



Voice of freedom

Actor Elnaaz sheds light on Iran's political and social realities, highlighting restrictions on personal freedom

LEISURE | **P2**



Nuclear treaty ends

As treaty expires, Russia says it's still ready to talk to the US on nuclear limits

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



Bitcoin slides

The price of bitcoin continues its months-long slide Thursday, falling another 11 per cent to \$67,000, its lowest level in 15 months

BUSINESS | **P11**



Shooters shine

Reigning world champion Samrat Rana and WC Final winner Suruchi Singh join forces to clinch silver in 10m air pistol mixed team event

SPORTS | **P12**

Spelling change for 24 places in Odisha

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 5: The state government has proposed to change the English spellings of 24 places, including some districts, to align them more closely with their pronunciation in Odia language, a notification issued by the Revenue and Disaster Management (R&DM) department said.

In the notice, which was available to media Thursday, the department invited objections and suggestions from the public on the proposed changes. "All stakeholders likely to be affected by the proposed changes are hereby invited to submit their objections or suggestions, if any, in writing, along with supporting documents, to the undersigned within 15 days from the date of publication of this public notice," it said.

It also mentioned that late submissions of objections will not be entertained. "In case no objection is received within the prescribed time, it shall be presumed that there is no objection

PRESENT	PROPOSED
Khurda	Khoradha
Balasore	Baleshwar
Keonjhar	Kendujhar
Khondmal	Kandhamal
Deogarh	Debagarh
Angul	Anugol
Nayagarh	Nayagada
Kendrapara	Kendrapada

from the public, and the government may proceed further in the matter as per law," the notification added.

Deogarh district's spelling has been proposed to be changed to Debagarh, Khurda to Khoradha, Balasore to Baleshwar, Kendrapara to Kendrapada, Keonjhar to Kendujhar and Nayagarh to Nayagada. Among others, the department also proposed to change the spelling of Reamal to Riamal, Jatni to Jatani and Aul to Ali.

In 2011, the English spelling of the state's name was changed from Orissa to Odisha and spelling of language from Oriya to Odia in line with the Odia script.

21 IAS officers transferred

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 5: The state government Thursday made a reshuffle in its bureaucracy by transferring 21 IAS officers.

Development Commissioner DK Singh has been given additional charge of the Steel and Mines department, while Surendra Kumar has been appointed as Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) of the General Administration & Public and Grievance (GA&PG) department with additional charge of the Parliamentary Affairs department.

Bishnupada Sethi, who was appointed Officer on Special Duty (OSD) at the GA&PG department after CBI summoned him in a bribery case, has been appointed as Chairman of the Odisha Forest Development Corporation (OFDC). He will also hold the additional charge of Chief Administrator of the KBK (Kalahandi-Bolangir-Koraput) region.

Arabinda Kumar Padhee has been appointed as ACS of the Revenue and Disaster Management department. He will continue to serve as Chief Administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) in Puri, according to a notification.

Chithra Arumugum has been given additional charge as the Director General of Gopabandhu Academy of Administration, Bhubaneswar, and Usha Padhee made the Chairperson of Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation.

Among other IAS officers who were transferred was NBS Rajput, who has been appointed as the Principal Secretary of the Commerce and Transport department, and he will remain the CMD of OSRTC.

Requested PM not to come to LS: Birla

AGENCIES


Bhubaneswar, Feb 5: In a significant step towards improving public service delivery, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurated 57 new sub-registrar offices (SROs) across 56 tehsils in 17 districts Thursday.

With this expansion, all 317 tehsils in the state now have functional SROs, including an additional office in Cuttack tehsil.

Speaking at the event, Majhi hailed the development as a major milestone, emphasising that it will streamline land and property registration processes, enhance transparency, and eliminate the need for intermediaries.

"With proper coordination between tehsils and registration offices, mutation pattas can now be processed efficiently, directly benefiting citizens," he stated. In a move to further simplify public access to government services, Majhi also integrated 11 key revenue services into the state's WhatsApp chatbot system.

Citizens can now apply for mutation cases, changes in agricultural land type, residence certificates, caste certificates, income certificates, tribal certificates, OBC certificates, EWS certificates, legal heir



also alleged that the PM was 'hiding behind' the Speaker. She alleged that the government is making the Speaker "say all this" because Wednesday the PM did not have the "guts" to come to the House.

The LS Wednesday witnessed dramatic scenes as women MPs from the Opposition marched towards the Treasury benches holding banners ahead of the PM's scheduled reply at 5pm.

The LS has witnessed disruptions since Monday afternoon, when the Speaker disallowed Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, citing rules, from referring to an unpublished book by former Army Chief MM Naravane.

Members of the ruling alliance had participated in the debate, while Opposition members had refused to join and insisted that the Congress leader be allowed to speak first.

Lashing out at Opposition

CM inaugurates 57 sub-registrar offices

PNN & AGENCIES

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certificates, and guardianship certificates via WhatsApp at 9437292000, eliminating the need to visit tehsil offices physically.

The CM expressed gratitude to Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari and the department for systematising revenue administration and highlighted the government's commitment to future reforms aimed at protecting sharecroppers' rights.

"Many sharecroppers are deprived of government benefits due to the lack of legal rights. By safeguarding the interests of landowners and sharecroppers, the government aims to introduce new laws ensuring legal protection," Majhi added.

Pujari underlined the broader impact of these reforms, stating that opening SROs in all tehsils will reduce public inconvenience, cut down travel expenses, and ensure prompt and efficient registration of land and property documents.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL




Noise and air pollution don't bother me anymore. I live in Delhi and cover Parliament

World's 1st AI tool tracks icebergs from birth to death

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Paris (France), Feb 5: British scientists said Thursday that a world-first AI tool to catalogue and track icebergs as they break apart into smaller chunks could fill a 'major blind spot' in predicting climate change.

Icebergs release enormous volumes of freshwater when they melt on the open water, affecting global climate patterns and altering ocean currents and ecosystems. But scientists have long struggled to keep track of these floating behemoths once they break into thousands of smaller chunks, their fate and impact on the climate largely lost to the seas. To fill in the gap,



the British Antarctic Survey has developed an AI system, touted as world's first, that automatically identifies and names individual icebergs at birth and tracks their sometimes decades-long journey to a watery grave.

Using satellite images, the tool captures the distinct shape of icebergs as they break off – or calve – from glaciers and ice sheets on land. As they disintegrate over time, the machine performs a giant puzzle problem, linking the smaller 'child' fragments back to the 'parent' and creating detailed family trees never before possible at this scale.

It represents a huge improvement on existing methods, where scientists pore over satellite images to visually identify and track only the largest icebergs one by one.

The AI system, which was tested using satellite observations over Greenland, provides

What's exciting is that this finally gives us the observations we've been missing. We've gone from tracking a few famous icebergs to building full family trees. For the first time, we can see where each fragment came from, where it goes and why that matters for the climate

BEN EVANS | MACHINE LEARNING EXPERT AT BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY

servations we've been missing," Ben Evans, a machine learning expert at the British Antarctic Survey, said in a statement.

"We've gone from tracking a few famous icebergs to building full family trees. For the first time, we can see where each fragment came from, where it goes and why that matters for the climate."

This use of AI could also be adapted to aid safe passage for navigators through treacherous polar regions littered by icebergs. Iceberg calving is a natural process. But scientists say the rate at which they were being lost from Antarctica is increasing, probably because of human-induced climate change.



leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today ideas will flood your mind, but it is good that you will be able to carry them out efficiently. However, Ganesha warns you not to take rash decisions. Wise people will help you along the way. Pay heed to the advise of experienced people.

TAURUS
Ganesha predicts that today, you will be successful in money matters. There is, at best, only an outside chance that any stimulating event or thrilling escapade will occur today. In short, the day may be boring. Fret not as the dreary day may change into an exhilarating evening, feels Ganesha.

GEMINI
It is better for you to swim with the current in all of today's dealings, suggests Ganesha. This will help you effortlessly deal with even the most morbid state of affairs. No need to be a hero, today. Pleasure is the key word for you. Your performance will be satisfying at work, and more than satisfying back home.

CANCER
You will not only make plans, but will also act on them. So you can save money, time and energy for creative pursuits. The quality of your work and accomplishments will be high. Your creativity plays a key role in your accomplishments in career or business.

LEO
Today, Ganesha advises you to keep the Bhagavad Gita's verses in mind, and persist in fulfilling your duties without bothering about the fruits of your labour. Put in some extra effort to finish off whatever you undertake today. Patience bears its fruits and they are always sweet. Also, Ganesha reminds you that anybody can enjoy pleasure, but only few can handle pressure. So, take your pick!

VIRGO
You better identify your worth in the realms of emotions, feelings and sentiments. You shall warm up to and about everything - from play to colleagues to family. Simultaneously, you may realise where your limitations are. Ganesha predicts that the artist in you will flourish beginning today.

LIBRA
Ganesha says that today in your office you should be very careful in your work. It is likely that your superiors will not be happy about your work or your ability today. Those of you who are businessmen should try and delay sending off tenders today. Those who have given their job interviews may not get a favorable response to it. There may be a delay in getting your call letters. Ganeshji advises to be very careful in each and every undertaking of yours today.

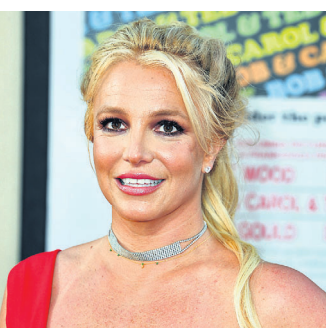
SCORPIO
It is likely that you shall learn an important lesson in life today. Remember that spite and envy beget enemies. Ganesha advises you to display some errors so as to make you seem more human and approachable.

SAGITTARIUS
Today, find yourself driving all your thoughts and actions towards your family. You will also spend some superb time with your dearie and discuss intimate matters. A relaxing day today as you spend time with your friends and family, chilling out and having a good laugh or two.

CAPRICORN
It's time to prove your extraordinary skills as a professional, says Ganesha. You will go out of your way, and even double your efforts to accomplish set goals, and chances are that you might succeed. Family and friends will be glad that could take out time to spend some happy hours with them. You will also let them know that they mean the world to you, and no matter what, you will be there whenever they need you.

AQUARIUS
The day begins on high note. You work hard, put your best foot forward and at the end get the final output as per your requirements. Romantic and beautiful, the setting Sun will bring the softer side of your personality to the fore as you will spend the evening with your sweetheart, predicts Ganesha.

PISCES
For you, today will be all work and no pay, says Ganesha. This, however, will not stop you from putting in extra efforts to finish your pending projects and to meet your deadlines. Who else but a Virgo to handle the pain nonchalantly without bemoaning the lack of pleasure?



BRITNEY SPEARS CALLS OUT FAMILY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Pop icon Britney Spears has come out victorious after managing the tensions in her family. The singer-songwriter says she's "lucky to be alive" after managing ongoing family tensions. The singer, 44, opened up about her family and feelings of loneliness in a post on Instagram

LILY ALLEN'S ADDICTION WITH MATERIALISM

Lily Allen has revealed that she is now "addicted to material things," admitting she has replaced past struggles with drugs and alcohol by compulsive shopping. The 40-year-old singer-actress says buying designer goods has become her way of escaping and coping



Rhea returns

Mumbai: Actress Rhea Chakraborty seems to be slowly taking back control of her life. She will be returning to acting after 7 long years with the recently announced Netflix drama *Family Business*. Returning to the set after such a long time left the *Jalebi* actress a little emotional. She ended up reflecting on her journey in Bollywood, which started with a 17-year-old girl coming to Bombay with nothing but a dream to become an actor.

Rhea penned on her official Instagram handle, "7 years have passed since I went to set .But I'm still the same girl who came to Bombay at 17 with a dream to be an actor. A part of me moved on, but a part of me stayed and waited. And I'm here, once again in my chapter2 It seems Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans (sic)."

Rhea further thanked director Hansal Mehta, the makers, and her co-stars Anil Kapoor and Vijay Varma for being a part of her life's chapter 2.

"Thankyou @hansalmehta @abundantiaent #vikrammalhotra @aktalkies @nirenbbhatt @anilskapoor @itsvijayvarma for being a part of my chapter2", she went on to add.

IAN S

Pulkit's career turning point

Mumbai: Actor Pulkit Samrat recently reflected on the early days of his career, recalling how his television debut with *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* became a defining moment in his professional journey. What began as a hesitant audition unexpectedly opened doors to one of Indian television's most influential shows, bringing him nationwide recognition and confidence.

In a recent interview, Pulkit revealed that he was initially reluctant to work in daily soaps, as he was unsure whether television matched his long-term ambitions. "I didn't want to do routine serial work. I wanted something versatile," he admitted. However, the casting team insisted that the role was different and encouraged him to consider it seriously.

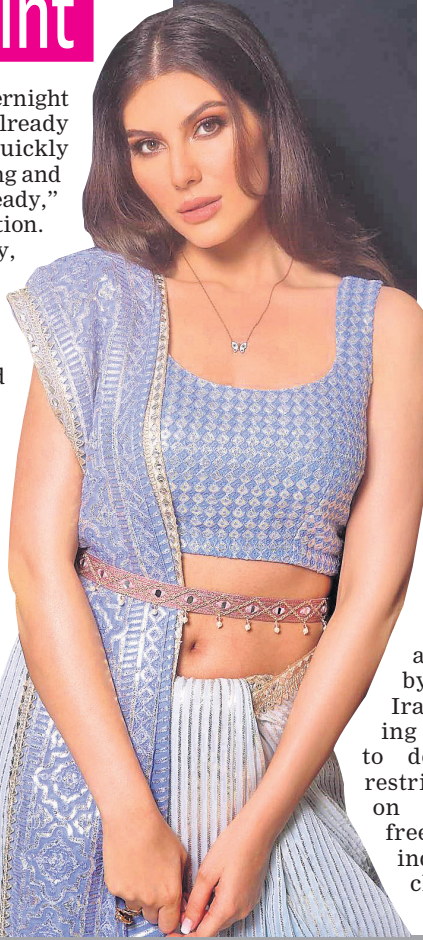
The turning point came when he learned that Ekta Kapoor wanted to meet him. Acting on

their advice, he travelled overnight to Mumbai. Kapoor had already seen his photographs and quickly guided him through grooming and screen tests. "Okay, done. Ready," she said, finalising his selection.

Before committing fully, Pulkit briefly returned to Delhi to meet his parents, who were unaware of the sudden developments. "There were tears, hugs, and hardly any words," he recalled, before flying back to Mumbai within hours.

Introduced during the show's generational leap, Pulkit became a household name almost overnight. He later transitioned successfully into films, earning praise for his performances and establishing himself as a versatile actor in the industry.

AGENCIES



Mumbai: Iranian-German actor Elnaaz Norouzi recently used social media to highlight the political and social realities faced by people in Iran, drawing attention to decades of restrictions on personal freedom and individual choice. In her emo-

THEATRE ROUNDUP



Naye Natua Production of West Bengal presented Bengali play *Mitali* at Rabindra Mandap, Thursday on the third evening of 51st National Theatre Festival by International Theatre, Bhubaneswar. Adapted from Russian playwright Fyodor Dostoyevsky's work, the play was dramatised and directed by Goutam Halder



The members of Kalaparishad, Dhenkanal performed Odia play *Baunsa Thengare Swadhinata* at Bhanja Kala Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Thursday, on the inaugural day of Lavanya Mahotsav. The play was written and directed by Dilliswar Maharana. The three-day event is being organised by City-based troupe Lavanya Theatre

op photos

Elnaaz's note on Iranians

tional post, she invited audiences, especially in India, to imagine losing the diversity and liberty they enjoy today.

She wrote, "Imagine India today. So alive and diverse, with different religions, languages, and cultures existing together: Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis." She then asked readers to picture a sudden change, where overnight a new regime allows only one religion to exist.

Norouzi further explained how such systems impose strict control over personal expression. "You either follow it or you're punished. They start controlling your clothes, your voice, and your freedom disappears," she wrote.

Stressing that her message was not symbolic, she added, "This is not an exaggeration. This is exactly what happened in Iran."

She also reflected on her country's past, noting that Iran was once as culturally rich and vibrant as India. Addressing common misconceptions, Norouzi emphasised that such political changes did not represent the will of the people. "Iranians didn't want this, just as you wouldn't want this for your country," she stated.

Through her post, Norouzi aimed to raise awareness about freedom of belief, personal autonomy, and the everyday struggles faced by Iranians under restrictive governance.

