



SINGER BY CHANCE

Playback singer Shirley Setia reveals that she was once discouraged from learning music by her family

LEISURE P2



ZELENSKYY SEEKS TANKS

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urges the West to supply heavy tanks to boost its firepower against Russia

INTERNATIONAL P9



CRUCIAL KNOCK

Shantanu Mishra's unbeaten ton helps Odisha close in on Nagaland's first innings total in their Ranji Trophy game

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

Matric summative exams start March 10

Cuttack: The Board of Secondary Education (BSE) in Odisha, which conducts the Class-X exams for Odia medium students, has decided to hold this year's matriculation examinations from March 10 to March 17. Over six lakh students will appear in the examinations this year in regular, ex-regular, madhyama (Sanskrit) and Open School Certificate streams. Under the new pattern, the BSE is now conducting a total of six assessments for Class-X students in a year, that includes four formative assessments (FAs) and two summative assessments (SAs). BSE president Ramashish Hajra said that the exams in March will be known as Summative Assessment II (SA-II). He added that students have already appeared in FA-I, FA-II and SA-I. P3

Dolphin count rises slightly in Odisha

Bhubaneswar: There has been a slight increase in the number of dolphins in Odisha as per the census report released Thursday. The number of dolphins has increased to 733 from the 726 spotted in 2021. The census was carried out December 21 to 23, last year. It states that out of the total number registered, 550 dolphins have been sighted alone in Gahirmatha and Bhitarkanika. Nine teams led by DFO Sudarshan Gopinath Yadav and comprising wildlife experts had carried out the headcount in the three-day exercise. Among the species spotted were humpback, chinensis, bottlenose and spinner dolphins. P5

Another drag horror death in West Bengal

Kolkata: In what looks like a rerun of the Kanjhawala incident in Delhi, a scooter-borne man met a similar end after being hit and dragged by a dumper truck for about 1.5 km in West Bengal's Siliguri Thursday evening. Local police sources said the incident took place in front of the University of North Bengal campus at around 8.30pm Thursday, when the victim, Ananta Das, was returning home on this scooter and was hit by the dumper truck. The two-wheeler somehow got stuck to the truck and soon caught fire charring the victim.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, not Covid. This is to protect myself from co-passengers who feel like peeing on me

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	60353.27	↓ 304.18
NIFTY	17992.15	↓ 50.80
DOLLAR	82.81	↑ ₹0.14
EURO	87.13	↓ ₹0.45
GOLD	₹55,327	↓ ₹440
SILVER	₹68,180	↓ ₹1138

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	26.2°C	26.5°C
MAX	26.2°C	26.5°C
MIN	15.8°C	15.2°C
Humidity	77%	75%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Shallow to moderate fog likely	



HOCKEY FEVER: As the Capital city gears up for the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup, a replica of the trophy installed at Housing Board Square in Unit IV grabs eyeballs PHOTO: BIKASH NAYAK

SC slams CBI over chit fund probe

The Supreme Court points out that many cases in Odisha have still not reached their logical end due to lackadaisical approach by probe agencies

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Jan 5: The Supreme Court expressed Thursday dissatisfaction with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for its inordinate delay in investigation of financial scams. It made the observations while hearing a PIL seeking probe in the multi-crore chit fund scam in Odisha.

A two-judge bench of SC comprising Justices MR Shah and CT Ravikumar observed that whenever CBI and Enforcement Directorate (ED) are in the fray probing financial scams, there is delay in taking those to a logical end. "Whenever CBI and ED come into the picture in investigating financial scams, there is delay. Show us where it has come to logical conclusion. In most cases, money has gone to tax haven countries. The accused will be enjoying in London. We have to change the system," the bench observed.

The Supreme Court noted that chit fund scams are a very serious issue and asked the CBI to file its response on the petition seeking probe in chit fund scam. The bench posted the matter for hearing Monday. The apex court as-



1,403 persons arrested in chit fund cases related to Odisha

₹83cr returned to over 2 lakh depositors

serted that it cannot spend 10-15 years in hearing a case.

Earlier in November 2022, the Odisha government had informed the Supreme Court that it has filed chargesheets in 334 cases out of 806 registered in connection with the chit fund scam in the state and paid compensation to 2.10 lakh depositors to the tune of ₹83.46 crore.

The Odisha government had earlier filed a status report in the apex court on a petition seeking probe in multi-crore chit fund scam and compensation to depositors. The Odisha government submitted that the Economic Offences Wing and the district police have registered 806 cases against the persons and financial establishments involved in unauthorised collection of public deposits and chit fund activities

from 2011 to till date. It said that the EOW has registered 67 cases and the district police have registered 739 cases against 280 companies.

In the affidavit filed by it, the Odisha government said it had also passed orders in 83 cases to attach properties of 65 companies involved in chit fund scams. Out of them, orders in 28 cases have been made absolute and the rest 55 cases are pending for adjudication in different designated courts, it added.

"So far, 1,403 accused persons have been arrested/remanded. The trials are in different stages in different courts including designated courts under OPID Act and in the meantime 12 cases have ended in conviction of the accused persons," the Odisha government had submitted.

4 held for thrashing 1st yr BJB student

The accused have been barred from entering college on charges of 'ragging' till further notice

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: The Commissionerate police arrested Thursday four students including three minors for thrashing a fellow junior over an alleged love affair inside the campus of the BJB Autonomous College here. The accused senior student has been identified as Chinmaya Behera, 18 and is Plus-II 2nd year student of the college.

Police held the accused students after registering a case (No. 5/23) on the basis of a complaint registered by the victim's girlfriend



January 4. She had alleged that the accused persons thrashed the victim, who is a first year student. The college falls under Badagada police limits here in the state capital.

The incident sparked widespread resentment after the video of the attack went viral. City police soon swung into action and started a probe into the incident detaining the accused persons.

Police officials said that the accused had warned the victim not

to keep relationship with the girl. However, he did not pay heed to the warnings which irked seniors.

When Chinmaya and his friends again saw the two together, they beat the boy black and blue. Efforts by others to prevent the accused from thrashing the boy went in vain.

Chinmaya was produced in court Thursday and sent to judicial custody while police presented the minors before the Juvenile Justice Board here which sent them to a correctional home.

The college management also came down hard on the accused and suspended the four till further orders. Although officials in the college said that the students had been suspended for 'ragging', police did not term it so. Bhubaneswar DCP Prateek Singh told mediapersons that it was a 'personal attack' and not a case of ragging.

ODISHA ON 5G RADAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: Union IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw along with Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched Thursday the high-speed fifth generation (5G) telecom service in Odisha. The Odisha capital and Cuttack became the first cities in Odisha to get 5G services. The 5G services have been unveiled in Odisha in the first phase of national launch, much before the first phase deadline (March, 2023), Vaishnaw informed.

"We have set a target to cover entire Odisha within the next two

years," Vaishnaw said. "A total of 5,000 towers will be constructed within the next 18 months," the minister added. He informed that 5G services will be available in Rourkela, Berhampur, Puri, Sambalpur, and Balasore by February. Initially Jio and Airtel will be providing services.

Vaishnaw also informed that for revival of BSNL, the Centre has allocated ₹1.64 lakh crore. BSNL will start rolling out 5G services by 2024, Vaishnaw said.

Pradhan, meanwhile said 5G services will act as a game-changer for Odisha as it will help tremendously in the education, health and telemedicine sectors. **MORE P4**

Three arrested for threatening lady SI

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: Commissionerate Police finally arrested Thursday three persons for threatening woman sub-inspector (SI), Subhasree Nayak deployed at Mahila Police station here and brandishing swords to create panic on the intervening night of January 1 and 2. The accused were identified as Kuna Chandra Sahoo, 23, of Ranpur in Nayagarh district, Arabinda Mahakud, 28, of Manamunda and Pradeep Behera, 35, of Puruna Katak in Boudh district. The accused were staying at Saheed Nagar in the state capital.

DCP Parateek Singh while speaking to mediapersons said that it is a case of road rage. The vehicle in which the accused were travelling came on a collision course with the car of the SI on a narrow stretch near the Reserve Police Office. The three, who were allegedly under the influence of alcohol, then abused the lady SI and threatened her by brandishing a sword.

Based on the complaint, Saheed Nagar police registered a case and launched a manhunt to identify and nab the accused. After examination of the CCTV footage in and around the place of the incident, police identified the accused and arrested them from different places in Cuttack and Puri.

However, Singh informed that the police did not find any sword inside the vehicle.

It should be stated here that Nayak during the Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, had earned praise from actor superstar Chiranjeevi as she fed an elderly woman who had been abandoned.

When William attacked Harry for courting Meghan

THE TELL-ALL AUTOBIOGRAPHY REVEALS THE HINDRANCES PRINCE HARRY FACED FOR FALLING IN LOVE WITH MARKLE AND HOW THE ROYAL FAMILY DEMEANED HER

AGENCIES

London, Jan 5: Prince Harry has made a shocking revelation in his upcoming autobiography that his brother Prince William 'knocked' him to the floor during an argument over his American wife Meghan Markle, according to a media report here. The autobiography titled *Spare* also reveals the abusive words used by Prince William against Meghan.

Describing a confrontation at his London home in 2019, Harry says William called Meghan 'difficult', 'rude' and 'abrasive', which Harry calls a 'parrot (ing) of the press narrative' about his American wife, according to 'The Guardian', which says it has seen a copy of the duke's memoir *Spare*.



Prince Harry (right) has never shared a good rapport with Prince William; (Inset): Cover of the book

The confrontation escalated, Harry writes, until William 'grabbed me by the collar, ripping my neck-

lace, and... knocked me to the floor', the paper has quoted the book while publishing the narrative.

"I landed on the dog's bowl, which cracked under my back, the pieces cutting into me. I lay there for a moment, dazed, then got to my feet and told him (William) to get out," Harry writes in the book.

