



Embarking on a New Journey

for
Accelerated Development
of Skill and Industry

Odisha Extends a Warm
Welcome
to
His Excellency

Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam
President, Republic of Singapore

Signing of significant MoUs

towards Samruddha Odisha@2036 for Viksit Bharat@2047

Skilling for the Future: Advancing the Skill Landscape in Odisha
(Skill Development & Technical Education Department, Govt. of Odisha and ITE Education Services, Singapore)

Skill Development in Semiconductor Sector
(Skill Development & Technical Education Department, Govt. of Odisha and ITE Education Services, Singapore)

New Energy
(Energy Department, Govt. of Odisha & IIT Bhubaneswar and Nanyang Technological University, Singapore)

Green Hydrogen Corridor
Industrial Promotion & Investment Corporation of Odisha (IPICOL) and Sembcorp, Singapore

Industrial Parks
Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) and Sembcorp, Singapore

Odisha Petro Chemical and Petroleum Investment Region (PCPIR)
Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) and Surbana Jurong, Singapore

Development of New City
Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) and Surbana Jurong, Singapore

Strengthening Odisha's FinTech Ecosystem
Electronics & IT Department, Odisha and Global Finance & Technology Network (GFTN), Singapore





DiCAPRIO TO DONATE \$1MN FOR LA FIRE RELIEF EFFORTS

Hollywood actor-producer Leonardo DiCaprio is donating \$1 million to help Los Angeles recover from the devastating wildfires. The Oscar winner announced on his Instagram Stories Wednesday, January 15 that he is donating \$1 million toward relief efforts, reports people.com.

VERGARA, HAMILTON STIR ROMANCE RUMOURS

Actress Sofia Vergara seems to be racing down the track, and perhaps drifting towards a new romance as she has been linked to F1 champion Lewis Hamilton. With this, a hot new Hollywood couple could be in the marking, reports 'Mirror.co.uk'.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You will want to catch up with old friends that you have been neglecting for some time. The stars suggest that you will enjoy yourself. Your excitement will brighten up your activities. Your frankness and honesty are what set you apart from others, says Ganesha.

TAURUS
This day you will tend to be too bossy, too harsh on your subordinates or employees and end up making them miserable as well as hostile. Their insubordination could corrode the respect you get and, in addition, make things unworkable. This acrimony and ill will is sure to spread and foul up your larger professional connections and interests. Ganesha urges you to be particularly sane and sensible. Conduct yourself as you would normally do.

GEMINI
You will try to think up creative ways to perform your daily routine to get a break from the boredom and the rut of your daily schedule. You need to mingle more with people and practice some humility. Guests will come visiting at your home.

CANCER
The day looks set to be so good that you may end up inviting jealousy and envy from people around you. The stars are favourable for matters pertaining to heart. In short, a great day for boosting love and relationships. Fantastic opportunities may come your way, if you have been looking to woo a sweetheart, whispers Ganesha.

LEO
It is an important day for you. Everyone in the office will accept your capabilities and will praise you. You may incur expenses on entertainment and luxuries. Your financial difficulties will now be solved. It is better to have an eye on long term gains. A progressive day on the whole, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
Today will be a pleasant day full of surprises and unforeseen changes. You may go for a long drive with your beloved. The trip will be very interesting and will calm your frayed nerves. All in all, Ganesha says, it is an optimistic and happy day, so go ahead and get the best out of it.

LIBRA
Ganesha says today you will use your mental competency to complete all your work on time. You may not give complete attention to your family as you will be spending time in the office or at work. Your extraordinary intelligence will be showcased at work today.

SCORPIO
You are one social butterfly today. However, shunning the gossips, you spread kindness and happiness in your social groups. People will look up to you today for this reason. What goes around, comes around; spread joy and you are sure to receive joy, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
It's time for some entertainment. Movies, picnics and dining out is on your mind. Invite your beloved and enjoy quality time with each other. Also, you will spend time with you family and friends, and attend a music concert together.

CAPRICORN
Though you leave no stone unturned to identify the opportunities coming your way, you need to keep your guards on whenever you are a part of a legal matter. Financially, you're likely to bear some heavy losses, and if you're a dealer or a broker, the chances of suffering from them are even higher. Take some precautionary measures well in advance, advises Ganesha.

AQUARIUS
You wish to have more than twenty-four hours in a day! You are determined to finish off your pending work but somehow you will find it extremely difficult to get the load off your shoulders. You will try everything; from canceling your vacations to postponing your dates, but nothing will seem enough, feels Ganesha.

PISCES
Ganesha feels that you will sympathize with people today. This will help you get people's good wishes. You can prove to be a good boss, co worker, husband or wife and son or daughter. Ganesha advises you to carry on with these virtues.

Sam reflects on embracing imperfection



MUMBAI: Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu, also known Sam to her fans, recently talked about accepting shortcomings in life. *The Family Man* actress Thursday shared a reel on Instagram, revealing her approach to letting go of strict resolutions while still pursuing her goals. Recently recovered from chikungunya, Sam was seen relaxing in bed, followed by clips of her working out in a gym. Sporting a green athleisure outfit, the actress demonstrated exercises with dumbbells and kettlebells.

Known for her authenticity, the *Khushi* actress reflected on embracing imperfection, writing, "Two weeks into the new year and your resolutions are already slipping? Same here! It has happened so many times." She added, "But hey, a few bad days won't mean we're out. Sometimes we rest, sometimes we push—that's just how it goes." She encouraged her fans to take it one small step at a time.

In the coming weeks, Samantha plans to share simple workout rituals that have made a difference in her life. Alongside the reel, set to the song *Zoo* by Eluzai, she wrote, "We got this," inspiring fans who praised her candidness and resilience.

On the work front, Samantha is set to star in Raj & DK's *Rakt Bramhand - The Bloody Kingdom*, alongside Aditya Roy Kapoor and others.

AGENCIES

MANANA'S ANNUAL DRAMA FESTIVAL: DAY IV



Artistes of Nayeeka, a theatre troupe from Balasore, presented Odia play *Laxman Rekha* at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Thursday. Written by Pradip Bhowmick, the play was directed by Susmita Rana-Pattanaik. PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

MUMBAI: Indian actress Priyanka Chopra has said that her heart is "so heavy" after the devastation the Los Angeles wildfires has caused and shared that she is deeply grateful for her family's safety.

Priyanka took to her Instagram, where she posted a string of pictures of the destruction caused by the wildfires. She wrote: "I (heart emoji) you LA. My heart is so heavy. While I'm deeply grateful for my family's safety, so many of our friends, colleagues, and fellow Angelenos have lost so much. These fires have displaced countless families and devastated entire communities, leaving an overwhelming need for rebuilding and support."

The actress added: "To the firefighters, first responders, and volunteers risking everything—you are true heroes."

"Over the past week, I've come across countless GoFundMe pages and organisations working tirelessly to provide relief. If you're able, please consider donating to those who have lost everything or supporting organizations like @cafirefound, @baby2baby, @americanredcross and so many more making a difference on the ground. Every contribution, no matter the size, truly helps. I'll keep adding pages as I come across them. Link in my bio for more details."

Fierce wildfires across the Los Angeles area have killed at least 25 people, destroyed more than 12,300 structures and scorched more than 40,600 acres. IANS

PRIYANKA'S poignant note on LA inferno



AJIT's multilingual theatre fest to celebrate silver jubilee year

BHUBANESWAR: Abhinaya Jagruti Institute of Theatre (AJIT), one of the prominent theatre troupes of the state, will organise a four-day drama festival, Ajit Natya Mahotsav, to celebrate its 25th foundation day. The event will be held here at Rabindra Mandap from January 20.

Speaking to media, troupe's president Maya Das said, "Over the past 25 years, AJIT has been steadfast in promoting Odisha's rich art and culture, driven by the visionary leadership of our founder, Ajit Das, who directed over 100 plays and organised 12 national festivals."

As per the schedule, three plays and a seminar will be held during the celebration.

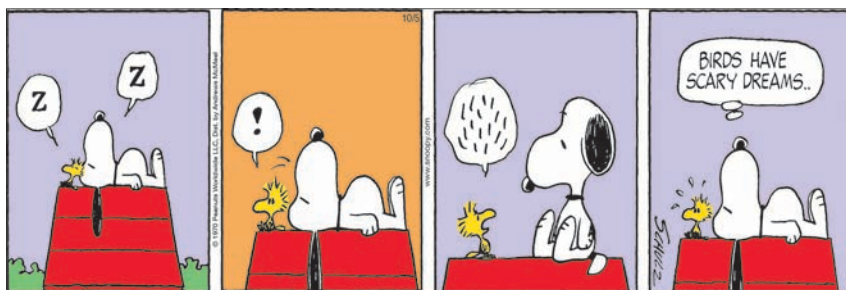


On the first day, the host troupe will stage the famous play *Tata Niranjana*. The play is written by Akademi award-winning playwright late Bijoy Mishra and

directed by late Ajit Das. On the second day, the Bangalore centre of the National School of Drama will present *Shivaratri*, directed by Veena Sharma. The third day will feature *Bitarkita Aparahna*, a play

by CAN-MASS from Paradip. The drama is directed by Sriman N. Mishra. The final day of the event will have a seminar honouring Ajit Das' remarkable 50-year journey in theatre, celebrating his contributions to the field and his legacy in the world of performing arts. PNN

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

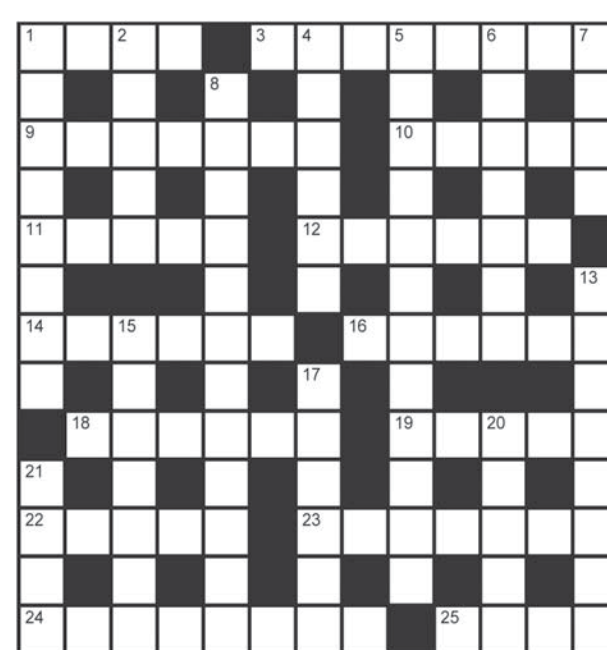


BREVITY



FUN POST

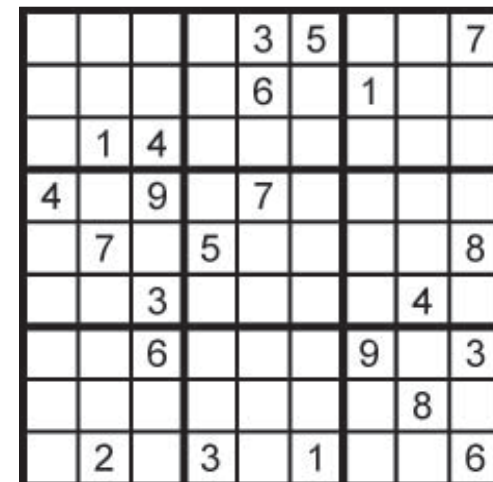
CROSSWORD



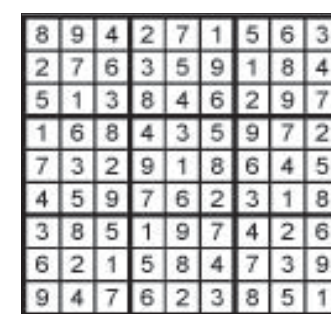
- Across**
- 1 Type of signal
 - 3 Jonathan Swift, for one
 - 9 African wild swine
 - 10 Perch
 - 11 Faithful
 - 12 Firenze native
 - 14 Make secret
 - 16 Move up
 - 18 Rap session?
 - 19 Creator of Nora Helmer
 - 22 Loathe
 - 23 *La Dolce Vita* director
 - 24 Industrial city in England's Midlands
 - 25 Just say no
 - 5 Like some sweets
 - 6 Set apart
 - 7 Ballet attire
 - 8 Large houseplant
 - 13 Pick out of a line-up
 - 15 *The Seagull* dramatist
 - 17 Young cow
 - 20 Snail trail
 - 21 Bath powder, briefly
- Down**
- 1 Confuse
 - 2 Mist
 - 4 Dark-green to black glassy mineral

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Space ambitions soar

Union Cabinet approves setting up of a third launch pad at Sriharikota to send heavier spacecraft in orbit

NATIONAL | P7

Fight for credit

Joe Biden and Donald Trump claim credit for Israel and Hamas agreeing to a ceasefire deal in Gaza

INTERNATIONAL | P8

Boost to transactions

RBI announces norms for use of ₹ to settle cross border transactions

BUSINESS | P9

Shuttlers shine

PV Sindhu progresses to the quarterfinals, while Kiran George delivers a gritty performance at the India Open

SPORTS | BACK PAGE

SAIF STABBED AT MUMBAI HOME

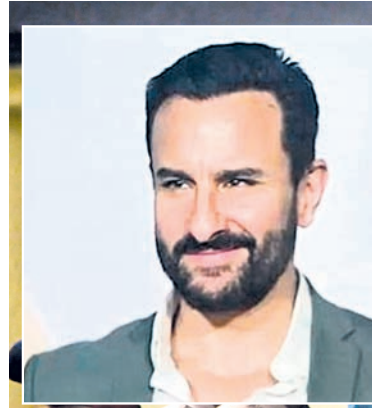
AGENCIES

Mumbai, Jan 16: Hindi movie star Saif Ali Khan was repeatedly stabbed by an intruder in his high-rise apartment in upscale Bandra early Thursday and rushed to hospital with the blade still lodged in his spine, an audacious attack that raises intriguing questions about security and celebrity life in the financial and showbiz hub.

The 54-year-old, who received six stab injuries, including in his neck, was out of danger following an emergency surgery at the Lilavati Hospital, where he was taken after the attack outside his younger son Jeh's room around 2.30am.

The entire family was at home in the 12th-floor apartment along with their five house helps. In a statement to the police, Jeh's nanny Eliyama Philip, who first encountered the armed attacker, said he asked for ₹1 crore. The intruder did not force his entry or break in to the actor's flat but possibly sneaked in at some point during the night with the intention of robbery, police officials said. The attacker made his escape through the stairs.

Recounting the horrific events of the night, Philip said she was sleeping on the floor in Jeh's



UNSAFE MUMBAI: Kareena Kapoor Khan (L), Sara Ali Khan and Ibrahim at the Lilavati Hospital. (Insets) A file photo of Saif Ali Khan and (bottom) a video grab of the alleged assailant

room and woke up around 2am when she heard a sound and saw a man move towards the sleeping child. Panicked, she rushed to pick him up and was pushed away by the man, armed with a wooden stick and a long blade. Another nanny was also sleep-

ing in the same room. "I sat up to see who was in the bathroom... I saw a thin and short man come out and go towards Jeh's bed," Philip said in the statement that forms the basis of the police FIR on the incident. The man,

she said, pointed a finger at her and warned her 'Koi awaz nahin (don't make any noise).' "In the scuffle, he attacked me with the blade. I got injured on my wrist. I asked him what he wants. He said he needs ₹1 crore," Philip, who has been

working with the star couple for four years, said in her statement. Hearing her scream, Khan and Kareena rushed out of their room. The intruder, who Philip said was between 35-40 years old, then attacked Khan with a knife. During the commotion, another

house help also rushed out to raise an alarm. The intruder then ran away. CCTV footage showed the alleged assailant, wearing a red scarf and carrying a backpack, scurrying down the stairs from the sixth floor of the Satguru Sharan building.

NEP: Panel to prepare curriculum framework

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: The Odisha government Thursday constituted a committee to develop the State Curriculum Framework under the ambit of National Education Policy, 2020 (NEP-2020) and in alignment with the National Curriculum Framework with local contextualisation.

Under the chairmanship of Nityananda Pradhan, retired principal of Regional Institute of Education (RIE) in Bhopal, the State Steering Committee will have former NCERT director Hrushikesh Senapati, retired associate professor Gopal Prasad Mohapatra, retired Utkal University Psychology professor Udaynath Dash, retired educationist Kishore Chandra Mohanty and Ravenshaw University professor Sudarshan Mishra as its members, according to a notification of the School and Mass Education (S&ME) department.