AGENCIES

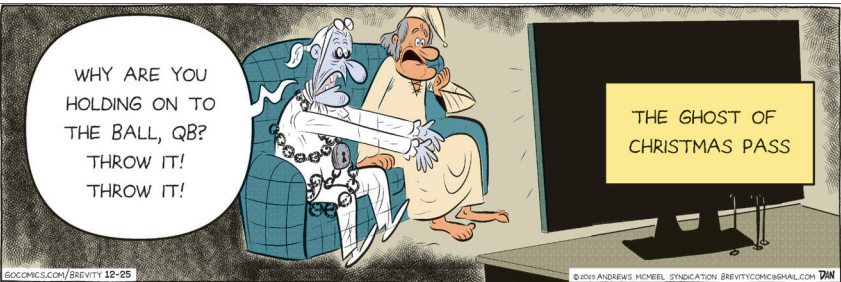
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBES



BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

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Across

- Sled dogs
- Billiards shot
- Sitter's handful
- Bouquet
- Butter portion
- Shiraz native
- On the loose (2,5)
- Position
- Sweetened red wine
- Pillow filler

Down

- Port-au-Prince's land
- Gullible one
- Put on a pedestal
- Paulo, Brazil
- Edible mushroom
- Apart
- Main courses
- Kind of story
- Top dog
- Spartan
- Ross Sea sight (3,4)
- Tricks
- Wash cycle
- Pertinent
- Saloon

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

F	E	R	V	O	U	R	L	E	M	U	R
R	A	P	E	A	N	X	I	O	U		
A	D	I	E	S	A	N	X	I	O		
M	M	S					N		T		
E	R	E		C	O	M	P	O	S	E	R
N		C	N		R				U		
B	A	T	T	E	R	S	I	T	C	O	M
E			D	E		G					
T	O	P	H	E	A	V			M	A	T
T			A		A	M	P		R		
I	G	N	O	R	E	D		A	R	O	M
N	D	I	E		I	T	P				
G	R	A	S	P		S	I	M	M	E	R

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

CUO, Koraput holds mustard cultivation awareness prog

Koraput / Bhubaneswar: To boost livelihood and income of tribal farmers, the department of Agriculture, Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput, held the first phase of a two-day farmers' awareness programme on mustard cultivation under the Scheduled Tribe Component (TSP), with around 100 farmers from Rajanaguda and 130 from Ruseiput participating. The programme was recently held at Rajanaguda and Ruseiput villages in Semiliguda block of the district, with technical support from ICAR-Indian Institute of Rapeseed-Mustard Research (ICAR-IIRMR), Bharatpur, Rajasthan. The initiative aimed to strengthen farmer-scientist linkages, promote scientific mustard cultivation, and boost productivity and income of tribal farmers in Koraput. CUO vice-chancellor (I/c) NC Panda conveyed his best wishes for the programme's success. The programme received strong support from ICAR-IIRMR director VV Singh and Principal Scientist Ashok Sharma, who expressed their willingness to collaborate with CUO to enhance the welfare and livelihoods of tribal farmers in the district.

CLASSIFIED LOST

I, Ratish Kumar Patra, S/o. Late Krishna Chandra Patra, Resident of Plot No. HIG-124, Dharma Vihar, P.S.-Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Dist.-Khurda, Odisha declare that Original Lease-cum-Sale Deed vide Document No.2218/2009 on dated 17.03.2009 pertaining to property situated at HIG-124 vide Drawing No.L-1232/2000 of Orissa State Housing Board, Plot No.650(P) under Khata No.1154, Area-2123 Sqft, Mz-Jagamara, P.S.-Khandagiri, Dist.-Khurda, DSR-Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar has been lost somewhere. In this connection, I have lodged a FIR at Khandagiri Police Station vide GD No.006 dated 27.01.2026. If anyone finds it, kindly inform me on the below mentioned contact No. Ratish Kumar Patra, Mobile No.9748541881.

I, Bimal Kumar Agarwal, S/o.- Budh Deo Agarwal of New Industrial Estate, Jagatpur, Cuttack. It is Noticed to public that following land documents lost in respect of land situated at Mouza-Toral, Jagatpur lost/ misplaced somewhere. Despite of my best efforts I am unable to trace out/ find out same. I request public found below noted documents if any to inform to Bimal Kumar Agarwal Jagatpur, Cuttack, Mobile No. 7681043066. This is produced before competent Authority List of Lost Documents mentioned below as:-
1. Original Sale deed Vide Registration No. 771, dated- 06.06.1997 purchaser Anusuya Devi Agarwal & Bimal Kumar Agarwal, 2. Original ROR Vide Khata No. 620/173, Plot No. 2299/2381 In the Name of Anusuya Devi Agarwal & Bimal Kumar Agarwal, 3. Original CDA permission MAP and letter No. 10162, dated- 11.05.2001, 4. Original Sale Deed No. 6271, dated- 14.11.1980 Purchaser Satyanarayan Agarwal, 5. Original ROR Vide Khata No. 542, Plot No. 2299/2381 in the Name of Satyanarayan Agarwal.

37 NCC cadets felicitated for Republic Day Parade



AGENCIES

Cuttack, Feb 5: Group Headquarters, NCC Cuttack organised a felicitation ceremony recently to honour 37 NCC cadets for their commendable and disciplined participation in the Republic Day Camp (RDC) 2026, held at New Delhi from December 29, 2025 to January 28, 2026.

The cadets, representing various NCC units under Group Headquarters Cuttack, successfully underwent a two-month-long rigorous schedule involving ceremonial parades, cultural activities, national integration programmes, drill, and interactions with dignitaries. Their participation culminated in the grand Republic Day Parade, showcasing the highest standards of discipline, turnout and esprit de corps associated

with the National Cadet Corps.

During the ceremony, Col Satyabrata swain lauded the cadets for their dedication, resilience and exemplary conduct, stating that selection for RDC is a matter of great pride and a testament to a cadet's all-round excellence. The cadets were felicitated for bringing laurels to their units and to the state through their active and disciplined participation at the national level.

The event also served as a source of inspiration for junior cadets, motivating them to strive for excellence and aspire for participation in prestigious national-level camps. The programme concluded with a reaffirmation of NCC's core values of unity and discipline, and its commitment to nation-building through youth development.

Aspirants protest in Capital

Protest highlights mounting frustration among candidates after a job-selling racket surfaced and a CBI probe led to the cancellation of the earlier examination process

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 5: A large group of aspirants, under the banner of Students Against Corruption, staged a protest at Mahatma Gandhi Marg here Thursday, demanding clarity and a transparent process for the Police SI examination.

The protesters said the future of hundreds of Odisha Police Sub-Inspector aspirants remains uncertain, as the state government has yet to announce a clear roadmap for the long-pending recruitment exam. More than a year after the notification, candidates are still awaiting an official exam

POLICE SI EXAM DELAY



schedule, they added.

The protest underscored growing frustration among candidates after the exposure of a job-selling racket and a subsequent CBI probe that led to the cancellation of the earlier examination process.

According to the protesters, government indecision over the examining authority has worsened the situation. With the Odisha Police Recruit-

ment Board inactive and the new Odisha Uniformed Staff Selection Commission yet to be fully operational, candidates say they remain caught in administrative limbo.

Protest leaders said the prolonged delay has severely affected aspirants who spent years preparing for the exam, accused the government of apathy, and warned that continued inaction could spark statewide

protests.

The organisation urged the government to promptly name the examination authority and conduct the Police SI exam in a fair, time-bound manner, warning that aspirants may gherao the State Assembly during the upcoming session if delays continue. Notably, the controversy centers on an alleged question paper leak in the Police SI exam which is under CBI investigation. Termed one of the state's biggest recruitment scams, the probe has been shifted from the Crime Branch to the CBI.

Meanwhile, uncertainty surrounding the recruitment examination has sparked growing unrest among aspirants across the state as continued delay in announcing a fresh examination date has fueled dissatisfaction among thousands of meritorious candidates.

Aspirants alleged that the government appears to have "forgotten" about the SI recruitment process altogether and demanded the immediate declaration of an examination date.

Prez turns emotional during visit to native village

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rairangpur, Feb 5: President Droupadi Murmu turned emotional Thursday as she garlanded the statue of her late husband Shyam Charan Murmu at her native village in Mayurbhanj district.

The president, visited her native village, Pahadpur, and went to the SLS Memorial built in memory of her late husband and her two sons, Laxman and Sipun.

Murmu has endured a series of personal tragedies, losing her son Laxman in 2009, her husband in 2014, and her son Sipun in 2012. She also lost her



mother and a brother during that period.

The President performed 'pinda daan' rituals in Jajpur

and Puri for the salvation of the souls of members of her family and Thursday organised a feast for Brahmins at a Jagannath temple in Rairangpur, in accordance with Hindu customs.

Murmu also visited a 'Jahira', the sacred grove and place of worship of the Santhal community, located in a forested area. She offered prayers to the Santhali deity Marang Buru.

The president arrived here around 3:30 pm and was received by Forest, Environment & Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia, MP Naba Charan Majhi, and senior police and administration officials.

Min flags off chariot



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 5: Handlooms, Textiles and Handicrafts Minister Pradeep Bal Samanta Thursday flagged off a promotional chariot from Ekamra Haat here as part of the 20th Grand Toshali Swadeshi Mela celebrations.

The promotional chariot will tour major cities, including Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Puri, Sambalpur and Berhampur, to spread awareness about the fair. The 20th Grand Toshali Swadeshi Mela will be held at Janata Maidan here from February 14 to 26, themed 'Swadeshi and Self-Reliance', showcasing indigenous products and local craftsmanship.

A total of 840 stalls will be set up during the fair, featuring a wide range of handloom, textile and handicraft products from across the state as well as other parts of the country.

Several eminent personalities including Prabhakar Maharana & Ileana Citaristi, attended the programme.

PMCA alumnus Rao bags National Thesis honour

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Feb 5: Abhishek Rao, an alumnus of Piloo Mody College of Architecture (PMCA), Cuttack, has brought laurels to Odisha by securing the third prize in the National Best Thesis Award 2025 announced by the Institute of Town Planners, India (ITPI).

The award is a prestigious national honour recognising outstanding postgraduate planning research across India. Rao, currently pursuing M.Plan (Urban & Regional Planning) at IIT Shibpur's Department of Architecture & Planning, was selected for his academic excellence and innovative research approach.

He completed his Bachelor of Architecture from PMCA in 2021. During his time at the institute, he earned multiple academic and design accolades, reflecting his consistent dedication and academic excellence.

His award-winning thesis, titled "Planning Strategies for Temporal City in Context of Mega Festival: Kolkata's Durga Puja", focuses on urban planning challenges arising during large-scale festivals. The re-



search proposes strategic planning solutions to effectively manage massive temporary population influxes, enhance urban mobility, ensure public safety, and promote sustainability during mega events like Kolkata's iconic Durga Puja.

The management, faculty, and students of PMCA have congratulated Rao on his remarkable achievement, stating that his success exemplifies the institution's commitment to academic excellence and socially responsive professional education.

His achievement serves as an inspiration to aspiring architects and planners across Odisha and reinforces PMCA's growing reputation at the national level.

Min Gond assures support for SAHAYA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 5: SAHAYA, under the Odisha branch of the Indian Red Cross Society, held its managing committee meeting Thursday at Capital Hospital here, chaired by Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) Minister Nityananda Gond.

Key issues related to the organisation's functioning and its future development was discussed during the meeting. It is pertinent here to mention that SAHAYA operates a special school for children with intellectual disabilities, a vocational training centre, and a therapeutic unit. The minister



appreciated SAHAYA's sustained efforts in promoting the development and well-being of children with intellectual disabilities and assured continued government support for further strengthening services in this sector.

CM Majhi makes ‘Godaan’ tax-free

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 5: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday announced that Hindi feature film 'Godaan' will be tax-free in the state and a cow research centre will be set up to promote research and awareness related to indigenous cattle and traditional practices.

Majhi made the announcement after watching the premiere of 'Godaan' at his official residence here.

"The film Godaan will be tax-free across the state and a cow research centre will be set up in the state soon," the CM told reporters after watching the movie.

Majhi turned emotional while watching the film and said that 'Godaan' is a complete family film, which keeps children connected with their parents and also gives a strong message to explain the value of 'Sanatan Dharma'.

The chief minister appreciated the film's content and social values, cultural traditions and family values. He said that



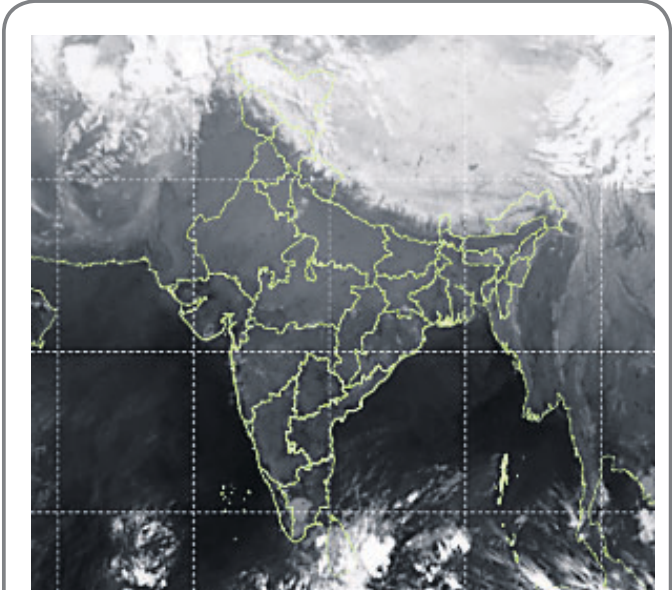
films like 'Godaan' play an important role in creating social awareness and strengthening cultural understanding.

He urged the youth to watch the film and advised to give priority to cultural sentiments in the society. "Films like Godaan are relevant in today's times, watch it whenever you can," he said. The film is scheduled to be released February 6. The film's director and sponsor Vinod Kumar Chaudhary, MLAs and other distinguished guests watched it at the CM's official residence.

11-day Adivasi Mela 2026 concludes

Bhubaneswar: The state-level Adivasi Mela 2026 concluded at the Adivasi Mela Ground, Unit-I here, after an eventful run of 11 days. The mela witnessed a massive public turnout of over 10 lakh visitors and generated business worth more than 4.22 crore. Addressing the valedictory ceremony as the chief guest, the STSC Development, Minority & Backward Classes Welfare Development Minister Nityananda Gond highlighted the success of the mela and reiterated the state government's commitment to tribal development in collaboration with the Central government. The minister stated that the Adivasi Mela has effectively reflected the Prime Minister's "Vocal for Local" vision by promoting tribal products, traditional huts (kudias), and indigenous craftsmanship. He emphasised that true development is not limited to economic growth alone but also includes the preservation of culture, identity, and human values. Minister Gond lauded the quality of tribal products and reiterated that protecting and promoting tribal languages, culture, and traditions remains a key priority of the government.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	90.41 ▼ 0.16	SENSEX	83313.93 ▼ 503.76	GOLD	₹150,767 ▼ ₹2,279
EURO	106.78 ▼ 0.38	NIFTY	25642.80 ▼ 133.20	SILVER	₹237,400 ▼ ₹31,451



WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	31.7°	27.4°	Dry weather likely to prevail
Min Temp	15.5°	14.6°	
Humidity	65%	80%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	



KORAPUT DECLARED ‘NAXAL-FREE’

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Feb 5: Odisha Police Thursday declared Koraput district “Naxal-free” following the surrender of an area committee member (ACM) of the banned CPI (Maoist), marking a significant breakthrough in efforts to curb Left Wing Extremism in the Odisha-Chhattisgarh border region.

The surrendered cadre was identified as Mamata Podiami (26), also known as Mamita and Soni, a native of Bijapur district in Chhattisgarh. She was carrying a bounty of ₹5.5 lakh, police said. The surrender took place before the district police in the presence of senior officials, including the DIG of Police, South-Western Range, DIG BSF, SP Koraput, a BSF commandant and the SDPO of Jeypore.

During the formal surrender, Mamata handed over a 7.62 mm SLR rifle, one magazine and 10 rounds of live ammunition. Police said she renounced violence, severed all links with extremist activities and expressed faith in the Constitution and the democratic system.



Area Committee Member Mamata Podiami surrenders

DIG (South-Western Range) Kanwar Vishal Singh said Mamata would receive ₹5.5 lakh as surrender assistance and an additional ₹1.65 lakh for surrendering her weapon, along with benefits under the state’s surrender and rehabilitation policy. “After her surrender, Koraput is now a Maoist-free district,” he said, appealing to remaining cadres to return to the mainstream.

According to police, Mamata was an active member of the Andhra-Odisha Border (AOB) military platoon and was in-

involved in several Maoist-related cases. She is an accused in Katekalyan police station Case No. 28/2023, registered under various sections of the IPC, Arms Act, Explosives Act and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Investigations into her role in Maoist operations across the border areas are continuing.

Authorities attributed her surrender to sustained appeals by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and senior police leadership, intensified pressure from security forces, growing

disillusionment with Maoist ideology and the state’s newly announced surrender-cum-rehabilitation policy.

Under the policy, Mamata will also be eligible for housing under the Antyodaya Gruha Yojana, skill development training with a monthly stipend, health coverage, subsidised ration and other benefits. An interim relief of ₹50,000 has already been provided, police said.

Director General of Police YB Khurania appealed to remaining Maoist cadres to shun violence and join the mainstream, assuring full support, protection and rehabilitation to rebuild their lives with dignity.

Koraput, which witnessed several Maoist incidents in the past, including a major attack in 2009 when rebels laid siege to Damanjodi town, has seen marked improvement in law and order in recent years. With this development, the district has become the fourth under the south-western police range, after Malkangiri, Nuapada and Nabarangpur, to be declared Maoist-free.

3 coaches of Chennai Central Exp derail in Jaipur; none hurt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Feb 5: Three coaches of the Chennai Central Express derailed near Jakhapura railway station in Jaipur district Thursday, an official said.

There were no reports of any injury or fatality in the incident that took place at 8.51am, he said. One AC and two general coaches of the train from Chennai to West Bengal’s New Jalpaiguri jumped off the tracks, the railway official said.

