



### Chitrangda’s insight

Actor Chitrangda Singh says wives of army personnel carry the same blend of strength and fear every day

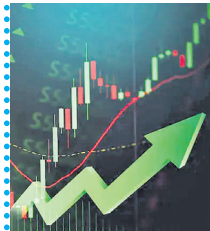
LEISURE | P2



### Immigration crackdown

Judge orders ICE chief to appear in court to explain why detainees have been denied due process

INTERNATIONAL | P10



### Markets rebound

Indices end higher in volatile trade, buoyed by heavy buying, a firm trend in global markets and optimism over India-EU FTA

BUSINESS | P11



### Lancers win HL

Kalinga Lancers declared Hockey India League champions after they trounce Ranchi Royals 3-2 in a thrilling summit clash

SPORTS | P12



WHEN RAIN MEETS JOY: People amid rainfall, at the Ridge in Shimla, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

# New UGC rules spark protests

Govt says regulations won't be discriminatory, misused

PNN & AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Jan 27:** The new Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions Regulations, 2026 of the University Grants Commission (UGC), which aims at replacing a 2012 anti-discrimination framework and making it binding for higher education institutions (HEIs) to implement it, has triggered massive protests and demonstrations at several places across the country.

The government had January 13 notified new regulations mandating all HEIs to form “equity committees” to look into discrimination complaints and promote equity.

The UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026, mandated that these committees must include members of Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), persons with disabilities (PwDs) and women.

The document was issued after the Supreme Court told the UGC to submit the new regulations while hearing a plea by the mothers of Rohith Vemula and Payal Tadv, questioning the implementation of the 2012 UGC regulations. The top court had asked the UGC to consider stakeholder suggestions while finalising regulations to curb caste-based discrimination, ragging, and other biases in campuses. The SC emphasised accountability structures, confidential complaint mechanisms, time-bound redressal, and institutional responsibility — with the aim of turning regulatory intent into effective

protection for students. The top court gave the UGC a deadline to incorporate these suggestions before notifying the new rules.

Many students, however, argue that the new rules are one-sided because they focus on discrimination faced by SC, ST and OBC students but apparently do not allow general category students to raise similar complaints or protections under the same framework. Protesters say this could institutionalise “reverse discrimination.”

Tuesday, a plea was filed in the SC challenging the new regulation, alleging that it has adopted a ‘non-inclusionary’ definition of caste-based discrimination and excludes certain categories from institutional protection. The plea submitted that regulation 3(c) of the new regulations is “non-inclusionary” and fails to protect students and faculty who do not belong to reserved categories.

The plea, filed by Vineet Jindal, assailed the regulation on the grounds that caste-based discrimination is defined strictly as discrimination against members of SC, ST, and OBC.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Tuesday assured that there would be no discrimination against anyone.

Meanwhile, a group of protesting students in New Delhi submitted a list of demands to the UGC, including a complete rollback of the regulations. “UGC officials received our submission. They agreed to discuss a few points from our list of demands,” Alok Tripathi, a PhD student from Delhi University, said.



## 4 INJURED AS BOMB EXPLODES IN CITY



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** Four persons, including a hardcore criminal, sustained grievous injuries when a bomb exploded in New Azad Nagar area of Sundarpada under Airfield police limits here, Tuesday afternoon.

According to Commissionerate Police, the incident happened when some people were binding a crude bomb illegally at the rooftop of a rented house.

The injured hardcore criminal has been identified as Sahanwaz Mallik, who has cases registered against him at Nayapalli and Maitree Vihar police stations.

Mallik, his mother, friend Amiya Ranjan Mallik and a female friend were injured in the incident. All were initially admitted to Capital Hospital, and later were shifted to a private hospital, he said.

“They were illegally preparing the bombs when the incident happened,” said Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena after visiting the spot.

A scientific team has been sent to the spot for collection of evidence and other details, he said. “We will interrogate the injured persons to find out the involvement of any other person in illegal bomb making,” the DCP said.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The UGC Act should be withdrawn because it is discriminatory. After all, we are equal

# Now, fuel sans PUCC

*A little over a month after issuing a directive that barred vehicle users without Pollution Under Control Certificates (PUCCs) from purchasing fuel at filling stations and those with pending challans from obtaining PUCCs, the state government Tuesday informed the Orissa High Court that petrol and diesel will continue to be supplied at fuel stations even if a vehicle does not possess a pollution certificate*

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Jan 27:** The Orissa High Court Tuesday held that a valid Pollution Under Control Certificate (PUCC) must be issued even if an e-challan is pending against a motor vehicle.

The state government has also informed the HC that petrol and diesel will continue to be supplied at fuel stations even if a vehicle does not possess a PUCC.

Rejecting the state government’s plea, the court ruled that denial of a PUCC on the ground of an unpaid challan is not permissible under law. The court further directed the state government to take appropriate steps to ensure that vehicle owners do not face inconvenience while accessing services through the VAHAN portal.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice Harish Tandon and Justice MS Raman passed the order while hearing the matter and directed the state government to issue a separate notification in this regard. The



matter has been posted for the next hearing after two weeks.

According to the case records, a letter issued December 20, 2025, by the Transport Commissioner to all oil companies selling petrol and diesel was challenged as being unsustainable in law. The petitioners contended that the letter violated the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.

The decision to deny petrol and diesel to vehicles without a valid PUCC was argued to be

a violation of the fundamental rights of the general public and vehicle owners.

The petition sought quashing of the December 20 order and challenged the rule that prohibited the sale of petrol or diesel to vehicles lacking a valid PUCC. The counsel argued that such a restriction amounted to a complete violation of the fundamental rights of vehicle owners across Odisha.

The petitioners also contended that the condition requiring clearance of pending challans prior to conducting pollution tests was illegal. In this context, a PIL filed by Snigdha Patra stated that vehicle owners should not be compelled to pay pending e-challan dues before undergoing pollution testing.

# ODISHA BANDH TODAY

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** The Navnirman Krushak Sangathan (NNKS) has called for an eight-hour Odisha bandh Wednesday to pitch for disbursement of ₹800 per quintal input assistance at state-run mandis and other demands. The state unit of Congress and the BJD have extended their support to the shutdown called by the farmers outfit.

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Bhakta Charan Das, in a state-



ment Tuesday, said the issues raised by the NNKS are similar to those over which the grand old party has been staging agitations across the state.

“The OPCC has resolved to support the bandh called by NNKS January 28. Accordingly, instructions have been issued

to the party’s district-level units,” the statement said.

The NNKS, a body staging agitations on farmers’ issues, has called for a bandh demanding the disbursement of the ₹800 per quintal input assistance at state-run mandis and elimination of middlemen and millers from the paddy procurement system.

Meanwhile, BJD’s spokesperson Lenin Mohanty welcomed the bandh call by NNKS and said that the party will launch its agitation over PUCC and smart city issues from February 2.

## Anganwadi uniform, footwear aid hiked

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida Tuesday announced a hike in uniform, footwear and winter wear allowance provided to children going to anganwadi centres (AWCs). Parida said the hike will benefit over 14.76 lakh children across 74,224 AWCs.

The allowances provided to the preschool children (ages 3-6) of the anganwadi centres under the Malati Devi Prak

Vidyalaya Paridhan Yojana have been enhanced, she told media persons here. The allowance for boys’ uniform has been increased from ₹100 to ₹175, while the aid for girls’ uniform has been hiked from ₹150 to ₹225, Parida said.

Similarly, the allowance provided for shoes, socks and sweater (winter wear) has also been enhanced by ₹50 from the existing ₹100. The revised unit costs will be effective from the current financial year 2026-27, she said. **P3**

### SHORT TAKES

## INDIA, EU INK FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

**New Delhi:** India and European Union Tuesday sealed a landmark free trade agreement -- billed as “mother of all deals” -- with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the top EU leadership unveiling a grand agenda to leverage trade and defence to shore up ties and work towards a rules-based world order. The two sides also inked two crucial pacts -- one on security and defence collaboration and another on the mobility of Indian talent to Europe -- after Prime Minister Modi hosted EU leaders Ursula von der Leyen and Antonio Costa for summit talks. **P9 & 11**

## ARIJIT SINGH QUILTS PLAYBACK SINGING

**Kolkata:** India’s iconic singer Arijit Singh, the voice behind countless much-loved Bollywood numbers, Tuesday triggered a wave of shock across the music industry by announcing his retirement from playback singing. However, the 38-year-old singer made it clear that he would continue to pursue his career as an independent musician. Arijit, known for churning out evergreen film tracks like “Tum hi ho” and “Kesariya”, took to Instagram to declare he would not take any more assignments as a playback vocalist. **P2**



# Scientists recover ancient wooden tools in Greece

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Athens, Jan 27:** Two artifacts found at a lake shore in Greece are the oldest wooden tools to be uncovered so far and date back 4,30,000 years.

One is a spindly stick about two-and-a-half ft long that could have been used for digging in the mud. The other is a smaller, more mysterious handheld chunk of willow or poplar wood that may have been used to shape stone tools, according to research published Monday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Scientists think ancient humans wielded a whole litany of tools made from stone, bone and

wood. But it’s particularly difficult to find evidence of wooden tools today because wood rots so quickly. Such tools are only preserved in specific environments like in ice, caves or underwater.

The newest tools, found in Greece’s Megalopolis basin, were possibly buried quickly by sediment and preserved by a wet environment over time.

For years, researchers have found other remnants at the site, including stone tools and elephant bones with cuts on them. While scientists didn’t directly date the wooden tools, the site is about 4,30,000 years old, which provides insight into the objects’ age.

“I’ve always just been thrilled to be able to touch these objects,”



said study author Annemieke Milks with the University of Reading. Human remains haven’t been found at the site yet, so it’s not yet clear who used the tools. The owners could have been Neanderthals, early human ancestors or someone else.

“The site in Greece probably has more gems from the past that are waiting to be found,” said archaeologist Jarod Hutson with the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. But the unassuming appearance of these two new tools makes them

harder to interpret. “It’s difficult to get excited about these because they don’t strike you immediately as wooden tools. And we don’t know what they were used for,” said Hutson, who was not involved with the new study.

Other examples of ancient wooden tools include a set of spears from Germany and 3,00,000-year-old Chinese digging sticks that may have been used to harvest plants.

The new find offers a rare look into the varied collection of tools used to survive - a glimpse at a “little known aspect of the technology of early humans”, study author Katerina Harvati with the University of Tübingen said in an email.



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

**ARIES**  
You are very apprehensive about your possessions today, and will not like to share them. This mood may be because of someone particular. Affairs regarding love, Ganesha says, are progressing fine, and your married life will bloom.

**TAURUS**  
This day has been earmarked for beautification, a make-over, says Ganesha. You are likely to remain preoccupied with ways to enhance your looks and appearance. A new, stylish hair do, face packs and massages, trendy outfits and accessories could be in store. You will, subconsciously, be doing all that you can do, to get noticed by others.

**GEMINI**  
Your physical appearance and personal attitude will see a marked improvement today, predicts Ganesha. A well-groomed you will climb up the popularity chart among peers, friends and members of the opposite sex. You will keep people under your spell with your wit

**CANCER**  
You will be firing all cylinders in the creativity department, says Ganesha. Even your colleagues may pitch in, and will give you new ideas to make your work better. Those looking for a new job will ace the interview and clear the selection process as easily as clearing the fog from their glasses.

**LEO**  
A challenging day awaits you. You will face some tensions and problems, however this doesn't mean you will not be able to complete all your work successfully. Your personal life will proceed as usual, however expectations from you at the work-front will increase. You need to maintain a balance between your home and work-place, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
Play dodge ball with prejudice today. Do not let intolerance find shelter in you today, advises Ganesha. Instead, chances are you will seek to find love, affection and goodwill among those around you. Stay away from negativity as it may bog you down. Ganesha counsels you to have the courage to stand by your convictions.

**LIBRA**  
Everyone has a dream, but only few have the fortune to realise them. Be among the lucky ones today as you see your dream project materialise and take its first steps towards a successful future. But all good things have humble beginnings. What matters is that you had a dream, and dreaming it was the hardest part, reminds Ganesha.

**SCORPIO**  
Ganesha predicts that you shall work towards building a better future. But do not expect radical or dynamic changes. Cruise control is the best way to go for now, says Ganesha. Patience in itself will reap rich benefits.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Expect a call to late-night revelry and a chance to binge. But you don't seem to be in the mood to let your hair loose and party, says Ganesha. However tempting it may be, your serious side will take over and you shall deny the offer. No wonder they like that sensible head on your shoulders.

**CAPRICORN**  
The chances of you meeting financial success are few, but they are there nonetheless, says Ganesha. If you really want to improve your account balance and settle all the burgeoning debts, focus on what all needs to be done, and get it done without delay. You will make merry later in the day and will enjoy the company of your loved ones. But you will have free time despite all of this, and will get lured into unnecessary spending, especially on recreational activities.

**AQUARIUS**  
Work, work, work! That is what will pay rich dividends. Of course, a pat on the back does matter, and with your commitment record, you may be getting a lot of it! You may back off from taking risks, and yet want change. Ganesha wonders how you will fulfil your wish.

**PISCES**  
Arguments lead nowhere, and why argue when, at the end of the day, you can step back and watch them end up with egg on their faces, break a leg, get crushed under a falling safe, or otherwise suffer the numerous disasters you wish them to, for disagreeing with you. You will end up having the last laugh, so you might as well use your time more effectively, says Ganesha.



## ARIANA TO REDUCE PACE OF HER WORK

Singer-actress Ariana Grande, who has tasted success in both music and acting since finding fame, acknowledges that it could be beneficial for her to reduce the pace a little. "I think that it would probably be healthy. I'm not used to taking breaks. These past few years have been pretty non-stop," said Grande.

## MARGOT TALKS ABOUT 'VERY GOOD BOYFRIEND'

Hollywood star Margot Robbie thinks her *Wuthering Heights* co-star Jacob Elordi would be a 'very good boyfriend' for someone after he did 'a lot of very thoughtful things' on the sets of *Wuthering Heights*. The pair appears as Heathcliff and Cathy in the movie, loosely inspired by Emily Bronte's 1847 novel of the same name.



## DAY 6 AT IFFB Kok Kok Kokoooktakes centre stage



Filmmaker Maharshi T Kashyap in a post screening conversation with film critic Aditya Srikrishna

**BHUBANESWAR:** The sixth day at the 15th Indian Film Festival of Bhubaneswar (IFFB) unfolded with an energetic convergence of film screenings, engaging discussions and audience interactions.

As part of Adoor Retrospective, one of his acclaimed works—*Anantaram* (1987) was screened. This was the last film in the retrospective segment.

The day started with repeat screenings of Sameer Zaidi's *Two Sinners*, Hemant Gaba's *The Unknown Filmmaker* and Elory-Pinto's *Samvega-Pasada*.

Post lunch, *Kok Kok Kokoook*, an Assamese magic realist horror drama by Maharishi T Kashyap stole the show. The movie is based on the story of an undocumented migrant chicken seller, whose deep attachment to his red Yamaha RX100 motorcycle turns into an unsettling obsession after he is forced to dispose of it to avoid being framed for an accident. As his grief intensifies, the boundary between man and machine begins to dissolve.

The next screened was Naresh K Hegde's *Tingl Belku*. The movie

explores a teenager's struggle with psychedelic substance use, disrupting his family's preparations for his sister's wedding in a coastal Indian village, and resulting in a police raid, that compels him to confront the consequences of his actions.

The day ended with screening of *Theatre: The Myth of Reality*, directed by Saajin Babu,

Speaking about the festival, a young festival volunteer Debashish Jena shared, "Attending the festival every year since 2018 has shaped how I look at cinema and storytelling."

He went to add, "As someone interested in culture and media, the festival has helped me develop critical thinking and exposed me to paths I didn't know existed. The accessibility of filmmakers and discussions makes it feel less hierarchical and more welcoming."

The last day at the festival will feature two Odia films—*Bou Buttu Bhuta* by Jagdish Mishra and *Biswaprakash* by Susant Misra. Suman Mukhopadhyay's *Putulnacher Itikatha* will also be screened.

## SHOCKING ANNOUNCEMENT

## Arijit quits playback singing

**MUM-** Superstar singer Arijit Singh has shocked fans by announcing his retirement from playback singing. The singer in a social media note, has revealed that he will no longer take up any new assignments as a playback vocalist.

He wrote, "Hello, Happy new year to all. I want to thank you all for giving me so much of love all these



years as listeners. I am happy to announce that I am not gonna be taking any new assignments as a playback vocalist from now on. I am calling it off. It was a wonderful journey."

The singer also thanked his listeners for their unwavering love and support over the years and calling his journey as a playback singer "wonderful".

