of public trust. Had these actions surfaced after elections, the damage to the credibility of the Election Commission would have been irreparable. To curb such malpractice, continuous public audit of voter rolls, transparent deletion notices, time-bound grievance redressal, and joint oversight by the EC, political parties, civil society, and media are essential. Only collective vigilance can ensure clean, truthful elections and safeguard the nation's democratic soul. Additionally, mandatory publication of deletion lists in local newspapers and on polling-booth notice boards, door-to-door verification drives, SMS and IVRS alerts to every registered mobile, and open data APIs for citizen-led cross-checks must be institutionalized.

RS Narula, PATIALA

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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



Punjab to be major hub of aviation industry: CM Mann

Emphasising that his government's focus is to create job providers rather than job seekers, Mann said the upcoming aviation museum at the Patiala Aviation Complex, built at ₹7 crore, will not only preserve India's flying heritage but also inspire the new generation



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patiala, Dec 20: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Saturday said his government is building a robust aviation ecosystem by providing quality, affordable and world-class training aligned with industry needs. Mann said the state will be positioned as a major hub of the aviation industry in the coming years while interacting with aircraft engineers and trainees at the Patiala Flying Club, according to an official release. Emphasising that his government's focus is to create job providers rather than job seekers, Mann said the upcoming aviation museum at the Patiala Aviation Complex, built at Rs 7 crore, will not only preserve India's flying heritage but also inspire the new generation. Mann said he was elated to be here for a dialogue session with the students taking training from this prestigious institute at Patiala Flying Club, with 32 trainee pilots and 72 students from Patiala Aircraft Maintenance Engineering College.

“Among the 32 trainee pilots, most belong to the first generation in their families entering the aviation sector. In private institutes, it costs Rs 40 to 45 lakh to become a commercial pilot, while at the Patiala Flying Club, there is about a 50 per cent subsidy, reducing the fee to Rs 22 to 25 lakh,” the chief minister said. With a reduction of fee by nearly Rs 20 lakh, students from ordinary households like shopkeepers, teachers, farmers, clerks and others can now dream of becoming pilots. According to the release, a new website of the Department of Civil Aviation was also launched on the occasion. Mann said the Patiala State Aviation Council, Punjab, aims to give every child a chance to fulfil their dream of flying high in the sky. The aviation museum at Patiala will showcase MiG aircraft, second-generation helicopters, simulators, and aviation heritage, he said. The Patiala Flying Club has

broken the decades-long barrier, where training to become a pilot was possible only for the very wealthy, he said. The club was established in 1965 and spans 253 acres, making it one of the largest aviation training campuses in India, Mann said. He said the club ranks seventh nationwide and currently it operates seven training aircraft, including five single-engine planes, two multi-engine planes and one Tecnam P2006T (newly added, purchased from Italy for Rs 5 crore). “The facilities include night landing capability at Patiala airfield and training experience at Amritsar International Airport,” he said. “The aviation career is not limited to becoming a pilot, as many students want to work in aviation but not necessarily as pilots,” he added. For them, Mann said that the Punjab government offers affordable technical education at Patiala Aircraft Maintenance Engineering (AME) College, which runs India's most economical AME and B.Sc (Hons) programs. He claimed that a three-year B.Sc (Hons) plus three-year Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)-approved AME programme costs only Rs 3 lakh in total, whereas in other states, the same course costs Rs 5 to 8 lakh. About one-third of seats are reserved for students from the SC and OBC categories, he said. It is a matter of pride that more than 4,000 trained professionals from the Patiala Flying Club and College are working in major companies, earning an average starting salary of Rs 1.5 lakh per month, he said. The chief minister said that key Indian airlines are the main employers for the students of this prestigious institute.

IMD issues ‘orange alert’ for dense fog in parts Jharkhand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, Dec 20: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Saturday issued an ‘orange alert’ (be prepared) for very dense fog likely in parts of Jharkhand over the next two days, and a ‘yellow alert’ (be updated) for the next three days. The districts for which the ‘orange alert’ has been issued include Garhwa, Palamu, Latehar, Chatra, Hazaribagh, Koderma, Giridih, Ramgarh, and Bokaro. Early morning visibility is expected to drop significantly in these districts to less than 50 metres. Very dense fog is likely in these districts until December 22, the IMD bulletin said. The yellow alert has been issued until December 23. A total of 13 districts are likely to be affected December 21, 10 districts December 22, and 8 districts December 23.

The districts likely to be affected Sunday include: Gumla, Lohardaga, Ranchi, Khunti, Ramgarh, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Jamtara, Deoghar, Dumka, Godda, Pakur, and Sahibganj. Morning visibility is expected to drop in these districts to between 50 and 200 metres, it said. “Light south-easterly to easterly winds are prevailing in the lower tropospheric levels over Jharkhand. Dense fog is likely to prevail in most parts of the northern and some central districts. This situation will continue until December 23,” said Abhishek Anand, Deputy Director of the Ranchi Meteorological Centre. “No significant change in the minimum temperature is likely in the next five days,” he added. He also advised caution during early morning travel due to low visibility.



A person pulls his bicycle while making his way through dense fog on a cold winter morning, in Ranchi, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

PUNJAB AMENDS ABADI DEH ACT



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Dec 20: The Punjab Cabinet Saturday cleared amendments to the Punjab Abadi Deh (Record of Rights) Act, 2021, to replace the specific time periods with “within time notified by the government,” in order to reduce the period for filing objections and their disposal from the existing 90 and 60 days, respectively, to 30 days each. This step will further accelerate the resolution of objections and appeals, benefiting the public significantly. The ‘Mera Ghar Mera Naam’ scheme aims to bestow property rights to people who are living in houses that are situated within the Lal Dora of villages and cities. ‘Lal Dora’ refers to land

amend Section 11 of the Punjab Abadi Deh (Record of Rights) Act, 2021, to replace the specific time periods with “within time notified by the government,” in order to reduce the period for filing objections and their disposal from the existing 90 and 60 days, respectively, to 30 days each. This step will further accelerate the resolution of objections and appeals, benefiting the public significantly. The ‘Mera Ghar Mera Naam’ scheme aims to bestow property rights to people who are living in houses that are situated within the Lal Dora of villages and cities. ‘Lal Dora’ refers to land

that is part of the village ‘abadi’ (habitation) and is used for non-agricultural purposes only. In another decision, the cabinet approved an amendment to the Industrial and Business Development Policy (IBDP) 2022, which replaces the requirement to provide a bank guarantee (BG) for availing fiscal incentives. The decision follows numerous representations from industry associations highlighting that the existing bank guarantee requirements were blocking substantial amounts of working capital. This liquidity crunch was identified as a major hurdle,

limiting the funds available for industrial expansion, research and development, and job creation. The amendment will be applicable from the effective date of the policy, which is October 17, 2022. The cabinet also gave a go-ahead to the redistribution of 253 acres of land of Guru Nanak Dev Thermal Plant in Bathinda to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. A piece of 10 acres will be used for battery energy storage system installation, 10 acres for a new bus stand shall be retained by the Bathinda development authority, and 20 acres shall be retained by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for residential and commercial purposes. The cabinet also gave its concurrence to amend Rule 3 and 16 (1) of the Punjab Management and Transfer of Municipal Properties Rules, 2021, for the modification of the payment schedule for high-value properties, defined herein as “Chunk Sites,” to be sold or transferred by the Municipalities and urban local bodies.

MGNREGA TO VB-G RAM G SWITCH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Dec 20: Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema Saturday said the government will convene a one-day special session of the state assembly December 30 to discuss “how rights of the poor will be snatched” under the VB-G RAM G Bill. The House will also discuss

Punjab to convene special Assembly session

how the Centre is “finishing” the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act scheme (MGNREGA), he said. The decision in this regard was taken by the Punjab Cabinet in a meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann here. Addressing the media after the meeting, Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema accused the



BJP-led Centre of attempting to finish the Constitution. Referring to the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajee-

vika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Bill, 2025, Cheema said the state government was against the amendments being brought under the employment scheme. For discussing how “rights of the poor in Punjab or the country will be snatched”, a one-day special session of the Punjab Vidhan Sabha will be convened December 30, Cheema said.