“A minor derailment involving Train No. 22611 Chennai-New Jalpaiguri Express occurred at 0851 hrs today morning, while the train was passing through Jaipur Yard (JKPR),” the East Coast Railway (ECoR) said in a release.

The train was moving at a very slow speed at the time of the incident. There has been no loss of life or injury to passengers. Passenger train operations remain unaffected, it said.

The cause of the derailment is yet to be ascertained.



On receipt of information, Accident Relief Train (ART) from Bhubaneswar and Khurda Road and Accident Relief Medical Equipment (ARME) from Khurda Road were promptly dispatched at 0853 hrs, the ECoR release said.

East Coast Railway CPRO, Deepak Rout, said the train has left for its destination, and three new coaches will be attached at Balasore.

Merchant navy official from Bhadrak ‘missing’ from vessel near Mauritius

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar/Bhadrak, Feb 5: A merchant navy official from Bhadrak district has allegedly gone missing while on duty aboard a vessel near Mauritius February 3, prompting his family to seek urgent intervention from the Centre and the state government, officials said.

The missing seafarer has been identified as Sarthak Mahapatra, a native of Kespur in Bhadrak district.

Mahapatra has been working with a private shipping company since July 2025.

According to his mother, Rashmita Mohapatra, the vessel had sailed from China to West Africa and was returning to China via Singapore.

When the ship was near Singapore February 2, he spoke to me, other family members, and his friends, she said.

“We are devastated at his disappearance and request the Central and state governments to intervene urgently. We have sent emails appealing to the Odisha government to rescue my son and bring him back home safely,” she said.

She also sought help from the Prime Minister, the Chief Minister, the Director General of Shipping and the Ministry of External Affairs through posts on X. “As a mother, I request a transparent investigation, access to CCTV footage, details of his personal belongings and continuous official updates,” she wrote.

Sources in the state government said they have taken up the issue with the authorities concerned in New Delhi and requested them to inquire into the incident.

Nayagarh constable shoots himself dead

Nayagarh/Bhubaneswar: A constable of Odisha Police working in Nayagarh district killed himself with his service pistol allegedly after his family opposed his decision to marry the woman of his choice, officials said Thursday. The deceased was identified as Sunil Sethi, a 2023-batch constable posted in the district and a resident of Beruabari under Odagaon police limits. His body was recovered from the terrace of the barracks at Nayagarh Reserve Police campus Thursday morning, police said. Nayagarh SP Sushree and District Collector Madhumita Rath visited the spot and launched a probe. “The deceased Armed Police Reserve (APR) constable was in a relationship with a woman who is his close relative, and they wanted to get married. The proposal was opposed by his family, due to which he was under mental pressure,” Sushree said. “He shot himself with his service pistol on the terrace of the police barracks,” Sushree said. The SP said the constable had also taken a loan for his proposed marriage. “On Wednesday night, he spoke to the woman, transferred the loan amount to her bank account and sent her WhatsApp messages, stating that he was unable to handle the pressure from his family,” Sushree said.

Wildfire prevention: Awareness cycle rally flagged off in Angul

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Feb 5: With the aim of turning forest fire prevention and environmental protection into a mass movement, a large scale awareness cycle rally was flagged off Thursday in front of the Jagannath temple at Purunagarh in Angul town.

The initiative is being organised by Sathi Paribar in collaboration with Dharitri and Orissa POST.

The five-day rally, scheduled to conclude at Saila Srikhetra February 9, will cover nearly 280km. During the journey, awareness messages will be disseminated among residents of 120 villages. Special emphasis is being laid on sensitising youth and students about ways to prevent forest fires and protect nature and the environment.



The rally began at 8am under the guidance of Sathi Paribar chief adviser Susanta Tripathy and coordinator Subrat Pradhan. Matiasahi Sarpanch Satyabrata Behera formally inaugurated the event.

An atmosphere of enthusiasm marked the launch, with environmental activists, students and local residents participating in large numbers. Children joining the rally on their bicycles added to its appeal. Local residents welcomed the initiative and

expressed support for environmental conservation efforts.

Susanta and Subrat said the initiative aims to educate people about the severe impact of recurring summer forest fires

on wildlife, vegetation, soil and the climate. They said residents would be urged to stop setting fire to dry leaves in hills and forests and to adopt eco-friendly practices in daily life.

The cycle rally will cover more than 120 villages under the Angul forest division, Satkosia wildlife division and Athamallik forest division to sensitise villagers, women, youth and students.

The programme was attended by Siddharth Pradhan, pres-

ident; members Pintu Behera, Rajesh Ranjan Sahu, Subhendu Sahu, Dillip Sahu, Soumyaranjan Thamb, Gurudev Sahu, Bijay Kumar Jena and Papun Sahu; youth social workers Subrat Kumar Sahu, Binod Majhi, Dibyaranjan Sahu and Sumant Sahu of Aryabhata Educational Institution; Sipun Sahu, Sunil Dalabehera and Subrat Pradhan of Second Youth Light Association; and district-level members of the **Dharitri and Orissa POST** in Angul.




Indian Bank
इलाहाबाद
ALLAHABAD

ZONAL OFFICE : SAMBALPUR
1st Floor, Shyam Arcade, Khetrajpur,
Sambalpur-768003

**APPENDIX-IV [Rule-8(1)]
POSSESSION NOTICE
(FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES)**

Notice is hereby given under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement (Security) Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of Security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer issued a Demand Notice calling upon the following borrower(s) / guarantor(s)/ mortgagor(s) to repay the outstanding amount & interest thereon within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The borrower(s) / guarantor(s) /mortgagor(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors and the public in general that the Authorised Officer has taken **POSSESSION** of the property of below mentioned account in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said rules. The borrower(s)/guarantor(s)/mortgagor(s) in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **Indian Bank** for an amount mentioned herein below. **The borrower’ attention is invited to the provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.**

BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower / Partner / Guarantor / Mortgagor(s)	Amount outstanding as on the date of Demand Notice	Date of Demand/ Possession Notice	Description of the Immovable Properties
PADAMPUR BRANCH/ Borrower : M/s. Mohinee Motors, At : Plot No.: 717, MS Khata No.: 246/1229, Near PHD Office, Padampur, Basna	₹33,97,212/- as on 11.11.2025 + interest, costs & expenses thereon	12.11.2025 / 02.02.2026	All that piece and parcel of Residential Land and Building recorded in the name of Smt. Mohini Pattanaik , W/o : Mr. Rohita Pattanaik under Plot No.: 1863, Area : Ac. 0.04 dec. and under Plot No.: 1865, Area : Ac. 0.03 dec., Total Area : Ac. 0.07 dec. , both the Plot under Khata No.: 1309/2770 at Mouza : Padampur, PS No.: 17, PS/Tahasil : Padampur, Dist : Bargarh, Bounded by : North : Nabaghana Bariha, South : Rahasa Gouda and Dash Gouda, East : Road, West : Road
Date: 05.02.2026, Place: Sambalpur			Sd/- Authorized Officer, Indian Bank



HDFC BANK

Branch: Kharvela Nagar, Plot No. 98, 3rd Floor, Keshari Talkies Office Complex, Kharavela Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751001
CIN:L65920MH1994PLC080618, Website: www.hdfcbank.com

DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13 (2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of **HDFC Bank Limited** (erstwhile HDFC Limited having amalgamated with **HDFC Bank Limited** by virtue of a Scheme of Amalgamation approved by Hon'ble NCLT-Mumbai vide order dated 17th March 2023) (**HDFC Bank** under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) listed hereunder, to pay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice/s, within 60 days from the date of the respective Notice/s, as per details given below. The undersigned have, caused these Notices to be pasted on the premises of the last known respective addresses of the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s). Copies of the said Notices are available with the undersigned, and the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s), may, if they so desire, collect the respective copy from the undersigned on any working day during normal office hours.

In connection with the above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) to pay to **HDFC**, within 60 days from the date of publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below in their respective names, together with further interest @ 18% p.a. as detailed in the said Demand Notices from the respective dates mentioned below in column (c) till the date of payment and / or realisation, read with the loan agreement and other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following Secured Asset(s) have been mortgaged to **HDFC** by the said Borrower (s) respectively.

Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured asset/s.

Name & Address of Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s)	Total Outstanding Dues as on date and Loan No.	Date of Demand Notice	Description of Secured Asset(s) / Immovable Property (ies)
Borrower: Mr. Nityananda Sahoo Thousand Three Hundred Seventy-Two Only) against L/A: 604878540 as on 30-Sep-2025*	Rs.9,84,372/- (Nine Lakh Eighty-Four	10-Nov-2025	A Flat of Admeasuring In Aggregate SbuA Area: 438.33 Sqft. Approx Situated at Flat No.: 5085, 5 th Floor, Including One Car Parking space in the apartment named “Seven Hills Sands” Situated over Plot No.: 351, Khata No.: 36, Mouza: Sipasarubali, PS: Puri Sadar No.: 78, Tahasil: Puri Sadar, SRO: Puri, Dist.: Puri, Odisha bounded by East: Garden, West: Corridor, North: Lift Area, South: Flat No.: 5087
Borrower: Mr. Braja Kishora Mishra Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty-Four Only) against L/A: 617776119 as on 30-Sep-2025*	Rs.10,21,864/- (Ten Lakh Twenty-One	10-Nov-2025	A Flat of Admeasuring in Aggregate Area: 702 Sqft. Approx Situated at Flat No.: 106, 1 st Floor, Block-B1, including One Car Parking space in the Apartment Named “Jagannath Warriors Residency” Situated over Plot No.: 396, 389, 388/736, 390, 389/728, 388/727, 387/726, 335/725, 334/724, Khata No.: 237/83, 237/65, Mouza: Kaimatia, P.S.: Jatni No.: 60, Tahasil: Jatni, SRO: Jatni, Dist.: Khurda, Odisha.
Borrower: Mrs. Ghanasyni Nayak Mrs. Pravasini Nayak Thousand Thirty-Five Only) against L/A: 640214877 as on 28-Feb-2025*	Rs.13,35,024/- (Thirteen Lakh Twenty-Five Thousand Twenty-Four	27-Mar-2025	A Plot of Land Admeasuring in Aggregate Area: 1125 Sqft. Situated over Plot No.: A/121 at LIG Core Housing Scheme, Category-LIG “A” Core House having Plinth Area: 398.30 Sqft., Dumduma, Phase-V, Housing Scheme, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Bounded By North: A-119, South: A-123, East: Road, West: A-122
* with further interest @ 18% p.a. as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and / or realization.			
If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to HDFC Bank as aforesaid, then HDFC Bank shall proceed against the above Secured Asset(s) / Immovable Property (ies) under Section 13 (4) of the said Act and the applicable Rules entirely at the risk of the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) as to the costs and consequences.			
The said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) are prohibited under the said Act to transfer the aforesaid Secured Asset(s) / Immovable Property(ies), whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of HDFC . Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the Act or Rules made thereunder shall be liable for imprisonment and/ or penalty as provided under the Act.			
Regd. Office: HDFC Bank House, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai- 400020			
Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 05.02.2026			Sd/- Authorised Officer, For HDFC Bank Limited

2 students consume poison on campus

BOUDH: In a shocking incident, two students – a male and a female –of a degree college here reportedly attempted to end their lives by consuming poison on the institution campus while classes were in progress Thursday. Both fell seriously ill and were rushed by fellow students to the Boudh district headquarters hospital in an ambulance. Hospital sources said their condition is now stable. According to preliminary information, the incident occurred during the forenoon. A second-year female student and a first-year male student consumed poison on the campus for reasons not yet known. Classmates noticed them lying unconscious and immediately alerted college authorities and emergency services. While the male student is a resident of Malisahi area in Boudh town, the female student reportedly hails from Bagharpali village. Speculations are rife that the incident may be linked to a love affair, though this has not been officially confirmed. Police and college authorities are continuing their inquiry into the matter.

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

Deputy Chief Engineer/Line South Eastern Railway, Kolkata-700043 for and on behalf of the President of India, invites Open E-Tender for the following work:
Tender No. SER-HQ-TR-W-PAUT-CKP-1-26; Name of the Work: Carrying out USFD testing of Flash Butt (FB) welds on all types of rails using contractor's RDSO approved Phasor Array Ultrasonic Testing (PAUT) weld tester over Chakradharpur divisions of South Eastern Railway;
Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹ 9,28,34,942.40; **Earnest Money:** ₹ 6,14,200.00;**Date and time of Closing of Tender:** 27/02/2026 at 15:00 hrs.;
Website particulars: Complete details for e-tendering and online participation for the above work are on website www.ireps.gov.in. (PR-1150)

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No.: ST-OT-TELE-SPL-WORKS-541, Dated 30.01.2026
Name of Work: MAINTENANCE OF INDOOR AND OUTDOOR GEARS OF EXCHANGE, DRM BUILDING, TMC BUILDING, DRH, OUTDOOR OFFICES, VIDEO CONFERENCE AND CCTV UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (SSE)/ TELE/EXCHANGE KHURDA ROAD (KUR) FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.
Tender Value: ₹ 1,81,90,853.04, EMD: ₹ 2,41,000.00.
Bidding Start Date: 09.02.2026.
Tender closing Date & Time: At 1100 hrs. of 23.02.2026.
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against the e-tenders. Even if these are submitted on firm's Letter Head and receipt in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website www.ireps.gov.in
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.
Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, PR-1086/Q/25-26 Khurda Road

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, MALKANGIRI

E-mail : eerrwss_mal@nic.in, eerrwssmlkg@gmail.com
INVITATION FOR BIDS
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
Bid Identification No. : RWSS_MKG_ONLINE_05/2025-26 Dated : 03.02.2026
No.25001/202526 : The Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Malkangiri on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites bids from bidders having valid HT Electrical Contractor license issued by Electrical Licensing Board of Odisha (ELBO) for the works detailed in the table below to be eventually drawn up in P-I contract.
1. Name of the Work : Construction of External Electrification (As detailed in TCN), 2. No. of Works : 02 Nos., 3. Estimated Cost : ₹ 9.75 Lakhs to ₹ 10.15 Lakhs, 4. Tender Paper Cost: Rs. 4000/- each, 5. Class of Contractor : HT Electrical Contractor, 6. Period of Completion : 01 (One) calendar month, 7. Critical dates :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender/Online for Bidding	Last Date of Seeking tender Clarification	Date of opening the Bid
Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Malkangiri	RWSS_MKG_ONLINE_05 of 2025-26	From 10.02.2026 at 09.00 Hours To 18.02.2026 up to 17.00 Hours	17.02.2026	19.02.2026 At 11.00 Hours

◆ Further details can be seen in the bidding documents, which is available in the e-procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>.
◆ Subsequent corrigendum if required shall be appeared in the website.
◆ Authority reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Superintending Engineer
RWS&S Division, Malkangiri

OIPR-25001/25041/1/25-26/0020



भारत सरकार
कारपोरेट कार्य मंत्रालय
त्वरित कोर्पोरेट समापन प्रयत्नकरण केंद्र (सी-पेस),
आइ.आई.सी.ए. बिल्डिंग, 7वीं मंजिल,
प्लॉट P-6, 7, 8, से.-5,
आई.एम.टी. मानसर,
गुर्गाँव, हरियाणा – 122050
Email: roc.pspace@mca.gov.in



Government of India
Ministry of Corporate Affairs
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE),
IICA Building, 7th Floor,
Plot P - 6, 7, 8, Sector-5,
IMT Manesar,
Gurgaon, Haryana - 122050
Email: roc.pspace@mca.gov.in

Form No. STK - 6
PUBLIC NOTICE
[Pursuant to sub-section (2) and sub-section (4) of section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 7 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016]

Public Notice: ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/2025-26/1917 **Date: 28/01/2026**
Reference: In the matter of striking off or removal of names of (2) companies in the state of Odisha under section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

S. No.	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
1	AC1448799	U24290OR2021PTC037059	BERRIES PHARMACY PRIVATE LIMITED
2	AC1134034	U46411OD2023PTC042236	FRONTIX ENTERPRISES PRIVATE LIMITED

2. Notice is hereby given that the Registrar of Companies had received applications from the above-mentioned companies under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 for removal of its/their name (s) from the register of companies either on the ground that they have failed to commence business within one year of their incorporation or on the ground that the company(ies) is/are not carrying on any business or operation for a period of two immediately preceding financial years and has/have not made any application (s) within such period for obtaining the status of a dormant company under section 455 of the Companies Act, 2013 or the company(ies) have obtained the status of dormant company/subscribers to the memorandum have not paid the subscription which they had undertaken to pay at the time of incorporation of a company and a declaration to this effect has not been filed within one hundred and eighty days of its incorporation under subsection (1) of section 10A/ have not been carrying on any business or operations, as revealed after the physical verification carried out under sub-section (9) of section 12, but it/they do not wish to continue its/their registration as companies and have, therefore, requested for removal/strike off of its/their names from the register of companies.
3. Accordingly, the Registrar of Companies proposes to remove or strike off the names of the above-mentioned companies from the Register of Companies.
4. Any person objecting to the proposed removal or striking off name of the companies from the register of companies may send his or her objection to the office address mentioned here above within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

Irkan Tirkey, Deputy Registrar
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit

CBC 071231/10/666/2526

DRIVERS OF GROWTH



Instead of concentrating solely on the modernization of the sixty-mile coastal belt (Cuttack-Puri- Bhubaneswar region), the Government of Odisha should prioritize harnessing the entrepreneurial potential of its villages

dicinal plants form the backbone of livelihoods for tribal communities. With appropriate training, processing facilities, and fair market access, these resources can support sustainable enterprises while preserving ecological balance. Similarly, rural tourism, handicrafts, and indigenous food products can tap into growing urban demands.

