



Life-changing choice

Actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu shares how entrepreneurship has changed her life

LEISURE | P2



US-Venezuela rift

The US seizes a Russian-flagged oil tanker that was being shadowed by a Russian submarine

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Silver skyrockets

Silver prices surge by ₹5,000 to hit a new record of ₹2,56,000 per kilogram amid strong safe-haven demand

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ICC-BCB impasse

BCB says the ICC is "willing to work closely" with it to address security concerns around the team's participation in the T20 WC

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CM lays stone for 118 schools under new edu scheme

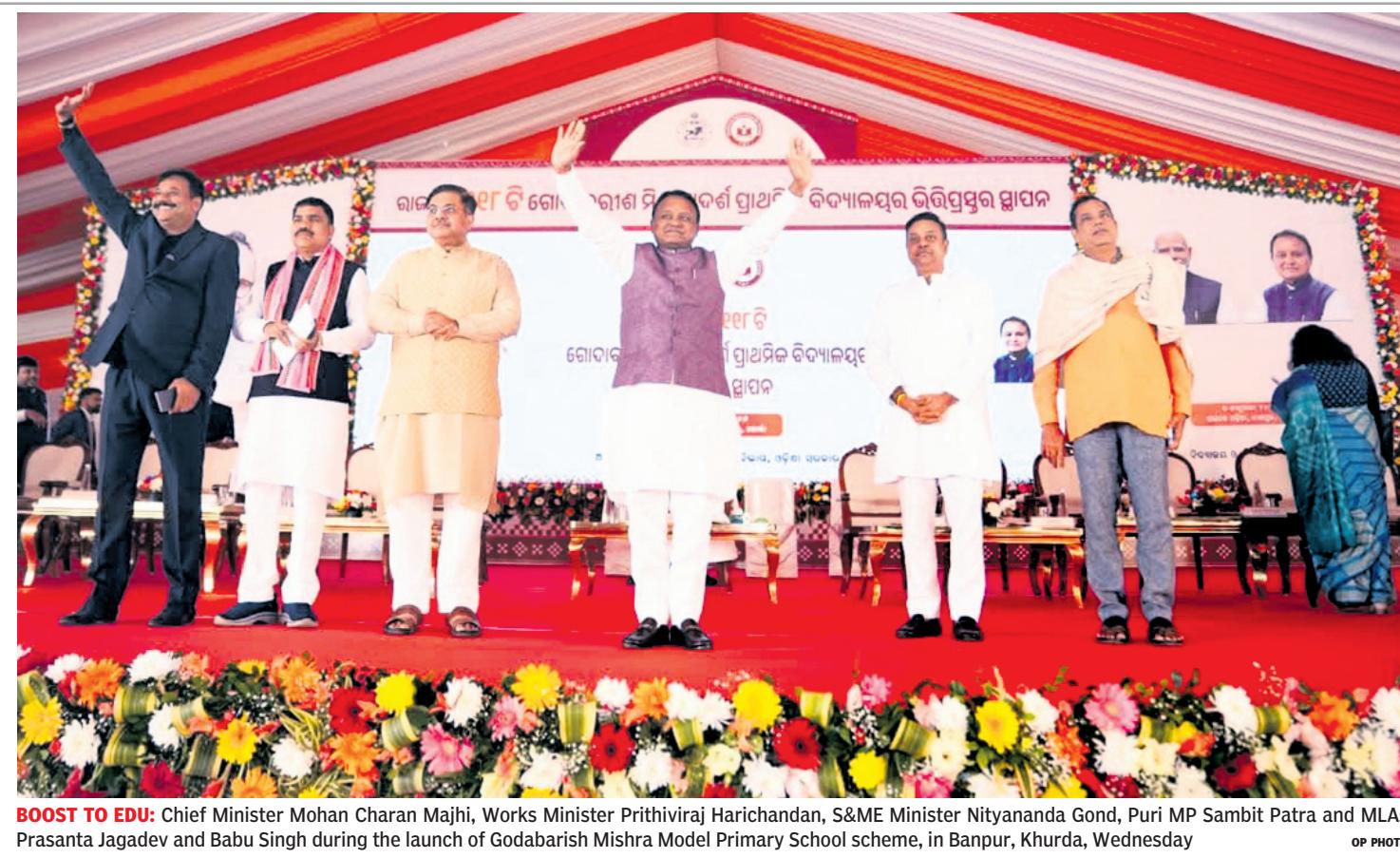
PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday launched the Godabarish Mishra Model Primary School scheme and laid the foundation stone for 118 such schools across the state.

Majhi launched the scheme at Banpur in Khurda district, the birthplace of Pandit Godabarish Mishra, a noted educationist and social reformer of the state, who contributed a lot to the primary education in the state.

Launching the scheme, the CM said the initiative aims to strengthen primary education in rural and remote areas of the state by improving school infrastructure, appointing teachers, and upgrading learning facilities. The state government has allocated ₹12,000 crore in the first phase to develop 2,200 such primary schools, he said.

P3



BOOST TO EDU: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Works Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan, S&ME Minister Nityananda Gond, Puri MP Sambit Patra and MLAs Prasanta Jagadev and Babu Singh during the launch of Godabarish Mishra Model Primary School scheme, in Banpur, Khurda, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

'UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE'

Rahul takes dig at govt over Trump's remarks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



said, "Farq samjho, sir ji!"

The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha shared his own video in which he had alleged that Prime Minister Modi surrendered after a call from US President Trump during the India-Pakistan military conflict.

Gandhi had also said that the then prime minister Indira Gandhi didn't budge in the 1971 war despite the US sending its Seventh Fleet. This is the difference, Gandhi had said.

Sharing a video of Trump's remarks, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh also took a swipe at the PM.

In a post on X, Gandhi

Sangam Kumar Sahoo takes oath as Patna CJ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Jan 7: Justice Sangam Kumar Sahoo was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Patna High Court Wednesday. The oath was administered by Bihar Governor Arif Mohammad Khan in a ceremony at the Lok Bhawan here, officials said.

The function was attended by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and several other dignitaries. Justice



Sahoo studied in Stewart Science College and the Cuttack Law College in Odisha and enrolled as an advocate in 1989 under the Orissa State Bar Council, Cuttack. He practised in district courts, the high court, consumer forums and the CAT in Odisha.

He was elevated as a judge of the Orissa High Court July 2, 2014.

Doctors defy ESMA; services hit

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Jan 7: Filmmaker Aditya Dhar's 'Dhurandhar' has become the highest-grossing Indian film of all time in a single language with a net India collection of over ₹831 crore, the makers said Wednesday.

With its Day 33 earnings Tuesday standing at ₹5.70 crore net, the Ranveer Singh-starrer's total India net collection climbed to ₹831.40 crore, placing it at the No. 1 spot among all Hindi releases to date. According to Jio Studios, the movie, released only in Hindi, has earned ₹1,240 crore worldwide.

"History has been rewritten. With Tuesday's collections, 'Dhurandhar' has officially risen to become the highest-earning Hindi film of all time, a towering achievement that has redefined Indian box office success," the makers said.

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: Despite the state government invoking ESMA, over 6,000

Plaster collapse leaves patient injured in SCB



CUTTACK: An elderly patient was seriously injured after a large chunk of plaster fell from a wall inside the old medicine ward of SCB Medical College and Hospital here Wednesday. Narayan Das, 70, of Khurda district, sustained head and facial injuries in the mishap which occurred while he was lying on his bed on the first floor of the ward. His family alleged that he did not receive primary treatment for nearly 90 minutes after the incident. Hospital authorities were not immediately available at the spot. The incident triggered tension among patients and attendants, raising concerns over poor maintenance and patient safety at the state's premier government hospital.

government doctors under the banner of Odisha Medical Services Association (OMSA) Wednesday boycotted OPD service for two hours to demand fulfilment of their charter of demands, including filling up of vacant posts.

The state government Tuesday had announced the doctors' agitation as illegal for disrupting essential medical services. As per the provision of the Essential Services (Maintenance) Act or ESMA, strikes in the

OT goes dark during surgery at MKCG

BERHAMPUR: A serious lapse was reported at MKCG Medical College and Hospital here Tuesday when the operation theater (OT) went dark in the middle of a surgery due to a power failure, allegedly exposing negligence by the General Electrical Division (GED). The incident occurred in the surgery department while doctors were operating on a patient identified as Prashant Sahu of Padmapur in Rayagada district. A sudden power outage plunged the operation theater into complete darkness. Although power supply from generators was restored to parts of the surgery block, electricity did not reach the operation theater, creating a critical situation for the surgical team.

form of cessation of work by doctors, nursing officers, pharmacists, paramedics, and technicians have been banned for six months with effect from Tuesday. The OMSA doctors boycotted OPD service from 9am to 11am across the state. The protest is part of their ongoing movement pressing for fulfilment of their 10-point charter of demands. Their demands include parity in pay with Central government employees, proportional restructuring of cadres across all grades, additional financial incentives for super-specialists and performance-based incentives.

"Invoking Odisha Essential Services (Maintenance) Act, 1988 (ESMA) on peaceful strike by doctors is considered as part of an oppression, intolerance and bureaucratic interference. The government must address the issues and resolve doctors' genuine problems," OMSA president Kishore Mishra said.

The OMSA president said that the boycott of OPD service for two hours was a symbolic protest. The doctors, after the boycott hour from 9am to 11am, attended to patients. The emergency service, surgeries and indoor treatment are also being provided by OMSA-affiliated doctors. They just boycott the OPD service demanding fulfilment of their genuine demands, he said.

The OMSA demanded Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi's intervention into the matter, even as Health and Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling appealed to the doctors to call off the strike.

The state government has also constituted a high-level committee to consider the 10-point charter of demands of doctors. The doctors' OPD boycott agitation since December 26 has impacted health service in rural and remote areas. The doctors launched the OPD boycott for one hour from December 26 and later extended it to two hours from 9am to 11am starting January 5.

Chased by mob, Hindu man drowns in B'desh

AGENCIES

Dhaka, Jan 7: A 25-year-old Hindu man died after he jumped into a canal to escape a mob which accused him of theft in Naogaon district Tuesday. To escape, he jumped into a canal but tragically drowned, Debnath said.

Sarkar was chased by a mob accusing him of theft in Naogaon district Tuesday. To escape, he jumped into a canal but tragically drowned, Debnath said.

In a statement issued Tuesday, the Council demanded

actions against "alarmingly increased and continued" persecution of minorities.

As the date of the general elections draws nearer, communal violence is increasing at an alarming rate, it said, adding that the forum believed the incidents aimed to prevent minority voters from casting votes for candidates of

their choice. This incident came close on the heels of the murder of two Hindu businessmen Monday.

At least six Hindus, including Sarkar, have fallen prey to a surge in violence against minorities in Bangladesh. Miscreants also raped a Hindu widow, cut her hair and tied her to a tree this week.

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: Despite the state government invoking ESMA, over 6,000

Lotus, Kite go hand in hand in Maharashtra

BJP ties up with Cong, AIMIM in 2 local bodies; CM, Sena oppose move, Cong suspends 12 councillors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 7: In a surprising move, the BJP forged a post-poll alliance with Congress and AIMIM in Maharashtra's two municipal councils, drawing the ire of the state leadership of the ruling as well as opposition parties, with the grand old party suspending 12 newly-elected councillors in one of these local bodies.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said such arrangements were not approved by the party leadership and violated discipline, while BJP's state ally Shiv Sena called it a betrayal of "cooperative dharma".