Talking about Arijit Singh, the singer over the last decade, went onto become one of the most influential voices of contemporary Hindi cinema.

Known for keeping a low profile, the singer leads an extremely quiet personal life with his wife Koel Roy and their children.

# CHITRANGDA'S ARMY INSIGHT

**MUMBAI:** Actor Chitrangda Singh, who will be seen portraying an army wife in *Battle Of Galwan*, says the role gave her a deeper understanding of the quiet strength carried by women from military families.

Growing up as the daughter of an Indian Army officer, she was familiar with uniforms, postings, and regimented discipline, but prepping for the Battle of Galwan gave her a deeper emotional gaze into that world.

Chitrangda said: "My father was in the Indian Army, and growing up, listening to his

stories was normal for me, but playing the role of an army wife is different. When I met army wives, I understood my mother's silences, her pride mixed with worry."

"These women carry that same blend of strength and fear every day. I tried to bring that complexity to the role, not just the smile or the courage, but the part where you learn to hold it together even when your heart is breaking," she added.

*Battle of Galwan* is based on the Galwan stand-off between India and its expansionist neighbour, China, on June 15, 2020, during the thick of the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in India.

Directed by Apoorva Lakshia, the film is set to release on April 17. **IANS**

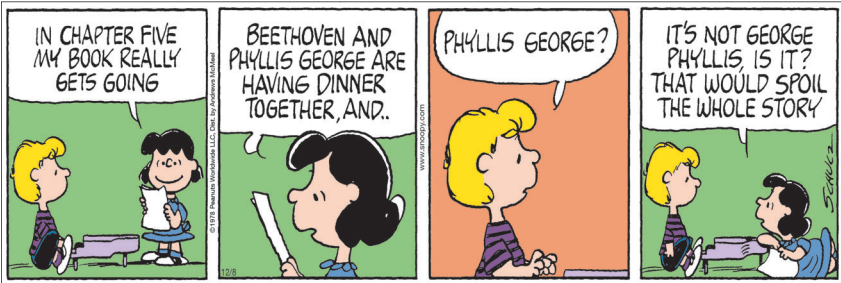


## UTTAR PURUSH'S NATAKA PARIKRAMA - 2026



The artistes of Uttar Purush, one of the oldest theatre troupes of Bhubaneswar, staged Odia play Adrusta on the first day of the festival. Written by Abinash Nayak, the drama was directed by Chakradhar Patra. The troupe will present two more plays over the next two days.

## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

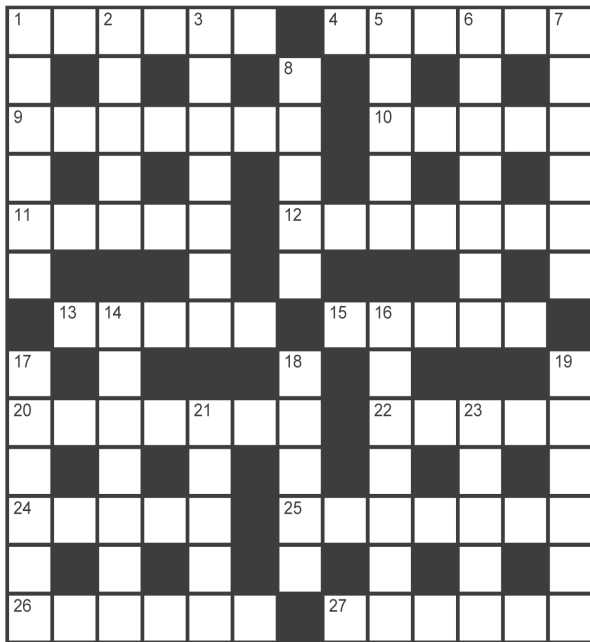


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



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### Across

- Wander
- Meager
- Doctor's clue
- Guinness product
- Garlicky mayonnaise
- Kind of band
- Sports facility
- Begin
- Triumph
- Knock over

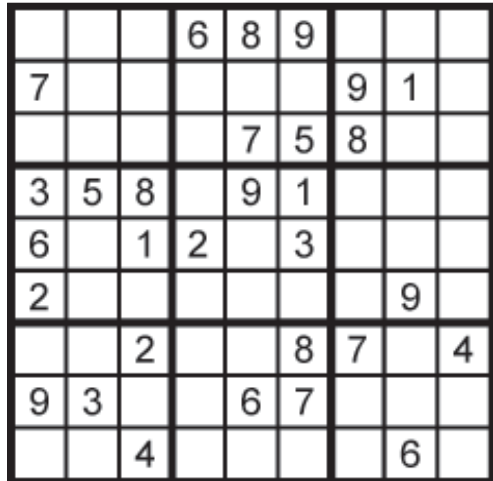
### Down

- Defeats mightily
- Genghis Khan, e.g.
- Concedes
- Greek capital
- Mischievous one
- Latin dance
- Riga native
- Noodles

- Nature's alarm clock
- Inveigle
- Hot coal
- Hermit
- Brass instrument
- Sea eagle
- Hibachi residue
- Baby birds?
- Relaxed
- Tennis starter

## 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.

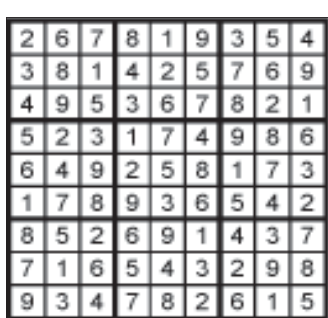


## SOLUTIONS

### CROSSWORD



### SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



Funkwal emphasised that the investment underscores ECoR's continued commitment to the health and well-being of its workforce and their dependents.



# Online grievance box planned for Endowment dept: Law Min

Grassroots action and effective training can strengthen transparency and efficiency in Endowment administration, Minister Harichandan says



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** Emphasising the Endowment department's role in managing temple rituals, services, properties and financial accountability, Law, Works and Excise Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan Tuesday said the department is considering introducing an online grievance box to ensure transparency and timely redressal.

He was inaugurating a training programme for Endowment Inspectors, Auditors and other officials at the Odisha Secretariat Training Institute, Unit-II here.

Minister Harichandan said steps have been initiated to upload detailed information on all ancient temples under the Endowment department on the official website. He said the initiative aims to create a comprehensive digital repository of temples, which will benefit researchers, tourists and the gen-

ACCORDING TO LAW MINISTER, STEPS HAVE BEEN INITIATED TO UPLOAD DETAILED INFORMATION ON ALL ANCIENT TEMPLES ON THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE

DIGITAL REPOSITORY TO BENEFIT RESEARCHERS, TOURISTS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC BY IMPROVING ACCESS TO AUTHENTIC INFORMATION ON ODISHA'S TEMPLE HERITAGE, HE SAYS

EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEMPLE MANAGEMENT LAWS BY NEWLY APPOINTED OFFICERS CAN HELP RESOLVE MANY ISSUES SMOOTHLY, MINISTER OBSERVES

eral public by providing easier and wider access to authentic information on the state's rich temple heritage.

The minister said several laws govern temple management and related matters, and stressed that if newly appoint-

ed officers and employees study and implement these provisions effectively, many issues can be resolved smoothly. Emphasising the importance of training, he said such programmes help officials better understand their responsibilities while enhancing their efficiency and professionalism.

He added that many challenges faced by the Endowment Department can be effectively addressed at the grassroots level by field officers, and urged participants to apply the knowledge gained during the training to make the administration more transparent, accountable and efficient.

Addressing the programme, retired Justice AS Naidu advised officials to gain a clear understanding of endowment-related laws and procedures and apply them diligently in their day-to-day work.

Principal Secretary Pabitra Mohan Samal encouraged officials to carry out their duties with patience, integrity and a spirit of innovation while discharging government responsibilities.

Endowment Commissioner Lalatendu Jena delivered the welcome address, while Deputy Commissioner Dillip Kumar Satpathy proposed the vote of thanks.

Law department Additional Secretary Shiba Prasad Mohapatra, Odisha Secretariat Training Institute chairman Manoj Kumar Sarangi, and several senior departmental officers were present on the occasion.

# Man held in ₹30L TRAI-related cyber fraud

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** The Cyber Crime and Economic Offences Wing Tuesday arrested a man in connection with a digital fraud in which an elderly city resident was cheated of ₹30 lakh by fraudsters posing as Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) officials, police said. The accused has been identified as Gulipagi Chiranjeevi (38) of Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

According to police, the complainant said that November 6, 2025, his wife received a call from an unknown number claiming their SIM card was linked to criminal activity. The caller, posing as a TRAI official,



later transferred the call to individuals impersonating Mumbai Police officers.

The fraudsters conducted WhatsApp video calls, shared forged documents—including

a fake arrest warrant allegedly linked to an Enforcement Directorate case—and threatened immediate arrest. The couple was told to stay home, avoid contacting anyone, and

was coerced into transferring money for a supposed audit.

Out of fear, the complainant transferred ₹30 lakh from his SBI account to multiple bank accounts provided by the accused. Police arrested Gulipagi and seized two mobile phones, an ATM card, a cheque book, a PAN card, and an Aadhaar card from his possession.

Gulipagi was booked under Sections 127(4), 127(7), 308(2), 318(2), 318(4), 319(2), 336(2), 336(3), 338, 342 and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, along with Section 66(D) of the Information Technology Act, and was forwarded to court. Further investigation into the case is underway.

## Cuttack Stewart School celebrates 77th R-Day



**CUTTACK:** Stewart School, Cuttack, celebrated the 77th Republic Day with patriotic fervour. The programme began with a disciplined parade, followed by an invocation and prayer led by School Secretary RR Senapati. Principal D Martina welcomed and felicitated the guests, while the National Flag was unfurled by chief guest, High Court of Odisha senior advocate Gautam Mukherjee. Students took an oath and recited the Preamble, reaffirming their commitment to the Constitution of India. The occasion was graced by Diana Stewart, great-granddaughter of the late William Day Stewart, founder of Stewart School, and Sue Adey, whose presence added special significance to the celebrations. Diana addressed the gathering and announced the Diana Stewart Trophy for Service in the Community. The programme featured patriotic songs, cultural presentations, and student speeches. It concluded with prize distribution, a vote of thanks by Shilpa Sahu, Coordinator, Stewart School, and distribution of sweets, leaving a lasting message of unity, discipline, and national pride.

## DFO CONFERENCE

# Be extra vigilant during forest fires: Min

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** Minister for Forest, Environment and Climate Change (FE&CC) Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia Tuesday chaired a high-level Divisional Forest Officers (DFO) Conference here, expressing serious concern over the rising incidents of forest fires in the state in recent years. He directed forest officials in fire-prone divisions to remain extra vigilant and proactive.

Underscoring the need to balance forest conservation with livelihood, the minister emphasised the growing impact of climate change and instructed the department to realign its programmes accordingly in order to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for relocated villagers through schemes such as OFDSP.

Reviewing the issue of elephant deaths in state, the



minister called for better coordination with the Energy department and asked DFOs to maintain direct supervision over elephant movement tracking and field squad operations. In order to ensure environmental balance, the minister also stressed the need to improve air quality in industrial areas like Talcher and undertake large-scale plantation drives in districts such as Balasore. He also issued strict instructions for firm action against illegal mining and encroachment on forest land.

The meeting was attended

by department's Principal Secretary Bhaskar Jyoti Sharma, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force Suresh Pant, PCCF (Wildlife) P K Jha, PCCF (Kenduleaf) Uma Nanduri, along with other senior forest officials.

Sharma spoke on human-wildlife conflict mitigation, livelihood generation, and the need to expedite statutory clearance processes within the department. PCCF and HoFF Suresh Pant shared updates on the success of major afforestation initiatives, including 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign.

# Activists begin indefinite hunger strike over Gadakana dump yard



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** Members of the Save Sainik School and Remove Garbage Dump Campaign Tuesday staged an indefinite hunger strike in front of the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) office, demanding compensation for people affected by the illegal and toxic garbage dump yard at Gadakana.

The campaign had earlier appealed to the public to individually file compensation claims with the BMC for deaths, illnesses, and damages caused by the hazardous waste dumping. Residents from the severely affected areas of Dhirikuti and

VSS Nagar participated in the strike in large numbers.

Campaign members stated that despite prolonged protests, sit-ins, strikes, and hunger strikes over several years, the Odisha State Pollution Control Board has taken only delayed and minimal action. Instead of imposing penalties, it has merely issued warning letters to the BMC, granting time for legal compliance.

According to the campaign, prolonged exposure to toxic gases and pollution from the garbage dump has led to multiple deaths and numerous residents suffering from serious and life-threatening diseases. They demanded that the BMC provide adequate compensation to all affected individuals and families, particularly those living near Gadakana, who have borne the brunt of this environmental disaster.

# RPF dog detects 13 kg ganja at railway station; 2 arrested

MANOJ KUMAR JENA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** Two youths were arrested after an RPF squad canine detected 13 kg of ganja in their bags at Bhubaneswar railway station Tuesday morning, police said. The accused have been identified as Sahazad Gujjar (24) and Moshin Gujjar (20), both residents of Haryana.

According to police, the Bhubaneswar Railway Protection Force (RPF), along with the Government Railway Police (GRP) and a canine named 'Max' from the dog squad, were conducting routine patrolling at the railway station Tuesday morning.

The canine stopped and sniffed a bag carried by Sahazad and Moshin, then



started barking, which immediately raised the police's suspicion. Acting on this, the officers conducted a thorough search of the bag and discovered 13 kg of ganja,

following which the duo was arrested on the spot.

"The duo was travelling from Bhubaneswar to Delhi when our canine detected the ganja in their bag," said Bhubaneswar RPF station IIC Amaresh Behera. "Our specially trained canine squad plays a crucial role in identifying contraband and supporting us during routine patrolling as well as targeted operations, helping ensure the safe-

ty and security of passengers and railway premises," he said.

Further investigation into the case is currently underway to identify any possible links or accomplices.

# BMC cracks down on stale food at Khandagiri Mela



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** As part of a special enforcement and awareness drive, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and its SHINE team conducted an extensive inspection of food stalls at the ongoing Khandagiri Mela Tuesday to ensure food safety and hygiene standards.

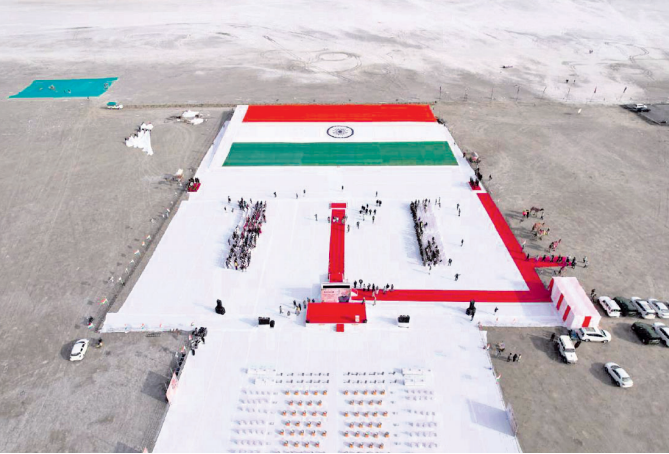
During the drive, officials inspected 70 eateries operating within the mela premises. The inspection uncovered multiple violations of food safety norms, including spoiled food, expired products, and items containing synthetic colours. Around 60 kilograms of such unsafe food were immediately seized and discarded to prevent health hazards to visitors.

In addition to enforcement, the team focused on raising awareness among vendors. Around 70 stalls were inspected, and their operators were educated on safe food handling, the risks of using synthetic colours, proper storage methods, and the importance of maintaining cleanliness at their establishments.

Officials warned vendors against repeating such violations and urged strict compliance with food safety regulations, emphasising that serving unhygienic or expired food could invite legal action.

"We will conduct these drives regularly to detect stale food and create awareness among eateries at the fair to prevent the sale of unsafe food," said BMC food safety officer Satyajit Patel.

# World's largest Khadi Tricolour displayed at Rann of Kutch



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhuj, Jan 27:** On the 77th Republic Day, the world's largest monumental national flag made of Khadi was displayed in a grand and dignified manner at Dhordo in the Rann of Kutch, in Gujarat's border district of Bhuj.

The special display was organised by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Chairman Manoj Kumar as the chief guest at the event. Senior officers and personnel of the Indi-

terprises (MSME), Government of India.

The gathering witnessed a powerful embodiment of the nation's unity, integrity and rich traditions. Khadi artisans from across the country also created a new record by saluting the world's largest Tricolour in Kutch through video messages.

