



Shocking disclosure

Actor Mouni Roy reveals that she was inappropriately touched by audience at a recent event in Haryana

LEISURE | P2



Seafarer abandonment

Indians are the most abandoned nationality of seafarers for the second consecutive year

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Amazon layoffs

Amazon planning a second round of job cuts next week as part of its broader goal of trimming some 30,000 corporate workers

BUSINESS | P11



B'desh out of WC

The ICC confirmed that Scotland has replaced Bangladesh in the upcoming T20 World Cup

SPORTS | P12

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 295 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | SUNDAY | JANUARY 25, 2026

12 PAGES+SUNDAYPOST | ₹5.00

MAN FIGHTS OFF LEOPARD



PNN & AGENCIES

Badamba/Cuttack, Jan 24: In a fierce face-off inside a farmhouse in Cuttack district, a man fought off a leopard with a kitchen knife, killing the animal but sustaining serious injuries, officials said Saturday. The incident took place at Anantaprasad village Friday night. The injured Subhranshu

Bhol was rushed to a local hospital initially and then rushed to SCB Medical College and Hospital with multiple injuries, additional conservator of forests Manoj Patra told reporters. The forest department has seized the carcass of the leopard from the farmhouse. According to Subhranshu's father Sudharshan, his son was at the farmhouse located

in Narsinghpur West forest range when he heard dogs barking outside. "When my son opened the door to check, a leopard jumped into the house and pounced on him. He tried to drive it away, but it went on attacking my son," his father said. "At that moment, Subhranshu grabbed hold of a kitchen knife and stabbed the leopard



repeatedly, which weakened the animal. He later locked himself in a room and called me to rush with an ambulance," he added.

Russian oil import dips, US hints at relief to India

Calling the drastic fall in India's Russian oil imports in the face of sweeping 50 per cent tariffs from the Trump administration a 'success,' US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has indicated that the punitive tariff of 25 per cent imposed on Indian goods may be relaxed. Bessent's remarks came amid heightened pressure from President Trump, who earlier warned that tariffs could increase further unless India curtails its Russian oil purchases. India's Russian oil imports in December dropped to their lowest in two years, lifting OPEC's share of Indian oil imports to an 11-month high

REUTERS

Mumbai, Jan 24: US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent Friday signalled the potential removal of additional 25% tariffs on India following a sharp reduction in Indian imports of Russian oil. Trade tensions escalated in August when US President Donald Trump doubled tariffs on Indian goods to 50%, including a 25% levy in response to India's imports of Russian crude. "Indian purchases by their



refineries of Russian oil have collapsed. So that is a success. The tariffs are still on, 25% tariffs for Russian oil are still on. I would imagine there is a path to take them off," Bessent said in an interview with Politico at the World Economic Forum. Bessent's remarks came amid heightened pressure from Trump, who earlier warned that tariffs could increase further unless India curtails its Russian oil purchases. Indian refineries have been buying more oil from Middle Eastern, African and South American countries to make up for a drop in Russian oil imports, which is expected to help India negotiate a tariff deal with Washington. Indian Oil Corp, the country's top refiner, has bought 7 million barrels of oil, including from Brazil's Petrobras, for March loading to replace

Russian oil, trade sources said. IOC last month bought its first Colombian oil and for the first time bought Ecuadorian Oriente crude. India became the top buyer of discounted Russian seaborne crude after Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, but challenges posed by Western sanctions eventually prompted Indian refiners to increase imports from other sources. Bessent also criticised Europe for not imposing tariffs on India. "Our virtue-signalling European allies refused to do it (impose tariffs) because they wanted to sign this big trade deal with India," he said. He accused Europe of funding Russia's war by purchasing the oil refined in India. "But in the ultimate act of irony and stupidity, guess who was buying the refined products from the Indian refineries made from Russian oil. The Europeans. They are financing the war against themselves," he added. When asked if he called the Europeans "stupid," Bessent said, "I said there was an act of stupidity."

PIO kills wife, 3 relatives in US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, Jan 24: A 51-year-old Indian-origin man has been arrested for allegedly shooting dead his wife and three relatives purportedly due to a family dispute in the US state of Georgia. Vijay Kumar was taken into custody a short distance from the residence in Lawrenceville city where the shooting occurred Friday, Gwinnett County Police said in a social media post. Gwinnett County Police identified the victims as Kumar's wife Meemu Dogra, 43, who is an Indian national, and the relatives Gourav Kumar, 33, Nidhi Chander, 37, and Harish Chander, 38.



Police said an argument began between Kumar and Dogra at their home in Atlanta and they travelled to their relatives' home on Brook Ivy Court with their 12-year-old child. Gourav Kumar, Nidhi Chander, and Harish Chander, resided at the

Brook Ivy Court home, along with two juveniles who are seven and 10 years old, police said. Kumar's child was the one who called 911 after the incident occurred, police said. "It is unknown at this time what the argument was about, why they came to the residence, or what led up to the incident," police said. Upon arrival, officers located four deceased adults inside the home, all suffering from apparent gunshot wounds, they said. The three children were inside the residence, hiding in a closet and were unharmed. Police said the motive remains under investigation but appears to be domestic related.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Gmail, FB, Netflix passwords of 149 million users leaked

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 24: Login credentials, including usernames, passwords, of over 149 million accounts of internet firms, including Gmail, Instagram, Facebook, and Netflix, have allegedly been leaked, a report published by ExpressVPN said. The report published by cybersecurity researcher Jeremiah Fowler claims that the publicly exposed data includes 48 million accounts on Gmail, 4 million on Yahoo, 17

million on Facebook, 6.5 million on Instagram, 3.4 million on Netflix, 1.5 million on Outlook, etc. "The publicly exposed database was not password-protected or encrypted. It contained 149,404,754 unique logins and passwords, totalling a massive 96 GB of raw credential data. In a limited sampling of the exposed documents, I saw thousands of files that included emails, usernames, passwords, and the URL links to the login or authorization for the accounts," Fowler said in the report.

MORE P11

Greenland, Denmark set aside troubled history to face Trump

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Nuuk, Jan 24: Greenland and Denmark have formed a united front to face down US President Donald Trump, momentarily setting aside the troubled history between them. The Arctic island, a Danish colony for three centuries, still has a complicated relationship with Denmark, which now rules it as an autonomous territory. Greenland's main political parties all want independence, but disagree on how exactly to get there. Trump's designs on the island led them to forge a coalition government in March last year. Greenland was a Danish colony



from early 18th century. It became a Danish territory in 1953, a full part of Denmark -- before becoming an autonomous territory in 1979, a status that was strengthened in 2009. "Any colonial relation is a question of domination and there have

been some injustices committed," said Astrid Andersen of the Danish Institute for International Studies. Those injustices include a 1951 social experiment in which 22 Inuit children were forcibly separated from their families and prevented from speaking Greenlandic -- part of bid to create a Danish-speaking elite. In 2021, the six still alive were each awarded compensation of 250,000 crowns. Another dark chapter was Denmark's efforts from the 1960s and for three decades on to reduce the birth rate in Greenland. Several thousand women and teenagers had IUDs fitted without their consent to prevent them conceiving.

DSPL-493

ମତଦାତା ଦିବସ

୨୫ ଜାନୁଆରୀ, ୨୦୨୬

ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଅତିଥି
ମାନ୍ୟବର ରାଜ୍ୟ ନିର୍ବାଚନ କମିଶନର,
ଶ୍ରୀ ମଧୁସୂଦନ ପାଢ଼ୀ, ଭା.ପ୍ର.ସେ (ଅବସର ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ)

ରାଜ୍ୟସ୍ତରୀୟ ସମାରୋହ

ସ୍ଥାନ : କନ୍ଦେନସନ୍ ସେଣ୍ଟର, ଲୋକସେବା ଭବନ , ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର
ସମୟ : ସକାଳ ୧୦:୦୦ ଘଟିକା

ଏହି ସମାରୋହରେ ଯୋଗଦେବାକୁ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ସାଦର ନିମନ୍ତ୍ରଣ ।

SIR ମ୍ୟାପିଂରେ ଆମକୁ ସାହାଯ୍ୟ କରନ୍ତୁ

ଅତ୍ୟଧିକ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟାକରଣରୁ ଦୂରେଇ ରୁହନ୍ତୁ

ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବୁଥ-ସ୍ତରୀୟ ଅଧିକାରୀଙ୍କ ସହଯୋଗରେ

୨୦୦୭ ଭୋଟର ତାଲିକାରେ-ଆପଣଙ୍କ ନାମ କିମ୍ବା ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପିତାଙ୍କ ନାମ କିମ୍ବା ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଜେଜେବାପାଙ୍କ ନାମ ଯାଞ୍ଚ କରି ନିଜକୁ ମ୍ୟାପିଂ କରନ୍ତୁ ।

ଏହି ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା ଏବେ ଠାରୁ କରି ରଖନ୍ତୁ!

ଏହା ଦ୍ୱାରା ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ସମ୍ପଦ ସଂଶୋଧନ ସମୟରେ କୌଣସି ଦସ୍ତାବିଜ କିମ୍ବା ପ୍ରମାଣପତ୍ର ଆଉ ଦାଖଲ କରିବାପାଇଁ ପଡ଼ିବ ନାହିଁ ।

ସଚେତନ ନାଗରିକ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ - ଶଗଡ଼କୁ ସୁଦୃଢ଼ କରନ୍ତୁ!

ଅଧିକ ସୂଚନା ପାଇଁ
ଭୋଟର ହେଲ୍ପଲାଇନ୍ ନମ୍ବର
୧୯୫୦
ରେ କଲ୍ କରନ୍ତୁ

କିମ୍ବା
ECINet ରେ
'Book a Call with BLO'
ବିକଳ୍ପ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରନ୍ତୁ

ମୁଖ୍ୟ ନିର୍ବାଚନ ଅଧିକାରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା
Chief Electoral Officer, Odisha

Follow us on :
CEO Odisha | Ceodisha | odishaceo | Chief Electoral Officer Odisha | ମୁଖ୍ୟ ନିର୍ବାଚନ ଅଧିକାରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା Channel

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
The day sparkles with opportunities and pleasures, you just have to look in the right place. If you've been looking to seal a relationship, today is the day to propose, says Ganesha! Be careful while driving, and be subtle in suggestion.

TAURUS
You will hear the division bell beckoning you to strike a balance between your personal and professional life. Today is an encouraging day for big business deals and new projects. In the afternoon, you may fall victim to iniquity. Safeguard your money from green-eyed monsters, advises Ganesha.

GEMINI
It is highly probable that you will channel your energy constructively, instead of worrying about minor issues, predicts Ganesha. In the evening, you are likely to go on a shopping spree with your sweetheart. Don't fret, the expenditure promises handsome returns.

CANCER
You will decide to expose certain unreasonable conventions and traditions, and you will be able to do so successfully, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may incur the displeasure of your bosses. In the evening, you will be able to draw pleasure from whatever you do.

LEO
Your wish to be in a cocoon, protected from the vagaries of the world, will come to fruition today as you remain sensitive and protected, says Ganesha. At work, you will be filled with a sense of purpose, and a feeling of solidity. But it is the evening that you should look forward to, as you are assured of a fantastic time with your family and loved ones. Time for one sensational trip or a night out, suggests Ganesha!

VIRGO
Your professional life may just bounce up higher than ever today, predicts Ganesha. Expect incentives as well today. Executing plans to perfection will come naturally to you. In the evening, family will drown you in their unconditional love. A bright, charming day, says Ganesha.

LIBRA
It's now or never for you, as today, you may finally take out time to do some sound thinking for your future goals and success. Things seem to go your way, and all your plans are beautifully executed towards the afternoon. Also, find time in the evening to be with the ones dear to you. A movie and dinner sounds like a good idea to Ganesha. Enjoy life in all its goodness!

SCORPIO
Proposals of your choice will come your way today says Ganesha. You shall probably retreat into your shell in the afternoon. But the passing hours will bring out a different you. At work, you shall greatly impress your boss with sparkling results, predicts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Today, you will probably emerge as the victorious gladiator in the arena of sports and games, says Ganesha. But later in the day, some hurdles may come across your path. At your desk, your bosses might just lend you a helping hand to assist you to finish off pending jobs.

CAPRICORN
It's not every day that you wake up with a positive feeling, one that pushes you to make right everything that has been going wrong around and within you. Today, you may be in one of those high-spirited moods, says Ganesha. At home, you will strive to gain the confidence of your family members while at work, you will slog hard the entire day and get adequately rewarded for the same.

AQUARIUS
You will finally make an effort to get in touch with old friends. At work, you find your public relation skills suddenly enhanced and even your rivals salute you! Naturally, the happiest is your beloved, who appreciates all the things you say. Enjoy it while it lasts, says Ganesha.

PISCES
Not the best of days for you, haunted as you will be by feelings of insecurity. However, do not be in too much of a hurry to get in the mood to grieve, for the evening brings you pleasant times in the company of your soul mate, says Ganesha.



KATIE GETS ENGAGED FOR THE NINTH TIME

English model Katie Price has revealed that she is engaged for the ninth time to a new mystery man after jetting out to Dubai for a lavish holiday with him. The 47-year-old had split from her former partner JJ Slater a few weeks ago.

LIZA MINNELLI HITS BACK AT TROLLS OVER AI CLAIMS

Veteran entertainer Liza Minnelli has hit back at trolls who claimed her vocals on new track Kids Wait Till You Hear This were created using AI. The 79-year-old has made a surprise return to music with the above track, which has been created as part of The Eleven Album project.



DAY 3 AT IFFB

Vidheyan keeps audience engaged

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: The third day at 15th Indian Film Festival of Bhubaneswar (IFFB), organised by Film Society of Bhubaneswar, screened *Vidheyan* — one of the most acclaimed works of Adoor Gopalakrishnan as part of his retrospective.

Vidheyan (1994)—based on the novella Bhaskara Pattelarum Ente Jeevithavum by Paul Zacharia, explores the relationship of tyrannical landlord Patelar and an obsequious slave Thommie. Considered as one of the best performances by superstar Mammooty, *Vidheyan* is a haunting exploration of power, servitude, and morality. Adoor's Mukhamukham was also screened Saturday.

In contemporary section, Sanju Suren-dran's *If on a Winter's Night* initiated conversations among the audience and garnered praises. The film is based on the love of a young couple as they move from Kerala to Delhi, confronting prejudice, ambition, and the city's hidden harshness.

Nidhi Saxena's acclaimed work *Secret of*



Santa Nibedita(R)— first assistant director of *Secret of a Mountain Serpent* in a post screening conversation with film critic Aditya Shrikrishna

a Mountain Serpent is a poetic exploration of desire and freedom, where myth and memory blur.

Speaking on the occasion, a life member of FSB said, "I thoroughly enjoyed

the curation of films that I otherwise don't get an opportunity to see. Someone who is currently in his 70's, to see young members of the society run this festival makes me rejuvenate."

