

HERE . NOW

# Orissa POST



## PC's milestone

Actor Priyanka Chopra marks another major milestone by featuring on the Variety US cover for the second time

LEISURE | P2



## Russia blocks WhatsApp

US messenger app WhatsApp has been completely blocked in Russia for failing to comply with local law

INTERNATIONAL | P10



## Strong inflow

Domestic investors pump ₹1.14 lakh crore into AIFs in 18 months till September 2025

BUSINESS | P11



## Tribute turns sour

Ukraine's Vladyslav Heraskevych was disqualified from Winter Games over his helmet depicting athletes killed since Russia's invasion

SPORTS | P12

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12 PAGES | ₹5.00

## RETAIL INFLATION AT 2.75% IN JANUARY

**New Delhi:** Retail inflation stood at 2.75 per cent in January under the new series of All India Consumer Price Index (CPI), with 2024 as base year, released Thursday. The new series released by NSO under Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation has increased number of goods from 259 to 308 and services from 40 to 50 for a better picture of price situation. The January food inflation has worked out to be 2.13 per cent, and housing at 2.05 per cent. The retail inflation, under the old series with base year 2012, was 4.26 per cent in January 2025 and 1.33 per cent in December. **P11**

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



**HITTING LIFE:** Members of CPI, AITUC, and BKMU stage a sit-in at Raj Mahal Square in Bhubaneswar Thursday, blocking the road as part of a nationwide strike organised by various trade unions to protest the Centre's 'anti-worker policies'. The 12-hour strike disrupted normal life across Odisha (Report P3)

PIC: MANORANJAN MISHRA

## Proposal for 114 Rafale jets okayed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 12:** In its largest-ever defence acquisition push, India Thursday cleared a long-pending proposal to procure 114 Rafale fighter jets under a government-to-government framework with France, nearly two decades after the plan was originally rolled out to boost the Indian Air Force's combat prowess.

In total, capital acquisition



of military hardware worth ₹3.60 lakh crore including pro-

curement of an additional six US-made Boeing P8-I surveillance aircraft for the Indian Navy was approved by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired

by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

Under the Multi-Role Fighter Aircraft (MRFA) project, 18 aircraft will be supplied by Dassault Aviation, the maker of Rafale, in a fly away condition and the rest will be manufactured in India, sources said.

Though the Ministry of Defence did not provide the cost of the procurement, it is expected to be in the range of ₹2.90 lakh crore to ₹3.15 lakh crore.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 12:** Revenue and Disaster Management (R&DM) Minister Suresh Pujari Thursday announced that the state government will soon introduce land pattas with QR codes, a move aimed at modernising land administration and curbing property fraud.

Addressing media, Pujari stated, "We will soon provide land pattas embedded with QR codes, allowing for instant digital verification of land records. This initiative, to be implemented in partnership with the Central government, will ensure that every new or updated land patta includes a QR code."

By simply scanning the QR code with a smartphone, citizens will be able to access complete land details from the official database, including ownership history, full transaction records, encumbrances, if any, and other relevant information.



tion. The system will provide a comprehensive digital history of properties spanning 50 to 70 years, R&DM department sources said.

Traditionally, land ownership records in Odisha have been maintained as physical documents, making them vulnerable to damage, manipulation, and loss. The new QR-enabled pattas, embedded with secure digital features, are designed to replace paper-based verification processes and significantly enhance transparency, they added. The sources said the initiative is expected to reduce reliance on the traditional

Encumbrance Certificate (EC), as land information will now be available digitally in real time. "Prospective buyers will be able to verify ownership details directly from authenticated government records before completing transactions, reducing delays and the risk of fraud," they pointed out.

Pujari said the reform is aimed at strengthening trust in land administration and ensuring accountability. He added that in case of any irregularity or attempt to manipulate records, immediate alerts will be sent to the local tehsildars and revenue inspectors, enabling swift action.

Centralised and secure digital storage will make it nearly impossible to create fake deeds or alter ownership records.

As part of wider land reforms, the state government will also undertake a comprehensive statewide land survey covering both government and private land.

37001/4/2526



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ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ



ODISHA

INDIA'S BEST KEPT SECRET.

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OIPR-37001/37001/2/25-26/0002

## leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com

accuracy • reliability • trust

FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

## ARIES

You experience a sense of freedom today. And in this mood you feel like doing all the things that you loved to do in your childhood. It is a nice time to take your family on an outing, says Ganesha. Given your mood, you may start planning for the future of your loved ones.



## TAURUS

You have a hectic day ahead, says Ganesha. You will be immersed in your work all day long and will love doing so. A lot will get done by the end of the day. Make sure you do not stretch your neck or take unnecessary risks. That will be bad for business. Stick to basics. Do not be innovative or speculative. Be prepared for new challenges that are due to come up shortly.



## GEMINI

Today, you will realise that close relationships need care and concern to grow, predicts Ganesha. You will have new responsibilities and achieve huge profits in all your dealings. Pay special attention to your personal health.



## CANCER

Ganesha says that this will be a unique and auspicious day for you. You will get clue and hints of this from morning itself. A religious ceremony in the house, and thereby invitation to guests is indicated. The chance of shifting to a new house is indicated. Ganesha expresses his best wishes.



## LEO

Few and rare are the days when creativity takes flight. After all, even Picasso couldn't make a masterpiece every day. So make the most of this auspicious day, urges Ganesha, during which your imagination peaks and touches new heights.



## VIRGO

Today you will find yourself delving deep into your inner self. You will reap a lot of monetary rewards, and will be generous in spending it on your near and dear ones. Ganesha says that you may make up for the pressures at work by entertaining yourself with material pleasures.



## LIBRA

All things passionate seem to engulf you today. It is one of those moments when chance dictates every possibility of a new romantic love episode in your life. The last time a moment like this came by, Romeo met Juliet. Ganesha expects you to try hard to please your heartthrob.



## SCORPIO

You may deviate a little from mundane chores and take up creative activities like cooking and gardening. Today, according to Ganesha, you wish to do smart work and not just hard work. Family joys and pleasures will replace work satisfaction.



## SAGITTARIUS

A paradigm shift in your temperament and your looks is on the cards today. Your personality will get better as you don some chic attire, jewellery and a rather loud perfume today. You're a magnet today, says Ganesha, and will charm your way through a crowd of admirers who will clamour for your attention.



## CAPRICORN

You are not an impulsive person and this reflects in whatever you do. Money will be on your mind almost throughout the day. Generally, you are a penny pincher, but during the later half of the day you will go on a spending spree.



## AQUARIUS

It is time to make addition in your possessions. Book your dream house or buy a vehicle, as today is a favourable day to do so. You, however, need to consider your financial resources before deciding anything because it will take a major chunk out of your savings, warns Ganesha. A major change is on the cards for the Archer.



## PISCES

Sometimes you are so kind and charitable that you sacrifice your own well-being and happiness for the sake of others. This streak within you may emerge as you engage in a selfless deed. You will have a strong desire to do something for your family and your home.

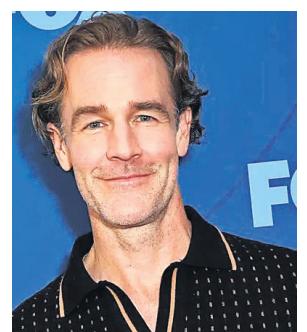


## GARNER REVEALS FAVOURITE PART OF DOING 'FIGHT SCENE'

Hollywood star Jennifer Garner says her dance background helps her enjoy action scenes in *The Last Thing He Told Me*. The 53-year-old shared that she loves using her whole body in fight sequences, combining physicality, emotion, and high stakes, making every scene intense, challenging, and deeply satisfying.

## JAMES VAN DER BEEK PASSES AWAY AT 48

Actor James Van Der Beek, best known for his starring role in US teen drama *Dawson's Creek*, has died aged 48 after being diagnosed with bowel cancer. The star was diagnosed with the disease in the latter half of 2023 but only revealed the news in November 2024.



## Priyanka's unique feat

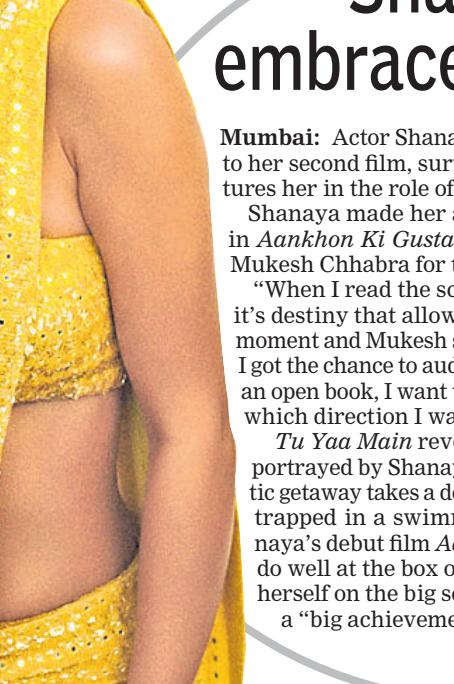
**Mumbai:** Priyanka Chopra Jonas has added another milestone to her global journey by featuring on the cover of *Variety US* magazine for the second time, after her first appearance in 2018. With this, she becomes the only Indian actor to achieve this distinction, reflecting her sustained relevance across international entertainment industries rather than a single career peak.

Her Hollywood journey has been marked by several breakthroughs, beginning with her lead role in *Quantico*, which made her the first South Asian actor to headline an American network drama. Her portrayal of Alex Parrish brought her widespread recognition and earned her a People's Choice Award, opening doors for greater representation in mainstream Western television.

Over the years, Priyanka has continued to strengthen her presence in global cinema. In 2025, she appeared in the action film *Heads of State*, followed by her upcoming thriller *The Bluff*, where she plays a darker, more intense character. Both projects highlight her growing range in international productions.

In India, excitement surrounds her return to regional cinema with her Telugu debut *Varanasi*, directed by S.S. Rajamouli. Beyond films, she remains active as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and global entrepreneur. She is also set to headline the 23rd India Conference at Harvard in 2026. Her latest *Variety* cover reflects a career built on consistency, influence, and cross-cultural engagement.

AGENCIES



## BARA BADHU VS RAKTA GOLAPA

## Two Odia releases to clash at BO today

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar:** Odia cinema is ready to captivate audiences with not one, but two exciting releases. *Bara Badhu* and *Rakta Golapa* are all set to hit theatres across the state Friday, promising a perfect blend of suspense, emotion, romance, and social drama for movie lovers.

*Bara Badhu* brings a socially relevant yet entertaining narrative to the big screen. Directed by Beeswaranjan, the multi-starrer thoughtfully explores the intersection of marriage and employment in contemporary society.

The film promises a refreshing storyline that weaves together personal relationships, social expectations, and career aspirations. The main cast of the movie includes Sivani Sangita, Sailendra Samantaray, Suryamayee Mohapatra, Hara Rath, Subhasis Sharma, Jayshree Sarangi, and Bhawati Basu, each character reflects different dimensions of relationships and societal pressures — particularly those surrounding marriage and livelihood.

Produced under the banner of The Useful Garbage Creations in association with Country Boyz Studios and Sharpine Film Pvt. Ltd.,



*Bara Badhu* is presented by Chandra Mani and will be released by Prakash Films. Chandra Mani serves as producer, with Beeswaranjan and Sushil Kumar Mishra as co-producers.

In contrast, directed by Peenakee Singh and Sisir Kumar Sahu, *Rakta Golapa* is a gripping murder mystery that delves deep into the emotional journey of a woman whose life takes a devastating turn. Produced by Aesthetic Films in association with P.S. Motion Pictures, the film centres on a powerful performance by Elina Samantaray.

Elina plays a woman whose husband, a forest officer portrayed by Abhishek Giri, mysteriously goes missing. However, his disappearance is anything but ordinary. The visuals and trailer hint at dark secrets, raising chilling questions — was it a murder, a carefully laid trap, or a truth too terrifying to reveal?

Choudhury Jayaprakash Das, Samarena Routray, Hara Rath, and Udit Guru play other key roles. Ashrujeet Mahapatra and Shovan Das have produced the project.

Both films carry heightened expectations as Valentine's week releases.

## Shanaya embraces destiny

**Mumbai:** Actor Shanaya Kapoor says destiny brought her to her second film, survival thriller *Tu Ya Main*, which features her in the role of a social media influencer.

Shanaya made her acting debut opposite Vikrant Massey in *Aankhon Ki Gustakhiyan*. She credited casting director Mukesh Chhabra for the role in *Tu Ya Main*.

"When I read the scenes, I found them super fun, I was like, it's destiny that allowed me to be there at the right time, right moment and Mukesh sir for thinking of me in the first place that I got the chance to audition. I'm just starting out, so I'm just like an open book, I want to explore everything. I need to figure out which direction I want to go in," she told this news agency.

*Tu Ya Main* revolves around social media influencers portrayed by Shanaya and Adarsh Gourav, whose romantic getaway takes a deadly turn when they find themselves trapped in a swimming pool with a crocodile. Shanaya's debut film *Aankhon Ki Gustakhiyan* did not do well at the box office but the actor said seeing herself on the big screen for the first time was a "big achievement" for her.

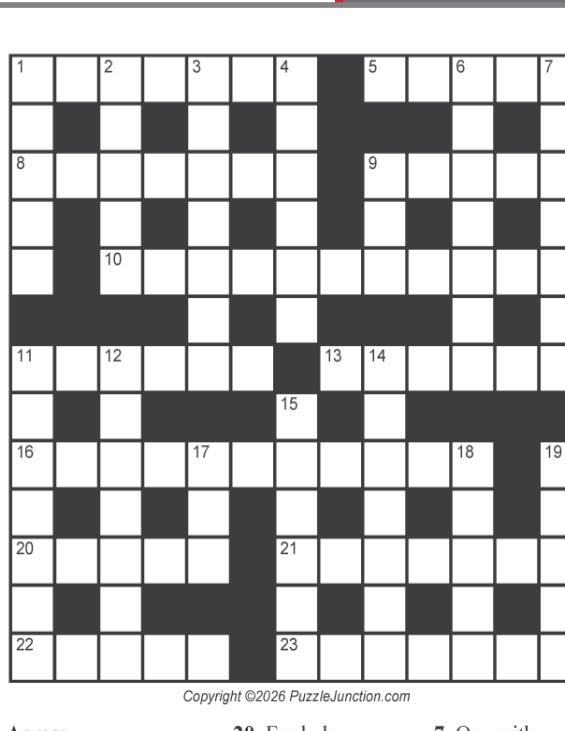
PTI

## 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.

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

## CROSSWORD



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## Across

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- 5 Kingdom
- 8 Way back when (4-3)
- 9 Worth
- 10 Like some health care
- 11 Reserved
- 13 Neutron star
- 16 Wisenheimer (5,6)
- 20 Explode
- 21 Null and void
- 22 Difficult trips
- 23 Progress
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LET THE SHOW BEGIN: Members of the opening committee perform during a dress rehearsal for the traditional Opera Ball in Vienna, Austria REUTERS

## Edge for BNP in B'desh polls

## 12-hour strike disrupts life

PNN & AGENCIES

**Dhaka, Feb 12:** The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) appears to have the edge over its once ally Jamaat-e-Islami in the crucial general elections Thursday to elect a new government to replace the interim administration, which took charge after the collapse of the Awami League regime in August 2024.