Other members include NIE, NCERT professors Ranjana Arora and Suniti Sanwal, RIE-Bhubaneswar principal PC Agarwal, NCTC programme chief consultant Binay Pattnayak, Language and Learning Foundation's Mahendra Kumar Mishra and NDWCTE-Bhubaneswar principal Gayatri Mohanty.

Hindenburg shuts shop

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI: Hindenburg Research, which made international waves with campaigns targeting billionaire Gautam Adani that wiped billions from market value of his group companies, will disband, its founder Nate Anderson announced. Announcement by Anderson, 40, who started Hindenburg in 2017, came just days before Donald Trump's inauguration as the new President of the US. While he cited the toll of the rather intense, and at times, all encompassing nature of the work as the reason for his decision, critics were quick to link the shutting down Hindenburg's alleged ties with George Soros and the so-called deep state being under significant pressure from the incoming Trump administration.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Armed police to guard Similipal

Balasore/Baripada: Armed police forces are being deployed to assist Forest personnel in patrolling poaching-prone areas of Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) spread over Mayurbhanj and Balasore districts. The decision was taken after the Forest department suspected that a melanistic tiger was killed in November last year in the STR, the world's only habitat, where an estimated 13 black-striped cats remain. "A total of 10 people have been arrested in connection with the death of a melanistic tiger. The poachers have admitted that they killed a one-and-half-year-old tiger," STR field director Prakash Chand Gogineni said. P3

Cabinet okays 8th Pay Commission formation

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 16: The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Thursday approved setting up of the 8th Pay Commission to revise salaries of nearly 50 lakh Central government employees and allowances of 65 lakh pensioners.

"The Prime Minister has approved formation of 8th Pay Commission for Central government employees. The chairman and two members of the commission will be appointed soon," I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told reporters here. Seven pay commissions have been constituted since 1947. The 7th Pay Commission was formed in 2014 and its recommendations were implemented January 1, 2016. Its term will end in 2026.

"Setting up of the 8th Pay Commission in 2025 will ensure that its recommendations are received well before the completion of the term of the 7th Pay Commission," Vaishnaw said.

Later in the day, the PM said that the government's decision to constitute the 8th Pay Commission will boost consumption and improve the quality of life.

- **Setting up of the 8th Pay Commission in 2025 will ensure that its recommendations are received well before the completion of the term of the 7th Pay Commission**
- **Term of the 7th Pay Commission, constituted in 2014 and whose recommendations were implemented January 1, 2016, will end in 2026**
- **Nearly 50 lakh Central government employees and 65 lakh pensioners will benefit from the government's move**

He said on X, "We are all proud of the efforts of all government employees, who work to build a Viksit Bharat. The Cabinet's decision on the 8th Pay Commission will improve quality of life and give a boost to consumption."

Pay commissions hold extensive consultations with Central and state governments and other stakeholders before giving recommendations to the government. The pay commis-

sion has a key role in deciding salary structures, benefits and allowances for government employees. Most of the state-owned organisations follow the commission's recommendations.

Sources said the government's move will benefit nearly 50 lakh Central government employees and 65 lakh pensioners.

In Delhi alone, about four lakh employees will benefit from the recommendations of the panel. Delhi is going to Assembly polls February 5, 2025.

The 7th Pay Commission saw an expenditure increase of ₹1 lakh crore for fiscal 2016-17.

Usually, every 10 years, the Central government constitutes a pay commission to revise the remuneration of its employees. The pay commission also recommends the formula for the revision of dearness allowance and dearness relief for Central government employees and pensioners with a view to compensating them for inflation.

Several state governments also revise the remuneration of their employees on the lines of the pay commission recommendations.

India's feat in space docking

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Jan 16: In a major boost to India's ambitious future space missions, ISRO Thursday successfully performed the docking of satellites as part of the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) and announced that post docking, control of two satellites as a single object was also achieved.

"India docked its name in space history! Good Morning India. ISRO's SpaDeX mission accomplishes historic docking success. Proud to witness this moment!" ISRO said in a post on 'X'.

With the successful docking of satellites - Chaser and Target, India has become the fourth country after the US, Russia and China to accomplish the technological feat.

In space, docking technology is essential when multiple

rocket launches are required to achieve common mission objectives. The docking experiment is crucial for the smooth conduct of the country's ambitious future missions, including Chandrayaan-4, setting up of a space station and landing an astronaut on the Moon.

Last October, the government announced that India will have its own Space Station by 2035, known as the 'Bharatiya Antriksh Station'.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a post on 'X' greeted the scientists for the achievement. He said, "Congratulations to our scientists at @isro and the entire space fraternity for the successful demonstration of space docking of satellites. It is a significant stepping stone for India's ambitious space missions in the years to come." Hailing ISRO, Union Minis-

ter of State for Science, Technology and Space, Jitendra Singh, said, "Congrats #ISRO. Finally made it. SPADEX has accomplished the unbelievable... docking complete... and it is all indigenous 'Bharatiya Docking System'." He said this success paves the way for the smooth conduct of ambitious future missions, including the 'Bharatiya Antriksh Station' and Chandrayaan-4. ISRO Chairman V Narayanan too congratulated the team which made the mission successful.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge also greeted ISRO for achieving the feat.

"We are extremely proud of the exceptional work of the scientists and space engineers at @isro as they successfully achieved the satellite docking as part of the SpaDeX Mission," Kharge said in a post on 'X'.

12 Naxalites gunned down

BIJAPUR: As many as 12 Naxalites were killed in a fierce encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district Thursday, a senior police official said. The gunfight broke out at around 9am in a forest of south Bijapur when a joint team of security personnel was out an anti-Naxalite operation

and the intermittent exchange of fire lasted till late in the evening, he said.

Personnel belonging to the state police's District Reserve Guard (DRG) from three districts, five battalions of CoBRA and the 229th battalion of CRPF were involved in the operation, he said.

Let's get off the plane like grown-ups

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 16: The chaos of deplaning is spiralling out of control. Travellers are increasingly ignoring unwritten etiquette, leading to frustration among passengers. Some push past others despite arriving early, while others slowly gather their belongings, holding up the entire row. Though airlines have improved boarding processes, deplaning remains a free-for-all with little regulation.

Satish Kumar, a frequent traveller, recalls a Bangalore flight where a woman, in her 40s, attempted to shove through passengers to exit first. When Kumar's girlfriend

suggested waiting for the front rows to go, the woman responded that no rules required it. And she was right.

Kumar, 32, believes common courtesy is clear - deplane in row order, letting the row ahead go first. Following this can ease tensions and make travel smoother for everyone.

The challenge of exiting an airplane efficiently continues to frustrate travellers. A primary issue is the increase in carry-on luggage, which leads to congestion in the aisles. Airlines have responded by installing larger overhead bins and monitoring baggage policies more strictly.

Smita Deshmukh, a frequent flyer from Mumbai, recalls a



time when deplaning took just five-six minutes. With lower checked baggage fees then, carry-on bags were less common. Now, Deshmukh exits immediately when the seatbelt sign goes off but only allows others to pass her once before

holding her position to keep order. "Sometimes I've got to enforce courtesy," she said.

Airlines offer no universal guidelines for connection times, forcing some passengers to rush between flights. A member of All India Cabin Crew Association, who wished not to be named, said, "Flying is a group project. And kindness makes deplaning faster."

Naresh Gupta from Jaipur sympathises with stressed travellers and lets them pass when possible. However, he notes how selfish behaviour can slow things down.

Some airlines have introduced row-by-row deplaning to reduce aisle chaos.

Flight attendant Nisha

Thakur advises those with tight connections to politely ask for help, instead of demanding it.

Satish Naik, a systems administrator, has researched some boarding methods. He proposes alternating rows starting with window seats in the back—reversing this for deplaning would allow more passengers to access their luggage simultaneously.

Naik, however, takes a more relaxed approach. "I usually wait until the plane is almost completely empty, preferring not to fight the crowd."

In the end, cooperation and courtesy are vital to making the deplaning process smoother for everyone.

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	27.4°	25.2°
Min Temp	15.4°	14.5°
Humidity	75%	79%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST
Shallow Fog

Singapore President to visit Odisha today

Eight MoUs are expected to be signed between Odisha and Singapore, particularly for the semiconductor industry in the state



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam will arrive in Capital Friday for a two-day visit, marking his government's interest in fostering projects and collaborations in Odisha.

The visit, scheduled for January 17 to 18, is significant as Singapore is the first country partner of the Utkarsh Odisha-Make in Odisha (MIO) Conclave 2025, the state's flagship biennial investors' meet January 28-29.

Tharman, on a state visit to India from January 14-18 at the invitation of President Droupadi Murmu, is the first Singaporean President to visit India in 10 years and his first trip as President. The visit also celebrates 60 years of diplomatic ties between India and Singapore.

During his stay in Odisha, Tharman will meet Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who will host an official dinner. The two leaders are expected to discuss economic strategies and explore mutual opportunities.

The Singaporean President will tour Bharat Biotech's vaccine manufacturing facility and visit the World Skills Centre, supported by Singapore's Institute of Technical Education Services (ITEES) and funded by the Asian Development Bank. He will also visit the Sun Temple in Konark, showcasing Odisha's rich cultural heritage.

Tharman will be accompanied by Jane Ittogi Shanmugaratnam and a high-level delegation, including Transport Minister Chee Hong Tat, Senior Minister Sim Ann, Members of

Parliament, and business representatives. The delegation aims to explore collaborations in skills development, green energy, and petrochemicals.

Eight MoUs are expected to be signed that are aimed at extending cooperation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to further enhance the skill development ecosystem, particularly for the semiconductor industry in the state.

The Commissionerate Police has imposed traffic restrictions in the Capital city from 10:50am January 17 to 6pm January 18 for security and public safety during the President's visit.

Newborn's body found abandoned near Paikanagar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: Stray dogs were seen carrying the lifeless body of a newborn male child near Paikanagar Canal Road within the Nayapalli police station limits, late Wednesday night.

Injury marks were found on the lower limbs and abdomen of the body following recovery, suggesting it had been mauled by the dogs.

IIC Nayapalli police station Satyaranjan Pradhan said the newborn's parents have not yet been identified. It is suspected that they abandoned the newborn near the canal after which dogs picked the body. "We have registered a case of unnatural death. CCTV footage in the area is being scanned to identify the person/s who dumped the body," he added.

Pradhan said late Wednesday night locals in Paikanagar noticed street dogs howling persistently near the canal. Upon inquiry, they discovered a few dogs carrying a newborn's motionless body. They immediately chased away the strays and alerted the police, as well as ambulance, for help, Pradhan added.

Apollo Hospitals to offer liver transplant surgery



RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: With an aim to provide world-class liver care to patients in Odisha and eliminating the need for long-distance travel for liver transplantation, Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar officially launched its comprehensive Liver Transplant Programme here Thursday.

Chief operating officer and medical services director at Apollo Hospitals Alok Srivastava, at a press conference here, emphasised the importance of this new initiative and stated, "Liver transplant surgery requires exceptional expertise and meticulous management. At Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar, we are committed to providing our patients with

the best possible care. This programme represents a significant advancement in liver care for the region, and we are excited to offer these services to our community."

Joining on the occasion, HPB surgery and liver transplantation head and senior consultant at Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, New Delhi, Neerav Goyal said, "The Liver Transplant Programme at Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar, is designed to provide comprehensive care for patients with liver diseases. Our multidisciplinary team works together to ensure that each patient receives individual care, tailored to their specific needs. We also offer advanced laparoscopic GI onco surgery, bringing cutting-edge techniques to our patients."

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	77042.82 ↑ 318.74
NIFTY	23311.80 ↑ 98.60
DOLLAR	86.66 ↑ 0.16
EURO	89.14 ↓ 0.02
GOLD	₹79,121 ↑ ₹411
SILVER	₹92,906 ↑ ₹50

CLASSIFIED ACCOMMODATION

Free accommodation for senior citizens and mentally ill person & Drug addicted person with all facilities. Contact- 9337160036, 7325991853, 9439928693.

LOST

I, Mamuni Behera, W/o Debaraj Behera, R/o Khandiabandha, Nr. Kartika Mandap, PO - Gopinathpur, Dist. - Puri, do hereby declare that 2 nos. of original sale deed bearing No. 11482001036 & 11482001051 which link to my sale deed No. 11482400096 have lost on 02.01.2025 at Nr. Gundicha Temple, Puri, which is beyond recovery. I shall not be liable if some misuse the same after getting. Contact - 9090456678

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit No.-110, Dt.- 15.01.25 before the Court of Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar, I, Prabhatnolini Sahu, D.O.B-15.01.1966, W/o Prabhat Kumar Sahu, at Plot No-12, Bapujinagar, P.S.- Capital, Bhubaneswar- 751009, Dist.- Khorda have changed my name from Prabhat Nalini Sahoo to Prabhatnolini Sahu. Henceforth I shall be known as Prabhatnolini Sahu in all purposes.

By virtue of an affidavit before Notary Public, Bhubaneswar No.1549, Dt.15.01.2025, I/Saroj Kumar Kuanar, S/O Babaji Chandra Kuanar, At: Marahatta Sahi, P.O. Choudwar, Dist: Cuttack, Odisha, declare that my father's actual and correct name is BABAJI CHANDRA KUANAR but it has been wrongly mentioned BABAJI CHARAN KUANAR in my Aadhaar Card. I declared that BABAJI CHANDRA KUANAR and BABAJI CHARAN KUANAR is one and same person.

SVNIRTAR, OTR sign MoU to advance prosthetics research

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: The Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research (SVNIRTAR) and Odisha University of Technology and Research (OUTR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Thursday, marking a significant collaboration aimed at advancing research in prosthetics and orthotic devices.

The partnership will focus on cutting-edge research, clinical studies, and innovations in prosthetic limbs and orthotics. The event was attended by OTR vice-chancellor Bibhuti Bhusan Biswal, along with key officials including dean of Academics Achyutananda Acharya, dean of Faculty and

Planning PK Parida, and dean of the School of Mechanical Sciences SK Pradhan.

The MoU creates a framework for the joint use of specialized laboratories, libraries, and academic resources, expanding research opportunities for scholars, faculty, and students. The collaboration also includes plans to host workshops, seminars, and conferences to encourage academic excellence and interdisciplinary cooperation.

The agreement was signed by SVNIRTAR director Patitapaban Mohanty and OTR registrar Renuprava Nayak. This strategic alliance aims to accelerate advancements in prosthetics and orthotics, contributing to the future of human rehabilitation.



Workshop on action plan '25 for DDU-GKY 2.0 launched



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: A two-day regional workshop aimed at preparing the Action Plan 2025 for implementing Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) 2.0 and RSETI was inaugurated Thursday by Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water, Minister Rabi Narayan Naik.

The event, jointly organised by the Union Ministry of Rural Development and ORMAS under Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department, brought together participants from 11 states.

In his inaugural address, Minister Naik emphasised the importance of rural skill development and employment generation. He called for great

er commitment to replicating the scheme's past success in the second phase to empower rural youth and strengthen the state's socio-economic fabric. "With focused efforts, the scheme can maximize its impact on poverty alleviation by ensuring benefits reach grassroots levels," he said.

The workshop featured insights from key officials, including Union Ministry joint secretary Pankaj Yadav, state Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department Commissioner-cum-Secretary Girish SN, and Skill Development programme director Santosh Kumar Tiwari. Discussions revolved around programme strategies, implementation challenges, and solutions.

ORMAS CEO, Guha Poo-

nam Tapas Kumar, delivered the welcome speech, while additional CEO Subash Chandra Das proposed the vote of thanks. Senior officers and advisors from the Union Ministry and State Rural Livelihood Missions of Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, and Tripura participated in the workshop.

Various sessions outlined the structure of DDU-GKY 2.0, focusing on ensuring its successful execution and addressing potential challenges. Officials reiterated the government's commitment to providing skill development training to rural youth, building on Odisha's achievements under the programme's first phase.

BJD meets OBC panel, demands caste census

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: Several organisations, including Opposition BJD, Thursday submitted memoranda to the parliamentary committee on welfare of other backward classes (OBCs) demanding a caste-based census in India for proper wellbeing of the community.

The organisations met committee chairperson Ganesh Singh here.