Dia flags safety gaps for girls

MUMBAI: On the occasion of National Girl Child Day and National Tourism Day, actor, producer, and UN Goodwill Ambassador Dia Mirza drew attention to the growing safety concerns faced by girls and women in public spaces, calling for urgent, gender-responsive action.

Through a powerful statement, Mirza highlighted how freedom of movement remains deeply unequal, stressing that progress in tourism and urban development cannot be celebrated unless girls feel safe to move independently. Underscoring the long-term impact of safety on confidence and opportunity, Mirza said, "A girl who feels safe enough to travel independently today becomes the woman who will move through the world with confidence tomorrow. And yet, for far too many of our girls, public spaces come with a 'safety tax'—a price paid in fear, in lost time, in constantly calculating routes, clothes, hours... and in dreams that quietly shrink before they even take flight."



Reflecting on the significance of the two national observances, she further added, "As I mark National Girl Child Day and National Tourism Day, I feel this truth deeply: we cannot celebrate movement, exploration, and freedom while so many girls are still navigating the gap between mobility and fear."

MUMBAI: Superstar Shah Rukh Khan has officially announced the release date of his upcoming film *King*, with an announcement video that comes packed with a powerful punch.

Taking to his social media account, the actor unveiled striking visuals from the film while confirming that *King* will "roar" into cinemas on December 24, 2026.

The first visual in the announcement video features the bold title ROAR set against a dramatic backdrop. Another frame carries the impactful line, "This Christmas, fear wears the crown," hints at ger-than-ing it more



KING GETS A RELEASE DATE

In the video, Shah Rukh Khan is seen exuding dominance, with his rugged look in a torn white shirt and face splashed in blood.

Sharing the post, the actor wrote on his , "#KING is Ready to ROAR on 24.12.2026 in Cinemas. #ItsKingTime #KingDateAnnouncement"

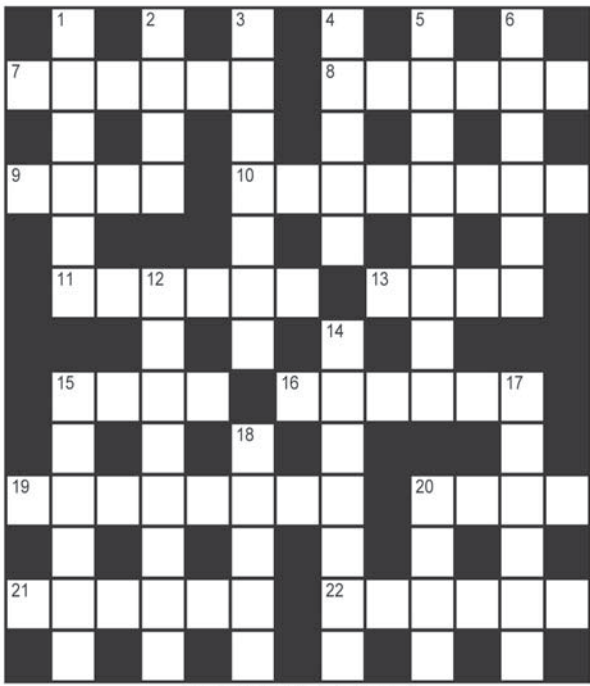
On Shah Rukh Khan's 60th birthday in November, last year, the makers of *King* had unveiled the captivating title video from the forthcoming drama.

The clip opened with a bird's-eye view of an island facility. SRK's voice-over could be heard perfectly synced with the high-octane action sequences.

King also stars Deepika Padukone, Shah Rukh Khan's daughter Suhana Khan, Jaideep Ahlawat.

FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Mutilate
 - 8 Ermine
 - 9 Style of poker
 - 10 Former squeeze (3,5)
 - 11 African antelopes
 - 13 Worry
 - 15 Hunt for
 - 16 Garden sight
 - 19 Purchases
 - 20 Austrian peaks
 - 21 Plug-uglies
 - 22 Paradise
- Down**
- 1 Royal home
 - 2 Like some cigars
 - 3 Duel participants
 - 4 Stockholm native
 - 5 Aussie hopper
 - 6 Head protector
 - 12 Just enough
 - 14 Short and snippy
 - 15 Fasten
 - 17 Mend
 - 18 Garbage
 - 20 Soothing agent

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

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

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

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

CM seeks NITI’s support for new economic region devtpt

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Saturday sought the support of NITI Aayog for the development of Bhubaneswar-Cuttack-Puri-Paradip Economic Region (BCPPER), envisaged as a major engine of growth and rapid urbanisation for the state.

NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery, accompanied by Member Arvind Virmani, called on the CM at Lok Seva Bhawan here.

While interacting with them, the CM highlighted the significant progress made by Odisha in infrastructure and connectivity, particularly in roads, irrigation, power and logistics, which are driving both industrial expansion and rural growth. He emphasised the state’s focused approach towards strengthening MSMEs, developing manufacturing clusters, attracting investments, and generating employment through skill development aligned with local economic potential.

The CM sought support of NITI Aayog for the development of BCPPER. “He (the CM) underlined that the proposed economic region, with nearly 90 priority projects, has the potential to transform Odisha’s urban and industrial landscape and requested NITI Aayog’s guidance and support, including funding



CM Mohan Charan Majhi with NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery

The NITI Aayog Vice Chairman observed that Bhubaneswar deserves special attention as a model city, with emphasis on efficient sewage management, cleanliness, green spaces and sustainable urban infrastructure

He suggested adopting global best practices, including a ‘Texas model’-like integrated urban planning approach, to develop Bhubaneswar as a benchmark city for the country

APPRECIATING THE ODISHA’S DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORY, BERY Praised the leadership of the CM and the reform-oriented approach of the state government

through the Urban Challenge Fund,” the CMO said.

Appreciating the Odisha’s development trajectory, Bery praised the leadership of the CM and the reform-oriented approach of the state government. He noted that Odisha has

emerged as one of the top-performing states in terms of fiscal health and has created a strong and stable business climate conducive to industrial development and investment. He appreciated Odisha for the steps taken for effective reforms that could cata-

pult industrialisation in the state.

“Bery observed that Bhubaneswar deserves special attention as a model city, with emphasis on efficient sewage management, cleanliness, green spaces and sustainable urban infrastructure. He suggested adopting global best practices, including a ‘Texas model’-like integrated urban planning approach, to develop Bhubaneswar as a benchmark city for the country,” it said.

He further commended Odisha’s proactive collaboration with NITI Aayog in areas such as green energy transition, data-driven governance, skilling ecosystem reforms, tribal empowerment through value chain development, and innovative initiatives like Living Labs under the Frontier Tech Lab.

Virmani also appreciated the state’s forward-looking policies and its commitment to inclusive and sustainable growth.

The CM reiterated that the state government accords the highest priority to ease of doing business and investment facilitation, in alignment with the national reform agenda. Majhi expressed confidence that the partnership with NITI Aayog would further accelerate Odisha’s journey towards inclusive growth, industrial development and improved quality of life for its citizens.

IN SYNC

Artistes perform during the second day of Mukteswar Dance Festival organised by Odia Language, Literature and Culture department and Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi in Bhubaneswar, Saturday



Odisha man among 8 held for duping elderly couple of ₹14cr

PTI & PNN

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: The Delhi Police has arrested a 27-year-old man from Odisha, along with seven others from separate states, for allegedly duping an elderly NRI couple of over Rs 14 crore through ‘digital arrest’, busting a cyber fraud racket with links to operators based in Cambodia and Nepal, officials said Saturday.

The accused were apprehended from Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha following a multi-state operation that exposed the well-coordinated network engaged in impersonating law-enforcement agencies and siphoning off victims’ money through mule bank accounts, they added.

Divyang Patel, 30, and Krutik Shitole, 26, from Gujarat’s Vadodara, Mahavir Sharma alias Neel, 27, from Odisha’s Bhubaneswar, Ankit Mishra alias Robin from Gujarat, Arun Kumar Tiwari, 45, and Pradyuman Tiwari alias SP Tiwari, 44, from Uttar Pradesh’s Varanasi, and Bhupender Kumar Mishra, 37, and Aadesh Kumar Singh, 36, from Lucknow have been arrested in connection with the incident, the officials said.

Sharma, arrested January 19, is a B.Com graduate. According to police, the victim, a 77-year-old woman living in South Delhi’s Greater Kailash, received a call in December 2025 claiming that a SIM card issued in her name was linked to a money-laundering case.

DIGITAL ARREST

The 77-year-old woman in Greater Kailash received a call in December 2025 from fraudsters who claimed that a SIM card in her name was linked to money laundering



POSING AS CBI AND POLICE OFFICIALS, THEY PUT HER ON VIDEO CALLS, SHOWED A FORGED ARREST WARRANT, STAGED FAKE COURT PROCEEDINGS, AND KEPT HER AND HER HUSBAND UNDER CONSTANT VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

THREATENED WITH SEVERE CONSEQUENCES, THE COUPLE TRANSFERRED RS 14.84 CRORE IN MULTIPLE TRANSACTIONS TO ‘RBI-MANDATED’ ACCOUNTS FOR ‘VERIFICATION’, BASED ON FALSE PROMISES OF A REFUND

She was then placed on video calls by the fraudsters, who posed as officials from agencies such as the CBI and police, showed her a forged arrest warrant and conducted fake ‘court proceedings’.

The victim and her husband were allegedly kept under round-the-clock video surveillance and threatened with dire consequences if they contacted anyone. Under fear and coercion, they were persuaded to transfer funds, including from fixed deposits and share investments, into so-called ‘RBI-mandated accounts’ for ‘verification’, with false assurances that the money would be returned. A total amount of Rs 14.84 crore was transferred through eight transactions, police said.

An e-FIR was registered at the Special Cell’s IFSO police

station in New Delhi January 10 under relevant sections of the BNS and a special team formed to investigate the case.

Through technical surveillance and an analysis of bank accounts, police tracked the money trail leading to several alleged mule-account holders.

The investigators said the accused acted as facilitators by procuring and operating mule accounts and layering defrauded funds at the behest of the international syndicate – mostly based in Cambodia and Nepal.

Police have frozen Rs 2.08 crore of the Rs 14.84 crore duped in the case and seized seven mobile phones and chequebooks during the operation. Further investigation is on to unearth the entire money trail and identify other conspirators, the officials added.

Early panchayat elections likely

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: State BJP president Manmohan Samal Saturday indicated that the upcoming panchayat elections could be held earlier than scheduled, possibly two to three months ahead of the Census.

Speaking to party functionaries and elected local representatives, Samal said the panchayat elections are likely to be announced within

the next six months, citing the Census as a possible reason for advancing the timeline, and urged party workers to complete unfinished development works within this timeframe.

“Common people at the grassroots are still deprived in many ways. We must win every block, every panchayat, every zilla parishad, and every ward. BJP needs to build leadership at all levels,” Samal said.

He emphasised on preparedness at all levels and strengthening the party’s presence at the grassroots. He instructed sarpanchs and samiti members to prioritise pending development projects in their areas over the next six months to improve public perception ahead of the elections.

In a bid to expand the party’s base, Samal outlined plans for ‘Mishran Parva’ at various levels — from panchayat to state headquarters.

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: Hundreds of Youth Congress members Saturday scuffled with security personnel here as they attempted to gherao Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi’s official residence to demand his resignation in protest against alleged rise in attacks on members of minority community.

They were protesting the recent alleged assault on a pastor

in Dhenkanal district and the killing of a youth belonging to a minority community on suspicion of cow theft in Balasore district. Odisha Pradesh Youth Congress president Ranjit Patra alleged, “While atrocities against the minorities are increasing, the Chief Minister is sitting silently. We need a reply from the government.”

Pastor Bipin Nayak was assaulted, forced to drink drain water and paraded with a garland of shoes by a religious out-

While atrocities against the minorities are increasing, the Chief Minister is sitting silently. We need a reply from the government

RANJIT PATRA | ODISHA PRADESH YOUTH CONGRESS CHIEF

fit in Dhenkanal. Similarly, in Balasore, a poor minority man was beaten to death allegedly by cattle protectors, the Congress leader said. Patra also

claimed that poor people from West Bengal who come to Odisha to earn a livelihood are being harassed and branded as Bangladeshis.

“Is the Odisha Chief Minister unable to control this situation, or is the BJP encouraging it? If the Chief Minister is unable to protect the minority community, then he should resign,” Patra said. The protestors were picked up from the agitation site and later released, police said.



R-DAY PREP: Youths perform a daredevil show during the full dress rehearsal ahead of the Republic Day celebrations at Mahatma Gandhi Marg in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

'Higher public health funding can cut household med costs'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 24: Ahead of the Union Budget 2026-27, a new study has added empirical weight to long-standing demands for higher expenditure on public healthcare, warning that socio-economic factors are increasingly driving medical costs and deepening inequality in access to care.

The study, ‘Impact of Determinants of Healthcare Expenditure in India: The ARDL Bounds Testing Approach’, published in the International Journal of Advanced Research in December last year, analyses national data from 1991 to 2023 to assess what shapes healthcare expenditure in India – both total per-capita spending and household out-of-pocket (OOP) payments.

Using advanced econometric

modelling, the authors argue that income growth, urbanisation, education levels, inflation and life expectancy all have statistically significant long-term effects on healthcare spending.

The research shows that rising incomes and rapid urbanisation are closely linked to higher healthcare consumption, while education and longevity also influence spending patterns, particularly private OOP expenses.

The findings suggest that India’s development trajectory itself is structurally pushing healthcare costs upward – disproportionately impacting families dependent on private care.

The study highlights the persistent ‘dual nature’ of India’s health financing system – limited public spending alongside heavy

■ Rising incomes, urbanisation, education, and longevity drive higher healthcare spending, especially out-of-pocket costs

■ The findings indicate that India’s development path is structurally increasing healthcare costs, disproportionately affecting families who rely on private medical care

reliance on private OOP expenditure. This structure, the authors note, entrenches inequality, with rural and lower-income households facing a greater risk of catastrophic medical costs and delayed treatment.

“Without stronger public financing, the burden of illness continues to fall most heavily on those least able to afford it,” the paper concludes. Industry leaders say

the study reinforces the urgency of structural healthcare and innovation-centric reforms.

Amit Mookim, Board Director and CEO, Immuneel Therapeutics, said, “As India advances its ambition to become a global hub for next-generation biotherapies, the Union Budget 2026-27 can play a defining role in improving access, affordability, and innovation in cell and gene therapy.”

Broader rationalisation of GST on manufacturing inputs, targeted import-duty relief, insurance frameworks for one-time curative therapies like CAR-T, innovative financing models, and a predictable regulatory pathway aligned with international standards will be critical to expanding patient access and ensuring sustainable innovation, Mookim said.

Insurance Bhi, Savings Bhi

Dreams

Goals

Responsibilities

Security

Security

Assurance

Comfort

Independence

Security

Security

My Regular Premium Plan!