The extraordinary scene, which Harry says resulted in visible injury to his back, is one of many in the book, which will be published worldwide next week. The book is likely to spark a serious furore for the British royal family.

The Kensington Palace said it 'has no comment to make'.

The book's title comes from an old saying in royal and aristocratic circles: that a first son is an heir to titles, power and fortune, and a second is, therefore, a 'spare', should anything happen to the first-born, 'The Guardian' report added.

Spare is a remarkable volume, in which the altercation between the two princes forms a startling passage. Harry, 38, writes that William, 40, wanted to talk about 'the whole rolling catastrophe' of their relationship and struggles with the press.

After William complained about Meghan, Harry told him he was repeating the press narrative and that he expected better. But William, Harry says, was not being rational, leading to the two men shouting over each other.

Harry met Meghan in 2016. They married at Windsor Castle in 2018. However, more than their marriage it has been their rift with the royal family which has sparked off worldwide attention. Currently Harry and Meghan live in California.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Today will be as agreeable as any day can be. You are satisfied with what you have, says Ganesh. Besides, you have already planned on what you desire and are moving towards it. A date of romantic nature may turn out to be interesting or it may lead to a controversy; you have to decide on it.

TAURUS
You can expect a pleasant, comfortable day at the office, today, so says Ganesh. You will be carrying out your work cheerfully and effortlessly. You could, later in the evening, have a strong urge to go out for dinner with your family and friends.

GEMINI
You face a hectic and demanding day today. You will spend your entire day wondering how best to channelise your energy and enthusiasm. You may be prone to extreme mood swings as well. Meditative techniques should help you keep your mind calm, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will tend to try new recipes at home. Family members will take advantage and enjoy it. You will indulge in pastimes. Arrival of guests will bring in an air of festivity and happiness, says Ganesh.

LEO
You will be filled with extraordinary self-confidence and will be able to take on huge risks. Sportspeople will be able to make a lot of progress in their fields. You will square off against any obstacles in your way using your entire might. While it is a good day for you, keep a curb on your speculations, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Take a little break today, and spend some time looking within. At your office there may be some bitter confrontations, so Ganesh advises you to be very careful and try to prevent things from getting too difficult. In matters of love, a new romance may develop.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today you will try to be adept in your favorite subject. Today you will be buying antique artistic things too. If there are any legal proceedings going on then the results will be in your favor. You shall be a success in everything that you touch today. Your artistic streak will come to the fore today and you will develop an interest in the fine arts

SCORPIO
A series of events at work front may keep you busy throughout the day. You may be unable to manage the clutter and confusion created by too many things at the same time. However, you emerge a fighter because of your power of resilience. Ganesh advises to go slow, yet steady; take one problem at a time and sort it out.

SAGITTARIUS
You are caught in a whirlpool of emotions, predicts Ganesh. You may come across many ups and downs today. However, nothing seems to deter you from your determination and dedication towards work.

CAPRICORN
By and large, your life today will be dull. But, there isn't something unfavourable or negative about it, assures Ganesh, as the planetary movements signal a change, probably a positive one, happening in the near future. So, keep your chin up and get ready for a better tomorrow.

AQUARIUS
You are armed with good communication skills, and like always, it will come to your aide today, too. There is one problem though. You are not clear about your emotions and it may make your arms blunt, foresees Ganesh. Make sure that you are able to identify your feelings and don't make any disastrous decisions based on that confusion.

PISCES
Your energy and enthusiasm will know no bounds today, as everything seems to fall into place, seemingly on its own. You will blaze a new trail at the work-place. Certain tough calls may leave you off-balance momentarily, but you will come out of it with flying colours.



ELLIE GOULDING DENIES CHEATING ON SHEERAN

Singer Ellie Goulding has dismissed rumour that she once cheated on Ed Sheeran. Before heading out for her New Year's Eve plans, the singer posted a casual TikTok video. However, a follower tried to stir up trouble in the comments section by writing, "can't believe u cheated on Ed." Goulding promptly responded, "False!!!!"

SIMON COWELL WAS ONCE OFFERED HIS OWN TALK SHOW

TV personality Simon Cowell doesn't believe he's talk show host material. In a recent interview with *E! News*, the *America's Got Talent* judge revealed that he has no plans to host his own daytime talk show - and even backed out of a previous offer to do so, reports *people.com*.



Rakul 'invites' students to attend sex education class

Mumbai: After playing a gynaecologist in the film *Doctor G* alongside Ayushmann Khurrana, Rakul Preet Singh will now play the role of a condom tester in her next. Opting for an unconventional role like that, her next *Chhatrivali* aims at educating the society about the importance of safe sex and inspiring people to be more open about the subject.

The *Cut Putli* actress recently took to Instagram to share the motion poster of *Chhatrivali* in which she is seen posing with a blackboard that features the diagrams of male and female reproductive parts, whereas she is holding a book of Concise Biology with students seated in front of her. The motion poster indicates the way students often have several questions about

sex in their mind and how, Rakul, will attempt to solve them.

Considering the unique job profile of the actress, the film is also expected to be an attempt to remove the stigma attached to sex and subject related to it. Talking about the film and her character in it, Rakul had earlier said, "It's quite an interesting and hatke subject and I am very thrilled about starting the journey of my character. It's important to highlight some issues in a light-hearted way and that has got me pretty excited."

AGENCIES



OSNA'S DRAMA FEST ON ODIA LEGENDS: DAY 2



A scene from Odia play *Kabya Shilpi Gangadhar*, based on the life of Swabhabakabi Gangadhar Meher, staged at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Thursday. Presented by Abamir Gunda Natya Sansad of Padmapur (Bargarh), the drama was written by Ashok Bahidar and directed by Akademi award winner Keshu Ranjan Pradhan. Titled *Natak Utsav*, the event is being organised by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi (OSNA) in collaboration with the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, on the life of five legendary personalities of Odisha.

OP PHOTO

OSCAR RACE RRR nets 11 mentions on Variety shortlists

Los Angeles: The *Variety* editor responsible for making the Hollywood bible's predictions for the Oscars and Emmys has a lot of good news for the makers of *RRR*.

If Clayton Davis had the casting vote at the Academy, *RRR* would be a close runner-up to *Close*, Lukas Ghont's 2022 Cannes Grand Prix-winning coming-of-age movie, in the Best Picture and the International Feature categories.

And if Davis were the God of All Things at the Academy, music composer MM Keeravaani, along with playback singers Suddala Ashok Teja and Kala Bhairava, would come home with the Oscar for *Kuruman Bhemudoo*, staving off a challenge from *Naatu Naatu*.

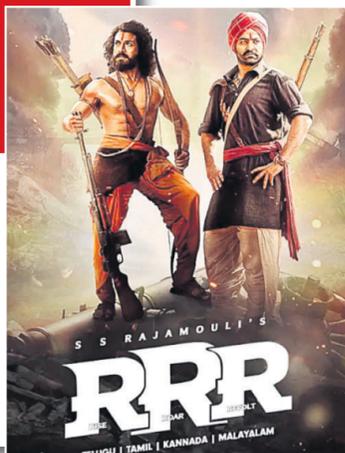
The period drama's director, SS Rajamouli, is in the running for Best Director, but he gets an honourable mention, in a field topped by Todd Field, the helmer of the highly anticipated film, *Tar*.

Also to land an honourable mention is *RRR* star Jr NTR for Best Actor in a Leading Role, where the favourite is the Elvis star, Austin Butler.

Similarly, Vijayendra Prasad is on for Original Screenplay, Sabu Cyril for Production Design, A Sreekar Prasad for Film Editing, KK Senthil Kumar for Best Cinematography, MM Keeravaani in the shortlist for Original Score.

RRR is also again in Davis's shortlist for Visual Effects and earns an honourable mention for Sound.

IAN S



Shirley calls herself a singer by chance

Mumbai: Shirley Setia, who is slowly but steadily making her mark in Hindi film industry, recently revealed that she was discouraged from learning music by her family who saw it just as a hobby and not as a profession.

In an interview with a news portal, Shirley called herself a singer by chance. The actress also revealed that her first career choice was actually doing something in the marketing field. That was also something that her parents also

wanted her to focus on.

Shirley recalled posting her singing videos on YouTube and receiving positive reviews from the viewers. The actress then took music a little more seriously and devoted time to learning music by herself.

The singer added that despite how her family reacted initially, today they are her biggest cheerleaders. According to her, now that they have seen how much it means to her, they are extremely supportive. She also revealed that her family has cut out articles about her and her mom keeps it on a shelf.

On the work front, Shirley was last seen in *Nikamma* co-starring Abhimanyu Dassani and Shilpa Shetty.

AGENCIES



TRIDHARA TO ORGANISE PADMAVATI-AN AVATAR

Bhubaneswar: Tridhara, a pioneering dance institution which treasures and upholds the unique style of late Guru Debaprasad Das, is organising *Padmavati-An Avatar* at Utkala Rangamancha, Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Odissi Research Centre, Bhubaneswar, Friday.

"The event will be a solo thematic operatic Bharatnatyam production which will be presented by Bharatnatyam exponent and scholar Kalamaimani Bala Devi Chandrashekar who will be conferred with Guru Debaprasad Nrutya Ratna Award, said Tridhara's director Gajendra Kumar Panda.

Talking about Bala Devi Chandrashekar, she is known for her distinct scholarly style and takes on subjects based on ancient texts supported by intense research. She

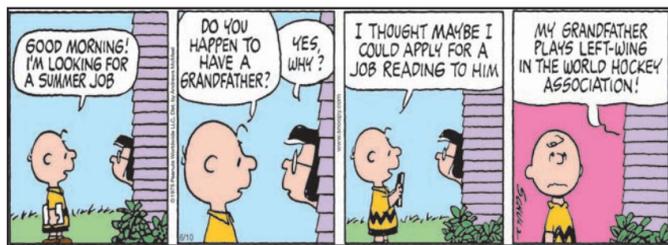
collaborates with renowned scholars in their respective fields, carving messages from scriptures relevant to the contemporary world and actively presenting this art form around the world. Her lineage is from a family of philosophers and literary scholars. Through her classical dance, Bala strives to interpret ancient philosophical, esoteric concepts and present them in a distinct classical style that is always contemporary in interpretation and communicates across cultures.