The BJD delegation, which was led by senior leaders and former ministers, presented a comprehensive memorandum requesting the committee to recommend a caste census and include the socially and educationally backward classes (SEBC) of Odisha in the national OBC list.

The BJD delegation stressed on the need for a caste census to bridge the data gap in understanding the socio-economic status of various caste groups across the country.

They pointed out that absence of detailed caste-related data from the socio-economic and caste census (SECC) 2011 has hampered the formulation of targeted policies that could address the specific needs of marginalised communities.

The delegation said a caste census would provide invaluable data on household structures, income sources, educational attainment, and employment status across different caste groups, which is essential for informed policymaking and equitable resource allocation.

ECoR achieves 200 MT freight loading in just 290 days

Highest ever freight loading by any zone surpassing previous records

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has shattered all previous records by achieving an unprecedented freight loading milestone of 200.13 million tonne in a remarkably swift 290 days during the 2024-25 fiscal, an official statement said Thursday.

This marks the highest-ever freight loading by any zone in the history of Indian Railways, reinforcing ECoR's leadership in freight transportation and operational excellence, it said.

The ECoR reached this landmark January 15, 2025, surpassing its own record set in the



previous fiscal year (2023-24) when it took 295 days to cross 200 million tonne.

This year's feat was accomplished 15 days ahead of last year's pace and comes on the back of a strong performance in previous years, where it took 366 days (2019-20), 360 days

(2020-21), 320 days (2021-22), and 310 days (2022-23) to achieve similar milestones, the ECoR said.

During this period, ECoR has unloaded a record of 183.5 million tonne of freight, further highlighting its remarkable performance in freight han-

The feat was accomplished 15 days ahead of last year's pace and comes on the back of a strong performance in previous years, where it took 366 days (2019-20), 360 days (2020-21), 320 days (2021-22), and 310 days (2022-23) to achieve similar milestones

dling. Over the period, ECoR handled a total of 200.13 million tonne, up by 1.6 per cent from 196.77 million tonne in the previous fiscal year. The zone's performance in freight handling remains robust, and it continues to be a crucial enabler of economic growth.

The major commodities

loaded by ECoR included coal (119.637 MT), raw materials for steel plants (7.67 MT), pig iron and finished steel (15.991 MT), iron ore (24.426 MT), cement (0.88 MT), food grain (2.226 MT), fertiliser (5.477MT), mineral oil (2.317 MT), freight in container (4.372 MT) and other goods (17.159 MT).

This apart, the ECoR has al-

so seen an increase in revenue generation, earning ₹20,288.041 crore, which represents a 1.28 per cent growth compared to the previous fiscal year.

"The achievement of 200 million tonne within a span of 290 days is a direct result of meticulous planning, excellent coordination with industries and government entities, and the tireless efforts of its workforce," a senior official said.

ECoR general manager Parmeshwar Funkwal has embraced a culture of efficiency, positive thinking, and strategic foresight, making the zone a model of excellence within the Indian Railways network, he said.

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LIFE SAVING SKILLS

Girl students being taught martial arts for self defence during a special training programme conducted by Higher Secondary Education department at Suraj Mahal Saha Higher Secondary School in Puri Thursday



NABA DAS MURDER

Write to CM for CBI probe, Law Minister tells Dipali



the matter, she now wanted to know from the CM the state government's position.

Senior BJP MLA and former leader of Opposition, Jayanarayan Mishra, said he has been demanding a CBI probe since the day of Das' murder.

"However, Das' family members then remained silent and did not say a word on the Crime Branch investigation. The BJP government will certainly help the family if they lodge a formal complaint," Mishra said.

Asked whether Majhi would call the Das family for a discussion, as suggested by Dipali Wednesday, Mishra said, "There is no point in the CM calling the family. If they have any grievance, the family members may directly go to the CM. If they want, I will facilitate their meeting with the CM."

Senior Congress leader and former legislator Santosh Singh Saluja also said he and his party had earlier demanded either a CBI investigation or a judicial probe into Das' murder. However, neither the then government nor Das' family supported the Congress's demand, he claimed.

"In the last Assembly session, two BJP legislators raised the issue and a section of the media and social media are questioning why I am not demanding a CBI probe. As a daughter, I am hurt by such allegations. My question to the Mohan Majhi government is, will it conduct a CBI probe? Fingers are being pointed at our family—will the government stand with us?" Dipali said Wednesday.

Stating that the CM is the final authority to decide on the next course of action by the government, Law Minister Pritiviraj Harichandan said when the BJP was in Opposition, it had raised questions about the probe being carried out by the Crime Branch

the BJP was in Opposition, it had raised questions about the probe being carried out by the Crime Branch of Odisha Police.

"However, the then BJD government went ahead with the Crime Branch probe, notwithstanding BJP's demand," he added.

As BJP MLAs raised the issue of her father's murder in the last Assembly session and demanded a CBI inquiry into

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: A day after slain former minister Naba Das' daughter Dipali Das sought to know the Mohan Charan Majhi government's stand on a CBI probe into her father's murder by a policeman in Jharsuguda January 29, 2023, Law Minister Pritiviraj Harichandan Thursday advised Dipali to write to the Chief Minister requesting a CBI probe into the incident.

"Expressing concerns in the media is not a formal complaint. Instead, she should submit a written petition to ensure a proper course of action. If she (Dipali) and her family have any objection to the investigation conducted by the previous government, they should come forward and write to the government. The CM will then consider the matter," Harichandan said.

Stating that the Chief Minister is the final authority to decide on the next course of action by the government, the Law Minister added that when



CURTAINS DOWN: The evening sky lights up with a dazzling display of fireworks on the concluding day of Adivasi Mela at IDCO Exhibition Ground in Bhubaneswar Thursday. As per reports, the 12-day long fair generated business worth ₹9 crore

ARMED POLICE TO GUARD SIMILIPAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasure/Baripada, Jan 16: Armed police forces are being deployed to assist forest personnel in patrolling poaching-prone areas of Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) spread over Mayurbhanj and Balasure districts, officials said Thursday.

The decision was taken after the state Forest department suspected that a melanistic tiger was killed in November last year in the STR, the world's only habitat, where an estimated 13 black-striped cats remain.

Police had January 12 arrested four people in Mayurbhanj district after the skin and nail of a tiger was seized from their possession.

Earlier, six others were also apprehended in Balasure dis-



trict after claws of the same tiger were recovered from their possession.

"A total of 10 people have been arrested in connection with the death of a melanistic tiger. The poachers have admitted that they killed a one-and-half-year-old tiger," STR field director Prakash Chand Gogineni said.

The police are making elaborate arrangements to assist forest officials in checking the

wildlife poaching in Similipal and adjacent areas, he said.

"Two platoons (1 platoon comprises 30 personnel) of armed police force are being provided to forest officials for conducting joint patrolling and flag marches in sensitive villages near Similipal Tiger Reserve to counter poaching," Mayurbhanj SP Varun Guntupalli told reporters at Baripada.

At a press conference in Balasure, Police Eastern Range DIG

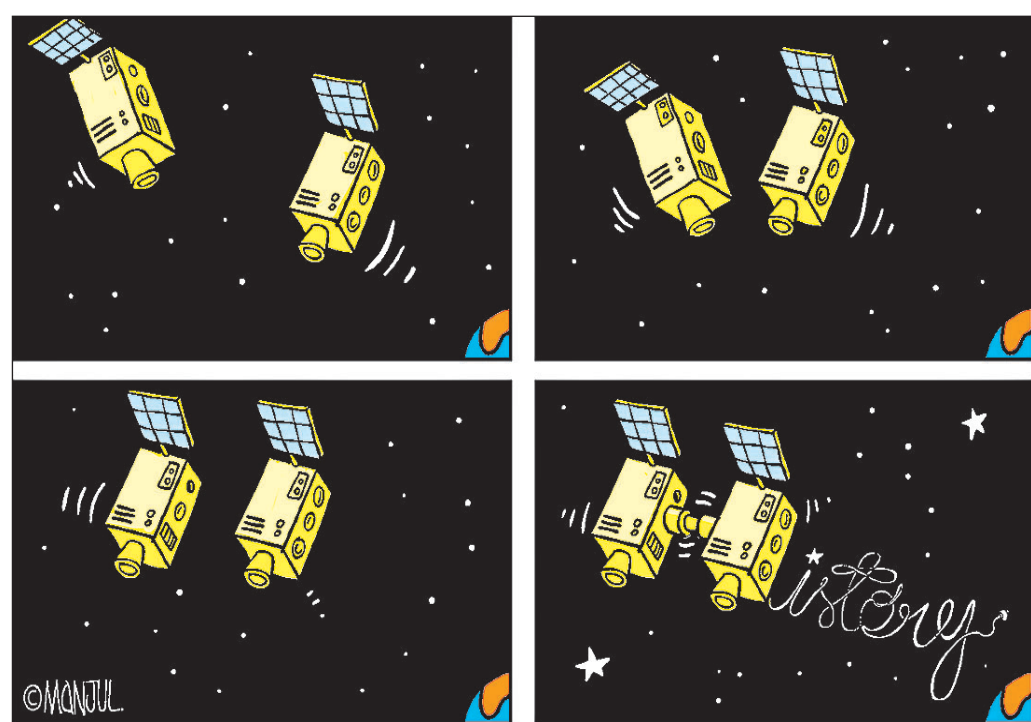
Satyajit Nayak Thursday said that armed police forces have been trained to assist forest personnel in patrolling and flag marches in the reserved areas.

"Specially trained armed police forces will assist the forest personnel in Balasure and Mayurbhanj forest divisions to protect wildlife," Nayak said.

Around 40 police personnel in Mayurbhanj and 50 in Bagudi range of Balasure have been given armed training for this purpose.

The DIG said that modern IT tools and technologies are being deployed to prevent wildlife crimes and in more than 180 locations, modern AI and infrared cameras have been installed to detect poachers and those who are involved in wildlife crime.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



2 killed as car falls into pond in Konark

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: Two persons were killed and as many others sustained severe injuries after their car fell into a pond near Konark in Puri district, police said Thursday.

The deceased were identified as Sanatan Senapati of Balasure district and Sandeep Mohapatra of Puri district.

According to the police, the speeding car overturned and fell into a roadside pond at Bainshi Bazaar near Junei Square after the driver lost control of the vehicle.

Sandeep was driving the car while Sanatan was

sitting in the front seat.

Two other persons, Manish Senapati and Papun Parida, were in the rear seat of the car when the accident took place, an officer of the Konark police station said.

After hearing a sound, locals rushed to the spot, rescued the passengers and sent them to the nearby Gop Hospital, where Sanatan and Sandeep were declared dead, he said.

The deceased were wearing seat belts and they were unable to get out of the car immediately after it fell into the pond.



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Parle Biscuits fined ₹14.4L for misleading ad



POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, Jan 16: The Additional District Magistrate (ADM) of Khurda has imposed a fine of ₹14.4 lakh on Parle Biscuits Private Limited for printing misleading information on packets of 'sugar free' biscuits in violation of the provisions under the Food Safety and Standards Act (FSSAI), 2006.

The order came recently in response to a complaint by a Food Safety Officer (FSO) from East Coast Railway (ECOR), Khurda Road Division, alleging false claims regarding the sale of food products. Under Section 68 of the FSSAI, the ADM directed the concerned parties to deposit the fine amount within one month of receiving the notice.

The penalties include ₹3 lakh on Bhagabati Food Private Limited, ₹3 lakh on the franchise operators, ₹1 lakh for a distributor in Jatni, and ₹20,000 on a salesman operating stalls on platform number 6 and 7 at Khurda Road railway station. The salesman, licensed under ECOR, was found responsible for selling improperly labeled products.

The ADM instructed the parties to ensure compliance by making necessary amendments to product labeling, addressing discrepancies such as misleading 'sugar-free' claims. Failure to comply with the directives and deposit the fines within the stipulated period may result in further legal action, the ADM said.

Based on received information, FSOs, in coordination with the enforcement team, inspected stall number 5 at platform number 6 and 7. The inspection was conducted under the FSSAI, 2006, to verify product quality. During the inspection, a packet of biscuits from Parle company was found with an improperly labeled declaration that appeared suspicious. The packet displayed unclear information, sources said. The product label indicated it was sugar free, with four sealed packets weighing 327.6 gram each.

On May 30, 2023, the Bhubaneswar food laboratory issued a report which confirmed that the product was mislabeled and violated Section 3.1(j) of the Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018. Subsequently, the food safety officer filed a complaint with the ADM's court against the vendor. Based on the evidence, the court delivered its verdict.

PMLA court frames charges in Rose Valley scam

EARLIER IN 2016, ED HAD FILED A PROSECUTION COMPLAINT (CHARGESHEET) AGAINST GAUTAM KUNDU AND SHIBAMOY DUTTA, PROMOTERS OF THE ROSE VALLEY GROUP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: The special court under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) here has framed charges against individuals and entities involved in the multi-state Rose Valley chit fund scam, informed the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Bhubaneswar Zonal office in a press release Thursday.

As per the press statement, the agency had earlier attached moveable properties worth ₹332 crore in 2014 and 2015 through provisional attachment orders in this case. The value of the attached properties is currently at over ₹400 Crore, which includes the interest as well.

"A prosecution complaint was filed in 2016 against Gautam Kundu and Shibamoy Dutta, promoters of the Rose

Valley Group. On 15.01.2025, the Special Court framed charges against the accused paving the way for restoring the attached properties to legitimate claimants, with the court's approval. This marks an important milestone in delivering justice and protecting the rights of defrauded investors," informed the ED.

The case against Rose Valley Group was also being investigated in the Kolkata Zonal Office, Guwahati Zonal Office and Agartala Sub Zonal Offices of ED. In Kolkata Zone, in one case ₹12.36 Crore, along with accrued interest totaling ₹19.40 Crore, has already been handed over to the Asset Disposal Committee (ADC) formed by Calcutta High Court and has been further resituated to the victims.

Further properties worth ₹1,172.68 crores of the ponzi firm, including ₹147.64 crore in



movable assets and immovable assets valued at ₹1,025.04 crore have also been attached by ED Kolkata and are in the process of restitution. The value of immovable property, with a deed value exceeding ₹1,000 crore at the time of purchase, is likely

to be worth much more today. Similarly, in Guwahati, assets worth ₹38.30 Crore have been secured, while in Agartala, immovable properties worth ₹8.01 Crore have been attached. ED is expediting the framing of charges in these cases and is

working in close coordination with the one-man Asset Disposal Committee for expedited monetisation and restitution of these assets to the rightful claimants and victims of the fraud.

Notably, the special court (PMLA) in Bhubaneswar has also framed charges in 9 other cases since September 2024. These cases relate to bribery scandals, extortion, chit-fund scams, builder investor disputes, bank frauds, narcotics trade and illegal wildlife trade.

The total value of confirmed properties attached in these cases stands at approximately ₹160 crore as of date. It is also important to mention here that ED, Bhubaneswar Zonal office has filed 75 prosecution complaints (chargesheets) at the special court (PMLA) to date.

FOCUS POLITICS

DEATH OF AN ALLIANCE



The INDIA bloc is almost dead, only the last rites need to be performed, most likely once the high stakes Delhi Assembly elections are done and dusted

“A grand alliance against a Modi-led BJP is desirable but I am not sure it is feasible,” said a senior INDIA bloc leader in June 2023.

Those cautionary words from a veteran politician have proven to be prophetic. Just over 18 months after a disparate gathering of leaders came together in the summer heat of Patna to forge an unlikely anti-BJP grouping, the alliance has quickly unraveled. The INDIA bloc is almost dead, only the last rites need to be performed, most likely once the high stakes Delhi Assembly elections are done and dusted.



Rajdeep Sardesai

OPPOSITIONAL POLITICS CANNOT SURVIVE ON SHORT-FIX PRESCRIPTIONS DEVOID OF ANY IDEOLOGICAL MOORINGS

After all, as a political start-up, the AAP rose on the debris of the Congress in Delhi. It was Arvind Kejriwal's India Against Corruption campaign in 2011 that enfeebled the Manmohan Singh government and created an anti-establishment mood for BJP to capitalise upon in 2014 general elections. It was Kejriwal who humbled a three-time Congress CM, Sheila Dikshit, in 2013, eventually forming a government in Delhi for first time with outside support from Congress. A grand old party surrendering primacy to a political newbie, the decline of the Congress in the national capital was rapid. The party hasn't won a single seat in Delhi in a decade since.