Presenting LIC's NAV JEEVAN SHREE

UIN: 512N387V01 Plan No.: 912 Regular Premium Payment Plan

Single solution to achieve our goals

Guaranteed Additions payable as a percentage of Tabular Annual Premium without taxes.

Limited Premium Payment Term.

Attractive Premium Payment Terms of 6/8/10/12 years.

Policy Term Options : 10 to 20 years.

Attractive Benefits for Existing Policyholders

Plans are also available online

(A Non-Par, Non-Linked, Life, Individual, Savings plan)

These are two different products with different features.

My Single Premium Plan!

Presenting LIC's Nav Jeevan Shree

UIN: 512N390V01 Plan No.: 911 Single Premium

One Time Premium Payment

Guaranteed Addition @ ₹ 85/- per ₹1000/- Basic Sum Assured.

Settlement Option On Maturity/Death.

Attractive Rebate for existing policyholder.

Provision for granting loan during the Policy Term.

Download LIC Mobile App

Visit: licindia.in

Call Centre Services 0221 6827 6827

WhatsApp No. 8976862090

For details, contact your Agent/Nearest LIC Branch/visit www.licindia.in

Follow us : LIC India Forever | IRDAI Regn No.: 512

BEWARE OF SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND FICTITIOUS / FRAUDULENT OFFERS. IRDAI or its officials do not involve in any activities of insurance business like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums, refund of amounts. Policyholders or the prospects receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.

LIC

भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम

LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Har Pal Aapke Saath

LIC / R1 / 2025-26 / 11 / ENG

COMBINED FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATIONS

Unity in diversity India’s enduring strength: Guv



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: Emphasising unity in diversity as India’s enduring strength, Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati Saturday said the nation must remain cohesive while navigating a rapidly changing world. He was addressing the combined Foundation Day celebrations of Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu at Lok Bhavan here. First Lady Jayasree Kambhampati was also present. Addressing the gathering, the Governor said the observance of these foundation days transcends administrative reorganisation, reflecting India’s faith in democratic governance, cooperative federalism and balanced regional development. He urged citizens to renew their commitment to national unity and constitutional values, guided by the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat vision, the

Governor said the initiative strengthens emotional, cultural and intellectual bonds among states and Union Territories. He noted that exchanges in language, art, education, tourism, cuisine and heritage promote mutual respect, turn diversity into a unifying force, and underscore that national progress is most meaningful when it is inclusive and shared. Highlighting the contributions of the regions being honoured, the Governor said Manipur has made lasting contributions through its classical dance, handloom traditions and sporting achievements. Meghalaya, he noted, exemplifies ecological harmony and community-based social systems, while Tripura has distinguished itself through indigenous arts, bamboo craftsmanship and sustainable development initiatives that promote social cohesion. Referring to Uttar Pradesh, the Governor said the state holds a central place in India’s historical, cultural and intellectual heritage and continues to

Modern agri sector full of opportunities

BHUBANESWAR: Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati Saturday said modern agriculture goes far beyond traditional farming, offering vast opportunities in technology, processing, packaging, marketing and exports. Addressing the valedictory ceremony of Krushi Odisha-2026, he highlighted agri-entrepreneurship as a key driver in making the sector dynamic, sustainable and future-ready. The Governor underscored the importance of post-harvest management, value addition and food processing in reducing losses, enhancing farmer incomes, generating rural employment and strengthening food systems. He urged Odisha’s youth to lead this transformation, noting that initiatives such as the Mukhya Mantri Krushi Udyog Yojana provide a strong platform for innovation and enterprise. Appreciating the successful organisation of the event, he lauded the Agriculture and Farmers’ Empowerment Department for creating a meaningful forum for dialogue, innovation and collaboration. Describing agriculture as the backbone of India, he said the sector sustains rural communities, supports over half the population and plays a vital role in national development.

play a vital role in agriculture, education and national development. He added that the Union Territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, with their strategic coastal location and rich natural resources, exemplify the blend of traditional livelihoods with modern governance, contributing to inclusive and sustainable growth. The Governor said the regions are bound by constitutional values, economic interdependence and the continuous exchange of ideas, skills and aspirations. He added that hosting the celebration in Odisha was significant, as the state’s legacy of openness, inclusivity and shared heritage embodies India’s timeless ideal of unity in diversity.

Cuttack Stewart School observes Netaji Jayanti

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Jan 24: Stewart School, Cuttack, observed Netaji Jayanti with deep respect, pride and patriotic fervour. The day held special significance for the school, as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was once a student here, highlighting the institution’s historic association with the great freedom fighter. The programme began with an opening hymn, Bible reading and prayer led by Rev. FC North, setting a solemn tone for the celebration. The Principal, D Martina, in her keynote and welcome address, highlighted Netaji’s formative years at Stewart School, emphasising the institution’s role in shaping his discipline, courage, leadership and spirit of nationalism. Teachers Sashi Bhusan Lenka and AS Khan addressed the gathering, reflecting on Netaji’s ideals and sacrifices. Patriotic songs, speeches and recitations were also an integral part of the observance.



CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Notary Public, Chikiti, dated 20.01.2026, I, G. KUTULI, Address: Village- Dalapalanka, P.O.- Ramachandrapur, P.S.- K Nuagam, District- Ganjam (Odisha), PIN- 761010 declare that I have changed my name from GHUSURI DURYODHAN to G. KUTULI. Henceforth, I shall be known as G. KUTULI for all purposes.

PJ Group celebrates 20th annual day ‘Prelude-2026’



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: The Panchanan Jena (PJ) Group of Institutions Saturday celebrated its 20th annual day ‘Prelude-2026’ with great enthusiasm at its campus here. The event was attended by eminent academicians, administrators, media personalities and an environmental activist, along with students, faculty members and parents. The function was presided over by PJ Group of Institutions chairman Pratap Chandra Jena. PJ College of Management & Technology (PJCMT) dean Ipsita Patra delivered the welcome address, highlighting the institution’s commitment to academic excellence and holistic

development. PJCMT director Santosh Kumar Biswal formally introduced the guests, while group director Laxmidhar Biswal addressed the gathering, outlining the vision and growth of the institution. Presenting the annual report, PJ Higher Secondary School vice-principal Ashis Kumar Beuria outlined the year’s academic achievements, co-curricular successes and key institutional milestones. Noted journalist Ardhendu Das attended the event as guest of honour, while Odisha Assembly secretary Satyabrata Rout, the chief speaker, inspired students with his address on discipline, integrity and the role of youth in nation-building.

Odisha hails inclusion of three Buddhist sites’ in UNESCO tentative heritage list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: The Odisha government Saturday lauded the inclusion of three major Buddhist sites from the state - Ratnagiri, Lalitgiri and Udaygiri - in the Tentative List of India by UNESCO for consideration of granting World Heritage Site recognition. Deputy Chief Minister Pravatiparida, who is also minister in charge of Tourism department, said the three Buddhist sites have made a journey from ancient wisdom to global recognition. “Ratnagiri, Udaygiri and Lalitgiri on UNESCO Tentative List,” Parida said in a post on X. She said that inclusion of the three Buddhist sites from the state in UNESCO’s tentative list is a major milestone for heritage, conservation and sustainable tourism.



Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan, in a social media post, said, “Odisha’s diamond triangle-Ratnagiri, Lalitgiri and Udaygiri have been included in the Tentative List of India by UNESCO for consideration of granting World Heritage Site recognition. This is a matter of pride for our state, our culture and heritage.” According to official sources, in a letter to Vishal V Sharma, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of India to UNESCO, Lazare Eloundou Assomo,



The decomposed carcass of a giant whale at Devi River mouth in Jagatsinghpur, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Strategic meet with Sarvam for AI ecosystem

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: The state government Saturday held a high-level strategic meeting with the leadership of Sarvam, an Indian artificial intelligence company, as part of its efforts to build a secure, inclusive and sovereign AI ecosystem aligned with Vision 2036 and Vision 2047.

The discussions focused on developing artificial intelligence as a long-term public capability, with emphasis on sovereign infrastructure, population-scale applications across key sectors and building durable institutional capacity within the state. The meeting was attended by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Electronics and IT Minister Mukesh Mahaling, Chief Secretary Anu Garg, senior state officials and Sarvam’s leadership team. Speaking after the meeting, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said Odisha must move



beyond merely adopting technology and instead emerge as a harbinger for others to follow, adding that artificial intelligence offers an opportunity to set new benchmarks in governance and public service delivery. Chief Secretary Garg said it was time for Odisha to emerge as a technology leader, particularly in artificial intelligence, through its true democratisation—ensuring the benefits of AI reach citizens across sectors and geographies. Minister Mahaling reiterated

the importance of AI in high-impact sectors such as agriculture and healthcare, noting that population-scale deployment can deliver tangible gains in livelihoods and well-being while easing the burden on frontline workers. During the discussions, the state indicated plans to formalise the partnership through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the Black Swan Summit scheduled for February 5 and 6. Speaking on behalf of Sar-

vam, co-founder Pratyush Kumar said Odisha’s focus on sovereign AI and population-scale public impact reflects a clear understanding of how artificial intelligence can strengthen governance. He added that Sarvam looks forward to working closely with the state to translate this vision into durable public systems. The state government outlined its approach to building shared, sovereign AI infrastructure, including secure compute and state-governed data platforms, to ensure public data, AI models and intelligence systems remain within Odisha’s trust boundary. To enable timely implementation, both sides discussed a parallel one-year execution framework under which departments would prepare datasets, identify priority use cases and develop applications alongside the commissioning of core AI infrastructure, ensuring services are rollout-ready without delay.

3 held for group clash in City; 2 still at large

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: The Chandrasekharpur police Saturday arrested three individuals, including a minor, in connection with a group clash at Housing Board Colony Friday night that caused fear among residents. Two other youths involved remain at large. According to police, the incident occurred around 7:30 pm Friday, when a group of youths from Gadakana, armed with sharp weapons, attacked Satyajee Samantaray and another person following a quarrel during Saraswati Puja celebrations in the area. The accused—Kanha Das (20), Debasish Das alias Guna (19), a minor, and two others—had come to Housing Board Colony and were reportedly involved in hooliganism. Local residents intervened, sparking a heated argument and exchange of threats. Later in the evening, while the victims were standing near an OMFED stall, the accused attacked them with swords, injuring both. Local residents immediately rushed the injured to a hospital. Following the attack, the



ACCORDING TO POLICE, A GROUP OF YOUTHS FROM GADAKANA, ARMED WITH SHARP WEAPONS, ATTACKED SATYAJEET SAMANTARAY AND ANOTHER PERSON FOLLOWING A QUARREL DURING SARASWATI PUJA CELEBRATIONS

accused fled, with one reportedly hiding in Om Sai Vihar in Gadakana. Acting on a tip-off, police raided the area and arrested three of the accused. An iron sword and two sharp weapons were seized from their possession. A case has been registered at Chandrasekharpur Police

Station under Sections 109(1) and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), read with Section 25(1)(a) of the Arms Act. The arrested individuals have been forwarded to court, while efforts continue to trace the remaining suspects. Further investigation is underway, police said.

RIE hosts Prakriti Mela in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 places strong emphasis on addressing environmental concerns such as climate change, pollution, waste management and conservation of biological diversity. Aligned with the vision of NEP 2020, a three-day Prakriti Mela is being organised by Regional Institute of Education (RIE), NCERT here in Bhubaneswar. Inaugurating the programme, RIE Bhubaneswar Principal Manasi Goswami emphasised the need of environmental education and sustainable practices among the younger generation. She stressed on the role of pre-service teachers in environmental sensitivity, promoting values, attitudes, behaviour and skills essential to address environmental challenges and preparing them to contribute to a sustainable future. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation of more than 1,600 students from various schools and institutions. More than five hundred pre-service teachers and prospective teacher educators visited and participated in the Prakriti Mela.

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	30.9°	27.8°	Dry weather likely to prevail over the districts of Odisha
Min Temp	14.5°	13.4°	
Humidity	90%	98%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	



Jharsuguda Superintendent of Police, Raghavendra Gundala, IPS, after completing a Half Marathon of 21 kilometres organised commemorating SAIL Foundation Day at Rourkela, Saturday

Sexagenarian killed over sorcery; 6 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada/Tikiri, Jan 24: Police arrested six persons in connection with the murder of a 65-year-old man who was allegedly murdered over suspicion of practising sorcery in Rayagada district. Five of the accused were arrested from Doraguda area, while another was apprehended from Puri, police said Saturday.

The incident occurred in Doraguda village in Kashipur block. The victim, identified as Gopala Dora, was allegedly murdered by villagers who suspected him of practising sorcery and causing harm to their families, police said.

Rayagada Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Gaurahari Sahu said the case was cracked within three days of the recovery of the body. The arrested persons have been identified as Iswar Dora, Eno Dora, Ramarao Dora, Nachi Dora, Raju Dora and Mohanrao Dora. Iswar Dora, also known as Isha, was arrested from Puri, while the remaining five were detained



from Doraguda area.

According to police, the victim's daughter, Gangama Dora, lodged a missing complaint January 21, stating that her father had been living in a hut about 300 metres from the village to tend cattle and had not returned home for the past 25 days. Villagers spotted his body Thursday in a nearby river, with his hands and legs tied and a stone fastened to his waist.

Following the complaint, Doraguda IIC Kiranbala Samal registered a case (08/26) and initiated an investigation, which revealed that the death was a murder involving six accused. During interrogation, the accused allegedly confessed to killing Gopala over suspicions

that he was practising sorcery and harming their families.

Police recovered a piece of eucalyptus wood, plastic bags and ropes allegedly used in the crime. After post-mortem examination, all the accused were produced before court.

The incident has once again highlighted the prevalence of superstition and lack of awareness in remote tribal pockets of the state. Despite the presence of major industrial units such as Utkal Alumina International Limited in the Doraguda area and claims of extensive CSR activities, local intellectuals have raised questions about the effectiveness of education, health and awareness programmes at the grassroots level.

Woman arrested for ₹3 crore fraud

POST NEWS NETWORK

Udala, Jan 24: Police arrested a 40-year-old woman for duping people of more than ₹3 crore by impersonating a senior Labour department official and falsely promising government loans.

The accused, identified as Binodini Nayak of the Balani police station area in Keonjhar district, was arrested from the Hanspal area of Bhubaneswar following a complaint lodged at Kaptipada police station.

Police said Nayak targeted both men and women by claiming to be a senior officer in the Labour department. About six months ago, she organised a meeting in the Kaurapur area under Kaptipada police limits, where she assured attendees that she could arrange government loans. Believing her, more than 20 people collectively paid her over ₹30 lakh.

Neither the promised loans ever materialised, nor was the money returned. After repeated attempts to contact her failed, a victim, Santosh Kumar Pati of Parasibadi village, submitted a written complaint to the police.

During the investigation, police found that multiple cheating cases had already been registered against Nayak at Kaptipada, Udala, Bhanjpur, Kharavela Nagar and Balipatana police stations. Preliminary findings indicate that she cheated victims of around ₹3



crore across several districts.