The BJP also struck a similar alliance with the

following the local polls held December 20, the BJP joined hands with the Congress, its arch-rival, and the Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) under the banner of 'Ambernath Vikas Aghadi' to form the Ambernath Municipal Council leadership, sidelining ally Shiv Sena led by Eknath Shinde.

Left red-faced, the Congress Wednesday suspended 12 newly-elected councillors in Ambernath Municipal Council along with its block president for alliance with the BJP.

Shiv Sena (UBT) also

slammed the BJP, saying it reflects the ruling party's double standards and shows it can do anything to grab power.

In Ambernath, the BJP forged a post-poll understanding with the Congress and NCP, securing a majority of 31 seats, even though the Shiv Sena is the single largest party with 27 members.

In the polls to the 60-member council, Shiv Sena won 27 seats, falling just four short of a majority. The BJP secured 14 seats, Congress 12, NCP 4, while 2 independent candidates were also elected.

With the support of one independent, the three-party coalition's strength has risen to 32 councillors, crossing

the majority mark of 30. BJP councillor Tejaswini Karanjule Patil was elected the council president, defeating Sena's Manisha Walekar, and took the oath Wednesday.

However, the decision taken at the local level did not go down well with the state leadership of any of the parties involved.

Talking to a news channel, CM Fadnavis said such alliances would not be acceptable under any circumstances and action would be taken against the local leaders.

BJP, NCP and Shiv Sena are partners in the ruling Mahayati.



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**SYDNEY SWEENEY:
I'VE SEEN A GHOST**

Actress Sydney Sweeney said that she had an imaginary friend when she was a child but "creeped out" her mom when it emerged the person she was seeing in the playground had died years before. Sweeney told W magazine: "I think I've seen a ghost."

**GEORGE CLOONEY RECALLS
HAVING HIS FIRST KISS**

Hollywood star George Clooney was just 11 years old when he had his first kiss in the back of a church in his hometown in Kentucky. He also reminisced about how he and the girl were "hiding" from their friend in the place of worship to get some privacy.

**FORTUNE FORECAST**

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ARIES

You are likely to give in to the demands of your children today. Ganesha says it is for times like this that you labour so hard. You will finish the tasks that you have been postponing for a long time. It is a good day for people in the medical field and in the public sector.

TAURUS

Today, you will be as creative and competent as you can get. Your work style, the deft way you handle things will awe and amaze your colleagues and superiors. Your subordinates will be highly impressed and motivated. They will be eager and compliant and will support and assist you to the utmost.

GEMINI

You will listen to your heart over your head, swept away as you will be in a flood of emotions today. This could mean that you will be unable to distinguish between good and bad. However, looking back upon your day in the evening, you are unlikely to regret any of the decisions you made, says Ganesha.

CANCER

You will begin the day with a definite plan for a bright future. You will respectfully implement plans that you have made thoughtfully. Such methodical decisions will save you a lot of time in the future. Ganesha says that you will succeed in every endeavour today.

LEO

Your natural self-confidence and capability will help you attain a position of strength today. As a result, all your tasks will be completed easily and you will reap rewards greater than your expectations, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

Ganesha says you realise the importance of family matters today. You have great skills when it comes to negotiations, and you will use them in settling disputes amicably. Ganesha says you have learned the lessons of life on staying level-headed, and that you keenly believe that opposition eventually leads to progress.

LIBRA

Ganesha says you will have a good time with your family members and will have fun with them. You will also be able to organize a picnic or a party for your family members and enjoy the day with them. Ganesha says you will go out for a trip to a religious place or temple, which will enhance your mind and ideas.

SCORPIO

Try to take a chill pill as you may be worried about petty issues today. Do not let them hinder your happiness and take a toll on your health. However, the day looks promising towards the end. Friends are just a phone call away, call them and set out for a destination unknown to de-stress and rejuvenate.

SAGITTARIUS

Suddenly, you become ambidextrous and plan to multi-task today, says Ganesha. Your instincts will guide you today; trust them and move ahead. You may come across few challenges. But, anyway, who wants an easy way out, right?

CAPRICORN

Actions speak louder than words. Your sincere efforts and honest intentions will motivate others also to put in their best, feels Ganesha. You'll be like a friend, philosopher and guide to them. People will follow you, but it has a darker side to many will even take you.

AQUARIUS

You are disappointed and you seek solace in spirituality. Don't run away from the problems; rather face them with strength and confidence, advises Ganesha, to bring your life back on track. With patience and belief in the Almighty, you will be sail through the storm. Understand that challenges are a part of everyone's life.

PISCES

You are striving hard to influence your destiny. You are not going to kneel down without a fight against heavy odds. With persistent efforts you will succeed in achieving your goals. While victory is a given, hard work will be necessary. In brief, today will be a challenging day for you, says Ganesha.

**Sam's
newfound
interest**

Hyderabad: Samantha Ruth Prabhu has transitioned from being a great actress to leading her own production house in the business of filmmaking. Not only that, but she is also making her name in expanding her business ventures. Recently, the Family Man star shared about the journey from films to startups and this has changed her life in many ways.

The newlywed actress shared her take on entrepreneurship, calling it the "greatest gift" she has given to herself, while speaking with *Moneycontrol*. "It's the greatest gift that I have given myself to actually step out of my comfort zone of being an actor and to be able to work with such amazing people, doing amazing things, improving the quality of life of people around," she said.

"You interact with just the people you're filming with and the people that are involved in that film. But as an entrepreneur, investing in over 10 companies, I have the opportunity to understand real world problems, to work in a team, to work in partnerships," she added.

Samantha also mentioned that launching a business made her more confident and called the process of setting it up from scratch an enjoyable process.

AGENCIES

**Sonu addresses
stray dog issue**

Mumbai: Sonu Sood, widely celebrated as a real-life hero for his tireless humanitarian work, has once again used his voice to champion a cause rooted in empathy and responsibility but this time, for India's stray animals. In a heartfelt message supporting animal welfare organisation Jeev Sabha, Sood spoke about the urgent need for humane and sustainable solutions to address the growing stray dog population and rabies-related concerns.

"Namaskar, I am Sonu Sood, and just as I am Indian, every stray dog born and living here is also Indian—hence they are called 'Indy.'

I appeal to everyone that, just as we faced the Covid pandemic, we can similarly control rabies and other diseases among these stray dogs through vaccination and sterilization," he added.

By advocating vaccination and sterilisation as long-term measures, Sonu highlighted the importance of science-backed, humane approaches over reactive responses. His message strongly reinforces the idea that coexistence is possible when guided by awareness, empathy, and collective responsibility.

"Let's choose kindness, let's choose solutions. I support Jeev Sabha. God bless you all. Take care," he concluded, urging citizens to be part of the solution rather than the problem.

Known for stepping up during national crises, from aiding migrant workers during the pandemic to supporting healthcare and education initiatives, Sonu Sood's support for animal welfare feels like a natural extension of his values.

AGENCIES

**Nyrria: Comedy
needs honesty**

Mumbai: Actor Nyrria M Banerji will next be seen in the upcoming comedy film *One Two Cha Cha Cha*, a Pan-India entertainer that relies on situational humour and character-driven storytelling. The film places Nyrria in a comic role that allows her to explore a different side of her screen presence, rooted in everyday chaos and regional flavour.

In the film, Nyrria plays a woman who is outspoken, emotionally expressive, and unapologetically herself.

One of the defining aspects of her character is a strong Bihari accent, which becomes central to the humour and the way situations unfold. While the character is region-specific, the narrative attempts to keep the emotional beats and comic moments accessible to a wider audience.

Speaking about the role, Nyrria said, "This character is mad, dramatic, emotional, funny—all at the same time. The accent, the behaviour, the little quirks... I enjoyed every bit of going a little crazy on screen. Comedy looks easy, but it needs honesty, and I completely surrendered to the madness of this role. I love that this character can make people laugh across regions."

According to sources close to the production, several scenes benefited from Nyrria's improvisation, with spontaneous moments making their way into the final cut. Her performance reportedly leans more on situational reactions and character-based humour rather than exaggerated slapstick.

AGENCIES



New Delhi: For Chitrangda Singh, some opportunities arrive without planning, pitching or even expectation and that's exactly what made *The Battle of Galwan* so special. The actress admits she never imagined she would find herself part of a film with Salman Khan, despite having known the superstar socially for years.

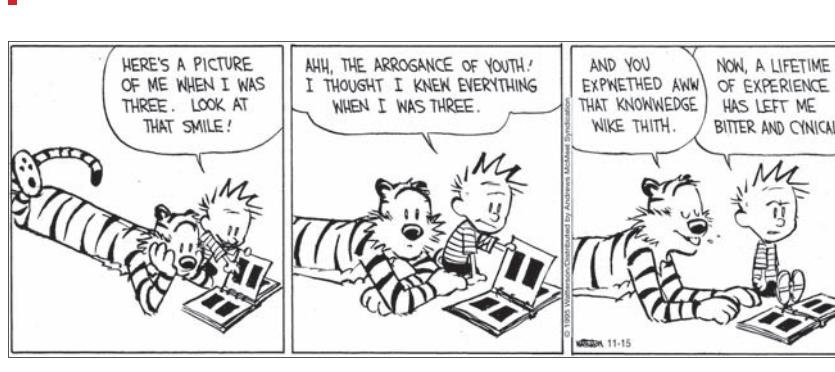
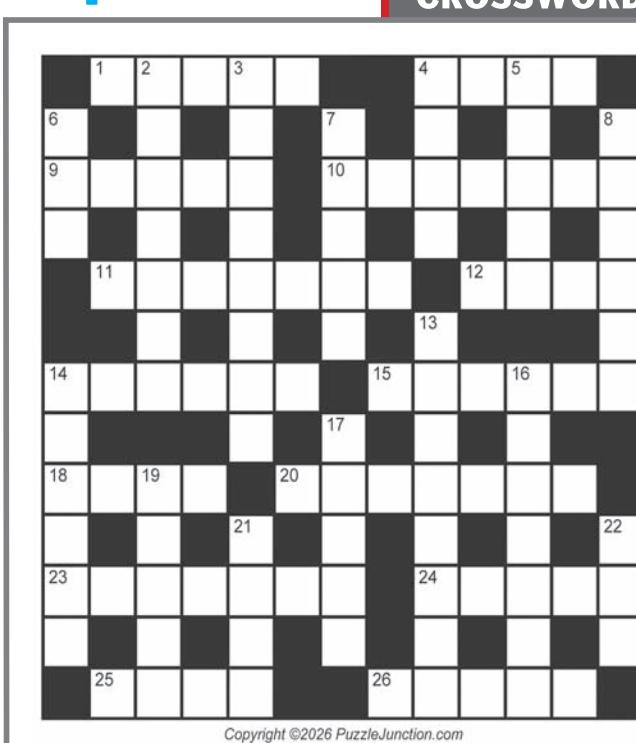
Sharing her first reaction on being roped in for *The Battle Of Galwan* opposite Salman, Chitrangda told this agency: "I got

Apoorva Lakhia (director) who gave me a call and I was like, 'Really?' I wasn't so sure that I'd ever end up doing a Salman Khan film because I mean, I don't even think I ever pitched myself for some work, you know with him even though I'd known him socially for a long time."

