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OrissaPOST

Rani on success

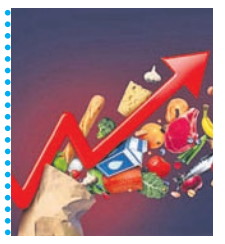
Celebrating 30 years in Indian cinema, Actor Rani Mukerji reflects on her journey by redefining success through artistic fulfillment

LEISURE | P2

Critical hearings

Myanmar targeted Rohingya Muslims for destruction, making their lives a nightmare, Gambia tells UN court

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Inflation up

Retail inflation rises to a three-month high of 1.33 per cent in December, mainly due to higher prices of food items

BUSINESS | P11

Glory for Catalans

Raphinha scores twice as Barcelona beat Real Madrid 3-2 to win the final of the Spanish Super Cup

SPORTS | P12

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VOLUME 15, ISSUE 283 | www.orissapost.com BHUBANESWAR | TUESDAY | JANUARY 13, 2026 12 PAGES | ₹5.00

Iran blames US, Israel for unrest

AGENCIES

Tehran, Jan 12: Iran's foreign minister has accused the United States of deliberately inflaming unrest after days of nationwide protests and a sweeping internet shutdown left the country largely cut off from the outside world.

Speaking Monday, Abbas Araqchi said the situation remained "under total control" but blamed Washington for encouraging violence by threatening action against Tehran. He said US President Donald Trump's public warnings had pushed armed groups to target both protesters and security forces in a bid to trigger foreign intervention.

Araqchi said Iranian authorities possessed footage showing weapons being distributed on the streets and would soon release confessions from detainees. He added that officials were "closely following" developments and insisted the demonstrations were "stoked and fuelled" by foreign elements. Those responsible, he warned, would be pursued.

More than 500 protests have taken place across all of Iran's 31 provinces, the US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency reported early Monday. The death toll had reached at least 544, it said, with more than 10,600 arrests.

GLOBAL GLORY: Joe Alwyn, Noah Jupe, Chloe Zhao, Jessie Buckley, Paul Mescal, and Jacobi Jupe pose with the Best Motion Picture - Drama award for Hamnet at the 83rd Annual Golden Globes in Beverly Hills, California, Monday **(Full list – P2)** REUTERS

Fresh blow to ISRO; rocket misses orbit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sriharikota, Jan 12: ISRO's PSLV-C62 rocket carrying 16 satellites, including a foreign Earth Observation satellite, "encountered an anomaly", the space agency said on Monday, signalling the failure of the mission.

The mission of placing the satellites in the intended orbit could not be achieved and all the 16 satellites were lost in space, ISRO sources told PTI adding this was the second consecutive PSLV mission failure during the third stage.

Disturbances in the rocket and later deviation from flight path was observed when strap-on motors were providing thrust during the flight's third stage to propel the vehicle to the intended altitude, space agency chairman V Narayanan said adding a detailed analysis has been initiated to identify the cause.

A similar, previous attempt in May 2025 (PSLV-C61-EOS-09) also did not succeed due to "motor pressure issue," and there was a fall in the chamber pressure of the motor case.

Budget Feb 1, Sunday

New Delhi: In a first, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the Union Budget in Parliament Sunday, February 1, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla announced Monday. This will be Sitharaman's ninth budget presentation, one short of the record 10 budgets presented by the former finance minister Morarji Desai. The Budget session of Parliament begins on January 28 Sitharaman is likely to present the Economic Survey in both the Houses of Parliament after the president's address.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

X says it can't remove the hateful, obscene content as it wasn't posted by Grok, but by our party members

US envoy praises Trump-Modi, nothing more

Though Sergio Gor, the new US ambassador to India, struck an upbeat note about the future relations between both countries in his arrival speech, the optimism seems detached from on-the-ground realities. His effusive praise for Trump-Modi friendship signals continued subservience to personality-driven diplomacy rather than substantive policy. Gor's 'rhetoric' about deepening ties masks America's plan to counter China through India, reducing bilateral relations to strategic convenience. This hollow charm offensive, heavy on superlatives but light on specifics, suggests another four years of style over substance in US-India engagement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: Signalling intent to rebuild strained ties, President Donald Trump's new ambassador to Delhi Monday said that both sides are actively engaged to firm up a trade deal.

"Many of you have asked me for an update on the ongoing trade deal negotiations. Both sides continue to actively engage. In fact, the next call on trade will occur tomorrow," shared Sergio Gor.

SPEECH HIGHLIGHTS

- Most consequential global partnership of this century
- Invitation to New Delhi for a US-led strategic alliance 'Pax Silica'
- Friendship between Trump and Modi "real"
- "Real" friends can disagree, but always resolve their differences

The 38 year old, in his arrival speech, went on to add that no country is as essential as India to the United States.

He announced an invitation to New Delhi for a US-led strategic alliance, known as 'Pax Silica' on critical minerals and artificial intelligence.

The comments made just hours after he began work are seen as a welcome outreach by the Trump administration which has mounted pressure on India in recent months over tariffs and H1B visas.

"You and I have an incredible once in a lifetime opportunity to redefine diplomacy. What it can accomplish could be the most consequential global partnership of this century," Gor said addressing the US embassy employees.

"No partner is more essential than India. In the months and years ahead, it is my goal as ambassador to pursue a very ambitious agenda. We will do this as true strategic partners, each bringing strength, respect and leadership to the table," he said.

He also emphasised that the friendship between Trump and PM Narendra Modi is "real" and will help in resolving "differences", which have resulted in the worst phase in the relations in the last two decades.

The downturn began after Trump slapped a 50 per cent tariff on India, including a 25 per cent additional duties for India's purchase of Russian crude oil. Apart from the tariff issue, the relations witnessed a severe strain on a number of other issues that included Trump's claim of ending the India-Pakistan conflict in May last year and Washington's new immigration policy.

"The United States and India are bound not just by shared interests, but by a relationship anchored at the highest levels. Real friends can disagree, but always resolve their differences in the end," he said.

While talking about trade, the US envoy also recalled Secretary of State Marco Rubio's remarks that it will be a "year of reciprocity".

Assembly seats may increase to 200: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: Following delimitation, the seats in the state Assembly may increase, with the total strength possibly going up to around 200, said Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi during the foundation stone laying ceremony of the new Assembly building and Lok Seva Bhavan Monday.

"Today, we have 147 MLAs, which could increase after delimitation. I am not sure, but after delimitation, the number of members could be 200. Therefore, we have to construct a new assembly building keeping in view for the next 50/100 years," Majhi said.

The chief minister also said that the state required a new Lok Seva Bhavan (secretariat) as the present building is 70 years old, where office space failed to meet the present-day requirements.

There is a need for a modern Lok Seva Bhavan due to expanded departments and staff numbers outgrowing the existing infrastructure, aligning with June 2025 government announcements for integrated new buildings.

The new Assembly and Lok Seva Bhavan premises will have underground parking facilities, ensuring better space management and convenience.

The project will be constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 3,623 crore and spread over 71.13 acres of land in the state capital. The CM said the proposed assembly building will feature a modern meeting hall with a seating capacity of 300 members.

Works Minister Pritiviraj Harichandan said that the campus, officially named Lok Seva Bhavan and Mantralaya building, is envisioned as a state-of-the-art hub for governance and public service delivery. He said a master plan for this ambitious project has already been approved. MORE P 3

Minor loses eye as snack toy explodes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Titilagarh, Jan 12: An eight-year-old boy lost an eye after a toy found inside a snack packet allegedly exploded in Bolangir district, police said Monday.

The incident occurred at Sagadghat village under Titilagarh police station limits. According to sources, a locally packaged snack similar to "Kurkure" is being manufactured in Bargarh and Sambalpur districts and sold in plastic packets priced at Rs 5. To attract children, small toys are put inside the packets.

Ankesh Harpal, son of Lab Harpal of Sagadghat village, bought one such packet from a local shop Sunday evening. After consuming the snack at home, the child reportedly threw the toy into a fire, following which it suddenly exploded.

The explosion caused severe injury to the child's eye. He was rushed to Titilagarh hospital, where doctors later confirmed that the eye was completely damaged.

Ankesh's parents lodged a complaint at Titilagarh police station Monday, demanding strict action against those responsible. They also called for an immediate ban on the company involved and sought compensation for their son's injury.

Police said an investigation has been initiated to ascertain the source of toy production and the circumstances leading to the explosion.

Man who built his own grave laid to rest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Jan 12: An 80-year-old man in Telangana, who built his own grave while leading a healthy life, passed away January 11.

A resident of Laxmipuram village, Nakka Indrayya had gained national attention for constructing his own final resting place years in advance, as a peaceful gesture to ensure that his children would face no burden during their time of grief.

Indrayya, who built his grave beside his wife's, has placed a plaque at the site inscribed with a message on the eternal truths of life and death.

He made it a routine to visit the spot, clean the surroundings, water the plants and sit in quiet reflection.

The man's life was marked by a tireless spirit of giving.

In a file photo, Indrayya is seen sitting at the grave he built for himself

Sharing Indrayya's contributions, his elder brother, Nakka Bhumayya told PTI videos: "He built his own grave... and also a church in the village. He did several good things for the village. He distributed his wealth during his lifetime to his four children. He built houses for them and organised nine weddings in the family..."

Srinivas, a villager, recalled Indrayya's guiding principle: "Whatever you hoard will slip away, but what you give to others will stay with you forever."

Following his passing on Sunday, Indrayya's final wish was fulfilled as he was laid to rest at the grave he had prepared with his own funds.

For many villagers gathered in large numbers for the last rites, Indrayya's journey served as a reminder that in a world driven by material pursuit, preparing for the end with clarity and calm can itself be a profound life lesson.

"I have built four-five houses, a school and a church and now my own grave. I am very happy. The very mention of building a grave causes sadness to many but I am happy," Indrayya had earlier told PTI Videos.

Born into a landless labourer family from a poor Dalit background, Indrayya lost his father at a tender age and began working as a child labourer under a local landlord. He later moved to Mumbai before finally settling in Dubai, where he spent the major part of his life and went on to become one of the wealthiest persons in his village.

Two SIR deaths in West Bengal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 12: Two persons died in different parts of West Bengal Monday, with the families of both claiming that anxiety related to the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was the reason for their deaths.

A middle-aged man collapsed and died in a market in Uttar Dinajpur's Kaliaganj in the northern part of the state, while an elderly woman breathed her last after suffering a stroke at Basirhat in North 24 Parganas district in the south. The man recently received a notice for the SIR hearing, and the woman attended the exercise last week.

In Kaliaganj, a 50-plus daily wage labourer, Lakshmikanta Ray, collapsed and died Monday afternoon at the crowded Dhankaili market, police said.

leisure

FLIPPERACHI ANNOUNCES FIRST LIVE SHOW IN INDIA

Bahraini rapper Hussam Aseem, better known by the name of Flipperachi, who rose to fame after his song *FA9LA* was featured in the Bollywood film *Dhurandhar*, has announced his India tour. Flipperachi shared the news with a post on his Instagram handle

WILL SMITH WANTS SRK TO CAST HIM IN MOVIE

Will Smith was recently in Dubai for the premiere of *National Geographic's Pole to Pole with Will Smith*. During an interaction, Will expressed his desire to work with Shah Rukh Khan in a Bollywood film and also revealed that he had been in talks about working with Salman Khan and Amitabh Bachchan

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You are going to make full use of your silver-tongued sleekness today! Your power of expression will be appreciated, especially by the opposite sex, and you will thoroughly enjoy the attention. Ganesha advises a little meditation to help balance your inner and outer worlds.

TAURUS

You are likely to succeed in everything you start today, predicts Ganesha. Financial transactions will be both satisfying and profitable in the afternoon. The day may not turn out to be as exciting as you may have expected. A thrilling evening will compensate for a rather tiring day, expects Ganesha.

GEMINI

Today, luck is on your side. In the afternoon, you will remain reserved and subdued. But as the day progresses, you will be a different person altogether. You will transform into an enterprising and outgoing person. At work, you will impress your bosses with your brilliance, predicts Ganesha.

CANCER

Your day will revolve around your spouse and matters related to him/her. Thanks to the love and warmth that he/she will shower on you, you may not want to go to work, and you would expect the same from him/her. Don't push it, unless both of you can take a break from work without any harm done to your day's tasks.

LEO

Ganesha foresees that today, you will be gripped by the desire to shop till you drop, even if it means having to spend a small fortune from your hard-earned savings! You have no problem with that, especially if all the money-spending is being undertaken to please your sweetheart.

VIRGO

All you have to do is start what you intend to do, and its success will automatically fall in. Such is the day today for you, says Ganesha. Financial transactions will be rewarding. However, the day may not be as exciting as you expect. But then again, don't expect – just go with the flow, says Ganesha.

LIBRA

'Wait and watch' is always a good policy. You have been doing the same, and today, there is every possibility that the talents you have displayed for so long finally get the deserved recognition at work. For the businessman, Ganesha once again advises patience if one wants better future prospects.

SCORPIO

Take the lonely road today in business ventures, advises Ganesha. Professionally, you are capable of managing massive missions. Be set to administer your department all by yourself. You shall stake a claim as a great team leader today, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

A curious blend of good and bad, foresees Ganesha. While at home, you will receive good support to renovate your home. But, it may end up being more than a bit too heavy on your pocket. A long day's slog will earn you much praise at work.

CAPRICORN

It is time again for that once-in-blue-moon mood swing. You will be easily irked by everyday activities and may let small, less important things bother you too much, foresees Ganesha. But the darkest hour is just before dawn. Things should start looking up later in the day. You enjoy doing things others won't dare, and for all you know, you may have already won millions of hearts with your impressive personality.

AQUARIUS

You have been bitten by the explorer's bug. Today, you could be pouring over an encyclopedia, a National Geographic magazine, or even tour your town, discovering little eateries and joints hitherto unknown. Ganesha says that if you include friends, it will be so much more fun!

PISCES

You have been ruminating on your past performance for quite some time now, and today will be the day when you attempt to better it, says Ganesha. Your peers may try to outwit you, but you will manage to pre-empt them with consummate skill. Meditative techniques will help you remain calm.

Rani's definition of success

Mumbai: Bollywood veteran Rani Mukerji, who recently completed 30 years in Indian cinema, reflected on her journey by redefining what success truly means to her as an artist. Sharing a note through Yash Raj Films' official social media, the actress said her career, from *Raja Ki Aayegi Baaraat* to the upcoming *Mardaani 3*, has never been about chasing numbers, trophies or external validation.

Rani revealed that she measures success through moments rather than milestones. "I don't count box-office numbers or awards first. I count moments," she wrote, pointing to experiences such as standing under the rain for a shot, laughing between takes or being emotionally drained after a demanding scene. For her, these intimate, behind-the-scenes experiences define fulfilment far more than commercial outcomes.

She explained that cinema's ability to capture and preserve emotion has shaped her relationship with the craft, keeping her grounded despite decades in the industry. This philosophy has guided her choice of roles, many of which centre on emotionally complex and socially driven characters, including *Black* and *Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway*.

Even her National Award win, she noted, felt like a quiet validation rather than a destination. As she steps into her fourth decade with *Mardaani 3*, Rani reaffirmed that as long as there are stories to tell, she will continue learning, growing and measuring success through the depth of her experiences rather than accolades. AGENCIES

Anushka reflects on motherhood

Mumbai: As her daughter Vamika turned five, actress Anushka Sharma reflected on her journey into motherhood, sharing that she cherishes every part of it and wouldn't trade her version of motherhood for anything in the world.

Anushka, who welcomed her first child Vamika in 2021 with star cricketer Virat Kohli, took to her Instagram stories re-sharing a post about how motherhood changes a person.

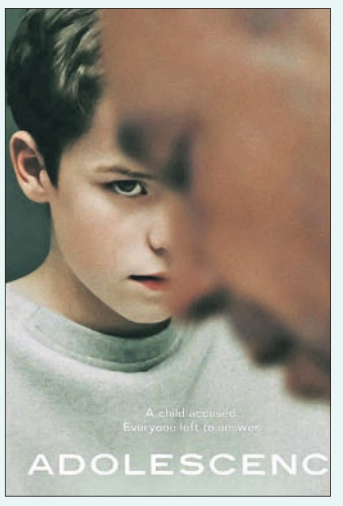
The post read, "Let motherhood change you - and take responsibility for this new version of you. The idea that we can keep our old lives, just slightly adjusted, and simply take our babies along… is only partly true. No one mentioned the cost. With tired eyes and a full heart, our needs are not disappearing - they're being rearranged. Love and exhaustion, growth and grief, all living side by side. All these feelings are exhausting enough. It happens in these small, heavy, meaningful moments that shape us- and they deserve space. Because they take so much from us, and we are meant to be seen and held," the further read.

As she re-shared the post, Anushka added the caption: "And I wouldn't go back to any version of me that didn't know you, my child." IANS

83RD GOLDEN GLOBES

Top honours for Rose, Timothee

ADOLESCENCE, ONE BATTLE AFTER ANOTHER TIE AT 4 WINS



Los Angeles: The 83rd Golden Globe Awards unfolded in grand style at the Beverly Hilton in California, bringing together the biggest names in film and television. This year's ceremony celebrated storytelling that sparked conversations across platforms, with *One Battle After Another* and *Hamnet* leading the film categories, while *Adolescence* emerged as the biggest winner on the television front. Here's the full list of winners:-

Best Picture Award
Hamnet

Best Motion Picture - Musical/Comedy
One Battle After Another

Best Male Actor
Wagner Moura - *The Secret Agent*

Best Female Actor
Jessie Buckley – *Hamnet*

Best Animated Motion Picture
KPop Demon Hunters

Best Director
Paul Thomas Anderson - *One Battle After Another*

Best Performance Male - Limited Series
Stephen Graham – *Adolescence*

Best Performance Female Actor - Comedy/Musical
Rose Byrne - *If I Had Legs I'd Kick You*

Best Male Actor– musical/comedy
Timothée Chalamet- *Marty Supreme*

Best Male Actor - TV Drama
Owen Cooper - *Adolescence*

Best Female Actor – TV Series (Musical or Comedy)
Jean Smart – *Hacks*
(Third Golden Globe win)

Best Male Actor - TV Series (Musical/Comedy)
Seth Rogen - *The Studio*

Best TV Series - Comedy
The Studio

Best TV Series Drama
The Pitt

AGENCIES

Timothee Chalamet earned his first Golden Globe for Best Actor (Musical or Comedy) for *Marty Supreme*

Rose Byrne won Best Actress (Musical or Comedy) for If *I Had Legs I'd Kick You*

Rashami on today's digital world

Mumbai: Actress Rashami Desai said that in today's digital world, one cannot think of taking things lightly.

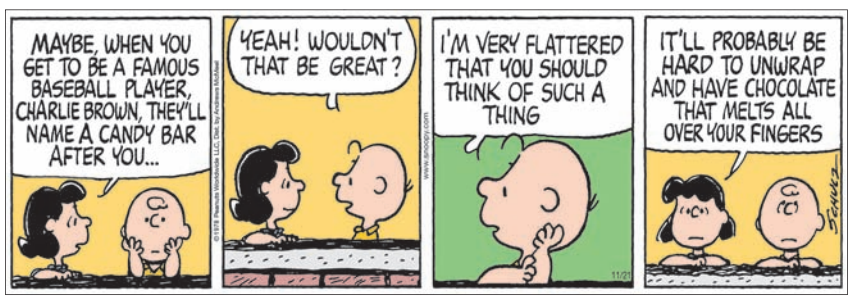
During an exclusive conversation with this news agency, Rashami, who herself hosts a talk show *Rashami Ke Dil Se Dil Tak*, said that in this era where everything ends up getting recorded, it becomes extremely difficult to open up to people as anything you say might be taken out of context.

The *Bigg Boss 13* contestant shared, "It is very difficult because you know, you talk to people who have gone through some experiences in their life. So it is very difficult to open in front of other people, and especially when there are cameras. Once it's gone, it's a Xerox. People do pick up the clip, and you know, they want to create their sort of conversation. Sometimes it happens that you say a statement and the rest of the people start picking it up, and it becomes a very opinionative world."

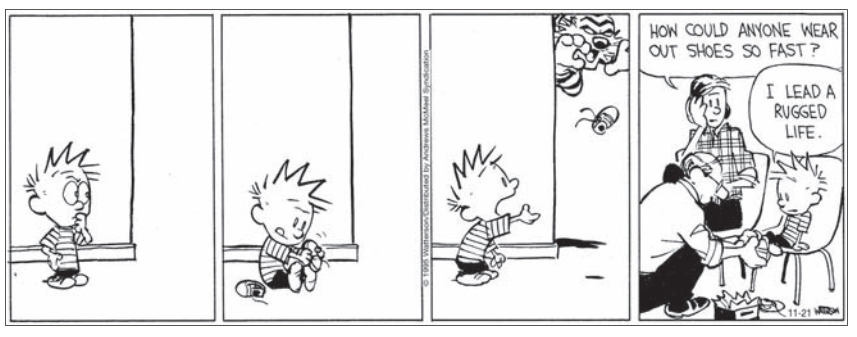
Rashami added that in the world of social media, everyone has an opinion, and everyone's opinion reaches various parts of the world.

