

# HERE . NOW orissa POST



## Rachita's advise

Actor Rachita Ram urges women to stop letting online voices control their minds or self-worth

LEISURE | P2



## Crewless chopper

Britain's Royal Navy launches full-sized autonomous helicopter, designed to track submarines amid North Atlantic tensions

INTERNATIONAL | P10



## Household gold

Indian households see a massive jump in their wealth in 2025, driven mainly by a sharp rise in gold prices

BUSINESS | P11



## Series decider

India's absolute dominance at home will come under examination when they meet a determined New Zealand in the decisive third ODI

SPORTS | P12

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 288 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | SUNDAY | JANUARY 18, 2020

12 PAGES+SUNDAY POST | ₹5.00

## Greenland: 10% tariff on 8 nations for not backing US

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**NUUK, Jan 17:** US President Donald Trump said Saturday that he would charge a 10 per cent import tax starting in February on goods from eight European nations because of their opposition to American control of Greenland.

Trump said in a social media post that Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Finland would face the tariff and that it would climb to 25 per cent June 1 if a deal is not in place for "the Complete and Total purchase of Greenland" by the United States.

The threat of tariffs was a drastic and potentially dangerous escalation of a showdown between Trump and NATO allies, further straining an alliance that dates to 1949 and provides a collective degree of security to Europe and North America.

## Hindu man crushed to death in B'desh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Dhaka, Jan 17:** A Hindu man was crushed to death in Bangladesh after he tried to stop a vehicle from leaving a petrol pump without paying for fuel, police said.

It has not been confirmed whether the incident, which took place on Friday in Rajbari district, is related to the recent spate of violence targeting Hindus in Bangladesh. The victim, 30-year-old Ripon Saha, was a fuel station worker, The Daily Star reported Saturday, quoting police officials.

He was working at Karim Filling Station in Goalanda Mor at the time of the incident, it said.

"We will file a murder case. The worker stood in front of the car after they refused to pay for fuel, and they ran him over before fleeing," Rajbari Sadar Police chief Khondakar Ziaur Rahman was quoted as saying by news portal bdnews24.

## IRREGULAR by MANJU



You voted yesterday. Why is the mark still on your finger? Don't you wash your hands?



**R-DAY PREP:** An official of the Indian Army's Remount Veterinary Corps (RVC) handles a bactrian camel during rehearsals for the upcoming Republic Day Parade, amid dense fog on a cold winter morning, at Vijay Chowk, in New Delhi, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

## ODISHA INVESTORS' MEET, KOLKATA

## State secures ₹1L-cr

*The Odisha government has secured investment commitments worth ₹1 lakh crore during a two-day investors' meet and roadshow in Kolkata. The state signed 27 MoUs worth ₹81,864 crore and received 19 investment intents valued at ₹18,453 crore, together expected to generate around 90,000 jobs once implemented. Highlighting Odisha's shift towards value-added manufacturing, its financial stability, and port-led industrialisation, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi stressed that execution, not agreements alone, would define success.*

POST NEWS NETWORK



states complementing each other to build a strong and integrated industrial corridor.

Majhi said Odisha is financially strong and economically secure, and is rapidly transforming from a resource-based economy into a value-added and advanced manufacturing hub driven by speed, scale and sustainability. He highlighted the state's strategic coastline and ports at Paradip, Dhamra and Gopalpur as key enablers of port-led industrialisation serving eastern and central India.

The roadshow featured around 130 high-level one-on-one meetings and four sectoral roundtables covering hosiery and technical textiles, metal ancillaries and engineering goods, plastics and chemicals, and pharmaceuticals, medical devices and biotechnology, reflecting strong industry engagement across sectors.

The engagements resulted in

the signing of 27 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with an investment potential of ₹81,864 crore, expected to generate over 63,000 jobs. In addition, 19 investment intent proposals worth ₹18,453 crore were received, with the potential to create more than 27,500 employment opportunities. The Chief Minister stressed that while MoUs are important, the real measure of success lies in their execution on the ground.

More than 500 industry leaders, business associations and institutional stakeholders participated in the mega roadshow, which showcased Odisha's industrial ecosystem, infrastructure readiness and policy-driven growth model. Majhi outlined his vision for building a "Samriddha Odisha" by 2036 and highlighted opportunities in renewable energy equipment, textiles, pharmaceuticals, electronics, IT, data centres and advanced manufacturing. He invited companies, particularly from West Bengal, Jharkhand and the northeastern states, to expand and diversify their operations in Odisha.

Industries Minister Sampad Chandra Swain said Odisha is emerging as a natural expansion hub for eastern India, citing strong infrastructure, port-led logistics, stable policies, fast project execution, a focus on new-age sectors and skilled manpower development.

## Man hires goons to kill brother

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bolangir, Jan 17:** Police have arrested eight persons, including the elder brother of a businessman in connection with the latter's murder. The victim was pushed to death from a bridge in what investigators say was a pre-meditated killing stemming from a long-standing financial dispute.

Those arrested are Naba Kumar Thanapati, 43; Kshetramohan Suna, 32; Milan Bohidar, 38; Mantu alias Mahadeb Bag, 19; Ranjit Mishra, 25; Sathil Bagatry, 22; Manoj Selma; and Raja Kumbhar, 30, all residents of different areas of Bolangir district, police said.



Victim Nataraj Thanapati

Bolangir Superintendent of Police Abhilash G said the crime, initially believed to be a case of suicide, was later established as a murder following scientific, forensic and cyber investigations.

## Flight disruptions: DGCA slaps ₹22.2 crore penalty on IndiGo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Jan 17:** Airlines regulator DGCA Saturday slapped penalties totalling ₹22.20 crore for the massive flight disruptions in December, and warned CEO Pieter Elbers and two other senior executives for non-compliance.

It also directed the airline to furnish ₹50-crore bank guarantee to ensure long-term systemic corrections.

Between December 3 and 5, the DGCA said, 2,507 flights were cancelled and 1,852 flights were delayed, impacting over 3 lakh passengers at airports across the country.

Announcing the enforcement

actions after the detailed probe, DGCA cited over-optimisation of operations, inadequate regulator preparedness, along with deficiencies in system software support as among primary reasons for the disruptions.

Shortcomings in management structure and operational control at IndiGo were also blamed. The penalties are one of the biggest imposed by the regulator on any airline for flight disruptions, while other regulatory actions are also unprecedented.

IndiGo, in a statement, said it is "in receipt of the orders of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation of India" on the flight disruptions.

## SEC: PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS LIKELY IN JAN-FEB 2027

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 17:** The Odisha State Election Commission Saturday indicated that the next panchayat elections in the state are likely to be held in January–February next year, as the tenure of the existing panchayat bodies is nearing completion.

Addressing the media, State Election Commissioner Madhusudan Padhi said a preparatory meeting was held to review arrangements and finalise the roadmap for the upcoming panchayat and urban local body elections. He announced that a door-to-door voter survey would be conducted for both rural and municipal polls to ensure updated and accurate electoral rolls. The survey is expected to be completed by March this year, though it may be delayed by about a month due to the ongoing census exercise.

Padhi clarified that the voter survey is unrelated to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process and said booth reorganisation would be undertaken wherever necessary to improve voter convenience. The aim, he added, is to locate polling booths as close as possible to voters' residences.

He also said meetings are being held with district collectors, sub-collectors, deputy collectors, district panchayat officers and municipal commissioners as part of the election preparations, with the next meeting scheduled in Chhattrapuri January 20.

## 19 Bills pending in Rajya Sabha, oldest dates back to 1992

WHILE BILLS PENDING IN LOK SABHA LAPSE WHEN THE HOUSE IS DISSOLVED, A BILL PENDING IN RAJYA SABHA NEVER LAPSES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 17:** As many as 19 government Bills remain pending in the Rajya Sabha, with the oldest, pertaining to population control, dating back to 1992.

The Rajya Sabha is a permanent House which is never dissolved, with one-third of its members retiring every two years. While the Bills pending in the Lok Sabha lapse when the House is dissolved, a Bill pending in the Rajya Sabha never lapses.

According to a bulletin of the Upper House, there are 19 pending Bills at present, the oldest



pushback from tenant and landlord groups.

While the government is working on bringing The Seed Bill 2025, among the pending Bills is The Seeds Bill, 2004, which aimed to regulate the quality of seeds for sale, import and export and to facilitate the production and supply of quality seeds.

Another Bill that remains

pending is The Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Amendment Bill, 2011, which was introduced when Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge was the labour minister.

Other pending Bills which were introduced in the UPA 2 include The Building and Other Construction Workers Related Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2013; The Employment Exchanges (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies) Amendment Bill, 2013; and The Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Parliamentary and Assem-

bly Constituencies (Third) Bill, 2013.

The pending Bills introduced during the NDA regime include The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 2019, which aimed to strengthen tribal autonomy in the northeast by enhancing financial and executive powers of Autonomous Councils in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram, introducing elected village and municipal councils, and The Registration of Marriage of Non-Resident Indian Bill, 2019.

The latest pending Bill, The Pesticide Management Bill, dates back to 2020.

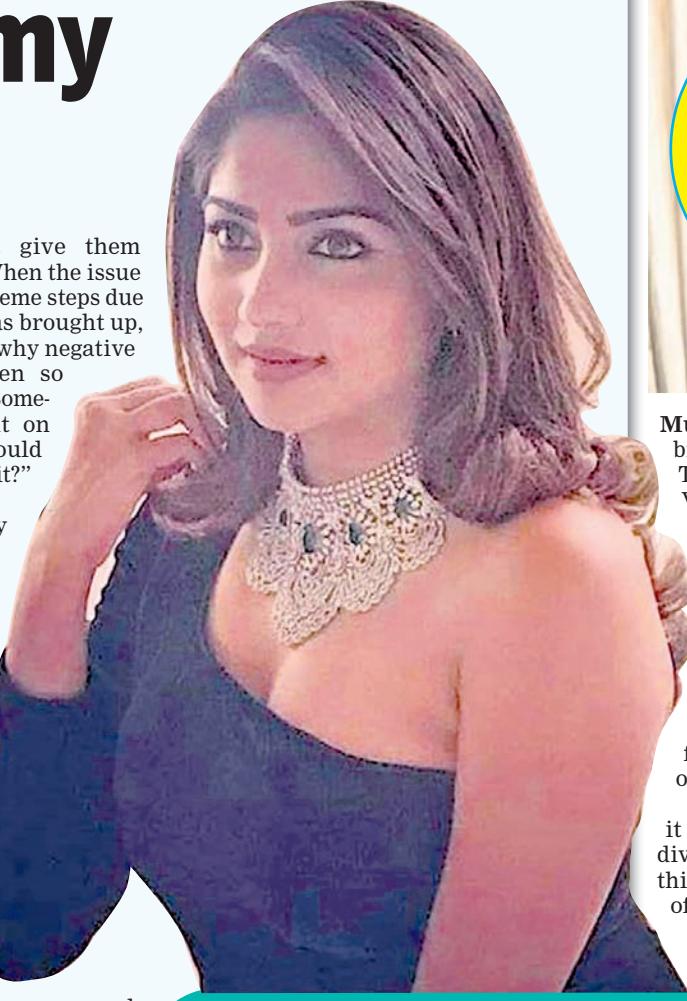
## leisure

**BELLA HADID WANTS MORE ACTING ROLES**

Model Bella Hadid is hoping to land more acting roles after making her small screen debut in Ryan Murphy's new TV series *The Beauty* because it's her dream to become an actress.

**REASON SARA REFUSED TO DATE CLOONEY**

American actress, producer and socialite Sara Foster rejected a date set up with George Clooney by Cindy Crawford and Rande Gerber in her early 20s, admitting she felt "offended" by the age gap. She thought girls going out with guys double their age was so weird, shared Foster on a podcast.

**Rachita: It's my body, my life**

**Bangalore:** At a recent media interaction, actress Rachita Ram spoke openly about the growing culture of body shaming and negative comments on social media. Known for her frank opinions, the actor urged people, especially women, to stop letting online voices control their minds or self-worth.

When asked how to deal with negative comments online, Rachita shared a rather simple answer. "Don't. Don't take the trouble. Don't listen to any of that. Don't mess your head with these com-

ments. Just don't give them space," she added. When the issue of people taking extreme steps due to online trolling was brought up, Rachita questioned why negative comments are given so much importance. "Somebody will comment on something. Why should you pay attention to it?" she asked.

"It's my body, my life. I don't give a damn," she says.

She then acknowledged that not everyone reacts to negativity the same way.

"Everybody's capability to handle such things is different. Not everyone can stay calm," she said, stressing that people

shouldn't feel pres-  
sured to respond or explain  
themselves.

AGENCIES

**Akshay recalls Dimple's warning**

**Mum-bai:** Akshay Kumar recalled his mother-in-law Dimple Kapadia's helpful warning for him as he was getting married to Twinkle Khanna.

In his latest social media post, Akshay revealed that back in 2001, when he and Twinkle were getting married, Dimple told Akshay to be ready to laugh at the most weird situations, as it is something Twinkle does not shy away from doing.

Now, after 25 years of being married to the *Mela* actress, Akshay can say with some certainty that his mother-in-law does not lie.

Claiming that Twinkle is someone who prefers to dance through life, Akshay penned on his official Instagram handle, "When we got married this day in 2001, her mother had said 'Beta, get ready to burst out laughing in the most weird situations because she'll do exactly that.'

*25 years and I know ki meri mother-in-law kabhi jhooth nahi bolti hai...her daughter refuses to even*



"From day one to year twenty five, cheers to my lady who keeps me laughing, guessing and slightly anxious at times! Happy anniversary to us, Tina. 25 years of madness that we both love," the Airlift actor added.

IANs

Sharing her excitement about being on *MTV India's Splitsvilla*, Nia wrote, "Is it a crime to trip on yourself coz no one else will. Love you @mtvindia @mtvsplitsvilla — being on MTV was lowkey my childhood dream (sic)."

**Nia holds Shakira responsible for her style choices**

**Mumbai:** Actress Nia Sharma playfully held international pop star Shakira responsible for her unique style choices.

Nia took to her Instagram stories, sharing a video of the "Queen of Latin Music" Shakira performing her 2001 hit "Whenever, Wherever".

"Blame this song for how I dress," Nia, who is known for her Gothic glam, captioned the post.

She also shared a screenshot of herself on *MTV India's Splitsvilla*, calling it her "childhood dream" to be part of the channel.

Sharing her excitement about being on *MTV India's Splitsvilla*, Nia wrote, "Is it a crime to trip on yourself coz no one else will. Love you @mtvindia @mtvsplitsvilla — being on MTV was lowkey my childhood dream (sic)."

