HERE . NOW

OrissaPOST

Bhumi's pain

Actor Bhumi Pednekar talks about the emotional toll of online trolling following the release of The Royals

LEISURE | P2

Drama in K'taka Assembly

Karnataka Governor shortens his speech to three lines, sparking Siddaramaiah's accusation that he's a 'puppet' of the Centre

NATIONAL | P8

Shares bounce back

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty rebound Thursday after three sessions of losses, tracking gains in global markets

BUSINESS | P11

BCB stands firm

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has reaffirmed its decision not to tour India for next month's Twenty20 World Cup

SPORTS | P12

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 293 | www.orissapost.com BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY | JANUARY 23, 2026 12 PAGES | ₹5.00

SARASWATI PUJA TODAY

Ya Kundendu Tushara Hara Dhavala,
Ya Shubhra Vastravrita,
Ya Veena Varadanda Manditakara,
Ya Shveta Padmasana |
Ya Brahmachyuta Shankara
Prabhritibhi
Devaih Sada Vandita,
Sa Mam Paatu Saraswati Bhagavati
Nihshesha Jadyapaha ||

SABARIMALA ROW: Police use water cannons to disperse Youth Congress activists during their protest near the Kerala Legislative Assembly demanding the resignation of Minister VN Vasavan over the Sabarimala gold smuggling controversy, in Thiruvananthapuram, Thursday PTI PHOTO

J&K: 10 soldiers die as vehicle falls into gorge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhaderwah/Jammu, Jan 22: An Army truck skidded off the road and plunged into a deep gorge in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Thursday, killing 10 soldiers and injuring 11 others, officials said.

The accident took place at the 9,000-foot-high Khanni top along Bhaderwah-Chamba interstate road around noon when the driver of the bulletproof Army vehicle, Casspir, heading towards a high-altitude post lost control and the vehicle plunged into a 200-foot-deep gorge.

A joint rescue operation by Army and police was immediately launched and four of the soldiers were found dead on the spot. Many were rescued in injured condition, the officials said. The Army vehicle was badly mangled after plunging down.

Later, six more injured soldiers succumbed to injuries.

One of the injured is under observation in Bhaderwah sub-district hospital while 10

soldiers were airlifted to Udhampur command hospital for specialised treatment while one is under observation in Bhaderwah Sub-district hospital.

"We have lost 10 soldiers with 11 others injured in the unfortunate accident involving Army vehicle," Additional Deputy Commissioner, Bhaderwah, Sumit Kumar Bhutyal told PTI.

Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah have expressed grief over the accident. The CM conveyed heartfelt condolences to the families of the soldiers who lost their lives and wished a speedy recovery to those injured. Abdullah also lauded the swift rescue and evacuation efforts.

VILLAGE GUARDS TO GET ₹2,500/MONTH

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday announced a hike in the monthly allowance for 'Grama Rakhis' (village guards) to ₹2,500 from ₹1,800, an official said.

In addition, the government also directed the 'Grama Rakhis' to report weekly to the police station under which they serve.

This measure ensures accountability and strengthens coordination with law enforcement authorities, he said. Over 18,000 'Grama Rakhis' had recently staged an agitation demanding an enhancement in their allowance.

Meitei man shot dead in Kuki-majority area

AGENCIES

Imphal/Churachandpur, Jan 22: A man belonging to the Meitei community was shot dead after being abducted by suspected Kuki militants in Churachandpur district, in a fresh escalation of the tensions in restive Manipur, police said Thursday.

Mayanglambam Rishikanta Singh, whose wife is a Kuki, was abducted from his home in the Tuibong area Wednesday and shot dead in the vicinity of Natjang village, a senior officer said.

The kidnappers are suspected to be members of United Kuki National Army (UNKA), a non-signatory to the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement. The SoO pact was signed between the Centre, the Manipur government and dozens of Kuki-Zo militant groups.

Trump launches Board of Peace; India skips event

AGENCIES

Davos (Switzerland), Jan 22: *US President Donald Trump Thursday formally launched his Board of Peace, saying the body—initially conceived to stabilise Gaza—could take on a broader global role while working alongside the United Nations. While nations such as Pakistan and Indonesia have joined the board, countries like India and China remain noncommittal, having skipped the Davos event.*

"Once this board is completely formed, we can do pretty much whatever we want to do. And we'll do it in conjunction with the United Nations," Trump said, adding that the UN had great potential that had not been fully utilised.

Trump, who will chair the board, invited dozens of other world leaders to join, saying he wants it to address challenges beyond the stuttering Gaza ceasefire, stirring misgivings that it could undermine the UN's role as the main platform for global diplomacy and conflict resolution.

While regional Middle East powers including Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, as well as major emerging nations such as Indonesia, have joined the board, global powers

and traditional Western US allies have been more cautious.

Trump said permanent members must help fund with a payment of $1 billion each.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the board's focus would be on making sure the plan for peace in Gaza was fulfilled but that it could also 'serve as an example of what's possible in other parts of the world'.

Apart from the US, no other permanent member of the UN Security Council - the five nations with the most say over international law and diplomacy since the end of World War Two - has yet committed to join.

Russia said late Wednesday it was studying the proposal after Trump said it would join. President Vladimir Putin said Moscow was willing to pay $1 billion from frozen US assets in the US 'to support the Palestinian people', state media said.

France declined to join. Britain said Thursday it was not joining at present. China has not yet said whether it will do so.

The board's creation was endorsed by a UN Security Council resolution as part of Trump's Gaza peace plan, and UN spokesperson Rolando Gomez said Thursday that UN engagement with the board would only be in that context.

Few of the countries that have signed up for the board are democracies, although Israel, Argentina and Hungary, whose leaders are close allies of Trump and supporters of his approach to politics and diplomacy, have said they will join.

Board members also include Rubio, the US Gaza negotiators Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

India was among the countries not present Thursday at the ceremony in Davos where Trump launched his Board of Peace. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among global leaders who Trump invited to join the board. India is yet to take a call on it, people familiar with the matter said when asked about Trump's invite to Modi. New Delhi is considering various aspects as the initiative involves sensitive issues, it is learnt.

4.57L get Subhadra money

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday disbursed over ₹315 crore to the bank accounts of more than 4.57 lakh beneficiaries under Subhadra Yojana, which he called the 'state's biggest women-centric welfare scheme since Independence'.

Majhi, at a programme, transferred ₹5,000 each to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). He said more than one crore people are benefiting from the scheme under which all eligible women in the age group of 21 to 60 are provided with an assistance of ₹10,000 every year in two equal instalments.

The CM said that each beneficiary will receive ₹50,000 at the end of five years as promised by the ruling party. He also handed over cheques to selected five beneficiaries.

Of the over 4,57,681 lakh beneficiaries who received ₹5,000 each Thursday, 1,78,398 were newly enrolled and this was their first instalment, while 2,55,265 got their second and third instalments. Additionally, 24,018 beneficiaries were also added through grievance redressal hearings, said Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida.

Alleging that the previous BJD government was 'using women under Mission Shakti for its political benefits', Majhi said that Subhadra Yojana, launched on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday September 17, 2024, is a key initiative of the Odisha government which aims to enhance the socio-economic condition of the women. P3

TOP MAOIST WITH ₹2.35CR BOUNTY AMONG 16 KILLED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chaibasa (Jharkhand)/New Delhi, Jan 22: Sixteen Maoists, including top leader Anal, were killed in a gunfight with security forces in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district Thursday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said.

Patiram Manjhi alias Anal Da, carrying a ₹2.35-crore bounty, and five women were among those killed.

While ₹1 crore was announced by Jharkhand, ₹1.2 crore by Odisha and ₹15 lakh by the NIA. "Today, in West Singhbhum, the ongoing joint operation by CRPF and Jharkhand Police has achieved a major success in the campaign to make the region free of Naxals, with the neutralisation of the notorious bounty-wanted Naxal Central Committee member 'Anal alias Patiram Majhi'... and 15 other Naxals so far," Shah posted on X. P5

Sabyarchita blessed with baby boy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Popular Odia film actors Sabyasachi Mishra and Archita Sahu, fondly known among fans as Sabyarchita, have been blessed with a baby boy, spreading joy across the film fraternity and their admirers throughout Odisha.

Sabyasachi told OrissaPOST that the couple welcomed their first child Wednesday morning. The star couple, who tied the knot in 2021, are receiving an outpouring of love and congratulatory messages from colleagues in the Odia film industry and fans on social media.

A few days earlier, the couple had organised a baby shower ceremony. They had also recently shared a photoshoot announcing Archita's pregnancy, which was warmly received by their followers.

On the work front, Archita was last seen in the horror film 'Bou Buttu Bhuta', co-starring Babushaan Mohanty. Sabyasachi was last seen in 'Ananta' and will next appear in the big-budget film 'Landfall', directed by National Award-winning directors Vishal Mourya and Debi Prasad Lenka.

Historic love letters from royals, romantics go on display

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Jan 22: Love is, famously, a many-splendored thing. It can encompass longing, loneliness, pain, jealousy, grief — and, sometimes, joy.

As Valentine's Day approaches, the many facets of passion are going on display in "Love Letters," a public exhibition at Britain's National Archives that covers five centuries.

Curator Victoria Iglikowski-Broad said that the documents recount "legendary romances from British history" involving royalty, politicians, celebrities and spies, "alongside voices of everyday people."

"We're trying to open up the potential of what a love letter can be," she said. "Expressions of love can be found in all sorts of places, and surprising places."

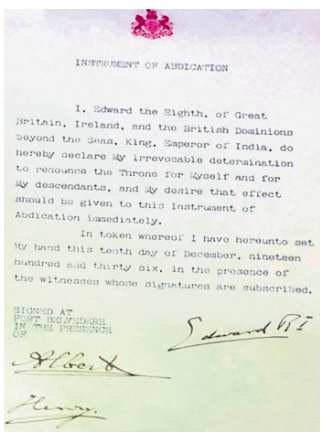
They also take many forms. The exhibition ranges from early 20th-century classified ads seeking same-sex romance to sweethearts' letters to soldiers at war and a medieval song about heartbreak.

"There's also one of our most iconic documents," Iglikowski-Broad said, referring to a poignant letter to Queen Elizabeth I from her suitor Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

Written days before Dudley's death in 1588, it conveys the intimacy between the "Virgin Queen," who never married, and the man who called himself "your poor old servant."

The missive, with "his last letter" written on the outside — spelling at the time was idiosyncratic — was found at the queen's bedside when she died almost 15 years later.

Love, in the exhibition, doesn't just mean romance.



INSTRUMENT OF ABDICATION

I, Edward the Eighth, of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Emperor of India, do hereby declare My irrevocable determination to renounce the Throne for Myself and for My descendants, and My desire that effect should be given to this Instrument of Abdication immediately.

In token whereof I have hereunto set My hand this tenth day of December, nineteen hundred and thirty six, in the presence of the witnesses whose signatures are subscribed.

SIGNED AT
WHITE HALL PALACE
IN THE PRESENCE
OF

Family bonds are in evidence in Jane Austen's handwritten will from 1817 leaving almost everything to her beloved sister Cassandra, and in a 1956 letter in which the father of London gangster twins Reggie and Ronnie Kray implores a court to go easy on the brothers because "all their concern in life is to do good to everybody."

The letter writers range from paupers to princes. In an 1851 petition, an unemployed 71-year-old weaver named Daniel Rush begs authorities not to separate him and his wife by sending them to workhouses. It's displayed alongside the Instrument of Abdication through which King Edward VIII gave up the throne in 1936 so that he could marry "the woman I love," twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson.

"There is a lot of connection in these two items even though on the surface they seem very different," Iglikowski-Broad said. "In common they have just this human feeling of love … that the sacrifice is actually worth it for love."

Other documents tell of love lost. There is a never-before-displayed 1944 letter from young British intelligence officer John Cairncross to his former girlfriend Gloria Barraclough, reflecting on what might have been. "Would we have broken off, I wondered, if we had known what was coming?"

Some readers may think Barraclough had a lucky escape — years later, Cairncross was unmasked as a Soviet spy.

Some love stories tell of danger, heartbreak and tragedy. In one, Lord Alfred Douglas asks — in vain — for Queen Victoria to pardon his lover Oscar Wilde. The writer had been sentenced to two years in prison for gross indecency after Douglas' outraged father revealed their relationship.

Nearby is a letter written in 1541 by Catherine Howard, fifth wife of King Henry VIII, to her secret beau Thomas Culpeper.

Archives historian Neil Johnston noted that the tone of the extraordinary letter is "restrained panic. She is warning him to be very, very careful."

Catherine signed off the letter "yours as long as life endures." That turned out not to be long. The king discovered the affair and both Catherine and Culpeper were executed for treason.

A letter by Queen Henrietta Maria to King Charles I – "my dear heart" – is a rarity, since Britain's royal family guards its private papers closely.

It was found among possessions left behind by the fleeing king in 1645 after a battlefield defeat for royalist troops in England's civil war. Charles lost the war and was tried, convicted and executed in 1649. The letter ended up in Parliament's archives, which last year was transferred to the National Archives.

leisure

PALTROW'S ADVICE TO MANAGE ANXIETY

Gwyneth Paltrow recently opened up about managing anxiety during an Instagram AMA. Responding to a fan, the actress said she copes by practicing gratitude, deep breathing, taking walks, being kind to herself, and even shouting at bushes, joking that it genuinely helps her feel better

MCADAMS GETS HER STAR ON HOLLYWOOD WALK OF FAME

Hollywood actor Rachel McAdams, known for her acclaimed performances in films such as *Mean Girls, Sherlock Holmes*, and *The Notebook*, has been honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce shared the announcement on its official website

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today, you will meet with success, and you do it on your own merit, without any divine intervention. You may be a student of science or arts, but you will excel due to your deep knowledge of the subject. There are chances you may decide to study further, says Ganesha.

TAURUS

You will wake up feeling adventurous today, says Ganesha. Experimentation and an unusual attitude will manifest itself in how you think today. Your subordinates may influence some of your decisions at work this afternoon. On the whole, you will take time to think things out before making any vital decisions, predicts Ganesha.

GEMINI

Though you are always open to advice, you need to take your own, independent decision today. You may spend the afternoon putting things in order. In the evening, you will possibly have a romantic dinner with your sweetheart and may event want to propose marriage. Ganesha won't advice, as today, it's entirely your call.

CANCER

Both your physical and mental health will remain stable today, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may meet one of your clients for lunch. It is an auspicious day to propose and finalise wedding dates, hopes Ganesha.

LEO

Necessity is the mother of invention, and today, you will draw from your large pool of scientific and technological knowledge to achieve your goals at work. Family matters will keep you occupied in the afternoon, but do not let that come in the way of your evening activities that get your blood flowing through the veins, such as dance or music lessons.

VIRGO

The tempest of anger runs wild. You are most likely to blow hotter than Mount Vesuvius ever did, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may chalk out a big business plan. Peers will stand by your side at the workplace. But in the evening, try spending your time meditating and cooling those nerves, advises Ganesha.

LIBRA

The mind is a pool of infinite thoughts; this is more true for you today than any other day. Ganesha says you will explore the depths of your thoughts. At work, you may share some precious moments with peers of the opposite sex.

SCORPIO

Your entrepreneurship today will reflect a lot of your creativity and artistic sense. Romantic diversions will bring you immense pleasure in the afternoon. Have your close friends over in the evening and spend some quality time, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

A delightfully emotional experience would stir up your soul today. Later perhaps, success will touch your feet either through the electronic media or through a brilliant idea. Love will steam and bubble as you expect to be asked out by your prospective life mate, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

It takes years of hard work, optimism and unceasing support of loved ones to reach the pinnacle of success. But you will only have to be tactful, says Ganesha. You will take matters more seriously today and will treat your subordinates as equals for achieving your targets. At home, you will spend some quality time with family members and realise that they need you more than anything else.

AQUARIUS

Today, you will seek direct and frank communication like never before, and it does seem to solve some of your problems. You will remain edgy, and at work, minute things will bother you no end. Later in the day, Ganesha will grant results.

PISCES

Your social standing ought to receive a boost today, and the financial success coming your way today plays no small part in it, says Ganesha. You may find yourself enjoying your own company in the afternoon, but come evening, you are likely to find yourself indulging in some intellectual discussion in the company of like-minded people.

IFFB rolls into action with Adoor's *Swayamvaram*

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: The 15th edition of the Indian Film Festival of Bhubaneswar (IFFB), organised by Film Society of Bhubaneswar, commenced here at GKCM Odissi Research Centre auditorium, Thursday.

The opening day witnessed presence of filmmakers, actors, film scholars, critics, and cinephiles. Students from Birla Global University attended the festival and praised the efforts of running a community film festival in City.

The day started with screening of three short films- *Malwa Khushan, Every Now and Then Girls* and *Ballad of the Mountain*. The day also marked the opening of Adoor Goapalakrishnan's Restrospective with screening of *Swayamvaram*. Released in the year 1972, *Swayamvaram*'s plot revolves around Vishwam and Sita who have married against the preference of their families and wanted to start a new life together.

The day followed with *Swaha* by Abhilash Sharma, which examines the haunting tale of an unemployed couple swallowed up by forces beyond their control. The lead roles feature Satya Ranjan and Sonalli Sarmisstha— both from Odisha. Next followed Sivaranjini's *Victoria* –based on a tale of a young beautician's overwhelming day which won the FIPRESCI Award for 'Best Malayalam Film of Debut Director' at International Film Festival Kerala. The film deals with themes of gender, religion, faith, caste and class.

Shailendra Sahoo's *Bailadila*—a poetic exploration of grief, art, and friendship set amid the mining landscapes of the Bailadila hills – was the next to be screened.

The day ended with *Alaav* by Prabhash—a dispassionate yet intimate portrayal of the human bond between a mother and son in the quiet suburb of Delhi.

Speaking on the festival, FSB secretary Sankalp Mohanty said, "The 15th edition of IFFB is a celebration of stories that matter and reflect many realities of our society. We will continue to provide a platform for young filmmakers whose voices deserve to be heard."

PNN

MANANA'S THEATRE FEST: DAY 4

Artistes of Kaarund Kalamanch of Bhawanipatana staged Odia play *Baris* on the fourth evening of Manana's 47th Foundation Day Drama festival at Rabindra Mandap, Thursday. The play was written and directed by Pradip D Majhi

Rani's confession

Mumbai: Yash Raj Films recently brought together Karan Johar and Rani Mukerji for a special chat celebrating 30 years of Rani's cinematic journey, ahead of *Mardaani 3*. During the conversation, Rani made a candid confession about having her voice dubbed in *Ghulam* (1998), opening up about a difficult phase early in her career.

Rani revealed that as a newcomer, she had little say in the decision, especially since acting opposite Aamir Khan was a major opportunity. She later learned that the call was taken by director Vikram Bhatt along with the makers and Aamir. According to Rani, Aamir explained that films often demand personal sacrifices and told her that her voice may not have suited the character. To comfort her, he cited Sridevi, whose voice had been dubbed in several films without affecting her stardom. Though the decision deeply upset her, Rani said she couldn't express her disappointment. She emphasised that being part of a film means being a team player and prioritising the story above personal feelings. The experience, she admitted, taught her an important lesson about surrendering to what serves the film best, even when it comes at a personal cost.

AGENCIES

Bhumi on impact of trolling

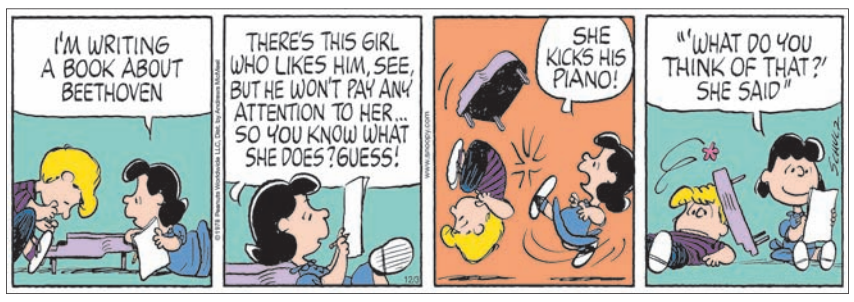
Mumbai: Bhumi Pednekar has candidly opened up about the emotional toll of online trolling following the release of *The Royals*, revealing that the backlash led her to step away from film sets for nearly nine months. In a recent interview, the actor shared that the experience forced her to confront difficult personal and professional questions, ultimately prompting a quiet but firm break from acting.

Bhumi said the period after the show's release was marked by intense trolling and bot-driven criticism, alongside some constructive feedback. The noise pushed her to take drastic decisions in 2025, one of which was taking a break she chose not to publicly announce. Admitting she was emotionally exhausted, Bhumi said she had lost clarity about who she was as both an actor and a person, and needed distance to regain perspective.