Election officials and media reports said early results gave an edge to the BNP with its nominees leading in over 175 seats while Jamaat candidates leading in 30 seats. The polling with a referendum on constitutional reforms running in parallel closed at 4.30pm with an initial estimate suggesting the turnout to be 48 per cent at 2pm.

In unofficial results, Election Commission officials said BNP chairman and former premier Khaleda Zia's son Tarique Rahman won from Dhaka-17 and Bogra-6 constituencies. **P10**



A groom, on his way to tie the nuptial knot in Khurda, stranded on the road due to the general strike in City, Thursday OP PHOTO

affected as major roads, including national and state highways, were blocked.

The strike's impact was felt in all major urban areas, including Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Balasore, Berhampur and Samalpur.

Protesters locked the 'Ama Bus' depot at Master Canteen here, halting bus operations in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

The vehicle of a groom headed

towards Keranga village in Khurda from Soro in Balasore was halted by protesters at Jayadev Vihar in Bhubaneswar.

"I travelled over 120 km and all protesters allowed me to move forward. However, my vehicle got caught in Bhubaneswar. I appeal to the strike supporters to allow me to move forward," the groom said, appealing to the agitators with folded hands.

## RATNA BHANDAR Table missing key report in House: HC

POST NEWS NETWORK



hearing a PIL concerning the inventorisation, repair, and maintenance of the Ratna Bhandar.

Amid raging public anger over the mysterious disappearance of the key to the inner Ratna Bhandar, the then BJD

government ordered a judicial inquiry into the issue in June 2018. Soon after, the Justice Raghbir Dash Commission was constituted, and its report was subsequently submitted to the state government. Though the report was to be tabled in the Assembly as per norms, the government failed to do so.

Years later, the BJD government decided to place the report before the Cabinet to be constituted after the results of the 2024 Assembly election.

The HC further said, "We also direct the state government to complete the exercise of tallying the inventory report submitted by the newly constituted committee with the report of 1978 within three months."

the ensuing session, and we expect that a decision will be taken thereupon."

The bench also reviewed the steps taken for the conservation of the Ratna Bhandar. It noted that a high-level committee was constituted after the change in political regime, and a standard operating procedure (SOP) was framed in July 2024 for opening the inner and outer chambers.

Organised by the Energy department, in collaboration with GRIDCO Limited, the conclave brought together policymakers, investors, developers, financial institutions, technology providers and industry leaders to accelerate renewable energy deployment in the state. The International Forum for Environment, Sustainability and Technology (iFOREST) served as the Knowledge Partner.

## In a 1st in 145 yrs, Darjeeling toy train gets woman TTE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Darjeeling, Feb 12:** The UNESCO World Heritage Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) has got its first woman Travel Ticket Examiner (TTE) in its 145-year history.

Sarita Yolmo, a veteran employee of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), conducted the toy train from New Jalpaiguri to Darjeeling for the first time in her new role February 5. "I am proud to be the first woman TTE in a Darjeeling Himalayan Railway toy train in its history," Yolmo told PTI over the phone.

DHR official Prateeksha Chhetri confirmed that Yolmo is serving as the first woman TTE in the toy train service. Sarita Yolmo, a veteran employee of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), conducted the toy train from New Jalpaiguri to Darjeeling for the first time in her new role February 5. "I am proud to be the first woman TTE in a Darjeeling Himalayan Railway toy train in its history," Yolmo told PTI over the phone.



Though I had no prior experience of working as a TTE in trains, I gathered courage and took responsibility for the passengers as the first woman TTE in the toy train service. I was a little anxious on my first journey, but I felt very good after completing the route and reaching Darjeeling.

**SARITA YOLMO**

very good after completing the route and reaching Darjeeling," she added.

Yolmo joined the NFR in April 1991 in the printing press department at Kurseong. After the railway press was shut down, she was posted to the commercial department at NJP, where she worked in the enquiry, station checking and announcement wings.

A resident of Siliguri, known as the gateway to the hills and the Northeast, Yolmo is the mother of a daughter who is studying while also working abroad.

"Though I had no prior experience of working as a TTE in trains, I gathered courage and took responsibility for the passengers as the first woman TTE in the toy train service," she said. "I was a little anxious on my first journey, but I felt



cer was appointed in RERA, the CJI said, "In every state, it has become a rehabilitation centre. These authorities are all occupied by these persons."

"The people for whom this institution was created, they are completely depressed, disgusted and disappointed. None of them are getting any effective relief. For whom this institution actually is now serving, you will find out when you meet these people," the CJI said.

The SC also observed that Shimla is "completely over exhausted".

While issuing notice on the plea, the bench said, "The state is permitted to shift the office of RERA to the place of its choice. However, it shall be subject to the final outcome of the writ petition pending before the high court."

The advocate general of HP told the bench that, as per a policy decision, the state is developing Palampur, Dharmsala and other cities.

The CJI asked, "What is the logic of having a retired bureaucrat? How will he be able to help in developing Palampur. You need to avail services of some architect who is environment friendly, who knows Palampur area, Dharmsala area and these entire areas. Only those persons will help."

The bench was also informed that the district judge, Shimla, hears the appeals against the orders passed by RERA.

## Better to scrap RERA, it only helps defaulting builders: SC

PTI & AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Feb 12:** Expressing strong disappointment over the functioning of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) in several states, the Supreme Court Thursday said it would be better to 'abolish this institution', as it is 'doing nothing' except facilitating defaulting builders.

A bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said the people for whom RERA was created were 'completely depressed, disgusted and disappointed'.

The observations came from the bench, which permitted the Himachal Pradesh (HP) government to shift the office of RERA to the place of its choice.

The bench issued notice on a plea filed by the HP government and others challenging an order of the Himachal High Court in a matter pertaining to the shifting of the state RERA office from Shimla to Dharmsala.

The HC had earlier stayed a June 2025 notification concerning the shifting of RERA office till further order. Later, in its order passed December 30, 2025, the HC directed the continuance of the interim order. The top court stayed the HC's December 30 direction.

"Except facilitating the builders in default, this institution is doing nothing. Better abolish this institution, we don't mind that," the CJI said.

When the bench was informed that a retired IAS offi-

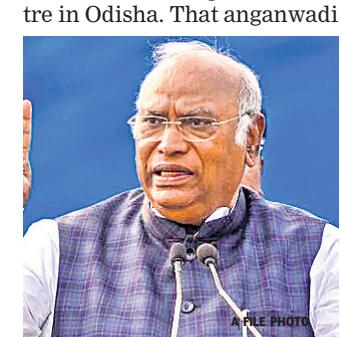
## Pacts inked for ₹67K-cr green energy projects



POST NEWS NETWORK

According to sources, GRIDCO, under the Energy department, signed the memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with NHPC, BPCL, North Eastern Electric Power Corp Ltd (NEEPCO), and ABC Cleantech Pvt Ltd & Axis Energy Ventures India Pvt Ltd for developing 6.8 Giga watt (gw) of renewable energy, a statement said. NHPC would set up a pumped storage project of 1,000 mw, while BPCL proposed to set up ground-mounted solar, floating solar PV, and pumped storage projects.

While the MoU with ABC Cleantech Pvt Ltd & Axis Energy Ventures India Pvt Ltd was signed for the development of 5,000 mw of clean energy, the agreement with NEEPCO was signed for the development of 800 mw of pumped storage projects (PSP), they added.



centre has been boycotted for the last three months."

The LoP said anganwadi centre is the foundation of children's physical and cognitive development. "But if there is such racial discrimination, it will naturally affect children's growth," he said, adding that such incidents directly affect the right to education provided under Article 21A of the Constitution.

Kharge said workplace caste discrimination is being reported from different parts of the country. "Had investigations been done timely, future incidents would have been averted," he said.

Citing instances from other states, Kharge recalled an incident in Madhya Pradesh a few years ago where a person had urinated on an Adivasi person. Last year in Gujarat, he said, a government Dalit officer committed suicide due to caste discrimination.

# LAC clears land for 31 pending projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 12:** In a major boost to Odisha's industrial development, the Land Allotment Committee (LAC) has cleared land allocation for 31 long-pending industrial projects. The meeting, chaired by IDCO Chairperson Usha Padhee, was held Thursday at IDCO Towers here.

The approvals are expected to unlock substantial investments and create significant employment opportunities across multiple sectors in the state.

Most of the cleared proposals are from the MSME sector, along with projects in apparel and textiles, food processing,



engineering and other emerging industries. The committee also gave special priority to proposals in non-industrial

inclusive industrial growth.

The meeting was attended by MSME department Commissioner-cum-Secretary and IDCO Managing Director D Prasanth Kumar Reddy; IPICOL Managing Director Bhupendra Singh Poonia; Director of Industries Aboli Sunil Naravane; OCAC Executive Director Kaustuv Dipta Pany; along with other senior officials and committee members.

Reaffirming its commitment to investor-friendly governance, the LAC stressed transparent procedures, time-bound decision-making and proactive facilitation to boost investor confidence and promote balanced regional economic growth across Odisha.

## IT training launched for PACS, LAMPCS officials

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 12:** In a major step towards modernising Odisha's cooperative sector, Ministry of Cooperation Union Secretary Ashish Kumar Bhutani Thursday launched the state-wide IT proficiency enhancement training through OS-CIT for officials of Primary Agriculture Cooperative Societies (PACS) and Large Area Multipurpose Cooperative Societies (LAMPCS).

The inaugural programme at Lokseva Convention Hall saw 5,422 officials from 2,711 PACS and LAMPCS across all 314 blocks of the state participating through a hybrid model at designated Odisha Knowledge Corporation Limited (OKCL) Authorised Learning Centres (ALCs) and via online.

The training, organised by state Cooperation department, in collaboration with OKCL aims to strengthen digital skills among cooperative officials.



The curriculum covers basic digital literacy, e-governance portals, AI awareness, cyber security practices, and office productivity tools, with a focus on enhancing transparency, operational efficiency, and service quality in grassroots cooperative institutions.

Addressing the participants, Bhutani emphasised the role of PACS in agricultural credit delivery and rural financial inclusion, noting that digital capacity building would improve efficiency and accountability in cooperative operations.

OKCL MD Manoranjan Puthal provided an overview of the OS-CIT programme, underlining its goal of building confidence among cooperative officials to handle digital platforms effectively. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Registrar of Cooperative Societies Siddhartha Das and was efficiently coordinated by OKCL Senior GM Sasmita Panda.

## Manipal Hospitals saves 3-yr-old from congenital spinal disorder



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 12:** Manipal Hospitals, Bhubaneswar has successfully treated a rare and complex congenital spinal condition in a three-year-old boy from Jaleswar in Balasore district, giving him a new lease on life and averting the risk of permanent neurological disability.

The child was diagnosed with spinal lipomyelomeningocele, a rare closed neural tube defect that affects only 3 to 6 per 100,000 births. The condition involves a fatty mass (lipoma) extending through a defect in the spine and

attaching to the spinal cord, leading to a tethered cord. If left untreated, it can cause progressive nerve damage, limb weakness, loss of sensation, and bladder and bowel dysfunction as the child grows. Since birth, the child experienced difficulty passing urine and stools. Over time, his left leg became visibly thin and weak—clear signs of worsening neurological involvement.

Seeking advanced care, the parents approached the hospital where the child came under the care of Neurosurgeon Consultant Ritesh Bhoot. Following detailed investigations, including MRI

## Police rescue kidnapped minor, nab accused

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 12:** Police have rescued a 14-year-old girl and arrested a 22-year-old man in connection with her alleged kidnapping in the state capital, officials said Thursday.

The case was registered at Lingaraj police station February 10 under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), following a written complaint filed by the minor's mother, a resident of the Bhimtagi area.

According to the complaint, the girl left for a private school in the Kedar Gauri area February 10 but did not return home. School authorities later confirmed that she had not attended classes that day.



Police traced the minor to Ghasipura in Keonjhar district, rescued her safely and apprehended the accused based on credible inputs.

During questioning, the accused reportedly admitted to luring the girl and taking her to multiple locations, where she was wrongfully confined.

The complainant suspected the involvement of one Tapan Das alias Silu, who had allegedly threatened earlier to abduct her daughter.

Acting on credible inputs, a police team traced the minor to Ghasipura in Keonjhar district, rescued her safely and apprehended the accused. During questioning, Tapan reportedly admitted to luring the girl and

taking her to various locations, where she was wrongfully confined.

Police seized a motorcycle and a mobile phone from his possession. Officials said he was previously booked in two cases under the POCSO and IT Acts at Airfield police station. He has been forwarded to court, and further investigation is underway.

## NAT'L WORKSHOP ON JICA FORESTRY

### Day 2 focuses on resilient, sustainable wood economy



POST NEWS NETWORK

Technical session showcases innovative practices from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Odisha, including advanced plantation genetics and modern wood processing technologies like Cross Laminated Timber.

mation as the cornerstones of future cooperation. Participants highlighted multi-stakeholder collaboration involving governments, research institutions, and industry partners as vital for a climate-resilient forestry sector.

Technical sessions showcased innovative practices from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Odisha, including advanced plantation genetics and modern wood processing technologies like Cross Laminated Timber (CLT). Experts also stressed that digital public infrastructure in forestry should operate as integrated decision-support systems rather than standalone platforms to enhance long-term planning and policy outcomes.

The valedictory session was graced by PCCF and Forest Force head K Murugesan as guest of honour. The workshop reinforced India's commitment to a sustainable and climate-resilient forestry sector through innovation, certification and international collaboration.

## MARKET WATCH

CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	90.63 ▲ 0.10	SENSEX	83674.92 ▲ 558.72	GOLD	₹157,899 ▲ ₹856
EURO	107.82 ▲ 0.40	NIFTY	25807.20 ▲ 146.65	SILVER	₹257,500 ▲ ₹5,518

## RSC hosts 3-day science training for teachers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 12:** The Regional Science Centre (RSC), Bhubaneswar conducted a three-day teachers' training programme to promote experiential and activity-based science learning in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

A total of twenty-nine in-service science teachers from across Odisha, affiliated with Shiksha Vikash Samiti Odisha, took part in the programme. A regular RSC initiative, it aims to enrich classroom teaching through hands-on and innovative methods.



The programme's core featured five activity-based Teaching Learning Material (TLM) sessions, where participants were trained to create curriculum-linked teaching aids in Physics, Chemistry

and Biology. With materials and guidance provided by the Centre, the teachers collectively developed 145 teaching kits.