"And in today's technology world, where AI is leading the world, you know, social media has given a platform to the people who are sitting in one corner of the world and still having an opinion which can also reach India, where we are sitting together." IANS

PEANUTS



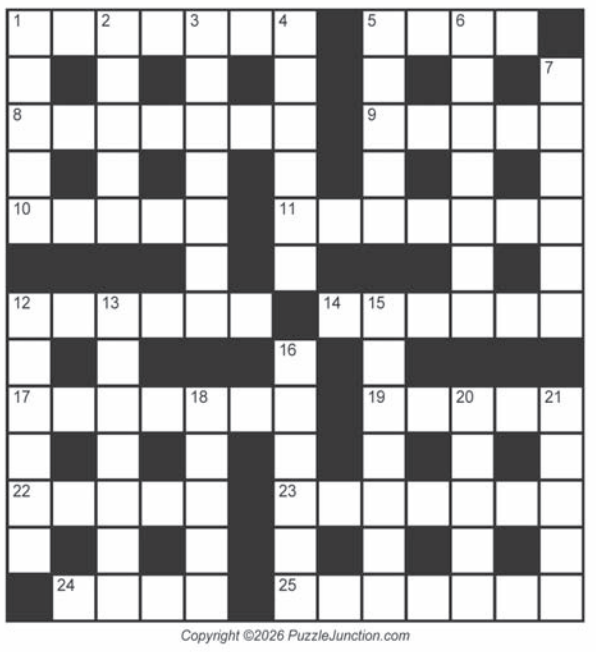
CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY

FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across
1 It goes around the world
5 After ice or sugar
8 Diameter of a gun barrel
9 Cattle locale
10 Doggerel
11 Trap
12 Gesso ingredient
14 Protect
17 Poisonous plant
19 Stair part
22 Track events
23 Berth
24 They go with chips
25 Like Cyclops (3-4)

Down
1 Happen
2 Mild, as weather
3 Vista
4 Smelled bad
5 Nursery rhyme food
6 Servitude
7 Sharp as a tack
12 "Get outta here!" (2,4)
13 Vesuvius destroyed it
15 Piercing site
16 Sitting position
18 Haven
20 Piquant
21 Inflexible

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

J	A	N	I	T	O	R		S	E	D	E	R
E		I		I		A		E		E		E
W	I	L	L	P	O	W	E	R		S	A	C
E				P				G		T		I
L	O	C	A	L		C	H	E	E	R	U	P
		O		E		O				O		E
A		R	A	S	P	B	E	R	R	Y		S
B		A				R		A		E		
S	T	L	U	C	I	A		P	A	R	S	E
O		R		O				I				A
R	O	E		R	A	I	N	D	R	O	P	S
B		E		N		D		L		H		E
S	O	F	A	S		A	B	Y	S	M	A	L

SUDOKU

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

downtown

RESCUE OP

A vehicle that fell into a water body being taken out in Sutahaat area of Cuttack, Monday

CM's 6E road safety mantra

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: Expressing concern over the rising road mishaps, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday emphasised adoption of a '6E' policy for road safety.

Addressing an event at Lok Seva Bhavan as part of the National Road Safety Month celebrations, Majhi expressed deep concern over the increasing number of road accidents in the state as well as in the country and called upon everyone to obey road safety rules.

He said the state government has given importance to the implementation of '4E' policy (Education, Enforcement, Engineering and Emergency) – for road safety. Along with the implementation of these 4Es, the CM personally suggested implementation of two more Es (Environment and Evaluation), saying they would go a long way to save precious lives.

The CM suggested strict implementation of vehicle pollution rules and proper assessment of the results of the existing road safety norms. He said that various road safety programmes can be changed or improved based on this assessment.

Stressing the importance of road safety, the CM announced road safety as a part of good governance. He expressed the hope that with this, government officials will be more vigilant about it. Based on this, the CM announced 'Mukhyamantri Sadak Suraksha Yojana Samman'. Under this scheme, all districts, educational institutions and private institutions will be honoured based on the steps taken in the field of road safety. The districts that perform well will get awards and those that perform poorly will be held accountable. Similarly, schools and other institutions will also be awarded based on the best steps taken for road safety.

On the occasion, the CM inaugurated a warning bell to alert motorists on Kalinga Ghati road in Kandhamal district. Under this system, the siren will sound to warn the vehicles coming from both sides of the pass. This has been started as a pilot project. Seeing its success, it will be installed at other passes.

Similarly, on this occasion, a memorandum of understanding was signed with IIT-Kharagpur for better traffic management in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. Based on this report from IIT, steps will be taken to improve the traffic system in the two cities.

The CM dedicated 15 EV charging stations in Bhubaneswar. It is worth noting that 85 more charging stations are under construction in the state, which will be dedicated to the public soon.

Majhi dedicated 14 new Atal Bus Stands built in 10 districts at a cost of ₹156.53 crore. Earlier, 55 such bus terminals have been dedicated to the public. The CM said that Atal Bus Stands will be established in all the districts, sub-districts, Panchayat Samiti and municipalities of the state in the coming days.

The Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) launched 100 new BS-VI standard modern buses worth ₹46 crore. On the occasion, Majhi launched the 'Closed Loop Smart Transit Card' or smart card system for the buses run by the OSRTC. Using this card, passengers can travel with convenience by purchasing cashless tickets.

On this occasion, 25 new e-buses were also launched from a state-of-the-art bus depot built by CRUT in Berhampur.

The CM handed over vehicle keys to five women drivers.

"Road accidents have become a major concern not only in our state or country but also in the entire human civilization. Therefore, we can prevent road accidents by changing the mindset from education to safety and from technology to innovation," said Commerce and Transport (C&T) Minister Bibhuti Bhusan Jena.

"Road widening is being done under the leadership of the CM through the New Road Policy. All the roads will be free from potholes and traffic will be cleared soon," said Works Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan.

- Mukhyamantri Sadak Suraksha Yojana Samman launched
- Warning bell to alert motorists inaugurated at Kalinga Ghati
- 15 EV charging stations unveiled in Bhubaneswar
- 14 new Atal Bus Stands dedicated to the public

Stone laid for new **elevated corridor**

Keeping in mind the transformation of Bhubaneswar, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday laid the foundation stone for a new elevated corridor from Jayadev Vihar to Nandankanan at an estimated cost of ₹952 crore. In this, flyovers will be constructed at Jayadev Vihar Square, Kalinga Hospital Square, Damna Square and KIIT Square. It is expected to improve the traffic system on a busy road in the state capital and the public will be able to travel comfortably in less time, the CM said.

OrissaPOST and ***Dharitri*** Editor Tathagata Satpathy addresses 'Yuva' at Press Club of Odisha in Bhubaneswar, Monday. Also seen on the dais are Yuva Shakti founder Amit Kumar Mallik, Rajya Sabha MP Subhasish Khuntia and BJD leader Manmath Kumar Routray OP PHOTO

On 150th anniversary, 'Vande Mataram' echoes across state

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: Students, teachers and staffers of over 16,000 educational institutions across the state took part in a mass rendition of 'Vande Mataram' Monday, marking the 150th anniversary of the iconic national song by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.

The event was jointly organised by Odia Language, Literature and Culture, Sports and Youth Services, School and Mass Education and Higher Education departments. Institutes under Skill Development and Technical Education (SD&TE) department also took part in the programme.

Earlier, the Assembly had unanimously adopted a resolution directing the state government to celebrate 150 years of 'Vande Mataram' across the state. While the Commerce and Transport Minister BB Jena claimed that more than 50 lakh people took part in the mass rendition, an official statement from Odia language, Literature and Culture department put the number at over 21 lakh.

Apart from reciting the national song, the participants also took the pledge of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Swadeshi Sankalp' on the occasion of National Youth Day.

In a post on X, Higher Education Minister Suryabanshi Suraj said, "One time, many places; One vibe, the song of the nation! Today is definitely a historic moment! On the occasion of National Youth Day, in the year of celebrating 150 years of the composition of 'Vande Mataram', the sound of patriotism is resounding in educational institutions across Odisha."

"My warmest congratulations and gratitude to all the educational institutions, students and teachers who made this grand event a success," Suraj said.

The event was held simultaneously at 11am across the state. Several institutions shared photographs and videos on social media platforms, while some also organised quizzes and debate competitions as part of the celebrations.

At Utkal University here, students, faculty members and staffers participated in the collective singing in the presence of Vice-Chancellor Jagneshwar Dandapat and PG Council chairperson Mitali Chinara. The participants also took the Atmanirbhar Bharat Swadeshi Sankalp pledge.

A student of Fakir Mohan Junior College in Balasore said they sang 'Vande Mataram' collectively and took pledge to be vocal for local products, choose 'Made in India' goods and services, and contribute to the country's self-reliance.

Min visits aircraft crash site, praises pilots, locals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: Commerce and Transport Minister Bibhuti Bhusan Jena Monday visited the site where a small aircraft made an emergency crash landing and met the injured passengers and pilots at Rourkela hospital.

At least six people, including two pilots, were injured when the nine-seater aircraft of India One made an emergency crash landing near Rourkela in Sundargarh district January 10.

"On the instruction of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, I visited the accident site and met the injured pilots and passengers in Rourkela. It is a rare aircraft crash where no one died," Jena said after returning from Rourkela.

The front portion of the aircraft was completely damaged in the crash, and an 11-kV wire was snapped in the crash. Thanks to the two pilots, who have ensured the safety of the passengers, he said.

The minister also lauded the local people who immediately rescued the six injured persons from the aircraft.

"I can claim that the state government has the blessings of God for which no loss of life was reported in such a tragic aircraft crash," he added.

Out of six injured persons, two passengers went to Mumbai on their own wish while four others, including two pilots are under treatment in a private hospital in Rourkela city. All passengers and pilots are "now stable", the minister said.

PULLING CROWD: Visitors throng a handicraft stall at 'Sisir Saras' in Bhubaneswar, Monday OP PHOTO

Live craft demos add charm to Sisir Saras

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: With a steadily rising demand for handicraft items, many locally crafted handmade products have found a prominent place at this year's Sisir Saras Fair being held at Exhibition Ground here.

While visitors are showing keen interest in purchasing traditional products, Monday (third day) saw the live craft counters grabbing the attention of the audience.

A wide range of products is being created live, including wallets, fruit baskets, coasters, dining mats, mirrors, boxes and other household items made from Sabai grass.

Using coconut fibre and colourful wool threads, artisans are producing decorative home items. Handcrafted figures such as crocodiles, deer, elephants, camels, birds and bird nests made from fibre are highly popular among buyers.

The live counter of Tumba (dried gourd) craft is witnessing huge footfall.

46 cops receive DGP's Disc

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Jan 12: Director General of Police (DGP) Yogesh Bahadur Khurania Monday conferred 46 police officers with the prestigious DGP's Disc award for their exemplary service, dedication and professional excellence.

The special ceremony was held at RK Padhi Memorial Hall here.

Among the recipients were IG (Central Range) Satyajit Naik, Rayagada SP Swathi S Kumar, Kalahandi SP Nagaraj Devarakonda, Jharsuguda SP Gundala Reddy Raghavendra, Kandhamal SP Harisha BC, Gajapati SP Jitendra Kumar Panda and Commandant Prafulla Kumar Singh.

The award was also presented to three additional SPs, five DSPs, five inspectors, seven sub-inspectors, five assistant sub-inspectors, five havildars and nine constables/OPF personnel/sepoys.

Senior police officers, including DGP (Crime Branch) Vinaytosh Mishra and Director of Intelligence RP Koche, were present on the occasion.

The medals and certificates were presented to the awardees for their outstanding performance and commitment to duty. Addressing the gathering, the DGP lauded the officers for their integrity, discipline and contribution to strengthening the policing system in the state.

The medal distribution ceremony was conducted under the direct supervision of Additional Director General of Police (Headquarters) Prateek Mohanty.

CM bats for protection, revival of Chilika

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday called for immediate action and a coordinated approach to protect and develop Chilika Lake, a vital biodiversity hotspot that holds immense potential for eco-tourism.

At a high-level meeting held here, the CM instructed the officials concerned to prepare a comprehensive plan to restore the lake's ecological balance and ensure its long-term sustainability.

Chilika, known as a sanctuary for migratory birds and rich aquatic life, is a critical part of Odisha's natural heritage. However, with time, the lake has faced growing environmental challenges, including gradual closure of its mouth since 2000, which has led to a decline in its biodiversity.

Key proposals discussed at the meeting include dredging of the lake mouth, opening several connecting water channels, and boosting the region's fishery resources. The plan also stresses the development of sustainable land-based infrastructure, alongside scientific research to monitor the lake's ecosystem.

Highlighting the significance of Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, not only for its biodiversity but also for tourism, Majhi directed for creation of an independent tourism development plan. This will focus on eco-tourism initiatives that will help showcase the lake's natural beauty without compromising its ecological integrity.

Among the tourism strategies outlined are hosting a bird festival, seafood festival, boat festival, and establishment of a lighthouse and an interpretation centre. These events are expected to attract eco-conscious travellers, further solidifying Chilika's reputation as a top eco-tourism destination.

Officials confirmed that restoration of Chilika will take approximately five years to complete, with priority given to environmental balance and community involvement.

The meeting was attended by key officials including Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida, Forest and Environment Minister Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia, Law Minister Pruthiviraj Harichandan, and Principal Secretary to the CM Anu Garg, along with senior officials from various departments.

108 Ambulance service grapples with dense fog

Reduced visibility, slippery roads and severe cold have made driving hazardous, raising safety concerns and affecting response times

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: The ongoing spell of dense fog and severe cold weather across several parts of Odisha has significantly disrupted the movement of the 108 Emergency Ambulance Services, particularly during night and early morning hours, reports said.

Reduced visibility, slippery roads, and harsh cold conditions have made driving extremely challenging, raising serious concerns over the safety of patients as well as ambulance personnel and affecting response times.

Due to dense fog, visibility on national highways, forest roads, rural stretches, and remote village routes has dropped to near zero in many areas. Ambulance drivers are being compelled to operate vehicles at very low speeds. The situation is especially critical in rural and remote regions where road lighting infrastructure is limited, further increasing the risk during emergency movements.

Sharing his experience, a 108 ambulance driver said, "Driving an ambulance during winter amid dense fog is one of the toughest challenges we face. Visibility can suddenly drop, and narrow roads with sharp turns require extreme caution. Even if it takes more time to reach the hospital, the safety of the patient and our team remains our priority."

The impact is not limited to road ambulances alone. Boat ambulance services operating in districts such as Kendrapara, Koraput, Malkangiri, and Kalahandi are also facing serious operational difficulties. During early morning and nighttime hours, dense fog blankets rivers and water bodies, drastically reducing visibility and making navigation hazardous. In addition, extremely cold weather and fluctuating water currents are posing added challenges for boat ambulance crews.

Commenting on the situation, Sabyasachi Biswal, the state head of EMRI Green Health Services, which manages the 108 Ambulance Service, said, "Fog and cold weather create unavoidable challenges for emergency operations on both roads and waterways. However, our teams are well-trained to handle adverse conditions. All personnel have been instructed to strictly follow safety protocols, maintain controlled speeds, and prioritize the safety of patients and staff, ensuring uninterrupted service delivery."

He further added that the central call centre is closely monitoring the movement of all ambulances and maintaining constant coordination with field teams to provide immediate support wherever required.

Despite the harsh winter conditions, the 108 Ambulance Service continues to provide emergency medical assistance across the state. Citizens have been urged to cooperate with ambulance personnel, give way to emergency vehicles, and remain patient, as dense fog and cold-weather safety precautions may occasionally affect response times.

The dedication, patience, and sense of duty displayed by 108 ambulance drivers, EMTs, helpers, and boat ambulance staff continue to reinforce the service's role as a vital lifeline in Odisha's emergency healthcare system.

INTERSTATE CYBER FRAUD

With 3 more, total arrests reach 15

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: The Commissionerate Police Monday arrested three more members of a notorious interstate cyber fraud gang, taking the total number of arrests in the case to 15. Earlier, 12 members of the gang had been apprehended.

The newly arrested accused, all residents of Bihar, have been identified as Chandan Kumar (40), Pankaj Kumar (38) and Rishi Kumar (27).

Acting on a tip-off, police conducted a raid and nabbed the trio from the City, officials said Monday.

According to the preliminary investigation, the trio was key members of the gang known as the 'Katri Sarai gang of Bihar', playing a crucial role in collecting fake SIM cards, managing mule accounts, distributing fake official letters through post, and withdrawing money duped from victims from banks.

"Sunday, we arrested 12 cyber fraudsters and Monday, we arrested three more key members, all residents of Bihar. They were using social media to advertise attractive vouchers to lure people into scams and are involved in a multi-crore fraud," said Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena.

Police seized three mobile phones and a car from their possession. The accused were forwarded to court following their arrest. Further investigation is underway to trace additional accomplices and financial trails.

It may be noted that the gang targeted victims through gift voucher scams, fake loan offers and Kerala lottery frauds, using fake advertisements on social media, forged documents and UPI-based transactions linked to mule accounts.

Utkal Mahila Samiti to launch block-level agitation from Feb 15

BHUBANESWAR: The Utkal Mahila Samiti have threatened to launch a statewide block-level movement from February 15 to 28, raising multiple public demands, including an end to violence against women, rising prices and policies affecting working women. The decision was taken at a state-level workshop of the Samiti held Monday at Bhagabati Bhawan, here. The workshop, held under the chairpersonship of Utkal Mahila Samiti State President Pramodini Paikaray, was inaugurated by Nisha Sidhu, All-India General Secretary of the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW). Addressing the gathering, Sidhu alleged that incidents of violence against women have increased during the tenure of the BJP government, particularly in BJP-ruled states. She criticised labour reforms, stating that the replacement of 29 labour laws with four labour codes has weakened protections for women workers and promoted exploitation. Sidhu also opposed the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, claiming it has led to privatisation and communalisation of education, thereby limiting women's access. She further highlighted inflation, unemployment and what she described as an authoritarian approach driven by corporate and RSS-backed ideology.

ECoR registers 11% YoY growth in freight loading

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: East Coast Railway (ECoR) recorded encouraging performance in freight loading during the current financial year, reflecting sustained demand across key commodity groups and improved logistics efficiency.

During the period up to December, East Coast Railway achieved a total freight loading of 209.97 million tonnes, registering a growth of 11% over the corresponding period of last year. The performance also shows a 4% increase over the set target, highlighting consistent operational momentum.

Commodity wise performance indicates notable growth in several segments. Loading of fertilizers increased significantly by 40%, while finished steel registered a growth of 31%. Iron ore loading rose by 20%, and food grains recorded an increase of 16%, underscoring the Railway's crucial role in supporting agriculture and core industries. Coal, the principal commodity, maintained steady performance, ensuring uninterrupted supply to power and industrial sectors.

As per the ECoR, several key initiatives have been instrumental in achieving this success, including the construction and commissioning of new rail lines along with the doubling of third & fourth line projects boosting connectivity across the region.

East Coast Railway continues to raise the bar in freight transportation, setting new benchmarks for operational excellence and contributing to the economic growth of the nation. The zone remains committed to enhancing its capabilities and providing sustainable and efficient transportation solutions for the future, the Railways said.

Villagers gherao, lock land settlement offices in Puri

AGENCIES

PROTESTERS ALLEGE LOSS OF LAND TITLES DUE TO PROLONGED DELAYS AND IRREGULARITIES IN LAND RIGHTS SETTLEMENT SINCE 1988

Puri, Jan 12: Hundreds of irate villagers from eleven villages Monday gheraoed and locked the district land consolidation and land settlement offices, demanding that the ongoing settlement work be halted until the 1988 Supreme Court order is implemented.

The protesters alleged that many villagers have lost their land titles due to inordinate delays and irregularities in the settlement of land rights by the revenue administration since 1988.

The affected villages include Samangara, Batagaon, Baliguali, Mangarajpur, Malatipatpur, Alikia, Rendua, Nuapatana, Nagapatana, Chakrabartipatana and Puri Sadar.

In most cases, the land rights of the villagers were allegedly deleted. They demanded that the ongoing settlement work be halted until the 1988 Supreme Court order is implemented.

Village leaders Ullash Chandra Jena and Damodar Mahapatra alleged negligence by the district administration for failing to implement the 1988 Supreme Court judgment on the Odisha land reforms issue.

Non-implementation of the apex court order has put the villagers in distress. They warned that they would intensify their agitation if the issue is not resolved.

Committed to accelerate pace of development: Harichandan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: Under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the leadership of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, the Odisha government is committed to accelerating the pace of development across the state, said Works, Law and Excise Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan.

Chairing a high-level meeting at Lok Seva Bhavan Monday afternoon, the Minister stressed the need for the use of high-quality construction materials and their proper price fixation to ensure faster execution of infrastructure projects and long-term durability of assets. He noted that due to regular recruitment processes, the number of skilled engineers in the department have increased, making it essential to adopt modern construction practices.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on fixing appropriate prices for materials used in upcoming road and building projects. These included bricks, sand, stone chips, indoor and outdoor materials, building components, prefabricated construction materials, and other inputs used in road and building construction. It was observed that the use of quality materials along with rational price determination would not only enhance the longevity of infrastructure but also help reduce overall construction costs.

Minister Harichandan directed senior officials and engineers to prioritise quality standards while expediting ongoing construction works. He also reviewed key upcoming projects, including the Jayadev Vihar–Nandankanan Road and Flyover project and the construction of the new Lok Seva Bhavan. The Minister emphasised completing all projects within the stipulated timelines as per the directions of the Chief Minister.

The meeting was attended by Engineer-in-Chief and Special Secretary Lakshmikant Padhi, Engineer-in-Chief (Civil) Satyabrata Behera, Managing Director of OBCC Sameer Hota, EIC Roads-I Dhyanchand Nayak, Chief Engineer (Buildings-I) Priyabrata Samantaray, Chief Engineer (NH) Narayan Patel, along with other senior departmental officials.

Bhubaneswar CARE Hospitals performs rare cardiac surgery

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: CARE Hospitals, Bhubaneswar successfully performed a rare and complex cardiac surgery. The surgery was carried out by a highly experienced cardiothoracic surgical team led by Dr Suvakanta Biswal, Senior Consultant – Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery (CTVS), with support from Dr Somen, Consultant – CTVS, and a dedicated team of skilled CTVS nursing staff. The procedure required meticulous planning and seamless coordination among multiple clinical teams.