Investigators said the accused used more than 30 SIM cards to evade detection, frequently changing numbers after committing fraud in one area. Records show cases against her were registered between March 2025 and January 2026.

Police also alleged that Nayak used the money to fund a lavish lifestyle, including travel in expensive vehicles.

A case (08/26) has been registered at Kaptipada police station. Station officer Madhusmita Mohanty said further investigation is underway and raids are being conducted to identify others involved in the racket.

Barbil bank heist: 2 arrested in J'khand



PNN & AGENCIES

Barbil/Dhanbad, Jan 24: In a major breakthrough in the Barbil Bank robbery case, Keonjhar police have arrested two prime accused from Dhanbad city in neighbouring Jharkhand.

A total of 288 gram of gold worth over ₹40 lakh, robbed from the Bank of Maharashtra in Barbil town January 19, was recovered following the arrests in a two-day joint operation by police forces of Jharkhand and Odisha in Dhanbad's Nirsra and Sindri areas, they said.

A total of 3.7 kg gold and ₹4 lakh in cash were robbed from the bank by six masked men, they added. Addressing a press conference in Dhanbad Saturday, SP (Dhanbad City) Ritvik Srivastava and Keonjhar's ASP Pratyush Mahapatra said two four-wheelers used in the robbery were also seized.

Those arrested were identified as Rajkumar Singh (27) of Bihar's Jamui and Kunal Raj Verma (33) of Nirsra.

Mahapatra said the duo was the mastermind of the robbery, and a hunt is on to nab the others involved.

Bank accounts of cattle mafia frozen

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 24: Keonjhar police have intensified their crackdown on the cattle mafia under a special anti-cattle smuggling drive, as they froze multiple bank accounts linked to the arrested accused Saturday.

As part of a coordinated operation, police conducted simultaneous raids at 46 locations across five districts, including Keonjhar. During the searches, police seized cash, gold ornaments, bank passbooks and documents related to land and houses. According to officials, five bank accounts belonging to cattle mafia kingpin Pradyumna Mishra of Telkoi police station area, his younger brother Pratap Mishra and his son Rakesh Mishra have been frozen.

These include three accounts at the Bank of India's Telkoi branch and two accounts at the Keonjhar Central Cooperative Bank's Telkoi branch. Police have frozen around ₹3.80 crore deposited in these accounts, said Telkoi IIC Anjan Patra. Police also said accounts of other cattle mafia members, involving deposits worth several crores of rupees, have been frozen as part of the ongoing investigation.

Toxic water scare grips villages near NALCO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Jan 24: Allegations have surfaced against the National Aluminium Company Ltd. (NALCO), a Navratna public sector undertaking, of causing severe environmental pollution and endangering human and animal lives in Banarpal area on the outskirts of Angul town.

Local residents alleged that toxic ash and chemical-laden wastewater discharged from NALCO's captive power plant is being released daily into an open canal. The canal passes through villages such as Gotamara, Lingarakata and Basana-

li before merging with the Indira Nullah near Budhapank and ultimately flowing into the Brahmani river, leading to severe water pollution.

Villagers claimed that breaches in the canal embankment have allowed contaminated water to seep into nearby ponds and water bodies. Residents using the water reported suffering from skin diseases, kidney ailments and even cancer-like symptoms. Cattle deaths have also been reported after animals consumed the polluted water, with visible signs of infection observed.

Residents further alleged that

excessive industrial noise from the plant has disrupted daily life, affecting children's education and sleep patterns. A black residue reportedly settles on wells and ponds every morning, making the water unfit for drinking.

Subas Nayak of Gotamara village said land had been handed over to NALCO decades ago with assurances of employment and development, but local communities continue to face health hazards and unsafe infrastructure, including unmanned railway crossings that have led to fatalities.

Ramchandra Nayak of Bagchar village alleged widespread

skin infections among villagers who bathe in the polluted Nandira Nullah. Similar concerns were raised by residents of Lingarakata, who reported repeated cattle losses due to the absence of protective fencing along the canal.

Attempts to contact Ramesh Chandra Eka, the regional head of the Pollution Control Board in Angul were unsuccessful. NALCO authorities declined to comment on the allegations. Residents have demanded immediate intervention by the district administration, warning of a large-scale protest if corrective measures are not taken.

Cough syrup racket run from cop's farmhouse sparks rage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, Jan 24: The seizure of more than 5,000 bottles of cough syrup from a farmhouse allegedly owned by a senior police officer has sparked outrage in Bargarh district, intensifying public scrutiny of law enforcement's role in tackling the illegal drug trade and raising questions about possible official complicity and selective enforcement.

The illegal trade in narcotics, including illicit liquor, cough syrup and brown sugar, continues unabated across rural and urban areas of the district. While police and Excise officials routinely make seizures, alleged kingpins behind the trade remain beyond the reach of law enforcement agencies, fuelling public suspicion of leaks and protection within the system.

The latest controversy erupted after Bargarh Town police Wednesday seized 5,050 bottles of cough syrup from a house near the Banjibahali canal bridge along the Bargarh-Katapali road. According to sources, the property is a farmhouse owned by a senior police officer currently serving as a sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) outside the district.

Police arrested six people, including a woman, and detained



two juveniles in connection with the seizure. However, the name of the farmhouse owner does not appear in the seizure case, despite the large quantity of contraband recovered from the premises.

The omission has triggered allegations of favouritism and protection, with critics claiming the officer was spared action due to his rank. The perceived leniency has further eroded public confidence in the district police's credibility and impartiality in combating the drug trade. Residents say the growing drug menace has contributed to a rise in criminal activity, including theft, robbery, assault and murder, often occurring even during daytime hours. The trend has also taken a toll on local youth, many of whom are being drawn into substance abuse and related crimes.

The exposure of an alleged

cough syrup racket operating from a farmhouse linked to an SDPO-rank officer has shocked villagers and triggered widespread anger. Though the officer is currently posted outside the district, residents are questioning how such illegal activity could continue at his property without his knowledge.

Banjibahali village resident Brahma Mahakur said the house from which the cough syrup was seized belongs to a police officer. "If cough syrup can be seized from a police officer's house, why would it not be found elsewhere?" he said, demanding that the officer be brought under the ambit of the investigation. He added that villagers plan to meet the Inspector General (IG), Director General of Police (DGP) and the Chief Minister to seek action.

Another resident, Ganesh Mahakur, said villagers were unaware of any illegal trade in the area and were taken by surprise by the incident. He alleged that those arrested so far were only minor players and demanded that police dismantle the racket entirely and arrest the owner of the house where the trade was allegedly operating. Failing that, he said, villagers would approach the CM and the DGP.

Row as schoolkids found intoxicated

Phulbani: A fresh controversy has emerged around a school run by the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes Development department in Kandhamal district after two students were found in an inebriated condition in a local market on Saraswati Puja. The incident occurred Friday at Tikabali, where two Class IX students of the government high school, managed by the SSD department, allegedly consumed alcohol and were found lying unconscious near the BSNL tower close to the Tikabali post office. Both students were wearing their school uniforms at the time, triggering concern and criticism among local residents. According to sources, the students had left their hostel premises to attend Saraswati Puja celebrations. Taking advantage of the holiday, they reportedly went to the market area, consumed alcohol and later collapsed due to intoxication. Local residents who noticed the students informed the school's headmaster, Kamraj Kanhar. The students were immediately shifted to the Tikabali Community Health Centre, where medical examination confirmed that they had consumed a large quantity of alcohol.

Government of Odisha

Office of the Superintending Engineer,
Rural Works Division-II, Dhenkanal

Kamakhyanager

No.O-2133

E-Mail : nw.kamakhyanager@yahoo.co.in

e-procurement Notice No. 25 / Road Work / 2025-26

1. Name of the Work : Road Work

2. Total No. of Works : 05 (Two) Nos.

3. Tender Cost : Rs.5.08 to 40.32 lakhs

4. Class of Contractor : D, C & B equivalent

5. Period of Completion : 1 calendar month

6. Availability of Tender : 28.01.2026 at 11.00 A.M. to 03.02.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.

7. Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification : 02.02.2026 upto 5.00 P.M.

8. Date & Time of opening of Bid : 04.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M.

Other details can be seen from the website <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
Rural Works Division-II, Dkl
Kamakhyanager

OIPR-

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
NABARANGPUR (R&B) DIVISION, NABARANGPUR

E-mail id : eebngpur@yahoo.com, Tel & Fax - 06858-222833 (O)

e-Procurement Notice

Bid Identification No.S.E (R&B)-25/2025-26/NGP

No.205 **Date : 15.01.2026**

Bid Documents consisting of work, Estimated Cost, Cost of Tender paper, EMD, Time of completion, Class of Contractors and set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. Website i.e www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

1. Name of the Work : Civil Construction Work as mentioned in DTCN

2. No. of Work : 01 No.

3. Estimated Cost : Rs.82.64 Lakhs

4. Period of Completion : 5 Calendar of Months

5. Date & Time of Bidding : From 11.00 hours of 27.01.2026 upto 16.00 hours of 10.02.2026

6. Last Date & Time for receipt of Bids in the Portal : 16.00 hours of 10.02.2026

7. Bids received online shall be opened on : 11.00 hours of 11.02.2026

8. Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Superintending Engineer, Nabarangpur (R&B) Division, Nabarangpur

Further details can be seen from the www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer,
Nabarangpur (R&B) Division

OIPR-

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
NABARANGPUR (R&B) DIVISION, NABARANGPUR

E-mail id : eebngpur@yahoo.com, Tel & Fax - 06858-222833 (O)

e-Procurement Notice

Bid Identification No.S.E (R&B)-24/2025-26/NGP

No.194 Date : 15.01.2026

Bid Documents consisting of work, Estimated Cost, Cost of Tender paper, EMD, Time of completion, Class of Contractors and set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. Website i.e www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

1. Name of the Work : Civil Work as mentioned in DTCN

2. No. of Work : 05 Nos

3. Estimated Cost : Rs.7.50 Lakhs to Rs.46.88 Lakhs

4. Period of Completion : 1 to 4 Calendar of Months

5. Date & Time of Bidding : From 11.00 hours of 27.01.2026 upto 16.00 hours of 05.02.2026

6. Last Date & Time for receipt of Bids in the Portal : 16.00 hours of 05.02.2026

7. Bids received online shall be opened on : 11.00 hours of 06.02.2026

8. Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Superintending Engineer, Nabarangpur (R&B) Division, Nabarangpur

Further details can be seen from the www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer,
Nabarangpur (R&B) Division

OIPR-

EAST COAST RAILWAY

'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

No. MCS/Stores/E-Procure/Tender
Notice/Frict. Snub. assly/25, Dtd.: 19.01.2026

SL. NO. 01 : TENDER NO. 92265046

DESCRIPTION: FRICTION SNUBBER ASSEMBLY ETC., QUANTITY: 768 NOS.

Tender closing date & time: at 1500 hrs. of 11.02.2026.

Complete information including e-tender documents is available in website www.irps.gov.in

Dy. Chief Materials Manager/
Carriage Repair Workshop/
PR-1047/Q/25-26

Mancheswar

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Auction Catalogue No. NFR-KUR-EMR-BBS

Sec. No. 4441 **Lot No./Category: MSS- KUR-BBS-MedStn-107-25 (Misc-Static- Services-Medical facilities at station)**

DESCRIPTION: OPERATION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL ROOM (EMR) AT BHUBANESWAR RAILWAY STATION FROM LEADING EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PROVIDERS I.E PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOSPITAL/ NURSING HOME/POLYCLINIC/ CLINICS/ PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS/ COMPANIES/ FIRMS/ INSTITUTIONS/ NGO's INVOLVED IN HEALTHCARE FOR PROVIDING ROUND THE CLOCK EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES IN EMERGENCY MEDICAL ROOM (EMR) BY CHARGING OF CONSULTATION FEE TO THE RAILWAY PASSENGERS/VISITORS/ PERSONS WHO NEEDS EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AT RAILWAY STATION ALSO PROVISIONING OF SETTING UP MEDICAL STORE, ROUND THE CLOCK AMBULANCE SERVICES AND ENGAGING OF MEDICAL PRIVATE PRACTITIONER AT EMERGENCY MEDICAL ROOM (EMR) FOR RAILWAY PASSENGERS/VISITORS ON PAYMENT BASIS.

Rate Unit: Annual Licensing Fee, Trips/Days: 1096, Lot Start Date & Time: 10.02.2026 at 1100 hrs., Lot End Date & Time: 10.02.2026, at 1130 hrs., Minimum Increase(%): 0.2, Lot Status: New in Draft Catalogue.

For complete information, please visit website www.irps.gov.in

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/
PR-1049/Q/25-26

Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. ST-OT-LHS-02-KUR-539

Dt: 19.01.2026

Name of the Work: PROVISION AND CONSTRUCTION OF LIMITED HEIGHT SUBWAYS (LHS) IN LIEU OF EXISTING MANNED LEVEL CROSSINGS NO. CT-29 AT KM. 424/14-16, NO. CT-65 AT KM. 473/29-31, NO. JB-12 AT KM. 438/14-16, NO. CT-42 AT KM. 449/9-11 AND AT THE TRESPASSING LOCATION AT KM. 140/29-31 IN BETWEEN VARIOUS STATIONS/SECTIONS OF KHURDA ROAD (KUR) DIVISION, INCLUDING EIWOKS OF SIEMENS MAKE.

Tender Value: ₹ 2,14,33,436.10, EMD: ₹2,57,200/-.

Bidding start date: 27.01.2026, Date & Time of closing of Tender: at 1100 hrs. of 10.02.2026.

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website www.irps.gov.in

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

Divisional Railway Manager (S&T)
PR-1046/Q/25-26

Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. ST-SBP-TENDER- 2026-02 Dt: 15.01.2026

Name of the Work: SIGNAL & TELECOM OUTDOOR WORKS CORRESPONDING TO SHUNTING NECK: (1) PROVISION OF SHUNTING NECK OF 100M AT SAMBALPUR END OF R/5 OF HIRAKUD STATION WITH PROVISION OF DS AND EXTENSION OF 26M OF R/6 AT HIRAKUD, (2) PROVISION OF 100M SNECK AT BOTH END OF R/4 AT DUNGIRPALI STATION FOR LOCO REVERSAL, (3) PROVISION OF 100M SNECK ON R/4 AT RAIPUR END AT KANAKJANI YARD FOR LOCO REVERSAL, (4) PROVISION OF 100M SNECK ON R/4 AT BOTH END OF BELSONDA STATION FOR LOCO REVERSAL W/O BLOCKING MAIN LINE, (5) PROVISION OF 100M SHUNTING NECK ON R/4 AT RAIPUR END OF KOMAKHAN (KMK) STATION.

Tender Value: ₹ 1,30,95,560.97, Bid Security: ₹ 2,15,500/-.