The kits covered key scientific concepts such as inertia

of rest, the magnetic field of a current-carrying solenoid, a sodium atom model, ionic conduction in liquids and a kidney model. The aim was to help teachers use practical demonstration tools in classrooms to improve students' conceptual understanding.

Beyond the TLM sessions, the programme included enrichment activities such as live science demonstrations, interactive discussions, a dynamic globe cosmic projection, a Dinosaur Theme Park tour, robotics and programming sessions, a 3D film show, and evening telescope-based sky observation.

At the conclusion of the programme, participants received the teaching kits they developed along with certificates for classroom use.

The valedictory session was attended by Kiran Choudaj, Assistant Professor of Zoology at the Regional Institute of Education, Kishore Chandra Mohanty, President of Shiksha Vikash Samiti Odisha; and Saroj Kumar Hati, Secretary of the organisation.

Kapil Jain, Curator 'E' and Project Coordinator of RSC urged the media to widely publicise the initiative to promote awareness of experiential science education.

## Mass snail emergence observed on Puri coast



especially during tidal movements, drawing attention for its unusual behaviour and ecological significance.

According to Debasish Mahapatro, a marine biologist specialising in benthic communities, the phenomenon is a natural ecological response and not an immediate cause for concern.

"Bullia vittata moves toward the sediment surface primarily

in search of food," Mahapatro explained. "These snails are highly responsive to chemical cues from decaying organic matter, dead fish, or other biological debris brought in by tides and wave action," he said.

He further emphasised that oxygen availability is a key factor driving this behaviour. Deeper sediment layers, particularly those rich in organic matter, often have low oxygen levels. "By migrating upward, the snails reach better-oxygenated zones, which improves their chances of survival," he added.

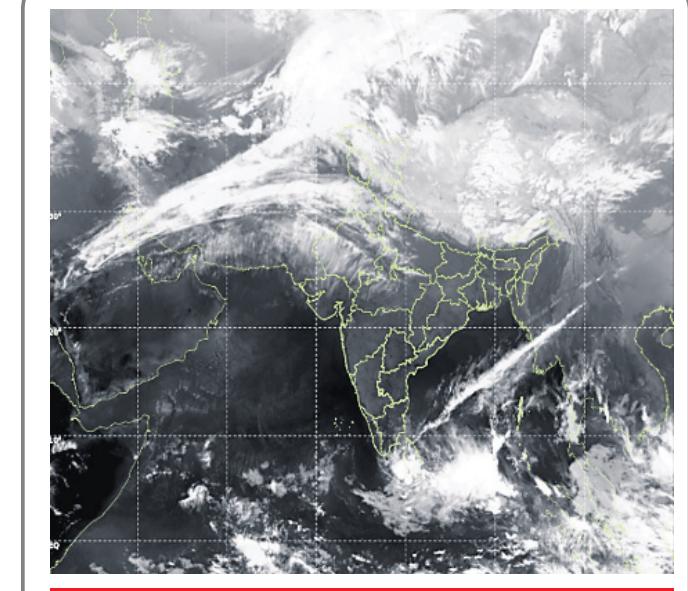
Tidal dynamics also play a role in the mass emergence. Incoming tides disturb surface sediments and deposit fresh organic material, prompting the snails to surface quickly. Scientists highlight that this behaviour underscores the

ecological importance of Bullia vittata as natural scavengers, helping recycle organic matter and maintain sediment quality in coastal ecosystems.

While such migrations are typically part of the species' natural cycle, experts caution that unusually dense or prolonged surfacing could signal environmental stress. Factors such as sewage discharge, coastal pollution, or declining water quality can alter sediment conditions.

"Monitoring these organisms can offer early warning signs of ecological imbalance along our coast," Mahapatro said.

Marine scientists emphasise that small benthic organisms such as Bullia vittata are highly sensitive indicators of marine ecosystem health, often reflecting subtle changes in sediment and water quality.



## WEATHER

Max Temp	32.7°	CTC	29.4°
Min Temp	16.5°	15.4°	
Humidity	74%	91%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	



I, Sangram Kumar Panda, S/o. Late Santosh Kumar Panda, R/o. At: Amastala, Larambha, P.S: Attabira, Dist: Bargarh, declare that my father Santosh Kumar Panda has the Legatee of will deed vide Regd. Document No. 31621303963, Dt. 21.10.2013. That, the said original Will Deed was completely destroyed by white ant, which was beyond recoverable. That I have issued certified copy of said Deed of will for proof of Original Will Deed, Hence this affidavit.

**CLASSIFIED**  
**LOST**  
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**Man, parents awarded life term in dowry death case**

PNN & AGENCIES

**Balasore, Feb 12:** In a landmark judgment, the Additional District and Sessions Court at Soro in this district sentenced a man and his parents to life imprisonment Thursday for their involvement in a dowry death case dating back to 2012.

The court, presided over by Judge Meenakshi Dash, also imposed a fine of ₹10,000 on each convict, with an additional eight months of imprisonment in case of default.

The convicted individuals have been identified as Santosh Barik and his parents, Binod Barik and Sanjumani Barik, residents of Simulia village.

According to prosecution records, Santosh married Swapna Barik of Khadgapur village in 2010. After the marriage, Santosh and his parents allegedly subjected Swapna to both physical and mental harassment, repeatedly demanding additional dowry from her family.

Tragically, Swapna later died due to poisoning under suspicious circumstances.

Following her death, her father, Gangadhar Barik, filed an FIR at Soro police station June 30, 2012, citing dowry-related harassment.

Police registered a case under Sections 304(B) and 498(A) of the Indian Penal Code, along with Section 4 of the Dowry Prohibition Act, leading to the arrest of the accused trio.

After careful examination of 18 witnesses and review of documentary and material evidence, the court delivered its verdict Thursday, bringing long-awaited justice to Swapna's family.

**NIT-Rourkela inks MoU with Survey of India for research**

PNN & AGENCIES

**Rourkela, Feb 12:** The National Institute of Technology Rourkela and the Survey of India (Odisha & Chhattisgarh Geo-Spatial Directorate) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to promote collaboration in geospatial science, mapping technologies and advanced research in engineering and science.

The partnership combines Survey of India's expertise in national mapping and geodesy with NIT Rourkela's strengths in geo-dynamics, remote sensing, earth sciences and climate studies.

The agreement enables joint research projects, academic events and technical exchanges in alignment with the National Geospatial Policy-2022.

The MoU was signed by Prof K Umamaheshwar Rao, Director, NIT Rourkela, and Swarnima Bajpai, Director, Odisha & Chhattisgarh Geo-Spatial Directorate, Survey of India. Senior administrative officials, faculty members and officers from both institutions attended the ceremony. Prof K Umamaheshwar Rao stated, "The collaboration is of national significance as it aligns with India's growing emphasis on geospatial governance, digital mapping, climate resilience and infrastructure development."

**Jharsuguda:** Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, is supporting government school students in Jharsuguda for their upcoming board exams through comprehensive education camps. Organised under the aegis of its Vidyagraha initiative, four such camps were held at government high schools in the district. Through this initiative, Vedanta aims to help the students improve their exam preparation and career prospects through structured subject assessments and expert counselling. Held at the UG High School (Sriapalli), VSS High School (Beraham), Panchayat High School (Badmal), and Government High School (Sarabah), the camps have benefited close to 200 students in Jharsuguda. The camps are focused on strengthening the understanding of fundamental concepts in Mathematics, Science and English, with assessments conducted in close adherence to board exam protocols. This approach has also enabled the students to familiarise themselves with exam patterns, evaluation parameters, and overall assessment process, helping build both their confidence and competence ahead of the crucial board examinations. Under the EVP (Employee volunteer programme), more than 30 employee volunteers from Vedanta Jharsuguda were involved in career guidance and academic counselling sessions in the camps. Led by accomplished technical professionals from the company, these sessions provided the students with structured inputs on subject selection, academic pathways and career opportunities, helping students make informed decisions about their development. Underscoring the impact of the initiative, C Chandru, CEO, Vedanta Jharsuguda said, "At Vedanta Jharsuguda, we believe that education is the foundation of long-term community development. Through our Vidyagraha initiative, we are working to strengthen academic preparedness and provide meaningful guidance to students at a crucial stage in their lives. We remain committed to creating new and innovative avenues for students to succeed."

# Hubby, aide held for killing, burying pregnant woman



PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhawanipatna, Feb 12:** Police Thursday arrested a man and his associate for allegedly killing his eight-month pregnant wife and burying her body near a farmhouse on the outskirts of Bhawanipatna town in Kalahandi district.

The decomposed body of the woman was exhumed near the farmhouse in Sripur Monday afternoon. Following an investigation, police identified the deceased as Barsha Patel, 25, of Sarlanji area under Bhawanipatna Sadar police limits.

Suspicion arose after her husband, Nilambar alias Lalit Patel, went missing after the body was recovered. Police later apprehended Lalit and his associate, identified as Jashobant Goud of Chakradhar Nagar, from the local area. According to police, Lalit strangled Barsha January 26, allegedly over an extramarital affair and ongoing family disputes. He then buried her body with the help of Jashobant. Both accused were arrested Thursday and are scheduled to be produced in court Friday.

Police said Lalit's mother and aunt are also suspected to have been involved in the crime. They have been detained for questioning. Investigators recreated the crime scene with Lalit after his arrest Thursday.

Police said Lalit and Barsha were reportedly cousins in relationship, who married for love in 2023 despite opposition from their families and community. As they were not accepted socially, the couple had been living away from the family, frequently changing places. Meanwhile, Lalit allegedly developed a relationship with another woman, leading to frequent quarrels with Barsha.

Police have registered a case (48/2026) under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and said further investigation is underway.

The crime came to light Monday when a sanitation worker noticed a finger protruding out from the ground while cleaning the area and alerted the farmhouse owner, who informed police. Officers recovered the body and seized a 'Mangalsutra' and materials allegedly used in the crime.

## Close shave for protesters as police bus suffers brake failure during stir



PNN & AGENCIES

**Rayagada, Feb 12:** Protesters staging a road blockade on National Highway 326 in Rayagada town during the nationwide strike Thursday had a close shave after a police bus suffered brake failure and rolled towards the group of protesters. However, no injuries were reported, officials said.

The incident occurred at Siriguda Chhak on NH-326, which passes through the

town, where members of a workers' organisation had been staging a demonstration since 6am.

At around 9am, a bus carrying more than 30 police personnel was travelling from Rayagada to Nabarangpur when its brakes allegedly failed near the protest site. The bus began moving rapidly towards the demonstrators.

After the driver shouted about the brake failure, protesters sitting on the road and

## Defence lawyer questions police chargesheet

The lawyer alleged that police were attempting to malign the character of former MLA Bikram Panda, an accused in the case and a district president of the BJD

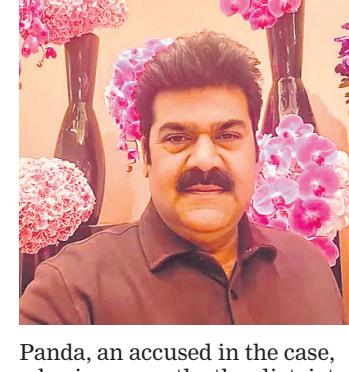
POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, Feb 12:** Advocate Deepak Pattnaik, lawyer of ex-MLA Bikram Panda, has raised serious objections to the chargesheet filed by police in connection with the murder of senior lawyer and BJP leader Pitabas Panda.

Police had earlier claimed that political and business rivalry was the motive behind the murder of the BJP leader when the accused were arrested. However, Pattnaik Thursday said the chargesheet presents a different narrative regarding the circumstances of the murder and that new elements have been inserted.

He alleged that police were attempting to malign the character of former MLA Bikram

### PITABAS MURDER



Panda, an accused in the case, who is currently the district president of the BJD.

During the post-mortem, a key was found tied to the sacred thread worn by the deceased. Police stated that the key was used to open a secret chamber in his house, from where the pen drive was seized.

Pattnaik questioned these

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



journalists covering the agitation ran to safety. More than 100 protesters, media representatives and over 38 police personnel and jawans on board the bus narrowly escaped injury, sources said.

According to data available on the transport department's portal, the bus is more than 14 years and three months old. While its fitness certificate was valid, the vehicle reportedly did not have valid insurance or pollution clearance documents.

When contacted, Rayagada Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Gourahari Sahu said all necessary documents of the bus were in order and that it had been duly authorised.

The incident has triggered public criticism, as transport and police authorities routinely fine citizens for lacking valid insurance, pollution and vehicle fitness certificates. Had the bus run over people and caused casualties, compensation could have been difficult in the absence of valid insurance, locals said.

Simultaneous searches were conducted at Sethi's office in

## Senior official held for taking bribe to release seized tractor



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bellaguntha, his residence and his ancestral home on suspicion that he possessed assets disproportionate to his known sources of income, officials said.**

The case stems from an incident February 5 when Sethi allegedly seized a sand-laden tractor without making a proper record. Although the owner produced relevant documents, Sethi allegedly demanded a bribe to release the vehicle.

The tractor owner later filed a complaint with the Berhampur Vigilance unit. Acting on the complaint, officials laid a trap. As planned, the complainant visited Sethi's office Thursday. Sethi collected ₹30,000 as a penalty and allegedly accepted an additional ₹10,000 as a bribe for releasing the tractor. Vigilance officers apprehended him immediately after the transaction and seized the entire amount.

Officials said discrepancies and irregularities were found in the penalty challans issued in the case, and their authenticity is being verified. The investigation is ongoing.

claims, alleging that the story was fabricated to defame Bikram Panda. He said police submitted only the seizure list in court but did not produce any photographic evidence or the pen drive itself.

He further said that initially police had linked the murder to alleged irregularities involving liquor, sand and land dealings. However, the chargesheet makes no mention of these aspects. Had the investigation proceeded in that direction, several influential individuals might have been implicated, Pattnaik alleged.

An application has been filed seeking a copy of the evidence submitted by police in court. Further legal steps will be taken after examining the documents, Pattnaik said.

## City couple kept under 'digital arrest' for 35 hrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 12:** An elderly couple from Nayapalli area in the Capital city was allegedly kept under 'digital arrest' by cyber fraudsters for over 35 hours, police said Thursday.

The couple, however, did not suffer any financial loss as the bank account provided by the fraudsters for transferring money was found to be non-functional, they said.

'Digital arrest' is a tactic where miscreants pose as law enforcement agency officials, and threaten people of arrest by making video calls.

A complaint was lodged at Cyber Police Station here, following which an investigation began, a police officer said.

The victims were identified as Saroj Kumar Patnaik, a retired officer of a central public sector undertaking, and his wife Nirjharani.