Veer Birsa Munda Cyclothon culminates in Ranchi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, Dec 20: The first leg of the Veer Birsa Munda Cyclothon, aimed at celebrating the legacy of tribal icon Birsa Munda and promoting national unity, concluded in Ranchi Saturday. Jharkhand Sports, Tourism, Arts, Culture and Youth Affairs minister Sudivya Kumar welcomed the participants of the Cyclothon in a grand function at Ranchi's Morabadi ground, organised by the NCC Directorate Bihar and Jharkhand under the aegis of NCC group headquarters, Ranchi. Conducted under the theme “Shaurya Ke Kadam, Kranti Ki Ore”, the cyclothon, flagged off Thursday from three different locations, promoted the ideals of fitness, social harmony, environmental consciousness and national pride while paying tribute to the legendary tribal freedom fighter Bhagwan Veer Birsa Munda.

Describing the cyclothon as a powerful symbol of the enthusiasm, discipline, and nationalistic spirit of Jharkhand's youth, Kumar said, “It is a proud initiative for the state.” The minister said the selected NCC cadets will now depart on a journey to New Delhi. Addressing the gathering, Kumar said, “All these cadets heading towards Delhi are the proud ambassadors of Jharkhand. Wherever they go, they will represent our state's culture, identity, traditions, and the immortal inspiration of the brave Birsa Munda.” Group Commander of NCC Headquarters, Ranchi, Brigadier RK Singh, senior Army officials, state dignitaries, NCC cadets, and a large gathering of enthusiastic citizens were also present on the concluding function. Vibrant cultural performances by NCC cadets beautifully showcased the rich cultural heritage of

Jharkhand and reflected the spirit of unity and discipline embodied by the Cyclothon. The cyclothon was flagged off by Latehar deputy commissioner Utkarsh Gupta from his district December 18, Khunti SP Manish Toppo from Torpa and principal of BN Jalan College, Sisai, Dr Amitabh Bharti, from Gumla, the NCC said in a statement. The Cyclothon was started at Mandar for Ranchi by former minister Bandhu Tirkey and at Lohardaga by Sushma Neelam December 19, Project Director, Integrated Tribal Development Agency. At Ulihatu, the birthplace of the tribal icon, Khunti Deputy Commissioner R Ronita flagged it off. The second leg will be a challenging and inspiring journey from Ranchi to New Delhi, covering almost 1,300 km through Bihar, UP, Haryana and Delhi over 20 days, which will be flagged off from the Birsa Munda Jail Complex here December 28, the NCC statement said. “This journey from Ranchi to New Delhi will carry the message of unity, courage and cultural pride across the nation by a team of two officers, two permanent staff and 16 NCC cadets, including girl cadets. This leg will culminate in a grand homecoming at the Prime Minister's Rally January 27, 2026, in New Delhi, which will be a fitting tribute to Dharti Aba Veer Birsa Munda at the highest national platform,” it added.

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, ATHMALLIK FOREST DIVISION
AT/PO : ATHMALLIK, DIST : ANGUL-759125
E-mail : dfoathmallik@gmail.com Mob : +91 9437004236
Letter No.5966/1F Section/(55/2025-26)/Dt.17 Dec., 2025
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
E-Procurement Bid Identification No.DFO(AKL)-FE & CC-02/2025-26
1. The Divisional Forest Officer, Athmallik, Odisha on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate in Single cover system in ONLINE MODE only, for the work Construction of staff barrack at Ghodagadi under Madhapur Range.
2. Nature of Work : Building Works
3. Class of Contractor : C & D Class
4. Estimated Cost : 1504726.00
5. Completion Period : 2.5 Calendar Months
6. Availability of Bid Documents : 22.12.2025 (11.00 A.M.) to 04.01.2026 (05.00 P.M.)
7. Last Date for Receipt of Bids : 04.01.2026 up to 05.00 P.M.
8. Opening of Bids : 05.01.2026 at 11:30 A.M.
Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in. The Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation of tender, if any, will be hosted on the website only.
Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer
Athmallik Forest Division
OIPR-08125/11/0025/2526

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, P.H. DIVISION, BHUBANESWAR, SAHID NAGAR, ODISHA
Phone/ FAX : 0674-2540578 (O) / e-Mail: eeophilbbsr@gmail.com
No.C-1852 Office Order No. 9516 /Dt. 19/12/25
Bid Identification No. EEPHBBSR-46 (01)/ 2025-26 Dt. 12.11.2025
1) **The Tender ID: 2025_PHEO_121297_1** for the work "Supply of ISI Marked Centrifugally Cast(Spun) Ductile Iron K-9/K-7 Socket/Spigot Pressure Pipes required for the work of "Procurement of 200mm dia D.I. K-9 pipe for RWRM pipe line of Khandapada NAC for widening and strengthening of Khandapada-Fatengah PWD road from 0/00 to 18/030 Km. (Trinath Chhakk to Forest Office RWRM Right side)." **is hereby cancelled due to technical issue.**
Bid Identification No. EEPHBBSR-46 (02)/ 2025-26 Dt. 12.11.2025
1) **The Tender ID: 2025_PHEO_121298_1** for the work "Supply of ISI Marked Centrifugally Cast(Spun) Ductile Iron K-9/K-7 Socket/Spigot Pressure Pipes required for the work of "Procurement of 200mm dia D.I. K-9 pipe distribution pipe line of Khandapada NAC for widening and strengthening of Khandapada-Fatengah PWD road from 0/00 to 18/030 Km. (Trinath Chhakk to Bhubutbhuti distribution line left side & Trinath Chhakk to SCS School Distribution line right side) **is hereby cancelled due to technical issue.**
Sd./- Superintendent Engineer
P.H. Division, Bhubaneswar
OIPR-13205/11/0061/2526

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, MALKANGIRI
Odisha, Pin -764045 Ph - 06861-230244
e-Mail : malkangiri@ulborissa.gov.in
Lt. No. 7656/Mpl. / 2025 **Date: -19/12/2025**
Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of Local Self-Help Group (SHG) for Operation and Maintenance of AAHAR Kendra at Bus Stand, Malkangiri
No.C-1842 : Sealed proposals are invited from the local WSHGs for Operation and Maintenance of Aahar Centre at Bus Stand, Malkangiri.
The AAHAR Program aims to provide safe, hygienic and subsidized meals to the public, especially targeting the poor and needy. The selected SHG will be responsible for day-to-day operations, food preparation, serving, cleanliness and maintenance of the AAHAR Kendra as per prescribed guidelines.Maintenance of records and timely reporting to the authority. Ensuring quality service and customer satisfaction.
Eligibility Criteria
1. The SHG must be a local group functioning within Malkangiri Municipality areas.
2. The local Self-Help Groups (SHGs) must be registered under NULM / Mission Shakti / ORMAS / Government recognized SHG federations.
3. Should have a minimum of one year of experience in community kitchen/meal preparation/SHG-based livelihood activity or similar service-oriented activities.
4. The SHG should not be blacklisted or involved in any litigation with any government agency.
5. Preference will be given to women-led and experienced SHGs.
6. The SHG must adhering to Pancha Sutra for Group management.
7. The SOP strictly followed issued by the H & UD Department.
Document Should be Submitted:
1. Application expressing interest.
2. SHG registration certificate
3. Copy of Aadhaar card of all members
4. Past Experience details (if any) with supporting documents.
5. Bank account details
6. Resolution copy for willingness to take up the work.
7. SHG should submit last 06 (Six) months resolution copy.
8. SHG should submit the last 06 (Six) month cash book copy.
9. SHG should submit last three years transaction details copy.
10. SHG PAN Card.
Submission Deadline:
Interested SHG may submit their Expression of Interest with relevant documents in a sealed envelope to the office of the Executive Officer-cum-Secretary, District Aahar Society, Malkangiri Municipality before date 20-12-2025 to date- 29-12-2025 by 4 PM during office hours through Speed post/Regd. Post/ Office Drop Box only. The same will be opened on the date i.e 30-12-2025 at 10:30 AM in the chamber of EO with presence of WSHGs and their authorized agent if present. The envelope should be superscribed with "EOI for AAHAR Kendra Operation - Bus Stand, Malkangiri". The WSHGs should submit the self-attested copy of valid registration certificate. This office shall not be held responsible for any delay in receipt of the EOI. The Undersigned reserve the right to reject any or all the application without assigning any reason thereof.
For any further information, please contact the Executive Officer, Malkangiri Municipality office/ office web site www.malkangirimunicipality.in during working hours.
Sd./- Executive Officer-cum-Secretary
District Aahar Society
Malkangiri Municipality
OIPR-13125/11/0012/2526

of the day quote

Not to talk of bringing the economy on track, the present government is undoing the efforts of the previous governments to strengthen the economy

