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OrissaPOST

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TIGHT VIGIL: Security personnel deployed on the Parliament premises during the Budget session in New Delhi, Tuesday PTI PHOTO

SC: Check if any racket is behind missing kids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: The Supreme Court Tuesday asked the Centre to ascertain whether there is a nationwide network or state-specific group behind the incidents of children going missing from different parts of the country.

A bench of Justices BV Nagrathna and Ujjal Bhuyan emphasised the need to ascertain whether there is a pattern behind these incidents or if they are random ones, and asked the Centre to collate data from all states.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, said some states have given their data on missing children and that of prosecution, but around a dozen states have not given their data.

She submitted that the analysis can be made only after the Union government gets complete data.

The top court suggested to Bhati that children who have been rescued should be interviewed to ascertain who is responsible for such incidents. The bench was also critical of the states that have not furnished the data, and said it may pass harsh orders if needed.

Senior advocate Aparna Bhatt said the Centre has taken the initiative and direction be issued to all states to furnish the data.

The bench was hearing a PIL filed by an NGO, 'Guria Swayam Sevi Sansthan', that highlighted the rising number of children who remain untraced across several states.

The top court December 9 directed the Centre to furnish six years of nationwide data on missing children and appoint a dedicated officer in the Union Home Ministry for ensuring effective coordination with states and Union Territories in compiling such data.

3 women killed, four hurt in jumbo attack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Feb 10: Three women were killed while four others sustained grievous injuries in an attack by a wild elephant at a forest in Dhenkanal district Tuesday, a senior officer said. The incident occurred near Lochapali village in Patpuri forest of Dhenkanal Sadar range, he said.

The deceased were identified as Indumati Pradhan, 60, Tuni Behera, 50, and Kuntala Pradhan, 40. The injured were identified as Rama Dehuri, 40, Rashmita Pradhan, 35, and Jhili Pradhan, 35. The identity of the other injured woman is yet to be confirmed. The women had gone to the dense forest to collect firewood when they came across the tusker. "The elephant suddenly appeared before us and attacked without any provocation," one of the survivors said.

DFO Sumit Kumar Kar said, "A forest patrol team rescued the women immediately, but three of them lost their lives."

Sadar Range officer Uchhab Pradhan said forest staff on patrol had warned villagers about the presence of the tusker and advised them not to venture into the forest, but to no avail.

The district administration provided ₹10,000 each from district Red Cross fund to the victims' families, Sadar tehsildar Swadhin Behera said.

No-trust notice against Om Birla

Perturbed by what they termed the "partisan" conduct of Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla during the ongoing Budget Session of Parliament, Opposition parties Tuesday submitted a notice seeking his removal from office. The notice, signed by at least 118 MPs, was submitted to the Secretary General of the Lok Sabha. Alleging that the Speaker repeatedly denied Opposition members to speak in the House, the signatories - including MPs from the DMK, Samajwadi Party, Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP (SP), and Left parties - claimed that their basic democratic rights had been infringed

PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 10: Opposition parties Tuesday put in motion the process to oust Om Birla as Lok Sabha Speaker, alleging that he had acted in a "blatantly partisan" manner in the House and prompting him to step aside from chairing the proceedings till the matter is settled.

Congress' deputy leader in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi, chief whip K Suresh and whip Mohamed Jawed submitted the notice under Article 94C of

the Constitution to Lok Sabha Secretary General Utpal Kumar Singh on behalf of several opposition parties, including the Congress, Samajwadi Party (SP) and the DMK.

The Opposition accused the Speaker of making certain false claims against the Congress members when he spoke of some "unexpected action" in the Lok Sabha and asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to come to the House to reply to the debate in the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address.

Lok Sabha Secretariat officials said Birla, upholding the highest standards of morality, has decided not to sit in the Speaker's chair until the no-confidence motion moved against him is settled.

The officials said the no-confidence motion against the Speaker is likely to be taken up March 9, when the House reassembles after the recess to examine budgetary proposals.

"We, the undersigned, hereby give notice of a resolution for the removal of Shri Om Birla from the office of Speaker Lok Sabha, in terms of the provisions of Article 94(c) of the Constitution of India, because of the blatantly partisan manner in which he has been conducting the business of the Lok Sabha," the notice said.

On several occasions, opposition parties have just not been allowed to speak, which is their basic democratic right in Parliament, the notice said.

The notice said that Rahul Gandhi was not allowed to complete his speech on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address February 2. This is not an isolated instance. The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha is almost invariably not allowed to speak, it claimed. Eight Opposition MPs were "arbitrarily suspended" for the entire Budget session February 3, the notice mentioned.

Time to impeach Rahul, Cong from politics: BJP | P8

CM flags off 250 ambulances

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: In a bid to meet emergency healthcare requirements and reduce the time taken for patients to reach hospitals, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday flagged off 250 new ambulances to strengthen emergency health services across the state.

While 150 ambulances were launched in the first phase December 23, the additional 250 were dedicated to the public at Kalinga Stadium here Tuesday.

The state government has invested around ₹111 crore from its own resources for the fleet, an official said.

"The objective of launching these ambulances is to ensure timely emergency health services and reduce the time taken for patients to reach hospitals," Majhi said.

At present, 866 emergency ambulances are operational across Odisha. An additional 500 ambulances under the 'Janani Express' scheme cater specifically to pregnant women and sick children, the officials said. Majhi said steps are being taken to ensure uninterrupted ambulance services from all blocks to district hospitals, and from district hospitals to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. "Ambulance services will also be extended to airstrips such as Rourkela and Jaipur under the Viman Yojana," he said.

AYUSH DOCTORS GET SALARY HIKE

CM Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday approved a proposal to enhance the salary of contractual AYUSH doctors working under National Health Mission in the state, a statement said. P3

SHORT TAKES

Hindu trader hacked to death in B'desh

Dhaka: A 62-year-old Hindu trader was hacked to death by unidentified men inside his shop in Trishal upazila of Mymensingh in Bangladesh, a local media report said Tuesday. The incident took place Monday night at Bogar Bazaar intersection under Upazila, Trishal PS chief Muhammad Firoz Hossain was quoted as saying by news portal bdnews24.com. The victim, Susen Chandra Sarkar, was the owner of 'Bhai Bhai Enterprise'. P10

Govt: Remove illegal AI content within 3 hours

New Delhi: The CentreTuesday brought in stricter obligations for online platforms on handling AI-generated and synthetic content, including deepfakes, saying platforms such as X and Instagram must take down within three hours any such content flagged by a competent authority or courts. The government notified amendments to the Information Technology Rules, 2021, that formally define AI-generated and synthetic content. P8

ARSON, FIRING ROCK MANIPUR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, Feb 10: In a fresh bout of violence over the alleged assault of a Tangkhul Naga community member in Manipur's Ukhrul, several abandoned houses were set on fire and shots fired Tuesday morning, prompting the state government to suspend internet services in the district for five days, police said.

The fresh firing and arson in Litan Sareikhong area comes a day after two Tangkhul Naga organisations restricted the movement of Kukis in Ukhrul and Kamjong districts.

"Armed men set ablaze abandoned houses and fired several rounds of bullets at Litan Sareikhong. The situation remains tense, and security forces are trying to bring the situation under control," a police officer said.

The Manipur government Tuesday ordered suspension of internet, including services through broadband, VPN and VSAT in the revenue jurisdiction of Ukhrul district for five days as a preventive and precautionary measure, he said.

Locals, who fled their residences, confronted security forces for their alleged failure to stop firing in the area.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

What kind of driver misses a ditch this big in the middle of the road? Find out who issued a DL to the dead biker

Global name hunt ends; it's 'The people's mollusc'

AGENCIES

Washington, Feb 10: A newly discovered deep-sea creature has become an unlikely Internet star. After appearing in a popular YouTube video, a rare chiton found nearly three miles beneath the ocean surface sparked a worldwide naming effort, drawing more than 8,000 suggestions from people around the world. Scientists ultimately chose the name 'Ferreiraella populi', meaning "of the people" or "The people's mollusc".

Scientists first discovered the deep-sea chiton – a type of marine mollusc – in 2024 in the Izu-Ogasawara Trench of the coast of Japan at a depth

Newly found deep-sea chiton Ferreiraella populi (Senckenberg Ocean Species Alliance)

of over 5,500 metres (3.4 miles), according to a report by 'The Independent'.

Following its discovery, a public naming campaign began after YouTuber Ze Frank featured the rare chiton from the genus Ferreiraella in an episode of his "True Facts" series, the report said.

Over 8,000 suggestions for its name were submitted through social media, and after reviewing the entries, scientists selected the name 'Ferreiraella populi', where the species name in Latin means "of the people".

Eleven different participants independently suggested the same name during the online process, researchers say.

The mollusc has eight armoured shell plates and an iron-clad radula, or tongue, and belongs to a rare group known for living only on sunken wood in the deep sea. Chitons, especially deep-sea ones, are rarely studied despite their key role in nutrient circulation within seafloor wood-fall ecosystems.

It also hosts a small group of worms that feed on its excrement near its tail, according to details of the species revealed in the 'Biodiversity Data Journal'.

"We were overwhelmed by the response and the massive number of creative name suggestions!" said study author Julia Sigwar from the Natural History Museum Frankfurt.

Other suggestions were also made in the online poll, including the name Fereiraella ohmu, referencing a chiton-like creature from a Studio Ghibli film.

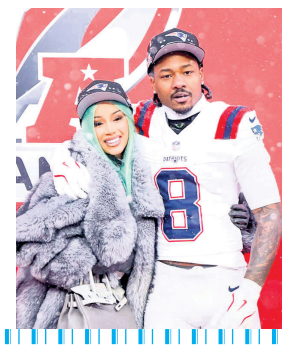
leisure

BLAKE GARRETT DIES AGED 33

The How to Eat Fried Worms actor Blake Garrett - who played Plug in the 2006 children's comedy movie of same name- passed away Sunday, his mother, Carol Garrett, has told *TMZ*. Carol told the publication that the family are still waiting for an autopsy result to determine her boy's official cause of death.

CARDI B, STEFON DIGGS SPARK SPLIT SPECULATION

Rapper Cardi B and NFL star Stefon Diggs have sparked split speculation after unfollowing one another on Instagram, just hours after he took part in the Super Bowl last weekend. The 33-year-old rapper attended last weekend's Super Bowl to support the NFL star, 32, who took to the field with the New England Patriots.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

You are very sensitive, and some people will disturb your peace of mind today. However, getting irritated will only make matters worse. Reflect in isolation what may be at the root of the problem. Ganesha says it is closer to you than you think.

TAURUS

Today, says Ganesha, you will are likely to encounter someone who is bent upon provoking and getting on your nerves. You are urged not to retaliate and do things unbecoming of your good nature. Keep calm and unruffled. Respond and behave in a manner befitting your better nature. Do not allow the other to spoil your composure, your graciousness. Your goodness, decency will, ultimately, prevail.

GEMINI

You will keep your emotions aside and concentrate solely on your work today. You will have to waste a lot of time in fulfilling the demands made by those around you. However, the more demands you fulfill, the more their expectations will rise, says Ganesha.

CANCER

The day is very favourable, says Ganesha. You will feel a sense of joy and happiness with your valuable possessions. You may fall into love or have a strong romantic ties with someone. A great time for lovers. Ganesha foresees chance of having new contacts and ties.

LEO

Your entire day will be spent at work. Those working in large corporations will have to fulfill heightened expectations from their superiors. Housewives will need to tackle other work, apart from their daily chores. It is an important day for you, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

You will stay away from partnership ventures. Ganesha says you have the ability to control large-scale projects on your own. You have leadership qualities, and will be able to coordinate team work and direct your colleagues to get the required amount of work from them.

LIBRA

Ganesha says you will put everything aside to pay more attention to your outward appearance and your beauty as you will be more aware about it. People will get attracted to your beauty today. You will be able to share your own ideas and thoughts with people, at the same time you will learn about their views and from their experiences.

SCORPIO

You are ready to take up the challenges that life has to throw at you. Thanks to the confidence within you, which gives you power to fight it out against all odds. Even if you take up a mammoth task, you are bound to succeed today, predicts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

The day begins on a bright note and you decide to flaunt your sunny side up, foresees Ganesha. At home front, sharing of work with your partner will keep the home atmosphere peaceful and harmonious. Both of you discover a joy is cleaning and cooking together. A perfect recipe for love!

CAPRICORN

Practical and creative, you are able to utilise your talents in the best possible manner. You will smartly solve family issues, without favouring or hurting anybody, says Ganesha. You'll like to play the role of a peace maker, as it gives you satisfaction from within. Also, you will love to help others as much as you can.

AQUARIUS

Be it about solving financial issues or concerns about income, money matters will keep your mind occupied through out the day. You will have a gala time with your friends later on the day, predicts Ganesha. Not that you don't value your friends, but today, you will realise how important you are for one another.

PISCES

You are fond of traveling and are always looking for an excuse to set off. Hence it comes as no surprise if you pack your bags and decide to embark upon a journey on a whim today. It is a much needed break too, from the daily stresses of earning a livelihood. While you are seeking solitude, you will take your friends and relatives along with you on the trip, says Ganesha.

Shanaya's advantage

Mumbai: Bollywood actor Sanjay Kapoor and Maheep Kapoor's daughter, Shanaya Kapoor, made her Bollywood debut along-side Vikrant Massey in *Aankhon Ki Gustaakhiyan* in 2025. She is now awaiting the release of her upcoming film, *Tu Yaa Main*. Recently, Farah Khan visited her home, where Shanaya spoke about the advantages of having star parents.

During the visit, Farah struck up a conversation with Maheep and Shanaya and asked what it was like to have star parents.

Shanaya said, "It's good to have a star mother and father because they help me promote the film."

Shanaya recalled going to watch Marty Supreme in a theatre with her mother when a group of girls ignored her to click pictures with Maheep. She said, "I was standing there with my phone and I saw a group of girls walking towards us. I was like, 'Oh, the trailer has just released and they might want a photo with me.' I was about to get up, and these girls went to my mum saying, 'We are such big fans of you,' and they asked, 'Can you please take a photo of us with your mum?'"

AGENCIES

Nora hails cultural pride

Mumbai: Actor and dancer Nora Fatehi recently reflected on Bad Bunny's Super Bowl performance, using the moment to underline the importance of cultural identity and representation on global platforms. In a video shared on social media, Nora addressed artists from the South Asian and North African communities, speaking about their efforts to gain international recognition while staying rooted in their culture.

She spoke about how artists from these regions are often advised to dilute their cultural expression to appeal to Western audiences.

"I see a lot of our South Asian even our North African artists pushing and pushing to be seen on a global level and to be recognised through their culture and through their language and I'm sure just like Bad Bunny so many people would tell them that oh you know if you sing in your language or if you portray your culture you celebrate too much of it it's not going to be relatable for the global audience for the international audience mainly the West," she said.

Referring to Bad Bunny's *Super Bowl* appearance, Nora said the performance carried a broader message for artists across the world. "That performance sent out a massive message to the entire world, that no matter where you're from, if you stay authentic and believe in yourself, the sky is the limit," she added.

AGENCIES

Mrunal believes in 'evil eyes'

Mumbai: Mrunal Thakur really believes in 'nazar', and that's exactly why she respects boundaries when it comes to sharing her professional or personal life. Even amid rumors of allegedly dating Tamil actor-producer Dhanush, she has chosen to share her side, not much. But the *Sita Ramam* actress has once explained why she consciously draws boundaries when it comes to sharing details about her plans.

Talking to an entertainment portal, the actress admitted that she prefers to keep her plans to herself, as she believes in the evil eye. "There are a lot of things I still need to do with my career, a lot of boxes I haven't checked. But I will talk about those things once I actually do them, because I don't want to jinx it by talking about them. I believe the whole nazar thing, 'boht nazar lagti hai'," she said.

Mrunal also spoke about how she sets boundaries while navigating the public side of showbiz. While her peers love to talk about their future projects, Mrunal avoids to discuss it.

AGENCIES

First look of *Bindusagar* unveiled

Bhubaneswar: The first look of upcoming Odia film *Bindusagar*, to hit screens April 10, was unveiled Tuesday.

The movie explores themes of love, loss, faith, and homecoming, weaving together an emotionally rich narrative rooted in Odia culture while resonating with universal human experiences.

The movie had its world premiere at the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), Goa.

The film also marks the first venture into Odia cinema for Platoon One Films. Directed by Abhishek Swain and written by Abhishek Das, Bindusagar is produced by Shiladitya Bora, along with Vinay Reddy and Shubho Shekhar Bhattacharjee of Boundless Blackbuck Films, in association with Nikhil Chaudhary of MDC Filmworks.

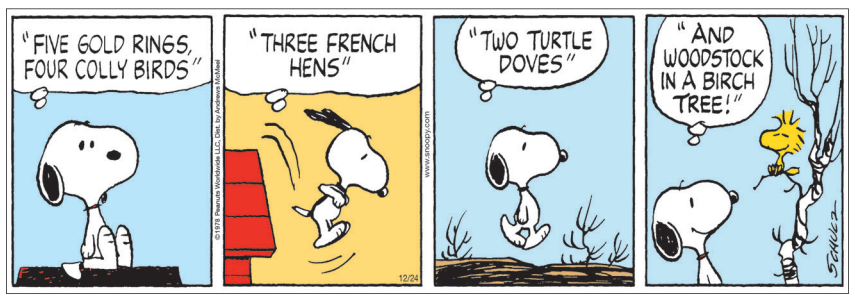
National Award–winning actor Prakruti Mishra, Dipanwit Dashmohapatra, Sonalli Sharmisstha, and Satya Ranjan, alongside veteran performers Sukant Rath and Robin Das, and Pranab Rath play key roles in the movie.

Speaking about the project Bora said, "Odisha has a rich cinematic legacy that deserves a global stage. We believe this is a moment of rebirth for Odia storytelling. We hope to contribute to a new era where Odia films travel, win hearts, and take their rightful place internationally." Bora is known for producing critically acclaimed films such as *Bayaan* (TIFF 2025), *Ghaath* (Berlinale 2023), and the National Award–winning *Picasso*.

"With *Bindusagar*, we wanted to take a hyperlocal story deeply rooted in Odia culture and present it through a universal cinematic lens," shared director Swain.

FUN post

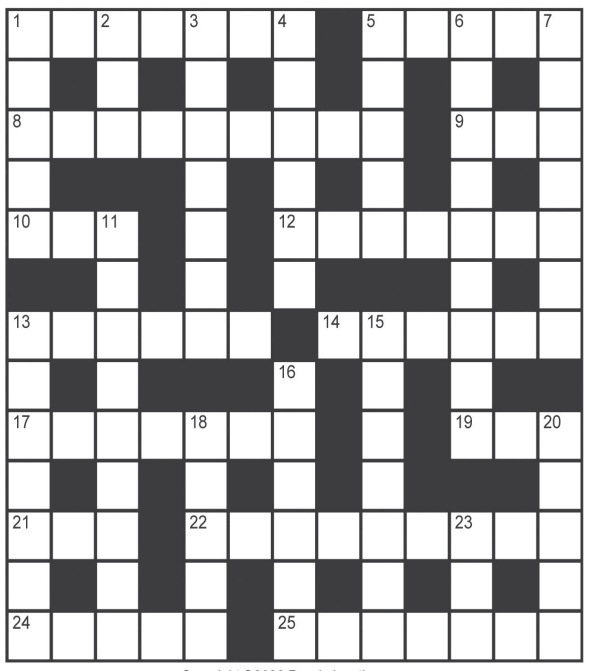
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES

BREVITY

CROSSWORD



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Across
1 Mexican band instruments
5 Like a yurt
8 Getting better (2,3,4)
9 Theatre sign
10 Even so
12 Dais
13 Take chances
14 Pub
17 Strong current
19 Patsy
21 Merino mother
22 Never-ending story (4,5)
24 Pick up the tab
25 Postpone

Down
1 Saturnine
2 Decay
3 Billiard item (3,4)
4 Gardener's tool
5 Extinct flightless birds
6 Salad ingredients
7 Hotel employee
11 Watch
13 Bikini, e.g.
15 Passionate
16 Bicycle parts
18 Atlas feature
20 Tartan
23 Dutch city

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

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

downtown

FOLK DANCE

Artistes perform traditional 'Ghoda Nacha' during Ghumusara Utsav, organised by Odia Language, Literature and Culture department at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

₹4,111CR INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS OKAYED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: In a boost to Odisha's industrial ecosystem and job-led economic growth, the State Level Single Window Clearance Authority (SLSWCA), headed by Chief Secretary Anu Garg, approved 23 industrial projects involving an investment of ₹4,111.80 crore, with the potential to generate 9,924 jobs, Tuesday.

Nipha Limited's proposal to establish a railway component manufacturing unit in Khurda got the SLSWCA approval. With an investment of ₹384 crore, the facility is expected to create jobs for 310 individuals. Inventgrid India Private Limited got the go-ahead to set up an advanced multi-drone manufacturing centre in Ganjam with an investment of ₹300 crore, generating 1,000 jobs.

Northernexpress Infradevelopers Private Limited received the state government's approval to develop a shipbuilding and ship-repair facility in Bhadrak. With an investment of ₹339.40 crore and a potential to create 507 employment opportunities, the facility will position Odisha as an emerging maritime industrial hub.

JG Hosiery Private Limited is set to establish an apparel manufacturing unit in Khurda with an annual production capacity of 149.76 million pieces. With an investment of ₹100 crore, the apparel manufacturing unit is expected to provide jobs to 2,350 individuals.