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) Chairman Manoj Kumar was the chief guest at the event. Senior officers and personnel of the Indi-

CURRENCY

INDEX

VARIATION

DOLLAR

91.66

▲ 0.20

EURO

108.90

▲ 0.95

BOURSES

INDEX

VARIATION

SENSEX

81875.48

▲ 319.78

NIFTY

25175.40

▲ 126.75

COMMODITIES

INDEX

VARIATION

GOLD

₹158,239

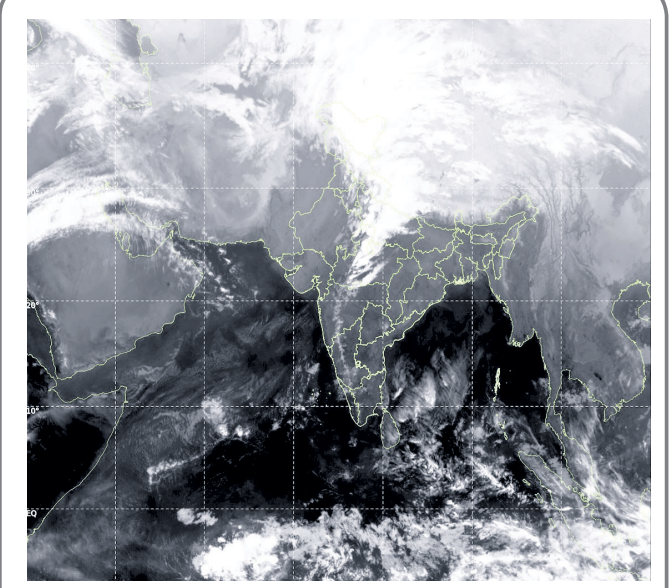
▲ ₹2202

SILVER

₹358,070

▲ ₹23,371





WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	31.7°	28.6°	Dry weather likely
Min Temp	14.6°	13.6°	
Humidity	83%	79%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	



# Man ends life after daughter faces ‘kangaroo court’ shame



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chandbali, Jan 27:** A man died by suicide after his daughter was allegedly subjected to public humiliation and harassment by a self-styled “kangaroo court” during an anti-liquor campaign in Bhadrak district, police said Tuesday.

According to the complaint, the incident occurred in Chada-

dia village under Bansada police limits, where women associated with self-help groups had launched a movement against the sale of illicit liquor in the area. The women allegedly accused the daughter of Lambodar Tarai, a resident of the village, of selling illicit liquor.

Members of the SHG reportedly vandalised a shop Monday suspected of selling illicit liquor

and later went to Tarai’s house, where they allegedly assaulted him and his daughter. Tarai’s daughter was then allegedly paraded along the road and made to stand in a local market from 6pm to 11pm, where a fine of ₹1 lakh was demanded.

Despite repeated apologies from Tarai and his daughter, the group allegedly refused to relent and finally demanded ₹30,000 as a penalty before allowing them to leave.

Unable to bear the humiliation and harassment, Tarai consumed poison later that night and died, police said.

Tarai’s son, Smrutiranjana Tarai, lodged a complaint at Bansada police station, alleging his father was drawn to end his life due to the illegal “kangaroo court” proceedings, said Sub-Divisional Police Officer Prabhas Sahu.

Bhadrak ASP Arup Abhishek Behera said one person was arrested in this connection, and the SDPO, Chandbali, has been directed to investigate the case.



**ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE:** Students of NIT-Rourkela, also members of Yoga Club, perform in an acrobatic show to mark Republic Day celebrations at its NCC Ground Monday

OP PHOTO

## Suspected bombing damages house in Ganjam’s Chhatrapur

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chhatrapur, Jan 27:** Suspected bombing by unknown miscreants created panic in Chikalkhandi under Chhatrapur police limits during the wee hours of Tuesday. As per the information, house of G Kammaraju Reddy was rocked after strong blast at the backyard of his house while family members were asleep.

While household items were destroyed due to the explosion, police suspect use of high-end explosive materials in it. The impact was so huge that the walls of the back portion of the house were collapsed. Electrical equipments, utensils, home appliances and other valuables have also been damaged because of the blast. However, no injuries have been reported in the incident.

A scientific team of experts, state bomb disposal squad and forensic department have reached the spot to collect samples to determine the materials used to prepare the bomb. Chhatrapur SDPO Chandan Kumar Ghadei along with IIC Sabyasaachi Malla said that although the residents have not claimed rifts with anyone, the angle of past enmity also cannot be ruled out. The police informed that further investigations are underway.

## Woman killed, 2 injured in wild boar attacks

POST NEWS NETWORK

**G Udayagiri, Jan 27:** Wild boar attacks claimed the life of an elderly woman and left two others seriously injured in separate incidents in the G Udayagiri area of Kandhamal district Tuesday, triggering panic among residents of nearby forest villages.

The deceased, Apsari Pradhan (60), of Kanabagiri village, was attacked while collecting firewood along with Niranjini Pradhan (60), in a forested area close to their village in the morning. The wild boar reportedly charged at the women without warning, inflicting severe injuries. Apsari suffered deep wounds on several parts of her body and collapsed at the spot, while Niranjini also sustained injuries.

Local villagers rushed the injured women to the G Udayagiri community health centre, where doctors administered first aid. Due to her critical condition, Apsari was referred



to the Phulbani district headquarters hospital. However, she succumbed to her injuries during treatment, hospital sources said.

In another incident later in the day, Sasmita Mallick (35), of Dakapala village was attacked by a wild boar near Srikala Ghat while returning home on a motorcycle with her husband, Bapi Mallick. The motorcycle reportedly developed a mechanical glitch and stopped midway. While inspecting the vehicle, a wild boar suddenly emerged from the nearby forest and attacked her. Local residents intervened and rescued the couple.

Sasmita and Niranjini are undergoing treatment at the G Udayagiri CHC and their condition is stated to be stable.

## Three arrested in triple murder case

**Hatadihi:** Police Tuesday arrested three persons in connection with the brutal murder of three members of a family at Nalijharan village in the Khaliamenta panchayat under Keonjhar’s Ghasipura police limits. The accused were identified as Laxman Soren, his brother Baidyanath Soren and Baidyanath’s son Sudam Soren. Anandapur DSP Kamal Kumar Panda said the murders took place Sunday and were triggered by a long-standing land dispute. According to police, the victims were Laxman’s brother Jitendra Soren, Jitendra’s wife Malati, and their 15-year-old daughter, Sasmita, who were allegedly hacked to death with sharp weapons. Further investigation is underway, police said.

## Koraput: 2 wagons of goods train derail

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Koraput, Jan 27:** Two wagons of a freight train derailed late Monday night on Koraput–Rayagada (KR) rail line, barely 200 metres from Koraput railway station, railway officials said.

The incident occurred near A-Cabin crossing on the down track when a freight train carrying iron ore from Kirandul was passing through the section. Two wagons slipped off the track, fell completely off the rails and were dragged for nearly 200 meters before coming to a halt. A special rescue and restoration team from Koraput railway station rushed to the spot and began recovery operations on a war footing. After the derailed wagons were brought back on to the track, repair work on the damaged section was taken up.

According to the railways, more than 200 personnel were engaged in the restoration work, which continued until around 4am, Tuesday.

Train services on the affected line resumed Tuesday morning after a successful trial run. The Samaleswari Express and the Intercity Express to Rourkela were the first passenger trains to pass through the section.

Station Master Balaram Muduli said trains will operate at reduced speed on the down track near the A-Cabin crossing until next week as a precautionary measure.

## Student electrocuted after flagpole touches live wire

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kujang, Jan 27:** A 14-year-old student died Monday evening after a flagpole came into contact with a high-voltage power line during Republic Day celebrations in Jagatsinghpur district, police said.

The victim, identified as Omprakash Dwivedi, was a Class X pupil at Kujang BB High School. He was originally from Teragaon in Kendrapara district and had been staying at his uncle’s home in Samagol village under Kujang police limits.

According to police, the incident occurred at a private coaching centre in Kujang market where a steel pipe had been used to hoist the national flag. The 11-kV power line runs less than a metre from the flag site. While the morning flag-hoisting went incident-less, Omprakash attempted to lower the flag by uprooting the pole in the afternoon. Unable to manage the weight of the steel pipe, he lost



control and it struck the over-head wire.

He sustained severe injuries on the spot. Local residents rushed him to Kujang community health centre, where doctors declared him dead.

Police seized the body and initially detained the coaching centre owner, Ashwini Nanda. However, later that night the boy’s grandfather, Rajkishore Dwivedi, submitted a written complaint to police declaring no one had sent his grandson to lower the flag and that no one was responsible for his death. Following the statement, police registered an unnatural death case (3/26) and released the coaching centre owner. The body was handed over to the family after post-mortem examination Tuesday.

The incident has sparked discussion in the locality, as the coaching centre owner is reportedly a close relative of the boy’s maternal family.

## Car-bike collision leaves two dead

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khamar, Jan 27:** Two motorcyclists were killed in a car-bike collision near Bhaluki Chhak under Khamar police limits in Pallahara of Angul district late Monday evening, police said.

The deceased were identified as Biswanath Naik, 21, son of Bijay Naik of Tambur village in Badasada panchayat under Khamar police limits, and Amit Naik, 22, son of Subal Naik of Arkil village under Rengali police limits in Kaniha block. The mishap occurred near Parachhata panchayat around 8pm when a car hit their motorcycle they were riding. Both were thrown off the bike and sustained severe injuries. They were rushed to Khamar hospital, where one was pronounced dead on arrival. The other was sent to Angul DHH in a 108 ambulance. However, he succumbed to his injuries at the hospital. They were reportedly on their way to attend a social function when the accident occurred.

Khamar IIC Arun Kumar Panda said police seized both the vehicles involved in the crash, arrested the car driver and produced him before a court.

## Female jumbo found dead; probe begins

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** A female wild elephant was found dead in a forest in Bolangir district Tuesday. Forest department officials said.

The carcass of the wild elephant was spotted by locals in Muribahal range of Bolangir forest division, who intimidated the Forest department personnel. After receiving information, local forest personnel rushed to the spot and launched an investigation, they said.

Speaking to media-persons, Siba Prasad Naik, range officer, Muribahal forest range, said the elephant was moving from Titilagarh to Muribahal forest area during the past few days. It was found dead Tuesday morning, he said.

While the exact cause of death remains undetermined, Naik said that a postmortem will be carried out to ascertain the cause and age of the animal.

## CM grants ₹4 lakh ex gratia for accident victim’s kin

**Hatadihi:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday announced ₹4 lakh in ex gratia assistance from the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund (CMRF) to the family of a man killed in a truck collision in Keonjhar district. As per reports, the victim, Anand Jena (58), of Bishnupur village under Hatadihi block had died Sunday after being hit by a Hyva truck.

Majhi expressed condolences to the bereaved family and sanctioned the relief amount within 24 hours of the incident. Protest that had erupted after the accident, was called off Monday following assurances of compensation and stricter checks on sand transportation. The owner of the killer truck has also provided ₹2.5 lakh to the victim’s family, Anandapur Sub-Collector Neelamadhab Suna and Nandipada police station officer-in-charge Dharmendra Shanti said. According to police, Jena was returning home on his bicycle from a local market when a Hyva truck heading toward a sand ghat hit him from behind and ran over him. Angry locals staged a road blockade by placing the body on the Hanuman Chhak road leading to the Bishnupur sand ghat, demanding compensation and action against illegal sand transport.

**GOVT. OF ODISHA**  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER**  
**RURAL WORKS DIVISION, NUAPADA**  
Email : rd\_nuapada@rediffmail.com  
**BID IDENTIFICATION NO. RWNPD - 08 (Online) of 2025-26**  
**“e” PROCUREMENT NOTICE**

No. 25001/5/2526 : Bid documents consisting of Work, Estimate Cost, Cost of tender Paper, EMD/BID security, Time of Completion, Class of Contractor and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. website i.e. [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

1. Name of the Work : Roads & Building works in the District of Nuapada as mentioned in DTGN, 2. Total No of Works : 20 Nos, 3. Estimated Cost : Rs.2.52 to 46.98 Lakhs (Roads & Building), 4. Period of Completion : 01 (One) Calendar month, 5. Other Details

Procurement officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender
		From	To		
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Nuapada	RWNPD-08/2025-26 (Online)	29.01.2026 at 10.00 A.M.	05.02.2026 upto 5.00 P.M.	04.02.2026 upto 05.00 P.M.	06.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)

OIPR-25001/250501/1/25-26/0005

Sd./- Executive Engineer  
Rural Works Division, Nuapada

**ADARSH SCHEME SECTION**  
**SCHEME FOR SANSKRIT PROMOTION**  
Under  
**CENTRAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY, DELHI**  
Established by an Act of Parliament  
56-57, Institutional Area, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058

Advertisement No. 01/2026

Dated 28.01.2026

**RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATION 01/2026**

The Central Sanskrit University, Delhi (CSU) is the nodal agency of the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India for implementing the Central Schemes of the Govt. of India for Sanskrit Promotion. Under one of the Central Schemes i.e. “The Scheme for Financial Assistance to Institutions Recognized as Adarsh Sanskrit Mahavidyalayas (ASMs)/Adarsh Sanskrit Shodh Sansthans (ASSSs) (Revised Adarsh Scheme-2022)”, various institutions have been recognised as ASMs/ASSSs, in different parts of the country, for financial assistance. In this context, under the provisions contained in this Scheme, applications are invited through online from Indian nationals for direct recruitment for the following Non-teaching/other academic posts in recognised ASMs/ASSSs located in various parts of the country :-

Name of the Posts & Level (as 7th CPC)	No. of Posts	Reservations, Eligibility, Qualifications, other necessary requirements
College Librarian (Level-10)	04	Details of Eligibility criteria. Qualifications, Age limit, Zone-wise Recruitment process. Institution-wise segregation of vacancies, reservation etc. and other essential requirements, application process etc. details are available in the detailed notification, which is available at CSU’s website <a href="http://www.sanskrit.nic.in">www.sanskrit.nic.in</a> under recruitment/notification heads and also available in the website of the concerned institutions.
Section Officer (Level-07)	01	
Assistant (Level-06)	15	
Professional Assistant (Level-06)	01	
UDC (Level-04)	02	
LDC (Level-02)	20	

The starting date of the application is 28.01.2026 and closing date of advertisement is 27.02.2026 by 11.30 P.M. (IST)

This advertisement is only a short notification, on behalf of 19 grantee Adarsh Institutions who are the appointing authority(s) for the concerned selected candidate(s). Accordingly, interested candidates are advised to go through the detailed advertisement for all necessary information.

cbc 21212/12/0004/2526

SD/- REGISTRAR I/c

## Important Announcement

## We are moving

Axis Bank’s branch in Orakel

will move to new location

from the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2026.

### Current address:

Axis Bank Ltd. Orakal Branch,  
First Floor, Plot No. 130, Village-Orakal, District-Khurda,  
Airfield Kapila Prasad, 751002, Odisha.

### New address:


Axis Bank Ltd. Orakal Branch,  
Plot No. 20, Vaishnomata Vihar, PO-Kuha,  
Botanda, 751002, Odisha.

We look forward to welcoming you.



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

SRI AUROBINDO



## Another Leak

Invariably US President Donald Trump says one thing and means something completely different has, by now, become clear to the world. But those in the Indian ruling establishment who still set store by his words or false promises need to sit up and redraw their strategy vis-à-vis the USA under Trump. This is the inescapable conclusion one can draw from the latest leak of a purported conversation between Senator Ted Cruz, the Texas Republican, and Trump. Cruz, regarded as a close ally of Trump, has such a stature in American politics that he is eyeing a 2028 White House run. As such his confidential exchanges with the US President and American business leaders do carry weight and it is of much concern for India as they refer to US trade policies for India. The Senator pilloried Vice President JD Vance and ridiculed Trump's tariff policy during private meetings with donors, according to recordings accessed by a media outlet.

Cruz's caustic remarks during two meetings last year are some of the harshest criticisms of Trump and Vance by a fellow Republican since they took office a year ago. The recordings have a duration of nearly 10 minutes in total, but they provide a glimpse into the way the US administration is working under Trump's presidency and its negative stand on US trade relations with India endorsed by Trump himself. During his talks Cruz described Vance as a pawn of conservative podcaster Tucker Carlson whom Cruz has accused of promoting anti-Semitism and an anti-Israel foreign policy. They were made in early and middle 2025.

Cruz warned donors that Trump's tariffs could prove disastrous for the US economy and lead to his impeachment. Cruz told them after Trump introduced the tariffs in early April 2025, he and a few other senators had a call with the PoTUS in which they urged him not to go ahead with his punitive tariff policy. Cruz admitted his long conversation, which stretched past midnight, "did not go well," and that Trump was "yelling" and "cursing," using unparliamentary language.