JAI RAM THAKUR | HP LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

If anyone meets anti-India forces and insults Bharat from foreign soil, it's none other than Rahul

GAURAV BHATIA | BJP SPOKESPERSON

We are waiting impatiently for snow. It has been dry since November. And we are feeling a little shortage of water everywhere. Pollution has also increased in both, Jammu and Kashmir regions. Whether it is rain or snow, the air will be cleaner. But the big thing is that our winter tourism season will start

OMAR ABDULLAH | J&K CM

POST OF THE DAY

This will break your heart. People were brought in WB to show crowd at Modi's rally. Sadly 4 people died near the rally ground at railway track, but rally didn't stop. Modi didn't stop. Imagine the value of a common man's life #ModiMustResign @mr_mayank

SHORT TAKES

- EC introduces new BLO option**

Kolkata: The Election Commission has introduced a new option in the BLO application to re-verify logical discrepancies in West Bengal, aiming to resolve nearly 32 lakh cases of voters not linked to the 2002 electoral rolls, an official said Saturday. The application, titled 'Re-verify logical discrepancies', is expected to substantially reduce the number of voters being summoned for hearings, the official said. "The new feature allows BLOs to resolve mismatches caused by differences in spelling, inclusion of middle names, or changes in titles or designations," he said.
- Man assaulted in Baran; 8 held**

Kota (Rajasthan): Eight people were detained Saturday for allegedly assaulting a man, who was returning from a condolence meeting, here in the Baran Sadar area, police said. The incident occurred at around 4.30 pm Saturday when Naresh Meena was returning from a condolence meeting in Akhedi village, the former Sarpanch Tolara, his two sons and around eight others with them allegedly abused Meena and attempted to hit his vehicle, Baran city DSP Hariram Sonli said.
- Two held with narcotics, arms**

Jaipur: Hanumangarh Police Saturday arrested two drug peddlers and seized 6 kilograms of MD, 3 kg of opium, a pistol and three cartridges, officials said. SP Hanumangarh Hari Shankar told reporters that this is the district's biggest-ever MD drug seizure. Acting on a tip-off, the police conducted a raid at a place on Bharatmala Road and arrested Santosh Bishnoi and Ramesh Chandra Bishnoi and recovered the narcotics and arms from their possession, the SP said.



The Mahayuti government has no concern for people's issues. Farmers, unemployment, women's safety and law and order have been completely neglected

RAMESH CHENNITHALA | MEMBER OF THE KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

WEST BENGAL RENAMES 'KARMASHREE' SCHEME

The West Bengal government Saturday issued a notification stating that its 100-day employment scheme, Karmashree, will be renamed 'Mahatmashree' from the next financial year



Court will always lean towards animals who suffer silently: SC

The hotels and resorts in the wildlife areas are aggrieved as they have been asked to vacate the forest area after the Tamil Nadu government notified elephant corridors in the Sigur Plateau in the Nilgiris



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 20: The Supreme Court has observed that courts will always lean in favour of animals, who suffer silently when their migration paths are blocked by humans and commercial ventures. A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joy-malya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi deferred the hearing on a batch of petitions filed by the owners of hotels and resorts in the Nilgiris to January, saying the issue required detailed consideration. The bench said, "All of you are there for commercial purposes and in the elephant corridor. These constructions interfere with elephant movement... The benefit must go to

these animals who are silent victims of these commercial developments." The hotels and resorts in the wildlife areas are aggrieved as they have been asked to vacate the forest area after the Tamil Nadu government notified elephant corridors in the Sigur Plateau in the Nilgiris. The Madras High Court September 12 approved the recommendation of the apex court appointed panel, which had declared that the land purchased by private parties on the elephant corridors in the Sigur Plateau was illegal and that these constructions needed to be dismantled. Earlier, the top court was informed that there were over 800 constructions, including 39 resorts and 390 houses, inside

The Madras High Court September 12 approved the recommendation of the apex court appointed panel, which had declared that the land purchased by private parties on the elephant corridors in the Sigur Plateau was illegal and that these constructions needed to be dismantled

the Sigur elephant corridor. Senior advocates Salman Khurshid and Shueb Alam, appearing for different parties, submitted that the owners of these hotels and resorts had purchased the properties much before the elephant corridors had been notified, and they should be allowed to continue with their "eco-friendly" business with a rider that they must not expand their business ventures. Alam pointed out that some matters are coming up for hearing in January and it would be appropriate that the court hear all of them together. The top court adjourned the matter for further hearing in the first week of January.

CSR must inherently include environmental responsibility: Top court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 20: In a significant ruling, the Supreme Court has said that corporate social responsibility cannot be separated from corporate environmental responsibility and companies cannot claim to be socially responsible while ignoring equal claims of the environment and other beings of the ecosystem. A bench of Justices PS Narasimha and AS Chandurkar passed a slew of directions to protect the Great Indian Bustard, a species which is on the verge of extinction and faces threat from the operation of non-renewable power generators in Rajasthan and Gujarat. "Therefore, the corporate definition of 'social responsibility' must inherently include environmental responsibility. Companies cannot assert to be socially responsible while ignoring equal claims of the environment and other beings of the ecosystem," the bench said. It added that the Constitution of India, under Article 51A(g), imposes a fundamental duty on every citizen "to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures."



Acrobats perform during a show of Ajanta Circus, in Kolkata, West Bengal PTI PHOTO

ATTACKS ON HINDUS IN B'DESH

BJP supporters stage protests across WB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Dec 20: Supporters of BJP and right-wing outfits Saturday staged protests across the city and its outskirts against incidents of arson, loot and killing of minority Hindu community members in Bangladesh. In Kolkata's northern outskirts Sodepur, Trinamool Congress Dumdum MP Saugata Roy had to get down from his vehicle and walk around 1km before boarding an auto-rickshaw as BJP supporters continued to block the Sodepur-Madhyamgram Road. Similar protests were reported in the CIT Road-Beck-bagan area of the city, as well as in Howrah and other parts of the state, with saffron-clad youths blocking traffic for around half an hour, demanding protection for Hindus in Bangladesh. In Sodepur, Roy, who was heading towards the Panihati Utsav winter carnival to inaugurate the festival, was stranded in his car for about half an hour as protestors refused to lift the blockade and allow his vehicle to pass. Around 100 BJP youth wing activists of North 24 Parganas district burnt tyres on the road and shouted slogans against Bangladesh interim government's chief adviser Muhammad Yunus and Islamist fundamentalists and the anti-India demonstrations in the neighbouring country. "We strongly protest the barbaric killing of a Hindu youth by Islamic zealots. From the killing of a Hindu youth in public to the arson at Tagore music academy Chhayanaout and acts of vandalism at newspaper offices, it is clear Islamic jihadis are in control of the situation in Bangladesh. Our protest is aimed against this anarchy and attacks on minorities," a BJP leader said.

Modi inaugurates ₹4K-cr new terminal of Guwahati airport



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Dec 20: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the Rs 4,000-crore new terminal of Guwahati's Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport, which has been designed to reflect Assam's natural heritage and cultural ethos. Touted as the country's first "nature-themed airport", the new terminal will be able to handle 13.1 million passengers per annum, officials said. The total cost of the project is Rs 5,000 crore, including Rs 1,000 crore earmarked specifically for Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) facilities, they said. The project has been developed by Guwahati International Airport Ltd, with operations led by Adani Airport Holdings Limited (AAHL), they added. Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani said the new terminal will serve as a catalyst for regional and industrial development, strengthening Guwahati's role as an emerging economic gateway beyond its tourism potential. After the inauguration, Modi toured the new terminal. He also examined the model of the airport, the Kaziranga-inspired landscape and other key aspects of the facility. The PM also interacted with the workers involved in the construction of the airport. The airport is named after Assam's first chief minister, whose 80-ft statue was also unveiled by the PM. Modi said

the airport will become a key aviation hub for Northeast India and a gateway to Southeast Asia. He said it will open up opportunities and give new meaning to development, along with the preservation of heritage. "Modern airport facilities and advanced connectivity infrastructure serve as gateways to new possibilities and opportunities for any state, and stand as pillars of growing confidence and trust among the people," he said. The new terminal, spread over an area of 1,40,000 sq m, draws inspiration from Assam's rich biodiversity and cultural heritage. Modi said the new terminal will also allow a large number of tourists to visit Assam and make it easier for devotees to have 'darshan' of Goddess Kamakhya. The PM emphasised that the airport has been designed keeping in mind Assam's nature and culture, with greenery inside and arrangements resembling an indoor forest. He highlighted the special use of bamboo in the construction, stating that it was an integral part of life in Assam, symbolising both strength and beauty. Modi also recalled that his government in 2017 amended the Indian Forest Act, 1927, to reclassify bamboo grown in non-forest areas as a "grass", instead of a "tree". "This decision has led to the creation of a wonderful structure in the form of a new terminal today," he said.