Despite this potential, rural entrepreneurship in Odisha faces several challenges. Access to affordable credit remains a major constraint.

While schemes like Mudra loans exist, many rural entrepreneurs struggle with bureaucratic hurdles, documentation, collateral requirements, and financial literacy.

Also, infrastructure gaps, unreliable electricity, limited internet literacy, and lack of storage and processing facilities raise costs and reduce competitiveness.

Skill development and mentorship are equally critical. Entrepreneurship requires more than technical know-how; it demands business planning, branding, quality control,

and digital marketing skills. Many rural entrepreneurs operate informally, without exposure to modern business practices. Training programmes, when available, are often short-term and disconnected from market realities. Sustained hand holding, local incubation centres, and partnerships with universities, research institutions, and industries are urgently needed.

Government initiatives have laid an important foundation, but they must evolve from a scheme-driven approach to an ecosystem-driven one. Instead

of viewing rural entrepreneurs merely as beneficiaries, policies should treat them as partners in development. Decentralised procurement, preferential market access for rural enterprises, and cluster-based development can boost their viability. Panchayati Raj institutions can play an important role in identifying local entrepreneurs, facilitating land and infrastructure access, and linking them with schemes and markets.

The private sector and civil

society also have a role to play. Corporate social responsibility funds can support rural incubation, technology transfer, and market linkage projects. NGOs with grassroots presence can bridge the trust gap, especially in tribal and remote areas. Financial institutions must innovate with flexible credit products tailored to rural realities, recognising cash flow cycles rather than rigid repayment schedules.

Ultimately, the success of rural entrepreneurship in Odisha will depend on a shift in mindset. Rural areas should not be seen as spaces of deficit, but as hubs of innovation rooted in sustainability and community. Young people should be encouraged to see entrepreneurship as a viable and respectable career choice, not a last resort. Education systems must nurture problem-solving, creativity, and local relevance rather than preparing students only for earning degrees and urban employment. When local enterprises thrive, they create jobs, reduce migration, strengthen food and energy security, and foster social cohesion.

Instead of concentrating solely on the modernization of the sixty-mile coastal belt (Cuttack-Puri- Bhubaneswar region), the Government of Odisha should prioritize harnessing the entrepreneurial potential of its villages. This can be achieved by blending local knowledge with modern skills, and aligning state support with community initiative. Promoting entrepreneurship-led development in rural Odisha can provide a compelling model of inclusive and balanced growth. However, the road ahead will require sustained investment and strong collaboration among stakeholders.

The writer is a scientist.

YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO SEE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A VIABLE AND RESPECTABLE CAREER CHOICE, NOT A LAST RESORT



Sanjib Kumar Karmee



Peter Singer

When vaccination coverage drops below critical thresholds, “herd immunity” – the protection vulnerable populations receive from high vaccination rates in the general population –is lost, and preventable diseases return



Be fearless and resolute, all obstacles will melt away before you.

THE MOTHER

Killer Misinformation

Three people, including two children, died of measles in the United States in 2025. Their deaths were preventable. There were 2,267 confirmed measles cases in the US last year – more than seven times the 285 cases in 2024, and the highest number in more than 30 years. All these cases were preventable, too. So, why weren’t they?

For two decades, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who was confirmed as the Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services last February, has promoted baseless theories linking vaccines with autism. He has claimed that vaccines have “poisoned an entire generation of American children,” and his statements are likely to have contributed to declining vaccination rates in the US. This has led to a sharp increase in the incidence of measles.

Since taking office, Kennedy has fired experienced scientists from a key vaccine advisory committee and replaced them with skeptics. He has also withdrawn funding for developing mRNA vaccines –the method of developing new vaccines that enabled the rapid production of highly effective vaccines against COVID-19, probably saving several million lives. Kennedy suggested taking vitamin A as an alternative to measles vaccination, after which some Texas parents gave their children such high doses that the children showed symptoms of toxicity.

The turn away from the usual standards of science in public health is not only an American problem. In Slovakia, Prime Minister Robert Fico appointed Peter Kotlár, an orthopedic surgeon and anti-vaccine activist, to investigate the country’s pandemic response. Kotlár’s October 2024 report described COVID-19 as “an act of bioterrorism” designed to “test the naivete of the global population to follow orders subliminally.” The report also claimed, without evidence, that mRNA vaccines alter human DNA, and recommended that they be banned.

In a free society, individuals may express their unfounded opinions about vaccines, knowledgeable scientists can rebut them, and public-health officials should examine the evidence and act accordingly. In rare cases, views opposed to a scientific consensus will turn out to be true and become a new orthodoxy.

Public-health officials occupy roles of special responsibility because they shape policies affecting millions. Vaccines are among the most extensively tested medical interventions in history. Yet vaccine skeptics like Kennedy demand ever-more studies, while accepting far lower evidentiary standards for their own claims – anecdotes, cherry-picked data, and conspiracy theories about pharmaceutical companies.

When vaccination coverage drops below critical thresholds, “herd immunity” –the protection vulnerable populations receive from high vaccination rates in the general population –is lost, and preventable diseases return. We know this from historical precedent and from contemporary examples like Romania and now Canada, where measles had been considered eliminated.

Under communism in Romania, childhood vaccination was compulsory, and measles was effectively eliminated. While the fall of the Ceau escu dictatorship brought welcome freedoms, and EU membership improved living standards, one consequence was that some vaccines became voluntary. By 2023, the measles vaccination rate in Romania had fallen to 62%, down from 95% when the vaccine was introduced, and in 2024, the country had more than 30,000 measles cases, including 23 deaths.

Some officials say they are simply respecting individual liberty. But liberty for competent adults to make their own choices does not extend to decisions that harm others. Refusing childhood vaccination does exactly that. Children attending kindergarten or elementary school should be vaccinated, not only because it will protect them, and they are too young to make their own choices, but also because refusing vaccination increases the risk to others who are too young for vaccination, as well as to immune-compromised individuals who cannot be vaccinated and to the broader community when herd immunity breaks down.

Kennedy presents himself as fighting pharmaceutical company power, pointing to genuine scandals like Purdue Pharma’s promotion of OxyContin. But well-documented cases of corporate malfeasance do not justify rejecting an entire category of medical intervention supported by scientific evidence for safety and efficacy that comes from independent researchers, public-health agencies worldwide, and decades of population-level data. The suggestion that this global scientific consensus is some vast conspiracy is wildly implausible.

When government officials act on unfounded beliefs about vaccine risks, people die, as the unvaccinated Texas children who contracted measles died. Those who wield power over health policy bear responsibility for these outcomes. Epistemic recklessness – persisting in beliefs contradicted by overwhelming evidence when many lives depend on getting it right – is a basic ethical failure.

Of course, scientific understanding is never perfect or final. Genuine questions about vaccine safety merit serious investigation – which is why vaccine-safety monitoring systems exist, and why rare adverse events are carefully studied. But there is a wide gap between good-faith inquiry and ideological resistance to overwhelming evidence.

Disregard for scientific evidence by opponents of vaccination is now producing exactly the harms experts predicted: disease outbreaks, preventable deaths, and the unraveling of progress in public health that took decades to achieve. This must stop now, before the consequences become truly catastrophic.

Governments should appoint officials with relevant scientific expertise who respect evidence. Public-health agencies should operate according to scientific consensus, not political ideology. And when officials demonstrate sustained commitment to views contradicted by evidence, they should be removed from positions where they can translate those views into policies with deadly consequences.

The writer is Professor in Medical Ethics at the Centre for Biomedical Ethics, National University of Singapore.

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WISDOM CORNER

The two most powerful warriors are patience and time.

LEO TOLSTOY

Freedom from the desire for an answer is essential to the understanding of a problem.

JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

God gave us the gift of life; it is up to us to give ourselves the gift of living well.

VOLTAIRE

SPECTRUM HERITAGE

The forgotten home of a Buddha

In a world increasingly fractured by conflict, environmental crises, and the alienating pace of technological change, the search for a unifying ethos has never been more urgent. It is within this context that India’s initiative to convene the 2nd Global Buddhist Summit in New Delhi emerges not merely as a cultural event, but as a profound act of civilization statecraft. This gathering of Supreme Patriarchs, scholars, and dignitaries from across the globe underscores a pivotal moment: India is consciously reclaiming and reactivating its timeless legacy as the birthplace of Buddha Dhamma to address contemporary global challenges and reshape its diplomatic and cultural frontiers.

The summit’s theme, “Collective Wisdom, United Voice, and Mutual Coexistence,” cuts to the heart of the Buddhist philosophy that once radiated from this land to illuminate Asia.

The ancient ideal of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” or the philosophy of universal kinship, which found profound expression in Emperor Ashoka’s renunciation of war

after the conquest of Kalinga and his subsequent dispatch of emissaries of peace across continents, is not a relic but a living blueprint. Ashoka’s edicts, carved into rocks and pillars from Kandahar to Odisha, preached not the dogma of a sect but the essential moral law of Dhamma, emphasizing compassion, truth, and respect for all life—a message of startling relevance in today’s polarized world.

A significant dimension of this reclamation is the compelling scholarly work tracing the roots of Guru Padmasambhava, the revered “Second Buddha,” to the ancient land of Uddiyana, identified with present-day Odisha. For too long, this luminary, who carried Vajrayana Buddhism to Tibet and the Himalayas and is deified across the region, has been a forgotten son in his own homeland.

The recent discovery of inscribed plates and sophisticated mandala-based architecture at Ratmagiri provides tangible proof of the doctrinal sophistication that emanated from this region, the very soil from which a figure like Padmasambhava emerged.

Herein lies the subtle genius of India’s soft-power diplomacy. India’s Buddhist diplomacy relies not on exporting a product but on promoting shared spiritual and cultural associations. With 97% of the world’s Buddhist population in Asia, this shared heritage forms a natural, mutually respected platform for deeper engagement. The development of the Buddhist tourism circuit, from Bodh Gaya to the newly emphasized sites in Odisha; the revival of Nalanda as a centre of pan-Asian learning; and gestures like the recent return of sacred Buddha relics—all are threads in a tapestry of reconnection.

This strategy is amplified by the power of pilgrimage. Consider the simple, profound act of a Thai monk meditating under the restored Bodhi Tree in Bodh Gaya, or a Sri Lankan devotee circumambulating the Dhamek Stupa at Sarnath where the Buddha first turned the wheel of law. These are not tourist visits; they are acts of profound personal and national heritage, weaving emotional bonds that no trade agreement alone can forge. India’s role as the steward of these most

sacred sites confers upon it a unique responsibility and an unparalleled diplomatic asset.

This approach dovetails seamlessly with India’s “Act East” and “Neighbourhood First” policies, building bridges with ASEAN and South Asian nations on a foundation far stronger than transient political alignment. The architectural echoes of the Sanchi stupa in the grand Borobudur in Indonesia, or the textual parallels between Pali Tipitaka and scripts found in Myanmar and Thailand, are not coincidental but are testaments to a once-integrated cultural sphere.

By reviving this consciousness, India is not inventing new links but reminding its partners of ancient, unbreakable ones.

The global podium in New Delhi marks a full circle—a civilisational rediscovery that promises to guide not only India’s future but also offers a beacon of peace, dialogue, and mutual coexistence for all humanity.

The writer is a Senior Officer at the Parliament of India.

Letters TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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

Cancer hurts twice

Sir, On World Cancer Awareness Day, Care Health Insurance highlighted the rising financial burden of cancer treatment in India, driven by prolonged and multi-stage care that places immense strain on patients and their families. The harsh reality is that insurance coverage for individuals with a history of cancer remains largely unavailable, leaving many without financial protection when they need it most. With treatment costs soaring, the impact goes far beyond the patient—it shatters the morale and stability of entire families. This is where both the Central and state governments must step in, offering meaningful and accessible support, which is currently sorely lacking. Mere awareness of the disease is not enough, especially when many patients are left wondering why they were affected in the first place, with little guidance or assistance thereafter.

AP Thiruvadi, CHENNAI

East-South connectivity

Sir, The Centre has proposed a seven-lane high-speed rail corridor, which aims to launch bullet trains to act as “growth connectors.” A high-speed rail corridor between East and South India is the need of the hour. The Howrah-Chennai high-speed rail corridor would be an option that can improve long-distance passenger mobility; reduce congestion on highways and airports and provide a fast green alternative to air travel. Besides, this high-speed link will boost regional trade, pilgrimage tourism; connect major industrial centres etc. in West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, which will significantly impact economic growth.

Nabnit Panigrahi, RAYAGADA

Mamata’s move

Sir, Kudos to Mamata Banerjee for bringing the cases of harassment during the SIR exercise to the notice of the Supreme Court expecting the latter to take cognizance of the matter. The top court is also apprised of the fact as to how Bengal is targeted and how the names of voters are being deleted on filmy ground. The ball is now in the apex court and it has the legal responsibility to find out whether any machination is going on to delete names of voters arbitrarily.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

MAHA SEES RISE IN ROAD MISHAPS FOR 6TH STRAIGHT YEAR

The state recorded 36,450 road accidents in 2025, sustaining the upward trend despite intensified enforcement, while the number of seriously injured persons rose by 8 per cent during the year, marking the sixth consecutive annual increase

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 5: Maharashtra has recorded a rise in the number of road accidents as well as serious injuries in them for the sixth consecutive year, though the silver lining is that fatalities have registered a marginal decline, officials said Thursday citing figures from the transport department's provisional accident data of 2025.

The state recorded 36,450 road accidents in 2025, sustaining the upward trend despite intensified enforcement, while the number of seriously injured persons rose by 8 per cent during the year, marking the sixth consecutive annual increase, as per the report.

As per official data, the state recorded 24,971 accidents in 2020, which rose to 29,477 in 2021, to 33,383 in 2022, to 35,243 in 2023, and 36,110 in 2024.

After witnessing a dip in accidents in 2020, when the first wave of the COVID pandemic hit the world, from 32,925 the previous year, numbers have steadily increased every year thereafter, the report stated.

Incidentally, Maharashtra, which has a vehicular population of over 4.5 crore, witnessed one of its worst traffic congestions on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway over the past two days after a tanker carrying flammable gas overturned in



From playful pup to valiant warrior: The journey of ITBP dog

Remo's story is a glimpse into the lives of hundreds of 'combat dogs' in the army who are taught to defy death through play

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: He was just three months old when he was first introduced to humans in uniform. He knew nothing of borders or the smell of gunpowder, but today, "Remo" (name changed), is a valiant warrior of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), for whom detecting explosives is merely a "game".

Remo's story is a glimpse into the lives of hundreds of 'combat dogs' in the army who are taught to defy death through play.

Remo's handler, an ITBP jawan, told PTI that Remo's first deployment was in the Naxal-affected area of Chhattisgarh. An area, where IEDs planted underground by Naxalites pose the biggest threat to the soldiers.

According to the jawan, "Remo cleared the path for the security forces many times with his sense of smell."

It took a full nine months to train him into a skilled explosive detection dog. Recalling his training process,

the Khandala Ghat section. However, Maharashtra managed to bring down fatalities slightly for the first time since 2021. In 2025, Maharashtra recorded 15,549 deaths in 14,440 fatal accidents, compared to 15,715 deaths in 14,565 fatal crashes in 2024.

Road fatalities, however, have shown an overall rising trend since 2020, when 11,569 people lost their lives in accidents, the report showed.

The death toll increased to 13,528 in 2021, 15,224 in 2022, 15,366 in 2023, and 15,715 in 2024, as per provisional data.

In a release issued on January 22, Maharashtra's Additional Transport Commissioner Bharat Kalaskar claimed a dip of 166 fatalities (1.05 per cent) in road accidents in 2025 was the positive effect of continuous measures being implemented by the transport department.

The release also claimed the state government has set a target of reducing the number of road accidents by 50 per cent by 2030.

Various efforts are being undertaken, including the formation of road safety cells at the state and district levels, among others, to achieve this goal, the release had added.

Maharashtra, however, failed to bring down the number of serious injuries in road accidents in 2025, as per the provisional data.

The state recorded 23,756 serious injuries in 2025, up from 22,051 in 2024.

Data showed Maharashtra reported 13,971 serious injuries in 2020, which rose to 16,073 in 2021, 19,540 in 2022, 21,446 in 2023, and 22,051 in 2024.

Sanjay Sasane, principal of Institute of Driving Training and Research Society (IDTRS), Pune said lack of driver training is one of the reasons for the rising road accidents in the state, besides various other reasons.



MCD launches major clean-up drive ahead of India-AI summit

New Delhi, Feb 5: The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has rolled out an extensive plan to spruce up the city and ensure smooth civic arrangements as the India AI Impact Summit 2026 is set to bring global leaders and industry heads to the national capital later this month.

The summit, scheduled from February 16 to 20 at Bharat Mandapam, is expected to host Heads of State, ministers, senior policymakers, global CEOs and academicians. Officials say the event, billed as the first global AI summit in the Global South, will draw significant international focus on Delhi.

Officials said that Wednesday, the nodal officer directed all zonal deputy commissioners to ensure high standards of cleanliness, infrastructure upkeep and beautification across areas linked to the summit.