Cruz even cautioned Trump that his economic policies, including the tariff war, would affect the common man in the US in such a way that the Republican party would suffer "a bloodbath" in November 2026 when there would be a mid-term poll. He even told Trump that he was going to lose the Senate and there would be impeachment motions against him every single week for the next two years.

What concerns India most is the revelation that Vance and White House economic adviser Peter Navarro played a key role in blocking a proposed trade deal between Washington and New Delhi. Cruz told the donors that Trump himself "sometimes" intervened to stall the proposed US-India agreement. The report comes when India and the US are engaged in prolonged trade negotiations. The irony is Trump recently expressed confidence about the India-US Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) while speaking on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos. He even repeated his admiration for Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing him as "a fantastic man and a friend of mine." He then iterated that the two countries "are going to have a good deal." The formally proposed agreement aims to more than double bilateral trade from the current \$191 billion to \$500 billion by 2030. Talks were first announced during the PM's visit to Washington in February 2025. Several rounds of discussions have been held since then.

The leaked recordings indicate the US administration's real intent to merely dangle carrots before India, while the top leadership wants to block US trade with India. The current dispensation in Delhi and its sycophantic media display the tendency to gloat over every word of praise for the PM by Trump. It is time to shake off the illusion of favourable treatment from Trump and instead form trade ties with other countries, including the European Union which is ongoing with the EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyens currently being present in New Delhi. Here too, the EU seems to be getting the better of the deal. India has reportedly offered to lower tariffs to the tune of nearly Euro 4 billion and EU expects to double its exports to India. However, no one is heard speaking about the exports from India to the EU and what tariffs the EU will decrease, if any, on goods from India.

### WISDOM CORNER

Nothing is so great an example of bad manners as flattery. If you flatter all the company, you please none; if you flatter only one or two, you offend the rest.

JONATHAN SWIFT

Whoever loves becomes humble. Those who love have, so to speak, pawned a part of their narcissism.

SIGMUND FREUD

If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1813: Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice was published anonymously and enjoyed immediate success, thanks in part to the popularity of the central character, Elizabeth Bennet, who was reportedly Austen's own favorite among all her heroines.

1820: Fabian von Bellinghausen discovers the Antarctic. The Baltic German explorer is believed to be the first person to sight the Earth's southernmost continent.

1871: The French capital, Paris, fell following a four-month siege during the Franco-German War.

1881: Russian novelist and short-story writer Fyodor Dostoevsky, known for groundbreaking novels such as Crime and Punishment (1866) and The Brothers Karamazov (1879-80), died in St. Petersburg.

1958: Godtfred Kirk Christiansen, whose father founded the LEGO company in Denmark, filed for a Danish patent (later granted) for a toy building block that became hugely popular around the world.

1986: Challenger space shuttle catastrophically explodes. On this day in 1986, the U.S. space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after liftoff from Florida, killing all seven aboard, including high school teacher Christa McAuliffe, who had been chosen as the first American civilian to travel in space. After the disaster, NASA overhauled its space exploration program and added extra safeguards to its shuttles' rocket boosters.



Hippolyte Fofack

THE WEF HAS CHOSEN CONVENIENCE OVER SECURITY AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY BY ALLOWING TRUMP TO SET THE TERMS OF THE DEBATE

### IN JEST THIS

## The many awards I'd like to have



Melvin Durai

IF NEERAJ CHOPRA IS UNWILLING TO GIVE ME HIS SILVER MEDAL, I'D BEG HIM TO LEND IT TO ME FOR JUST 24 HOURS, LONG ENOUGH TO GET LOTS OF PHOTOS WITH THE MEDAL AROUND MY NECK

I've never been much of an athlete, but someday I'd like to wear an Olympic silver medal around my neck. I'd show it proudly to all my friends, saying, "It's mine, all mine. Did you ever think I'd have an Olympic silver medal in javelin?"

My friends would shake their heads in disbelief. "Amazing," one of them would say. "You can't even throw a butter knife across the room."

"That's true," I'd say. "But I still got this."

You may be wondering how I'd ever get myself an Olympic silver medal in javelin. Well, I hope to meet Neeraj Chopra one day and beg him to give me his. "You have a gold medal and a silver medal," I'd say. "Why do you need both? Once you have gold, anything less is meaningless. If you give me your silver medal, both of us can be proud."

If Chopra is unwilling to give me his silver medal, I'd beg him to lend it to me for

just 24 hours, long enough to get lots of photos with the medal around my neck. I'd post a photo on social media with this message: "If you can dream it, you can achieve it. Dreams do come true." I'd also frame a photo and pass it down to my grandchildren, so they can be proud of their grandpa. I know what you're thinking: "You can't just take someone else's medal. You have to earn it on your own."

That's not true anymore. After all, US President Donald Trump is now in possession of the Nobel Peace Prize that Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado won in 2025. Machado recently met Trump and handed him the prize. Trump had coveted it and was disappointed that the Nobel committee awarded it to Machado.

Machado placed the medal in a frame, along with these words: "To President Donald J. Trump. In recognition of extraordinary leadership

in promoting peace through strength, advancing diplomacy, and defending liberty and prosperity."

In a social media post, Trump called it "a wonderful gesture of mutual respect." Those are the same words I will write when Chopra gives me his silver medal.

The Nobel committee, of course, did not approve of Machado's actions. "Once a Nobel Prize is announced, it cannot be revoked, shared, or transferred to others," it said in a statement. "The decision is final and stands for all time."

But Trump obviously does not care about that. Rules are not for rulers. After all, people who visit Trump's home are just going to admire the medal. And Trump will be standing there proudly, saying, "Everybody knows I should have won it. Even the person who won it knows I should have won it. That's why she gave it to me."

I will say something similar when Neeraj Chopra gives me

collapse of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, which would eventually raise global sea levels by around 13 feet. Such a drastic rise would permanently alter coastlines and threaten low-lying communities and island countries. Similarly, exceeding the 1.5°C goal accelerates permafrost thaw, releasing large amounts of carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere – a process that reinforces global warming and cannot be reversed.

Ecosystems also face irreversible losses if the planet exceeds 1.5°C of warming. Coral reefs are projected to decline by 70-90% at that temperature, while the Amazon rainforest, one of the world's largest carbon sinks, risks becoming a carbon source, undermining natural mitigation efforts and further accelerating climate change. These changes could also have profound social consequences. Sea-level rise, for example, may wipe out coastal settlements, agricultural land, and freshwater resources, displacing communities and erasing cultural heritage.

Perhaps most importantly, surpassing 1.5°C locks future generations into managing a planet with higher climate risks and fewer adaptation options. More than diversifying energy sources, continuing the energy transition is essential for humanity's survival; ignoring this reality to appease Trump and humor his oil obsession is a dangerous game with global and intergenerational consequences.

As the window to act on climate change narrows and the global order continues to fragment, dialogue must foster cooperation, strengthen collective problem-solving, and emphasize equity and justice. Decisions on emissions reductions, adaptation, and climate finance inherently raise questions of responsibility, fairness, and burden-sharing between countries and within societies. But the WEF has chosen convenience over security and long-term sustainability by allowing Trump to set the terms of the debate.

The writer is a former chief economist at African Export-Import Bank.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

### FOCUS MULTILATERALISM

# STIFLING DIALOGUE

US President Donald Trump rose to power partly by positioning himself as a foil to global elites. But last week, he attended the World Economic Forum (WEF) – the quintessential gathering of the world's wealthiest and most powerful people – in Davos as the star guest. With the largest-ever US delegation in tow, Trump took his aggressive protectionism and transactional diplomacy to the global stage, shifting the debate and, in the process, increasing the risk of irreversible changes to the Earth system.

Instead of discussing issues such as fair taxation, sustainability, social justice, and the energy transition, as delegates have done in the past, they kowtowed to Trump. But Trump's remarks at Davos should erase any remaining doubt that normalizing his extreme policies and strident positions only encourages him to double down on the geopolitical chaos and uncertainty he is causing. In the last month alone, Trump has withdrawn the US from 66 international organizations, including two of the world's most important and oldest climate institutions – the 34-year-old UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which serves as the primary forum for climate negotiations, and the UN's 38-year-old Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which leads the science related to climate change. And just days before his trip to Davos, Trump stunned European leaders by threatening to impose punitive tariffs on allies that oppose his plan to seize Greenland from Denmark.

After more than a year of such wanton destruction and excessive use of unilateral measures to advance his "America First" agenda, trust – the lifeblood of multilateralism – has eroded, raising the risk of fragmentation and fueling instability. To mitigate these effects, sustain global growth, and promote shared prosperity, the WEF chose "A Spirit of Dialogue" as the theme for this year's meeting. It may be one of the best-attended yet, with more than



As the window to act on climate change narrows and the global order continues to fragment, dialogue must foster cooperation, strengthen collective problem-solving, and emphasize equity and justice

3,000 delegates from over 130 countries, including 64 heads of state and government.

Dialogue, of course, is essential to resolve disputes, prevent conflict escalation – especially in our great-power-rivalry world of heightening geopolitical tensions – and prepare for risks. According to the WEF's pre-Davos survey, the most severe risks over the next decade all relate to the climate emergency. But, to secure Trump's participation, the WEF agreed to avoid "woke" topics, including the energy transition and climate change. So much for a spirit of dialogue.

The agenda instead focused on, among other things, improving cooperation in a more contested world, unlocking new sources of growth, investing in people, responsibly deploying innovation at scale, and building prosperity within planetary boundaries. Technology – particularly how AI, quantum computing, and next-generation biotech and energy systems can drive economic and societal transformation – was a prominent theme.

The silence on climate change is as cynical as it is unsurprising. One of Trump's first acts in his second term was to withdraw the US from the Paris climate agreement. His administration later launched a major campaign to reverse US climate policy and expand fossil-fuel production. This has included halting the construc-

tion of offshore wind farms, slashing funding for renewable-energy projects, and working to repeal federal limits on greenhouse-gas emissions from power plants and vehicles.

Following Trump's "drill, baby, drill" mantra, the administration has declared a "national energy emergency" and authorized the expansion of domestic fossil-fuel production. This policy could reverse progress in the transition to renewable energy, which contributed about one-third of global electricity generation in 2024. It also brings the world closer to a climate catastrophe, especially after scientists revealed earlier this month that the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C is now on track to be breached by 2030, more than a decade earlier than expected at the time of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

As the world's largest historical and current emitter, the US economy's continued reliance on fossil fuels has repercussions for everyone else. It will cause trillions of dollars in damage, disproportionately affecting poorer countries, and could push global warming above the 1.5°C target set by the Paris climate agreement. Crossing this threshold significantly increases the risk of irreversible changes to Earth systems; once climate tipping points are passed, self-reinforcing processes are activated that cannot be reversed, even if temperatures later decline.

One such tipping point is the

### Trade diplomacy

Sir, The India-European Union Free Trade Agreement, concluded Tuesday after nearly two decades of negotiations, marks a decisive moment in global trade diplomacy. Covering nearly two billion people and accounting for a quarter of global GDP, the pact is being described as the "mother of all" trade agreements—not only for its vast scale, but for its strategic timing. As global supply chains recalibrate amid geopolitical rivalries and efforts to reduce dependence on China, the agreement firmly positions India as a central pillar in the emerging economic architecture. It reflects a shared resolve between New Delhi and Brussels to anchor trade in democratic, rules-based frameworks. From an economic standpoint, the agreement is potentially transformative. It eliminates tariffs on over 96 percent of EU exports to India while providing Indian goods preferential access to European markets, particularly in textiles, pharmaceuticals, engineering, and IT services. Indian exporters are projected to gain significantly over the coming decade, while consumers at home may benefit from more affordable European automobiles, electronics, and clean-energy technologies.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

### ICE outrage

Sir, A massive federal immigration crackdown, Operation Metro Surge, in Minneapolis has ignited widespread fury. ICE and Border Patrol agents' aggressive tactics led to the fatal shootings of US citizens, including 37-year-old ICU nurse Alex Pretti—killed amid a chaotic encounter while aiding others—and Renée Good earlier in January. Videos challenge official accounts, sparking massive protests with thousands demanding agent withdrawal and accountability. Minnesota Governor Tim Walz urged federal forces to exit the state, slamming their methods. Detentions escalated tensions, including children seized during raids, amid complaints of missing warrants, opacity, and civil rights violations. Critics demand humane, lawful policies with oversight over militarized sweeps. Indian nationals endure intensified checks and deportations. India confirms citizenship prior to repatriation, liaises with US officials for fair treatment, and is pressed to safeguard its migrants, students, and legal rights.

RS Narula, PATIALA



# Jharkhand set for civic polls

THE VOTING FOR THE CIVIC POLLS TO 48 URBAN LOCAL BODIES IN THE STATE WILL BE HELD IN A SINGLE PHASE FEBRUARY 23



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ranchi, Jan 27:** The Jharkhand State Election Commission (SEC) Tuesday announced that civic polls to 48 urban local bodies in the state, including Ranchi, will be held February 23.

The counting of votes will take place February 27.

“The voting for the civic polls to 48 urban local bodies in the state will be held in a single phase February 23,” State Election Commissioner Alka Tiwari said while issuing a notification in this regard.

The nomination process will start January 29 and will continue till February 4, she said.

The nominations will be scrutinised February 5, while candidates can withdraw their names till February 6. The symbols will be allotted February 7, she said.

Over 43.33 lakh voters, including 21.26 lakh women, are eligible to exercise their franchise in the elections to 1,087 wards in nine municipal cor-

porations, 20 nagar parishads and 19 nagar panchayats.

“The elections for the mayor or chairman posts, and ward councillors will be held directly, while the deputy mayors and vice chairmen will be elected indirectly,” Tiwari said.

ULB polls in Jharkhand are not contested on the electoral symbols of the political parties, but candidates are backed by the outfits.

In 2018, the ULB elections for the posts of mayor and deputy mayor of municipal corporations, and chairman and vice chairman of municipal councils, were held on party lines.

After coming to power in 2019, the Hemant Soren government changed the rules and decided to conduct the ULB polls on a non-party basis.

The Congress, a constituent of the JMM-led ruling alliance, and the main opposition BJP had demanded that the government hold the elections on a party basis.

The model code of conduct (MCC) across 48 urban local

bodies, excluding panchayats and cantonment areas, came into force after the issuance of the election notification.

The voting will be conducted using ballot papers and there will be no option for NOTA, Tiwari said.

She said proper security arrangements will be ensured to hold the polls peacefully at 4,304 polling booths.

“Of the total polling booths, 896 have been identified as hyper-sensitive and 2,445 as sensitive,” she added.

The commission has also fixed expenditure limits for the candidates contesting for the post of mayor or chairman and ward councilors in the elections.

According to the SEC notification, a candidate contesting for the post of mayor in municipal corporations having over 10 lakh population can spend up to Rs 25 lakh. The limit is Rs 15 lakh for the municipal corporations with a population of less than 10 lakh.

Similarly, the expenditure limit is between Rs 5 lakh and Rs 10 lakh for the candidates contesting for the post of chairman in nagar parishads and nagar panchayats based on the population size.

The candidates contesting for the posts of ward councilors can spend Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh based on the population size, it added.

The Jharkhand High Court had earlier slammed the state government over the delay in conducting the local body polls.

The commission, in November 2025, outlined before the high court a timeline of eight weeks for completing the formalities and issuing the notification for the election.

Elections to 14 ULBs have been due since May 2020, while polls to the remaining 34 ULBs have been due since April 2023.

All civic bodies are currently under the administrative control of government officials.



People arrive to take a holy dip at Sangam during the ongoing Magh Mela 2026, in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

## J'khand industrialist's son rescued from Hazaribag

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jamshedpur, Jan 27:** The son of a Jamshedpur-based industrialist, abducted January 13, was rescued from Barhi in Jharkhand's Hazaribag district in the early hours of Tuesday, police said.

Kairav (24), the son of Industrialist Devang Gandhi, was abducted while he was on his way to office in Adityapur industrial area of Seraikela-Kharswan district, they said.

“He was safely rescued by the Jamshedpur Police today, and sent home around 4:30 am,” SP (City) Kumar Sivashish told PTI.

The accused were planning to shift Kairav to another place, “owing to massive raids by the Jamshedpur Police”, an official statement said.

Accordingly, the police teams were alerted and deployed on the routes likely to have been used by the abductors, it said.

“Under mounting pressure from the police, the perpetrators set Kairav free on the road on the Chauparan-Barhi

section of Hazaribag and fled,” the statement said.

A manhunt is on to nab the culprits, it added.

Earlier, police had found Kairav's car from Kanderbedha area on National Highway-33 on the night of the incident.

Devang Gandhi, a resident of Bistupur, is also the vice-president of the Adityapur Small Industries Association (ASIA).

The local business community and politicians hailed the police for rescuing Kairav.