Alventa Pharma Limited will set up a pharmaceutical formulation unit in Khurda with an investment of ₹100 crore, creating 250 jobs, while Blue Mount Energy Private Limited got the state government's nod to establish a sorbitol manufacturing unit in Cuttack having a production capacity of 17,000 MT per annum, with an investment of ₹100 crore, generating 100 jobs. Growing Tree Oil Refinery Private Limited also got the go-ahead to develop an integrated solvent extraction unit, oil refinery, fish feed, prawn feed, cattle feed and poultry feed manufacturing complex in Cuttack. With an investment of ₹100 crore, the initiative is expected to create 250 jobs.

Sarvesh Refractories Ltd will expand its existing unit by setting up a silica brick manufacturing plant in Sundargarh with an investment of ₹62 crore, generating 100 jobs, while Jharkhand Grind Chem Private Limited will establish a refractories unit in Jajpur with an investment of ₹67.15 crore, creating 225 jobs.

Yash Flexi Pack Private Limited will establish a 12,400 MT flexible packaging products unit in Balasore with an investment of ₹51 crore, creating 150 jobs, while JBSS Glass Private Limited will set up a glass manufacturing unit in Cuttack with an investment of ₹50.85 crore, generating 263 jobs.

The SLSWCA approved Kalinga Metalics Limited's proposal for a 4 MTPA iron ore beneficiation plant in Sundargarh with an investment of ₹600 crore, creating 700 jobs. Shree Ram Iron and Alloys Private Limited's plan for 0.8 MTPA pellet plant in Deogarh with an investment of ₹250 crore, generating 475 jobs also got the government's nod. While Rashmi Metallurgical Industry Private Limited will establish a 3.0 MTPA iron ore beneficiation plant with tailing pond in Sundargarh with an investment of ₹350 crore, creating 200 jobs, Aryas Ore Refinery Private Limited's plan for iron ore beneficiation plant in Sundargarh with an investment of ₹51 crore, generating 149 jobs also got the approval.

Shrishti Trading Corporation Private Limited will develop a logistic park and warehousing facility in Cuttack with an investment of ₹160.75 crore, generating 595 jobs.

The state government also approved the proposals of MK Assets Private Limited for a 5-star hotel in Khurda (Rs 210 crore investment with potential to create 240 jobs) and Manjeera Hotels and Resorts Private Limited for a 5-star luxury hotel in Puri (Rs 200 crore investment with potential to generate 450 jobs).

The SLSWCA also approved the proposals of Panda Resorts Private Limited and Shankari Devi Enterprise for 4-star hotels in Puri and Sambalpur with investments of ₹70 crore and ₹64.10 crore, generating 240 and 165 jobs, respectively.

Among others, Water Tech India Private Limited will establish a facility for plastic-based products in Ganjam with an investment of ₹387 crore, generating 975 jobs.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL

Salary hike for contractual AYUSH doctors

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday approved a proposal to enhance the salaries of contractual AYUSH doctors working under the National Health Mission (NHM) in Odisha, recognising their contribution to public healthcare.

The hike ranges from ₹20,000 to ₹40,000 per month, depending on their period of service, said a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO).

Doctors with less than five years of experience will get a hike of ₹20,000, and their salary will now become ₹56,948, it said. Those with five to 10 years of experience will get a hike of ₹25,000, raising their salary to ₹74,467. Doctors with experience between 10 and 15 years will get a hike of ₹30,000, resulting in a salary of ₹80,467 per month. Those with more than 15 years of service experience will get the highest hike of ₹40,000, taking their salary to ₹91,467, the statement said.

The decision will benefit 2,912 AYUSH doctors working on a contractual basis under NHM. The salary revision is estimated to cost the state exchequer an additional ₹1 crore per annum.

DEFT HANDS: An artisan shapes earthen lamps at Basantapur, on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Tuesday as state gears up for Maha Shivratri

PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

Clear challans older than 90 days: HC on PUCC

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar/Cuttack, Feb 10: The Orissa High Court Tuesday observed that vehicle owners have to clear outstanding challans older than 90 days before obtaining a Pollution Under Control Certificate (PUCC).

While rejecting a PIL filed by advocate Snigdha Patra opposing the state government's decision making mandatory clearing of challans for pollution testing of vehicles, a division bench of Chief Justice Harish Tandon and Justice Murahari Sri Raman stated that motor vehicles with pending challans older than 90 days are not eligible for pollution testing. The court observed that clearing outstanding challans older than 90 days before undergoing PUCC testing is a mandatory legal requirement.

Taking to X in the evening, Commerce and Transport Minister Bibhuti Bhushan Jena said the controversy over pollution certificates that has been going on for the past few days has come to an end after the decision of the HC. "The Central Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 have been framed by the Parliament. As per Section 167 and Sub-Section 12 of this Act, it is mandatory to pay the challans outstanding for more than 90 days to get a pollution certificate," Jena said.

"It has been enacted to ensure the safety of road users and reduce environmental pollution and the state government has implemented it accordingly. In this regard, Advocate General Shri Pitambar Acharya had sided with the Government. The Hon'ble High Court examined this and clarified that the Government's decision was in accordance with the law," he added.

Constitute 15th Press Council of India: BJD

New Delhi: BJD MP Sasmit Patra Tuesday urged the government to constitute the 15th Press Council of India in order to uphold democratic values and strengthen media accountability. Speaking in the Rajya Sabha, Patra noted that there is concern over the prolonged non-functioning of the Press Council of India, a statutory and autonomous body established by an Act of Parliament in 1978 to safeguard the freedom of the press and to uphold ethical standards in journalism. The 14th Press Council of India completed its term October 5, 2024, yet the 15th Press Council of India has not been convened even after more than 16 months, he added. The situation has been further aggravated by the expiry of the extended tenure of the former chairperson, Justice Ranjana Desai, December 17, 2025, without the appointment of a successor, Patra said. "I urge the Government to treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves and to take immediate steps to complete the appointment of the Chairperson and constitute the 15th Press Council without any further delay," Patra said.

IIT develops digital power substation

Bhubaneswar: IIT-Bhubaneswar has developed an advanced digital substation equipped with a centralised monitoring and protection system. Energy department's Additional Chief Secretary Vishal Kumar Dev inaugurated the system at the 33/11 kV campus substation in the presence of IIT-Bhubaneswar Director Shreepad Karmalkar Tuesday. The system will enable real-time monitoring and protection of the institute's entire electrical distribution network, a statement said. The project was undertaken as a demonstration initiative under the National Perspective Plan (NPP) of the Central Power Research Institute (CPRI), Bengaluru, it said. The objective of the project was to design, develop, and demonstrate a centralised protection and monitoring (CPM) system for a distribution substation, including integration of distributed energy resources, it added. This is one of the indigenously developed digital substation frameworks in the country, leveraging intelligent merging units that eliminate the need for conventional physical Intelligent Electronic Devices (IEDs) within the substation, the statement said.

Form high-level inquiry committee: OHRC

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has directed the state government to constitute a high-level inquiry committee comprising officials from various departments within four weeks to probe the flawed process of village relocation in the Satkosia Tiger Reserve (STR) in Angul district.

Raising serious concerns over violations of various procedures during the relocation process, the OHRC has also directed that the committee should identify officers responsible for such violations and recommend departmental as well as criminal action wherever warranted. It issued the directions while acting on complaints filed by the affected residents of Bhurukundi, Asanbahal, Kataranga, Tuluka, Tikarapada, Gopalpur, and other adjoining villages, who alleged violations of their basic human rights due to irregularities in the relocation process. The OHRC observed that the relocation from a core or critical tiger habitat is governed by Section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, as

STR VILLAGE RELOCATION

amended, and the guidelines issued by the NTCA. It further noted that the relocation requires strict legal compliance, habitat assessment, settlement of rights under the FRA, 2006, and informed consent of Gram Sabha. Relocation must be genuinely voluntary and based on a mutually agreed rehabilitation package.

However, the OHRC found that the relocation in several instances was done without following prescribed procedures.

"The Commission recommends the Government of Odisha to constitute High-Level Inquiry Committee within four weeks, consisting of the Secretary, Forest and Environment Department, with Secretaries of the ST & SC Development Department, Revenue & Disaster Management Department, Law Department and one independent expert having knowledge of wildlife law, the FRA, 2006 and rehabilitation policy to be nominated by the government," directed the OHRC.

It also asked the Chief Secretary to decide who will head the committee and submit the compliance report regarding the formation of the committee within six weeks.

Odisha launches MDA programme in 5 dists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) Minister Mukesh Mahaling launched the Mass Drug Administration (MDA) programme in five districts Tuesday, aimed at accelerating the elimination of lymphatic filariasis (LF), a chronic mosquito-borne disease that can cause long-term disability if left untreated.

The 10-day campaign, scheduled to conclude February 19, will cover an estimated 7.4 lakh population across seven endemic blocks and urban areas in five districts—Bolangir, Bargarh, Ganjam, Dhenkanal and Jajpur.

In order to ensure effective implementation, 2,200 drug administrators have been deployed for supervised drug consumption, supported by 210 supervisors to monitor field activities, according to the H&FW department.

The national-level launch of the programme was also conducted in hybrid mode by Union H&FW Minister JP Nadda. The event was also attended by Mahaling, along with senior officials, department's Commissioner-cum-Secretary, and NHM Odisha Mission Director among others in the City.

Over the past few years, Odisha has made remarkable progress in its fight against LF. The number of Implementation Units (IUs) under MDA has seen a sharp decline—from 349 blocks and urban areas in 2023 to 162 in 2025. During February 2025 round, MDA was conducted in 47 units, which has now reduced further to just seven units in February 2026.

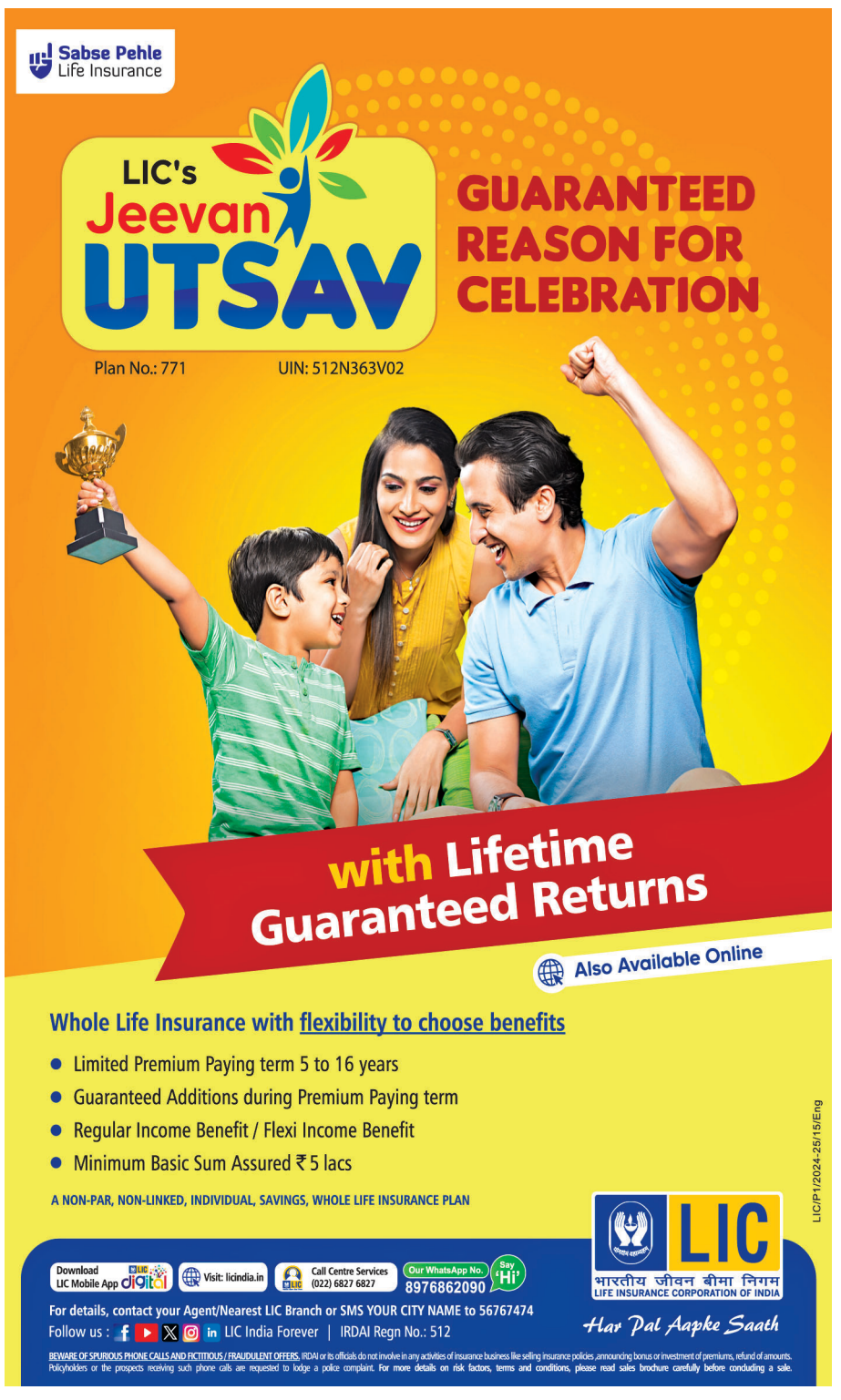
In 2025–26, the state successfully cleared 25 Evaluation Units (EUs) and 113 IUs under the Transmission Assessment Survey (TAS), achieving an impressive 96 per cent success rate.

Nine districts—Koraput, Malkangiri, Gajapati, Kendrapara, Nabarangapur, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Deogarh and Boudh—have cleared TAS-3, while Khurda, Nayagarh, Nuapada and Kandhamal have cleared TAS-1. Notably, Kandhamal cleared TAS-1 with just five rounds of MDA, a performance described as exemplary by health authorities.

In recognition of its sustained efforts, Odisha's MDA programme was selected as a best practice by the Central government in 2025.

The state government reiterated its commitment to eliminating LF as part of its broader vision of 'Viksit Odisha', which prioritises improved health outcomes, strengthened public health systems, and active community participation.

With intensified efforts now underway, the government is optimistic about achieving the national goal of eliminating LF and phasing out the MDA programme by 2027.



ATTACK ON ODIA MIGRANT WORKER

NHRC slams TN's response, seeks answer on negligence

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 10: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Tuesday criticised the Tamil Nadu (TN) government's response to the brutal attack on an Odisha migrant worker in Tiruttani, noting the delayed FIR and the victim's unexplained disappearance from the hospital without follow-up searches.

The NHRC has issued a notice to the Chief Secretary of the state after the youth, with serious injuries, disappeared from the hospital, and the Stalin government had no information about him.

In a disturbing incident that triggered widespread outrage, four 17-year-old drug-addicted boys brutally attacked an Odia man with a sickle near the Tiruttani railway station in Tiruvallur district in December last year. The victim was later identified as K Suraj (20), from Odisha.

NHRC member Priyank Kanoongo called the incident "the pinnacle of governmental ineptitude".

Taking to X, Kanoongo stated, "The MK Stalin government of the state has responded to our notice regarding the migrant worker Suraj, who was slashed with a sharp weapon in Tamil Nadu, stating that the victim left the hospital in an injured condition and has since disappeared, and the government now has no information about him."

- In a shocking incident that sparked outrage, four drug-addicted 17-year-olds allegedly attacked 20-year-old Odia youth K Suraj with a sickle near Tiruttani railway station in Tiruvallur district in December last year
- NHRC member Priyank Kanoongo said the attack occurred December 27, 2025, with the injured persons' statements recorded the same day, but the FIR was filed only on December 28, allegedly under pressure from social media

He mentioned that the attack occurred December 27, 2025, and statements from the injured were recorded on the same day. However, the FIR was filed only December 28, "under pressure from social media".

Kanoongo further stated that the immediate disappearance of the injured thereafter "raises serious questions about the government's functioning" as the administration, according to the NHRC member, did not even attempt to search for the injured or trace his family.

"Therefore, we have issued a notice to the Chief Secretary of the state with the following directives: Search for the injured and ensure his treatment is provided; explain why compensation of 2 lakh rupees should not be given to the victim? Provide details and clarification on the action taken against the negligence of the police and administration," he added.

Two-week civil aviation security training begins

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: A 'Civil Aviation Security Training' camp was recently inaugurated at the Biju Patnaik State Police Academy (BPSPA) here, with ADG of Police (Law and Order) Sanjay Kumar formally opening the session by lighting the ceremonial lamp. The two-week programme will train 40 police security personnel from Jharsuguda, Rourkela, Jeypore (Koraput), and Utkela (Kalahandi) airports.

While addressing the gathering, Kumar urged the trainees to perform their duties with utmost sincerity and set a benchmark for the country, while Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) Regional Director Pradeep Baxla briefed them on the technical aspects and protocols of aviation security.

The event was attended by Odisha's Special Secretary to the Commerce and Transport department and Director of Civil Aviation, Debadutta Suranjita Jena, along with SP US Mishra and Aviation Consultant Suresh Chandra Hota, while the programme was coordinated and managed by Deputy Commandant Lalitendu Mohanty.

Piped water to all villages by March 2027: CM Majhi

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday set an ambitious target to provide piped drinking water to all villages in Odisha by March 2027, directing officials to fast-track ongoing projects in mission mode to meet the deadline.

According to official sources, out of the state's 46,531 villages, 21,721 villages currently have access to piped water supply. Several initiatives, including solar-powered drinking water systems and mega drinking water projects, are presently under various stages of implementation to bridge the remaining gap.

To achieve universal coverage, the state government has planned a total investment of ₹54,000 crore, of which ₹32,128 crore is being funded under the Jal Jeevan Mission, while the remaining ₹21,109 crore will be borne by the state from its own resources.

The details emerged during a review meeting of the Rural Drinking Water Supply system of the Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department, chaired by the Chief Minister. During the meeting, Majhi directed officials to accelerate implementation to ensure all villages receive drinking water facilities within the stipulated timeframe, while stressing special focus on tribal-dominated areas for equitable access.

- Of Odisha's 46,531 villages, 21,721 currently have access to piped drinking water
- State has planned a total investment of ₹54,000 crore to achieve universal piped water coverage
- Of this, ₹32,128 crore will come under the Jal Jeevan Mission, while ₹21,109 crore will be funded by the state government

Officials said only three mega drinking water projects were completed in the state between 2017 and June 12, 2024. However, since June 2024, as many as 23 such projects have been completed.

Additionally, over the past 20 months, the state has completed 2,951 single village projects, installed 2,702 solar-powered drinking water systems, and constructed 26,137 tubewells across Odisha.

The meeting was attended by Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Minister Rabi Narayan Naik, Chief Secretary Anu Garg, Development Commissioner DK Singh, and senior departmental officials.

Left parties back Feb 12 general strike in Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: Ahead of the nationwide general strike February 12, Left parties in Odisha—CPI, CPI(M), CPI(ML) Liberation and the All India Forward Bloc—have jointly called for its complete success across the state.

The strike, called by Central trade unions and independent federations, is aimed at protesting what they describe as anti-worker, anti-farmer and anti-people policies of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the Centre, now in its third consecutive term.

The strike will be observed across Odisha from 6 am to 6 pm, with essential services such as medical care, ambulance operations, water supply, news media and fire services exempted.

Addressing a joint press conference at Bhagawati Bhawan here Tuesday, Left leaders said the February 12 general strike was prompted by the government's refusal to repeal the four labour codes, withdraw what they termed anti-worker legislations, and roll back policies affecting job security, pensions and public sector enterprises.

"Despite prolonged agitations and the submission of a 12-point charter of demands by trade unions including INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, AICCTU, TUCC, AEPF, UTUC and SEWA, the Centre has allegedly failed to address their core concerns," he said.

Among the key demands were repeal of the four labour codes, withdrawal of the Electricity Amendment Bill 2025, an end to contract, outsourcing and fixed-term employment in permanent jobs, restoration of the old pension scheme by repealing the NPS and UPS, and fixing a minimum monthly pension of ₹9,000, including EPF.

The unions have also sought worker status for scheme workers, including Anganwadi staff, ASHAs, mid-day meal workers, garden companions, gram panchayat employees and livelihood mission workers. The Left parties further demanded a central law guaranteeing Minimum Support Price for farm produce, repeal of the Seed Bill 2025, withdrawal of education-related legislations they claim restrict access, and immediate steps to curb price rise.

Criticising the BJP government in Odisha, the leaders alleged lapses in women's safety, corruption in recruitment examinations, poor regulation of the grain market, non-procurement of paddy despite the end of the token period, and arbitrary penalties under the Motor Vehicles Amendment Act.

They also expressed concern over what they described as deteriorating law and order, attacks on Bengali-speaking minorities, rising atrocities against Dalits, tribals and women, displacement linked to mining activities, unfulfilled promises of free electricity up to 300 units per household, and alleged consumer exploitation by power distribution companies.

Calling for broad-based participation, the Left leaders appealed to farmers, youth, students, small traders, transport workers, women and other sections of society to join the strike in solidarity. The press conference was addressed by CPI State Secretary Prashant Kumar Mishra, CPI(M) State Secretary Suresh Panigrahi, CPI(ML) Liberation State Secretary Yudhishthir Mohapatra, and All India Forward Bloc State President Puneet Chandra Padhee, who jointly issued the call for the statewide shutdown.

Nat'l summit on tax reforms, global practices held in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: The Bhubaneswar Branch of the Eastern India Regional Council (EIRC) of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) recently hosted a two-day national summit on "Emerging Tax Reforms & Global Practices" at a City hotel here, drawing over 500 participants, including chartered accountants, tax professionals, industry experts and academicians from across the country.