SNIPPETS

Man nabbed with posters of banned outfit in Pulwama

Srinagar: A person was arrested in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district Saturday and the posters of the banned Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) were recovered from his possession, police said. During routine checking at Gudoora area near New Circular Road in the south Kashmir district, the accused -- identified as Hilal Ahmad Bhat, resident of Khadermooh Kakapora -- was arrested, an official said. During a search of his personal belongings, some posters of the JeI were recovered, police added.

Court orders Christian Michel's release from custody in ED case

New Delhi: A Delhi court Saturday ordered the release of Christian James Michel from custody in a money laundering case filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) related to the alleged AgustaWestland VVIP chopper scam. However, he will remain in jail as he is also an accused in a separate corruption case filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the matter. Special CBI judge Sanjay Jindal, who was hearing the plea filed by Michel seeking release from custody in the case filed by ED, noted that he has been accused of the offence under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act that is punishable up to seven years of imprisonment and that he has already been in custody for the last seven years.

Nine foreign nationals booked for illegal stay, work at resort

Udupi (Karnataka): A case has been booked against nine foreign nationals, including three minor children, for allegedly staying and working illegally at a private resort here, officials said Saturday. The incident came to light December 19 when staff of the Barkur Primary Health Centre informed the Brahmapur police that a pregnant woman had arrived seeking treatment, they said. During preliminary verification, the police grew suspicious about her identity and residential details and alerted senior officers.

Ex-Agniveer quota for BSF constable post now 50%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 20: The Union Home Ministry has increased the quota for ex-Agniveers for constable recruitment in the BSF to 50 per cent from 10 per cent, according to a gazette notification. The increase has been made by amending the Border Security Force, General Duty Cadre (Non-Gazetted) Recruitment Rules, 2015. The first batch of ex-Agniveers will also get upper age-limit relaxation up to five years, while the rest of the ex-Agniveers will get three years' relaxation. The ex-Agniveers shall also be exempted from Physical Standard Test and Physical

Efficiency Test, said the notification issued Friday. By direct recruitment (including fifty per cent), vacancies shall be reserved for ex-Agniveers in every recruitment year, ten per cent for ex-Servicemen, and up to three per cent for Combatised Constable (Tradesmen) in absorption of annual vacancy, the notification said. In the first phase, the recruitment shall be conducted by the Nodal Force for 50 per cent vacancies earmarked for ex-Agniveers, and in second phase recruitment shall be conducted by the Staff Selection Commission for candidates other than ex-Agniveers for the remaining forty-seven per cent vacancies (including ten per cent ex-Ser-



THE INCREASE HAS BEEN MADE BY AMENDING THE BORDER SECURITY FORCE, GENERAL DUTY CADRE (NON-GAZETTED) RECRUITMENT RULES, 2015

THE FIRST BATCH OF EX-AGNIVEERS WILL ALSO GET UPPER AGE-LIMIT RELAXATION UP TO FIVE YEARS, WHILE THE REST OF THE EX-AGNIVEERS WILL GET THREE YEARS' RELAXATION

vicemen), alongwith the unfilled vacancies of ex-Agniveers in a specific category in the first stage, it said. The Centre had amended the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961, by

the gazette notification in June this year, inserting a new point in the second schedule under the Department of States of the Union Home Ministry, "co-ordinating activities for further progression of Ex-Agniveers"

who exit after completing four years in the armed forces. With this amendment, the work relating to coordinating activities for further progression of ex-Agniveer has been assigned to the Union Home

Ministry, sources said. In June 2022, the government rolled out the Agnipath recruitment scheme with an aim to bring down the age profile of the three services. Under the scheme, candidates between the age bracket of 17 and half years and 21 who get selected are enrolled in the Army, Air Force and Navy as Agniveers for a period of four years with a provision to retain 25 per cent of them for 15 more years, while the remaining 75 per cent exit. The government had already reserved 10 per cent of jobs for ex-Agniveers in all future appointments of constables in the 11-lakh-strong Central Armed Police Forces like CRPF, BSF, CISF, SSB, etc.

of the day

quote

These detentions render the delivery of UN humanitarian assistance in Houthi-controlled areas untenable. This directly affects millions of people in need and limits their access to life-saving assistance

STEPHANE DUJARRIC | SPOKESPERSON, UN

We're not concerned about an escalation with Russia, with regards to Venezuela

MARCO RUBIO | SECRETARY OF STATE, USA

Attempts are being made to differ the election date, which is not acceptable

PUSHPAKAMAL DAHAL | FORMER PRIME MINISTER, NEPAL

SHORT TAKES

World bank boosts Pakistan economy

Islamabad: The World Bank has approved \$ 700 million in financing for Pakistan under a multi-year initiative aimed at supporting the country's macroeconomic stability and service delivery, media reports said Saturday. According to the lender, funds will be released under the bank's Public Resources for Inclusive Development – Multiphase Programmatic Approach (PRID-MPA), which could provide up to \$1.35 billion in total financing, the Dawn newspaper reported. Of this amount, \$ 600 million will go for federal programmes and \$ 100 million will support a provincial programme in Sindh. The approval follows a \$ 47.9 million World Bank grant in August to improve primary education in Punjab.

Russian strike hits Odesa port; kills 8

Kyiv: Eight people were killed and 27 wounded in a Russian missile strike on port infrastructure in Odesa, southern Ukraine, late Friday, Ukraine's Emergency Service said Saturday morning. Some of the wounded were on a bus at the epicentre of the overnight strike, the service said in a Telegram post. Trucks caught fire in the parking lot, and cars were also damaged. The port was struck with ballistic missiles, said Oleh Kiper, the head of the Odesa region. Elsewhere, Ukrainian forces hit a Russian warship and other facilities with drones, Ukraine's General Staff said in a statement Saturday. The nighttime attack Friday hit the Russian warship "Okhotnik," according to the statement posted to the Telegram messaging app.

Israeli fire kills 5 Gaza civilians

Deir Al-Balah: Israeli troops fired over the ceasefire line in the northern Gaza Strip Friday, killing at least five Palestinians, including a baby, according to a local hospital that received the casualties. The killings came as the tenuous Israel-Hamas truce has stalled in recent weeks. The five died in Tuffah, an eastern neighbourhood in Gaza City, said Rami Mhanna, managing director of Shifa Hospital. Israel's military said troops identified "a number of suspicious individuals ... in command structures west of the Yellow Line," and fired at them. The incident is under review and the military "regrets any harm to uninvolved individuals," it added. The Yellow Line divides the Israeli-held part of Gaza from the rest of the territory, and was drawn under the US-brokered ceasefire agreement that went into effect in October.

Epstein release highlights Clinton

REUTERS

Washington, Dec 20: The US Justice Department released thousands of heavily redacted documents related to the late financier and convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein Friday that made scant reference to President Donald Trump but extensively featured Democratic former President Bill Clinton.

The absence of references to Trump was notable given that pictures and documents related to him have trickled out of previous Epstein releases for years. Trump's name appeared in flight manifests listing passengers on Epstein's private plane that were part of a first batch of Epstein material the Justice Department released in February, for instance.

The release also contained other items of note, including a complaint accusing Epstein of involvement in "child pornography" that was filed with the FBI in 1996, long before law enforcement began looking into his misconduct.

Maria Farmer, who filed the complaint, said in a statement that the bureau had failed to follow up on her allegations.

"This is a moment for which I have waited three decades, over half of my life. When I was ignored and hung up on by the FBI in 1996, my world turned upside down, and I felt frozen in time," Farmer said.