"The caller said a terrorist had used my Aadhaar card for fraudulent activities. He claimed that an arrest warrant had been issued against us and shared a fake arrest order on a messaging platform," she said.

The couple, in their 60s, was allegedly kept under continuous video surveillance by the fraudsters for more than 35 hours.

The accused "demanded ₹1 crore" for their release and sought details of bank accounts.

The couple said they managed to come out of the situation around 10:30pm Tuesday with the help of friends. They switched off their mobile phones and approached the cyber police.

"Cyber fraudsters usually target senior citizens and retired employees, who may have savings in their bank accounts."

Such vulnerable people need to be very careful," ACP Biswaranjan Senapati said.

## Odisha records 765 dolphins in 5-year high

Chilika houses 159 Irrawaddy dolphins

Annual census in 2025 counted 710 dolphins



Red List. Despite the population in Chilika remaining static, the lagoon continues to have the highest concentration of Irrawaddy dolphins in a single area globally, a forest officer said.

Amlan Nayak, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of the Chilika Wildlife Division, said the sea mammal might have migrated to other areas, which could explain why its population remained the same as last year.

In the Berhampur division, the Irrawaddy dolphin was not sighted during last year's count. This time, their number stood at 13.

It is a good sign that the species has been sighted this time in the Ganjam coast, said Dibya Shankar Behera, Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF), Khallikote.

**Baripada, Feb 12:** At least three persons died and five others were injured after a tractor fell into a river in Mayurbhanj district Thursday evening, police said. The accident took place near Murgasahi village under Karanji block of the district.

Eight people on board the tractor were returning from Jhumukakudar village when the mishap took place.

The number of Irrawaddy dolphins in Chilika Lake remains unchanged at 159. The count of the species in the brackish water lagoon was 159 in 2025 too, they added.

Besides the Irrawaddy dolphins, Chilika also recorded 16 humpback dolphins of the Indo-Pacific and Indian Ocean species. In 2025, the lake had reported 15 humpback dolphins, officials said.

In all, 765 dolphins of six species were sighted along the Odisha coast and in Chilika Lake during the population estimation exercise. These in-

cluded 208 Irrawaddy dolphins, 498 humpback dolphins, 55 bottlenose dolphins, three spinner dolphins and two finless porpoises.

Nine Irrawaddy dolphins have also been sighted in Bhitarkanika Marine Sanctuary, 12 in Puri wildlife division area, 13 in Berhampur division and 15 in Balasore wildlife division, it said.

"Odisha has recorded the highest dolphin count in five years at 765," state's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) Prem Kumar Jha posted on X.

Strong conservation efforts, habitat protection and community participation drive a major milestone in marine biodiversity conservation, he said.

The annual census in 2025 estimated 710 dolphins in the state, including those in Chilika.

These included 188 Irrawaddy dolphins, 498 humpback dolphins, 16 bottlenose dolphins and eight spinner dolphins.

Dolphin has been included in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 and categorised as endangered on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List.

## Vedanta Aluminium's Vidyagraha aids 200 students ahead of exams



PNN & AGENCIES

**Jharsuguda:** Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, is supporting government school students in Jharsuguda for their upcoming board exams through comprehensive education camps. Organised under the aegis of its Vidyagraha initiative, four such camps were held at government high schools in the district. Through this initiative, Vedanta aims to help the students improve their exam preparation and career prospects through structured subject assessments and expert counselling. Held at the UG High School (Sriapalli), VSS High School (Beraham), Panchayat High School (Badmal), and Government High School (Sarabah), the camps have benefited close to 200 students in Jharsuguda. The camps are focused on strengthening the understanding of fundamental concepts in Mathematics, Science and English, with assessments conducted in close adherence to board exam protocols. This approach has also enabled the students to familiarise themselves with exam patterns, evaluation parameters, and overall assessment process, helping build both their confidence and competence ahead of the crucial board examinations. Under the EVP (Employee volunteer programme), more than 30 employee volunteers from Vedanta Jharsuguda were involved in career guidance and academic counselling sessions in the camps. Led by accomplished technical professionals from the company, these sessions provided the students with structured inputs on subject selection, academic pathways and career opportunities, helping students make informed decisions about their development. Underscoring the impact of the initiative, C Chandru, CEO, Vedanta Jharsuguda said, "At Vedanta Jharsuguda, we believe that education is the foundation of long-term community development. Through our Vidyagraha initiative, we are working to strengthen academic preparedness and provide meaningful guidance to students at a crucial stage in their lives. We remain committed to creating new and innovative avenues for students to succeed."

## 3 killed, 5 injured as tractor falls into river

PNN & AGENCIES

**Baripada, Feb 12:** At least three persons died and five others were injured after a





# Assam Rifles in 'Atmanirbhar' mode

Assam Rifles is planning to induct dog breeds available in India into its squad



ing which the Assam Rifles started looking for more local breeds for induction in the force, Palei said.

"Currently we have four breeds -- Labrador, German Shepherd, Belgian Malinois and Tangkhul Hui. Out of them, we inducted six dogs of Tangkhul Hui in 2022 as a pilot project. They are highly disease resistant and all of them are in narcotics detection," he added.

The Tangkhul Hui is found in Ukhral district of Manipur, and it is a domestic breed, used mainly for hunting purposes, the official said.

Talking about the Kombai

breed, Palei said it is found in Tamil Nadu, and this type of dog is being inducted in all the central armed police forces after the call for an indigenous breed.

"We are in the process of identifying the parent stock. The first three years will be for breeding. There are different stages, starting from identifying the breed to final induction. As

the first step, we will induct two males and eight females of Kombai in April," he added.

Palei said that the Tangkhul Hui and Kombai breeds are likely to be inducted fully into the Assam Rifles' dog squad by March 2027 together.

"This centre is the only facility of the Assam Rifles. The Kombai dogs will also be trained in this centre," he said.

The Assam Rifles has 344 authorised strength for dogs, but it currently has 253 dogs. These are posted in different battalions across the Northeast and Jammu & Kashmir, the Lt Col said.

He said that the Assam Rifles presently has over 1,200 dog trained handlers, while 9-10 people are required for care and maintenance of each dog.

The Assam Rifles Dog Training Centre in Jorhat district has 104 dogs and 174 handlers, which are in different stages of training, Palei said.

When asked about any big operation that was successful with a significant role of its dog squad, he said, without sharing details, that a huge cache of narcotics substances transported from Myanmar was seized in September 2025 in a Northeastern state due to

its canine unit.

On the training aspect, Palei said the centre is conducting three courses for its personnel and two courses for the dogs.

The three courses for personnel are basic dog handler course (23 weeks), dog first aid course (four weeks) and refresher course (two weeks).

For dogs, there is a basic obedience course (12 weeks) and a refresher course (two weeks).

The officer said that there are three specialised courses also -- tracking, explosive detection and narcotic detection. Each course is of 36 weeks' duration.

"At present, we have the 42nd batch of our basic dog handling course. After this, the best of the handlers are selected for a master trainer course at the CRPF Dog Breeding & Training School in Bangalore, and it is 24 weeks long. Also, we send our people to the Remount Veterinary Corps Centre (RVC) in Meerut for a six-month course," he added.

Palei said after passing out from these two centres, the personnel are deployed at ARDTC as instructors.

## Over 20 int'l runners to take part in Aizawl half-marathon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, Feb 12: Over 20 professional runners from various foreign countries will take part in an international half-marathon to be held in Aizawl February 14, Mizoram Sports Minister Lalngi

hinglova Hmar said Wednesday.

The second edition of the mega event will be organised by the state's sports department in partnership with Innovations India. Hmar said that the current edition will feature an elite field as over 20 athletes from distance-running powerhouses, including Kenya, Ethiopia, Bahrain, England and France, have confirmed their participation.

The state government is currently coordinating with Central

authorities to secure Protected Area Permits (PAP) for these athletes upon their arrival in India to enter Mizoram, he said.

Following a successful inaugural run in April last year that drew 1,500 participants from different parts of the country, the 2026 marathon is scaling up significantly. The state government has integrated the marathon into the 2026 Tourism Event Calendar, leveraging the race to showcase the state's cultural heritage and natural landscapes, according to Hmar.

With the recent expansion of the railway line up to Sairang near Aizawl, the Minister expected a record-breaking attendance from both domestic and international visitors.

### PUBLIC NOTIFICATION REGARDING SPEED TRIAL

Notice is hereby given to all users of Railway lines and premises situated along the completed section mentioned below under South Eastern Railway that a speed trial run by an electric engine at a speed of 130 km/h will be conducted in the specified section from 16.02.2026 to 20.02.2026. (1) Section: Newly constructed 3rd line between Soro-Ranital (from Electric Mast No. 264/13 to Mast No. 285/11). (2) Date of speed trial : 16.02.2026 to 20.02.2026. All users of the Railway line and members of the public are hereby advised to maintain a safe distance from the newly constructed 3rd line during the period of the speed trial run.

Deputy Chief Engineer (Construction), Garden Reach, Kolkata

South Eastern Railway (PR-1176)

### PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Sudarshan Khara @ Suraj @ Raju, S/o Bhagwan Khara, R/o Village Khamra, Tehsil Badel, PS Padua, District Koraput, Odisha, Presently Address: Room No. 2, Khanjra Khanjra Guda Road, Hanuman Nagar, Simli Guda, Koraput, Odisha has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 600/2024, U/s 20/25/29 NDPS Act, P.S. Swaroop Nagar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Sudarshan Khara @ Suraj @ Raju cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Sudarshan Khara @ Suraj @ Raju has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said Sudarshan Khara @ Suraj @ Raju accused of FIR No. 600/2024, U/s 20/25/29 NDPS Act, P.S. Swaroop Nagar, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 27.03.2026.

By Order - Harvinder Singh Johal

Special Judge (NDPS), North

DP/1796/ON/2026 Room No. 207, Rohini Courts, Delhi

### GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA

#### OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

#### RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KARANJA (MAYURBHANJ)

E-mail ID : [gerwkaranja@yahoo.com](mailto:gerwkaranja@yahoo.com)

Order No.619 / WE / Date : 09.02.2026

"E" Procurement Notice for Construction of building works for year 2025-26.

Bid Identification No. - RWDKNJU - 18/2025-26 (Building)

1. Name of the work : Construction and repair/renovation of buildings (Res & Non-Res) for the year 2025-26 under Rural Works Division, Karanja in the District of Mayurbhanj (Details as per Annexure). 2. Estimated Cost : Rs.16.81 to 42.78 Lakhs (Approximately). 3. Class of Contractor : 'B' and 'C' Class (of Odisha P.W.D.). 4. Period of Completion : As per Annexure. 5. Tender Paper Cost : Rs. 6,00/-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender Online for bidding	From	To	Last date & time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/S R.E.W. Division, Karanja Technical & Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	
Executive Engineer, Rural	RWDKNJU-18/2025-26 Building	Dt.17.02.2026	Dt.23.02.2026	Dt.21.02.2026	upto 1.00 P.M. at 12.00 P.M.	

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

Sd/- Executive Engineer

R.W. Division, Karanja

### STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD, ODISHA

(Forest, Environment & Climate Change Department, Govt. of Odisha)

Paribesh Bhawan, A/118, Nilakantha Nagar, Unit-VIII, Bhubaneswar-751012

Tel:0674-2562368/2561909, EPABX:2653800

E-mail:paribesh1@ospccboard.org, Website: [www.ospccboard.org](http://www.ospccboard.org)

No.1909/ IND-I-SWM-MISC-138/2025-26

Date 11.02.2026

### PUBLIC NOTICE

No.8001/68/2026: With a significant move towards environmental conservation and maintaining temple sanctity, also to implement ban order of use of single use plastics under Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 and amendments thereof, it is hereby instructed to prohibit the use of single use plastics within the temple premises for taking puja offerings, giving food materials in single use cutlery. This notification aims to reduce pollution due to plastic waste littering and to promote eco-friendly practices among devotees and vendors. Therefore, it is requested to adopt the following steps.

#### For Devotees and Vendors-

- Instead of single use plastics, devotee shall use bamboo baskets, patra danas, reusable plastic baskets for taking puja offerings to the temple.
- Vendors within and outside temple premises are instructed to provide the puja offerings only in above mentioned allowed items.

#### For Temple administrator-

- To make available bamboo baskets, patra danas, reusable plastic baskets for puja offerings.
- To provide separate colour coded bins for collection of Dry Waste and Wet waste
- To hand over waste to authorized waste collectors of local bodies.
- To Instruct peripheral and captive Hotels/restaurants/local vendors not to use single use plastic/ thermocol cutlery (like cups and plates, plastic straws, knives, forks, spoon) and plastic carry bags of less than 120 micron for prasad/ food serving
- To use cutlery made up of compostable plastics, biodegradable materials (leaf plate, wooden spoons, paper straws, paper plate, metal plate etc)
- To ensure the disposal (bisarjan) of puja offerings in the barricaded area of the pond to facilitate removal of these materials
- To create awareness among public to dispose the puja left-overs in appropriate bins and barricaded area of pond

Let us pledge to keep temple surroundings clean and single use plastic free.

Sd/- MEMBER SECRETARY

OSPCB-MSW-MISC-0014-2025/5/2026 OIPR-8001/8012/1/25-26/0013

### भारत संचार निगम लिमिटेड

(भारत संचार का उपकरण)

**BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED**

(A Govt. of India Enterprise)

संख्या: BSNLCO-11/2(11)/1/2025-RECTT-CO-Part(1) दिनांक: 03.02.2026

भारत संचार निगम लिमिटेड (बीएसएनएल) दूरसंचार एवं वित्त संवर्ग में वरिष्ठ कार्यकारी प्रशिक्षण (सीनियर एजिञ्चरिटिव ट्रेनी) के पद हेतु प्रत्यक्ष भर्ती योजना के अंतर्गत खुले बाजार से प्रतियोगी परीक्षा के माध्यम से आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है।

इच्छुक उम्मीदवार अधिक जानकारी एवं नवीनतम अपडेट के लिए वीएसएनएल की वेबसाइट [www.bsnl.co.in](http://www.bsnl.co.in) पर जा सकते हैं।

बीएसएनएल निगम कार्यालय, नई दिल्ली

CBC 06204/12/002/2526

### OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, WATCO DIVISION, KEONJHAR-758001

Ph. No.06766-254096, e-Mail : [gmwatcojk@gmail.com](mailto:gmwatcojk@gmail.com)

#### NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

Invitation for Bids (IFB) No. WATCOJKR-04/2026-07.02.2026

- Name of the Work : Construction of 250000 Ltr capacity UGR at Zone-10A near DHH Keonjhar
- Estimated Cost : Rs.15.63 Lakh
- Period of completion : 180 Days
- Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal : 10 hours of dt.13.02.2026 to 17 hours of dt.26.02.2026 at 17 hours
- Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal : Dt.26.02.2026 at 11.30 hours
- Date & time of opening of bids : Dt.27.02.2026 at 11.30 hours
- Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid : The General Manager, WATCO Division, Keonjhar, 758001, Odisha. Ph. 06766-254096 e-Mail : [gmwatcojk@gmail.com](mailto:gmwatcojk@gmail.com)

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

Sd/- General Manager WATCO DIVISION, Keonjhar

OIPR-13001/13215/1/25-26/0001

### OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, MEGA LIFT BHUBANESWAR

Bid Identification No. 12ML/2025-26

No.32001/84/2526 : The Chief Engineer, Megalift on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites online tender through "e" procurement for the work as detailed in the Annexure to this bid notice.