PNN



Kalamaimani Bala Devi Chandrashekar

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

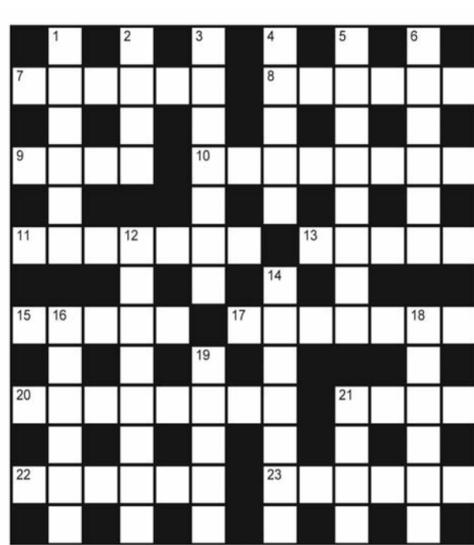


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

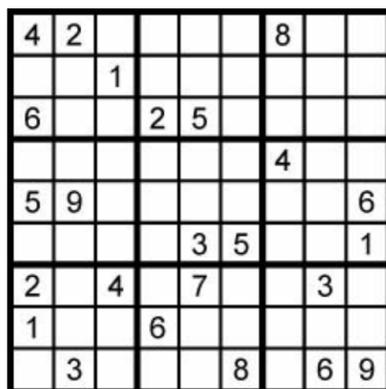


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- Across**
- 7 Brazilian port
 - 8 Flag or banner
 - 9 Very dry, as wine
 - 10 Extroverted
 - 11 Template, of sorts
 - 13 Air freshener option
 - 15 Blacksmith's block
 - 17 Mountain sheep
 - 20 Thick dark syrup
 - 21 Delicate fabric
 - 22 Platitudes
 - 23 Smooth, in music
 - 4 Breakwater
 - 5 Fill with wonder
 - 6 Schedule
 - 12 Irritation
 - 14 Minced meat dish
 - 16 Lonely pasta piece?
 - 18 Enumerate
 - 19 Michaelmas daisy
 - 21 Racing sled
- Down**
- 1 Clandestine
 - 2 Help for the stumped
 - 3 Type of exercise

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

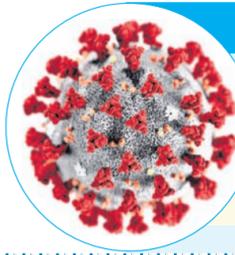
downtown

COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	66,69,03,120	63,86,08,652	67,04,727
India	4,46,79,319	4,41,46,055	5,30,710
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

JOB FAIR

A mini job fair-cum-counselling camp was organised by Khurda district administration and OSDA at Unit 8 Boys' High School in Bhubaneswar, Thursday



'Music in Park' held to wow hockey lovers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: City Mayor Sulochana Das Thursday inaugurated a community outreach programme 'Music in Park' at Buddha Park here in the presence of Bhubaneswar North MLA Susanta Kumar Rout.



"The event is being held to boost the denizens' enthusiasm for the Hockey World Cup. Tourists and hockey lovers from different parts of the world will visit the City during the event and we will express our hospitality by decorating significant places and organising such events. We are also conducting other events to welcome the sports persons and to create awareness among students. Residents and institutions of City, through participation, will add value to our hospitality," said Das in her address.

Events like Patha Utsav, Dot Fest and other community outreach activities have been planned to enhance the people's love towards hockey. After Forest Park, Buddha Park will host three-day long 'Music in Park' events from Thursday. The programme will involve community talents and professionals to encourage citizen involvement.

On the sidelines, organised were also a hockey quiz competition and three participants were rewarded by the guests.

About 500 people participated in the event. And among dignitaries, local corporators Monalisa Sahoo, Bharati Singh, additional commissioner Laxmikanta Sethi, zonal deputy commissioner Purandar Nanda were present.

Matric exam from March 10 to 17

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: The Summative Assessment-2 (SA-2) of Class X students would be conducted from March 10 to 17, said the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) Thursday.

The practicals for vocational trade students will be held from February 15 to 22. External examiners will be appointed by the Board to conduct the practical tests, said BSE President Ramashis Hazra.

The pattern for SA-2 will be uploaded on the Board website. There will be no change in examination and nodal centres for SA-2.

Addressing a presser at BSE office in Cuttack, Hazra said that SA-2 will start March 10, 2022 and will continue till March 17.

The Class X exam for Madhyama and state open school certificate (SOSC) 2023 (first) will be held simultaneously.

Questions for all categories of students including Regular, Madhyama and others will remain the same.

The examination centres and nodal centres which were fixed in SA-1 will be the same for SA-2.

As per BSE officials, Formative Assessment-3 has already been conducted by the third week of December 2022 at school level and FA-4 is now continuing and shall be completed by second week of February.

The marks of both FA-3 and FA-4 will be uploaded by the respective mentor schools from February 15 to 22. Likewise, SA-2 of Class IX students in high schools and Madhyama schools will be conducted from February 20 to 25. Evaluation of answer-sheets will be done in neutral schools between February 22 and 28.

Senior BSE Odisha officials said the next academic session will be from April 2023 to March 2024.

The Matric SA-1 examinations for Class 10 students were conducted in November last year.

CM unveils Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: Ahead of the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup-2023, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday inaugurated the much-awaited Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium at Rourkela.

The Chief Minister inaugurated the hockey stadium amidst much fanfare in the presence of the national men's hockey team.

Both the stadium and the Hockey Practice Centre have been certified Level 1 by FIH which is the highest in its category. As a tribute, the stadium has been named after legendary tribal leader Birsa Munda.

Patnaik also inaugurated Hockey Training Centres in Sundargarh, Ganjam, Sambalpur and Rourkela.

On this landmark occasion, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said, "It is a moment of great joy and celebration for Odisha. We are not only hosting the Hockey World Cup for the second consecutive time, but have also built the world's

largest hockey stadium in Rourkela."

"This is the new Odisha. I dedicate this to the people of Sundargarh and the hockey players of our nation. I welcome the global Hockey fraternity to come and experience its grandeur," he said.

In the coming years, Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium will play a pivotal role in taking Indian Hockey to global heights, he said.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated the World Cup Village with 225 rooms that will house the teams of the upcoming World Cup. Taj has been roped in by Hockey

India to offer impeccable service and hospitality that reflects the culture of Odisha.

On this occasion, Patnaik spent some time with the National hockey team and announced an award of ₹1 crore for each Indian Hockey team player if they win the World Cup.

He wished them all the best and hoped they would lift the cup. Players praised the Odisha gov-

ernment and thanked the Chief Minister for developing a holistic ecosystem for hockey. President Hockey India Dilip Tirkey, Sports Minister Tusharkanti Behera, Secretary to CM (ST) VK Pandian, Sports Secretary R Vineel Krishna and other government officials were present during the inauguration of the stadium.

Earlier in the day, Patnaik also flagged off Mo Bus service in Rourkela. A fleet of 25 buses were rolled out. City level development projects in Rourkela were also inaugurated.



CM Naveen Patnaik unveiling the World Cup Village at Rourkela, Thursday

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Patnaik also inaugurated Government Medical College & Hospital at Sundargarh, which has been built by NTPC at a cost of ₹417.77 crore out of its Resettlement and Rehabilitation Community Development Fund.

The Hockey World Cup will be played at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar and Birsa Munda Stadium in Rourkela from January 13 to 29. Altogether 16 teams will compete with each other in the prestigious world tournament. While 24 matches will be played in Kalinga Stadium, 20 matches will be held in Birsa Munda Stadium.

Ministers invite North East CMs to Hockey WC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: Ahead of the Hockey Men's World Cup, several ministers from the state invited the Chief Ministers of North Eastern states on behalf of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to attend the tournament beginning January 13, 2023.

ST and SC Development Minister Jagannath Saraka invited Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang Thursday. Saraka met Assam Speaker Arun Kumar Upreti and handed over the invitation of the Odisha CM asking him to visit the

state for the World Cup. Similarly, Forest and Environment Minister Pradip Kumar Amat handed over the invitation to Meghalaya Minister RL Tongkhair inviting Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma to attend the mega event.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishore Das met Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio and invited him to visit Odisha for the tournament. Earlier, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash met Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga and invited him to the state.

FINAL ELECTORAL ROLLS OUT

3.23 crore voters in 146 constituencies

Revision of electoral roll for Padampur constituency was not done as the segment had gone to byelection recently

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: The office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Odisha has published the final electoral rolls of 146 Assembly constituencies of the state.

In the electoral roll, there are 3,23,49,341 voters of which 1,64,96,153 are males, 1,58,49,966 females and 3,222 belong to the third gender.

The CEO office here said the revision of the electoral roll was not done in Padampur Assembly constituency due to a byelection held in the Assembly constituency recently. The revision of electoral roll in Padampur constituency will commence January 6.

In addition to it, 78,260 advance applications from 17-plus age group prospective voters have also been received during the revision programme.

The applications will be disposed of in subsequent phases and enrolled in the respective quarter of the year. EPIC cards will be delivered at the doorsteps of the voters through speed post free of cost.

Further, the CEO office sources said during the revision, special focus was given on enrolling more and more electors from the marginalised sections of the society like Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), third genders, sex workers and persons with disabilities (PwDs).