"We never discussed or I never approached him for work. But yeah, so it's definitely something which was a huge surprise," she added.

Asked about *The Battle of Galwan*, which is rooted in a real and emotionally charged incident, she said: "Yes, I think commercially also it's going to be a big one, Galwan, and it is at the same time rooted in very real incidents. So I think that's a great combination for cinema and I am very excited especially because I come from an army background."

IANS

**Chitrangda's
unexpected
Galwan alliance****PEANUTS****CALVIN AND HOBBES****BREVITY****FUN
POST****CROSSWORD****Across**

- 1 Words to a sleepyhead (3,2)
- 4 Small boat
- 9 Hipbone-related
- 10 Daybreak
- 11 Toils
- 12 Angler's stash
- 14 Waiting lines
- 15 Goof
- 18 Assistant
- 20 Juice starters

- 6 Youngster
- 7 Autocrats of old
- 8 Washer setting
- 13 Acme
- 14 Misgivings
- 16 Butcher's tool
- 17 Hair care item
- 19 Practice
- 21 Adroit
- 22 Airport posting (Abbr.)

Down

- 2 Kuwait, for one
- 3 Raw
- 4 Buggy terrain
- 5 Side dish

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

R	V	C	A	S	T
B	U	E	R	A	C
O	N	M	U	B	L
K	N	E	U	T	M
I	P	O	S	A	F
O	A	S	P	H	E
S	T	U	N	G	L
U	B	A	A	N	
P	R	O	L	I	
B	N	E	R	E	
R	D	E	O	N	

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

downtown

CM launches Godabarish Mishra Adarsha Prathamik Vidyalaya scheme in Khurda



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday launched the Godabarish Mishra Adarsha Prathamik Vidyalaya (GMAPV) scheme and laid the foundation stone for 118 such schools across the state.

Majhi launched the scheme at Banpur in Khurda district, the birthplace of Pandit Godabarish Mishra, a noted educationist and social reformer of Odisha who contributed a lot to the primary education in

the state.

Launching the scheme, the Chief Minister said the initiative aims to strengthen primary education in rural and remote areas of the state by improving school infrastructure, appointing teachers, and upgrading learning facilities.

The state government has allocated Rs 12,000 crore in the first phase to develop 2,200 such primary schools," he said.

The Chief Minister said that GMAPVs will come up in all gram panchayats of the state with a focus on quality edu-

cation, especially in rural and tribal areas.

He said the objective of the scheme aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) and introduces digital classrooms, STEM learning, sports facilities, and a strong focus on foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN).

"This scheme, named after Godabarish Mishra, will revolutionise rural education in Odisha. We aim to establish one model school in each gram panchayat. The scheme will also provide free transport fa-

cilities for children in remote areas," he said.

Each model school will enrol at least 100 students, occupy more than two acres of land, and offer classes from pre-primary to Class VIII. The initiative bridges the gap between rural and urban education, the CM said.

In a post on X, Majhi said, "Today, in Banpur, we inaugurated the Godabarish Mishra Adarsha Prathamik Vidyalaya scheme along with laying the foundation stones for 118 schools across the state. This scheme is the realisation of the experience from my childhood as a student from an ordinary tribal family and a grand dream I have envisioned for future generations."

"Our government has allocated Rs 12,000 crore in the first phase for the development of 2,200 schools, which will provide our children with a world-class educational environment," he said.

Majhi said GMAPVs will be set up in all 6,794 gram panchayats of the state in phases.

School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond, Works Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan, Puri MP Samit Patra and local MLAs participated in the launching ceremony.

Paddy procurement resumes amid rice millers' strike: Min

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: AIIMS Delhi, in collaboration with IIT-Bhubaneswar Research and Entrepreneurship Park (IIT-Bhubaneswar REP) has launched a major health-education initiative to advance mental health care and medical training in India.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two institutions will jointly implement two pioneering projects aimed at strengthening the skills and well-being of healthcare professionals. The first initiative, AASHA-HOPE (Manasa Santulan), will focus on training postgraduate doctors in mental health through advanced and AI-driven habit-building tools.

The second project, 'Everyday Hero - Gamification of Training for Healthcare Workers', will use gamification techniques to make medical training more engaging, practical, and outcome-oriented.



He said the government has agreed to several demands of the rice millers, including a hike in their transportation fees.

The association has been demanding an increase in milling charges, revision of transportation rates for paddy and rice, and enhanced custody and maintenance levies for the grain stored in their godowns.

Patra claimed, "The paddy procurement has resumed in 19 districts, where more than 14 lakh metric tonne of paddy have already been procured."

"We have four genuine demands. If the government agrees to these, it should give assurance in writing," he said.

Due to the deadlock between the state government and rice millers, farmers are spending nights at mandis, braving the cold. Lifting of paddy has been stalled in several districts across the state, a farmer leader said.

"Before the beginning of the ongoing Kharif marketing season (KMS), the government had assured the millers that it would fulfil their demands in 15 days. But the government has failed to respond adequately even after the passing of nearly one month," another rice miller said.

Several meetings between the government and the association have been held on the issues, with the last interaction organised Tuesday, he said.

However, miller's organisation president Mahesh Bansal claimed that they are continuing their strike as the government "has not fulfilled their demands so far".

He said the government has agreed to several demands of the rice millers, including a hike in their transportation fees.

"We have issued an order to make payments for three months of custody maintenance. The government is also considering two other demands. Now, they have resumed work," Patra told media persons here.

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Due to the deadlock between the state government and rice millers, farmers are spending nights at mandis, braving the cold. Lifting of paddy has been stalled in several districts across the state, a farmer leader said.

"Before the beginning of the ongoing Kharif marketing season (KMS), the government had assured the millers that it would fulfil their demands in 15 days. But the government has failed to respond adequately even after the passing of nearly one month," another rice miller said.

Several meetings between the government and the association have been held on the issues, with the last interaction organised Tuesday, he said.

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Odisha prepares for Census; first phase to begin in April



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: Odisha has begun preparations for the Census-2027, with the first phase set to start in April 2026. In this regard, a meeting of the State Level Census Coordination Committee (SLCCC) was held Wednesday at Lok Seva Bhawan, chaired by Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary Deoraj Kumar Singh.

At the outset, Nikhil Pavan Kalyan, Director of Census Operations, Odisha, welcomed the dignitaries and members, outlining the objectives of the meeting.

The meeting saw participation from senior officials, including the Principal Secretaries of Finance and Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Departments, Additional Secretary of Revenue & Disaster Management, Special Secretaries of Forest & Environment and Rural Development Departments, Additional Secretary of School and Mass Education, Secretary of the State Election Commiss-

sion, a representative of the Chief Conservator of Forests, and other senior officers from various state departments.

All Collectors-cum-Principal Census Officers and Municipal Commissioners-cum-Principal Census Officers from across the state joined the meeting virtually through video conferencing, along with their respective census functionaries.

Detailed agenda-wise discussions were held on the smooth conduct of House Listing Operations (HLO) 2026 and Population Enumeration (PE), scheduled for April-May 2026 and February-March 2027.

Key issues discussed included the freezing of administrative boundaries, Phase-I Census schedule in Odisha, deployment of enumerators and supervisors, and possible overlap with the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

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Deliberations were also held on financial norms, selection of master and field trainers, finalisation of forest villages, urban agglomerations and slums, special charge notifications, and identification of industrial towns

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The Director of Census Operations elaborated on the modalities and operational framework of the forthcoming Census in detail.

Addressing the gathering, the Development Commissioner underlined the critical administrative role and responsibilities of Collectors-cum-Principal Census Officers and urged all departments and officials to extend full cooperation to ensure the successful execution of Census-2027, describing it as a pivotal government programme with long-term significance.

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OPF urges awareness drive for RTE admissions

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The Odisha Parents' Federation (OPF) has urged the state government to promptly launch a comprehensive awareness campaign on admissions under Section 12(1)(c) of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act for the 2026-27 academic year.

In a representation to Chief Secretary Anu Garg, the federation raised concerns over insufficient publicity of the RTE admission process, which provides 25 per cent reservation for children from Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and disadvantaged groups in private unaided schools.

The federation, which claims to have been actively involved in promoting transparent RTE implementation since 2016, said its efforts had contributed to the enrolment of nearly 86,000 students in private schools under the RTE framework. However, it warned that without a robust public awareness campaign, thousands of eligible families—especially in rural, remote and underprivileged areas—risk missing out on admissions due to lack of information.

Referring to the recent School and Mass Education department notification dated December 22, 2025, which outlines the RTE admission calendar for 2026-27, the federation said timelines and online procedures remain largely unknown to the intended beneficiaries. "Small and inconspicuous notices are not enough for a scheme of this magnitude," the organisation stated, alleging that RTE admissions have historically received far less publicity compared to other government initiatives.

AOCWA, AOCA oppose scrapping of bid cap



RESHMI YADAV, OP

PRESS MEET
in project execution.

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The All Odisha Contractors' Welfare Association (AOCWA) and the All Odisha Contractors' Association (AOCA) Wednesday expressed serious concern over Works department Memo No. 173/W dated January 3, 2026, which abolishes the long-standing 14.99 per cent below-estimate bidding threshold in public works tenders.

Addressing a press conference here, AOCWA President Jagadish Patra said the threshold was originally introduced in 2013 to curb reckless under-bidding and was later strengthened through multiple circulars by introducing the Additional Performance Security (APS) mechanism. He said the earlier framework helped maintain quality and financial discipline

The Associations pointed out that the new memo has dismantled the APS system and adopted the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) guidelines of April 30, 2025, without considering ground realities of State PWD works, many of which involve small-value projects. Applying MoRTH norms to such works could lead to abnormally low bids, poor quality, and stalled projects, they warned.

AOCWA President Anil Mahalik flagged the lack of clarity on tender finalisation when SC/ST bidders achieve price parity with L-1 bidders under the 10 per cent price preference, applicable to nearly 80 per cent of contractors. He also raised concerns over excessive discretion granted to Technical Committees, which could result in arbitrariness.

Ranjan Samal addressed the gathering and highlighted various voluntary and charitable initiatives undertaken by the bank in recent years. Deputy General Manager Malaya Kumar Sahoo and Puri Branch Manager Praveen Kumar Mishra were also present. On behalf of the hospital administration, spokesperson Sanjukta Mishra thanked IDBI Bank for the support, stating that the donated equipment will benefit thousands of patients from Chandanpur and nearby areas.

IDBI Bank extends medical support to CHC Chandanpur

Puri: IDBI Bank's Puri Branch, under its special initiative Project HOPE, has donated essential medical equipment and assets to the Community Health Centre (CHC) at Chandanpur in Puri district, strengthening healthcare services in the area. Puri MP Sambit Patra attended the programme as the chief guest and appreciated the bank's community-oriented initiative, which was undertaken with his support for the benefit of the local population. Around 70 women healthcare workers from the CHC participated in the event.