Which is why it is no surprise that the Delhi Congress has chosen to now chart its own path. A fraught history leaves its inescapable scars behind. What is surprising though is just how there has been so little effort from either side to even try and find common ground. Instead, we are witnessing a spiraling war of words that can only provide more comfort to the BJP. Ironically, it was as recently as September 2024 when Rahul Gandhi had reportedly green flagged an alliance with AAP for the Haryana Assembly elections. However, the state Congress, supremely confident of winning the elections, sabotaged alliance overtures. Now, with the Congress having lost the Haryana and Maharash-

tra elections, the party is in no position to call the shots. This time, it is Kejriwal's turn to play 'ekla chalo re' politics, the AAP even going to the extent of asking for the Congress to be 'thrown out' of the INDIA bloc. Without the Congress, the only pan-Indian party within the alliance, there is no force large enough to act as a magnet to settle internal contradictions.

In hindsight, individual egos and ambitions are at such cross-purposes that it is astonishing that an INDIA alliance was even attempted in the first instance. Nitish Kumar, the original proponent of the alliance was also the first to opt out, his hope of being made the convenor of the grouping being vetoed by his peers. Mamata Banerjee, who has never forgiven the Congress for tying up with the Left in Bengal, will not play second fiddle to a Rahul Gandhi, someone she views as decidedly a political junior. And the Congress leadership, a section of which was carried away by its 99 LS seats and remains oblivious to ground realities, still sees itself as a natural party of power. Sharad Pawar, the one leader who might have played the role of coalition-builder, is now 84 and after the Maharashtra defeat and the break-up of his party, doesn't have the political heft left to mend differences within.

But there is a lesson in the collapse of the INDIA that goes beyond its stakeholders. In the

last decade, the rise of Modi has created the spectre of the country being pushed towards a single party, single leader 'elected autocracy'. It is the fear of being totally marginalised that brought the Opposition together. But this grouping had little in common beyond visceral anti-Modism. Just like the Janata Party experiment in the 1970s was kickstarted by a desire to get rid of Indira Gandhi at all costs, the INDIA alliance emerged out of an obsessive Modi fixation. However, oppositional politics cannot survive on short-fix prescriptions devoid of any ideological moorings. The Janata Party lasted just over two years, the INDIA bloc has had an even shorter innings. At least, the Janata Party had the towering persona of Jayaprakash Narayan to guide it for a while; the INDIA bloc hasn't had the enlightened leadership nor even a common minimum agenda to shape its trajectory.

The alliance's demise would suggest that the BJP is back to where it was at the start of 2024, a dominant force that will simply bulldoze any opposition to its ascendancy. For democratic-spirited citizens, a divided Opposition must be of grave concern, especially given the tendency of the Modi government to use institutional power to constantly push its opponents on the defensive. The 2024 general elections had opened a small window of hope that politics would now see a more level playing field contestation between the NDA and its political rivals within and outside Parliament. The rapid implosion of the INDIA bloc implies a possible return to a more bruising politics where a domineering government will be tempted to flex its muscles once again in crushing all dissenting voices. An 'Opposition Mukh Bharat' is not what India needs.

The writer is a senior journalist and author. His latest book is 2024: The Election That Surprised India.



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THE MOTHER

Search For Answer

The COVID-19 pandemic killed an estimated 7.1 million people worldwide, causing global life expectancy to decline by 1.6 years between 2019 and 2021. It disrupted economies, destroyed livelihoods, and strained social cohesion in many countries. Yet no one has been held accountable for it. Will US President-elect Donald Trump change that? Five years after the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19), we still do not know where the pathogen first arose. Did it emerge naturally in the wet markets of Wuhan, China, or did it escape from the nearby Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), where studies into bat coronaviruses were underway?

We do know that China's government allowed what might have been a local outbreak to morph into a global health crisis. After the first COVID-19 cases were reported in Wuhan, Chinese President Xi Jinping's regime censored reports about the disease and hid evidence of human-to-human transmission for weeks. Meanwhile, travel to and from Wuhan was allowed to continue unhindered.

Unlike the Muslim gulag in Xinjiang province or naval-base construction in the South China Sea, however, Chinese authorities could not conceal the "novel coronavirus" for long, nor could the rest of the world ignore it once the secret was out. So many people contracted COVID-19 so quickly that many hospitals were soon overwhelmed, leaving many victims to be treated in tents.

China's government then shifted from concealment to damage control. State media reframed the crisis in Wuhan as a story of successful recovery, while touting unrealistically low mortality rates. Meanwhile, Xi thwarted international efforts to initiate an independent forensic inquiry into COVID-19's genesis, which he claimed would amount to "origin-tracing terrorism." The only "investigation" he allowed was a 2021 joint study with the World Health Organization that China controlled and steered.

While Trump, who was president for the first few months of the pandemic, often highlighted the link between China and COVID-19, his successor, Joe Biden, effectively let China off the hook. Less than a week after his inauguration, Biden produced a presidential memorandum urging federal agencies to avoid mentioning the virus' geographic origins.

Biden's goal was to stem a rise in bullying, harassment, and hate crimes against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The toxicity of America's partisan politics meant that pushing back against racism - which Trump and his cohort often stoked - also meant shutting down any discussion of China's role in causing the crisis. Social-media platforms, mainstream media, and some prominent US scientists (who hid their conflicts of interest) also aided the suppression of debate about COVID-19. The partisan divide over whether to investigate China's responsibility for COVID-19 persists to this day. Just last month, Democrats challenged a 520-page report - produced by the Republican-controlled US House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic - which concluded, after a two-year investigation, that the virus likely escaped from the WIV, faulting the report's methodology. So, while some US government agencies - including the Department of Energy and the FBI - have given credence to the lab-leak theory, there remains no consensus in Washington.

Failure to get to the bottom of where COVID-19 originated may not only allow China to evade responsibility; it will also weaken the world's ability to prevent another global pandemic. But there is reason to hope that the incoming Trump administration will revive the search for an answer. Beyond Trump's own willingness to point the finger at China, some of his cabinet picks - notably, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., as Secretary of Health and Human Services and Jay Bhattacharya as director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) - challenged prevailing narratives about COVID-19 (albeit sometimes in dangerous ways).

An effective investigation will require considerable transparency from the US. The NIH, the US government's medical-research agency, was funding studies on bat coronaviruses at the WIV as far back as 2014. The NIH knew that the work was risky; it was being done in China precisely because the US has stricter rules governing "gain-of-function" research, which involves modifying a biological agent's genetic structure to confer on it "new or enhanced activity," such as increasing a pathogen's transmissibility or virulence. The NIH continued to fund research at the WIV even after multiple State Department cables flagged the lab's lax safety standards, stopping only after the pandemic began (when it also removed the description of gain-of-function research from its website).

Making matters worse, we now know that the WIV has been carrying out classified research on behalf of the Chinese military since at least 2017. A 2021 State Department fact sheet acknowledged that some US funding for civilian research could have been diverted to secret Chinese military projects at the institute. One rule of thumb in forensic investigations is to "follow the money," so the Trump administration should start by disclosing the full extent of US funding of coronavirus research in China. But investigators will also have to "follow the data," meaning that the US will have to disclose the results of the research it funded in Wuhan, which was part of a collaborative US-China scientific programme.

Holding China accountable for its role in the pandemic is only the first step. To safeguard humanity's future, the Trump administration will also have to address a more fundamental issue: dangerous "gain-of-function" research is still taking place in some labs in China, Russia, and the West. The genetic enhancement of pathogens represents the greatest existential threat to humankind ever produced by science, even greater than nuclear weapons. By tightening rules on such activities - or, ideally, prohibiting lab research that could unleash a pandemic - Trump would leave an important positive legacy.

The writer is Professor Emeritus of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research and Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin.

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Brahma Chellaney

FAILURE TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF WHERE COVID-19 ORIGINATED MAY NOT ONLY ALLOW CHINA TO EVADE RESPONSIBILITY; IT WILL ALSO WEAKEN THE WORLD'S ABILITY TO PREVENT ANOTHER GLOBAL PANDEMIC

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

The myth of declining poverty

A common method used to estimate poverty in India is based on the income or consumption levels and if the income or consumption falls below a given minimum level, then the household is said to be Below the Poverty Line (BPL). India has not estimated poverty since 2011-12. The Planning Commission which was calculating poverty based on calorie intake derived from the monthly per capita consumption expenditure (MPCE) data of NSSO has been dismantled. Niti Aayog, which replaced the commission, calculates poverty sporadically based on data from the National Household Family Survey.

Meanwhile, using the latest annual Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) data for August 2023-July 2024, SBI, in a report, claimed a significant decline in headline poverty ratio in rural areas to 4.86% in 2023-24 from 7.2% in 2022-23. Similarly, the poverty ratio in urban areas fell to 4.09% from 4.6% during the same period. Overall, the poverty rates in India could now be in the range of 4-4.5% with almost minimal existence of extreme poverty, the report said. The report estimated the monthly poverty lines

in 2023-24 at Rs 1,632 (Rs 54.40 a day) for rural areas and Rs 1,944 (Rs 64.80 a day) for urban areas by adjusting for decadal inflation and the imputation factor in the poverty line set by the Suresh Tendulkar Committee in 2011-12. Earlier in 2011-12, an expert group headed by Tendulkar had estimated the poverty line at Rs 26 a day for rural areas and Rs 32 a day for urban areas. According to the committee, in India, 25.7% was BPL in rural areas whereas it was 13.7% in urban areas. As a whole, 21.9% were BPL in 2011-12.

However, updating poverty by taking inflation into account instead of change in cost of living of different periods is a flawed method. Further, the inflation measured through price deflator does not take into account hidden inflation. The rising cost of health, education and lifestyle expenses are not reflected in inflation.

Pronab Sen, former chief statistician of India, said that poverty lines are usually estimated by basing them on certain developmental norms, which keeps on improving as time progresses. Simply adjusting the Tendulkar line for inflation is completely wrong on account of the changes in consumption basket and the

difference in the methodology of earlier consumption surveys and current HCES.

Methodologically, the current HCES uses a modified mixed reference period in which the recall period for expenditure on items like edible oil, egg, meat, milk, vegetables and fruits is 'last 7 days'. For items like clothing, bedding, footwear, education, durable goods and medical, it is 'last 365 days'. For all other items, the recall period is 'last 30 days'. Earlier consumption expenditure surveys used the mixed reference period method in which only two categories of recall periods existed. Besides, the sampling methodology has also undergone a significant change in the current HCES. While discussing poverty, rarely the impact of transient poverty (TP) is discussed which leads to erosion of purchasing power of people. TP is different from chronic poverty, which is a long-term state of deprivation. TP is a temporary state of poverty that can be caused by external shocks, such as war, natural disasters, climate upheaval, global warming financial crises, pandemics, sudden changes in household conditions, such as joblessness or inflation. Similar-

ly, certain schemes may increase the income levels of poor temporarily and provide a false picture of reduced poverty. But when those schemes become unavailable, poverty goes up. The food assistance scheme is one of them.

The World Bank defines extreme poverty as living on less than \$2.15 per day in 2017 PPP terms. This line is based on the median national poverty line of 28 low-income countries. Now the World Bank says that almost 12.9 crore Indians are living in extreme poverty in 2024. As per UNDP's multidimensional poverty index, as of 2024, 23.9 crore Indians are plagued by multidimensional poverty.

The abysmal poverty is also reflected in other indices. More than half of India's total population (56.6%) is unable to afford a healthy diet, according to the UN State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report published on July 24, 2024. India had 19.46 crore undernourished people between 2021 and 2023. This was 13.7 per cent of the total population. Hence, poverty should be redefined in monetary terms which can ensure a decent life.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

UPDATING POVERTY BY TAKING INFLATION INTO ACCOUNT INSTEAD OF CHANGE IN COST OF LIVING OF DIFFERENT PERIODS IS A FLAWED METHOD

WISDOM CORNER

“We're all going to die, all of us; what a circus! That alone should make us love each other, but it doesn't. We are terrorized and flattened by trivialities. We are eaten up by nothing.”

CHARLES BUKOWSKI

“Never permit a dichotomy to rule your life, a dichotomy in which you hate what you do so you can have pleasure in your spare time. Look for a situation in which your work will give you as much happiness as your spare time.”

PABLO PICASSO

“Every man is more than just himself; he also represents the unique, the very special and always significant and remarkable point at which the world's phenomena intersect, only once in this way, and never again.”

HERMANN HESSE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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



Zero-error forecasting

Sir, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the 150th anniversary of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), has targeted zero-error weather forecasting up to three days, and 90 per cent accuracy in forecasting up to five days by 2047. The IMD's aim is zero loss of life by 2047 for all types of severe weather events by enabling disaster managers, stakeholders, and the general public to take early action following early accurate warning. The IMD, the nations weather life line institution established in 1875 by the British government to centralise weather data collection in India is one of the oldest meteorological departments in the world and as had a steady growth and in recent years progressed by leaps and bounds. An institution that got established to predict and collect climatic conditions and calculations after a cyclone that struck Kolkata in 1864 and a famine that hit Odisha in 1866 has now taken the role of a saviour not only for India but the whole of South Asian region giving timely warnings of weather changes and also plays a fundamental role in disaster risk reduction by protecting communities from extreme weather events. IMD in collaboration with ISRO is doing a commendable job redefining the study and prediction of weather.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

Jobs for youths

Sir, To convert dreams into reality, honing of one's skills is essential. Power of youth is insurmountable; in addition to the obvious livelihood advantage, plugging the glaring unemployment rate is the power of self-empowerment. Despite possessing abundant skills, a lot of young brains find themselves unemployed for reasons not too difficult to fathom. Learning and earning supplement each other well. One's content can be copied; not one's creativity. Education empowers youngsters by helping them make informed choices. A United Nations study has revealed that one in five youngsters are "Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)," and many of those are women. The UN has said that more than 400 million new jobs need to be created to absorb nearly 70 million unemployed and another 40 million new entrants into the job market.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Illegal blasting threatens lives, livelihoods in Jajpur

Regular blasting for illegal stone mining in areas under Dharmasala tehsil has led to tremors in villages with houses and various infrastructures developing cracks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Jan 16: Illegal blasting for stone mining by some leaseholders and black stone traders in Dharmasala tehsil of Jajpur district has posed serious threat to life and properties of local residents.



Sources said illegal mining activities have gone from bad to worse in Dharmasala tehsil despite directives from the Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS) and the state mining department. Numerous leaseholders and black stone traders have been accused of extensive blasting, leading to life-threatening consequences for local residents.

Villagers' protests against large-scale blasting at mines numbered 34/2020-21 and 36/2020-21 on Aruha hill, where over 10 feet deep pits were dug without safety precautions, Monday are cases in this point. Residents of Muraripur, Aruha, Jogada, Khunta, Thanuwal, Guarang, and Kantamalia villages have accused mine operators of carrying out illegal activities without appointing mines manager and ensuring necessary safety measures.

The issue extends beyond these villages. Reports indicate that approximately 50 unauthorised mines in Dharmasala tehsil operate day and night without leases, despite repeated calls for intervention and drawing the attention of the state Revenue minister. Even after Revenue officials and Dharmasala legislator raising the matter with authorities, little action has been taken to curb these operations. The MLA has urged the authorities to grant lease to the non-leased quarries

but in vain.

According to the district Minor Minerals department, there are 84 black stone mines in Dharmasala tehsil, of which only 22 have received clearance for mining with e-transit passes. Nine mines have been shut down as they fall within protected forest areas. Additionally, one mine is under scrutiny due to landslide risks, while 25 others are embroiled in court cases. Nine mines are undergoing legal evaluation, and 17 remain non-operational for various reasons.

Local residents continue to demand immediate enforcement of mining regulations to protect lives, livelihoods, and the environment in the region. Despite approval for the use of one machine and two compressors in the leased mines, as many as 20 excavators and 18 compressors are operating in the mining areas of Aruha hill. Regular blasting has led to tremors in these villages with houses and various infrastructures developing cracks. Rampant blasting has also raised suspicions over black stone looting significantly exceeding government-approved limits. Notably, public interest litigations (PILs) calling for legal actions have previously been filed against individuals such as leaseholders Manoj Samal and Sarat Jena, who are accused of violating regulations. However, they have continued with illegal mining and blasting with impunity.