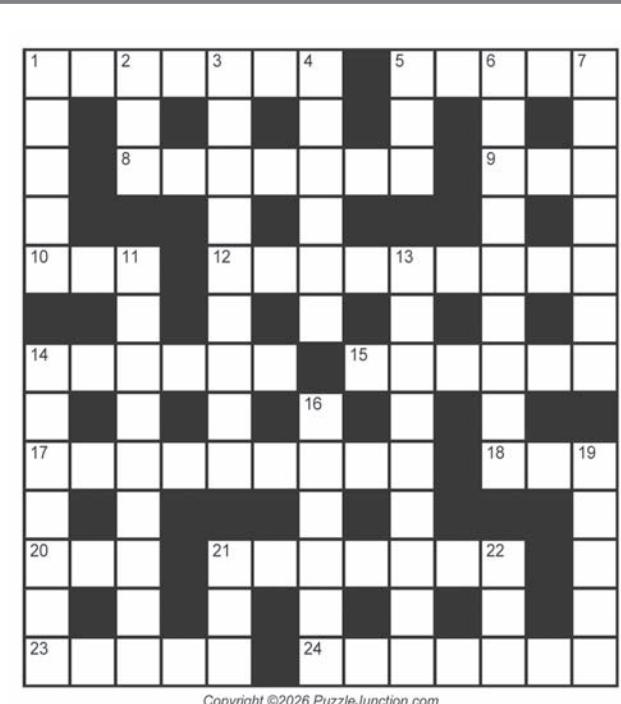
Talking about the actress, Nia was last seen on screen in *Laughter Chefs Fun Unlimited*, which also stars Krushna Abhishek, Rahul Vaidya, Karan Kundrra, Ankita Lokhande, Vicky Jain, Reem Shaikh, Sudesh Lehri, Elvish Yadav, Rubina Dilaik, Aly Goni, Kashmera Shah. It is hosted by Bharti Singh, and judged by chef Harpal Singh Sokhi.

IANs

**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.

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

**CROSSWORD**

Copyright ©2026 PuzzleJunction.com

**Across**

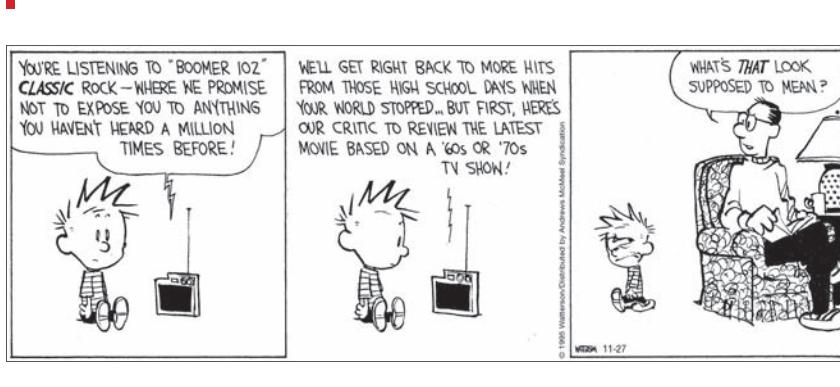
- 1 Crisp flat tortilla
- 21 Guise
- 5 Madcap comedy
- 23 Out of gas
- 8 Remove, as a tooth
- 24 Corrode (3,4)
- 9 Calendar abbr.
- 10 Balloon filler
- 11 Anecdotist
- 12 Common law example
- 13 Top-drawer
- 14 Tame
- 15 Rifle attachments
- 17 Aberrant
- 18 River inlet

**Down**

- 1 Beauty pageant wear
- 2 "Get the picture?"
- 3 Plane's navigational device
- 4 Flabbergasted
- 5 Portly plus
- 6 Cayenne (3,6)
- 7 Energises
- 14 Gift for a musician (4,3)
- 16 Gentle wind
- 19 Test, as ore
- 21 After lily or launch
- 22 Wrecker's job

**ICROSSWORD**

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

**SUDOKU****PEANUTS****CALVIN AND HOBBES****BREVITY**

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



## downtown

# Odisha Police raids cattle smugglers; 10 arrested



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar/Keonjhar, Jan 17:** Odisha Police Saturday conducted raids at 46 locations across Bhadrak, Jajpur, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Khurda districts in connection with alleged cattle smuggling, a senior police officer said.

The operation against illegal cattle traders was launched in the early morning by multiple police teams comprising two additional superintendents of police, five DSPs, 25 inspectors, 36 sub-inspectors and ASIs, and 18 platoons of force, said the officer.

During the raids till evening, the police teams have seized cash of ₹1.52 crore, gold weighing 1 kg 131 grams, 3.80 kg silver, 23 four-wheelers, 23 two-wheelers, 13 mobile phones, and 21 wristwatches.

"Nearly a year ago, some cow smugglers attacked a police van and ran their vehicle over police officials. So, we had decided to crack down on their network by seizing their properties and arresting them," the SP said.

In Bhadrak town, a large police team headed by a DSP and comprising three inspectors, six sub-inspectors and two platoons of personnel conducted a raid at the residence of a suspected cattle smuggler and recovered over ₹70 lakh in cash, gold ornaments, two SUVs and other valuables.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

The early-morning operation was carried out by multiple police teams comprising two Additional SPs, five DSPs, 25 inspectors, 36 SIs and ASIs, and 18 platoons of force

During the raids conducted till evening, police seized ₹1.52 crore in cash, 1.131 kg gold, 3.80 kg silver, 23 four-wheelers, 23 two-wheelers, 13 mobile phones and 21 wristwatches

assets worth approximately ₹50 crore accumulated by the cattle mafias as proceeds of illegal cattle trafficking," said Keonjhar SP Nitin Kusalkar.

The assets will be confiscated as per the provisions under Section 107 of BNSS. The raids are under progress and will continue till completion, he said.

The arrested persons have been identified by the police as SK Rajan alias Tajudin of

Bhadrak, Tipu Sultan, Kunu Sahu, Arjun Sahu, SK Akbar, Nasir and Sipu Sahu of Keonjhar, and Mrutunjaya Mohapatra, Sujit Mohanty and K Naim of Mayurbhanj district.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals. When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

During a raid at Tentoposh village in Mayurbhanj district, the police team faced strong protests by locals.

When the police team was taking steps to seize a four-wheeler, a large gathering of villagers including women, gheraoed the police team and also removed pressure from the tyres of the vehicle.

Several cases are pending against the cow smugglers in different police stations of Keonjhar, Sudarshan Gangai, sub-divisional police officer (SDPO), Keonjhar Sadar, said.

"We raided the house and found cash, gold ornaments and other valuables. Further search was going on," he told reporters.

## Youth poses as owner, steals bike; nabbed

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 17:** A youth was arrested for allegedly stealing a motorcycle from a service centre by posing as its owner in the Gajapati Nagar area, Maitree Vihar police said Saturday.

According to a complaint filed by the service centre manager, the incident occurred around 10 am January 14, when the accused, identified as Manoj Gochhayat (22), entered the service centre premises pretending to be the owner of the motorcycle.

Taking advantage of the situation, he allegedly descended with a Yamaha motorcycle, a theft that was later confirmed after examining CCTV footage from the service centre.

During the investigation, CCTV footage showed that Manoj had arrived at the service centre earlier on a black motorcycle and remained inside the premises for over an hour, posing as a genuine customer and introducing himself under a fake name.

At around 12.08 pm, he rode away on the stolen motorcycle and fled the spot.

Acting on credible intelligence, police raided an area near Acharya Vihar and caught the accused while attempting to sell the stolen motorcycle. The motorcycle, along with its key, was recovered, and another vehicle used in the crime was also seized.

After gathering sufficient evidence, the accused was arrested and forwarded to court, with further investigation into the case ongoing.

## BMC, CGM COLLABORATION

# Push to eco-friendly mobility solutions



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 17:** In a significant step towards sustainable, eco-friendly and people-centric urban mobility, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Saturday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Centre for Green Mobility (CGM) to promote non-motorised transport (NMT) across the City.

The signing ceremony was held in presence of BMC Mayor Sulochana Das, Commissioner Chanchal Rana, Additional Commissioner Ratnakar Sahoo, Deputy Commissioner N Ganesh Babu and other senior officials. The agreement was signed between Rana and CGM chief executive officer Bankim Karla.

The collaboration aims to encourage walking, cycling, and other non-motorised modes of transport, in line with urban development policies and global priorities on climate change mitigation and environmental sustainability. "As a Smart

city that blends rich heritage with modern infrastructure, Bhubaneswar has placed renewed emphasis on eco-friendly and people-centric mobility solutions," an officer said.

Under the MoU, strategies will be developed to create safe, inclusive, and accessible infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists, with special focus on children, women, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. The partnership will also focus on strengthening institutional capacity through training programmes, workshops, exposure visits, and technical guidance on NMT planning, design, safety, and management.

CGM will provide technical assistance to BMC in developing infrastructure that supports pedestrian safety, cycling culture, and sustainable mobility practices. Community participation and public awareness initiatives will be undertaken to promote environmentally responsible transport choices among citizens.

## DPS Kalinga wraps up week-long sports meet

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 17:** Delhi Public School (DPS) Kalinga successfully concluded the grand finale of its week-long Annual Athletic Competition 2025-26, showcasing enthusiastic participation and excellent sportsmanship.

The meet was inaugurated January 12 by Executive Trustee Sunaina Patro and Principal Suvabrat Mukherjee, while Pro Vice Chairperson Mala Mishra conveyed her best wishes for the event in absentia.



Students from Classes IV to XI competed across Houses—Cauvery, Ganges, Jamuna and Mahanadi—in a range of track and field events, including 100m, 200m and 400m races, 4x100m relay, shot put, discuss throw and long jump.

Vice Principal Sanjay Kumar Jena flagged off the march-past, while Vice Principal Swati Nath and Headmaster Mustaque Ahmed distributed prizes and encouraged participants. The school leadership lauded the students' performance and reaffirmed DPS Kalinga's commitment to promoting physical education, athletics and true sporting spirit.

## Outfit protests rising mob lynchings in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 17:** A sharp rise in incidents of mob violence and lynchings has raised serious concerns over law and order in Odisha. Reflecting this concern, members of Manabata Banchao Abhiyan (MBA) Saturday staged a protest at the City's Master Canteen Square, condemning such acts and demanding special legislation and stringent punishment for those involved.

The protest follows recent incidents, including one reported January 14, 2026, in Balasore district, where Sheikh Makandar Mohammad was allegedly beaten to death near Sahada village under Balasore Sadar police limits by suspected cow vigilantes.

During the protest, the activists expressed solidarity with victims of mob violence and targeted the state government, al-

leging a lack of accountability in protecting minorities, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

"In recent times, incidents of violence against Dalits, minorities, backward communities and women have reportedly increased. Attacks carried out in the name of cow protection, religion and caste have become more frequent," the agitators alleged, claiming administrative inaction and political patronage.

The protesters sought fulfillment of four key demands, including the enactment of a specific law against mob lynchings, implementation of police guidelines issued by the Director General of Police in 2018 in line with Supreme Court directives, award of life imprisonment to those convicted in mob lynchings, and compensation of ₹50 lakh to the next of kin of victims who die in such incidents.



## Gaur population climbs to 848 in Debrigarh

POST NEWS NETWORK



shown a steady upward trajectory over the last three surveys:

First census in November 12-13, 2024 recorded 659 gaurs in 52 herds. Similarly second census in May 11 to 13, 2025 recorded 788 gaurs in 60 herds.

In the Safari Zone, a 50 sq km tourism area within the sanctuary, officials recorded 98 gaurs in eight herds. These herds are regularly sighted by tourists, enhancing Debrigarh's reputation as a prime wildlife tourism destination.

Forest officials attribute the rising numbers to species-specific habitat management, especially tailored to the feeding and behavioural needs of the gaur, a Schedule-I protected species with an average weight ranging between 600 and 800kg.

Hirakud Forest Division

ability. Das said the six-monthly census exercise was introduced to closely monitor the breeding pattern of the gaur, the flagship species of Debrigarh, which supports one of the healthiest gaur densities in India.

Since November 2024, the sanctuary has been conducting the census every six months to scientifically track population dynamics. The steady rise—129 animals added between the first and second census and another 60 in the third—indicates that gaurs in Debrigarh are breeding throughout the year.

This trend is significant, officials noted, as gaur breeding in several other parts of





We are always surrounded by the things of which we think.

THE MOTHER

## Shattered Illusions

My generation (I am 56) grew up on the expectation that India would compete with China and become one of the world's great powers in our lifetime. This confidence was felt by us, it was spoken about in politics and it was written about by the world's journalists. All through the 1990s, and the 2000s, for two decades, this sentiment remained.

Yes, India was growing a little slower, and yes, India was not industrialising as China was, but it was only a matter of time before it caught up. One famous writer compared the two nations' futures and said China's road to development was smooth but with one giant bump on the horizon, which was the transition to democracy. India's road was pot-holed but it had no major obstacles to development. This turned out to be both simplistic and totally wrong.

At some point, I think this happened in the last decade or so though it could be a little later, it was realised that all the forecasting was off. India would not rival China as an economic power or a great power, meaning one that is able to influence the world. We would not follow the path of other Asian nations like Japan, Korea, Singapore and China into prosperity for our citizens.

We would continue as many nations do, with the majority remaining poor by the standards of the world (India's per capita GDP is one fourth of the world's average). The ambition fell away from my generation, which spent more than 30 years of adulthood in 'post liberalisation' and was in the position to arrive at conclusions based on our lived reality. The ambition fell away from politics as well, and we can see that India has returned to competing with Pakistan and Bangladesh, and this is where we are most comfortable and where our nationalism really blooms.

The writers of the world also realised that we were not comparable to China and the cover stories that put the two nations on the covers and feature stories of The Economist and The Wall Street Journal no longer appear. There is a second realisation that dawned on those who observe India and this has also come in the last decade. All this time, it was assumed that while it may be the case that India was not delivering the expected economic miracle, it was still democratic and because of that fact it was distinct.

The second realisation was that India has moved away from democracy and individual liberty towards a mix of electoral autocracy and straight-up authoritarianism. As an activist and a liberal it may be expected that I would say such things and so it is important to look at it from the perspective of those who study and classify states.

Four years ago, the government of India took offence when an American think-tank classified India as being 'partly free' and Kashmir, which it classified separately, as 'not free'.

The government's response was to put out a press release which said: 'Many states in India under its federal structure are ruled by parties other than the one at the national level, through an election process which is free and fair and which is conducted by an independent election body. This reflects the working of a vibrant democracy, which gives space to those who hold varying views.'