In the 2023 draft electoral rolls, the gender ratio was 959 which has been increased to 961 in the final electoral rolls. The number of electors in the age group of 18-19 has increased from 2,10,268 in the draft electoral rolls to 4,46,779 in the final rolls. As many as 7,464 PwD electors have been marked in the electoral rolls for 2023.

The percentage of photo electors in the final electoral rolls of 2023 has increased to 99.99 per cent from 99.74 per cent in final electoral rolls in 2022. Similarly, the number of service holder voters has increased to 49,919 in the final electoral roll of 2023 from 49,897 in the draft electoral roll of 2023.

Due to change in names of schools, the nomenclature of 21,219 polling stations has been changed while locations of 373 polling stations have been changed with the approval of the Election Commission of India (ECI).



The draft photo electoral rolls of 146 Assembly constituencies were published November 9, 2022. Claims and objections for deletion, addition, correction in electoral rolls and transfer of names from one location to another were received from November 9, 2022 to December 8, 2022.

During the revision programme, 5,94,613 names were approved for first-time enrolment of names, 3,20,506 names were approved for deletion, and 2,14,000 were approved for the correction of names and other details, the CEO office said.

Covid may impact semen quality: AIIMS study

Infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus may negatively impact semen quality, according to a study on 30 males conducted by researchers at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Patna.

The team led by researchers at AIIMS Patna noted that Covid-19 can lead to multiorgan damage through the angiotensin-converting enzyme-2 receptor (ACE2), abundant in testicular tissue.

ACE2 acts as the receptor for the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, through which the virus gains entry into the host cells.

However, little information is available regarding the shedding of SARS-CoV-2 in semen - the thick, white fluid that contains sperm - and its impact on sperm formation and fertility potential.

The study, published in the Cureus Journal of Medical Science,

investigated the presence of SARS-CoV-2 in the semen of Covid-19 males. The researchers also analysed the effect of the disease on semen quality and sperm DNA fragmentation index, which reflects the integrity of and the damage to the DNA, thereby detecting potential sperm damage.

Thirty Covid-19 male patients aged 19-45 registered to AIIMS Patna hospital participated in the study between October 2020 and April 2021.

"We conducted a real-time reverse transcriptase test on all the semen samples. Detailed semen analysis, including the sperm DNA fragmentation index, was done at first sampling that is during Covid-19," the authors of the study said.

"After 74 days of the first sampling, we obtained the second sampling and repeated all the tests," they



said. The study, including researchers from AIIMS Managalagiri and AIIMS New Delhi, found that all semen samples collected in the first and second sampling tested with real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) were negative for SARS-CoV-2.

In the first sampling, semen volume, vitality, total motility, sperm concentration, and total sperm count were significantly lower; the researchers said. In contrast, semen agglutination or formation of sperm heads, head defect, DNA fragmentation index, liquefaction time,

semen viscosity, and leukocytes or white blood cells, were increased

■ Semen volume, vitality, total motility, sperm concentration, and total sperm count were found to be significantly lower in Covid-infected samples

■ Semen agglutination or formation of sperm heads, head defect, DNA fragmentation index, liquefaction time, semen viscosity, and leukocytes or white blood cells, were increased

semen viscosity, and leukocytes or white blood cells, were increased. Liquefaction time is a measure of the time it takes for the semen to turn into liquid while viscosity is the thickness of the seminal fluid. These results were reversed at the second sampling but not to

the optimum level, according to the researchers.

The findings were statistically significant suggesting "Covid-19 negatively affects semen parameters, including sperm DNA fragmentation index," the authors noted.

"Although we could not find SARS-CoV-2 in the semen, the semen quality remained poor until the second sampling," they said.

The researchers noted that assisted reproductive technology (ART) clinics and sperm banking facilities should consider assessing the semen of Covid-19 infected males. ART includes all fertility treatments in which either eggs or embryos are handled.

These clinics should exclude men with a positive history of SARS-CoV-2 until their semen quality returns to normal, the researchers added.

Centre to spend ₹8,400cr for rice to poor: Pradhan

The Union minister says of the 4.5 crore population in Odisha, 3.25 crore will get 'Modi rice' free of cost

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Thursday claimed that the Centre will spend ₹8,400 crore for distribution of the food grain among the poor in Odisha while the state government's expenditure in this regard is only ₹185 crore per annum.

The Union Education minister told reporters that the Centre will spend ₹700 crore per month which amounts to ₹8,400 crore annually to provide free rice for 3.25 crore people of Odisha under the food security scheme.

He, however, urged the state government to ensure that the poor beneficiaries get the 'Modi rice' without any hurdles.

According to a decision taken by the Union Cabinet last month, the Narendra Modi government would provide free food grain to the people for one year under Pradhan Mantri Garib Anna Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY). "Odisha's 3.25 crore people will be covered under the PMGKY and will get free of cost rice for one year," Pradhan said.

The Union minister said of the 4.5 crore population in Odisha, 3.25 crore will get 'Modi rice' free of cost. They constitute around 85 per cent of the state's population, he claimed. "Let people decide who is helpful to them. Its ₹8,400 crore versus ₹185 crore," he said.

Referring to Odisha government's cheap rice scheme where the poor people were getting rice at the rate of ₹1 a kg, Pradhan said: "The Centre was bearing 90 to 95 per cent of the cost, while the state had to take care of the rest. The state government had the responsibility to properly distribute the rice to the beneficiaries."

Of the rice priced at ₹30 per kg,

the Centre was bearing ₹27 while the state government was giving ₹2 a kg and the beneficiary gets it at the cost of ₹1.

Pradhan said now that the Centre will take full expenditure, the state has nothing to continue, but to ensure proper distribution.

Explaining the cost involved in the free rice programme, Pradhan said around 1,87,475 metric tonnes of rice will be required for distribution among 3.25 crore people of the state per month. With rice costing ₹37.28 per kg, around ₹700 crore will be spent per month and ₹8,400 crore per year by the Centre in the state, the Union Minister said.



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said, "With the Centre announcing free rice for poor, the state government's claim to provide cheap rice will end now. They (state) were giving ₹2 a kg and taking all credit of cheap rice distribution. Modi government delivers."

Odisha's Food Supplies and Consumer Affairs Minister Atanu S Nayak, however, said: "We do not compete with any one and seek mileage from welfare schemes. People know who is what. The state government is now providing free of cost rice worth ₹185 crore. The amount may increase."

The Naveen Patnaik government had first launched the cheap rice scheme in the state just before the 2009 general elections. Before the National Food Security Act came into existence, Patnaik government had introduced the scheme to provide 25 kg of rice to BPL families every month.

SPRUCING UP: Fire services personnel spray water on the trees along a median of Mahanadi Ring Road in Cuttack to clear the dusts settled on the leaves

Ensure accident-free traffic, OHRC to CP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: While hearing a plea on the unfortunate death of female student in road mishap, the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Thursday issued a slew of recommendations to the state government for a smooth traffic movement in the twin city. The OHRC has also directed the state Chief Secretary to pay a financial compensation of ₹5 lakh to the relatives of the victim who died at College Square in Cuttack September 5, 2019.

The chief secretary has been asked to pay the said amount to the victim, Ananpurna Chaudhury's relatives within two months and submit Action Taken Report (ATR) by March 31, 2023. The OHRC delivered the order while hearing a plea filed by advocate Shivasankar Mohanty.

Expressing displeasure over the unabated rise in road fatalities, the commission said that it is the duty of the commissioner police



to ensure 'zero road accident'. The commission has also asked the twin city police to initiate steps to make some stretches of roads in the city as honking free.

It advised the government to increase the strength of traffic police in various towns of the state, especially the twin city corresponding to the rise in vehicular population. The government has also suggested the refresher courses for traffic staff who should also be instructed to not ignore any violation of traffic rules.

It advised the government to take the help of experts for corrective measures to address the faulty road designs in the twin city

and replace the lighting systems on place at crossings with effective advanced alternative road designs for smooth flow traffic. The commission also asked to evict shops and stalls located alongside the road or encroaching upon the roads to avoid road jams.

The government has been advised to build more bicycle paths and free encroachments on the existing ones in the twin city. It recommended the government to encourage people to use bicycles, electronic vehicles instead of four and two-wheelers for pollution free environment and eased traffic movement.

This apart, the commission recommended the government to introduce car-pooling system, sharing same vehicle for journey, in various institutions and offices and encourage the private and public servants to use the same. It advises regular periodic inspection of traffic training institutions to ensure the learners get proper training on road safety.



TAKING STOCK: CMC Mayor Subhash Singh and Choudwar MLA Souvic Biswal inspecting the beautification work in Cuttack, Thursday

OP PHOTO

Roof-top library at Krushi Bhawan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: A roof-top library was inaugurated by the chief advisor to Chief Minister R at Krushi Bhawan here Thursday. Balakrishnan appreciated the unique initiative and stressed on the importance of reading books in today's world.

Balakrishnan while visiting the Millet Shakti Cafe and Odisha Millets Mission cell also highlighted the significance of having millet-based food items in daily diet. Later, he planted a tree in the Krushi Bhawan garden and posed for a group photo with the staff.



The event was hosted by Agriculture department principal secretary Arabinda Padhee. Agriculture special secretary, Agriculture director and officials of the department were present during the event.

SOA, Jio sign MoU for establishment of 5G lab



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University Thursday signed a MoU with Jio Platforms Ltd (JPL) for establishment of a 5G lab and collaboration towards exploring other opportunities including building new technologies such as optical communication and 6G.

A separate MoU was also signed during the programme between SOA and the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) with the objective of developing skilled manpower in the domains of interest such as management and emerging technologies through the participatory mode.

The MoU was signed during the launching of the 5G services in Odisha at the SOA auditorium which was attended by union minister for Education, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Dharmendra Pradhan and minister for Railways, Communications, Electronics and Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw.

SOA's Pro-Vice Chancellor Pradipta Kumar Nanda and STPI's

Director General Arvind Kumar signed one of the MoUs while the university's Director Manas Kumar Mallick and JPL's President Ravi P Gandhi signed the other.