#### ANNEXURE TO BID NOTICE

Name of
---------

## national

of the quote

What happened afterwards was that people ensured his victory with more votes compared to that of Modi ji... We are not bothered about any motions, if you want to hang us, we are ready for that... we will continue to tell the truth in Parliament

K C VENUGOPAL | CONG GENERAL SECY

We are supporting each other and moving forward. Dada (Ajit Pawar) is no more, so I do not want to revisit old matters. Whatever discussions we had remain between us. It is our moral responsibility to complete his unfinished dreams

SUPRIYA SULE | NCP (SP) WORKING PRESIDENT

There was a time in the state when outlawed groups such as All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) and National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) were created only to remain in power. It was Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah who had brought the misguided youth to the national mainstream

MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM

## SHORT TAKES

■ UP: 5 killed, 44 hurt in separate road mishaps

**Lucknow:** At least five people were killed and 44 injured in separate road accidents across Uttar Pradesh. In Lucknow, an 82-year-old cyclist, Ram Chandra Lodhi, was killed by an unidentified truck. In Amethi, a woman died and her husband was injured when a truck hit their motorcycle. In Firozabad, a road contractor from Punjab died and three others were injured after their car crashed on the Agra-Lucknow Expressway. In Kannauj, 40 passengers were injured when a bus overturned on the Lucknow-Agra Expressway. In Deoria, a man was killed by a speeding truck.

■ CBI takes over case of NEET aspirant's death

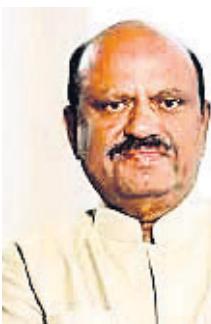
**New Delhi:** The CBI has registered a case in the mysterious death of a NEET aspirant in Patna, taking over the investigation into the matter from the local police, officials said Thursday. The NEET aspirant, hailing from Jehanabad, was found unconscious in a girls' hostel in Patna's Chitragupt Nagar January 6. She had slipped into a coma and died five days later at a private hospital.

■ ₹1.7cr found during Lokayukta raids

**Bangalore:** A sum of ₹1.70 crore was seized from the flat of a friend of a senior government engineer during Lokayukta raids conducted in connection with a disproportionate assets case in Karnataka, officials said Thursday. The recovery was made during searches linked to H M Janardhan, Superintendent Engineer in the Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society.

■ Gujarat Cong leaders move HC against SIR

**Surat:** Two Congress leaders from Surat have moved the Gujarat High Court challenging the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state, alleging large-scale violations of rules and "arbitrary deletion" of voters' names. The petition, filed February 10, has been submitted by Congress' Surat district president Vipulkumar Udhawala and chief organiser of Congress' Seva Dal in Surat Vinod Patil.



Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is now a closed chapter after the top court's verdict. If there are shortcomings in the conduct of the exercise, it will certainly be addressed in a balanced manner

CV ANANDA BOSE | WB GOVERNOR

## HOLI REUNION TURNS TRAGIC

A 55-year-old woman, Neelam, and her daughter, Deepanjali, tragically died in a road accident near Ghazipur toll plaza while returning home to Delhi from Dehradun. The man, eagerly waiting to celebrate Holi with them, remains unaware of their passing



Former Doordarshan news reader, Sarla Maheshwari dies



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 12:** Former Doordarshan news reader Sarla Maheshwari, one of TV's most recognised faces in the 80s and 90s who embodied a calm and serene presence, died Thursday. She was 71.

Maheshwari was the familiar face of TV news from 1976 right up till 2005 along with Salma Sultan, Minu Talwar, Shammi Narang, Geetanjali Aiyer, Neeti Ravindran and others, their very names evoking nostalgia of India's broadcasting and its evolution from black and white to colour. The days when broadcasts were limited to a few hours a day and when there was only one channel to watch. Her death - first announced by co-anchor and friend Shammi Narang - was mourned by her colleagues, friends, the Congress and just old-time viewers who recalled her quietude, poise and her distinctive 'seedha palla' sari.

In Kerala, though the state government declared dies non (a day when no legal business is carried on) for government employees, attendance at offices remained low as transport vehicles stayed off the roads.

Travellers were among the worst affected, with KSRTC and private buses remaining off the roads. Punjab's ruling party, AAP, extended support to the nationwide strike.

The agitation drew a mixed response in Goa, with banking

operations affected while essential services remained uninterrupted. Nationalised banks and offices of many insurance companies remained shut in the coastal state.

## Trade unions observe one-day strike

THE TRADE UNIONS MOSTLY HELD GATE MEETINGS AND DEMONSTRATIONS ACROSS MANY STATES, AND AT SOME PLACES, WORKERS REPORTED LATE FOR DUTY TO SHOW THEIR SOLIDARITY TO THE AGITATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 12:** A one-day nationwide strike call given by trade unions to protest against alleged anti-worker policies of the central government Thursday evoked a fragmented response, and normal life remained largely unaffected throughout the country.

The trade unions mostly held gate meetings and demonstrations across many states, and at some places, workers reported late for duty to show their solidarity to the agitation.

According to reports, a mixed response was seen in states including Odisha, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab.

Trade unions claimed "a big resistance against anti-people, anti-national policies of Union Government", and stated that more than 30 crore workers, farmers and other sections joined the agitation. The joint platform of the Central Trade Unions and Independent Sectoral Federations and Associa-



tions, along with the constituents of Samyukt Kisan Morcha and the joint front of agricultural workers' unions, succeeded in organising strike actions and massive mobilisations in more than 600 districts of the country, the forum stated. In Delhi, trade unions organised processions in all industrial areas as part of strike actions. A meeting was held at the Jantar Mantar here, and it was addressed by central trade union leaders.

Meanwhile, the Confederation of All India Traders said

that "markets across the country are open, trade is normal, and all business activities will proceed as usual".

In Jharkhand, banking, insurance and coal sectors have been affected by the strike. Bank of India (BOI) Employees' Union state Deputy General Secretary Umesh Das said.

Left parties and the Congress have also extended their support to the strike in the state.

In Chhattisgarh, several nationalised banks remained closed as employees joined

the strike. Staff of insurance companies, post offices, along with labourers and farmers, also participated in the agitation, affecting operations in their respective sectors. Normal life was largely unaffected in many areas, including Durg district in Chhattisgarh, where operations at the Bhilai Steel Plant continued as usual.

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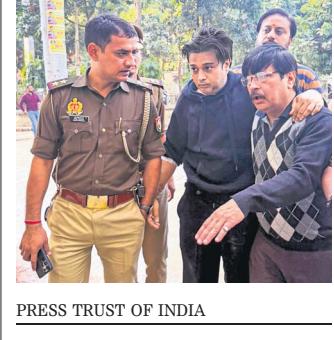
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The agitation drew a mixed response in Goa, with banking

operations affected while essential services remained uninterrupted. Nationalised banks and offices of many insurance companies remained shut in the coastal state.

## LAMBORGHINI CRASH

## Shivam Mishra gets bail within hours



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shivam Mishra granted bail hours after arrest in the Kanpur Lamborghini crash case; court rejected police plea for 14-day remand citing procedural lapses**

**Police allege he was driving and evading arrest; defence claims illegal arrest, says he was not behind the wheel and assures cooperation in the probe**

**Crash injured six people, sparked public outrage; investigation based on CCTV and eyewitnesses, with claims and counterclaims over who was driving**

owing which the court rejected the remand plea and ordered the accused's release on bail.

Sharma said Kanpur Police had formally arrested Mishra earlier in the morning and produced him before the court around 10 am. After hearing arguments, the court reserved its order and pronounced it after 3 pm, he added. Describing the order as "just and appropriate", Sharma said there was no provision for punishment or imposition of fine at this stage and that Shivam had been released on a bail bond. Senior defence counsel Naresh Chandra Tripathi, also appearing for Mishra, told reporters that the arrest was in violation of Supreme Court guidelines and provisions of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

Anant Sharma, a counsel for the accused, said the police had moved an application before the court seeking Mishra's remand but claimed the remand papers had several discrepancies. He also claimed that the documents did not mention details about serving of notice, fol-



Passengers rush to board a train amid delays during the nationwide strike, in Patna, Bihar

PTI PHOTO

## DUBEY'S REMARKS ON RAHUL GANDHI

## LS adjourns for the day after uproar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 12:** The Lok Sabha was adjourned for the day Thursday following uproar by the Opposition over BJP member Nishikant Dubey's remarks targeting Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Dubey alleged that Gandhi was hand-in-glove with anti-national forces. His remarks triggered an uproar from the Opposition benches forcing TDP leader Krishna Prasad Tenneti, who was in the chair, to adjourn

the proceedings for the day.

This was the second adjournment of the Lok Sabha during the day. During Question Hour, the House was adjourned till noon as the Opposition members raised slogans against the India-US interim trade agreement and the four labour codes.

Separately, Dubey told PTI Videos outside the Parliament complex that he has given a notice to initiate a "substantive motion" against Gandhi, and demanded that his Lok Sabha

membership be cancelled and he be debarred from contesting elections for life. Dubey said in his notice he has stated how the leader of the opposition (LoP) visits foreign countries joining hands with the Soros Foundation, USAID and Ford Foundation, and "colludes" with anti-India elements.

A substantive motion is an independent, self-contained proposal submitted for the approval of a legislative house or Assembly, drafted to express a decision or opinion.

Research on Patanjali honey featured in international journal

PATANJALI

AGENCIES

**Haridwar, Feb 12:** Patanjali has reaffirmed its commitment to quality, purity and consumer safety, following the publication of an extensive research study on Patanjali Honey in a prestigious international journal by Elsevier.

On the occasion, Acharya Balkrishna stated that Patanjali consistently practices the principles it advocates, describing this as an enduring truth of the organisation.

He said the company's mission is to safeguard the nation from the threat of adulteration and reiterated that Patanjali remains steadfast in its commitment to this cause. This accomplishment is a source of pride not only for Patanjali but also for the entire Indian FMCG sector.

Acharya highlighted that the study conclusively proved that Patanjali Honey contains no external sugars, synthetic syrups, or harmful chemical residues.

"This confirms that Patanjali's supply chain, from raw material sourcing to packaging, follows strict quality control standards. The study clearly demonstrates that Patanjali Honey complies with regulatory standards and reflects robust industrial-grade quality-control systems," he added.

## Marriage median age rises to 29: Report

The data-led report, "The Big Shift: How India Is Rewriting the Rules of Partner Search and Marriage", conducted by matrimony platform Jeevansathi, analysed its user trends between 2016 and 2025 along with survey insights from over 30,000 active users in 2026

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



with 50 per cent of users now beginning the process at 29. The shift indicates that financial stability, career growth and personal readiness are taking precedence over early marriage timelines," the report said.

The study also recorded a

sharp rise in remarriage seekers. In 2016, 11 per cent of users on the platform were looking for a second marriage where as by 2025, the figure had risen to 16 per cent - a 43 per cent increase over 10 years.

received by divorced profiles now comes from individuals who have never been married, while one in six success stories on the platform involves a second marriage, signalling a gradual decline in the stigma around divorce," it added.

The findings also point to a broader redefinition of marriage priorities, with 90 per cent of users saying finding the "right person" matters more

than reaching a certain age or income level.

The report also observed a sharp decline in caste as a strict preference, from 91 per cent of users marking caste as a non-negotiable criterion in 2016 to 54 per cent in 2025.

Marriage decisions are also becoming more individual-led, as, according to the data, 77 per cent of profiles today are created and managed by users themselves, compared to 67 per cent in 2016, while family-managed profiles have reduced from 33 per cent to 23 per cent.

However, 69 per cent of respondents said parental involvement makes the process easier, indicating an emerging hybrid model that balances autonomy with family participation.

# national



No other state has had the courage or capability to hold a conversion conclave to prove the transformation of MoUs into real-world investments

M K STALIN | TN CM

OVER 2,800 POSTS VACANT IN IAS, IPS AND IFOS: GOVT

More than 2,800 posts are lying vacant in the three All India Services - IAS, IPS and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) - with the IAS alone facing a shortage of 1,300 officers, the government informed Parliament Thursday

संघ लोक सेवा आयोग

UNION PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

of the day quote

Earlier, we used to think that we as veterinarians have a limited role to play. But we need to change the way we think and imagine a bigger picture and a bigger role for ourselves

MOHAN BHAGWAT | RSS CHIEF

I would like to tell Rahul Gandhi that nobody is a greater 'jhootha' (liar) and 'luchcha' (crowdy) than you in the country. You want to spread confusion among farmers of the country. You want to start a civil war in the country. You speak lies in the Lok Sabha, which is a temple of truth

GIRAJ SINGH | UNION MINISTER

It is unfortunate and shocking that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has deliberately misinformed the Parliament on the agreements reached at the ninth WTO Ministerial meeting in Bali in December 2013

ANAND SHARMA | CONGRESS LEADER

**X** POST OF THE DAY

If AI threat is real, Indian IT could be a ticking time bomb. 50 lakh people work in IT. If even 50% lose jobs - 25 lakh unemployed next?

• EMIs default

• NPs explode

• Credit dries up

• Economy slows

Then the dominoes fall: Real estate, Auto, Markets, Manufacturing. This isn't just an IT problem. It's a systemic risk India can't afford to ignore. Think this is exaggerated? Or are we sleepwalking into it?

@pushpendrakum

## SHORT TAKES

### Bihar begins 'river census'

**Patna:** The Bihar government has initiated a statewide 'river census' to identify dead and nearly dead rivers, and prepare a plan for their rejuvenation, a state minister said Thursday. The announcement was made during Water Resources Minister Vijay Kumar Choudhary's budget speech for the department in the Assembly. The Assembly also passed the department's ₹7,127.35-crore budget for the 2026-27 fiscal by voice vote. Choudhary said many rivers in the state require urgent restoration, and the department is committed to preserving and reviving them.

### Brazilian Prez to visit India from Feb 18-22

**New Delhi:** Brazil President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will undertake a five-day visit to India beginning February 18 to hold wide-ranging talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and participate in the AI Impact summit. The state visit of President Lula will provide an opportunity for both sides to chart a forward-looking agenda for further strengthening bilateral strategic partnership and further deepen cooperation across bilateral, regional and global platforms, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

### Demons in Churachandpur

**Churachandpur/Imphal:** Hundreds of people Wednesday staged a demonstration in Manipur's Churachandpur district, accusing MLA LM Khaute of betraying the Kuki Zo community by joining the new government led by Y Khemchand Singh.