IDBI Bank General Manager Nihar Ranjan Samal addressed the gathering and highlighted various voluntary and charitable initiatives undertaken by the bank in recent years. Deputy General Manager Malaya Kumar Sahoo and Puri Branch Manager Praveen Kumar Mishra were also present. On behalf of the hospital administration, spokesperson Sanjukta Mishra thanked IDBI Bank for the support, stating that the donated equipment will benefit thousands of patients from Chandanpur and nearby areas.

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BITING
COLD
GRIPS
STATE

Similipal hits freezing point; snowfall in Koida, Tensa



POST NEWS NETWORK

G Udayagiri shivers at 3 degrees Celsius

BHUBANESWAR: G Udayagiri in Kandhamal district recorded a minimum temperature of 3 degrees Celsius Wednesday, while Phulbani town registered 5 degrees Celsius, followed by Rourkela (5.1 degrees Celsius) and Jharsuguda (5.4 degrees Celsius), the IMD said. Minimum temperatures in Daringbadi, a popular tourism destination, Keonjhar, Sundargarh and Bhawanipatna hovered between 7 and 8 degrees Celsius, it said in a bulletin. In Bhubaneswar, the minimum temperature was 10.2 degrees Celsius. The IMD said steady inflow of dry and cold northerly winds contributed to the chill, which is likely to intensify over the next few days. The weather office also issued a warning for dense fog at several places across the state.

The lowest temperature was recorded at Upper Barakamunda area of the Similipal Tiger Reserve, according to Field Director of the Similipal Tiger Reserve and Chief Conservator of Forests, Baripada Circle, Prakash Chand Gogineni. The sharp fall in temperature has intensified cold conditions across the core and fringe areas of Similipal as

well as the entire district. With temperatures steadily

declining and cold northerly winds blowing throughout the day, bone-chilling cold has gripped the region, affecting daily life. There are concerns that the extreme cold may impact wildlife, while domesticated animals are already showing signs of distress.

Officials said the district has been witnessing the effects of climate change and environmental degradation throughout the year. While Baripada was recorded as one of the hottest towns during summer, the region experienced continuous rainfall for nearly six months this year. During winter, minimum temperatures in urban areas have fallen below 10 degrees Celsius, while Similipal has now

recorded freezing conditions.

Environmentalists attribute the worsening extremes to deforestation and mining activities, which they say are affecting the local climate and public life. Northerly winds blew at a speed of about 14 kmph Wednesday, intensifying the cold wave.

Across the district, residents are braving the cold by wearing heavy woollens round the clock and lighting fires in the evenings to keep warm. Of the district's 26 blocks, most reported minimum temperatures hovering around 9 degrees Celsius.

Meanwhile, falling night temperatures led to frost formation at several locations in the mining areas of Sundargarh district. Mercury dipped to about 2 degrees Celsius in Tensa, while Koira recorded temperatures below 6 degrees C. The temperature hovered around 5 degrees Celsius near Jindal mines area at Tantrara, while Tensa recorded about 7 degrees. Parts of Koira saw temperatures ranging between 5 and 7 degrees Celsius.

Ice deposits were visible at Kalta, Kusumundi, Tensa, Jindal Colony, playgrounds and on parked vehicles. Cold conditions have intensified over the past three days, leaving residents reeling under the biting chill.

Frost during the night has caused significant inconvenience for the residents. Streets remain largely deserted after 7pm and until about 9 am, with shops shutting by 8 pm.

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FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

THE 'DONROE' DOCTRINE**No-Rules Order**

The most important question stemming from America's intervention in Venezuela is not whether it violated international law and norms, but what it reveals about the future of the liberal international order. Contrary to what some commentators say, that order is not collapsing, since its core pillars remain in place and the alternatives to them are still weak. But sustaining it will now involve more frequent discretionary US actions, and it will become increasingly unclear where the thresholds for future interventions lie.

When the perceived limits on state action recede, the meaning of power shifts. The question is no longer what is formally permitted, but how actions will be interpreted by others within the system. Venezuela exposes a growing tension between the American prerogative to pursue unilateral enforcement and the cooperative expectations on which US leadership ultimately depends. Global leadership is not just a state's ability to act; equally important is whether an action reinforces or erodes expectations of future prudence and restraint.

For decades, US power has rested on military and economic predominance, reinforced by dense alliance commitments. This configuration made withdrawal from US-led institutional arrangements costly, even when partners were dissatisfied. American authority, therefore, has rested not on consent alone, but on a structure of dependence created by security guarantees, alliance ties, and control over critical economic and strategic relationships.

But even if institutions can entrench advantage, they cannot offset the reputational and strategic costs of wielding discretionary power. While a single intervention against a weak or isolated state rarely alters the structure of the broader international order, the effects of such actions accumulate as others revise their expectations in response.

Venezuela is distinctive when set against earlier US interventions, such as those in Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, and Syria. These cases may have been controversial and highly contested, but each involved a clear escalation point or "red line" (even if concocted) for the United States – be it a weapons programme, mass violence, or an ongoing war. By contrast, the Trump administration based its intervention in Venezuela on an array of concerns such as migration, sanctions evasion, criminal networks, and Chinese influence. At no point was it clear when restraint would give way to coercion and escalation.

Of course, material and ideological interests – oil access, regional influence, and resistance to socialism – have always shaped US policy toward Venezuela. What is new in this case is not the presence of those interests, but the absence of a clearly articulated threshold or emergency to justify coercive action.

Moreover, this uncertainty has been reinforced by parallel moves elsewhere. US President Donald Trump's public threats toward close US partners such as Canada (a NATO member) and Greenland (a territory of Denmark, also a NATO member) undercut the presumption that allied sovereignty is off limits to US bullying.

By capturing and prosecuting Maduro, a sitting foreign leader, the Trump administration is extending US jurisdiction through means short of war. By sidelining Venezuela's own opposition, it is collapsing the distinction between enabling political change and imposing it. And by marginalizing Congress, it has removed a procedural check that once forced red lines to be drawn in advance.

Taken together, these moves replace visible thresholds with discretionary judgment. Before Trump, other countries could watch for a breach and anticipate the US response to it; now they are left guessing. Such is the precedent Venezuela sets.

The US has long benefited from being seen not merely as a rule enforcer, but as the central provider of security and access within an international system that it disproportionately shapes. In this context, occasional departures from rules were tolerated because they were assumed to be one-off episodes. But that assumption is now under strain.

As striking as this US intervention is, so too is the domestic political tolerance for US assertions of discretion across the hemisphere. Casual speculation about territorial claims involving close partners, however implausible in practice, would once have been politically unthinkable in an order anchored by mutual restraint. Not anymore. The White House's public justification – framing the action as routine management against drugs, rivals, and security spillovers, rather than as an exceptional use of force – underscores how normalized the Trumpian discretion-first approach has become.

This matters. Order depends not only on outcomes, but on expectations. If more states begin to anticipate that similar US judgments could be applied against others, even if infrequently, the calculus of participation changes. Most likely, the response to the Venezuela intervention will not be mass defections or public confrontations, but rather hedging, legal insulation, institutional diversification, and quiet efforts to reduce exposure to the US. No coordination is required, and once the process begins (as indeed it already has), individual moves will reinforce one another.

This does not mean that the current order is on the verge of collapse. Systemic change requires credible alternatives, and those remain limited. Rival powers can frustrate US initiatives, but they have not replaced the institutional foundations on which global cooperation rests.

The more difficult question is whether the balance between US enforcement and the provision of global public goods can be sustained. Leadership becomes costlier when coercive tools are used more often than cooperative ones, or when enforcement expands faster than shared benefits. At that point, compliance shifts from voluntary to transactional, and authority begins to resemble domination.

Venezuela sharpens an old question rather than resolving it. The danger now is not that states will openly defect, but that they will quietly adapt to a rogue US. An order can endure under such conditions, but only at a higher cost and with diminishing returns for the dominant power.

The writer is Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto.

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WISDOM CORNER

► A man can do what he wants, but not want what he wants.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

► Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.

TS ELIOT

FRANZ KAFKA

Various theories have been advanced to explain the reasons for Donald Trump's order to abduct Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and attack the resource-rich Latin American nation. Is it a thinly disguised attempt to grab and control oil and other natural resources? Or a return to the doctrine-directed interventionism of the past (Monroe Doctrine of 1823) by the US in the Western Hemisphere, and its justification? The first theory centres around a bid to grab and control Venezuela's vast oil deposits by allowing the entry of US multi-national oil companies after Maduro's exit.

Apart from oil there is the deeper rationale of metals like silver. The Arco Minero del Orinoco, a vast mineral-rich region in Venezuela, is estimated to contain over \$1 trillion in untapped natural resources. This region is said to have huge reserves of silver, gold and rare metals which are important for American military systems, defence supply chains and advanced electronics. Also, in the light of a growing shortage of precious metals, these strategic metals are becoming as important as oil was. Control of these resources could secure years of strategic metal supply and give the US a geopolitical edge over the European Union and other countries.

The second reason is the traditionally trotted American desire to "restore democracy." This was akin to what President George HW Bush had told Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev during the December 2-3, 1989, Malta Summit. Bush spoke of the problems caused by Manuel Noreiga in Panama, a former CIA asset, and that the US was preparing "solid indictments" against him and was going to bring in "democracy" in Panama.

The third reason, as reported by the Spanish daily El Pasion December 8, relates to Trump's new security doctrine wherein Latin America is seen as a source of some of the United States' serious problems like migration, and was going to bring in "democracy" in Panama.

The fourth reason is, according to some observers, to divert public attention from America's "affordability crisis" and Epstein files. As Time magazine said: "The news diverted attention from America's affordability cri-



A reason why US forces have not yet occupied and taken over Venezuela is due to the bitter experience in Iraq, despite Trump's declaration that US would "run the country"

drug export, transnational crime and also the burgeoning Chinese investment in the region. The paper said that Trump would achieve this through goodwill and coercion.

Trump's twin strategy would include rewarding right-wing regimes in El Salvador, Argentina, Ecuador, Bolivia, expressing support to the right-wing candidate Nasry Asfura in Honduras elections and pardoning former Honduras President Juan Orlando Hernandez, who was serving 45-year prison sentence in the US for drug trafficking. Also, such countries would be awarded US companies' contracts without the need for public tenders. Friendly countries would be encouraged by Washington to "make every effort to push out foreign companies that build infrastructure in the region." This is a reference to China, as their companies have been constructing ports from Chanay in Peru to the metro system in Bogotá. At the same time, recalcitrant States like Venezuela, Columbia and Chile would be "softened" by "targeted deployments" of military force, which would increase its presence and may resort to "lethal force" wherever necessary.

The fourth reason is, according to some observers, to divert public attention from America's "affordability crisis" and Epstein files. As Time magazine said: "The news diverted attention from America's affordability cri-

sis, the loss of health care coverage for millions, and the Epstein files. Instead, all eyes turned to Venezuela."

Another dimension to this fourth issue was added by Asia Times on 2 January: the alarming situation when US debt is expected to hit 100% of GDP by the end of fiscal year 2025. For FY20 the interest was \$345 billion. It has now surged to three times more to \$970 billion.