The entire surgery was managed by the Cardiac Anaesthesia team led by Dr Manoranjan Padhi and Dr Dharma Jivan, whose expertise played a crucial role in ensuring patient stability and safety throughout the procedure.

Following the surgery, the patient showed steady recovery and was discharged in a stable condition on the 6th post-operative day. The patient's family members expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the doctors, nurses, and hospital staff for their dedication, timely intervention, and compassionate care.

Speaking on the occasion, the medical team highlighted that such complex procedures require not only advanced infrastructure but also strong teamwork and clinical expertise, which CARE Hospitals, Bhubaneswar continues to prioritise.

"CARE Hospitals, Bhubaneswar remains committed to delivering world-class healthcare services, especially in managing complex and high-risk cardiac conditions, ensuring patients receive comprehensive and compassionate care under one roof," said a hospital official.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I, Sebati Lata Rout, W/o-Biswajit Palei, resident of Vill-Manatri, PO-Janhia, PS-Soro, District-Balasore, PIN-756045, Odisha declare by this Affidavit No.73 dtd.09.01.2026 that now onwards I shall be known as SEBATI LATA for all future purposes.
Sebati Lata

By virtue of an Affidavit sworn before Notary Public, Bhubaneswar, dtd.- 09.01.2026, I, "DEBARATI SINHA" (New name), Address: At- Plot No. 231/B, Samarpana Lane-2, Aerodrum Area near Nabin Niwas, P.S.- Aerodrum, Bhubaneswar- 751020, Dist.- Khordha, Odisha declare that I have changed my name from "DEBARATI BANERJEE" (Old name) to "DEBARATI SINHA (New name). Henceforth, I shall be known as "DEBARATI SINHA" (New name) for all purposes.
Debarati Sinha
(New name)

SWACHH SURVEKSHAN

Best clean schools to get ₹50k each: Mayor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 12: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has initiated its preparations for the upcoming Swachh Survekshan with a strong focus on the participation of educational institutions. As part of this initiative, the best-performing clean school in each of BMC's three zones will be awarded a cash prize of ₹50,000.

This announcement was made by BMC Mayor Sulochana Das while addressing a Swachh Survekshan training workshop for principals, lecturers, teachers, and educators held at the Ekamra Hall of the BMC headquarters Monday.

Addressing the gathering, the Mayor emphasised that educational institutions play a vital role in transforming cleanliness into a social value. She said maintaining cleanliness in the City is not only the responsibility of BMC but also a collective duty of all citizens. She urged everyone to make individual efforts to keep Bhubaneswar clean and green.

Mayor Das appealed to schools to strictly follow waste segregation practices by separating wet, dry, and hazardous electronic waste and handing them over to BMC sanitation vehicles. She also requested teachers to take special care in maintaining a clean and green school environment and to spread awareness among students and their parents about cleanliness and waste management.

MAYOR DAS STRESSED THAT MAINTAINING CLEANLINESS IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL CITIZENS, NOT JUST THE BMC

SHE URGED SCHOOLS TO STRICTLY FOLLOW WASTE SEGREGATION BY SEPARATING WET, DRY AND HAZARDOUS E-WASTE AND HANDING IT OVER TO BMC SANITATION VEHICLES

Calling for collective responsibility, the Mayor urged citizens to avoid littering and to properly segregate household and garden waste before disposal. She further appealed to ensure cleanliness in schools, colleges, roads, parks, playgrounds, drains, conservancy lanes, water bodies, temples, and both government and private offices across the City.

Highlighting Bhubaneswar's goal of securing the top position in the national cleanliness rankings, the Mayor called upon people of all age groups to actively participate in cleanliness drives. She added that along with cleanliness, environmental greening must also be prioritised.

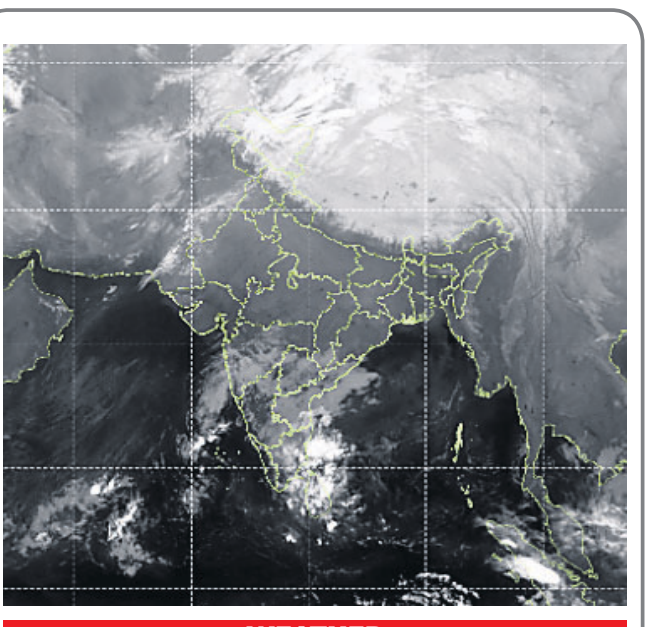
The training programme was organised under the direction of BMC Commissioner Chanchal Rana, who instructed each educational institution to prepare its own cleanliness action plan. Teachers were also advised to train students and organise various competitions related to cleanliness and Swachh Survekshan.

It was informed that the Swachh Survekshan survey will begin in February, during which a central or third-party inspection team will visit Bhubaneswar. Citizens were urged to strictly follow solid waste management rules, keep their surroundings clean, and make cleanliness a daily habit.

The training programme witnessed participation from 130 schools and colleges, along with IEC assistants.

MARKET WATCH

CURRENCY INDEX	VARIATION	BOURSES INDEX	VARIATION	COMMODITIES INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR 90.24	↓ 0.03	SENSEX 83878.17	↑ 301.93	GOLD ₹142,129	↑ ₹3,31
EURO 105.55	↑ 0.37	NIFTY 25790.25	↑ 106.95	SILVER ₹268,250	↑ ₹15,52



WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	28.7°	26.4°
Min Temp	12.3°	11.4°
Humidity	58%	71%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST

Dry weather likely to prevail over the districts of Odisha

Police bust cybercrime syndicate, arrest seven

PNN & AGENCIES

Rourkela, Jan 12: Police Monday said they busted an organised cybercrime syndicate and arrested seven members of the gang allegedly involved in large-scale money laundering and fraud using mule bank accounts.

Acting on intelligence inputs, an operation was launched, leading to the arrest of the seven accused, Rourkela SP Nitesh Wadhwani said. "We have seized 80 passbooks, 50 debit cards, 25 mobile phones, four laptops, 10 Aadhaar cards and 20 PAN cards from the accused," he said.

A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Information Technology Act. Further investigation is underway to identify other members of the syndicate and possible interstate and international links, the SP said.

According to police, the gang was engaged in procuring and operating bank accounts opened in the names of unsuspecting individuals, primarily from Rourkela and nearby areas.

These accounts were allegedly used to facilitate cybercrime and laundering of fraudulent proceeds across India and abroad, police said. The accused reportedly arranged bank accounts, activated SIM cards and identity documents using forged papers and impersonation.

Investigators revealed that the mule accounts were sold or rented to cybercriminals across the country and used as pass-through accounts to receive proceeds of cyber fraud.

Police said the accounts were sold or rented for amounts ranging between ₹5,000 and ₹10,000 per account, with the proceeds distributed among syndicate members. These accounts were allegedly linked to around 200 cybercrime complaints registered across India, as identified through the Samanvaya portal of the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), Ministry of Home Affairs.

Outsiders rampage at Ganjam school; 2 students critical

POST NEWS NETWORK

Gopalpur, Jan 12: Two students were seriously injured after a group of outsiders allegedly entered a high school in Ganjam district and carried out a violent attack during school hours Monday.

The incident occurred at Maa Narayani High School in Phulata village under the Rangeilunda block. According to sources, four youths who were not students of the school allegedly forced their way into the campus around 1.30pm, during the midday break, despite the main gate being locked.

The attackers reportedly assaulted Omm Mandal, a Class X student, with iron rods, stones and punches, leaving him unconscious. Another student, Ramakrushna Pradhan of Class VII, who was playing nearby, also sustained serious head injuries in the attack.

Teachers and staff rushed to intervene and managed to rescue the students. Some teachers sustained minor injuries while trying to stop the assailants. Both injured students were immediately shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur, where they are undergoing treatment.

DEO Ajay Kumar Patra and Rangeilunda BEO Debendra Behera visited the hospital in the evening and enquired about the students' condition. They also held discussions with hospital authorities and the parents.

Jaundice scare grips OAV

AT LEAST 15 STUDENTS TAKEN ILL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Jan 12: Panic has gripped the Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya (OAV) at Biswanathpur in Gondia block of Dhenkanal district following reports that more than 15 students have been affected by jaundice over the past few days, parents and guardians alleged.

This comes close on the heels of a similar situation at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) in Khurda, leading to a temporary closure of the institute after a jaundice outbreak.

Former MLA and president of the Dhenkanal Swabhiman Surakhya Manch Nabin Nanda Monday informed the District Collector about the situation through an email, alleging that the school's sanitation system is in a deplorable condition.

Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO) Dr Sanjay Kumar Mohapatra said a high-level committee would probe the matter. "Based on complaints regarding jaundice cases and sanitation at the school, a high-level inquiry will be conducted Tuesday," he said.

Dr Mohapatra added that as per information received from the school principal, a student from Nityanandapur area in Jajpur district has been diagnosed with jaundice. The exact number of affected students is yet to be ascertained, he said.

Meanwhile, District Education Officer (DEO) Paresh Chandra Patra said the principal has officially reported only one case of jaundice so far. "However, we have deputed the Gondia block education officer (BEO) to verify the situation on the ground and submit a report," he said.

Further action will be taken based on the findings of the inquiry, officials said.

Jaundice scare at the OAV has triggered panic among the students and parents after several cases were reported in and around the campus.

At least four students staying at a private hostel near the school have been diagnosed with jaundice, sources said. The hostel manager is also reportedly infected. In addition, some students from Gondia block who attend the school regularly have shown symptoms of the disease.

Parents have alleged that the outbreak is linked to unhygienic conditions and poor sanitation system on the campus. They claimed school toilets are not cleaned regularly and questioned the quality of drinking water and the midday meal, saying both are unfit for consumption. The allegations are subject to verification by officials.

Following reports, Gondia BEO Manoranjan Dalai visited the school and launched an inquiry.

Malay Kumar Singh, former Gondia block chairman said his son, a Class VIII student at the school, has been undergoing treatment for jaundice for the past five to six days. He alleged that several students missed examinations due to the illness and accused the school authorities of concealing information about the number of cases. He also reiterated complaints about nonfunctional bathrooms and poor-quality midday meals.

Ashok Kumar Sahu informed the mediapersons that his son, who studies at the same school, has also been diagnosed with jaundice.

Despite these reports, the school principal, district administration and health department have officially acknowledged only one case, a claim that remains under scrutiny.

Former MLA Nabin Nanda has demanded a thorough probe into the outbreak, citing the school's deteriorating environment and sanitation. He said he has emailed details of the issue to the state Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan project director, the CDMO and the DEO, seeking immediate intervention.

Woman killed in elephant attack

Angul: Human–elephant conflict continues unabated in the Angul forest division, claiming yet another life and triggering fresh concern among residents of forest-adjacent villages over the forest department's preparedness and response. The latest incident occurred early Monday morning at Dhipipada Sahi under Sankhapur panchayat, where a 75-year-old woman, Ichha Dehuri, was killed in an elephant attack. According to sources, Dehuri had stepped out of her house at dawn to attend nature's call when she unexpectedly came face to face with an elephant, which attacked her. Hearing her cries, local residents rushed to the spot and rescued her in a critical condition. She was immediately shifted to the Angul District Headquarters Hospital, where doctors declared her dead during treatment. This incident is the third fatal elephant attack reported from the same forest division within the past two weeks, highlighting the growing intensity of the human–elephant conflict in the region. Earlier, an unidentified youth, reportedly suffering from mental illness, was also killed in an elephant attack near Gurang Khaira Sahi under the same forest range January 1. Similarly, Jhili Behera, 35, of Sunabhui village, was killed in a similar elephant attack December 31.

Cousins killed as bike rams into utility pole

Gunupur: Two cousins were killed after their motorcycle rammed into an electric pole late Sunday night on the main road of Limameda village on the outskirts of this town in Rayagada district. The deceased were identified as Muna Kimbaka, 24, and Krishna Kimbaka, 21, residents of Nilaguda village in Gudari block. According to police, the cosuins had come to Gunupur on some personal work. While returning home on a motorcycle late at night, they lost control of the vehicle and crashed into an utility pole along the main road near Limameda village. Both were thrown onto the road and sustained critical injuries. Police rushed to the spot and, with the help of local residents, rescued the two and took them to the sub-divisional hospital. Doctors there declared both of them dead.

ILLEGAL SIM CARD RACKET BHADRAK

Main accused, 3 others held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhandaripokhari, Jan 12: Bhadrak district police Monday arrested four persons, including the main accused, for running an illegal SIM card racket that supplied unauthorised connections to interstate cybercriminals.

The arrested accused were identified as the prime accused Dilip Sahu, 30, of Kulana village; Ramesh Chandra Parida alias Kalia, 37, and Ashish Kumar Swain, 40, of Bishol Shasan; and Ganesh Kumar Rout, 25, of Nalgunda area under Chandabali police limits.

Bhandaripokhari police station officer-in-charge Rajalakshmi Nayak said the racket came to light after Delhi Police arrested Santosh Khandei from the Manjuriroad area December 10 in connection with a cybercrime case. During interrogation, Santosh reportedly revealed the involvement of Dilip and others from Bhadrak district.

Following the development, Bhadrak SP Manoj Rout directed local police to intensify the investigation. The accused had gone into hiding soon after the arrests by Delhi Police.

Police said Dilip was an authorised Airtel retailer but allegedly bypassed mandatory KYC and biometric verification norms. Using Aadhaar details of unsuspecting people, multiple SIM cards were activated against single identities and sold at high prices. These SIM cards were later used in cyber fraud cases across several states.

Punjab Police had earlier registered a cybercrime case (19/25) at SAS Nagar police station September 25, in which links to Bhadrak surfaced. Subsequent raids were conducted in Kulana and Chandrabhanuapur villages, and notices were issued to absconding suspects.

Based on a complaint filed by a sub-inspector January 10, a case (14/26) was registered at Bhandaripokhari police station. Police said further arrests were likely as the investigation continues.

Man awarded life term for murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Jan 12: A local court here in Ganjam district Monday sentenced a man to life imprisonment in a murder case linked to an unpaid loan.

District and Sessions Judge Ashanta Kumar Das convicted Prashant Kumar Swain alias Dungei, 25, of Patapur, Balipentha Sahi under Patapur police station limits and awarded him the punishment. The court also imposed a fine of ₹10,000. In default, the convict will undergo an additional six months of rigorous imprisonment (RI).

According to the prosecution, the crime took place on the night of December 28, 2023, when Surya Kumar Sahu, 33, was murdered. Sahu worked as a cook at a hotel in Digapahandi and was a friend of the accused. He had borrowed ₹10,000 from Swain for personal needs. Frequent quarrels reportedly broke out between the two after Sahu failed to repay the amount on time.

Driven by vengeance, Swain invited Sahu and another friend, Shiba Nayak, to drink. Swain asked Nayak to bring liquor and later sent him away. Swain and Sahu continued drinking together. Sahu did not return home that night. Sahu's body was found lying near a bus stand December 29 morning. Police reached the spot and seized the body. Based on a complaint filed by the victim's brother, Nityananda Sahu, a murder case (832/23) was registered. During investigation, police arrested Swain, who later confessed to killing Sahu during interrogation.

Patnagarh shuts down for 12 hrs over doctor posting

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patnagarh, Jan 12: Normal life came to a standstill in Patnagarh town of Bolangir district Monday as residents observed a 12-hour shutdown demanding the posting of doctors for emergency treatment at the old Sub-Divisional Hospital located within the town.

The shutdown, observed from 6am to 6pm, led to the closure of all business establishments except emergency services. Traffic movement was also disrupted following a road blockade staged by local residents, mostly women, on the Patnagarh–Kantabanji main road in front of the old hospital.

On receiving information, local police and Sub-Divisional Medical Officer (SDMO) Saroj Ranjan Swain reached the spot and attempted to persuade the protesters to withdraw the blockade. However, when the agitators refused to disperse, police detained them and shifted them to the police station in a van.

According to sources, the old Sub-Divisional Hospital, located in the heart of Patnagarh town, had been providing treatment to patients for several years. Recently, the hospital was shifted to a newly constructed building near Gangasagar, about 3 km away, by the administration. Since then, residents have been facing difficulties due to poor transport connectivity, causing inconvenience to patients, particularly during medical emergencies.

Expressing strong resentment over the issue, town residents had earlier staged road blockades January 5 and 8. The blockade near the old hospital January 8 had severely affected vehicular movement. Following the incident, local police, Patnagarh Deputy Collector Manflis Kerketa, SDMO Swain and Tehsildar Rudra Mohan Nayak reached the spot and convinced the protesters to withdraw the agitation.

At that time, the agitators had warned that a 12-hour shutdown would be observed January 12 if their demands were not fulfilled. As no steps were taken by the administration, the shutdown was enforced Monday.

Notably, three key agitators who had led earlier protests were absent from the site. When questioned by mediapersons, protesters claimed the three had stayed away fearing arrest.

SDMO Swain, Deputy Collector Kerketa and Tehsildar Nayak visited the police station and assured the detained protesters that steps would be taken to address their demands within the next 10 days. Following the assurance, the detained women protesters were released, and the agitation was called off.

Elderly woman raped, bludgeoned to death

Udala: An elderly woman was raped by her neighbour and later bludgeoned to death in a bid to erase evidence under Udala police limits in Mayurbhanj district Monday. The accused, identified as her neighbour Raghu Hembram, fled the scene after committing the crime. Locals informed the police after learning about the incident. On being informed, Udala police reached the spot and launched an investigation. A scientific team was also pressed into service. Preliminary inquiries indicated that the woman was raped before being murdered. Police also launched a manhunt and nabbed Raghu from his hideout. Further investigations were underway.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No. ST-OT-HIRING-VEHICLE-532, Dt : 06.01.2026

NAME OF WORK : HIRING OF TWO NOS. MULTI UTILITY OF ROAD VEHICLE LIKE TATA 207-DI OR EQUIVALENT ALONG WITH DRIVER ROUND THE CLOCK FOR MOVEMENT OF SIGNALLING STAFF AND MATERIALS UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (SIGNAL) / BALUGAON, SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (SIGNAL) / BRAHMAPUR FOR MAINTENANCE OF SIGNALLING ASSETS, ATTENDING BREAKDOWN AND EN-ROUTE DETENTION FOR A PERIOD OF 30 MONTHS.

Tender Value : ₹ 35,40,000.00, EMD : ₹ 70,800/-, Tender document cost : ₹ 3,540/-

Bidding Start Date : 14.01.2026.

Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1100 Hrs. of 28.01.2026.

No manual offers send by Post/ Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against the e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.

Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, Khurda Road
PR-993/Q/25-26

College students to take part in annual bird census

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhanjanagar, Jan 12: College students will join forest officials in the annual bird census to be conducted across Odisha, including the Ghumusar North forest division at Bhanjanagar, from January 18.

As part of the preparations, a training camp was organised Monday at the Lalsingh Nursery campus in Bhanjanagar. Forest department staff and students from colleges at Galeri, Kendupadar and nearby areas participated in the programme.

Officials said the bird census plays a key role in identifying migratory and resident bird species and understanding local climate, soil and water conditions. The findings help authorities plan conservation measures and development activities in bird habitats.

The census in the Ghumusar North forest division will be carried out from 6am to 10am January 18 at 34 identified locations. College students will actively assist in the counting process, which officials said would help enhance their knowledge and awareness about wildlife and biodiversity conservation.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Himanshu Sekhar Mohanty inaugurated the training camp and stressed the need to conduct the bird census in a systematic and disciplined manner.

Among others, Assistant Conservators of Forests (ACFs) Bimal Pradhan and Bibek Das, ornithologist Umakanta Das, Mujagada Ranger Bimbadhar Sahu, Jagannathprasad Ranger Sujata Rani Panda, Galeri Ranger Gyanendra Lima and Tarsing Ranger Prashant Kumar Behera addressed the participants and explained the methodology and importance of bird counting.

Sale of items prepared by inmates of Berhampur Circle Jail doubled in 2025

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, Jan 12: Sale of different items, including food, made by inmates of Berhampur Circle Jail has doubled in 2025, a prison official said.

The jail inmates are producing textile items including bed-sheets, towels, shirting, prison kurta, scarf, etc, water drum, rice tray, bucket, mug, dal cane, dust lifter, vermicomposts inside the jail, he said.

Similarly, they also produced food items like atta, besan, turmeric powder, ragi powder, chhatua, and mustard oil inside the jail.

Besides supplying for its own consumption, the jail authorities have also made provision for selling these items to the public, the officer said.

The sale of the food and non-food items in public doubled in a year after they opened an outlet outside the prison for public, said DN Barik, Senior Superintendent of the circle jail.

Items worth ₹6.95 lakh were sold in 2024, which increased to ₹14.53 lakh in 2025. This included non-food items worth ₹7.97 lakh and food items worth ₹6.56 lakh, he said.

The jail inmates had produced total food, non-food and vegetable items worth ₹47.39 lakh and ₹37.54 lakh in 2024 and 2025, respectively. The textile items like bed-sheets, towels and prison dresses, produced by the circle jail here, were also supplied to other 22 jails in Ganjam and other districts.