These include venues, hotels, major roads, markets, monuments, transit corridors and public spaces likely to be seen by international delegates. Officials further said that the summit, being organised by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), will also see a citywide branding exercise.

"Old G20 stickers on dustbins and other civic assets will be replaced with AI Impact Summit branding, while authorised material will be displayed on

digital screens in markets and other identified locations," an official said. Giving details about the clean-up drive, officials said that they have been instructed to clear major routes of encroachments, illegal vendors, stray cattle and unauthorised advertisements.

"Impounding of stray cattle, dogs and monkeys from the key

PUNE LAND 'SCAM'

Kharge panel still to submit report, says Bawankule

The sale of 40 acres of land in Pune's upscale Mundhwa area for ₹300 crore to Amadea Enterprises LLP, in which Parth Pawar is a majority partner, had come under scrutiny after it emerged that the plot belongs to the government and could not be sold



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 5: Maharashtra Revenue Minister Chandrashekhhar Bawankule Thursday said the Vikas Kharge-led committee probing the alleged Pune land scam has not yet submitted its report, ruling out a clean chit to anyone at this stage.

He was responding to questions tied to media reports claiming relief to the late deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar's son Parth Pawar in the matter. Parth Pawar's mother Sunetra Pawar is now a deputy CM in the state.

The sale of 40 acres of land in Pune's upscale Mundhwa area for Rs 300 crore to Amadea Enterprises LLP, in which Parth Pawar is a majority partner, had come under scrutiny after it emerged that the plot belongs to the government and could not be sold. The firm was also allegedly exempted from paying Rs 21 crore in stamp duty.

The committee has sought an eight-day extension to submit its findings, and the government will grant the request, Bawankule told reporters in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar.

"The report has not been officially submitted to the

state government. Therefore, there is no scope for giving a clean chit to Parth Pawar or anyone else. I urge people not to speculate on such a serious issue and confuse the public," he said.

The five-member committee, headed by Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue) Vikas Kharge, is examining alleged procedural lapses in the registration of the purchase deed related to the Mundhwa land.

The probe focuses on aspects such as valuation, documentation and the role of officials involved in the registration process. The panel was constituted in early November amid political controversy and was initially asked to submit its report by December 6 last year.

The deadline was later extended twice after the committee sought more time to examine records and responses from multiple departments.

While earlier indications suggested the panel could submit its report by February 6, Bawankule said Thursday that an additional extension would now be granted.

The committee also includes the Pune divisional commissioner, the commissioner of land registration and director of land records,

rewarded for identifying the correct scent. Gradually, the scent of gunpowder and other explosives is included in this exercise, after which the dog becomes proficient in identifying explosives.

During training, the dogs are also physically prepared. They are trained to walk on different surfaces, maintain balance, and overcome obstacles so that they can work in difficult and risky situations.

The most difficult part of Remo's training was teaching him 'silent indication'.

The soldier explained, "If the dog starts barking after seeing an explosive, the sound waves could detonate some sensitive bombs. Therefore, dogs are taught to sit down quietly as soon as they detect the scent. They are taught to sit at a pre-determined distance from the bomb. Their sitting down signals to the handler that there might be a bomb there."

The soldier said, "A dog is the most loyal creature in the world. Once its owner gives an order, it will complete its task no matter what. That is why dogs are successful in almost 99 per cent of cases."

He said, "The dog doesn't know that it is identifying gunpowder or explosive material. For him, it's just a game. On receiving the command, he searches for the same scent he has been trained to detect."

No cause for panic over missing person cases, says Delhi Police



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: Days after releasing data showing that over 800 people went missing in the national capital during the first half of January, the Delhi Police Thursday sought to allay public concern, stating there is "no cause for panic or fear" as the figures actually reflect a decline compared to the same period in previous years.

According to official Delhi Police data accessed by PTI, a total of 807 people went missing between January 1 and 15, with an average of 54 people going missing every day. Of these, 509 were women and girls, and 298 were men. Among the total reported missing, 191 were minors and 616 were adults.

In an official statement, the police said that, while the data was recorded, January 2026 saw a "decline in the number of missing persons reports when compared with the corresponding period of previous years."

The Delhi Police, however, did not share the specific total for the month in its statement.

The police maintained that they follow a transparent and impartial crime reporting policy. All complaints related to missing persons are promptly registered and investigated. A missing person report can be lodged not only at a local police station but also through online

platforms and the Emergency Response Support System (112).

"Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are strictly followed in all missing persons cases. Immediate efforts are initiated to trace the missing individual, with cases involving children being accorded the highest priority," the statement read.

To ensure focused action, dedicated missing persons squads have been deployed in all districts of the city. In addition, the Crime Branch's Anti Human Trafficking Unit is actively engaged in handling cases related to missing persons, especially children, to ensure swift investigation and recovery, it added.

The police further clarified that no organised gang or criminal network has been found involved in cases of missing or abducted children in Delhi so far.

Appealing to the public to remain vigilant but calm, the police urged people not to pay heed to rumours or unverified information being spread through social media and other platforms. Officials warned that those found spreading panic or misinformation would face action under relevant legal provisions.

The Delhi Police also advised citizens to promptly report any missing person and share accurate information with the authorities to aid investigations.

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GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
ROURKELA IRRIGATION DIVISION, ROURKELA
email id: seridrk1@gmail.com
'e' Procurement Notice
e-Procurement Notice No.SERID-RKL-11/2025-26 (ONLINE) Dt.31.01.2026
No.32001/20/2526: The Superintending Engineer, Rourkela Irrigation Division, Rourkela on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites **Percentage Rate Bid in double cover system** to be received in **online mode** from the eligible contractors registered with the State Government, contractors of equivalent Grade/ Class Registered with Central Government/ MES/ Railways/ CPWD work as detailed below:

1.	Name of Work	Improvement to Service Road in between RD 6503M To RD 7700M of Pitamahal Irrigation Project for the year 2025-26
2.	Total Number of works	01 (One) No.
3.	Bid Identification No.	SERID-RKL-11/2025-26 (ONLINE)
4.	Estimated Cost	Rs.26.80 Lakh
5.	Class of Contractor	'C' & 'B' Class Contractors
6.	Cost of Tender Paper	Rs.6,000.00
7.	Earnest Money Deposit	Rs.27000.00
8.	Period of Completion	45 days
9.	Date & Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal	From dt.06.02.2026 at 10.00 A.M. to dt.16.02.2026 upto 05.30 P.M.
10.	Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal	Dt.16.02.2026 upto 05.30 P.M.
11.	Date and time of Opening of Technical Bid	dt.17.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M.
12.	Last date & time of seeking of clarification	Dt.12.02.2026 at 05.30 P.M.
13.	Place of Opening	Office of the Superintending Engineer, Rourkela Irrigation Division, Rourkela
14.	Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Superintending Engineer, Rourkela Irrigation Division, Rourkela

1. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation/erratum of tender can also be seen in the said website. 2. Further details can be seen from Government Website <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>
Sd/-, Superintending Engineer, Rourkela Irrigation Division, Rourkela
OIPR-32001/32018/11/25-26/0020

of the day

quote

After publication of the final voter list (February 14), the MCC can be enforced at any moment. Under the MCC, the government cannot increase financial benefits or expand the number of beneficiaries

When the PM speaks of Viksit Bharat @2047, he repeatedly acknowledges the deprivation the region suffered and the need to bridge that gap. The change seen across the Northeast to-day reflects that commitment

We have done a lot, but we wish to do more. We have set a target of doubling the per capita income of Bihar in the next five years. To achieve this target, we intend to boost industrial growth. Schemes like Mukhya-mantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana would also do their bit in giving rise to entrepreneurship

SHORT TAKES

CIC orders disclosure of garnet sand export data

New Delhi: The Central Information Commission (CIC) has ordered disclosure of garnet sand export quantities by several private firms, holding that “larger public interest warrants the disclosure” particularly as mining of the mineral has been banned since 2013. The order came on an RTI appeal seeking year-wise details of garnet sand and abrasive exports from 2018-19 to March 31, 2024 by firms operating in and around the Visakhapatnam Special Economic Zone (SEZ).

Security forces on alert for Amit Shah's J&K visit

Srinagar: Security forces in Kashmir are on alert for Union Home Minister Amit Shah's three-day visit beginning Thursday, officials said. Police and paramilitary CRPF personnel carried out area dominance exercises and surprise checks around the commercial hub of Lal Chowk and adjoining areas, they said. Security personnel have been deployed in higher numbers and random vehicle checks and frisking operations have also been intensified. Shah is scheduled to visit Jammu and Kashmir Thursday for a three-day visit.

5 Tejas jets ready for delivery to IAF: HAL

New Delhi: State-run aerospace behemoth Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) on Thursday said five Tejas light combat aircraft are fully ready for delivery to the Indian Air Force. In February 2021, the defence ministry sealed a ₹48,000 crore deal with HAL for the procurement of 83 Tejas Mk-1A jets for the IAF.

ED raids in Kerala investment 'fraud case'

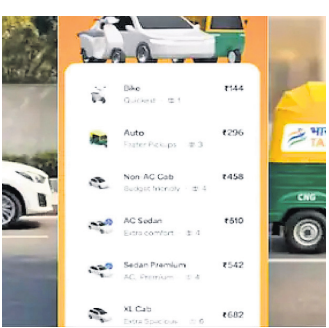
Thiruvananthapuram: The Enforcement Directorate Thursday conducted searches in Kerala against the promoters and key functionaries of the Nedumparambil Credit Syndicate Group as part of an alleged investment fraud linked money laundering probe, officials said. The federal probe agency has booked a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) taking cognisance of a clutch of FIRs filed by the state police on charges of fraud with depositors by collecting funds on the promise of high returns.

It is an absolute lie. There is no question of anybody raising hands on the prime minister, trying to hurt him or any such thing. There is no question. So it is absolutely wrong for anybody to say that there was any such plan, there was no such plan

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

AMIT SHAH LAUNCHES BHARAT TAXI PLATFORM IN DELHI-NCR, GUJARAT

Union Cooperation Minister Amit Shah Thursday launched Bharat Taxi, the country's first co-operative-run ride-hailing platform, which will start services in Delhi-NCR and Gujarat initially and pan-India in the next three years. Bharat Taxi platform, which has been established by India's top eight co-operative organisations including dairy major Amul, will enhance drivers' income significantly, besides giving them ownership, the minister highlighted



'Cong will never be able to dig my grave'

Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, Modi regretted the disruption caused by the Opposition party in the Lok Sabha and said it was not just an insult to a poor tribal woman President of India but also the top Constitutional position she occupied, and the Constitution of India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday launched a scathing attack on the Congress, saying the Opposition party is unable to digest its successive electoral defeats and will never be able to dig his grave despite nursing deep hatred towards him. Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, Modi regretted



the disruption caused by the Opposition party in the Lok Sabha and said it was not just an insult to a poor tribal woman President of India but also the top Constitutional position she occupied, and the Constitution of India. He also deplored Rahul Gandhi's "traitor" comment on Union Minister Ravneet Singh Bittu, and termed it an insult to the entire Sikh community. Modi accused the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC party of protecting "ghuspaithiyas" (infiltrators) in West Bengal, who were taking away jobs and rights of youth and land of tribals.

grave as he enjoys the blessings of crores of mothers and sisters and the poor of the country, for whom he is working selflessly. The Prime Minister said Congress treated Indian citizens as "problems while we treat them as our strength and solution to challenges". The Prime Minister listed out the achievements of his government in the last 11 years, while asserting that high growth and low inflation reflect the strength in the country's economy, which was set to emerge as the third largest in the world. Modi also spoke about the recent trade deals with the European Union and the US and said the world is feeling more confident about stability after these developments. He said India is now on 'Reform Express' and will achieve the goal of a developed nation by 2047. In his nearly 100-minute speech, Modi countered the Opposition parties' criticism about his government's track record of implementing schemes and talking about 'Viksit Bharat'. He also said that India has now become a strong voice of the global south.

SABARIMALA GOLD LOSS Prime accused Potty gets statutory bail, released from prison

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kollam (Kerala), Feb 5: A local court here Thursday granted statutory bail to Unnikrishnan Potty, the prime accused in the Sabarimala gold loss cases, following which he was released from prison. Potty secured the relief in the second case related to the incident. Kollam Vigilance Court Judge Mohit C S granted bail to Potty in the case pertaining to the loss of gold from the door frames of the Sreekovil (sanctum sanctorum). The bail was granted as the police' Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the case failed to file a charge sheet within 90 days of Potty's arrest, making him eligible for statutory bail. He had earlier been granted statutory bail in the case related to the loss of gold from the Dwarapalaka (guardian deity) idol plates. The court imposed conditions, including execution of a bond with two solvent sureties for ₹2 lakh each each, a direction not to enter Pathanamthitta district, a direction to refrain from influencing witnesses or tampering with evidence, and an obligation to appear before the investigation officer whenever summoned. After completing the bail formalities in the court, Potty was released from the Thiruvananthapuram Special Sub Jail by around 6.30 pm. He is the first accused in both cases and is the fourth person arrested in connection with the incident to be released from custody.

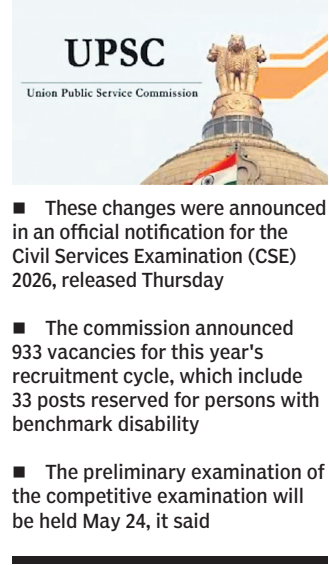


A flock of mynas sits in a line on the banks of the River Ganga on a sunny day, in Prayagraj

UPSC civil services prelims May 24

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has made face authentication mandatory for all aspirants at examination centres and introduced strict eligibility restrictions for candidates already appointed to certain services. These changes were announced in an official notification for the Civil Services Examination (CSE) 2026, released Thursday. The commission announced 933 vacancies for this year's recruitment cycle, which include 33 posts reserved for persons with benchmark disability. The preliminary examination of the competitive examination will be held May 24, it said. The prestigious exam is conducted annually by the UPSC in three stages -- preliminary, main and interview-- to select officers of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) among others. "In order to ensure a secure and smooth examination process, all candidates will be required to undergo face authentication at the examination venue mandatorily. Candidates are advised to enter the examination venue well in time for face authentication/identity verification and frisking," the UPSC notification read. Applicants are strongly advised "to use their Aadhaar card as ID documents for easy, effortless and seamless verification and authentication of ID and other details", it said. The notification clarifies new "restrictions" aimed at candidates who have already secured positions through previous examinations. According to the notification, any candidate currently serving in the IAS or the IFS "will not be eligible to appear" for the 2026 examination. If a candidate is appointed to the IAS or IFS after the preliminary exam, they will not be eligible to appear in the "main" phase of the test "notwithstanding having qualified" in the prelims. If appointed after the commencement of the main exam but before the results are declared, they will not be considered for any service/post under the CSE 2026 results.



■ These changes were announced in an official notification for the Civil Services Examination (CSE) 2026, released Thursday

■ The commission announced 933 vacancies for this year's recruitment cycle, which include 33 posts reserved for persons with benchmark disability

■ The preliminary examination of the competitive examination will be held May 24, it said

Kuki-Zo group declares social boycott of 3 MLAs for being part of Manipur govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, Feb 5: A day after three Kuki-Zo MLAs joined the government of Manipur, an organisation Thursday declared "social boycott" of them for allegedly betraying the community and aligning with the Meiteis. Several groups also called for a "total shutdown" in the Kuki-majority Churachandpur district Friday. Manipur witnessed the outbreak of ethnic violence between the Meitei and Kuki communities in May 2023, leading to the imposition of President's Rule in February last year. Amid a demand by the Kuki-Zo leaders for a separate administrative unit for the community, BJP MLA Yumnam Khemchand Singh Wednesday was sworn in as the 13th Chief Minister of Manipur, nearly a year after the resignation of N Biren Singh as the CM. Nemcha Kipgen, a BJP MLA who belongs to the Kuki community, and Naga People's Front legislator L Dikho, took oath as deputy chief ministers of Manipur. There are 10 Kuki-Zo legislators in the Assembly, and seven of them are from the BJP. Hmar tribe MLA N Sanate was part of a BJP-led NDA team that met Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla in Imphal to stake claim for government formation in the state. Another Kuki Zo MLA, L M Khaute, was also part of the team. Hmar people are part of the Kuki-Zo community. In a statement Thursday, the Kuki Zo Council (KZC) "strongly and unequivocally condemns



the participation of certain Kuki-Zo MLAs in the formation of the Manipur government, which constitutes a gross violation of the Lungthu Resolution dated 13 January 2026". According to the resolution, the Kuki-Zo community members will take part in government formation only if there is a written assurance from the central and state authorities that there will be a separate administration in the form of a Union Territory with a legislature. It said that by joining the government, these Kuki MLAs have effectively aligned themselves with Meiteis, betraying their own people. The organisation urged the Kuki-Zo people not to cooperate or associate with them in any social, customary, or public matters. This boycott shall remain in force until they realign themselves with the collective position of the Kuki-Zo people, it said. The KZC said any commu-

nity MLA who chooses to disregard its collective decision shall be doing so in their individual capacity and that the organisation will not be held accountable for consequences arising out of the "unilateral decisions". Responding to the development, the Joint Forum of Seven (JF7), a tribal organisation based in Churachandpur district, called for a "total shutdown" in Kuki Zo-dominated areas from 6 am to 6 pm on Friday. It urged all community members to join the protests across villages in a democratic way, reiterating the demand for a separate Kuki administration. Some Kuki militant groups have also issued a strong warning to the MLAs for participating in government formation. On Wednesday night, agitators burnt tyres and placed bamboo sticks on the road near Leimakhong in Kuki-dominated Kangpokpi district to protest against Nemcha Kipgen's swearing in as a deputy CM.