This was dishonest. The report had two parts. The first, which was given 40 per cent weightage, was on political rights. Here India got a score of 34/40, including full marks for free and fair elections, election commission impartiality, freedom to start political parties and opportunities for the Opposition to increase their power. In this part, India did not get full marks on whether voting was unhampered by violence and unaffected by communal tension. This is hardly arguable. In fact, the government even got 3/4 on transparency, which was probably overgenerous. The government response was therefore merely repeating what had anyway been conceded.

Where India's rating was hurt was in the other 60 per cent, for civil liberties, which are also a part of freedom. Here it performed poorly (33/60). On the issues of freedom of expression, freedom of religion, academic freedom, freedom of assembly, freedom for NGOs to work (the report named the government's attack on my organisation Amnesty International India specifically), rule of law, independence of judiciary and due process by police, India's rating was poor. But the scores merely reflected the reality.

When another report, this time by The Economist Intelligence Unit, downgraded India to a 'flawed democracy', the government sought details of the parameters though the report itself clearly says that the 'primary cause was an erosion of civil liberties' and introduction of religion into citizenship.

It should be noted that these reports are from a few years ago. After them has come the era of bulldozer justice and the current disenfranchising crusade mounted by the Election Commission of India. Current assessments of India as a democracy under rule of law will be worse than the ones the government took objection to.

On the other hand the government no longer objects or even responds to such reports. It has become inured to criticism from outside, as it has become to criticism from inside. Like the realisation on the failure of development, we have also internalised the failure on democracy. It is what it is, as those of us who are old enough know.

## WISDOM CORNER

**There is no greatness where there is no simplicity, goodness and truth.**

LEO TOLSTOY

**We always question the bonafides of the man who tells us unpleasant facts.**

RK NARAYAN

**No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it to anyone else.**

CHARLES DICKENS

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

**1871:** The German Empire was founded by Otto von Bismarck in the aftermath of three successful wars by the state of Prussia.

**1882:** A.A. Milne—who originated the immensely popular stories of Christopher Robin and his toy bear, Winnie-the-Pooh—was born in London.

**1912:** British explorer Robert Falcon Scott and four members of his expedition reached the South Pole, only to discover that Roald Amundsen had preceded them by a month; Scott and his men subsequently died trying to return to their base camp.

# power post

## FOCUS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

# EUROPE'S SLOP WAR

When the Economist and Merriam-Webster announced "slop" as their word of the year, Microsoft's Satya Nadella complained, but few were surprised. The past 18 months have been characterized by an unrelenting flood of brain-rot slop, political slop, scam slop, and, above all, porn slop. Recent estimates suggest Elon Musk's Grok AI posts one nonconsensual pornographic image of a woman per minute on the social-media platform X (formerly Twitter).

Not so long ago, social-media companies billed themselves as tools for connecting with real people and keeping up with the news. They have long since abandoned that promise. Having untethered their platforms from reality, tech barons like Meta founder Mark Zuckerberg and X owner Elon Musk now exercise near-monopoly control over our screens. They use that power to feed users a steady diet of manipulative, dangerous, and outright illegal AI-generated junk. Grok has produced sexual-abuse images of children as young as four.

Fortunately, after years of inaction, regulators are stepping in. The European Union just opened an investigation into the spread of child sexual abuse material on Grok. This follows its first enforcement action in December, when it fined X \$140 million under the Digital Services Act (DSA). While this hardly makes a dent in Musk's vast fortune, the fine is not the point. More important is what the EU ordered X to do: redesign its scam-ridden blue-check system, tackle ad fraud, and restore researcher access so the public can understand the platform's effects on the information landscape.

These probes set the stage for a confrontation. US President Donald Trump's new National Security Strategy illustrates the stakes of the coming slop war. Released on the same day the X fine was an-



Having untethered their platforms from reality, tech barons like Meta founder Mark Zuckerberg and X owner Elon Musk now exercise near-monopoly control over our screens. They use that power to feed users a steady diet of manipulative, dangerous, and outright illegal AI-generated junk

nounced, the NSS makes clear the administration's intention: to back social-media moguls as they spread lies, amplify hate, bolster authoritarians, and destabilize Europe from within.

Despite the predictable protests from Musk and Trump, the EU's regulatory actions have nothing to do with attacking "free speech." (The fine targeted economic scams; the probe targets child abuse.) Instead, these measures mark the start of what is likely to become a bitter struggle to rein in X and, more broadly, to curb the spread of AI-driven slop. What Musk and Trump portray as a fight over who has the right to speak is really a fight over who has the power to force others to listen.

The conflict raises stark questions for policymakers. What will Europe do once X inevitably refuses to comply? Will the European Commission impose stiffer penalties or suspend the company's access to the single market?

Child sexual abuse material is illegal; yet X's leadership has allowed it to be generated and spread. And why, for that matter, are European leaders still active on X at all, given that Musk has already signaled

his defiance by blocking the EU's advertising account on the platform?

The EU's first, limited enforcement action against X has already caused Trump to retaliate. In late December, the administration barred five Europeans, including Thierry Breton, the bloc's former internal market commissioner, from entering the US, citing Europe's "egregious acts of extraterritorial censorship." More will follow. Even so, European leaders should stay the course.

Brazil offers a useful precedent. In 2024, after Musk defied a court order to suspend certain X accounts, the Brazilian judiciary shut down the platform nationwide and moved to seize Musk's assets. Musk soon folded. This was a show of strength the EU would do well to emulate.

It's important to remember that Europe has faced information warfare before. During World War II, Nazi Germany broadcast propaganda into European and British living rooms in flawless English. "Lord Haw-Haw," as one broadcaster was dubbed, used radio to sap Allied morale until his capture in 1945. Eighty years

later, unfettered by geography or spectrum limits, Musk and Zuckerberg are dripping micro-targeted poison into billions of personalized feeds.

Even those who scoff at disinformation can see how the slopification of public discourse has made truth almost impossible for ordinary citizens to discern. Regulated media are no firewall, as authoritarians increasingly exploit such outlets to steer people toward unregulated platforms hosting more extreme messages. In the United Kingdom, for example, the hard-right channel GB News recently used YouTube to broadcast a call for the removal of non-white members of Parliament—content it could not lawfully air on television.

Taken together, these developments herald a widening conflict over Europe's information space. While tech moguls like Musk will cry censorship, this should be dismissed as the bad-faith claim it is. Others will frame it as a civilizational clash between Europeans and Americans. That, too, is wrong. Many Americans are fighting to defend their democracy and their children from slop, too, and Europe can play an important role in resisting the same authoritarian tech.

Contrary to what authoritarians like Trump may claim, this is a battle pitting parents, honest merchants, and citizens who value freedom against the plutocrats, slop pornographers, pension scammers, crypto-bringers, and would-be dictators who happily subvert democratic institutions for power and profit. Trump and his tech allies have shown us which side they are on and the world they want. It is up to us to stop them.

The writer is Executive Director of the Future of Technology Institute.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

## SPECTRUM

## NOSTALGIA

# Analogue hearts, digital beats



**PEOPLE BORN IN THE 1960S ARE PRECIOUS, A LIVING ARCHIVE OF CHANGE**

Narvijay Yadav

People born in the early 1960s carry a rare depth. They stand between two eras. They witnessed the slowest rhythm of life and now observe the fastest phase in human history. This shift is not a concept for them. It is a lived memory. They have watched the world move from an analog flow to a digital pulse. This makes them a true bridge generation, a generation that understands both patience and speed.

Their childhood belonged to a quieter world. Walking long distances was common and respectful. Bullock carts carried families across villages.

Bicycles covered miles. A train journey felt like a celebration. Letters took days and weeks to reach. News travelled gently. Life had pauses, and that pace carried a certain beauty. Everything felt real.

Their professional lives also began in this unhurried era. Work was done on paper. Editing meant working by hand. Typewriters demanded

accuracy with every mistake requiring a white fluid to correct. Then computers arrived. They learned them. They adapted. Later came the internet, smartphones, and now AI.

In one lifetime, they have ridden every technological wave without losing their balance. Fortunately, I belong to this rare tribe, and I'm proud of it.

This is why people from the 1960s hold a special value in society. They have seen landlines and now hold smartphones that run the world. They listened to vinyl records and now stream endless music.

They lived in a time of limited information and now navigate an ocean of content. They worked without digital tools and now use AI to enhance their productivity. Such a long-time arc cannot be repeated. No future generation will ever witness that kind of slow beginning followed by such rapid acceleration.

This generation also carries an extraordinary adaptability. They survived political shifts,

cultural changes, economic transitions, and social transformation. They rebuilt lives more than once.

They adjusted quietly and steadily. They did not learn this adaptability at a workshop. It is a life-earned skill, shaped by decades of constant change.

Along with adaptability comes clarity. When people experience long phases of life, they naturally understand the difference between noise and value. They learn where to invest their energy and what to ignore.

This clarity becomes their strength. It makes them natural mentors. It allows them to guide younger minds with wisdom that comes from seeing life from both sides.

Many individuals from this generation have also lived through difficult times. Illnesses, uncertainties, and the COVID years tested families across the country. Those who survived found a renewed purpose. Many embraced healthier lifestyles, quiet mornings,

and simple practices that restore peace, clarity, and inner balance.

For this generation, documentation has become important. They have crossed the longest bridges of change. They have seen worlds that no longer exist. Today's children in cities and villages grow up with screens, conveniences, and technology, unaware of how life once unfolded. If the bridge generation does not record its experiences, a valuable part of human history will disappear.

This is why their stories matter. Their memories hold lessons for the future. Their experiences explain how societies evolve. Their journeys reveal how resilience grows. They are a living archive of change. People born in the 1960s are precious. They are living libraries. They are bridges. And their stories must live on.

The writer is the founder of BlissMedia. Views are personal.

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

HERE NOW  
**OrissaPOST**

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

## ECI's highhandedness

Sir, The Election Commission of India is showing its highhandedness while implementing rules for SIR exercise in Bengal. The refusal of admit card as proof of birth of electorates is a case in point. There can be no better document than admit card to prove the date of birth. The pertinent question arises as to whether the ECI has sweeping powers to frame rules arbitrarily with no regard for the law of the land intending to devour the fundamental rights of the people? If the government remains silent, the ECI is likely to perpetuate this illegality. This will cause untold hardship to electorates.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

## Puri: Harbinger of hope

Sir, At a time when people fall seriously ill and succumb to contaminated drinking water, Odisha's Puri has turned a harbinger of hope as this pilgrim and tourist city has become India's first city to provide tap water that is safe for direct consumption. According to authentic reports the tap water supplied meets all standards set by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) making it a major achievement in public health, environmental protection and urban management. Despite progress in urban development, access to clean and safe drinking water remains a challenge in most cities in India. The recent Indore water disaster is an example of this. Most of the urbanites in India usually boil water or depend on filters and RO systems for safe drinking. Puri's direct tap water implementation as part of Odisha's Sujal scheme, an initiative that was launched in 2020 and by the end of 2025 Puri became the first city to provide drinkable tap water. The project ensures that every household receives clean, safe drinking water round the clock, matching international quality standards thus making Puri as India's first city where people can confidently consume water straight from the tap. This is indeed an achievement and a project worth emulating.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

**1871:** The German Empire was founded by Otto von Bismarck in the aftermath of three successful wars by the state of Prussia.

**1882:** A.A. Milne—who originated the immensely popular stories of Christopher Robin and his toy bear, Winnie-the-Pooh—was born in London.

**1912:** British explorer Robert Falcon Scott and four members of his expedition reached the South Pole, only to discover that Roald Amundsen had preceded them by a month; Scott and his men subsequently died trying to return to their base camp.

**1871:** The German Empire was founded by Otto von Bismarck in the aftermath of three successful wars by the state of Prussia.

**1882:** A.A. Milne—who originated the immensely popular stories of Christopher Robin and his toy bear, Winnie-the-Pooh—was born in London.

**1912:** British explorer Robert Falcon Scott and four members of his expedition reached the South Pole, only to discover that Roald Amundsen had preceded them by a month; Scott and his men subsequently died trying to return to their base camp.

**1871:** The German Empire was founded by Otto von Bismarck in the aftermath of three successful wars by the state of Prussia.

**1882:** A.A. Milne—who originated the immensely popular stories of Christopher Robin and his toy bear, Winnie-the-Pooh—was born in London.

**1912:** British explorer Robert Falcon Scott and four members of his expedition reached the South Pole, only to discover that Roald Amundsen had preceded them by a month; Scott and his men subsequently died trying to return to their base camp.

**1871:** The German Empire was founded by Otto von Bismarck in the aftermath of three successful wars by the state of Prussia.

**1882:** A.A. Milne—who originated the immensely popular stories of Christopher Robin and his toy bear, Winnie-the-Pooh—was born in London.

**1912:** British explorer Robert Falcon Scott and four members of his expedition reached the South Pole, only to discover that Roald Amundsen had preceded them by a month; Scott and his men subsequently died trying to return to their base camp.

<



# Soren to represent J'khand at Davos

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ranchi, Jan 17:** The Jharkhand government will present an energy transition model at the global platforms during the upcoming visit of a state delegation led by Chief Minister Hemant Soren to Davos in Switzerland and the UK, an official statement said.

In a first, Soren will attend the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in the Swiss ski resort town of Davos this month and also undertake a visit to the United Kingdom to strengthen global partnerships.

"At Davos, Jharkhand will engage with global energy leaders, investors, technology providers, and policy institutions to highlight opportunities across renewable energy deployment, grid modernisation, energy storage, clean fuels, and industrial decarbonisation," said the statement issued by the Chief Minister's Secretariat Friday.

The state's energy transition strategy is rooted in responsi-



**After January 18-24 Davos meeting, Soren will deliver a special lecture at the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford**

ble diversification, leveraging its existing energy infrastructure while accelerating investments in solar power, emerging clean technologies, and efficiency-driven systems, it said.

Central to this approach is Jharkhand's development philosophy of 'Growth in Harmony with Nature', it said.

Through its engagements at Davos and in the United Kingdom, Jharkhand will present

and economic foundations," the statement said.

For decades, Jharkhand has been central to India's energy landscape, it said, adding that the state's coal reserves, power plants, transmission networks and industrial ecosystems have supported national growth, industrialisation, and infrastructure development.

Cities such as Bokaro, Partratu, and Chandrapura have long stood at the heart of India's power and steel economy, supplying energy and materials that fuelled national progress.

"Today, Jharkhand is building on this legacy while adapting to a rapidly evolving global energy paradigm," it said.

As the world transitions towards cleaner and more resilient energy systems, the state is "pursuing a balanced pathway, one that ensures energy security, economic stability and employment while steadily expanding the share of renewable and low-carbon solutions," the CM's secretariat said.

Jharkhand's mineral endowment, including materials critical for renewable energy systems, batteries, transmission infrastructure and clean manufacturing, also positions it as a "strategic partner in the global energy transition", it said.