Earlier, people did not show interest in coming to the jail to buy the products. But now they purchase various items from the outlet, set up outside the prison, Barik said.

Besides, they have also maintained quality in all of the products, including food items. The Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) has certified the food products produced by the jail inmates, he said.

"As the demand for made-in-jail items increased among the public, we are planning to open another outlet in a strategic location in the city to sell the products. We will request the Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) to provide a room for the purpose," said the jail superintendent.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

NOTIFICATION FOR ADDITIONAL PANEL OF ADVOCATES

Notification No. 01/2026 Dated : 09.01.2026

EAST COAST RAILWAY INVITES APPLICATION FROM ADVOCATES HAVING REQUISITE QUALIFICATIONS, ELIGIBILITY AND EXPERIENCE FOR ADDITIONAL PANEL OF RAILWAY ADVOCATES FOR DISTRICT & SUB-ORDINATE COURT, SAMBALPUR AS PER RAILWAY BOARD'S LETTER No. 2024/LC/15/1 Dated: 06.10.2025.

For application, eligibility and other details, please refer to **www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in ➲ Recruitment into ➲ Walk-in-interview/Notification.**

The last date for submitting the application is **12.02.2026**.

N.B.: Please follow the above website for updates, if any.

PR-1003/Q/25-26 Dy. General Manager, (Law) / Bhubaneswar

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

PETROLEUM AND EXPLOSIVES SAFETY ORGANISATION (PESO)

Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO) propose to recognize competent persons under the Static & Mobile Pressure Vessels (Unfired) Rules, 2016 and the Petroleum Rules, 2002 through written examination and interview.

Persons or Organisations intending to be recognized as competent persons may refer to the detailed advertisement on www.peso.gov.in for minimum eligibility criteria and examination process schedule.

CBC 05209/12/0005/2526 Chief Controller of Explosives, Nagpur

What men call knowledge, is the reasoned acceptance of false appearances. Wisdom looks behind the veil and sees.

SRI AUROBINDO

Political Rot

In politics, especially in India, an axiomatic truth is that there is no permanent enemy or permanent friend. Hence, it is only natural to expect strange bed-fellows when it comes to forming political alliances and more so when stakes are high where spoils of offices are to be shared by hook or by crook. In such situations so-called political ideologies are thrown to the wind and sworn enemies embrace one another as friends for benefit. India has experienced the phenomenon at such nauseating regularity that it has ceased to cause any surprise. But what happened recently in two municipal areas of Ambernath and Arkot in Maharashtra can be termed as political opportunism of the worst variety as sworn enemies – BJP, Congress and AIMIM – buried the hatchet, threw away all scruples and joined hands to form the two municipalities and share power.

It was the height of opportunism when BJP units tied up with the Congress at Ambernath in Thane and the AIMIM at Akot in Akola to gain majority control in the two local bodies following the municipal elections last month. One may view the development as a small aberration in some far-away local bodies and may even discard the event as too insignificant, but the die has been cast. The claim of an "ideological battle" as Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has been saying or "Congress Mukt Bharat" as Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been personally repeating for over a decade now, not only ring hollow but represent a naked alliance of opportunism that is obviously accepted and blessed by both these two top leaders.

It would be hypocrisy on the part of leaders of any of the three parties to claim they are unaware about the greed and lack of principles of their party functionaries. The fact that the brazenness with which political opportunism has been displayed must not be considered as isolated instances. It rather reflects the moral and ideological bankruptcy of the country's top political class. The apparent ideological battles that are fought are only smokescreen to fool the average voter. The message that emanates from the actions of the elected representatives of the three parties appears to be that they should not lag behind when political opportunism at any cost is the norm at their respective parties' top levels. Had it not been so, they would not have dared take the reprehensible course.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis directed his party to break both alliances while saying they were "not acceptable." At the same time, the Congress dissolved the party's city unit in Ambernath and suspended its chief Pradip Patil while the AIMIM warned its corporators in Akot, which falls in the Vidarbha region, of legal action if they did not pull out from the BJP alliance. Fadnavis has said "alliance with Congress and AIMIM is not acceptable and disciplinary action will be taken if anybody has violated orders."

Maharashtra BJP chief Ravindra Chavan also issued a show cause notice to party MLA Prakash Bharsakhle, who represents Akot, for the "suo motu" AIMIM alliance. Meanwhile, Maharashtra Congress vice-president Ganesh Patil said in a letter to its Ambernath unit chief that the municipal election was fought on the party's symbol. He warned disciplinary action would be taken against the unit for "allying with the BJP in the Ambernath municipal council without informing the state office." It said that the block Congress committee was dissolved and all corporators suspended from the party.

Pradip Patil, however, accused the state leadership of not giving him a hearing before announcing the disciplinary action and threatened to join the BJP. The conclusion he has reached is not only the height of political dishonesty, but takes rank opportunism to another level. He said he and his pack of party leaders "respect the Congress and will continue to do so in future," but if they are insulted by the party they would have "no option but to join the BJP." And as is well known, the BJP would certainly take them in.

This is a familiar political trajectory that the BJP top leadership has advocated and followed during the past few years in different states and at the national level when they broke Congress and other Opposition parties, poached their MLAs and MPs to form new governments toppling those run by the Opposition. They even used Central investigating machinery to go after Opposition leaders and coerce them to join their party. Some Social Media users compare this tactic of the BJP with the work of a "washing machine" in which the taint of corruption in Opposition leaders is washed clean once they enter the BJP fold.

Congress too cannot walk a moral high ground just as any other party. The Maharashtra civic body scandals have shown Indian politics in its true colours. When top leaders are always seen to have engineered defections, get the defectors absolved of any past crime or corruption and grab power at any cost, why should the lower rungs of the party be denied the same immorality is the moot point. Thus, it is only the people who become the losers but never the ruling political class.

WISDOM CORNER

When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.

KAHLIL GIBRAN

Happiness must happen, and the same holds for success: you have to let it happen by not caring about it.

VIKTOR E. FRANKL

Your entire life only happens in this moment. The present moment is life itself. Yet, people live as if the opposite were true and treat the present moment as a stepping stone to the next moment - a means to an end.

ECKHART TOLLE

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1404:** The threat of alchemy. King Henry IV of England outlawed alchemy on this day in 1404. By preventing the creation of gold from base metals—the goal of alchemy—Henry was trying to prevent challenges to his reign. His law was eventually repealed in 1688.
- **1915:** The worst earthquake in Italian history kills 30,000. The quake hit the town of Avezzano, about 100 km (60 m) east of Rome.
- **1942:** American industrialist Henry Ford patented plastic automobile construction.
- **1968:** Johnny Cash recorded the album Johnny Cash at Folsom Prison in front of an audience of some 2,000 inmates. Its success helped Cash to reestablish himself as one of country music's most relevant artists, and he followed it with Johnny Cash at San Quentin in 1969.

FOCUS POLITICS

INDIA NEEDS A MAMDANI

Malay Mishra

THERE WAS HARDLY ANY COVERAGE IN THE INDIAN MEDIA OF HIS HISTORIC OATH-TAKING, AND THE SEMINAL IMPACT MAMDANI'S ELECTION WOULD HAVE ON AMERICAN POLITICS

Zohran Mamdani took the oath of office as the mayor of New York, the largest and most important city of USA, at a decommissioned subway of Manhattan to symbolise his affinity with the city's workers and marginalised people whose cause he said he would serve, thus wearing the badge of a democratic socialist on his sleeve. He was administered the oath by the Democratic senator Bernie Sanders, a monumental figure in American politics and a torchbearer of democratic socialism, with Congress woman Alezandria Cortez by his side.

There was hardly any coverage in the Indian media of his historic oath-taking, and the seminal impact Mamdani's election would have on American politics. The 34-year-old politician broke several taboos in taking charge of the Big Apple, right in the heart of the elite, fat-cats and billionaires, the bastion of American Jewry.

Mamdani, however, remains a taboo in India. The government through its media handlers had made it a point to invisibilise Mamdani despite his stupendous victory by ousting the two-time Democrat governor Andrew Cuomo, his nearest rival, by polling more than 50% of the vote. Over one million New Yorkers, cutting across race, religion, ethnicity and economic background and largely carrying the immigrant tag, had voted for him in a ground-breaking election creating waves across the world. It is only his home country India that did not salute its 34-year-old son on his unprecedented victory.

Mamdani has several firsts: the first American of Asian descent and African origin, the first Muslim and the youngest Mayor of New York. Scion of the celebrated power couple Mira Nair, globally acclaimed filmmaker, and Mahmood Mamdani, Professor Emeritus at Columbia University, Zohran has never idolised being born into an elite legacy. On the contrary, he has taken up the cause of the immigrants given that New York hosts more than 150 nationalities. Secular and liberal in orientation, he has shown himself caring for the plight of every New Yorker. Outspoken about Netanyahu's role in the genocidal killings of Palestinians, he has distanced himself quickly from allegations of anti-Semitism, given that the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, America's largest pro-Israel lobbying group, and the New York Jewish Foundation had played an active role in canvassing support for Cuomo. However, the results saw an even split of the Jewish vote, the younger generation rooting for Mamdani while the older, Hasidic and wealthy Jews, voting en masse for Cuomo.

Mamdani's ideas – plural, liberal and invaluable – resonate with the core of a new India and make him stand out as a leader worth cherishing

President Trump's fulminations and public denunciations of Mamdani, threatening to cut off federal funds and openly supporting his Democrat rival Cuomo, hardly made any dent in Mamdani's surging popularity. Calling Mamdani a Marxist and anti-national, Trump sought to nix Mamdani's political career even before it had started. However, the NYC Mayor turned the tables on Trump by appearing at the White House for a courtesy meeting, stressing his primary objective of securing affordability for all New Yorkers while providing free transport, and childcare, affordable housing and government-run grocery stores as he had promised in his election campaign. Surprisingly, and perhaps gauging the public mood, Trump turned turtle and assured Mamdani of all support. The incident showed the contrarian portraits of both ideologically divided politicians of the right and left. One, mean-minded, vindictive, unpredictable, and the other, defiant, committed and fearless.

In the current turmoil in South America, with Trump defying all international norms and "capturing" the elected President and the first lady of Venezuela, the American system literally collapsed with the media largely and perniciously silent, and with Congress and Supreme Court voiceless against this flagrant abuse of power. Mamdani stood up to condemn the brazen act of aggression as a "declaration of war."

Known for his outspoken views, Mamdani has positioned himself securely on the side of a pro-people ideology. He cautioned the Israeli PM not to ever land in New York as he would have him arrested for committing "crimes against humanity" for massacring thousands of helpless Palestinian women, children, old and sick while calling for the Palestinians' right to a peaceful homeland on their own soil. Mamdani's father is a Kutchi Gujarati while his mother is a Hindu Punjabi. Zohran, who is married to a Syrian Muslim, radiates the kind of cosmopolitanism which resonates in his unequivocal liberal views, notwithstanding his taking the oath on the Quran to reaffirm his Muslim ancestry.

In his ideological pronouncements, Mamdani veers closely towards a liberal socialist front, a much-needed panacea against the slide towards an autocratic majoritarian State which democratic India has morphed into over the last decade or so. With its secular and democratic credentials founded on the majesty of a nonviolent freedom struggle, India needs a Mamdani at its hour of reckoning in a world tossed between powerful and opposing ideological blocs. It is no wonder that Mamdani chose to quote from Nehru's iconic "Tryst with destiny" speech when he vanquished all his opponents.

In his seminal work 'The Idea of India,' eminent political scientist Sunil Khilnani writes: "Modern Indian politics continues to plunder the nationalist pantheon for its iconography while, at the same time, in its practical struggles, it moves further and further away from the nationalist world and its distinctive temperament. The old arguments and battles are replayed today with the current generation's new meanings and desires: Ambedkar is once again ranged against Gandhi, Patel is brought into battle against Nehru. Even as they divide, these struggles themselves testify to the presence of a common history, a shared Indian past…These struggles constitute the identity of India's history since 1947. And, in its ability constantly to encompass diverse ideas of what India is, this history is itself expressive of the Indian idea."

India's strength lies in its civilizational diversity, its age-old tradition of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and no attempts to paint with a monochromatic brush can bring the real Indian canvas to life. Mamdani's ideas – plural, liberal and invaluable – resonate with the core of a new India and make him stand out as a leader worth cherishing.

The writer is a retired diplomat and policy analyst.

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SPECTRUM STATE

Are MLA salary & ex-MLA pension hikes unjustified?

Nabin Nanda

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES MUST REMAIN ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PEOPLE. AT THE SAME TIME, DIGNITY IN PUBLIC LIFE AND REASONABLE FINANCIAL SECURITY ARE ESSENTIAL FOR THE HEALTHY FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRACY

The recent unanimous passage of a financial bill in the Odisha Assembly to increase salaries and allowances of sitting MLAs, along with the pension of former MLAs, has generated widespread debate and criticism across the state. Much of the outrage, particularly on social media, portrayed legislators as self-interested and insensitive to public hardship. While public scrutiny is a vital part of democracy, this issue deserves a more reasoned and factual discussion.

Members from both the ruling and Opposition parties supported the bill, though CPI(M) MLA Laxman Munda opposed it in keeping with his party's ideology. The controversy escalated when former CM and Leader of the Opposition, Naveen Patnaik, stated that he would donate his increased salary to the poor. While this was a personal decision, it raises an important question: if the bill was objectionable, why was it not opposed during the Assembly proceedings or through party legislators at the time of voting?

It is true that many MLAs and ministers, particularly those from affluent or industrial backgrounds, may not depend on their salaries. However, a significant number of MLAs come from poor, tribal, and remote regions, where the salary is a genuine necessity rather than a privilege. Some MLAs struggle to meet basic expenses through their official remuneration alone. In such circumstances, financial pressure can create vulnerability, though this does not imply that all MLAs resort to unethical practices. Ignoring this reality would be unfair.

It is also important to note that this bill was not passed hastily. A Standing Committee comprising members from all political parties examined the matter in detail and recommended that MLA salaries and allowances be limited to Rs 2.75 lakh. This recommendation was approved by the State Cabinet and then unanimously passed by the Assembly. However, during the final stage, the amount was amended to Rs 3.5 lakh. This increase later became the main focus of public anger.

The Opposition had sufficient opportunity to object during the legislative process. When criticism erupted later, especially on social media, the government acknowledged that a mistake may have been made. Respecting public sentiment, the ruling party requested the CM to reconsider the decision. If the bill is revised or withdrawn, it would be an unprecedented development in the history of the Odisha Assembly.

Criticism of certain allowances such as those for newspapers, books, electricity, and similar expenses is not entirely unjustified. MLAs are already provided official accommodation, and communication costs have reduced significantly in recent years. However, other unavoidable expenses remain substantial. These include constituency visits, maintaining a personal assistant, a driver, and continuous engagement with the public. Any reconsideration should therefore distinguish between excessive claims and genuine operational needs.

The issue of pension for former MLAs requires special sensitivity. The pension has been increased from Rs 30,000 to Rs 80,000, while the medical allowance remains only Rs 2,000. In today's economic reality, even basic medical expenses often exceed this amount.

Former MLAs, even after leaving office, continue to live among the people. They are expected to attend social events, religious functions, and community programmes, often at personal expense. In many constituencies, former MLAs are still regarded as public representatives and are approached regularly for assistance.

Not all former MLAs are wealthy. Many come from lower or middle-class backgrounds and have no independent source of income. Over the years, while affluent individuals have increasingly entered politics, nearly 500 former MLAs from modest backgrounds still depend on pension to meet basic needs.

Our committee has repeatedly met the CM seeking a reasonable revision of former MLAs' pensions, and assurances were given that the matter would be considered. If the government revisits this decision in upcoming Assembly session, whatever outcome is reached in the broader interest of the state should be accepted collectively.

Public representatives must remain accountable to people. At the same time, dignity in public life and reasonable financial security are essential for healthy functioning of democracy. The debate should move beyond outrage and focus on fairness, realism, and long-term institutional integrity.

The writer is a former MLA, Gondia & Dhenkanal.

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

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Symbol of resilience

Sir, The commemoration marking one thousand years since the first attack on the Somnath Temple, participated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was a solemn and reflective national moment. The event went beyond ritual remembrance, serving as a tribute to a civilisation that endured repeated assaults yet refused to surrender its spiritual and cultural essence. Somnath, repeatedly destroyed and rebuilt, stands as a powerful symbol of resilience, continuity and collective memory. Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister recalled how the attack sought not only to damage a structure, but to break the morale of a people. He emphasised that the temple's repeated reconstruction represents India's unwavering faith and determination to preserve its heritage against all odds. The commemoration was framed as an act of historical acknowledgment rather than grievance, urging society to draw strength, not bitterness, from the past. By linking remembrance with national confidence, the Prime Minister underlined that India's progress lies in understanding its history honestly while shaping a future rooted in dignity, unity and cultural self-awareness for generations to come.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Long-term investment

Sir, Searching for rare earth minerals in Greenland is costly because many deposits lie in eudialyte-rich rock buried under thick ice, extreme cold, and remote terrain. Eudialyte ores are chemically complex and low grade, making extraction and processing expensive and technologically demanding. Sparse infrastructure, environmental constraints, and short exploration seasons further raise costs and risks. Trump's continued interest reflects long-term strategy rather than quick profit. The United States depends heavily on China for rare earth magnets critical to defence and advanced technologies, and Greenland offers a future alternative. Beyond minerals, permanent control would secure Arctic positioning against Russian and Chinese influence. Acquiring Greenland would function like buying land for a house: costly upfront with no immediate return, but a strategic investment whose value and resources could be developed and harvested later, when conditions and capital allow.

RS Narula, PATIALA

Cyber fraud costs Delhi ₹1,250cr

The nationwide figure is believed to be around ₹20,000 crore or as much as the budget of a small state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: A few lakh rupees here, a few crores there, and once as much as ₹23 crore. With relentless regularity, cyber fraudsters have stolen a cumulative ₹1,250 crore from unsuspecting victims in Delhi region alone in the last one year, officials said Monday.

The nationwide figure is believed to be around ₹20,000 crore or as much as the budget of a small state.

The new-age dacoity once again came to the forefront of public consciousness last week with a ₹14.85 crore fraud perpetrated on a senior citizen couple in Greater Kailash colony of New Delhi, leaving them nearly penniless and the community in shock at how easily the cyber thieves are able to manipulate their victims.

Repeated public service messaging by authorities has not deterred or reduced the crime. In 2024, police said the criminals -- almost always based in Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos and working mostly on the behest of Chinese

THE NEW-AGE DACOITY

handlers -- collectively stole ₹1,100 crore in Delhi.

The figure for 2025 jumped to about ₹1,250 crore, a senior police officer said. The only silver lining is that the recovery rate too jumped from 10 per cent in 2024 to 24 per cent in 2025.

That is of little consolation for 81-year-old Om Taneja and his wife Indira, 77, who were conned over a 16-day period through the now-familiar stratagem -- digital arrest, a non-existent tool in the law that the criminals have used with impunity over the last three to four years when the fraud was first started being observed.

"We have lost all of our life's savings now. The cyber fraudsters repeatedly threatened us with arrest and serious consequences," Om Taneja told PTI.

He said his wife was approached on WhatsApp by a caller who claimed to be from the telecom department. Using a tried-and-tested spiel that her phone was being used for illegal activities, the caller and his associates sucked the couple into a deepening web of deceit built on fear and their willingness to abide by the law.

While placed under "digital arrest" from December 24 to January 9, they gave away their entire life savings in several chunks of about ₹2 crore, drawn from their savings accounts and by liquidating their mutual funds.

In the wake of the case, another senior police officer, explaining the modus operandi of such scammers, told PTI that digital arrest cases, along with investment frauds, have emerged as two of the most common ways in which people are losing their hard-earned money.

Investigators said most of these fraudsters operate out of Southeast Asian countries such as Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, where large-scale "scam compounds" run by Chinese handlers target victims across the world.

From these locations, the accused use illegal SIM box installations that allow international calls to be masked as local Indian numbers by bypassing telecom networks.

"The calls are actually routed from abroad but are made to appear as domestic calls using illegal SIM box devices, which helps the accused evade detection while creating fear and urgency among victims," the officer said.

The police said mule bank accounts continue to pose a major challenge, as they create multilayered money trails that are difficult to trace. Fraudsters based in India often assist overseas syndicates by providing mule accounts and SIM cards to launder stolen funds.

These accounts are typically opened by people from economically weaker sections, who hand them over to fraudsters in return for a commission.

To tackle the rising menace of cybercrime, the police said they have been regularly conducting cyber awareness programmes across multiple platforms, with a special focus on vulnerable sections such as senior citizens. Recently, they launched a two-phase awareness drive titled 'Santa ki Seekh', under which citizens were educated about the risks of scanning unknown links after being prompted through QR codes. Officials said coordination meetings are also being held regularly with bank officials to ensure greater due diligence and sensitisation of frontline staff.

In this connection, two bank employees were recently arrested for allegedly facilitating a cyber fraud by helping a gang open a fake current account using forged documents, which was used to divert and siphon off the proceeds of the crime.

Officials reiterated their appeal to citizens to immediately report cyber fraud on the national helpline number 1930, noting that early reporting significantly improves the chances of putting fraudulent transactions on hold and recovering the money.

Goa records highest tourist footfall at 1.08cr in 2025

Foreign tourist arrivals through charter flights have played an important role in Goa's inbound tourism, particularly from traditional source markets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Panaji, Jan 12: Nearly 1.08 crore tourists, including five lakh foreigners, arrived in Goa in 2025, surpassing the numbers of previous years, as per official data.

The Goa government's focus remains on promoting quality tourism, diversifying markets, and advancing the coastal state's vision of Regenerative Tourism, ensuring that its growth translates into long-term benefits for local communities, the environment, and the economy, Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte said Sunday.