Although qualified black stone mines have remained closed for the past 10 months, owners of operational mines are allegedly charging exorbitant prices, with boulder rates jumping from ₹250 per tonne to ₹500. This has made home construction and infrastructure development increasingly difficult for lower and middle-income groups.

In November, MLA Himanshu Sekhar Sahu wrote to the state ministers of Commerce and Transportation as well as Steel, and Mines, urging immediate corrective actions. He demanded to prepare action plan as per norms and make the non-operational mines operational. However, reports suggest that certain officials and black stone operators are profiting from illegal activities, leading to allegations that mining leases are not being granted lawfully. This has reportedly resulted in significant revenue losses for the government.

There are indications that people are preparing for large-scale protests against illegal black stone mining in the coming days. When contacted, Jajpur's Deputy Director of Mines, Jayaprakash Nayak, stated that necessary action will be taken regarding allegations of illegal blasting after conducting a proper investigation. Additionally, plans are underway to lease 20 to 22 mines in accordance with the law by February. Efforts are being made by the department to curb illegal extraction through raids and appropriate measures, he added.



TOURING TOWN: Courtiers and soldiers revel as Kansa Maharaj takes a tour of Sambalpur town atop an elephant on the second day of Sambalpur Dhanu Yatra, Thursday

2 killed in road accident

Keonjhar: Two bikers were killed while another sustained critical injuries after the vehicle hit a trowler while trying to overtake it near Rajabasa village under Jhumpura police station limits in Keonjhar district Thursday. The deceased were identified as Preeti Ranjan Majhi, 20, and Pujya Majhi, 17, of the village. Lily Majhi, 18, who was also riding lily, sustained critical injuries in the mishap. The mishap sparked tension in the area. Local people said that they were going towards Marsuan. Preeti Ranjan tried to overtake a trailer truck on NH-20 but eventually hit the cargo vehicle and fell down with the bike. Two died on the spot while Lily sustained critical injuries. After local residents alerted the fire department vehicle that was escorting the Chief Minister's carcade, they immediately reached the spot and shifted the injured to the hospital.

Workers trapped as coal hopper collapses at Rajgangpur factory

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Jan 16: A major industrial accident occurred at Dalmia Bharat Cement Limited (DBCL) plant in Rajgangpur under Sundargarh district Thursday when a coal hopper collapsed, reportedly trapping some workers beneath the debris. The incident took place between 5.30pm and 6.00pm at Line 2 during the loading of coal into the plant's boiler unit. The number of workers

affected was unclear when this report was filed. The accident is being treated as severe, as the hopper is typically managed by 12 workers. Mobile cranes and ambulances have been deployed to assist in the rescue operation.

Reports suggest that plant authorities were aware of the deteriorating condition of the structure. Following the accident, other workers and family members of those presumed to be trapped gathered outside the plant. The

situation outside the DBCL main gate became tense as the crowd grew. The workers could not be reached on their mobile phones, leaving uncertainty about the exact number of victims.

The plant authorities also halted power supply to the entire facility for more than 30 minutes following the incident, though power was restored later. At the time of filing the report, plant authorities remained incommunicado.

Family serves 76 dishes to groom-to-be in Pongal feast

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Jan 16: A family in Rayagada has become the talk of the town after inviting their future son-in-law for a grand feast during Pongal, the main festival of the Telugu community, and serving him with an impressive 76 dishes.

The family of B Suryanarayana and Swapna, who live near Jagannath temple in Rayagada, hosted their daughter's fiancé with a lavish meal served on banana leaves on the final day of Pongal, known as Kanuma.

The feast included plain rice, biryani, four types of non-vegetarian dishes, vari-



ous curries, fried delicacies like 'vadas', papads, numerous sweets, and a variety of fruits, all adding up to 76 items.

B Suryanarayana's daughter is set to marry G Srinath,

an engineer and the son of G Balakrishna and G Sarita of Muniguda in Rayagada district, in coming March.

The Telugu festival of Pongal is celebrated over three days: Bhogi on the first day, Pongal or Makar Sankranti on the second day, and Kanuma on the third day.

Traditionally, during Kanuma, families host grand meals and invite relatives and close friends to partake in the festivities as part of a reunion.

As per custom, inviting the daughter's husband or fiancé during the Pongal festival is an integral part of the celebrations in Telugu culture.

Labourer dies of wall collapse at Kantabanji stn

PNN & AGENCIES

Kantabanji, Jan 16: A 56-year-old labourer was killed when a wall collapsed on him while clearing debris at Kantabanji railway station in Bolangir district Thursday, police said. The incident took place when an earth mover machine hit the wall, causing it to collapse, they added.

According to police, deceased Umesh Rishidev worked on the railway project for a private contractor. "Prompt rescue operations were carried out and an inquiry has been initiated to determine the cause of the incident. Preventive measures are being reinforced to ensure such incidents do not recur in the future," a statement by East Coast Railways (ECOR) said.

The Railways has directed the contractor to provide extra gratia and financial support to the next of kin of the deceased, in line with contractual obligations and welfare provisions.

Man held for duping woman of over ₹3L on pretext of marriage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, Jan 16: A 28-year-old man was arrested in Ganjam district for allegedly duping a woman of around ₹3.12 lakh on the pretext of marriage, police said Thursday.

The accused, a resident of Mujagada near Bhanjanagar, was held Wednesday, nearly five months after the 30-year-old woman lodged a complaint with the Aska Police Station, an officer said.

According to the police, there was a marriage proposal between the accused and the complainant in 2023 and their relationship developed.

While the woman was working in a private firm, the accused was found unemployed. After a few months, the man allegedly took around ₹3.12 lakh from the woman to do business, Aska Police Station Inspector In-Charge Rajendra Kumar Patnaik said.

The woman allegedly had



given the money to him in cash and online mode in a phased manner in 2024.

She alleged that the accused later denied marrying her and did not return her money, Patnaik said.

The accused was absconding after he came to know that a case was registered against him. Acting on a tip-off, a police team arrested him Wednesday from Aska. Further inquiry is underway, the officer added.

FMU holds national seminar on livelihood enhancement

Balasure: Fakir Mohan University here hosted a two-day national seminar on "Livelihood Enhancement and Social Work Strategies for Sustainable Community Development". The event was inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor Santosh Kumar Tripathy, under whose patronage the seminar was organised by the Department of Social Work in collaboration with Reach Lives (Odisha), Youth for Social Development (YSD)-Odisha, Unipower School of IT and Management, Bhadrak, and Ganesh College of Education, Balasure. The seminar aimed to provide a platform for academicians, NGOs, students, and scholars to discuss sustainable livelihood practices and social equity. More than 50 research papers were presented during five technical sessions and two plenary discussions. Highlights included insights into empowering rural and tribal communities, women's economic development, and policy frameworks for livelihood support. The event was addressed by Supriya Pattanayak, VC of Centurion University, Bhubaneswar. Other notable attendees included Bipin Joo (TISS, Mumbai), Bishnu Mohan Dash (DU), and Aditi Sharma (Symbiosis International University, Pune). VC Tripathy emphasised integrating classroom studies with community interventions, while convener Grace Bahalen Mundu and organising secretary Rashmirekha Rout coordinated the programme. Supriya Rout delivered the vote of thanks.

Phulbani beggar features in Central govt calendar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, Jan 16: A woman beggar in her 70s from Phulbani in Kandhamal district, who had become the talk of the town for donating her life savings to a Jagannath temple, has earned a place in the Central government's 2025 calendar featuring prominently on the January page alongside Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The calendar was released January 6 by Union Minister for Railways and IT Ashwini Vaishnaw.

The photograph, taken during PM Modi's visit to Phulbani May 11 last year as part of his election campaign, shows her shaking hands with the Prime Minister.

During the interaction, the PM was visibly moved by the woman's selfless act and sought her blessings to serve



Tula Behera had made headlines in December 2022 when she donated her life savings of ₹1 lakh to the Jagannath Temple in Phulbani

the nation. "She wants nothing, except the blessings of Lord Jagannath. After getting blessings from such a mother, I am inspired to serve the coun-

try and its people," the PM had said. That's not all. When Modi offered to help, the philanthropic beggar humbly declined, saying, "Lord Jagannath's bless-

ings are enough for me."

Tula Behera, affectionately called 'Tula mausi', had made headlines in December 2022 when she donated her life savings of ₹1 lakh to the Jagannath Temple in Phulbani on the occasion of Dhanu Sankranti. For the past 40 years, she has been begging near various temples in Phulbani town.

Tula was married to Prafulla Behera, a physically disabled man, and the couple begged together. After Prafulla's death, Tula continued to beg alone. With no family members to turn to, she has surrendered herself to Lord Jagannath.

"I have neither parents nor children. Whatever money I saved through begging, I have donated to Lord Jagannath," Tula had said. Explaining that she no longer needed money as

she was old, she had requested the Phulbani Jagannath Temple's managing committee to use the donation for renovation of the old temple.

Despite initial hesitation, the temple management had to accept her donation. She had then expressed her contentment, stating, "I do not need any money. If I could do any service for Lord Jagannath, I will feel the purpose of my life on this earth has been fulfilled."

Tula was overjoyed when she learnt that her photo had been featured in the government calendar. "I'm just a humble beggar, struggling to make ends meet. I'm thrilled that the money I donated to the Jagannath temple, earned through my begging, has brought me such recognition. It's a truly surreal moment for me," she said, her eyes beaming with happiness.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No.: 49-KUR-TRD-OT-2024-25, Dtd.: 09.01.2025
Name of Work: OHE MODIFICATION AND ELECTRIFICATION WORK IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSED UPGRADATION OF BOLAGARH PH TO BOLAGARH STATION.
Advertised Value: ₹66,49,005.47
EMD: Rs. 1,33,000/-, Completion Period: 180 Days
Bidding Start Date: 17.01.2025
Tender closing Date & Time: At 1300 hrs. on 31.01.2025
The Tender documents & complete details are available at www Ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD) Khurda Road
PR-883/P/24-25

EAST COAST RAILWAY
E-TENDER FOR CATERING STALLS
Station & Location: Sl.No.1: BRAHMAMPUR (BAM) PF-1 (TOWARDS VSKP END), Sl.No.2: BRAHMAMPUR (BAM) PF-2&3 (TOWARDS VSKP END), Sl.No.3: PALASA (PSA) PF-2&3 (MIDDLE)
Category of Reservation: Sl.No.1:SMU(Minorities) Sl.No.2: SMU(PH) Sl.No.3:SMU(BPL)
Tender start Date & Time: 24.01.2025 at 1100hrs. (For All Sl.Nos.)
NOTE: Prospective bidders are advised to visit the Website: www.ireps.gov.in and check all the details regarding eligibility criteria, detail of site and any other information.
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager Khurda Road
PR-884/P/24-25

Government of Odisha No.B-848
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER CUTTACK (R&B) CIRCLE, CUTTACK
E-mail ID - sectcrb_2006@yahoo.co.in
Tel/Fax - 0671-2301751/2302751
(*e*-PROCUREMENT NOTICE)
Bid Identification No.CCE.Ctc.(R&B) 15/2024-25
1 The Chief Construction Engineer, Cuttack (R&B) Circle, Cuttack on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites on Percentage rate basis bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for Road and Building works as mentioned below.
2 No. of work : 05 Nos.
3 Nature of work : Road and Building works
4 Class of contractor : 'B', 'A' & Special Class
5 Tender paper cost : Rs. 10000/- (online)
6 Available of bid document in the website : From 27.01.2025 to 17:30 Hours of 10.02.2025
7 Date of opening of bid : Dt. 11.02.2025 at 11.00 Hours
8 The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said web site.
Sd./- Chief Construction Engineer Cuttack (R&B) Circle
OIPR-34012/11/0019/2425

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
RURAL WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION ORGANISATION
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RWS&S DIVISION, ANGUL, AT: TALCHER
At: Baghuabole, P.O.: Hatatota, Talcher, Dist.: Angul, PIN - 759100
(Ph. No./Fax: 06760-240762, E-mail: eewssang@gmail.com)
National Competitive Bidding through e-Procurement
Bid Identification No. 12/SE/RWSS/ANGUL/2024-25 Dt.15.01.2025
No. O-1260: The Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Angul, at Talcher on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Item Rate/Percentage bid through e-procurement in Double/Single Cover System according to norm of e-Procurement System in Online Mode.
Nature of Work : Construction of Building
1. No. of Tenders : 1 No.
2. Tender Paper Cost : Rs. 6,000.00
3. Value of Work : Rs. 27.81 Lakhs
4. Class of Contractor : "C" & "B" Class
5. Date & time of availability of Bid document in portal : 21.01.2025 at 13.00 hours to 30.01.2025 upto 17.30 hours
6. Date & time of seeking tender : 27.01.2025 upto 17.30 hours clarification
7. Date & time of opening of tender & verification of original document : 31.01.2025 at 12.00 hours in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Angul, At: Talcher
8. Time of Completion : 6 (Six) Calendar Months
9. The bidders have to participate in online bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
10. Corrigendum if any shall be publish in the above website only.
Sd./- Superintending Engineer
OIPR-25195/11/0003/2425 RWS&S Division, Angul at: Talcher



The government is steadfastly committed to empowering women and is diligently working towards this cause

OMAR ABDULLAH | J&K CM

KTR DARES REVANTH REDDY FOR LIVE LIE DETECTOR TEST

Asserting that he is ready for a lie-detector test in the Formula-E race case, BRS working president K T Rama Rao Thursday dared Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to take the same test in the presence of any judge and media



of the day quote

At one time, individuals with many children were not allowed to contest the panchayat (election) or local bodies. Now what I am saying is that individuals with lower numbers of children cannot contest

Can anyone get it (post) in the media? You can't get it in the media or any shop. It is given as a reward for the work we do. Will the media gift it to you. These are new trends

Congratulations team @isro on this historic achievement! Bharat has become the 4th nation to successfully achieve space docking, marking a giant leap in our space capabilities. The SpaDeX docking process was executed with flawless precision

Many question 'lawlessness' in Mumbai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

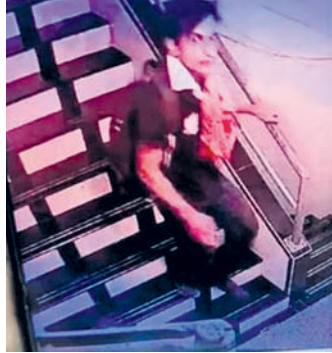
Mumbai, Jan 16: Film celebrities and politicians, including West Bengal Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee, Arvind Kejriwal and Chiranjeevi, expressed shock over the attack on Saif Ali Khan at his home in Mumbai with several others questioning lawlessness in the city.

The 54-year-old actor, who was injured after an intruder attacked him with a knife at around 2.30 am Thursday at his Bandra home, was hospitalised and underwent surgery. He is out of danger, his representative said. Banerjee and Kejriwal wished for the actor's speedy recovery in their social media posts.

"It's very concerning to hear about the attack on noted actor Saif Ali Khan. I pray for his speedy recovery, trusting that the law will take its course and those responsible will be held accountable. My thoughts and prayers are with Sharmila Di, Kareena Kapoor, and the entire family during this difficult time," Banerjee posted on X. Kejriwal said, "Shocked to hear about the attack on Saif Ali Khan. Wishing him a speedy recovery and strength to his family during this difficult time."

Shiv Sena UBT leader and Rajya Sabha MP Priyanka Chaturvedi said the incident at Saif's residence is another "high profile attempt on life" after the firing outside superstar Salman Khan's home and the murder of NCP leader Baba Siddique. "The attack on Saif Ali Khan yet again raises questions on Mumbai Police & the Home Minister. This is after

SAIF KNIFE ATTACK



Police are examining the CCTV footage showing the intruder who allegedly attacked actor Saif Ali Khan at his Bandra apartment with a knife escaping through the staircase, officials said



a series of incidents that show there is a deliberate attempt to undermine Mumbai by targeting big names... "All in Bandra. An area which has the highest concentration of celebrities, which is supposed to have adequate security. If celebrities are not safe then who in Mumbai is? Wishing Saif Ali Khan a speedy recovery," she wrote on X. Actor Pooja Bhatt tagged Mumbai Police in a post and questioned the "lawlessness" in the city, which is home to several celebrities as well as top industrialists. "Can this lawlessness please be curbed @MumbaiPolice @CPMumbaiPolice We need more Police presence in Bandra. The city & especially the queen of the

suburbs, have never felt so unsafe before," she said. Chiranjeevi wrote, "Deeply Disturbed by news of the attack by an intruder on #SaifAliKhan. Wishing and praying for his speedy recovery." Imtiaz Ali, the director of Saif's 2009 movie "Love Aaj Kal", shared a picture of the actor on Instagram Stories and wrote, "My brave brother." Parineeti Chopra said, "Get well soon Saif." Sonu Sood posted on X, "Sadened to hear about the unfortunate attack on Saif Ali Khan. My thoughts and prayers are with him for a swift recovery and a full return to health. Stay strong, brother. #SaifAliKhan" Actor and BJP MP Ravi Kishan, who worked with Saif on films such as "Agent Vinod"

and "Bullet Raja", said the incident is saddening. "He's my friend and co-actor... Government and police administration is working to nab the culprits. The culprit will be caught soon, Mumbai police has a good reputation. He'll be given strict punishment. Security of actors should be given importance. I pray to lord that Saif recovers soon," Kishan told PTI.