By integrating energy policy with its critical minerals strategy, the state is "advancing a vision where extraction, processing, and energy use are aligned with environmental safeguards and long-term sustainability," the statement said.

Following the World Economic Forum, discussions in the United Kingdom will further explore collaboration on clean energy finance, technology transfer, institutional partnerships, and capacity building, reflecting the shared India and UK commitment to climate action and sustainable growth.

"As Jharkhand marks 25 years of statehood and looks ahead toward 2050, its energy vision reflects both confidence and responsibility. The state is demonstrating that regions built on traditional energy strengths can lead the transition by combining industrial experience, policy reform, global partnerships, and ecological consciousness," the statement said. After the January 18-24 Davos meeting, Soren will deliver a special lecture at the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford.

He will be the first CM from India to address the institution, one of the world's leading schools of public policy and governance, an official said.

## Health dept issues Nipah advisory

**Ranchi:** The Jharkhand Health department has issued an advisory, directing all district civil surgeons to step up measures against Nipah virus in the wake of two confirmed cases in neighbouring West Bengal, an official said. Though no confirmed case has been reported in Jharkhand so far, the movement of people from affected areas poses a potential risk, he said. Nipah virus is a zoonotic disease primarily transmitted from bats to humans and animals.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS' EMPOWERMENT  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (AGRIL.), AGRIL. ENGG DIVISION, RAYAGADA**

No. 52 INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) Date. 16/01/2026

e-procurement notice

Bid identification number / Tender call notice No. - EE (A) -05 of 2025-26  
No.L-165 : The Executive Engineer (Agril.), Agril. Engg Division, Rayagada who has been authorized as the procuring officer for the projects of Agril. Engg Division, for the Civil construction works (including IE and PH works) under Rayagada Division. The costs of the project are approximately 1.96 to 22.34 Lakhs (Excluding GST & LC). Bid document consisting of detailed tender call notice, the schedule of quantities and the set of terms and conditions of the contract and other necessary documents can be downloaded from <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> from 19.01.2026 at 11:00 hours to 31.01.2026 at 17:30 hours. The bid will be opened on 02.02.2026 at 11:00 AM hours and onwards in the O/o Executive Engineer, Agril. Engg Division, Rayagada. All other details regarding term and conditions, corrigendum from time to time if any. DTCN etc. can be seen and downloaded from <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.

Sd./- Executive Engineer (Agril.)  
Agril. Engg Division, Rayagada

OIPR-

**OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, MANGROVE FOREST DIVISION (WL), RAJNAGAR**

AT/P.O: Rajnagar, Dist: Kendrapara-754225, Phone: 06729-242460, Control Room: 06729-242463, E-mail ID: dfo.rajnagarwl@odisha.gov.in

BID IDENTIFICATION NO. - DFO MFD-Hiring Trawler/03/1F(Accts.)/

Tender/334/ Dated.16/01/2026

Dated, Rajnagar the 16th January, 2026

**SHORT TENDER CALL NOTICE**

No.MM-510 : Sealed quotations are invited from registered trawler owners to submit their competitive quote for leasing of their sea worthy vessel of engine power of 400 HP or above for Sea Turtle Protection duty for the year 2025-26. The period of engagement shall normally be from 01st February-2026 to 31st March-2026. The owners are to quote the monthly hire charges inclusive of taxes if any but the cost of fuel, which will be borne by this Division. The details of terms and condition for engagement of trawler can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours from 17.01.2026 onwards. Quotation for hiring of trawler (400 HP or above) to be submitted separately. Tender Paper & related documents should be collected from the office of the undersigned during the working hours between 10 AM. to 5 PM, from 17.01.2026 onwards with production of Tender Paper cost. The last date & time of receipt of quotation is 27.01.2026 at 05:00PM. Opening of Quotation is 28.01.2026 at 11:00 AM. The undersigned reserve the right to accept or reject any all quotation without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer  
Mangrove Forest Division (Wildlife)  
Rajnagar

OIPR-

## Defence Estates sub-office inaugurated in Jharkhand



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ranchi, Jan 17:** Jharkhand Governor Santosh Kumar Gangwar and Union Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth Saturday inaugurated the sub-office of Defence Estates in Ranchi.

With the launch of the sub-office, one will not have to visit Bihar for any land related matters of the defence department.

"Previously, the management of defence land in all districts of Jharkhand as well as military stations was being handled from Dhanapur in Bihar. Due to excessive distance and inability to achieve better coordination, the processes used to become complicated. People had to face many problems. Now, with a Jharkhand office at the local level, faster and effective decision-making will become possible," Seth said. He added the Narendra Modi government has a clear focus on decentralisation, transparency, and administrative efficiency. "The opening of this office in Ranchi is an example of a technology-based, accountable, and results-oriented governance system.

It will now be possible to provide simple, prompt, and effective

solutions at the local level, Gangwar said.

The Union minister said the sub-office opened in Ranchi will operate under the Defence Estates Office, Dhanapur Circle.

"Until today, matters related to Defence Estates connected with Jharkhand were handled from Dhanapur in Bihar. Due to excessive distance and inability to achieve better coordination, the processes used to become complicated. People had to face many problems. Now, with a Jharkhand office at the local level, faster and effective decision-making will become possible," Seth said. He added the Narendra Modi government has a clear focus on decentralisation, transparency, and administrative efficiency. "The opening of this office in Ranchi is an example of a technology-based, accountable, and results-oriented governance system.

It will now be possible to provide simple, prompt, and effective

## NGT takes note of environmental damage to Deepor Beel in Assam



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Guwahati, Jan 17:** The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has taken serious cognisance of environmental degradation at Deepor Beel in Guwahati, a Ramsar-listed wetland.

The matter is being heard suo motu by the NGT's Eastern Zone Bench based on a news report in a local English daily here April 22 last year.

The bench, comprising chairperson Justice Prakash Srivastava and expert member Ishwar Singh, Thursday took note of violations at the wetland by the Assam Pollution Control Board (APCB).

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in its report July 18 last year said the water quality parameters of Deepor Beel were beyond prescribed norms, includ-

ing the presence of faecal coliform and faecal streptococci, indicating serious pollution, they said.

"Assam State Wetlands Authority has filed a short cryptic reply dated 23.08.2025, which does not take into account the violations/status which have been disclosed in the report of the CPCB and APCB," the order said.

On the request of the wetlands authority, the Tribunal granted four weeks to take remedial measures and submit a fresh status and action taken report.

Accepting submissions made during the hearing, the Tribunal impleaded the Guwahati Municipal Corporation as a respondent, recognising its role in addressing urban pollution impacting the wetland.

The matter has been listed for further hearing March 23, the order stated.

**भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक**  
RESERVE BANK OF INDIA  
[www.rbi.org.in](http://www.rbi.org.in)

**Redressal of complaints against entities regulated by RBI**

**Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS)**

- The Reserve Bank has mandated all its regulated entities to have a mechanism at their end to resolve the complaints received by them from their customers, which is considered as the Internal Grievance Redress Mechanism of regulated entities.
- The Reserve Bank has also put in place an expeditious and cost-free Alternate Grievance Redress Mechanism for resolution of customer complaints relating to deficiencies in services rendered by its regulated entities through the Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2021 (RB-IOS).
- Banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies, Payment System Participants and Credit Information Companies are considered as regulated entities under the Grievance Redress Mechanism.
- The RB-IOS adopts a "One Nation One Ombudsman" approach for all complaints against any regulated entities. It is therefore no longer necessary for a complainant to identify under which Ombudsman scheme/office, he/she should file a complaint with the Ombudsman.
- The complaints against regulated entities not covered under the RB-IOS are handled at Consumer Education and Protection Cells (CEPCs) for resolution.
- The list of regulated entities covered under the ambit of RB-IOS and CEPC can be accessed by visiting <https://cms.rbi.org.in>

### What to do if you have a complaint?

You can lodge complaint against the regulated entity at its branch or through online in the grievance redressal portal or any other mode as mentioned in its website. Get acknowledgement or save the reference number of the complaint.

### When to approach the RBI Ombudsman?

You can approach the RBI Ombudsman, in case:

**No reply is received from the regulated entity within 30 days** - Anytime within one year and 30 days from the date of your complaint to regulated entity.

**Reply received from the regulated entity is unsatisfactory** - Anytime within one year of receipt of reply from the concerned regulated entity.

#### Note:

The complaint should contain all requisite details / information as per the complaint form prescribed in the RB-IOS.  
The complaint should not have been dealt with / pending with any other forum (like Courts) or dealt earlier by the RBI Ombudsman.  
Filing complaint directly with RBI Ombudsman, without approaching the RE, may lead to its rejection.

### How to lodge a complaint with RBI?

Complaint against the regulated entity can be filed through any of the following modes:

Online through the Complaint Management System (CMS) portal of RBI at <https://cms.rbi.org.in>  
Physical complaint (letter / post) in the form as specified in Annexure in the RB-IOS to "Centralized Receipt and Processing Centre, 4th floor, Reserve bank of India Sector-17, Central Vista, Chandigarh – 160017"

### How to know more about lodging a complaint with RBI?

For more information, you can approach RBI Contact Centre facility with Toll-free Number: 14448. The contact center with Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) is available 24x7, while the facility to connect to Contact Centre personnel is available from Monday to Saturday except National Holidays, between 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM for English, Hindi and ten regional languages (Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Telugu and Tamil).

### For more information

Please Visit:  
FAQs on RB- IOS, 2021  
[https://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/FS\\_FAQs.aspx?fn=2745](https://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/FS_FAQs.aspx?fn=2745)  
Or  
CMS Portal - <https://cms.rbi.org.in/>

(For complaints against DICGC, members of public can lodge the complaint at following address/ e-mail Id)

**Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation**  
The General Manager  
DICGC, Complaint Redressal Cell,  
Reserve Bank of India, 2nd Floor,  
Opp. Mumbai Central Railway Station,  
Byculla, Mumbai – 400008  
E-mail: [dicgc.complaints@rbi.org.in](mailto:dicgc.complaints@rbi.org.in)  
Contact No. 022-23019645

# national

of the day quote

Please protect the Constitution, democracy, judiciary, history and geography of the country from disaster. You (the CJI) are the guardian of our Constitution, we are under your legal guardianship. Please protect the people



MAMATA BANERJEE |  
CHIEF MINISTER, WEST BENGAL

Kashi today is witnessing unprecedented development. Projects worth over Rs 55,000 crore have already been implemented on the ground, writing a new chapter of development



Himachal Pradesh is known not only as Devbhoomi but also as Veerbhoomi. Almost every village reflects a proud tradition of military service, which is part of our culture and values



SHIV PRATAP SHUKLA |  
GOVERNOR, HIMACHAL PRADESH

## SHORT TAKES

### Ex-min Bheemanna Khandre dies at 102

**Bidar (Karnataka):** Former minister Bheemanna Khandre has died at the age of 102, due to age-related issues, his son and Karnataka Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre said. A freedom fighter, veteran Congress leader, and a cooperative stalwart from the Kalyana Karnataka region has died late Friday at his residence. He is survived by two sons, including Eshwar Khandre and four daughters. A tall Veerashaiva Lingayat community leader, Bheemanna Khandre, had served as the state's transport minister in Veerappa Moily's cabinet. He was suffering from age-related ailments and respiratory problems for the last 10-12 days and was admitted to a private hospital in Bidar. Later, treatment was continued at his home in Bhalki, Eshwar Khandre said in a statement. As a freedom fighter and a fighter for the liberation of Hyderabad, he protested the atrocities of the Razakars and worked hard to keep Bidar district in Karnataka during the unification.

### 4.1 magnitude quake hits Gujarat's Kutch

**Ahmedabad:** An earthquake of 4.1 magnitude shook Gujarat's Kutch district in the wee hours of Saturday, causing panic among locals, though no casualties were reported, officials said. The quake was recorded at 1.22 am with its epicentre about 55 km north northeast (NNE) from Khavda in the district, the Gandhinagar-based Institute of Seismological Research (ISR) said. No casualty or damage to property was reported, a district disaster management official said.

### Acid attack on minor girl; neighbour held

**Wayanad (Kerala):** A 14-year-old girl suffered severe burns after her neighbour allegedly attacked her with acid in this district, police said Saturday. The accused Raju Jose (53), a resident of Priyadarshi Unathi, Marakavu, Pulpalli, has been arrested. According to police, the incident occurred Friday evening when Jose allegedly poured acid on Mahalakshmi, an eighth standard student living in the neighbourhood. Police said there were multiple issues between the neighbours that led to the incident.



It's my dream to install a Shiv Sena (UBT) mayor in Mumbai, and if God is willing, this dream will be realised

UDDHAV THACKERAY |  
SHIV SENA (UBT) CHIEF

## DOLPHIN RECOUNTING BEGINS

The Union Environment Ministry Saturday rolled out the second range-wide estimation of riverine and estuarine dolphins under Project Dolphin from Bijnor in Uttar Pradesh. The survey commenced with 26 researchers in three boats, recording ecological and habitat parameters, and using technologies such as hydrophones for underwater acoustic monitoring, an official statement said



## Indians return from protest-hit Iran

Poignant scenes of relief and reunion unfolded at the Delhi airport on early

Saturday as families embraced their loved ones who returned from Iran amid the worsening security situation there

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, Jan 17: Several Indians, including students, have arrived here in commercial flights from Iran amid widespread protests in the Islamic nation and Tehran's crackdown that has so far killed more than 2,500 people.

The flights arrived at the Delhi airport late Friday night. It was not immediately known how many Indians had arrived in these commercial flights.

While some welcomed their children with flower garlands, a father held his daughter to his chest, smiling as tears welled up in his eyes - a moving image capturing the tumult of emotions these families endured while their children were stranded amid the political unrest in Iran.

Upon arriving at the airport

here, Ali Naqui, who was a part of a group of 12 to 13 travellers, was asked if they faced any difficulty in Iran. "We didn't face any problem," he replied.

"We have returned from Tehran. Earlier, we were in Iraq, then we travelled to Iran. After an eight-day stay there, we have returned to India," he told PTI.

A young woman, who is studying at a medical college in Shiraz, said, "The Internet was not working. So, we didn't exactly know what was happening around the country."

The student said the situation in the city she was in was "fine". "We have come back on our own in a commercial flight,

and not on the arrangement of the Indian government."

Late Friday night, many people arrived at the airport to receive their relatives arriving from Iran. While many seemed to be gripped by a sense of anxiety, they said that the Indian Embassy in Tehran has been reassuring all Indian nationals there, through whatever means of communication available.

Abbas Qazmi, whose mother and aunt returned from Iran, said, "There was definitely some anxiety because it was a global issue, and when the Internet was shut, we were quite worried."