Some of these grounds appear to be unrealistic if the actual realities are closely examined. Firstly, most of the US economic and technical publications say that the American oil industry has "no interest" in "making the needed investment to revive the antiquated drilling and refining operations of Venezuela" to extract the less desirable "heavy oil, a thick, viscous product, which is far harder to extract and move compared to the domestic US sources."

They quote Reuters and the International Energy Agency which indicate a supply glut in 2026. Reuters said in December that the global oil supply would exceed demand by 3.84 million barrels per day, "according to figures from the Paris-based IEA's latest monthly oil market report, down from a 4.09 million bpd surplus estimated in November."

El Pais quotes former Chilean minister and ambassador Jorge Heine, who alleges that Trump wants South America to be like "Vassal" States. According to

him, Trump does not understand the reluctance of American companies to operate major projects in South America as they find them unprofitable. "The United States is too late; there's no turning back from China's presence in Latin America." Heine also said, early in December, that South American States would not be cowed down by the threat of force through the modern "Donroe Doctrine", which flips the Monroe Doctrine to the present with US plans to re-shape the Americas.

A reason why US forces have not yet occupied and taken over Venezuela is due to the bitter experience in Iraq, despite Trump's declaration that US would "run the country".

Thus, as things stand, the abduction of Maduro is a US law and order action based on a 1989 legal opinion by then-Assistant Attorney General Bill Barr, issued six months before the invasion of Panama and the abduction of Noreiga, the de facto dictator of Panama, on 20 December 1989. That opinion, which is likely to be quoted again, had said the UN Charter's prohibition on the use of force in international relations did not bar the American agencies from carrying out "forcible abductions" abroad to enforce domestic laws.

Interestingly, the Noreiga factor had figured during the Malta Summit. This was before Bush decided to invade Panama and capture Noreiga, based on indictments by Grand Juries in Tampa and Miami, for money laundering and drug smuggling. To this Gorbachev reacted: "People ask, is there no barrier to US action in independent countries? The United States passes judgment and executes the judgment."

It was during this summit that the two leaders, Bush and Gorbachev, had declared the end of the Cold War.

The writer is a former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat.

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SPECTRUM NUTRITION**What lies beyond the rice bowl**

Step into two neighbouring homes in rural Odisha and the first thing you notice is reassuring. In both kitchens, rice is cooking. On both plates, there is enough to eat. This quiet but significant achievement reflects years of public investment in food security and the steady expansion of the PDS. Hunger, at least in its most visible form, has been pushed back.

But look a little closer at those plates, and another story begins to emerge. In one home, the meal is simple; rice and dal, with a few vegetables. In the other, there is fish curry, leafy greens, and sometimes even fruit. These everyday differences do not take away from the success of India's food policies. Instead, they highlight the next challenge before us: moving from filling stomachs to nourishing bodies.

A recent study examining the diets of 13,113 households across Odisha between 2011 and 2023 brings this reality into focus. The research shows that while calorie intake has become more equal across social groups, the quality of food people consume remains uneven. In other words, access to food has improved but access to good nutrition has not kept pace.

The patterns are clear. Households from historically margin-

alised communities consume far less fruit, animal protein, and dairy than socially advantaged households. Measures that capture access to varied, market-based foods show similar gaps. The success of PDS in equalising cereal consumption is undeniable. What now needs attention is everything beyond cereals: vegetables, proteins, and micronutrients that protect children from anaemia, stunting, and lifelong health problems.

One of the most useful contributions of this research is that it points not to failure, but to opportunity. By tracking households over time, it shows where progress has slowed and where policy support could make the greatest difference. Many families remain in low dietary quality brackets year after year, not because they lack motivation, but because structural barriers limit their choices. Recognising these constraints allows governments to sharpen existing programmes rather than reinvent them.

The study also challenges a common assumption: that rising incomes alone will solve nutrition gaps. Even when households earn similar amounts, differences in diet persist. This makes it clear that nutrition is shaped not just by money, but by access; access to

markets, infrastructure, and reliable food supply chains. These are areas where public policy already has a strong foothold.

Geography plays a crucial role here. Families in marginalised settlements often live farther from markets, making fresh vegetables, fruits, and dairy more expensive and harder to obtain. Addressing this last-mile gap, through mobile markets, local cold storage, better transport, and improved rural connectivity could dramatically improve diets. Encouragingly, such measures align closely with ongoing investments in rural infrastructure and livelihoods.

India's changing food landscape adds urgency to this task. Processed and packaged foods are becoming available everywhere, but healthy diversity is not. This moment presents both a risk and an opportunity. With the right mix of nutrition awareness and support for affordable fresh foods, dietary change can be guided in healthier directions. Initiatives like the Odisha Millets Mission show what is possible—reviving traditional, climate-resilient crops that are nutritious, locally suited, and empowering for farmers, especially in tribal and rain-fed regions.

The public health implications are well known. Odisha continues to grapple with child

stunting and wasting, and improving everyday diets is central to addressing these challenges. Programmes such as POSHAN Abhiyaan already provide a strong institutional framework. With sharper focus on inclusion, last-mile delivery, and monitoring, these initiatives can achieve even greater impact.

Seen this way, the evidence from Odisha is not a critique of government intent, but a roadmap for the future. It shows how far food policy has come and how much more it can achieve.

As Odisha and India move towards ambitious development milestones, success will be measured in small, everyday ways. When a child in Kalahandi sits down to a meal as varied and nutritious as a child in Bhubaneswar, it will signal not just economic progress, but social confidence and maturity. Building on existing achievements and guided by evidence, governments today have a real opportunity to ensure that India's nutrition story is not only a story of quantity, but also of quality, equity, and hope.

The writer is ICSSR Doctoral Fellow, Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for Development Studies, Bhubaneswar

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

Letters

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Tradition upheld

Sir, The Madras High Court's Madurai Bench delivered a welcome and principled judgment by upholding the traditional right to light the Karthigai Deepam lamp on the Deepathoolam stone pillar atop the Thirupparankundram hill, dismissing the Tamil Nadu government's law-and-order objections as unfounded. The Division Bench of Justices G. Jayachandran and KK Ramakrishnan reinforced that a sacred lamp on temple land cannot reasonably be said to threaten peace, and criticised the attempts to politicise a centuries-old custom. This decision upholds the constitutional right to worship and demonstrates judicial commitment to protecting Sanatan Dharma practices from unnecessary executive interference. In contrast, the DMK government's resistance—framing a spiritual ceremony as a public-order risk and planning to appeal further—reflects misplaced priorities and a tendency to antagonise age-old traditions for political ends. The court's verdict should encourage respect for cultural heritage and religious freedom over short-term political calculations.

N. Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Bail, not jail

Sir, The Supreme Court's decision to deny bail to activists Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam in the Delhi riots cases is based on allegations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), a stringent national security law. The Court stated that, at the present stage, the prosecution's version could not be brushed aside. However, many people have expressed concern because the accused have remained in custody for years while the trial is yet to conclude. There is a growing public perception that harsh laws are being applied to suppress dissent and limit freedom of expression, giving less weight to personal liberty. The verdict appears to suggest that security concerns can outweigh the principle of "bail, not jail." A more balanced approach could have been a conditional bail with safeguards and timely trials. In a democracy, public concerns deserve thoughtful consideration.

RS Narula, PATIALA

national

of the day **quote**

We will take steps to complete all Polavaram Project works by next March (2027). By December 2027, our goal is to bring the project to use



N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | ANDHRA CM

It was Omar's (Abdullah) job and not mine, but I do not know what world does Omar with his 50 MLAs, many MPs live that he does not talk about these issues? He only criticises PDP, he is obsessed with the PDP



A satellite city is planned to be developed over 10,000 acres in Kharikhoda of the Sonipat district. Besides, a wholesale market will be established in Rai, for which traders have already started approaching the government



NAYAN SINGH SAINI | HARYANA CM

SHORT TAKES**BJP leader Kabindra Purkayastha dies**

Hailakandi (Assam): Veteran BJP leader and former Union minister Kabindra Purkayastha died Wednesday due to old age related issues. He was 94. "Purkayastha was hospitalised a few days ago for old age related ailments. Eventually, he was kept on ventilation. He died sometime back," a doctor at Silchar Medical College and Hospital told reporters. He is survived by a son and a daughter. His wife had predeceased him.

Top court flags road accidents due to strays

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: Flagging non-compliances of rules and directions by civic bodies, the Supreme Court Wednesday said that people were dying not only due to dog bites alone in the country but also because of accidents caused by stray animals on roads.



A bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and N V Anjaria, which was hearing pleas for modification of its earlier orders of the apex court filed by dog lovers and those seeking stringent compliance of orders, said it is conducting the hearing as many lawyers and animal activists claimed that they were not heard before passing of the order November 7.



"The roads should be clear of dogs and stray animals. It is not only the dog bites but also the roaming of stray animals on roads that are proving dangerous.

"It's a serious issue," he said and causing accidents. No one knows which dog is in what mood in the morning. Civic bodies have to implement the rules, modules and directions strictly," the bench said.

Justice Mehta pointed out that two Rajasthan high court judges have suffered accidents in the last 20 days and one of the judges is still suffering from spinal injuries.

He submitted that the court can adopt the formula of CSV (Capture, Sterilise, Vaccinate

national



One has to have the blessings of people to be in politics. With the blessings of the people I have come so far, I don't know how long I will be there (in politics). I have come so far, and will continue in the future too. Will remain in politics until I have the blessings of the people

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

ISRO TO KICK OFF 2026 WITH PSLV-C62 LAUNCH JAN 12

ISRO is gearing up for its first launch of the new year with the PSLV-C62 mission January 12 from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. According to an ISRO official, the primary payload of the mission is the EOS-N1, an imaging satellite built for strategic purposes by the Defence Research and Development Organisation



of the quote

Key member of Bishnoi gang deported from US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

In such a state as ours, the Home Minister's accusation that the rights of Hindus are being snatched away is completely false and unbecoming of his position. To tell the truth, it is the mindset of those who wish to create riots and division that has not succeeded in Tamil Nadu

MK STALIN | TN CM

The loss of even a single life is extremely painful for us. Therefore, we don't delve into statistics. It's a different matter that the administration follows its own procedures. Generally, only those cases where post-mortems were performed were considered valid figures

MOHAN YADAV | MP CM

A big conspiracy is going on in Assam. I had a talk with Union Home Minister yesterday. During the last four-and-a-half years, Assam was completely peaceful. Suddenly, fundamental forces have become active in Assam

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

The accused is a notorious criminal and key member of an organised criminal gang, namely the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. He was earlier arrested in India and was later granted bail. However, he did not face trial and subsequently absconded," a CBI spokesperson said in a statement.

Based on the Interpol Red Notice, Bhainswal was traced and geolocated in the US.

"He was successfully deported from the USA and arrived in India January 7, 2026. He was taken into custody by a team of the Haryana Police at Delhi Airport," the official said. He has 10 serious criminal cases registered against him in Haryana and Delhi, out of which six cases were filed before he went abroad, an officer of Gurugram Police's STF said.

Special Task Force (STF) IG B Satheesh Balan said that Bhainswal had been detained in the United States two months ago.