Tender closing date & time: at 1100 hrs. of 09.02.2026.

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website www.irps.gov.in

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


Divisional Railway Manager (S&T)
PR-1043/Q/25-26

Sambalpur

“

Each victory gained over oneself means new strength to gain more victories.

SRI AUROBINDO



Legal Apartheid

This week, Rajasthan is set to pass a segregation law modelled after one in Gujarat. It is unlikely that most Indians will know of its existence because it is unlikely that the media will report it. Let us look at what it is intended to achieve.

Poor people forced to live clubbed together is what we know as a slum. An ethnic group forcibly relegated to certain neighbourhoods is a ghetto. The former have no means to go elsewhere. The latter have no choice even if they have the means. Apartheid means separateness and refers to the policy of South Africa of forcing the black Africans in ghettos. They could only live in fixed spaces by law.

When segregation in the United States was legally ended in the 1960s, the government passed laws that sought to integrate the races, like the Fair Housing Act. It prevented discrimination in the buying and selling of properties which was keeping the races separate. All across Gujarat, in all major cities and in several towns, the BJP government has done the opposite. Muslims are deliberately forced into ghettos through a law called the Gujarat Prohibition of Transfer of Immovable Property and Provision for Protection of Tenants from Eviction from Premises in Disturbed Areas Act. The law requires citizens in particular parts of cities to seek permission from the government before selling their property or changing their tenant and filters them by religion. The application must list the name of the buyer and the seller and includes an affidavit that the sale has been without coercion and at market price.

The law was passed initially by the Congress, and in 2009, the Modi government amended the Act to give discretionary powers to the collector to hold an inquiry and to take possession of property under the Act. In July 2019, another change was introduced. Previously, property sellers had to apply for permission to transfer their property and register their consent on affidavit. Now, it would not matter even if the sale was with free consent, and the fair value was paid to the owner. The collector could stop a sale of property if he felt at his discretion that there was any ‘disturbance in demographic equilibrium’ or ‘improper clustering of persons of a community’ or ‘likelihood of polarisation’, if the transfer took place.

The collector could reject an application for the legal transfer of a property after making assessment on these grounds. Punishment for transferring property without clearance was raised to six years in jail (it was six months when the law was first introduced). The law now also allowed the state government to form a ‘Monitoring and Advisory Committee’ to keep a check on the demographic structure in neighbourhoods. This committee would advise the collectors on whether or not sales could be permitted.

The act is currently in force in large parts of the state’s three largest cities, Ahmedabad, Vadodara and Surat, and also in Bharruk, Kapadvanj, Anand and Godhra. These are also the places Gujarat’s Muslims are concentrated, effectively ghettoising them permanently. In effect, foreigners can lease and buy property in Gujarat that Indian Muslims cannot.

Last week Rajasthan Cabinet has approved a law that does the same thing in their state. Law Minister Jogaram Patel said neighbourhoods with “improper clustering” would be targeted. The transfer of immovable properties in these areas without permission of the government would be void.

Like the other laws persecuting minorities, this one is also given a benign name: the Rajasthan Prohibition of Transfer of Immovable Property and Provisions for Protection of Tenants from Eviction from the Premises in Disturbed Areas Bill, 2026.

Its effects will of course be the same as we have seen in Gujarat. It criminalises social and commercial intercourse between communities, in much the same way as Nazi Germany did. Violation of the Rajasthan law’s provisions are non-bailable and cognisable, and punishable with imprisonment of up to five years and a fine. You could go to jail for renting a property. The Congress in the state opposes the passing of the law, but it lacks the numbers and will not be able to stop it. Its state chief said that “Demographic imbalance is not a legal term. There is no mention of the basis on which an area will be declared disturbed. The BJP wants to remain in power by following the Gujarat model.”

This is true. India under Modi has hollowed out the constitution’s secularism through a slew of laws that have found no resistance. The courts have looked away, the Opposition is too weak and the media is complicit. Criminalisation of the possession of beef was introduced in 2015, starting with Maharashtra and Haryana. Criminalisation of interfaith marriage came in 2018, starting with Uttarakhand. Criminalisation of Muslim divorce came in 2019, as did their specific exclusion from the Citizenship Amendment Act. The Rajasthan law carries this progression forward. Step by step, law after law, we have entered New India, a majoritarian state that is shedding its carapace of secularism.

FOCUS SOCIETY

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY



I walked for two and a half years, 8000 miles, through fifteen countries, without a single penny in my pocket. I just carried the currency of love in my heart and I was looked after by strangers everywhere



Satish Kumar

SCIENCE IS GOOD BUT ALSO SPIRITUALITY IS NECESSARY, POETRY IS NECESSARY, ARTS AND CRAFTS ARE NECESSARY. WE NEED EVERYTHING IN LIFE



Aakar Patel

INDIA HAS HOLLOWED OUT THE CONSTITUTION'S SECULARISM THROUGH A SLEW OF LAWS THAT HAVE FOUND NO RESISTANCE. STEP BY STEP, LAW AFTER LAW, WE HAVE ENTERED NEW INDIA, A MAJORITARIAN STATE THAT IS SHEDDING ITS CARAPACE OF SECULARISM

creasingly dominant. Science is good but also spirituality is necessary, poetry is necessary, arts and crafts are necessary. We need everything in life.

The Jains have given us Anekantvad, the concept of the diversity of truths, which is a great ideal to live by. Jains have given us another word and that word is Syadvad, which means ‘it may be true’. The Jains would say that “What you are saying maybe true. I am open to listen, I am open to learn, I am open to think. Maybe your truth and my truth can be neighbours!”

Liberal minded people talk about freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, freedom of speech and freedom of ideas but very few people actually respect that freedom! If we were to accept and practice Syadvad, then it would help us to embrace multiple views, truths and perspectives without getting into conflict and condemnation or even wars. All our thriving is mutual. We all depend on each other and on the gifts of the planet Earth. We are all related. Nothing and

no one can exist in isolation. The whole cosmos is our country, the whole planet earth is our home, love is our religion, yet we are rooted in our place, in our community, in our bio region. This way unity and diversity are the two banks of the same river, community and cosmos exist in perfect harmony, the intimate and the ultimate are two sides of the same story. Local and global are complementary. We need to remember that unity is not uniformity and diversity is not division. With the concept of Syadvad we can overcome uniformity and division and instead embrace unity and diversity.

Truth represents diversity and love represents unity. Whoever you are, whether you are a Christian, a Muslim, a Hindu or an atheist, we are all humans and we can still love one another. We can hold different beliefs and views and still love one another, despite our differences. When I was walking around the world for peace, I went to Muslim countries and I said, “You are Mus-

lims, I love you”. Then I went to Christian countries and I said, “You are Christians, I love you”. Then I went to communist countries and I said, “You are communists I love you”. Then I went to capitalist countries and I said, “You are capitalists, I love you”. Then I went to Buddhist countries and I said, “You are Buddhists, I love you”. For me, humanity goes beyond labels and names. I walked for two and a half years, 8000 miles, through fifteen countries, without a single penny in my pocket. I just carried the currency of love in my heart and I was looked after by strangers everywhere. I was looked after by communists, capitalists, Christians, Muslims, poor and rich. They were all humans and hospitable.

That experience taught me that we can, and we should, love everyone: we should love diversity. Whoever you are, we love you. We need no enemies. And we should have no enemies. We are all friends. Through love enemies are transformed into friends. “Love your enemies” is not just an impractical idealism, it is a very powerful and effective way of life. In Europe, people claim to be Christians. They go to church on Sunday and pledge to practice love, then from Monday to Saturday they pay and prepare for war. Spending billions and trillions of dollars, euros and pounds on weapons of mass destruction! How can Christians, or any religious people for that matter, contemplate such a thing as nuclear bombs and wars?

The writer is the founder of Schumacher College and an eco-spiritual leader based in the UK.

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Climate change creating economic momentum

The latest United Nations Climate Change Conference ended in a political deadlock. COP30 in Belém produced no agreement to phase out fossil fuels, no binding plan to halt deforestation, and no meaningful increase in support for the countries already drowning – sometimes literally – in climate and ecological losses. For a summit held in the world’s largest rainforest, the symbolism was brutal.

But the real story was not the political paralysis on the negotiating floor. It was the unmistakable signal that the economics of climate change have already moved on. To see the developments that really matter, we can look to corporate balance sheets, sovereign credit ratings, supply chains, and risk pricing. These show that the transition to carbon-neutrality is happening despite the dysfunctional politics surrounding the issue.

When it comes to addressing major global risks, politics often fail until the economic math works out. In the case of climate change and nature loss, markets, insurers, lenders, and ratings agencies are now forcing the transitions that governments have been deferring. Sovereign credit ratings are being revised to reflect climate- and nature-risk exposure. Insurance markets are collapsing in high-risk regions, leaving households,

businesses, and entire municipalities without coverage. Borrowing costs are rising for countries facing drought, flooding, and deforestation, thus narrowing their fiscal space and accelerating capital flight. These mechanisms are doing what politicians will not do: Making inaction more expensive than action.

Meanwhile, the global auto market is evolving fast. More than half of new vehicles sold in China are plug-ins. In Norway, almost 90% of new cars sold in 2024 were fully electric. Fossil fuels still dominate the existing system, but they are decidedly absent from the future that is being built. The economics of clean energy have already won, and these industries’ advantages are widening. The cumulative effect is unmistakable. The cost advantage of low-carbon systems is now structural, not cyclical.

Even the re-emergence of trade issues at COP30 – with emerging economies, including China, objecting to unilateral climate-related trade measures – ultimately points to the same conclusion. Rules that are being rewritten through markets, supply chains, and standards are inevitably ending up on the agenda for consensus-based diplomacy.

Moreover, the economic transition is not only about energy. The global bioeconomy – economic sectors that use re-

newable biological resources for materials, energy, chemicals, and agriculture – is valued at about \$4 trillion today, and is projected to grow to around \$30 trillion by 2050 – roughly 30% of current global GDP.

In this respect, COP30’s emphasis on inclusion of Indigenous peoples and local communities mattered not for its symbolism, but because markets now recognize that traditional stewardship underpins the increasingly fragile ecosystems – forests, watersheds, soils – upon which our economies depend. Just as energy markets are reshaping cost curves, nature-dependent sectors are taking steps to address their economic exposure to risks such as rainfall disruption, soil loss, fisheries collapse, and coastal erosion.

These responses are reshaping markets as powerfully as energy price shocks can. Disaster losses are compounding so fast that insurers are withdrawing from entire regions and product lines. Heat stress is shrinking productivity from South Asia to the Gulf of Mexico. From Brazil to Indonesia, deforestation is destabilizing rainfall patterns. Agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and shipping are all absorbing mounting climate- and nature-driven losses, triggering food-price spikes and economic volatility.

Regardless of political gridlock, climate change and ecolog-

ical degradation are creating undeniable economic momentum. As renewables scale up, fossil fuels will become even less competitive. As ecosystems degrade, fiscal burdens will rise. Central banks, sovereign lenders, ratings agencies, and private investors have already begun pricing drought-driven crop failures, flooded infrastructure, eroding coastlines, collapsing fisheries, and other risks. In many countries, climate change is raising borrowing costs, boosting debt, and shaving points off expected growth.

At some point, the financial pressure will become so acute that what was once a political choice will become an economic inevitability. Brazil’s launch of the Bioeconomy Challenge – a three-year multi-partner effort to “translate the G20 Bioeconomy High-Level principles into real outcomes” – reinforces this shift. It signals that the transition is increasingly being shaped through economic strategy rather than multilateral consensus.

This pattern is not new. The Cold War superpowers did not pull back from their nuclear arms race because it was morally right; they did it because the costs were unsustainable, and the risks too high. When the economics change, the politics eventually follow.

The writer is CEO of NatureFinance.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

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



B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Rupee’s slide

Sir, Ever since US President Donald Trump stepped up efforts to acquire Greenland in the second week of January, the rupee—like other emerging market currencies—has come under pressure from rising geopolitical uncertainty. Fears of a transatlantic trade war between the US and Europe have unsettled global markets, triggering aggressive selling by foreign institutional investors and heightened demand for dollars from importers. This has accelerated the rupee’s decline, even as the US dollar index has weakened by 4–5 per cent over the past year. Additional stress stems from penal US tariffs, global capital chasing AI-driven equities, elevated Indian stock valuations, and the broader drift towards protectionism. None of these headwinds appears temporary, suggesting prolonged currency pressure. While exporters are often seen as beneficiaries of a weaker rupee, gains are limited. Nearly 40 per cent of India’s exports rely on imported inputs, raising costs and compressing margins. Currency depreciation also inflates fuel prices, with a five per cent fall in the rupee estimated to add 20–30 basis points to inflation through higher transport and manufacturing costs. The rupee thus faces a constrained path, with sustained stress likely until global economic disorder becomes the new normal.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Pension justice

Sir, Recent pay revisions for RBI, NABARD, and insurance staff rightly include pension updates for retirees. Yet public sector bank pensioners are not heard by the government. Nearly five lakh retirees survive on outdated pensions of Rs 8,000–10,000, while serving staff receive periodic 15–20 percent hikes. Pension is deferred wages, funded by employees who refunded provident fund amounts in 1995. Inflation, medical costs, and longevity make such neglect indefensible and socially unjust. The government owns these banks, takes dividends, and recapitalises losses; it cannot disown pension justice or its moral responsibility toward retirees. Wage revision without pension revision breeds inequality, resentment, and deep distrust among those who built these institutions. Fairness demands automatic pension updation with every bipartite settlement, without further delay or needless procedural excuses.

Sidhartha Kar Mohapatra, BARIPADA

WISDOM CORNER

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

MAHATMA GANDHI

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

“Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.”

NELSON MANDELA

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ **1882:** Charles J. Guiteau was found guilty of the murder of U.S. President James A. Garfield.

■ **1949:** The first Emmy Awards were presented; there were only six categories, and nominated shows were limited to those that aired in the Los Angeles area.

■ **1961:** The animated film One Hundred and One Dalmatians was released in the United States, and it became a Disney classic, especially noted for the villainous character Cruella De Vil.

■ **1979:** A factory worker was killed by a robot. Robert Nicholas Williams climbed into a shelving unit to investigate an assembly-line malfunction, where he was struck in the head by an industrial robot and killed. The incident was the first recorded instance of a person being killed by a robot.

Over 40-year-old, 10 tonne steel bridge stolen overnight



Investigators found the involvement of 15 persons in the incident, who allegedly cut and stole the structure to sell it as scrap

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Korba, Jan 24: A 70-foot-long steel bridge weighing over 10 tonnes built on a canal more than four decades ago was stolen overnight in Chhattisgarh's Korba city, leaving local residents stunned, police said Saturday.