The summit opened with a grand inaugural session attended by chief guest Yamini Sarangi, Commissioner of Commercial Taxes & GST, Odisha, along with guests of honour CA Sarat Chandra Bhadra and CA Saroj Kumar Sahu, in presence of Chairman CA Mahendra Kumar Sahoo, Vice Chairman CA Goutam Lenka, and Secretary CA Prithvi Ranjan Parhi.

On day one, deliberations featured three technical sessions: CA Abhisek Tibrewal of Kolkata spoke on latest trends in GST assessments, scrutiny and audits; CA Manish Dafria of Indore outlined the transition roadmap under the Union Budget 2026 and the Income Tax Act, 2025; and CA Vishal Poddar of Nashik delivered a practical guide on GST appeals, covering filing, drafting and pleading.

On day two, sessions covered recent amendments to the Companies Act, labour laws and MCA rules by CA RS Balaji of Chennai and CA Bisworanjan Sutar of Bhubaneswar; procedures under the Income Tax Act, 2025, by CA Prasad Bhandari of Siridi; and emerging opportunities, FTA policy and Budget 2026 by CA Madhukar N Hiregange, Chairman, CMP, ICAI.

The summit concluded with a valedictory session attended by senior ICAI leaders CA Aswini Kumar Kar and CA Arun Kumar Sabat.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit before The Executive Magistrate, Nayagarh, Sl No.333CF No.1/2 dt 7.2.2026 I NAYAK PABITRA KUMAR Aged about 48 years, S/o SUKADEV NAYAK of Village/PO-Sikirida, P.S- Nuagaon, Dist-Nayagarh (Odisha), Pin-752083 solemnly declare that my Passport No. Z7848553, dated 24.06.2024 which is issued by the concerned authority of passport office in the column of my wife BIJAYA KUMAR PARIDA has been mentioned wrongly instead of "KALYANI PRADHAN" which name is mentioned in my wife's Aadhaar Card No. xxxx xxxx xxxx 2554. It is required to submit before the concerned authority for information and also correction of my passport certificate in the place of wife's column as "KALYANI PRADHAN" instead of "BIJAYA KUMAR PARIDA".

I Amit Kumar Agarwal, aged about 43 years, S/o-R.K. Agarwal, At-P- 312 , Block- A, South Dumdum, Lake town North-24 Pragans, West Bengal, India, declare by this Affidavit No. 80AA 956540 dated 10.02.2026 that my actual name is Amit Kumar Agarwal, Which is mentioned correctly in my Aadhaar Card Vide No.xxxx xxxx 4268 and in my Passport Vide No.Z3989185, My name has been mentioned as Amit Agarwal. Both Amit Kumar Agarwal and Amit Agarwal is one and same person i.e. myself.

Air pollution sparks health alarm in urban areas

Experts flag alarming air quality levels in Bhubaneswar, Rourkela, Talcher, Paradip and other urban centres

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: Rising air pollution is rapidly emerging as a serious public health concern across several urban centres in Odisha, with cities such as Bhubaneswar, Balasore, Rourkela, Paradip, Talcher, Barbil and Kalinga Nagar recording a steady decline in air quality, experts warned at a recent seminar organised by the Orissa Environmental Society (OES) here on the theme, "How safe is the air that we breathe today: An overview of air pollution as a silent killer."

Addressing the gathering, CSIR–IMMT chief scientist Trupti Das said air pollution is increasingly causing health emergencies in urban India, including Odisha, citing industrial emissions, vehicular exhaust, construction activities, and the burning of solid waste and crop stubble as major sources, and noting that air quality typically worsens during the winter months across the state and the country.

Referring to the State of Global Air (SoGA) 2024 report by the US-based Health Effects Institute (HEI), Das said air pollution remains a leading cause of premature deaths in India, with 464 children under five dying daily and a total of 21 lakh deaths across all age groups in 2021.

OES secretary Manoranjan Mishra, in his address, pointed out that rapid urbanisation and changing lifestyles have led to a sharp increase in motor vehicles on City roads. He cautioned that fine particulate matter generated from vehicle tyres poses serious health risks.

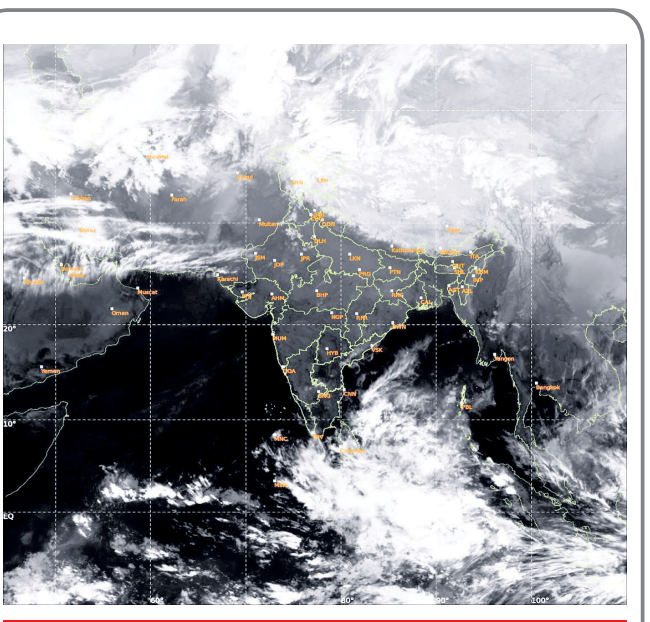
OES president SN Patro noted that nearly 40 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions originate from residential households, largely due to extensive use of electronic gadgets and air conditioners. Working president of OES JK Panigrahi suggested that CSIR-IMMT should consider undertaking a pilot project in collaboration with the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation to assess air quality and suggest improvement measures for the Capital city and nearby regions.

Participants in the seminar stressed the urgent need for remedial steps to control air pollution. They advocated the adoption of Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE)—an eco-friendly way of living—as a sustainable solution to reduce pollution and improve public health. Emphasis was also laid on transitioning to energy-efficient non-fossil fuels, dust suppression measures, development of green belts with broad-leaved tree species, and promotion of organic food.

The seminar was presided over by OES vice president Lala AK Singh. CSK Mishra introduced the guest speaker, while joint secretary Surabhi Jain delivered the vote of thanks. Several eminent personalities including Seba Mahapatra, BS Patro, Suresh Moharana, Rekha Das and Sarat Chandra Mishra, attended and actively participated in the deliberations.

MARKET WATCH

CURRENCY INDEX	VARIATION	BOURSES INDEX	VARIATION	COMMODITIES INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR 90.60	↓ 0.17	SENSEX 84273.92	↑ 208.17	GOLD ₹157,879	↓ ₹187
EURO 107.97	↑ 0.19	NIFTY 25935.15	↑ 67.85	SILVER ₹259,710	↓ ₹2910



WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	32.3°	29.0°	fog/mist
Min Temp	15.0°	13.8°	
Humidity	76%	83%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

Crushers must register on i4MS by Feb 20

Illegal crusher unit owners jittery after minor minerals dept directive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Feb 10: Illegal stone crusher units are causing the state to lose revenue worth crores of rupees, officials said. Despite periodic inspections, effective action against unauthorized crushers has remained limited, allowing violations to continue.

The Minor Minerals department has been conducting checks at stone crusher units to verify environmental clearances, transit passes, sale receipts and other mandatory documents. However, visible enforcement against illegal units has so far been lacking.

To curb such violations, the state Steel and Mines Department had earlier issued an order, May 5, 2025, directing all stone crusher units to register on the Integrated Minor Mineral Mining Management System (i4MS) portal. The Directorate of Minor Minerals reiterated the directive through subsequent orders issued May 9, 2025 and October 30, 2025.

However, as per the officials, even after nine months, none of the stone crusher owners complied with the registration requirement, prompting fresh instructions from the government.

In a recent order February 9, 2026, Deputy Director of Minor Minerals Turam Balai Munda directed all Deputy Directors of Mines (DDMs) and Mining Officers (MOs) to ensure that all stone crusher units are registered on the i4MS portal by February 20, 2026.

The directive asked field officers to treat the matter on priority and initiate appropriate action against non-compliant units. Officials said the registration process would help improve monitoring, enhance transparency and prevent revenue loss caused by unauthorized mining and crushing activities.

The Directorate of Minor Minerals under the Steel and Mines Department has issued a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the registration of stone crusher units on the i4MS portal. As per the SOP, all operational stone crusher units must complete their registration on the i4MS portal within one month.

A private farm has been directed to take the necessary steps for integration of the SOP. The registration certificate will remain valid until the expiry of the sitting criteria or the consent to operate (CTO). Unit owners must apply for renewal through the portal at least 30 days before the registration expires.

For transportation of minerals from crusher units, obtaining permission from the competent authority and securing an e-Transit Permit (e-TP) through the i4MS portal will be mandatory. Crusher unit owners must provide accurate daily details of raw materials received and processed output dispatched through Form-C on the portal. A consolidated monthly return must be submitted to the authorities within the first week of every month.

All norms prescribed by the Pollution Control Board must be strictly followed. Crusher units will be required to produce mineral stock details and relevant records during inspections by government officials. Installation of CCTV cameras and check gates has been made mandatory to ensure proper monitoring of stock.

Violation of the SOP may lead to cancellation of registration. The district-level task force will oversee the registration process and ensure compliance. Regular roadside checks will be conducted by the administration to inspect vehicles transporting chips, dust and metals from crusher units. Vehicles found operating without valid e-TPs will face penalties, and action will be initiated against owners and drivers. In such cases, the registration of the concerned crusher unit can also be cancelled.

Officials said strict implementation of these measures is expected to significantly boost revenue and effectively curb illegal mining and transportation of black stone.

Pitabas Panda murder case: Accused Bikram hospitalised

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur/Berhampur, Feb 10: Former MLA Bikram Panda, who is lodged in Berhampur Circle Jail after his arrest in the Pitabas Panda murder case, was admitted to the surgery ward of MKCG Medical College and Hospital Tuesday following health complications.

Panda had returned to jail after receiving treatment at MKCG Medical College and Hospital two days ago. However, he was readmitted after complaining of severe abdominal and chest pain. He is currently under police guard and admitted to Bed No. 320 in the surgery ward.

Hospital sources said Panda is suffering from a gall bladder-related ailment, and surgery may be required.

In a related development, another accused in the case, BJD leader Madan Dalai, was also admitted to the same hospital Tuesday after his health condition deteriorated. Dalai was produced before the district and sessions court Monday in a wheelchair due to his poor health. He has been admitted to the orthopaedics department for treatment.

> Panda is suffering from a gall bladder-related ailment and undergoing treatment at the surgery ward under the supervision of specialist doctors. He may require a surgery

MKCG Medical College and Hospital Superintendent Durgamadhab Satapathy confirmed that Panda is undergoing treatment in the surgery ward under the supervision of specialist doctors. He also said Dalai has been admitted for medical care in the orthopaedics department.

Police have so far arrested 16 persons in connection with the murder of Pitabas Panda, including former MLA Bikram Panda and former mayor Shibashankar Das, also known as Pintu. All the accused were produced before the court and remanded to judicial custody.

The case was heard on February 9 and subsequently transferred to the court of the Additional District and Sessions Judge-III. The next hearing in the case is scheduled for February 17.

Defence counsel Chakrapani Nahak said the court is expected to hear bail pleas of some of the accused and frame charges on the same day.

Dacoity bid foiled in Sonepur; 3 held with firearms, bomb

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, Feb 10: Police foiled an attempted dacoity in Sonepur town and arrested three persons, seizing firearms, live ammunition, a bomb and other weapons, officials said Tuesday.

The arrested accused were identified as Debashish Panda (28) of S Patrapali village under Ulunda police limits, Sonu alias Shubhranshu Sekhar Kumbhar (26) of Block Chhak area in Sonepur town, and Vicky alias Shubham Pritam Hota (25) of Champamal area under Biramaharajpur police limits.

Superintendent of Police Narayan Nayak said in a press conference held at the district police headquarters Tuesday that the accused were allegedly planning a dacoity at a business establishment in Sonepur and were moving around in a car with lethal weapons Monday night. Acting on intelligence inputs, a police team led by Sonepur IIC Jayadev Bag intensified patrolling.

As per reports, the police intercepted a red Maruti Alto car (OR-05-AD-0933) while it was moving from Nalini Chhak towards Biju Patnaik Chhak. While the occupants attempted to flee after spotting the police, they were apprehended by the cops.

During a search conducted in the presence of witnesses, police recovered two country-made pistols, six live rounds and a magazine from the accused. A knife was seized from Panda, while a small axe, a live bomb and cash amounting to ₹39,300 were recovered from the car.

Police said the accused did not possess any valid arms licence and had allegedly procured the weapons from a neighbouring district. Shubhranshu and Shubham have previous criminal records, officials added. A case (48/26) has been registered at Sonepur police station under the Arms Act and Explosives Act. The accused were produced before the court, and further investigation is underway to ascertain the involvement of others.

Odisha appoints special officer in Kotia amid border dispute

NARENDRA RAUT, OP

Koraput, Feb 10: In a significant administrative move amid the ongoing Odisha–Andhra Pradesh border dispute, the Odisha government Monday independently assigned Sourav Kumar Das the responsibility of Leave Reserve Officer (LRO) at the Collectorate, with a special focus on Kotia. The decision reflects the state government's intent to strengthen governance, restore public confidence, and address long-pending civic issues in the sensitive border region.

Soon after assuming charge, Das visited Kotia along with senior officials and representatives from various administrative council bodies. The visit aimed at taking stock of ground realities and initiating coordinated action on key concerns affecting local residents, particularly in the sectors of healthcare, education, infrastructure, and overall development.

During an extensive interaction at the Kotia Panchayat, the newly appointed officer held discussions with elected representatives, village elders, and members of the local administration. Several issues were raised, including lack of adequate medical facilities, educational challenges faced by students, road connectivity, welfare scheme implementation, and administrative accessibility.

Assuring prompt action, Das emphasized that the government is committed to resolve the problems of Kotia on a priority basis. "The purpose of my visit is to listen to the people directly and rebuild trust. The administration will now work in close coordination to ensure that basic services reach every resident of Kotia without delay," he said.

He further assured that continuous monitoring would be carried out and inter-departmental coordination will be strengthened to fast-track development works. "From now onwards, the administration will fully cooperate with the people. Our focus is on sustainable development and protecting the interests of residents in this border area," Das added.

Local representatives welcomed the government's initiative, expressing hope that the appointment would bring administrative stability and long-term solutions to Kotia's longstanding issues. The move is being seen as a strategic step by the Odisha government to assert administrative presence and reinforce governance in the region.

Nine students fall ill after taking deworming tablets

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patana, Feb 10: Nine students were taken ill after consuming deworming tablets at Rengalbeda Primary School under Kapundi panchayat in Saharpada block of Keonjhar district Tuesday.

The affected students were identified as Khusi Mahant (7), Jamuna Mahant (10), Subhadra Mahant (7), Chhabirani Mahant (10), Shubhasmita Mahant (9), Shubhashree Mahant (7), Bhavani Shankar Mahant (6), and Prince Mahant (10), of the school. The incident has triggered concern among the guardians and teachers during the National Deworming Day programme.

The incident occurred in the afternoon after students were administered Albendazole tablets provided by the government. Teachers distributed the tablets to children from the Balbatika in Anganwadi to Class V after the mid-day meal.

Shortly after taking the medicine all the nine affected students complained of discomfort, including vomiting, stomach pain and headaches.

Teachers Pragyan Choudhury and Malay Sethi immediately rushed the students to the Patana Community Health Center in an ambulance. They were provided primary treatment and medication by doctors Abhisek Sahu and Niranjan Sahu and were later discharged. Doctors said the condition of all the students is stable and out of danger.

Court frames charges against top ultra Azad

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Feb 10: A POCSO court here Tuesday framed charges against Maoist leader Azad, also known as Dunna Keshava Rao, in connection with a 2013 case involving alleged rape and torture of a minor girl. Azad is currently lodged as an undertrial prisoner at Jharsuguda jail.

Although his advocate Nab Kumar Kanta filed a petition seeking to absolve Azad of the offences, the court framed charges against top Maoist leader.

Additional District and Sessions Judge and POCSO court judge Sweta Mishra rejected the petition and remanded Azad to judicial custody.

According to the case details, it was April 25, 2013, when a minor girl lodged a complaint at Bissamkatak police station, alleging that about a year ago, she was abducted by Azad, along with several other Maoists - Nikhil, Sagar, Mitu, Sadhu and Subas. They threatened her at gunpoint and gangraped her. She was allegedly held captive in forest areas of Chandrapur, Phulbani, Gajapati, Karlaghati and Niyamgiri hills. However, she escaped around 15 days before filing the complaint and later approached the police.

A case (43/13) was registered under Sections 363, 366(A), 376(G), 506 and 34 of the IPC, Sections 25 and 27 of the Arms Act, and Sections 4 and 8 of the POCSO Act. Kanta dubbed the allegations false, stating that Azad had surrendered before Hyderabad police in May 2011 and had been in custody since then, making his involvement in the alleged 2012 offence impossible.

97 sign up for body donation at VIMSAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Feb 10: As many as 97 people have submitted sworn declarations expressing their willingness to donate their bodies to Veer Surendra Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR), Burla. The documents were handed over Tuesday morning by the Indian Body and Organ Donation Institute (IBODI).

The declarations, along with other necessary documents, were formally presented to VIMSAR Director and Dean Pradeep Kumar Mohanty and Head of the Anatomy Department Mamata Sar in the presence of IBODI president Prabhas Acharya, associate professor Sabita Singh, former principal and professor of pharmacology Bhabagrahi Rath, and organisation members Bipin Panda and Narayan Pradhan.

These donors included both men and women who had earlier taken an oath expressing their consent for body donation.

Speaking on the occasion, Acharya said the institute had so far facilitated pledges from around 50,000 people for organ donation and about 2,600 for body donation. He said such initiatives played a crucial role in strengthening medical education and research.

Sar said medical students showed greater interest in learning from actual human bodies than virtual models, as it significantly aided their understanding of anatomy. She added that the efforts of volunteers encouraging body donation were highly commendable and contributed meaningfully to the training of future doctors.

Man electrocuted, a day before wedding

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajgangpur, Feb 10: A 24-year-old man was electrocuted, a day before his wedding at Kheramuta village under Rajgangpur police limits in Sundargarh district, turning celebrations into mourning, police said Tuesday. The deceased was identified as Binod Majhi. According to officials, Majhi had gone to a place, about 3 km away from his home, to cut jamun branches. He climbed the tree but accidentally came in contact with a 33-kV live wire and got electrocuted on the spot. Informed, a team of Rajgangpur police officer Bijay Das, Lanjiberna police outpost OIC Priti Ranjan Parida, and others reached the spot and recovered the charred body. Tension, however, prevailed in the area as villagers demanded adequate compensation to the victim's family.

Later, the administration decided to provide the family ₹30,000 from the district Red Cross fund and ₹1 lakh from the Energy department. Following the assurance, the body was sent to the Rajgangpur community health centre for post-mortem.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. ST-SBP-TENDER-2026-04, Dtd. 02.02.2026

Name of the work : S&T PORTION OF THE WORK – "PROVISION OF INTERMEDIATE BLOCK SIGNALLING BETWEEN LAPANGA-RENGALI IN JHARSUGUDA-SAMBALPUR BG DOUBLE LINE ELECTRIFIED SECTION".

Tender Value : ₹ 3,06,96,039.57. Bid Security: ₹ 3,03,500.00.

Tender closing Date & Time: At 1100 hrs. on 25.02.2026.

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against the e-tenders.

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 (fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.

Divisional Sig. & Telecom Engineer (Tele), Sambalpur

PR-1109/Q/25-26

EAST COAST RAILWAY

'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS

Tender Notice No. SDMM/KUR/EP/2025-26/E-procurement Tender Notice/17, Dtd : 06.02.2026

The following tenders have been uploaded on website www.ireps.gov.in

SL. NO. 01 : TENDER NO. 81256552A, BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS : SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF 4G SIM SOLAR PTZ 4MP IP BASED CCTV CAMERA ETC., QUANTITY : 261 NOS.

SL. NO. 02 : TENDER NO. 81256545A, BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS : DIFFERENT SIZE'S RAIL JUMPER WITH RAIL CLAMPS AT BOTH ENDS LENGTH-01 MTR, 05 MTRS & 14 MTRS, QUANTITY : 1520 NOS.

Tender Closing Date & Time : At 1500 hrs. of 02.03.2026 (for both Tenders).

Sr. Divisional Materials Manager/Khurda Road

PR-1107/Q/25-26

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, DASPALLA

2nd Corrigendum on Tender Call Notice No. 66 Dt. 08.01.2026

Bid Identification No. NAC-Daspalla-(SAN)-2025-26

No. 422 **Dt.: 03.02.2026**

No. 13001/151/2526: Corrigendum hereby issued for Tender Call Notice No. 66 / Dt.08.01.2026 for Sanitation Work of Daspalla NAC regarding extension of date opening of Financial Bid due to unavoidable circumstances.

1. Date & time of opening of Financial Bid : Dt.12.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M.

*All other terms & conditions remain unaltered.

Sd./- Executive Officer
Notified Area Council, Daspalla

OIPR-13001/13141/1/25-26/0001

PUBLIC NOTICE

The original Patta / Record of Rights (ROR) relating to Khata No. 112/41, Plot No. 46/254 and Khata no 112/40, plot No. 44, Mouza Ramachandrapur, P.S. Badachana, Tahasil Darpan, District Jajpur, Odisha, has been lost/misplaced on 05.02.2026. A General Diary has been lodged at Darghabazar Police Station, Cuttack UPD.