SIR PHASE 2

Nearly 6.5 crore electors removed from draft rolls



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BLO dies in Bengal

Kolkata: A booth-level officer (BLO) in West Bengal's Malda district died Wednesday, with her family members alleging that she was under stress due to excessive workload in the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state, police said. The deceased, identified as Samprita Choudhury Sanyal, had been "unwell" for the past few days and was advised to take rest by doctors, but she continued working for the electoral roll revision exercise", her husband said.

list due to deaths, permanent migration or multiple registrations, he said at a press conference. Phase II of the SIR began in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal on November 4.

The draft electoral roll for Uttar Pradesh, published Tuesday after the SIR exercise, excluded 2.89 crore voters and retained 12.55 crore. The 2.89 crore voters, or 18.70 per cent, of the 15.44 crore listed earlier could not be included in the draft

draft rolls have been put in the 'ASD' or absent, shifted and dead/duplicate category.

The EC officials had earlier cited available trends to say that the collection of enumeration forms has been "much less" in urban areas compared to rural areas of the states and UTs covered in the SIR exercise.

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The 2.89 crore voters, or 18.70 per cent, of the 15.44 crore listed earlier could not be included in the draft

EC serves SIR notice to Amartya Sen

Kolkata: The Election Commission Wednesday served a notice to Nobel laureate Amartya Sen in connection with the ongoing SIR of electoral rolls in West Bengal, seeking a hearing of the 92-year-old economist January 16 at his residence, an official said. The Trinamool Congress responded sharply to the development and called it a "shameful farce". With Sen currently stationed abroad, the notice was served to a member of his family in Santiniketan, Bolpur, where the ancestral residence of the economist is located, officials said.

In Assam, a separate 'special revision' of electoral rolls is in progress.

The last SIR in states will serve as the cut-off date, just as the 2003 voter list of Bihar was used by the ECI for intensive revision.

Most states had the last SIR of the voter list between 2002 and 2004.

The primary aim of the SIR is to weed out foreign illegal migrants by checking their place of birth. The move assumes significance in the wake of a crackdown in various states on illegal migrants, including those from Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Fadnavis fumes as BJP ties up with Congress, AIMIM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai: The BJP has entered into post-poll alliances with rivals Congress and AIMIM in some municipal councils in Maharashtra, even as Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis Wednesday rejected the tie-ups and warned of action against party leaders involved.

Following the civic elections last month, the BJP joined hands with the Congress, its arch-rival, and the Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) under the banner of 'Ambernath Vikas Aghadi' to form the Ambernath Municipal Council leadership, sidelining ally Shiv Sena.

The BJP also struck a similar alliance with the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) and several other parties in the Akot Municipal Council in Akola district.

CM Fadnavis, however, made it clear that such arrangements were not approved by the party's senior leadership and violated organisational discipline.

"I am making it very clear that any alliance with the Congress or the AIMIM will not be accepted. If any local leader has taken such a decision on their own, it is wrong in terms of discipline and action will be taken," Fadnavis told a news channel, adding that instructions had already been issued to undo such alliances.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut, however, said, "What happened in Akot and Ambernath shows frivolous behaviour of

Fadnavis made it clear that such arrangements were not approved by the party's senior leadership and violated organisational discipline

The three parties have come together, claiming that the move is aimed at "saving the town" and ensuring stable administration. The Shiv Sena, however, slammed the move, calling it "unethical and opportunistic". Sena MLA Dr Balaji Kinikar called it a betrayal of "coalition dharma" and contrary to the BJP's national slogan of a "Congress-mukt Bharat".

CM Fadnavi asserted that such alliances would not be acceptable under any circumstances and said action would be initiated against local leaders who defected party directions.

BJP councillor Tejasree Karanjule Patil was elected the Ambernath Municipal Council president, defeating Sena's Manisha Walekar, and took the oath Wednesday.

Censor snag puts Vijay's 'Jana Nayagan' on hold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai: The Madras High Court Wednesday reserved its order on a petition seeking a direction to the CBFC to give a censor certificate under 'UA 16+' category to the top star, TVK chief Vijay starrer film "Jana Nayagan."

With the court reserving its order, the release of the movie, which was originally scheduled to hit cinema halls January 9, faces uncertainty. Justice P T Asha reserved order on a petition filed by KVN Productions LLP, which has produced the film.

When the case came up for hearing, as directed by the court Tuesday, Additional Solicitor General A R L Sunderesan produced a copy of the complaint given by one of the panel members, which examined the film.

He said the Censor Board has the power to refer the decision of the committee to grant a certificate to the Review Committee, if it was found subsequently, some scenes have to be deleted.

One of the panel members pointed out at 14 scenes that have to be reviewed. Therefore, the decision to grant censor certificate was kept in abeyance and it was referred to Review Committee, he added.

Meanwhile, industry sources indicated that the film's release may be delayed.

Senior counsel Satish Parasaran, appearing for the petitioner, submitted that the majority of the members took a decision to grant censor certificate. However, based on one complaint from a member, it cannot be reviewed. Moreover, the Central government has the power to review decision and there was no transparency in the system.

The producer has invested ₹500 crore and it has already announced the release date as January 9 ahead of the start of Pongal festival holidays.



A tourist paraglides against the backdrop of snow-covered mountains, at Solang Valley area in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

BJP woman functionary alleges cops' misconduct during arrest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Police rejected the woman's allegation, saying she removed her clothes herself and also attacked the cops, causing them bite injuries

also bit four police officers, including two sub-inspectors, in their abdomen.

According to sources, there was an encroachment of government land. To clear it, revenue officials had gone there with policemen, and they were attacked by the alleged illegal occupants. A case was registered in this connection.

The Investigation Officer (IO) decided to arrest one of the women involved in the offence.

While arresting her, the IO had shown utmost restraint and precaution. He had taken about 8-10 women officers and staff, knowing very well that there was a possibility of some nuisance, Shashikumar said.

The police team overpowered

her and bundled her into the police vehicle.

Videos of the woman emerged showing her topless. She alleged the police team disrobed her.

Refuting the charge, Shashikumar explained the chronology of the events to reporters.

He said that when government officers went to the Chalukya Nagar area of Keshwarpur in Hubballi, for a land survey, people quarrelled with them and attacked them.

Three separate cases were registered in this connection. The Investigation Officer (IO) decided to arrest one of the women involved in the offence.

While arresting her, the IO had shown utmost restraint and precaution. He had taken about 8-10 women officers and staff, knowing very well that there was a possibility of some nuisance, Shashikumar said.

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international



I call for restraint to prevent the mood from becoming further inflamed so that, heaven forbid, we do not have additional tragedies

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | PRIME MINISTER, ISRAEL

PHILIPPINES BRACES FOR VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS

A series of mild eruptions at the most active volcano in the Philippines has prompted the evacuation of nearly 3,000 villagers in a permanent danger zone on its foothills, officials said Wednesday. Authorities raised the 5-step alert around Mayon Volcano in the northeastern province of Albay to level 3 Tuesday



of the day quote



Efforts should be made to effectively address various risks and challenges, and jointly safeguard the national security and social stability of both countries

WANG XIAOHONG | PUBLIC SECURITY MINISTER, CHINA



The Americans, in my view, are being productive right now; we have good results... They need to put pressure on Russia. They have the tools, and they know how to use them

VOLODYMIR ZELENSKY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE



The government is exhausting any available means, is fixing decade-long ills and is introducing transparency rules to reboot the primary sector

KOSTAS TSIAKAS | AGRICULTURE MINISTER, GREECE

SHORT TAKES**Deadly clashes resume in Syria**

Aleppo: Fierce fighting resumed in Syria's northern city of Aleppo between government forces and Kurdish fighters for a second day Wednesday, sending thousands of civilians fleeing and leaving at least four people dead. The violence, and statements trading blame over who started it, signaled that a stalemate between Damascus and Kurdish authorities that have resisted integrating into the central government was deepening and growing deadlier. It began Tuesday, when at least six people were killed, including two women and a child, in an exchange of shelling between Syrian government troops and the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

Dozens of Italian tourists evacuated

Rome: Italy has begun repatriating dozens of its citizens stranded on the Yemeni island of Socotra, with a first flight carrying 46 tourists due to land in Jeddah Wednesday, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Another 59 Italians remain on the island and are expected to return on additional flights in the coming days, as authorities work with Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Saudi authorities will grant the Italians a four-day transit visa to help facilitate their return home. The United Arab Emirates last week its troops from Yemen under a deadline from Saudi Arabia, also leaving behind the remote Yemeni island of Socotra and roughly 600 tourists who had flown in but could no longer fly out.

Iran executes man convicted of spying

Tehran: Iran executed a man convicted of spying for Israel's Mossad, state media reported Wednesday. The official IRNA news agency identified the man as Ali Ardestani, saying he relayed sensitive information to Mossad officers in return for financial rewards in the form of cryptocurrencies. The report said the man confessed to the spying charges and that he had hoped to receive a million-dollar reward as well as a British visa. It called Ardestani a "special operative force of Israel" and said he gave images and footage of "special places" to Mossad agents. IRNA did not elaborate about the time and place of his detention. The report said Israel recruited Ardestani online, adding that his case went through legal procedures, both in primary courts and the country's Supreme Court.

US seizes Russian-flagged oil tanker linked to Venezuela

REUTERS

Washington, Jan 7: The US seized a Russian-flagged oil tanker that was being shadowed by a Russian submarine Wednesday, after a more than two-week-long pursuit across the Atlantic as part of a US "blockade" of Venezuelan oil exports, two US officials told Reuters.

This appeared to be the first time in recent memory that the US military has seized a Russian-flagged vessel.

The operation took place after the tanker, originally known as the Bella-1, slipped through a US maritime blockade of sanctioned tankers in the Caribbean and rebuffed US Coast Guard efforts to board it. The seizure effort was first reported by Reuters. In a post on X, the US military's European Command said the Trump administration had seized the vessel for violating US sanctions.

"The blockade of sanctioned and illicit Venezuelan oil remains in FULL EFFECT — anywhere in the world," US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said in reply to that post. The US officials, who were speaking on condition of anonymity, said Wednesday's operation near Iceland was being carried out by the Coast Guard and US military. The Coast Guard did not immediately respond to a re-

quest for comment. The officials said Russian military vessels were in the general vicinity of the operation, including a Russian submarine. It was unclear how close the vessels were to the operation, but there were no indications of a confrontation between US and Russian military forces.

NOT CLEAR WHERE VESSEL WILL NOW GO

The seizure took place just days after US special forces swooped into Caracas before dawn Saturday in a deadly raid to seize President Nicolas Maduro and take him to the United States. The US military turned him over to federal authorities for prosecution on charges involving alleged drug trafficking.

It was unclear where exactly the ship would now go, but sources said it would likely be entering British territorial waters. The US Coast Guard first attempted to intercept the vessel last month, but it refused to be boarded. Since then, it has registered under a Russian flag and been renamed Marinera.

The vessel is the latest tanker targeted by the US Coast Guard since the start of US President Donald Trump's pressure campaign against Venezuela.

Separately, the US Coast Guard has also intercepted another Venezuela-linked tanker

- Vessel had been renamed and registered under Russian flag
- Seizure took place in the Atlantic, near Iceland
- Pursuit of vessel was part of US pressure campaign on Venezuela
- Seizure took place days after capture of President Nicolas Maduro

in Latin American waters, US officials told Reuters Wednesday, as the US continues enforcing its blockade of sanctioned vessels from Venezuela.