CHILLING DETAILS FROM GHAZIABAD SISTERS' DIARY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ghaziabad (UP), Feb 5: A nine-page pocket diary recovered from the room of three minor sisters who died by suicide in Ghaziabad has offered a glimpse into their inner world, marked by an intense attachment to the Korean culture and anguish over family strife, police said Thursday. The police probing the triple suicide case in Bharat City Society in Ghaziabad said that the initial investigations haven't revealed the use of any Korean task-based app by the girls. The police also said if the use of any such task-based Korean app is confirmed, they will write to the department concerned seeking a ban on such apps. After the sisters - Nishika (16), Prachi (14) and Pakhi (12) - jumped to death from the

ninth floor, their father Chetan Kumar claimed they had been playing a Korean game for close to three years and had not attended school since then. After the postmortem, their bodies were cremated at Delhi's Nigam Bodh Ghat on the bank of the Yamuna river Wednesday evening. The last rituals were performed by their father Chetan, Additional Commissioner of Police, Shalimar Garden, Atul Kumar Singh told PTI. "It is not known why the girls were cremated on the night of Wednesday. It may be due to their personal reasons," the ACP said, adding that the autopsy report confirmed that the girls died due to head injuries. According to the police, the diary contains repeated references to the girls' love for Korea and what they described as attempts by the family to make



them give it up. "We love Korean. Love, love, love," the diary states, calling itself a "true life story" and urging readers to believe what is written in it. The note alleges that their parents were opposed to their interests and future choices, including marriage. "You tried

to make us give up Korean. Korean was our life. You expected our marriage to an Indian, that can never happen," the diary says. It also mentions physical punishment and ends with an apology addressed to their father. "Death is better for us than your beatings. That is why

The police probing the triple suicide case in Bharat City Society in Ghaziabad said that the initial investigations haven't revealed the use of any Korean task-based app by the girls

The police also said if the use of any such task-based Korean app is confirmed, they will write to the department concerned seeking a ban on such apps


we are committing suicide... Sorry Papa." "The pocket diary has been taken into custody and the matter is being investigated," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Trans-Hindon) Nimish Patil said. On the condition of anonymity, an office-bearer of the residents' body said the girls' father, Chetan, had been under severe financial stress after

incurring heavy losses in the stock market. He allegedly lost more than ₹2 crore and, at one point, sold a mobile phone to pay the electricity bill, the person said, adding that the financial crunch had led to frequent clashes at home. DCP Patil said the police are also looking into the family's financial situation as part of the probe. While admitting that they were at present treating it as a suicide case, DCP Nimish Patil told PTI, "Our investigation primarily will focus on verifying if the girls were actually using a task-based app as claimed by their father and if that led to them committing suicide." The DCP said that as of now, the cops have no evidence to prove that the girls were indeed using any Korean task-based app.

of the day

quote

If you want to keep a UT, then do not keep an Assembly; and if an area is fit to have an Assembly, then make it a state



OMAR ABDULLAH | J&K CM

Considering its importance, we must rise above political differences and make a collective effort to safeguard the Khejri



BHAJANLAL SHARMA | RAJASTHAN CM

The interests of the farmers have been completely protected. Farmers' interests are completely safe. Our main foodgrains, fruits, all our main crops, our millets, everything is safe. Dairy products are safe



SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | AGRICULTURE MINISTER

XPOST

OF THE DAY

2014 : We will make India developed in just 100 days

2015 : We will make India developed by 2017

2017 : We will make India developed by 2019

2019 : Can you please give us one more term to make India developed?

2020 : Due to COVID, we can make India developed by 2022

2022 : We will make India developed before 2024 elections

2024 : Just one more year, we will be developed by 2025

2025 : Enjoy 5 Kilo ration and RS 1500 ladli behen yojna. Congress could never do this

2026 : Sorry, i am on mission 2047 give me 20 more years

And 40% of people still believe them

@Amockx2022

SHORT TAKES

Eight Indian sailors released from Iran


New Delhi: Eight out of 16 Indian crew members of a commercial vessel detained by Iran in December have been released, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Thursday. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India was given consular access to the Indians. The Iranian authorities have informed us that eight out of 16 people have been released and they will return home after completion of as and when necessary formalities, he said.

B'lore: Metro fares to rise 5 pc from Feb 9

Bangalore: The BMRCL Thursday said that metro rail fares will be revised on a zone-by-zone basis starting February 9 as part of its Annual Automatic Fare Adjustment system. Under the new structure, Namma Metro fares will rise by Re 1 to Rs 5 across 10 zones, with charges adjusted according to travel distances throughout the metro network. Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, also the minister in-charge of Bangalore Development, claimed the matter has not been discussed with the state government or him.

Mob clashes with security forces

Churachandpur: A mob clashed with security forces in Kuki-dominated Churachandpur district of Manipur Thursday evening amid protests over an MLA from the community, Nemcha Kipgen, joining the BJP-led government as deputy chief minister.



Modi ji was so afraid of the truth, he took refuge in lies. However, he did what he felt was right

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

PRASHANT KISHOR'S PARTY MOVES SC

Former poll strategist Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraaaj Party has moved the Supreme Court challenging the Bihar Assembly Elections, 2025 and seeking fresh polls in the state. The matter is likely to come up for hearing Friday before a bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Joyimalya Bagchi



'3/4th of Air India planes identified for repetitive defects'

In all, 377 aircraft have been identified as having recurring defects since January last year, of the total 754 aircraft analysed for such deficiencies across six scheduled airlines, the government told Lok Sabha Thursday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 5: Nearly three-fourths of the Air India Group's 267 planes that were analysed for repetitive defects have been identified as having recurring defects, the data presented in the Lok Sabha Thursday showed.

In all, 377 aircraft have been identified as having recurring defects since January last year, of the total 754 aircraft analysed for such deficiencies across six scheduled airlines, the government told Lok Sabha Thursday.

Of these, 405 aircraft belonging to IndiGo were analysed, of which 148 were identified for repetitive defects, as February 3, this year, as per the data presented by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol in Lok Sabha in response to MPs question.

Of the 166 Air India aircraft analysed, 137 planes were identified for repetitive defects, while 54 Air India Express aircraft were identified for repetitive defects of the 101 aircraft analysed, the data showed.

Taken together, a total of 267 aircraft of Air India Group (Air

India and Air India Express) were analysed, of which 191 or nearly 72 per cent were identified for repetitive defects.

Also, of the 43 aircraft of Spice-Jet were analysed, 16 planes were identified for repetitive defects, and a total of 14 Akasa Air aircraft were identified for repetitive defects of the 32 aircraft analysed, according to the data.

Speaking on the data, an Air India spokesperson said, "We have, out of abundance caution, carried out checks across our fleet. Hence, numbers are higher.

A senior Air India executive said there are different types of equipment which are checked on planes. These are categorised into A, B, C and D segments, depending on the priority or urgency of the equipment.

"In case of Air India, most of the issues are with category D, which includes items like seats, tray tables, screens (on the back of seats) and so on. These are not related to the safety of the aircraft," the executive said.

As the retrofit programme for narrow-body aircraft rolls out over the next two years, these issues will be resolved too, the executive added. At the same time, aviation safety regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) also conducted 3,890 surveillance inspections, 56 regulatory audits, 84 surveillance of foreign aircraft (SOFA) and 492 ramp checks as part of its planned surveillance activities in last year besides carrying out 874 spot checks and 550 night surveillance as part of the unplanned surveillance activities during the previous year, Mohol said.



Children slide downhill on sledges after snowfall at Gawran village, in Anantnag district, Jammu and Kashmir

PTI PHOTO

Centre must complete pending work: Mamata

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Feb 5: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Thursday said her government had no objection to provide land for border fencing but maintained that the Centre should first complete the pending work on the plots provided to various agencies, and roll back its "arbitrary" decision to expand the BSF's jurisdiction in the state from 15 km to 50 km before seeking additional land.

Speaking in the Assembly during discussion on the governor's address, Banerjee rejected allegations by the Centre and the BJP over the state government obstructing border fencing, and asserted that land had already been provided to all central organisations and agencies, in-

BORDER FENCING



cluding the BSF. She claimed the BJP's tally in the assembly polls will go down further, and many saffron party MLAs present in the house will not win elections in April this year.

"We have given land for many projects. First tell us how much work has been completed. We have given land to BSF as well. Finish the work first," the CM said. "Land will not be a

problem. You will get land. But first, change the arbitrary rule increasing BSF's jurisdiction from 15 km to 50 km. Locals in bordering areas are being tortured," she said, reiterating her government's commitment to national security.

The remarks came amid a war of words between the Centre and the Trinamool Congress-led state government over "delay" in fencing, alleged illegal migration and the management of West Bengal's long and porous borders with Bangladesh.

The BJP-led central government had amended the BSF Act in 2021 to authorise the force to undertake search, seizure and arrest within a larger 50 km stretch, instead of 15 km, from the international border in Punjab, West Bengal and Assam.

Centre signs MoU with Nagaland, ENPO for creation of FNTA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: The Centre Thursday signed a tripartite agreement with the Nagaland government and the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organisation for the formation of 'Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority', a long standing demand for a new administrative body within the state aimed at addressing the demands of eastern Nagaland.

The agreement was signed in presence of Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who said the Centre will extend all help and fulfil all its responsibilities for the development of eastern Nagaland.

The ENPO, the apex body representing eight tribes across six eastern districts of the state, has been demanding a separate state since 2010, alleging decades of neglect. It later agreed to the Centre's proposal for a certain degree of autonomy under the Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority (FNTA) framework.

The MoU aims to create Frontier Nagaland Territorial Authority for the focussed development and governance of eastern Nagaland which covers six districts - Kiphire, Longleng, Mon, Noklak, Shamator and Tuensang.

"In 2021-22 elections, all office bearers of ENPO had come to meet me. I had called them because they had decided to boycott the elections. I had told them that Narendra Modi Government wants to find solution of every pending dispute. You have trust, participate in the democratic process you will justice and respect. I am happy that MHA officials had acted as a bridge between the state government and ENPO for a long time to come to the solution ending the dispute," Shah said.

Top court quashes FIR alleging rape

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: The Supreme Court Thursday quashed an FIR alleging rape on the false pretext of marriage, saying the facts unmistakably indicate towards a classic case of a consensual relationship turning acrimonious.

A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan observed that the parties should have exercised restraint and refrained from involving the State in their personal relationship turning rancour.

The apex court referred to some of its earlier verdicts, including one that had taken note of the disquieting tendency wherein failed or broken relationships are given the colour of criminality.

The bench delivered its verdict on an appeal challenging a March last year order of the Chhattisgarh High Court that had refused to quash the pro-

ceedings arising out of the FIR registered in Bilaspur district in February 2025.

The court noted that both the complainant and the accused in the case were lawyers and the former was a 33-year-old married married woman and the mother of a minor.

"It has been time and again settled by this court that the mere fact that the parties indulged in physical relations pursuant to a promise to marry will not amount to a rape in every case," the bench said.

"Upon a careful consideration of the record in the present case, we are unable to discern any material that would warrant the invocation of section 376(2) (n) of the IPC. The facts of the present case unmistakably indicate towards a classic case of a consensual relationship turning acrimonious," the bench said.

Newlywed wife plots husband's murder with lover

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Feb 5: A 23-year-old woman allegedly orchestrated the murder of her husband, just three months after their marriage, by conspiring with her long-time boyfriend and two accomplices in Rajasthan's Sri Ganganagar, police said Thursday.

The accused wife, Anjali (23), her lover Sanjay (25), and his friends Rohit (20) and Sidharth (20) were arrested Tuesday, Sri Ganganagar Superintendent of Police (SP) Amrita Duhan said.

The incident occurred on the night of January 30 when Ashish Kumar (27), a resident of 1 KLM village in the Rawla area, went for his daily walk with his

wife after dinner.

He was allegedly attacked with sticks on a deserted stretch of the road near the village, and later strangled with a muffler when he did not succumb immediately, the SP said.

What initially appeared to be a case of robbery and murder was later found to be a pre-planned murder, Duhan said.

Anjali had been in a relationship with Sanjay for the past six to seven years and was unhappy with her arranged marriage to Ashish October 30 last year, the police said. Her family was aware of the affair, they added.

Her Uncle, Ravi, said, "If we had known that a child from our family would turn out to be like this, we would have never allowed Anjali to take such



POLICE INVESTIGATIONS REVEALED THAT ANJALI AND HER LOVER, SANJAY, PLANNED THE MURDER WEEKS IN ADVANCE, DRIVEN BY HER DESIRE TO CONTINUE THEIR RELATIONSHIP

a step. We would rather have died than let her marry. They should just be hanged."

The woman and Sanjay

studied at the same college in Sri Ganganagar, where their relationship developed. After marriage, she allegedly wanted

to pursue an MA in Sri Ganganagar to continue meeting Sanjay, but her husband opposed it, leading to resentment, the police said.

According to police, she had told her lover about the opposition from her husband.

Investigations revealed that 16 days before the murder, Anjali visited her parental home in Sadulshahar, where she and Sanjay allegedly finalised the plan to kill her husband.

Ashish had joined as a private school teacher just three days before his death, police said. "On the fateful night, after dinner, Anjali took Ashish for a walk. She alerted Sanjay, who arrived with his accomplices and hid in nearby bushes. When she signalled, the

three assaulted her husband with sticks, rendering him unconscious, and then strangled him," Circle Officer Prashant Kaushik said.

Then, to frame the murder as robbery, Anjali handed over Ashish's mobile phone and her earrings to the accused, the police said, adding that she pretended to be unconscious near the spot. "Upon receiving information around 9 pm about the incident, the police rushed them to Rawla Community Health Centre, where doctors declared Ashish dead," he said.

Suspicion arose during questioning and detailed investigation, including analysis of call details and the post-mortem report, exposed the conspiracy, the police said.

of the day

quote

These cuts and reductions untie perpetrators' hands everywhere, leaving them to do whatever they please. With crises mounting, we cannot afford a human rights system in crisis




VOLKER TURK | UN HUMAN RIGHTS CHIEF

These cuts and reductions untie perpetrators' hands everywhere, leaving them to do whatever they please. With crises mounting, we cannot afford a human rights system in crisis



LAI CHING-TE | PRESIDENT, TAIWAN

I do believe that AI today is an absolutely crucial issue in international relations and one of the biggest challenges of our times. So it is very important that countries come together and discuss it, also with civil society, in all kinds of circumstances



ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

Iran seizes two foreign oil tankers

Dubai: Iran seized two foreign oil tankers in the Persian Gulf Thursday, state television reported, claiming the vessels had been smuggling fuel. The report did not provide a nationality of the tankers or say what flag they were flying under. Gen. Heidar Honarian Mojarrad, a regional commander with the Revolutionary Guard's navy, said the tankers had been carrying about 1 million litres of fuel (about 6,300 barrels), including diesel and were seized near Farsi island and transferred to Bushehr. Fifteen crew members on board the two tankers are "in custody of judicial bodies," he said, without providing their nationalities. Iran occasionally seizes oil-carrying vessels over similar charges in the region.

Morocco evacuates 1,43,000 in northwest

Rabat: Moroccan authorities have evacuated more than 143,000 people in the flood-prone northwestern plains, the interior ministry said Thursday, amid rising threats of inundation from heavy rain, swollen rivers and the release of more water from full dams. Slovenia to ban social media for under-15s Slovenia: Slovenia is preparing draft legislation to ban social media access for children under 15, Deputy Prime Minister Matej Arcon told a news conference Thursday. Slovenia, with a population of around 2 million, is following Spain and Greece, which earlier this week proposed bans on social media use by teenagers in a sign of hardening attitudes in Europe towards the technology that some say is designed to be addictive.

Nigeria deploys troops

Abuja: Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu has deployed an army battalion to Kaiama district in the central Kwara state after suspected jihadist fighters killed 170 people in an overnight attack, his office said Thursday. Tuesday's assault on Woro village was the deadliest this year in the state bordering Niger, a hotspot where Islamic State West Africa Province and other armed groups have stepped up village attacks and mass kidnappings. The violence highlights fears that jihadist factions from the north are pushing south along the Niger-Kwara axis toward the Kainji forest, which security analysts warn could become their next stronghold.

Russia opens to N-talks with US as treaty expires

REUTERS

Moscow, Feb 5: Russia said Thursday it regretted the expiry of its last remaining nuclear arms treaty with the United States but was still ready to talk, raising the possibility of a last-minute deal to preserve limits on deployment of the world's deadliest weapons.

Axios reported that negotiations had been taking place over the past 24 hours in Abu Dhabi and the two countries were closing in on a deal to keep observing key terms of the New START treaty, which limits each side's numbers of missiles, launchers and strategic nuclear warheads.