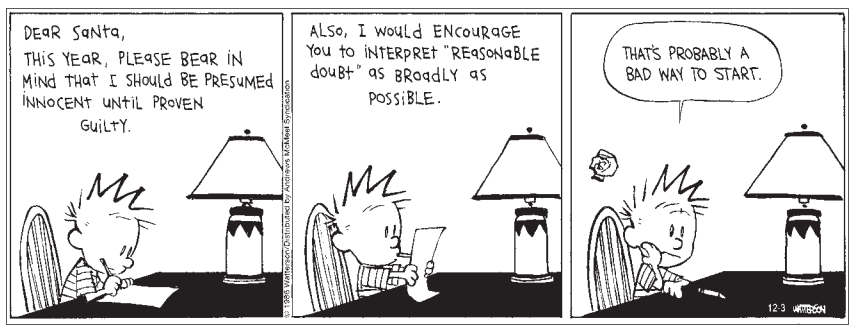
Emphasising that the decision was entirely voluntary, she clarified she hadn't been on a set since June and described the break as the best choice she's made for herself. Bhumi also distanced herself from the industry, returning signing amounts, declining films, award shows, and fashion events to truly disconnect. During this time, she focused on self-reflection: reading, travelling, watching films, and even pursuing a course at Harvard University. Now re-centred, Bhumi is preparing for her upcoming show *Daldal*, which premieres on Amazon Prime Video January 30, 2026.

AGENCIES

PEANUTS



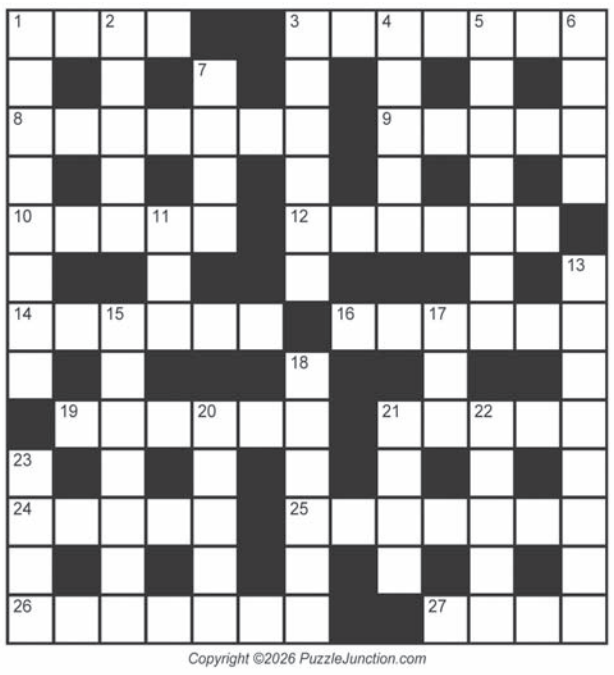
CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY

FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across
1 Tempo
3 Like the Bedouins
8 Slumber (4-3)
9 Circular domed dwellings
10 Mini-lakes
12 Legume
14 Cure
16 Irritate
19 Stick to
21 Vicious
24 Russian prison camp
25 Fishing
26 Not normal
27 Hatchling's home

Down
1 World traveller's item
2 Butter maker
3 Tailor's tool
4 Yucateco, e.g.
5 Crane
6 Wine holder
7 Gambles
11 Female hare
13 Traffic stopper (3,5)
15 Like some furniture or homes
17 Negative joiner
18 Watch out!
20 Encourage (3,2)
21 Zoo feature
22 Join forces
23 Prima donna problems

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

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

AJIT NATYA MAHOTSAV

A scene from Odia play 'Nisidha Kakhya', presented by Rangashala, Puri, at Bhanjakala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Thursday. Written by Shankar Tripathy, the drama was directed by Bikram Sahoo and staged on the second evening of the event

WHY NEW STATE PARTY NOW

SUNIT MISHRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Speculation is growing that several political leaders in Odisha are quietly exploring the formation of a new regional party. Observers say the state's current political landscape has prompted renewed thinking about whether space exists for another regional outfit.

Looking at the present political scenario in the state, many are also thinking that there is space for another regional outfit. The results of the 2024 general elections help explain the rising interest.

The outcome underscored voters' continued affinity for regional parties, even as seat tallies told a different story.

In the 147-member Odisha Assembly, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) secured the highest vote share, winning 1,01,02,454 votes or 40.22 per cent, but translated that support into 51 seats. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) followed closely with 1,00,64,827 votes or 40.07 per cent, yet won 78 seats which is 27 more than the BJD, enabling it to form the government. The BJD, despite polling 37,627 more votes than the BJP statewide, fell short in seat count.

The Congress garnered 33,31,319 votes or 13.26 per cent. Voters opting for 'None of the Above' (NOTA) accounted for 2,57,355 votes or 1.02 per cent. Independent candidates collectively received 8,43,702 votes or 3.39 per cent.

Three Independents won Assembly seats but later joined the BJP; a common post-election development in state politics, where successful Independents often align with the ruling party.

An analysis of the 2024 Lok Sabha election results in Odisha shows that the BJP secured 1,13,35,549 votes (45.34 per cent). Riding on this vote share, the BJP won 20 of the state's 21 Lok Sabha seats.

The BJD finished second in terms of vote share, polling 93,82,711 votes or 37.53 per cent. However, the regional party failed to win a single Lok Sabha seat. The BJP polled 19,52,838 more votes than the BJD. The Congress secured 31,30,056 votes (12.52 per cent). Though third in vote share, the Congress managed to win one Lok Sabha seat — Koraput.

A total of 3,24,588 voters in Odisha opted for NOTA, rejecting all contesting candidates. Independent candidates collectively secured 6,50,336 votes (2.60 per cent).

The overall results indicate that despite electoral setbacks, public faith in regional political forces in the state remains intact. This has triggered a political gamble of sorts for the formation of a new regional party in Odisha.

During the last general election, it is known that a significant section of BJD workers, along with their family members, voted for the BJP. This suggests that the votes secured by the BJD in both the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections came largely without grassroots organisational support. It also points to the party's failure to effectively channel campaign resources to the grassroots during the election.

Despite these challenges, the BJD secured 1,01,02,454 votes in the Assembly elections and 93,82,711 votes in the Lok Sabha polls. This indicates that voters in Odisha continue to place trust in regional political formations, even bypassing party cadres.

Against this backdrop, political circles are abuzz with speculation that senior leader Bijoy Mohapatra, BJP leader Dilip Ray and BJD leader Pranab Prakash Das, popularly known as Bobby, are exploring the possibility of launching a new regional party. Observers believe they have sensed a political vacuum for a credible regional force in the state.

It is also noteworthy that during the 2024 elections, there was no visible wave in Odisha in favour of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Similarly, there was no discernible nationwide surge in favour of the BJP.

It is largely agreed upon that BJD president and former chief minister Naveen Patnaik bears primary responsibility for the party's defeat. His decision to aggressively project close aide VK Pandian did not find acceptance among the people of Odisha.

In that sense, it would be more accurate to say that the BJD lost the 2024 elections rather than saying that the BJP won.

It is worth noting that the present generation largely recognises only Naveen Patnaik and the BJD. Many people engaged in politics in Odisha make little effort to understand the state's political history.

In December 1997, Naveen did not have the ability to name all the districts of Odisha. It is also important to note that the BJD was not created by Naveen or by any single individual. If credit for the party's formation is to be assigned, it could be attributed to the then Congress chief minister and the political figures around him.

At the time, widespread public resentment grew over alleged immoral personal conduct and what was seen as relentless efforts to benefit only family members. Frustrated voters ultimately chose the BJD as an alternative.

There is now a possibility that the creation of a new regional party could suit the BJP. The BJP's central leadership is said to understand the reasons behind the seemingly widening rift between Pandian and Bobby, as such developments are likely to benefit the saffron party. The BJP is expected to seize every opportunity necessary to keep the BJD politically relevant.

The BJP recognises that regional parties command a substantial vote base in the state. If the BJD weakens or ceases to exist, those votes are likely to shift to the opposition. There appears to be little chance of this vote base moving to the Congress.

CM to inaugurate, lay stone for ₹30K-cr projects in W Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi is all set to inaugurate and lay foundation stone for 20 major industrial projects worth ₹30,000 crore during his two-day visit to Sambalpur and Rourkela beginning January 27. The projects are expected to generate over 10,000 employment opportunities, marking a significant boost for the Western Odisha's economy.

Building on the momentum created by successful investors' meets in Hyderabad and Kolkata, Odisha continues to attract investment intents from industry leaders—underscoring growing confidence in the state's policy stability and governance framework.

A key highlight of the visit will be the inauguration of India's first Fiber Reinforced Bar (FRB) units at Hindalco's Lapanga facility, a landmark step in industrial and infrastructure innovation. The Chief Minister will also inaugurate 'Enterprise Odisha-2026' at Rourkela in collaboration with CII, a flagship initiative aimed at accelerating industrial growth, strengthening investment facilitation, and expanding employment opportunities, particularly in Western Odisha.

Since the formation of the new government in the state, western Odisha has witnessed unprecedented industrial momentum, said a statement issued by the government.

Investments worth ₹1,28,472 crore have already been approved for the region, with a potential to create more than 69,000 jobs. The latest round of investor outreach has further reinforced the state's positioning as a preferred destination for diversified and future-ready industries.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

For once, Davos looked effective. Trump backtracked

Vig nabs RI for bribery

CUTTACK: Odisha Vigilance Thursday caught a Revenue Inspector (RI) red-handed while he was accepting a bribe of ₹10,000 for submitting a favourable report in a land mutation case in Cuttack district. The accused has been identified as Janaki Ranjan Mallik, RI of Kakhadi Circle under Sadar Tehsil, Cuttack.

Min visits IG Park, reprimands officials over poor amenities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Housing and Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mohapatra conducted a surprise visit to Indira Gandhi (IG) Park Thursday to review the condition of public amenities and overall maintenance of the park.

Located in a prime area of the Capital City and frequented daily by a large number of visitors, IG Park requires special attention in terms of upkeep and cleanliness. During the inspection, the minister interacted with visitors and enquired about the facilities available for the public.

Mohapatra expressed serious displeasure over the inadequate maintenance of the park, particularly the poor condition of urinals and toilet facilities. He directed the concerned authorities to take immediate corrective measures and ensure proper hygiene, regular maintenance, and improved service standards. He warned that strict action would be taken against officials responsible for negligence if lapses continue.

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation Deputy Commissioner N Ganesh Babu accompanied the minister during the visit. Officials and maintenance staff of the park were present and were instructed to strengthen monitoring mechanisms to ensure that the park remains clean, safe, and visitor-friendly at all times.

Police hoist national flag on uninhabited Udabali Island

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Ahead of the 77th Republic Day, Odisha Police Thursday hoisted the national flag on the uninhabited Udabali Island in the Bay of Bengal, a few kilometres off Dhamara Port, and announced a ₹149-crore plan for strengthening coastal security.

Director General of Police (DGP) YB Khurania unfurled the tricolour in the presence of senior officials and expressed gratitude for the courage, sacrifice and dedication of the security forces protecting the coast.

Khurania said that a long-term plan has been launched by Odisha Police to further strengthen and modernise coastal security.

He said that the state government has sanctioned ₹149 crore in the 2025-26 annual Budget for upgrading facilities to strengthen coastal security.

"By utilising this amount, works like deployment of motorised boats and trawlers for maritime patrolling, drones for each maritime station, hiring of naval experts and technical advisors, posting of special maritime police officers at fish landing centres and community policing at all maritime stations are being expedited," the DGP said.

He said steps are being taken to install CCTV cameras at fish landing centres. All these systems will be linked to a state-of-the-art command and control centre in Bhubaneswar and it will play a key role in coastal security in the days to come, Khurania said.

The DGP said hoisting of the national flag on uninhabited coastal islands reflects the unwavering commitment of the Odisha Police towards upholding the sovereignty of the country.

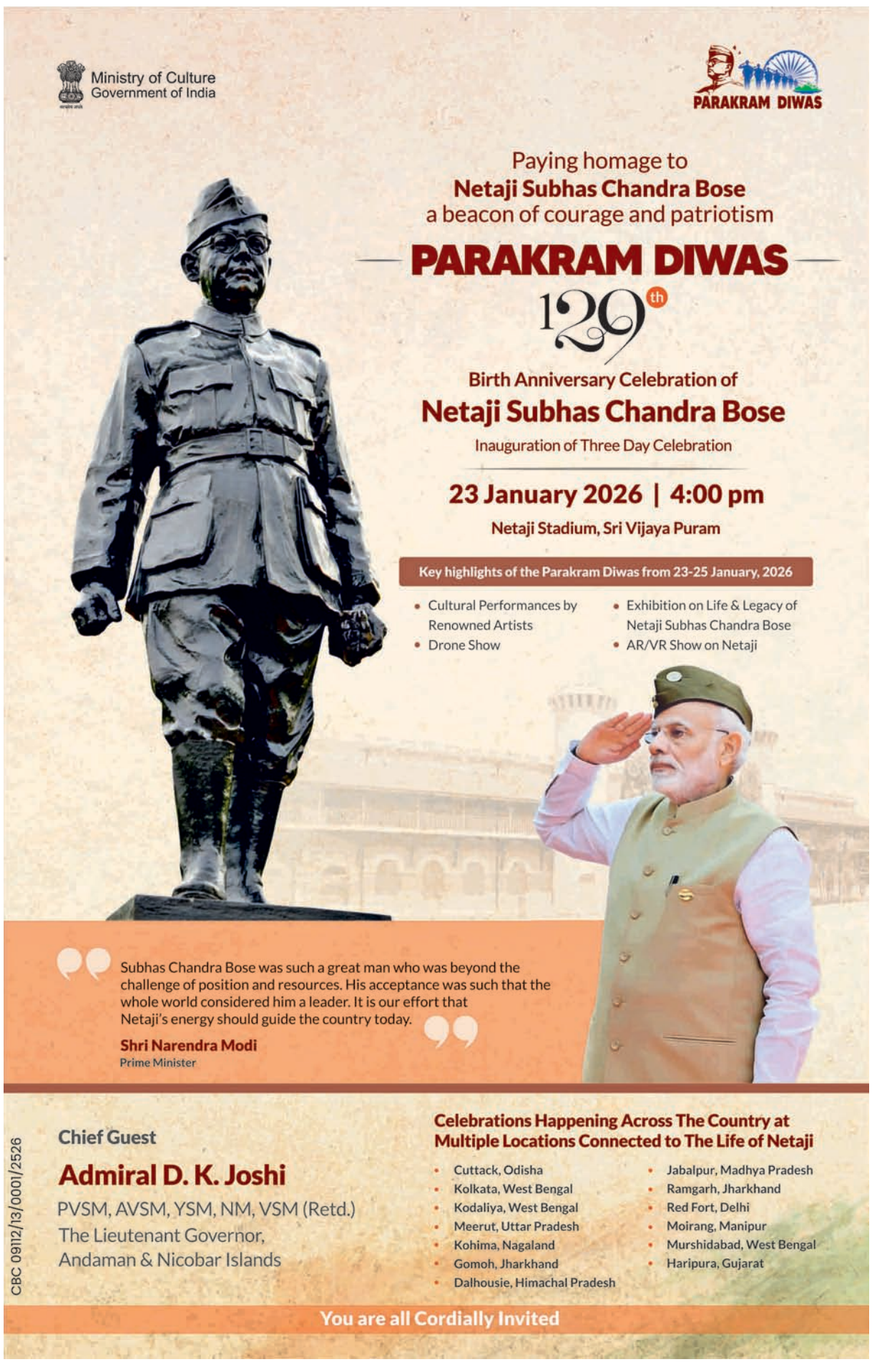
He thanked the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard, Customs, police, fisheries, intelligence and forest departments, and local residents and fishermen who play a key role in strengthening coastal security.

The idea of hoisting the tricolour on uninhabited islands in the Bay of Bengal was proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the All India Director General of Police Conference held here in November 2024.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi issued a direction to the police to hoist the national flag on the uninhabited islands of the coastal state on or before the Republic Day, he added.

The DGP said that accordingly, over the next three days, the tricolour will be hoisted at Kanika Sands, Long Wheeler (Babu Bali), Coconut Wheeler, Small Wheeler, Nayatapu, Budhiabali, Hukitola Island in Kendrapara district, Kaduapal, Dhanichada and Parikud, Nalban, Kalijai Island in Puri district.

Additional Director General of Police (Railways and Coastal Security) Arun Bothra, DIG (Eastern Region) Pinak Mishra, Bhadrak Superintendent of Police Manoj Raut, AIG (Marine) Satyajit Mishra, along with many senior police officers, Coastal Security department employees and representatives attended the event.



KRUSHI ODISHA 2026 CONCLAVE

₹141.5cr MoA signed for Odisha drought mitigation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: The state government Thursday signed a memorandum of agreement (MoA) worth ₹141.50 crore with international research organisations for implementing the Odisha Agriculture Drought Mitigation Programme (OADMP), aimed at promoting climate-resilient farming in vulnerable regions.

The MoA was signed by the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment (DA&FE) with International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and Central Research Institute of Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA) in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo here at the inaugural session of the three-day Krushi Odisha 2026 conclave.

Signed under the framework of the National Drought Mitigation Project (NDMP), the initiative represents a paradigm shift from reactive disaster relief to a proactive, science-led resilience model, officials said.

"The project moves beyond temporary aid. We are building a system where science leads the way -- from the farm to the entire value chain," DA&FE Principal Chief Secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee said.

The MoA aims at total funding of ₹141.50 crore sourced through the National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF) and Odisha government funds.

The project will be implemented immediately in three high-vulnerable blocks -- Komna (Nuapada), Kosagumuda (Nabarangpur), and Raruan (Mayurbhanj) -- reaching 24,000 households directly, with thousands more benefiting through convergence with existing state and central schemes, the officials said.

A real-time digital dashboard will track progress -- from soil moisture level to household income, ensuring total transparency and data-driven scaling, they said.

The programme aims to deliver steadier yields and higher cropping intensity by introducing drought-tolerant seed varieties and distributing water recharge systems maintained by the community.

Furthermore, it will empower self-help groups (SHGs) and farmer producer organisations (FPOs) by improving their access to mechanisation and high-value markets, they further said.

Inaugurating the conclave here, Singh Deo said that six new cold storages will soon be set up in different areas of the state to store vegetables and other perishable commodities.

He said that the government has approved six proposals from different agencies received through the 'Go-Sugam' portal for the establishment of cold storages.

"The cold-storages will be set up cluster-wise. If the government gets two proposals for a single block, we will consider that as well," he said.

While appealing to interested persons and agencies to come forward to set up cold-storages, the Deputy CM said that private players will get 3 per cent interest subsidy from the state government and another 3 per cent subsidy from the Centre. The person concerned will have to pay the remaining 3 per cent interest to the bank, he added.

Singh Deo also said that Odisha, which was earlier dependent on centres for food grains, now provides foods to other states. The state's food grain production is much higher than the national average, he said.

Key objectives of Krushi Odisha-2026 include the showcasing of best products, practices, and emerging technologies that drive farm profitability.

PAYING TRIBUTES: Netaji Birth Place Museum at Odia Bazar in Cuttack decked up ahead of Netaji's birth anniversary observation here Friday. Security beefed up near the museum as Vice President C P Radhakrishnan is scheduled to attend the celebration OP PHOTO

'90% farmland to be irrigated by 2036'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday said sustainable water management is essential for agriculture, economic growth, and the overall development of Odisha. Addressing the State-Level Pani Panchayat Fortnight–2026 at Lok Seva Bhawan Convention Centre, he said the Pani Panchayat system has brought a transformative change in the lives of farmers and the agricultural sector of the state.

The CM reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensure irrigation coverage to more than 90 per cent of cultivable land by 2036, with the goal of making Odisha a prosperous state. He also announced that

the state government aims to provide irrigation facilities to an additional 15 lakh hectares of land over the next five years.

He said, at present, 40,380 Pani Panchayats are functioning across Odisha, managing irrigation over 24.12 lakh hectares of farmland. Majhi noted that the Odisha Pani Panchayat Act, 2002, and its subsequent amendments have ensured equal rights and opportunities for women, fishermen, and water users in irrigation management. Highlighting the benefits of Pani Panchayat system, Majhi said while traditional irrigation methods led to significant water wastage, the current system enables equitable and efficient distribution of water.

He also informed that several major irrigation and water resource projects are progressing rapidly across the state, including the Khairei bandhan Barrage in Mayurbhanj, the Upper Lanth Project in Bolangir, the Sandul underground pipeline project, and the Brittanga irrigation project in Nayagarh, along with multiple reservoirs and canal projects.

CM Majhi said, "A prosperous Odisha is not possible without prosperous farmers."

Man arrested for murder in Balipatna

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Balipatna police Thursday arrested a 35-year-old man for stabbing a youth to death near Triveniswar Temple at Bhapur village in Khurda district, police said. The accused was identified as Mithun Nath, a resident of Bhapur.