South star Jr NTR, who recently shared screen space with Saif in Telugu hit "Devara", said he was shocked and saddened to hear about the attack on Saif. "Wishing and praying for his speedy recovery and good health," he added. Filmmaker Kunal Kohli, who directed Saif and Rani Mukerji's 2004 hit "Hum Tum", said the incident was scary. "Praying for Saif's speedy recovery. #SaifAliKhan," he wrote on X.

Actor Neil Nitin Mukesh wrote, "My prayers with Saif sir and the entire family. This is very sad indeed!! May your bravery and love for your family be rewarded with healing, strength, and peace. Get well soon." The intruder fled from the spot following the incident which took place at Saif's 12th floor house in Satguru Sharan building in Bandra area. The actor's representatives described the incident as an "attempted burglary" though police were yet to comment on it. No person has been arrested so far, a senior police official said. After Khan's medical procedure, his team said the actor has come out of the surgery and is out of danger.

BPSRC ROW

Prashant Kishor ends fast unto death after 14 days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Jan 16: Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor Thursday withdrew his fast unto death after 14 days of protest over alleged irregularities in a competitive exam conducted by the Bihar Public Service Commission December 13 last year.

However, the former political strategist said his 'Satyagraha' would continue for the cause of civil service aspirants, and the youth of the state and also against the alleged 'authoritarian' attitude of the state government.

"The matter, seeking the cancellation of the BPSC's 70th Combined Competitive exam held December 13, is being heard by the Patna High Court today. It is a coincidence that I am calling off my fast unto death on a day when the matter is being heard before the court. We are quite hopeful that job aspirants will get justice from the Patna High Court. If they don't get justice, we will knock on the door of the Supreme Court," Kishor said.

Before withdrawing his fast unto death at the party's camp office here, Kishor took a dip in the Ganga river and offered puja. Kishor was offered fruit juice by his party workers as he withdrew from the hunger strike.

The party has set up its camp office at LCT Ghat on the bank of the Ganga river. "Now, my 'Satyagraha' will continue from



the Jan Suraj party office here. We call it 'Bihar Satyagraha Ashram'. We will train at least 1 lakh students at this ashram till March 11," he said.

These trained students will create awareness among the people against the alleged injustice being faced by the socially weaker sections of the society and the youth, he claimed. "I condemn the baton charge and police action against the protesting students in Bihar. The Jan Suraj Party will file a criminal writ petition in the next two days against those bureaucrats who are behind the police action against the job aspirants. We will also go to the Human Rights Commission against the officials," Kishor said.

He also claimed, "Our 'Satyagraha' will also continue against the authoritarian attitude of the Nitish Kumar government, which has not said even a single word so far on students' demands." Kishor also said the Bihar governor and the chief secretary met the protesting students, but "the CM never bothered to meet them".

SHORT TAKES

Coal mine mishap: SIT probe announced

Morigaon/ Guwahati: The Assam government Thursday announced a judicial enquiry and a police Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into the Umrangso coal mine incident, in which nine workers were trapped with bodies of four victims recovered so far. It also declared an ex-gratia of ₹10 lakh each to the families of the victims, even as officials said that suspected seepage of fresh water from underground streams has slowed down the dewatering process.

3 of a family die in road accident

Hoshiarpur: Three members of a family lost their lives after their car collided with a truck near Noorpur Jattan village in Mahilpur Thursday, police said. The accident occurred when Gurnam Singh (36), a resident of Manewal village in SBS Nagar district, was traveling with his wife, Varinder Kaur (35), and their seven-year-old daughter, Tirath Kaur, to attend a marriage function in Kot Fatuhi village. The collision happened along the roadside of the Bist-Doab Canal when a speeding canter struck their car.

SUV overturns on GT Karnal Road; 2 killed

New Delhi: Two friends returning from a trip to Himachal Pradesh were killed after their SUV overturned on the GT Karnal Road in the Alipur area of outer north Delhi early Thursday, an official said. The two deceased have been identified as Kartik Kakkar (20), a resident of Vikaspuri, and his friend Yashraj Sidhu (23), a resident of Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal, police said. The incident happened early Thursday when the two friends were returning after visiting Lahaul and Spiti Valley, and Kasol among other places in Himachal Pradesh.

Rajnath holds talks with John Healey

New Delhi: India-UK cooperation in niche defence technology areas such as electric propulsion and jet engines figured in a phone conversation between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his British counterpart John Healey. Singh and Healey also explored the possibilities of joint work by the two countries in the Indo-Pacific.

SNIPPETS

GRAP 4 curbs lifted in Delhi-NCR

New Delhi: The Centre's panel on Delhi-NCR's air quality Thursday revoked curbs under stage 4 of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) amid dip in pollution levels, according to an official order. The curbs were imposed Wednesday as calm winds, low temperatures and foggy conditions allowed accumulation of pollutants in the region, with the air quality index clocking 396 last evening. Stage 4 curbs include a ban on all construction activities, entry of non-essential polluting trucks into Delhi, and mandatory shifting of school classes, except for Classes X and XII, to hybrid mode. Non-essential diesel trucks are prohibited from entering Delhi, while Delhi-registered BS-IV and older diesel-run heavy goods vehicles are banned, except for essential services under Stage 4.

Court notice to Atishi, Sanjay Singh

New Delhi: A court here Thursday issued notice to Chief Minister Atishi and AAP MP Sanjay Singh on a criminal defamation complaint filed by former Congress MP Sandeep Dikshit. Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Paras Dalal said the matter was at the stage of cognisance and as per law, Atishi and Singh were to be given the opportunity of being heard. The judge directed the AAP leaders to file a reply by January 27, when the court will further hear the matter. "Matter is at the stage of cognisance and in compliance of the first proviso to section 223 BNSS, the proposed accused persons are to be given the opportunity of being heard. Accordingly... let notice be issued to both proposed accused persons returnable for January 27, 2025," the judge said.

Coal scam: Justice Viswanathan recuses himself

New Delhi: Supreme Court judge Justice K V Viswanathan Thursday recused himself from hearing coal scam cases, paving way for a fresh three-judge bench to decide a crucial issue arising from previous orders that barred the high court from entertaining appeals. The apex court passed two orders in 2014 and 2017 restricting the accused from approaching the high court and had directed that appeals against trial court proceedings in the coal scam cases could only be filed in the top court. The intent behind the orders was to expedite trial processes by preventing delays and to stall the proceedings by the accused seeking relief in high courts. While taking up the pleas seeking modification of its earlier orders, a bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justices Sanjay Kumar and Viswanathan, at the outset, said a fresh bench will be set up to decide the issue in the week commencing February 10.



View of the 'Republic Day Flower Show' at Lalbagh Botanical Garden during its inauguration, in Bengaluru. This 217th edition of the flower show is themed around Maharshi Valmiki

Delhi polls: MCD rolls out discounts to boost voter turnout

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: Ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has launched innovative initiatives in Karol Bagh and Rohini Zones to encourage voter participation. Both zones have announced special discounts for voters,

aiming to motivate people to exercise their democratic rights.

In the Karol Bagh Zone, over 500 guest houses, 30 restaurants and 32 sweet shops have introduced a "democracy discount", offering 15 per cent to 20 per cent discounts to those who cast their votes.

The initiative, undertaken in coordination with the Public Health Department of Karol Bagh Zone, requires voters to show proof of voting by displaying the indelible ink mark on their index finger. Karol Bagh Zone Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Kumar Mishra emphasized the importance of this initiative.

Nutritional support could prevent TB deaths, cases by 2035: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: In India, providing nutritional support to half the households with individuals undergoing tuberculosis (TB) treatment could prevent roughly 4.5 per cent TB-related deaths and 2.2 per cent of disease episodes by 2035, a modelling study has found.

The study, published in The Lancet Global Health journal, estimated that more than 3.6 lakh deaths and over 8.8 lakh TB cases could be averted through such intervention. Typically, about 24 households would need to be treated of tuberculosis to prevent one death, while 10 would need to be treated to prevent one case, researchers, including those from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis

(NIRT), Chennai, estimated.

The nutritional intervention could have an additional cost of about \$1,349 million on the health system, with potential benefits of \$167 for every disability-adjusted life-year averted, they projected.

'Disability-adjusted life-year' is a metric that helps measure overall burden of disease. The researchers said that about a fifth of the world's tuberculosis incidence is attributable to undernutrition, with the ratio increasing to more than a third in India.

A 2023 study, published in The Lancet journal, by the same research team had enrolled household contacts of 2,800 patients with tuberculosis across 28 units of the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme in four districts of Jharkhand. The patients re-



ceived food rations of 1,200 kilocalories (52 grams of protein per day with micronutrients) for six months, with their household contacts receiving monthly food rations and micronutrients having 750 kilocalories (23

grams of protein per day with micronutrients).

Results showed that over a two-year follow up period, tuberculosis incidence in a household dropped by 39-48 per cent, simply by extending nutritional

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to have substantial health and economic benefits among the households willing to pay, even at the national level, they said. A higher fraction of the tuberculosis burden could be averted by focussing on states having high levels of undernutrition, further improving the value for money, the authors added.

A December 2024 study, published in the journal PLoS Medicine, estimated over 62 million cases of tuberculosis and eight million deaths in the two decades up to 2040, along with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) loss of more than \$146 billion.

However, improving case detection rates and meeting the World Health Organization's End-TB target of 90 per cent could reduce disease burden by 75-90 per cent, and macroeconomic burden by \$120.2 billion, the study projected.

national



We are all proud of the efforts of all Government employees, who work to build a Viksit Bharat. The Cabinet's decision on the 8th Pay Commission will improve quality of life and give a boost to consumption

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

LOAN DISPUTE ENDS IN TRAGEDY

The president of the Bawana Industrial Area Association was allegedly killed with an iron rod in a confrontation over a ₹3 lakh loan he had given to someone, police Thursday said.



of the day quote

Unlike Congress, BJP, and other opposition parties, we do not accept financial help from big industrialists or wealthy benefactors to fund our party activities

My dear Bangalore, it's official. The US Consulate is opening January 17th

Rahul Gandhi is in the complete grip of urban naxals' thinking process... Now that Hindenburg is closing its shop, have you Rahul Gandhi got the contract for it

FUTURE IN-DEMAND SKILLS

New Delhi, Jan 16: India has been ranked the second after the US among the world's most prepared job markets for future in-demand skills including in the key areas of Artificial Intelligence, digital and green sectors, according to the QS World Future Skills Index 2025.

'India world's second most prepared job markets'

well countries are equipped to meet the evolving demands of the international job market by measuring four main points - Skills Fit, Academic Readiness, Future of Work, and Economic Transformation.



leader in the index," QS said in a statement. Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded India's performance in the QS World Future Skills Index.

strengthening our youth by equipping them with skills that enable them to become self-reliant and create wealth. We have also leveraged the power of technology to make India a hub for innovation and enterprise.

proud moment for India. India, alongside Mexico, is identified as "most ready to recruit into digital roles".

Kerala cops exhume body of man who attained 'samadhi'

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 16: The police Thursday exhumed the body of a 69-year-old man whose family claimed he had attained 'samadhi,' near Neyyattinkara in the capital district, and conducted a post-mortem as part of an investigation into his mysterious death.

Medical college death row: WB govt suspends 12 docs

Kolkata, Jan 16: On a day the Calcutta High Court directed the West Bengal chief secretary to file a comprehensive report placing on record all facts for the death of a patient after child delivery at Midnapore Medical College and Hospital allegedly after administration of 'expired' intravenous fluid, the state suspended 12 doctors of the hospital on grounds of negligence.



This is an unfortunate and sentimental incident and our government does not support it. The reports filed by the CID and that by the expert committee are the same. We have found prima-facie negligence on part of several doctors of the hospital and have decided to suspend 12 of them pending completion of investigation

Cabinet nod to build 3rd launch pad at Sriharikota

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: The government Thursday approved setting up of a third launch pad at Sriharikota to send heavier spacecraft in orbit as it aims to build a space station, carry out human spaceflight Gaganyaan and land an astronaut on the moon.



The third launch pad will be built at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota and will be capable of putting 30,000 tonne spacecraft in low earth orbit as against the existing capabilities of 8,000 tonnes as India eyes a larger pie in the global space economy.

with capabilities of hauling 70 tonnes payload to low earth orbit. The launch pad will be built with maximum industry participation fully utilising ISRO's experience in establishing the previous launch pads and maximally sharing the existing launch complex facilities.

POST OF THE DAY

Govt has no data on - PM cares, Unemployment, Electoral Bonds, Covid Deaths, But they have all the data on Mahakumbh- 2 crore took dip daily. 40 crore will do it eventually. 2-4 lakh crores revenue will be generated.

SHORT TAKES

Constable shoots self with AK-47 rifle

Gondia: A police constable allegedly committed suicide Thursday afternoon by shooting himself with his service AK-47 rifle in Maharashtra's Gondia district, an official said.

Family of four die by suicide

Erode (Tamil Nadu): In a tragic incident near Gobichettipalayam in the district, a couple died by suicide after administering poison to their two children, who also died Thursday. According to police, Dhanasekaran (36) and his wife Balamani (29), residents of Siruvalur village and employees of a private garment factory in Vellankoil, were living with their two children, aged 10 and 7, who were studying at a local school.

Leopard dies

Meerut (UP): A male leopard Thursday died after being hit by a speeding vehicle on the Delhi-Meerut Expressway, officials said. The incident took place near Kashi Toll Plaza in Meerut district at around 9:30 pm, they said.

The statements of Gopan Swami's family members will be recorded again as part of the ongoing investigation, police said. After the postmortem conducted at Thiruvananthapuram Medical College, the body was handed over to the family by noon. It was then shifted to the mortuary of a private hospital in Neyyattinkara.

The cremation is scheduled for Friday morning, following religious rituals, according to relatives. "Gopan Swami's body will be cremated on the premises of his residence, with a grand ceremony to be attended by religious leaders," said Vaikunta Swamy Dharma Pracharana Sabha (VSDP) chairman Vishnupuram Chandrasekharan.

A division bench of the high court presided by Chief Justice T S Sivagnanam also directed the relevant central government authority to file a report on the action taken against the pharmaceutical company that supplied the drugs in question. A 31-year old woman, who had delivered a baby on January 8, died the following day and four others turned critical after childbirth at the Midnapore medical college allegedly from administration of 'expired' intravenous fluid, prompting the state health department to constitute a 13-member committee to investigate the matter. On

Monday, the state government ordered a parallel CID probe into the incident. "This is an unfortunate and sentimental incident and our government does not support it. The reports filed by the CID and that by the expert committee are the same. We have found prima-facie negligence on part of several doctors of the hospital and have decided to suspend 12 of them pending completion of investigation," Banerjee told reporters Thursday at state secretariat Nabanna. The suspended doctors included the medical superintendent and vice-principal (MSVP) of

the hospital, the RMO, the departmental head, one senior resident, and six postgraduate trainee doctors. Banerjee said that the CID would lodge an FIR against the accused doctors and continue investigation in accordance with the law. Earlier in the day, while hearing two public interest litigations (PIL) seeking a CBI probe into the patient's death, the court directed that the matter be heard again January 30, by which the state chief secretary and the central government will file their respective reports.



Tourists at a resort amid snowfall, at Solang Valley in Manali, Himachal Pradesh

BJP slams AAP over liquor policy stance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: The BJP Thursday hit out at AAP over Chief Minister Atishi favouring the implementation of the now-scraped Delhi excise policy, saying the "blind attachment" of the party's politics to safeguard the interest of liquor mafia will remain a "black chapter" in Indian polity.