US President Donald Trump has not formally responded to a proposal from Russian President Vladimir Putin to stick to those central provisions for one more year, even though there is no legal option to extend the full treaty.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia was still ready to engage in dialogue with the US if Washington responded constructively to Putin's proposal.

"Listen, if there are any constructive replies, of course we will conduct a dialogue," Peskov told reporters.

LAST IN A SERIES OF TREATIES

New START was the last in a series of nuclear agreements between Moscow and Washington dating back more than half a century to the Cold War.

Besides setting numerical limits on weapons, they included inspection regimes that experts say served to build a level of trust and confidence between the nuclear adversaries, helping make the world safer.

If nothing replaces the treaty, security analysts see a more dangerous environment with a higher risk of miscalculation. Forced to rely on worst-case assumptions about the other's



- New START was last Russia-US nuclear arms control treaty
- Russia proposed an extension of warhead limits
- Donald Trump says he wants a better treaty including China
- UN chief urges a swift return to negotiations

intentions, the US and Russia would see an incentive to increase their arsenals, especially as China plays catch-up with its own rapid nuclear build-up.

Trump has said he wants to replace New START with a better deal, bringing in China but Beijing has declined negotiations with Moscow and Washington. It has a fraction of their warhead numbers - an estimated 600, compared to around 4,000 each for Russia and the US.

Repeating that position Thursday, China said the expiration of the treaty was regrettable, and urged the US to resume dialogue with Russia on "strategic stability".

Peskov said Russia would take a responsible approach. The White House said this week that Trump would decide the way forward on nuclear arms control, which he would "clar-

ify on his own timeline".

UN CHIEF SAYS NUCLEAR RISK IS HIGHEST IN DECADES

Strategic nuclear weapons are the long-range systems that each side would use to strike the other's capital, military and industrial centres in the event of a nuclear war.

They differ from so-called tactical nuclear weapons that have a lower yield and are designed for limited strikes or battlefield use.

If left unconstrained by any agreement, Russia and the US could each, within a couple of years, deploy hundreds more warheads beyond the New START limit of 1,550, experts say. "Transparency and predictability are among the more intangible benefits of arms control and underpin deterrence and strategic stability," said Karim Haggag, director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the dissolution of decades of achievement in arms control "could not come at a worse time - the risk of a nuclear weapon being used is the highest in decades."

He urged the sides to resume negotiations without delay to agree a successor framework restoring verifiable limits.

Malaysia bans e-waste imports, vows to end illegal dumping

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kuala Lumpur, Feb 5: Malaysia has announced an immediate and full ban on the importation of electronic waste, as the government vowed the country would not be a "dumping ground" for the world's waste.

The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission said in a statement late Wednesday that all electronic waste, commonly known as e-waste, would be reclassified under the "absolute prohibition" category effective immediately. This removes the discretionary power previously given to the Department of Environment to grant exemptions for importation of certain e-waste.

Environmental advocates have long urged stronger action. E-waste - discarded electronic products such as computers, phones and appliances - can contain toxic substances and heavy metals including lead, mercury and cadmium that pollute soil and water resources if improperly processed or dumped.

"E-waste is no longer permitted," MACC chief Azam Baki said in the statement, vowing "firm and integrated enforcement action" to prevent illegal imports. Malaysia has previously grappled with large volumes of imported e-waste, much of it suspected to be illegal and hazardous to human health and the environment. Authorities have seized hundreds of containers of suspected e-waste at ports in recent years and issued notices for return to exporters.

The ban comes as authorities widen a corruption inquiry tied to e-waste management. Last week, the MACC detained and remanded the director-general of the environment department and his deputy over alleged abuse of power and corruption involving e-waste oversight. The probe has also seen authorities freeze bank accounts and seize cash linked to the case.

B'desh-India ties hit setback under Yunus-led regime, official admits

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, Feb 5: Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain Thursday admitted that ties with India witnessed a "setback" during the interim regime led by Muhammad Yunus, but hoped that the relations could be restored under an elected government following the general elections scheduled for next week.

"The relations faced some setbacks during the interim government, but they (ties) remained important," he told reporters at a media briefing a week ahead of the elections, the first since the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led government in a mass protest in August 2024.

Hossain, a former career diplomat who served as the deputy high commissioner in India as well, expressed optimism that the next elected government would be able to make the relationship smoother, finding some ways. The Yunus-led interim government was installed after the ouster of Hasina's Awami League regime in a student-led violent protest - dubbed as the July Uprising - August 5, 2024. Since then, the 78-year-old leader has been living in India.

A special Bangladeshi tribunal last year sentenced Hasina to death, accusing her of committing crimes against humanity through her efforts to brutally tame the protests, while Dhaka repeatedly demanded her extradition to face justice.

Asked if India continued to refuse to return her, would the next government be able to rebuild ties with New Delhi, Hossain said, "Don't be pessimists".

Bangladesh-India relations are said to have witnessed



their lowest ebb in the past 18 months when Dhaka's ties with Pakistan saw a remarkable development through political, trade and defence engagements.

Hossain's comments came hours after youth and sports adviser Asif Nazrul thanked Islamabad for its decision to boycott the T20 World Cup match against India February 15 to protest Bangladesh's removal from the tournament.

"Thank you, Pakistan," Nazrul said on a Facebook post sharing Sharif's remarks and expressing his gratitude.

Hossain acknowledged that bilateral progress stalled in several areas but called the situation "not a major crisis" and rather a "period without forward movement".

He said, "differing perceptions of national interests" between India and Bangladesh contributed to the slowdown as each side pursued its own priorities, which did not always synchronise.

Hossain, however, said the interim government advanced key negotiations, including trade talks with the United States and other partners, to ease the workload of the next elected government.

Ukraine, Russia agree on prisoner swap

REUTERS

Kyiv, Feb 5: Ukraine and Russia concluded a second round of US-brokered talks in Abu Dhabi Thursday aimed at ending Europe's biggest conflict since World War Two, with the two sides conducting a major prisoner swap and agreeing to resume negotiations soon.

US President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff said that the delegations from the US, Ukraine, and Russia had agreed to an exchange of 314 prisoners of war, which took place Thursday at the Ukrainian border.

"While significant work remains, steps like this demonstrate that sustained diplomatic engagement is delivering tangible results and advancing efforts to end the war in Ukraine," Witkoff said in a post on X, describing the peace talks as "detailed and productive".



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the sides had agreed another meeting in the very near future.

"The conversation is ongoing. It's certainly not easy, but Ukraine has been and will be as constructive as possible," Zelenskyy said at a joint news

conference in Kyiv Thursday with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk.

Zelenskyy said the talks covered all the main points of difference between the two sides and the Ukrainian team would deliver their report to him in person because of the

sensitivity of the issues.

Zelenskyy said he was keen for the talks to lead to the end of the four-year war but he repeated his insistence that Ukraine must receive robust security guarantees, including from Washington, to ensure Russia will not attack again.

Famine spreads to more towns in Sudan's Darfur region

The UN estimates that over 40,000 people have been killed in the war in Sudan, but aid agencies consider that the true number could be many times higher

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cairo, Feb 5: Famine is spreading in war-torn Sudan's western Darfur region and has now engulfed two more towns there, a global hunger monitoring group said Thursday.

The announcement came after the group said last year that people in Darfur's major city of el-Fasher, overrun by the paramilitary forces after an 18-month siege, were enduring famine.

Since April 2023, war has gripped much of Sudan after a power struggle erupted between the East African country's military and the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support

Forces. The conflict has triggered what the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The report on the spread of famine by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, or IPC, came as an attack Thursday by the RSF on a military hospital in southern Sudan killed 22 people, including the hospital's medical director and another three members of the medical staff.

A HARROWING REPORT The IPS report said famine has now been detected in the towns of Umm Baru and Kernei in Darfur. In November, the group said el-Fasher - a major



city in the region - was enduring famine and also the city of Kadugli in South Kordofan. At

the time, it also said 20 other areas across Sudan were at risk of famine. In Umm Baru, near-

ly 53 per cent of children aged between 6 months and nearly 5 years suffered from acute malnutrition, while 32 per cent of children in Kernei face the same ordeal.

"These alarming rates suggest an increased risk of excess mortality and raise concern that nearby areas may be experiencing similar catastrophic conditions," the report said.

The fall of el-Fasher in October 2025 to the RSF set off an exodus of people to nearby towns, straining the resources of neighbouring communities and driving up food insecurity rates, the report said.

The IPC has confirmed fam-

ine only a few times, most recently in 2025 in northern Gaza during the Israel-Hamas war. It also confirmed famine in Somalia in 2011, and in South Sudan in 2017 and 2020. With this report, the total number of famine-stricken areas in Sudan rises to nine. In 2024, famine had struck five other areas in North Darfur and also Sudan's Nuba Mountains region.

The UN estimates that over 40,000 people have been killed in the war in Sudan, but aid agencies consider that the true number could be many times higher. Over 14 million people have been forced to flee their homes.

of the day

note

The government borrowing programme also includes Rs 5.5 lakh crore for repayment. So, the net borrowing would be Rs 11.73 lakh crore. It is in the same range as has been the case earlier

ANURADHA THAKUR | ECONOMIC AFFAIRS SECRETARY

The India-US trade deal provides much-needed macro predictability at a time when technology, talent, and trust are central to global competitiveness

RAJESH NAMBIAR | PRESIDENT, NASSCOM

The Indian market in 2026 reflects a clear shift towards intent and capability-led growth. Organisations are hiring with a sharper focus, prioritising specialised skills, leadership depth, and long-term value creation

NILAY KHANDLWAL | SENIOR MD, MICHAEL PAGE INDIA AND SINGAPORE

Q3 RESULTS

TMPVL posts net loss

New Delhi: Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Thursday reported a consolidated net loss of Rs 3,483 crore for the third quarter ended December 2025, impacted significantly by the cyber incident at its British arm Jaguar Land Rover. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 5,485 crore in the corresponding quarter of the last fiscal, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd (TMPVL) said in a regulatory filing.

JSW Cement net rises

New Delhi: JSW Cement Ltd has reported a profit of Rs 130.62 crore for the December quarter of FY26, helped by improvement in EBITDA and gains in sales volume. The company had reported a loss of Rs 80.22 crore for the October-December quarter a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from JSW Cement, part of the \$23 billion JSW group, on late Wednesday evening.

IOC profit zooms 4X

New Delhi: Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) Thursday reported a more than four-fold surge in its third-quarter net profit, as gains in refining and marketing margins offset weakness in the petrochemicals segment. Its standalone net profit of Rs 12,125.86 crore in October-December - the third quarter of April 2025 to March 2026 fiscal year - compared with Rs 2,873.53 crore earnings in the same period a year back.

LIC profit rises 17%

New Delhi: State-owned life insurer LIC Thursday reported a 17 per cent jump in net profit at Rs 12,958 crore in the third quarter ended December 2025. The country's biggest insurer, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), earned a net profit of Rs 11,056 crore in the year-ago period. During the quarter, the net premium income of the insurer rose to Rs 1,25,613 crore from Rs 1,06,891 crore in the same period a year ago, LIC said.

Bharti Airtel plunges

New Delhi: Bharti Airtel Thursday said its consolidated net profit plunged by about 55 per cent to Rs 6,630.5 crore in the third quarter ended December 2025. The company's consolidated profit, attributed to the owners of the parent, was Rs 14,781.2 crore in the year-ago period, according to a regulatory filing. India's second-largest telecom company clocked a quarterly revenue from operations of Rs 53,982 crore, 19.6 per cent higher than Rs 45,129.3 crore it posted in the year-ago period.



Restrictive trading is something a market person like me does not like, but what we call throwing sand into the wheels is a well known and well appreciated way of doing it

ARVIND VIRMANI | MEMBER, NITI AAYOG

INDIA EXPORTS FIRST FUEL TO EUROPE SINCE BAN ON RUSSIAN CRUDE

Reliance Industries has partially offloaded a jet fuel cargo in Italy, India's first export to the region since a European Union ban on products derived from Russian oil took effect on January 21, data from ship trackers and trade sources showed



CRISIS OF FAITH

Bitcoin's monthslong slide continues

GLOBAL CRYPTO MARKET HAS LOST NEARLY \$1.9TN IN VALUE SINCE HITTING A PEAK OF \$4.379TN IN EARLY OCT, WITH SOME \$800BN WIPED OUT IN THE LAST MONTH ALONE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, Feb 5: The price of bitcoin continued its monthslong slide Thursday, falling another 11 per cent to \$67,000, its lowest level in 15 months.

The original cryptocurrency, pitched as "digital gold," has lost 46 per cent of its value since October 6, when it hit a record high of \$126,210.50, according to crypto trading platform Coinbase. As of 10:30 am EST Thursday, its price had dipped to \$67,245.

After the election of President Donald Trump in November of 2024, Bitcoin prices chugged higher for the better part of a year, in part due to investors' expectations of a more crypto-friendly administration in Washington.

Companies that enable investors to buy and sell cryptocurrencies, as well as the



The original cryptocurrency, pitched as "digital gold," hits fresh 15-month low of \$67,000

It has lost 46% of its value since October 6, when it hit a record high of \$126,210.50

growing number of companies who have made investing in bitcoin their main business focus, have also been hit hard in the recent sell-off.

Coinbase Global fell 9.1 per cent and online trading platform Robinhood Markets lost 8.1 per cent. Bitcoin min-

ing company Riot Platforms dropped 10 per cent.

Strategy, the biggest of the so-called crypto treasury companies that raises money just to buy bitcoin, tumbled 13 per cent. The company, formerly called MicroStrategy, reports on its website holdings of 713,502 bitcoin.

With the average purchase prices for those above \$76,000 it means the company is under water on the investment Thursday morning its bitcoin holdings were worth about \$47.8 billion, less than the \$54.3 billion Strategy says they cost.

American Bitcoin, in which Trump's sons Eric Trump and Donald Trump Jr. hold a stake, fell 6.6 per cent and is now down more than 80 per cent since October 7.

Other Trump-related crypto ventures have declined as well. The market value for the World Liberty Financial token, or \$WLFI, has fallen to about \$3.25 billion from above \$6 billion in mid-September, according to coinmarketcap.com. And the price of a meme coin named for President Donald Trump, \$TRUMP, is \$3.93, a fraction of the \$45 asking price just before his inauguration in January.

Benchmarks snap 3-day rally

SENSEX TUMBLES 504 POINTS AHEAD OF RBI POLICY DECISION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 5: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty halted their three-day rally to close with deep cuts Thursday, in line with bearish global markets, as participants turned cautious ahead of the RBI policy announcement amid geopolitical uncertainties.

Intense selling in metal, IT and capital goods stocks also dampened market sentiment, traders said.

In a bearish session, the 30-share BSE Sensex further dropped 503.76 points, or 0.60 per cent, to settle at 83,313.93. During the day, it tanked 666.07 points, or 0.79 per cent,



to 83,151.62.

A total of 2,447 stocks declined while 1,737 advanced and 158 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The 50-share NSE Nifty declined 133.20 points, or 0.52 per cent, to end at 25,642.80.

The decision of the Monetary

INDIA, GCC LAUNCH FTA NEGOTIATIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: India and the six-nation bloc of Middle Eastern nations, the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), inked terms of reference Thursday for formally launching negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA).

The terms of reference (ToR) outline the scope and modalities of a proposed trade pact. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal presided over the signing ceremony of the ToRs with GCC.

GCC is a union of six countries in the Gulf region - Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain.

Goyal said that the agreement will help boost bilateral trade and investments between the two. "The two trading partners have been trading amongst each other for over 5,000 years," he told reporters.

He added that about 10 million Indians are living and working in the GCC region.



It is most appropriate that we now enter into a much stronger and robust trading arrangement which will enable a greater free flow of goods, services, bring predictability and stability to policy, help encourage a greater degree of investments

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

He said the agreement will also encourage the food and energy security of the GCC nations, as well as India. While India is a major food grain producer in the world, GCC nations are oil and gas exporters.

"We already have a very robust, nearly \$179 billion bilateral trade. I believe a number of

products and services required by the GCC countries can be provided by our young, very talented and skilled Indians, as the GCC countries can help us with further diversification and growth of our energy sources," he said.

About 10 million Indians at present are living and working

GLOBAL SELLOFF, STRONG DOLLAR

Silver sinks 10% to ₹2.68L/kg

GOLD & SILVER



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: Precious metal prices tumbled sharply in the national capital Thursday, with silver slumping 10 per cent to Rs 2.68 lakh per kg, and gold falling to Rs 1.6 lakh per 10 grams triggered by a global selloff and a firm US dollar.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, silver nosedived by Rs 30,300, or 10.16 per cent, to Rs 2,68,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes), compared with Wednesday's closing level of Rs 2,98,300 per kg.

Gold of 99.9 per cent purity also depreciated by Rs 4,500, or nearly 3 per cent, to Rs 1,60,600 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). It had settled at Rs 1,65,100 per 10 grams in the previous session. "Gold and silver moved lower on Thursday, snapping a two-day rally, as precious metals faced renewed selling pressure and heightened volatility. The pullback coincided with a stronger US dollar, hawkish remarks from Federal Reserve official, and a moderation in safe-haven demand," Saumil Gandhi, Senior

Analyst, Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Meanwhile, bullion prices also witnessed a steep fall with silver and gold diving up to 13 per cent in the international markets. Spot silver tanked \$11.94, or 13.54 per cent, to \$76.26 per ounce, while gold declined by \$137.32, or 2.77 per cent, to \$4,826.99 per ounce.