In 2025, Goa recorded 1,02,84,608 domestic tourists and 5,17,802 foreign tourists, aggregating to 1,08,02,410 total arrivals, the state Tourism Department said in its data released Sunday.

Foreign tourist arrivals through charter flights have played an important role in Goa's inbound tourism, particularly from traditional source markets, it said. The data indicated that tourist arrivals in Goa, known for its picturesque beaches, have shown distinct phases of growth, disruption, and recovery over the years.

In 2017, the state received 68,95,234 domestic tourists and 8,90,459 foreign tourists, taking the total to 77,85,693.

As of 2025, Goa received 189 charter flights, bringing in 40,336 foreign tourists, with operations split between Dabolim and Mopa airports

Moderate growth continued (before COVID-19) in 2018 and 2019, with total arrivals reaching 80,15,400 and 80,64,400, respectively, as per the data.

This upward trend continued (post-COVID-19) in 2023 and 2024, with total arrivals at 86,28,162 and 1,04,09,196, respectively, it said.

On the international arrival front (foreign tourist), in 2017, Goa received 1,024 charter flights carrying 2,49,374 foreign tourists, which gradually declined to 799 flights and 2,16,738 tourists in 2019.

The department said the operationalisation of Manohar International Airport (at Mopa in North Goa) reflected in the data from 2023, when charter operations were recorded at both Mopa and Dabolim airports, with a total of 356 flights and 72,795 tourists.

"In 2024, charter arrivals stood at 266 flights and 58,680 tourists. As of 2025, Goa received 189 charter flights, bringing in 40,336 foreign tourists, with operations split between Dabolim and Mopa airports," it said.

Khaunte said that Goa's tourism performance, as reflected in the year-wise statistics, clearly demonstrates the resilience of the sector and the effectiveness of the government's sustained efforts towards structured and balanced tourism growth.

"The steady rise in domestic tourist arrivals, the gradual revival of foreign tourism across charter, scheduled international flights, and cruise segments, along with the enhanced role of Manohar International Airport, underline the state's improved connectivity and destination readiness," he said.

Khaunte said that foreign tourist arrivals through international scheduled flights have consistently contributed to Goa's inbound tourism.

"In 2017, 2,460 international flights operated through Dabolim Airport, carrying 3,35,573 foreign tourists. This number gradually declined until 2021, when only 265 flights and 11,971 tourists were recorded due to travel restrictions," he noted.

A steady recovery began in 2022, with 1,135 flights and 1,34,922 tourists. "The operationalisation of Mopa Airport became evident from 2023, when international flights were handled by both airports, together accounting for 1,416 flights and 1,95,067 tourists," he said.

In 2024, these figures increased to 1,546 flights carrying 1,95,990 tourists, the minister said.

FROM 'UNMAPPED' TO VERIFIED

EC resolves voter identity notice to 1971 war veteran

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Panaji, Jan 12: The Election Commission (EC) Monday clarified that a "system-driven procedure" led to the controversial notice issued to former Navy chief Admiral Arun Prakash (retd) as part of Goa's ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

The commission said the incomplete details in his previous enumeration form triggered the notice. The notice to Admiral Prakash, an 81-year-old Vir Chakra awardee and hero of the 1971 India-Pakistan War, had sparked a social media storm, with veterans and citizens questioning why such a decorated officer was required to "prove his identity" in person.

Officials said the form had now been duly completed and that the former Naval chief was not required to appear now.

In a clarification issued Monday, Electoral Registration Officer Dr Medora Ermomilla D'Costa said the Booth Level Officer (BLO) for the Cortalim constituency collected the Admiral's form but found it lacked mandatory particulars from previous revisions.

"It was observed that the said enumeration form did

not contain the mandatory particulars relating to the previous SIR, including the name of the elector, EPIC number, name of the relative, name and number of the Assembly Constituency, Part number, and serial number in the electoral roll," D'Costa added.

In the absence of these essential identification details, the BLO Application was unable to establish an automatic linkage between the submitted enumeration form and the existing electoral roll database, the official pointed out. As all the fields pertaining to the last SIR were left blank, the system categorised the enumeration form under the 'unmapped' category," the clarification mentioned.

D'Costa said, as per the standard, system-driven procedure, a hearing notice was automatically generated and issued to enable verification of the elector's details and ensure due opportunity for confirmation of eligibility.

Admiral Prakash, who has lived in Goa since his 2006 retirement, took to social media to highlight the logistical hurdles for elderly citizens and said that he and his wife were asked to appear on two separate dates at a location 18 km away from their residence.

"I neither need, nor have ever asked for any special privileges... but if the SIR forms are not evoking required info, they should be revised," Prakash, who was Naval chief from 2004 till 2006, posted on X.

He added that the BLO had visited his home three times and could have easily requested the missing documents then.

Delhi to add 7,000 EV charging stations, 2,000 buses this year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: The Delhi government is planing to install around 7,000 new electric vehicle charging stations by the end of the year to promote clean mobility and boost EV adoption, officials said Monday.

According to the officials, the initiative is part of a broader strategy to mitigate vehicular emissions, a primary driver of air pollution in the national capital. Alongside the charging infrastructure, the government is planing to strengthen public transport by expanding the bus fleet. The existing EV policy will expire at the end of March. Officials said a revised policy is expected to finalised and notified by that deadline.

Under the proposed transport plant, the government has plans to add over 2000 buses by the end of 2026, the officials said. In a recent high-level review meeting on air pollution control measures, authorities established a total requirement of 11,000 buses for the city. Delhi, currently operates 5,245 buses, including 3,377 electric buses.

"A month-wise action plan was shared with the officials. The target is to add 2,468 new buses this year. However, some old CNG buses may get phased out over the year, which the government has to factor in yet," a senior official said.

To support the transition to electric vehicles, the government's pollution control plan includes the addition of 7,000 charging stations across the city.

Official data shows that as of December, Delhi has 8,849 charging stations against a projected requirement of 36,150. This leaves a current deficit of 27,301 stations.

With the addition of 7,000 new charging stations, the total is expected to reach 15,849. These charging stations are situated at Rapid Rail and Delhi Metro stations and are installed by power distribution companies, the officials said.

The government is also working with the Delhi Traffic Police to address road congestion.

Traffic Police has identified 62 congestion hotspots and 215 specific remedial tasks. Of these, 83 tasks have been completed, while 46 have been deemed unfeasible due to ongoing infrastructure projects, redevelopment works, or lack of feasibility, the officials said.

Of the 86 pending tasks, 50 are scheduled to be completed within the next one to six months.

MP Raghav Chadha turns into delivery agent

IN THE VIDEO, THE PUNJAB RAJYA SABHA MP IS SEEN WEARING BLINKIT'S YELLOW UNIFORM AND A HELMET, RIDING PILLION ON A DELIVERY PARTNER'S MOTORCYCLE AS THEY COMPLETE MULTIPLE ORDERS ACROSS THE CITY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: Aam Aadmi Party MP Raghav Chadha Monday shared a video of himself dressed as a Blinkit delivery agent and delivering orders, drawing attention to the daily grind of gig workers and renewing his call for better working conditions in India's fast-growing quick commerce sector.

Chadha posted a video on X with a caption, "Away from boardrooms, at the grassroots. I lived their day".

The AAP leader said he wanted to step away

from policy debates and see life at the grassroots.

In the video, the Punjab Rajya Sabha MP is seen wearing Blinkit's yellow uniform and a helmet, riding pillion on a delivery partner's motorcycle as they complete multiple orders across the city.

The footage follows the pair through what appears to be a regular work shift, offering a glimpse into the pace and pressure of last-mile deliveries. Chadha has been a vocal critic of 10-minute delivery promises made by quick commerce platforms. He has argued that such deadlines push workers to take risks on the road to meet unrealistic targets.

Earlier, while raising the issue during Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha, he urged the House to look beyond convenience and consider the human cost of ultra-fast deliveries.

"I want to tell you that these people are not robots. They are also someone's father, husband, brother, or son. The House should think about them. And the cruelty of this 10-minute delivery should end," he had said earlier. Through his latest post, Chadha sought to underline that debate with lived experience, placing the spotlight firmly on delivery workers and their safety.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KESINGA
E_mail:eerwkesinga@yahoo.com
e-Procurement Notice
BID IDENTIFICATION NO.RWKSNG-online-08/25-26

No.O-2027:1. Name of Works: Building works & Road Works (As per annexure). 2. Total No. of Work: 18 Nos. 3. Estimated Cost: Rs.1.46 Lakhs to Rs.34.11 lakhs (Approximately). 4. E.M.D.: Please refer DTCN. 5. Cost of Tender Document: As per annexure. 6. Class of Contractor: 'D' 'C' & 'B' Class. 7. Period of Completion: As per annexure. 8. Other Details: As per DTCN.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding		Last date and time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender
		From	To		
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Kesinga	RWKSNG-online-09/ 25-26	13.01.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	21.01.2026 upto 17.00 P.M.	19.01.2026 upto 11.00 A.M.	22.01.2026 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the Website i.e. www.tenderodisha.gov.in
OIPR- **Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Kesinga**

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KHARIAR
Phone No.06671-224074, e-mail: eerwkhariar@gmail.com
e-Procurement Notice
BID IDENTIFICATION NO.RWKHR-07/2025-26 (Online)

No.O-2002: Bid documents consisting of Work, Estimated Cost, EMD, Cost of Tender Paper, Class of Contractor, Time of Completion and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. website i.e. www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
1. Name of the Work: Roads & Building Works. 2. Total No. of Works: 7 Nos. 3. Estimated Cost: 3.26 to 55.48 Lakhs. 4. Period of Completion: 1 (One) Calendar & 2 (Two) Calendar Months. 5. Other details:-

Procurement officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bid	Date & Time of Opening of Financial Bid
		From	To			
1	2	3	4	5	6	
Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Khariar	RWKHR- 07/ 2025-26 (Online)	13.01.2026 At 10.00 AM	27.01.2026 Upto 5.00 PM	27.01.2026 Upto 11.00 AM	28.01.2026 at 11.00 AM	31.01.2026 at 11.00 AM

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
OIPR- **Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Khariar**

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA ee_rwbdk2@yahoo.co.in
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION-II, BHADRAK
"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works
Identification Online Tender025/RWD/BDK-II/2025-26, Dtd.06.01.2026

No.O-1997:1. Name of the Work : Road Works as per Annexure, 2. Total Number of Works: 1 No., 3. Approximate Estimated Cost: Rs.55.08 Lakhs. 4. Class of Contractor: "B" Class. 5. Period of Completion:As per Annexure, 6. Type of Tender: Double Cover. 7.Other details: The details are as follows.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of Opening of the Bid	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division-II, Bhadrak	25	12.01.26 At 11.00 P.M.	19.01.26 upto 5.00 P.M.	19.01.26 upto 3.00 P.M.	20.01.26 at 11.00 AM	Will be intimated later

8. **Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal "https://www.tendersorissa.gov.in"**
9. Any other changes/ Corrigendum may be seen only in website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
OIPR- **Sd./- Superintending Engineer, R.W.Division-II, Bhadrak**

national

Yoga is part of our Indian tradition. The yogic practice of Surya Namaskar is the essence of our entire life. It is not just a physical exercise, but a great medium to elevate our lives from mediocrity to excellence

MOHAN YADAV | MP CM

EX-VP DHANKHAR ADMITTED TO AIIMS

Former vice president Jagdeep Dhankhar was admitted to the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Monday after he fell unconscious twice January 10, officials said. Dhankhar, 74, will undergo an MRI, the officials said

Quote of the day

It is an example of how to empower individuals. People should not be dependent on the government. People should not be dependent on freebies given by the government, like free electricity for life without any involvement from the people. The PM does not believe in floating such schemes

PIYUSH GOYAL | UNION MINISTER

Ten people have so far been arrested in connection with the incident at Fatikroy. Life should be in order, and the police will take strong action if any disorder happens. The police will not act selectively

MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM

On the death anniversary of martyr Masterda Surya Sen, the great hero of the anti-British freedom struggle of Chittagong, I offer my heartfelt tribute and salutations. Ideals never die — and therefore, he remains immortal

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

SHORT TAKES

Shiv Sena releases manifesto for Thane

Thane: The Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena Monday released its manifesto for the January 15 Thane civic polls, promising a slum-free city as well as an iconic 260-metre viewing tower. The manifesto, released by state minister Pratap Sarnaik and Lok Sabha MP Naresh Mhaske, among others, at Anand Ashram, the office of Shinde's late mentor Anand Dighe, is a roadmap of "unbroken development, party leaders said.

History-sheeter hacked to death at govt hosp

Chennai: A history-sheeter was hacked to death by a gang at Government Kilpauk Medical College Hospital here Monday afternoon, police said. The man, identified as Adhi, a resident of Kolathur, was waiting near the maternity ward when he was attacked by a group of men with weapons. Adhi suffered fatal injuries and collapsed on the spot, they said. Speaking to mediapersons, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Narendra Nair, said nine teams are investigating the case, with two persons already taken into custody based on preliminary CCTV footage.

Protest blocks NH-66 over toll collection

Kasaragod (Kerala): Traffic was blocked on NH-66 in Arikady here Monday as protesters opposed the commencement of toll collection, police said. More than 500 protesters, led by Manjeshwar MLA A K M Ashraf, staged a sit-in on the road near the toll plaza demanding the withdrawal of toll collection. Over 300 police personnel have been deployed in the area to control the situation. According to police, the protesters had formed an action council last year against the setting up of the toll plaza at Arikady.

'Man kills wife for refusal to have sex'

Indore: A man was arrested in Indore in Madhya Pradesh for allegedly murdering his wife as she refused to have sex with him for the past eight years, a senior police official said Monday. The 40-year-old woman died January 9 under Aerodrome police station limits, Deputy Commissioner of Police Shrikrishna Lalchandani told PTI.

Kerala: Satyagraha sparks political storm

Pinarayi Vijayan accused the Union government of centralising power and using money to reward states ruled by friendly parties while punishing Opposition-ruled states like Kerala

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 12: Kerala saw a heated political showdown Monday as state ministers led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan took to the streets with a Satyagraha, accusing the BJP-led Centre of squeezing the state financially.

What followed was a war of words, with the BJP hitting back hard and the Congress keeping its distance, turning the issue into a three-cornered political battle.

Standing before party leaders, ministers and supporters at the Martyrs' Column in Palayam here, Vijayan said Kerala had been pushed into an "extraordinary struggle" to protect its rights. According to him, this was not just about money, but about dignity, federalism and democracy. "This is a struggle for the survival of this land and its people. Believing that all authority rests in their hands, the rulers at the Centre are arbitrarily usurping our rights," Vijayan said, a day after Union Home Minister Amit Shah claimed that the funds given to the state during the NDA period were more than three times higher than what it received during the Congress-led UPA period.

"The present situation has compelled us to take to struggle in order to protect those rights. This is an extraordinary and grave circumstance," the veteran CPI(M) leader said. He said the Union government was treating Kerala with bias and political vengeance.

The cuts in grants and borrowing limits, he claimed, were meant to choke the state financially.

Vijayan pointed out that Kerala was supposed to get ₹12,000 crore between January and March, but was denied ₹5,900 crore without any clear reason. This, he said, had made it difficult for the government to pay bills and run welfare schemes smoothly.

The CM also accused the Union government of centralising power and using money to reward states ruled by friendly parties while punishing opposition-ruled states like Kerala.

He reminded the people of how Kerala was denied permission to receive foreign aid during the 2018 floods and how support was lacking after the Wayanad landslide. These were, Vijayan said, clear examples of discrimination.

Rejecting claims of financial mismanagement, he said the state had continued to invest in welfare, development and jobs despite financial pressure.

Taking on Amit Shah's claim that Kerala received more funds under the Modi government, Vijayan said tax devolution was not a gift, but a constitutional right. He accused the Centre of interfering with the Finance Commission and quoted NITI Aayog CEO B V R Subrahmanyam.

The chief minister said the Finance Commission had recommended 42 per cent for states and that there was an attempt to cut it to 33 per cent. He added that the Prime Minister had not denied this claim.

Calling for wider protests, Vijayan said Kerala would fight legally and politically to protect federalism and ensure its rightful share. He also criticised the Congress-led UDF for not standing with the state at this crucial time.

But the BJP hit back almost immediately. State BJP president Rajeev Chandrasekhar said the Left government was trying to fool the public.

He said a government that had ruled for nearly 10 years had no excuse to shift blame.

KARUR STAMPEDE

Vijay questioned for 6 hours by CBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Chennai, Jan 12: TVK chief and actor Vijay was questioned for nearly six hours by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) here Monday in connection with the Karur stampede case, officials said.

The Tamil superstar will be called again for questioning as some queries need to be clarified further, they said.

The CBI wanted him to come Tuesday for questioning but the actor asked for another date citing Pongal. The agency has agreed to his request and will give him a fresh date, the officials said.

Vijay reached the heavily barricaded CBI headquarters here at 11.29 am in a black Range Rover.

After completion of the necessary formalities, he was taken to a team in the anti-corruption unit of the agency that is investigating the September 27, 2025, stampede, which claimed 41 lives and left more than 60 injured in Tamil Nadu's Karur.

He left the CBI headquarters at around 6.15 pm after nearly six hours of questioning by a team of officials where he was asked various questions related to the rally in which the tragic incident took place, the officials said. The CBI also questioned Tamil Nadu's former ADG (law and order) S Davidson Devasirvatham in the case. Anticipating a huge turnout of the actor-politician's supporters, multiple units of Delhi Police and Central Armed Police Forces were deployed around the CBI office building to prevent any protests. A small group of fans managed to slip in among the mediapersons gathered outside the CBI office to get a glimpse of the actor.

The Tamil superstar will be called again for questioning as some queries need to be clarified further

The CBI has also questioned several TVK office bearers in the case. The federal agency took over the case from an SIT following a Supreme Court order and has been gathering evidence related to the stampede.

In October last year, the apex court asked the CBI director to appoint a senior officer to take over the investigation.

The court also set up a three-member supervisory committee headed by former Supreme Court judge Ajay Rastogi to monitor the CBI probe.

A bench comprising Justices J K Maheshwari and N V Anjaria had said the stampede has left an imprint in the minds of citizens throughout the country. It has wide ramifications with respect to the life of citizens and enforcing the fundamental rights of the families who lost their kin is of utmost importance, the court had said.

Amrit Bharat Express trains driving Bengal's next rail revolution

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 12: The Amrit Bharat Express, launched by Indian Railways, is a new initiative aimed at providing affordable, reliable, and comfortable long-distance travel for everyday passengers. With fares under RS 500 per 1000 km, it connects distant regions across India, benefiting millions who rely on railways for work, education, and livelihood.

These trains prioritize passenger comfort and energy efficiency, offering features like fast charging points, comfortable seating, and enhanced safety measures.

The Amrit Bharat Express is part of a broader transformation of Indian Railways, alongside the Vande Bharat and Namo Bharat Express, focusing on modernizing rail travel and making it accessible for all.

On January 17, 2026, the Prime Minister will flag off new Amrit Bharat Express routes from West Bengal, connecting the region to various parts of the country.

Key routes include:

New Jalpaiguri - Nagercoil
New Jalpaiguri - Tiruchirappalli
Alipurduar - Bengaluru
Alipurduar - Mumbai (Panvel)

These routes will improve connectivity across linguistic, cultural, and economic zones, offering direct, affordable travel for migrant workers, students, and businesses.

The trains also emphasize safety with semi-automatic couplers, impact-absorbing tubes, and push-pull technology for better operational efficiency.

The Amrit Bharat Express is designed with the common traveller in mind, providing modern facilities like foldable snack tables, mobile holders, and eco-friendly toilets.

It will reduce travel time on long-distance journeys, making Indian Railways an even more vital lifeline for the nation.

With 30 services already operational, these trains represent a major leap in making rail travel more efficient, affordable, and inclusive.

Man shoots wife dead at PS over affair claim

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hardoi (UP), Jan 12: A 36-year-old man allegedly shot his wife dead at a police station here Monday morning, just days after he had lodged a complaint accusing her of eloping with her lover, a senior officer said.

The accused, identified as Anoop, was overpowered and arrested from the spot, he added.

Hardoi Superintendent of Police Ashok Kumar Meena said an investigating officer and a female constable have been suspended in this connection over alleged negligence in discharge of duty.

According to police, Anoop's wife, Soni (35), a resident of Ramapur Atariya under Pali police station limits, had allegedly left home with her lover five days ago. Anoop had filed an FIR in this regard, alleging that his wife had taken jewellery and ₹35,000 in cash with her.

Police detained her Sunday, and Monday morning, the process of presenting Soni before court and other legal formalities were underway.

SNIPPETS

Child among 3 killed in Solan fire; 6 Nepalese nationals feared trapped

Shimla: An eight-year-old child was among three Nepalese individuals killed in a massive fire that engulfed a four-storey building in Solan, primarily occupied by migrant families from Bihar and Nepal, officials said Monday. The fire broke out near UCO Bank in the Arki market Sunday night, and six people are still feared to be trapped under the debris, police said. Arki MLA Sanjay Awasthi, who was at the spot, said that 10 to 15 houses suffered significant damage in the fire. Some locals from Nepal are missing and a search is underway to locate them, he said. The building, made of mud and wood and owned by Rajiv Gupta, was completely gutted in the blaze. The ground and first floors housed shops, while families lived on the third and fourth floors. Visuals showing fire tenders battling the enormous flames in the cold night, along with residents of nearby buildings crying out for help to save their homes, have gone viral on the internet. All three deceased individuals and the six people trapped are Nepalese nationals from Salyan in the Karnali province of Nepal. Among these nine individuals, five are minors. The child was rescued in an injured condition, but later succumbed to injuries in the hospital. The bodies of two others were recovered during the rescue operation, found charred and fragmented, and post-mortem and forensic examinations are currently underway, police added.