Citing Atishi's remarks, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said if the said excise policy is implemented in Delhi, it will be recorded as a "shame" in the country's history. Has liquor become the first priority

of the party which came into being "preaching morality" out of Anna Hazare's public movement, he asked and slammed the AAP while terming Atishi's remarks painful. "The blind attachment of AAP's politics to safeguard the interests of liquor mafia will remain as a black chapter in Indian polity," Prasad added. There was no immediate reaction from AAP on the BJP's charge. Prasad alleged the AAP is considering implementing the liquor policy if voted back to power despite its supreme and former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, ex-deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia and others arrested in connection with the scam and a chargesheet has also been filed in the court.

Congress promises ₹500 LPG cylinder, free ration, electricity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: The Congress Thursday said it would give ₹500 LPG cylinder, free ration kits, and free electricity up to 300 units to the city residents if voted to power in Delhi.

ment pollution and pollution of lies" and the time has come for the people to make a decisive change by electing Congress to power. "Congress will fulfil all its five guarantees if it is elected to power in Delhi," Reddy said.

BJP names nine more candidates

New Delhi: The BJP Thursday named nine more candidates for the elections to the 70-member Delhi assembly, fielding Shikha Rai and Anil Vashishth against from Greater Kailash and Babarpur, respectively. While Rai is pitted against Delhi minister and AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj, Vashishth will battle it out against Gopal Rai, also a minister in the AAP government. With its latest and the fourth list, the BJP has named 68 candidates.

The announcement was made by Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy who was addressing a press conference here with AICC Delhi in-charge Qazi Nizamuddin and Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav.

"There is no difference between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal. They have done nothing for the national capital," Reddy said. He also said his government in Telangana waived farmer loans to the tune of ₹21,000 crore in one year.

"Congress threw out the minor partner in the liquor scam from power in Telangana and now it was the turn of the people of Delhi to throw out the major partner in the liquor scam, Arvind Kejriwal, from power in Delhi," Reddy said.

Having earlier announced three promises, the Congress Thursday announced two more. Yadav said the party came up with the promises on the back of the feedback it gleaned from its Delhi Nyay Yatra.



international



China is willing to work with the international community to make unremitting efforts to promote peace and stability in the Middle East

ROCKET BLASTS OFF

Blue Origin launched its massive new rocket on its first test flight Thursday, sending up a prototype satellite to orbit thousands of miles above Earth.



of the day quote

Today, an oligarchy is taking shape in America of extreme wealth, power and influence that literally threatens our entire democracy, our basic rights and freedoms, and a fair shot for everyone to get ahead



JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

I want to make it clear that no matter what tactics are used, I will not make any deal. I am not Nawaz Sharif who seeks to get his billions made through corruption forgiven. I have lived in and will die in Pakistan... I will always stand for my nation



IMRAN KHAN | JAILED FORMER PM, PAKISTAN

The President-elect firmly believes we can avoid conflict with the Chinese Communist Party because they need our markets. We are going to use the leverage in a way that's in line with what we have that's in line with our national security while we still can



MIKE WALTZ | INCOMING NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR, US

SUNITA WILLIAMS STEPS OUT ON SPACEWALK

It was the first spacewalk by NASA astronauts since an aborted one last summer

Williams, the station's commander, had to tackle some overdue outdoor repair work alongside NASA's Nick Hague. They emerged as the orbiting lab sailed 260 miles above Turkmenistan.



the launch of their replacements, meaning the two won't be home until late March or early April — ten months after launching. It was the first spacewalk

US spacewalks were put on hold after water leaked into the airlock from the cooling loop for an astronaut's suit

by NASA astronauts since an aborted one last summer. US spacewalks were put on hold after water leaked into the airlock from the cooling loop for an astronaut's suit.

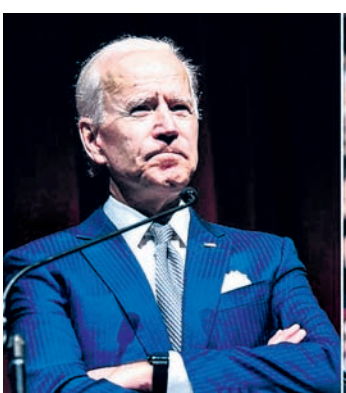
Standoff in SA ends with 87 dead miners

Stilfontein, Jan 16: The death toll in a monthslong standoff between police and miners trapped while working illegally in an abandoned gold mine in South Africa has risen to at least 87, police said Thursday.

GAZA CEASEFIRE DEAL

Trump, Biden both claim credit

Biden said his administration negotiated the deal but that Trump's team will soon be charged with making sure it's implemented



"My diplomacy never ceased in their efforts to get this done." Later in remarks at the White House, Biden said his administration negotiated the deal but that Trump's team will soon be charged with making sure it's implemented, a nod to Witkoff being a partner in the talks.

- Political commentators say delays will be resolved
Deal requires 600 truckloads of humanitarian aid per day
Some Israelis protested against the ceasefire deal in Jerusalem carrying mock coffins
Trucks carrying aid for Gaza are lining up in an Egyptian border town

A vote was slated for Thursday, an Israeli official said. However, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has delayed the meeting, accusing Hamas of making last-minute demands and going back on agreements.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich's Religious Zionism Party said in a statement that its condition for remaining in the government would be a return to fighting at the end of the first phase of the deal, in order to destroy Hamas and bring all the hostages back.

National police spokesperson Athlenda Mathe said that 78 bodies were retrieved in a court-ordered rescue operation, with 246 survivors also pulled out from deep underground since the operation began Monday.

Mathe said nine other bodies had been recovered before the rescue operation, without giving details. Community groups launched their own rescue attempts when authorities said last year they would not help the hundreds of miners because they were "criminals."

The miners are suspected to have died of starvation and dehydration, although no causes of death have been released.

South African authorities have been fiercely criticised for cutting off food and supplies to the miners in the Buffelsfontein Gold Mine last year. That tactic to "smoke them out," as described by a prominent Cabinet minister, was condemned by one of South Africa's biggest trade unions.

Police and the mine owners were also accused of taking away ropes and dismantling a pulley system the miners used to enter the mine and send supplies down from the surface. A court ordered authorities last year to allow food and water to be sent down to the miners, while another court ruling last week forced them to launch a rescue operation.



AGENCIES

Washington, Jan 16: President Joe Biden and President-elect Donald Trump are both claiming credit for Israel and Hamas agreeing to a ceasefire deal in Gaza after the White House brought Trump's Middle East envoy into negotiations that have dragged on for months.

Trump wasted no time in asserting he was the moving force behind the deal, whose final details were still being ironed out, according to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office.

"This EPIC ceasefire agreement could have only happened as a result of our Historic Victory in November, as it signaled to the entire World that my Administration would seek Peace and negotiate deals to ensure the safety of all Americans, and our Allies," Trump wrote on social media.

Biden stressed in a statement that a deal was reached under "the precise contours" of a plan that he set out in late May. "It is the result not only of the extreme pressure that Hamas has been under and the changed regional equation after a ceasefire in Lebanon and weakening of Iran — but also of dogged and painstaking American diplomacy," Biden said.

Nancy Okail, head of the US-based Center for International Policy, said acceptance of the deal in the face of Trump's insistence that a ceasefire be in place when he takes office next week "ironically shows how effective actual pressure can be in changing Israeli government behavior."

Jonathan Panikoff, director of the Scowcroft Middle East Security Initiative at the Atlantic Council, said Biden deserves praise for continuing to push the talks despite repeated failures. But Trump's threats to Hamas and his efforts through Witkoff to "cajole" Netanyahu deserve credit as well, he said.

wee hours Thursday morning, just a floor above where the Hamas negotiators were holed up, the senior official said.

Later Thursday, Hamas made several last-second demands, but "we held very firm" and Hamas eventually agreed to the terms of the deal, the US official said.

Israel's acceptance of the deal will not be official until it is approved by the country's security cabinet and government, and

Despite truce, Israel strikes kill 77 in Gaza

Israel airstrikes killed at least 77 people in Gaza overnight Thursday, residents and authorities in the enclave said, hours after a ceasefire and hostage release deal was announced to bring an end to 15 months of war between Israel and Hamas.

US TikTok users scramble amid Bytedance shutdown buzz



lowings and careers on the app hoped for months that TikTok would find a way to avoid a US ban passed into law in 2023. But resignation and anger have begun to set in, with Jan 19 just a few days away.

TikTok and its parent company ByteDance have sought to delay the law's implementation, which they say violates the US Constitution's First Amendment protection against government abridgment of free speech

Unless the US Supreme Court decides to halt the ban, people attempting to open the app Sunday will see a pop-up message directing them to a website with information about the shutdown

ByteDance was given until Jan 19 to sell the US assets of TikTok or face a US ban, following lawmakers' concerns that the app poses national security risks because China could compel the company to share the data of its US users.

the US Constitution's First Amendment protection against government abridgment of free speech.

Unless the US Supreme Court decides to halt the ban, people attempting to open the app Sunday will see a pop-up message directing them to a website with information about the shutdown.

TikTok user Amber Goode, 28, a true crime content creator from Colorado Springs, Colorado, complained about waiting for the Supreme Court to make a decision on the fate of the beloved app.

The Washington Post Wednesday reported President-elect Donald Trump is considering issuing an executive order hoping to "save TikTok," but it is unclear if such an order would circumvent the ban.

UK's Starmer arrives in Ukraine for security talks

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, Jan 16: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer arrived in Ukraine's capital Thursday with a pledge to help guarantee the country's security for a century, days before Donald Trump is sworn in as US president.

Starmer's unannounced visit is his first trip to Ukraine since he took office in July. He visited the country in 2023 when he was Opposition leader, and has twice held talks with Zelenskyy in London since becoming prime minister.



Ukraine, Martin Harris, and Ukraine's envoy to London, Valerii Zaluzhnyi. The UK, one of Ukraine's biggest military backers, has pledged 12.8 billion pounds (\$16 billion) in military and civilian aid since Russia's full-scale invasion three years ago, and has trained more than 50,000 Ukrainian troops on British soil.

REUTERS

New York, Jan 16: Disappointment, denial and confusion flooded US TikTok Wednesday upon hearing the news that Chinese owner ByteDance planned to shut off the app for its 170 million US users by Sunday, seemingly throwing in the towel on efforts to keep the popular video-sharing platform going.



India represents a major market for Inspeq AI's growth as we work toward transforming businesses through responsible AI integrations
APOORVA KUMAR | CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, INSPEQ AI

EMAAR LOOKING FOR BUYERS

Emaar Properties, Dubai's largest listed real estate firm, is in talks with "a few groups" in India including Adani Group to sell a stake of its Indian business, it said Thursday. The builder of the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa, and other iconic parts of Dubai, said in a statement that the valuation and other terms of a potential deal were not finalised.



of the day quote

China's export curbs signals deeper geopolitical tensions and trade war. We hope India-specific restrictions go away soon as they will also hurt China



Apparel exports have been registering a robust growth for the last six months despite global turmoil and subdued demand from major markets



A system that is efficient but is exclusive does not serve the nation. We wish for our market ecosystem to be inclusive and to bring as many citizens of the country into the fold and into the opportunity of wealth creation for our nation



Q3 RESULTS

Reliance net surges
New Delhi: Reliance Industries Ltd Thursday reported a 7.4 per cent rise in its December quarter net profit, as its retail business rebounded and telecom earnings rose. Its consolidated net profit of ₹18,540 crore, or ₹13.70 per share, in October-December - the third quarter of April 2024 to March 2025 fiscal (FY25) - compared to ₹17,265 crore, or ₹12.76 a share, in the same period a year back, according to a stock exchange filing by the company. Profit was also up sequentially from ₹16,563 crore in the July-September quarter.

Infosys profit jumps
New Delhi: IT services major Infosys Thursday reported an 11.46 per cent year-on-year increase in consolidated net profit to ₹6,806 crore in the October-December quarter of FY25. The company had posted a profit of ₹6,106 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. Revenue from operations for the quarter under review came in at ₹41,764 crore, 7.58 per cent higher than ₹38,821 crore in the third quarter of FY24, the company said in a regulatory filing.

Axis profit rises 4%
New Delhi: Private sector lender Axis Bank Thursday reported a 4 per cent rise in standalone net profit to ₹6,304 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2024. The bank had earned a net profit of ₹6,071 crore in the October-December quarter of the previous year.

Google to buy carbon removal credits from Indian farms

The deal - signed by Google and Indian supplier Varaha - is one of the biggest ever involving biochar, and is the tech giant's first foray into India's carbon dioxide removal sector

REUTERS

Singapore, Jan 16: Google will buy carbon credits from an Indian initiative that turns large amounts of agricultural waste into biochar - a form of charcoal that removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and returns it to the soil, it said Thursday.

The deal - signed by Google and Indian supplier Varaha

- is one of the biggest ever involving biochar, and is the tech giant's first foray into India's carbon dioxide removal (CDR) sector.

Google is one of a number of big tech companies looking to offset emissions through CDR, which refers to a range of interventions designed to remove CO2 already in the atmosphere and oceans.

While some developers are



We are going to face peak warming. Even if something just reduces (CO2) or removes it for only 20 to 40 or 50 years, I feel that we need to do everything that we can

VARAHA'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE MADHUR JAIN

looking at expensive new technologies that extract CO2 directly from the air, solutions like biochar could prove a cheaper near-term option.

"Biochar is a promising approach to carbon removal because it has the ability to scale worldwide, using existing tech-

nology, with positive side effects for soil health," said Randy Spock, Google's carbon removal lead.

Google to buy 100,000 T of offsets from Indian carbon removal projects

Indian developer to convert agricultural waste into CO2-rich charcoal

Carbon dioxide removal market set to grow as firms look for offset opportunities

of carbon credits from now until 2030. Varaha's chief executive Madhur Jain said there was scope for rapid growth, with waste from India's farms capable of generating enough biochar to store more than 100 million tons of CO2 every year.

CDR accounts for only a fraction of global carbon trading but is expected to grow rapidly as countries and corporations seek new ways to offset emissions.

However, critics say CDR is no substitute for emission cuts. They also warn that solutions like biochar offer no guarantee the CO2 will be removed permanently.

EXPANDING REACH OF EQUITIES

SEBI pushes ₹250 investment plans

The regulator hopes to build on the success of SIPs, through which investors pumped ₹223.6 billion a month, on average, into Indian equities last year



FOR FY2024-25, SIPs HAVE MORE THAN QUADRUPLED TO ₹2.1 TRILLION FROM 2016-17

MUTUAL FUND INDUSTRY MANAGES ₹66.93 TRILLION IN DEBT AND EQUITY ASSETS

REUTERS

Mumbai, Jan 16: India's markets regulator is pushing fund houses to popularise monthly investments as low as ₹250, or \$3, to expand the reach of equity investing in the world's most populous country.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is looking to introduce simpler customer identification rules and lower costs as it aims to popularise small-ticket investments via mutual funds, four sources familiar with the discussions said.

About 225 million investors currently invest via systematic investment plans (SIP) but a majority are from big cities. Introducing bite-sized SIPs would help take financial investments to smaller towns, which will give fund houses new markets to expand to.

The regulator hopes to build on the success of SIPs, through which investors pumped ₹223.6

We would like to take mutual funds to the masses. The ₹250 SIP plans would offer hybrid funds, which invest in both debt and equity

DP SINGH | DEPUTY MD, SBI MUTUAL FUND

billion (\$2.59 billion) a month, on average, into Indian equities last year. This has acted as a buffer at a time when foreign investors have turned sellers.

Last Friday, SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch said that ₹250 SIPs would be launched soon as a way to expand financial inclusion. She did not give further details.

It is working with the industry to reduce upfront costs related to customer identification and opening of accounts and settlements, an executive said, adding that a decision on the plan could be reached in one or two months.

The executive and other sources declined to be identified as the discussions with the regulator are not public.

The fund house, India's largest asset management company by assets, will look to push ₹250 SIPs through its parent SBI's network but also through digital investment platforms once the regulator's final rules are in.

DEEPENING DEMAND

Demand for equity investments has grown as young Indians, 40% of whom are under the age of 30, jump into the riskiest corners of the market, including futures and options. Zerodha, India's largest digital investment platform, has seen rising interest for SIPs below ₹500, said Neelesh Verma, the company's product head for mutual funds. While currently less than 5% of the platform's total SIPs are under ₹500, Verma believes the product would bring in more young investors.