The MoU between JPL and SOA underlined that JPL and/or its affiliates and group companies would work with SOA to meet the growing requirement of research and training in the latest 5G standard - 5G Standalone (SA), optical fiber networks, work on development of new services and use-cases on the 5G platform, optical fiber communication as well as other associated technology domains such as Beyond 5G (B5G) and to work on other projects.

JPL would establish 'Jio Standalone Technology Test Labs' in collaboration with SOA and work with developers of the university for sharing necessary technical information which might be necessary to execute the projects. In this regard, JPL may also set up a 5G test bed at SOA University.

Vaishnaw, while on a visit to SOA September 15 last, had suggested that a university like SOA needed to set up a 5G lab while

promising all assistance for the venture. A world class 5G lab had already been established at IIT, Madras to provide a boost to the 5G technology, he had said.

SOA Deemed to be University would help execute the project by providing the necessary infrastructure for setting up the lab and facilitate the training and developmental activities.

SOA and STPI, as per the MoU signed between them, would work together to develop skilled manpower in the domains of interest such as management, emerging technologies through a participatory mode including internships, placements, field visits, joint programmes, projects and consultancy.

The scope of the MoU included designing and delivering various industry-oriented training and certification programme for individual, corporate and industry professionals at the national and international level in the domain and technologies like Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML), to enhance the start-up eco-system in Odisha.

ARCHANA CASE

PATRA GRILLED IN JAIL BY ED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) sleuths Thursday grilled Khageswar Patra, business partner of black-mailer Archana Nag, inside the special jail at Jharpada here for more than four hours.

Following the receipt of fresh set of forensic examination report of digital gadgets of Archana from the State Forensic Science Laboratory (SFSL), the ED had earlier sought the court's permission to question Archana and Patra in the jail January 4 and 5 respectively.



Archana was grilled around six hours by ED sleuths in the jail Wednesday regarding the vital clues revealed in second phase of digital forensic report.

On the other hand, ED team Thursday visited the residence of Archana at Satya Vihar and started the process to estimate valuation of the properties owned by the lady blackmailer.

The ED has reportedly issued show-cause notices to Archana, her husband Jagabandhu Chand and Patra seeking their replies as to why their ill-gotten properties should not be attached.

Grand welcome of Hockey WC Trophy at Dhenkanal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Jan 5: The trophy of the FIH Men's World Cup Hockey 2023 received a rousing welcome at Tata Steel Meramandali (TSM) gate, as it entered Dhenkanal district, Thursday.

The MLA of Hindol, Simarani Nayak, ADM, Dhenkanal, UdayaMahapatra, Sub-Collector, Dhenkanal, Sibananda Swain, District Sports Officer, Pradipta Mohanty and Amit Kumar Singh, Chief, Iron Making, TSM, received the trophy in a function held at the gate of the Tata Steel Meramandali plant, located at Kantabania in Odapada Block.

On the arrival of the trophy from Angul district it was cheered on to the stage by an enthusiastic gathering. The dignitaries present on the occasion welcomed it with garlands.

Addressing the gathering, Simarani Nayak said, "It's a privilege for the people of the district, particularly the youth to welcome the trophy and be a part of this international event. Our effort is to encourage the youth to take in-

terest in hockey as a sport and in particular the Hockey World Cup that is being organised in Odisha this year."

Thanking the district administration in choosing Tata Steel Meramandali as the official venue to welcome the trophy and being a part of this historic occasion, Amit Kumar Singh said, "As the official partner of the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023, Tata Steel is proud to welcome the trophy to the Dhenkanal district. As the trophy is taken around, we hope it will inspire youngsters and aspiring sports persons to develop their interest in this magnificent sport."

Other Senior executives of the Company including Shailesh Verma, Managing Director, Angul Energy Limited, Ved Prakash Thakur, Chief, Shared Services, Mohit Das, Chief, Corporate Services; Shaktishree Das, Chief, Business Finance & Accounts were also present. Besides, volleyball players from local villages who are being trained by Tata Steel Foundation and members of the District Kick-Boxing Association, also fervently joined in the welcome ceremony.



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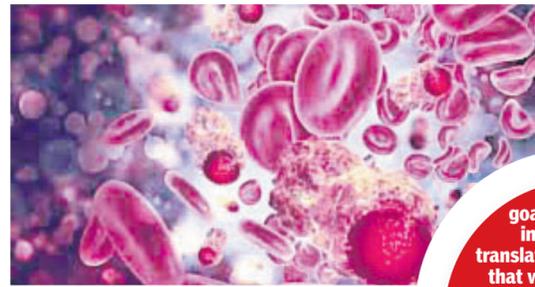
By the virtue of an affidavit No.118, Dt.28.11.2022 before the Court of Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar, I, Saswati Pattanayak resident of Plot No.1025, Ward No.65, Patrapada, Bhubaneswar, Dist.-Khorda have changed my name from Saswati Pattanayak to Dibyaa Saswati according to my Aadhaar card. Henceforth, I shall be known as Dibyaa Saswati for all future purposes.

LOST

I Sri Satyananda Sahu resident of Plot No. K3A-15, Kalinga Nagar, Ghatikia, Bhubaneswar lost the original sale deed document No. 197 of 2009, Khata No. - 731/104 at my above mentioned residence. Mob.: 9841237961.

New way to turn cancer cells into anti-cancer agents

According to the study, investigators have developed a new cell therapy approach to eliminate established tumours and induce long-term immunity, training the immune system so that it can prevent cancer from recurring



Scientists are harnessing a new way to turn cancer cells into potent, anti-cancer agents, according to a study.

According to the study, investigators have developed a new cell therapy approach to eliminate established tumours and induce long-term immunity, training the immune system so that it can prevent cancer from recurring.

In the latest work from Brigham and Women's Hospital, the team of researchers tested their dual-action, cancer-killing vaccine in an advanced mouse model of the deadly brain cancer glioblastoma, with promising results, said the study. Findings are published in

the journal Science Translational Medicine.

"Our team has pursued a simple idea: to take cancer cells and transform them into cancer killers and vaccines," said corresponding author Khalid Shah, director of the Centre for Stem Cell and Translational Immunotherapy (CSTI) and the vice chair of research in the Department of Neurosurgery at the Brigham and faculty at Harvard Medical School and Harvard Stem Cell Institute (HSCI).

"Using gene engineering, we are repurposing cancer cells to develop a therapeutic that kills tumour cells and stimulates the im-

mune system to both destroy primary tumours and prevent cancer," said Shah.

Cancer vaccines are an active area of research for many labs, but the approach that Shah and his colleagues have taken is distinct, the study said.

Instead of using inactivated tumour cells, the team repurposes living tumour cells, which possess an unusual feature. Like homing pigeons returning to roost, living tu-

mour cells will travel long distances across the brain to return to the site of their fellow tumour cells.

Taking advantage of this unique property, Shah's team engineered living tumour cells using the gene editing tool CRISPR-Cas9 and repurposed them to release tumour cell killing agent, the study said.

The engineered tumour cells were also designed to express factors that would make them easy for the immune system to spot, tag and remember, priming the immune system for a long-term anti-tumour response, the study said.

The team tested their repurposed CRISPR-enhanced and reverse-engineered therapeutic tumour cells (ThTC) in different mice strains including the one that bore bone marrow, liver and thymus cells derived from humans, mimicking the human immune micro-environment, the study said. Shah's team also built a two-layered safety switch into the cancer cell, which, when activated, eradicates ThTCs if needed. This dual-action cell therapy was safe, applicable, and efficacious in these models, suggesting a road map toward therapy, the study said.

While further testing and development is needed, Shah's team specifically chose this model and used human cells to smooth the path of translating their findings for patient settings, the study said.

"Throughout all of the work that we do in the Centre, even when it is highly technical, we never lose sight of the patient," said Shah.

"Our goal is to take an innovative but translatable approach so that we can develop a therapeutic, cancer-killing vaccine that ultimately will have a lasting impact in medicine," said Shah.

Our goal is to take an innovative but translatable approach so that we can develop a therapeutic, cancer-killing vaccine that ultimately will have a lasting impact in medicine

KHALID SHAH | DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR STEM CELL AND TRANSLATIONAL IMMUNOTHERAPY

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Dolphin population on the rise in Bhitarkanika

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajnagar, Jan 5: Dolphin population in Bhitarkanika wetland and Gahirmatha marine sanctuary has seen an increase this year more than any other water body in the state.



Reports said that, 550 out of 733 dolphins identified in the water bodies all over the state were traced in Bhitarkanika and Gahirmatha marine sanctuary. This means that 75 per cent of the total dolphins have been identified in these two sanctuaries.

This year 544 dolphins were spotted under Gahirmatha range while four dolphins were identified in Kanika range and two in Rajnagar forest range. Among them, 208 Indian Ocean humpback dolphins (Sousa plumbea), 281 Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins also known as the Chinese white dolphin (Sousa chinensis), 52 bottlenose dolphins and three spinner dolphins were found during the census drive.

Last year, 726 dolphins were identified in the state in a census out of which 540 were identified in Gahirmatha and Bhitarkanika alone. In comparison to last year, dolphin population has decreased by three in the state while it is 10 more in Bhitarkanika than last year's count.

Similarly, four Irrawaddy species of dolphins were found from Khola to Kantiakhil areas under Kanika range and two in Rajnagar range.

These are the findings of dolphin census conducted in the deltaic river systems flowing through the Bhitarkanika National Park and the Gahirmatha marine sanctuary from December 21 to December 23. Nine teams led by DFO Sudarshan Gopinath Yadav participated in the census drive.

Two CB teams step up probe

Security guards of Sai Int'l hotel quizzed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Jan 5: The state Crime Branch (CB) stepped up its investigation into the mysterious death of two Russian tourists in Sai International Hotel here. Two teams of CB are on their toes collecting all possible evidences and materials from the hotel and local police station.