SC asks gangster Abu Salem to justify claim of having spent 25 years in jail

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Monday asked gangster Abu Salem to justify his claim that he has spent 25 years in jail, a contention if proven will allow him to walk free from jail. Salem, a convict in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts, was extradited from Portugal November 11, 2005, after a prolonged legal battle. According to the extradition terms agreed upon by India and Portugal, Salem cannot be given death penalty and his prison term cannot exceed 25 years. Taking note of his plea, a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta questioned his counsel over the claim of having completed 25 years jail term in India and asked him to substantiate the contention. "First of all, how do you calculate 25 years from 2005?" the bench asked the counsel appearing for Salem. His counsel said as per the calculation, Salem has completed 25-year jail term. "You were taken in actual custody on which date?" the bench asked. The counsel said Salem was taken into custody November 11, 2005. Salem's counsel said he would place the relevant prison rules on record. "Let the relevant prison rules be filed within a period of two weeks by the petitioner," the bench said, and posted the matter for hearing February 9.

'Tobacco glamorisation could fuel cancer, lung disease'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: Health and education experts have warned that the growing glamorisation of tobacco through surrogate advertising and its normalisation, by selling it alongside toffees and candies, pose a serious threat to the health of children and adolescents.

They cautioned that if this trend is not checked urgently, it could lead to a new epidemic of cancer and lung diseases in the coming years.

The warning came during a National Youth Day webinar titled 'The Silent Push: Tobacco and Young India', organised by Tobacco Free India, a citizen initiative, on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekanand.

Speakers noted that while India has taken several commendable steps in recent years to strengthen tobacco control, children and young people between 10 and 20 years of age are increasingly being targeted through subtle and indirect practices.

They stressed that addressing this challenge would require tighter controls on surrogate promotions, strict limits on point-of-sale visibility, and ensuring that tobacco is not sold alongside products meant for children.

They also underlined the need to delay initiation by raising the legal age for purchase, ending single-stick sales, and strengthening enforcement around educational institutions to better protect children's everyday environment.

Dr Shalini Singh, director of the ICMR-?National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research, highlighted how children are exposed to tobacco through everyday influences, starting at retail points and extending to surrogate promotion. Other experts noted that these layered exposures together make tobacco products appear harmless, easily accessible, and socially acceptable to young minds.

From a child health perspective, Dr Naveen Thacker, executive director of the International Pediatric Association, warned that the problem begins far earlier than commonly assumed. Referring to a cross-sectional study conducted under his leadership in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, he said nearly one in six children around the age of 10 had already experimented with tobacco.

Experts noted that while direct tobacco advertising is prohibited under Indian law, promotion today works largely through everyday visibility and proximity

Tobacco products continue to be displayed at neighbourhood shops and kiosks frequented by children, often alongside items meant for young consumers

Echoing these concerns, Dr M C Misra, public health expert and former director of AIIMS, Delhi, cautioned that the consequences of inaction could be severe and long-lasting.

Professor JS Rajput, former director of NCERT, said celebrity-linked surrogate promotions add another troubling layer to the problem and called for collective responsibility.

Drawing on child health evidence, Dr Thacker said the growing signs of early exposure call for a much sharper focus on protecting children's everyday environment from tobacco influence. Several speakers, including Prof Rajput, stressed the importance of curbing surrogate branding and celebrity-linked promotions, observing that aspirational cues play a disproportionate role in shaping youth behaviour. When admired public figures are indirectly associated with tobacco brands, it undermines both health messaging and value-based education, they said.

To delay initiation and reduce lifetime dependence, experts also highlighted the potential public health benefit of raising the legal age for purchase of tobacco products, similar to alcohol. Global evidence shows that even modest delays in initiation significantly reduce long-term addiction and disease burden.

The continued practice of single-stick sales, which lowers cost barriers and facilitates experimentation, was flagged as another area requiring urgent attention.

In addition, speakers called for consistent enforcement of the ban on the sale of tobacco products within 100 yards of educational institutions.

Several speakers said that reducing tobacco consumption would be a meaningful tribute to Swami Vivekananda on National Youth Day.

national

More lives are lost in road accidents than in wars on the country's borders

A REVANTH REDDY | TELANGANA CM

NEAR-ZERO TEMPERATURES FREEZE RAJASTHAN, HARYANA

Haryana's Gurugram and Punjab's Bathinda recorded a low of 0.6 degrees Celsius, while Fatehpur in Rajasthan's Sikar district crossed the freezing point threshold to reach minus 0.4 degrees, the local meteorological departments said Monday

Quote of the day

Seventy per cent of India's population consists of youth. If they are properly shaped, then no one can stop us from becoming the world's third-largest economy in future

SHIV PRATAP SHUKLA | HIMACHAL GOVERNOR

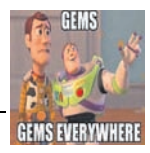
Working on a robust, IT-enabled ILP system to track overstaying, expired permits, unusual travel patterns, and real-time entry–exit data

PEMA KHANDU | ARUNACHAL CM

Today's youth has passion and energy, and the one who is giving the right direction to their passion is Prime Minister Modi

NITIN NABIN | BJP NATIONAL WORKING PRESIDENT

X POST OF THE DAY



Benefits of 42% income tax in Germany:
- On Job loss, the govt pays 60% of salary
- 3 years leave on have a baby
- Education is completely free upto PhD
- For every child, get €250/mon till 18 yrs
- Free travel within country
- Free Hospital bills
what are you getting?
@IndianGems_

SHORT TAKES

4 killed after car hits truck

Garhwa: Four people were killed after their four-wheeler hit a truck in Jharkhand's Garhwa district, police said Monday. The incident happened at the Bel Champa area late Sunday night, they said. "All four bodies were retrieved from the damaged car by using a gas cutter. The impact of the crash was so huge that the four-wheeler dashed into a house on the roadside," Garhwa police station's in-charge Sunil Kumar Tiwari said.

Gyanvapi mosque: HC adjourns hearing

Prayagraj: The Allahabad High Court Monday adjourned the hearing in the Gyanvapi mosque dispute case in Varanasi to February 3, saying the matter is pending before the Supreme Court. Justice Rohit Ranjan Agarwal was hearing the petition, which seeks a scientific survey of the ablution area (wazu khana) of the Gyanvapi complex, excluding a structure which the Hindu side claims to be a Shivling and the Muslim side a fountain, by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The civil revision plea has challenged a Varanasi district judge's order dated October 21, 2023, refusing to direct the ASI to survey the 'wazu khana' area of the Gyanvapi mosque.

Venezuela crisis: Oppn criticise Govt's stance

New Delhi: Opposition parties, including the Left parties, DMK, SP, RJD, AAP and VCK, adopted a resolution Monday condemning the US aggression on Venezuela and the "kidnapping" of President Nicolas Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores. At a public meeting held here, leaders from these parties also came down heavily on the BJP-led Centre, accusing it of having a muted response to these events.

ED RAID ON I-PAC

Abhishek alleges 'information theft'

Addressing a conclave of the party's digital volunteers, Abhishek questioned both the intent and the selectivity of the ED action, claiming that the raid was designed to create a political narrative against the ruling party rather than pursue a legitimate probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 12: Senior TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee Monday escalated the party's confrontation with the Centre over the ED raid on I-PAC, alleging that the central agency's objective was not investigation but "stealing political information" to settle scores on behalf of the BJP ahead of the 2026 Assembly polls.

Addressing a conclave of the party's digital volunteers, 'Ami Banglar Digital Joddha', Banerjee questioned both the intent and the selectivity of the ED action, claiming that the raid was designed to create a political narrative against the ruling party rather than pursue a legitimate probe.

Banerjee alleged that the January 8 searches at premises linked to I-PAC, which provides political consultancy to the TMC and manages its IT operations, were aimed at accessing the party's internal strategy.

"The ED says it came to investigate the coal scam. That case is more than three years old and they have not summoned anyone all this time. They can come, but their purpose was information theft," Banerjee alleged, marking the first time he directly accused the agency of attempting to appropriate Trinamool's internal data.

The ED conducted searches at the Salt Lake office of I-PAC and at the south Kolkata residence of its director Pratik Jain as part of a money laundering probe linked to the alleged coal scam. Searches were also carried out at a few locations in Delhi.

Banerjee questioned why the agency chose to target only the Kolkata-based director when I-PAC has three directors operating from Kolkata, Hyderabad and Delhi. "If the investigation is genuine, why were offices and residences in other states not searched? And if a director's house is being searched, why go to the Bengal office at all?" he asked.

"And, if the case is against one director, why target the office? This is meant to create an impression that the organisation itself is guilty," alleged Banerjee, considered number two in the TMC hierarchy.

The TMC leader linked the ED action to I-PAC's role in assisting the party during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, reiterating a charge he had first made at a rally in Nadia's Taherpur Friday. I-PAC, he said, had helped the party develop digital tools such as the 'Didir Doot' app to assist voters during the revision process.

"Because they helped people and worked for the TMC during SIR, the ED was sent to raid them. On one hand, the Election Commission is being used to snatch people's rights, and on the other, ED is being used to throttle democracy," Banerjee alleged.

The ED has accused Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of obstructing its officers and removing incriminating documents during the raid at Jain's residence, a charge strongly denied by the TMC. The agency has moved the Calcutta High Court seeking a CBI probe.

Without directly referring to the removal of files, Banerjee defended the chief minister, saying, "She responded in the language they used. In other states, leaders are threatened into switching sides. That does not work here."

Banerjee also widened the political attack, accusing the BJP of disrespecting the Bengali language and icons. He cited BJP IT Cell chief Amit Malviya's alleged remark branding Bengalis as "Bangladeshis" and recalled the vandalism of polymath and social reformer Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's statue during a BJP rally in 2019.

Banerjee, however, did not elaborate on the connection between the two Gujaratis and the Bengali language.

Framing the party's organisational strength in militaristic terms, Banerjee likened the TMC to the three wings of the armed forces: grassroots workers as the "Army", MPs and lawyers as the "Navy", and social media volunteers as the "Air Force".

Urging digital workers to counter BJP narratives with data and logic, Banerjee said the party would continue to fight what he called the misuse of central agencies and institutions, asserting that "Trinamool may have nothing, but it has the people with it."

Modi, Merz engage in 'kite diplomacy'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Jan 12: German Chancellor Friedrich Merz Monday visited the Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad and paid rich tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, saying the teachings of India's independence movement hero are more needed today than ever.

On his maiden India tour, Merz, who later flew kites with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who accompanied the visiting leader to the historic ashram on the banks of the Sabarmati river, noted that Mahatma Gandhi's legacy unites Indians and Germans as friends.

Modi and Merz visited the Sabarmati Ashram in the morning and paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi, later inaugurated Gujarat's famous kite festival. The German Chancellor also made a trip to Adalaj Ni Vav, an iconic stepwell near Gandhinagar city.

The Prime Minister, who reached the ashram a few minutes before Merz's arrival, welcomed the German Chancellor upon his arrival.

After paying floral tributes at a statue of the Father of the Nation, both leaders visited 'Hriday Kunj', a room inside the ashram where Mahatma Gandhi and his wife Kasturba lived during the freedom struggle.

At the sprawling ashram, Merz also witnessed how khadi yarn is woven using the 'charkha', or spinning wheel.

Mahatma Gandhi spun yarn on the charkha as part of his campaign to promote khadi and self-reliance during the independence movement.

In a note in the ashram visitors' book, Merz stated, "Mahatma Gandhi's unshakeable belief in the power of freedom and dignity of each and every individual inspires us to this day. This legacy unites Indians and Germans as friends in a world that may more than ever be in need of Gandhi's teachings."

A pennant with Operation Sindoor, a giant Hanuman and his mace, the tricolour and myriad other kites floated against a cloudless blue sky. Politics, diplomacy and festivity blended in the Ahmedabad airspace as Modi and Merz inaugurated the Kite Festival.

The pull and the tug, kites of various shapes and sizes fluttering in the breeze and the vivid blue providing the perfect canvas for the art fest in the skies. It all made for a picture book setting at the Sabarmati Riverfront. As many as 135 kite flyers from 50 countries and nearly 1,000 enthusiasts from India are participating in the festival this year in Ahmedabad, according to a Gujarat government release.

As part of the festival organised by the state government, the kite flyers have already visited places like Rajkot, Surat, Dholavira (in Kutch) and Statue of Unity (Narmada district) during the last two days and enthralled the visitors, it said.

The festival in Ahmedabad will continue till January 14.

The festival is held annually ahead of 'Uttarayan', also known as Makar Sankranti, which falls January 14 and marks the Sun's northward journey and the transition towards summer.

Nipah scare: Two nurses on ventilator support

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 12: Two nurses working at a private hospital in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district are showing symptoms of being infected with Nipah virus, a senior official of the state health department said Monday.

The condition of the two nurses, one male and another female, are stated to be "very critical", he said.

"Both nurses work in the same hospital in Barasat. They are suspected of being infected with Nipah virus. Samples of both nurses were sent to Kalyani AIIMS for testing, and preliminary reports indicate a possible Nipah infection," the official told PTI.

While one nurse is a resident of Nadia district, the other lives at Katwa in Purba Bardhaman district, he said.

"Both are currently admitted to the Barasat hospital where they work, and have been placed in the isolation ward with ventilator support," he elaborated.

According to health department sources, one of the nurses had recently returned from her hometown in Katwa, where she fell ill and was initially admitted to a local hospital December 31.

"Her condition worsened, leading to her transfer to Bardhaman Medical College, and then by special ambulance to Barasat hospital. The male nurse exhibited similar symptoms and was also placed on ventilator support," he stated.

Army personnel showcase combat skills during the 'Know Your Army' exhibition ahead of 78th Army Day, in Jaipur, Rajasthan PTI PHOTO

MAHA MUNICIPAL POLLS

EC stops 'Ladki Bahin' funds transfer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana is a flagship scheme of the state government under which eligible women beneficiaries get a monthly assistance of ₹1,500

The scheme is widely credited with helping the Mahayuti secure victory in the 2024 state Assembly elections

Mumbai, Jan 12: The State Election Commission Monday barred the Maharashtra government from releasing the January instalment of the 'Ladki Bahin' scheme in advance, citing the enforcement of the model code of conduct for municipal elections.

The SEC's clarification came after it received several complaints following media reports claiming that beneficiaries of the scheme would receive ₹3,000- covering the December and January instalments- in their bank accounts before January 14 as a Makar Sankranti gift.

BJP leader and minister Gitish Mahajan had claimed eligible beneficiaries of the Ladki Bahin scheme will receive a combined transfer of ₹3,000 for December and January in their bank accounts before Makar Sankranti,

The SEC had sent a letter to state Chief Secretary Rajesh Agarwal Sunday, seeking clarification on the factual position following media reports and whether the government intended to release two months' instalments together just ahead of the polls, with a response sought Monday.

The Chief Secretary stated that the SEC had issued consolidated instructions November 4, 2025, regarding the model code of conduct for local body elections.

The SEC has clarified that the regular or pending instalments under the "Mukhyamantri Mazi Ladki Bahin Yojana" scheme may be disbursed, the commission has made it clear that no advance payment will be allowed during the model code period, according to a statement. As per these guidelines, development works and welfare schemes that had already commenced before the announcement of elections may continue during the code period.

The controversy erupted after Gitish Mahajan claimed eligible beneficiaries of the Ladki Bahin scheme will receive a combined transfer of ₹3,000 for December and January in their bank accounts before Makar Sankranti, which falls January 14, terming it a "special gift" from CM Devendra Fadnavis.

The Opposition had termed the announcement a bid to influence voters ahead of the January 15 polls to 29 municipal corporations.

Raj: Class XII girl student gangraped inside moving car

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Jan 12: A Class XII girl student was allegedly kidnapped and gangraped inside a moving car in Rajasthan's Bikaner district, police said Monday.

The incident occurred January 6 in the Napasar area, but a case was registered only January 11 following a complaint by the girl's family, they said.

According to the complaint, the girl had left home for school on the morning of January 6. Two youngsters intercepted her and abducted in a car and drove away.

The accused allegedly drove around for several hours, threatening and raping the girl turn by turn inside the moving vehicle, they said in the complaint. Later, when the car entered a neighbouring village, locals grew suspicious and stopped the vehicle.

After forcing the girl out of the car, the accused fled from the spot. Villagers informed the girl's family, who reached the spot and took her home, police said.

A case has been registered at Napasar police station under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Circle Officer Gangashahar Himanshu Sharma told PTI.

He said that the girl is aged above 18 years while the age of the accused is not clear.

"No arrests have been made so far," he said, adding that the matter was under investigation.

Interfaith wedding reception cancelled after protest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shahjahanpur (UP), Jan 12: Hindu activists objected to the 'walima' (wedding reception) of a newly-married couple in Kotwali police station area here, organising a protest that prompted the family to cancel the event, a police officer said.

He said Sunday night, Dr Adnan, a resident of Zia Khel locality in Shahjahanpur city, was holding his 'walima' ceremony at a local banquet lawn. He had married a Hindu girl named Neelam in a registry marriage in Delhi.

As information went around, a large number of Hindu activists reached the event venue and created a ruckus. A purported video of the incident has also surfaced.

Rajesh Awasthi, a Hindu leader who participated in the protest, said they had received information that Adnan had married a Hindu girl and his family was holding a 'walima' feast. Triggered by this, Hindu activists reached the venue and protested against the marriage.

Mob demands that police book husband under National Security Act; purported video of the incident also surfaces

Awasthi said the police were also informed, who arrived at the scene and the 'walima' ceremony was eventually cancelled.

A memorandum was submitted to Superintendent of Police Rajesh Dwivedi Monday, demanding action against Adnan under the National Security Act, he added.

Superintendent of Police Rajesh Dwivedi told PTI on Monday that Adnan Ansari (29), a dentist by profession, had married Neelam (35), an MBA graduate working in a multinational company, in a Delhi court September 12 last year. The 'walima' ceremony for the marriage was being held Sunday night.

He said when police reached the spot after receiving information, the family members informed them that they had cancelled the 'walima' ceremony.

The senior officer, citing family members, said Adnan's family had also printed invitation cards for the 'walima', in which the bride's name was mentioned as Neelam Ansari.

international

It is vital that Ofcom complete this investigation swiftly because the public – and most importantly the victims – will not accept any delay

LIZ KENDALL | TECHNOLOGY MINISTER, UK

POPE LEO MEETS MACHADO

Pope Leo met Venezuelan opposition leader and Nobel peace prize winner Maria Corina Machado Monday, the Vatican said, but did not provide any further details

Quote of the day

Corruption is a roadblock and stumbling stone to the Party and nation's development. The fight against corruption is a major battle that we cannot afford to lose and must not lose

XI JINPING | PRESIDENT, CHINA

A dispute between China and Japan was not desirable for regional peace, Seoul would not meddle in the ongoing row

LEE JAE MYUNG | PRESIDENT, SOUTH KOREA

We are in very detailed discussions with the Danish government and simply want to work together to improve the security situation for Greenland

FRIEDRICH MERZ | CHANCELLOR, GERMANY

SHORT TAKES

PIO astronomer wins UK's RAS Gold Medal

London: US-based astronomer Professor Shrinivas Kulkarni has been awarded the prestigious Gold Medal by the Royal Astronomical Society (RAS) in London for his "field-defining" discoveries in time-domain astronomy. Maharashtra-born Kulkarni is the George Ellery Hale Professor of Astronomy and Planetary Science at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), where he has discovered a wide range of astronomical objects, including brown dwarfs and remote bursts of gamma rays. His RAS Gold Medal citation from last week recognises his "sustained, innovative and ground-breaking contributions to multi-wavelength transient astrophysics". In receiving the highest honour from the historic organisation, awarded annually since 1824, he joins great scientific minds such as Stephen Hawking, Jocelyn Bell Burnell, Albert Einstein and Edwin Hubble.

UK in talks with NATO to counter Russia, China

London: Britain is discussing with NATO allies how it can help beef up security in the Arctic to counter threats from Russia and China, a government minister said Sunday. Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander said the talks are "business as usual" rather than a response to recent threats by US President Donald Trump to take over Greenland. Trump said Friday that he would like to make a deal to acquire Greenland, a semiautonomous region of NATO ally Denmark, to prevent Russia or China from taking it over. "We are going to do something on Greenland whether they like it or not," Trump said Friday. Greenland, with a population of around 57,000, is defended by Denmark, whose military is dwarfed by that of the US, which has a military base on the island. Denmark's prime minister has warned that a takeover would threaten NATO.

6 policemen killed in IED blast in Pakistan

At least six policemen including a senior officer were killed and three others injured Monday in a blast targeting a police vehicle in northwest Pakistan, officials said. The vehicle was on patrol duty in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province's Tank district when unidentified miscreants targeted it with an improvised explosive device (IED). Those killed in the blast include a Station House Officer, a Sub-Inspector, three Elite Force personnel, and a driver, police said. The three injured officers were immediately shifted to a nearby hospital, where some of them are reported to be critical.

Communication open with US: Tehran

REUTERS

Dubai, Jan 12: Iran said Monday it is keeping communications open with the US as President Donald Trump weighed responses to a deadly crackdown on nationwide protests, which pose one of the stiffest challenges to clerical rule since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Trump said Sunday the US may meet Iranian officials and he was in contact with Iran's opposition, while piling pressure on its leaders, including threatening possible military action over lethal violence against protesters.

US-based rights group HRANA said it had verified the deaths of 544 people - 496 protesters and 48 security personnel, with 10,681 people arrested since the protests began December 28 and spread around the country.

Iran's leaders are facing fierce demonstrations that evolved from complaints about dire economic hardships to defiant calls for the fall of the deeply entrenched clerical establishment, and with the country's regional clout much reduced.