An artist paints an idol of 'Lord Shiva' ahead of the 'Mahashivratri' festival, at the 'Jabreshwar Mahadev Temple', in Mumbai, Maharashtra

PTI PHOTO

### Ghooskhor Pandat: SC raps Neeraj Pandey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 12:** Observing that a section of society cannot be denigrated in the name of freedom of expression, the Supreme Court Thursday rapped filmmaker Neeraj Pandey over the title of his movie 'Ghooskhor Pandat'.

The top court was hearing a plea seeking a stay on the release of the Manoj Bajpayee-starrer film on OTT platform Netflix.

A bench of Justices BV Nagarkartha and Ujjal Bhuyan issued notices to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Central Board of Film Certification and Pandey on a plea against the movie.

"Why should you denigrate a section of society by using such a title. Freedom of expression is one thing, but that doesn't give license to denigrate anybody. This is against morality and public order. We will not allow you to release the film unless you tell us the changed title. We thought filmmakers, journalists, etc are responsible people," the bench said.

The top court directed Pandey to file an affidavit that the film 'Ghooskhor Pandat' doesn't denigrate any section of society.

### Nurse recovers from Nipah, dies of cardiac arrest in WB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata/New Delhi, Feb 12:** A nurse who had recovered from Nipah virus infection died of cardiac arrest at a private hospital in West Bengal's Barasat Thursday, a state health department official said.

The woman had been in a prolonged coma, which severely affected her immunity, and later developed a lung infection. She had been taken off ventilator support at the end of January.

"She died of cardiac arrest this afternoon. Though she had recovered from Nipah infection, she was suffering from multiple complications," the official said.

Two confirmed cases of Nipah Virus disease have been reported from West Bengal since December, according to reports from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). The other one, a male nurse, has been cured of the disease.

The deceased, who was a resident of Katwa in Purba Bardhaman district, also contracted a hospital-acquired infection



during treatment.

"She was trying to regain consciousness, move her limbs, and speak before her condition suddenly deteriorated. She died at around 4:20 PM," he said.

The nurse had first fallen ill in early January after returning home December 31 for the New Year holidays and was initially admitted to Burdwan Medical College and Hospital before being shifted to the private hospital in Barasat.

The Union Health Ministry said, "Out of the two Nipah positive cases reported from West Bengal January 11, 2026, one of the nurses who was critically ill and was under intensive medical care passed away today due to cardiac arrest in the hospital where she was under treatment."

## Will not allow anyone to touch Aravalli: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 12:** The Supreme Court Thursday said it will not allow "anyone to touch the Aravallis", refusing to permit the Haryana government to submit a detailed plan on jungle safari till a definition of "Aravalli range" is clarified by experts.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said that the issue of jungle safari will be dealt with when it considers the main matter on the Aravalli range.

Counsel for Haryana said that they have revised the detailed project report (DPR) of the safari project from 10,000 acres to over 3,300 acres. He said all they want is to be allowed to furnish the DPR to the central empowered committee (CEC) for their examination.

The bench said, "We are not experts. The experts will decide the definition of Aravalli. Till

the definition of the Aravalli range is finalised, we will not allow anyone to touch the Aravallis."

CJI Kant said that the Aravalli is not only of Haryana or Rajasthan but it is a range which traverses many states. "We will deal with this issue of safari with the main matter," he told the counsel for the Haryana government, who said that the main matter is altogether different and the issue of safari is different.

"Sometimes, the CEC is also very selective in giving its permission. If we permit this, they will give a very rosy picture that these are the trees, wildlife and forests," the bench observed.

CJI Kant said that once the expert committee's opinion comes, it will deal with the safari project.

In October last year, the top court stalled the proposed mega 'Aravali Zoo Safari project', touted to be the world's biggest zoo-safari by the Haryana government.



**A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said that the issue of jungle safari will be dealt with when it considers the main matter on the Aravalli range**

**Counsel for Haryana said that they have revised the detailed project report (DPR) of the safari project from 10,000 acres to over 3,300 acres**

**He said all they want is to be allowed to furnish the DPR to the central empowered committee (CEC) for their examination**

there is a "dire need to further probe" to prevent any regulatory gaps that might undermine the ecological integrity of the Aravalli region.

It also directed that as set out in the order dated May 9, 2024, until further orders, no permission shall be granted for mining in the "Aravalli Hills and Ranges", as defined in the August 25, 2010, FSI report, without its prior permission.

The top court had said this public dissent and criticism appear to stem from perceived ambiguity and lack of clarity in certain terms and directives issued by the court.

The top court had November 20 last year accepted a uniform definition of these hills and ranges and banned the grant of fresh mining leases inside its areas spanning Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat until experts' reports are out.

It had accepted the recommendations of a committee of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the definition of the Aravalli hills and ranges to protect the world's oldest mountain system.

ing relationship between the Royal Air Force and the Indian Air Force," Air Vice Marshal Ian Townsend, Assistant Chief of the Air Staff, said.

"Bringing Indian QFs into UK Military Flying Training Systems deepens our cooperation, enhances interoperability and reinforces our shared commitment to excellence in aircrew training," he said.

Commodore Chris Saunders, who is Defence Adviser to the British High Commission, said: "The forthcoming deployment of Indian Qualified Flying Instructors to the UK represents another significant milestone in our expanding defence relationship, positively building on the mandate of UK-India Vision 2035."

The development closely follows the first-time deployment in January this year of an Indian Air Force officer as an instructor to the Royal Air Force College Cranwell -- the air academy that trains the next generation of RAF officers

The new initiative marked all three British military academies now hosting Indian officers as instructors from respective services, the readout noted.

"The signing of this Letter of Agreement is a significant step in strengthening the longstand-

### In a first, IAF to train UK's Royal Air Force pilots



**The development closely follows the first-time deployment in January this year of an Indian Air Force officer as an instructor to the Royal Air Force College Cranwell -- the air academy that trains the next generation of RAF officers**

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"The signing of this Letter of Agreement is a significant step in strengthening the longstand-

### Woman killed by speeding car driven by drunk cop in Ambala

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ambala, Feb 12:** A 24-year-old woman was killed after a car, allegedly being driven at high speed by a 'drunk' Haryana Police head constable rammed into an e-rickshaw here, throwing the victim onto the road before running her over, officials said Thursday.

The cop, identified as Amit Kumar, has been arrested, they said, adding that the offending vehicle has been impounded.

The incident took place Wednesday evening near the Kali Paltan Bridge. The deceased was identified as Nikita Bajaj, an Ambala res-

ident, who was working at a company in Gurugram. She had arrived in Ambala from Delhi along with her brother, Harsh Bajaj, Wednesday.

Around 8.30 pm, the siblings boarded an e-rickshaw from the Cantonment area to Ambala city to attend a family function.

Near Ambala city, a car -- allegedly being driven at a high speed with Head Constable Amit Kumar at the wheel -- rammed into the rickshaw from behind. The impact caused the vehicle to go out of control, throwing Nikita onto the road, before the offending vehicle ran her over, killing her on the spot.

### Mumbaikars will be forced to ride horses in future: HC

A bench of Justices Ravindra Ghuge and Abhay Mantri wondered what would become of the city of Mumbai in the next two decades if squatting and illegal encroachments continued unchecked, and slammed the local civic body, saying it appears powerless and seems to lack courage to remove them

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Feb 12:** The Bombay High Court Thursday expressed concerns over increasing encroachments on public roads in the metropolis, terming the situation "grim".

remarked that in the future residents would be forced to ride bicycles and horses.

A bench of Justices Ravindra Ghuge and Abhay Mantri wondered what would become of the city of Mumbai in the next two decades if squatting and illegal encroachments continued unchecked, and slammed the local civic body, saying it appears powerless and seems to lack courage to remove them.

only two wheelers, bicycles or horses on roads which would be taken over by encroachers," the court observed.

The court made the remarks while hearing a plea filed by a school in suburban Powai raising concerns over alleged inaction on the part of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) against encroachments in the institute's vicinity. The bench questioned civic authorities as to how unauthorised structures could be erected on public roads while directing the deputy municipal commissioner concerned to remain present in the court Friday.

"It seems the BMC does not have the will, desire, courage or means to remove such encroachments. The bench was aghast to note the BMC had been sup-



plying drinking water and had also parked a temporary toilet facility van at the spot in Powai where encroachers had taken over the road.

"Isn't the BMC promoting encroachments like this? This is a grim situation. If you stop giving them water and toilet facilities they will move. But you have been giving to them (facilities) on a platter," the HC observed. The court stated that the BMC has to see the sit-

uation of roads across the financial capital. "Everywhere, roads are left with only one or two lanes and then there is traffic jams. Cars cannot move -- a person walks faster than such cars stuck in jams," it remarked. The court noted that people have limited time on this planet and each person's endeavour must be to keep the environment and the city in such a good condition that the next generation reaps its benefits. "Our next generation should not say we have been callous with our city," it said.

BMC advocate Dhruti Kapadia assured to the court to submit an affidavit giving a timeline by which the encroachments specified in the petition would be removed.

## international



**I'm not disappointed. Each of us has a full agenda. And one time the American defense minister is here, and one time not, so it's his decision and his duties he has to fulfill**

BORIS PISTORIUS | DEFENCE MINISTER, GERMANY

**UN TO LAUNCH RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS**

The UN peacekeeping mission in Democratic Republic of Congo will send reconnaissance flights to the eastern city of Uvira as part of preparations to help monitor a ceasefire between the government and the AFC/M23 rebel group, it said Thursday



of the day quote

It depends not only on Ukraine, but also on America, which must exert pressure - excuse me for saying so, but there is no other way - it must exert pressure on Russia

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

Today we are the most democratic country in the region, an achievement of both our society and our institutions and this standard must be preserved and advanced

ALBIN KURTI | PRIME MINISTER, KOSOVO

I say to all those protesters outside, go protest in front of the Iranian embassy or whichever embassy they have

ISAAC HERZOG | PRESIDENT, ISRAEL

**SHORT TAKES****Canada police identify shooting suspect**

**Ottawa:** The suspect in a deadly school shooting in western Canada was an 18-year-old woman with mental health issues who killed her mother and stepbrother before attacking her former school, police said Wednesday, but investigators did not offer a motive for one of the worst mass slayings in Canadian history. The killer, whom police identified as Jesse Van Rootselaar, died by suicide after the shooting Tuesday in Tumbler Ridge, a remote community of 2,400 people in the Pacific province of British Columbia. Police revised the death toll down to nine, including Van Rootselaar, from the initially reported 10.

**Russian air attack knocks out power**

**Kiev:** Russia pounded Ukraine with drones and ballistic missiles overnight Thursday, further battering its energy system and leaving tens of thousands in the capital Kyiv and the cities of Dnipro and Odesa without heat, power and water, officials said. Russia has intensified its winter campaign of strikes on Ukraine's power grid, plunging major cities into long periods of cold and darkness in freezing temperatures. In Kyiv alone, around 3,500 apartment buildings were without heating Thursday after the latest attack knocked out supplies to nearly 2,600 high-rises, on top of the 1,100 already affected by previous strikes, said Mayor Vitali Klitschko. More than 100,000 families were without electricity, according to private energy firm DTEK, which said one of its thermal power plants had been targeted but did not disclose the location.

**Khan complains about 'denial' of health services**

**Islamabad:** Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan is reportedly facing a loss of vision in his right eye and has complained about denial of health services in jail while showing satisfaction with the security and food being provided, it has emerged. Advocate Salman Safdar, who was appointed amicus curiae to visit Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, formally submitted to the Supreme Court Wednesday a report regarding incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Khan's living conditions amid concern from his party over his treatment. According to the report submitted to the court, Khan said that he has been complaining of decreased vision for the last three months "although his vision was completely fine until October."

Immigration raids have increased in the city of 403,000

**Early counts show close race in Bangladesh election after strong turnout**

REUTERS

**Dhaka, Feb 12:** The Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Islamist Jamaat-e-Islami were locked in a tight race Thursday, early counting showed, after tens of millions of Bangladeshis voted in a pivotal national election - the first since the 2024 Gen Z-driven uprising that toppled long-time premier Sheikh Hasina.

Analysts say a clear outcome is crucial for stability in the nation of 175 million, after months of deadly anti-Hasina protests disrupted everyday life and hit major industries, including the garment sector, the world's second-largest exporter.

It was the first national election to follow the recent under-30, Gen Z-led uprisings scattered around the world, with Nepal set to hold a vote next month.

Counting began at 4:30 pm at most booths, immediately after polls closed with clear trends

expected around midnight and results likely to be clear by Friday morning, Election Commission officials said.

**CONTEST BETWEEN FORMER ALLIES**

The race pits two coalitions led by former allies, BNP and Jamaat, with opinion polls giving the BNP a slight edge.

BNP was leading in 10 seats and Jamaat in seven of the nearly 20 seats for which early trends were available, local TV news stations said. Bangladesh's parliament, the Jatiya Sangsad, has 300 seats, with 151 required for a simple majority.

Turnout appeared on track to exceed the 42% recorded in the last election in 2024. Local media reported that more than 60% of registered voters were expected to have cast ballots.

Both prime ministerial candidates - the BNP's Tarique Rahman and Jamaat chief Shafiqur Rahman said they were confident of winning. The two men are not related.

"I am confident of winning the election. There is enthusiasm among the people about the vote," Tarique Rahman told reporters, while Jamaat's Shafiqur Rahman called the election a "turning point" for Bangladesh and said the people



were eager for change.

**HASINA CALLS VOTE A FARCE**

Hasina's Awami League is banned, and she remains in self-imposed exile in long-term ally India, opening the window for China to expand its influence in Bangladesh as Dhaka's ties with New Delhi fray.

Elections under Hasina were frequently marred by boycotts and intimidation, critics say.

In a statement sent to journalists on WhatsApp, Hasina denounced the election as a "carefully planned farce", held without her party and without real voter participation. She

said Awami League supporters had rejected the process.

"We demand the cancellation of this voterless, illegal, and unconstitutional election ... the removal of the suspension imposed on the activities of the Awami League; and the restoration of the people's voting rights through the arrangement of a free, fair, and inclusive election under a neutral caretaker government," she said.

Alongside the election, a referendum was held on a set of constitutional reforms, including establishing a neutral inter-

- First elections since 2024 protests ousted then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina
- The protests triggered months of unrest and hundreds were killed
- Polls give edge to the Bangladesh Nationalist Party
- The Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami is also showing strength
- There was also a national referendum on reforms to state institutions
- Hasina's political party banned from the election
- Results expected to be clear by Friday

im government for election periods, restructuring parliament into a bicameral legislature, increasing women's representation, strengthening judicial independence and a two-term limit for the prime minister.