Celebrities who appeared in photos made available as part of Friday's release include the late news anchor Walter Cronkite, singers Mick Jagger, Michael Jackson and Diana Ross, British entrepreneur Richard Branson and the former Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson. Many of the photos were undated and provided without context, and none of those figures have been accused of any wrongdoing in



Former US President Bill Clinton, Mick Jagger and Ghislaine Maxwell are seen in this image released by the Department of Justice in Washington, DC, US, December 19

- Clinton featured extensively in Epstein files, Trump references minimal
 - Justice Department to release more Epstein documents, Trump may feature later
 - Bipartisan vote forced release, Democrats criticize
- incomplete disclosure

 - Trump ordered probe into Clinton's Epstein ties amid political pressure
 - Epstein's ties to high-profile figures revealed in previous disclosures

connection with Epstein.

CONGRESS OVERWHELMINGLY BACKED RELEASE OF ALL EPSTEIN FILES

The partial release of the documents Friday was intended to comply with a law overwhelmingly passed by Congress in November that mandated the disclosure of all Epstein files, despite Trump's months-long effort to keep them sealed.

The scandal surrounding Epstein has become a self-inflicted

political wound for Trump, who for years had promoted conspiracy theories about Epstein to his supporters.

It was not immediately clear how substantive the new materials were, given that many Epstein-related documents have previously been made public since his 2019 death in jail, which was ruled a suicide.

Many of the files were heavily redacted — several documents with 100 pages or more were entirely blacked out — and the Jus-

US sanctions more relatives of Venezuelan Prez Maduro

REUTERS

Washington, Dec 20: The United States Friday imposed sanctions on family members and associates of Nicolas Maduro and his wife, as Washington ratchets up pressure on the Venezuelan president.

The US Treasury Department in a statement said it had imposed sanctions on seven people it said were tied to Maduro and his wife. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent accused them of "propping up Nicolas Maduro's rogue narcostate."

"We will not allow Venezuela to continue flooding our nation with deadly drugs," Bessent said.

"Maduro and his criminal accomplices threaten our hemisphere's peace and stability. The Trump administration will continue targeting the networks that prop up his illegitimate dictatorship."

Venezuela's information ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Maduro and his government have vehemently denied links to crime and say that the



US is seeking to oust him in order to take control of Venezuela's vast oil reserves.

In recent months, the administration of US President Donald Trump has been ratcheting up pressure on Maduro, executing a large-scale military build-up in the southern Caribbean.

It has carried out strikes against suspected drug vessels in the region, seized a sanctioned oil tanker off the coast of Venezuela, and declared a "blockade" of all sanctioned oil tankers entering and leaving Venezuela.

Trump has also repeatedly said that strikes on land in Venezuela are coming soon.

Friday's action sanctioned relatives of Carlos Erik Malpica Flores, the nephew of Maduro's wife, Cilia Flores.

Bangladesh holds funeral for slain youth leader

REUTERS

Dhaka, Dec 20: Tens of thousands of Bangladeshi mourners, including the country's interim government leader, attended the funeral Saturday of a slain youth leader and election candidate amid tight security.

Sharif Osman Hadi, 32, a key figure in last year's student-led uprising that toppled longtime Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, was shot in the head by masked assailants in Dhaka last week while launching his campaign for an election due in February. He died Thursday in Singapore after six days on life support.

His death has prompted a wave of unrest in the South Asian nation that included coordinated mob attacks on major newspapers and cultural insti-

tutions.

Police and paramilitary forces were deployed across the capital for Saturday's funeral but there were no reports of any renewed violence.

Interim government leader Muhammad Yunus said Hadi's legacy would endure, describing the funeral as a collective pledge to uphold the ideals he had championed.

"Today, we have come to promise you (Hadi) that we will fulfil what you stood for," Yunus, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, told the mourners, who included Bangladesh's army chief and representatives from across the political spectrum.

In a rare and symbolic honour, Hadi was laid to rest on the Dhaka University campus beside the grave of national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.



BANGLADESHIS HOPE ELECTION WILL END YEARS OF INSTABILITY

Bangladesh is to elect a new parliament on February 12 - a transition many hope will help the Muslim-majority nation of 175 million people recover from nearly two years of instability and reclaim its position as a regional success story.

But frequent bouts of violent protests and political wrangling

among disparate groups including Islamist hardliners have punctured the national sense of euphoria that arose after Hasina was ousted in August 2024.

It has also exposed the limitations of Yunus' interim government, analysts say, raising questions over his grip on governance in the world's largest apparel producer after China.

The government has declared

Imran Khan, wife get 17-year sentences

REUTERS

Lahore, Dec 20: A Pakistani court Saturday sentenced former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi to 17 years in prison each in a corruption case involving the under-priced purchase of luxury state gifts, the court and Khan's lawyers said.

The latest conviction adds to a series of legal troubles for Khan, who has been behind bars since August 2023, and is currently serving a 14-year sentence in a separate land graft case.

He faces dozens of cases filed since he was ousted from office in 2022, ranging from corruption to anti-terrorism and state secrets charges. Khan has denied wrongdoing in all the cases, which his party says are politically motivated.

"The court announced the sentence without hearing the defence and sentenced 17 years imprisonment to Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi with heavy fines," Khan's family lawyer Rana Mudassar Umer told Reuters.

They were handed 10 years' rigorous imprisonment under

Pakistan's penal code for criminal breach of trust and a further seven years under anti-corruption laws, the special court of Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency said in its verdict.

Khan's jail term from Saturday's ruling would begin after he has served the 14 years from the land graft case, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said.

The case relates to luxury watches gifted to Khan by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman during official visits, which prosecutors said Khan and his wife then purchased from the state at a heavily discounted price in violation of Pakistan's gift rules.

Tarrar said the purchase resulted in losses of several million rupees for the state.

Zulfi Bukhari, a spokesperson for Khan, said the verdict "ignores basic principles of justice" and turns the process into "a tool for selective prosecution." Khan has told his legal team to appeal the decision at the Islamabad High Court, Salman Safdar, another one of his lawyers, told reporters outside the jail where the trials were being held, Geo News reported.



US launches major ISIS strikes in Syria

REUTERS

Washington, Dec 20: The US military launched large-scale strikes against dozens of Islamic State targets in Syria Friday in retaliation for an attack on American personnel, US officials said.

A US-led coalition has been carrying out airstrikes and ground operations in Syria targeting Islamic State suspects in recent months, often with the involvement of Syria's security forces.

President Donald Trump had vowed to retaliate after a suspected ISIS attack killed US personnel last weekend in Syria.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said the strikes targeted "ISIS fighters, infrastructure, and weapons sites" and that the operation was "OPERATION HAWKEYE STRIKE."

"This is not the beginning of a war — it is a declaration of vengeance," Hegseth said. "Today, we hunted and we killed our enemies. Lots of them. And we will continue," he added.

Trump said on social media



that the Syrian government fully supported the strikes and that the US was inflicting "very serious retaliation."

At a speech in North Carolina Friday night, Trump called it a "massive" blow against the ISIS members that the US blames for the Dec 13 attack on coalition forces.

"We hit the ISIS thugs in Syria. It was very successful," Trump said at a rally in Rocky

Mount, North Carolina.

US Central Command said the strikes hit more than 70 targets across central Syria, adding that Jordanian fighter jets supported the operation.

One US official said the strikes were carried out by US F-15 and A-10 jets, along with Apache helicopters and HIMARS rocket systems.

Syria reiterated its steadfast commitment to fighting Islam-

- STRIKES HIT MORE THAN 70 ISIS TARGETS
- RETALIATORY STRIKES FOLLOW ATTACK ON US TROOPS
- TRUMP SAYS SYRIAN PRESIDENT BACKS US MILITARY ACTION AGAINST ISIS
- US HITS ISIS IN SYRIA WITH LARGE RETALIATORY STRIKES, OFFICIALS SAY

ic State and ensuring that it has "no safe havens on Syrian territory," according to a statement by the foreign ministry.

Two US Army soldiers and a civilian interpreter were killed Saturday in the central Syrian town of Palmyra by an attacker who targeted a convoy of American and Syrian forces before being shot dead, according to the US military. Three other US soldiers were also wounded in the attack.

About 1,000 US troops remain in Syria. The Syrian Interior Ministry has described the attacker as a member of the Syrian security forces suspected of sympathizing with Islamic State.