A team of CB led by DSP Tapan Das has got all data and evidences related to the deaths while another team led by DSP Sarojkant Mohanta visited Sai International Hotel Thursday and quizzed two security guards. The CB officials also checked the entry register of tourists at the hotel.

Some CB sleuths carrying seized materials left for the State Forensic Science Laboratory (SFSL) in Bhubaneswar Wednesday night, while some others also visited the district police office Thursday. Notably, the CB is planning to recreate the circumstances in which the Russian lawmaker Pavel Antov died. It was said that CB is investigating all possible angles of the deaths.

In its plan to recreate the circumstances that led to the death of the Russian lawmaker, the CB has

contacted leading experts based in Delhi.

The CB sleuths are specifically planning to conduct a dummy simulation exercise of falling from the roof top in similar circumstances to recreate the scene and ascertain the situation leading to his death.

For this, a dummy of same weight and height as that of the deceased shall be created with the help of experts of anatomy department of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and forensic experts. The objective is to study the fall pattern.

In this regard CB has contacted Dr Rajendra Dangri, former Director, Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL), CBI and Dr Dogra of AIIMS, Delhi who are the leading experts in dummy fall simulation exercise.

They have been involved in resolving several complicated cases of CBI. They will ascertain the cause, nature and manner of the incident and the injury on Pavel's body and crosscheck with the post-mortem report. This is expected to help the inquiring team of CB to come to a definite conclusion.

The CB team as well as scientific and forensic officers are still camping at Rayagada and continuing with their investigation into the death of Pavel and his friend Vladimir Bidenov which entered its sixth day, Wednesday.

DSP Das had earlier questioned the Town police IIC about the deaths after his arrival and verified the details collected earlier and matched them with the details and evidences collected by CB DSP Sarojkant Mohanta during the probe.

Notably, Russian lawmaker Pavel Antov died December 24 allegedly after a fall from the roof of the hotel in Rayagada where they were staying, two days after Bidenov was found dead in his room.



DEMON KING'S DAY OUT: Students of Government Girls' High School welcome Kansa Maharaj to their school premises during his tour of Mathura Nagari as part of the itinerary on the 10th day of Dhanu Yatra festival in Bargarh, Thursday

Man dies by suicide in police custody

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, Jan 5: A 24-year-old man, who was arrested on charges of circulating photos of intimate moments of him and his former girlfriend on social media, allegedly died by suicide in police custody in Jajpur district, an official said Thursday.

The man was found hanging with an electric wire from the skylight of the Dhanmandal police outpost in Jajpur district Wednesday night, a day after his arrest. He died during treatment in a hospital in Cuttack.

Police arrested him following a complaint by a 21-year-old woman, his former lover. He was accused of circulating photos of their intimate moments on social media after they broke up. He was being interrogated in the outpost.

"He attempted suicide by hanging himself with a wire from the outpost's skylight last night. We admitted him to Barachana community health centre and later shifted him to SCB Medical College and Hospital where he died," SDPO (Jajpur Road) Sanjaya Kumar Patnaik, said.

Youth beats dad to death, buries corpse in house

Bhawanipatna: A missing man's body was found buried inside his house at Kadam village under Bhawanipatna Sadar police limits in Kalahandi district. The deceased was identified as Parama Harijan. Parama's younger son Sumant Harijan beat up him to death and later buried the body inside a dilapidated house. The matter came to the fore after family members dug up the floor and exhumed the body from the room, Thursday. A complaint was lodged by deceased's son Madan Harijan at the Bhawanipatna Sadar police station and a case was registered. The wives of the deceased and the accused were taken for interrogation. Police conducted post-mortem of the body and handed it over to the family members.

Meanwhile, the accused is absconding. Police said the father-son duo was having regular fights over some issue. January 1, Sumant beat up his father with a lathi to death and buried him inside a dilapidated room.

NHRC directs CS, DGP to look into fake murder case

POST NEWS NETWORK



Kendrapara, Jan 5: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Chief Secretary (CS) and the Director General of Odisha Police (DGP) to look into the matter of a man being lodged in jail and facing trial in the fake murder case of his wife, a report said Thursday.

The rights body has directed the CS and the DGP to take exemplary action against the policemen responsible for his plight since the woman who was alleged to be killed by her husband is alive with her children.

The victim was identified as Abhaya Sutar, a native of Chaulia village under Patkura police limits in Kendrapara district. Abhaya has already spent seven years in jail as an under-trial prisoner for the murder of his wife Mili, a crime which he did not commit. He is currently out after being granted bail by a designated court.

The NHRC passed the order over a petition filed by rights activist and advocate Radhakanta Tripathy, December 30, last year.

In the petition, Tripathy stated that a villager Abhaya Sutar of Chaulia village under Patkura police limits of Kendrapara district was falsely implicated by the police for murdering his wife and remanded to judicial custody for the offence which he had never committed.

Police took action after Abhaya's father-in-law Prahlad Moharana of Samagola village under Kujang police limits in Jagatsinghpur district lodged a murder complaint at Patkura police station stating that his daughter was killed by her

husband over dowry, May 14, 2013.

Mili went missing from home the next day after she informed her father that she is being tortured by her in-laws for dowry, February 22. Moharana in his complaint alleged that Abhaya had killed his wife to have second marriage with another woman.

Police registered a case and arrested Abhaya and produced him in the court. Abhaya informed police that he did not kill his wife but failed to get any relief. As a result, Abhaya had to spend seven years in jail as an under-trial prisoner.

Later, a team led by Patkura IIC Sujit Pradhan rescued Mili from Pipli in Puri district in February, 2020. Mili informed that she had eloped with her lover to Maharashtra and was staying there for seven years and recorded her statement before police that she was being tortured for dowry by Abhaya's family members.

Chilika hosts about 11 lakh migratory birds this winter

'RIVER LAPWING', A MIGRATORY BIRD, WHICH VISITED THE LAKE AFTER ALMOST A DECADE HAS BEEN SPOTTED BY ORNITHOLOGISTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



tory birds in the 1,100 sq km lake is yet to be ascertained, forest officials attributed it to the availability of food and no disturbance in the area.

The winged guests from far-off places, including the Caspian Sea, Lake Baikal, remote parts of Russia, central and Southeast Asia, Ladakh and Himalayas, descend to the lake every winter for feeding and roosting. They start their homeward journey with the onset of summer.

Bhubaneswar/Berhampur, Jan 5: Asia's largest brackish water lagoon Chilika lake has welcomed 10.93 lakh migratory birds this winter, 5.4 per cent more than last year, according to a survey.

A total of 11,31,929 birds were recorded in the lake this year, of which 10.93 lakh are migratory birds. This is around 57,000 more than the previous year, when 10.36 lakh avian guests had visited the lake, according to a bird census conducted Wednesday.

A total of 184 species of birds were found during the census. Apart from migratory birds, the survey spotted 38,880 local birds that reside at the lake.

In Nalabana Bird Sanctuary in the lake, enumerators found a total of 3,42,897 birds.

The survey was conducted by 134

personnel including bird experts from government and non-governmental organisations, along with forest officers, both working and retired.

The lagoon was divided into 21 segments. Two units went by road and 19 on boats. Each unit was led by a bird expert and comprised three to five members and a local guide. They were provided with a status survey kit (a map of the area and the route to cover), walkie-talkie sets, binoculars, cameras and other essential items, an official said.

The bird count was carried out for all water bird species and wetland-dependent birds.

Ornithologists said they spotted 'River Lapwing', a migratory bird, which visited the lake after almost a decade. Although the exact reason behind the rise in the number of migra-

EAST COAST RAILWAY
NOTICE FOR EMPANELMENT OF CONSULTANTS ON CASE TO CASE BASIS IN DIVISIONAL RAILWAY HOSPITAL, KHURDA ROAD

No. CMS/KUR/Case to case/Consultant/2022/04, Dated: 03.01.2023

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES FOR EMPANELMENT AS CONSULTANTS IN DIVISIONAL RAILWAY HOSPITAL, KHURDA ROAD ON CASE TO CASE BASIS IN THE FOLLOWING SPECIALITIES:-

(1) General Anaesthesia, (2) General Surgery, (3) Orthopaedics, (4) General Obstetrics and Gynecology, (5) Nephrology, (6) Ophthalmology, (7) Cardiology, (8) Neurology, (9) ENT, (10) Plastic Surgery, (11) Laparoscopy Surgery.

Filled up Application forms downloaded from website with enclosures are to be submitted in person or by post by 20th January 2023 to the office of Chief Medical Superintendent, Divisional Railway Hospital, Khurda Road, East Coast Railway, Khurda, Odisha-752050. Selection will be done on the basis of documents only and no personal interview will be conducted.

NB: For Application Format, Educational Qualification/ Eligibility, Age, Period of Engagement & other detailed terms and conditions, candidates may please refer to the official website: www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in → About us → Division → Khurda Road Division.

PR-880/N/22-23 Chief Medical Superintendent/Khurda Road

Government of India
National Monuments Authority
Ministry of Culture
24, Tilak Marg, New Delhi - 110001

Dated: 02.01.2023

Empanelment of Surveyors (Retired) in States/UTs in the National Monuments Authority, Ministry of Culture

Applications are invited from willing and eligible persons for Empanelment of Surveyors for deployment on need basis in various States and UTs by National Monuments Authority, a statutory body under the Ministry of Culture:

The Surveyors empanelled will be responsible for conducting site visits for processing of NOC applications and revalidation of Site plans of Centrally Protected Monuments in Heritage Bye Laws.

Surveyors shall be positioned in the offices of Superintending Archaeologist of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu & Kerala and Agra circle besides ASI Regional Director offices at New Delhi, Bhopal, Mumbai, Chennai & Kolkata.