If anyone finds the said document, kindly inform at the contact number given below.

Smt. Manju Devi Agarwal, Cuttack
Mob: 9437068119

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA 25001/131/2526

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

RURAL WORKS DIVISION-II, DHENKANAL, KAMAKHYANAGAR

E-Mail: rw.kamakhyanagar@yahoo.co.in

e-Procurement Notice No. 27/ Building Work / 2025-26

1.	Name of the Work	: Building Work
2.	Total No. of Works	: 2 (Two) Nos.
3.	Tender Cost	: Rs.12.61 to 35.296 Lakhs
4.	Class of Contractor	: D, C & B & equivalent
5.	Period of Completion	: 3 & 6 Calendar Months
6.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding	: 10.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M. to 17.02.2026 upto 5.00 P.M.
7.	Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	: 16.02.2026 upto 4.00 P.M.
8.	Date & time of opening of Technical Bid	: 18.02.2026 at 11.00 A.M.

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

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

OIPR-25001/25094/1/25-26/0018

PUBLIC NOTICE

SAHARA INDIA PARIWAR

It has come to our notice that Mr. Naveen Maurya has issued certain newspaper advertisements, made representations to revenue authorities, and released public statements in relation to properties situated at Berhampur, Odisha, claiming to act for and on behalf of Sahara India Pariwar.

We hereby clarify and place on record that Mr. Naveen Maurya has no authority whatsoever, whether express or implied, actual or ostensible, to represent, act for, or bind Sahara India Pariwar or any of its entities in any manner whatsoever, including but not limited to issuing any notices, making any representations, publishing any statements, or lodging any complaints for or on behalf of Sahara India Pariwar in relation to the Berhampur property or any other property of the Group.

Any publications, representations, statements or communications issued by Mr. Naveen Maurya in this regard are wholly unauthorised, do not represent the Sahara India Pariwar or its position and shall not be binding on Sahara India Pariwar in any manner whatsoever.

Members of the public, government authorities, and all concerned parties are hereby advised to disregard any such unauthorised communications, representations, or claims.

This clarification is being issued in the interest of transparency and to prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation.

For Sahara India Pariwar
Authorised Signatory

Date: 10 February 2026
Place: Lucknow

ସମନ୍ୱିତ ଆଦିବାସୀ ଉନ୍ନୟନ ସଂସ୍ଥା, ଫୁଲବାଣୀ
ଅନୁସୂଚିତ ଜନଜାତି ଅନୁସୂଚିତ ଜାତି ଉନ୍ନୟନ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର

OFFICE OF THE PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR, ITDA, PHULBANI

ST & SC Development Department, Government of Odisha
Tel:(06842) 254149, E-Mail: itdaphulbani@gmail.com
No.217/ Date 02.02.2026

CORRIGENDUM

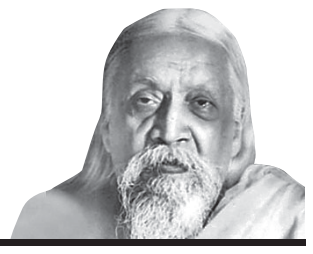
No.19001/25/2526: In continuation to this office tender call notice No.182, Dated 30.01.2026 & Tender ref. No. PA ITDA PLB_04 of 2025-26, the Estimated Cost of the project namely "Construction of Mission Shakti Bazar at Phulbani, Kandhamal" has been revised as detailed below:

Estimated Value (Earlier)	Revised Estimated Value
Rs.2,07,22,353.00 (Column-3)	Rs.2,07,22,301.00 (Column-3)
EMD: 2,07,224.00 (Column-5)	EMD:2,07,223.00 (Column-5)

All other terms and conditions contained in the said tender, remain unchanged. This corrigendum shall be treated as an integral part of the original tender document. Interested bidders are requested to take note of the above change while submitting their bids.

Sd./- Project Administrator,
ITDA, Phulbani

OIPR-19001/19069/1/25-26/0002



My God is love and sweetly suffers all

SRI AUROBINDO

Epstein's Sleaze & Politics

Influential people and high dignitaries often willingly get into honey-traps or sex rackets to seek pleasure using their positions. The Dutch dancer Mata Hari used her charm and sexuality during World War I as part of her spying weapon to ferret out secrets from her targeted victims. Italy's Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi organized the infamous "bunga bunga" parties between 2010 and 2011 in his private villa in Arcore, near Milan, for alleged erotic entertainment, including striptease acts by young women, some of whom were reportedly aspiring showgirls. But all these pale into insignificance compared to the sexual exploits influential men from different continents allegedly indulged in as favours from the dubious American financier and human trafficker Jeffrey Epstein. This is because national secrets and trade and commerce have never before been compromised on such a scale as the Epstein files unearthed by US investigators have revealed. These documents demonstrate that unlike Mata Hari or Berlusconi, Epstein and his rich and powerful friends did not remain limited to just sex with young women but more importantly it was the gruesome acts of pedophilia mixed with abominable practice of child sacrifice, drinking the blood of tortured and terrified children and infants and multiple acts that cannot be understood or comprehended, leave alone believed by common people.

Epstein files contain names, references and details of many top world leaders, not just limited to politicians like ministers, Presidents, Prime Ministers, but also judges, top officials, industrialists, business tycoons and billionaires from the US and across the world, including India. Hushed whispers even go as far as to connect the recent US-India trade deal as a product of pressure generated by 'Redacted' Indian names that hold the power of disturbing the power structure in this country.

The UK also is currently in the grip of a severe political crisis in the wake of the disclosures that threaten the survival of British Prime Minister Keir Starmer. The latest casualty is Starmer's chief of staff Morgan McSweeney who has resigned after taking responsibility for backing the appointment of Lord Mandelson as Britain's ambassador to the US, despite what was known about the peer's friendship with Epstein. The resignation was hoped to be a calculated gamble to let the PM off the hook for the role he played in the appointment of Mandelson. But it has compounded matters for Starmer with a call for his own resignation given by Anas Sarwar, Labour's leader in Scotland with ambition to step into Starmer's shoes.

Starmer had earlier sought to deflect the criticism for vetting Mandelson's appointment and indicated that he would move to tighten rules on lobbying, following revelations that Epstein used Mandelson as a conduit for influence and inside information. But McSweeney's exit shows there is deep trouble within the ranks of the ruling Labour Party. Many within the ruling establishment are said to be willing to share Sarwar's view that over the past year and a half there have been "too many incidents where wrong judgment calls have been made."

PM Starmer still has some chance to successfully weather the storm since his would-be challengers are keeping their cards close to their chests. It seems unlikely that any of them would relish the prospect of their party suffering a debacle in elections to several counties in May. Whatever happens, there is no denying the fact his government has now lost control over how events will unfold in the coming months. The Epstein scandal in which two of Starmer's close men have got involved has come as a shot in the arm of the Far-Right political party, Reform UK, of Nigel Farage which seems to have already captured the imagination of a large number of people in that country.

PM Starmer has tried, in the past few days, to insulate himself against the wave of outrage that threatens to engulf him. He condemned in unequivocal terms Mandelson's apparent leaking of market-sensitive information as a cabinet minister in Gordon Brown's government. He has now announced Mandelson will be removed from the privy council.

The Epstein scandal has unnerved Starmer so much that he has been forced to accept the proposal from Kemi Badenoch, the Leader of the Opposition, that all documents relating to Mandelson's appointment should be made public. However, this has landed him in fresh troubles with his own party colleagues questioning the decision to open sensitive documents for public scrutiny.

At the moment there have been a flurry of denials and unconvincing self-defence by many of the bigwigs whose names have figured in the Epstein files for alleged moral turpitude, child trafficking and selling classified information for sexual favours. They have acquired political overtones as an influential elite group of people seemed to have believed itself to be beyond the law. Or, as some claim, so very powerful that no law anywhere can touch them. Time, like many such exposes earlier, may very well never tell whether they were correct since the law is never equal for the weak and the powerful.

WISDOM CORNER

You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view

HARPER LEE

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

There is only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self

ALDOUS HUXLEY

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1753:** Pennsylvania Hospital, the first hospital in the United States, began admitting patients; it was cofounded by Benjamin Franklin.
- **1847:** American inventor Thomas Edison, who, singly or jointly, held a world record of 1,093 patents and who played a critical role in introducing the modern age of electricity, was born.
- **1945:** The Yalta Conference between the Allied leaders of World War II came to a close.
- **1975:** British politician Margaret Thatcher was elected leader of the Conservative Party, replacing Edward Heath; she became Europe's first woman prime minister in 1979.
- **1979:** Ayatollah Khomeini seizes power in Iran. Few days after Khomeini's triumphant return from French exile, the Iranian army steps aside, making way for the creation of an Islamic theocracy.
- **1990:** After serving 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela was released, and he subsequently began negotiations with President FW de Klerk that ended apartheid in South Africa.

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

TRANSACTIONAL FOREIGN POLICY

By privileging personalities over processes, leverage over legitimacy, and speed over sustainability, transactional policymaking erodes predictability, and creates space for rule-breaking

Ana Palacio

IN A WORLD OF ASYMMETRICAL POWER DYNAMICS AND DEEP INTERDEPENDENCIES, THE ONLY PATH TO STABILITY LIES IN BINDING RULES, CREDIBLE INSTITUTIONS, AND ENDURING ALLIANCES

The just-concluded talks among representatives of the United States, Russia, and Ukraine in the United Arab Emirates to end Russia's war in Ukraine finished, no surprise, virtually where they began. But the latest effort might shed light on how the US is thinking about Russia's place in the international system – in particular, what a postwar bilateral relationship might look like. Like much of US President Donald Trump's foreign policy, this vision appears to be defined by commercial considerations.

Trump's willingness to put aside human rights or respect for the rule of law in his quest to strike business deals from Pakistan to the Gulf states might look like realpolitik, but Trump's transactional approach should not be mistaken for realism. Whereas a realist foreign policy accounts for constraints, power dynamics, and long-term interests, a transactional approach reduces international politics to a patchwork of narrow bargains. And while realism calls for making the most of norms, alliances, and institutions, transactionalism counsels their evasion or even destruction.

At a time when the postwar order appears to be crumbling, this traditional conception of realism might sound idealistic, and transactional engagement more pragmatic. Unburdened by the responsibility to build institutions or maintain alliances, and unconstrained by principles, a transactional leader, the thinking goes, can deliver results even in challenging circumstances. But the long-term outcomes are likely to be far from desirable.

This is almost certainly the case when it comes to America's emerging approach to Russia. The Trump administration seems to view the end of active hostilities in Ukraine less as an end goal than as an opportunity to begin reconfiguring economic and geopolitical relations with the Kremlin. The gradual rollback of sanctions, technology restrictions, and market barriers will then enable the US to continue to shape outcomes as it wishes.

Crucially, however, these changes will be applied selectively, with actors being forced to negotiate agreements individually. What were conceived as instruments of broad deterrence – mechanisms for forcing a rogue entity back into a rules-based system – will be wielded to shape incentives within elite structures. This pay-to-play approach, devoid of institutional ambition, can hardly be considered economic statecraft, and it is unlikely to work.

Because commercial considerations are always paramount for Trump, he assumes that the same is true for leaders like Russian President Vladimir Putin, and thus that political agreements are more likely to last if they are embedded in commercial arrangements that increase the costs of reversals or violations. This also explains the administration's belief that a partial normalization of the US-Russia relationship would automatically weaken Russia's relationship with China.

According to this "reverse Nixon" strategy, it does not matter that an ideological realignment is not on the cards; drawing Russia back into some Western-connected infrastructure – financial clearing, technological standards, supply chains – will be enough to weaken Russia's alignment with China. Power, in this view, lies less in alliances than in controlling the architecture of connectivity. The Russian elite thus needs to be brought into Western economic and commercial frameworks through a large number of narrow, overlapping deals.

Whether these assumptions hold in Russia is far from clear. Nearly four years of war, harsh sanctions, and asset redistribution have further consolidated what was already a highly personalized regime. Personalization increases the internal cost of compromise and narrows the space for durable deal-making. What looks appealing on a balance sheet might be politically untenable in the Kremlin, which must reckon with a population that has absorbed around a million casualties in the Ukraine war.

Even if deals are made, the idea that they can underpin a stable, prosperous system is far-fetched. By privileging personalities over processes, leverage over legitimacy, and speed over sustainability, transactional policymaking erodes predictability, and creates space for rule-breaking. This is not good news for the US: it was by acting as a trusted enforcer of shared rules that America was able to secure and retain the global leadership position that brought it so many advantages over the last several decades. But it is even worse news for Europe.

Ukraine's gradual integration is a central geopolitical project for the European Union. A US-Russia arrangement in which Ukraine is little more than a bargaining chip risks hollowing out this project before it is consolidated. How can the EU anchor Ukraine in its institutional order if Ukraine's future is to reflect a transactional settlement negotiated by external powers?

Europe is trying to adapt to this new, more disorderly world through diversification and "de-risking." Recent trade agreements with India and Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay) reflect this approach. But while these partnerships are strategically necessary, they carry political costs. Social resistance to trade agreements like that reached with Mercosur highlights the limits of a "narrow-path" globalization which promises resilience while generating domestic anxiety.

More important, diversification does not eliminate dependency. The US remains the EU's largest market, absorbing one-fifth of EU exports. Moreover, Europe still depends on US capabilities in defense, intelligence, finance, internet technology, cloud computing, AI, and advanced semiconductors. The effort to break these dependencies by embracing European alternatives or building coalitions of middle powers will not bear fruit any time soon.

Not everyone is worse off in this new age of transactional international politics. While Trump looks for excuses to declare quick victories, China is playing the long game, reinforcing Sino-centric technological standards, locking in supply chains, expanding financial and digital infrastructure, and building up its military and innovative capacity. This will leave it well positioned to capitalize on the destruction of the US-led global order.

In a world of asymmetrical power dynamics and deep interdependencies, the only path to stability lies in binding rules, credible institutions, and enduring alliances. Trump's rejection of this basic truth – reflected in his administration's dealings with Russia – augurs an age of volatility from which China will emerge a clear winner.

The writer, a former foreign minister of Spain, is a visiting lecturer at Georgetown University.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

Fear of travelling: Only a few dogs have it

Melvin Durai

IF DOGS EVER CREATE A CANINE SPACE AGENCY, YOU CAN BET THERE'LL BE A STATUE OF LAIKA OUTSIDE THE HEADQUARTERS

A tourist named Pablo Garcia recently shared an Instagram video that he titled, "India has the best surprises." The video, taken from an auto-rickshaw traveling down a busy road in Bangalore, shows another auto-rickshaw carrying a fairly large passenger: a calf.

The calf is sticking its head out, while being held by someone in the backseat. It's not everyday that you see a cow -- even a baby cow -- being transported in an auto-rickshaw, so the video was widely shared and received many likes and comments.

My favourite comment was this: "Why should dogs have all the fun?"

Indeed, another video shared on Instagram shows a dog sitting calmly on the roof of an auto-rickshaw as it travels down a busy street in Pune. Don't ask me why the dog was on the roof. Perhaps the auto didn't have enough space for it, or perhaps the dog just wanted to do something that dogs don't often get to do: look down on humans.

Dogs have been known to travel in every mode of transportation possible. Many of them routinely travel in cars, of course. They love to put their heads outside the window and feel the breeze. They especially love spotting other dogs on the street and barking at them: "Ha ha! You're walking!"

Dogs have also travelled on motorcycles, on buses and trains, and on bullock carts. They've taken many flights, mostly on planes, but also on helicopters. The only type of travel that dogs do not routinely attempt is space travel. Dozens of wealthy people have become space tourists in recent years by spending $450,000 or more for short trips into space, but dogs do not have that kind of money. It's only a matter of time, of course, that a billionaire takes his pooch on a space flight.

Whichever dog becomes the first canine space tourist will be following in the footsteps of Laika, the first dog in space. Laika was a stray mongrel taken off the streets of Moscow and sent into space aboard a Sputnik 2 spacecraft in 1957, becoming the first animal to orbit the earth. The Soviets were using dogs to observe the effects of spaceflight on living creatures. Unfortunately Laika did not survive -- she died of hyperthermia during the flight. But she will always be remembered as a pioneer of dog space travel. If dogs ever create a Canine Space Agency, you can bet there'll be a statue of Laika outside the headquarters.

I've tried to tell my dog, Lulu, about Laika, hoping it will inspire her. I don't want her to travel into space -- I just want her to travel down the road in a car. But Lulu has a fear of cars that I just can't overcome.

Whenever we want to travel with Lulu, we have to struggle to get her into our car. She pulls back on her leash and tries desperately to run away. If we do manage to get her into the car, she sits nervously in the backseat, drooling continually, looking like a death-row inmate being driven to the gallows. If we give her something to eat, even a special treat, she doesn't touch it.

Some humans suffer from fear of flying. My dog suffers from fear of riding. I've shown her videos of dogs traveling blissfully in cars, trains and planes, but Lulu just gives me a look that says, "You expect me to believe that you didn't create this with AI?"

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 HERE . NOW
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Innovation & inclusion

Sir, As inequalities grow, it is vital to ensure that women and girls have equal opportunities to benefit from science, technology, and innovation. Combining AI, social science, STEM, and finance can help build a future that includes everyone. AI can analyze data, improve healthcare, predict climate changes, and solve many challenges, but without careful planning, its benefits may not reach women and girls. Social science helps us understand communities, design fair policies, and create programmes that reach marginalized groups, while STEM equips women with the skills to develop, use, and maintain new technologies and encourages inclusive research teams. Finance plays a key role in turning ideas into reality. Tools like impact investing, blended finance, and gender-smart funds can support women-led projects, startups, and STEM education. By linking AI, social science, STEM, and finance, we can close digital and gender gaps, empower women entrepreneurs, guide fair use of technology, and make social inclusion a central goal. Working together across these four areas shows how knowledge, technology, and finance can create equal opportunities and build a future where women and girls can thrive. The International Day of Women and Girls in Science is celebrated on 11 February..

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Overlooking deficiencies

Sir, This refers to "No roadblocks in SIR, SC sends clear message to states," Orissa Post, February 10. This means that the whole exercise of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to highlight the deficiencies inherent in the SIR exercise has been overlooked. There is no direction from the apex court to stop using the defective software which unnecessarily creates logical discrepancies. The Honourable court has shown its concern for failing to register FIRs against individuals allegedly interfering and obstructing the SIR work but has failed to take cognizance of the loss of human lives during the SIR exercise let alone directing the Election Commission of India to compensate the family members of the victims.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

Mumbai installs barriers to protect oceans

Mumbai releases about 5 million kg of plastic waste into the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean annually, impacting 220 km of the coastline, 152 sq km of mangroves, 107 protected species and nearly 1.9 million livelihoods dependent on coastal and marine ecosystems

BLOCKING THE PLASTIC TIDE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: At least 61 tonnes of plastic is expected to be recovered every year from Trombay and Malad waterways in Mumbai, where barriers will be installed in phases to stop the flow of plastic waste into the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, officials said Tuesday.

The initiative is being led by The Ocean Cleanup, a Netherlands-based non-profit organisation that develops technologies to remove plastic from the oceans, in collaboration with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai and the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB).

"Mumbai will witness the deployment of barriers to stop the flow of plastic waste into the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. The first deployments will focus on the Trombay and Malad waterways, identified through a data-driven analysis as significant contributors to ocean-bound plastic waste. The technology is scheduled for deployment over 2026. Once operational, these initial systems are expected to recover 61 to 92 tonnes of plastic per year. Research found that 80 per cent of marine litter along India's coastlines is made up of plastic," the Ocean Cleanup said in a statement.

The deployment, which will kick off before the monsoon season arrives, will take place in phases.

According to a survey conducted by the Ocean Cleanup, Mumbai releases about 5 million kg of plastic waste into the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean annually, impacting 220 km of the coastline, 152 sq km of mangroves, 107 protected species and nearly 1.9 million livelihoods dependent on coastal and marine ecosystems.

The primary sources of plastic waste in the city are urban runoff, industrial discharge, and inadequate waste management practices.

"India is a critical geography in the global fight against plastic pollution. With such a large proportion of plastic on India's coasts, stopping waste before it reaches the ocean is crucial in safeguarding the ocean against plastic pollution," said Boyan Slat, Founder and CEO, The Ocean Cleanup.

"Through our 30 Cities Programme, Mumbai has been identified as a priority intervention point, and by working closely with local government bodies, implementation partners, NGOs and community partners, we aim to deploy solutions that are not only effective but also deeply aligned with local needs and long-term development goals," Slat added.

Research by The Ocean Cleanup reveals that just 1,000 of the world's 3 million rivers are responsible for nearly 80 per cent of plastic emissions into the ocean.

Through the 30 Cities Programme, The Ocean Cleanup aims to cut one-third of global river-based plastic emissions, using its comprehensive strategy and proven technologies to target 30 of the most polluting urban waterways worldwide.

Mumbai is identified as a critical intervention point due to the scale of plastic leakage and its impact on local communities and ecosystems.

UP to build 1,680 modern toilets at 640 railway stations

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Feb 10: As the Uttar Pradesh government is set to build 1,680 modern toilets for women at 640 railway stations across the state, Uttar Pradesh Women's Commission Vice Chairperson Aparna Yadav Tuesday termed it an important step for women's health, dignity, and safety.

Calling the initiative a welcome move, Aparna Yadav praised the state government and the Railway Department for prioritising women-friendly infrastructure at railway stations, especially in smaller and rural areas.

Speaking to IANS, Aparna Yadav said, "This is an important step for women's health, their self-respect, and their safety. It is quite a welcoming step that the Railway Department has made a proposal on this. I want to thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the way he is inspiring people on women sensitisation."