According to a complaint lodged by Umesh Nath, father of the victim, it was around 11:40pm January 20, 2026 when his son Upendra Nath alias Lipu returned home after attending Triveni Mahotsav organised near Triveniswar Temple. However, a verbal altercation broke out when Upendra allegedly scolded his sister, who returned home late from the festival.

Meanwhile, Mithun, a distant relative of Upendra, was present at the spot and listening to the arguments. Mithun reportedly intervened and abused Upendra. Though Upendra clarified that the remarks were directed at his sister and not at him, Mithun allegedly became aggressive, and stabbed him in the abdomen with a sharp weapon. Upendra suffered grievous injuries and was bleeding profusely before collapsing at the spot. Locals rushed him to Athantar Hospital for treatment. Considering his critical condition, doctors referred him to Capital Hospital, where he was later declared dead.

Following the incident, Balipatna police registered a case and launched an investigation. Mithun was arrested Thursday and the weapon of offence was also seized.

Mithun was booked under Sections 296/103(1) BNS r/w Section 25(1)(a) Arms Act and forwarded to the court.

Republic Day rush expected at BPIA

Bhubaneswar: Heavy passenger traffic is expected at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA), Bhubaneswar, during the upcoming Republic Day weekend. In view of enhanced security arrangements for Republic Day, passengers have been advised to arrive well in advance and allow adequate time for check-in and security clearance. Authorities have also urged travellers to cooperate with airport officials and security personnel to ensure smooth movement within the terminal. Passengers have been advised to contact their respective airlines for flight-related information, including schedules and boarding details. Airport authorities have sought travellers' cooperation to manage the expected rush and ensure safety and efficiency during the festive travel period.

Apollo showcases paediatric heart care advances

Bhubaneswar: Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar, Thursday highlighted major advances in paediatric heart surgery, stressing the importance of early diagnosis and timely intervention for children with congenital heart defects. At a press conference titled "Paediatric Heart Surgery: Feasibility & Our Achievement," senior doctors outlined clinical milestones and advanced treatments that have significantly improved children's survival. Hospital COO & DMS Alok Srivastava said Apollo remains committed to world-class paediatric cardiac care in Odisha and neighbouring states, adding that investment in infrastructure and multidisciplinary expertise enables successful treatment of even complex congenital heart diseases.
Senior Consultant (CTVS) Raghunath Mohapatra said most congenital heart defects are now curable, urging early detection and timely treatment. Consultant–Paediatric Cardiology Sandeep Mohanty noted advances in medical science have made surgeries safer and minimally invasive.

Chief Secy reviews Odisha DISCOMs' performance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Chief Secretary Anu Garg Thursday chaired the board meeting of Odisha's power distribution companies—TPCODL, TPNODL, TPSODL, and TPWODL—to review their performance for the period ending December 31, 2025, and set strategic priorities for the coming months.

The Chief Secretary reaffirmed Odisha's commitment to strengthening power distribution infrastructure and improving consumer experience. Emphasis was placed on sustained capital investment for network modernisation, reliability enhancement, and technology-driven initiatives to build a resilient, future-ready distribution system.

She also reviewed progress on government-funded projects aligned with national and state priorities on energy access, sustainability, and efficiency, stressing timely execution. The board meeting further assessed advancements in the smart metering programme, highlighting its role in transparent billing, better energy accounting, and enhanced consumer engagement.

Special focus was given to the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and the Utility-Led Aggregation (ULA) model, recognised as key initiatives to boost rooftop solar adoption, empower consumers, and advance Odisha's clean energy transition.

Discussions on operational performance focused on enhancing reliability through network strengthening, automation, preventive maintenance, and better outage management, aiming to improve key metrics such as SAIDI, SAIFI, and AT&C losses.

Reinforcing a strong safety culture, Garg emphasised the use of the Surakhya Kavach App for real-time safety monitoring, emergency response, and coordinated supervision of field staff during outages, accidents, and disaster-related restorations. She reiterated that achieving zero fatalities and zero blackouts remains non-negotiable.

A consumer-first approach was emphasised, urging stronger customer care, expanded digital service channels, and faster, more responsive service delivery.

Kankrej bull: A royal symbol of power & performance

Majestic bull steals the spotlight at Matsya-Pranee Samavesh Odisha 2026, showcasing India's indigenous cattle excellence

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: The majestic Kankrej bull has emerged as one of the prime attractions at the state-level Matsya-Pranee Samavesh Odisha 2026 (MPSO-2026), which commenced here Wednesday.

Globally admired for its legendary "Sawai Chal"—the regal king's gait—the Kankrej bull stands as a remarkable symbol of power, grace, and performance among India's indigenous cattle breeds.

Renowned for its proud walk, commanding posture, and calm yet dominant temperament, the Kankrej bull has long been associated with royalty, endurance, and strength. Its presence at the event has drawn widespread admiration from breeders, conservationists, and livestock enthusiasts alike.

The five-year-old bull on display exemplifies the classic characteristics of the breed, featuring distinctive lyre-shaped horns, a strong skeletal frame, and a well-proportioned physique. Standing at an impressive height of five feet and weighing approximately 700 kilograms, the animal reflects excellent growth, robustness, and functional efficiency.

Recognised as a superior dual-purpose breed, the Kankrej is highly valued for its exceptional draught power as well as its strong genetic potential

for milk production and crossbreeding programmes. Its ability to thrive in harsh climatic conditions, resistance to diseases, and long working life make it a preferred choice among progressive farmers across the country.

To ensure optimal health and peak performance, the bull is maintained under a meticulously planned nutritional regimen. Its daily diet includes green gram, oil cakes, broken wheat, concentrated feed, chickpea, rice bran, and sesame bran—providing a balanced mix of protein and energy essential for muscle strength, stamina, fertility, and overall vitality. The monthly expenditure on feed and maintenance amounts to approximately ₹40,000, reflecting the premium level of care extended to this elite animal.

With its royal gait, powerful frame, and versatile utility, the Kankrej bull continues to represent the excellence of India's indigenous cattle heritage. It is not merely an animal, but a living legacy of tradition, strength, and sustainable livestock development, attracting growing interest from breeders, conservationists, and livestock enthusiasts across the country.

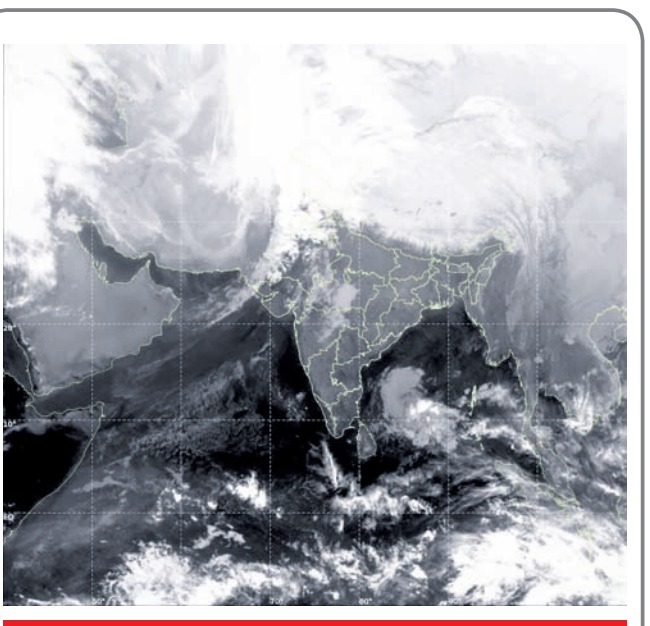
- **The five-year-old bull exemplifies classic Kankrej characteristics, including distinctive lyre-shaped horns, a strong skeletal frame and a well-proportioned physique**
- **Standing nearly five feet tall and weighing around 700 kg, the bull reflects excellent growth, robustness and functional efficiency**
- **Monthly expenditure on feed and maintenance is about ₹40,000, underscoring the premium care extended to the elite animal**

₹4 crore magnificent Murrah bull 'Inder'

Inder, a magnificent Murrah bull, is rapidly gaining national recognition as one of the most promising breeding bulls of its generation. At just 4.5 years old, Inder weighs an impressive 17 quintals, showcasing exceptional growth, strength and superior genetic potential. Hailing from the renowned Karamveer Breeding Farm in Kurukshetra, Inder embodies next-generation, performance-driven Murrah genetics, with a powerful frame, balanced build and commanding presence that set him apart in elite breeding circles. Inder is maintained on a closely monitored, nutrition-rich diet to maximise health, fertility and longevity. He consumes about 28 kg of feed daily—including milk, curd, green chickpeas, broken wheat, wheat, pearl millet and soybean—at an approximate daily cost of ₹4,000, reflecting the premium care that ensures optimal stamina and consistent reproductive performance. With rapid physical development, superior Murrah traits and rising demand for high-quality genetics, Inder's market value is estimated at around ₹4 crore. Experts regard him as a future flagship breeding bull with the potential to significantly enhance productivity and genetic advancement in the buffalo sector.

MARKET WATCH

CURRENCY INDEX	VARIATION	BOURSES INDEX	VARIATION	COMMODITIES INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR 91.63	↓ 0.07	SENSEX 82307.37	↑ 397.74	GOLD ₹154,100	↑ ₹1238
EURO 107.16	↓ 0.23	NIFTY 25289.90	↑ 132.40	SILVER ₹320,860	↑ ₹2368



WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	32.3°	28.8°	Fog or mist in the morning and mainly clear sky later
Min Temp	14.0°	12.8°	
Humidity	75%	81%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

HM expels student from hostel over substance abuse

POST NEWS NETWORK

Daringbadi, Jan 22: A Class IX student of the Government Higher Secondary School, Daringbadi in Kandhamal district has been expelled from the Gajapati Kapilendra Dev hostel for the past two days.

The move by the school authorities has drawn widespread attention.

According to headmaster Umashankar Samantray, the student, along with a few classmates, allegedly broke a section of the school's boundary wall to leave the hostel regularly and visit different parts of Daringbadi to consume intoxicants before returning in an inebriated condition.

While the other students managed to return to the hostel, one student reportedly failed to re-enter through the damaged wall and was later found unconscious outside the boundary. Acting on information received from sources, the headmaster brought the student back to the school premises.

The following day, the student's parents were informed, after which the student was formally expelled from the hostel. School authorities said the student has been allowed to continue attending classes but will not be permitted to stay in the hostel.

Meanwhile, the incident has triggered sharp resentment in the local area. Residents have questioned how the hostel superintendent on duty and the school authorities failed to notice students leaving the hostel. They have also raised concerns as to who provided the tools and other materials used to break the boundary wall.

Top Maoist among 16 killed in gunfight

PNN & AGENCIES

Chaibasa(J'khand)/Rourkela, Jan 22: Sixteen Maoists, including top leader Anal, were killed in a gunfight with security forces in Saranda forest along the Odisha-Jharkhand border Thursday.

Patiram Manjhi alias Anal Da, carrying a Rs 2.35 crore bounty, and five women were among those killed.

The bounty included Rs 1 crore by Jharkhand, Rs 1.2 crore by Odisha and Rs 15 lakh by the NIA. Around 1,500 personnel of the CRPF's CoBRA unit were engaged in the operation in Kumdi area of Saranda forest within Kiriburu police station limits, officials said, describing it as one of the biggest anti-Maoist drives in Jharkhand.

"We have recovered the bodies of Maoists, including their top leader Patiram Majhi alias Anal Da carrying a bounty of Rs 2.35 crore on his head. Eleven bodies have been identified and identification of the remaining four Maoists is underway," IG CRPF Saket Kumar Singh said.

This is the first time bodies of so many Maoists have been recovered after an encounter in Jharkhand. Earlier, the highest number was eight, Singh said.

Barring Misir Besra, all central committee members of CPI (Maoists) have been killed in Jharkhand, Singh said.

Two central committee members were killed last year and one this year, he said, adding that now only 60-65 Maoists are left in the state and that too in Singhbhum. "The last round of battle is going on and we will end this soon," Singh added.

The IG CRPF urged the Maoists to surrender before the security forces or else to be ready to face consequences.

Inspector General of Police (Operations) Michael Raj S said that among the Maoists killed in 'Operation Megaburu', five were women.

Anal Da was involved in an attack on a CISF camp in Jharkhand's Bokaro March 3, 2006, in which five CISF personnel were killed and two injured.

He was also involved in the killing of five security personnel at Kukru Haat in Seraikela-Kharswan district in June 2019 and loot of five tonnes of explosives in Odisha in May 2025.

Another top Maoist leader killed in the encounter was Bihar-Jharkhand Special Area Committee (BJSAC) member Anmol alias Sushant, who was wanted in 149 cases and carried a Rs 90 lakh reward, comprising Rs 25 lakh by Jharkhand and Rs 65 lakh by Odisha governments, officials said.

The anti-Maoist operation has been going on in the Saranda forest since Tuesday, but the exchange of fire began Thursday morning. Raj said the operation started after police received a tip-off about the presence of Anal Da, along with his squad, in Saranda forest.

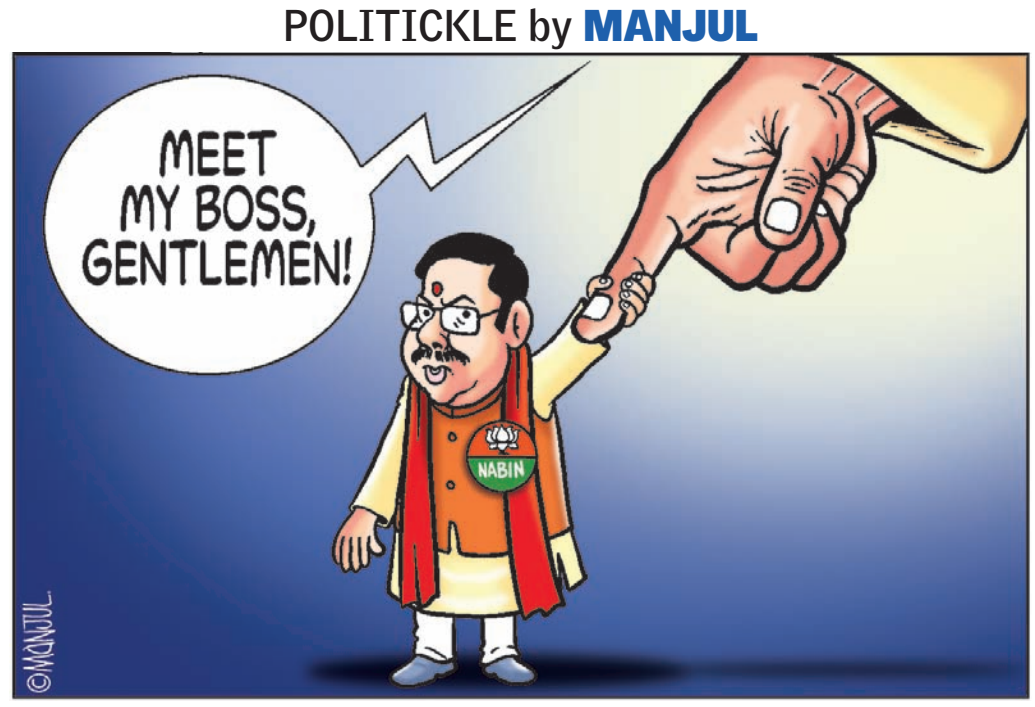
Mob lynching: Case registered at NHRC

Bhubaneswar/Balasore: A case was registered at the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Thursday over the mob lynching incident in Balasore where a 35-year-old man, identified as Sk. Makandar Mohammad, was killed January 14 by cow vigilantes in suspicion of cattle smuggling. The case was filed by the state coordinator of Bahujan Student & Youth Front (BSYF) Anil Kumar Mallick. The complainant has demanded intervention of the apex rights body in the probe and Rs 50 lakh compensation for the family of the deceased. He has also demanded exemplary punishment against the accused involved in the incident.

Group clash leaves 6 critical

Rayagada: At least six people were critically injured in a violent group clash Wednesday evening at Paikamadakhola village under Ambadala police limits in Rayagada district, police said Thursday. The injured were identified as Debaraj Panigrahi, Somanath Panigrahi, Krushnachandra Panigrahi, Tanu Panigrahi, Raghubir Karakaria, Kesh Karakaria, Keshapati Gardia and Senapati Gardia. Six of them sustained serious head injuries, police said. Some of the injured were admitted to the Rayagada District Headquarters Hospital, while others were referred to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur for advanced treatment. Police said the violence stemmed from a long-standing land dispute between two groups. About 20 people from one group allegedly attacked members of the rival group with sharp-edged weapons, including sickles and axes, and sticks, leaving six critically injured. Officials said the two groups have been at odds for years over ownership of a parcel of land. Following repeated complaints, authorities had scheduled a demarcation of the disputed land for Wednesday. However, the process could not be carried out as officials failed to arrive on time, triggering an argument that escalated into violence.

POLITICKLE by **MANJUL**



Man's torso, head recovered on road

PNN & AGENCIES

Jajpur, Jan 22: The torso and head of a 60-year-old man were found lying on a village road in Jajpur district Thursday, police said.

The deceased has been identified as Dasaratha Behera, a resident of Matiagada village under the jurisdiction of Sukinda police station.

According to reports, locals noticed the body of Dasaratha lying on the road around 100 metres away from his house Thursday morning and informed his son who stays in his shop located in the same village. He reached the spot and informed the police.

The son told the police that he had left home after serving dinner to his father Wednesday night. Dasaratha's other son works in neighbouring Keonjhar district.

locals noticed the body of Dasaratha lying on the road around 100 metres away from his house Thursday morning

Police said the man might have been killed on the village road after he was dragged from his house. The motive behind the crime is still unclear.

"We have sent the body for post-mortem and are waiting for the report," said a senior police official. Further investigation is underway to identify those involved in the crime and determine the reason behind the killing, he added.

2 teenagers drown in river while bathing

Berhampur: Two teenagers drowned while taking a bath in Bahuda river in Ganjam district, police said Thursday. The incident took place at Sundarada village in K Nuagaon police station area Thursday afternoon. The victims were identified as Saswat Patra (13), a Class VII student, and Biswas Pradhan (12), who was studying in Class VI, a police officer said. The victims, along with some of their friends, went to Bahuda river this afternoon. Pradhan first went to the river to take a bath and was drowning, following which Patra tried to rescue him and was also swept away. Their other friends rushed to the nearby road and alerted passersby and villagers. They have also informed the fire officials. After conducting a search for some hours, they rescued both and rushed them to the nearby hospital at Bomakai, following which they were shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital here. The doctors, however, declared them brought dead.

> Witness and stand back from Nature, that is the first step to the soul's freedom.
>
> **SRI AUROBINDO**

Feeding 10bn People

With the world struggling to feed eight billion people today, how will we feed ten billion by 2050? Meeting the nutritional needs of a growing population requires not just a radical increase in food production – almost all of it plant-based – but also a more equitable distribution to ensure that no one is food-insecure.

That is a tall order. The current food system is already buckling. Roughly 673 million people go to bed hungry every night, and in 2025, we witnessed two famines (in Gaza and Sudan), each driven by conflict, climate shocks, and soaring food prices. At the same time, 1.66 billion hectares – 60 per cent of which are agricultural land – have been degraded by the very practices we rely on to feed the world.

Global hunger stems not from a lack of capacity to produce enough food, but partly from our failure to produce it efficiently and distribute it evenly. Conflict and insecurity remain the dominant causes of hunger across 20 countries and territories, leaving nearly 140 million people facing acute food insecurity. Disasters have inflicted an estimated $3.26 trillion in agricultural losses worldwide over the past 33 years – an average of $99 billion annually, or roughly 4 per cent of global agricultural output; and recent supply-driven food-price spikes have pushed tens of millions of people into hunger almost overnight. Worse, these are not one-off shocks. They represent the new normal.

Yurdi Yasmi

For decades, the agriculture sector has responded well to rising demand by developing higher-yielding crops and using more of everything: more fertilizer, more pesticides, and more water. Yet this trend has produced unnecessary waste, polluted rivers, degraded the soil, and released ever-more greenhouse gases (GHGs). We need to find a better path, and science can show us the way. We already have the knowledge and the tools to optimize what we use and diversify what we grow.

A WORLD WHERE NEARLY EVERYONE EATS WELL, FARMERS PROSPER, SOILS REGENERATE, WATERS RUN CLEAN, BIODIVERSITY RECOVERS, AND AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS EMIT MINIMAL GHGS IS NOT UTOPIAN

One priority is to improve efficiency. Between 1990 and 2020, fertilizer use rose 46 per cent and pesticide use doubled. But only 30-60 per cent of fertilizer nutrients and 20-70 per cent of pesticides are effectively absorbed; the rest washes into rivers, degrades soil, or releases GHGs. Fortunately, research shows that optimizing nitrogen use can boost yields by up to 19 per cent and slash fertilizer use by 15-19 per cent. Improved pesticide management – through precision spraying, biopesticides, and residue monitoring – reduces chemical waste while safeguarding biodiversity. Agroecological practices – such as intercropping, crop rotation, and integrating trees into farm systems – further enhance soil health, lower input dependence, and strengthen long-term resilience.