"But as soon as communication resumed, we realised that

things were under control. That gave us assurance that everything was fine. We had registered with the embassy as soon as the advisory was issued and were waiting for further instructions. My mother's flight was already scheduled, so things went smoothly, and we are happy," he said.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, in his weekly media briefing Friday, said, "At present, there are approximately 9,000 of our nationals living in Iran. Most of them are our students".

In addition to this, there are sailors, pilgrims, and some people who are associated with business and reside there, he said, adding that in view of the recent developments and activities taking place there, "we have issued two to three advisories".

"In these advisories, we have stated that our citizens should not travel to Iran at this time. And the Indian nationals who are currently residing there have been advised that, through whatever means available to leave the country at present, commercial flights are still operating, and that option is also available; they should make use of those and leave," he said.

## Mamata intends to turn Bengal into B'desh: BJP



Patra alleged that Banerjee is trying to stop the Special Intensive Review (SIR) of the electoral rolls in West Bengal in an unconstitutional manner "through violence" to protect Bangladeshi and Rohingya infiltrators

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patra alleged that Banerjee is trying to stop the Special Intensive Review (SIR) of the electoral rolls in West Bengal in an unconstitutional manner "through violence" to protect Bangladeshi and Rohingya infiltrators

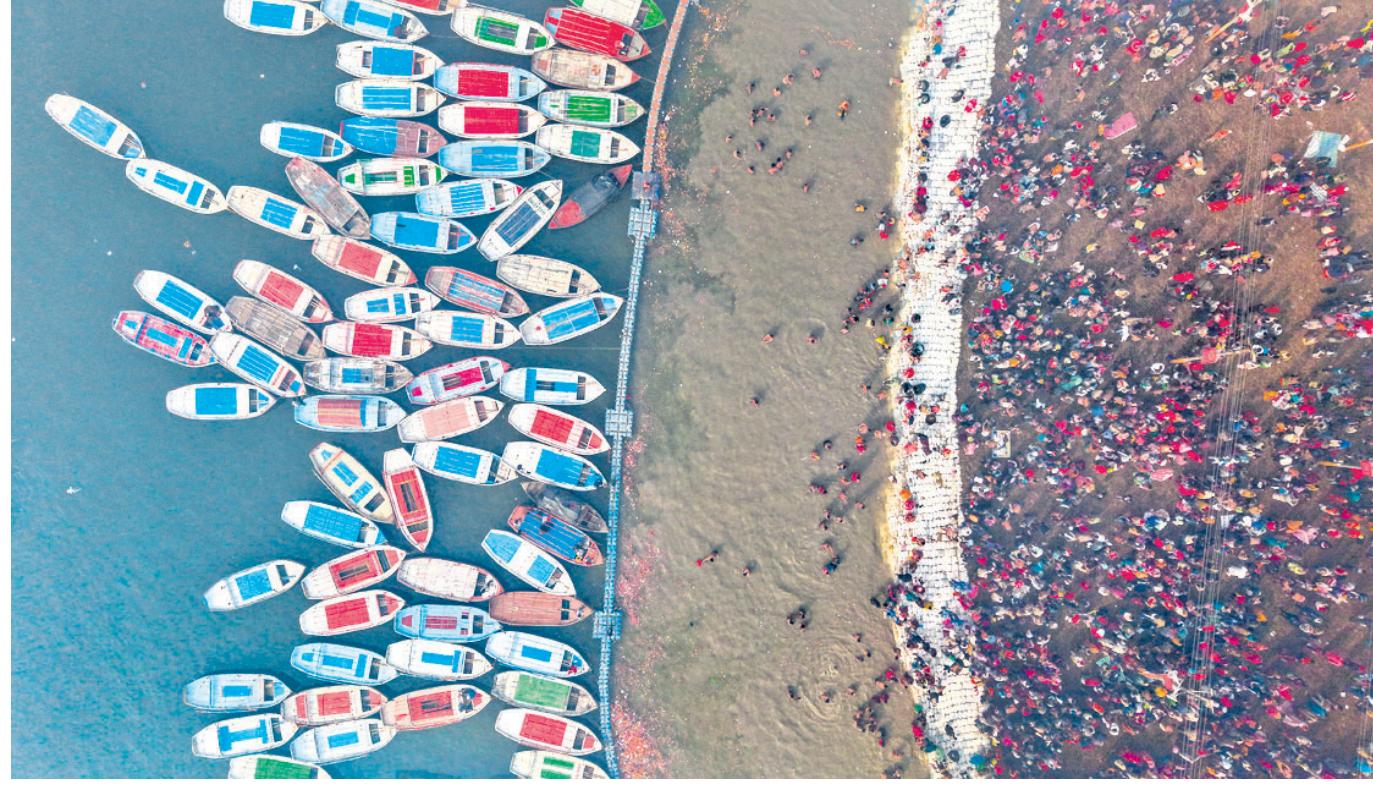
Violence is currently happening in Murshidabad. NH 12 has been blocked, and all train services have been suspended. Trains are being burnt and Mamata Banerjee is justifying it, saying it's happening due to the minorities' anger. Abhishek Banerjee says protests will happen when names are removed (from the voter list), he said.

Patra alleged that Banerjee and her government "attack" all constitutional processes in the country, including those in West Bengal.

"There are 72 sensitive points along the border from where Bangladeshi are entering. Letters are written and the BSF holds meetings repeatedly, but Mamata Banerjee does not provide land for fencing at these 72 points," he charged.

Patra said the demography of several districts has changed due to illegal infiltration.

"Whether it is Murshidabad or Uttar Dinajpur districts, there has been a demographic change there between 2011 and 2019 due to illegal immigration. In some places, the Muslim population has increased by 70 per cent, while in others, by more than 50 per cent," Patra claimed.



Prayagraj: People take a holy dip at the Sangam ahead of 'Mauni Amavasya', during the ongoing 'Magh Mela' festival, in Prayagraj, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

## NIA chargesheets 5 for propagating ideologies of banned terror outfit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ti-India ideologies of the banned AQIS, a statement issued by the probe agency said.

They posted provocative posts, including videos, audios and photos, through various social media accounts, it said.

NIA further found that, through these posts, the accused had called for armed revolt against the democratically elected Indian government, and for the establishment of the Caliphate based on the Sharia law, the statement alleged.

They also promoted the extremist ideologies of other proscribed terror organisations to radicalise gullible youth, it said. The NIA, during investigation, further traced the digital footprints and identified incriminating posts strengthening evidence against the accused.

NIA's investigation in the case had revealed that the accused used social media platforms for propagating, supporting and disseminating the an-

ti-India ideologies of the banned AQIS, a statement issued by the probe agency said.

The exercise held in South African waters comprised the navies of China, Russia, Iran, Egypt, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) among others.

The week-long military wargame took place amid increasing tensions in Iran over possible military strikes on the country over its crackdown on anti-government protesters.

"We clarify that the exercise in question was entirely a South African initiative in which some BRICS members

took part," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

## India skips South Africa-led naval exercise



take part in it," he said.

Jaiswal was responding to media queries on India's absence from the so-called "BRICS naval exercise".

The MEA spokesperson said

India has not participated in previous such activities.

"The regular exercise that India is a part of in this context is the IBSAMAR maritime exercise that brings together the navies of India, Brazil and South Africa," he said. The last edition of IBSAMAR (India-Brazil-South Africa Maritime) was held in October 2024.

India is the current chair of BRICS.

BRICS, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the UAE, with Indonesia joining in 2025. It has emerged as an influential group representing around 49.5 per cent of the global population, around 40 per cent of the global GDP and around 26 per cent of the global trade.

## CJI lays foundation of integrated court complexes in UP

Court complexes will come up in six districts- Chandauli, Mahoba, Amethi, Shamli, Hathras and Auraiya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandauli (UP), Jan 17: Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant laid the foundation of integrated court complexes for six districts in Uttar Pradesh Saturday amid the chanting of Vedic hymns and said the step will set a benchmark for the

entire country.

The six districts are Chandauli, Mahoba, Amethi, Shamli, Hathras and Auraiya.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion, the CJI said, "Once these (integrated court complexes) are built, I feel that Uttar Pradesh will set an example for entire India. These complexes will become a benchmark for the entire nation."

"I can proudly say that the 10 integrated court complexes that the chief minister has announced in Uttar Pradesh and the construction of six that has begun today are a significant achievement. Whichever state

entire country.

The six districts are Chandauli, Mahoba, Amethi, Shamli, Hathras and Auraiya.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion, the CJI said, "Once these (integrated court complexes) are built, I feel that Uttar Pradesh will set an example for entire India. These complexes will become a benchmark for the entire nation."

"I can proudly say that the 10 integrated court complexes that the chief minister has announced in Uttar Pradesh and the construction of six that has begun today are a significant achievement. Whichever state

courts that such facilities be also provided there," he added.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was also present on the occasion.

Justice Kant said these integrated court complexes, to be equipped with all kinds of facilities, will successfully meet the needs of lawyers and common people seeking justice for at least the next 50 years.

A separate room of the bar should be built for women in every district court where our daughters and sisters practise law. I would also request the chief minister that a primary health centre be established in this complex, wherever possible

SURYA KANT | CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA

on the occasion.

Justice Kant said these integrated court complexes, to be equipped with all kinds of facilities, will successfully meet the needs of lawyers and common people seeking justice for at least the next 50 years.

He said the district judiciary

# national

of the **Quote**

Secularism, democracy and constitutional values were under threat in the country as minority communities like the Muslims and Christians and their places of worship were being attacked across the country

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | CHIEF MINISTER, KERALA

Once again, the Modi government has delivered a practical solution that directly improves everyday life in Kerala. The central government has sanctioned a new train service on the Thrissur-Guruvayur route as requested by him last year

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR | BJP STATE PRESIDENT, KERALA

Now those parties who abuse us (as BJP's B team) should think of themselves. It is the decision of the people. There is an English saying that victory has many fathers, defeat has none. Why did we (they) lose? Those great people will have to say. As far as the voters' list is concerned, it is correct

ASADUDDIN OWAISSI | AIMIM CHIEF

**POST OF THE DAY**

Constitution can make rules, but it can't teach us civic sense on how we speak in public, how to behave or even how we treat others. I strongly believe if simple decency needs to be enforced by a law, the problem isn't with the law it's with us.

@Finance\_Neelam

**SHORT TAKES****Fresh unrest in Murshidabad**

**Kolkata:** Fresh unrest gripped West Bengal's Murshidabad district Saturday as protesters again blocked National Highway-12 and railway tracks at Beldanga, a day after violent agitations over the death of a migrant worker had snapped road and rail links between the state's northern and southern parts for hours, police said. Hundreds of locals gathered on the highway at Barua More in Beldanga, bringing traffic on NH-12 to a standstill and triggering long queues of stranded vehicles, while protesters also damaged a railway gate and attempted to disrupt train services, they said.

**Gold worth ₹2.89 cr seized from 3 Burmese**

**New Delhi:** Three Myanmar nationals have been booked after Delhi Customs officers seized over 2 kg of gold worth ₹2.89 crore from them at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, officials said Saturday. The three male passengers, who arrived from Yangon, Myanmar, January 14, were intercepted while crossing the green channel at the international arrivals hall of Terminal 3, an official statement said. "On thorough personal search and baggage examination, 13 gold bars, were recovered from them. The weight of 13 uneven rectangular shaped gold is 2158 grams," the statement said.

**Defence delegation to visit Kenya**

**New Delhi:** A four-member Indian delegation, led by Sanjeev Kumar, Secretary (Defence Production) in the defence ministry will undertake an official visit to Kenya from January 19-21, officials said Saturday. During the visit, he will also hold meetings with the officials of the government of Kenya and Kenya Defence Forces, they said.



The Madurai soil is known for bravery. We become valorous by witnessing the world-famous Jallikattu. The strong bulls are the pride of Tamil Nadu. I hope this will make you happy

MK STALIN | CHIEF MINISTER, TAMIL NADU

**WAR MEMORIAL SET UP IN RAJOURI**

In a tribute to fallen heroes, including a senior government official, who lost their lives during Operation Sindo in May last year, the army in coordination with Jammu and Kashmir government has established a war memorial in the border district of Jammu, officials said Saturday

**Suspected Pak drone seen hovering over forward village in J&K**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jammu, Jan 17:** A suspected Pakistani drone was briefly sighted over a forward area along the International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district Saturday, officials said.

The drone-like object came from the direction of Pakistan around 7 pm and was seen hovering over Kandral village in Ramgarh area for a couple of minutes, they said.

According to officials, after the drone movement was spotted, security forces launched a search operation in the area to ensure there were no airdrops of illicit payload like narcotics or weapons.

However, nothing objectionable was found during the operation, they said.

Earlier January 9, security forces recovered an arms consignment, dropped by a drone that originated in Pakistan, in Paloora village of Ghagwal in Samba. The recovery included two pistols, three magazines, 16 rounds and a grenade.

Drone movement was also noticed in several forward areas along the Line of Control in Rajouri and Poonch districts over the past week amid heightened security ahead of Republic Day celebrations. The Army fired at similar unmanned aerial vehicles at three places in the twin border districts, and also lodged a protest with their Pakistan counterpart.

**India seeks early consular access for 16 detained nationals**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 17:** India will continue to press Iranian authorities to grant early consular access to the 16 Indian crew members of a commercial vessel that was detained last month, the Indian embassy in Tehran said Saturday.

The mission said it was informed in mid-December about the detention of the vessel, MT Valiant Roar, with the Indian crew onboard.

"The Consulate of India in Bandar Abbas immediately (December 14) wrote to the Government of Iran seeking consular access to the crew," the embassy said.

It said the request for consular access has been repeated numerous times since then, both by diplomatic correspondence and in-person meetings in Bandar Abbas and Tehran, including at the level of the ambassador.

"The matter is expected to be subject to judicial process in Iran," the embassy said.

However, the Mission and the Consulate continue to press the Iranian authorities to grant early consular access to the crew, and to ensure expeditious completion of the judicial proceedings," it said.

The embassy said the Iranian authorities were also requested to allow the crew to communicate with their families in India. The Indian consulate in Bandar Abbas also established contact December 15 with the United Arab Emirates-based



company that owns the ship.

Subsequently, it has also been in touch with the Iranian-based agents of the company to press for providing food, water and fuel to the ship, and also to arrange legal representation for the crew in Iranian courts, the embassy said.

"Upon being informed by the ship of depleting food and water stocks, the mission intervened with the Iranian navy to arrange emergency supplies of food and water in early January," it said. The Indian Consulate in Dubai has also been pressing the ship-owning company to ensure legal representation and regular supplies to the ship, it said.