TRUMP EYES VENEZUELAN OIL

Top Venezuelan officials have called Maduro's capture a kidnapping and have accused the US of trying to steal the country's vast oil reserves, estimated to be the largest in the world.

In turn, Trump and top US officials have accused Venezuela of stealing US oil, in an apparent reference to the country's nationalization of its energy sector in several waves over the past half-century.

Venezuela has millions of barrels of oil loaded on tankers and in storage tanks that it has been unable to ship due to the effective US blockade on exports imposed since mid-December.

Trump said Tuesday that Caracas and Washington have reached a deal to export up to \$2 billion worth of Venezuelan crude to the United States, an agreement that would divert supplies from China while helping Venezuela avoid deeper oil production cuts.

Such an agreement would be a strong sign that the Venezuelan government is responding to Trump's demand that authorities there open up to US oil companies or risk more military intervention. Trump has said he wants interim President Delcy Rodriguez to give the US and private companies "total access" to Venezuela's oil industry.

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business

of the day quote



With 15 per cent blending, India can save nearly \$4,500 crore in foreign exchange and substantially reduce its dependence on imported crude oil

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

FASTEST GLOBALLY

GDP TO GROW AT 7.4% IN FY26

India expects strong economic growth despite US tariff hit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: India is likely to grow at a faster pace of 7.4 per cent during 2025-26, compared to 6.5 per cent in the previous year, driven by a strong performance in the services and manufacturing sectors, thus retaining its position as the world's fastest growing major economy.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) had expanded by 9.2 per cent during 2023-24.

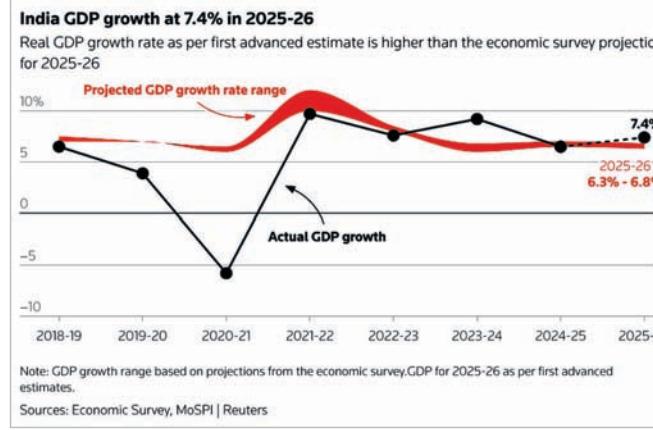
The First Advance Estimates of national income released by the government on Wednesday, also showed that Gross Value Added (GVA) is estimated to grow at 7.3 per cent during the current financial year as against 6.4 per cent in the year-ago period.

The manufacturing sector is expected to post a 7 per cent growth (GVA) in the current fiscal, up from 4.5 per cent in 2024-25.

The growth in the services sector has been estimated at 9.1 per cent versus 7.2 per cent in 2024-25, according to the data released by National Statistics Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

Growth in the agriculture and allied sector moderated to 3.1 per cent in the current fiscal from 4.6 per cent in the 2024-25.

"Real GDP or GDP at constant prices is estimated to at-



India's growth momentum has sustained despite elevated global uncertainty due to tariff tensions, riding on accommodative monetary and fiscal policies, robust corporate balance sheets, and favourable developments such as above-normal monsoons and low crude oil prices

DHARMAKIRTI JOSHI | CHIEF ECONOMIST, CRISIL

tain a level of Rs 201.90 lakh crore in FY 2025-26, against the provisional estimates (PE) of GDP for FY 2024-25 of Rs 187.97 lakh crore, registering a growth rate of 7.4 per cent," NSO said.

The nominal GDP, which factors in inflation, is estimated to attain a level of Rs 357.14 lakh crore in 2025-26, against Rs 330.68 lakh crore in 2024-25, showing a growth rate of 8 per cent. The government had

estimated the nominal GDP ex-

pansion at 10.1 per cent in the Union Budget presented in February last year.

The First Advance Estimates are used in preparation of the Union Budget, likely to be presented February 1.

According to World Bank's China economic update issued in December, the country is estimated to grow at 4.9 per cent in 2025 and 4.4 per cent in 2026.

The NSO's GDP estimate for the current fiscal is marginally

higher than the Reserve Bank's projection of 7.3 per cent.

The real private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) has been estimated to attain a growth rate of 7 per cent during 2025-26.

Gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) has been estimated to have 7.8 per cent growth rate at constant prices during 2025-26, compared to 7.1 per cent in previous financial year.

Despite global headwinds, the Indian economy has been on a steady trajectory, and the government has come out with various reform measures this fiscal, including income tax relief and reduction in GST rates.

Commenting on the data, Rahul Agrawal, senior economist, ICRA, said the rating agency does not expect a fiscal slippage over the targeted 4.4 per cent of GDP, as higher-than-budgeted non-tax revenues and likely expenditure savings would provide a buffer against the expected miss on taxes.

Jahnavi Prabhakar, Economist, Bank of Baroda, said he Indian economy remains resilient on the back of the festive demand and steady improvement in economic activity.

Strong festive sales along with GST rationalization 2.0 and income tax cuts are expected to boost the consumption sector. Even the post festive demand has been holding up, Prabhakar said.

Anil Kumar Singh takes over as NALCO's Director (Commercial)

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) has appointed Anil Kumar Singh as Director (Commercial) on its Board, further strengthening the leadership of the Navratna PSU.

The appointment was made through an order issued by the Ministry of Mines, Government of India, January 5.

Singh will hold office from the date of assumption of charge until his superannuation September 30, 2028, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

Singh brings over 35 years of rich experience in the commercial domain of the metals and mining sector. He is a graduate in Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering from BIT Sindri (1990) and holds a GDMM, an MBA in Materials Management, and a PGDCA.

He began his career with Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), Visakhapatnam, in the Materials Management Department. Later, during his tenure at Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL), Singh played a key role in advancing the company's expansion plans. His responsibilities included product marketing, procurement, policy formulation, works contract management, stores management, and quality control of copper products.

Housing sales drop

New Delhi: Housing sales fell 1 per cent last year to over 3.48 lakh units across eight major cities, with demand stagnating amid an average price rise of up to 19 per cent, according to Knight Frank.

In a virtual press conference Wednesday, real estate consultant Knight Frank India noted that the decline in interest rates on home loans, strong economic growth and lower inflation were some of the key factors that helped in sustaining the housing demand during the 2025 calendar year despite fears of an impending correction.

As per the data, the housing sales declined 1 per cent in 2025 to 3,48,207 units across eight major cities of the country.

Titan revenue zooms

New Delhi: Jewellery and watch maker Titan Co Ltd. Tuesday reported a whopping 40 per cent annual growth in standalone revenue during the December quarter of FY26, aided by surging gold prices. According to the latest quarterly updates, the Tata Group firm said its jewellery division, which contributed around 85 per cent of its business, "clocked a robust 41 per cent YoY growth in Q3FY26". "Revenue growth was driven by substantial average selling price increases, offsetting flattish buyer growth," the company said.

LIC unveils 'Jeevan Utsav Single Premium' plan

NEW DELHI: Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has introduced a new insurance product, "LIC's Jeevan Utsav Single Premium" (Plan No 883), aimed at providing guaranteed lifelong income along with whole-life risk cover. The plan was launched January 6 by LIC's Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director R Doraiswamy. It is a non-participating, non-linked, individual savings and whole-life insurance plan, available on a single premium basis. The plan's UIN is 512N392V01. LIC's Jeevan Utsav Single Premium is open to individuals aged 30 days to 65 years. The minimum Basic Sum Assured is Rs 5 lakh, with no upper limit, subject to underwriting norms. During the Guaranteed Addition Period, policyholders will receive guaranteed additions of Rs 40 per Rs 1,000 of Basic Sum Assured at the end of each policy year. The plan offers two survival benefit options. Under Regular Income Benefit, policyholders receive 10% of the Basic Sum Assured annually, starting after 7 to 17 years, as chosen. The Flexi Income Benefit allows the income to be accumulated and withdrawn later, earning 5.5% annual compounded interest. In case of death, the nominee will receive the Sum Assured on Death plus accrued Guaranteed Additions. On maturity, the Sum Assured on Maturity along with Guaranteed Additions will be payable. Loan facility, high sum assured rebates and optional riders are also available. The plan will be available for purchase from January 12, 2026.



POST NEWS NETWORK

SENSEX, NIFTY EXTEND LOSSES INTO 3RD SESSION ON GEOPOLITICAL CONCERN, TRADE UNCERTAINTIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 7: Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty drifted lower for the third day in a row Wednesday as geopolitical tensions and renewed concerns about potential US tariff hikes weighed on investor sentiment.

Sustained foreign fund outflows also dragged the markets lower, traders said.

However, buying on select blue-chip counters and lower crude prices in the international market supported equities, they added.

In a volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 102.20 points or 0.12 per cent to settle at 84,961.14. During the day, it dropped 445.85 points or 0.52 per cent to 84,617.49.

The 50-share NSE Nifty went down by 37.95 points, or 0.14 per cent, to 26,140.75.

From the 30-Sensex firms, Maruti, Power Grid, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, HDFC Bank, Asian Paints and Tata Steel were among the biggest

laggards. However, Titan, HCL Tech, Tech Mahindra, Infosys and Tata Consultancy Services were among the gainers.

The BSE midcap gauge moved 0.47 per cent, and the smallcap index went up by 0.12 per cent. Among sectoral indices, BSE utilities declined by 0.80 per cent, oil & gas (0.76 per cent), auto (0.68 per cent), telecommunication (0.61 per cent)

and realty (0.39 per cent).

However, BSE Focused IT jumped 2.52 per cent, IT climbed 1.97 per cent, consumer durables (1.25 per cent), healthcare (0.42 per cent) and capital goods (0.41 per cent).

"Indian equity markets ended today's session on a subdued and cautious note, with investors adopting a selective approach amid mixed domes-

tic and global cues. Elevated geopolitical tensions and renewed tariff-related concerns continued to cap risk appetite and deter aggressive positioning," Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.81 per cent to \$60.21 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors offloaded equities worth Rs 107.63 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Domestic institutional investors, however, bought stocks worth Rs 1,749.35 crore.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi index and Shanghai's SSE Composite index settled higher, while Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index ended lower. Markets in Europe were trading mostly lower. US markets ended higher Tuesday.

On Tuesday, the Sensex dropped 376.28 points, or 0.44 per cent, to settle at 85,063.34. The Nifty declined 71.60 points, or 0.27 per cent, to end at 26,178.70.

PTI

GRAPHICS

NSE NIFTY JANUARY 7, 2026



India's EV story gains momentum in 2025

EV RETAIL SALES SURGE 16.37% TO OVER 22.70 LAKH UNITS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



per cent to 15,606 units from 10,123 eCVs retailed a year ago.

The electric two-wheeler sales for the year under review stood at 12,79,951 units compared to 11,49,416 units in

the year-ago period, registering a growth of 11.36 per cent.

Similarly, the e-three-wheeler retail sales rose 15.39 per cent to 7,97,733 units in 2025 against 6,91,313 units sold in 2024, FADA said.