The next priority is to diversify the food system. Decades of productivity gains have fostered a dangerous dependency on just three crops. Wheat, rice, and maize now provide most of the world's calories. Such reliance on monocultures creates profound vulnerability to pests, diseases, and climate change. The solution lies in the crops we have marginalized. Traditional and underused species – hardy millets, nutrient-dense legumes, indigenous fruits, robust yams – offer ample nutrition alongside other benefits such as climate resilience. United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization initiatives like Future Smart Food (in Asia) and 100 Crops for Africa demonstrate how these "forgotten" crops can simultaneously expand diets, boost farm incomes, and restore degraded soils.

Finally, we must scale up effective technologies. Data analytics and precision-agriculture tools are already reshaping farming. Drones can plant seeds and deliver inputs with pinpoint accuracy. AI platforms can use satellite imagery to provide tailored, real-time recommendations. Robots can detect weeds for targeted spraying, avoiding the need for blanket herbicide applications. Digital soil tests and weather stations can guide day-to-day decisions, and blockchain systems can link smallholders to transparent and traceable markets.

Scaling these tools will require substantial investments in agricultural extension services (to promote best practices), major science-based policy shifts, and knowledge-sharing platforms to help farmers optimize inputs. Likewise, ongoing innovation must be incorporated into local practices, which calls for greater collaboration among governments, investors, the private sector, and farmers.

The objective is clear: agriculture must produce more with less – more crop per drop, more calories per kilogram of fertilizer, and more nutrition per hectare – every season, everywhere. That requires replacing one-size-fits-all industrial packages with resilient, context-specific systems finely tuned to local soils, water regimes, crops, and climates. Publicly funded research must lead where markets fall short to ensure equitable access to precision agriculture, while private innovation continues to scale up what works. Knowledge is no longer the bottleneck; political will and aligned incentives are.

Even in the face of recurring conflict, drought, and market chaos, stable production and affordable prices are possible. Resilient soils, diversified cropping, and precision management hold the key. A world where nearly everyone eats well, farmers prosper, soils regenerate, waters run clean, biodiversity recovers, and agrifood systems emit minimal GHGs is not utopian. It is the realistic reward for embracing a different agricultural model before the old one collapses.

The only question is whether we use the knowledge, science, and proven tools already in hand. Future generations will not ask whether the solutions existed; they will ask what took us so long to implement them. The choice is ours, and it starts with turning science into real-world practice.

The writer is Director of the Plant Production and Protection Division at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

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WISDOM CORNER

> If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world.
>
> **JRR TOLKIEN**

> If you're going to do something tonight that you'll be sorry for tomorrow morning, sleep late.
>
> **HENNY YOUNGMAN**

> When you are enthusiastic about what you do, you feel this positive energy. It's very simple.
>
> **PAULO COELHO**

FOCUS **INDIA-POLAND TIES**

DIPLOMATIC SPAT

DK Giri

INDIA AND POLAND HAVE SIMILAR GROWTH ASPIRATIONS AND SECURITY CONCERNS. IT IS, THEREFORE, STRATEGIC FOR BOTH TO DEEPEN THEIR TIES

India and Poland relations seem to have taken a nosedive in the last few months, especially since October 2025 when the Polish Foreign Minister, Radoslaw Sikorski, who is also the Deputy Prime Minister, visited Pakistan. This visit happening a few months after the India-Pakistan conflict (May 2025) had ruffled feathers in South Block, New Delhi. The unease and the strain between the EAM S. Jaishankar and Sikorski came out into the open in the joint press conference held on 19 January.

In the televised press conference, Jaishankar made a sharp remark on Sikorski's observations on India's transactions with Russia. Secondly, Jaishankar picked on the Foreign Minister for his initiatives in renewing ties with Pakistan. Jaishankar referred to India's imports of Russian oil which Sikorski had been speaking about publicly during his visit. He quoted Polish Foreign Minister on latter's remarks in Jaipur that "he was pleased that India had cut its purchase of Russian oil…." Jaishankar said, "I have repeatedly underlined that selective targeting of India is both unfair and unjustified. I do so again today."

Jaishankar in his opening remarks elaborated, "Poland should display zero tolerance for terrorism and not help fuel the terrorist infrastructure in our neighbourhood." In his response, the Polish FM agreed that the two sides were on the same page on terrorism. He admitted that the conversation about India and Poland's respective regions had been open and frank. But he pointed out, perhaps as a retort, "India's participation in Zapad 2025 military exercises in Russia and Belarus was seen as 'threatening'."

The sharp exchange of divergences between two Foreign Ministers of two democracies was a bit unusual for observers of international relations

The sharp exchange of divergences between two Foreign Ministers of two democracies was a bit unusual for observers of international relations. The relations between both countries have been steadily growing in multiple sectors since the visit of Prime Minister Modi to Warsaw en route to Kiev to meet Ukraine's President Zelenskyy. That said mutual concerns about their respective neighbours are in fact not out of order. These have to be addressed by both countries if the ties have to be taken to new heights. Poland is certainly and genuinely concerned about Russian military actions in the neighbourhood. It has won and lost battles to Russia in the past. But in the recent past, Poland has been colonised by Russia, its predecessor Soviet Union, to be more precise. Russia under Putin has expressed off and on to extend Moscow's influence across Eastern Europe which includes Poland as an immediate neighbour bordering it. Putin's intentions are revanchist in nature as Soviet Union used to have political suzerainty over Eastern Europe including Poland. It is natural for Warsaw as a sovereign, independent, a fast-growing economy and democracy to be alarmed by Russia's neo-imperialist designs.

The oil purchase has become a thorn in the flesh of European countries. As a matter of fact, many countries are driven in their geo-political relations by their respective national interests. India is no exception to that trend as it is evidenced in New Delhi's response to Ukraine war. European Union countries have been guided by their national economic interests. Their trade and investment in China testify to the mismatch between their avowed international political principles and economic policies. Having written extensively about it, I am a bit surprised that Jaishankar does not raise the China obsession of Europe in his remarks on partner countries dealing with New Delhi's hostile neighbours.

It is in order that New Delhi raises the China question with EU including Poland whenever the latter brings up India's policy on Ukraine war. That is a better bargain than raising European engagement with Pakistan, which is of course, of no less concern to India. But Pakistan exists only as a satellite country of one big power or the other.

On the brighter side, India-Poland relations have been steadily growing despite such irritants. Under the India-Poland strategic partnership framework, both countries have agreed to review their Action Plan 2024-2028 focusing on cooperation in trade, investment, defence and security. More important, Poland has expressed support for stronger India-EU ties as both Union of India and the European Union are about to sign a Free Trade Agreement.

In economic ties, the bilateral trade has grown by 200% in the past decade, touching $7bn. India's investment in Poland has crossed $3b creating job opportunities for Polish citizens. While both countries are committed to upholding international law and promoting global peace and security, they have divergent views on Russia's actions in Ukraine. In defence cooperation, both countries have scope in expanding their collaboration. Poland's defence industry with established companies like PZL and WZL having expertise in aerospace and defence equipment manufacturing can collaborate with India on co-development and co-production of aircraft, helicopters and drones.

As India is becoming an exporter of defence equipment, both countries have potential scope in naval cooperation. Poland's experience in building naval vassals can compliment India's growing naval capabilities. However, the challenges that the defence cooperation may encounter consist of differences in defence procurement processes, export controls and licensing – Poland's membership of the EU and NATO may incur export controls and licensing requirements.

However, these challenges can be addressed by regular dialogue and consultations encouraging industry-to-industry engagement and providing government support and facilitation in promoting cooperation. India and Poland have similar growth aspirations and security concerns. It is, therefore, strategic for both to deepen their ties.

INFA

SPECTRUM **SUSTAINABILITY**

Diving deeper to save the ocean

Shaun Seow

DESPITE ITS IMPORTANCE, THE OCEAN PLAYS A MARGINAL ROLE IN INVESTMENT, GOVERNANCE, AND PLANNING DECISIONS

Long-term global stability depends heavily on what happens in the ocean. Nowhere is this more evident than in Asia, home to much of the Coral Triangle and vast mangrove and seagrass ecosystems that sustain fisheries, protect coastal communities, and store massive amounts of carbon. Together, these ecosystems underpin food security, employment, and climate resilience across the continent and beyond.

Yet, despite its importance, the ocean plays a marginal role in investment, governance, and planning decisions. Less than 1% of global philanthropic funding is directed toward ocean health, and an even smaller share reaches Asia. As a result, many conservation projects remain underdeveloped at a time when marine ecosystems and coastal communities face growing strain.

It doesn't have to be this way. Philanthropy can make a decisive difference. By linking science, policy, finance, and communities more effectively than other forms of capital, it has a unique ability to foster collective action. It can take early risks, back emerging ideas, and fill gaps where markets and governments fall short.

There are many compelling examples. The Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance is developing innovative financial and insurance instruments to strengthen climate-vulnerable coastal communities. The 30x30 Southeast Asia Ocean Fund works with national and subnational governments and residents to expand marine protection in line with scientific priorities and local needs. And The Audacious Project enables donors to back one of the world's largest coral restoration initiatives, combining science, technology, and community expertise to regenerate reef systems at scale. These initiatives demonstrate the potential of philanthropic action, but they remain relatively rare, and their impact is limited. To unlock meaningful progress, philanthropic contributions must align with shared priorities and reinforce one another, rather than operate in isolation.

Effectiveness depends on clarity. When governments, communities, and funders work toward a shared goal, coordination improves and momentum builds. This underscores the need for national and regional strategies that link ocean conservation with livelihoods, prioritize ecosystems by their need for protection, and identify areas suitable for sustainable industries. Without direction, efforts remain fragmented, and projects struggle to move beyond the pilot stage.

There is already a strong foundation to build on. The High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, for example, has developed a useful handbook outlining a practical process for governments to set objectives, mobilize finance, analyze baseline data, build inclusive frameworks, and implement roadmaps.

Philanthropy can accelerate the process by helping countries translate ambition into practical strategies, convene partners around shared priorities, and support the analytical and participatory work needed to develop credible long-term plans. Once these are in place, investments align more effectively, and promising solutions are better positioned to scale.

But implementation depends on capacity. Roadmaps mean little if policymakers, institutions, markets, and communities are not in sync. Early support can help catalyze critical financing. By funding feasibility studies, regulatory groundwork, and initial project preparation, philanthropy acts as risk capital, reducing uncertainty and attracting public and private investment. Concessional capital, in particular, enables projects to mature to a point where commercial actors are willing and able to participate.

Indonesia's Southeast Asia Framework for Oceans Action in Mitigation shows how this approach works. Initial philanthropic support focused on defining how ocean solutions could be integrated into Indonesia's climate commitments. Subsequent funding has shifted toward execution, strengthening links between science and policy, building institutional capacity, and enabling national and local partners to set and advance new priorities. The result is not a single flagship program, but a system designed to deliver.

Ocean-related challenges cross borders and sectors, and solutions must do the same. The real opportunity for philanthropy lies in turning shared objectives into coordinated action through platforms that help clarify priorities and develop investment-ready opportunities. My own organization, the Philanthropy Asia Alliance, aims to achieve this through our annual Philanthropy Asia Summit and the Blue Oceans Community initiative, which bring funders and partners together to mobilize co-investment for Asia-focused solutions.

While philanthropy cannot save the ocean on its own, it has a crucial role to play. Its impact depends less on the amounts raised and more on how effectively it connects people and organizations working to build a sustainable blue economy with those who have the means to help.

The writer is CEO of the Philanthropy Asia Alliance.

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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

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Mic politics

Sir, Tamil Nadu's latest Governor–government clash has the familiar rhythm of political "sledging": provoke, react, escalate — and then claim moral victory. The Governor RN Ravi's address under Article 176 of the Constitution is conventionally the elected government's statement, delivered through the Governor's voice. When a Governor contests the text publicly, he risks looking like a parallel Opposition. When the House responds with procedural muscle — even something as symbolic as a mic going dead — it looks less like constitutional discipline and more like political humiliation. Was it stage-managed? The incentives suggest so. For the ruling DMK, an open confrontation with the Governor helps shift attention from governance deficits to a larger, emotionally resonant frame: federalism, identity, and "Delhi's overreach." It also forces the BJP into the centre of the narrative, where polarisation can consolidate anti-BJP votes. But this is not a one-sided script. Both sides profit from the spectacle; institutions absorb the damage..

Gopalaswamy J, CHENNAI

Safety of animals

Sir, That the foundation stone for the four lane Elevated Road Corridor Project in Assam's Kaziranga National Park and Tiger reserve along the existing National Highway-37 has been laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is great news as it will go a long way in ensuring the safety and security of the animals. During rains, as the park gets flooded, the rush of animals towards the nearby Karbi Anglong hills by traversing across the highway has resulted in deaths of animals like the one-horned rhinoceros. Therefore, the 34.5-km-elevated corridor in an earmarked area of Kaziranga, a UNESCO world heritage site, where definite animal-crossings are said to happen, stands to shield many endangered species. Drastically reduced chances of animal-vehicle collisions also means safe commuting options for tourists.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Increase fodder subsidy of dairy farmers: Priyanka to Kerala govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wayanad (Kerala), Jan 22: Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has urged the Kerala government to increase the subsidy cap for fodder, claiming that the current rate was "grossly inadequate".

The MP from Wayanad constituency has raised the demand in a letter to state Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development J Chinchu Rani, the party said in a release Thursday.

In her letter, Priyanka has pointed out that dairy farmers in her constituency were facing grave difficulties due to the rising cost of cattle feed.

She has said that according to some studies over 80 per cent of the cost of milk production was attributed to feed cost.

The Congress leader has said that the severe shortfall in fodder production, as well as the high cost of cultivation has further aggravated the situation.

"In Wayanad district alone, only 1,800 hectares are under fodder cultivation. Some projections suggest that the district needs to bring 3,000 hectares under fodder cultivation to meet local demands. Dairy farmers in Kerala rely on fodder from neighbouring states, often procured at premium prices, and are prone to supply disruptions. This has made milk production extremely expensive for dairy farmers in

Kerala," she has said.

The Wayanad MP has also said that the cost of production runs to over Rs 50 per litre, but the procurement rate has remained stagnant at Rs 47 to 48 per litre.

In addition to these challenges, farmers in Wayanad also face the risk of wild animal attacks while collecting fodder, she has said. Vadra has further said that currently dairy farmers were provided Rs 3 per kg for green fodder and Rs 4 per kg for dry fodder.

"The maximum subsidy available to an individual farmer is Rs 5,000, and subsidies to Dairy Cooperative Societies are capped at Rs one lakh. While the cattle feeding subsidy provided is welcome, the current subsidy rate is grossly inadequate. Furthermore, the cap on the maximum subsidy that can be availed by individual farmers and dairy cooperative societies ought to be raised. The dairy farmers require financial support that not only helps them recover their costs but enables them to be competitive," she has said in her letter to the minister.

She has urged the state government to hold consultations with the relevant stakeholders, and increase the subsidy for both wet and dry fodder and to prioritise initiatives for bringing more area under fodder cultivation.

"The dairy farmers have also apprised me of the steep cost of engaging chartered accounts. The GST compliance burden further adds to their mounting costs. Any financial support or arrangement to assist dairy farmers and cooperatives avail the services of chartered accountants will be of great help," the Congress MP has said.

She further said that lakhs of dairy farmers were crippled by debt and mounting losses and the industry sustains some of the most vulnerable communities in rural areas. "It is our duty to help them build a more productive future for themselves. I would be happy to extend my full support to any initiative to do so," she said.

FROM TOURISM INTELLIGENCE TO GLOBAL OUTREACH

Delhi plans detail data-driven branding overhaul

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: Building a tourism intelligence repository, crafting evidence-led communication strategies and expanding international outreach -- the Delhi government is preparing a comprehensive overhaul of how the national capital is positioned and promoted as a tourism destination.

To implement the initiative, the Delhi Tourism and Transport Development Corporation (DTTDC) will engage a specialised information, education and communication (IEC) agency to handle destination branding, market research, digital asset creation, website redevelopment and global market outreach, an official of the tourism department said.

According to the official, "The selected agency will undertake periodic assessments of Delhi's tourism landscape, mapping visitor flows, seasonality patterns, tourism circuits, emerging experiences and overall performance, while benchmarking the city against comparable national and international destinations."

He said the agency will also source and analyse credible tourism datasets, including government statistics, transport footfall, hotel occupancy trends, digital search behaviour and traveller intent indicators. These inputs will be used to generate actionable insights on audience preferences, peak travel windows and experience-driven demand.

The estimated cost of the project is Rs 3.95 crore. Technical bids for the selection of the IEC agency are scheduled to be opened February 5, the official added.

"A key element of the project involves developing detailed target audience profiles for both domestic and international travellers. High-potential segments such as weekend travellers, heritage and culinary tourists; meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) travellers; wellness seekers, students and spiritual or cultural visitors will be identified to enable sharper, market-specific communication," he explained.

As part of the branding exercise, the agency will create a new theme and tagline for Delhi Tourism and prepare comprehensive brand guidelines, including tone of voice, storytelling approach, creative standards and content governance systems to ensure consistency across all communication outputs.

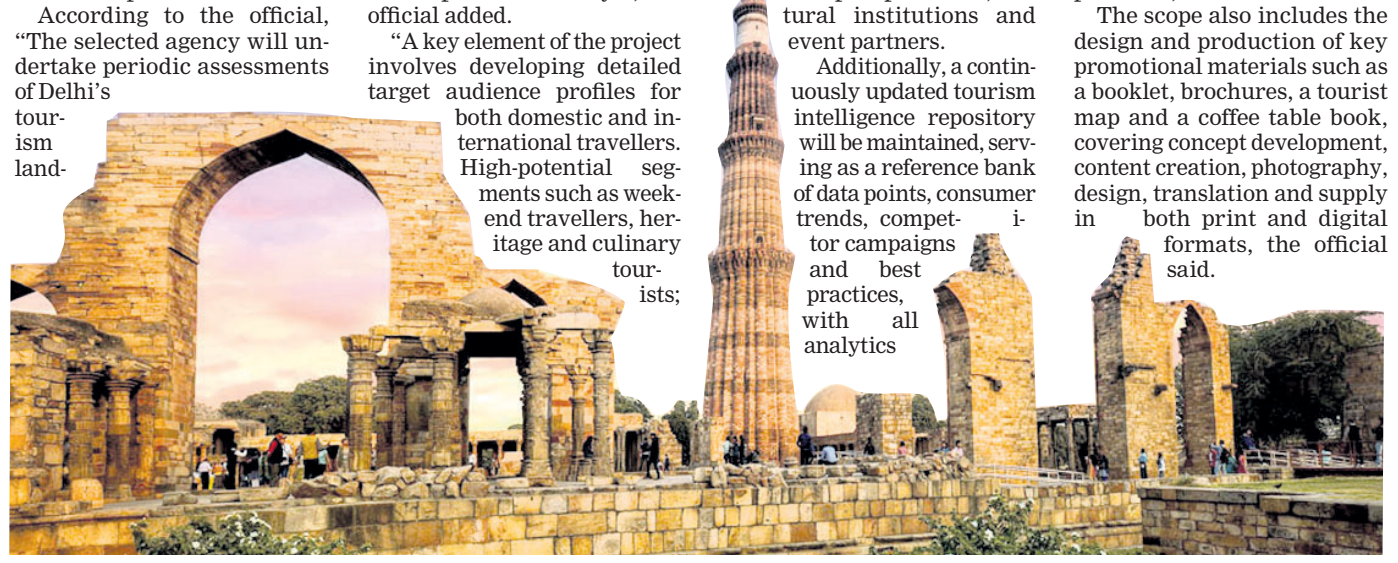
The official further said that the agency will additionally map the city's tourism ecosystem, identifying opportunities for collaboration with tour operators, hotels, guides, transport providers, cultural institutions and event partners.

Additionally, a continuously updated tourism intelligence repository will be maintained, serving as a reference bank of data points, consumer trends, competitor campaigns and best practices, with all analytics required to be traceable and source-cited, he said.

Based on this research, the agency will prepare a structured tourism communication strategy framework and a detailed content roadmap, the official said, adding that this will define Delhi Tourism's positioning, narrative pillars, key messaging architecture, priority markets and channel strategy, covering websites, digital platforms, partner media, events and exhibitions.

Integrated campaign frameworks linked to seasons, festivals, heritage circuits, culinary experiences and new-age attractions will be developed, along with annual and quarterly communication calendars aligned to tourism seasonality and policy priorities, he mentioned.