ASIA President Inder Agarwal said, “It was really a big achievement of the police. The police department has put in more than 100 per cent effort and taken all steps to trace Kairav back safely. He is well,” Agarwal told PTI.

Agarwal, who met the Gandhi family earlier in the day, said the association will decide about seeking proper security for industrialists and the busi-

ness community to check recurrence of such incidents.

President of Singhbhum Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Manav Kedia also expressed happiness over the safe return of Kairav.

“I had spoken to Devang Gandhi, who expressed his gratitude towards the efforts and support of the police department and SCCL,” Kedia said in a statement.

### HUB OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

## UP: ODOP GIVES NEW RECOGNITION TO CITIES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, Jan 27:** The One District One Product (ODOP), an ambitious initiative of the Uttar Pradesh government, has given new recognition to cities and towns by harnessing their inherent potential, thereby establishing a distinct identity of their own.

The scheme, launched in 2018, has gone a long way in unlocking myriad opportunities for the residents, and also making them a hub of economic activity.

The success of the ODOP model clearly reflects the state's export figures. In 2017, Uttar Pradesh's total exports stood at Rs 88,000 crore, of which ODOP products accounted for Rs 58,000 crore. By 2024, total exports had risen to Rs 1.86 lakh crore, with ODOP's share increasing to Rs 93,000 crore. This significant growth stands as strong evidence of the sustained institutional support extended to the ODOP ecosystem.

## UP inked deals worth ₹3L crore at WEF in Davos: Min Khanna

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, Jan 27:** The Uttar Pradesh government has signed agreements involving proposed investments of about Rs 3 lakh crore at the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in Davos, state Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna said Tuesday.

Briefing reporters on the state's participation at the WEF annual meeting held from January 19 to 22, Khanna said, “The state delegation held 119 meetings with global investors, including interactions with multinational companies, leading to MoUs worth Rs 3 lakh crore in multiple sectors.”

“This is a major achievement for Uttar Pradesh and reflects the confidence global investors have in the state,” he said.

Khanna said the largest MoU (memoranda of understanding) was signed with the Netherlands-based AM Green for an artificial intelligence-based one-gigawatt data transfer project, with an



estimated investment of around \$25 billion.

“This is the biggest MoU signed by Uttar Pradesh at Davos,” he added. The minister said that investment agreements were signed in sectors such as data centres, renewable energy and green hydrogen, besides defence, tourism, food processing, logistics and warehousing, electric vehicles, pharmaceuticals and healthcare manufacturing.

“Uttar Pradesh's image at Davos was extremely positive. There was a continuous crowd at our pavilion, showing strong interest in investing in the state,” Khanna said.

He attributed the positive response to Uttar Pradesh to improved air, road and rail connectivity and better infrastructure, as well as “clean, personal image” of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The finance minister said that companies from countries including the US, the UK, Sweden, Australia and Singapore participated in the discussions.

“Investors choose destinations based on facilities and competitiveness, and Uttar Pradesh has emerged strongly on that count,” he said.

Khanna said the Uttar Pradesh delegation that led the state at Davos included Finance Secretary Deepak Kumar, Chief Minister's Secretary Amit Singh, Invest UP CEO Vijay Kiran Anand and NEDA Director Indrajit Singh. He added that more investment proposals are expected to materialise “sooner or later”. Khanna said this was the third time the state participated in the WEF in Davos, Switzerland.

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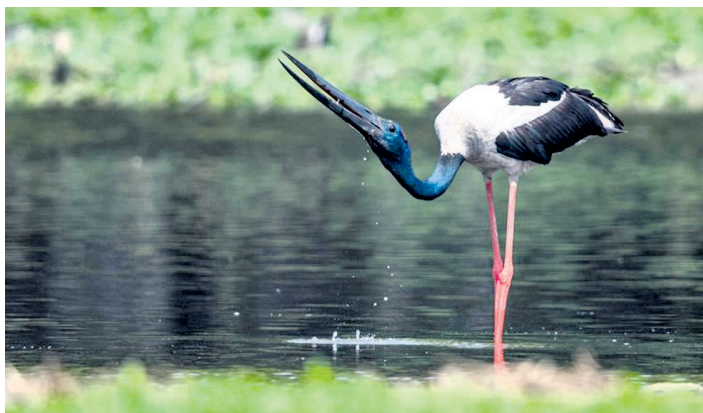
## 1,500 migratory, resident birds spotted at Jodhpur Jhal wetland

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mathura (UP), Jan 27:** Close to 1,500 migratory and resident birds -- from 72 wetland-dependent species and 11 endangered species -- were spotted at the Jodhpur Jhal wetland in Mathura district during a recent survey, experts said.

According to ecologist Dr K P Singh of Agra-based Biodiversity Research and Development Society, a non-governmental organisation, the Jodhpur Jhal wetland receives thousands of migratory birds belonging to more than 50 species every year.

“The birds fly to wetland and other areas of Mathura after clocking a distance of up to 9,000 kilometres on the Central Asian Flyway, which covers nearly 30 countries across Europe and



Asia. Bluethroat from Alaska, Common Pochard from Siberia, Bar-headed Goose from Mongolia, and Grey-headed Lapwing from Northern China are among the birds already arrived at the wetland,” Singh told PTI.

The birds take 30-50 days to travel from different parts of the Central Asian Flyway to the city, he said. “Migration is an important part of their life cycle. The interesting fact is that the primary consumers (herbivores) are fol-

lowed by the secondary animals (birds that feed on small animals) during migration,” he added.

Citing the Wetland International's Asian Waterbird Census 2026 conducted at Jodhpur Jhal January 18 jointly by the Biodiversity Research and Development Society, Uttar Pradesh Braj Teerth Vikas Parishad, and Social Forestry Division, Singh said that a total of 1,493 individual birds from 72 wetland-dependent species and 11 endangered species were identified.

It took more than three hours for a team of eight experts led by Singh and Forest SI Amit Diwakar to cover an area of 80 hectares, including the adjoining canals, to conduct the survey. Among the wetland-dependent birds, 32 were identified as migratory species, while 40 were resident species.

### EAST COAST RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. ST-SBP-TENDER-2026-03, Dt: 22.01.2026

**Name of the Work: SIGNAL & TELECOM WORKS CORRESPONDING TO: (1) PROVISION OF ELECTRICAL LIFTING BARRIER IN PLACE OF EXISTING MLB AT 03 INTERLOCKED LEVEL CROSSING GATES OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION, (2) PROVISION OF AXLE COUNTER IN GIRDER BRIDGES AND ISS IN PARALLEL TO DC TRACK CIRCUIT OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION.**

**Tender Value: ₹ 3,98,68,072.88, Bid Security: ₹ 3,49,400/-**

**Tender closing date & time: at 11:00 hrs. of 16.02.2026**

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.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

**Note:** The prospective tenderers are advised to visit 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)/ Sambalpur**  
PR-1052/Q/25-26

### S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

**Tender Notice No. : e-Tender/2026/02.**

For and on behalf of President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur-721301 invites e-Tender for the following works before 15:00hrs. on the date mentioned against items and will be opened at 15:30hrs. **Sl. No., Tender No. & Description of Work** are as follows : (1) **E-KGP-West-01-2026**, Supply and unloading of 1,90,274 cum 50 mm gauge hard stone machine crushed ballast and loading the same into Railway's wagons/hoppers at Pakur/Taljhari/Barharwa Depot for Kharagpur Division. **Tender Value : ₹ 39,09,72,702.42. Earnest Money: ₹ 21,04,900/-** (2) **E-KGP-West-02-2026**, Improvement and upgradation of existing subway at LC No. 120, 129 and 130 near Ghatsila & Rakhamines station under the jurisdiction of ADEN/Jhargram. **Tender Value : ₹ 2,29,30,541.97. Earnest Money: ₹ 2,64,700/-** (3) **E-KGP-East-01-2026**, Supply and unloading of 1,80,691 cum 50 mm gauge hard stone machine crushed ballast and loading the same into Railway's wagons/hoppers at Bakudih/Raigam Pinargaria Depot for Kharagpur Division. **Tender Value : ₹ 36,43,65,499.04. Earnest Money: ₹ 19,71,800/-**

**Tender Document Cost : ₹ 0 for each. Date of Opening : 12.02.2026 for each. Completion Period of the work : 18 months for Sl. No. 1 & 3 and 12 months for Sl. No. 2. Bidding Start Date: For Sl. No. 1 to 3 from 29.01.2026 and up to 15:00 hrs. on 12.02.2026. Interested tenderers may visit website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for full details/ descriptions/specifications of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these works will be accepted. N.B.: Prospective bidders may regularly visit “[www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)” to participate in all tenders.** (PR-1093)

### OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL: G.UDAYAGIRI

No.287

Date:22.01.2026

#### “e” Tender Notice

**Bid Identification No.GUDGR-NAC-02/2025-26**

No.C-2165:Bid Documents consisting of work, Estimated 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](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in).

- Name of the works : As per DTCN
- No. of Works : 1 No.
- Estimated Cost : Rs.87.34 Lakh
- Period of Completion : As per DTCN
- Class of Contractor : As per DTCN
- Date & Time of availability of bid : Dt.23.01.2026 at 09.00 A.M. to documents in the portal : Dt.07.02.2026 upto 5.00 P.M.
- Last date & time for submitting : Dt.07.02.2026 upto 5.00 P.M. online Bid
- Bids shall be opened on : Dt.09.02.2026 at 10.00 A.M.
- Bid shall be evaluated on : Dt.10.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M.
- Name and address of the officer inviting bid : Executive Officer, N.A.C. G.Udayagiri

Further details can be seen from the procurement portal i.e. [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)

**Sd./- Executive Officer**  
**N.A.C. G. Udayagiri**

OIPR-

### Government of Odisha “e” procurement Notice

**Bid Identification No. TENDER ONLINE**

**No.O-2147 SNPR - 13 OF 2025-26**

**Letter No. 607 Dated : 22.01.2026**

- Name of the Work : Road Works as per DTCN available in the website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)
- Total No. of Work : 11 (Eleven) Nos.
- Approximate Estimated Cost : Vary from Rs.5.94 lakh to Rs.54.20 lakh
- Period of Completion : 1 (One Calendar month)
- Period and time of availability of bid document in the portal for Bidding : 29.01.2026 at 11.00 A.M. to 09.02.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.
- Date and time of opening of Tender : 10.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M. (Technical Bid) & (Financial Bid will be intimated later on)
- Name and address of the officer inviting Bid : S.E., R.W. Division, Sonapur

- (1) Other details can be seen from detailed notice
- (2) Inviting tenders, available in website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)
- (3) Corrigendum if any shall only be published in the website : [www.tenderodisha.gov.in](http://www.tenderodisha.gov.in)

**Sd./- Executive Engineer**  
**Rural Works Division, Sonapur**

OIPR-

### OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

**RURAL WORKS DIVISION-II, GANJAM, BHERAMPUR**

Phone : 0680-2404096, E-Mail : [eerwgmt@yahoo.co.in](mailto:eerwgmt@yahoo.co.in)

**No.O-2065 Government of Odisha e-Procurement Notice**

**Bid Identification No. Online Tender/26/SERWD-II/2025-26**

**Memo No.339/RWD-IGB, Date : 13.01.2026**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Name of the Work   | : Road Works  |
| 2 Estimated Cost   | : Rs.29.41 to 42.02 Lakhs   |
| 3 Period of Completion                                       | : 1 (One) Month as per Annexure                                       |
| 4 Date & Time of availability of Bid documents in the Portal | : 28.01.2026 at 10.00 A.M. to 04.02.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.              |
| 5 Last Date/Time for receipt of Bids in the Portal           | : 04.02.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.  |
| 6 Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid               | : Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division-II, Ganjam, Bherampur |

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal [tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgep/app](http://tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgep/app)

**Sd./- Executive Engineer**  
**R.W. Division-II, Ganjam Bherampur**

OIPR-

### GOVT. OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, NAYAGARH

At/PO-Nabaghanpur, Dist.-Nayagarh, Ph-06753-252049, E-Mail : [nayagarhrw2006@yahoo.in](mailto:nayagarhrw2006@yahoo.in)

**No : Tender-Online-Nayagarh Divn.-11/2025-26** **Date :**

#### e-Procurement Notice

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Name of the work  | : Road works  |
| 2. Total No. of Projects                                     | : 02 (Two) Nos. of projects   |
| 3. Class of contractor                                       | : B Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities  |
| a) Estimated cost above Rs 20.00 Lakhs & up to Rs 3.00 Crore | : C Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities. |
| b) Estimated cost up to Rs.40.00 Lakhs                       | : D Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities. |
| c) Estimated cost up to Rs.20.00 Lakhs                       | : Rs.16.95 Lakhs & Rs.42.37 lakhs   |
| 4. Estimated cost put to tender                              | : 01 (One) calendar month   |
| 5. Time for completion                                       |   |
| 6. Other details   |   |

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding		Date & Time of opening of tender
1	2	3	4	5
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Nayagarh	No : Tender-Online-Divn. Nayagarh-11/2025-26	28.01.2026 at 10.00 A.M.	07.02.2026 upto 5.30 P.M.	09.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

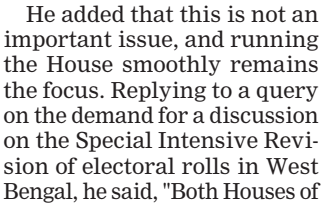
**Sd./- Executive Engineer**  
**Rural Works Division, Nayagarh**

OIPR-



ing Chas (in Bokaro district of Jharkhand) and Purulia (in West Bengal) under Pindrajora police station limits, police said. Pindrajora police station Officer-in-Charge, Abhishek Ranjan, said that the trailer driver fled after the mishap, but police have caught the cleaner of the trailer, who has admitted that the driver was drunk.

He said opposition MPs put forth several issues, and these can be raised during debate on the President's ad-

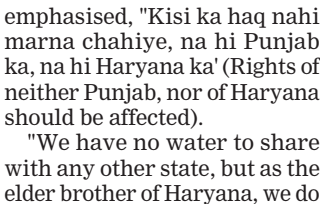


Parliament had extensive discussions on electoral reforms in the last session, where this issue was also raised by the opposition. This is uncalled for if another debate is demanded."

Rijji appealed that members should raise their issues but there should not be any ruckus.

"My sincere appeal on behalf of the government to all honourable members is that in our Parliamentary democracy, we have been elected to represent the people and to speak for the people. While exercising our right to speak, we must also have the duty to listen to the members of other political parties," he said.

Mann also stated that there should be a resolution to the long-pending issue, though he



not want to draw daggers with our neighbouring state and seek early resolution of this long-pending issue," Mann said.

"Punjab has no surplus water to share with any other state," Mann said, adding, "Not even a single drop of Punjab's rightful water can be allowed to be taken away."

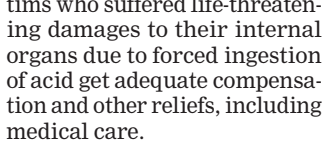
An official statement quoting Mann said that the SYL canal is an emotive issue for Punjab and added, "The state will face serious law and order problems if it is imposed."

Mann said, "Punjab is the elder brother, and both states are here to find an amicable solution to this controversial issue."

**New Delhi, Jan 27:** Batting for “extraordinary” punitive measures for convicts in acid attack cases, the Supreme Court Tuesday asked the Centre to consider amending the law to sternly deal with such cases on the lines of dowry death matters, where the onus of proving innocence lies on the accused.

The top court also asked all states and Union territories to provide a slew of information, including the year-wise details of the number of acid attack cases, their status in courts, besides the rehabilitation measures to support the victims.

A bench comprising Chief



The bench referred to inadequate punishment handed down to the convicts of acid attack cases and said, "You have to take extra-ordinary punitive

measures unless the punishment is painful for the accused, such offences are hardly going to stop reformatory punishment theory has no place here".

“Why can’t assets of the accused be attached?” the CJI asked, adding that deterrence is needed and something like attaching the assets of the accused can be thought of to compensate victims.

The bench asked Additional Solicitor General Archana Pathak Dave, representing the Centre, that some legislative intervention might be necessary from the Centre to make the punishment stringent.

The CJI also suggested a reversal of onus of proof, like in dowry death cases. “Think of some legislative intervention... this is not less serious than dowry death alone,” he said. Issuing certain directions, the

bench gave four weeks to states and UTs and asked them to provide information about the number of appeals filed in appellate courts, including high courts, in acid attack cases.

The bench asked them to also provide brief particulars of each victim, her academic qualification, employment and marital status and the medical treatment and the expenses incurred or to be incurred.

It also asked states and UTs to provide details about the rehabilitation scheme for such victims.