Eligible applicants desirous of Empanelment by National Monuments Authority may submit their applications in the prescribed proforma by 23.01.2023 to the concerned Superintending Archaeologist & Regional Directors as per details given in NMA website www.nma.gov.in.

Date: _____ Director
National Monuments Authority

CBC 09125/12/0030/2223

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. A-972
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, GEOLOGY
GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT DIVISION, BHAWANIPATNA
e-mail: srgeologistsbhawanipatna@gmail.com
AT/P.O.- PARAMANANDAPUR, DIST.- KALAHANDI, PIN-766002, PH/FAX NO.-06670-232836/291159
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Identification No. 12/GWBPTN/ARUA/2022-23

e-Procurement Notice

Name of the Work: Recharge Dug Well cum shaft 13 Nos. in Govt Tanks and ponds under Nuapada Block of Nuapada district (Pkg-III). Total No. of Works: 01 (one). Estimated Cost: Approx. Rs.21.12 Lakhs. Class of Contractor: B & C Class Contractor. Period of Completion: 01 Calendar Months.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	No. of works	Availability of Tender On-line for Bidding		Date & time of opening of Bid
			From	To	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Deputy Director, Geology, Ground Water Development Division, Bhawanipatna	12/GWBPTN/ARUA/2022-23	01 (one)	06.01.2023	17.1.2023	17.1.2023

For details can be seen from the Government website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
OIPR-32392/11/0002/2223 Sd./- DEPUTY DIRECTOR, GEOLOGY

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. A-975
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RENGALI LEFT BANK CANAL DIVISION

At/P.O.: Kamakhyaganar, Dist.: Dhenkanal, Odisha, PIN - 759018
Tel.: 06769-270771 Email ID: erlbcddivision@gmail.com
e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE No. RLBCD-P-06/2022-23

1	Category of Work	"Civil Construction Works"
2	Total No. of Works	13 (Thirteen) Nos.
3	Estimated Cost	Varies from Rs.19.82 lakhs to Rs.4.18 lakhs
4	Period of Completion	30 Days
5	Class of Contractor	"D" & "C" or equivalent grade/class
6	Cost of Bid Document/Mode of Payment	Varies Rs.6,000 to Rs.2,000/- (Non-refundable)/Online through Electronic Payment Mode (internet Banking/NEFT/RTGS of Designated banks and their Aggregator Banks).
7	EMD/Bid Security Amount (Online)	Varies from Rs.19,900/- to Rs.4,200/-
8	Other details	

(i) Procurement Officer: Superintending Engineer, Rengali Left Bank Canal Division, Kamakhyaganar

(ii) Availability of Bid Documents for Online Bidding: 06.01.2023 from 10.00 hours to 15.01.2023 upto 17.00 hours

(iii) Date, time & Venue of Bid Opening (Online): On 16.01.2023 at 11.00 hours in the O/o. the Superintending Engineer, Rengali Left Bank Canal Division, Kamakhyaganar (through Online)

(iv) Date, time & venue of transparent lottery for finalization of bids, if required: On 21.01.2023 at 11.00 hours in the O/o. the Superintending Engineer, Rengali Left Bank Canal Division, Kamakhyaganar.

*Further details can be seen from the Government of Odisha website: https://tendersodisha.gov.in.
Sd./- Superintending Engineer
OIPR-32298/11/0008/2223 R.L.B. Canal Division, Kamakhyaganar

Vedanta's Subhalaxmi Co-op launches 'Udyogini' for women entrepreneurs

Jharsuguda: Subhalaxmi Co-operative, one of India's largest rural women's co-operatives supported by Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, launched 'Udyogini' project to promote entrepreneurship among rural women in Jharsuguda and nearby areas. Subhalaxmi Co-operative, the flagship community development initiative of Vedanta Aluminium, with over 4,100 women members, works towards the empowerment of women by enabling aspiring women entrepreneurs with micro-finance, skill development, financial literacy and market linkage, for building sustainable livelihoods. Under the Udyogini, the co-operative aims to increase its membership base to 10,000 in a few years and enhance the income of its members by at least 50 per cent. The project was kick started with a two-day orientation programme on Co-operative Affairs & Management for the 15 newly elected Board of Directors and other members. The programme focused on promotion of entrepreneurship development and educated participants on the various facets of entrepreneurial policies, genesis and financial portfolios. As part of the project, the co-operative will also build partnerships and resource convergence with government line departments and initiatives such as the OLM, Mission Shakti, ITDA and others.

Chola
Enter a better life

CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED
Corporate Office : 1st Floor, 'Dare House', No. 2, N. S. C. Bose Road, Chennai - 600 001
Regional Office : 55 & 55/1, Chowringhee Road, 5th Floor, Chowringhee Court
Opp. Nehru Children's Museum in Rabindra Sadan, Kolkata - 700 071, W.B.
Branch Office : Sreemaa Construction, 3rd Floor, Naya Chowk Link Road, Madhupatna, Cuttack - 753010
Branch Office : Annapurma Complex, 559, Lewis Road, Cuttack-Puri Road, Bhubaneswar - 751014

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(1)

WHEREAS the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 hereinafter called the Act and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rules 9 of the Security Interest [Enforcement] Rules, 2002 issued demand notices on the dates mentioned against each account calling upon the respective borrowers, to repay the outstanding amount with interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers in particular and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties mortgaged with the Company described herein below on the respective dates mentioned against each account in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 9 of the Rules made there under.

The Borrowers in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties mentioned herein below and any such dealings will be subject to the charge of M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited for an amount mentioned against each account along with interest and other charges.

Under section 13 [8] of the Securitisation Act, the borrowers can redeem the secured asset by payment of the entire outstanding including all costs, charges and expenses before notification of Sale.

Sl. No.	a) Loan Account Number b) Name and Address of Borrower / Co-borrower	Details of Property Possessed	a) Date of Demand Notice b) Outstanding Amount c) Date of Symbolic Possession
1.	a) Loan Account Nos. : X0HECUC00003066445 and HE02BHUU0000002289 b) 1. Kabita Barik, 2. Prafulla Kumar Barik, 3. Saraswatee Dei All are are : Plot No. 20, Shaktinagar, A D Market, Cuttack, Odisha, Cuttack Sadar, Odisha, Pin - 753012. 4. Ganesh Traders Netaji Nagar, Madhupatana, Cuttack, Cuttack Sadar, Odisha, Pin - 753010.	All that piece and parcel of the land situated at District- Cuttack, Tahasil- Cuttack, SRO- Cuttack, P. S.- Madhupatana, P. S. No. 4, Mouza - Cuttack Sahar, Unit No. 37, Badambadi Arunodaya Market, Near Shiv Temple Orissa, Cuttack - 753012, Mutation Khata No. 535/519, Plot No. 544/3084, Area Acre 0.056 Dec with Status- Stitban, Kisam - Gharabari-2 (Homestead). Butted and Bounded by : North - Road, South - Damodara Barik, East - Gopinath Jew God, West - Rest part of sots plot.	a) 28.07.2022 b) Rs. 52,30,114.26 and Rs. 9,25,229.00 Totally Rs. 61,55,343.26 (Rupees Sixty One Lakhs Fifty Five Thousand Three Hundred Forty Three and Paise Twenty Six Only) as on 20.07.2022 with interest thereon c) 04.01.2023

Date : 06.01.2023
Place : Cuttack, Odisha
Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited
Authorised Officer

FOCUS G-20 PRESIDENCY

HOPE ON A DIFFICULT ROAD



To move forward, it is necessary to prioritise cooperation and dialogue between nations and to work towards ending geopolitical conflicts. It is also important to address issues of inequality and deprivation. Protecting the environment and addressing climate change are also crucial for the long-term well-being of the planet

real and many countries have benefited. That memory is only too recent to be forgotten.

The total factor productivity (TFP) growth in the first world was substantially contributed by the increase in labour force – new births, migration, and greater participation of women, and technology upgradation. Currently, population is declining, migration is prevented and women's participation has nearly peaked. COVID-19 has shaped up reluctance to work. Technology improvements are contributing, albeit marginally.

The developing economies were beneficiaries of outsourcing, flow of abundant capital and sharing of technological developments. The planetary economy was the beneficiary of broader global geopolitical peace, low inflation, low interest rates and low costs of labour, energy, metals and minerals.

Now, with economic growth threatened, the customary dialogue and discussions are bound to be infructuous. When the world at large is facing a near similar situation, it is time to sink the idea of a First World and a Third World. In this context, "One Earth, One Family, One Future" becomes very relevant. Therefore, the underpinning of narratives in all the meetings will have to be that all are sailing in the same boat and will benefit equally from cooperation toward reorienting and even rewriting the rules of the game.

To move forward, it is necessary to prioritise cooperation and dialogue between nations and to work towards ending geopolitical conflicts. It is also important to address issues of inequality and deprivation. Protecting the environment and addressing climate change are also crucial for the long-term well-being of the planet.

Ultimately the goal is ambitious and will require the effort and cooperation of all nations and people to achieve. The question to ask is: Is that possible?

The writer is a former Chairman of SEBI and LIC. Views are personal.

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India has taken over leadership of the G-20 and has said it wants to lead with a presidency of "healing, harmony and hope," with the theme of "One Earth, One Family, One Future." This reflects the very Indian idea of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" and the celebration of all life and the interconnectedness of the wider universe. The G20, or Group of Twenty, comprises as many as 20 major developed and developing economies, so this is described as "the premier forum for international economic cooperation." Clearly, economics will be at the heart of this cooperation and in that sense the Indian theme would also be seen within the meaning of economic prosperity – that the world should prosper together as part of one global community. This is a fine idea but it comes at a difficult time. It is quite obviously fraught with many challenges that must be overcome in order to become workable. India holds the Presidency of the G20 from December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023. This includes a major event where 43 heads of delegations, the biggest so far in the G-20, will be participating in the New Delhi summit this September. So, time is short and ambition is high.