Investigators found the involvement of 15 persons in the incident, who allegedly cut and stole the structure to sell it as scrap. Five of the accused have been arrested so far, officials said. Residents noticed that the steel bridge built over the

Hasdeo Left Canal and used as a pedestrian pathway in Ward No January 18. 17 of the Dhodhipara area had gone missing, following which local corporator Laxman Shrivastava lodged a complaint, Korba Additional Superintendent of Police Lakhman Patle said.

Preliminary investigation suggested that unidentified accused used gas cutters to cut the iron railings of the structure, he said.

Based on the written complaint received at the CSEB police chowki, a special police

team was constituted to probe the matter, he added.

Following technical analysis, inputs given by informers and sustained investigation, police identified 15 accused in the case. Five of them - Lochan Kevat (20), Jaysingh Rajput (23), Moti Prajapati (27), Sumit Sahu (19) and Keshavpuri Goswami alias 'Picture' (22), all residents of the CSEB police chowki area - were arrested, Patle said.

Efforts are underway to trace the remaining 10 accused, including the alleged kingpins Mukesh Sahu and Aslam Khan, who are currently absconding, he added.

During their interrogation, the arrested accused confessed to committing the theft to sell the iron as scrap, he said, adding that further investigation is underway. CSEB police chowki in-charge Bhimsen Yadav said around seven tonnes of steel, which had been hidden inside the canal, has been seized.

The vehicle used to transport the stolen steel has also been seized, he said, adding that the police were probing where the remaining material was sold.

Talking to PTI over phone, corporator Shrivastava said the bridge, around 70 feet long and five feet wide, was built nearly 40 years ago and weighed more than 10 tonnes.

Since the theft, local residents have been using a nearby concrete bridge to cross the canal, he added.

SVPEZ to match abilities & opportunities: CM

Addressing the gathering at Rashtra Prerna Sthal, Adityanath extended greetings to the people of the state and said Uttar Pradesh Diwas celebrations were being organised across all 75 districts on the occasion

UP DAY



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Jan 24: Uttar Pradesh (UP) Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Saturday announced the launch of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Employment Zone (SVPEZ), a new youth-focused employment initiative, and said it will align youths' abilities with job and business opportunities.

He was speaking at the state's foundation day celebrations, where he also welcomed Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Addressing the gathering held at the Rashtra Prerna Sthal here, Adityanath extended greetings to the people of the state and said Uttar

Pradesh Diwas celebrations were being organised across all 75 districts on the occasion.

The event was attended by BJP's UP unit president and Union Minister Pankaj Chaudhary, Deputy CMs Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak and Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh, among others.

The CM referred to a message sent by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying the country has witnessed a 'transformed India over the past 11 years under Modi's leadership' and that UP had played a key role in that journey.

Adityanath then read out

the PM's letter from the stage, in which Modi praised UP's rich heritage, development trajectory, improving infrastructure and public facilities.

The CM said UP Day celebrations were being organised across the state and that people from the state living elsewhere in the country and abroad were also associating themselves with the event in different ways.

Recalling the beginning of the annual celebration, he said the foundation day was first formally observed in 2018, when Ram Naik was the Governor of the state and under the guidance of PM Narendra Modi, while Shah was serving as the BJP national

president and Union Home Minister.

Adityanath announced the launch of SVPEZ, to be inaugurated by Shah.

"Under the scheme, around 100 acres would be developed in each district to support skill development, employment and entrepreneurship by aligning youths' abilities with job and business opportunities," he said.

Highlighting the state government's flagship initiatives, the chief minister said, "The 'One District, One Product' programme has helped UP move towards self-reliance, and the programme would further strengthen the state's economy by giving global recognition to district-specific traditional foods."

He said, "The 'One District, One Cuisine' initiative would promote hygienic and nutritious food, including millet-based products and enable geo-tagging, branding, packaging and designing of local cuisines in line with domestic and global demand, opening up export opportunities for traditional dishes from across the state."

The CM also congratulated five individuals who were honoured with the 'Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman' for their distinctive contributions, saying their work reflected innovation and dedication aligned with the prime minister's 'Viksit Bharat' mission.

Glass Museum coming up in Firozabad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Firozabad (UP), Jan 24: A glass museum being constructed near the district headquarters in Firozabad is expected to emerge as a major boost for the city's famed glass and bangle industry and position it as a global tourism destination, officials said Friday.

Being built close to the Vikas Bhawan, the three-storey glass museum is being developed by the Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department on the initiative of state Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh.

Widely known as the "city of glass and bangles", Firozabad is now seeking to expand its identity beyond manufacturing to become an international tourism hub, tourism department officials said.

OFFICIALS EXPECT TRADE, TOURISM PUSH

Tourism officer Vishal Srivastava said the museum is coming up on around 25,700 square metres of land at an estimated cost of Rs 47.47 crore, with nearly 70 per cent of the work already completed.

"The three-storey structure will have an attractive exterior made of glass. It will also feature a 500-seat auditorium, a 150-seat open-air theatre, a watch tower and an art gallery displaying handcrafted glass artefacts," Srivastava told PTI. He added that a special 'glass bridge' is also being constructed for tourists as part of the project.



According to officials, the museum will showcase the evolution of glass products in Firozabad from ancient times to the modern era. In addition to bangles, exhibits will include glass chandeliers, artistic cre-

ations and premium glassware meant for export.

The facility will also have an AR-VR (augmented and virtual reality) zone for children and students, allowing visitors to see how glass is melted and moulded. Live demonstrations of glass-blowing will also be organised, enabling people to observe and learn the traditional craft.

Firozabad's glass and bangle industry provides direct and indirect employment to an estimated 5 to 7 lakh people and supports the livelihood of over 50,000 families, the officials said.

Mukesh Bansal (Tony), vice-president of the All India

Glass Manufacturing Federation and a leading exporter from Firozabad, said the glass museum would not only strengthen the city's economy but also connect it with major religious and tourist destinations such as Ayodhya and Varanasi.

"This project will create new employment opportunities for traders and workers and will prove to be a milestone in the development of Firozabad district," Bansal said.

He also urged the government to facilitate visits by foreign tourists to the museum, on the lines of industrial tourism seen abroad, so that visitors can observe the craft and artistry of Firozabad's glass industry firsthand.

REPUBLIC DAY

UP: Drone cameras, dog squads help boost security



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Maharajganj (UP), Jan 24: Ahead of the Republic Day, the Sashastra Seema Bal and police have stepped up vigil along the India-Nepal border in the Maharajganj district with several measures, including deployment of dog squads, a police official said Saturday.

Maharajganj SP Somendra Meena said Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has installed closed-circuit and drone cameras on all routes leading to Nepal.

"To prevent the possible movement of terrorists in the area, security agencies have been asked to ascertain the identity of people before allowing them to cross over through the border. In an effort to strengthen the security arrangements at the porous India-Nepal border and stop infiltration of anti-national elements, the SSB has installed closed-circuit cameras and drone cameras on each and every route leading to Nepal," Meena told PTI.

These cameras have been put

at SSB posts, as well as on the main roads, he said. He added that metal detectors have been installed at Sonauli and Thuthibari outposts on the India-Nepal border.

The SP said that dog squads trained in detecting narcotics and arms have been deployed to check smuggling across the border. "After the deployment of the dog squad, there would be a lot of relief in checking the suspected people in the bordering area," he said.

According to Meena, assistance from Nepalese security agencies is also being taken so that no anti-national element can infiltrate.

"SSB and police are investigating suspicious people in congested areas and at dhabas alongside the border. Along with this, a strict vigil is being kept on the people and the vehicles passing through Sonauli on the India-Nepal border with the help of the dog squad," he said.

UP's Maharajganj district shares an 84-km open border with Nepal.

Chitrotpala Film City, Tribal & Cultural Convention Centre plan takes off in Ch'garh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, Jan 24: Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai Saturday laid the foundation stone for Chitrotpala Film City and Tribal and Cultural Convention Centre in Mana-Tuta village in Raipur district and asserted the state will soon get a new identity in the field of film production.

Through this ambitious initiative, Chhattisgarh will not only move towards becoming a major centre for film production and cultural events, but this project will also give a new impetus to the state's creative economy, he said.

"Chhattisgarh's long-cherished dream has finally come true today. The construction of Chitrotpala Film City and the Tribal and Cultural Convention Centre will give Chhattisgarh a new identity in the field of film production, both nationally and internationally," Sai said.

The construction of Chitrotpala Film City and the Tribal and Cultural Convention Centre will provide a national and international platform for local talent, create new investment opportunities, and further strengthen Chhattisgarh's cultural identity on a global level, he said, adding the project will open new avenues of development for the state's youth, artists, and the tourism sector in the coming years.

Through Chitrotpala Film City, thousands of artists from the state will get an opportunity to showcase their talent, while local filmmakers will have access to all technical facilities related to film production in one place, the CM said.

An official said following the foundation stone laying ceremony of Chitrotpala Film City, the Tourism Department received four proposals for setting up units in film production and a convention centre, which were handed over to the CM during the ceremony.



'GUNS FALL SILENT, HOMES RISE'

Maoist victims get fresh start in Chhattisgarh



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mohla-Manpur, (Chhattisgarh) Jan 24: For years, families living under the shadow of Maoist violence in Chhattisgarh's Mohla-Manpur lived lives marked by fear, displacement, and loss. However, today, the situation has undergone a sea change - the reality is fast changing for the better.

The impact of security operations and special rehabilitation schemes launched continuously by the government for Maoist violence-affected families is

now visible on the ground.

There was a time when fear of Maoist violence forced several families from highly sensitive villages in the district to abandon their homes. Many of them fled after Maoists killed the heads of their families, branding them as police informers. The trauma pushed these families into years of forced migration and insecurity.

Speaking to IANS, Ram Bai Mandavi, a victim of Maoist violence, recalled her painful past. "The incident happened

in 2009. After that, our entire family left the village. The Maoist killed my husband. Now the Maoists are gone, so we have returned to our village. We have received a house, and now we will live here," she said.

Another victim, Aghan Singh, shared a similar experience.

"In 2009, my father was beaten to death with sticks after the Maoists suspected him of being an informer. At that time, we did not receive the benefit of any government scheme. Now, in 2026, we have finally been given a house," he said.

Ramita Bai, another Maoist-affected woman, described the terror she endured.

"The Naxals tied me up and took me with them. They kept me for a day and a night, beat me, and later released me. When the police found out, our entire family was shifted to Manpur. Due to fear, I lived in Manpur for 18 years. Now the situation has improved, we have received a house, and we will stay here," she said.

According to Pranjal Prajapati, CEO of Mohla, 26 houses have been sanctioned for Maoist-affected families under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. "Our entire staff is working on the ground to ensure that these houses are completed at the earliest," he told IANS.

Government of Odisha "e" procurement Notice

Bid Identification No. TENDER ONLINE SBPR-19 OF 2025-26

e-mail ID : rw_sambalpur@yahoo.co.in, Phone No. 0663-2401850

No.O-2129 No.854 dated. 20.01.2026

1. Name of the work	: Road Works as per DTCN available in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
2. Total No. of Work	: 05 (Five) Nos.
3. Estimated Cost	: Varies from Rs.6.72 lakhs to 36.47 lakhs
4. Period of Completion	: 01 (One) Calendar month
5. Period and time of availability of bid document in the portal for bidding	: 27.01.2026 at 11.00 A.M. to 02.02.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.
6. Date and time of opening of Tender	: 03.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M.
7. Name and address of the officer inviting bid	: S.E.R.W. Divn. Sambalpur
(1) Other details can be seen from detailed notice inviting tenders, available in website www.tendersodisha.gov.in	
(2) Corrigendum if any shall only be published in the website : www.tenderodisha.gov.in	
OIPR-	Sd./- Superintending Engineer Rural Works Division, Sambalpur

of the day

quote

Mandating only an appearance has no academic rationale and appears designed solely to normalise and expand NEET across society. This would only end up forcing millions in the country to avail coaching, thus profiting NEET coaching centres at the cost of poor families

M K STALIN | TAMIL NADU CM

We are sending a message that under the leadership of Kumaraswamy, JD(S) is strong. This message should be sent to our opponents who held two rallies in this district and have tried to completely destroy Revanna's leadership

H D DEVE GOWDA | JD(S) PATRIARCH

Punjabis have always been ready to sacrifice their lives for the country. When a bullet comes from the enemy side, they are the first to face it, whether in Kargil, Jaisalmer, Ganganagar, or Bikaner. This spirit comes from our gurus, and sacrifice runs in our DNA

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

XPOST

OF THE DAY

ECONOMY UPDATE
Rupee = Historic Low
Markets = Historic Fall
Gold & Silver = Historic High
FIIs = Historic Selling
Middle class portfolios = collateral damage
Why no statement from the Finance Minister?
1 USD= RS 92

@pushpendrakum

SHORT TAKES

President to address nation on R-Day eve

New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu will address the nation Sunday on the eve of the Republic Day, her office has said. The address will be broadcast from 7 pm on the entire national network of Akashvani and telecast over all channels of Doordarshan in Hindi followed by the English version, it said Saturday.

16 IEDs, explosives, gelatin sticks recovered

Bijapur: A total of 16 beer bottle-based improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were recovered in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district Sunday in an anti-Naxal operation, a police official said. The 16 pressure IEDs, found in a forest patch between Bandedpara and Neelamargu villages under Maddar police station limits, were defused by the Bomb Disposal Squad, he added. "In the same operation, a joint team of DRG, local police and CRPF recovered a large quantity of explosives and other Maoist materials from different locations in the area."

CEC: SIR rollout in remaining states soon

New Delhi: Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar Saturday said the special intensive revision of voters' lists in the remaining states will be rolled out soon as he described "pure" electoral rolls as the bedrock of democracy. On the eve of the Election Commission's foundation day -- also celebrated as National Voters' Day -- Kumar said the revision exercise is presently being conducted "smoothly" in 12 states and Union territories.



The goal must be to transform access to justice from a passive right to a state-guaranteed service. Justice delayed is not only justice denied but it is justice destroyed

SURYA KANT | CJI

EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT LANDS IN DELHI

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen kick-started her four-day visit to India to firm up a series of big-ticket initiatives to significantly expand two-way ties. President of the European Council Antonio Costa and von der Leyen will hold summit talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi January 27 amid increasing global concerns over disruptions caused by the Trump administration's economic and security policies



SC issues notice to Centre, CBI, RBI

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi has issued notices to the Union of India, Central Bureau of Investigation, Reserve Bank of India and others on the plea filed by Naresh Malhotra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 24: The Supreme Court has sought responses from the Centre, the CBI and others on a plea filed by a 78-year-old retired banker who was duped of Rs 23 crore after allegedly being put under "digital arrest" for nearly a month. A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi has issued notices to the Union of India, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and others on the plea filed by Naresh Malhotra.