The bench also asked them to provide details of the cases where victims are forced to ingest acid.



of the day

quote

Some people are trying to incite riots for electoral gains. But we have to live together for 365 days. This Bengal belongs to everyone. I can assure you that Bengal is for all. This is your motherland



MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

After presenting the rich heritage of young Jharkhand, its immense possibilities, and our resolve for development in harmony with nature at the World Economic Forum in Davos and in the United Kingdom, I have returned today to Ranchi, among my own people



HEMANT SOREN | JHARKHAND CM

Yes, we are trying to steal the votes of the Miyas. They should not vote in our country but in Bangladesh. We are making arrangements to ensure that they do not vote in Assam



HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

POST OF THE DAY

SC angry. ST angry. OBC angry. Minorities angry. Students angry. Middle class angry. Small traders angry. Unemployed angry. Farmers angry. Gig workers angry. Now GC angry against UGC guidelines. Then who is voting for BJP on ground?

@Politicx2029

SHORT TAKES

Nine workers stranded in Mir Alam lake rescued

**Hyderabad:** Battling darkness and adverse conditions, the HYDRAA rescued nine workers and engineers stranded in the middle of Mir Alam Lake after their boat engine failed, officials said. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy Tuesday lauded the Hyderabad Disaster Response Force and Asset Protection Agency personnel for saving the lives of those trapped. Officials said the workers and engineers had entered the crocodile-inhabited lake Sunday to conduct soil testing for a proposed bridge. While returning in the evening, their boat engine malfunctioned, leaving them stranded.

Woman kills son after quarrel with husband

**Pune:** In a chilling incident, a woman Tuesday morning allegedly killed her 11-year-old son and attacked her daughter following a quarrel with the alcohol-addicted husband, police said. Soni Jaybhay, resident of Wagholi area of the city, was arrested. "The couple lived in a rented accommodation. As per preliminary probe, her husband, a Poclain machine operator, was addicted to alcohol and did not pay attention to the children, leading to quarrels," said an official of Lonikand police station.

Gujarat resident who escaped Nepal jail held

**Ahmedabad:** An Ahmedabad resident, who escaped a Nepalese prison during the 'Gen Z' protests while facing drug charges, was arrested by Gujarat Police, officials said Tuesday. The Special Operations Group (SOG) of the crime branch tracked down the accused, Dharmesh Chunara, following a coordinated effort involving technical surveillance and human intelligence.

India & EU clinch 'mother of all deals'

*The two sides also inked two crucial pacts -- one on security and defence collaboration and another on mobility of Indian talents to Europe -- after Prime Minister Modi hosted EU leaders Ursula von der Leyen and Antonio Costa for summit talks amid frosty ties with the US*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 27:** India and the European Union Tuesday sealed a landmark free trade agreement- billed as the "mother of all deals" -- to create a market of two billion people with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the top EU leadership unveiling a transformative agenda to leverage trade and defence in protecting the rules-based world order.

The two sides also inked two crucial pacts -- one on security and defence collaboration and another on mobility of Indian talents to Europe -- after Prime Minister Modi hosted EU leaders Ursula von der Leyen and Antonio Costa for summit talks amid frosty ties with the US.

The free trade agreement that will account for almost a quarter of the global GDP will reduce tariffs on 99 per cent of Indian exports to the EU and cut duties on over 97 per cent of the EU's exports to India, according to officials.

The EU estimated that the deal will cut up to four billion euros in annual tariffs for European exporters. Indian sectors



such as textiles, apparel, leather goods, handicrafts, footwear and marine products are set to gain from the FTA, while Europe is set to benefit in areas of wine, automobiles, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, among others.

Under the provisions of the pact, the EU's wine exports will benefit significantly as the current duties of 150 per cent will see a sharp cut and the new levies will be in the range of 20 per cent to 30 per cent.

In line with their vision for a rules-based global order, India and the 27-nation bloc also rolled out a joint comprehensive strategic agenda for the next five years and firmed up a total of 13 pacts including one on the conclusion of negotiations for the FTA.

In his remarks, Modi said the global order is undergoing "profound turbulence" and, in such a context, the partnership between India and the EU will strengthen stability in the international system.

The finalisation of the trade deal came nearly two decades after the two sides began negotiations on it. It may take at least six months to formally sign the deal as it will require

**"We believe that global challenges require collective solutions and we believe that international institutions must be reformed, not weakened, so that they can adapt to contemporary realities"**



DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT

ture and a trust-based platform for cooperation on the strategic issues that matter most. In doing so, we will help to build each other's resilience," she added.

It is widely believed that the frosty ties that India and Europe have experienced with the Trump administration resulted in a new urgency to conclude the FTA.

In his remarks, European Council President Costa said the key agreements signed between the two sides will reinforce the rules-based global order.

In a multi-polar world, Costa added, the European Union and India are working together to grow spheres of shared prosperity.

In his comments, Modi said the India-EU comprehensive strategic agenda will provide a "clear direction" and advance shared prosperity by accelerating innovation, strengthening security cooperation, and deepening people-to-people ties.

The European Council president also reiterated Europe's long-held position on Ukraine. "Peace will not come out of a clash of arms, but out of justice lived and done by unarmed nations in the face of odds."

"Our summit reaffirmed our commitment to supporting efforts towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, one that fully respects Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity," he said.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said the outcomes reached at the summit are "deeply strategic in nature" and each of them has specific significance in the overall scheme of things.

'DK, DK' chants leave Siddaramaiah fuming



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, Jan 27:** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Tuesday lost his cool and shouted at some Youth Congress workers who started raising slogans in favour of Deputy CM D K Shivakumar during a protest rally in the city.

Siddaramaiah, along with Shivakumar, Congress general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala, ministers, MPs and legislators took part in the protest condemning replacing Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) with a new rural employment scheme Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajivika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G).

As soon as the chief minister rose from his chair to address the gathering, Congress workers started shouting "DK, DK". The sloganeering grew louder and louder as he reached the podium to deliver his speech.

Annoyed, the chief minister shouted at the Congress workers asking them to keep quiet, but they did not heed.

"Who are those shouting 'DK, DK'," an angry Siddaramaiah

As soon as the chief minister rose from his chair to address the gathering, Congress workers started shouting "DK, DK"

The sloganeering grew louder and louder as he reached the podium to deliver his speech

asked the Congress leaders.

The compere told the crowd, "The Youth Congress leaders should keep quiet. The chief minister is addressing. We know who you are. Listen to the CM silently."

They (workers) tried to interrupt Siddaramaiah even after he started his speech.

The ruling Congress in Karnataka has been a witness to the power tussle between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar and several party MLAs and MLCs have lobbied on behalf of the Deputy Chief Minister.

Both Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar have said they would abide by the party high command's decision.

Siddaramaiah also said he has full faith that he would complete the five years term and that the high command is on his side.

BRO rescues 60, including 40 soldiers, from snowbound Doda



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jammu, Jan 27:** As many as 60 persons, including 40 soldiers of a Rashtriya Rifles unit, were rescued by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) after they were stranded in a snowbound area in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district, a defence spokesman said Tuesday.

The BRO successfully carried out the high-altitude rescue and road restoration operation under Project Sampark at Chatergala Pass situated at an altitude of 10,500 ft in the Bharderwah-Chatergala axis, the spokesman said in a statement.

He said the 118 Road Construction Company (RCC) of 35 Border Roads Task Force (BRTF) began the operation on January 24, a day after heavy snowfall which continued for nearly 40 hours, clearing approximately 38 km of road covered under five to six feet of snow. The route was opened by

January 25 evening, enabling safe evacuation of 20 stranded civilians and 40 personnel of the 4 Rashtriya Rifles (RR), along with weapons and stores, the spokesman said.

The rescue mission was completed by early hours of January 26 with zero casualties, underscoring the professionalism of BRO personnel operating in the challenging high-altitude terrain amid extreme weather conditions, the statement said.

Meanwhile, the spokesman said the BRO also restored connectivity of strategic roads in the Kandi-Kotranka area of Rajouri district.

Following a spell of heavy snowfall in the Rajouri-Kandi-Budhal area Tuesday, the BRO undertook immediate and sustained snow clearance operations to restore vital road connectivity in the region. The snow cover, measuring up to three feet, had disrupted movement along a critical road stretch in the Pir Panjal region, cutting off the Kandi-Kotranka sub division from Rajouri town, the spokesman said, adding that the intense snowfall had disrupted military and civilians movement, including medical emergency services.

Banking ops impacted as unions observe strike

**New Delhi:** Banking operations at public sector banks across the country were impacted Tuesday as the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) went on nationwide strike demanding the immediate implementation of a five-day work week. The strike call by the UFBU, an umbrella body of nine unions representing officers and employees, comes after a conciliation meeting with the Chief Labour Commissioner January 23 failed to yield a positive outcome. "Since there was no positive outcome and the government did not agree to our demand, hence this strike is forced on us. Bank employees and officers are highly aggrieved that they alone are being discriminated against," All India Bank Employees Association (AIBEA), a constituent of UFBU, general secretary C H Venkatachalam told PTI. Most branches of public sector banks across the country were either completely closed or partially closed as both employees and officers were observing Tuesday's strike. Services such as cash deposits, withdrawals, cheque clearances, and administrative work are hit at branches of all public sector banks (PSBs) and some old generation private sector banks.



Caste enumeration to be done in 2nd phase of Census 2027: MHA



**New Delhi:** The caste enumeration under Census 2027 will be carried out during the second phase of the population count that will begin in February 2027 across the country, except in snowbound regions non-synchronous areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, where it will take place in September, 2026, the home ministry clarified Tuesday. Referring to a government statement issued earlier, the Ministry of Home Affairs said the complete information about Census 2027 has been released through a press note December 12, 2025. "Yet, some people are deliberately trying to spread confusion regarding

Census-2027 and especially the caste census. It has already been clarified that Census-2027 will be conducted in two phases, in which caste enumeration will be done in the second phase," it said. It said Census 2027, like the previous censuses, is being conducted in two phases -- the first stage is known as houselisting and housing census, and the second stage is the population census.

GST officer quits over Shankaracharya's Adityanath remarks

**Ayodhya (UP):** GST Deputy Commissioner Prashant Kumar Singh Tuesday resigned in protest against Shankaracharya Avimukteshwaranand's "objectionable" remarks against Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Singh said he was deeply hurt by what he described as recent attempts to divide the country on the basis of caste and religion, allegedly emanating from the holy land of Prayagraj. Singh said he was stepping down in support of the government, the Constitution and the country's elected leadership. "Over the past few days, there have been despicable attempts to divide the nation based on caste and religion from the sacred land of Prayagraj. I am deeply pained by this," Singh said. Singh said he took this decision in support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and the Constitution of India. "I have resigned in support of the honourable prime minister, honourable chief minister and honourable home minister and in support of the Constitution of India," he said. Singh referred to statements made by Shankaracharya Avimukteshwaranand against CM Adityanath. "From the holy land of Prayagraj, Shankaracharya Avimukteshwaranand has made objectionable remarks against our state's elected leader, who is constitutionally holding the post," he said.



Flyover narrows from 4 lanes to 2, draws criticism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Jan 27:** A newly-constructed flyover at Mira-Bhayandar near Mumbai that narrows midway from four lanes to two lanes has drawn criticism, raising questions on planning, traffic flow, and commuter safety.

The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA), which built it, Tuesday said the transition from four lanes to two lanes is a planned feature and not a structural or design flaw.

Reacting to the viral video of the flyover which has drawn criticism and mockery on social media, the authorities claimed it was the result of space constraints. MMRDA, which is the nodal planning and development body for the Mumbai metropol-

itan region, has constructed the double-decker flyover in Bhayandar. After aerial footage of the structure began to circulate on social media, some users ridiculed the planning and expressed fear that the design could lead to traffic snarls, if not accidents. It also reminded some users of the 'faulty design' of the Rail Over Bridge in Bhopal with an unusual 90-degree turn, which prompted the Madhya Pradesh government to suspend seven engineers, including two chief engineers of the Public Works Department.

"See the design of upcoming ₹100 crore double decker flyover in Mumbai. Four lanes suddenly narrow into just two lanes. Just imagine the ride at night. Engineering marvel at best," wrote X handle @IndianGems\_, which



shared the video of the Bhayandar flyover.

The X handle of the Congress, too, weighed in, targeting BJP governments. "Engineering miracle in Maharashtra....May it be Madhya Pradesh or Maharashtra, such life-threatening miracles have become common under BJP government," said

the post in Hindi.

The MMRDA said the flyover does not narrow down suddenly, and the transition from four lanes to two lanes was designed keeping in mind the width constraints and future planning requirements. "As per planning, the flyover has been designed with two lanes for Bhayandar

Reacting to the viral video of the flyover which has drawn criticism and mockery on social media, the authorities claimed it was the result of space constraints

East and two future connecting lanes for Bhayandar West," the state-run authority said in a statement, adding that since the Bhayandar East arm comes first along the alignment, the four-lane configuration currently transitions into two lanes. The two lanes on the outer side are planned as part of future exten-

sion towards Bhayandar West across the Western Railway line, it said.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray took a dig at the MMRDA's post, and said people must not make fun of the authority and the team that designed this masterpiece. "Next year, another MoU on teaching this design to other countries. The bridge will be complete by the timeline of everything else that was promised- 2047." "What stupidity can lead to this spurt in such horrid designs- the 2 lanes, reducing from 4 suddenly and the MMRDA defending this stupid, if not corrupt practice," Thackeray said. The former Maharashtra minister said the MMRDA could have at least designed it better to smoothen the transition into two lanes.



of the day

quote

China and its President Xi Jinping have the opportunity to bring about an end to Russia's war in Ukraine by influencing President Vladimir Putin and reducing cooperation



PETTERI ORPO | PRIME MINISTER, FINLAND

The world has drastically changed and our main ally has become highly unpredictable



PHILIPPE BAPTISTE | MINISTER, FRANCE

Spain to grant legal status to thousands of immigrants lacking permission



ELMA SAIZ | MINISTER OF MIGRATION, SPAIN

SHORT TAKES

Russia withdrawing troops from Syria

**Qamishli (Syria):** Russian forces have begun pulling out of positions in northeast Syria in an area still controlled by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces after the group lost most of its territory in an offensive by government forces. Associated Press journalists visited one base next to the Qamishli airport Tuesday and found it guarded by SDF fighters who said the Russians had begun moving their equipment out in recent days. Inside what had been living quarters for the soldiers was largely empty, with scattered items left behind, including workout equipment, protein powder and some clothing. Ahmed Ali, an SDF fighter deployed at the facility, said the Russian forces began evacuating their positions around the airport five or six days ago, withdrawing their equipment via a cargo plane.

Spain to pay \$24mn to victims of train crash

**Madrid:** Spain will pay out 20 million euros (\$24 million) in compensation to the victims of last week's high-speed train crash that killed 45 people and left more than 150 injured, Transport Minister Oscar Puente said Tuesday. The nation is still reeling from the January 18 disaster in Adamuz near the southern city of Cordoba that caused one of the highest death tolls from a train crash in recent European history and the highest in Spain since 2013. The families of those killed will receive 216,000 euros each within no more than three months, made up of 72,000 euros in tax-exempt aid from the government and an advance insurance payment of 72,000 euros. Another 72,000 euros will be paid from passengers' mandatory travel insurance.

Norway parl approves \$2 billion artillery plan

**Oslo:** Norway's parliament Tuesday approved a \$2 billion procurement plan for long-range artillery to boost the NATO country's deterrence against Russia in the Arctic, where the two nations share a border. European countries are in the midst of hiking defence spending, under pressure to do so by the administration of US President Donald Trump and unnerved by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "These are weapons that can reach far behind enemy lines... this is decisive in modern warfare," Peter Froelich, the defence policy spokesperson for the opposition Conservatives, told parliament Tuesday. Norwegian daily Aftenposten, citing anonymous sources, January 24 reported that the government has selected South Korean defence contractor Hanwha Aerospace's Chunmoo artillery system, beating US Lockheed Martin's HIMARS.



It is such a huge milestone in India's history and reminds us that the world's democracy continues to thrive, the mother of all democracies

LINDSAY HOYLE | SPEAKER, UK

Meta, TikTok, YT face landmark trial over youth addiction claims

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Jan 27: Three of the world's biggest tech companies face a landmark trial in Los Angeles starting this week over claims that their platforms – Meta's Instagram, ByteDance's TikTok and Google's YouTube - deliberately addict and harm children.

Jury selection starts this week in the Los Angeles County Superior Court. It's the first time the companies will argue their case before a jury, and the outcome could have profound effects on their businesses and how they will handle children using their platforms.

The selection process is expected to take at least a few days, with 75 potential jurors questioned each day through at least Thursday. A fourth company named in the lawsuit, Snapchat parent company Snap Inc, settled the case last week for an undisclosed sum.