She further said that separate and clean toilets for women at railway stations were a necessity and would also send a strong message about women's dignity in public spaces.

"The government is trying to take women empowerment seriously. Making separate bathrooms will also give a message, as it is a matter of pride. The most important thing is to have clean bathrooms because a lot of problems come up with using dirty bathrooms," she told IANS.

Highlighting how railway stations cater to people from all walks of life, Aparna Yadav stressed that women passengers often face discomfort due to a lack of hygienic and safe washroom facilities, especially at stations where existing infrastructure is limited.

"Now, women will not feel uncomfortable. Railway stations are such places where every type of person comes. It is not necessary that only educated people come there. People come from different backgrounds, and rail is such a medium through which people can travel at any time. So, it is a welcoming step. I praise the government and the Railway Department," she added.

As per the plan, the 1,680 toilets will be built at 640 stations, including major stations like Charbagh, Alamnagar, Utretia, and Malhaur. The Railway Board has given in-principle approval to the project, which is estimated to cost around ₹84 crore. An amount of ₹15 crore will be allocated for the first phase of the work.

The lack of toilets for women at railway stations has been a long-standing concern in Uttar Pradesh. The Daily Passengers Association had earlier raised the issue with Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, following which the Railways took cognisance and moved ahead with the proposal.

Maha clears land policy for development of 'Third Mumbai'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 10: The Maharashtra cabinet Tuesday approved a land acquisition and allotment policy for development projects for "Third Mumbai" near Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), also known as Atal Setu.

Speaking to reporters after the cabinet meeting, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said that 200 sq km of land had been handed over to the Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA) to develop the area.

According to an official statement, the decision will apply to areas falling under the newly appointed New Town Development Authority and projects to be implemented in the future by the MMRDA.

The policy aims to facilitate planned development in the impact zone of the MTHL.

The cabinet decision is expected to provide a clear framework for land acquisition and distribution, enabling faster execution of infrastructure and urban development projects in the region.

The Atal Setu, a sea bridge which connects Sewri in Mumbai to Nhava Sheva in Navi Mumbai, is a key infrastructure project and is expected to play a crucial role in decongesting Mumbai and promoting balanced regional growth.

The cabinet also approved a long-term loan of ₹15,000 crore from NABARD to complete water resources projects, benefiting around 8 lakh hectares of agricultural land across the state.

The cabinet has allocated 12.76 hectares of government land at Vikaswadi in Karveer taluka of Kolhapur district for an international-standard cricket stadium.

To speed up the Purandar airport project in Pune district, the cabinet approved the formation of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) and a loan of ₹6,000 crore for land acquisition and allied works.

The loan will be repaid by state agencies, including the MIDC, MADC and CIDCO, according to their shareholding, with the Maharashtra government providing approval and guarantee.

Fadnavis said 96 per cent of the farmers have given their consent for the project.

The cabinet cleared the launch of the 'Majha Gaav, Arogya Sampanna Gaav' (My Village, Healthy Village) campaign to improve health at the village level, which will run from April 1 to March 31, 2027, with an annual budget of ₹80.75 crore.

Under the campaign, awards ranging from ₹5 lakh to ₹2 crore will be given to gram panchayats up to the district council level.

UP budget jumps to ₹8.33 lakh crore

The survey described the state's fiscal position as balanced, noting that the public debt-to-GSDP ratio declined from 29.3 per cent in 2016-17 to 28.0 per cent in 2024-25, lower than national and global averages

In the health sector, the allocation has reached a record ₹46,728.48 crore, accounting for 6.1 per cent of the total budget

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Feb 10: Uttar Pradesh's budget size has more than doubled from ₹3.47 lakh crore in 2016-17 to an estimated ₹8.33 lakh crore in 2025-26, while capital expenditure rose from ₹69,790 crore to ₹1,47,720 crore during the period, according to the Economic Survey.

Presenting the report on the opening day of the budget session Monday, Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna said the budget has expanded by ₹4.86 lakh crore over the past nine years, compared to an increase of ₹2.34 lakh crore between 2008-09 and 2016-17.

The survey described the state's fiscal position as balanced, noting that the public debt-to-GSDP ratio declined from 29.3 per cent in 2016-17 to 28.0 per cent in 2024-25, lower than national and global averages.

In the health sector, the allocation has reached a record ₹46,728.48 crore, accounting for 6.1 per cent of the total budget. The report claimed that citizens' out-of-pocket health expenditure has reduced and medical infrastructure has been strengthened.

Institutional deliveries increased from 34.74 lakh in 2021-22 to 41 lakh in 2024-25, marking an 18.02 per cent rise. Institutional births accounted for 96.12 per cent of total deliveries in 2024-25, while non-institutional deliveries declined by 50.44 per cent to 1.66 lakh.

The survey stated that free vaccination is being provided to children aged 0-5 years against 12 life-threatening diseases, including polio, tuberculosis, measles and Japanese encephalitis, and pregnant women are being immunised against tetanus.

Khanna said the number of medical colleges has increased from 36 in 2017 to 81 by the end of 2025, including 45 government and 36 private institutions.

The state currently has 38 state universities and 52 private universities.

On tourism, the report said arrivals in Uttar Pradesh recorded an increase by 2.4 times, reaching 156.18 crore in 2025. A record 66.30 crore visitors attended the Prayagraj Mahakumbh, it said.

In agriculture, the sector's contribution to the state economy increased from 24 per cent in 2017-18 to 24.9 per cent in 2024-25.

Foodgrain production reached 737.4 lakh metric tonnes in 2024-25, raising the state's share in national output from 18.1 per cent to 20.6 per cent.

Per hectare gross value addition rose from ₹0.98 lakh in 2017-18 to ₹1.73 lakh in 2024-25. Paddy accounts for 13.1 per cent of the state's agricultural gross value, with area and production rising by 19.4 per cent and 23.6 per cent, respectively.

The report said around 65,000 food processing units are operational in the state, employing nearly 2.55 lakh youths, as Uttar Pradesh emerges as a food processing hub.

According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey 2023-24, 53.2 per cent of the workforce is engaged in agriculture and allied sectors, including 78.8 per cent of working women and 44 per cent of working men. Khanna also told the House that a zero-tolerance policy towards crime has been implemented to strengthen women's safety.

Kite rescued by municipal team after getting entangled in Chinese 'manjha'

Saharanpur (UP): A kite was severely injured after it got entangled in banned Chinese 'manjha' (kite string) here and was subsequently rescued by the local corporator and a team of municipal staff. The kite was found hanging upside down from a tree in Saharanpur's Anand Nagar Park, with a nest containing its younglings nearby. When residents heard the fluttering sound of the entangled kite Monday night, they informed corporator and municipal corporation executive committee member Mansoor Badar. Local residents said owing to Badar's efforts, the municipal lift vehicle and a team from the horticulture department arrived at the spot. The bird was found entangled in Chinese manjha. After hours of effort, the kite was freed from the sharp thread. Badar said the kite was severely injured by the thread, and the municipal corporation team administered first aid by applying turmeric and medicine on the wounds. Badar told PTI that as soon as he received information about a bird trapped in a Chinese 'manjha', he informed the municipal commissioner and the assistant municipal commissioner, the garden in-charge. Despite the late hour, the officials didn't stall the matter until morning, acting promptly. The corporator said it was only due to promptness on all levels that the kite was freed from the death trap.

QUOTATION CALL NOTICE

No. 17 **Dt.02.02.2026**

No. 8001/55/2526: Athamallik: Sealed quotations in plain paper/letter pad are invited from the intending registered firms/suppliers having valid GST and PAN in the name of the firms for supply of the following items to the Divisional Forest Office, Athamallik Division

The quotation should reach the undersigned on or before 15th February, 2026 by 5.00 P.M. positively and the same will be opened on 16th Feb., 2026 at 03.00 P.M. in the Division Office, Athamallik for selection by the purchase committee in the presence of the quotationers or their authorized representatives. The quotation received in incomplete shape without enclosing the sample item or after the scheduled date and time are liable to be rejected. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all quotations at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.

Supply of Uniform Articles;

1. Uniform (Khaki) Cloth
2. Shoes and Socks
3. Blue and Green barret cap
4. Web Belt
5. O.F. & Star for Forester Arm Batch
6. OF & FD Cap badge for Fr. & FG
7. OF & Star & Odisha Forest Arm Badge for Fr. & FG.
8. Winter Jacket
9. Rain Coat
10. Lathi (Forest & Forest Guard)
11. Blanket

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer
Athamallik Forest Division

OIPR-8001/8125/1/25-26/0001

VULTURES RETURN TO MELGHAT

The presence of a migratory Himalayan griffon suggested improving ecological conditions following sustained rewilding efforts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 10: A wild Himalayan griffon vulture has been spotted in Maharashtra's Melghat Tiger Reserve after nearly a decade, indicating that vultures released there are attracting their wild counterparts back to the landscape, a wildlife expert has said.

The sighting was significant as vultures had become locally extinct from the Melghat and Tadoba landscapes. The presence of a migratory Himalayan griffon suggested improving ecological conditions following sustained rewilding efforts, Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) Director Kishor Rithe said Monday.

Very recently, after the Himalayan griffon was seen in Melghat, a Eurasian griffon vulture was also spotted in the Tadoba Andheri Tiger Reserve, he noted.

By 2004, vulture populations in Maharashtra had declined drastically due to the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as diclofenac, aceclofenac, ketoprofen and nimesulide, which proved fatal to the birds.

Thereafter, the Maharashtra Forest Department joined hands with BNHS to revive the nearly extinct species.

As part of the programme, 15 critically endangered long-billed vultures were shifted from the Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre at Pinjore to the Somthana range in Melghat Tiger Reserve April 23 last year. The birds were kept in an aviary for acclimatisation before their release.

The vultures were fitted with GSM and satellite transmitters to study their movement, behaviour and survival December 19 last year. They were released from the aviary January 2 this year, after which BNHS began feeding them naturally outside the enclosure.

"Melghat has historically been a stronghold for vultures. We hope the birds relearn to thrive here. Their continued presence and exploration of the Melghat Tiger Reserve (MTR) area over the last one month shows positive signs. On top of it, their socialising with a wild Himalayan griffon for almost a week is remarkable," Rithe said.

Bhaskar Das, a conservation biologist at BNHS, said the fact that vultures released in Melghat were attracting wild vultures was a major achievement.

"The Himalayan griffon mixing with captive-released vultures and feeding alongside them indicates growing ecological acceptance of the MTR area," he said.

A pioneer in vulture conservation, BNHS runs vulture breeding centres and several release sites and currently cares for around 700 vultures.

As many as 34 vultures have been soft-released in Melghat, Pench and Tadoba tiger reserves in Maharashtra during 2025-26.

ଜିଲ୍ଲା ଖଣିଜ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାନ,ସୁନ୍ଦରଗଡ଼
DISTRICT MINERAL FOUNDATION, SUNDARGARH
Collectorate Campus, Sundargarh-770001,
Email ID: dmfsundergarh@gmail.com, Tel.No.-06622-273846
RFP No.DMF/01-2025-26 Date:07.01.2026

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
FOR ENGAGEMENT OF AN AGENCY FOR THE FORMULATION OF A FIVE-YEAR PERSPECTIVE PLAN AND ANNUAL PLANS FOR SUNDARGARH DISTRICT, ODISHA

No.30001/13/2526: District Mineral Foundation (DMF), Sundargarh invites proposals in response to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the engagement of an agency for the formulation of a Five-Year Perspective Plan and Annual Plans for Sundargarh District, from agencies having the required experience and eligibility as specified in the said RFP. The detailed terms and conditions for submission and evaluation of bids, including the scope of services and contractual terms and conditions are provided in the RFP document. Bidders are advised to familiarize themselves with the site conditions before proceeding with the RFP submission.

Sl. No.	Particulars	Document Fee (Rs.)	EMD (Rs.)
1	Request For Proposal (RFP) For Engagement of Agency for Formulation of Five-Year Perspective Plan and Annual Plans for Sundargarh, District	Rs.10,000	Rs.5,00,000

The details of RFP as follows:

Sl. No.	Event Description	Date
1	Issue of Advertisement & Uploading RFP	08.02.2026
2	Pre-Bid (Submission of Pre-Proposal Query)	17.02.2026 (All queries, if any, shall be submitted only through email:dmfsundargarh@gmail.com
3	Last date of Submission of Proposal	02.03.2026 (by 05.00 PM)

Detailed RFP is available on the District website www.sundargarh.odisha.gov.in, or can be obtained from the DMF Office.

Sd/- Collector & Chairperson Cum Managing Trustee
District Mineral Foundation (DMF)
Sundargarh District, Odisha

OIPR-30001/30026/1/25-26/0001

In our state budget, we had announced three to four schemes. The 'Yuvasathi' programme is for those who have passed the Madhyamik (Class 10) exams, aged 21-40 years

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

'GHOOSKHOR PANDAT' WILL BE RENAMED: NETFLIX TO DELHI HC

Netflix India Tuesday informed the Delhi High Court that the Manoj Bajpayee-starrer film, 'Ghooskhor Pandat', will be renamed. The statement was made before Justice Purushaindra Kumar Kaurav, who was dealing with a petition seeking a stay on the release of the film on account of its "offensive" and "defamatory" title

Quote of the day

The day of 'Qayamat' (doomsday) will never come, and hence the Babri structure will never be rebuilt. Those who are dreaming of the day of 'Qayamat' will rot away, that day will come

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

People belonging to different ideologies contest elections, but today competition is getting converted into hatred. The animosity and tension we are witnessing in politics is not a good sign. If everyone becomes an enemy in a democracy, how will consensus be built?

SACHIN PILOT | CONGRESS NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY

The trade deal with the US will significantly boost India's economy

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Family of 3 found dead in apartment

Surat (Gujarat): A married couple and their 13-year-old son were found dead in their apartment in Lalgate area of Surat city Tuesday with asphyxiation due to gas leakage suspected to be the cause, police said. The bodies of Faiz Ahmed (45), Mubina (36) and Noman (12) were found at around 11:30 am, said Deputy Commissioner of Police Raghav Jain. The doors and windows of the apartment were shut, he said, adding that the main door was closed from inside.

Death of crows sparks concern in TN town

Dindigul: The death of a number of crows in Vedasandur in this district over the last few days has caused health-related apprehensions among the local people but officials said there was no need to worry and that a probe was on to ascertain the reason behind the spate of deaths. A health official Tuesday allayed concerns of bird flu. Officials also dismissed reports of mass deaths numbering up to 100. While there have been deaths of one or two crows recently, only February 8, about six to seven crows died, causing some anxious moments to the public, they said.

Telangana: Man rapes, murders mother-in-law

Hyderabad: A man allegedly raped and killed his mother-in-law in Nagarkurnool district, police said Tuesday. The incident happened February 8 night in Kalwakurthy mandal when the elderly woman was alone in the house. The accused, in his 40s, a labourer, who was addicted to drinking, raped his mother-in-law, in her mid 60s, and murdered her at their house, the victim's daughter and wife of the accused, stated in a complaint to the police.

Ranveer Singh receives threat

Mumbai: Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh received a threat through WhatsApp from unidentified persons, police said Tuesday. Security around his residence was increased after Singh received a threat through a voice note and approached police, an official said. The threat to the 'Dhurandhar' star came days after an incident of firing outside the residence of filmmaker Rohit Shetty in the city. The crime branch of Mumbai Police has launched a probe, he added.

Govt tightens AI use on social media

NEW RULES AIM TO CURB AI MISUSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA BY REQUIRING PERMANENT META DATA ON AI-GENERATED CONTENT, BANNING ILLEGAL CONTENT, AND SHORTENING USER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL TIMELINES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: The government Tuesday tightened rules for social media platforms such as YouTube and X, mandating the takedown of unlawful content within three hours, and requiring clear labelling of all AI-generated and synthetic content.

The new rules - which came in response to the growing misuse of Artificial Intelligence to create and circulate obscene, deceptive and fake content on social media platforms - require embedding of permanent metadata or identifier with AI content and ban content considered illegal in the eyes of law, as well as shorten user grievance redressal timelines. The response timelines have been reduced to two hours for platforms to take down flagged content involving material that exposes private areas, and in case of full or partial nudity, or sexual acts.

- The government amended the IT Rules, 2021, to define AI-generated and synthetic content
- The new rules will come into force from February 20, 2026

In the run-up to the rules, authorities had flagged a rise in AI-generated deepfakes, non-consensual intimate imagery and misleading videos that impersonate individuals or fabricate real-world events, often spreading rapidly online.

The amended IT rules aim to curb such abuse by requiring faster takedowns, mandatory labelling of AI-generated content and stronger accountability from platforms to prevent the promotion and amplification of unlawful synthetic material. It places the onus on both social media platforms as well as AI tools.

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) issued a gazette notification, amending the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. The new rules will come into force February 20, 2026.

Interestingly, February 20 is also the concluding day of India AI Impact Summit, a mega congregation New Delhi will host as the nation prepares to take the centrestage in global AI conversation.

The tweaked rules explicitly bring AI content within the IT rules framework; it defines AI-generated and synthetic content as one that by means audio, visual or audio-visual "is artificially or algorithmically created, generated, modified or altered using a computer resource, in a manner that such information appears to be real, authentic or true and depicts or portrays any individual or event in a manner that is, or is likely to be perceived as indistinguishable from a natural person or real-world event."

Routine editing, accessibility improvements, and good-faith educational or design work are excluded from this definition.

The new rules require social media platforms to take down any illegal content flagged by the government or courts within three hours instead of the previously 36 hour deadline.

User grievance redressal timelines have also been shortened. The rules require mandatory labelling of AI content.

Time to impeach Rahul, Cong from politics: BJP

The BJP alleged that the Congress and its allies have been attacking constitutional institutions and posts at the behest of US-based billionaire George Soros since the BJP-NDA returned to power for a third consecutive term under Modi's leadership

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: The BJP Tuesday slammed the Opposition for submitting a notice to move a resolution for the removal of Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla from office, saying the time has come for India to "impeach" Rahul Gandhi and the Congress from politics. "Those who have been impeached of their consciousness are the ones who want to impeach all the constitutional posts of India," BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra told reporters when asked about the Opposition's notice.

The BJP also alleged that the Congress and its allies have been attacking constitutional institutions and posts at the behest of US-based billionaire George Soros since the BJP-NDA returned to power for a third consecutive term under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

The comments came after the Opposition submitted a notice for moving a resolution to remove Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla from office, for disallowing Rahul Gandhi and other opposition leaders from speaking in the House on the Motion of Thanks to the President's address, as well as for the suspension of eight MPs.

Congress MP and chief whip K Suresh submitted the notice to the Lok Sabha Secretariat on behalf of several Opposition parties, including the Congress, Samajwadi Party and the DMK.

The TMC MPs, however, did not sign the notice and were not a party to it. Reacting sharply to the Opposition's move, Patra said, "The entire country is watching the behaviour of Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party in the House."

At the behest of Gandhi, an attempt was made to gherao the prime minister's seat so that they could do something to harm him, the BJP MP alleged in an apparent reference to the Opposition members' Wednesday protest in the Lok Sabha.

"What kind of thinking is this? I think the entire country will now have to think over this. The time has come for India to impeach Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party from politics," Patra told reporters at the BJP headquarters in Delhi.

The Lok Sabha Wednesday witnessed dramatic scenes as women MPs from the Opposition marched towards the Treasury benches holding banners ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled reply to the discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President's address.

The prime minister was not present in the House, and BJP member P P Chaudhary was making his remarks when the Opposition members trooped into the Well of the House and made their way to the Treasury benches protesting against the trade deal with the US and former Army Chief M M Naravane's unpublished book.

A worker tends to tulip flowers at the research garden of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST), in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir PTI PHOTO

Omar defends Assembly remarks

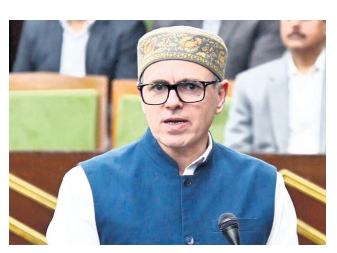
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Feb 10: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday ruled out apologising to BJP members for his certain remarks in the Assembly, saying while he was willing to withdraw his words, he was not allowed to speak in the House amid repeated disruptions.

"There is no question of an apology now as the remarks are already on record," he said.

A pandemonium broke out in the House during Abdullah's speech when BJP members objected to some of his remarks and demanded an apology, shortly before Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather adjourned the proceedings for the day.

Abdullah was addressing the House, winding up a discussion on the Union territory's Budget presented February 6. The BJP members were on their feet during most part of his nearly 40-minute speech.



Speaker Rather, who repeatedly tried to persuade the members to take their seats, later informed the BJP MLAs that their protest will not be recorded.

Referring to the recent India-US interim trade deal, the chief minister claimed it was detrimental to the interests of Jammu and Kashmir. He also made some remarks against the BJP members, who repeatedly disrupted his speech.

The BJP legislators then stood up and assembled in the front row, terming Abdullah's remarks "unparliamentary". Talking to reporters outside the Assembly, Abdullah said, "Had they (BJP members) allowed me to speak, I would have withdrawn my words myself. I was ready to withdraw them and say the same thing in a different manner. But they did not let me speak.

"There is no question of offering an apology now. What has been said is already on record. Had they allowed me even a second to speak, I was standing there to say 'fine, I would withdraw those words' and put the same point differently. But since they did not allow me to speak, there is no question of apologising," Abdullah said.

T'gana municipal polls

BJP candidate dies by suicide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Feb 10: A BJP candidate contesting the municipal elections in Telangana allegedly died by suicide in Narayanpet District Tuesday, police said.