But despite the massive scale of the protests, there are no signs of splits in the Shi'ite clerical leadership, military or security forces, and demonstrators have no clear central leadership. The opposition is fragmented.

- Trump considers range of options, including military action against Iran
- Iran says it is ready for war but also dialogue
- Says it is keeping communications with US
- Mass protests pose major challenge to clerics' rule
- Death toll rises to more than 544, rights group says

'COMMUNICATION CHANNEL' WITH US OPEN, ARAQCHI SAYS

"The communication channel between our Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and the US special envoy (Steve Witkoff) is open and messages are exchanged whenever necessary," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei said Monday.

Contacts also remain open through traditional intermediary Switzerland, he said.

"They (the US) touched upon some cases, ideas were brought up and in general the Islamic Republic is a country that never left the negotiating table", Baghaei said. But he added that "contradictory messages" from the US showed a lack of seriousness and were not convincing.

Araqchi reiterated in a briefing to foreign ambassadors in Tehran that the Islamic Republic was ready for war but also open to dialogue. The ambassadors of Britain, Italy, Germany and France in Tehran were summoned to the foreign ministry, semi-official Tasnim news agency reported Monday, and asked to relay to their governments Tehran's request to withdraw their support for the protests.

Iran considers any political or media support for the protests "an unacceptable intervention in the internal security of the country", Tasnim added.

Addressing a large crowd in Tehran's Enqelab Square Monday, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said Iranians were fighting a war on four fronts – "economic war, psychological warfare, military war against the US and Israel, and today a war against terrorism." Araqchi said Monday that a total of 53 mosques and 180 ambulances had been set on fire since the protests erupted, adding that "no Iranian would attack a mosque".

'WE MIGHT MEET' IRANIANS, TRUMP SAYS

Trump said Sunday that Iran had called to negotiate on its disputed nuclear programme. Israel and the US bombed Iranian nuclear sites in a 12-day war in June. "Iran wants to negotiate, yes. We might meet with them. A meeting is being set up, but we may have to act because of what is happening before the meeting, but a meeting is being set up. Iran called, they want to negotiate," he told reporters on Air Force One.

Trump was to meet with senior advisers Tuesday to discuss options for Iran, a US official told Reuters. The Wall Street Journal reported that the options included military strikes, using secret cyber weapons, widening sanctions and providing online help to anti-government sources.

GENOCIDE CASE

Myanmar made Rohingya lives a nightmare: Gambia

REUTERS

The Hague, Jan 12: Gambia Monday told judges at the United Nations' top court that Myanmar targeted minority Muslim Rohingya for destruction and made their lives a nightmare in a landmark case accusing Myanmar of genocide.

It is the first genocide case the International Court of Justice is hearing in full in more than a decade. The outcome will have repercussions beyond Myanmar, likely affecting South Africa's genocide case at the ICJ against Israel over the war in Gaza. Myanmar has denied genocide. Gambia's Minister of Justice Dawda Jallow told ICJ judges the Rohingya were simple people with dreams of living in peace and dignity.

"They have been targeted for destruction," he said.

"Myanmar has denied them their dream, in fact it turned their lives into a nightmare subjecting them to the most horrific violence and destruction one could imagine," according to Jallow.

The predominantly Muslim West African country of Gambia filed the case at the ICJ - also known as the World Court - in 2019, accusing Myanmar of committing genocide against the Rohingya, a mainly Muslim minority in the remote western Rakhine state.

- ICJ hears first full genocide case in over a decade
- Myanmar denies genocide, claims counter-terrorism campaign
- Rohingya victims seek justice

Myanmar's armed forces launched an offensive in 2017 that forced at least 730,000 Rohingya from their homes and into neighbouring Bangladesh, where they recounted killings, mass rape and arson.

A UN fact-finding mission concluded the 2017 military offensive had included "genocidal acts". Speaking in The Hague before the hearings, Rohingya victims said they want the long-awaited court case to deliver justice.

"We are hoping for a positive result that will tell the world that Myanmar committed genocide, and we are the victims of that and we deserve justice," Yousuf Ali, a 52-year-old Rohingya refugee who says he was tortured by the Myanmar military, told Reuters.

China reaffirms its territorial claims over Shaksgam Valley

India last Friday criticised China's infrastructure development projects in the Shaksgam Valley, saying it reserves the right to take necessary measures to safeguard its interests as it is an Indian territory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Jan 12: China Monday reaffirmed its territorial claims over the Shaksgam Valley in the backdrop of India's objections, stressing that the Chinese infrastructure projects in the area are "beyond reproach".

India last Friday criticised China's infrastructure development projects in the Shaksgam Valley, saying it reserves the right to take necessary measures to safeguard its interests as it is an Indian territory.

Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 sq km of Indian territory in the Shaksgam Valley to China in 1963 from areas illegally occupied by it.

"Shaksgam Valley is Indian territory. We have never recognised the so-called China-Pakistan 'boundary agreement' signed in 1963. We have consistently maintained that the agreement is illegal and invalid," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

"We also do not recognise the so-called China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which passes through Indian territory that is under forcible and illegal occupation of Pakistan," he said.

Jaiswal said that the entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are an integral and inalienable part of India. "This has been clearly conveyed to Pakistani and Chinese authorities several times," he added. Reacting to Jaiswal's comments, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here that "the territory you mentioned belongs to China".

"It's fully justified for China to conduct infrastructure construction on its own territory. China and Pakistan in the 1960s signed a boundary agreement and delimited the boundary between the two countries, which is the right of China and Pakistan as sovereign countries," she said.

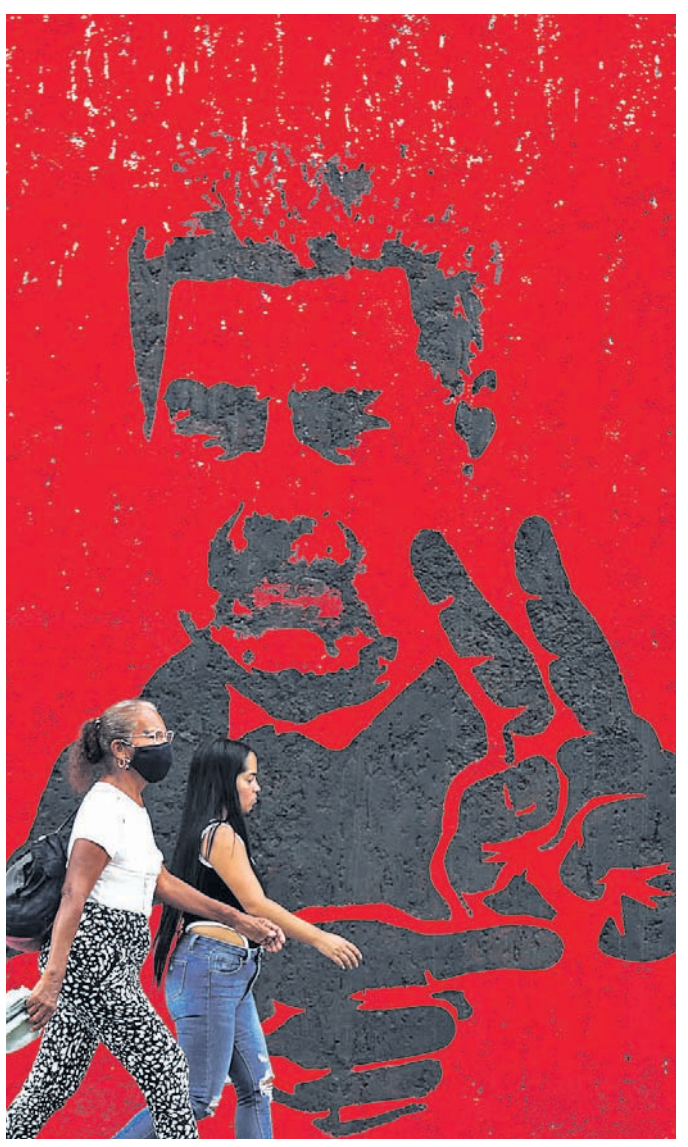
On India's criticism of the CPEC, Mao repeated Beijing's narrative that it is an economic cooperation initiative, aimed at promoting local socioeconomic development and improving people's livelihood.

"The China-Pakistan boundary agreement and CPEC do not affect China's position on the Kashmir issue and the position remains unchanged," she said.

China's official stand on the Kashmir issue, as often reiterated by Beijing, is that "Jammu and Kashmir dispute is left over from history, and should be properly and peacefully resolved in accordance with the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements".

The 1963 agreement ceding the territory of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK) was crucial for Pakistan and China as it provided a common boundary for them, which otherwise would have had no borders.

The agreement also has a clause that stipulates that after the settlement of Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India, the sovereign authority will reopen negotiations with the government of China to sign a formal boundary treaty.



People walk in front of a wall painted with the image of Venezuela's deposed President Nicolas Maduro, on the sidelines of a march calling for the release of Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, following their capture by U.S. forces during U.S. strikes on Venezuela, in Caracas, Venezuela REUTERS

Cuba's Prez says no current talks with US

REUTERS

Havana, Jan 12: Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said Monday there are no talks with the US government, in an apparent response to comments by President Donald Trump suggesting the two long-time foes were in conversations.

Trump told reporters Sunday that the US was "talking to Cuba." He did not specify what had been discussed but said "You'll find out pretty soon."

Diaz-Canel denied any ongoing conversations except for technical contacts on the issue of migration.

"As history demonstrates, in order for the relations between the United States and Cuba to advance, they must be based in international law instead of hostility, threats and economic coercion," Diaz-Canel said on X.

Tensions are rapidly escalating between the two neighboring nations, just 90 miles apart across the Straits of Florida.

Trump said Sunday that no more Venezuelan oil or money would go to Cuba following the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and suggested the Communist-run island should strike a deal with Washington.

The comments prompted Diaz-Canel Sunday to respond that Cuba would defend its homeland "to the last drop of blood."

UK investigates Musk's X over Grok deepfake concerns

REUTERS

London, Jan 12: Britain's media regulator launched an investigation into Elon Musk's X Monday to determine whether sexually intimate deepfakes produced by its Grok AI chatbot violated its duty to protect people in the UK from content that could be illegal.

"There have been deeply concerning reports of the Grok AI chatbot account on X being used to create and share undressed images of people – which may amount to intimate image abuse or pornography – and sexualised images of children that may amount to child sexual abuse material," Ofcom said in a statement.

When asked for comment Monday on the launch of the formal investigation, X pointed to a previous statement in which it said it takes action against illegal content on the platform, including child sexual abuse material, by removing it, permanently suspending accounts, and working with local governments and law enforcement as necessary.

"Anyone using or prompting Grok to make illegal content will suffer the same consequences as if they upload illegal content," it said.

STARMER: GROK IMAGES ARE 'DISGUSTING'

The regulator is under pressure to act after Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Thursday the images produced by Grok were "disgusting" and "unlawful".

Musk's X had to "get a grip" on Grok, Starmer said.

Asked Monday whether X could be banned, Business Secretary Peter Kyle said, "Yes, of course," but he noted that the power to do so lay with Ofcom.

Fellow minister Liz Kendall welcomed Ofcom's formal investigation, adding that it must be completed swiftly.

Creating or sharing non-consensual intimate images or child sexual abuse material, including AI-generated sexual imagery, is illegal in Britain.

Additionally, tech platforms must prevent British users from encountering illegal content and remove it once they become aware of it.

X has faced condemnation in other countries over the feature, which can produce images of women and minors in skimpy clothing.

French officials have reported X to prosecutors and regulators, calling the content "manifestly illegal," while Indian authorities have also demanded explanations.

- Ofcom investigates X over Grok AI chatbot's images
- PM Starmer calls Grok's images 'disgusting' and 'unlawful'
- X faces international criticism and legal actions over Grok

The dollar and Wall Street futures dropped and gold jumped Monday.

X said it has restricted requests to undress people in images to paying users.

Ofcom will investigate whether X failed to assess the risk that people in Britain would see illegal content, and whether it considered the risk to children.

Ofcom said in the most serious cases of non-compliance it could ask a court to require "payment providers or advertisers to withdraw their services from a platform", or make internet service providers block access to a site in Britain.

MALAYSIA, INDONESIA BECOME FIRST TO BLOCK GROK

Malaysia and Indonesia have become the first countries to block Grok, the artificial intelligence chatbot developed by Elon Musk's AI, after authorities said it was being misused to generate sexually explicit and non-consensual images.

Regulators in the two Southeast Asian nations said existing controls were not preventing the creation and spread of fake pornographic content, particularly involving women and minors. Indonesia's government temporarily blocked access to Grok Saturday, followed by Malaysia Sunday.

The ministry said the measure was intended to protect women, children and the broader community from fake pornographic content generated using AI.

business

The industry seeks globally competitive R&D incentives that align with India's innovation ambitions, enhance the scientific ecosystem, and support the transition from a volume-driven model to an innovation-led pharmaceutical sector

SUDARSHAN JAIN | SECRETARY GENERAL, IPA

BRITISH GIANT MUDDYFOX ENTERS INDIA

British iconic bike brand Muddyfox Monday announced its entry into the Indian market with the launch of 18 models across segments in collaboration with distribution firm Ananta Ventures. Muddyfox said it has signed a pact with Ananta Ventures -- which has a strong dealer network in the country with its home-grown bicycle brands Roam and Kylon -- as an exclusive distributor for India

Quote of the day

Being recognised as the world's strongest hotel brand carries with it the responsibility to lead all facets, including how brand equity is protected

RAJENDRA MISRA | EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT & GENERAL COUNSEL, IHCL

By partnering with Indian Oil Corporation Ltd, one of India's most trusted Maharatna enterprises, we will leverage their unmatched reach to take our after-sales service to locations frequently visited by our customers

RAM SURESH AKELLA | EXECUTIVE OFFICER (SERVICE), MARUTI SUZUKI INDIA

With the CAFE norms supposed to be effective from 2027, it will be really good if the government can issue the final notification soon, because that will give clarity to work towards it

VIKRAM GULATI | COUNTRY HEAD AND EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT, TOYOTA KIRLOSKAR MOTOR

SHORT TAKES

Credit-deposit ratio of banks rises to 82%

New Delhi: With the financialisation of the economy, India's Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio has been increasing continuously since 2000-01 from 53 per cent to 82 per cent as of December 15, 2025, which signifies a better financial development and lead to strong economic growth, a report said Monday. The incremental CD ratio numbers, which crossed 100 per cent in a number of instances, show the increasing demand for credit, despite lean deposits growth but banks honoured it by raising resources from other sources, an SBI Research Report said.

BSE warns against CEO deepfake video

New Delhi: Leading stock exchange BSE Monday cautioned investors to remain vigilant against deepfake video of its CEO giving stock recommendations and investment advice on social media platforms. The exchange emphasised that the video is unauthorised and fraudulent, and its officials are not permitted to provide any stock tips. "It has come to the notice of BSE Ltd that a fraudulent deepfake video is being circulated on social media and messaging platforms, falsely featuring Sundararaman Ramamurthy, Managing Director & CEO, BSE, and claiming to provide stock recommendations and investment advice," the exchange said in a statement.

TCS Q3 profit drops 14% to ₹10,657cr

Mumbai: The country's largest IT services company TCS Monday reported 13.91 per cent decline in December quarter net profit at Rs 10,657 crore. The Tata Group company had posted a net profit of Rs 12,380 crore in the October-December period of FY25 and Rs 12,075 crore in the preceding September quarter. Revenue from operations in the quarter under review increased 4.86 per cent to Rs 67,087 crore from Rs 63,973 crore.

HCLTech profit falls 11.2% to ₹4,076cr

New Delhi: IT services firm HCLTech Monday reported a 11.2 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 4,076 crore in the October-December quarter of FY26. The Noida-headquartered firm had registered a net profit (attributable to owners of the company) of Rs 4,591 crore in the year-ago period.

3-MONTH HIGH

Inflation climbs as food prices surge

The uptick was driven by narrower deflation in the food and beverages segment, as well as hardening inflation in the miscellaneous items

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: Retail inflation rose to a three-month high of 1.33 per cent in December, mainly due to higher prices of food items, but remained below the Reserve Bank of India's lower tolerance level.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based headline inflation was 0.71 per cent in November and 5.22 per cent in December 2024. The inflation stood at 1.44 per cent in September.

The food inflation in December was (-) 2.71 per cent, and remained negative for the seventh consecutive month.

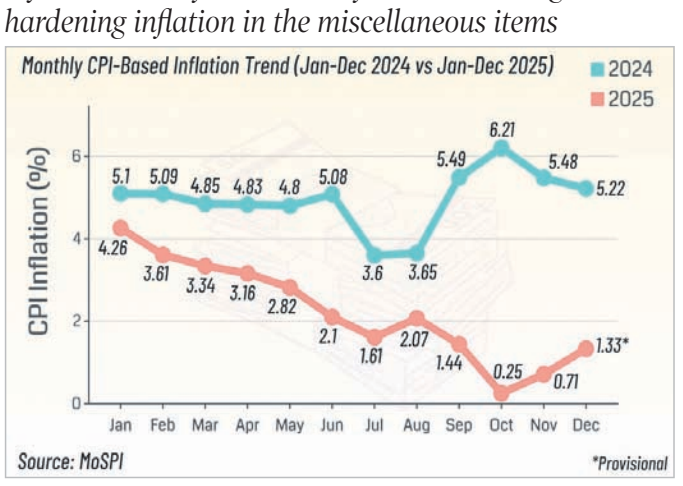
"The increase in headline inflation and food inflation during the month of December 2025 is mainly attributed to an increase in inflation of personal care and effects, vegetables, meat and fish, egg, spices and pulses and products," the National Statistics Office (NSO) said while releasing the CPI data.

The headline inflation in urban areas was higher at 2.03 per cent compared to 0.76 per cent in rural India.

The retail inflation remained below the Reserve Bank of India's lower tolerance limit for the fourth consecutive month in December. The government has mandated the central bank to ensure inflation remains at 4 per cent, with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

According to the NSO data, the top five major states with high inflation during December were Kerala (9.49 per cent), Karnataka (2.99 per cent), Andhra Pradesh (2.71 per cent), Tamil Nadu (2.67 per cent), and Jammu and Kashmir (2.26 per cent).

On the other hand, retail inflation was negative in Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh.



The December inflation print was the last before India launches a new consumer price index series next month with 2024 as the base year, incorporating new data and updated consumption baskets

RETAIL INFLATION RISES TO 1.33% IN DECEMBER

CPI BELOW RBI'S TARGET BAND FOR FOURTH STRAIGHT MONTH

FOOD INFLATION REMAINS NEGATIVE FOR SEVENTH MONTH

Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist at Icra, said the retail inflation expectedly rose to 1.3 per cent in December 2025 from 0.7 per cent in November, while printing marginally lower than Icra's estimate of 1.4 per cent for the month.

"While the December 2025 MPC minutes suggest a possibility of another rate cut in February 2026, Icra believes that a pause is warranted at the current juncture. Besides, it would be prudent to wait and assess the updated CPI (base: 2024) and GDP (base: 2022-23) series, which are due to be released later in February, as these will determine the current growth-inflation mix and aid in forming a fresh outlook," Nayar said.

Dipti Deshpande, Principal Economist at Crisil, said the uptick was driven by food, where deflation narrowed as the high base effect gradually waned.

"Going ahead, CPI inflation is likely to inch up as the base effect for food fades further. We expect CPI inflation to rise to 5 per cent in fiscal 2027, from an estimated 2.5 per cent in the current fiscal as food inflation normalises," Deshpande said.

Paras Jasrai, Associate Director, India Ratings and Research, said the core inflation jumped to a 28-month high of 4.6 per cent in December 2025, as personal care items' inflation touched a fresh high of 28.1 per cent, mainly due to the increase in gold and silver prices.

Overall, the retail inflation dipped to a record low of 0.8 per cent in 3Q FY26, thereby being the second successive quarter of inflation levels being out of the lower tolerance band (4 per cent, +/- 2 per cent) of the Reserve Bank's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), Jasrai added.

NSO collects price data from selected 1,114 urban markets and 1,181 villages covering all states/UTs.

₹ pares early losses, ends at 90.17 vs $

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 12: The rupee recovered from low levels and settled 1 paisa higher at 90.16 against the US dollar Monday on weak American currency and sliding crude oil prices.

Equity market sentiment also improved after the new US envoy to India, Sergio Gor, said that both sides are actively engaged in firming up a trade deal, forex analysts said.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 90.23 and strengthened to 90.13 during intra-day. It also touched a low of 90.25 before ending the session at 90.17 against the greenback, registering a gain of 1 paisa from its previous closing level.

On Friday, the rupee depreciated 28 paise to close at 90.18 against the US dollar.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which measures the strength of the greenback against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.34 per cent lower at 98.55.

Tax kitty swells 9% to ₹18.4 lakh cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: Net direct tax collection grew 8.82 per cent to over Rs 18.38 lakh crore in the current fiscal till January 11, the Income Tax Department said Monday.

The mop-up includes net corporate tax collection of over Rs 8.63 lakh crore and tax from non-corporates, including individuals and HUFs, of Rs 9.30 lakh crore.

Securities Transaction Tax collection stood at Rs 44,867 crore between April 1 and January 11. Refunds dropped 17 per cent to Rs 3.12 lakh crore during the period.