India's strong growth continues: WEF

GLOBAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS TO WEAKEN IN 2025, SAYS WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 16: A majority of chief economists worldwide expect weaker global economic conditions in 2025 but India is likely to maintain a strong growth despite signs of some momentum being lost, a new report said Thursday.

In its latest Chief Economists Outlook, the World Economic Forum said the global economy is set to face significant challenges in 2025, with 56 per cent of chief economists surveyed expecting conditions to weaken.

Only 17 per cent foresee an improvement, pointing to heightened uncertainty in key regions and the need for measured policy responses worldwide, it found.

The US economy is expected to deliver robust growth in 2025, and South Asia, particularly India, is also expected to maintain strong growth. The outlook for Europe remains gloomy, with 74 per cent of respondents predicting weak or very weak growth this year.

The outlook for China also remains weak, and growth is projected to slow gradually in the years ahead, the WEF said in the report.

BIZ BUZZ

PNB gives ₹49.46L to nominee of deceased loan account holder

Bhubaneswar: The Zonal Manager of Punjab National Bank (PNB), Rajesh Kumar, handed over a cheque of ₹49.46 lakh to Jharna Swain, the nominee of late Manoranjan Sahoo, a home loan customer from Punjab National Bank's Mahakalpada Branch under Cuttack Circle Thursday. This settlement was made under PNB MetLife's Credit Life Insurance scheme (Met Loan & Life Suraksha) after Sahoo tragically passed away after a heart attack August 25, 2024. Rajesh Kumar explained that the Credit Life Insurance scheme provides loan protection to the borrowers at Punjab National Bank. In the event of the borrower's death, the nominee is entitled to the insured amount, which covers the outstanding loan. This ensures that the family is not burdened with loan repayment. In this case, Manoranjan Sahoo had taken a housing loan of ₹50 lakh. The insurance coverage resulted in a settlement of ₹49.46 lakh to the nominee, Jharna Swain.



TPNODL unveils skill development centre

Bhubaneswar: TP Northern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPNODL), a joint venture between Tata Power and the Government of Odisha, has inaugurated a new skill development centre in Rajanjan, Bhadrak. The centre aims to enhance the skills of TPNODL employees and local students, providing hands-on training in the electrical field and aligning with industry standards. The inauguration ceremony was attended by TPNODL CEO Dwijadas Basak and other senior company officials, including Suresh Khetwani, Chief Corporate Safety & Environment, Tata Power, and Nilesh Pothode, Chief Operations. "Our focus on skill development is a key part of TPNODL's commitment to empowering our workforce and the community," said Basak. "We're pleased to launch this centre in Rajanjan, following similar ones in Balasore, Betonati, and Joda. Another centre is set to open in Panikoi by March."



Economy to grow at 6.4%, says FICCI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: Industry body FICCI Thursday lowered India's growth projection for the current financial year to 6.4 per cent from 7 per cent estimated earlier.

According to FICCI's Economic Outlook Survey, the revised projection is in line with the broad expectations and reflect a notable slowdown vis-à-vis 8.2 per cent GDP growth recorded in 2023-24.

"...FICCI's Economic Outlook Survey projects an annual median GDP growth forecast of 6.4 per cent for 2024-25. The forecast in the current survey marks a moderation from 7.0 per cent estimate (for 2024-25) put out in the previous round conducted during the month of September last year," it said.

The survey was conducted in December 2024 and drew responses from leading economists representing industry, banking and financial services sector.

The participating economists observed global economy in 2025 to present a reasonable growth trajectory, with an underlying note of caution.

Sharing their perspective on the expected impact of US President Donald Trump's policies on the Indian economy, the economists indicated the possibility of short-term disruptions through channels like exports, foreign capital flows, and input costs for the US trading partners including India. The Union Budget for 2025-26, set to be presented February 1, arrives amidst global economic uncertainties and moderating domestic growth.

EV onslaught in 2025 despite slowing global demand

REUTERS

New Delhi, Jan 16: Automakers operating in India plan to launch close to a dozen new electric car models this year, many in the premium market, with longer driving ranges and faster charging times, to attract buyers as demand for EVs slows down globally.

Electric cars will take centre stage at India's five-day auto show in New Delhi starting Friday with models from new Vietnamese entrant Vinfast shown alongside domestic brands Maruti Suzuki and Mahindra & Mahindra as well as global rivals BYD, Toyota and Hyundai.

India's EV market leaders Tata Motors and JSW-MG Motor, part-owned by China's

SAIC Motor will showcase an expanded line-up in the world's third-largest car market where tighter emission norms starting from 2027 are forcing a move to cleaner cars.

India's EV market is small, with electric models making up about 2.5% of the 4.3 million cars sold in 2024 as high prices and a patchy charging network hold back buyers. The government wants to grow this to 30% by 2030.

Globally, electric car sales growth slowed to 13% in 2024 from a year ago but crossed 10 million units for the first time, according to data from research firm RhoMotion.

While EV sales growth in India is also slowing, rising 20% in 2024 from a year ago to about 100,000 units, it outpaced the overall car market growth



of 5% over the same period. Auto industry executives say new models with longer ranges and faster charging times could lift demand, with analysts forecasting electric car sales in India to double this year.

The first EVs in India, mostly from market leader Tata Mo-

tors, were gasoline cars converted to electric, delivering a range of up to 300 kilometres (186 miles) on a single charge, which many found inadequate for inter-city journeys.

The majority of new launches are designed as EVs from the start at a minimum range

■ Carmakers in India to launch at least a dozen new EVs in 2025

■ VinFast, BYD, Hyundai, Maruti Suzuki to showcase new EVs

■ EV sales in India grew 20% in 2024, outpacing total car sales

The path to a faster electric takeoff really works better if you have all electrified vehicles being encouraged in a proportionate manner

VIKRAM GULATI | HEAD, TOYOTA

of 400 km. Some automakers, such as Mahindra, are offering more than 600 km and fast charging from 20%-80% in under 20 minutes.

Mahindra's two electric SUV launches for this year are priced at \$22,000 to \$35,000. The average price of a car in India is around \$12,000, with more expensive models growing at a faster pace than affordable ones.

EV maker VinFast, which is building a car factory in southern India, will display its mini-SUV VF3, a three-row MPV, the VF9, among others.

"India's burgeoning middle class, coupled with strong government incentives to promote EV adoption, makes it a natural focus for VinFast's global expansion," the carmaker said.

Some carmakers also plan to show other clean fuel technologies such as plug-in hybrid cars, flex-fuel models, hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and gas-based cars alongside EVs.

FIH Pro League in City soon

The Indian men's team will face Spain, while their women counterparts will take on England February 15 at the Kalinga Stadium

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: The Indian men's and women's hockey teams will commence their international assignments this year with the high-profile FIH Pro League matches here from February 15.

The Indian men's team will face Spain, while their women counterparts will take on England February 15 at the Kalinga Stadium.

Most of the Indian men's and women's team players are currently playing in the Hockey India League (HIL) in Rourkela and Ranchi respectively.

The Bhubaneswar leg of the FIH Pro League will be after the Australia leg (February 04-09) in Sydney.

Between February 15 and 25, the men's teams of India, Spain, England, Germany and Ireland will go head-to-head with all teams reaching the half-way point of their season by the end of the Bhubaneswar stage.

Following the Australian leg, the league will move to Bhubaneswar, India, renowned for its passionate hockey fan base. It will be the same in the women's competition for India, Spain, England, Germany and Netherlands, FIH said in a release.

With 24 matches over the 11 days, the action will be unceasing among the top ranked teams in the world, which will be a true showcase of the 'League of the Best'.

The FIH Pro League action this year will begin in Australia. The Kookaburras, who won the title in the previous edition, will start off their de-



fence against reigning Olympic champions Netherlands and Spain.

The Hockeyroos will also start their 2024-25 campaign simultaneously, facing off against China and Spain.

Both the Spanish teams will play their first matches of the season in the Sydney stage of the Pro League, with the women's team making their first appearance since 2020 having qualified for the current season by winning the FIH Hockey Nations Cup in 2024.

China women will look to continue their strong start to the season after taking eight points from the opening four games of their season, played at home in Hangzhou.

Netherlands men, meanwhile, will be hoping to return to their best, after an uncharacteristic start slow saw them pick up no wins in their open-

ing four games, totalling six points through three draws and a loss.

The FIH Pro League action will also simultaneously continue in Argentina as the Bhubaneswar stage goes on, with Santiago del Estero hosting the final stage from the first half of the season from February 19 to 24.

Locking horns in front of the large crowds will be Argentina, Belgium and Australia, in both the men's and women's competition.

At the end of the Bhubaneswar and Santiago del Estero stages, all men and women teams will have played eight matches, marking the halfway point of the season, giving us a clear picture of the title race for the 2024-25 season.

Australia men and Netherlands women are the title holders from the previous season.

SHUTTLERS SHINE TO REACH QFs

Sindhu, Kiran enter quarterfinals; Satwik-Chirag too advance at India Super 750

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu progressed to the quarterfinals, while Kiran George delivered a gritty performance under pressure to keep the home flag flying in men's singles at the India Open badminton tournament here Thursday.

Title contenders Satwik-sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who had won the 2022 edition, recovered from an opening game reversal to beat



Japan's Kenya Mitsuhashi and Hiroki Okamura 20-22 21-14 21-16 to inch closer to the crown.

"I think they were quite good in their flat exchanges. As I said, we can speed up controlling easy errors which we shouldn't have. I think we were cruising quite comfortably in

the first game, but happy that we could. However tired the game was, we still managed to beat," Chirag said.

Sindhu cruised past Japan's world No. 46 Manami Suizu with a 21-15 21-13 win, while Kiran pulled off a stunning recovery, saving six game points

to outlast Alex Lanier 22-20 21-13 to enter his maiden quarterfinals of a super 750 event at the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall here.

Sindhu, a former world champion, will now face Paris Olympics bronze medallist Gregoria Mariska Tunjung, while Kiran will take on left-handed Chinese shuttler Hong Yang Weng in the next round.

In other results, mixed doubles pair of Tanisha Crasto and Dhruv Kapila went down to eighth seed Hiroki Midorikawa and Natsu Saito 18-21 17-21.

Women's doubles combination of Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha, Rutuparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda and mixed doubles pair of Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh also were knocked out in the second round.

Kho Kho WC: Teams continue dominance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: Indian men's and women's teams continued its unbeaten streak to enter the quarterfinals of the Kho Kho World Cup here Thursday.

The men's team defeated Bhutan 71-34 and also guaranteed their position at the top of Group A.

The hosts set the tone early in the first turn, displaying exceptional attacking prowess to accumulate 32 points.

In the second turn, India showcased their defensive expertise, effectively containing Bhutan's attacks.

Meanwhile, the women's team notched a commanding victory over Malaysia. Starting with a spectacular 'Dream Run' by defenders Bhilar Opinaben and Monika, eves showcased their prowess across all four turns, ultimately securing an emphatic 80-point win.

The victory cemented their position atop Group A with a massive score difference, setting up a quarterfinal clash with Bangladesh.

Full points for Odisha FC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: Odisha Football Club registered their first win of the Indian Women's League (IWL) this season, beating HOPS FC 2-0 at the Ambedkar Stadium here Thursday.

Lynda Kom's (66th minutes) second goal in two games and Jennifer Yeboah's (84th) first finished off a HOPS side, which has now suffered two defeats in a row at home.

Odisha's young squad, devoid of the star names of previous seasons, had laboured for a point against Gokulam Kerala in their opener.

Up against HOPS, who had faced a tough loss to Nita FA, Odisha needed time till the 23rd minute to come up with the first real shot at goal. And, when it came, it was a weak long-range effort by Kiran Pisdha, saved easily by Priti Sarkar.

Odisha's build-up play was brilliant, especially when they passed the ball in midfield, with Lynda Kom, Kajol Dsouza and Grace Lalrampari linking up



in triangles at every available opportunity.

Their inability to find a pass in the final third let them down.

HOPS played their part well, defending in numbers and also conjuring up half chances on the counter when they could. They never really put Shreya Hooda to the test, the closest chance being a Gladys Amfobea volley from a corner, flying wide.

Odisha coach Crispin

Chettri decided to shake things up in the second half, and introduced new signing Kashmina in the midfield. The midfielder brought greater urgency to their play almost immediately.

Pisdha and Yeboah spurned great chances just after the hour mark, the latter in particular drawing a sharp save from Sarkar having been played in by a brilliant Kajol through ball.

STRICT ACTION

BCCI unveils 10-point diktat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: Mandatory domestic cricket, restriction on the presence of families and personal staff on tours and a bar on individual endorsements during series were among a slew of measures that the BCCI unveiled Thursday in a 10-point policy to promote "discipline and unity" in the embattled national cricket team.

Non-compliance would invite sanctions, including cuts in their retainer fee from central contracts and a bar on participating in the cash-rich Indian Premier League. The measures have been announced in the wake of the team's disastrous tour of Australia which was preceded by a series whitewash against New Zealand at home.

The Board has approved only a two-week window for families to stay with the players during overseas tours, besides imposing restrictions on personal staff, and commercial shoots.

The document also states that from now on, players won't be allowed to travel separately during a tour and would also be discouraged from leaving early in case a tour or a match ends early.

Odisha Warriors win in penalty shootout



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, Jan 16: Jocelyn Bartram pulled off three saves to help Odisha Warriors beat Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers 3-2 in penalty shootout after their Women's Hockey India League match ended 1-1 in regulation time here Thursday.

Baljeet Kaur (8th) struck for Odisha Warriors while Beauty Dungdung (16th) scored for Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers in the regulation time.

Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers came close to taking the lead in the third min-

ute as Ashley Hoffman played a pass from the goal-line. However, both Lalremsiami and Hannah Cotter missed the pass.

Bengal Tigers won the first penalty corner, but Warriors goalkeeper Jocelyn Bartram reacted well to stop Hoffman's drag flick.

Odisha Warriors took the lead against the run of play through Baljeet Kaur. Victoria Sauze slapped the ball towards the post from outside the circle, and Baljeet was at the right place to deflect the ball past Jennifer Rizzo into the goal.

Bengal Tigers had the chance to equalise in the final minute of the first quarter as they won a penalty corner, but it went begging as the Tigers failed to trap the injection clearly, allowing the Warriors to play out the clock.

The Tigers did not have to wait for long in the second quarter to get back on level terms as Beauty Dungdung received the ball in the circle and shot home.

The Warriors gave away a needless penalty corner in the 27th minute after having six foreign players on the field instead of a maximum five. Bartram saved her side by keeping out Udita's drag flick.

The Tigers won another penalty corner with five seconds left in the half but Udita was unable to direct her drag flick at goal.

Kalinga Lancers trounce Delhi SG Pipers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rourkela, Jan 16: Dutchman Thery Brinkman struck a brace as Vedanta Kalinga Lancers defeated Delhi SG Pipers 5-1 in a men's Hockey India League match here Thursday.

Brinkman scored two field goals in the 38th and 43 minutes, while Nicholas Bandurak (11th), Arthur van Doren (36th) and Gursahibjit Singh (45th) were the other goal getters for Kalinga Lancers.

Delhi SG Pipers' lone goal was scored by Corey Weyer in the 46th minute. Delhi SG Pipers are currently languishing at the bottom of the eight-team table with four points from seven games.

The win, however, propelled Kalinga Lancers to the third spot with 10 points from seven games.

Delhi SG Pipers started on the front foot and secured the first pen-



alty corner of the match in the fourth minute, only to be denied by Kalinga Lancers goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak.

While Delhi had the better share of possession in the first quarter, it

was Kalinga Lancers who struck first in the 11th minute from a counter attack through Nicholas Bandurak's strike from a field effort.

Down by a goal, Delhi SG Pipers continued to attack and won a penalty corner soon but Gareth Furlong's flick was saved by an alert Pathak. Shamsheer looked to score off a rebound but missed.

Kalinga Lancers doubled their lead in the 36th minute through Arthur Van Doren, who scored with a perfect deflection from a penalty corner past Delhi SG Pipers keeper Pawan.

Kalinga Lancers extended their lead two minutes later through Brinkman who stole the ball and sent it past into the net from a one-on-one situation with Pawan.

The Lancers scored their fifth goal two minutes later through Gursahibjit Singh, who finished the move with a simple tap-in.

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