- Youth leader was shot in the head by masked assailants
- His killing has triggered violence ahead of elections
- Interim government leader Yunus leaders mourners at funeral
- Rights groups urge government action to end mob violence
- Unrest has gripped Bangladesh since PM Hasina's 2024 ouster

Saturday a day of state mourning for Hadi and has urged citizens to resist "mob violence by fringe elements", warning that turmoil threatens Bangladesh's fragile democratic transition.

Human Rights Watch called Hadi's killing a "terrible act" and urged the government to act urgently to halt the violence

of the day

quote

So how do we work out on the construction (finance), particularly on the residential real estate, is something that we are working on. But it is also a fact that many of the people who have been aggressive on the residential real estate market have burned their hands

CS SETTY | CHAIRMAN, SBI

Celebrating the opening of our 200th property in India is a defining moment for Marriott International. Over the years, our growth in India has been shaped by hotels that offer enriching experiences.

KIRAN ANDICOT | SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, SOUTH ASIA, MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL

Pressure from forex due to the Indian rupee's sharp depreciation against the US dollar and euro has not eased for several months now and the input costs of raw materials and logistics have been impacted

HARDEEP SINGH BRAR | PRESIDENT AND CEO, BMW GROUP

RESULTS CORNER

Oppo Mobiles India net profit tanks 56%

New Delhi: Oppo Mobiles India reported a net profit of about Rs 620 crore in the fiscal 2024-25, a 56 per cent drop year-on-year, according to financial data accessed by business intelligence platform Tofler. The company, which designs, manufactures, and distributes mobile phones, clocked revenues of about Rs 32,216 crore in the financial year 2024-25, registering a 38 per cent decline as compared to a year ago. "Despite market-driven variation in results, the company remains sustainably profitable and focused on further growing profitability in the future," an Oppo India spokesperson said in an email response to a query by PTI. The company reported a net profit of Rs 620 crore during the financial year ended March 2025. This was 56 per cent fall from Rs 1,420 crore posted in the previous financial year. The company's total expenses in the fiscal year stood at Rs 31,178 crore, as per the data.

Decathlon India sees loss of ₹65cr in FY25

New Delhi: Sports goods manufacturer and retailer Decathlon Sports India has registered a net loss of Rs 65.03 crore and a marginal increase in revenue during FY25. Revenue from operations was up 3.11 per cent to Rs 4,133.10 crore in the financial year ended March, 2025, according to financial data accessed through business intelligence platform Tofler. A year earlier, Decathlon Sports India reported a net profit of 197.19 crore, while the company's revenue from operations stood at Rs 4,008.26 crore. Total income, including other income of the company, a subsidiary of French sporting goods retailer Decathlon, was up 2.84 per cent to Rs 4,182.05 crore in FY25.

Parle Agro net jumps manifold to ₹115.38cr

New Delhi: Parle Agro, which owns popular beverage brands such as Frooti, Appy, SMOODH and Bailey, has recorded a multi-fold growth in its consolidated net profit at Rs 115.38 crore in FY25, while revenue rose 5 per cent to Rs 3,284.13 crore. Its total income, which includes other income, was at Rs 3,370.14 crore, up 5 per cent annually in the fiscal year ended March, 2025, according to financial data accessed through business intelligence platform Tofler. Parle Agro's net profit was at Rs 17.3 crore, and its revenue from operations was at 3,126.06 crore a year before in FY24.



After due consultation with all stakeholders, we are going to form another working group to review the non-agricultural commodity derivative segment. This working group will be notified very shortly

TUHIN KANTA PANDEY | CHAIRMAN, SEBI

INDIA SECURES ADB FUNDING

Manila-based the Asian Development Bank (ADB) committed USD 4.258 billion in sovereign lending to India in 2025, supporting projects that strengthen the country's skill ecosystem, accelerate renewable energy deployment, transform urban infrastructure, expand metro networks, improve healthcare services, and promote ecotourism



FII selling crosses ₹21K-cr

TOTAL FII SALE FIGURE THROUGH EXCHANGES STOOD AT ₹2,30,964CR YTD IN CY25. THE TOTAL FII BUYING FIGURE FOR THE PRIMARY MARKET STOOD AT ₹73,106CR

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Dec 20: Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) have net sold shares worth Rs 21,104 crore in December, but there are signs of a reversal of foreign institutional investor outflows due to macro strength and earnings visibility, analysts said Saturday.

Strengthening of the currency in the last two days has helped to stem the tide of FII selling, they said. During the last three trading days, FIIs were buyers in the cash market with a total buy figure of Rs 3,596 crore.

"As the year 2025 draws to a close, there are signs of a reversal of FII outflows witnessed this year and indications of capital inflows in 2026," said Dr VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Ltd.

"With India's GDP growth improving steadily and corporate earnings growth indicating an uptrend in the coming quarters, FIIs are likely to turn net



buyers in 2026," he added.

The long-term trend of FII buying or investing through the primary market continues with an investment of Rs 11,454 crores in November so far.

Total FII sell figure through exchanges stood at Rs 2,30,964 crore year-to-date in CY25. The total FII buy figure for the primary market stood at Rs 73,106 crore.

Analysts said that sustained FII selling, along with the high

trade deficit, contributed significantly to the depreciation of the rupee in 2025.

The rupee's annual depreciation crossed above 5 per cent, but the last two days witnessed a reversal of the currency depreciation. Rupee bounced back from the low of 91.14 to the dollar December 16 to 89.29 December 19.

Though selling pressure dominated most sessions of

'MAKE IN INDIA' BOOSTER

Electronics exports zoom 38% in April-Nov

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 20: In a booster for the 'Make in India' and production-linked incentive (PLI) initiatives, electronics exports rose about 38 per cent (year-on-year) in the April-November period this fiscal (FY26), led by smartphones, according to official figures.

The electronics exports reached \$31 billion in eight months this financial years. Apple alone exported iPhones worth nearly \$14 billion — more than 45 per cent of the total exports value of

electronic items.

Last month, a company filing showed that Apple India posted a record high domestic sales of \$9 billion in FY25, and one in every five iPhones made globally in FY25 was manufactured/assembled in India. The company's manufacturing in India contributed 12 per cent of Apple's global production value.

Electronics production has increased sharply from about Rs 1.9 lakh crore in 2014-15 to around Rs 11.3 lakh crore in 2024-25. Electronics exports have also risen from Rs 38,000 crore to more than Rs 3.27 lakh

crore during the same period, as per the government data.

India had only two mobile phone manufacturing units in 2014-15, which has now increased to around 300 units. Mobile phone production has grown from Rs 18,000 crore to Rs 5.45 lakh crore, while exports have surged from Rs 1,500 crore to nearly Rs 2 lakh crore.

Meanwhile, the Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0), located in 10 states with projected investments of Rs 1,46,846 crore, have estimated to generate about 1.80 lakh jobs.

MG CENTRAL LAUNCHES ALL-NEW HECTOR IN CITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: MG Central launched the all-new MG Hector at its Khandagiri showroom Saturday, introducing a refreshed SUV designed to combine bold styling, advanced technology and enhanced comfort.

The launch event was attended by Saubhagya Sahoo, Branch Manager, UCO Bank, and Sushil Pradhan, Sales Manager, Axis Bank as guests of honour. Debashis Das, Sales Head, MG, along with senior company representatives, was also present on the occasion.

The new MG Hector features the striking Aura Hex Grille and sculpted front and rear bumpers, giving the SUV a confident and muscular stance. It is equipped with ADAS Level 2 technology offering 11 safety and convenience features, along with a 1.5-litre turbo-charged intercooled petrol engine delivering 143 PS of power and 250 Nm of torque. Other highlights include rain-sensing wipers, Follow Me Home headlamps and dual LED projector headlamps with fog lamps.

Inside, the Hector offers first-in-segment i-SWIPE touch ges-



ture controls, a panoramic sunroof, ventilated front seats and a 6-way power-adjustable driver

seat. The cabin is anchored by the largest-in-segment 14-inch HD portrait infotainment sys-

Oil makes comeback amid transition hype, with India at centre

THE REVIVAL OF THE 'OIL IS KING' NARRATIVE IN 2025 WAS FUELLED BY POLICY DELAYS, INFRASTRUCTURE BOTTLENECKS, AND GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 20: After years of forecasts predicting an imminent peak in oil demand amid a swift shift to renewables, oil and gas made a quiet but unmistakable comeback, with India emerging as a central driver of global consumption.