"On the strength of robust ground-level adoption, electric two-wheeler sales retailed around 12.80 lakh units (+11.36 per cent YoY) with an EV share of 6.3 per cent, while electric passenger vehicles grew sharply to 1,76,817 units (+77.04 per cent YoY), taking EV share to around 4 per cent from 2.4 per cent last year," said CS Vigneshwar, president, Federation of Indian Automobile Dealers'

Association (FADA). The most decisive transformation continues to be in three-wheeler, where EVs now command 6.09 per cent share, with EV 3W retails at 7,97,733 units (15.39 per cent higher year-on-year), a strong endorsement of EV economics in the last-mile mobility, he added.

Even in commercial vehicles, while the base is still evolving, momentum is visible with EV CV retails at 15,606 units (54.2 per cent jump year-on-year) and EV share rising to 1.55 per cent, Vigneshwar said, adding that this transition is being powered by improving product choices and total cost of ownership benefits.

INDIGO GETS FIRST A321XLR

Domestic carrier IndiGo Wednesday received its first Airbus A321 XLR aircraft at the Delhi airport, and will be deployed for non-stop services to Athens from Delhi and Mumbai starting later this month. Of the total order of 40 A321 XLR aircraft, nine are expected to be delivered in the 2026 calendar year

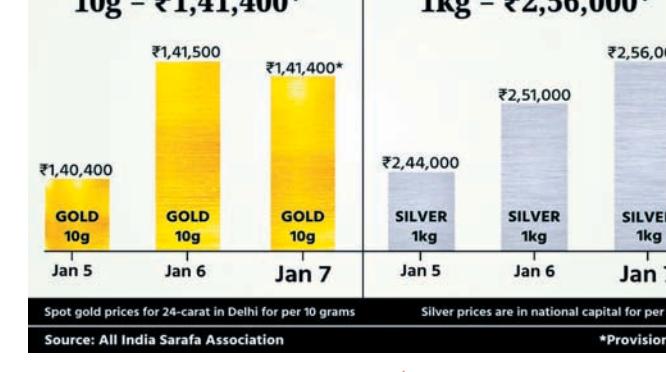


FRESH PEAK

Silver climbs ₹5K to ₹2.56 lakh/kg

The escalating tensions between US and Venezuela have boosted safe-haven appeal, while supply-side constraints and strong industrial usage further amplified silver prices

GOLD & SILVER



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: Silver prices surged by Rs 5,000 to hit a new record of Rs 2,56,000 per kilogram in the national capital Wednesday, amid strong safe-haven demand and robust industrial buying, according to the All India Sarfa Association.

The white metal closed at Rs 2,51,000 per kilogram Tuesday.

"Silver prices were also driven by sustained buying by the investors and China's export curbs on silver that came into effect from January 1," an expert said.

Meanwhile, the price of gold of 99.9 per cent purity slipped marginally by Rs 100 to Rs 1,41,400 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes), compared to the previous close of Rs 1,41,500 per 10 grams.

"Gold prices experienced a slight decline on Wednesday as investors took profits following a recent rally," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

He added that a recovery in the US dollar also weighed on gold prices, though persistent geopolitical risks continue to support safe-haven demand for precious metals, which is limiting sharp downside.

ICC to address BCB's concerns

Following Bangladeshi pacer Mustafizur Rahman's ouster from the IPL, a livid BCB demanded that its four World Cup matches in India to be shifted to co-host Sri Lanka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, Jan 7: The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Wednesday said the ICC is "willing to work closely" with it to address "security concerns" around the team's participation in the T20 World Cup in India even though its demand for a change of venue has not yet been accepted.

The T20 World Cup starts February 7 and Bangladesh are due to play their four games in Kolkata and Mumbai.

"In its communication, the ICC has reiterated its commitment to ensuring the full and uninterrupted participation of the Bangladesh team in the tournament," the BCB said in a statement.

"The ICC has conveyed its willingness to work closely with the BCB to address the concerns raised and has assured that the Board's inputs will be welcomed and duly considered as part of the detailed security planning for the event," it added.

BCB president Aminul Islam



T20 WORLD CUP

and government Asif Nazrul addressed a press conference after the board issued the statement on the sensitive subject.

Both reiterated their stance on why they are not comfortable with the team's travel to India. Nazrul was more vocal than BCB president Aminul.

"So far, we have very clearly taken this decision that we will make the ICC understand that we do not have an environment suitable for playing in India. This will be conveyed tonight or by tomorrow morning. With those sufficiently strong arguments, we will make the ICC understand that the core principle of our stand is that on the questions of Bangladesh's security, Bangladesh's honour, and Bangladesh's dignity, we will not compromise. But we definitely want to play the Cricket

World Cup," said Nazrul.

Aminul cited the arrangement between India and Pakistan under which the arch-rivals play their ICC matches in a third country. With security for his players being a major concern for Aminul, he argued the same should be done for the games involving Bangladesh.

Hostilities shot up between India and Bangladesh following Bangladeshi pacer Mustafizur Rahman's ouster from the IPL on BCCI's instructions. The Indian Board did not give a clear reason for the decision but it was largely attributed to the deepening diplomatic tensions between the two neighbours in the wake of attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh.

The BCCI's action prompted a livid BCB to demand that

When the Champions Trophy was held, India did not go to Pakistan, and Pakistan also did not come to India to play in the last World Cup. So we are also hopeful that we will get a proper response (from the ICC)...you know that the hybrid World Cup that is happening, the main reason behind that is security. So we are hopeful that we will be able to establish the reasons we have

AMINUL ISLAM | PRESIDENT, BANGLADESH CRICKET BOARD

its four World Cup matches in India be shifted to co-host Sri Lanka in a written submission to the ICC.

The ICC has not yet issued a public response to the BCB on this subject and a planned meeting between the two bodies Tuesday also could not take place. In the statement, the BCB said it will continue the "constructive engagement" with the ICC and relevant event authorities in a "cooperative and professional manner".

The Board also stated that it was confident of "an affordable and practical solution" for the "smooth and successful" participation of the team in the T20 World Cup.

Drawn in Group C, the team is scheduled to face the West Indies in their opening match at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata and subsequently compete

against defending champions England, Italy and Nepal.

No ultimatum from ICC

The BCB also rejected reports that it had been told to either participate as per the decided schedule or forfeit its games by the ICC.

"The BCB has also taken note of certain reports published in a section of the media suggesting that the Board has been issued an ultimatum in this regard.

"The BCB categorically states that such claims are completely false, unfounded and do not reflect the nature or content of the communication received from the ICC," it asserted.

Aminul also dismissed such reports in the press conference.

"Regarding this propaganda that is going on that the ICC has informed us that playing in Sri Lanka is not possible — no such thing has happened as far as I know. I would call it propaganda, false news, because we are still in contact with the ICC. We have informed them of one thing, and they are asking us what the issues are," he asserted.

Rahman was bought for Rs 9.2 crore by Kolkata Knight Riders at last year's players' auction in Abu Dhabi.

After his ouster from the IPL, he was Tuesday roped in by the Pakistan Super League even though the players' draft of that event has not yet taken place.

Young Men in Blue whitewash Proteas

Suryavanshi becomes the youngest captain to score a hundred in Youth ODIs history, adding a new 'world record' to his name

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Benoni (South Africa), Jan 7: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi extended his jaw dropping run with a sizzling hundred while Aaron George too struck a fine century as India U-19 thrashed South Africa by 233 runs in the third youth ODI to sweep the three-match series here Wednesday.

Sent in to bat, skipper Sooryavanshi, who smashed a 24-ball 68 in the previous game, once again went on a six-hitting spree, hammering 10 maximums and nine boundaries in a fluent 74-ball 127.

The 14-year-old from Bihar was ably supported by George, who compiled 118 off 106 balls, as the duo laid the platform for a massive total with a 227-run opening stand.

India piled up a mammoth 393 for 7, a target that proved well beyond South Africa, who were bowled out for 160 in 35 overs.

For the hosts, Ntanda Somi (3/61) and Jason Rowles (2/59) shared five wickets at Willowmoore Park.

Chasing the stiff target, South Africa slumped to 15 for 3 in the fourth over as Kishan Singh wreaked havoc at the top, dis-



missing Jorich Van Schalkwyk (1), Adnaan Lagadien (9) and Lethabo Phahlamohloka (0).

The 19-year-old Singh, who had taken four wickets in the second game as well, was the standout bowler again.

Daniel Bosman (40) and Rowles (19) offered brief resistance, but South Africa slid to 99 for six in the 23rd over. Paul James (41) and Corne Botha (36 not out) only delayed the inevitable.

Earlier, Sooryavanshi once again stole the spotlight with his power-hitting, bringing up his third century in Youth ODIs. He has also struck four fifties so far in 18 matches. The teen sensation has now amassed 973 runs in 18 matches at an average of 54.05 and a strike rate of 164.08.

India had won the first match by 25 runs via the DLS method and the second by eight wickets.

WINNING START FOR SINDHU, SAT-CHI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kuala Lumpur, Jan 7: Returning from a prolonged injury lay-off, PV Sindhu began the new season on a winning note along with the formidabile men's doubles pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy as they entered the second round of the Malaysia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament here Wednesday.

The 30-year-old former world champion, who had opted to withdraw from all BWF World Tour events in October last year to recover from a foot injury, defeated Chinese Taipei's Sung Shuo Yun 21-14, 22-20 in a 51-minutes showdown of the women's singles opening round.

The 18th-ranked Sindhu showed no signs of discomfort as she overcame the lower-ranked Sung for the second time to take her head-to-head to 20 and set up a round-of-16 clash with world No 9 Tomoka Miyazaki of Japan.

Sindhu has a 1-1 record against Miyazaki, whom she beat in the 2025 China Masters during their last meeting. Later, Satwik and Chirag, the former World No 1 pair, saw off Chinese Taipei's Yang Po-Hsuan and Lee Jhe-Hue 21-13 21-15 in 35 minutes to also enter the pre-quarterfinals.

The Panda sisters -- Rutuparna and Swetaparna -- also faced defeat, going down 11-21 9-21 in a lop-sided contest against second seeded Malaysians Pearly Tan and Thinaah Muralitharan.

ASHES TEST

Jacob's first test century stalls Australia's victory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Jan 7: Jacob Bethell posted his first test century Wednesday and it couldn't have come at a more crucial time for England, ensuring the fifth and last Ashes test will be decided on Day 5 at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Bethell finished 142 not out from 232 balls, helping England erase the 183-run first-innings deficit and maintain a chance of winning back-to-back tests Down Under. The Australians retained the Ashes with wins in the first three tests, but England is determined to narrow the margin after its drought-breaking win in Melbourne.

"It was special to get the milestone," Bethell said in a TV interview. "To have a family over ... (and) to top it off with a hundred here is very special."

The 22-year-old, Barbados-born allrounder went to the crease in the first over of England's second innings when Mitchell Starc trapped Zac

POST NEWS NETWORK

Crawley lbw on the fifth ball.

He shared an 81-run second-wicket stand with Ben Duckett (42), 32 with Joe Root (6), 102 with Harry Brook (42) and 45 with Jamie Smith (26) to help England reach 302-8 at stumps on Day 4, a lead of 119 runs.

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