The saffron party alleged that "harassment and intimidation" by ruling Congress leaders drove the candidate to take the extreme step.

Hitting back at the BJP, the Congress said the saffron leaders are trying to derive political mileage out of the incident by blaming the ruling government in the state.

Union Coal Minister G Kishan Reddy raised the issue in parliament, alleging that harassment, kidnaps and other atrocities are happening in Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's native district.

E Mahadevappa (45), contesting for the councillor post in Makthal municipality, was found hanging to the ceiling fan at his house in Makthal at around 4.30 AM, police said.

The Telangana BJP announced an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakh to the family of Mahadevappa.

As of now, there is no prima facie evidence of abetment, but police are investigating from all angles, a senior police official said. The reason for the suicide is still not known, police said.

Director General of Police (DGP) B Shivadhar Reddy told reporters here that a case has been registered. "No suicide note was found," he said, adding further investigation was on.

Siddique murder case

Court frames charges against 27 accused

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 10: A special court here Tuesday framed charges under MCOCA and BNS against 27 accused in the 2024 murder case of former Maharashtra minister and NCP politician Baba Siddique after they pleaded not guilty.

Framing of charges is the first stage in a criminal trial under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), where the court formalises accusations based on evidence.

The court, in the previous hearing, noted that there is sufficient material to proceed against all the accused and directed them to remain present before it Tuesday.

However, only 15 accused, lodged in Kalyan and Arthur Road jails, remained present. The other accused lodged in a jail in Thane were produced through video conferencing as they could not be brought to the court in South Mumbai due to logistical issues.

Special Judge Satyanarayan R Navander recorded the pleas of all the accused, who all pleaded not guilty and preferred to stand trial.

Parents, teachers back internet safety in school curriculum: Survey

According to the survey, 32 per cent respondents called for making internet safety a dedicated subject with weekly classes, while 24 per cent sought its integration into existing core subjects like computer studies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

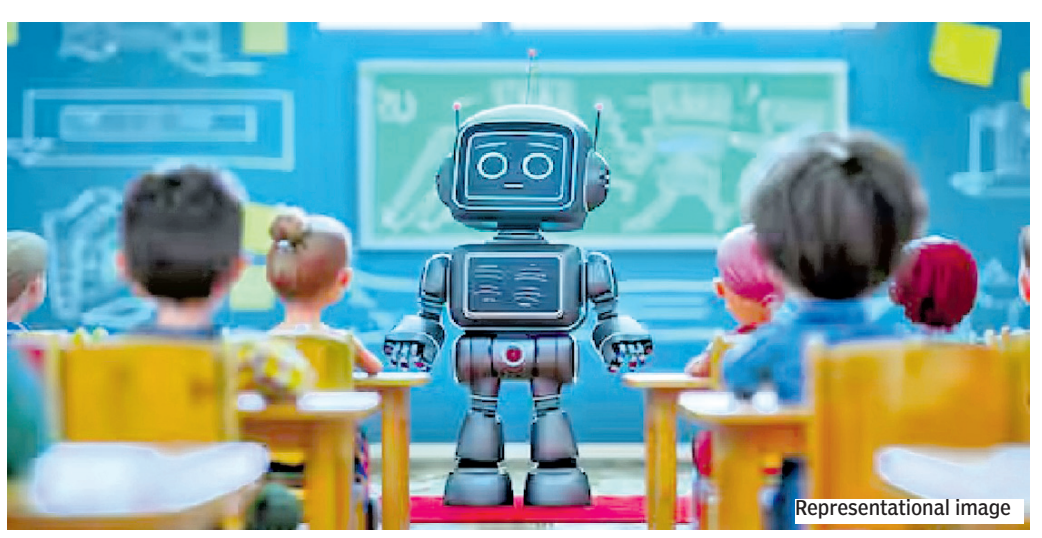
New Delhi, Feb 10: Over 56 per cent parents and educators are advocating inclusion of the subject of internet safety into the core curriculum for students to protect them from mounting online perils and malicious content, a new survey has found.

The study, which gathered responses from 1,800 parents and 300 teachers, primarily focuses on how artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming the digital landscape -- deeply affecting how young minds learn, socialise and navigate information.

According to the survey, 32 per cent respondents called for making internet safety a dedicated subject with weekly classes, while 24 per cent sought its integration into existing core subjects like computer studies.

Naman Jain, Vice Chairman of Silverline Prestige School, which conducted the survey, said the outcomes are a wake-up call. "Our parents and teachers are telling us clearly -- the digital world our students inhabit today is fundamentally different from the one we grew up in. With AI reshaping every corner of the internet, online safety is no longer optional, it is essential literacy," he said.

"We have a responsibility to equip our students not just with academic knowledge, but with the awareness and tools to navigate an increasingly complex digital ecosystem safely and intelligently," he said, asserting that educators should be committed to building a curriculum that prepares children for both opportunities and risks of tomorrow.



Representational image

According to the survey, 34 per cent participants flagged cyberbullying prevention and reporting mechanisms as their primary concern, while protection from inappropriate content and online predators was a priority for 29 per cent respondents.

Privacy protection and responsible sharing of personal information was flagged as an urgent need by 22 per cent participants, while 15 per cent advocated managing screen time and preventing digital addiction.

When asked about the necessary frequency of the digital safety curriculum, 42 per cent called for monthly sessions, 35 per cent supported termly programmes, 16 per cent advocated biannual sessions, while only 7 per cent believed annual sessions would be adequate.

When asked about how concerned they were regarding the emerging threats, 40 per cent respondents said they were 'extremely concerned' about students' exposure to inappropriate content and online safety threats, describing it as a daily worry requiring immediate action, while 24 per cent said they were 'moderately concerned', the report said.

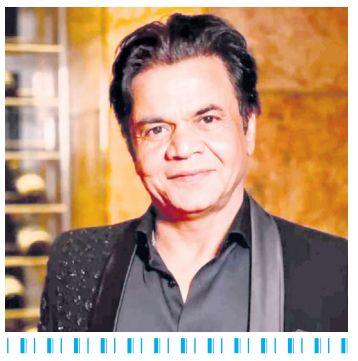
"However, only 12 per cent felt 'very prepared' to actively address online safety. The majority, 51 per cent indicated they feel 'somewhat prepared' but need more resources and training, while 29 per cent admitted they feel 'minimally prepared' and struggle to keep pace with rapid technology changes," it added.

The Indian space programme was started not to compete with anybody but to bring advanced space technology for the benefit of the common man of India

V NARAYANAN | ISRO CHAIRMAN

POLITICIAN, ACTORS EXTEND HELP TO JAILED RAJPAL YADAV

Actors Sonu Sood, Gurmeet Chaudhary and politician Tej Pratap Yadav Tuesday offered help to Rajpal Yadav after the comedian surrendered to Tihar jail authorities in connection with cheque-bounce cases stemming from the box office debacle of his 2010 directorial debut



Quote of the day

Mamata Banerjee has passed off numerous Group C state officials as Group B. She has even brought retired Group B and Group C officials into the list, violating EC guidelines and the Supreme Court directive

SUVENDU ADHIKARI | SENIOR BJP LEADER

GSDP figures are being deliberately cooked up by the Andhra Pradesh government to project an illusion of rapid economic growth, even though the revenue performance clearly remains weak

JAGAN MOHAN REDDY | YSRCP SUPREMO

The Congress party is proud of the most degrading behaviour by their MPs. If we had not stopped all the BJP MPs and allowed the women MPs to confront the Congress MPs, it would have led to very ugly scenes. We have very high consideration to protect the dignity and sanctity of Parliament

KIREN RIJIJU | UNION MINISTER

X POST OF THE DAY

BREAKING :
Abhishek Banarjee exposed BJP govt and Nirmala Sitharaman on taxation
What a brilliant speech
A baby is born : diaper is taxed
He grows : education is taxed
He goes to work : fuel is taxed
He earns : earning is taxed
He saves : saving is taxed
He takes insurance : that is also taxed
One of the finest of this #LokSabha session

@Amockx2022

SHORT TAKES

5 of family found dead in Mathura

Mathura: A couple and their three minor children were found dead inside their home in Mathura's Khapparpur village Tuesday, police said, suspecting that it is a case of mass suicide. Police have recovered a suicide note from the spot. A video made by the patriarch of the family was also found on his mobile phone besides a message written on a wall, they said. Mathura Senior Superintendent of Police Shlok Kumar said the deceased have been identified as Manish Kumar (35), a farmer, his wife aged around 32 and their two daughters -- Honey (8) and Priyanshi (5) -- and son Prateek (3).

Three missing girls from Ranchi rescued

Ranchi: Three minor girls, including two sisters, who had gone missing from Ranchi, were rescued Tuesday, police said. The two minor sisters, who had been missing since February 8, were rescued from Ranchi Railway Station within 24 hours, they said.

Man dies after falling in uncovered manhole

New Delhi: Four days after a 25-year-old private bank employee died after falling into a pit dug by the Delhi Jal Board, a labourer died after falling into an uncovered manhole in the Begumpur area of Delhi's Rohini. The body of the labourer was recovered from a manhole after an overnight delay in reporting the incident, police said Tuesday. The body has been sent to the hospital for post-mortem, the police said.

Himanta files defamation case against Cong leaders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Feb 10: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Tuesday filed a ₹500 crore defamation case against Congress leaders for their "land grabbing" allegations against him and his family.

He accused Congress leaders Jitendra Singh, Bhupesh Baghel and Gaurav Gogoi of making "false, malicious and defamatory allegations" during a recent press conference, leading to the legal suit against them.

"Over the last few days, Congress leaders have been saying that I have benami land of 12,000 bighas (over 3,960 acres). I have filed a case in court so that they can submit the list before the court itself," Sarma told reporters on the sidelines of an official event in Bongaigaon. He said that if they cannot provide the list, they have to pay him ₹500 crore, he added.

In a post on X earlier, the CM said, "Today, I have filed a defamation case seeking ₹500 crore in damages against Congress leaders Jitendra Singh, Bhupesh Baghel and Gaurav Gogoi for making false, malicious and defamatory allegations against me through a press conference."

Addressing a joint press conference here February 4, state Congress president Gogoi had claimed that the party's "investigation" has revealed that "almost 12,000 bighas of land have been occupied by the CM and his family across the state".

Asked about Congress filing a police complaint in Guwahati against the BJP for circulating a controversial video featuring him on social media, Sarma said he will continue speaking up as he has been doing now.

"It is good that they have filed the case. What does communal mean? You all know who I am against," the CM said, in an apparent reference to his stand against 'illegal Bangladeshis'.

"What will happen to me if a case is filed? For me, white is white, black is black. They cannot frighten me. Sibani Bora, Diganta Barman, their malik Rahul Gandhi can file a case against me. My thumb to them," Sarma added, showing his thumb to the camera.

Congress MLAs Bora and Barman lodged the complaint at Dispur Police Station in Guwahati Tuesday against the Assam BJP for a video on its official social media handle, which showed Sarma purportedly taking aim with a rifle and firing a shot at two people, one wearing a skull cap and the other with a beard, with "point-blank shot" as the caption.

The video, posted Saturday, was deleted after a massive political backlash.

Sarma had Monday claimed ignorance of the video, even as Gogoi accused the CM of "inciting genocide" against Muslims through his videos, and urged the police to take suo motu cognisance.

SC agrees to hear plea against Sarma

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday agreed to consider listing a plea of Left leaders seeking action against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma over a viral video allegedly showing him taking aim and firing with a rifle at members of a particular community. Referring to the upcoming Assembly polls in Assam, the top court said that the problem is that a part of the elections is fought before it.

Insta user claims Moga shooting; two injured

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Feb 10: Two migrant labourers sustained bullet injuries after three unidentified persons on a motorcycle allegedly opened fire at a group of workers in Punjab's Moga district Tuesday, police said.

Following the incident, an unverified post surfaced on Instagram in which an user by the name of Nirvair Singh claimed responsibility for the firing. The post also contains a purported video of the incident.

"The firing that took place on people from UP and Bihar was carried out by us -- Ladi Bhalwan and Nirvair Singh," the purported post claimed.

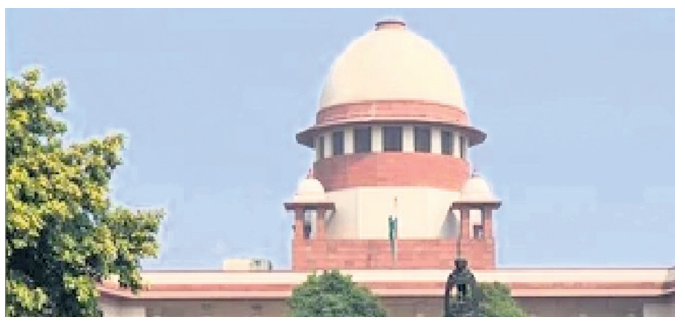
The post said the firing was carried out in an act of "protest" against these migrant workers who "spoil" the atmosphere of Punjab. It also warned of more violence if migrant workers continued to be employed.

The incident is being seen as the first such instance where migrant labourers have been targeted in such a manner in Punjab.

The alleged incident o ccurred on Zira road when some labourers were going for a meal after their work at a factory.

Three unidentified men arrived on a motorcycle and one of them allegedly fired at the labourers, injuring two of the workers, police said. It is alleged that one of the assailants even filmed the firing incident, they added. Police said three to four rounds were fired. "We have some clues and we will catch them soon," said Moga Senior Superintendent of Police Ajay Gandhi.

Advance notice may hinder IT raids: SC



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: The Supreme Court Tuesday highlighted the practical difficulties faced by investigators in the digital age and said giving a prior notice before a search and seizure could effectively end an investigation before it begins.

The top court was hearing a PIL challenging the scope of search and seizure powers under Section 132 of the Income Tax Act on the ground that it has the potential of misuse by the authorities. Section 132 of the Income Tax Act empowers IT officials to conduct a search and seizure when they have "reason to believe" that a person has undisclosed income, assets, or documents.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and N V Anjaria heard submissions by senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, appearing for PIL petitioner Vishwaprasad Alva, for some time and later deferred it for consideration after two weeks.

During the hearing, Justice Bagchi highlighted the practical challenges of issuing prior notice in search and seizure cases, particularly in the digital era.

Justice Bagchi said giving advance notice could defeat the very purpose of an investigation, as electronic evidence can be easily destroyed.

"If notice is given for search and seizure, there is a potential for destroying the evidence. The best way to snub out such an investigation against the digital record is to destroy the device itself," he said.

Hegde said the impugned provision provides excessive power in the hands of tax authorities and exposes not only the alleged tax evader but also third parties to coercive action.

The top court was hearing a PIL challenging the scope of search and seizure powers under Section 132 of the Income Tax Act on the ground that it has the potential of misuse by the authorities

Section 132 of the Income Tax Act empowers IT officials to conduct a search and seizure when they have "reason to believe" that a person has undisclosed income, assets, or documents

SNIPPETS

Bengal para-teachers hold protest march

Kolkata: Para-teachers in West Bengal staged a sit-in for five hours Tuesday over demand for a pay hike and jostled with police personnel during the protest near the state education department headquarters here. Around 500 members of the 'Sangrami Sikshak Mancha', a platform of para-teachers in the state, took out a march from Karunamoyee in Salt Lake area and were stopped from heading towards the Bikash Bhavan, the state education department headquarters. The protesting para-teachers were seen jostling with the police personnel and then sitting on the road demanding an audience with state Education Minister Bratya Basu, but were told the minister was not keeping well.

Dy CM Sunetra Pawar takes charge of official duties

Mumbai: Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar Tuesday assumed her ministerial duties at the state secretariat, 13 days after the death of her husband and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar in a plane crash, and attended her maiden cabinet meeting. She arrived in Mumbai from Pune earlier in the day and offered prayers at the famous Siddhivinayak temple and the memorial of BR Ambedkar at Chaityabhoomi in the Dadar area. Accompanied by her elder son, Parth Pawar, she visited the NCP office and met party MLAs and ministers before heading to Mantralaya.

Bishnoi gang claims responsibility for killing businessman

New Delhi: A day after a 35-year-old businessman was shot dead in the Bawana industrial area here, a social media post purportedly issued in the name of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang Tuesday claimed responsibility for the killing. Investigators said that four men were involved in the attack, during which the assailants first attempted to snatch the keys of the victim's car, forcibly took away his laptop bag when he resisted, and then shot him at close range. Multiple teams have been formed to verify the authenticity of the post and trace the assailants.

ED files money laundering case in Tirupati laddu case

Amaravati/New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate has registered a money laundering case to probe an alleged ghee adulteration scam linked to the preparation of 'laddu prasadam' at the famous Tirumala temple in Andhra Pradesh's Tirupati, officials said. The federal probe agency booked a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) sometime back to probe the alleged proceeds of crime or illicit funds generated by the accused, they said. The ED is looking at the FIR, documents and chargesheet filed recently in the case by a CBI-led special investigation team (SIT), the officials said. The SIT has named 36 people, including nine Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) officials and five dairy experts, as accused in the matter. As per the findings of the SIT, the original material which was sold to the Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple body as ghee was chemically processed palmolein oil and other ingredients.

An artist performs the 'Kathakali' dance ahead of the Kerala Tourism Meet, in Hyderabad, Telangana PTI PHOTO

Macron to visit India from Feb 17-19: MEA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: French President Emmanuel Macron will undertake a three-day visit to India next week to attend the AI Impact Summit and hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to boost ties in key sectors such as trade and defence.

Macron will begin his visit from Mumbai February 17 where he and Modi will inaugurate the India-France Year of Innovation. The two leaders are expected to hold bilateral talks in Mumbai.

"Both leaders will hold discussions on strengthening bilateral cooperation across a wide spectrum of areas as enshrined in the Horizon 2047 Roadmap," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said, announcing the French leader's visit.

The 'Horizon Roadmap' was unveiled following wide-ranging talks between Modi and Macron in Paris in July 2023. Its aim was to shore up bilateral ties including in trade and investment.

India jumps 5 places on Corruption Perceptions Index

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: India climbed five places to the 91st position out of 182 countries and territories on the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2025 released Tuesday.

India's score has gone up by one point since previous year while its rank has improved from the 96th position, according to the global NGO Transparency International's latest CPI.

There has been a slow growth in anti-corruption progress in Asia Pacific as many countries witnessed public anger in the previous year, the Berlin-based anti-corruption watchdog's report said. "The 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index shows that corruption remains a serious threat in every part of the world, although there are limited signs of progress."

"Leaders must act to tackle abuses of power and the wider factors driving this decline, such as the roll-back of democratic checks and balances, and attacks on independent civil society," the report said.

"Anti-government protests in many parts of the world show that people are fed up with unaccountable leadership and are demanding reform," it added.

The CPI ranks 182 countries and territories worldwide by their perceived levels of public sector corruption. The results are given on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

The report also listed India among countries "dangerous for journalists reporting on corruption".

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There has been a slow growth in anti-corruption progress in Asia Pacific as many countries witnessed public anger in the previous year, the Berlin-based anti-corruption watchdog's report said

"When journalists are attacked or killed for investigating corruption, power cannot be held to account effectively and corruption tends to worsen. Since 2012, in non-conflict zones worldwide, 829 journalists have been murdered."

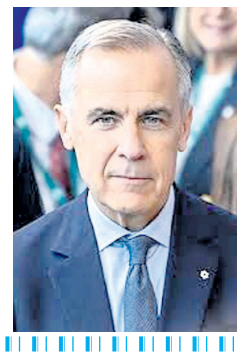
"Over 90 per cent of these killings happened in countries with a CPI score lower than 50, including in Brazil (35), India (39), Mexico (27), Pakistan (28) and Iraq (28), which are particularly dangerous for journalists reporting on corruption," it noted.

"While 31 countries have significantly reduced their corruption levels since 2012, the rest are failing to tackle the problem " they have stayed stagnant or got worse during the same period."

"The global average has fallen to a new low of 42, while more than two-thirds of countries score below 50. And people are paying the price, as corruption leads to under-funded hospitals, unbuilt flood defences and blights the hopes and dreams of young people," it said.

Denmark retained its position at the top of the index, scoring 89 points, ahead of Finland and Singapore. At the other end of the scale were South Sudan and Somalia, both registering nine points, followed by Venezuela. The leading three nations saw no change, while South Sudan's one-point gain brought it level with Somalia. While the US has been ranked at the 29th spot, the UK bagged the 20th spot.

international



Canada and the United States will settle the issue of a bridge connecting Detroit and Windsor, Ontario that US President Donald Trump is unhappy about

MARK CARNEY | PRIME MINISTER, CANADA

TOP IRANIAN ADVISER VISITS MEDIATOR OMAN

A top adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader discussed ways to reach a "balanced and just" agreement with the United States during talks in Oman Tuesday, as Washington and Tehran prepare to resume negotiations aimed at averting a new conflict

Quote of the day

Every fight I have ever been in, I've won. I'm not prepared to walk away from my mandate and my responsibility to my country

KEIR STARMER | PRIME MINISTER, UK

If the 'Yes' vote wins in the referendum, Bangladesh's future will be built in a more positive way

MUHAMMAD YUNUS | INTERIM GOVERNMENT CHIEF, BANGLADESH

The two leaders also discussed cooperation in key international fora such as BRICS and the G20

CYRIL RAMAPHOSA | PRESIDENT, SOUTH AFRICA

SHORT TAKES

12 killed, 8 hurt as bus falls into river

Kathmandu: Twelve people were killed and eight others injured Tuesday after a passenger bus fell into a river in central Nepal, police said. The incident occurred around 11 am when the bus enroute to Okhaldhunga from Kathmandu fell into the Tamakoshi River in Ramechhap municipality in Bagmati province, 150 km east of Kathmandu, they said. Twelve people were killed in the accident, police said. Ten of the 12 deceased passengers were identified, Manthali Hospital Medical Superintendent Dr Keshab Singh Dhami was reported as saying by The Himalayan Times.