## Treaties should be driven by national interest: SC



The observations by Justice JB Pardiwala came while a judgment in which the apex court upheld the decision of the domestic revenue authorities that capital gains arising from a US-based investor firm Tiger Global's exit from Flipkart in 2018 are taxable in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 17:** Treaties should be driven by national interest, not pressure from foreign governments or corporations, the Supreme Court has said while asserting that India must safeguard its tax sover-

"Tax treaties, international agreements, protocols and safeguards should be very engaging, transparent and capable of periodical reviews with the power to renegotiate with strong exit clauses to avoid unfair outcomes, safeguarding the nation's strategic and security, preventing erosion of tax base and loss or weakening of democratic control and introducing explicit carve outs safeguarding the sovereign's right of taxation.

"Treaties should be driven by national interest, not pressure from foreign governments or corporations," Justice Pardiwala said.

The top court laid down detailed safeguards to ensure that tax treaties protect the country's economic sovereignty, revenue base and public in-

terest. Justice Pardiwala suggested a comprehensive set of safeguards that India should adopt while negotiating or renewing international tax treaties, including incorporating limitation of benefits clauses to prevent treaty shopping by shell companies, allowing domestic anti-avoidance laws such as the General Anti-Avoidance Rule.

He said treaties should reflect broader economic and public interest, not just bureaucratic or diplomatic goals.

Tiger Global exited from Flipkart in 2018, when Walmart Inc. acquired a controlling stake in the Indian e-commerce company. Tiger Global approached the Income Tax Department in February 2019 for an Advance Authority Ruling to adjudicate on the matter.

## PM: Infiltration biggest challenge for Bengal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Malda, Jan 17:** With the high-stakes West Bengal polls barely months away, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday made infiltration the central plank of his offensive against the TMC government, alleging that large-scale illegal migration altered the state's demography, fuelled riots, and thrived due to the ruling party's "patronage and syndicate raj".

Amid the ongoing political controversy over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Modi sought to reassure refugees such as the Matuas, who migrated to India after facing religious persecution in neighbouring Bangladesh, asserting that they had nothing to fear.

Sharpening the battle lines and setting the tone for the 2026 electoral contest in the state, where the BJP is the principal challenger to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress, Modi accused TMC of "thuggery" and said its "politics of threatening and intimidating the poor" would soon come to an end, with Bengal, which is surrounded by BJP-ruled states, ready for what he called "Asol Paribartan" (real change).

Modi, who is on his second visit to the state in less than a month, launched a series of rail and road infrastructure projects worth about ₹3,250 crore in the state and flagged off the first Vande Bharat sleeper train between Howrah and Guwahati (Kamakhya) from Malda Town station in north Bengal

indicated that illegal migration will be the central election issue of the BJP campaign in the state.

The elections to the 294-member West Bengal Assembly are due in less than three months.

"There are developed and prosperous countries in the world that have no shortage of money, yet they are removing infiltrators. It is equally necessary to remove infiltrators from West Bengal," he said, adding that a BJP government would take "big action" to stop illegal migration and weed out infiltrators if voted to power.

Claiming that the impact of infiltration was visible on the ground, the Prime Minister said the demographic balance had changed in many parts of the state.

People tell me that in several places, even the spoken language is beginning to change. Differences are emerging in language and dialect. Due to the increasing population of infiltrators, riots have started occurring in many areas of West Bengal, including Malda and Murshidabad," he said.

Addressing the mega rally in the Muslim-majority district of North Bengal, Modi said infiltration posed "a very big challenge" and alleged that TMC has an alliance with infiltrators, remarks that clearly



**Modi flagged off the country's first Vande Bharat sleeper train between Howrah and Guwahati (Kamakhya) from Malda Town station in north Bengal**

indicated that illegal migration will be the central election issue of the BJP campaign in the state.

The elections to the 294-member West Bengal Assembly are due in less than three months.

"There are developed and prosperous countries in the world that have no shortage of money, yet they are removing infiltrators. It is equally necessary to remove infiltrators from West Bengal," he said, adding that a BJP government would take "big action" to stop illegal migration and weed out infiltrators if voted to power.

Claiming that the impact of infiltration was visible on the ground, the Prime Minister said the demographic balance had changed in many parts of the state.

People tell me that in several places, even the spoken language is beginning to change. Differences are emerging in language and dialect. Due to the increasing population of infiltrators, riots have started occurring in many areas of West Bengal, including Malda and Murshidabad," he said.

Addressing the mega rally in the Muslim-majority district of North Bengal, Modi said infiltration posed "a very big challenge" and alleged that TMC has an alliance with infiltrators, remarks that clearly

## Suspense builds over Mumbai Mayor's post

**Shinde's corporators moved to hotel**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



**Mumbai, Jan 17:** The Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena Saturday shifted its newly elected corporators in Mumbai to a luxury hotel in the city amid suspense over who would become the next Mayor.

Uddhav Thackeray, whose Shiv Sena (UBT) is the second single largest party, added to speculation by saying his party could have its Mayor if "Dev" (God) was willing. He also suggested that Shinde's party was scared of poaching attempts by its ally BJP.

The alliance of the BJP and Shinde-led Sena won a clear majority in the 227-member Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation Friday, securing 89 and 29 seats, respectively. The Sena (UBT) won 65 seats.

A senior leader of Shinde's party said the corporators were being moved to a luxury hotel in Bandra so that they can "refresh" themselves after a hectic election season.

Asked about reports about Shinde-led Sena's corporators moving to a hotel, Thackeray said they were afraid of the BJP. "Those who had once

Another party functionary said the corporators would undergo "orientation", and will be housed in the hotel for a couple of days. Earlier in the day, Uddhav Thackeray said the BJP failed to finish off his party which had ruled the BMC for 25 years. "It's my dream to install a Shiv Sena (UBT) mayor in Mumbai, and if God is willing, this dream will be realised," he said, interacting with party workers.

Asked about reports about Shinde-led Sena's corporators moving to a hotel, Thackeray said they were afraid of the BJP. "Those who had once



People ride hot air balloons during the Hot Air Balloon Festival, organised by Telangana Tourism, in Hyderabad, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

## India needs anti-discrimination law: Rahul

**The death of the 26-year-old Dalit student January 17, 2016, triggered a nationwide agitation against casteism in institutions of higher learning**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



In a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi said, "Today marks 10 years since Rohith Vemula's passing. But Rohith's question still resonates in our hearts: Does everyone in this country have an equal right to dream?"

"Rohith wanted to study, he wanted to write. He wanted to understand science, society and humanity to make this country a better place. But this system could not tolerate a Dalit's progress," the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said.

Institutionalised casteism, social exclusion, daily humiliation, language that reminded him of his "place" and inhuman treatment -- "this was the poison that pushed a promising young man to a point where his dignity was stripped away and he was left alone", Gandhi said. "And today? Has the reality for Dalit youth changed? The same contempt on campus, the

same isolation in hostels, the same feeling of inferiority in classrooms, the same violence -- and sometimes, the same death. Because caste is still the biggest admission form in this country," he added.

That is why the Rohith Vemula Act is not just a slogan but a necessity, the Congress leader asserted.

This fight is not just in Parliament, it is a fight of the youngsters on campuses and

"it is our fight", Gandhi said.

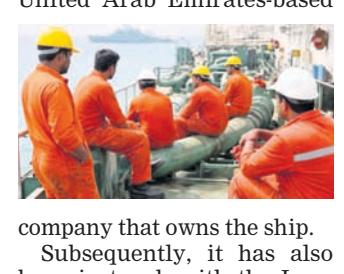
"Dalit youth -- raise your voices, organise yourselves, stand with each other. Demand: Implement the Rohith Vemula Act now. We need an anti-discrimination law now," he stressed.

The Congress governments in Karnataka and Telangana are in the process of implementing the law as soon as possible, he said.

"We want an India that is just, humane and equal -- where no Dalit student has to pay for their dreams with their life. Rohith, your fight is our responsibility," Gandhi said.

The death of the 26-year-old Dalit student January 17, 2016, triggered a nationwide agitation against casteism in institutions of higher learning.

Gandhi had joined the student protests over Vemula's suicide.



company that owns the ship.

Subsequently, it has also been in touch with the Iranian-based agents of the company to press for providing food, water and fuel to the ship, and also to arrange legal representation for the crew in Iranian courts, the embassy said.

"Upon being informed by the ship of depleting food and water stocks, the mission intervened with the Iranian navy to arrange emergency supplies of food and water in early January," it said. The Indian Consulate in Dubai has also been pressing the ship-owning company to ensure legal representation and regular supplies to the ship, it said.

# international

of the day quote

## RISING ATTACKS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Dhaka, Jan 17:** Journalists, editors and owners of media outlets in Bangladesh Saturday demanded that authorities protect them following recent attacks on two leading national dailies by mobs.

They said the media industry in the South Asian country is being systematically targeted in the interim government headed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus. They said the administration failed to prevent attacks on the Daily Star, the country's leading English-language daily, and the Prothom Alo, the largest Bengali-language newspaper, both based in Dhaka, the capital.

In December, angry mobs stormed the offices of the two newspapers and set fire to the buildings, trapping journalists and other staff inside, shortly

**The weaponisation of public anger against journalists and artists is dangerous at any time, and especially now as the country prepares for elections. It could have a chilling effect on media freedom, minority voices and dissenting views with serious consequences for democracy**

IRENE KHAN | LAWYER AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST, BANGLADESH

after the death of a prominent Islamist activist.

The newspaper authorities blamed the authorities under the interim government for failing to adequately respond to the incidents despite repeated requests for help to disperse the mobs. Hours later, the trapped journalists who took shelter on the roof of the Daily Star newspaper were rescued. The buildings were looted. A leader of the Editors Council, an independent body of newspaper



We consider the US president criminal for the casualties, damages and slander he inflicted on the Iranian nation

AYATOLLAH ALI KHAMENEI | SUPREME LEADER, IRAN

## NATIONAL GUARD STAYS IN DC

National Guard troops will be on the streets of Washington, D C, until the end of the year, according to a memo reviewed by The Associated Press. The memo, signed by Army Secretary Dan Driscoll and dated Wednesday, said "the conditions of the mission" warranted an extension past the end of next month to continue supporting President Donald Trump's "ongoing efforts to restore law and order."



Lanka unveils 'biggest' rare purple star sapphire



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Colombo, Jan 17:** A Purple Star Sapphire weighing 3,563 carats which is claimed to be the world's biggest of its kind was unveiled Saturday in the Sri Lankan capital by the owners, who are ready to sell the precious stone which is estimated to be worth at least \$300 million.

The round shaped gem named "Star of Pure Land" is the world's largest documented natural purple star sapphire, said Ashan Amarasinghe, a consultant gemologist.

"This is the largest purple star sapphire of its kind," he told the media, adding that the gem "shows a well-defined asterism. It has six rays asterism. "That's something special out of all the other stones."

The gem, which has been polished, is owned by the Star of Pure Land Team, who want to remain anonymous for security reasons.

One of the owners said the gem was found in a gem pit near the remote Sri Lankan town of Rathnapura, known as the "city of gems," in 2023.

It was purchased together with other gems in 2023 and about two years later, the owners found that it was a special stone. They then got it certified by two laboratories.

Amarasinghe said the value of the stone has been estimated at \$300 million to \$400 million by international valuers. Sri Lankan sapphires are renowned for their unique colour, clarity and shimmer.

## Journos in Bangladesh demand protection



editors, was manhandled by the attackers when he arrived at the scene. On the same day, liberal cultural centres were also attacked in Dhaka.

It was not clear why the protesters attacked the newspapers, whose editors are known to be closely connected with Yunus. Protests had been organised in recent months outside the offices of the dailies by Islamists who accused the newspapers of links with India.

On Saturday, the Editors

Kabir, also the editor of the English-language New Age daily, said unity among journalists should be upheld to fight such a trend.

"Those who want to suppress institutions that act as vehicles of democratic aspirations are doing so through laws, force and intimidation," he said.

After the attacks on the two dailies in December, an expert of the United Nations said that mob attacks on leading media outlets and cultural centres in Bangladesh were deeply alarming and must be investigated promptly and effectively.

Dozens of journalists are facing murder charges linked to the uprising on the grounds that they encouraged the government of Hasina to use lethal weapons against the protesters. Several journalists who are known to have close links with Hasina have been arrested and jailed under Yunus.

## Aircraft with 11 onboard goes missing in Indonesia



REUTERS

**Jakarta, Jan 17:** Indonesian rescuers were searching Saturday for an ATR 42-500 fisheries surveillance aircraft that went missing with 11 people on board, officials said.

The Indonesia Air Transport plane lost contact with air traffic control at about 1:30 pm (0530 GMT) around Maros region in South Sulawesi province, Andi Sultan, an official at the local rescue agency, told Reuters.

The aircraft had been heading to Makassar, the capital of South Sulawesi, after departing from Yogyakarta province before contact was lost, Sultan said.

There were eight crew and three passengers on board, he added. Around 400 personnel, including military and police units, were deployed to search for the plane and those on board, though the effort was being hampered by bad weather.

When Syria's army announced it was aiming to capture Tabqa next, the SDF said it wasn't part of the original deal and that it would fight to keep the town, as well as oil fields in its vicinity.

**Syrian troop buildup led to agreed withdrawal of Kurdish fighters**  
**Clashes erupted when Syrian troops pushed on further**  
**Arab residents rejoice as Syrian troops take over**  
**US envoy meets with Kurdish leaders in Erbil**

elated to Erbil in northern Iraq Saturday to meet with both Abdi and Iraqi Kurdish leader Masoud Barzani, according to two Kurdish sources. There was no immediate comment from Barrack's spokesperson.

**DEEPENING DIVIDES**  
Weeks of tensions between Syrian troops and the SDF have deepened the faultline between the government of President Ahmed al-Sharaa, who has vowed to reunify the fractured country after 14 years of war, and local Kurdish authorities wary of his Islamist-led administration.

The two sides engaged in months of talks last year to integrate Kurdish-run military and civilian bodies into Syrian state institutions by the end of 2025, insisting repeatedly that they wanted to resolve disputes diplomatically.

But after the deadline passed with clashes broke out earlier this month in the northern city of Aleppo and ended with a withdrawal of Kurdish fighters.

Enough blood in this country, Syria. We have sacrificed and lost enough - people are tired of it," Hussein al-Khalaf, a resident of Deir Hafer, told Reuters.

SDF forces had withdrawn east, some on foot, towards the flashpoint town of Tabqa - downstream but still on the western side of the river, according to a Reuters reporter in the area.

But when Syria's army announced it was aiming to capture Tabqa next, the SDF said it wasn't part of the original deal and that it would fight to keep the town, as well as oil fields in its vicinity.

Syria's army said four of its troops had been killed in attacks by Kurdish militants, and the SDF said some of its own fighters had been killed, but did not give a number.