More than 2,000 candidates - including many independents - were on the ballot, and at least 50 parties contested, a national record. Voting in one constituency was postponed after a candidate died.

**LONG LINES OF VOTERS, HEAVY SECURITY**

There were no reports of major violence. Around 958,000 personnel from the police, army and paramilitary forces were deployed throughout the country, the Election Commission said. Police and army personnel were stationed outside most polling booths.

"I am feeling excited because we are voting in a free manner after 17 years," Mohammed Jobair Hossain, 39, said as he waited in line. "Our votes will matter and have meaning."

Many voters echoed that sentiment, telling Reuters that the atmosphere felt freer and more festive than previous elections.

Kamal Chowdhury, 31, who works as a driver for a company in Dhaka and travelled to his hometown in the eastern district of Brahmanbaria to cast his vote, said: "It feels festive here."

Outside a polling booth in Dhaka where BNP chief Tarique Rahman and head of the interim government Muhammad Yunus voted, policemen were on horses with saddle blankets proclaiming: "Police are here, vote without fear."

**Seattle reaches \$29mn settlement with family of Indian grad student**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New York, Feb 12:** The family of an Indian student, killed in January 2023 when she was struck by a police vehicle in Seattle, has reached a \$29 million settlement with the city, according to a media report.

Jaahnavi Kandula, 23, was struck by a police vehicle driven by Seattle Police Officer Kevin in Dave as she was crossing a street January 23, 2023.

Dave was driving at 74 mph (more than 119 kmh) on the way to a report of a drug overdose call. Kandula was thrown 100 feet when she was struck by the speeding police patrol vehicle.

PubliCola web portal reported that the Seattle City Attorney's Office reached a settlement last week with Kandula's family.

"Jaahnavi Kandula's death was heartbreaking, and the city hopes this financial settlement brings some sense of closure to the Kandula family," city attorney Erika Evans said in the report.

"We also recognise that her loss has left unimaginable pain. Jaahnavi Kandula's life mattered. It mattered to her family, to her friends, and to our community," she added.

In September 2024, the family brought a lawsuit against the City of Seattle and Dave for \$110 million, as well as an additional \$11,000.

The settlement totals about \$29 million, and the \$11,000 amount, the report said.

**Russia fully blocks WhatsApp**

REUTERS

**Moscow, Feb 12:** US messenger app WhatsApp, owned by Meta Platforms, has been completely blocked in Russia for failing to comply with local law, the Kremlin said Thursday, suggesting Russians turn to a state-backed "national messenger" instead.

"Due to Meta's unwillingness to comply with Russian law, such a decision was indeed taken and implemented," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, proposing that Russians switch to MAX, Russia's state-owned messenger.

"MAX is an accessible alternative, a developing messenger, a national messenger, and it is available on the market for citizens as an alternative," said Peskov.

Critics say MAX is a surveillance tool. Russian authorities deny this.

The move against WhatsApp, Russia's most popular messenger, is the culmination of six months of pressure on the US company.

It reflects a wider push by the Russian authorities at a time of war to create and control a "sovereign" communications infrastructure in which foreign-owned tech companies submit to local laws or disappear.

Meta had already been designated as an extremist organisation inside Russia, and WhatsApp complained about what it said was an attempt to fully block its service.

"Trying to isolate over 100 million users from private and secure communication is a backwards step and can



- Moscow had warned WhatsApp over violations
- WhatsApp says it will try to keep users connected
- Russia promotes state-backed app MAX
- Mixed reaction from Russians in Moscow

only lead to less safety for people in Russia," it said in a statement.

Some domain names associated with WhatsApp disappeared from Russia's national register of domain names, meaning devices inside Russia stopped receiving its IP addresses from the app and could be accessed only by using a virtual private network (VPN).

**MIXED REACTION IN MOSCOW**

Activists in Moscow briefly hung a bike lock on the doors

of Roskomnadzor and put up a poster reading: "Give us an unregulated internet - Russia without Roskomnadzor."

There was a mixed reaction in the snowy Russian capital, with some people unfazed and others angry.

"Frankly I see this as negative because it's in part a violation of our constitutional rights because it's limiting freedom of choice," said a woman who gave her name as Anna.

Another, Elena, said she saw no problem as there were other messengers. A woman who gave her name as Alyona said she would try to use WhatsApp with a VPN for as long as possible before switching to MAX.

Russian authorities, who also block or restrict social media platforms such as Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, have been heavily pushing MAX.

Residents say fear in the Hispanic community is keeping people indoors. Some streets feel emptier, big birthday parties are less common and crowded backyard asadas are now rare.

Across the US, worries about immigration raids dominate daily conversations and force Hispanics to be cautious about where they go, speaking Spanish and being visible in their own neighborhoods.

At Mary Zuloaga's beauty salon in Aurora, a TV tuned to

Spanish-language network Univision was showing clips of Bad Bunny's show Tuesday as she reflected on its significance.

Born in Colombia, Zuloaga, who has been in the US since the early 1980s, said the Latino community had lived through similar moments of anxiety, notably under former President Ronald Reagan, and she saw how those fears negatively shaped collective behavior and identity.

She said the climate under Trump is worse than the 1980s, and she fears her language or appearance could trigger her arrest and detention despite being an American citizen.

**Bad Bunny's show offers cultural lifeline to besieged Hispanic community**

REUTERS

**Aurora, Colorado, Feb 12:** Puerto Rican superstar Bad Bunny's Super Bowl halftime show, which celebrated Latino culture in Spanish, offered an uplifting moment of cultural pride for many Hispanic residents in Aurora, Colorado, where daily life has been reshaped by fears of immigration raids and deportations.

The diverse Denver suburb has been in the crosshairs of US President Donald Trump. On the campaign trail and since returning to office, Trump has claimed the city has been taken over by Venezuelan gang members, an assertion local citizens and leaders dispute.

"The fear factor within the Hispanic community is definitely there - people with papers, people without papers. Many people are scared to come out of their houses, the morale of the community is super low," said William Herrera, a manager at Panaderia el Paisa, a popular bakery that is a neighborhood hub.

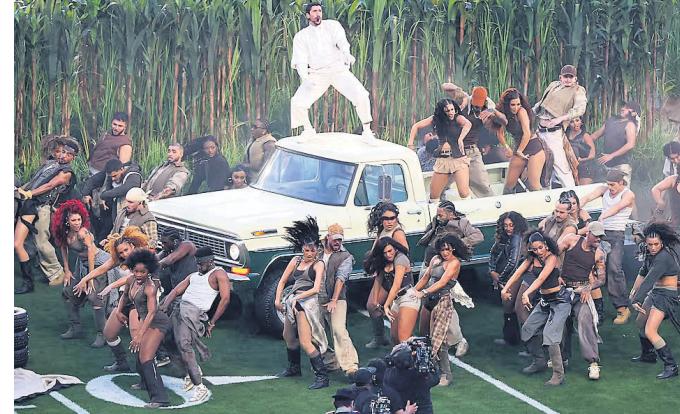
"That's why Bad Bunny's show was so beautiful. For

people, where Latinos comprise more than 31% of the population. Many Latinos living there, regardless of their immigration status, say they feel besieged, stigmatized and attacked.

In what feels like a dark time, a dozen Latino residents of Aurora said in interviews that Bad Bunny's performance - which Trump labeled "an affront to the Greatness of America" - felt less like simple entertainment and more like a cultural lifeline of recognition, a brief moment of visibility and pride.

"The fear factor within the Hispanic community is definitely there - people with papers, people without papers. Many people are scared to come out of their houses, the morale of the community is super low," said William Herrera, a manager at Panaderia el Paisa, a popular bakery that is a neighborhood hub.

"That's why Bad Bunny's show was so beautiful. For



him to represent Hispanics on the biggest stage in America at a time when all the racists are trying to push us down, for him to deliver the message that love

is stronger than hate, it filled me with pride," said Herrera.

"He gave courage to the entire community."

**HIGHLIGHTING JOY**

Residents say fear in the Hispanic community is keeping people indoors. Some streets feel emptier, big birthday parties are less common and crowded backyard asadas are now rare.

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# business

of the  
day quote

## CABIN CREW FATIGUE RULES

REUTERS

**Urban mobility** cannot be solved by a single company or a single product. It requires a combination of people, technologies, and capabilities working together to address real, on-ground challenges

ADITYA GOYAL | MD, BHAGO MOBILITY

**The slowdown** in housing sales over the past two years is largely due to a shrinking supply of homes priced below Rs 1 crore-a segment that has traditionally driven demand in tier-2 cities

SAMIR JASJAU | FOUNDER AND CEO, PROPEQUITY

**Financial literacy** among women is fundamental to India's long-term socio-economic progress. While urban centres have made meaningful advances, lakhs of women across Bharat, especially in Tier-2 and Tier-3 regions, remain underserved in terms of access to financial knowledge and tools

AVINASH SATWALKAR | PRESIDENT, FRANKLIN TEMPLETON

## Shares decline as AI fears push IT selloff

**IT index has declined 12.5% so far in 2026 after losing 12.6% last year**

REUTERS

**Mumbai, Feb 12:** Shares fell Thursday, with information technology shares hovering near a 10-month low, on concerns over artificial intelligence disruption while fading expectations of a near-term US rate cut also weighed.

Rapid advances in AI, triggered in part by Anthropic's latest automation push, have fuelled fears of AI-driven automation disrupting Indian IT's labour-intensive business model.

**Nifty fell 0.57% to 25,807.2**  
**Sensex shed 0.66% to 83,674.92**

**Twelve of the 16 sectors logged losses**

The IT index 5.5% on the day, the biggest decline in percentage terms among 16 sub-indexes. It has declined 12.5% so far in 2026 after losing 12.6% last year.

"There is no denying the fact that AI could effectively address the problems that Indian IT was solving collectively," said Tarun Singh, founder and managing director of Highbrow Securities, adding that AI shocks will have to be absorbed as Indian IT is a big outsourcing market. Stronger-than-expected January US jobs data, which dented near-term rate cut expectations, also weighed.

The tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite fell 0.2% overnight, with a sharp drop in software stocks from AI-led disruption, while hardware and chip stocks such as Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix pushed Asian shares to record highs.

On the day, the Nifty 50 fell 0.57% to 25,807.2 and the BSE Sensex shed 0.66% to 83,674.92. Twelve of the 16



In an evolving credit environment, investors increasingly seek predictable income with downside protection

AMIT JAIN | CHIEF EXECUTIVE, KOTAK ALTERNATE

## ADANI ENTERS NUCLEAR POWER SECTOR

India's Adani Power Thursday it has formed an atomic energy-focussed unit, becoming one of the first privately-held utilities to disclose publicly their interest in the newly-opened nuclear sector. Adani Atomic Energy Ltd. will generate, transmit and distribute electric power derived from nuclear energy sources, the company said



### UNFAIR BIZ PRACTICES

**Competition Comm slaps ₹27cr fine on tech major Intel Corp**



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 12:** The Competition Commission has imposed a fine of Rs 27.38 crore on Intel Corp for indulging in anti-competitive practices with respect to India-specific warranty policy for its boxed microprocessors.

The penalty has been imposed on the company for abusing its dominant position in the market for Boxed Micro Processors (BMPs) for desktops in India.

In a statement Thursday, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) said the India-specific warranty policy was discriminatory in comparison with Intel's warranty policies in China, Australia and the rest of the world.

The commission also found the policy to have limited the choice of consumers and parallel importers and thereby, causing an appreciable adverse effect on Indian consumers, it added.

The matter pertains to the provision that warranty requests for Intel Boxed Micro Processors in India would be entertained only when the same are purchased from an authorised Indian distributor of Intel.

Considering the fact that the India-specific warranty policy was in place for eight years, the regulator imposed the penalty, translating to 8 per cent of the average relevant turnover of Intel.

However, considering the mitigating factors, including the discontinuation of the aforesaid policy w.e.f. April 1, 2024, the Commission reduced the amount and imposed a penalty of Rs 27.38 crore on Intel, the statement said.

Further, CCI has directed Intel to widely publicise the withdrawal of the impugned India-specific warranty policy and submit a compliance report.

The watchdog started looking into the matter after a complaint filed by Matrix Info Systems Pvt Ltd regarding the company amending its warranty policy for India with effect from April 25, 2016.

As per this new policy, Intel would entertain warranty requests for Intel Boxed Micro Processors in India only when the same are purchased from an authorised Indian distributor of Intel, the statement said.

## Hindalco profit dips

**Mumbai:** Aditya Birla Group's metals arm Hindalco Industries Ltd on Thursday reported a 4.51 per cent decline in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to Rs 2,049 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2023.

The company had posted a consolidated PAT of Rs 3,735 crore in the year-ago period, Hindalco Industries Ltd said.

Revenue from operations during the October-December period rose to Rs 66,521 crore as compared to Rs 58,390 crore in the year-ago period. A \$28-billion metals powerhouse, Hindalco operates across the value chain, from bauxite mining, alumina refining, coal mining, captive power plants and aluminium smelting to downstream rolling, extrusions, and foils.

## CIL profit drops 16%

**New Delhi:** State-owned CIL Thursday reported a 15.8 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 7,157.45 crore in the quarter ended December 2023, amid lower sales and higher expenses. Coal India Ltd (CIL), which accounts for 80 per cent of domestic coal output, logged a consolidated net profit of Rs 8,505.57 crore in the year-ago period. In a filing to BSE, the Maharatna firm said that its sales dropped to Rs 30,818.17 crore from Rs 32,358.98 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal. The consolidated expenses of the company during the reporting third quarter increased to Rs 28,132 crore compared to Rs 27,280 crore in the year-ago period, CIL said.

"That indicates the industry is building a more self-sustaining, locally anchored capital base, reducing its reliance on foreign capital," according to the third edition of 'No Ifs About AIFs', a benchmarked assessment of India's AIF ecosystem by Oister Global and Crisil Limited.

Cumulative alternative in-

## Airlines group opposes India's scrutiny



**Airline association FIA warns rules could disrupt schedules**

**Draft rules exceed global norms, reduce competitiveness, FIA says**

**FIA seeks phased introduction, cites global standards**

**India regulator working to boost safety**

rules would "severely" limit long-term growth expansion and reduce the competitiveness of Indian airlines in the global market.

The letter was sent to India's Directorate General of Civil Aviation. The regulator and FIA, which also represents India's fourth-largest carrier SpiceJet, did not respond to Reuters' queries. There is no fixed timeline for implemen-

tation for the rules. IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet also did not respond.