Israeli strikes kill 5 in Gaza

Cairo: Israeli airstrikes and gunfire killed five Palestinians in Gaza Tuesday, health officials said, the latest violence to undermine a four-month-old, US-brokered truce in the enclave. In Deir Al-Balah in central Gaza, an airstrike killed two people who were riding an electric bike, medics said. Later, Israeli drone fire killed a woman in Deir Al-Balah and troops shot dead a man in Khan Younis in the south, they said. Another man was killed by Israeli gunfire in Jabalia in north Gaza, Palestinian medics said.

Indian Students' attacker remanded

Moscow: The 15-year-old juvenile, who attacked and wounded four Indian medical students and two police officers Saturday, pleaded guilty and was remanded to two months' judicial custody Tuesday. The teenager, a student of class IX of a local school, pleaded guilty and apologised to his victims for causing suffering to them, Bashinform agency reported. He was produced in the Ufa court and has been remanded for two months of judicial custody till April 7, according to reports from the capital of Bashkortostan, 1200 km east of Moscow. He faces up to a 15-year sentence for the knife attack on four Indian students and two police officers.

Immigration chiefs to testify in Congress

Washington: The heads of the agencies carrying out President Donald Trump's mass deportation agenda will testify in Congress Tuesday and face questions over how they are prosecuting immigration enforcement inside American cities. Trump's immigration campaign has been heavily scrutinised in recent weeks, after the shooting deaths in Minneapolis of two protesters at the hands of Homeland Security officers.

China ramps up Taiwan rhetoric

China to support 'reunification forces' in Taiwan, go after 'separatists'

REUTERS

Beijing, Feb 10: China will offer firm support for "patriotic pro-reunification forces" in Taiwan and strike hard against "separatists", the top Chinese official in charge of policy towards the democratically-governed island said in comments published Tuesday.

China, which views Taiwan as its own territory despite the objections of the government in Taipei, has ramped up its military and political pressure against the island as Beijing seeks to assert its sovereignty claims.

Addressing this year's annual "Taiwan Work Conference", a key meeting which sets the tone for China's policy towards the island, the ruling Communist Party's fourth-ranked leader Wang Huning said officials must advance the "great cause of national reunification", the official state-run Xinhua news agency said.

- China holds annual work meeting on policy towards Taiwan
- China vows to crack down on "separatists"
- China's military warns it could 'wipe out' Taiwan's forces
- Taiwan's government rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims

'USUAL TALKING POINTS', SAYS TAIWAN

It was necessary to "firmly support the patriotic pro-unification forces on the island, resolutely strike against 'Taiwan independence' separatist forces, oppose interference by external forces, and safeguard peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait", Xinhua paraphrased him as saying.

Taiwan's government, which says only the island's people can decide their future, said in response to Wang's remarks that he was repeating the usual Chinese talking points about opposing separatism and taking eventual control of the island.

China's "ultimate goal is to eliminate the Republic of China and advance unification," Taiwan's China-policy making Mainland Affairs Council said in a statement, referring to the island's formal name.

While the Xinhua report made no mention of the use of force, China has never renounced using military means to bring Taiwan under its control, the Chinese defence ministry struck a stronger note commenting on Taiwanese military deployments.

"If the 'Taiwan independence' armed forces dare to provoke a conflict, they will inevitably be wiped out," ministry spokesperson Jiang Bin said Tuesday in Beijing.

'ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS'

China has long offered Taiwan a Hong Kong-style "one country, two systems" model of autonomy, though no major Taiwanese political party supports that.

Taiwan's government says Beijing's rule in the former British colony has only brought repression, with Taiwan President Lai Ching-te Tuesday citing the sentencing of Hong Kong tycoon Jimmy Lai to 20 years in prison the previous day.

We are shifting from a revolution to a stable situation. So to bring stability, we need an elected government.

Hindu trader hacked to death in Bangladesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, Feb 10: A 62-year-old Hindu trader was hacked to death by unidentified men inside his shop in Trishal upazila of Mymensingh in Bangladesh, a local media report said Tuesday.

The incident took place Monday night at the Bogar Bazar intersection in the Upazila, Trishal Police Station chief Muhammad Firoz Hossain was quoted as saying by news portal bdnews24.com.

The victim, identified as Susen Chandra Sarkar, was the owner of 'Bhai Bhai Enterprise' and a resident of Southkanda village, he said.

Hossain said the attackers hacked Sarkar with a sharp weapon, left him inside the shop, and closed the shutters. Sarkar's family was searching for him, and when they opened the shutters to the shop, he was found covered in blood.

Sarkar was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

"We have had a rice business for a long time. No one had any enmity with us. The criminals stole several hundred thousand taka from the store after they

brutally killed my father," Sujan Sarkar, the victim's son, said. He demanded that his father's killers be identified quickly and given exemplary punishment.

Sarkar's murder is the latest incident of violence targeting the minority community.

The Hindu population in Bangladesh has been affected by a series of incidents after the killing of radical youth leader Sharif Osman Hadi in December. Last month, the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council alleged that as the date of the general elections draws nearer, communal violence is increasing at an alarming rate in the country. The Council said it recorded 51 incidents of communal violence in December 2025 alone.

Bangladesh will hold parliamentary elections February 12 - the first since the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in massive country protests in August 2024.

EU plans demands for concessions from Russia

REUTERS

Brussels, Feb 10: European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said Tuesday she would propose a list of concessions that Europe should demand from Russia as part of a settlement to end the war in Ukraine.

Talks to end the war have mainly involved Ukrainian, US and Russian officials, with Europeans consulted from time to time. But European officials say there can be no peace deal without them.

"Everybody around the table, including the Russians and the Americans, needs to understand that you need Europeans to agree," Kallas told a group of news agency reporters in Brussels.

"And for that, we also have conditions. And we should put the conditions not on Ukrainians, who have been already pressured a lot, but on the Russians."

TO PUT LIST TO EU GOVERNMENTS IN COMING DAYS

Kallas said she would propose a list to EU member governments in the coming days. Asked what the list could include, she cited the return of all Ukrainian children abducted during the war and limitations on Russia's armed forces. She did not elaborate further.

European officials say they have leverage such as some 210 billion euros ($250 billion) in Russian assets frozen in Europe, which may be part of any settlement. Most European nations have pursued a policy of diplomatically isolating Russia since its 2022 invasion of Ukraine. But some have spoken in recent months in favour of talking directly to Moscow, partly as they are wary of extensive discussions between US and Russian officials.

Palestinians play soccer on a pitch, near buildings destroyed during the two-year Israeli offensive, in Gaza City REUTERS

Lavrov accuses US of blocking Russian oil buyers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, Feb 10: Russia has accused the US of attempting to prevent India and other countries from buying Russian oil, saying Washington is using a wide range of "coercive" measures, including tariffs, sanctions and direct prohibitions, to fulfil its objective of global economic dominance.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov also accused the US of using "unfair methods" to suppress competitors by imposing sanctions on Russian oil companies.

"(The US) is attempting to control our trade, investment cooperation, and military-technical ties with major strategic partners, such as India and other BRICS members," Lavrov said in an interview with TV BRICS Monday.

He said that the West is reluctant to relinquish its formerly dominant positions. "With the arrival of the (US President Donald) Trump administration, this struggle to suppress competitors became particularly pronounced and open," he said.

Lavrov said that Russia accepted America's proposal on Ukraine during the Alaska talks between President Vladimir Putin and his US counterpart Trump last year.

"We were told that the Ukrainian issue must be resolved. In Anchorage, we accepted the United States' proposal. To put it straightforwardly, they proposed, and we agreed - the problem should be solved," he said.

"Having accepted their proposals, we essentially fulfilled the task of resolving the Ukrainian issue and moving toward comprehensive, broad, mutually beneficial cooperation," he added.

"In practice, however, the opposite occurs: new sanctions are imposed, attacks on tankers are staged in international waters in violation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and India and other partners are discouraged from purchasing affordable Russian energy, while Europe has long prohibited such purchases, forcing them to buy American liquefied natural gas at significantly higher prices. Thus, in the economic sphere, the US has effectively declared a goal of economic domination," he said.

Trump set to repeal landmark climate finding

REUTERS

Washington, Feb 10: The Trump administration is set this week to overturn an Obama-era scientific finding that serves as the legal basis for federal greenhouse-gas regulation, the Environmental Protection Agency said Monday.

Repealing the so-called endangerment finding, a scientific determination that greenhouse gas emissions endanger human health, would remove the legal foundation for broader greenhouse gas regulation and would mark the Trump administration's most wide-reaching climate policy rollback.

The Wall Street Journal reported Monday that the repeal is expected to be published later this week, and cited EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin saying it would amount to "the largest act of deregulation in the history of the United States."

The Trump administration has been working on the repeal for over a year. The proposed rule was sent to the White House Office of Management and Budget for review January 7. The proposal, unveiled last summer, got over a half a million public comments.

The repeal would remove the regulatory requirements to measure, report, certify, and comply with federal GHG emission standards for cars, administration officials told the Wall Street Journal, but would not apply to stationary sources such as power plants.

An EPA spokesperson said the endangerment finding was used by the Obama and Biden Administrations to "justify trillions of dollars of greenhouse gas regulations covering new vehicles and engines."

Tariffs threaten Colombian flower industry amid Valentine's Day rush

REUTERS

Bogota, Feb 10: Millions of Colombian roses arrived in the US just in time for Valentine's Day, but growing economic challenges are threatening to wilt the romance for the world's second-largest flower exporter.

Colombia, which trails only the Netherlands in global exports, shipped approximately 65,000 tons of fresh-cut blooms between January 15 and February 9. The Valentine's Day season typically accounts for 20% of annual sales for a sector that serves as the primary supplier to the US market, according to industry group Asocolflores.

But the holiday rush is being overshadowed by a 10% US tariff imposed last April as part of President Donald Trump's broader trade measures. The US accounts for about 80% of Colombia's flower exports.

Growers are also battling a peso that has strengthened almost 12% against the dollar over the past year and a 23% rise in minimum wage, factors that are eroding competitiveness and squeezing margins.

"We are in very adverse, very complicated situations," said Jose Antonio Restrepo, manager of Ayure SAS Eclipse Flowers near Bogota. Without a shift in economic conditions,

he warned, the industry could face widespread layoffs and farm closures by July.

Flower cultivation is the

- US tariffs, strong peso pressure Colombian flower industry margins
- Colombian flower sector faces potential layoffs, closures by July
- Valentine's Day Saturday challenges flower-delivery traditions

country's most labor-intensive agricultural sector, providing formal employment for roughly 240,000 workers across 10,500 hectares, or nearly 26,000 acres.

Flower growers face another unlikely challenge this year. Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday.

"It's preferable that Valentine's Day falls on a weekday because people are accustomed to sending flowers to offices as a surprise," explained Augusto Solano, president of Asocolflores.

On the packing floor at Ayure SAS Eclipse Flowers, the mood was more upbeat. Susana Vega, who was wrapping a bundle of roses, said the holiday still brings a sense of purpose.

'It's an immense joy (...), knowing that we're bringing happiness to someone," Vega said. "To a woman, to a mother, and that we're also benefiting ourselves."

business

We saw extreme volatility in the markets in January, particularly due to US government's intervention in Venezuela and imposition of new tariffs

VENKAT CHALASANI | CHIEF EXECUTIVE AT ASSOCIATION OF MUTUAL FUNDS IN INDIA

RUPEE RISES 10 PAISE

The rupee pared initial losses and settled on a positive note Tuesday, higher by 10 paise at 90.56 against the US dollar, supported by positive cues from domestic equities and weakening of the American currency in the overseas market. Forex traders said the rupee is witnessing sideways price action as the support from positive domestic equities and foreign fund inflows was negated by geopolitical tensions and dollar demand from importers.

Quote of the day

The demand environment remains selective, but increasingly intentional. Customers are not cutting technology spend indiscriminately; instead, they are prioritising initiatives where the business case is well defined

JOSEPH ANANTHARAJU | HAPPIEST MINDS TECHNOLOGIES CEO

GST reforms, coinciding with the traditional festive buying season, helped revive consumer sentiment and consumption-led demand for transportation

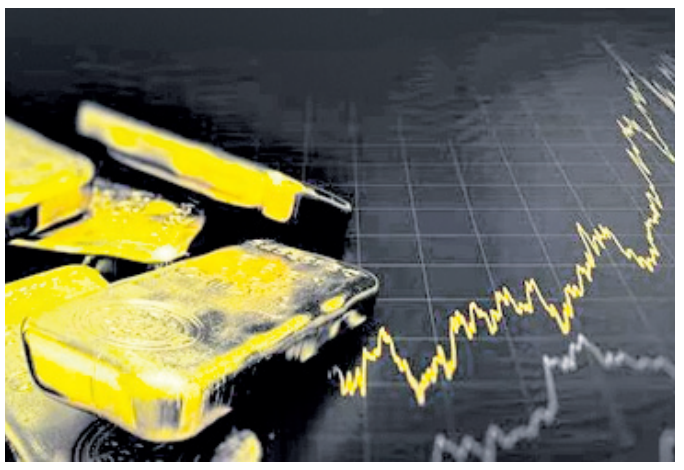
VINOD AGGARWAL | MD AND CEO OF VECV AND VICE CHAIRMAN OF EICHER MOTORS LTD

We remain focused on building a stronger 'Britannia' through elevated brand experiences and sustained investments, alongside distinctive and localised product innovations designed to address the diverse demographic and cultural preferences across the country

RAKSHIT HARGAVE | BRITANNIA INDUSTRIES MD & CEO

Gold ETF inflows top equity mutual funds for first time

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, Feb 10: Equity mutual funds attracted net inflows of Rs 24,028 crore in January, a slump of 14 per cent from the previous month, as investor sentiment remained cautious amid subdued market conditions and ongoing geopolitical concerns.

This was the second consecutive month of moderation in equity inflows.

Over the past several months, equity markets have delivered muted returns, while commodities, especially gold and silver, have seen strong momentum.

As a result, a portion of investor money shifted toward commodities during this period, Swapnil Aggarwal, Director, VSRK Capital, said.

Gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs) recorded a sharp surge in inflows in January, attracting Rs 24,040 crore -- more than double from Rs 11,647 crore in the preceding month -- as gold prices climbed amid rising geopolitical risks.

With this, inflows into gold ETFs marginally surpassed those into equity mutual funds for the very first time.

According to data released by Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) on Tuesday, equity inflows softened sequentially from Rs 28,054 crore in December and Rs 29,911 crore in November, although they remained higher than Rs 24,690 crore recorded in October.

Himanshu Srivastava, Principal Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said the flows remained constructive despite bouts of market volatility, supported by steady SIP contributions and continued confidence in the long-term structural growth prospects of Indian equities.

Retail participation through systematic investment plans (SIPs) remained steady at Rs 31,000 crore in January, suggesting their preference for disciplined and long-term wealth creation strategies.

According to Srivastava, the moderation in equity inflows was largely driven by cooling momentum in the mid and small-cap segments. While the categories continued to attract healthy inflows, the pace slowed sharply compared with the preceding month, reflecting elevated valuations and recent corrections prompting investors to adopt a more cautious and selective approach.

Mid and small-cap attracted inflows of Rs 3,185 crore and Rs 2,942 crore, respectively. This was a sharp decline compared with Rs 4,176 crore and Rs 3,824 crore in December.

Within equity schemes, flexi-cap funds led inflows with net additions of Rs 7,672 crore, besides, large & mid-cap funds added Rs 3,182 crore and large-cap funds attracted net inflows of Rs 2,005 crore.

In contrast, equity-linked savings schemes (ELSS) witnessed net outflows of Rs 594 crore, reflecting some profit booking and tax-related adjustments by investors.

Going ahead, flow into equity mutual fund inflows is expected to gradually improve as investor interest returns to the equity segment, VSRK Capital's Aggarwal said.

"With valuations becoming more reasonable and market consolidation largely behind us, equities are well-positioned for a stronger performance in the current calendar year, with the potential for meaningful returns as sentiment and participation improve," he added.

Despite the slowdown in equity investments, the mutual fund industry's overall asset base continued to expand. Total assets under management (AUM) rose to Rs 81.01 lakh crore in January from Rs 80.23 lakh crore in December.

Overall, the industry recorded net inflow of Rs 1.56 lakh crore during the month, recovering from net outflow of Rs 66,591 crore in December, supported by inflows across multiple fund categories.

Debt mutual funds also staged a turnaround, recording net inflow of Rs 74,827 crore in January after witnessing significant outflow of Rs 1.32 lakh crore in the previous month and Rs 25,692 crore in November. This suggests strong preference for fixed income and liquidity products as part of overall asset allocation.

FDI in banking sector down from $898mn in FY23 to $115mn in FY25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: Foreign direct investment (FDI) equity inflow in the banking sector has declined from USD 898 million in FY23 to USD 115 million in FY25, Parliament was informed on Tuesday.

Total FDI inflow includes equity inflow, equity capital of unincorporated bodies, re-invested earnings, and other capital, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha.

FDI is considered as a major source of non-debt financial resource for the economic development, he said.

He further said, FDI flows into India have grown consistently since liberalization and are an important component of foreign capital since FDI infuses long term sustainable capital in the economy and contributes towards technology transfer, development of strategic sectors, greater innovation, competition and employment creation amongst other benefits.

As per Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Master Directions on 'Acquisition and holding of shares or voting rights in Banking Companies', he said, share acquisition of a bank resulting in any person owning or controlling 5 per cent or more of the paid-up capital of the bank, requires prior approval of RBI.

The Reserve Bank of India has, from time to time, issued a number of instructions/guidelines to banks to regulate Priority Sector Lending (PSL) which is applicable to all commercial banks unless otherwise provided, he added.

Sharing details for foreign shareholding including FDI, FPI/FII/NRI/OCB holdings in public sector banks, Chaudhary said, foreign holding in State Bank of India (SBI) stood at 11.07 per cent at the end of March 2025, the highest in state-owned banks.

SBI was followed by Canara Bank with 10.55 per cent at the end of financial year 2024-25, Bank of Baroda at 9.43 per cent, Union Bank of India 7.48 per cent and Punjab National Bank at 5.85 per cent, he said.

Replying to another question, Chaudhary said, more than 56.31 crore mudra loan accounts, amounting to Rs 37.31 lakh crore have been disbursed as on January 2, 2026, under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), since the launch of the Scheme.

The data is being uploaded by Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) on the Mudra portal, maintained by Mudra Ltd, he said.

In another response, he said, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) receives complaints from investors on various issues, including those relating to misleading claims and advice disseminated by unauthorised persons on social media platforms.

"SEBI has been taking enforcement action, as per extant regulations, against entities providing unregistered investment advisory services, including issuance of enforcement and interim orders, wherever required. Such actions, inter alia, include directions for refund to aggrievedinvestors," he said.

Critical minerals deals: India in talks with Brazil, Canada, France, Netherlands

REUTERS

New Delhi, Feb 10: India is in talks with Brazil, Canada, France and the Netherlands over deals to jointly explore, extract, process and recycle critical minerals, sources said, as it broadens its global outreach to secure supplies of key raw materials.

The focus would be on lithium and rare earths, and India would also seek access to mineral-processing technologies, the sources said, declining to be identified because the discussions are confidential.

Heavy reliance on arch rival China, which dominates global supplies of many minerals and has advanced mining and processing technology, underscores the need for India to reach out to a range of countries as it accelerates its energy transition to cut emissions, mining experts said.

However, from discovery to production, mining can take years, as exploration alone runs five to seven years and often ends without a viable mine.

India aims to replicate elements of a critical minerals agreement it signed with Germany in January, which covers exploration, processing and recycling, as well as the acquisition and development of mineral assets in both countries and in third countries, one of the sources said.

There are requests and we are talking to France, Netherlands and Brazil while the agreement with Canada is under active consideration, the source said.

The Ministry of Mines is leading the effort, the sources said.

Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney is likely to visit India in early March and sign deals on uranium, energy, minerals and artificial intelligence.

Asked for comment, Canada's Natural Resources Department referred to a January statement saying both sides had agreed to formalise cooperation on critical minerals in the coming weeks.

Brazil's embassy in New Delhi, India's Ministry of Mines and the foreign ministry did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment. The embassy of the Netherlands did not comment while the embassy of France declined to comment.

India has been scouting globally for critical minerals and has signed pacts with Argentina, Australia, and Japan, and is in talks with Peru and Chile on broader bilateral agreements that also cover critical minerals.

India's expanding international engagement comes at a time when finance ministers from the G7 and other major economies met in Washington last month to discuss ways to cut dependence on rare earths from China.

In 2023, India identified more than 20 minerals, including lithium, as critical for its energy transition and to meet rising demand from industry and the infrastructure sector.

SHORT TAKES

Unemployment falls marginally to 6.7%

New Delhi: The rate of unemployment among persons aged 15 years and above in cities declined marginally to 6.7 per cent in October-December 2025 from 6.9 per cent in the previous quarter, showed a government survey released Tuesday. In rural areas, the unemployment rate (UR) or joblessness among those aged 15 years and above declined to 4 per cent in October-December 2025 from 4.4 per cent in the previous quarter (July-September 2025), helped by lower unemployment rates among rural males as well as females, according to the quarterly Periodic Labour Force Survey released by the National Statistics Office.