Major energy outlooks - from BP and McKinsey to the IEA - pushed peak oil into the 2030s and revised 2050 demand upward. And every forecaster said India will emerge as the epicentre of global demand growth, with its rise in appetite for energy outpacing that of China and Southeast Asia combined.

European nations, long champions of the clean energy transition, leaned more heavily on fossil fuels as supply shortfalls and high prices persisted amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. In the US, President Donald Trump's fossil-forward policies reinforced this trend. The result: oil was back on the centre board.

India's oil and gas sector in 2025 was marked by shifting import patterns, policy reforms,

rising demand and a push to strengthen energy security, underscoring the country's evolving role in the global energy landscape.

It continued its heavy reliance on crude imports in 2025, with Russian oil remaining a key source despite international pressure. The US escalated calls for New Delhi to cut Russian purchases, even imposing a 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods, yet Russian crude still accounted for more than a third of India's imports for most of the year, fuelling domestic refineries that produce petrol, diesel, and other petroleum products.

It was only with the enforcement of sanctions on major Russian exporters, Rosneft and Lukoil, in late November that imports were tempered, dropping from an average of 1.7-1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) to under 1 million bpd. Since Russian oil itself was not directly sanctioned, predictions that Indian imports would fall to zero remain unlikely, as refiners pivoted to non-sanctioned Russian entities to continue securing discounted crude.



The year also saw India diversifying crude supply, with US crude imports surging, particularly after Trump's tariff, alongside expansion in LNG and LPG trade, reflecting broader efforts to reduce dependence on any single source.

Domestic policy shifts included the notification of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 2025, introducing a modern regulatory framework to attract investment and simplify licensing for exploration and production.

Demand trends remained robust, with India's oil consump-

tion projected to grow faster than China's in 2025 and forecasts showing the country set to account for a significant share of global oil demand growth through the next decade.

India's refining capacity expanded steadily, reinforcing its role as a global refining hub. Despite infrastructure gains, crude oil and gas production remained under pressure from ageing fields, underscoring the need for new discoveries and upstream investments to reduce high import dependence.

Demand trends remained robust, with India's oil consump-

tion projected to grow faster than China's in 2025 and forecasts showing the country set to account for a significant share of global oil demand growth through the next decade.

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Demand trends remained robust, with India's oil consump-

tion projected to grow faster than China's in 2025 and forecasts showing the country set to account for a significant share of global oil demand growth through the next decade.

Two consecutive years of low prices and muted volatility are rare in oil market history. Unlike the brief lulls seen after the Asian financial crisis in 1998-99 or the shale glut of 2015-16 - both followed by sharp resets - the current calm appears more durable, reflecting diversified supply, weaker demand growth, and markets increasingly conditioned to geopolitical noise.

For major importers like India, the stability provided a welcome breather. Just like in COVID times, the government raised excise duty on petrol and diesel without raising retail fuel prices. The increase in tax, which brought in much-needed additional revenues for the government that had given major income tax relief, was adjusted against the rate reduction warranted from the fall in oil prices.

As 2025 draws to a close, the oil and gas industry faces a nuanced outlook - supply dynamics remain influenced by geopolitical risks and evolving demand profiles, while climate pressures and strategic pivots among global majors signal a sector in transition heading into 2026.

Realtors predict surge in housing prices in '26



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 20: Nearly 70 per cent of real estate developers expect housing prices to rise by more than 5 per cent during the 2026 calendar year on strong demand, according to a survey by CREDAI and CRE Matrix.

Realtors' body CREDAI and real estate data analytics firm CRE Matrix have done a sentiment survey of real estate developers. As many as 647 developers participated in the survey conducted in November and December.

According to the findings of the survey, 68 per cent of respondents expect home prices to rise above 5 per cent in the next calendar year.

The survey report was released at a CREDAI conclave held in the national capital December 19-20. As per the survey report, 1 per cent of respondents believe prices will rise by more than 25 per cent, while 3 per cent expect the prices to rise between 15 per cent and 25 per cent.

As much as 18 per cent of respondents expect housing prices to appreciate between 10 per cent and 15 per cent, while 46 per cent of participants see rates to move up between 5 per cent and 10 per cent.

Only 8 per cent of respondents see negative growth in prices, while 25 per cent feel rates to grow at less than 5 per

cent. Among other findings, the report said that two-third of developers hold a largely positive outlook for the residential segment in 2026 calendar year and believe demand to rise by more than 5 per cent.

Commenting on the findings, Shekhar G Patel, President, CREDAI, said, "The survey clearly indicates that real estate growth in CY'26 will be firmly anchored in end-user demand rather than speculative activity. The sector is witnessing a calibrated approach to new supply, with stronger emphasis on cost efficiency through technology adoption and closer alignment between product offerings and evolving homebuyer preferences."

To sustain and accelerate this momentum, he said, faster approvals and greater regulatory clarity will be critical.

"Streamlined clearances can unlock the next phase of housing supply across markets, support timely project delivery, and enable more balanced and sustainable urban growth," Patel said.

Abhishek Kiran Gupta, CEO and Co-Founder, CRE Matrix and IndexTap, said, "The insights highlight steady demand expectations, disciplined supply addition, and a sharper focus on long-term value creation." CREDAI has more than 13,000 real estate developers as members.

T20 WORLD CUP

Gill gets boot; Ishan, Rinku return

As India gear up for the T20 World Cup at home, the selectors have backed a squad built on impact, and versatility

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 20: Taking a bold call with an eye to maximise impact over reputation, the Indian selectors on Saturday dropped Shubman Gill from the T20 World Cup squad and brought back wicketkeeper-batter Ishan Kishan along with Rinku Singh.

Gill's omission is the most interesting decision of the selection meeting in Mumbai although given his form, it wasn't very surprising. In his place, Axar Patel is the new vice captain of the side.

Despite being one of India's most consistent batters across Tests and ODIs, Gill has struggled to nail down a fixed role in T20Is, particularly as an opener, where India are now prioritising high-impact starts over accumulation.

His strike-rate concerns in powerplays and the emergence of more explosive options appear to have weighed against him. He only scored 4, 0 and 28 in three games against South Africa.

"Shubman Gill is short of runs at the moment and missed last WC too," chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar said at the press conference. In contrast, Ishan's return reflects the selectors' renewed emphasis on left-right combinations and aggressive wicket-keeping-batters at the top.

Kishan, who has been out of favour for much of the year following fitness and availability issues, has impressed in recent Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, leading Jharkhand to the title with a splendid hundred.

"It's not about Gill's form. We wanted to have a keeper at the top," skipper Suryakumar said on Gill's omission.

Kishan's inclusion meant



We know what a quality player he (Gill) is, but, perhaps short of a little bit of runs at the moment

AJIT AGARKAR | CHAIRMAN OF SELECTORS, INDIA

that talented Yashasvi Jaiswal had to miss out while Jitesh also lost his place on the squad.

India have doubled down on power at the top and middle order, picking Abhishek Sharma alongside Suryakumar, Tilak Varma and Kishan, while Rinku's presence continues India's commitment to a specialist finisher who can absorb pressure and explode at the death.

All-round depth remains a cornerstone of the squad.

Strong bowling unit

Hardik Pandya will once again shoulder the responsibility of balancing the XI, supported by Shivam Dube, whose ability to target spinners has become a major asset, and the Axar-Washington Sundar duo, offering variety, control and batting depth.

The bowling unit blends experience with experimentation.

Jasprit Bumrah leads the

SKY SURVIVES

Since his return to the side during the Asia Cup as a vice-captain, Shubman Gill scored just 291 runs in 15 matches and innings at an average of 24.25 and a strike rate of above 137 with no fifties and a best score of 47. While the skipper Suryakumar Yadav has managed 218 runs at a strike-rate of 123.2 in 19 innings, his worst since making international debut has got a reprieve.

pace attack alongside Arshdeep Singh, India's most reliable left-arm option in T20Is.

Harshit Rana's inclusion points to a forward-looking approach, with the selectors backing raw pace and bounce as a point of difference.

Spin will be handled by Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakravathy, a pairing that provides both wrist-spin guile and mystery, especially effective in the middle overs on

abrasive surfaces. Washington Sundar and Axar bring in the much-needed versatility.

Fixtures

India will begin their campaign on the opening day of the tournament with a game against the USA February 7. India's next match is against Namibia (February 12) before taking on arch-rivals Pakistan in Colombo February 15.