The scope also includes the design and production of key promotional materials such as a booklet, brochures, a tourist map and a coffee table book, covering concept development, content creation, photography, design, translation and supply in both print and digital formats, the official said.



High ammonia in Yamuna to disrupt water supply in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: The national capital is set to face significant water supply disruption until next month, with at least five major water treatment plants (WTPs) of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) reducing water production due to high ammonia levels in the Yamuna and reduced raw water supply from Haryana, officials said Thursday.

The affected WTPs include Wazirabad, Haiderpur Phase 1 and 2, Bawana, and Dwarka, with water production reduced, impacting several areas across the city until February 4.

"The situation is being constantly reviewed by DJB. Four water plants are currently operating at 75 per cent of their overall capacity until the situation improves," a senior DJB official informed PTI.

The Wazirabad WTP, which has an overall capacity of 138 million gallons per day (MGD), has halted production completely.

"Operations at Wazirabad WTP have been temporarily suspended due to high ammonia levels in raw water from the Yamuna and reduced canal supply," DJB officials said.

Areas likely to be impacted include IGI Airport, Dwarka, Shalimar Bagh, Sultanpuri, Raja Garden, Rajouri Garden, Karala, Bawana, Prashant Vihar, Madhu Vihar, Mangolpuri, Paschim Vihar, Mayapuri, Janakpuri, and other adjoining localities.

From legislature to lyric sheet, Kerala Assembly disrupted by viral parody

SABARIMALA ROW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 22: The ruling LDF and the opposition UDF Thursday traded accusations against each other, both inside and outside the Kerala Assembly, in connection with the Sabarimala gold loss issue.

The Congress-led UDF disrupted assembly proceedings demanding the resignation of state Devaswom Minister V N Vasavan over the gold loss issue and accusing the CPI(M) of being behind the alleged "loot".

Hitting back at the opposition, the CPI(M)-led LDF claimed in the House that it was the Congress which was behind the "loot" of gold from Sabarimala.

Its ministers, MB Rajesh and V Sivankutty, alleged that Sonia Gandhi was involved in the matter as Unnikrishnan Potty, the main accused in the gold loss cases, had met her at her residence in Delhi.

Sivankutty also demanded that Sonia Gandhi be arrested and interrogated, alleging that the gold missing from Sabarimala was sold to her by Potty.

After the House was adjourned for the day due to the disruption caused by the opposition, LDF MLAs walked outside the assembly complex and told reporters that the actions of the UDF showed they were afraid to discuss the matter.

The Left MLAs said it was irresponsible of the UDF to not move a notice to adjourn the House to discuss the issue and instead disrupt the working of the assembly.

They also contended that the UDF was afraid of a discussion as it also had a role in the gold loss issue and to hide the alleged involvement of Sonia Gandhi.

"We have nothing to hide," LDF MLAs, like KK Shailaja, said, adding that the SIT probe will reveal who stole the gold from Sabarimala.

On the other hand, the UDF MLAs reiterated their allegations that Vasavan had a role in the loss of gold and that is why his resignation was demanded.

Leader of Opposition in the state assembly VD Satheesan said that Rajesh and Sivankutty appear to have lost their mental balance as they made accusations against Sonia Gandhi in connection with the matter.

"It is CPI(M) leaders who are in jail in connection with the matter. So, there is no need for discussion in the House," he said.

He said that when the UDF tried to discuss the matter in the House during the last session, permission for it was denied on the ground that it was a sub-judice matter.

"Since Vasavan has not resigned, there is no point in having a discussion," he added.

The opposition leader further said the Speaker claimed that such a disruption in the House was a first in the assembly's history, and suggested that A N Shamseer examine the records to ascertain if that is correct.

Delhi logs warmest January day in 7 yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: Delhi Thursday witnessed its warmest January day in seven years, with the Safdarjung observatory recording a maximum temperature of 27.1 degrees Celsius, according to the India Meteorological Department, though temperatures are likely to get colder again over the next 24 hours.

The last time the city recorded a higher maximum temperature in January was in 2019, when the mercury had touched 28.7 degrees Celsius January 21.

THE LAST TIME THE CITY RECORDED A HIGHER MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE IN JANUARY WAS IN 2019, WHEN THE MERCURY HAD TOUCHED 28.7 DEGREES CELSIUS JANUARY 21

This month's second warmest day was recorded January 19, when the maximum temperature stood at 26.7 degrees Celsius, while the average maximum temperature for January so far has been 20.4 degrees Celsius.

The IMD said that an ongoing western disturbance is expected to influence the region, bringing cloudy skies and rainfall. The maximum temperature is expected to fall to 19 degrees Celsius tomorrow, with the minimum temperature set to settle at 12 degrees, the weather office said.

One or two spells of light rain accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds of 30-40 kmph are likely during the early morning to forenoon hours Friday.

Another spell of very light to light rain is expected towards the afternoon or evening, along with shallow fog during morning hours. A yellow alert has been issued for thunderstorms and rain.

On the weather front, Delhi recorded a maximum temperature of 27.1 degrees Celsius, which was 6.8 degrees Celsius above normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 6.3 degrees Celsius, 1.2 degrees Celsius below the seasonal average.

Station-wise data showed that maximum temperatures across the city remained significantly above normal.

Safdarjung recorded the highest maximum at 27.1 degrees Celsius, followed by Ayanagar at 25.4 degrees Celsius, the Ridge at 25.2 degrees Celsius, Lodhi Road at 25.1 degrees Celsius and Palam at 24.7 degrees Celsius.

Minimum temperatures showed mixed trends, with Safdarjung at 6.3 degrees Celsius, Lodhi Road 6.7 degrees Celsius, the Ridge 9.2 degrees Celsius and Ayanagar 7.3 degrees Celsius, all below normal, while Palam was slightly warmer at 8 degrees Celsius, 0.8 degrees Celsius above normal.

Sajjan Kumar's acquittal shatters kin of '84 riot victims

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: A daughter who watched her father being set on fire, a wife widowed in her youth, and a man who lost his loved ones in the 1984 riots...they all stood outside a Delhi court Thursday, carrying the weight of their grief that has lingered for four decades.

Justice has been long, exhausting, and cruelly unfulfilled, the families said following the acquittal of former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar in a case related to alleged incitement of violence in the Janakpuri and Vikaspuri areas during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

Despite this acquittal, Kumar remains in prison, having been sentenced to life imprisonment in other riot-related murder cases.

Standing outside the courtroom, Nirmal Kaur recounted a childhood scorched by flames.

"My father was burnt alive before my eyes, and I have spent 42 years moving from one court to another, clinging to the belief that justice would one day arrive," she told PTI,

crying for justice.

She added that her family was destroyed that day, saying, "I myself was destroyed, and every good thing in my life was taken away." Even now, she lamented that justice remained out of reach after decades of hope.

Beside her stood another woman, her voice shaking with rage and despair. She declared that the man she held responsible must be punished and hanged, warning that if this did not happen, they would remain outside the court, even if it meant dying there - they had nothing left to lose.

Wazir Singh, another family member of a riot victim, said that Kumar had faced around 18 murder cases yet had been let off.

"He was responsible for the killing of thousands of Sikhs, and families like mine have spent their entire lives moving in and out of courtrooms," Singh said.

He asserted that if justice remained denied, they were ready to appeal to the high court and even the Supreme Court, expressing that they were no longer afraid to fight.

For Bagi Kaur, the memories of the riots are still unbearable and vivid.

"Ten members of my family were killed. I vividly remember that during the riots, the roads were littered with corpses. One had to jump over dead bodies to cross the road," she recounted.

She described witnessing her family's dreams being destroyed and mentioned that not a single day had passed in all these years when she missed a court hearing, regardless of the circumstances.

बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया Bank of India BOI

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[Rule-8 (1) & (2)] of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the **Bank of India** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s) in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **Symbolic Possession** of the property described here-in below in exercise of the powers conferred on him / her under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the Act read with Rule-8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002. Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s) in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property & any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **Bank of India, Sastri Nagar Branch,** for the amount stated below with interest thereon. **The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of the Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to them, to redeem the secured assets.**

SASTRI NAGAR BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) / Mortgagor(s)	Liabilities due as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice/ Date of Possession (Symbolic) Notice	Description of Immovable Property/ies
Borrowers: 1) Mr. Snehasis Prasad Nayak, S/o- Bhagaban Nayak, **2) Mr. Bhagwan Nayak,** S/o- Chakradhar Nayak, Both are at Village: Juilunda, PO: Tipuri, PS: Satyabadi, Dist.: Puri, PIN-752017.	₹14,48,007.88 + interest & other charges thereon	01.11.2025 / 22.01.2026	All that part and parcel of property consisting of Land and Building situated at Khata No.: 109/16, Plot No.: 164(P), Mouza: Sebatipur Purbapari, Tahasil: Delanga, PS: Delanga (97), SRO: Delanga, Dist.: Puri, Odisha, Area: Ac.0.050dec. i.e 2178 Sqft., standing in the name of Sri Snehasis Prasad Nayak. Bounded by- North: Plot No. 166 (Gangadhar Mallick), South: Plot No. 164 (P)/ Vendor, East: Road, West: Plot No. 168 (Abhiram Jena)
Borrowers: 1) Mrs. Soudamini Managaraj, W/o- Late Sadhu Charan Managaraj, **2) Mr. Samir Kumar Managaraj,** S/o- Late Sadhu Charan Managaraj, **3) Mrs. Sandhyarani Mangaraj,** D/o- Late Sadhu Charan Mangaraj, **4) Mr. Sunil Kumar Managaraj,** S/o- Sadhu Charan Managaraj, (Allr are Legal Heirs of deceased Sadhu Charan Mangaraj)All are At/PO: Ramachandi, Via: Narayangarh, Dist.: Khurda, PIN-752018.	₹9,54,633.68 + interest & other charges thereon	01.11.2025 / 22.01.2026	All that part and parcel of property consisting of Land and Building situated at present Khata No.: 322/76, Plot No.: 367, Area: Ac.0.211dec., i.e. 9161.16 Sqft., corresponding to Khata No.: 283, Plot No.: 367, Area: Ac.0.211dec., i.e. 9161.16 Sqft., Mouza: Ramachandi, Tahasil: Khurda, PS: Khurda, No-202, SRO/Dist.: Khurda, Odisha, standing in the name of Mrs. Soudamini Managaraj, W/o- Late Sadhu Charan Mangaraj. Bounded by- North: Govt. Road, South: Sanjuktarani Maharana, East: Plot No. 368, 370 & Govt. Road, West: Mrutunjaya Chhotaray.

Place: Bhubaneswar
Date: 22.01.2026

Authorized Officer
Bank of India

I have received a distressing message: at least 16 Indian nationals, including three from Hyderabad, were promised jobs in Thailand but taken to the Myanmar-Thailand border and enslaved

ASADUDDIN OWAISI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

PM TO ADDRESS RALLIES IN KERALA, TN TODAY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will kickstart the BJP's election campaign in Kerala and Tamil Nadu Friday by addressing public meetings in the two poll-bound states. Modi will be in Thiruvananthapuram for an official programme to launch and lay foundation stones for development projects and flag off new trains

Quote of the day

The lives of farmers, the poor and ordinary citizens would be protected only when the BJP was removed from power

AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

Our mothers cannot tell us their exact date of birth. Even (former Prime Minister Atal Bihari) Vajpayee ji had told me that December 25 is not his real birthday. I have Madhyamik (class 10 state board exam) papers to specify my date of birth. But there are many in the earlier generations who might not have it. Why harass them?

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

The arrogance of Congress never comes down! On the instructions of Rahul Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge insults PM Narendra Modi by saying – 'Kabhi chai banaya hai?' From abusing PM Narendra Modi Ji's mother to targeting him with daily personal attacks - all because he stands firmly between Urban Naxals and Bharat

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS CHIEF

High drama in Karnataka Assembly

This is the third governor vs government face-off in two days in three non-BJP-ruled southern states, the others being Kerala and Tamil Nadu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Jan 22: In a high drama in Karnataka Assembly, Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot Thursday refused to read the state-prepared address to a joint session of the state legislature and concluded his customary speech in just three lines, evoking a sharp reaction from Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who accused him of being a "puppet" of the Centre.

This is the third governor vs government face-off in two days in three non-BJP-ruled southern states, the others being Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

The Governor began the speech by greeting the Chief Minister, Assembly Speaker U T Khader, Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti, Leaders of the Opposition, ministers, and members.

"I extend a warm welcome to all of you to the joint session of the State legislature. I am extremely pleased to address one more joint session of the Karnataka legislature. My government is firmly committed to doubling the pace of the state's economic, social, and physical development. Jai Hind. Jai Karnataka," he said in Hindi, before walking out. The Treasury Benches, including ministers such as H K Patil (Law and Parliamentary Affairs), stood up and requested Gehlot to complete the speech. As the Governor proceeded towards the exit door, some ruling legislators, including MLC B K Hariprasad, tried to gherao him by shouting slogans. They were removed by the security staff.

The legislators then shouted 'shame shame' and "Dhikkara-Dhikkara, Rajyapalarige Dhikkara" (Reproof to the Governor) in Kannada. While seemingly defending the Governor, BJP members shouted "Bharat Mata ki Jai".

Siddaramaiah attacked Gehlot for the actions and charged him with failing to deliver his constitutional responsibilities and duties. Accusing the Governor of reading his own speech, Siddaramaiah said he has violated the Constitution by not reading out the full speech prepared by the government, and acted like a "puppet" in the hands of the central government. "Every new year, the governor has to address the joint session, and he has to read the speech prepared by the state cabinet. That is constitutional. Because Article 176 of the Constitution and Article 163 say he or she -- the Governor--shall read the speech prepared by the government or the cabinet," Siddaramaiah told reporters.

"Today, instead of reading the speech prepared by the cabinet, he delivered the speech prepared by himself. This is against the provisions of the Indian Constitution. It clearly violates articles 176 and 163. Therefore, it is not going to be the speech of the Governor. He has not discharged his duties as per the Constitution. He has not discharged his responsibilities as prescribed by the Indian Constitution," the Chief Minister said.

Asserting that the government was going to protest against the attitude of the Governor, he said: "We are examining whether to approach the Supreme Court or not. We will let you know."

Thursday's development follows similar ones in neighbouring Kerala and Tamil Nadu over the past two days.

On Tuesday, Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi walked out of the state Assembly without delivering his customary address to the House on the opening day of its inaugural session of the year, claiming "inaccuracies" in the text. Similarly, his Kerala counterpart Rajendra Viswanath Arlekar had allegedly "omitted" portions of his speech, with the Lok Bhavan claiming his suggestions had been excluded from the original draft. As the business of the Karnataka Assembly resumed, Law Minister Patil's speech on the Governor's address got preference over the customary obituary to the eminent persons, drawing sharp response from the BJP.

Anti-Sikh riots: Court acquits Sajjan Kumar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: A Delhi court Thursday acquitted former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar in a case related to inciting violence in the Janakpuri area in the national capital during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, saying the prosecution failed to prove the charges beyond a reasonable doubt.

Kumar has been in jail since 2018 after being sentenced by the Delhi High Court to life imprisonment over the murder of five people in Delhi's Palam Colony November 1 and 2, 1984.

Special Judge Dig Vinay Singh underlined that though the court understood the trauma suffered by the victims and their families, its decision had to be "sans emotions".

"The finding of guilt of the accused in this case must be solely judged based on the evidence led in the present matter. Unfortunately, most of the witnesses examined by the prosecution in this case are hearsay, and/or those witnesses who failed to name the accused for three long decades," the judge said.

He said relying on the identification of the accused by such witnesses "would be risky and may lead to a travesty".

The judge said there was no reliable evidence that Kumar was present at the crime scene or that he was seen there by anyone. There was also no evidence of instigating any riotous mob or of conspiracy regarding the alleged incident, he added.

In the 60-page order, the court said, "Sum and substance is that the prosecution has not met its burden of proof against the accused beyond a reasonable doubt, which is essential for conviction in a criminal trial."

"Resultantly, because of a lack of credible evidence as to the presence of the accused in the crime in question or a part of the unlawful assembly or his involvement in any manner, either through instigation, conspiracy, or abetment of any other nature, he is acquitted of the charges," it said. Meanwhile, complainant Harvinder Singh's counsel, Maninder Singh, hinted at challenging the order in the high court. "We will first study the verdict thoroughly and then file an appeal in the Delhi High Court," the counsel told PTI.

SHORT TAKES

Man stabbed to death; five held

New Delhi: Five people, including four minors and a DU student, have been apprehended for stabbing a 25-year-old man to death in northwest Delhi's Mangolpuri to settle scores stemming from past disputes, police said Thursday. The deceased was identified as Akash alias Akku, 22. He had allegedly set the house of Salman, a common friend of the accused, on fire in September last year and was known to bully local criminals, which further fuelled resentment, they said.

Man found dead in police custody

Nagpur: A 19-year-old man arrested for allegedly kidnapping a minor girl was found dead in the custody of Nagpur police, an official said Thursday. Manojkumar Ramji Bhatia was recently arrested in Uttar Pradesh in connection with a case registered against him for kidnapping, and under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act at the Jaripatka police station. He was brought to Nagpur and produced in a local court Wednesday. The court remanded him in police custody for two days, the official said.

One killed in blast at illegal firecracker unit

Siwan: A 50-year-old man was killed and his three family members injured in an explosion at an illegal firecracker manufacturing unit in Bihar's Siwan district Thursday, police said. The explosion took place in the house of Murtazza Ansari in Bargam village in Hussain Ganj block, where firecrackers were being illegally manufactured, they said.

Constable hangs self at police headquarters

Bharuch (Gujarat): A 27-year-old woman constable has allegedly died by suicide at her residence in the police headquarters in Gujarat's Bharuch district, officials said Thursday. A suicide note was recovered after the incident, which occurred Wednesday night, but it was yet to be examined, they said.

PTI PHOTO

Folk artists pose during a press preview of tableaux that will participate in the Republic Day parade in New Delhi

Noida techie death: 2 more builders held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noida, Jan 22: The Noida police Thursday arrested two more builders in connection with the death of a software engineer who drowned after his car plunged into a waterlogged trench near a construction site in Sector 150 here, officials said.

The official said both the arrested persons are associated with real estate developer Lotus Greens, although their exact designation in the company could not be confirmed immediately. According to the police, the arrests were made by the Knowledge Park police station team in a case registered under Sections 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 106 (causing death by negligence) and 125 (act endangering life or personal safety of others).

PM Modi speaks to Brazil's Lula

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva Thursday and asserted that close cooperation was vital for advancing the shared interests of the Global South. Modi received a call from the Brazilian president, and the two leaders underscored the importance of reformed multilateralism in addressing shared challenges, an official statement said. The Prime Minister also said he was looking forward to welcoming the Brazilian president to India soon. "Glad to speak with President Lula. We reviewed the strong momentum in the India-Brazil Strategic Partnership, which is poised to scale new heights in the year ahead," Modi said in a post on X. "Our close cooperation is vital for advancing the shared interests of the Global South. I look forward to welcoming him to India soon," he added. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen the India-Brazil Strategic Partnership and take it to even greater heights in the year ahead, the statement said.

Manipur man killing case handed over to NIA: Guv

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A man belonging to the Meitei community was shot dead after being abducted by suspected Kuki militants in a fresh escalation of the tensions in restive Manipur, police said

Imphal/ Churachandpur, Jan 22: Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla Thursday said that the case of the murder of a Meitei man by suspected Kuki militants in Churachandpur has been handed over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for a thorough probe, a Lok Bhavan statement said.

The governor expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Mayanglambam Rishikanta Singh and extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. He said that the case has been handed over to the NIA.

The governor further said that an intensive combing operation has been launched since Wednesday night to apprehend those responsible, with coordinated efforts involving both state and central forces and operations are being undertaken on a war footing. He also reiterated that all necessary measures are being taken in accordance with law and expressed profound regret over the tragic loss of life.

A man belonging to the Meitei community was shot dead after being abducted by suspected Kuki militants in Churachandpur district, in a fresh escalation of the tensions in restive Manipur, police said.

Mayanglambam Rishikanta Singh was abducted from his home in the Tuibong area Wednesday and shot dead in the vicinity of Natjang village, a senior officer said. The kidnappers are suspected to be members of the United Kuki National Army (UNKA), a non-signatory to the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement. The SoO pact was signed between the Centre, the Manipur government and dozens of Kuki-Zo militant groups.

Singh, who hailed from Kakching Khunou in Kakching district, was married to Chingnu Haokip of Churachandpur and assumed a tribal name, Ginminthang.

Is Maharashtra CM so helpless, asks HC over law and order

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 22: In a sharp rebuke, the Bombay High Court Thursday asked whether the rule of law exists in Maharashtra and if the Chief Minister was so helpless that he can not say anything against a minister whose son has been absconding after being named in a criminal case.