India Post, NSE ink pact to expand MFs

New Delhi: The Department of Posts (DoP) and the National Stock Exchange of India Tuesday signed a pact to expand mutual fund access through the NSE MF Invest platform. "This collaboration aims to transform the modest savings of millions of rural and small-town Indians into lasting wealth by channelling stranded savings into productive mutual fund investments," said a joint statement by DoP and NSE. This partnership leverages India Post's extensive network of over 1.64 lakh post offices and NSE's zero-cost NSE MF Invest platform to provide access to mutual fund products.

Ashok Leyland inaugurates 54th touchpoint in Odisha

Bhubaneswar: The 54th Ashok Leyland touchpoint of Odisha was inaugurated February 10, at Jharsuguda by Deepak Razdan (Zonal Manager – East) Ashok Leyland in the presence of the Abhinav Prateek (Regional manager - Odisha), Ashok Kumar Jalan - Chairman - Jalan Automobiles, Yogesh Jalan (Director- Jalan Automobiles) and Manish Chaudhury (Director - Jalan Automobile). This marks the 4th outlet of Jalan Automobiles. This state-of-the-art facility is equipped with 10 service bays along with modern tools and equipment to ensure efficient and high-quality service delivery. Strategically located on SH-10, the workshop will cater to the service support requirements of all Ashok Leyland vehicles operating along the Sambalpur–Rourkela route. The outlet will also extend service support to vehicles operating in major nearby coal mines such as Samleswari and Lakhanpur, as well as in the vicinity of leading steel and power plants including Shyam Metallics, JSW, Aditya Birla Group, and Vedanta.

Siddharth Agrawal joins as CureBay COO

New Delhi: CureBay, a hybrid healthcare platform transforming last-mile access to affordable, high-quality healthcare in India's underserved regions, has announced the appointment of Siddharth Agrawal as its Chief Operating Officer. The move strengthens the company's leadership team as CureBay scales operations and accelerates its transition toward a nationally scalable rural healthcare delivery platform, supported by its expanding multi-state presence. CureBay is expanding its rural healthcare infrastructure across states through a growing network of eClinics, its on-ground Swasthya Mitra workforce, and a digital-first care delivery model designed for last mile. It operates 175+eClinics across Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand, supported by over 230 doctors, 400 skilled healthcare workers, and partnerships with over 210 hospitals and laboratories.

ICL Fincorp's new NCD offers effective yield upto 12.25%

Bhubaneswar: ICL Fincorp is proud to announce the launch of its latest public issue of Secured Redeemable Non- Convertible Debentures (NCDs), that opened on February 5. With an effective yield of up to 12.25%, this offering presents an attractive, secure investment opportunity for those who require flexible tenures. The NCD issue will remain open until February 18 and is rated CRISIL BBB-/STABLE. Each NCD carries a face value of Rs 1,000. The issue offers 10 options (10 ISINs), with tenures of 13, 24, 36, 60, and 72 months, with monthly, annual, and cumulative interest options, with interest rates ranging from 10.00% to 12.25%. The minimum application amount is Rs 10,000, making it accessible to a broad spectrum of investors. The proceeds from this issue will be strategically used to support ICL Fincorp's growth initiatives and to enhance the quality of services it provides to its customers and stakeholders across India. With a legacy of 34 years, ICL Fincorp has established itself as a trusted financial partner under the visionary leadership of CMD Adv. K.G. Anilkumar.

Sensex, Nifty rally for 3rd straight session

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 10: Stock market benchmarks Sensex and Nifty rallied for the third straight session Tuesday buoyed by firm global cues and end of tariff uncertainties over India-US trade, even as investors booked profit at higher levels.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 208.17 points, or 0.25 per cent, to close at 84,273.92. During the session, the benchmark jumped 417.2 points, or 0.49 per cent, to hit an intraday high of 84,482.95.

The 50-share NSE Nifty rose 67.85 points, or 0.26 per cent, to finish at 25,935.15. In the intraday session, the index appreciated by 122.15 points, or 0.47 per cent, to hit a high of 25,989.45.

Among the Sensex constituents, Eternal, Tata Steel, Mahindra & Mahindra, PowerGrid, Tech Mahindra, NTPC, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Consultancy Services, Maruti Suzuki India, Axis Bank, Titan and Hindustan Unilever were among the gainers.

On the other hand, HCL Technologies, Bajaj Finance, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, HDFC Bank, UltraTech Cement, Adani Ports and ITC were among the laggards.

"Domestic equities continued their upward momentum, supported by the US trade agreement and positive cues from key Asian markets. A strong resurgence in FII inflows, coupled with rupee appreciation, is further bolstering the investor sentiment, although intermittent profit-booking was visible across sectors," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

He added that with tariff-related concerns largely easing, the near-term market trajectory is expected to hinge on Q3 earnings, which have been mixed and below expectations so far.

"Investors are now focused on the combined impact of recent fiscal and monetary measures to revive earnings momentum in the coming quarters," Nair said.

A total of 2,587 stocks advanced, while 1,675 declined and 145 remained unchanged on the BSE.

BSE Smallcap Select index rose 0.40 per cent, while Midcap Select index went lower by 0.31 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, auto rose the most by 1.35 per cent, followed by consumer discretionary (1.16 per cent), metal (0.83 per cent), and industrials 0.69 per cent). Utilities also gained by 0.62 per cent, while Oil & Gas climbed 0.51 per cent. Focussed IT ended 0.50 per cent higher, while Information Technology as well as Telecommunication ended 0.35 per cent higher.

On the other hand, PSU Bank, Consumer Durables, Bankex and Private Banks Index were among the laggards.

In Asian markets, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Hong Kong's Hang Seng, South Korea's Kospi and Shanghai's SSE Composite index closed in the positive territory.

Meanwhile, foreign institutional investors bought equities worth Rs 2,254.64 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

India will use more coal over next 25 years: Report

REUTERS

New Delhi, Feb 10: India's coal consumption could more than double by mid-century before plunging sharply as the country shifts toward cleaner energy, long-term projections published by government think-tank NITI Aayog show.

Under the current policy scenario - which assumes no major new decarbonisation measures - coal demand is expected to peak at 2.62 billion metric tons in 2050, more than double the current 1.26 billion.

Even by 2070, industrial demand is expected to keep coal consumption at a relatively high 1.80 billion tons, the report shows.

India is aiming for net-zero emissions by 2070, and under this scenario, coal consumption is expected to peak at 1.83 billion tons in 2050 before collapsing to just 161 million tons by 2070.

Virtually all remaining coal use in 2070 would be limited to hard-to-abate sectors such as steel and cement and would require carbon capture, utilisation and storage to meet emissions goals, the report said.

The world's second-largest coal consumer after China relies on the fuel for nearly three-quarters of its power generation, and aims to ramp up its coal power capacity to 307 GW by 2034-35 from 212 GW now to meet forecast electricity demand.

The report warns that coal will remain essential in the near term to back up rising solar and wind power capacity and balance the grid.

FIH PRO LEAGUE

India brace for double test

Men in Blue eye strong start at home against giants, Belgium and Argentina

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rourkela, Feb 10: The Indian men's hockey team will seek to establish early dominance in its quest to do way better than the eighth-place finish in the last edition when the side begins its FIH Pro League campaign against formidable Belgium and Argentina here from Wednesday.

India will begin their campaign against Belgium Wednesday, followed by a clash against Argentina Thursday. The hosts will once again face Belgium Saturday before concluding the leg against Argentina Sunday.

The Indian squad, featuring a balanced mix of experienced internationals and emerging young talent, will look to capitalise on familiar conditions as they take on two of the world's top-ranked teams.

While India are yet to open their campaign, both Argentina and Belgium arrive in Rourkela after a solid start to the season.

Argentina are currently second in the standings with 11 points, having played four matches, in which they recorded three regulation-time wins and one shootout victory.

Belgium, meanwhile, are placed third with 10 points, also from four matches, having secured three regulation-time wins and one shootout defeat.

Historically, Belgium have enjoyed the upper hand in head-to-head encounters against India in recent years.

Since 2013, the two sides have met 35 times, with Belgium winning 22 matches, India winning 11, and two matches ending in draws.

Against Argentina, however, India hold a stronger record, winning 10 of their 19 meetings since 2013, compared to Argentina's seven wins.

Speaking ahead of their opening match, India captain Harmanpreet Singh said, "I am very happy to see youngsters like Amandeep Lakra, Manmeet Singh and Rosan Kujur earning their opportunities in the squad. They have performed exceptionally well in the recent Hero Hockey India League and have shown great potential.

"This is the right time for them to step up at the international level, and I am confident they will make the most of this opportunity. The entire team is fit, motivated, and excited, and we are looking forward to seeing these young players express themselves and contribute strongly to the team's performance," he added.

With passionate support expected at the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium, the Indian team will look to convert that advantage into crucial points and make a confident start.

Sharing his thoughts ahead of the matches against Argentina and India, Belgium captain Arthur Van Doren stated, "Spending time here helps you get used to the conditions and the culture, which is always beneficial when you are here for a longer period. But whether it gives us a direct advantage as a Belgian team is hard to say, however, what really helped was that we arrived early. We had a solid and intense training block here...We feel sharp, we feel strong, and there's a lot of confidence and energy in the squad. Overall, we're very happy with our preparation going into the Rourkela leg of the Pro League."

Asian Shooting C'ship: Shooters on podium

Aakriti settles for silver while her senior teammate Anjum, a world championship medallist, clinches bronze with India leading medal tally at 39 gold, 15 silver and 12 bronze

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: India's Aakriti Dahiya and Anjum Moudgil won the silver and bronze medal respectively in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions event at the Asian Shooting Championship here Tuesday.

Kazakhstan shooter Sofiya Shulzhenko set a new world record in the same event enroute winning gold at the Karni Singh Range.

Sofiya ended the 35-shot final with a score of 358.2, a whole four points clear of silver winning Aakriti. Aakriti's senior teammate Anjum, a world championship medallist, clinched bronze with a score of 340.4.

Sofiya's score also gave her three more records -- world junior, Asian and Asian junior.

Later in the junior women's 3P final, India's Prachi Gaikwad emerged triumphant with a score of 353.3. 14-year-old Kazakh shooter Tomiris Amanova won silver with 351.4 while Anushka Thokur bagged another bronze for the hosts with an effort which ended after the 34th shot at 341.1.

Prachi, Anushka and Hazel also won the team gold in the event with a tally of 1748, seven clear of team Kazakhstan. In the senior women's 3P, the Kazak shooters turned the tables on the Indians by four points, to win gold with a combined score of 1760.

Paris Olympian and bronze medallist in the Buenos Aires World Cup last year, Arina Malinovskaya topped the women's 3P qualification field with a score of 588 after 20 shots each in the kneeling, prone and standing positions.

Anjum shot 587 to take second spot while Ashi Chouksey was fourth with 586. Aakriti took the sixth qualifying spot with a total of 583 while the winner Shulzhenko shot 587 to take third spot behind Anjum.

In the final, the three Indians were on top after the first kneeling position with Aakriti in the lead, but Shulzhenko had a strong display in the second prone position to rise up to second.

Thereafter, she was the only shooter to log above 50 points in both the five-shot series of the standing position, to take a decisive lead, which kept stretching till the end as her challengers faded out.

Also on the day, Adarsh Singh of India took pole position after the first precision round in the 25m rapid-fire pistol men's competition, with a score of 291/300.

Favourite Anish Bhanwala shot 287 to remain in contention for a finals berth while Neeraj Kumar's 277 meant that he would have to work hard on Wednesday to make the finals cut, which will follow the second rapid-fire round.

India's medal tally currently stands at 39 gold, 15 silver and 12 bronze medals and they comfortably head the standings.

T20 WORLD CUP

NL beat Namibia

New Delhi: Netherlands beat Namibia by seven wickets in their T20 World Cup match here Tuesday. Asked to bat first, Namibia scored 156 for eight. Jan Nicol Loftie-Eaton made 42 off 38 balls and Jan Frylinck got 30 in 26 deliveries for Namibia. Skipper Gerhard Erasmus blazed away to a nine-ball 18 before JJ Smit scored 22 off 15 balls to prop up Namibia. Logan van Beek and Bas de Leede picked up two wickets each for the Netherlands. In reply, Netherlands chased down the target of 157 in 18 overs with Bas de Leede and Colin Ackermann making 72 and 32 respectively, after opener Michael Levitt struck a 15-ball 28.

NZ outclass UAE

Chennai: Power hitting openers Finn Allen and Tim Seifert slammed fifties as New Zealand drubbed the United Arab Emirates by 10 wickets in their T20 World Cup Group D match here Tuesday. Allen (84 not out) and Seifert (89 not out) made mincemeat of the inexperienced UAE bowlers as the Kiwis overhauled the target of 174 in just 15.2 overs. This was also the highest partnership in T20s for any wicket. Earlier, skipper Muhammad Waseem and the promising Alishan Sharafu hit fifties to carry the UAE to a competitive 173 for six. After opting to bat, UAE lost opener Aryan Sharma early to pacer Jacob Duffy, but Waseem (66 no off 45 balls) and Shrafu (55, 47b) added 107 runs for the second wicket to give their side a solid base. For the Kiwis, pacer Matt Henry took two wickets while skipper Mitchell Santner and Duffy took a wicket each.

Pakistan defeat USA

Colombo: Sahibzada Farhan's power-filled fifty and spinner's accuracy lifted Pakistan to a smooth 32-run win over the United States of America in a Group A match of the T20 World Cup here Tuesday. Farhan's 41-ball 73 led Pakistan to a healthy 190 for nine, and then their highly-efficient spin quartet of Abrar Ahmed (1/30), Mohammad Nawaz (1/21), Shadab Khan (2/26) and Usman Tariq (3/27) did not allow the US batters any breathing space, limiting them to 158 for eight. It was Pakistan's second successive victory in this tournament, and now they are leading the group with four points.

TODAY'S CLASHES

- South Africa vs Afghanistan — Time- 11:00 am
- Australia vs Ireland — Time- 3:00 pm
- England vs West Indies — Time- 7:00 pm

PCB concessions after T20WC: Sources

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, Feb 10: The ICC has promised a few concessions to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for ending its boycott of the India game but those will only be announced after the conclusion of the T20 World Cup, a source said Tuesday.

"Whatever concessions the PCB has got from the ICC on ending their boycott will only be made public after the end of T20 World Cup," a PCB source told PTI Tuesday.

The ICC has already announced that Bangladesh Cricket Board will not face any sanctions from the global body and will also be given an ICC event in the 2028-2031 cycle (preferably U19 men's World Cup).

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced that the national would boycott the T20 World Cup group league match against India in Colombo February 15 in solidarity with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), who were replaced after refusing to play their matches in India citing security reasons.

After hectic parleys and back-channel talks which also included intervention from Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissinayake and the Bangladesh Cricket Board, which requested Shahbaz Sharif to change their stance keeping broader interests in mind, the boycott did end on Monday night.

The PCB has now also been given clearance to play India if both countries have to face off again in the latter stages of the World Cup.

Kho-kho event opens at FMU

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Feb 10: The East Zone Inter-University Women's Kho-Kho Tournament 2025–26, organized by Fakir Mohan University under the aegis of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), was inaugurated Tuesday on the university campus.

The four-day tournament will be held from February 10 to February 13. Vice-Chancellor of Fakir Mohan University Prof Santosh Kumar Tripathy, the chief guest, hoisted the AIU flag and formally declared the tournament open. The inauguration was followed by an oath-taking ceremony by the participants.

The host university's flag was hoisted by the guest of honor, Chairman of the PG Council, Prof Bhaskar Behera.

Director of the Sports Council Prof Pabitra Mohan Nayak delivered the welcome address. Assistant Director of the Sports Council Amit Kumar Sharma proposed the vote of thanks, while university official Jeena Priyanka Jethi coordinated the programme.

The tournament has drawn participation from more than 500 players representing 34 universities from seven states, including Odisha, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Manipur.

U-17 SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Odisha students win bronze

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: Odisha students have achieved notable success at the 69th National School Games Under-17 Softball Championship, held at Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh. In this national-level competition, the Odisha team secured the bronze medal. Odisha clinched the third position by defeating Punjab by 3–0 runs. The championship was conducted from February 4 to February 8.

A 16-member team from Odisha participated in the tournament under the Odisha state school sports association, functioning under the School and Mass Education Department. Appreciating the team's performance, Birendra Karkara, Director, Secondary Education stated that this remarkable achievement would inspire young sporting talents of the state to attain greater success at the national and international levels in the future.

Under the guidance of coach Bibhudatta Rath, the Odisha team was led by Captain Raju Pidishika and Vice-Captain Tarini Pradhan, with the team members being Jayant Kumar Mahanta, Rajesh Pradhan, Sujan Baske, Sonu Kartami, Soumya Ranjan Jena, Sudam Kardaka, Swagat Dang, Guru Prasad Mallik, Pragnan Sahu, Amulya Debnath, Divyajyoti Jena, Rudrapratap Barik, Shubhashish Debnath, and Dharmendra Pidishika, who all participated in the championship and contributed to Odisha's bronze medal success.

The school and mass education department has congratulated the players for their outstanding achievement. The young athletes were also welcomed and felicitated by Bandana Mahapatra, Additional Director, Phulmani Murmu, Joint Director, Jyoti Prasad Parida, Assistant Director (Physical Education) and Ranjan Kumar Dash, Editor, OSTA who extended their best wishes for the players' future endeavors.

GOLFERS TEE OFF IN RIYADH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Riyadh, Feb 10: Five Indians will tee up as the new season of the 2026 Ladies European Tour (LET) gets underway with the PIF Saudi Ladies International at Riyadh Golf Club.

The tournament takes place from Wednesday to Saturday, and Diksha Dagar, the top ranked Indian at 25th place in 2025, will be looking to improve her place to get into the Top-3 like she did in 2023.

The other golfers are Avani Prashanth, who has a superb first season on LET, Pranavi Urs, who did well to recover from an injury midway through the year and Hitaashee Bakshi, who sealed her card with a fine a top-3 finish as three Indians figured in the top-5 at the Hero Indian Open.

Also playing the event is Aditi Ashok, who divided her time between the LPGA and the LET, where she has won five times.

The LET has announced a record prize purse for the 2026 season with players competing for over 40 million euros for the first time in its history.

The PIF Saudi Ladies International, which is the first event of the 2026 PIF Global Series, will be contested as a 72-hole stroke play tournament, with a cut after 36 holes, and carries a prize purse of $5 million USD.

From fringes to frontline: Dhakshineswar, India's new Davis Cup hero

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: In an era obsessed with flair, Dhakshineswar Suresh's rise has been defined by order.

From meticulously placed kit bags and stern discipline to years of dawn-to-dusk grind, his journey to becoming India's newest Davis Cup mainstay has been forged quietly, patiently, and far from the spotlight.

His tennis roots trace back to family. His father, Suresh Ekka, was a club-level player from Dindigul, and it was through those early connections that Dhakshineswar found his way to coach Lakshman Chakravarthi in Chennai.

From those early days, the grind was relentless. Between 2010 and 2016, Dhakshineswar would travel nearly 16 kilometres daily by bus across Chennai.

"He was just nine then. There was no ego, no shortcuts. He had to travel from Surapet to Mogappair, then Mogappair to Anna Nagar, and from Anna Nagar to Loyola College, Nungambakka. I would pick him from the bus stand. The mornings were spent with fitness trainer Ranjit in Anna Nagar, followed by tennis sessions at Loyola College," Chakravarthi told PTI, sharing his ward's early struggles.

"He would play sets with everyone, and never shied away from working hard. He is very quiet, has a different attitude. He never drank Pepsi or Coke for years. He is very very disciplined," he added.

Money was often an issue. Opportunities were limited. Yet progress came in flashes. In 2016, Dhakshineswar travelled to France for training and later that year won the U16 Nationals at DLTA -- the prestigious Fenesta Open -- a milestone that gave the world a peek into his potential.

"If he had sponsors earlier, things could have been very different. He is playing at a different level," his coach said.

Setbacks, however, kept interrupting momentum.

A back injury in 2019 cost him five to six months, and the COVID-19 pandemic that followed, dried up competition and sponsorship.

With options narrowing, former India player Somdev Devvarman advised a move to the United States, a decision that would re-define Dhakshineswar's career.

"We were short of money, so we sent him to the US on the advise of Somdev. The scholarship helped," Chakravarthi said. "There, he improved a lot. College tennis not only provided structure but also sharpened his mental edge. The constant match play, the pressure of team competition, and the professional environment toughened him in ways rankings alone could not."

That mental strength now shows on the Davis Cup stage. In India's recent Davis Cup tie against the Netherlands in Bangalore, Dhakshineswar rose to the occasion, producing a composed and fearless performance under pressure to anchor the team when it mattered the most, winning all his three matches in India's close 3-2 win.

He will finish in May his studies at the Wake Forest University, where he is pursuing 'communication studies'.

At 65, Chakravarthi calls Dhakshineswar his finest pupil.

The coach believed the next leap is close.

"He should travel more and compete more. He can crack top-100 in six months. He should get wild cards. Playing more tournaments is the key."

More than the coaching, Chakravarthi underlined the physical demands ahead.

"Coaching is good in India. Fitness is where the difference comes. He did well in the US, but he still needs to work on his legs."

At home, pride remains understated. Suresh Ekka, a man of few words, summed up his emotions after his son's latest Davis Cup heroics simply.

"What to say, no words."

Suresh said after his heroic show against the Netherlands, Dhakshineswar didn't say a word to his family.

"There was no conversation, just a hug." That quiet embrace mirrored Dhakshineswar's journey: uncluttered, disciplined, and built patiently over years of unseen effort. As he now cements his place in India's Davis Cup plans, his story stands as a reminder that breakthroughs are often forged not in noise, but in routine, resilience and belief sustained over time.

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