US-led coalition planes flew over the flashpoint towns, releasing warning flares, according to a Syrian security source.

In a bid to end the fighting, US envoy Tom Barrack trav-

er, Sultan said. "We suspect the plane came down near the peak of Mount Bulusaraung. We have deployed our personnel there," he said. The plane had been chartered by Indonesia's Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, ministry official Pung Nugroho Saksono said.

The ATR 42-500 is a regional turboprop aircraft capable of carrying between 42 and 50 passengers. According to unconfirmed FlightRadar24 data, an aircraft matching the description was flying eastward over the Java Sea at about 11,000 feet before rapidly losing altitude and dropping off tracking systems.



People take part in the "Hands Off Greenland" protest, held under the slogans "Hands Off Greenland" and "Greenland for Greenlanders", after the White House said that the US was considering a range of options to acquire Greenland, including the use of military force, in Copenhagen, Denmark Saturday

REUTERS

## FRESH FIGHTING

## Syrian troops clash with Kurdish forces



enough blood in this country, Syria. We have sacrificed and lost enough - people are tired of it," Hussein al-Khalaf, a resident of Deir Hafer, told Reuters.

SDF forces had withdrawn east, some on foot, towards the flashpoint town of Tabqa - downstream but still on the western side of the river, according to a Reuters reporter in the area.

But when Syria's army announced it was aiming to capture Tabqa next, the SDF said it wasn't part of the original deal and that it would fight to keep the town, as well as oil fields in its vicinity.

Syria's army said four of its troops had been killed in attacks by Kurdish militants, and the SDF said some of its own fighters had been killed, but did not give a number.

US-led coalition planes flew over the flashpoint towns, releasing warning flares, according to a Syrian security source.

In a bid to end the fighting, US envoy Tom Barrack trav-

## NORTH ATLANTIC GUARD



Designed and built by defence and aerospace group Leonardo, Proteus relies on sensors and computer systems powered by software that allows it to interpret its environment and make decisions, the navy said.

The navy said it was designed for anti-submarine warfare, sea patrols, and underwater vessel tracking.

"Proteus represents a step-change in how maritime aviation can deliver persistence, adaptability and reach - conducting the dull, dirty and dangerous missions in challenging environments without putting human operators at risk," said Nigel Colman, UK managing director of Leonardo Helicopters.

The navy already operates several drones, including a small surveillance helicopter, but Proteus is bigger and more sophisticated.

## EU, Mercosur seal historic trade deal



REUTERS

### 25 YEARS OF NEGOTIATIONS

**Asuncion, Jan 17:** Top officials from the EU and the South American bloc Mercosur signed a free trade agreement Saturday in Paraguay, paving the way for the European Union's largest ever trade accord after 25 years of negotiations.

The agreement, designed to lower tariffs and boost trade between the two regions, must now gain the consent of the European Parliament and be ratified by legislatures of Mercosur members Argentina, Brazil,

Paraguay and Uruguay.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Antonio Costa joined the presidents of Mercosur countries at Saturday's ceremony, with the exception of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who sent his foreign minister.

The deal was signed after receiving the green light from most European nations last week, despite concerns from farmer and environmental

groups, who fear a surge of inexpensive South American imports and increased deforestation.

Von der Leyen, who met with Lula before heading to Asuncion for the signing, said the deal would create the largest free trade zone in the world.

"This agreement sends a very strong message to the world. It reflects a clear and deliberate choice. We choose fair trade over tariffs. We choose a productive, long-term partnership over isolation," she said Saturday.

The deal was signed after receiving the green light from most European nations last week, despite concerns from farmer and environmental

boost their military ranks.

US interest in acquiring Greenland is in part to expand its ability to monitor waters used by Russian vessels and submarines, including any activity in the waters between Greenland, Iceland and Britain. Russia says talk of Moscow and Beijing being a threat to Greenland is a myth.

The British navy said the

helicopter, named Proteus, had successfully completed a short test routine.

Developed under a 60 million-pound (\$80.46 million) programme, it was key to defending Britain and NATO allies against what it called "evolving threats" in the North Atlantic.

Royal Navy helicopter makes history with first autonomous flight



As India's cities grow taller, the responsibility to ensure safety, comfort, and long-term value for residents becomes even more critical

LALIT AGARWAL | CO-FOUNDER & VICE CHAIRMAN, SIGNATURE GLOBAL

**RELIANCE ENTERS GLOBAL BEAUTY AREA**  
Reliance Consumer, the FMCG arm of billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led RIL, has acquired global rights of some international brands, like Brylcreem, Toni & Guy and Badesas, to expand its presence in the fast-growing personal care and beauty market. Besides, it has also acquired Matey, a UK-based specialist brand, focusing on the children's personal care category, according to an investor's presentation by Reliance Industries



of the day quote



This first loan sanction by IGIFIL is a landmark for IREDA to emerge as a global catalyst for clean energy financing

PRADIP KUMAR DAS | CMD, IREDA



We will begin with launching seven-seater MPV. This is a premium yet practical electric MPV developed with both family and commercial use in mind

TAPAN GHOSH | CEO, VINFEST



India is currently at the centre of attention among European partners in view of the long-awaited free trade agreement

ADOLFO REBUGHINI | GENERAL MANAGER, VERONAFIERE

## Q3 RESULTS

### HDFC net profit jumps

**Mumbai:** HDFC Bank Saturday said its consolidated profit jumped 12.17 per cent to ₹19,807 crore in the December quarter. The city-headquartered lender had reported a consolidated net profit of ₹17,657 crore in the year-ago period and ₹19,611 crore in the preceding September quarter. On a standalone basis, the profit of the country's largest private sector lender increased 11.46 per cent to ₹18,653.75 crore for the October-December period.

### RBL Bank net up 555X

**Mumbai:** Private sector lender RBL Bank Saturday reported a 555 per cent jump in the December quarter net profit to ₹214 crore, helped by a steep decline in provisions. The lender, which is set to receive a \$3 billion fund infusion from Emirates NBD Bank, had reported a net profit of ₹33 crore in the year-ago period and ₹179 crore in the preceding June quarter. Its core net interest income grew 5 per cent to ₹1,657 crore on the back of a 14 per cent increase in advances and a 0.12 per cent growth in net interest margin to 4.63 per cent.

### ICICI net profit slips

**Mumbai:** Private sector lender ICICI Bank Saturday said its consolidated net profit for the December 2025 quarter declined 2.68 per cent to ₹12,537.98 crore. ICICI Bank had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹12,883.37 crore for the October-December period last year and ₹13,537.06 crore in the preceding September quarter. On a standalone basis, the second-largest private sector lender reported profit after tax of ₹11,318 crore, up from ₹11,792 crore in the year-ago period.

### IDBI net remains flat

**New Delhi:** IDBI Bank Saturday reported almost flat profit at ₹1,935 crore for the third quarter ended December 2025. The LIC-controlled bank reported a net profit of ₹1,908 crore in the year-ago period. However, the bank's total income declined to ₹8,282 crore during the quarter under review from ₹8,565 crore in the same period last year, IDBI Bank said in a regulatory filing.

### UCO profit rises 16%

**New Delhi:** State-owned UCO Bank Saturday reported a 16 per cent rise in net profit to ₹740 crore in the December quarter, helped by core income and decline in bad loans. The Kolkata-headquartered bank had earned a net profit of ₹639 crore a year ago. The bank's total income increased to ₹7,521 crore during the quarter under review against ₹7,406 crore in the same period last year, UCO Bank said in a regulatory filing.

# Exporters bet big on India-EU FTA

The EU remains one of India's largest trading partners, accounting for about 17% of India's goods exports and a significant share of services trade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



The conclusion of negotiations for the agreement is likely to be announced January 27

Engineering goods, petroleum products and chemicals are central to these discussions, he added.

Textiles and apparel currently attract 12-16 per cent import duty in the EU, which makes Indian goods less competitive. The average import duty for ready-made garments in the EU is 12 per cent, which apparently comes to 9.6 per cent as India enjoys preferential access under the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences (now called DCTS).

Kanpur-based Growmore International MD Yadavendra Singh Sachan said that domestic leather exporters should use this opportunity to significantly boost shipments.

"The FTA will be a game changer for Indian exporters," Sachan said.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) said substantial increases in US tariffs are affecting a spectrum of Indian exports, and it underscores the need for diversification of export markets and trade strategies.

Against this backdrop, it said, concluding a comprehensive India-EU Free Trade Agreement is not only timely, but it is strategically vital.

The EU remains one of India's largest trading partners, accounting for about 17 per cent of India's goods exports and a significant share of ser-

Reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers with the EU will partially offset adverse impacts from tariff pressures elsewhere, especially the United States, strengthening India's global trade footprint

AJAY SAHAI | DIRECTOR GENERAL, FIEO

vices trade.

"Reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers with the EU will partially offset adverse impacts from tariff pressures elsewhere, especially the United States, strengthening India's global trade footprint," FIEO Director General Ajay Sahai said.

He said that India is a major supplier of generics and specialty chemicals, and easier access under the trade pact will help scale exports.

Reduced duties on engineering goods and electrical machinery will enhance the competitiveness of Indian manufactured goods, he added.

Besides gems and jewellery, exports are expected to benefit from tariff concessions and streamlined regulatory convergence, while petroleum products and iron and steel export lines will gain improved market access under the FTA regime, Sahai said.

The major service segments, which will benefit from the pact, include IT, Legal, consulting, accounting, and management. Bilateral goods trade between India and the EU was approximately USD 136.5 billion in 2024-25, with India exporting roughly USD 75.8 billion to the EU.

Real GDP growth to be in 6-7% range in FY27, capex to surge by 14%

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Jan 17:** India's real GDP growth in FY27 is expected to be in the range of 6-7 per cent, supported by domestic consumption, interest rate cuts, and public capital expenditure, according to a new report.

For budgetary analysis, ICRA used the NSO's 'First Advance Estimates' of nominal GDP of ₹357.1 trillion for FY26, reflecting a growth of 8.0 per cent, and its own estimate of ₹392.0 trillion for FY27, implying nominal GDP growth of 9.8 per cent.

The rating agency further said that it expects the government to cap the fiscal deficit at 4.3 per cent of GDP in FY27, compared to the Budget Estimate of 4.4 per cent in FY2026, assuming nominal GDP growth of 9.8 per cent.

"The FY27 Budget is expected to reflect a shift in focus from annual fiscal deficit targets to a medium-term debt consolidation path, especially in the context of the forthcoming 16th Finance Commission recommendations," the report

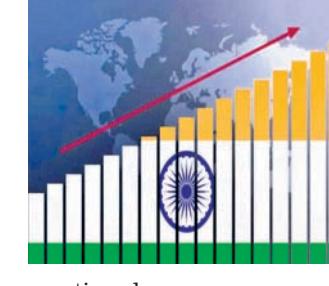
He said that India is a major supplier of generics and specialty chemicals, and easier access under the trade pact will help scale exports.

Reduced duties on engineering goods and electrical machinery will enhance the competitiveness of Indian manufactured goods, he added.

Besides gems and jewellery, exports are expected to benefit from tariff concessions and streamlined regulatory convergence, while petroleum products and iron and steel export lines will gain improved market access under the FTA regime, Sahai said.

The major service segments, which will benefit from the pact, include IT, Legal, consulting, accounting, and management. Bilateral goods trade between India and the EU was approximately USD 136.5 billion in 2024-25, with India exporting roughly USD 75.8 billion to the EU.

Financial disclosures posted



Thursday and Friday showed the majority of Trump's purchases were municipal bonds from cities, local school districts, utilities and hospitals. But he also bought bonds from companies including Boeing, Occidental Petroleum and General Motors.

The investments were the latest reported assets added to Trump's expanding portfolio while he is in office. It includes holdings in sectors that benefit

**Wipro slashes FY26 fresher hiring target amid muted Q3 show**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 17:** IT major Wipro Friday revised its fresher hiring guidance for the current fiscal year (FY26), stating it now expects to onboard 7,500-8,000 graduates, down from its original target of 10,000-12,000.

The adjustment comes after muted third-quarter earnings, during which the Bangalore-based firm added only about 400 freshers to its rolls.

"This quarter recruitment from campuses was muted; we had only about 400 odd freshers join in (by the end of this fiscal)... We had said 10,000. I think we'll end up between 7,500-8,000," Wipro CHRO Saubhab Ghosh said during the company's Q3 earnings press conference.

Despite the quarterly slowdown, the company's year-to-date fresher intake remains above 5,000.

Wipro leadership emphasised that while volume hiring has moderated, the company is intensifying its focus on "AI-ready" talent.

Wipro added 6,529 employees during the October-December quarter, bringing its total staff count to 2,42,021.

## NETFLIX, WARNER BROS BONDS AMONG \$100 MILLION PURCHASED BY TRUMP



The purchases of Netflix and WBD debt securities happened just a few days after the two companies finalised their \$83 billion megadeal

REUTERS

**Washington, Jan 17:** US President Donald Trump purchased about \$100 million in municipal and corporate bonds from mid-November to late December, his latest disclosures showed, including up to \$2 million in Netflix and Warner Bros Discovery bonds just weeks after the companies announced their merger.

Thursday and Friday showed the majority of Trump's purchases were municipal bonds from cities, local school districts, utilities and hospitals. But he also bought bonds from companies including Boeing, Occidental Petroleum and General Motors.

The investments were the latest reported assets added to Trump's expanding portfolio while he is in office. It includes holdings in sectors that benefit

from his policies, raising questions about conflicts of interest.

For example, Trump said in December he will have a say in whether Netflix can proceed with its proposed \$83 billion acquisition of Warner Bros Discovery, which faces a rival bid from Paramount Skydance. Any deal to acquire Warner Bros will need regulatory approval.

A White House official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said Friday that Trump's stock and bond portfolio is independently managed by third-party financial institutions and neither Trump nor any member of his family has any ability to direct, influence or provide input regarding how the portfolio is invested.

## FRAUDULENT PARTNERSHIP

### Musk seeks up to \$134bn from OpenAI, Microsoft

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

\$500 billion valuation as he do-

nated \$38 million in seed fund-

ing during the founding stage of

the company in 2015.

According to court papers,

Musk's side argued that \$65.5

billion to \$109.43 billions of

alleged wrongful gains

were made by OpenAI

and \$13.3 billion

to \$25.06 billion by

Microsoft from

Musk's financial

and non-monetary

contributions, in-

cluding technical and

business advice.

OpenAI and Microsoft have denied the

allegations.

Musk left OpenAI's board in

2018, launched his own AI com-

pany in 2023, and sued OpenAI in

2024, challenging co-founder Sam

Altman's move to operate the

company as a for-profit entity.