The dollar index, which measures the greenback's performance against a basket of six major currencies, was up 0.25 per cent at 97.86, weighing heavily on commodities denominated in the US currency.

"Spot gold tumbled on Thursday as the US dollar strengthened and caution prevails ahead of the US-Iran talks in Oman tomorrow," Praveen Singh, Head of commodities, Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said.

Manav Modi, Analyst, Commodities at Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said silver prices languished once again after recovering from last week's fall. "As China sold aggressively, global markets reacted," Modi said.

Govt expands definition of startup; turnover limit doubled to ₹200 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: The government has expanded the criteria for recognising entities as startups by doubling the turnover threshold to Rs 200 crore, according to a notification.

A new recognition of 'Deep Tech Startup' has also been introduced for entities working on cutting-edge and breakthrough technologies, the notification of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) said.

The age and turnover limit criteria for such Deep Tech Startups have also been significantly expanded.

According to the notification, the age limit has been extended from 10 years to 20 years from the date of incorporation or registration, and the turnover limit has been enhanced to Rs 300 crore.

"This step addresses the unique requirements of deep tech entities operating in areas with long gestation periods, high R&D intensity, and capital-intensive development cycles," the DPIIT said.

Further to support innovation-driven growth at the grassroots in agriculture, allied sectors, rural industries, and community-based enterprises, the government has extended startup recognition eligibility to cooperative enterprises.

Accordingly, certain categories of cooperatives are now eligible for recognition as startups, subject to conditions.

It includes multi-state cooperative societies registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002, and cooperative societies registered under State and Union Territory Cooperative Acts, it added.

"Keeping in view the evolving startup ecosystem and the need to support startups with targeted benefits at various stages of their business lifecycle, the turnover limit for recognition as a startup has been increased from Rs 100 crore to Rs 200 crore," it added.

SC rescues homebuyers of Supertech

Top court upholds NCLAT order asking NBCC to take over stalled projects

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: Coming to the rescue of thousands of hassled homebuyers waiting for the delivery of their dream homes for more than a decade, the Supreme Court Thursday upheld an NCLAT order asking the State-owned NBCC to complete debt-ridden realty firm Supertech Limited's 16 housing projects expeditiously.

The court also restrained all the tribunals and high courts from passing any order that may lead to the stalling of the construction work to be completed by the National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) Limited.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi used its extraordinary power under Article 142



of the Constitution to uphold the December 12, 2024 order of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), asking the NBCC to take over the projects in the interest of the homebuyers.

The bench noted that real estate firm Supertech, according to many homebuyers, had booked around 51,000 homes for delivery during 2010-12.

The CJJ made it clear that the interest and dues of the finan-

cial and operation creditors of the debt-ridden real estate firm can be taken care of only after the delivery of fully-furnished houses to the hassled homebuyers.

The bench also made it clear that the houses must contain all the assured facilities like water, electricity, sewage connections, besides roads and parks in the neighbourhood.

It said the financial and operational creditors of Supertech will have to take the hair cut as found just and equitable by the tribunals - the NCLT and the NCLAT.

On February 21, 2025, the top court had stayed an order appointing the NBCC as the project management consultant to complete the 16 housing projects of Supertech at a cost of nearly Rs 9,500 crore.

ICMAI-Bhubaneswar Chapter holds panel discussion on Budget 2026-27



BHUBANESWAR: The Institute of Cost Accountants of India (ICMAI) - Bhubaneswar Chapter successfully organised a Panel Discussion on "Union Budget: 2026-27" at CMA Bhawan, Nayapalli here with enthusiastic participation from professionals, members and students. The programme was graced by Rajesh Kumar Mishra, IRS, Commissioner of Income Tax (Appeal-2), as the Chief Guest. CMA Damodar Mishra, Vice-Chairman, ICMAI-Eastern India Regional Council, attended the programme as the guest of honour. The technical deliberations were conducted by CA Arun Kumar Sabat, renowned tax expert and budget analyst, and CMA Sushil Kumar Panda, Practising Cost Accountant, as panellists, who provided an in-depth analysis of the Union Budget 2026-27, focusing on taxation reforms, economic growth, fiscal policy and its implications for industry and professionals. CMA Sarat Kumar Behera, Chairman, ICMAI-Bhubaneswar Chapter, delivered the welcome address, highlighting the relevance of the Budget as a key policy document and emphasising the role of Cost Accountants in nation-building and economic governance. The programme was facilitated by CMA Barada Prasan Nayak, Chairman of the Professional Development Committee. In his address, the chief guest appreciated the analytical role played by professional bodies like ICMAI in spreading budget awareness and promoting informed discussions. An interactive question-and-answer session further enriched the deliberations. The programme concluded with a formal vote of thanks by CMA Soumya Ranjan Jena, Secretary of the Chapter. The event reaffirmed the commitment of the ICMAI-Bhubaneswar Chapter towards professional excellence and meaningful contribution to economic discourse. The programme was attended by around 130 members, students and stakeholders.

HIGH-VOLTAGE WPL FINAL

RCB claim second crown



Mandhana, Voll power Royal Challengers Bengaluru as Delhi Capitals suffer another heartbreak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vadodara, Feb 5: Displaying absolute dominance, a Smrit Mandhana-inspired Royal Challengers Bengaluru lifted their second Women's Premier League trophy with a six-wicket victory over Delhi Capitals, who failed to seize the moment

on the biggest stage despite playing in their fourth final here Thursday.

RCB captain Mandhana looked in imperious touch on way to a magnificent 87 off 41 balls, while Georgia Voll smashed 79 in 54 deliveries during a 165-run partnership for the second wicket with her skipper, which paved the way for a memorable title triumph.

This was after skipper Jemimah Rodrigues rose to the occasion with a scintillating half-century and Chinelle Henry blazed away to a 15-ball 35 to lift Delhi Capitals to an imposing 203 for four.

Laura Wolvaardt (44 not out off 25 balls) and Lizelle Lee (37 off 30 balls) also made quick

runs after DC were put in. Rodrigues slammed 57 off 37 balls.

In reply, RCB completed the record chase with two balls remaining while joining Mumbai Indians as the most successful teams in the WPL.

In the stiff chase, RCB lost the big wicket of Grace Harris (9) early but skipper Smriti Mandhana and Georgia Voll kept them in the contest by scoring quickly and keeping pace with the required run rate.

Both Mandhana and Georgia drove anything that was pitched up with ease, pulled and cut the short balls with authority as RCB reached 100 exactly at the halfway mark, requiring 104 runs in 60 balls.

Meanwhile Mandhana, hav-

ing just hit two sixes, raced to her fifty in 23 balls with a sublime boundary against Sneha Rana. Voll was also at her best at the other end, dispatching everything that was in her arc with utter disdain.

The equation came down to 54 of 36 balls after Mandhana smashed Shree Charani for two boundaries to take RCB to 150 in 14 overs.

The two continued to dominate until Voll gave her wicket away to Minnu Mani, raising DC hopes. However, RCB held their nerves to emerge winners.

Earlier, the Royal Challengers were on the money in the first three overs with Lauren Bell and Sayali Satghare conceding just nine runs as

Shafali Verma and Lee did not get enough width to free their arms.

However, the fourth over bowled by Satghare saw the Capitals release the pressure with Lee clobbering the medium pacer's half-volley and half-tracker two successive sixes -- one over long-off and another over mid-wicket.

In the end though, RCB had the last laugh, once again, in a rematch of the 2024 final.

BRIEF SCORES
Delhi Capitals 203/4 in 20 overs (Laura Wolvaardt 44, Jemimah Rodrigues 57) lost to **RCB** 204/4 in 19.4 overs (Smriti Mandhana 87, Georgia Voll 79) by six-wickets

ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Shooters' gold haul reaches double digits



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 5: Reigning world champion Samrat Rana and World Cup Final winner Suruchi Singh joined forces to clinch silver in 10m air pistol mixed team event as India extended their domination in the Asian Shooting Championship with their gold count reaching 10 here Thursday.

Southpaw Rashmika Sahgal and Vanshika Chaudhary, in the 10m air pistol women junior, and Priyanshi Purva and Chahak Kohla, in the corresponding youth category also delivered back-to-back 1-2 finishes.

Their combined efforts saw India finish the second competition day with a rich haul of 10 gold, five silver and one bronze medal, far ahead of Uzbekistan, who are second on the table with three gold.

Uzbekistan's lone gold of the day came from the 10m air pistol mixed team pair of Nigina Saidkulova and Mukhammad Kamalov, who prevailed over Samrat and Suruchi by 481.3 to 479.6, in the 48-shot final.

The Indian pair had earlier topped the 10-team qualification round with a total of 583 after 60 shots. Three more teams,

Vietnam (582, 2nd) and Chinese Taipei (575, 4th), besides Saidkulova and Kamalov, followed them into the final.

The race to medals brought the best out of the Uzbeks and they were the only team in the final, where both shooters individually registered an average of over 10.0 per shot over 24 shots, upstaging the home favourites in a nervy finish. Chinese Taipei won bronze.

The Indian duo hit the ground running, posting 100.5 in the first series to lead the four-team final.

But the Uzbek pair, Nigina Saidkulova and Mukhammad Kamalov, surged ahead by the third series and held their advantage through the 'Elimination' stage to claim gold.

In the 10m air pistol women junior event, Rashmika Sahgal of India won gold with a score of 237.9, while teammate Vanshika Chaudhary came second with 236.7. Indonesian Asyifa Rihadatul won bronze in the event.

Two more golds for the hosts came through the team competitions where the trio of Rashmika, Vanshika and Agam Grewal won the junior women's air pistol team gold with a combined tally of 1714, a good 43 points ahead of the silver winning Kazakhstan team.

U19 WORLD CUP

India keyed up for final against Eng

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Harare, Feb 5: In pursuit of a record-extending sixth title, the Indian Under-19 cricket team would bank on its swash-buckling batting line-up when it takes on a gritty England in what promises to be an evenly-matched summit clash of the ICC Under-19 World Cup here Friday.

India's successful chase of a massive total to humble Afghanistan in the semifinal where skipper Ayush Mhare and opener Aaron George finally produced innings of substance, augurs well for the five-time champions, aiming to regain the trophy they last lifted in 2022. They now face another unbeaten team in England.

India will be aware that England have reached this far after knocking out defending champions Australia and will be high on confidence.

India's record in the finals of the global age-group tournament has been brilliant. This marks their 10th appearance in the summit clash. Having beaten England in their only previous final meeting -- in the 2022 West Indies edition -- history is also on their side.

BADMINTON ASIA TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Shuttlers enter QFs despite losses



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Qingdao (China), Feb 5: India's men's and women's teams advanced to the quarterfinals despite suffering narrow 2-3 defeats to Japan and Thailand respectively in their final group ties at the Badminton Asia Team Championships here Thursday.

The defending champion women will face hosts China, while the men will take on South Korea in the last-eight stage.

The Indian women, who had opened with a 5-0 sweep of Myanmar, began strongly but lost momentum after taking a 2-0 lead against Thailand.

World No 42 Tanvi, a member of India's historic gold medal-winning team at the 2024 edition, stunned world No 16 Busanan Ongbamrunphan 21-14, 17-21, 21-18 in a gripping

contest lasting one hour and three minutes.

The doubles pair of Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly then battled past world No. 65 Tidapron Kleebyeusun and Natamon Laisuan 21-14, 20-22, 21-11 to hand India a 2-0 lead at the Qingdao Conson Gymnasium.

However, Rakshitha Ramraj failed to get past 19-year-old Pitchamon Opatniputh -- the 2023 World Junior champion and 2026 Indonesia Masters runner-up -- going down 19-21, 17-21 as Thailand pulled one back to trail 1-2.

In the second doubles, Tanisha Crasto and Shruti Mishra fought gallantly but went down 21-19, 14-21, 15-21 to Hathaithip Mijad and Napapakorn Tungkasatan, ranked 57th in the world, allowing Thailand to level the tie and force a deciding fifth match.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 5: Hockey India Saturday announced a 24-member Indian team for the FIH Men's Pro League 2025-26 for the Rourkela leg of the tournament, scheduled to take place from February 10 to 15 at the Birsamunda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Odisha.

Among the notable inclusions is 21-year-old Rosan Kujur from Odisha, who has earned his maiden call-up to the senior national squad. Kujur was a member of the Indian Junior Team that secured the bronze medal at the FIH Junior World Cup 2025 in Chennai.

He also enjoyed a breakthrough domestic season, playing a key role for Vedanta Kalinga Lancers, who went on to lift the Hero Hockey India League 2025-26 title.

The Rourkela leg will feature hosts India, alongside international heavyweights Argentina and Belgium, promising high-intensity encounters against some of the world's top hockey nations.

The Indian squad features a strong blend of experienced players and young talent across all departments as the team looks to make a strong start to its Pro League campaign on home soil.

FIH PRO LEAGUE



It's an exciting mix of youth and experience. We have young talents like Rosan, Manmeet and Amandeep coming through, while the presence of senior players, including those from the India A setup, adds valuable experience

CRAIG FULTON | CHIEF COACH, INDIA

The goalkeeping duties will be handled by Suraj Karkera and Pawan, while the defensive unit includes Amit Rohidas, Captain Harmanpreet Singh, Jarmanpreet Singh, Jugraj Singh, Sumit, Sanjay, and Nilam Sanjeev Xess, Amandeep Lakra

Also, the defenders' list includes Amandeep Lakra, comes

into the squad on the back of an impressive outing in the recently concluded Men's Hero Hockey India League 2025-26, where he was adjudged the Hero Player of the Tournament, underlining his growing influence at the senior level.

SQUAD FOR ROURKELA LEG

Goalkeepers: Suraj Karkera, Pawan
Defenders: Amit Rohidas, Jarmanpreet Singh, Jugraj Singh, Harmanpreet Singh, Sumit, Sanjay, Nilam Sanjeev Xess, Amandeep Lakra
Midfielders: Rajinder Singh, Manmeet Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Hardik Singh, Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Rosan Kujur
Forwards: Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Shilanan Lakra, Selvam Karthi, Mandeep Singh, Arajjeet Singh Hundal, Aditya Arjun Lalage

T20 WORLD CUP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, Feb 5: Calling Pakistan's boycott of their T20 World Cup match against India an "appropriate decision, the country's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that it was a "considered stance" to support Bangladesh.

Pakistan's cricket team has been told by the government to skip the February 15 game in Colombo after Bangladesh were replaced by Scotland for refusing to play its games in India on account of "security concerns".

"We have taken a very clear stand on the T20 World Cup that we won't play the match against India because there should be no politics on the sports field," Sharif stated after a government meeting here.

"We have taken a very considered stance, and we should

completely stand by Bangladesh, and I think this is a very appropriate decision. We are with Bangladesh," he added.

In response, Bangladesh sports advisor Asif Nazrul posted "Thank You, Pakistan" on his official Facebook page, while quoting Sharif's statement.

A livid ICC has warned the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) of serious consequences if it fails to show up for the high-profile match, which is a money magnet at the big event for sponsors, broadcasters and advertisers.

The world body has hoped that the PCB will "consider the significant and long-term implications for cricket in its own country as this is likely to impact the global cricket ecosystem, which it is itself a member and beneficiary of."

Pakistan has reached Colom-



bo for its other preliminary engagements, starting with a game against the Netherlands Saturday. The country's cricket board has already made it clear that it supports the government's position and would go by its advice even if a rematch against India crops up during the knockout stage.

PCB chief Mohsin Naqvi had stated that the decision to drop Bangladesh was not fair and

Our flight is booked, we are going: SKY

India skipper Suryakumar Yadav Thursday said his team will travel to Colombo for its ICC T20 World Cup match against Pakistan even though the neighbouring country has announced a boycott of the game. The Indian skipper did, however, acknowledge that the situation is not easy for those involved in the issue. "I feel it is not an easy job. It is not my call. I am sure they (the ICC) might be working out something as well but it has come from the other government or the nation, how can they (the ICC) help as well?" Suryakumar said during the pre-tournament captains' press conference here at the BCCI headquarters. India are scheduled to face the arch-rivals February 15 but Pakistan's cricket team has been told by its government to skip the game after Bangladesh were replaced by Scotland for refusing to play in India on account of "security concerns".



India game not in our control: Pak skipper



Maintaining his cricket board's stance, Pakistan skipper Salman Ali Agha Thursday stressed that the decision to boycott the T20 World Cup match against India was taken by their government and was "not in our control". "It's the government's and the PCB's decision and we respect that. Whatever they are going to say, we will do that," Agha said during the captain's conference.

their security concerns should have been addressed. The ICC's security assessment of Indian

venues had placed the threat perception for Bangladesh in the low to moderate category.

India to host Billie Jean King Cup



New Delhi: All India Tennis Association (AITA) Thursday said the country has been given the hosting rights of the World Cup of Women Tennis 2026 Billie Jean King Cup. "India has been given the privilege of hosting the World Cup of Women Tennis 2026 Billie Jean King Cup by Gainbridge Asia/Oceania Group I Event in April this year," AITA's secretary general Anil Dhupar said in a statement. The event will be held at the newly renovated courts of Delhi Lawn Tennis Association (DLTA) Complex from April 7-11. The tournament will be conducted in a round-robin format, with the top two teams earning promotion to the play-offs. Along with hosts India, teams from Indonesia, the South Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, and Thailand will compete for the two coveted promotion spots, the top AITA office bearer said.