At the core of the case is a 19-year-old identified only by the initials "KGM", whose case could determine how thousands of other, similar lawsuits against social media companies will play out.

She and two other plaintiffs have been selected for bellwether trials - essentially test cases for both sides to see how their arguments play out before a jury and what damages, if any, may be awarded, said Clay Calvert, a nonresident senior fellow of technology policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

KGM claims that her use of social media from an early age addicted her to the technology and exacerbated depression and suicidal thoughts. Importantly, the lawsuit claims that this was done through deliberate design choices made by companies that sought to make their platforms more addictive to children to boost profits.

US judge warns ICE chief with contempt



REUTERS

Washington, Jan 27: The chief judge of Minnesota's federal court ordered the acting chief of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement to appear in court Friday to personally explain why that agency has not complied with dozens of court orders in recent weeks.

In a filing late Monday, Chief Judge Patrick Schiltz said acting ICE director Todd Lyons must explain why he should not be held in contempt after his agency missed a deadline to provide a detainee with a bond hearing.

"This court has been extremely patient with respondents, even though respondents decided to send thousands of agents to Minnesota to detain aliens without making any provision for dealing with the hundreds of habeas petitions and other lawsuits that were sure to result," Schiltz wrote. "The court's patience is at an end."

The Department of Homeland Security, which includes ICE, was not immediately available for comment Tuesday. Schiltz said he will cancel Friday's hearing if the detainee is released. The judge, who sits in Minneapolis, was appointed to the bench by Republican President George W. Bush.

Schiltz's order came as protesters complain about ICE's tactics to advance President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown.

ICE agents shot and killed two US citizens, Renee Good



US ICE agents to support security at Winter Olympics in Italy

**Rome:** US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) personnel will help protect US delegations at the Winter Olympics in Italy, a US embassy source said Tuesday, confirming local media reports and prompting anger among some Italian politicians. ICE and Border Patrol agents have come under heavy criticism in the United States over their enforcement of President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown after two US citizens were shot dead in separate incidents this month in the state of Minnesota. The embassy source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said ICE's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) division would back up the US State Department's security service at the February 6-22 Milano Cortina Winter Olympics. The HSI agents will not carry out any immigration enforcement activity while in Italy but will rather aim to "mitigate risks from transnational criminal organizations", the source said, without elaborating. "All security operations remain under Italian authority," the source added. However, some Italian politicians, including the leader of one of the parties in the right-wing coalition of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, an ally of Trump, have criticised the involvement of ICE in next month's Games. "It seems sheer idiocy to me," Maurizio Lupi, leader of the Noi Moderati party in Meloni's governing coalition, told la Repubblica daily, while recognising that Italian law enforcement bodies may need to coordinate with foreign counterparts.

and Alex Pretti, in separate enforcement actions in Minneapolis this month.

Nobody is safe: China's Xi targets close ally in purge

REUTERS

Beijing/Washington, Jan 27: China's investigation into its top general is taking President Xi Jinping's years-long corruption purge into his innermost circle, underlining that even close personal ties do not offer protection when it comes to loyalty to the party leadership.

China experts said Xi's move against his long-term ally and Politburo member Gen. Zhang Youxia also concentrates even more power in the president's hands, makes the already secretive command of China's military more opaque, and suggests that a near-term attack on Taiwan is less likely.

"Zhang's removal means that truly nobody in the leadership is safe now," said Jonathan Czin of the Washington-based Brookings Institution, who called the investigation "astounding".

Czin, who spent years as a top China analyst for the Central Intelligence Agency and, in 2021-2023, served as the director for China at the United States National Security Council, added that the probe marked a "profound shift" in Chinese politics. The change is remarkable as past purges targeted people who may have had some overlap with Xi but lacked strong personal ties. This time around, the purge has crossed into what Czin has described as the "asteroid belt" of Xi's political solar system.

Both Xi and Zhang are princelings, children of former senior officers. The 75-year-old general was initially expected to retire in 2022, but Xi kept him on the Central Military Commission (CMC), the Chinese military's top leadership body, for a third term, underscoring



their closeness.

The defence ministry announced a probe Saturday in to Zhang - second-in-command under Xi as senior vice-chairman of the CMC - "for suspected serious violations of discipline and law". The military was one of the main targets of a broad corruption crackdown ordered by Xi after coming to power in 2012. The purges reached its elite Rocket Force, which oversees nuclear weapons as well as conventional missiles, in 2023. Two former defence ministers were also purged from the ruling Communist Party in recent years for corruption.

"I think corruption concerns are probably real, though those are typically more a pretext to remove someone in Chinese politics," said Czin, citing how deeply entrenched graft was before Xi's campaign.

Another senior member, Liu Zhenli, chief of staff of the CMC's Joint Staff Department, was also placed under investigation, effectively shrinking the seven-member body into two, with Xi at the top.

"Xi has eviscerated the People's Liberation Army (PLA) top brass like no leader before

Starmer heads to China

REUTERS

London, Jan 27: Prime Minister Keir Starmer will fly to China Tuesday on the first visit by a British leader in eight years, in a bid to mend ties with the world's second-largest economy and reduce its dependence on an increasingly unpredictable United States.

Starmer is the latest western leader to visit China, and his trip comes amid tensions between Britain and its long-standing closest ally - the United States - over President Donald Trump's threats to take control of Greenland.

On a three-day visit accompanied by dozens of business executives and two ministers, Starmer will meet with Chinese leaders in Beijing and then travel to Shanghai, before a brief visit to Japan.

"At the forefront of the visit 'will be what both sides make of the current behaviour and posture of the US and Trump,'" said Kerry Brown, professor of Chinese studies at King's Col-



lege London. "One of the great anomalies of the current situation is that London is probably closer to Beijing than Washington" on some global issues like AI, public health and the environment.

Since being elected in 2024, Starmer has made it one of his priorities to reset ties with China following a deterioration in relations under previous governments because of rows over Beijing's crackdown on pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong, a former British colony, and multiple allegations of espionage and cyberattacks.

NK launches ballistic missiles into sea

*The launches were the first time North Korea fired weapons since testing what it called hypersonic missiles in early January*

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, Jan 27: North Korea launched short-range ballistic missiles toward its eastern waters Tuesday, according to its neighbours, as the North heightens animosities with rival South Korea ahead of a major political meeting.

South Korea's military said it detected liftoffs of several ballistic missiles from an area northeast of the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, before the missiles each flew about 350 kilometres (217 miles).

Japan's Defence Ministry said two ballistic missiles launched from North Korea landed off the eastern coast of the Korean Peninsula. The min-



istry condemned the launches as a threat to the peace of Japan, the region and the international community.

South Korea's military said it maintains a firm readiness to repel any provocations by North Korea.

The launches were the first time North Korea fired weapons since testing what it called hypersonic missiles in early January. In December, the country test-fired what it called long-range, strategic cruise missiles and new anti-air missiles

and released photos showing the apparent construction of its first nuclear-powered submarine.

North Korea has engaged in a run of weapons launches to enlarge its nuclear and missile arsenals since talks with the US and South Korea stalled in 2019. Experts say the North's leader, Kim Jong Un, believes a bigger weapons arsenal would give him greater leverage to win concessions from the US.

North Korea's recent displays were likely meant to demonstrate or review its weap-

INSIDE STARBUCKS' SUPPLY STRUGGLES

AI glitches, scattered suppliers, sandwich shortages

REUTERS

New York, Jan 27: Four Starbucks CEOs over five years have blamed lost sales on its struggle to keep its thousands of US stores reliably stocked with coffeehouse essentials like milk, pastries, and cup lids.

Current CEO Brian Niccol has made fixing the shortages a main measure of his turn-around campaign.

But shortages at Starbucks are a more deeply rooted problem than has been publicly reported. And Niccol's ongoing efforts to keep shelves stocked have so far met with limited success as he encounters outdated technology and a splin-

tered network of suppliers, according to Reuters interviews with 10 current and former Starbucks corporate employees, including senior managers.

Reuters also reviewed on-line videos showing glitches in Starbucks' latest AI inventory technology, as well as previously unreported photographs provided by baristas of excessive shipments.

"We've been transparent about the opportunities in our supply chain, and our transformation plans. We're modernizing systems with AI-ready platforms, strengthening demand forecasting, and making our distribution network more agile so the right products reach



the right coffeehouses each day. This work is already improving reliability for our partners and customers," Starbucks said in a statement.

Supply chain experts say one of the most critical measures of a supply chain's reliability is how often delivery trucks arrive at the right time and

AI-powered tool miscalculates inventory-workers

Outdated systems limit Starbucks' ability to manage inventory

CEO Niccol has blamed product shortages for lost sales

Starbucks said shortages are improving

with the full amount of products. The goal is 95% or more, said Douglas Kent, executive vice president of the nonprofit Association for Supply Chain Management, and rates less than that indicate dysfunction.

In early 2024, less than a third of truck deliveries to Starbucks' distribution centers – compa-

ny facilities that supply stores – were unloaded on time and included the full amount of the milks, pastries and other products, according to two former employees with direct knowledge of the company's supply chain. Employees involved in logistics blamed Starbucks' failure to coordinate its many suppliers. Issues continued into at least late 2025, said two former employees who left around that time.

Starbucks' share price is up about 5% since Niccol took over in September 2024, outperforming a 1% increase in Reuters' US Restaurant Index but underperforming a 26% gain in the S&P 500 Index.



of the day

quote

We're not going to live in a world where the strongest put tariffs on everyone else. We're going to live in a world where we believe in free trade, where we believe in trusted relationships

TIM HODGSON | CANADA'S MINISTER OF ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES

The European Union has come in with a new set of proposals on steel, and we have agreed in good faith to work together towards a very preferential treatment as a free trade agreement (FTA) partner so that India gets a better deal than most other countries with whom the EU does not have an FTA

PYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

We will continue our focus on value addition to customers through local production and competitive pricing, making world-class vehicles in India, for Indian customers

SANTOSH IYER | MERCEDES-BENZ INDIA MD AND CEO

SHORT TAKES

Marico profit up 13.3% to ₹460cr

**New Delhi:** Homegrown FMCG major Marico Ltd Tuesday reported a 13.3 per cent rise in consolidated profit to ₹460 crore for the December quarter, led by a high single-digit volume growth from the Indian market. It had posted a net profit of ₹406 crore in the October-December period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing by Marico. However, Marico's consolidated revenue from operations rose 26.6 per cent to ₹3,537 crore in the December quarter of FY26. It was at ₹2,794 crore in the corresponding period a year ago. This revenue growth was led by an "underlying volume growth of 8 per cent in the India business and constant currency growth of 21 per cent in international business", said an earnings statement from Marico, which owns popular brands like Saffola, Parachute, and Livon.

Asian Paints profit down 4.8%

**New Delhi:** Asian Paints Tuesday reported a decline of 4.83 per cent in consolidated net profit at ₹1,073.92 crore in the December quarter of FY26 on a year-on-year basis on account of exceptional items as implementation of the new labour code and impairment of loss in a subsidiary. The company had logged a net profit of ₹1,128.43 crore during the October-December period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing by Asian Paints. Its revenue from operations rose 3.71 per cent to ₹8,867.02 crore in the December quarter of FY26 from ₹8,549.44 crore in the corresponding period a year ago. Asian Paints had reported exceptional expenses of ₹157.61 crore.

Adani, Embraer to set up aircraft facility

**New Delhi:** Adani Group and Brazilian major Embraer Tuesday announced a strategic collaboration that aims to set up a regional aircraft manufacturing facility in India, a significant boost for the country's indigenous manufacturing capabilities. India is one of the world's fastest growing civil aviation markets and the partnership will look to help enhance air connectivity to Tier 2 and 3 cities. Officials of Adani Defence & Aerospace and Embraer inked the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the strategic collaboration on regional transport aircraft in India at a function at the civil aviation ministry in the national capital on Tuesday.

Gold soars to record ₹1.66L; silver at lifetime high of ₹3.7L

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 27:** Gold and silver prices dazzled in the national capital Tuesday, with both precious metals vaulting to uncharted highs, driven by strong investor demand and a global rally amid rising geopolitical and trade tensions.

According to marketmen, gold of 99.9 per cent purity increased ₹7,300, or 4.6 per cent, to touch an all-time high of ₹1,66,000 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). The yellow metal had closed at ₹1,58,700 per 10 grams Friday.

Silver continued its remarkable performance, outperforming gold for yet another session in the bullion markets. The white metal skyrocketed by ₹40,500, or 12.3 per cent, to hit a new peak of ₹3,70,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes).

The metal had settled at ₹3,29,500 per kilogram in the previous market session.

"Silver in the domestic market has scaled another record high of ₹3,70,000 per kg, supported by strong safe-haven demand amid rising trade and geopolitical tensions," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst, Com-



modities at HDFC Securities, said. According to FOREX.com, silver prices extended their rally, with spot prices soaring USD 8.55, or 8.24 per cent, to USD 112.41 per ounce in the international market.

The white metal had surged by USD 14.42, or 14 per cent, to touch a new peak of USD 117.73 per ounce in the previous session.

"Silver is additionally benefiting from robust industrial demand alongside investment flows. The white metal prices in the near-term may see bouts of profit-booking and consolidation, but the broader

bias remains positive as long as global risk sentiment stays fragile and the dollar remains under pressure," Gaurav Garg, Research Analyst at Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

Silver prices crossed the crucial USD 100 per ounce level for the first time Friday in the overseas market, reinforcing investor appetite for the safe-haven asset.

Gold also extended its upward momentum in the global markets, with the metal gaining for the seventh consecutive day. It appreciated by USD 79.13, or 1.58 per cent, to USD 5,087.48 per ounce.

SER celebrates 77th Republic Day



Anil Kumar Mishra, General Manager, South Eastern Railway, inspecting the Parade on the occasion of 77th Republic Day celebrations at SER Headquarters, Garden Reach.

and the freight revenue for this period amounts to ₹13,432 crore. The General Manager added that in order to increase operational capacity, 55km of doubling/3rd line work has been completed so far this year. A cultural programme on patriotic theme was organised on the occasion. The programme was presented by the SER Headquarters Cultural Team and members of SER Bharat Scouts and Guides. Republic Day was also celebrated at the Divisional Offices at Kharagpur, Adra, Chakradharpur and Ranchi.

OHPC observes 77th Republic Day

**Bhubaneswar:** Odisha Hydro Power Corporation Ltd. (OHPC) celebrated the 77th Republic Day on January 26 across its Corporate Office, Training Centre, and units with due solemnity and patriotic spirit. At the Corporate Office, the National Flag was unfurled by Pranab Kumar Mohanty, Director (Finance), in the presence of Amiya Kumar Mohanty, Director (Operation), along with senior officers and staff. The National Flag was unfurled by Amiya Kumar Mohanty, Director (Operation) at the OHPC Training Centre, Chandaka. The occasion was marked by a deep sense of reverence for the ideals of the Constitution and the democratic ethos of the nation. To commemorate the historic occasion, hand flags and tricolour badges were distributed among employees, fostering a spirit of unity, pride, and devotion to the nation. The observance of the Republic Day reflected OHPC's unwavering commitment to upholding constitutional values and contributing meaningfully to the socio-economic development of the country.



PM Surya Ghar Yojana benefits households while supporting India's clean energy goals. TPCODL remains committed to enabling and encouraging such sustainable initiatives across Central Odisha."

TPCODL honours Green Champions on R-Day

**Bhubaneswar:** TP Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL) celebrated the 77th Republic Day with patriotic fervour, reaffirming its commitment to nation-building and sustainable development. The National Flag was hoisted by Arvind Singh, CEO, TPCODL, in the presence of senior officials and employees at the corporate office. As part of the celebrations, TPCODL honoured 30 'Green Champions', environment-conscious consumers who have adopted rooftop solar under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (Utility-Led Aggregation-ULA model). These consumers have installed 1 kW solar systems, availed subsidies and significantly reduced their electricity bills. By embracing clean energy, they have set an example of sustainable living and inspired wider community participation in environmental protection and energy self-reliance. The honoured champions included five consumers from each operational circle and five from the corporate office. Speaking on the occasion, Arvind Singh, CEO, TPCODL, said, "The transition to clean energy begins with informed and responsible choices by citizens. Our Green Champions exemplify how adopting rooftop solar under the

EU steps in to ensure Google gives rivals access to AI services, data

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Brussels, Jan 27:** The European Union said Tuesday it's stepping in to make sure Google gives rival AI companies and search engines access to Gemini AI services and data as required by the bloc's flagship digital rulebook.

The executive arm of the 27-nation bloc said it was opening up so-called "specification proceedings" to ensure that Google complies with the sweeping Digital Markets Act, which requires Big Tech companies to give smaller players

equal access to hardware and software features.