Ministers' children "commit crimes and roam freely" but police can not find them, Justice Madhav Jamdar said in a scathing observation.

The court was hearing a pre-arrest bail application of Vikas Gogawale, son of Shiv Sena minister Bharat Gogawale. Vikas has been named as an accused in a case related to a violent clash between rival groups during the Mahad Municipal Council elections. Following the court's reprimand, the government assured that the minister would see to it that his son surrenders within a day.

Vikas Gogawale moved the high court after the sessions court rejected his anticipatory bail application, but he remains absconding.

"Is the state's chief minister so helpless that he does not say anything against even one minister? Ministers' children commit crimes and roam freely and they stay in touch with their parents but the police cannot find them?" Justice Madhav Jamdar said.

- REMARKS MADE DURING PRE-ARREST BAIL PLEA OF VIKAS GOGAWALE
- MINISTER WILL GET HIS SON TO SURRENDER, GOVERNMENT TELLS HC
- DOES LAW AND ORDER PREVAIL IN MAHARASHTRA, ASKS JUDGE

The judge also asked if law and order and the rule of law prevail in the state. Advocate General Milind Sathe said minister Gogawale would speak to his son, and ensure that he surrenders before the police Friday.

"Ask him to surrender before the hearing tomorrow," the HC said. The court earlier warned that it would be forced to pass an order if the police failed to apprehend Vikas Gogawale. "There might be pressure on you (police), not on the court," Justice Jamdar said.

Clashes broke out between supporters of the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party during civic elections at Mahad in Raigad district December 2. Both Shinde and Pawar are deputy chief ministers in the BJP-led government.

The two sides lodged complaints against each other, and cross-FIRs were registered.

Vikas Gogawale, his cousin Mahesh Gogawale and their supporters are named in one of the First Information Reports. Another FIR named Shreeyansh Jagtap, son of former MLA Manik Jagtap and a leader of the NCP.

The HC subsequently granted interim protection from arrest to Shreeyansh Jagtap.

Vijay's TVK gets 'whistle' symbol for 2026 polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Jan 22: The EC has allotted 'whistle' as the symbol for actor-politician Vijay's TVK and enthusiastic party workers have already taken it across the state, senior leader CTR Nirmal Kumar said Thursday.

The whistle symbol was the 'priority' one as preferred by Vijay from a choice of 10 symbols proposed, Kumar, joint general secretary of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam said.

"The overall expectations and the desire of the people of Tamil Nadu is that our leader should become the Chief Minister. As a first step, this symbol has been given," he told reporters here. "The symbol has reached across Tamil Nadu with TVK workers enthusiastically taking it across the state," he added.

Two years after the launch of the party, the 2026 Assembly polls will be the first electoral battle of the 50 year-old Vijay-helmed TVK, Kumar said, expressing confidence of the party securing a massive win and Vijay becoming CM.

Incidentally, one of actor Vijay's top hit songs is "whistle podu," (play the whistle) from his 2024 film GOAT, which had some references to his then planned political foray. He had acted in a film titled 'Bigil,' which also means whistle.

Meanwhile, senior Congress functionary Praveen Chakravarty, whose reported meeting with Vijay earlier had set off buzz of in the political circles, said the 2026 "election whistle" is blown in the state.

national

First Tamil Nadu. Then Kerala. Now Karnataka. The pattern is clear and deliberate. Governors refusing to read the speech prepared by state governments and behaving like party agents, undermining duly elected state governments

M K STALIN | TN CM

TWO ACCUSED IN ZUBEEN DEATH CASE WITHDRAW BAIL PETITIONS

Two accused in the Zubeen Garg death case, North East India Festival director Shyamkanu Mahanta and the singer's cousin Sandipan Garg, Thursday withdrew their bail petitions during a hearing at a court here. The Kamrup Metropolitan District and Sessions Court was hearing the bail pleas of five of the seven accused when Mahanta and Sandipan Garg's lawyers withdrew their petitions

Quote of the day

Whoever understands India and its culture knows that the solutions to all the world's problems are inherent in Indian traditions

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

A Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board (HPSEB) division would be opened in Sulah and the Bhawarna town would be upgraded into a Nagar Panchayat

SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CM

Members of the public service must not confine such conferences to personal demands and memorandums alone, but utilise the platform meaningfully to collectively brainstorm how the public service can work better for the people through innovative ideas, schemes, and actionable plans

PEMA KHANDU | ARUNACHAL CM

X POST OF THE DAY

In India, we have approximately:
5000 IAS officers
25000 Judges
4000 MLAs
788 MPs
All of them live in huge bungalows, have 10 servants and travel in expensive cars with full convoys.
They are also getting good salaries. Why the hell are taxpayers funding such luxuries?

@talk2anuradha

From Parakram to progress: Netaji's enduring vision

CP RADHAKRISHNAN

On the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the nation bows in remembrance of a life that burned with courage, sacrifice and an unyielding passion for freedom. From a young age, Netaji displayed a rare moral intensity—renouncing personal comfort, worldly ambition and even a prestigious career in the Indian Civil Service to dedicate himself entirely to India's liberation. For him, freedom was a sacred duty that demanded discipline, fearlessness and the willingness to sacrifice everything.

A profound insight into Netaji's personality comes from a message written in 1939 by the great son of Bharat, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. In a remarkable tribute, Gurudev hailed Subhas Chandra Bose as Deshnayak—the leader of the nation. Gurudev observed that in troubled times, a country needs the strong hand of an inspired and valiant leader, one who can rise above adversity and lead with vigour. In Netaji, he saw that rare fusion of courage, vision and moral force.

Netaji's journey was marked by difficult choices and lonely resolve. When conventional paths appeared inadequate to achieve independence, he charted his own course, transforming the freedom struggle into an international movement through the Indian National Army. He asserted with conviction, "There is no power on earth that can deprive us of our birthright of liberty any longer." This belief found concrete expression in the INA.

Netaji's clarion call—"Give me blood, and I will give you freedom"—and his assertion that "Freedom is not given; it is taken," reflected his unwavering faith that liberty must be earned through struggle and supreme sacrifice.

Netaji's call for action, rooted in courage and self-respect, resonated deeply across regions and communities of India, especially among the people of the southern regions of the country, particularly the Tamils. This deep emotional and ideological bond between Netaji and the Tamil people became one of the strongest pillars of support for the INA and the larger freedom movement. Netaji's popularity not only rose across the Madras Presidency but also spread overseas, resonating powerfully with Tamil communities in Malaya, Burma and Singapore.

From the early 1920s, Netaji recognised the political importance of the Madras Presidency within the Indian national movement. As a Congress organiser and national leader, he engaged closely with political workers and leaders in the region, viewing it as a vital component of an all-India struggle. Netaji's visits to Madras (now Chennai) and other centres of the Presidency were marked by large public meetings and enthusiastic receptions, particularly among students and politically conscious youth. His speeches, stressing complete independence, discipline and national regeneration, found a deeply receptive audience and further strengthened his bond with the Tamil people.

On 3 September 1939, Netaji arrived at Madras Central Station, where he was received by supporters including lawyer and freedom fighter S. Srinivasa Iyengar and Pasumpon U. Muthuramalinga Thevar. Taken in an open jeep to "The Peak," the residence of civil engineer S. P. Aiyaswami Mudaliar, he was followed by a sea of supporters. That evening, he addressed a massive public meeting at Marina Beach.

During this visit, Pasumpon U. Muthuramalinga Thevar, a close associate of Netaji, emerged as a key leader of the Forward Bloc in Tamil Nadu. Often remembered as the "Bose of the South," he played a significant role in mobilising Tamil support for the Indian National Army. He also founded a Tamil weekly magazine titled Netaji and urged members of the Tamil community to join the INA.

A remarkable feature of the Tamil contribution to the INA was the wide geographical spread of its recruits. Among them was Ramu Thevar, a young boy from Penang, originally from Ramnad in the Madras Presidency. Inspired by Netaji at the age of about fourteen, he joined the INA and was later entrusted with intelligence duties. Arrested while attempting to reach India, he was imprisoned in Alipore Jail. His letters to his mother speak of immense hardship and unwavering patriotism. Unaware of his execution in Madras Jail in 1944, his mother continued writing to him until 1948. Ramu Thevar was only eighteen when he made the supreme sacrifice for the nation.

Another notable figure was Lieutenant R Madhavan Pillai, a Tamil from Burma who played a significant role in the INA. It was heartening to see the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi felicitating him at the Parakram Diwas celebrations in 2024.

Netaji's call also awakened the courage of Indian women. In a stirring address at the Padang in Singapore in 1943, he urged women to join the struggle, declaring that this must be a truly revolutionary army. His words deeply moved Tamil Indian women in Malaya, many of whom had endured hardship on rubber plantations. Despite having never seen India, nearly a thousand women volunteered for the Rani of Jhansi Regiment.

While the bravery of Dr Lakshmi Swaminathan (Captain Lakshmi Sahgal) is widely recognised, the contributions of Janaky Thevar, Anjalai Ponnusamy and Rasammah Bhupalan are equally inspiring. Janaky Thevar, only fourteen when she first heard Netaji speak, donated her diamond earring to the INA and later rose to a senior leadership position in the Rani Jhansi Regiment. Saraswathi Rajamani, often regarded as one of India's youngest women intelligence operatives, joined the INA at sixteen and served with distinction. In keeping with Netaji's egalitarian vision, women trained and served alongside men, and caste divisions were firmly rejected.

Alongside these leaders stood countless unnamed Tamil soldiers and labourers from Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli, Madurai, Sivaganga, Tiruchirappalli and Cuddalore, who answered Netaji's call from Malaya, Burma and Singapore. Deeply moved by this overwhelming support, Netaji is believed to have remarked that if he were to be born again, he would wish to be born a Tamilian.

Netaji belonged to a rare class of national leaders who combined intellectual depth with fearless action. He believed that political independence was only the beginning; the greater task was to build a strong, united and self-reliant India that ensured dignity and justice for all. His special bond with the Tamil people stands as a powerful reminder that India's freedom was forged through the shared sacrifice of regions, communities and countless unsung heroes.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has consistently emphasised the need to shed the colonial mindset, honour India's values and freedom fighters, and advance towards true freedom of the mind and spirit—an ideal for which Netaji lived and struggled. This vision is reflected in the Government's observance of Netaji's birth anniversary as Parakram Diwas, the renaming of historic islands in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in his honour, and the installation of his statue at Kartavya Path, all of which stand as national affirmations of his unparalleled contribution.

As Netaji once observed, "One individual may die for an idea, but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives." His ideals continue to guide Bharat—not only in remembrance, but in action—as the nation moves forward with a collective resolve to transform parakram into progress.

The writer is the Vice-President of India

EC terms SIR fair, just & reasonable

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: The Election Commission Thursday termed the decision to undertake Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls "fair, just and reasonable", and urged the Supreme Court to reject pleas challenging the exercise in Bihar.

It argued that a roving and fishing enquiry into the special scrutiny cannot be done at the behest of a few NGOs and politicians.

"None of the 66 lakh persons, whose names were deleted in Bihar SIR, came to this court or high court or filed pleas with the Election Commission. A roving and fishing enquiry cannot be permitted at the instance of ADR (Association for Democratic Reforms) and the PUCL (People's Union for Civil Liberty) and a few parliamentarians," said senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi on behalf of the poll panel.

The submissions were made by the senior lawyer during the final hearing on a batch of petitions challenging the Election Commission's decision to undertake SIR in different states, including Bihar.

Referring to a judgment in which the top court had refused a plea seeking re-introduction of paper ballot and discarding the EVMs, he said, "In short, we must follow Europe. If they go for EVMs, then we must go for it. And if they go for a paper ballot, then we go for it."

He said one person writes an article in a newspaper, and the other files a petition in the top court referring to that.

Dwivedi urged the bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi to dismiss the pleas with cost while defending the SIR as a lawful and transparent exercise of statutory powers under the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR EMPANELMENT OF PATHOLOGICAL LABORATORIES/DIAGNOSTIC CENTRES/HOSPITALS

No. CMS/ECoR/KUR/Investigation/Tie-up/26 **Dt.: 10.01.2026**

Divisional Railway Hospital, Khurda Road is Planning to empanel pathological laboratories/diagnostic centres/hospitals available in Jatani within the radius of 2.5 km of Divisional Railway Hospital, Khurda Road for engaging to provide the Pathological/Radiological investigation facilities to the Railway beneficiaries for a period of 02 years.

Expression of interest (EOI) is invited in sealed envelope with the prescribed application proforma (available in the website mentioned below) with relevant documents. The same to be sent to the office of the Chief Medical Superintendent, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road, Po-Jatani, Dist-Khordha, Odisha-752050 on or before **09.02.2026**.

Eligibility Criteria:

1. The Pathological Laboratory/Diagnostic Centre/Hospital must be located in Jatani within the radius of 2.5 km of Divisional Railway Hospital, Khurda Road.
2. The centre should have qualified Pathologists/Radiologists/Microbiologists and Technicians (Bio-data of them to be submitted).
3. The rates to be paid by Railway to the firms shall be as per the CGHS rates of lower. In case CGHS rate for a particular investigation is not available, AIIMS/BBSR rate or any other govt. rate shall be applicable. In case, govt. hospital rate is not available for a particular investigation, then reasonable rate as offered by the Pathological Laboratory/Diagnostic Centre/Hospital for Divisional Railway Hospital, Khurda Road shall be applicable.
4. Centre should be willing to accept cashless services on bill payment on monthly basis.
5. A committee of 03 Doctors from Divisional Railway Hospital, Khurda Road will visit the Pathological Laboratory/Diagnostic Centre/Hospital after receiving EOI for confirmation of eligibility criteria and facilities available.

Website for full details: **www.indianrailways.gov.in**, **www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in** and

For clarification- Please mail: Chief Medical Superintendent, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road, e-mail: **cmsdrhkur1@gmail.com**

PR-1039/Q/25-26 **Chief Medical Superintendent/ Khurda Road**

In a first, women Agniveers to join R-Day Parade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: In a first, nine women Agniveers will be part of the Indian Air Force's band contingent that will march down the Kartavya Path during the 77th Republic Day Parade playing music, according to officials.

At a briefing held in New Delhi, the IAF also announced that Flight Lieutenant Akshita Dhankar will unfurl the national flag alongside President Droupadi Murmu at the ceremonial parade January 26.

The IAF band, led by Sergeant Charles Antony Daniel, will complement the 144-member marching contingent of the air force, which will be led by Squadron Leader Jagdesh Kumar.

Sqn Ld Nikita Choudhary, Flt Lt Prakhar Chandrakar and Flt Lt Dinesh Murali will be serving as supernumerary officers in the IAF contingent.

A total of 29 aircraft -- 16 fighter aircraft, four transport aircraft and nine helicopters will be part of the two-phase flypast at the parade, with a total of eight formations, a senior official of the IAF said.

SC allows Hindus, Muslims to offer prayers at Bhojshala

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: A heavy posse of police and paramilitary personnel has been deployed in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh as the Supreme Court stepped in Thursday to avoid any tension at the disputed 11th-century Bhojshala-Kamal Maula Mosque.

The top court Thursday also directed that a list of persons from the Muslim community coming for namaz be given to the district administration.

Hindu and Muslim groups have sought nod for religious activities at the Bhojshala complex January 23, a Friday when Saraswati Puja will also be held on the occasion of Basant Panchami.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul

M Pancholi made an appeal to both sides to observe mutual respect and cooperate with the state and district administration for maintenance of law and order.

"ASG as well as Advocate General have fairly suggested that, after knowing that how many persons belonging to Muslim community are likely to come tomorrow for namaz between 1 to 3 pm, an exclusive and separate space within the same compound/ premises shall be made available, so that the namaz can be performed at the prescribed time."

"Similarly, a separate space, as per the past practice, shall be made available to the Hindu community to hold the traditional ceremonies on the occasion of Basant Panchami," the bench said.

It directed the district administration to make law and order arrangements at the site for offering of prayers. "The district administration may, with a view to ensure maintenance of law and order, issue appropriate passes, free of cost, for the visitors or may adopt any other fair measures to ensure that no untoward incident takes place and the rituals are performed peacefully," the bench said.

Hindus consider Bhojshala, an Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)-protected 11th-century monument, to be a temple dedicated to Vagdevi (Goddess Saraswati), while the Muslim community calls it Kamal Maula mosque.

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

E-Tender Notice No. : M-41-R-OBHS-LD-RNC-76 dt. 21.01.2026. For & on behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer, S.E. Railway, Ranchi-834003 invites e-tender for the following work : **Name of work:** On Board Housekeeping Service (On Board Cleaning and Hygiene service and Linen Distribution) in the trains of Coaching Depot, Hatia, Ranchi Division/SER for a period of Three years. **Approx. cost of work (inclusive of GST) :** ₹ 57,27,23,503.90. **Earnest Money :** ₹ 30,13,600/-. **Date and time for closing of e-tender :** 17.02.2026 at 15.00 hrs. **Website particulars and details: www.ireps.gov.in** (PR-1091)

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/ Chakradharpur acting for & on behalf of President of India, invites E-tenders against open tender. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Sl. No., E-Tender Notice No. & Date and Name of work** are as follows : **1. 86-EL-WT-2025-26, 21.01.2026**. Electrical (G) works in connection with the work of Tatanagar -Haludpukur : Elimination of Manned Level crossings (LC No. TB-6, TB-8 & TB-9) by construction of RUB. **Tender Value :** ₹ 9,07,397.43. **EMD:** ₹ 18,200/- **2. 87-EL-WT-2025-26, 21.01.2026**. Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for different make, type & capacity of room Air conditioners, Water Coolers and Refrigerators under the jurisdiction of SSEE(G)/Chakradharpur for a period of three years (1095 days). **Tender Value :** ₹ 62,36,077.68. **EMD:** ₹ 1,24,700/-. **3. 88-EL-WT-2025-26, 21.01.2026**. Conversion of 02 Nos. 33KV crossings at (i) Murgamahadev Road-Banspani (394/3B-6B) & (ii) Rairangpur-Aunlajori Jn section (321/4-5), and 05 Nos. 11KV Overhead crossings at (i) Jamkundia-Deojhar (386/3B-4B), (ii) Murgamahadev Road-Banspani (394/11B-12B), (iii) Barabil-Bolanikhadan (403/13-14) (iv) Barabil-Bolanikhadan (401/4-5) & (v) Jharsuguda Yard (513/9-11) to Underground crossings over Chakradharpur Division. **Tender Value :** ₹ 95,89,564.93. **EMD:** ₹ 1,91,800/-. **Tender Document Cost in Rs.:** Nil for each. **Date of Closing/Opening :** 13.02.2026 for Sl. No. 1 and 23.02.2026 for Sl. No. 2 & 3 each. The Tender can be viewed at website **http://www.ireps.gov.in** The tenderer/ bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered under IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can participate on e-tendering. All relevant paper must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-tendering. (PR-1086)

UCO BANK

Zonal Office, UCO Bank Building, 2nd Floor, C-2, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751009, Tel: 0674-2620423

POSSESSION NOTICE
For Immovable Property

(Under Section 13(4) of the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act., 2002 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 for Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the **UCO Bank, Nayagarh Branch** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the said Act calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount with interest at the contractual rate together with incidental expenses and costs within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **POSSESSION** of the property described here-in below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **UCO Bank, Nayagarh Branch** for an amount plus interest, incidental expenses & charges thereon. **The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.**

NAYAGARH BRANCH / Name and Address of the Borrowers	Amount Outstanding as on Specified Date	Date of Demand / Possession Notice	Description of the Immovable Property
Borrowers: 1) Mr. Saroj Kumar Nayak, S/o.: Mr. Raju Nayak, **2) Mrs. Pramila Dei,** W/o.: Mr. Raju Nayak, Both are At: Badaharijan Sahi, Nayagarh N.A.C, Dist.: Nayagarh	₹4,13,081.02 as on 29.08.2025 + further interest & other charges thereon	29.08.2025 / 20.01.2026	All that part and parcel of the immovable property Standing in the name of **Mr. Saroj Kumar Nayak,** S/o.: Mr. Raju Nayak, situated at Mouza: Nayagarh, Tahasil/SRO/Dist: Nayagarh, Khata No.: 1219/3129, Plot No.: 1392, Area: Ac.0.02 Dec., Bounded by East: Krushna Mahar, West: Purna Chandra Nayak, North: Bitumen Road, South: CC Road

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 22.01.2026 **Authorised Officer, UCO Bank**

भारत सरकार / Government of India
वित्त मंत्रालय / Ministry of Finance
राजस्व विभाग / Department of Revenue

Applications are invited from Government Servants retired from the Central Government/Supreme Court or Tribunals on temporary contract basis for the following posts in the Principal Bench and 31 State Benches of Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal.

S. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Posts	Pay Scale (of 7th CPC Pay Matrix)
1	Joint Registrar	05	Level 12
2	Deputy Registrar	06	Level 11
3	Principal Private Secretary	10	Level 11
4	Assistant Registrar	01	Level 10
5	Court Officer	14	Level 08
6	Senior Private Scecretary	16	Level 08
7	Private Secretary	23	Level 07
	Total	**75***	

*Vacancies are only indicative and may reduce depending upon the appointments made in due course.

General Information :

1. Maximum age to apply is 62 years (as on last date of application).
2. Engagement will be on contract basis intially for one year, extendable up to five years or attainment of 65 years of age, whichever is earlier, subject to satisfactory performance and organizational requirements. Further, the engagement is purely temporary and may be terminated at any time without assigning any reason. The contract shall also stand terminated immediately on joining of a regular incumbent appointed through deputation.
3. Remuneration will be fixed as per the instructions contained in the Department of Expenditure OM dated 09.12.2020 and other extant Government of India instructions.
4. Further details regarding eligibility and other terms and conditions are available on the website of Department of Revenue : **https://gstn.org.in/gstat-sub-staff/** or scan the QR code given in this advertisement.
5. Application may be submitted online in the link provided in the above website. The same can be submitted from **15.01.2026**. This is an open vacancy circular until the requisite positions are filled.

CBC 15302/11/0001/2526

international

We believe that the creation and efficient functioning of a sovereign Palestinian state is the only path to a final resolution of the Middle East conflict

VLADIMIR PUTIN | RUSSIAN PRESIDENT

DOG MISSING IN SPANISH TRAIN CRASH RESCUED

Firefighters in southern Spain Thursday rescued Boro, a dog missing since Sunday's high-speed train crash, reuniting him with his owners in a rare moment of relief amid national mourning for at least 43 people killed

Quote of the day

In terms of recent developments and the withdrawal of the threat of tariffs, I see that as a reflection of pragmatism, common sense and sticking to our values and our principles

KEIR STARMER | PRIME MINISTER, UK

You came to celebrate a festival of light and freedom and you left with the violence of hatred. I am deeply and profoundly sorry that we could not protect your loved ones from this evil

ANTHONY ALBANESE | PRIME MINISTER, AUSTRALIA

Even as the Philippines, we are not endorsing the elections, but we're open to what should come up from these events unravelling before us

TESS LAZARO | SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PHILIPPINES

War has to end: Trump sends message to Putin

REUTERS

Davos, Jan 22: US President Donald Trump said his message to Russian leader Vladimir Putin was that the war in Ukraine has to end, after what he said were "good" talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy in Davos Thursday.

US and Ukrainian officials have spent weeks in frenetic shuttle diplomacy as Kyiv faces pressure from Trump to secure peace in the nearly four-year-old war, despite few signs Moscow wants to stop fighting.

After a meeting with the Ukrainian leader that lasted around an hour, Trump said they had a "good" discussion but provided no further details on the substance of the conversation. Trump had said a deal was "reasonably close" Wednesday.

"I think the meeting with President Zelenskiy was good. It's an ongoing process," Trump told reporters, saying that US envoys were heading for talks in Moscow Thursday. Asked what his message was for Putin, Trump replied, "The war has to end."

Zelenskiy had said earlier this week he would only travel to Davos if he could sign agreements with Trump on US security guarantees and post-war reconstruction funding for Ukraine, but there was no indication after the meeting that a breakthrough had been made.

Zelenskiy wants deals with US signed

US envoy Witkoff optimistic about progress talks

Ukraine bonds rally amid flurry of diplomatic meetings

Witkoff, Kushner due in Moscow Thursday to meet Putin

The two leaders have met around half a dozen times face-to-face since Trump returned to the White House last year and upended US policy on Ukraine by embracing diplomacy with Russia.

Zelenskiy, saddled with an energy crisis at home from Russian air strikes that have left swathes of the capital and other regions without power and heating, was due to deliver a speech after his meeting with Trump, his spokesperson said.

"If both sides want to solve this, we're going to get it solved," US envoy for Ukraine Steve Witkoff told an audience at the World Economic Forum Thursday morning. "I think we've made a lot of progress."

TALKS WITH PUTIN IN MOSCOW

Witkoff has held talks in recent days with Ukrainian officials in Davos, following weekend discussions in Florida. He was due in Moscow with fellow US envoy Jared Kushner – Trump's son-in-law - later Thursday for talks with Putin on the possible plan to end Europe's deadliest war since World War Two.

After those discussions, negotiators would head directly to Abu Dhabi, Witkoff said Thursday, "where there will be military-to-military talks and discussion of the prosperity package".

Cambodia to send 73 online scam suspects to S Korea

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, Jan 22: Dozens of South Koreans detained in Cambodia for alleged involvement in online scam compounds will be sent home this week to face investigations, officials said Thursday, in what would be the largest group reparation of Korean criminal suspects from abroad.

The 73 South Korean suspects allegedly scammed fellow Koreans out of 48.6 billion won ($33 million), according to the statement.

The suspects, 65 men and eight women, were among about 260 South Koreans detained in a crackdown in Cambodia in recent months. Public outrage over scam centers in Southeast Asia flared in South Korea when a Korean student was found dead last summer after reportedly being forced to work at a scam compound in Cambodia.

Authorities said at the time he died after being tortured and beaten, and South Korea sent a government delegation to Cambodia in October for talks on a joint response.

South Korea will send a chartered plane to Cambodia, which is expected to return Friday with the suspects, who will be immediately handed over to investigative authorities upon arrival, according to a South Korean government statement.

Cybercrime has flourished in Southeast Asia, particularly in Cambodia and Myanmar, as trafficked foreign nationals were employed to run romance and cryptocurrency scams, often recruited with false job offers and then forced to work in conditions of near-slavery.

B'desh launches campaigns for first post-Hasina polls

The election will include a referendum on a national charter, with the interim government seeking to campaign for voters to support what it describes as a new political course built on reforms

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dhaka, Jan 22: Campaigning began Thursday for Bangladesh's first national elections since the 2024 uprising that ousted longtime Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The major political parties held campaign rallies in the capital, Dhaka, and elsewhere ahead of February 12 election, which is seen as the most consequential in Bangladesh's history as it follows Hasina's ouster and is being held under an interim government, with voters also deciding on proposed political reforms.

The interim government led by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus has pledged to hold a free and fair election, but questions were raised after his administration banned Hasina's former ruling Awami League party. The Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party have historically dominated the country's electorate.

There are also concerns about the country's law and order situation, but the government says it will keep the voting peaceful.

Yunus assumed office three days after Hasina left the country for India August 5, 2024, following the deaths of hundreds of protesters and others in a violent crackdown.

With the Awami League excluded from the election, a 10-party alliance led by Jamaat-e-Islami, an Islamist party, is seeking to expand its influence. Jamaat-e-Islami has long faced criticism from secular groups who say its positions challenge Bangladesh's secular foundations. A new party formed by student leaders of the uprising, the National Citizen Party, or NCP, is also part of the alliance.

Tarique Rahman, BNP chairman and the son of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, is widely seen as a leading contender for prime minister. His party has drawn strong support rooted in the political legacy of his mother, who died last month. Rahman returned to Bangladesh last month after 17 years in exile in the United Kingdom.

SHORT TAKES

Vance heads to Minneapolis

Minneapolis: Vice President JD Vance is expected to visit Minneapolis Thursday to show support for a massive federal law enforcement operation underway in a city that has been on edge since an ICE officer shot dead a 37-year-old mother of three. With the city and the country deeply divided over the January 7 fatal shooting of Renee Good, the vice president's visit is meant to show support for the work of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, part of a force of 3,000 federal law enforcement officers deployed to the area. Minnesota has become the latest Democratic-leaning jurisdiction targeted by Republican President Donald Trump with a federal police show of force that the administration says is aimed at immigration violators and a fraud investigation involving social service programs in the Somali community.

Germany expels Russian diplomat

Frankfurt: Germany is expelling a member of Russia's diplomatic service suspected of espionage, the German foreign ministry said Thursday, the latest sign of intensifying Russian intelligence activities in Europe since the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Berlin also summoned the Russian ambassador to inform him of the expulsion, it added. "The German government does not tolerate espionage in Germany – especially not under the guise of diplomatic status," the foreign ministry said in a post on X. The Russian Embassy in Berlin did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Colombia imposes tariffs on Ecuador

Bogota(Colombia): Colombia announced Thursday that it will apply a 30 per cent tax on a group of products from Ecuador and will suspend the sale of energy to that country, in response to a matching tariff announced the previous day by the government of Ecuadorian Daniel Noboa. The escalating trade dispute between the South American neighbours follows a public protest by Noboa regarding a more than $850 million trade deficit with Colombia. Noboa also cited a lack of reciprocity in securing their shared border, which remains a stronghold for criminal organizations and international drug trafficking. The Colombian government expressed surprise at Ecuador's unilateral tariffs.

Train collides with crane arm in Spain

REUTERS

Madrid, Jan 22: A commuter train collided with a crane arm that swung into its path in southeastern Spain Thursday, the transport minister said, in the country's fourth rail accident in less than a week.

Six people suffered minor injuries after the arm hit the passing train's windows, close to the port city of Cartagena in Murcia region, authorities added.

The incident - which did not derail the train but briefly disrupted traffic on the line - came four days after a high-speed train collision in the southern Andalusia region killed at least 43 people.

Two days after that, Tuesday, a commuter train derailed after a containment wall fell on the track due to heavy rain near the city of Barcelona, killing the driver and seriously injuring four passengers.

The main train drivers' union called a nationwide strike over safety standards after that and a second, less serious, collision in the northeastern Catalonia region the same day.

"A street-lighting basket crane vehicle ... encroached on public railway land with its arm, striking the windows of a metric gauge train that was passing by at the time," Transport Minister Oscar Puente wrote in a post on X Thursday.

The injuries were minor, a spokesperson for the central government's representative in Murcia told Reuters.

Alcohol tests on both the train driver and the crane operator were negative, they added.

The Lovely Man ridden by Eoin Staples on their way to winning the Adare Manor Opportunity Handicap Hurdle at Gowran Park Racecourse in Kilkenny, Ireland, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

Greenland's hunting culture helps emergency preparedness

Greenland's government issued updated recommendations for crisis preparedness Wednesday, advising residents to keep five days' worth of water and food, as well as access to hunting weapons, ammunition, and fishing gear

REUTERS

Kapisillit, Greenland, Jan 22: While many Greenlanders have been alarmed by US President Donald Trump's demands to acquire their homeland, others such as Kaaleeraq Ringsted have stayed calm, trusting in food stockpiles and traditional ways of life to navigate the uncertainty.

"I'm not scared," 73-year-old Ringsted said, standing beside one of his two chest freezers packed with reindeer meat, halibut, cod, redfish, and seal meat in his home in the Kapisillit settlement in the Nuuk fjord.

"I have enough food here for more than a year."

Ringsted, who no longer hunts due to health issues, depends on family and friends to deliver fish and meat from the Nuuk fjord. Supply chains in remote parts of Greenland are vulnerable to sudden weather changes, and the local grocery store in his settlement is restocked just once a week with basic necessities.

Greenland's government issued updated recommendations for crisis preparedness Wednesday, advising residents to keep five days' worth of water and food, as well as access to hunting weapons, ammunition, and fishing gear.

That same day Trump abruptly stepped back from threats to impose tariffs on key European allies as leverage to seize Greenland, ruled out using force and said a deal was in sight to end the dispute over the Danish territory. He said Thursday the details of the agreement were still being worked out.

FREEZERS FULL OF SEAL MEAT

FISH, SEALS, REINDEER

For many Greenlanders, self-sufficiency has long been integral to daily life.

Aslak Wilhelm Jensen, 50, who keeps three chest freezers full of fish and meat at his home in Nuuk, expressed little concern about food security or Trump's remarks as he worked aboard his small fishing boat at the bottom of the Nuuk fjord.

"Fish are all around here, there are seals right over there, the area is teeming with reindeer," Jensen said. "You're not really afraid of dying of hunger if someone comes and takes over your land."

Denmark, which holds sovereignty over Greenland, has promoted modernisation and urbanisation since the 1950s, often shifting locals away from traditional pursuits of hunting and fishing. However, many Greenlanders continue to balance modern occupations with skills honed over generations.

Deadly drone strikes have left people in and around central Sudan's El Obeid mourning and worried, Jensen, who had caught 900 kilograms of cod the day before, emphasized a worldview shaped by surviving in a rugged environment.

"We're not the kind of people who go into complete panic when we hear something is happening out in the world," he said.

"Us Greenlanders, we relax when we have food on the table," added Jensen. "We live with the animals as neighbours." Greenlanders have long been adapted to harsh weather conditions, isolation, and unreliable supply chains. Stocked freezers and self-reliance aren't considered "doomsday prepping" but a way of life.

business

India's transformation is remarkable. What we're seeing is more than economic growth, it's about building trust and shaping the future of global collaboration

BILL THOMAS | GLOBAL CHAIRMAN & CEO, KPMG INTERNATIONAL

POWER GRID CROSSES FEAT

India's electricity distribution network has crossed the milestone of five lakh circuit kilometres with the potential to carry high-voltage energy of 220 kilovolts and above and 1,407 gigavolt amperes of transformation capacity, the power ministry said Thursday

Quote of the day

India is adopting a calibrated approach on AI governance to tackle deepfakes, digital frauds and other user harms

ASHISH AGGARWAL | VICE PRESIDENT OF PUBLIC POLICY, NASSCOM

2025 was not a year of demand destruction, but one of recalibration. Buyers remained active but more deliberate, while developers responded with disciplined supply management

ONKAR SHETYE | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AURUM PROPTECH

Securing the RBI's Offline Payment Aggregator License further strengthens our ability to support businesses with scalable, compliant in-store payments as they expand their omnichannel presence

SHASHANK KUMAR | MD AND CO-FOUNDER, RAZORPAY

Q3 RESULTS

IndiGo net drops 78%

New Delhi: India's largest airline IndiGo Thursday reported a 78 per cent decline in December quarter net profit at ₹549.1 crore as flight disruptions and implementation of the new labour code took a toll on its earnings. The airline reported a net profit of ₹549.1 crore in the October-December quarter, compared with ₹2,448.8 crore earnings in the year-ago period, according to a company statement. The company said it took a hit of ₹1,546.5 crore in the third quarter. This included ₹577.2 crore due to massive flight disruptions witnessed during early December and another ₹969.3 crore on account of the implementation of new labour laws.

Zee Ent net dips 5%

New Delhi: Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd Thursday reported 5.37 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at ₹154.8 crore for December quarter FY26. It had logged a net profit of ₹163.6 crore in the October-December period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL). Total income was up 14.6 per cent to ₹2,298.5 crore in December quarter FY26. Total expenses were at ₹2,087.4 crore, up 20.3 per cent year-on-year.

USFB profit rises 71%

Mumbai: Ujjivan Small Finance Bank posted a 71% year-on-year jump in third-quarter net profit to ₹186 crore, driven by improving microfinance collections and lower provisioning. Provisions declined to ₹195 crore from ₹223 crore a year earlier as stress in the portfolio eased. The bank also reported its highest-ever quarterly net interest income of ₹1,000 crore, supporting profitability. Pre-provision operating profit rose 23% to ₹440 crore. Asset quality improved with the share of secured loans increasing to 48% from 39% last year, lending greater stability to the balance sheet.

Indian Bank net up 7%

New Delhi: Indian Bank Thursday reported a 7.33 per cent growth in net profit to ₹3,061 crore for the third quarter ended December 2025. The public sector bank had recorded a net profit of ₹2,852 crore in the December quarter of 2024-25.

EU suspends GSP export benefits

The EU's GSP is a unilateral trade arrangement that allows developing countries to export to the EU at a lower-than-MFN tariffs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: The European Union (EU) has suspended export benefits to sectors such as textiles and plastics under a preferential scheme for India and two other countries effective from January 1.

The commerce ministry said the move will not have any impact on the country's exports to the 27-nation bloc, as from 2016, the EU has progressively suspended GSP tariff preferences for India across products, such as minerals, chemicals and textiles.

This was further widened in 2019 and 2023.

"The same list was extended as per regulations released on December 1, 2025. From January 1, 2026, GSP preferential duties will be suspended for the same list of products until December 31, 2028," the ministry said in a statement.

As a result of this phased product level graduation, for 2024-25, about 47 per cent of India's exports to the EU, valued at $35.6 billion, are currently outside the scope of the GSP, with only 53 per cent ($40.20 billion) remaining eligible for the benefits. However, experts and exporters have stated that the move will impact the country's exports to the EU.

The development is important as the two sides are likely to announce the closure of negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) January 27.

According to the Official Journal of the European Union, the European Commission on September 25, 2025, laid down rules for the application of the regulation with regard to the suspension for 2026-2028 of certain tariff preferences granted to certain GSP beneficiary countries - India, Indonesia and Kenya.

"It shall apply from 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2028...," it said.

Commenting on the development, think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said from January 1, 2026, India faces a "major setback" in the EU market, as 87 per cent of its exports begin paying higher import tariffs following the European Union's suspension of GSP (Generalised Scheme of

Preferences) benefits.

Only about 13 per cent of exports, including agriculture and leather, retain the benefits under this scheme, it said.

GSP concessions allowed Indian exporters to ship at less than MFN (most favoured nation) tariffs to EU markets. Now, concessions are suspended for 87 per cent value of Indian goods to the EU.

In simple terms, an apparel product facing a 12 per cent tariff paid only 9.6 per cent under the GSP. From January 1 this year, this benefit ends, and exporters must pay the full 12 per cent duty. The EU has removed GSP benefits across almost all major industrial sectors - minerals, chemicals, plastics and rubber, textiles and garments, stone and ceramics, precious metals, iron and steel, base metals, machinery, electrical goods and transport equipment - which together form the backbone of India's exports to Europe.

The EU periodically reduces these benefits, as it did earlier in 2013 and 2023. This time, the concessions have been completely withdrawn for three years from 2026 to 2028.

"While there is optimism over the conclusion of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement, Indian exporters will, in reality, confront higher trade barriers in the near term, as the loss of GSP preferences coincides with the start of the tax phase of the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

With the FTA's implementation likely to take at least a year, if not longer, India's exports to the EU will face a difficult period marked by higher tariffs, rising compliance costs and weakened competitiveness, hitting exporters just as global trade conditions remain fragile, he said.

D-St rebounds after 3-day slide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 22: Indian share benchmarks rose Thursday, tracking a rebound in global equities after U.S. President Donald Trump walked back on threats to impose tariffs on European countries and ruled out the use of force to seize Greenland.

Sensex climbs 397.74 points, or 0.49%, to close at 82,307.37

Nifty surges 132.40 points, or 0.53%, to settle at 25,289.90

The Nifty 50 rose 0.53% to 25,289.90, while the BSE Sensex added 0.49% to 82,307.37.

Fifteen of the 16 major sectors logged gains. The broader small-caps and mid-caps about 0.8% and 1.3%, respectively.

The MSCI's broader index for Asia Pacific stocks outside Japan gained 0.9%.

A report quoted Trump saying on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos that the US is "going to have a good deal (with India)".

Sentiment improved following US President Donald Trump's withdrawal of tariff threats against the EU and his optimistic remarks on a potential India-US trade deal, which encouraged short-covering and risk-taking

GAURAV GARG | RESEARCH ANALYST, LEMONN MARKETS DESK

Textile exporters such as Trident, Vardhman Textiles, Gokaldas Exports and shrimp exporters Apex Frozen Foods, Coastal Corporation and Avanti Feeds jumped on optimism over New Delhi's potential deals with the US and EU.

Dr Reddy's Laboratories climbed 5.2% after reporting a quarterly profit beat. It received approval from the local regulator to manufacture and sell the generic version of the weight-loss drug Ozempic.

Zomato parent Eternal closed 2.7% lower as rising competition in the quick-commerce business outweighed optimism over strong third-quarter earnings.

While domestic benchmarks rebounded on the day, they are still down 3.3% in January so far, dragged by relentless foreign outflows and mixed earnings

The rupee rebounded marginally from its all-time low levels and gained 3 paise to close at 91.62 (provisional) against the US dollar Thursday.

Foreign institutional investors offloaded equities worth ₹1,787.66 crore Wednesday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth ₹4,520.47 crore, according to exchange data.

Reliance's Digital India Sale unleashes massive discounts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai, Jan 22: Reliance Digital has announced the return of its long-awaited Digital India Sale, bringing consumers a power-packed lineup of offers across electronics and home appliances.

The sale goes live Thursday and will continue till January 26.

The customers are entitled to instant bank discounts of up to ₹26,000, cashback of up to ₹30,000 on consumer durable loans, a 5 percent indefinite discount on UPI payments and so on.