India will compete their Group A engagements with a match against Netherlands at Ahmedabad February 18. The Super 8s matches will begin from February 21 and final is slated for March 8.

SQUAD:

Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel (vc), Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, Harshit Rana, Sanju Samson (wk), Washington Sundar, Varun Chakravathy, Ishan Kishan (wk), Rinku Singh.

BWF WORLD TOUR FINALS

Heartbreak for Sat-Chi after semis defeat

The shuttlers become the first Indian men's pair to reach the semifinals of the season-ending event

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hangzhou, Dec 20: Indian men's doubles pair of Satwik-sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty bowed out of the BWF World Tour Finals after losing the semifinal to China's Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang here Saturday.

The Indians won the first game but failed to capitalise on the advantage, going down 21-10, 17-21 13-21 in the last-four contest that lasted one hour and three minutes.

Satwik and Chirag had beaten their opponents in the group stage but the Chinese pair turned the tables on them when it mattered the most.

The Indian duo was unbeaten in the group stage in the season-ending tournament but Saturday's defeat meant that they could not become the first men's pair to reach the summit clash of the coveted event.

They though became the first



Indian men's pair to reach the semifinals of the season-ending event.

The two pairs split the first 10 points, with the Indians targeting Liang. Patient and composed, the Indians dictated terms to move to 9-6 before a smash from Chirag gave them a four-point cushion at the break.

With Satwik once again stepping up, covering the third shot while serving to Liang, the Indians kept a firm grip on the rallies. A run of eight straight points gave them a commanding 10-point advantage. They sealed the first game at the first opportunity as the Chinese found the net again.

Good serve and precise third shots helped the Chinese take a 6-3 lead after the change of ends, aided by a few unforced errors from the Indians. A Chirag smash and a wide shot from the Chinese brought India back to 7-7, but the local favourites edged 9-7 ahead before Liang committed a short service error.

The Chinese maintained a two-point cushion at the interval. On resumption, Chirag pounced on a weak return at the net and followed it up with a scathing cross-court smash to level it at 11-11. However, an error on return of serve and a moment of indecision cost India two quick points.

Cummins, Lyon floor Eng

England slide to 207/6 at stumps on Day 4

REUTERS

Adelaide, Dec 20: Pat Cummins skittled England's top order and Nathan Lyon spun out their soft underbelly to all but seal another Ashes series victory for Australia on day four of the third test at Adelaide Oval on Saturday.

Chasing a world record 435 runs to win, England were reduced to 207 for six at stumps, still 228 runs short of victory and having played no small part in their predicament through batting misadventure.

Jamie Smith, on two, and Will Jacks, on 11, were left to try to salvage something from the wreckage of another demolition day for the tourists.

With holders Australia 2-0



up in the five-test series after eight-wicket wins in Perth and Brisbane, they need only draw the match to retain the urn.

But there is little prospect of a rousing comeback win from an England squad that have failed to live up to expectations.

East Bengal FC crowned champions of inaugural SAFF Women's Club C'ship



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kathmandu, Dec 20: East Bengal FC etched their name in the history books after lifting the inaugural SAFF Women's Club Championship 2025 title after a commanding 3-0 victory over Nepal's APF (Armed Police Forces) in the final at the Dasharath Stadium in Kathmandu Saturday.

The Indian Women's League (IWL) champions recently capped off an undefeated season, winning all of their matches and not conceding in any. For the second time in the

competition, Ugandan striker Fazila Ikwaput proved that she can perform at a high level, scoring both of her team's goals in the finals (21 & 46 minutes), taking her tournament total to nine goals.

The next best player for East Bengal was Shilky Devi Hemam, who scored the second goal of the finals (35 minutes), which put East Bengal in complete control of the finals.

Coach Anthony Andrews, who led East Bengal through group play in the IWL, directed his team to the finals after finishing first in their group.

24-YEAR PRO CAREER

Wawrinka set to hang racquet in 2026

REUTERS

Bern, Dec 20: Stanislas Wawrinka will hang up his racquet at the end of 2026, the three-times Grand Slam champion announced Friday, bringing down the curtain on a 24-year professional career that saw him gatecrash tennis's elite during the sport's golden era.

Switzerland's Wawrinka, who turned professional in 2002, will turn 41 in March, capping a journey that transformed him from perennial underdog to giant-killer.

Nicknamed 'Stanimal', Wawrinka conquered Rafa Nadal to claim the 2014 Australian Open before he toppled Novak Djokovic twice -- at the 2015 French Open and 2016 US Open -- each time beating the world number one in the final.



"Every book needs an ending. It's time to write the final chapter of my career as a professional tennis player. 2026 will be my last year on tour," Wawrinka wrote on Instagram.

"I still want to push my limits and finish this journey on the best note possible. I still have dreams in this sport. I've enjoyed every part of what tennis has given me, especially the

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STANISLAS WAWRINKA

emotions I feel playing in front of you."

Wawrinka won 16 ATP titles and had a career-high world ranking of three. He also captured Olympic doubles gold alongside Roger Federer in 2008 and helped deliver Switzerland's maiden Davis Cup title in 2014.

The announcement comes with Wawrinka currently 157th in the world after injuries and knee surgeries sent him tumbling down the rankings.

Kalinga Lancers appoint Sanjay, Arthur Van Doren as co-captains

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Dec 20: Ahead of the upcoming Hockey India League season, Kalinga Lancers announced Saturday the appointment of India's Sanjay and Belgium stalwart Arthur Van Doren as co-captains of the team.

The HIL 2026 will be held from January 3 to 26, 2026, across Chennai, Ranchi and Bhubaneswar. Kalinga Lancers will begin their HIL 2026 campaign against Ranchi Royals January 4, 2026, in Chennai.

India drag-flicker Sanjay recently led the national team to a runners-up finish, while Van Doren captained Belgium to the title at the 31st Sultan Azlan Shah Cup in November 2025, underscoring the leadership pedigree both players bring to Kalinga Lancers into the new season.

Hailing from Haryana, San-



jay rose swiftly through the junior ranks, featuring at the 2018 Youth Olympic Games and the 2021 Junior World Cup, where he served as vice-captain and was the team's top goal-scorer. He made his senior team debut in the 2022-23 FIH Hockey Pro League and has since been a regular fixture in the Indian setup.

He was part of India's gold-medal-winning campaign

at the 2023 Asian Games and the historic bronze medal at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. The Arjuna Awardee has represented India in 78 international matches to date.

Arthur Van Doren, meanwhile, is one of modern hockey's most decorated defenders. A Tokyo 2020 Olympic gold medallist and 2023 World Cup champion, he also won silver at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and the 2023 World Cup.

REUTERS

Miami, Dec 20: Former heavyweight champion Anthony Joshua delivered a dose of reality to American Jake Paul Friday with a savage sixth-round knockout that left the social-media-star-turned prize-fighter nursing a jaw broken in two places.

Paul managed to evade the heavily favoured Briton through a lacklustre first four rounds before Joshua found his range, knocking his opponent down twice in the fifth round and finishing him off with a devastating right hand in the sixth.

"It took a little bit longer than expected but the right hand finally found its destination," said Joshua, who was returning to the ring after a 15-month lay-off. "Jake Paul has done really well tonight. I want to give him his props. He got up time and



time again. It was difficult in there for him but he kept trying to find a way. It takes a real man to do that... but he came up against a real fighter tonight," he added.

After the bout, which was carried live to Netflix's approximately 300 million subscribers, the 36-year-old Joshua called out long-time rival Tyson Fury.

"If you're a real bad man, don't do all that talking, 'AJ this, AJ that,' let's see you in the ring and talk with your fists," he said.

'DOUBLE BROKEN JAW' FOR PAUL

Paul later confirmed on social media that he had suffered a "double broken jaw", uploading an X-ray showing two

breaks while he joked he was ready to fight Mexican boxer Canelo Alvarez in 10 days' time.

"A nice little ass-whooping from one of the best to ever do it...," Paul added. "I'm going to come back and get a world championship belt at some point."

Others were not convinced. "This is a clown show," former UFC bantamweight champion Aljamain Sterling posted on X. It's the biggest village that we are organizing in the Milano Organizing Committee.

Paul frustrated Joshua, and viewers, by diving at the Briton's legs repeatedly and ending up on the canvas in the early rounds.

"Why are people complaining? You knew what you were gonna get," former mixed martial artist and podcaster Josh Thomson posted. "If you thought anything else you were in denial."