### INDIAN NORMS VS GLOBAL

India's government said this month the aviation minister chaired a meeting with aviation officials where discussions centred around assessing safety at airfields, as well as strengthening regulatory oversight frameworks

## NEW CPI SERIES

## Retail inflation at 2.75%

CPI base year revised to 2024 from 2012 to reflect changes in consumption

REUTERS



**We do not expect the new inflation series to materially influence policy in the near term. An extended rate pause looks likely, underpinned by a cyclical upturn in both growth and inflation and improving confidence following the conclusion of the US-India trade negotiations**

MADHAVI ARORA | CHIEF ECONOMIST, EMKAY GLOBAL FINANCIAL SERVICES

### inflation returns to central bank's target band in January

Food inflation at 2.13%

year-on-year in January

Weight of food in price

index cut to about 37%

from 46%

### in 2026/27.

### SMALLER FOOD BASKET

A high weighting for food in the previous inflation data series had led to volatility in the key price gauge.

In 2024, supply shocks had prompted the government's economic adviser to suggest a review of the central bank's inflation targeting framework to exclude food.

However, former RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had said that food inflation could not be ignored due to its heavy weight in the consumption basket. A review of the central bank's inflation targeting framework is due next month.

For January, food price inflation stood at 2.13% year-on-year.

The government did not release comparable annual data for key components under the new series but data showed a sequential decline in food prices, with the cost of a broader basket of goods remaining broadly stable.

Prices of food items such as tomatoes rose 64.8% in January, while prices of gold and platinum jewellery spiked 46.8%.

Inflation may now be driven more by core components than food, making monetary policy focused on aggregate demand pressures rather than dealing with supply-induced inflation, India's Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran told reporters after the data was released.

### OTHER CHANGES

The revised consumer price index will expand major spending categories to 13 from six earlier and start tracking e-commerce and digital services, airfare, telecom plans and some online services after a nationwide survey showed Indians are spending more through online platforms.

The series will also collect data from streaming platforms such as Netflix and Amazon.com's Prime Video.

## LOAN RECOVERY TIGHTENING

## RBI mulls mandatory agent training, call recordings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 12:** The Reserve Bank Thursday came out with draft rules governing banks' engagement of loan recovery systems, mandating training for agents and also recordings of all calls. A bank must ensure that all phone calls made to a borrower by an agent are recorded, the RBI said, stressing that an agent interacts with a borrower in a "civil manner".

The proposed guidelines ask banks to put in place guidelines on the subject, and also ensure that customer information regarding the agents or employees is not misused.

"An employee/recovery agent shall interact with the borrower

in a civil manner. Further, he / she shall maintain decency and decorum during visits to the borrower's place for collection / recovery of loan dues," the RBI said.

The RBI is also mulling to make it compulsory for the recovery agents to undergo the 'debt recovery training' conducted by the Indian Institute of Banking and Finance (IIBF).

The draft follows an announcement to this effect made by Governor Sanjay Malhotra last week while announcing the monetary policy review. In the past, there have been instances including the death of the next of kin of a borrower during a visit by a loan recovery agent in Bihar, which had prompted the RBI to ask lenders to be more sensitive.



vestment fund (AIF) commitments across Categories I, II and III reached Rs 15.05 lakh crore as of September 2025, clocking a compound annual growth rate of 30.7 per cent between fiscal 2021 and the first half of fiscal 2026, it highlighted.

The report highlighted that there was a shift toward larger, quality deals as transactions above Rs 500 million accounted for 90 per cent of total deal value in fiscal 2025, reflecting investor preference

tributions, around 25 per cent returned full paid-in capital and top quartile funds made over 2 times distributions to paid-in capital or DPI.

The report highlighted that there was a shift toward larger, quality deals as transactions above Rs 500 million accounted for 90 per cent of total deal value in fiscal 2025, reflecting investor preference

"This reinforces private markets as a source of differentiated returns, not just leveraged market exposure," Singh added.

"An employee/recovery agent shall interact with the borrower

for scaled, governance-ready businesses.

Sandeep Singh, Co-CEO and co-founder, Oister Global, said, "Across seven benchmarking cycles through March 2025, unlisted equity AIFs generated an average alpha of about 8.69 per cent over the BSE Sensex Total Return Index".

"This reinforces private markets as a source of differentiated returns, not just leveraged market exposure," Singh added.

"An employee/recovery agent shall interact with the borrower

## T20 WORLD CUP

# Men in Blue outplay Namibia

**Ishan, Pandya, Chakravarthy lead India to record 93-run win**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: Sanju Samson disappointed again, Ishan Kishan dazzled and his mentor Hardik Pandya entertained but India's 93-run victory over Namibia here Thursday wasn't exactly the Box Office hit one expected ahead of a tense T20 World Cup face-off against Pakistan.

The victory felt less like an assurance and more like the calm before the cricketing tempest with Pakistan lying in wait. The margin of victory, India's highest in a T20 World Cup, won't depict the entire picture as little-known Namibian captain Gerhard Erasmus came out as a surprise package by taking 4 for 20 in India's final total of 209 for 9, despite Kishan's smashing 24-ball-61 and Pandya's 52 off 28 balls.

In reply, the Namibian batting unit did struggle against the kind of attack that they hardly get to play, as the innings ended on 116 in 18.2 overs.

Varun Chakravarthy (3/7 in 2 overs) and Pandya (2/21 in 4 overs) shared the bulk of the spoils and India now need just one more win in their next two games to qualify for the Super Eights. Why India's batting show, despite a 200-plus score, would be considered below par is because of the Namibian skipper. Erasmus' eerie side-arm action created considerable discomfort for the Indian batters, including Kishan, Pandya and Tilak Varma, as he also bowled from behind the crease at times.

The 24 deliveries that Erasmus bowled was certainly an eye opener for the Indian bat-



ters as to what they can expect from the Pakistani freak Usman Tariq, who would pose even more probing questions on a tackier Premadasa track in Colombo. When Namibia batted, they used the long handle to good effect but one always knew that it was just a matter of time before Chakravarthy and Axar Patel (2/20) come and demolish them in unison.

Earlier, Samson's three-sixes innings was akin to a short-lived Instagram reel but Kishan's batting was a gripping web series, full of drama, action and anticipation.

Kishan muscled five sixes and half a dozen boundaries for a 20-ball-50 that set the foundation for a marauding Hardik Pandya (52 off 28 balls) to take

## MOSCA BROTHERS LEAD ITALY TO HISTORIC WIN AGAINST NEPAL



Mumbai: Brothers Justin and Anthony Mosca produced a polished performance to script an upset of sorts as debutants Italy thrashed Nepal by 10 wickets to notch their maiden T20 World Cup win here Thursday. Justin struck an unbeaten 60 off 44 balls, while Anthony contributed 62 not out from 32 deliveries, the duo stitching together a match-winning 1-run partnership as Italy overhauled the opponents' score of 123 in just 12.4 overs. Earlier, Italy's spinners delivered a disciplined performance, maintaining tight lines and lengths to dismiss Nepal for 123 in 19.3 overs. Their bowlers, especially spinners Ben Manenti (2/9) and Crishan Kalugamage (3/18), applied the brakes effectively, playing a key role in strangling the opposition.

the team to a total that looked beyond the reach of this Namib-

ian batting line-up. However, Erasmus gave a

fantastic account of himself and would certainly keep Pakistan's lethal weapon Tariq interested come Sunday. During the back-10, India's MVP Pandya took charge as his four sixes and four boundaries kept the momentum going, with Shivam Dube (23 off 16 balls) giving him good support in a 81 run stand off just 6.3 overs.

**Brief scores:**

**India:** 209/9 in 20 overs (Ishan Kishan 61, Hardik Pandya 52; Gerhard Erasmus 4/20) beat **Namibia:** 116 all out in 18.2 overs (Louren Steenkamp 29; Varun Chakravarthy 3/7) by 93 runs



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

## SL trounce Oman by 105 runs

**Pallekele:** Sri Lanka outclassed Oman by 105 runs to register their second successive victory in the T20 World Cup here Thursday. In a Group B match, Oman were limited to 120 for nine, chasing an imposing 226.

Mohammad Nadeem (53 not out) and Wasim Ali (27) fought for Oman, but the target was way beyond their reach. For Sri Lanka, Dushmantha Chameera and Maheesh Theekshana took two wickets each. Earlier, skipper Dasun Shanaka, Pavan Ratnayake and Kusal Mendis powered their way to fifties as Sri Lanka posted a mammoth 225 for five. Mendis (61 off 45 balls), Shanaka (50 off 20 balls) and Ratnayake (60 off 28 balls) toyed with Oman's bowling.



New Delhi, Feb 12: World champion silver medallist Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar beat teammate Niraj Kumar to clinch gold with a world record, as India swept the podium in the 50m rifle 3-positions event on the penultimate day of the Asian Championship here Thursday.

Aishwary, who signed off 2025 on a high by clinching Asian Championship gold in Kazakhstan along with silver medals at the World Championships and the World Cup Finals, carried that momentum into the new year. He fired a world record score of 362 to edge Niraj by a margin of just 0.2 points.

The 25-year-old sealed his triumph with a superb 10.7 on his final shot, finishing with a tally of 362.

Niraj settled for silver with 361.8, while Akhil Sheoran claimed bronze with a score of 343.5 at the Karni Singh Shooting Range.

It was a bittersweet moment for Niraj, who came agonisingly close to gold but had to settle for silver, even as he celebrated his first individual international medal.

The contest went down to the 35th and final shot, underscor-

ing just how tight the battle for the top spot had been.

Niraj fired first to hit a 10.3 giving Aishwary a target of 10.6 to win the gold.

Olympian Aishwary held his nerve and hit a superb 10.7 to leap over Niraj and secure the gold.

Earlier, Niraj had topped the qualification round with a score of 593, while Aishwary finished second with 588 and Sheoran placed third with an identical score of 588.

The trio of Niraj, Aishwary and Sheoran totalled 1769 to clinch the team gold, followed by Japan (1754) and Kazakhstan (1748) respectively.

In the junior men's final, Adriyan Karmakar secured his second gold medal of the championship with a comfortable victory, shooting a score of 353.2, which was 4.7 more than silver medalist Dmitry Kim of Kazakhstan.

India's Manvendra Singh Shekhwat won bronze with a final score of 338.6.

The third Indian in the final, Hemant Burman finished in fifth place going down in a shoot-off.

The championship will conclude Saturday with the medals in women's 50m rifle prone and men's 25m centre-fire pistol to be decided.

## I-League rebranded as Indian Football League

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: I-League, the country's second-tier football league, has officially been rebranded as the Indian Football League, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said Thursday.

Ten teams have already confirmed participation in the truncated season of the I-League 2025-26 starting February 21.

"The All India Football Federation's Executive Committee, in an online meeting on Thursday, approved the rebranding of the I-League to the Indian Football League from the 2025-26 season," AIFF posted on its official X account.

"The committee further ratified the charter for the Governing Council of the Indian Super League and the Indian Football League," the apex body added in the post. The decision was first taken at a meeting of club representatives and officials of the AIFF last month.

"The hosts pushed forward in the final quarter, earning their third penalty corner. However, Argentina managed to find the back of the net against the run of play with Domene (60') adding a fourth goal to his tally, and giving his side a big win.

"The hosts pushed forward in the final quarter, earning their third penalty corner. However, Argentina managed to find the back of the net against the run of play with Domene (60') adding a fourth goal to his tally, and giving his side a big win.

## Argentina humiliate India 8-0



side, Argentina continued to pile on the pressure. Domene (20') tripled the lead with a composed finish, and Mendez (22') soon added a fourth.

Ignacio Ibarra (25') rifled his shot from a tight angle to score a fifth, while Domene (26') completed his hat-trick soon after.

Nicolas della Torre (30') also got on the scoresheet, closing out the first half with a 7-0 lead for Argentina.

India created some opportunities with Shilanand and Aditya Lalage coming close to finding the back of the net. However, Tomas Santiago stood tall in the goal for Argentina. Despite creating scoring opportunities, the third quarter ended goalless.

Argentina scored almost instantly with Ruiz (14') powering his tomahawk into the back of the net to give his side the lead. The visitors quickly doubled their advantage as Domene (15') managed to guide his effort past Suraj Karkera to give his side a 2-0 lead in the opening quarter.

With momentum on their

gentle goalkeeper.

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Searching for a way back into the contest, India began the second quarter with greater urgency as Shilanand Lakra and Harmanpreet Singh earned a couple of penalty corners.

However, they were unable to convert, with a goal continuing to elude them.

With momentum on their

## WINTER OLYMPICS MILANO CORTINA

# War dead helmet: Ukrainian Heraskevych kicked out

*The helmet honoured the late athletes and coaches who died in the Russia-Ukraine war*

REUTERS

**Cortina D'ampezzo, Feb 12:** Ukraine's Vladyslav Heraskevych was disqualified from the skeleton competition at the Winter Games Thursday over his "helmet of remembrance" depicting athletes killed since Russia's invasion despite a personal appeal from the IOC president.

The draw left them in 17th place, only three points above third-from-bottom West Ham United. "It is very frustrating to dominate a game like that, with so many chances and there were plenty of good chances but it's finding that killer moment," Dyche said.

Phil Foden then found Erling Haaland who dispatched a shot for his 22nd league goal of the campaign to confirm City's 17th successive Premier League win against Fulham, the longest run

venue.

The IOC, however, later said that Heraskevych was allowed to keep his credentials and stay at the Milano Cortina Games after President Kirsty Coventry asked its Disciplinary Commission to "reconsider the withdrawal" of the athlete's accreditation.

Heraskevych's team said they would appeal the decision at the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

**COVENTRY MEETS HERASKEVYCH**

Coventry arrived in the early morning near the start gate and met Heraskevych before the competition was due to start at the sliding

**I am disqualified from the race. I will not get my Olympic moment. They (Ukrainian athletes) were killed, but their voice is so loud that the IOC is afraid of them**

VLADYSLAV HERASKEVYCH



She choked up with tears when telling reporters she was unable to broker a solution.

"I thought it was really important to come here and talk to him face-to-face," she said after the meeting that lasted about 10 minutes. "No one, especially me, is disagreeing with the messaging, it's a powerful message, it's a message of remembrance, of memory."

The IOC had suggested compromises including wearing a black armband or showing the helmet before and after racing.

"Sadly we've not been able to find that solution. I really wanted to see him race. It's been an emotional morning," Coventry said.

"It's literally

about the rules and the regulations and that in this case ... we have to be able to keep a safe environment for everyone and, sadly, that just means no messaging is allowed."

**UKRAINE PLANS PROTEST**

Ukraine's Olympic Committee said it was planning some sort of protest but would not boycott the Games.

"We will correct this mistake through legal channels. Vladyslav, you acted with dignity. This story will definitely continue. We stand with you," Ukraine Youth and Sports Minister Matvii Bidnyi wrote on X.

Ukrainian team members were seen in tears and hugging each other after the decision.

Heraskevych's father and coach Mikhailo Geraskevych sat on a dirty snowbank, his face buried in his hands.