Over 70 fugitives wanted by India located abroad during 2024-25: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 24: Over 70 fugitives, wanted by India, were located abroad during 2024-25, according to an official report. As many as 203 fugitives wanted by other countries were detected/located in India during the same period. A total of 71 "wanted persons/fugitives wanted by India" were located abroad in 2024-25, according to the annual report of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions. The number of such wanted fugitives located abroad is the highest in the over a decade time, officials claimed. A total of 27 fugitives/wanted persons returned to India, from abroad in the last financial year, said the ministry's annual report for 2024-25. It also gave details on the working of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which acts as the National Central Bureau (NCB) -- the nodal point for Interpol in India. During the period of April, 2024 to March, 2025, 74 Letters Rogatory (LRs) were sent abroad, out of which 54 pertained to CBI cases and 20 of them to state law enforcement and other central agencies, the report said. It was confirmed by Indian law enforcement agencies including CBI that 47 LR were fully executed during the said period and 29 were disposed of as closed/withdrawn on partial execution. As March 31, 2025, a total 533 LR were pending with other countries, out of which 276 pertained to CBI cases and 257 to state police and other central law enforcement agencies. As many as 32 LR/treaty based requests were received from various countries requesting to provide assistance in the investigation of criminal matters.



The plea has sought directions to the banks involved to deposit the defrauded amount of Rs 22.92 crore in the petitioner's accounts. Malhotra has made the Kotak Mahindra Bank, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, ICICI Bank, Indus Ind Bank, City Union Bank and Yes Bank parties to the case. Cyber fraudsters posing as Enforcement Directorate (ED) and CBI officials duped the retired banker from south Delhi's Gulmohar Park area of Rs 23 crore by allegedly putting him under "digital arrest" for

nearly a month. The accused allegedly told the victim that his Aadhaar card was involved in narcotics trafficking, terror funding and the Pulwama terror attack, and confined him to his flat under the pretext of investigation, an officer said. "The scammers directed him not to step out of his house and coerced him into transferring his savings to various bank accounts over a span of a month," police said. According to police, the victim has stated in his complaint

T'gana: 900 strays killed so far, sarpanch booked

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Jan 24: In a fresh incident of alleged stray dogs killing in Telangana, about 300 canines were allegedly killed in Jagtial district, taking the toll to 900, animal rights activists claimed.

The killings are suspected to have been carried out by some elected representatives, including Sarpanchs, allegedly to fulfill promises made to villagers ahead of gram panchayat elections held in December last year, to address the stray dog menace. The latest incident came to light after a complaint was lodged, alleging that 300 stray dogs were killed in Pegadapally village by administering poison-



ous injections January 22. Blaming the village Sarpanch and Gram Panchayat secretary for the gruesome act, the complaint alleged that the former hired few individuals to kill the strays. Based on the complaint, police registered an FIR against the duo under relevant sections of BNS and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, police said Saturday.



Visitors enjoy sledge rides after snowfall, in Gulmarg, Jammu and Kashmir

PTI PHOTO

Techie death: Accident site draws curious crowds

Residents and commuters were seen peering into the area of Noida's Sector 150 and asking security personnel and media persons whether it was the same location where the software engineer was allegedly pleading for help for hours after his car plunged into the ditch

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noida, Jan 24: A grim curiosity surrounds the spot in Noida where a 27-year-old techie drowned last week in a water-filled trench, as passers-by stop to inquire and take pictures of the site, while questioning the role and responsibility of civic authorities. Residents and commuters were seen peering into the area of Noida's Sector 150 and asking security personnel and media persons whether it was

the same location where the software engineer was allegedly pleading for help for hours after his car plunged into the ditch. Many paused briefly to take photographs and videos, discussing where the onus falls. Rakesh Chauhan, a retired teacher in his early 60s, slowed his car while passing through the area and asked, "Is this the place where the boy drowned?" Expressing anguish, he said the tragedy reflected "gross negligence" and lamented that the



victim could have been saved had timely efforts been made. A car driver, Raman, pointed out that the trench lay only a few metres from the road

and involved a sharp drop. "There were no barricades, reflectors, warning signboards or streetlights before the incident," he said, adding that

Unapologetic on Op Sindoor: Tharoor on issues with Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kozhikode (Kerala), Jan 24: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor Saturday said he has never violated the party's stated positions in Parliament, asserting that his only public disagreement in principle was over Operation Sindhoor. Answering questions during a session at the Kerala Literature Festival here, Tharoor said he had taken a strong stand on that issue and remained "unapologetic". His statement comes amidst recent reports stating "Tharoor's differences with the party leadership", with a speculation that he is upset over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi not adequately acknowledging his presence at a recent event in Kochi and over alleged repeated attempts by state leaders to sideline him. Explaining his position, Tharoor said that, as an observer and writer, he had written a newspaper column after the Pahalgam incident, stating that it should not go unpunished and that there should be a kinetic response. Earlier, answering questions during a session at the Kerala Literature Festival here, Tharoor said he had taken a strong stand on 'Operation Sindoor' and remained "unapologetic," about it. Explaining his position, Tharoor said that as an observer, commentator and writer, he had written a newspaper column after the Pahalgam terror attack, stating that it should not go unpunished and that there should be a kinetic response. He said that while India is focused on development, it should not be dragged into a prolonged conflict with Pakistan, and that any action should be limited to targeting terrorist camps. Tharoor said that to his surprise, the Indian government did exactly what he had recommended. "How could I be expected to



Tharoor's remarks come amid reports that he is upset over Rahul not adequately acknowledging his presence at a recent event in Kochi and over alleged repeated attempts by state party leaders to sideline him

criticise it when I myself recommended it. I supported it fully throughout Operation Sindoor and afterwards," he said. When the government sent him abroad as part of a multi-party delegation over Operation Sindoor, his party, for some reason, did not like it. "You can speak to them and find out," he said. Tharoor said it was Jawaharlal Nehru who posed the famous question: "Who lives if India dies." "When India is at stake, when India's security and its place in the world are involved, India comes first," he said. He added that political parties may have differences as part of the process of building a better India, but when national interests are involved, India must prevail. Terrorists had gunned down 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam in April 2025, sending shockwaves across the country. In response, India launched Operation Sindoor, a precision military offensive targeting terror launchpads in Pakistan.

CBSE mandates mental health, career counselors in all affiliated schools

New Delhi: In a significant policy reform aimed at strengthening students' mental health and providing them with career guidance, the Central Board of Secondary Education has made the appointment of socio-emotional and career counsellors mandatory in all affiliated schools. For this, the national education board amended Clause 2.4.12 of the CBSE Affiliation Bye-Laws, 2018, following a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed before the Rajasthan High Court in July 2025 by Kota-based advocate Sujeet Swami and some psychology experts. The PIL highlighted rising mental health challenges among students, including academic stress and lack of structured career guidance, and sought mandatory provisions for qualified counsellors and a uniform mental health support framework in schools.

safety arrangements were put in place only after the tragedy. "If these steps had been taken earlier, his life could have been saved," he said before leaving the spot. A police personnel deployed at the site said many people stop to inquire about the incident, often leading to crowding. A tea vendor located about 200 metres from the site said there were "several other vulnerable spots" in the area that posed similar risks. Mithlesh Kasana, a resident of Dadri, said the area has seen frequent visits by police officials, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and local residents since the incident. The software engineer died in the early hours of January 17 after his car skidded in dense fog and plunged into

an unbarricaded, water-filled trench in Sector 150 crossing over a drain at a sharp, almost 90-degree turning road. The incident triggered widespread public outrage, leading the Uttar Pradesh government to remove the Noida Authority CEO on January 19 and earlier terminate the services of a junior engineer in connection with the case. Police, who have lodged cases of negligence, culpable homicide not amounting to murder and for pollution and violations of environment laws, have arrested three builders and launched a probe against real estate developers MZ Wz-town and Lotus Greens, while investigations are continuing to fix accountability for the lapses that allegedly led to the fatal accident.

of the day

quote

Instead of fixing the United Nations, what's happening? President Trump is proposing to create a new U.N. where only he is the owner



LUIZ INACIO LULA DA SILVA | PRESIDENT, BRAZIL

I fully understand that Danish veterans have said no words can describe how much this hurts. It is unacceptable that the American President questions the commitment of allied soldiers in Afghanistan



METTE FREDERIKSEN | PRIME MINISTER , DENMARK

I am optimistic about a high-stakes White House meeting with US President Donald Trump scheduled for Feb 3



GUSTAVO PETRO | PRESIDENT, COLOMBIA

SHORT TAKES

Java island landslide kills at least 8

Jakarta (Indonesia): A predawn landslide triggered by torrential rains on Indonesia's main island of Java killed at least eight people Saturday and left 82 missing as rescuers struggled through deep mud, searching for survivors. Days of torrential rains had caused rivers to burst their banks, tearing through Pasir Langu village in the West Bandung district of West Java province. Mud, rocks and trees tumbled down the mountainside, burying some 34 houses. Rescuers were searching for the 82 residents feared buried under heaps of mud and debris, while 24 people managed to escape the disaster, said spokesperson Abdul Muhari of the National Disaster Management Agency.

US envoys meet with Netanyahu

Cairo: American officials met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Saturday, urging Israel to move into the second phase of the ceasefire that stopped the war in Gaza. Netanyahu met with President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and Middle East adviser, according to the Prime Minister's Office. The US is anxious to keep the Trump-brokered deal moving, but Netanyahu is facing pressure from within Israel not to progress to the second phase until Hamas returns the body of the last hostage it is holding in Gaza. The Rafah border crossing is both a symbolic and logistical step that is the biggest signal of the commencement of second phase, and many outside Israel are eager to see it open.

Suicide bombing at Pak wedding kills 7

Pakistan: The death toll from a suicide bombing at a wedding near the Afghan border rose to seven Saturday, police said, as Pakistan struggles to deal with a rising wave of militant attacks. The bombing tore through a building housing members of a peace committee during a wedding ceremony Friday in northwestern Pakistan's Dera Ismail Khan district, said police official Muhammad Adnan. The committees are made up of local residents and elders and supported by Islamabad as part of its efforts to counter Islamist militants in the regions along the Afghan border. The four, who were among nearly a dozen people hurt in the attack, died in hospital, Adnan added. Three people were confirmed dead Friday.

US-CANADA TRADE TENSIONS RISE

Trump warns of 100% tariffs

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Jan 24: President Donald Trump Saturday threatened to impose a 100 per cent tariff on goods imported from Canada if America's northern neighbour went ahead with its trade deal with China. Trump said in a social media post that if Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney "thinks he is going to make Canada a Drop Off Port' for China to send goods and products into the United States, he is sorely mistaken."

While Trump has waged a trade war over the past year, Canada this month negotiated a deal to lower tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles in return for lower import taxes on Canadian farm products. Trump initially had said that agreement was what Carney "should be doing and it's a good thing for him to sign a trade deal."

Carney's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Trump's threat came amid



an escalating war of words with Carney as the Republican president's push to acquire Greenland strained the NATO alliance. Trump had commented while in Davos, Switzerland, this week that "Canada lives because of the United States." Carney shot back that his nation can be an example that the world does not have to bend toward autocratic tendencies.

Trump later revoked his in-

itation to Carney to join the president's "Board of Peace" that he is forming to try to resolve global conflicts.

Trump's push to acquire Greenland has come after he has repeatedly needled Canada over its sovereignty and suggested it also be absorbed the United States as a 51st state.

He resumed that this week, posting an altered image on social media showing a map

Trump said in a social media post that if Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney thinks he is going to make Canada a Drop Off Port' for China to send goods and products into the United States, he is sorely mistaken

of the United States that included Canada, Venezuela, Greenland and Cuba as part of its territory.

In his message Saturday, Trump continued his provocations by calling Canada's leader "Governor Carney." Trump had used the same nickname for Carney's predecessor, Justin Trudeau, and his use of it toward Carney was the latest mark of their soured relationship.



Anti-abortion demonstrators walk past the U.S. Capitol on their way to the Supreme Court during the annual March for Life in Washington, Friday

PTI PHOTO

Winter storm forces over 10,000 flight cancellations across US

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dallas, Jan 24: More than 10,000 flights across the US set to take off over the weekend were cancelled as a monster storm started to wreak havoc Saturday across much of the country and threatened to knock out power for days and snarl major roadways with dangerous ice.

Roughly 140 million people, or more than 40 per cent of the US population, were under a winter storm warning from New Mexico to New England. The National Weather Service forecast warns of widespread

heavy snow and a band of catastrophic ice stretching from east Texas to North Carolina.

All Saturday flights were cancelled at Will Rogers International Airport in Oklahoma City, and all Sunday morning flights also were called off, as officials aimed to restart service Sunday afternoon at Oklahoma's biggest airport. The airport was nearly deserted Saturday morning, with only a few TSA agents and a couple of travellers remaining inside the departures side. The Texas Department of Transportation Saturday posted images of snow-covered highways in the suburbs north of Dallas.

China places highest-ranking general under investigation

REUTERS

Beijing, Jan 24: China's most senior general is under investigation, China's defence ministry said Saturday, in the highest-profile purge to date of senior military leadership just as Beijing modernises its forces and tries to further project its might.

Zhang Youxia serves as second-in-command under President Xi Jinping as vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission - the supreme

command body - and has long been seen as Xi's closest military ally.

The ministry said Zhang and Liu Zhenli, chief of staff of the CMC's Joint Staff Department, were under investigation for suspected serious violations of discipline and law.

Zhang is also a member of the elite Politburo of the ruling Communist Party and is one of just a few leading officers with combat experience.

The military was one of the

main targets of a broad corruption crackdown ordered by Xi in 2012. That drive reached the upper echelons of the People's Liberation Army in 2023 when the elite Rocket Force was targeted.

Zhang's removal is the second of a sitting general on the Central Military Commission since the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution. He has not been seen in public since November 20, when he held talks with Russia's defence minister in Moscow.

Russian air attack on Ukraine knocks out power for millions

Moscow carried out the strikes as trilateral, US-brokered talks between Russia and Ukraine continued into a second day in the UAE, with no sign of compromise Friday

since its full-scale invasion in 2022, is conducting its heaviest bombardment campaign on energy facilities this winter, leaving people across Ukraine with only a few hours of power a day and some without heat or water.

Over 800,000 people in the capital and another 400,000 in the northern region of Chernihiv were without power after the latest attacks, Deputy Prime Minister Oleksiy Kuleba said. Ukraine's air force said Russia had unleashed 375 drones and 21 missiles, including two of its rarely deployed Tsirkon ballistic missiles, in its overnight attack.

The sky over Kyiv was lit up by regular orange flashes as air defences fired on missiles and drones descending on the capital, with loud booms echoing around the city's tall buildings.

Tymur Tkachenko, head of Kyiv's military administration, reported strikes in at least four districts. A medical facility was among the buildings damaged.

Before Saturday, Kyiv had already endured two mass overnight attacks since the New Year that have knocked out power and heating to hundreds of residential buildings.

Emergency workers were still engaged in restoring services to residents that had been knocked out by those attacks, and Klitschko said many of the buildings that had lost heating Saturday had only recently had it restored. In Kharkiv, a frequent target 30 km (18 miles) from the Russian border and much closer to eastern battlefronts, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said 25 drones had hit several districts.