The sale is active in all Reliance Digital stores and MyJio stores in all parts of the country and in the official site of the company www.reliancedigital.in.

Popular iPhones prices are slashed up to ₹20,000 as well as bank discounts and exchange benefits that are increasing up to ₹21,000.

iPhone 15 (128 GB) has a starting price of ₹49,990, and iPhone 16 (128 GB) costs ₹57,990 and above. The iPhone 17 (256 GB) is the newest model that is sold at ₹78,900, and with EMI, the minimum price is ₹3,454. The iPhone 17 Pro (256 GB) is priced at ₹1,30,900 with EMI options for premium buyers.

Laptop buyers can avail the MacBook Air M2 at ₹64,990, including cashback offers and a free version of Microsoft Office. Another key highlight this season is the push on large-screen televisions. Priced at ₹44,990 with a two-year warranty, customers can buy a Toshiba 65-inch QLED TV. Shoppers can also opt for bundled soundbar upgrades, with combo offers providing additional discounts of up to ₹10,000 on select TV models.

Accessory deals are an addition of extra value, and two Reconnect products, which can be either chargers, power banks, or neckbands, will be sold at only ₹899 together.

Heavy discounts on home and kitchen appliances are also being executed by Reliance Digital. Consumers who spend ₹5,000 or more will be guaranteed free supplies up to ₹7,990, as well as discounts, and up to 50% on a few items.

Refrigerators are available from ₹7,999, while two-door models are priced at ₹19,990. Customers purchasing a refrigerator can also buy ultra-low-cost accessories, including irons for ₹9, soundbars for ₹49 and air fryers for ₹99. Additional offers such as gifts, cashback and free add-ons are available on washing machines, air conditioners and other large appliances.

The offers blend instant savings, bank cashback, and exchange benefits making tech upgrades easier during the Digital India Sale.

GLOBAL RALLY EASES

Gold, silver decline from record peaks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: Gold and silver prices retreated from record highs in the national capital Thursday as investors turned to profit-booking amid subdued global cues and easing demand for safe-haven assets, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity declined by ₹2,500, or 1.56 per cent, to ₹1,57,200 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) Thursday, after closing at the highest-ever level of ₹1,59,700 per 10 grams in the previous session.

Silver ended its unprecedented nine-day rally, tumbling by ₹14,300, or 4.3 per cent, to ₹3,20,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) from the previous close of ₹3,34,300 per kg. The white metal surged by ₹11,300 Wednesday.

"Gold and silver corrected from record highs as safe-haven demand eased and investors took profits following a record-breaking rally," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

According to Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, easing geopolitical risk sentiment triggered partial profit booking in domestic markets even as Trump's comment that the US will have a good trade deal with India kept bullion prices slightly pressured.

According to FOREX.com, gold slipped by $8.80, or 0.18 per cent, to $4,822.65 per ounce. The yellow metal had retreated and settled at $4,836.67 Wednesday, after hitting a record of $4,888.22 per ounce in the global markets.

Spot silver was trading 0.27 per cent higher at $93.36 per ounce in overseas trade. The white metal had touched a record of $95.89 per ounce Tuesday.

Empreo Kia organises preview of all-new Seltos in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: Empreo Premium Private Limited successfully hosted an exclusive preview of the all-new Kia Seltos at its Patia-based Kia showroom here recently.

The special preview event received an enthusiastic response from customers, SUV enthusiasts, and media representatives, underlining the strong anticipation surrounding Kia's latest premium SUV.

The exclusive preview showcased the all-new Kia Seltos' bold design, advanced technology, premium comfort, and enhanced safety features, further reinforcing its strong presence in the competitive SUV segment.

Guests were particularly impressed by the vehicle's modern styling, Trinity panoramic display, and advanced driver-assistance features, which together set new standards for everyday driving.

The event began with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony led by Empreo Kia CEO Sandeep Ojha; Empreo MG CEO Parthasarathi Guru; Apurva Rit from Re-Wire; Skoda General Manager Raghuveer Verma; and Re-Wire CEO Mohammad Azhar.

Speaking on the occasion, Empreo Kia CEO Sandeep Ojha said that the all-new Kia Seltos has been designed to create a powerful first impression. He highlighted its bold front profile, LED projector headlamps, dynamic welcome lights, and premium detailing, which clearly distinguish it from other SUVs in its class.

BUDGET 2026

Industry leaders urge govt to double infra spending

The leaders emphasised that sustained infrastructure planning is key to attracting investment, boosting competitiveness, and ensuring development benefits all regions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 22: Industry leaders urged the government to double the allocation for various infrastructure projects to ₹3 lakh crore in the forthcoming general Budget to boost overall economic growth.

Ahead of the general Budget, industry leaders from various sectors, including logistics, also demanded major infrastructure reforms and heavy budget allocation across diverse sectors, according to a statement by the Logistics Sector Skill Council (LSC).

A recent survey by the LSC highlighted the need for an infrastructure-focused budget aligned with the vision to position the country as a global economic powerhouse.

Building on last year's ₹1.5 lakh crore allocation for interest-free loans to states and landmark investments in highways, urban transport, and smart cities, the expectations of industry leaders are running high for a potential doubling of this outlay, it stated.

Ravikanth Yamarthy, CEO, Logistics Sector Skill Council, said that as the logistics sector emerges as the engine of India's economic momentum, Budget 2026 presents a defining opportunity to set new benchmarks in growth, employment generation, and Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The prospect of doubling infrastructure allocations, following years of transformative investment in highways, railways, and logistics corridors, can unlock robust supply-chain efficiency and global competitiveness, Yamarthy said.

Shrenik Ghodawat, Managing Director, Sanjay Ghodawat Group, said infrastructure remains the critical lever for unlocking India's next wave of consumption. "We see a significant opportunity for the Budget to prioritise retail-centric infrastructure, specifically by encouraging investments in modern warehousing, cold-chain facilities, and last-mile logistics corridors," Ghodawat added.

The government's ongoing emphasis on infrastructure is seen as a driving force for unlocking new opportunities, enhancing the quality of life, and fuelling overall economic momentum.

Avishek Kumar, founder and Director, Sunkonnect, said, "We need serious investment in decentralised solar, microgrids. At the same time, we must build recycling and R&D ecosystems for solar panels and batteries, while prioritising local battery manufacturing and a domestic supply chain for energy storage systems".

A robust and future-ready infrastructure framework is also seen as the backbone for innovation, digital transformation, and sustainable progress across industries.

Stakeholders note that bold infrastructure reforms can help India realise its full economic potential and boost job creation.

With unified calls for action from diverse industries, the survey confirms that the Budget presents a pivotal opportunity to lay the groundwork for an inclusive and future-ready India, driven by robust infrastructure and innovation across sectors.

T20 WC

Bangladesh firm on not playing in India

The rigid stance could also cost BCB close to BDT 325 crore (around $27 million) that comes from the ICC's annual revenue. Add to it loss of broadcast revenue, sponsorship revenue and the income for financial year could take a massive hit, close to 60 per cent or even more

REUTERS

Dhaka, Jan 22: The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has reaffirmed its decision not to tour India for next month's Twenty20 World Cup, with its chief Aminul Islam announcing Thursday that it would again request the International Cricket Council (ICC) allow the team to play in Sri Lanka instead.

The ICC board has dismissed Bangladesh's concerns regarding the safety of its players and fans in India, despite persistent political tensions between the two South Asian neighbours.

Following a meeting Thursday between the BCB's top officials, players and the sports adviser of Bangladesh's interim government, the board maintained its stance despite the risk of being replaced by another team in the tournament set to begin February 7.

"We will go back to the ICC with our plan to play in Sri Lanka," BCB president Islam said at a press conference.

"They did give us a 24-hour ultimatum but a global body can't really do that. ICC will miss out on 200 million people watching the World Cup (if Bangladesh is axed). It will be their loss..."

Bangladesh's sports adviser Asif Nazrul said the decision not to tour India was taken by the interim government. "We are hopeful that ICC will give us the opportunity to play in Sri Lanka," Nazrul said.

Political relations between India and Bangladesh have recently deteriorated, impacting cricket too.

Bangladesh player Mustafizur Rahman was dropped from this year's Indian Premier League (IPL) despite signing with its Kolkata franchise.

Bangladesh responded by banning IPL broadcasts in the country and demanding to play their World Cup matches in Sri Lanka.

After an emergency ICC board meeting Wednesday, cricket's global governing body ruled out any security issue in India for players and fans from Bangladesh. It also ruled out altering the schedule so close to the tournament, saying it would set a bad precedent.

Pakistan will play their World Cup matches in Sri Lanka in keeping with their policy of not touring India over fraught political tensions.

CRICKET POLITICS

- BCB to request again that ICC let them play in SL
- ICC dismissed Bangladesh's safety concerns in India
- Political tensions affect cricket relations

> **They did give us a 24-hour ultimatum but a global body can't really do that. ICC will miss out on 200 million people watching the World Cup (if Bangladesh is axed). It will be their loss...**
>
> AMINUL ISLAM | CHIEF, BCB

INDONESIA MASTERS

Sindhu, Lakshya enter quarterfinals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, Jan 22: Top Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen entered the quarterfinals of $500,000 Indonesia Masters badminton tournament after securing straight-game wins in their respective round-of-16 matches here Thursday.

Lakshya, a 2021 world championships bronze medallist, prevailed over Hong Kong China's Jason Gunawan 21-10 21-11 in a contest that lasted a little over half an hour.

The 24-year-old from Almora, who won the Australian Open last year, will meet Thailand's rising talent Panitchaphon Teeraratsakul, who knocked out Paris bronze medallist Lee Zii Jia of Malaysia.

Sindhu, a two-time Olympic-medallist, notched up a 21-19 21-18 triumph over familiar foe Line Hojmark Kjaerfeldt of Denmark in her pre-quarterfinal that took 43 minutes to wind up. This was Sindhu's fifth win over the Dane in their six clashes so far.

Sindhu will next be up against tournament top seed and world number four Chen Yu Fei of China in the Super 500 event. Sindhu and Fei have faced each other 13 times so far and the latter holds a slight 7-6 edge overall.

The Indian's last win over Fei came back in 2019 and she would be eager to improve that record. Later in the day, former world No 1 Kidambi Srikanth, a 2021 world championships silver medallist, was too erratic to pose any challenge, going down 11-21 10-21 to Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien Chen in a lop-sided pre-quarterfinals.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Djokovic rolls back years

The win was Serb's 399th in Grand Slams and his 101st in Melbourne, leaving him one shy of record-holder Roger Federer

REUTERS

Melbourne, Jan 22: Novak Djokovic rolled back the years to reach the Australian Open third round Thursday but Jannik Sinner, the man who has usurped him as king of Melbourne Park, showed why he is favourite to claim a hat-trick of titles.

Women's defending champion Madison Keys overcame a second-set wobble against Ashlyn Krueger to also advance while former champion Naomi Osaka toned down her outfit but not her power game as she also reached round three.

Iga Swiatek continued her quest to complete her career Grand Slam with a 6-2 6-3 victory over unseeded Marie Bouzkova.

Fourth seed Djokovic, seeking a record-extending 11th Melbourne Park title and 25th Grand Slam trophy overall to break the deadlock with Margaret Court, eased past Italian qualifier Francesco Maestrelli 6-3 6-2 6-2. He raced through the opening set and pounced again in the opening game of the second set to heap pressure on world number 141 Maestrelli.

In 2009, Djokovic, Cilic and Wawrinka all reached round three and 17 years later they are still going strong.

The man to beat on blue Melbourne hard courts these days, however, is Sinner. He was supreme as he thumped home wild card James Duckworth 6-1 6-4 6-2 in the Rod Laver Arena evening session, banging down 18 aces in a dominant display.

Sinner, bidding to join Djokovic by becoming only the second man in the professional era to win three successive Australian Open titles, has now won 12 successive Tour-level matches without dropping a set and looks razor sharp.

Keys, the ninth seed in the draw, notched up a 6-1 7-5 win over fellow American Krueger but was less than convincing after powering her way through the opening set. The defending champion allowed doubts to creep into her game in the second set, handing Krueger two breaks on serve with a succession of double faults before battling back to progress to the next round to face Karolina Pliskova.

Swiatek shrugged off the sluggishness of her first-round match with a much more lively display against Bouzkova.

Osaka, champion in 2019 and 2021, ditched the parasol, veil and broad-brimmed hat for her walk-on against Romania's Sorana Cirstea but continued making waves in her jellyfish-inspired outfit, battling to a 6-3 4-6 6-2 win.

- SINNER SUPREME AGAINST DUCKWORTH
- CHAMPION KEYS ADVANCES IN WOMEN'S DRAW
- OSAKA STILL MAKING WAVES

Yuki-Nicole suffer first round loss

India's Yuki Bhambri and his American partner Nicole Melichar-Martinez crashed out of the mixed doubles competition in the Australian Open after losing to the German-Chinese duo of Tim Putz and Zhang Shuai Thursday. Bhambri and Melichar-Martinez lost 6-3 1-6 (10-6) to the sixth seeded pairing of Putz and Shuai. Bhambri's campaign in the year's first Grand Slam is, however, not over yet as he remains in fray in the men's doubles event. On Wednesday, Yuki and his Swedish partner Andre Goransson stormed into the second round of the men's doubles competition, defeating local wildcards James Duckworth and Cruz Hewitt 6-3 6-4.

HOCKEY INDIA LEAGUE

Spot in final on line as Lancers clash with Royals in Qualifier 1

Kalinga Lancers finished atop the points table with 16 points, while Ranchi Royals secured second spot with 12 points

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 22: The Men's Hockey India League (HIL) 2025–26 is set for a high-voltage contest as table-toppers Kalinga Lancers face second-placed Ranchi Royals in Qualifier 1 at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium here January 23.

Kalinga Lancers advance to the playoffs as table toppers with 16 points, while Ranchi Royals, with 12 points, finished second, leading to this highly anticipated knockout match.

The Bhubaneswar-based Lancers have had a dominant league run, characterized by consistent performance and strategic discipline. They experienced only one loss in seven matches.

During the league stage, the Lancers achieved four regulation wins and secured two additional victories through shootouts, effectively leveraging the bonus-point system. Their defence has been notably strong, allowing just eight goals.

Belgian drag-flick specialist Alexander Hendrickx has been the key player in their penalty-corner strategy, leading the team with eight goals—all from set-pieces. Overall, the Lancers have the second-highest penalty-corner conversion rate in the tournament at 28.1%, highlighting their effectiveness in critical situations.

Reflecting on the challenge ahead, Lancers captain Arthur Van Doren said the team was fully focused on peaking at the right time. "Finishing first in the league was a result of sustained hard work, but the job is far from done. Ranchi have tremendous attacking quality, but we trust our defensive structure and our strength on set-pieces. Playing at home gives us added motivation, and we want to make it count," he said.

Ranchi Royals have focused on an aggressive attacking strategy, ending the league stage as the top scorer with 25 goals. Their forward line is spearheaded by captain Tom Boon, who leads the tournament with 15 goals.

Ahead of the crucial encounter, Boon acknowledged the magnitude of the occasion. "Qualifier 1 is exactly the kind of match players prepare for. We have played attacking hockey throughout the season, and against a disciplined side like the Lancers, accuracy and composure will be decisive. We have faith in our system and our squad, and we are ready for the challenge," he said.

With a spot in the final at stake, the pressure will be at an all-time high. The winner of Qualifier 1 will advance straight to the Men's HIL final January 26, while the loser will have a second chance, playing again in Qualifier 2 January 25 against the winner of the Eliminator.

RED HOT INDIA AIM TO MAKE IT 2-0 AGAINST NZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, Jan 22: Sanju Samson would look to hit his straps in a much-needed settled role at the top of the order, while Ishan Kishan would be better served to make the limited opportunities count in the second T20 international between India and New Zealand here Friday.

In and out of the playing eleven for no fault of his own, Samson is now certain to get an extended run ahead of next month's T20 World Cup.

Falling to a soft dismissal in the series opener, Samson would be determined to display his wide range of shots that have helped him rack up three hundreds in the shortest format.

Another batter who needs to repay the faith of the team management is Kishan, a surprise inclusion in the World Cup squad and played ahead of Shreyas Iyer in Nagpur on Wednesday night.

The southpaw looked good in his brief stay before being caught at cover. With batting till eight, most Indians players bat in top gear trying to hit every ball out of the park. Kishan would continue with that fearless approach and can only hope that it pays off.

Focus has been on captain Suryakumar Yadav's form ahead of the ICC event and even though he could not make a major contribution, the 32 off 22 balls would have lifted his confidence by a few notches.

Despite the individual areas of improvement emerging from an emphatic win in the first T20, the performance as a team sent ominous signals to rivals ahead of the World Cup where India go in as defending champions.

SNIPPETS

Gukesh beats Nguyen; Erigaisi shocked

World champion D Gukesh ended his spate of draws by defeating Thai Dai Van Nguyen of Czech Republic but overnight joint leader Arjun Erigaisi was shocked by Vladimir Fedoseev of Slovenia in the fifth round of Tata Steel Masters chess tournament. Gukesh's timely victory ahead of the first rest day Thursday put him on three points out of a possible five and the Indian ace went up to joint fourth spot behind three leaders. While the game between Hans Niemann of the USA and Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan ended in the draw, the two were joined by latter's compatriot and World Cup winner Javokhir Sindarov who defeated young Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus after some great resistance. With nine rounds still to come in the 114-player and 13-round tournament, Erigaisi slipped to joint seventh spot on 2.5 points, a point ahead of two other Indians -- Aravindh Chithambaram and R Praggnanandhaa.

Babar leaves BBL after forgettable outing

Karachi: Former Pakistan captain Babar Azam's forgettable first-ever stint in the Big Bash League (BBL) has ended with him returning home before Sydney Sixers' eliminator match against Hobart Hurricanes Friday. The Sixers management announced that Babar would return home because of his national team commitments. In a video posted on social media platforms, Babar thanked Sydney Sixers and his supporters for making his BBL appearance a memorable one. However, Babar endured a rough time in this edition of the league scoring just 202 runs in 11 matches with just two half-centuries. His strike-rate was a poor 103 and averaged a mere 22. His abrupt return from the league coincides with demands by some former Australian players including Mark Waugh that the Sixers should drop him for the eliminator.

Real Madrid head money league again

REUTERS

Manchester, Jan 22: Real Madrid remained the biggest-earning club in world football during the 2024-25 season while Liverpool for the first time generated the most revenues in the Premier League, according to an annual financial list published Thursday.

The Spanish club topped Deloitte's Football Money League with 1.16 billion euros ($1.36 billion) of revenue despite not winning either LaLiga or the Champions League.

The only club to make more than $1 billion in the past two seasons, Real Madrid benefited in 2024-25 from a whopping 23% rise in commercial revenue - driven by merchandise and corporate partners - to 594 million euros, the Deloitte figures showed, opens new tab.

Perennial rivals and reigning LaLiga champions Barcelona were the second highest earners with 975 million euros, back in the top three for the first time in five years.

Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich ranked third with 861 million euros, ahead of Champions League winners Paris St-Germain on 837 million euros.

Liverpool's fifth place in the global money list, with 836 million euros of revenues from the season they won the Premier League, was the strongest performance of any English club in the 29-year history of the rankings. Manchester City dropped to sixth with 829 million euros, followed by this season's Premier League leaders Arsenal on 822 million.

MANCHESTER UNITED'S SLIDE

Manchester United, who finished a lowly 15th in the Premier League last season, fell from fourth to eighth in revenues with 793 million euros - their lowest-ever position in the Money League that they have topped 10 times in the past.

Deloitte noted that United's revenue outlook for the current season will worsen due to their absence from European competition and early exits from the FA Cup and League Cup.

Six Premier League sides made the global top 10, with Tottenham ninth on 673 million euros and Chelsea 10th on 584 million.

Overall, revenue for the top 20 clubs rose 11% to a record 12.4 billion euros. Commercial income increased to 5.3 billion euros, driven by expanded stadium usage on non-matchdays, rising sponsorship deals and improved retail operations.

Matchday revenue grew the fastest, up 16% to 2.4 billion euros, while broadcast revenue rose 10%, helped by the expanded FIFA Club World Cup in the United States last summer.

Deloitte said the rise of some Saudi Pro League clubs and Inter Miami from Major League Soccer could challenge the financial hegemony of Europe's major sides in the future.

BIGGEST EARNERS

- Liverpool top Premier League list for first time
- Manchester United fall to lowest position in financial league
- LaLiga champions Barcelona second with just under $1 billion
- Saudi teams, Inter Miami may challenge Europe's dominance

Printed and published by Adyasha Satpathy on behalf of Navajat Printers and Media Pvt. Ltd. and printed at Navajat Printers, B-15 Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar -751010, Odisha;Phone:(0674) 2580385 (Advt.), Editor: Tathagata Satpathy, RNI No. ODIENG/2011/37159