Brussels said part of the proceedings will specify how Google should give third-party AI companies "equally effective access to the same features" available through its own services.

The EU will also look at whether Google is giving competing search engines fair and reasonable access to Google Search data. This will include whether AI chatbot providers are eligible to access the data.

The proceedings fall short of an investigation and must wrap up in six months with



EU-India FTA to unlock trade, investment avenues: Industry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 27:** The "game-changer" free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the European Union (EU) is set to unlock significant trade and investment opportunities for the country in the high-potential market of the 27-nation bloc, which remained untapped and boost India's export competitiveness, industry bodies said Tuesday.

The European Union and India on Tuesday announced the conclusion of negotiations for the free trade agreement (FTA) here.

CII Director General Chandrajit Banerjee said the landmark agreement represents a strategic breakthrough in India's global trade engagement and significantly deepens the partnership between two major democracies and economies that together account for nearly 25 per cent of global GDP.

"The unprecedented preferential access secured for over 99 per cent of Indian exports is a game-changer for Indian industry. It decisively improves competitiveness in the EU's high-value market, anchors Indian manufacturers and service providers deeper into global value chains, and accelerates investment, technology inflows, and scale," Banerjee stated.

According to him, key sectors of focus include textiles and apparel, leather and footwear, gems and jewellery, marine products, engineering goods, automobiles, agriculture and processed foods, IT and IT-enabled services, and other business and professional services.

FICCI President Anant Goenka said, "The European Union represents the most expansive and high-potential market covered under India's recent FTA engagements, opening new avenues for deeper economic collaboration. The India-EU FTA is poised to unlock substantial untapped trade and investment opportunities, enabling deeper market access, stronger value-chain integration, and enhanced export competitiveness across manufacturing and high-value sectors."

Renault brings back its iconic Duster

**Chennai, Jan 27:** Renault India, a wholly owned subsidiary of Renault Group, Tuesday unveiled the new Renault Duster, marking the return of a nameplate that helped establish the mid-size SUV category in the country. New Renault Duster preserves rugged, adventure-first character while advancing in areas critical to Indian SUV buyers: design, powertrain technology, comfort, safety and ownership experience. True to its iconic image, new Renault Duster was unveiled in a first in industry event witnessing a gathering of over 15,000 people along with Gang of Dusters community making a resounding comeback at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Chennai. New Renault Duster marks the first product unveil under Renault Group's International Game Plan in India, where the brand is prioritizing targeted investment and product expansion as part of a broader global strategy "As part of the Renault International Game Plan 2027, we are making India a

Sensex up 319 pts on buying in bank stocks



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Jan 27:** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended higher in highly volatile trade Tuesday, buoyed by heavy buying in bank and metal stocks, a firm trend in global markets and optimism over India-EU FTA.

However, muted corporate earnings growth and continued flight of foreign capital from Indian equities restricted the gains, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 319.78 points, or 0.39 per cent, to settle at 81,857.48. During the day, it hit a high of 82,084.92 and a low of 81,088.59.

The 50-share NSE Nifty surged 126.75 points or 0.51 per cent to end at 25,175.40.

"India's FTA with the EU, which accounts for 25 per cent of global GDP and 33 per cent of global trade, is a major breakthrough, particularly in the context of the prolonged India-US trade deal. Indian equities continued to trade with a measured and cautious undertone. The finalisation of the India-European Union bilateral trade agreement lent some support to investor sentiment amid a broader risk-off environment triggered by US tariff measures. However, sustained selling by foreign portfolio investors and muted third-quarter corporate earnings growth capped any meaningful upside in domestic equities," Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

From the 30-Sensex firms, Adani Ports, Axis Bank, Tata Steel, Tech Mahindra, NTPC, State Bank of India, UltraTech

Cement and Bharat Electronics were among the biggest gainers.

Axis Bank jumped over 4 per cent after the firm reported a 4 per cent growth in its December quarter net profit to ₹7,010.65 crore against ₹6,742.99 crore in the year-ago period.

In contrast, Mahindra & Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Asian Paints, Eternal and ITC were among the laggards.

India and Europe Tuesday announced the sealing of an ambitious FTA -- billed as "mother of all deals" -- that came against the backdrop of a fractious global environment and trade disruptions largely caused by Washington's policy on tariffs.

"It is important to understand that India has a trade surplus of USD 45 billion with the US but only USD 25 billion with the EU. Therefore, even while celebrating this India-EU deal, we should tirelessly pursue the US-India deal, which India badly needs. Also, this India-EU deal will become operational only in early 2027," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Among sectoral indices, metal jumped 3.11 per cent, services (1.96 per cent), commodities (1.87 per cent), PSU Bank (1.76 per cent), Private Banks index (1.08 per cent), utilities (0.93 per cent) and oil & gas (0.92 per cent).

Consumer Durables declined 1.18 per cent, consumer discretionary (0.68 per cent) and FMCG (0.48 per cent).

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, dipped 0.15 per cent to USD 65.49 per barrel.



key pillar of our growth outside Europe. We now have a strong ecosystem in Chennai, bringing together design, engineering, manufacturing, and local operations at the highest level - making India one of the most complete and powerful hubs in Renault's global network. Today, we have the means to fully

support our ambitions in India, to better understand customer expectations, and to deliver products truly adapted to this market. The new Renault Duster is the first step in Renault's renewal in India," said Fabrice Cambolive, Chief Growth Officer Renault Group & CEO Renault brand.

draft measures that Brussels will impose on Google.

Clare Kelly, Google's senior competition counsel, said she was concerned about the reasons behind the procedure.

"Android is open by design, and we're already licensing Search data to competitors under the DMA," Kelly said in a statement. "However, we are concerned that further rules, which are often driven by competitor grievances rather than the interest of consumers, will compromise user privacy, security, and innovation."

Teresa Ribera, who oversees

competition affairs as executive vice president of the European Commission, says it seeks to "maximise the potential and the benefits of this profound technological shift by making sure the playing field is open and fair, not tilted in favour of the largest few."

The move adds EU pressure on Google, which is facing antitrust scrutiny after the bloc's regulators last year started investigating whether the company gave itself an unfair advantage through the use of online content for its AI models and services.



HOCKEY INDIA LEAGUE

Kalinga Lancers clinch title at home



**A brace from Alexander Hendrickx, backed by Dilpreet Singh's goal, ensured a narrow 3-2 victory for the hosts against Ranchi Royals**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 27:** Vedanta Kalinga Lancers were crowned Hockey India League (HIL) champions after they defeated Ranchi Royals 3-2 in a thrilling summit clash in front of home fans at the Kalinga Stadium, here Monday.

Alexander Hendrickx (4th, 27th) struck a brace while Dilpreet Singh (25th) scored the other goal for the Lancers.

Arajjeet Singh Hundal (9th) and captain Tom Boon (59th) were the goal-scorers for Ranchi Royals.

HIL handed a prize money of Rs 3 crore to champions Vedanta Kalinga Lancers, Rs 2 crore for the runner-up Ranchi Royals and Rs 1 crore to the third-place team Hyderabad Toofans,

who defeated HIL GC 4-3 earlier in the day.

HIL GC were awarded the Fairplay Award.

Tamil Nadu Dragons goalkeeper Prince Deep Singh won the Best Goalkeeper of the Tournament and Talem Priyobarta of HIL GC earned the Upcoming Player of the Tournament award, with both players receiving Rs 10 lakh each.

Ranchi Royals' captain Tom Boon won the Top Scorer of the Tournament with 19 goals to his name and was awarded Rs 10 lakh, while Hyderabad Toofans' Amandeep Lakra was crowned the Player of the Tournament and was presented Rs 20 lakh.

In the final, both teams started the first quarter strongly by creating an array of circle entries and chances, determined to score early goals.

Kalinga Lancers were awarded back-to-back penalty corners in the fourth minute and Hendrickx converted with a powerful drag-flick past the Ranchi Royals goalkeeper.

However, the lead lasted only for a few minutes as the Royals equalised with an impressive field goal.

**H**yderabad Toofans' Amandeep Lakra was crowned the Player of the Tournament and was presented Rs 20 lakh

**R**anchi Royals' captain Tom Boon won the Top Scorer of the Tournament with 19 goals to his name and was awarded Rs 10 lakh

**T**amil Nadu Dragons goalkeeper Prince Deep Singh won the Best Goalkeeper of the Tournament and Talem Priyobarta of HIL GC earned the Upcoming Player of the Tournament award, with both players receiving Rs 10 lakh each

Lancers claimed the men's HIL title.

In the third-place match, Amandeep Lakra (30th, 53rd) bagged a brace while Nilakanta Sharma (24th) and Jacob Anderson (33rd) also got on the scoresheet for the Hyderabad Toofans to grab the bronze for them. Sam Ward (14th, 52nd) scored twice with Kane Russell (55th) also found the target for HIL GC.



**Four weeks to build a bond and shape a team is a very short time, and it is extremely challenging. That's why we are incredibly proud of what we have achieved. I believe we have done it very well—we have created a good, solid unit, and in the end, that was reflected on the pitch**

ARTHUR VAN DOREN | CAPTAIN, KALINGA LANCERS



Amit Rohidas



Amandeep Lakra



Anmol Ekka



Prasant Barla

and the ongoing season — a living bridge between two eras of Odisha hockey. From a young defender finding his feet in 2013 to a seasoned international anchoring the backline for the Accord Tamil Nadu Dragons in 2025-26, his career traces the same upward curve as his home state's hockey fortunes.

As crowded Kalinga Hockey Stadium in Bhubaneswar celebrate the Men's Hero HIL final leg this season, the surge in Odisha players offers a quieter but powerful narrative running parallel to the goals and results, and if the trend continues, this season's figure may soon look like just another stepping stone.

U-19 WORLD CUP

India crush Zim by 204 runs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bulawayo, Jan 27:** Young middle-order batter Vihaan Malhotra showed admirable composure to rediscover his touch and compile a fine century, while Abhigyan Kundu extended his sublime run of form as India stormed to a commanding 204-run victory over Zimbabwe in their opening Super Six match of the U-19 World Cup here Tuesday.

India, after an all-win group-stage campaign in which they emphatically defeated the USA, Bangladesh, and New Zealand, continued their aggressive brand of cricket to pile up a mammoth 352 for 8.

The innings was anchored by Malhotra's cautious yet confident unbeaten 109 (107 balls, 7x4) while Kundu chipped in with a fluent 61 (62 balls, 5x4, 1x6), as the hapless Zimbabwe bowlers were taken apart with alarming ease.

India now have six points and are on top of Group 2 of the Super Six. India carried four points into the Super Six, having beaten New Zealand and Bangladesh, the other teams to have qualified. Since USA didn't qualify, India's points weren't carried over.

India's dominance was evident as they brought up their first 100 in just 62 balls, with batting prodigy Vaibhav Suryavanshi leading the charge. India's bowlers took centre-stage to turn the game.

**Brief scores:** India 352 for 8 in 50 overs (Vaibhav Suryavanshi 52, Vihaan Malhotra 109 not out, Abhigyan Kundu 61; Panashe Mazai 2/86, Tatenda Chimugoro 3/49, Simbarashe Mudzengerere 2/51) beat **Zimbabwe** 148 in 37.4 overs (Kian Bignaut 37, Leeroy Chiwaula 62; RS Ambrish 2/19, Henril Patel 1/25, Udhav Mohan 3/20, Ayush Mhatre 3/14) by 204 runs.

Alcaraz makes his first Australian Open semis

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Melbourne, Jan 27:** World No 1 Carlos Alcaraz advanced to his first semifinal at Melbourne Park, moving within two wins of achieving the career Grand Slam as he sealed a statement 7-5, 6-2, 6-1 victory against Alex de Minaur in front of a vibrant Rod Laver Arena crowd.

The Spaniard absorbed the pressure and ultimately neutralised the full impact of Alex de Minaur's newly refined attacking style, aiming for his seventh major title and his first in Melbourne, to arrange a semi-final matchup against last year's runner-up Alexander Zverev.

The 22-year-old, who became only the eighth Spanish man in history to reach the Australian Open semifinals, is looking to



become only the sixth man in the Open Era to complete a career Grand Slam, joining Andre Agassi, Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic, and Rod Laver, ATP reports.

After exiting in the quarter-finals at Melbourne Park in 2024 and 2025, Alcaraz has now achieved a 16-4 record at the tournament. He will face Zverev in the semifinals, a rematch of their 2024 quarterfinal, which the German won in four sets.

India bank on spinners to extend dominance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Visakhapatnam, Jan 27:** With the series already sealed, India will be hoping for a positive turn in their spinners' performance while attempting to extend the total domination over New Zealand to the fourth T20I here Wednesday.

The batting storm kicked up by Abhishek Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan and the resultant 3-0 series lead has so far masked the underwhelming outings of two premier spinners -- Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakravarthy.

Kuldeep has picked up two wickets in as many matches, but looked a distant shadow of his bewitching self, conceding 9.5 runs an over.

The left-arm wrist spinner had three expensive overs, that leaked 32 runs, even when India



4TH T20I

limited the Kiwis to 153 for 9 riding on brilliant spells by Jasprit Bumrah, Ravi Bishnoi and Hardik Pandya. In fact, the modest effort was a continuation from the preceding ODI series in which he took three wickets across three matches and gave away 7.28 runs an over.

Chakravarthy, who was rested for the third T20I, is a slight-

ly different case as he has played in two high-scoring matches when the visitors scored 190 and 208. But the usual zip has not been there in his bowling. The little time away might have been useful in replenishing him.

In that context, India will ponder whether to persist with Bishnoi (4-0-18-2 at Guwahati) in the fourth match, and bring

back Chakravarthy in place of Kuldeep to allow the latter some breathing space.

India will also keep a close eye on the fitness of all-rounder Axar Patel, as he has not played since the first game at Nagpur because of a finger injury.

While the bowling pieces in this series have still not entirely fallen in their places, the hosts' batting has been a different story. The top-order reshaped India's T20 batting in this series and third match resembled an extended Power Play. Abhishek has scored at a strike-rate of over 300 while Suryakumar and Kishan have maintained a strike-rate close to 230.

Such has been the fury in their batting that India have so far spent only a combined 25.2 overs in the park while chasing 209 and 154 (363 runs in total) in the second and third T20Is.

Racing sensation Atiqa makes historic WSK debut

**The Eleven-year-old prodigy becomes first Indian to seal P2 in qualifying**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**La Conca (Italy), Jan 27:** Eleven-year-old racing sensation Atiqa Mir made a roaring debut in the WSK Super Master Karting Series as she became the first Indian to set the second fastest time in a male dominated qualifying grid of 37 seasoned drivers.

Embracing the mighty challenge after moving from mini (age 8-11) to junior category (12-14) in 2026, Atiqa showed remarkable speed driving in the OKNJ class for the first time.

One of the youngest drivers on the grid, the Formula 1 Academy supported racer defied all odds to set the second fastest time in qualifying and missed out on pole by only a tenth of a second.

The only female on the grid was on course for the pole with a stellar time of 49.76 seconds over the weekend before being pipped by Finland's Leo Latinen in the dying minutes of the session. The Finish driver got an extra lap while Atiqa didn't to finish P2, still enough to script history as she became the first Indian ever to score P2 on debut in OKNJ Class.

Atiqa had a front row start in all three of the heat races Friday and Saturday, finishing 4th, 6th and 7th respectively. She also zoomed to the Fastest Lap



in heat 1.

However, she did not have the luck she needed for the pre-final Sunday.

Starting fourth on the grid, Atiqa's kart didn't start on the pre-grid, ending a special week-

end with a heartbreak.

The team tried very hard to fire up the kart but to no avail. Because of the mechanical failure, she was relegated down to 18th place on the grid for the final.

Starting on the outside lane,

**That was a good debut weekend for me. I love the OKNJ category as the karts are very fast and power is instant. I worked hard during this weekend with the team and my coaches as I had limited track time in this kart compared to the other drivers who are far more experienced in this class. But we all worked hard as a team and got me up to speed. I wasn't expecting a P2 in qualifying and almost a Pole in a debut race, what else can I ask for. Pity about the Pre Final when my kart wouldn't start but that is motor racing. The team Modena, other than this have been flawless and have integrated me really well**

ATIQA MIR

Atiqa was pushed off the track in Turn 1 and dropped to 22nd. From thereon, she made a remarkable recovery to finish 14th out of 37 drivers. Atiqa's father Asif Mir, a former Formula Asia Vice-Champion, said her daughter's performance on debut surpassed his expectations.

"She showed top quality

speed and beat some of the best karters in the world with far more experience than her. Atiqa has proven that she has the natural talent as a racer. Atiqa initially held Pole Position at the end of qualifying and it was great to see the Indian flag on top. We will continue to work and hone her skills," said Asif.