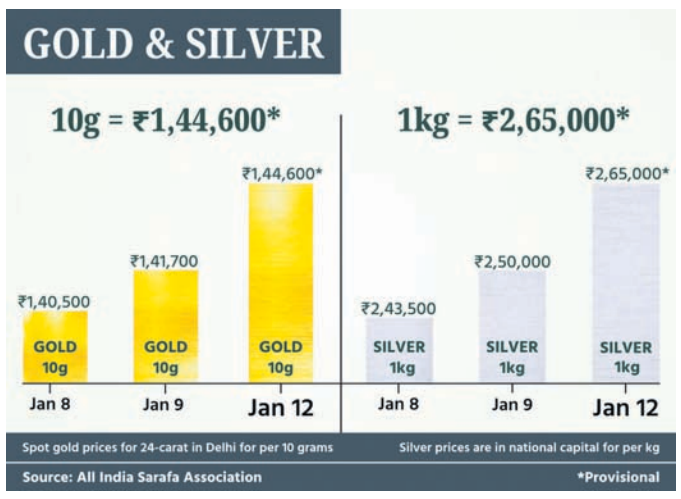
Gross direct tax collection increased 4.14 per cent to about Rs 21.50 lakh crore till January 11 of this fiscal.

In the current fiscal (2025-26), the government has projected its direct tax collection at Rs 25.20 lakh crore, up 12.7 per cent year-on-year.

The government aims to collect Rs 78,000 crore from STT in FY26.

FRESH PEAKS

Global chaos boosts gold, silver prices



The broader outlook for precious metals remains positive amid rising volatility in global equity markets, persistent geopolitical tensions, and sustained demand for safe-haven assets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: Silver prices rallied sharply by Rs 15,000 to hit a lifetime high of Rs 2,65,000 per kg in the national capital Monday, and gold advanced to a fresh record of Rs 1,44,600 per 10 grams, mirroring strong gains in the global markets.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, silver soared by Rs 15,000, or 6 per cent, to touch a new peak of Rs 2,65,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) from the previous close of Rs 2,50,000 per kg.

In addition, gold of 99.9 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 2,900, or 2.05 per cent, to hit a lifetime high of Rs 1,44,600 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). It had ended at Rs 1,41,700 per 10 grams on Friday.

In the international market, spot gold surged past the $4,600 per ounce level for the first time. The yellow metal gained $90.72, or 2 per cent, to touch a record $4,601.69 per ounce.

"Gold has responded positively, and jumped to the $4,600 per ounce level, while silver has seen an even sharper surge to $84 per ounce, highlighting its higher beta in risk-sensitive environments," Gaurav Garg, Research Analyst at Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

Spot silver in the international trade rose by $4.3, or nearly 6 per cent, to touch a record of $84.61 per ounce.

SILVER SOARS 6% TO RECORD ₹ 2.65 LAKH/KG

GOLD HITS LIFETIME HIGH OF ₹1.44 LAKH/10G

Silver has surged to fresh record highs, breaching the $84 per ounce, driven by a mix of rising geopolitical tensions and growing expectations that the US Federal Reserve will be forced to cut interest rates further, Renisha Chainani, Head - Research at Augmont, said.

Adding to the uncertainty, investor sentiment was rattled by an intensifying feud between Trump and Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell after the US Attorney's Office reportedly opened a criminal investigation into Powell, reviving broader worries about the Federal Reserve's independence.

The probe weighed on the US dollar, lending further support to bullion prices, Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

D-St returns to green after losing run

In the past five trading days, BSE benchmark declined 2,185.77 points or 2.54%, and Nifty tumbled 645.25 points or 2.45%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 12: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty found firmer ground Monday after facing a massive drubbing in the past five trading sessions, propelled by bargain hunting in energy, banking and metal stocks amid renewed optimism surrounding a potential India-US trade deal.

However, escalating geopolitical tensions and unrelenting foreign fund outflows capped the sharp gains, traders said.

In volatile trading, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 301.93 points, or 0.36 per cent, to settle at 83,878.17. During the morning trade, it tumbled 715.17 points, or 0.85 per cent, to 82,861.07, breaching the 83,000 level. The 50-share NSE Nifty edged higher by 106.95 points, or 0.42 per cent, to 25,790.25. The benchmark tanked 209.9 points, or 0.81 per cent, to 25,473.40 in morning trade.

From the 30-Sensex firms, Tata Steel, Asian Paints, Trent, State Bank of India, Hindustan Unilever, UltraTech Cement, ICICI Bank and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers.

IndianOil, Maruti Suzuki expand fuel station services

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Jan 12: Indian Oil Corporation Limited, India's flagship energy major, and Maruti Suzuki India Limited (MSIL), the country's leading passenger vehicle manufacturer, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance customer convenience. Under this agreement, Maruti Suzuki service facilities will be established at select IndianOil fuel stations across the country.

The collaboration leverages IndianOil's vast nationwide network to set up various Maruti Suzuki service facilities. This integration will allow customers to access scheduled periodic maintenance and minor repairs for their cars, at the same locations where they refuel, creating a more efficient and seamless experience.

IndianOil, with its extensive retail presence, will further strengthen Maruti Suzuki's 5,780+ service touchpoints. By bringing authorized service to the fuel station, both companies aim to provide a "one-stop" solution that enhances convenience and peace of mind for millions of car owners throughout their ownership journey.

Saumitra P Srivastava, Director (Marketing), IndianOil, said: "IndianOil is committed to enhancing the customer experience at our fuel station through value-added services. With a network of over 41,000 fuel stations across the length and breadth of India, we are uniquely positioned to bring essential services closer to the consumer. By partnering with Maruti Suzuki, we are integrating world-class automotive maintenance along with our energy offerings."

Ram Suresh Akella, Executive Officer (Service), Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Our goal is to make car servicing as easy and convenient as possible for our customers. By partnering with IndianOil Corporation Limited, one of India's most trusted Maharatna enterprises, we will leverage their unmatched reach to take our after-sales service to locations frequently visited by our customers. This collaboration marks a significant step to bring the mobility and energy sector together and to deliver a superior customer care experience. We are committed to enhancing accessibility, delivering unmatched convenience, to ensure complete peace of mind in the car ownership journey for our customers."

Inequality top economic concern for youth globally

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: Growing inequality between the rich and poor is the top-most economic concern for the youth across the world, while a large number of them want to run for political office rather than just critique, a new survey showed Monday.

The World Economic Forum's Youth Pulse 2026: Insights from the Next Generation for a Changing World 2026 report sought to know how the next generation is interpreting, and responding to, rapid economic, political, technological and environmental change.

The survey, drawing insights from nearly 4,600 young people aged 18–30 in 144 countries and territories, found that 48.2 per cent identify 'growing inequality between the rich and poor' as the top economic trend shaping the future.

Yet in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, entrepreneurship emerged as the most powerful economic force – reflecting growing confidence in innovation and self-determination as key drivers of opportunity.

More than 57 per cent cited financial concerns among their biggest sources of stress or anxiety. The study also found that youth priorities are practical and policy-ready. The most-cited empowering measures were creating employment opportunities for youth (57.2 per cent), equal access to affordable, quality education (46.1 per cent), and affordable housing and financial independence (32.2 per cent).

Showing that trust is earned close to home, young people rated community leaders as most effective in driving positive change (60 per cent), reinforcing demand for leadership that is proximate, accountable and delivers tangible results.

Despite concern over geopolitical tensions and democratic erosion, nearly half of respondents highlighted positive political shifts -- from innovative governance models and greater civic participation to stronger international cooperation and the inclusion of under-represented groups in policy-making.

It also found that it was a generation ready to govern, not just critique, as 36 per cent said they are likely to run for political office, challenging assumptions of political apathy.

Climate remained the defining global concern, even under economic strain, in the survey.

More than 56 per cent identified climate change and environmental degradation as the greatest threat to the world; personally, 51 per cent cited inflation and instability as their greatest worry, while 41 per cent identified climate change as the second most significant threat to their lives.

The report also documented more than 800 youth-led solutions advanced over the past year directly reaching over 2.2 million people worldwide.

A vast majority of 95 per cent said that intentionally designed youth communities provide a critical space for learning, growth, and dialogue.

On technology, two-thirds of respondents believed AI would reduce entry-level job opportunities, underscoring awareness of disruption and the need for adaptive skills and forward-looking policies and systems.

Nearly 60 per cent of young people reported using AI regularly to enhance their skills, with another third experimenting occasionally. Only a small minority was not yet engaged with AI tools.

Regular AI use among young people was found to be high across regions, challenging assumptions that digital innovation is concentrated in a few markets.

The results of the survey are likely to be discussed widely during the WEF Annual Meeting next week in Davos, Switzerland, from January 19-23.

ICC unlikely to shift Bangladesh T20 matches

The BCB's apprehensions followed the release of Mustafizur from IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders amid attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: The International Cricket Council (ICC) Monday indicated that it is unlikely to accept Bangladesh's demand for a change of venue for its T20 World Cup matches in India after an assessment report of the country's security concerns placed the threat perception at "low".

As per ICC sources, the world body's risk assessment report does not flag any specific or direct threat to the Bangladesh team if it participates in the tournament starting February 7.

It also contradicts claims made by Bangladesh sports ministry advisor Asif Nazrul that Mustafizur Rahman's inclusion in the team would contribute to the overall threat. Bangladesh are due to play four league stage matches in India.

"It is important to clarify that the ICC's independent risk assessments, carried out by internationally recognised security experts, do not conclude that Bangladesh cannot play its scheduled matches in India," an ICC source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"The overall security risk for the tournament in India has been assessed as low to moderate, which is consistent with the profile of many major global sporting events," the source said.

According to the source, the assessment did not identify any direct threat even to the Bangladesh officials at any venue in India.

"Based on the professional advice received, the risk associated with Bangladesh's scheduled fixtures in Kolkata and Mumbai is assessed as low to moderate, with no indication of risks that cannot be effectively managed through established security planning and mitigation measures," the source added.

This follows public comments by Nazrul in Dhaka in which he suggested that the ICC report had flagged a threat to Mustafizur, whose omission from the IPL on BCCI's directions owing to unspecified "developments all around" prompted the pullout threat from the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

SECURITY CONCERNS

The BCB later issued a clarification, effectively backpedaling on the assertions made by Nazrul Monday.

"The correspondence cited today by the Advisor for the Ministry of Youth & Sports was in reference to an internal communication between the BCB and the ICC's Security Department related to threat assessments for the Bangladesh team ahead of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

"This does not constitute a formal response from the ICC to the BCB's request for the relocation of Bangladesh's matches outside India," the BCB said in a statement.

The BCB, however, reiterated that it has requested relocation of Bangladesh's matches outside India "in the interest of the team's security" and that it is still awaiting an official response from the ICC on this matter.

However, the ICC source maintained that the existing schedule is unlikely to be tinkered with.

Following Mustafizur's removal from the Kolkata Knight Riders franchise, an irate Bangladesh government had banned the broadcast of the IPL in the country.

All ISL clubs confirm to play

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: All the 14 Indian Super League (ISL) clubs have written to the All India Football Federation (AIFF), formally confirming participation in the delayed 2025-26 season, clearing the decks for the start of the top-tier domestic competition February 14.

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya had announced January 6 that the ISL, which was on hold due to the absence of a commercial partner, would start February 14, with all the 14 clubs taking part in it.

Despite the minister's announcement, a few clubs were yet to confirm participation in writing as they had agreed to take part in the ISL "in principle" only.

But now, all the clubs have formally confirmed participation in the truncated league, a source in the AIFF told PTI Monday.

Many of the clubs have also shared details of the venues where they plan to play their home matches.

The top-tier ISL will feature 91 matches on a home-and-away basis.

AIFF President Kalyan Chaubey had earlier said that a Governing Council Board would be formed to manage the league and it would be "empowered to take all commercial decisions."

It is learnt that the AIFF and the clubs are expected to have an online meeting on Tuesday and jointly discuss the formation of the Governing Council Board.

The AIFF has asked the clubs to send the details of the venues where they plan to play their home matches by Monday noon to start working on the fixture and finalise broadcast and commercial rights partners.

Regarding the financial part of the league, the AIFF said, "The 2025-26 season of the ISL is proposed to be held on a total budget of INR 24 Crores Twenty Six Lakhs Seventy Four Thousand (INR 24,26,74,000/-) with an initial contribution of INR Nine Crores Seventy Seven Lakh Forty Thousand (INR 9,77,40,000/-) from the AIFF and a contribution of INR One Crore (INR 1,00,00,000/-) each from the participating clubs."

The AIFF had earlier said that it's willing to accept the participation fee of Rs 1 crore per club in instalments up to June 2026, if the clubs are not able to pay immediately.

High hopes, tricky draws await home shuttlers

India Open 2026 kicks off

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 12: India's top shuttlers, including P V Sindhu and Lakshay Sen, will look to convert recent form into results on home courts when the USD 950,000 India Open Super 750 begins here Tuesday.

Indian players, however, have struggled to fully capitalise on home advantage, with only a handful of them lifting the title in the last 15 years.

The draw will once again throw up early challenges for the home contingent, including a marquee all-Indian men's singles opener between Sen and Ayush Shetty, while Sindhu begins against Vietnam's Nguyen Thuy Linh.

Sindhu, a 2017 champion, comes into the Delhi leg on the back of a confidence-boosting run at the Malaysia Open Super 1000, where she reached the semifinals before losing to China's Wang Zhiyi.

The tournament, to be held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, marked a timely lift for the two-time Olympic medallist after an injury-interrupted phase.

"It's always nice to be playing the Indian Open in Delhi every time at the start of the year. I'm really happy to be playing at the home ground, we will put our best effort and give our 100% and hope we get some good results here," Sindhu said.

Sen, a 2022 India Open champion, has also had a volatile start to the season. He ended 2025 by winning the Australian Open Super 500 and then suffered a setback at the Malaysia Open.

It will also be the first time that the prestigious event will be held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, which will act as a test venue for the BWF World Championships in August

Ayush, on the other hand, announced himself last year by winning the US Open Super 300 and has beaten the likes of Kodai Naraoka, Loh Kean Yew, Chou Tien Chen and Brian Yang.

India's best podium hopes again hinge significantly on the men's doubles pairing of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty. They have reached two finals in the last four editions, winning the crown in 2022.

The Indian duo finished runners-up at Hong Kong Open and China Masters, won a second world championships bronze, and also reached the knockout stage of World Tour Finals last year. However, Satwik and Chirag ended their campaign at Malaysia Open in the quarterfinals and they will look to make amends when they open against Chen Zhi Yi and Presley Smith.

A cluster of young Indians will also look to use the home conditions to push into the latter rounds.

In the women's doubles, the top Indian pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand Pullela will meet Thailand's Ornnicha Jongsathapornparn and Sukitta Suwachai.

A total of 256 players from 20 countries including international stars such as Kunlavut Vitidsarn and An Se Young will headline the tournament which will see 28 Indians competing.

INDIA-NZ ODIs

Surprise maiden call-up for Badoni

Washington Sundar ruled out of ODI series against NZ due to rib injury

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 12: Uncapped Ayush Badoni Monday replaced Washington Sundar in India's squad for the remaining two ODIs against New Zealand after the all-rounder was ruled out due to a rib injury.

Washington suffered the injury in the series-opener in Vadodara Sunday.

The 26-year-old, who bowled five overs for 27 runs, walked off midway through the New Zealand innings and did not return to field. Despite the discomfort, he later came out to bat at No 8 as India picked up a four-wicket win.

"India all-rounder Washington Sundar reported an acute onset discomfort in his left lower rib area while bowling during the first ODI against New Zealand at the BCA Stadium, Vadodara, on Sunday," said the BCCI in a statement.

"He will undergo further scans, following which the BCCI Medical Team will seek expert opinion. Washington has been ruled out of the remaining two matches.

"The Men's Selection Committee has named Ayush Badoni as his replacement. Badoni will link up with the squad in Rajkot (the game is on Wednesday), the venue for the second ODI," it added.

Badoni being named in the national squad means that he will miss Delhi's quarterfinal against Vidarbha in Bangalore Tuesday.

Badoni, primarily a batter who bowls off-spin, has captained Delhi and was deputy to Rishabh Pant in the team's latest Vijay Hazare Trophy campaign.

Earlier, wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant was ruled out after suffering a side strain last week while Tilak Varma is unavailable for the first three T20Is against New Zealand due to a groin injury which required surgery.

SHORT TAKES

PWL fixtures out

New Delhi: Punjab Royals take on UP Dominators in the season opener of Pro Wrestling League (PWL) January 15, setting the tone for a competitive league phase as the PWL officially announced the schedule for its much-anticipated fifth season, with the league set to run from January 15 to February 1 at the Noida Indoor Stadium. Marking its return after a comprehensive restructuring, the PWL 2026 will feature six franchises competing in a high-intensity league and knockout format, bringing together elite Indian and international wrestling talent under one roof. The season will feature six franchises -- Delhi Dangal Warriors, Haryana Thunders, Tiigers of Mumbai Dangal, Maharashtra Kesari, Punjab Royals, and UP Dominators -- competing across the league and knockout format. A total of 15 league-stage matches will be played across 13 matchdays, with teams battling in a round-robin format before the top four advance to the semi-finals, scheduled for January 30 and 31, culminating in the PWL 2026 Final February 1.

SG Pipers' first win

Ranchi: SG Pipers secured their first win of the season, prevailing 2-1 against Hyderabad Toofans in the Men's Hockey India League (HIL) here Monday. Tomas Domene bagged a brace for the winners, while goalkeeper Tomas Santiago was remarkable between the sticks. For the Toofans, Amandeep Lakra got on the scoresheet at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Astro Turf Hockey Stadium. SG Pipers hit the ground running in this game, dominating the opening minutes of the contest. They earned a succession of penalty corners before eventually converting one through Tomas Domene's (8') dragflick that gave them the early lead. The Toofans grew into the game though, registering five circle entries, but they only had one attempt on goal to show for all their possession.

FA CUP

Man United crash out

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Manchester, Jan 12: Managerless Manchester United crashed out of the FA Cup with a 2-1 defeat to Brighton.

At the end of a week that saw the storied Premier League team and 13-time FA Cup winner fire head coach Ruben Amorim, the loss at Old Trafford has likely consigned United to another trophyless season and was greeted with loud jeers from the home crowd.

Interim coach Darren Fletcher admitted the 20-time English champion was "not in a good moment," but said it was too soon to write the season off with Champions League qualification still achievable.

Former United striker Danny Welbeck scored what proved to be the decisive goal in the

64th minute, and Benjamin Sesko's late header was only a consolation for the hosts in the third-round match. United has exited both domestic knockout competitions at the earliest possible stage this season, following the humbling loss to fourth-tier Grimsby in the English League Cup. The latest defeat means United will play the bare minimum of 40 competitive games for a top division team this season.

A trophyless campaign would be back-to-back seasons in which United has ended up empty-handed.

Showstopper Snowden eyes HIL final

Vedanta Kalinga Lancers remain unbeaten so far in the league

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ranchi, Jan 12: Vedanta Kalinga Lancers' goalkeeper Jed Snowden said that the team was very happy after their victory over the Hockey India League Governing Council and was hopeful of making it to the men's Hockey India League (HIL) final.

Snowden made an immediate impact after coming off the bench in the shootout, helping his team secure a 3-1 victory against HIL GC following a 1-1 draw at the end of regulation in their third match of the tournament Sunday.

Ajeet Yadav (19') initially

It's my first time in India and my first time playing with Indian players, which has been awesome. Learning how they approach hockey, and also learning from the Belgian guys and what they've picked up over their long careers, helps us get better as a team and even as individual players

JED SNOWDEN | GOALKEEPER, VEDANTA KALINGA LANCERS

scored to give HIL GC the lead, but Alexander Hendrickx (23') equalised for the Lancers, intensifying the final moments of the game. Neither team managed to secure a win in regulation time, resulting in a shootout where Snowden's calmness played a crucial role.

Snowden later commented on the challenges posed by the weather and the tough competition.

"It was a very hard-fought game. It's a different turf compared to Chennai, so some of the guys struggled a bit with their skills. But we stuck it out right to the very end, and obviously it ended in a draw," he said.

"We trained on the pitch the day before, so me coming on for the shootouts, the pitch wasn't an issue for me. To get the extra point in the shootout win puts us in a very good position. Hopefully, we can make the finals and we're on top of the ladder now, so everyone's very happy," Snowden added.

Kalinga Lancers secured the win, moving to the top of the table and staying unbeaten in the tournament. Their next match is against Hyderabad Toofans Wednesday.

Barca retain Spanish Super Cup throne in dramatic El Clasico

Raphinha scored twice as Culers beat Real Madrid 3–2, repeating his brace from last year's emphatic 5–2 final win

REUTERS

Jeddah, Jan 12: Raphinha scored twice as Barcelona won the Spanish Super Cup after an intense 3-2 victory over Real Madrid in Sunday's final in Jeddah.

The match at King Abdullah Sports City Stadium turned into a thriller, with four goals packed into a breathless phase at the end of the first half.

After an even opening spell, Barcelona gradually asserted control before the interval, and were rewarded in the 36th minute when Raphinha burst into the box and drilled a low shot into the far corner to give his side the lead.

Real struck back in the second minute of first-half stoppage time when Vinicius Jr collected the ball near the halfway line, surged down the flank, skipped past two Barcelona defenders and finished into the far corner in a stunning solo effort.

The first-half drama was far from over and two minutes later Robert Lewandowski was given space in the penalty area and finished with a delicate chip to restore Barcelona's lead, only for the chaos to continue moments before the interval.

From a Real corner, Raphinha made a goal-line clearance, but Gonzalo Garcia pounced on the rebound, with the ball striking both the bar and the post before crossing the line, bringing the sides level once more as the teams went into the break.

Raphinha struck again for Barcelona in the 73rd minute after drifting into a dangerous position on the edge of the box. Real pressed hard but failed to make their numerical advantage count, going agonisingly close when efforts from close range by Alvaro Carreras and Franco Mastantuono were both kept out by goalkeeper Joan Garcia to give Barcelona their 16th Super Cup title.

It was the 16th Super Cup title for Barcelona, more than any other club. Madrid is second with 13 titles

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