## Maruti Suzuki to invest ₹35K-cr in new plant

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE



ing facility at Khoraj, with an investment of ₹35,000 crore," Patel said in the post.

Guided by the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his 'Make in India, Make for the World' vision, Gujarat continues to strengthen India's manufacturing ecosystem, Chief Minister held in Gandhinagar.

"Glad to witness the Investment Letter Handover by Maruti Suzuki India Limited to the Government of Gujarat for setting up a mega car manufac-

"The presence of Maruti Su-

zuki further deepens the trusted India-Japan partnership and reflects global confidence in Gujarat's policy-driven governance, world-class infrastructure and industry-friendly ecosystem. Gujarat has firmly emerged as one of India's leading automobile hubs and a preferred destination for global investors," Patel further stated.

Maruti Suzuki India said in an exchange filing.

The car manufacturer produced over 22.55 lakh vehicles in 2025 - its highest-ever output in a calendar year. Maruti Suzuki India has exported 3.95 lakh vehicles in 2025, its highest ever in any calendar year. This marks a growth of over 21 per cent as compared to 2024.

The filing cited calculations that showed Musk is entitled to a share of OpenAI's current

market capitalisation.

The Nifty underperformed global peers and emerging markets by around 25 per cent, marking its worst relative performance in nearly three decades.

This correction has brought India's valuation premium closer to its long-term average.

Globally, gold, emerging markets, Europe and the so-called "Magnificent 7" stocks were among the top performers in 2025. In contrast, oil, the US dollar and Bitcoin were among the worst-performing assets during the year.

The report noted that after several years of strong gains,

### Indian households add ₹117L-cr in 2025 as gold rally boosts wealth

This was the highest wealth gain from gold price appreciation in the last 25 years

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

# Men in Blue look to protect ODI record

## BLACK CAPS EYE HISTORIC FIRST SERIES WIN IN INDIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, Jan 17: India's absolute dominance at home will come under examination when they meet a determined New Zealand in the decisive third ODI at the high-scoring Holkar Stadium here Sunday, with the three-match series locked at 1-1.

India have not lost a bilateral ODI series at home since March 2019, when Australia overcame a 0-2 deficit to win 3-2, including the decider in Delhi. But that history is now firmly on the line.

For New Zealand, the context is equally compelling.

The Black Caps have toured India for bilateral ODIs since 1989 but have never won a series in India and this is arguably their best opportunity to break that barren run.

India head coach Gautam Gambhir would not like another tumbling at home under his regime after getting a number of unwanted firsts. India lost five Tests at home under Gambhir apart from losing an ODI series in Sri Lanka for the first time.

India's defeat in the second ODI at Rajkot was shaped less by one extraordinary innings than by how New Zealand seized control of the middle overs.

Daryl Mitchell's unbeaten century was built on calculated aggression, particularly against spin, an area where India have been struggling of late.

Indore, with its short boundaries and minimal assistance for bowlers, offers even less margin for error.

India's ability to tackle spin has raised questions. Despite depth and power, the side has



continued to show discomfort against spin in the middle overs.

Strike rotation has stalled at key phases, forcing batters into high-risk options rather than controlled accumulation.

On a ground where totals can quickly spiral beyond 350, those quiet overs can decisively tilt the momentum.

Much of the spotlight will be on Rohit Sharma, who is enduring a lean run in this series. His ultra-aggressive approach at the top has been a defining feature of India's recent ODI philosophy, but repeated early dismissals has added a bit of pressure.

Virat Kohli, meanwhile, remains the fulcrum around which India's ODI batting revolves. With India's next 50-over assignment for senior players likely to come in July during the tour of England, the fans would hope for another RoKo show.

For Shubman Gill and his side, the challenge is not just to win a series, but to demonstrate tactical flexibility and situational awareness - traits that define successful teams when margins are thin and pressure is real.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 17:** Table-toppers Vedanta Kalinga Lancers opened the Bhubaneswar leg of the men's Hockey India League (HIL) with a commanding 6-1 victory over SG Pipers here Saturday.

The Lancers extended their winning streak to five matches.

Bobby Singh Dhami was named player of the match for a brilliant play-making performance that kept the Pipers' defence on the back foot all evening.

Cooper Burns (8th, 23rd minutes) and Alexander Hendrickx (39th, 56th) scored twice each, while Craig Marais (10th) and Angad Singh (54th) added one goal apiece to complete the rout.

KY Williot scored the solitary goal for the Pipers.

In the first match of the day, Hyderabad Toofans registered a dominating 6-0 win over Shachi Bengal Tigers.

Zachary Wallace (2nd, 17th, 30th minutes) and Tim Brand (12th, 39th, 46th) scored a hat-trick each for Hyderabad Toofans.

Hyderabad Toofans opened the scoring in the second minute of the first quarter itself as Talwinder Singh did well to hold and protect the ball inside the circle and passed it on to Wallace who finished the chance with ease.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Kalinga Lancers extend their unbeaten streak to five matches with a 6-1 win against SG Pipers

## HOCKEY INDIA LEAGUE

# Lancers dominate in home opener

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



In the seventh minute, Sukhejeet Singh won a penalty corner for Shachi Bengal Tigers but Tom Grambusch's drag-flick went inches away from the goal.

The very next minute, the Tigers won another penalty corner and this time, Grambusch's attempt was saved by Hyderabad Toofans' goalkeeper Jean-Paul Danneberg.

In the 12th minute, Hyderabad Toofans won their first penalty corner of the evening and although Amandeep Lakra's drag-flick was saved initially by the Tigers, Brand was quick to react on the rebound and slotted the ball into the net to extend the lead.

Hyderabad Toofans continued their scoring streak in the second quarter as Wallace was given too much time and space in the 16th minute. He dribbled

down the middle into the circle and unleashed a low-driven shot, to sneak the ball past the goalkeeper and into the bottom-right corner of the goal.

In the 19th minute, Abhishek created a good opportunity for Shachi Bengal Tigers as he took a strong shot on goal but it was stopped by Hyderabad Toofans' goalkeeper Bikramjit Singh.

Moments later, the Tigers came close again as Ketan Kushwaha played a strong pass into the circle from the left flank but Abhishek's deflection towards goal went narrowly wide off-target.

With 20 seconds left in the first half, Hyderabad Toofans found another goal, this time Wallace dribbled from the right flank and struck the ball towards goal, and it took a deflection and went over the

Tigers' goalkeeper.

The third quarter started off with a tight contest between the two sides. However, it didn't take long for Hyderabad Toofans to score their fifth goal.

In the 39th minute, Arshdeep Singh showed incredible 3D skills along the baseline as he beat multiple defenders and played it in the centre of the circle for Brand, who slotted the ball into the goalpost with ease.

In the first minute of the fourth quarter, Hyderabad Toofans scored their sixth goal, courtesy of Brand again as he completed his hat-trick.

Jacob Anderson took the initial shot on goal and although it was saved by the Tigers' goalkeeper, Brand pounced on the rebound again and finished the ball into the net.

## Odisha eves clinch bronze

Bihar triumph over Maharashtra in repeat of last year's final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



**Bhubaneswar, Jan 17:** The 10th Sub-Junior National Rugby Sevens Championship concluded at the Kalinga Stadium Saturday with a thrilling final day of knockout action, showcasing India's top Under-15 girls' rugby talent.

Bihar edged past this edition's defending champions Maharashtra, while host state Odisha claimed a convincing third-place victory in front of an enthusiastic home crowd.

On day two of the competition, the knockout stages saw teams vie for ranking and top-ranked teams battle for a place in the semifinals. In the Quarterfinals, Bihar continued their dominant run with a 43-7 victory over Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (DNHDD), while Odisha overpowered Karnataka 55-0.

In the semifinals, Bihar maintained their momentum with a commanding 35-0 win over Rajasthan, while Maharashtra came from behind to defeat host state Odisha 17-14 in a nail-biting encounter that had the home crowd on the edge of their seats.

The bronze medal playoff saw Odisha bounce back strongly, dominating Rajasthan 47-5 to claim third place on home turf,

showcasing the depth of their squad and disciplined play.

The final was a rematch of last year's title showdown. Bihar and Maharashtra faced off once again, with Bihar emerging victorious this time; pulling off a commanding 34-7 win, avenging their previous year's defeat and claiming their fifth title win in the last six years in this category.

The closing ceremony was graced by Sachin R Jadhav, IAS, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Department of Sports & Youth Services, Government of Odisha; Yedduva Vijay, IAS, Director - Sports, Department of Sports & Youth Services, Government of Odisha; and Bijaya

Kumar Swain, OAS, Additional Secretary, Department of Sports & Youth Services, Government of Odisha.

Also present to distribute the accolades were Rahul Bose, President, Rugby India; Gerald Prabhu, Secretary, Rugby India; Priyadarshi Mishra, President, Odisha Rugby Football Association; and Upendra Kumar Mohanty, Vice President, Odisha Rugby Football Association.

With the girls' U-15 tournament concluded, attention now turns to the upcoming boys U-15 championship, scheduled to be held January 20 and 21 promising another two days of exciting youth rugby action.

## U19 WC: India trump B'desh via DLS method

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bulawayo (Zimbabwe), Jan 17:** Off-spinner Vihaan Malhotra produced a sensational spell of 4 for 14 to trigger a dramatic Bangladesh batting collapse as India pulled off an 18-run victory via the DLS method in a rain-hit Under-19 World Cup match here Saturday.

Bangladesh, who bowled out India for 238 in a reduced 49-over contest, were firmly in control of the chase before losing eight wickets for 40 runs to lose the match from a winning position. It was India's second consecutive victory in the tournament.

Bangladesh were bowled out for 146 in 28.3 overs, well short of the revised target of 165 from 29 overs.

Players from both sides were seen exchanging handshakes and pleasantries on the field at the end of the match after both the captains avoided the customary gesture at the toss.

Cricket Board (BCB) said in a statement later in the day that "the absence of a handshake with the opposition captain was completely unintentional and resulted from a momentary lapse in concentration."

## 231-YR-OLD RECORD

# Pak TV team defends lowest first-class total

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Karachi, Jan 17:** A 232-year-old record has been shattered in the ongoing Presidents Trophy here, where Pakistan TV (PTV) pulled off the lowest successful defence in the history of first-class cricket.

PTV defended a target of 40 runs against Sui Northern Gas to etch their name in the record books. PTV won the match by just two runs and broke a 232-year-old record when the Old-field team had successfully defended a total of 41 runs against MCC at Lord's back in 1794, winning the game by six runs.

On Saturday, PTV's left-arm spinner, Ali Usman finished with figures of 6 for 9 to cause the main damage and help his team create history as Sui Northern were bowled out for only 37 runs. In the four day game, PTV were skittled out for just 166 runs in their first innings and Sui took a 72-run lead by totalling 238 runs.

## FINALE FIGHT

### Morocco, Senegal clash for Africa Cup glory

**Rabat (Morocco):** Morocco hosts Senegal in the final of the Africa Cup of Nations Sunday, ending a four-week tournament that showcased the continent's best soccer. Morocco will hope it also provided the best playing facilities, stadiums and infrastructure for a tournament on the continent as it continues its preparations to be a 2030 World Cup co-host. It's likely it will get another dry run before the global showpiece as host of the 2028 Africa Cup, brought forward a year to allow the Confederation of African Football to switch the competition to a four-year cycle that brings it in line with FIFA's calendar. A win in the men's showpiece Sunday would end a 50-year wait for the kingdom's second Africa Cup title and bring validation of sorts for the huge spending spree.

## SHORTHAND

### SHORT TAKES

#### B'desh asks ICC to swap group with Ireland

#### Dhaka:

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Saturday asked the ICC to swap its national team with Ireland in Group C during the upcoming T20 World Cup in order to play in Sri Lanka instead of India. Bangladesh are currently placed in Group A along with the West Indies, Italy, England and Nepal and are scheduled to play their matches in Kolkata and Mumbai. Ireland are in Group B alongside Sri Lanka, Australia, Oman and Zimbabwe and their matches are scheduled in Colombo and Pallekele. The two-member ICC team, consisting of Gaurav Saxena, General Manager, Events and Corporate Communications, and Andrew Ephgrave, General Manager, Integrity Unit, was in Dhaka to convince BCB about the security arrangements in India and to follow the original schedule. "The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) today held a meeting with representatives of the International Cricket Council (ICC) to discuss matters relating to Bangladesh's participation in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026," said the BCB in a release after the meeting with ICC delegates.

#### Vijender appointed to Asian Boxing Council

#### New Delhi:

Indian boxing icon

Vijender Singh has been appointed as a member of the Asian

Boxing Council, marking another significant milestone in his journey from an elite athlete to global sports administrator. Vijender, India's first Olympic medalist in boxing, brings with him nearly two decades of experience at the highest level of the sport, both in amateur and professional boxing. His appointment to the Asian Boxing Council reflects his deep understanding of the sport and his continued commitment to its growth across the continent. Speaking on the development, Vijender said, "I am honoured to be appointed as a member of the Asian Boxing Council. I would like to thank the Boxing Federation of India and its leadership for entrusting me with this responsibility. I hope to fulfil this role to the best of my ability at the international level. Just as we created history in Beijing, I am committed to working for the growth of Asian boxing, with a strong focus on Indian boxers, and helping our athletes achieve even greater success in the future."

#### AI slop

#### Washington:

A study by AI risk management platform Alethea into the surge in artificial intelligence-generated fake content, dubbed "AI slop," has warned sports teams, leagues and fans of the risks posed by increasingly sophisticated digital misinformation.

Retired NFL player Jason Kelce never said 2026 Super Bowl halftime singer Bad Bunny's critics were "a bad fit for America's future".

San Francisco 49ers tight end George Kittle never ranted about slain conservative activist Charlie Kirk and politics in football. However, thousands of people believed they did and that is the problem.

"Teams and players are suddenly being accused of things that are completely fabricated," Lisa Kaplan, founder and CEO of Alethea, told Reuters Friday.

adding that the evolution of AI tools has made fake news a more daunting challenge.

"Before, fake news often relied on human labour to repeatedly copy and paste content. Today, AI can impersonate brands and create engaging images that mimic genuine announcements."

Kaplan noted that this wave of AI-generated misinformation has disrupted the traditional monetisation model of sports media. "These networks drive engagement to questionable websites, skew advertising metrics, and can even create scenarios that could manipulate betting markets," she added.

Retired NFL player Jason

Kelce never said 2026 Super

Bowl halftime singer Bad

Bunny's critics were "a bad fit

for America's future".

San Francisco 49ers tight

end George Kittle never

ranted about slain conser-

vative activist Charlie

Kirk and politics in

football. However, thou-

sands of people believed

they did and that is the

problem.

"Teams and players are

suddenly being accused

of things that are

completely fabricated,"

Lisa Kaplan, founder and