META PAUSES TEEN ACCESS TO AI CHARACTERS

Meta is halting teens' access to artificial intelligence characters, at least temporarily, the company said in a blog post Friday. Meta Platforms Inc, which own Instagram and WhatsApp, said that starting in the "coming weeks," teens will no longer be able to access AI characters "until the updated experience is ready"



The central focus of the discussions was the possible parameters for ending the war

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

T20 World Cup: ICC drops B'desh, brings in Scotland

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 24: The ICC has pushed Bangladesh out of the upcoming T20 World Cup, bringing in Scotland after BCB refused to let its team travel to India citing security concerns in the wake of Mustafizur Rahman's ouster from the IPL.

Scotland's entry ended the month-long suspense after Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) repeatedly insisted that their matches be shifted to Sri Lanka and even suggested their group being swapped with Ireland.

The Irish Cricket board however categorically dismissed the suggestion.

At the ICC Board meeting, Bangladesh were taken to the cleaners with an overwhelming 14-2 verdict in favour of the

'Tigers' travelling to India for their games.

The ICC gave the BCB a 24-hour deadline to change its stance but with Asif Nazrul being adamant, the cricket crazy nation's hopes of playing the T20 World Cup went up in smoke.

It has been learnt that top ICC officials including chairman Jay Shah were in Dubai Friday and late evening an e-mail was sent to BCB chairman Aminul Islam Bulbul informing him about global body's decision.

"An e-mail was sent last evening to Bangladesh Cricket Board chairman intimating him that his board didn't get back to ICC officially after the 24 hour deadline that was given to them to decide if they wanted to come to India," an ICC source told PTI



on conditions of anonymity.

The ICC also intimidated all the participating member nations separately about Bangladesh being dropped from the tournament.

Bangladesh Sports Ministry advisor Asif Nazrul had advised against national team travelling to India, citing security issues despite being given repeated assurances by the ICC.

Scotland will thus play their four group league games against West Indies (February 7), Italy (February 9) and England (February 14) in Kolkata followed by a game against Ne-

Govt to take call: PCB on participation

PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi Saturday said the Pakistan government will take the final and binding decision on whether its national team will participate in the upcoming T20 World Cup, following Bangladesh's removal from the tournament. Addressing a press conference here, Naqvi said the matter would be placed before Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, who is currently out of the country, once he returns. "Whether we play in the T20 World Cup or not, the decision will be taken by the government," Naqvi said. Pakistan are scheduled to play all their matches in Sri Lanka as per an agreement with the BCCI. Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) was the only member nation to support Bangladesh in their demand to move their matches to Sri Lanka as 14 others voted against it. Naqvi said Bangladesh, whom he described as a "big stakeholder" in world cricket, had been unfairly treated by the ICC.

pal in Mumbai February 17.

The implications of this unceremonious ouster will also badly hit BCB's coffers. The board will lose USD 500,000 participation fee that each nation gets. But the bigger potential loss will be

ICC's annual revenue.

BCB said later in the day that it accepted the ICC's decision to replace its national team with Scotland, saying there is nothing more they could do now.

India smell series win

Ishan's fiery comeback puts Sanju under pressure as the hosts look to clinch the five-match T20 series in the third game against NZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Jan 24: Ishan Kishan's sensational comeback will reignite debate over who should be Abhishek Sharma's preferred opening partner with Sanju Samson's increasing struggles as the hosts look to seal the five-match T20 series in the third game here Sunday.

With just two weeks and three matches against New Zealand in the ongoing series left before the start of their T20 World Cup title defence, India's combination looks largely settled.

The batting and bowling units appear sorted and only a few spots remain under scrutiny and one such slot currently belongs to Samson.

Kishan's superb 76 off 32 balls, however, intensified the spotlight on Sanju.

Reinstated as opener alongside Abhishek Sharma at the expense of Test and ODI skipper Shubman Gill, Samson has been failing to make the most of his chances and he has got quite a lot of games.

Gill, despite his technical solidity, struggled to make an impact in T20Is and was sidelined in a bold call to accom-

modate Sanju, who had scored three centuries in five matches late last year.

But back in his preferred slot, the Kerala man has not delivered, and time is running out with hardly any turnaround time before the T20 World Cup



as the series would be a make-or-break for him.

Against New Zealand, he managed only 10 and 6, dismissed by Kyle Jamieson and Matt Henry respectively.

Former India opener and noted coach WV Raman summed it up on social media after his Raipur dismissal.

There were concerns over skipper Suryakumar Yadav's prolonged lean patch, but he silenced his critics in style, ending a run of 23 T20I innings without a fifty with a blazing 82 off 37 balls.

The seven-wicket win in the second T20, which gave India a 2-0 lead, was even more impressive as it came without much contribution from in-form Abhishek Sharma, the explosive inform world No 1 T20I batter, who fell for a golden duck.

Suryakumar seemed to have tweaked his approach in walking across the stumps to access the off-side and playing his trademark strokes over point and covers.

From 10 off 10 balls, he stepped on the gas in style smashing 72 from the next 27 deliveries as India chased down 209 with ease, reaching the target in just 15.2 overs.

However, before Suryakumar

took charge, the platform was set by the diminutive left-hander Kishan, who blasted a 21-ball fifty.

India had slipped to 6/2 in 1.1 overs, but Kishan's counter-attack turned the game around as they completed their joint-high-est successful T20I chase with 28 balls to spare.

With Kishan and Suryakumar in top form, India scored at a staggering 14.50 runs per over and lost just one wicket in the crucial overs seven ten,

to effectively sealing New Zealand's fate. On the bowling front, left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav and seamer Harshit Rana controlled the middle overs after Arshdeep leaked 36 runs in his first two overs.

India would hope Axar Patel's finger injury isn't serious ahead of the global showpiece and gets more game time, while pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, rested for the second match, is expected to return. Since the turnaround time between games is too less with travel included, the team management decided to rotate the pacers.

For New Zealand, it remains to be seen how they bounce back after the walloping. The Mitchell Santner-led side may look at tactical changes, possibly promoting in-form Daryl Mitchell, who has been their in-form batter hitting two centuries and a fifty in their 2-1 ODI series win.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN 400 majors, one Djokovic

Milestone man Novak Djokovic completes 400 major wins, equalling Federer's record of 102 Australian Open match wins

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Melbourne, Jan 24: Former World No 1 Novak Djokovic continued his steady march through the Australian Open draw Saturday, becoming the first player in history to record 400 match wins at the majors.

The 10-time Melbourne champion was tested by Botić van de Zandschulp but remained unflustered at the key moments, closing out a 6-3, 6-4, 7-6(4) victory to advance to the fourth round for the 18th time in 21 appearances at Melbourne Park. While the contest demanded patience and precision, Djokovic's trademark control under pressure proved decisive, particularly in the third-set tiebreak.

Djokovic's 400th career victory at the Grand Slam level also carried added significance in Melbourne as he equalled Roger Federer's record of 102 Australian Open match wins, ATP reports.

"It's been a great start to the tournament. But I'm not getting ahead of myself. I learned a lesson last year: I got too ahead of myself too early in some of the Grand Slams. I'm trying to give these young guys a push for their money. I'm still around. I'm hanging in there," Djokovic said during his on-court interview when asked about his fitness.

The former World No 1 will next compete against Jakub Mensik or Ethan Quinn. Djokovic, who has not lost a set in Melbourne, is only two wins

HOCKEY INDIA LEAGUE

Toofans battle Royals with title shot in sight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: The battle for a place in the final of the men's Hockey India League (HIL) has reached its decisive stage with Hyderabad Toofans taking on Ranchi Royals in Qualifier 2 here Sunday.

It will be a do-or-die match with the winner earning a coveted spot in the final, where table-toppers and Qualifier 1 winners Kalinga Lancers await.

The losing team, meanwhile, will play the third-fourth place match against HIL GC on Monday. The final is also Monday.



Hyderabad Toofans made it to Qualifier 2 with a clinical 2-0 victory over HIL GC in the Eliminator.

Ranchi Royals, on the other hand, arrive after a narrow 1-2 defeat to Kalinga Lancers in a closely fought Qualifier 1.

With one last chance to book a berth in the final, both teams will be under immense pressure to deliver when it matters the most.



It's been a great start to the tournament. But I'm not getting ahead of myself. I learned a lesson last year: I got too ahead of myself too early in some of the Grand Slams. I'm trying to give these young guys a push for their money. I'm still around. I'm hanging in there

NOVAK DJOKOVIC

away from a possible semi-final matchup with two-time defending champion Sinner, who earlier battled cramp to reach the fourth round.

"Obviously, Alcaraz and Sinner are the two best players in the world. They're playing at a different level than all of us right now, but when you enter the court and the ball rolls, you always have a chance, particularly here on the court that has given me the most in my career," Djokovic added.

Earlier, Jannik Sinner was limping and trying to stretch out cramps in his arms and legs, and had just gone down a break in the third set when the extreme heat rules kicked in at the Australian Open.

Play was suspended for several minutes while the roof was closed on Rod Laver Are-

India's Yuki Bhambri advances

India's Yuki Bhambri advanced to the third round of the men's doubles at the Australian Open Saturday, while compatriot N Sriram Balaji bowed out, marking a mixed day for the Indian contingent at the season's first Grand Slam. Bhambri and his 10th-seeded Swedish partner Andre Goransson overcame the unseeded pairing of Santiago Gonzalez and David Pel 4-6, 7-6(5), 6-3 in a second-round contest that was interrupted by the tournament's extreme heat policy. Earlier, Balaji, partnering Austria's Neil Oberleitner, exited the tournament after a straight-sets loss to fourth seeds Marcelo Arevalo and Mate Pavic. The alternate pair went down 5-7, 1-6 in their second-round encounter. Bhambri's progress keeps Indian interest alive in the men's doubles draw as the tournament moves into its decisive stages.



U-19 WORLD CUP

Rampant India crush NZ by 7 wickets

PESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bulawayo, Jan 24: Skipper Ayush Mhatre's 27-ball 53 underlined India's another dominant show as they notched a crushing seven-wicket victory via DLS method over New Zealand in the U-19 World Cup here Saturday.

An all-round India won a truncated game of 37-overs-per-side with complete ease, stamping their authority in the competition with another big victory. Chasing a revised target of 130, India made 130 for three in a mere 13.3 overs to record their third consecutive win and top Group B.

India lost Aaron George (7) early but Vaibhav Sooryavanshi (40 off 23 balls; 2 fours, 3 sixes) and skipper Mhatre led the response with a robust 76-run stand for the second wicket.

Both Sooryavanshi and Mhatre struck at over 150 to pulverise the New Zealand bowlers, who just did not have enough to defend.

Brief Scores:
New Zealand: 135 all out in 36.2 overs (Callum Samson 37; RS Ambrish 4/29, Henil Patel 3/23) lost to

India: 130 for 3 in 13.3 overs (Vaibhav Sooryavanshi 40, Ayush Mhatre 53; Selwin Sanjay 1/22) by 7 wickets

Sourav retains billiards title with emotional win

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bahadurgarh (Haryana), Jan 24: Encouraged by his family to compete at the premier National Championships soon after the passing of his father, Sourav Kothari produced a deeply emotional performance to retain the senior men's billiards title with a commanding 4-0



win over S Shrikrishna here Saturday.

As he potted the red into the centre pocket in the fourth frame to seal victory, Sourav looked heavenwards and appeared to gesture that the triumph was dedicated to his late father Manoj Kothari.

Overcome by emotion, the champion broke down moments later.

HISTORIC LEAP

The Indian racing sensation secures drive with world karting champions Modena for WSK 2026

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

La Conca (Italy), Jan 24: Indian racing prodigy Atiq Mir has secured a coveted drive for reigning world champions Modena Racing Team for the 2026 season of the prestigious WSK championship, considered as the 'Formula 1' of karting.

Atiq, all of 11, has taken the tougher route to the top by opting to race in the highly competitive junior category (age 12-14) this season.

On the back of her impressive performances in the mini category (age 8-12) last year, the Formula 1 Academy supported driver was signed for the entire season and will drive in the WSK Super Master Series, WSK Euro Series, WSK Final Cup amongst other championships.

The WSK series is the highest level of karting which attracts the best driving talent from around the world besides leading kart and engine manufacturers.

The WSK series is focused on developing young drivers by providing a platform for them to improve their race craft, technical knowledge, and understanding of motorsport.

Formula 1 world champions including Lewis Hamilton, Max

RANJI TROPHY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: Odisha were left staring at a daunting final-day challenge after Tamil Nadu tightened their grip on the Ranji Trophy fixture at the KIIT Cricket Stadium here Saturday. Set an imposing target of 408 runs, the hosts reached 42 for 2 in 15.3 overs at stumps on Day 3, still requiring 366 runs to pull off a remarkable victory.

Tamil Nadu built on their substantial first-innings lead

through a disciplined second-innings batting effort. S R Athish played the anchor's role with a resolute 88 off 162 deliveries, absorbing pressure and occupying the crease for long periods. He was well supported by R Sonu Yadav, whose attacking 74 down the order ensured Tamil Nadu crossed the 300-run mark and pushed Odisha further on the back foot.

For the hosts, Badal Biswal (356) and Biplab Samantray (222) were the most effective,

TN in command against Odisha



preventing the visitors from accelerating late in the innings.

Odisha's chase began with positive intent, Subhanshu Senapati counter-attacking with a brisk 36, but Tamil Na-

du struck at crucial moments to dent the hosts' momentum. R Sai Kishore provided the early breakthrough before Sonu Yadav removed Swastik Samal, leaving Odisha two down by close of play.

With eight wickets in hand but a steep target ahead, Odisha will need a near-perfect batting performance on the final day. Tamil Nadu, meanwhile, remain firmly in control and will back their bowlers to press for a decisive result.

I am so excited and grateful for Modena to sign me. To join such an elite team and reigning world champions in this class is a great honour. I will be tested against the best drivers in the world and I am up for the challenge. The grids in WSK are so close and the driving level is the best in the world. I hope to learn from them and improve myself

ATIQA MIR

Verstappen and Sebastian Vettel have raced in WSK in their formative years.

Moving up to OKNJ junior category from mini is a big step up for Atiq but she is up for the challenge. From 10 bhp

engines to 29 bhp engines with speeds of 126kmph and much bigger karts attracting G forces of more than 2.5, Atiq's physical fitness and adaptability will be tested against the best in the world.

"I am so excited and grateful for Modena to sign me. To join such an elite team and reigning world champions in this class is a great honour. I will be tested against the best drivers in the world and I am up for the challenge. The grids in WSK are so close and the driving level is the best in the world. I hope to learn from them and improve myself," said Atiq.

Atiq begins her campaign January 25 with WSK Super Master Series Round 1 in La Conca, Italy.



Atiq will become the first Indian female ever to drive in OKNJ category in WSK and remarkably will be the only female on the entire grid of 37 world class drivers