This ambition comes at a time of heightened geopolitical volatility, a very real VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) world that is showing signs of increasing volcanic activity, if that term can be used. Consider the rise of right-wing politics (the latest woes of Republicans in the US, where deciding a House speaker takes multiple votes because the hardliners within the party want to extract their price), economic nationalism, the attempt to shut borders rather than open them more freely, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and consequent economic turmoil, rising inflation worldwide, the continued toll of COVID-19 and new variants of the virus, particularly in China and that country's refusal to be transparent with information – all point to the world in a state that does not look like a peaceful and set of families, let alone "one family."

In that sense, India has a difficult task of leadership at hand. But this is also the time that can bring out the best, with the right leadership marked by a sense of purpose and the understanding that everyone suffers if the strains continue or escalate.

In order to meet these challenges, it may help to revisit the factors that contributed to the period of "great moderation" from the mid-1980s to 2007, when the global economy was growing and many were lifted out of poverty. These included broader geopolitical peace, conciliatory political leadership, low inflation, deepening globalisation and free movement of capital. David Ricardo's theory of "comparative advantage" which made the case for opening up global trade was at play along with a universal sharp focus on economic growth.

Unfortunately, all the building blocks seem to have crumbled and inequality and economic misery

are visible across geographies. The "surprising comeback of protectionism" hasn't been a sudden development. It has been slow cooking for more than two decades. It was more than two decades ago that an academic paper picked up early warning signs as it noted: "public anxiety about globalisation and free trade is rising... In an increasing number of grassroots movements and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), proposals for new forms of protectionism against the social and ecological consequences of free trade and increased capital mobility are being discussed." ("Game, Set, and Match for Mr. Ricardo?" by Robert Went in the Journal of Economic Issues, September 2000). Evidence of unrest later became plain for anyone to see, and the situation has only been detonating since the global financial crisis of 2008.

Yet, the idea of growth fuelled by globalisation has been very



GN Bajpai

THE IDEA OF GROWTH FUELLED BY GLOBALISATION HAS BEEN VERY REAL AND MANY COUNTRIES HAVE BENEFITED



Jörg Haas

Achieving a sustainable future is a political choice that requires leadership and cooperation

Higher always higher! Let us never be satisfied with what is accomplished.

THE MOTHER



Fuel of Future

Green hydrogen is all the rage these days. During November's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced that Germany will invest more than €4 billion (\$4.3 billion) in developing a market for it. In the United States, President Joe Biden's administration has made "clean" hydrogen a centerpiece of its Inflation Reduction Act, which provides subsidies for renewable energies. China, too, is so invested in electrolysis that some observers already fear that it will take over the market the same way it did with photovoltaic panels. And even corporations like the Australian mining giant Fortescue are betting on it becoming a multibillion-dollar industry.

When a technology is hyped to such an extent, many environmental activists tend to become nervous. Is "clean hydrogen" merely a way to greenwash so-called "blue" and "pink" hydrogen, generated from natural gas and nuclear energy, respectively? Is it an attempt to produce a magic technofix that vindicates absurd excesses like space tourism and hypersonic flight, when the world's middle and upper classes should be shrinking their energy and resource consumption? Or is this the next stage of extractivism, appropriating low-income populations' land and water under the guise of fighting climate change?

The short answer to all these questions is yes. But that is neither inevitable nor the whole story. Yes, the green hydrogen dream could well develop into a nightmare if we do not get it right. Still, it is an indispensable building block of the global economy's transition from climate-destroying fossil fuels to sustainable models based on 100 per cent renewable energies. It may be difficult to accept this ambiguity, but the urgent need to avert a climate catastrophe requires no less.

Given hydrogen's many potential applications, some leading experts estimate that it could power 20-30 per cent of global energy consumption by mid-century. But that does not necessarily make it the most efficient choice. Electric batteries, for example, require far fewer renewable kilowatt hours per kilometre travelled to power cars and trucks than hydrogen fuel cells or e-fuels do. Similarly, using heat pumps is more efficient than converting gas boilers to hydrogen. Organic alternatives to nitrogen fertilizer should also be given much more consideration.

But there are several critical sectors with few economically viable zero-carbon alternatives to green hydrogen and its derivatives, including long-distance shipping and aviation, chemicals, and steelmaking. Notwithstanding the hype, many industries will clearly need vast amounts of clean hydrogen to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. To illustrate the scale of the challenge, Bloomberg New Energy Finance founder Michael Liebreich recently estimated that just replacing today's "dirty" hydrogen – produced from fossil fuels – would require 143 per cent of the wind and solar energy the world currently has.

Several countries in the Global South have been blessed with world-class solar and wind potential, enabling them to produce green hydrogen at very low cost. Some, like Namibia, have built their industrial development strategy around this competitive advantage. But how could international trade in green hydrogen and its derivatives become a pathway to prosperity? And how can developing countries avoid the green extractivism trap and ensure that trade is fair and sustainable?

A series of consultations and studies in Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, South Africa, Morocco, and Tunisia have explored these questions at length. A new report by the Heinrich Böll Foundation and Bread for the World synthesises their findings and highlights the need to do no harm. To prevent the green hydrogen dream from becoming a nightmare, we must develop the sector with territorial planning, and clear standards and policies, as well as uphold local communities' right to prior informed consent. To deliver on the promise of post-fossil development and foster sustainable economies, governments must devise ambitious and realistic industrial strategies. And these strategies must be embedded in a systemic approach to sustainable development and the energy transition. Moreover, we need to consider how hydrogen is used – not just who can pay for it.

None of this will happen by itself. Achieving a sustainable future is a political choice that requires leadership and cooperation. Several countries could help make fair and sustainable trade in green hydrogen a reality. Namibia, Chile, Colombia, and now (under President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva) Brazil, for example, have the right political conditions for balancing green-hydrogen production with strong environmental and social standards. Over time, Argentina and South Africa could join this list and become producer countries.

As a prospective major importer and consumer of green hydrogen, Germany would need to form partnerships with producing countries, based on strong environmental and social standards. And given its progressive government, it can be expected to engage with its long-term partners not just as resource providers, but as fellow travellers on the journey toward sustainable, inclusive prosperity.

To that end, Germany and other energy importers must also support exporting countries in their efforts to localise value creation. In this way, the emerging international trade in green hydrogen could become a harbinger of a new, equitable trading relationship between the Global North and South. That is a future worth fighting for, and renewable energy holds the key.

The writer is Head of International Politics at the Heinrich Böll Foundation.

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WISDOM CORNER

- You must have chaos within you to give birth to a dancing star. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE
- The secret to getting ahead is getting started. MARK TWAIN
- The real question is not whether life exists after death. The real question is whether you are alive before death. OSHO

WORDSWORTH

Erumpent

Stifle your delight, Harry Potter fans. We're not discussing that elephant-like beast, whose over-sensitive horn exploded in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. It's a good name for the animal, though, with its hints of "erupt" and "trumpet", and its true meaning, of something bursting forth, might describe an explosion. A few writers have borrowed the word to salt their prose: "The musicians added to the erumpent revelry with a sprightly semi-martial tune", wrote Alan Dean Foster in Icescape. Better was the almost poetic "Snowdrops are erumpent in the dreary winter landscape", which the gardener Lia Leendertz wrote in The Guardian, because it locates the word nearer to its true home. Botanists, biologists and mycologists, the only people who employ it at all regularly, commonly bury it in the undergrowth of dense technical descriptions: "Pseudothecia mainly epiphyllous, in dense clusters, immersed but becoming erumpent". It has most often been used to refer to the fruiting bodies of fungi, which in their season are notably erumpent. It's from the Latin verb *rumper*, to break out. That's the source of several much more common English adjectives and verbs that end in -rupt, notably abrupt, erupt and interrupt, as well as the outstandingly rare *rumper* – the Oxford English Dictionary defines this last word as an application for breaking a swelling, but it has only one example of it and doesn't explain further.

SPECTRUM SELF-HELP

Making the best of each day

In the continuum of 'time', each moment, each day of the year or each situation at hand is of its own kind and needs to be handled differently. That is what Heraclitus, the predecessor of Plato, meant in his precept, "No man ever steps in the same river twice" for: neither the river in terms of its composition, content or dynamics, nor the person is ever the same. All physical and organic bodies, except the spiritual ingredient, undergo the process of growth, attrition, and finally death. The evolutionary nature of a living entity differentiates it from non-living ones. As with all creatures, the cells within us too have a specific time span, to be replaced by emergence of new ones till a certain time frame.

Our lives are not long enough to over-think, stay stuck to the past or procrastinate acting upon the plans that we espouse in our best interests. Skewed or poor knowledge of past-present-future matrix blurs the line of action for most people. They perennially undergo stress and anxiety. Few of the many confused people groping in dark about the re-

maining course of life till advanced years go berserk and waste the precious life.

It is ever enriching to understand that past is just an extension of present and that we build and strengthen our own system inch by inch, day by day, based on our thoughts, beliefs and convictions. That is why the adages, "the deeds that man do live after them," "the closing balance of the previous year is the opening balance of the new year," "as we sow so we reap" and so on. The simple reason why the pledges don't work and people find themselves back to square one again and again is the difficulty discarding the habitual or reflexive patterns that did not deliver the desired results. It requires gravitas and enormous grit to disentangle from the past, a condition, to emerge as an improved version of oneself. One with belief that the angel in him links to the super consciousness or God and that fire within has to be kept aflame, serves humankind that also paves his way to superior realms. The weak-willed fail be-

cause they are often trapped by the siren call of mundane pleasures. "You cannot defeat your demons if you are still enjoying their company." Further, your foray into the new, higher realm is not palatable to the existing group members who do all to pull you back with all their might.

Hence rather than enjoying the New Year or anniversary celebrations, the spiritually sound person shall derive enjoyment in his lone, creative pursuits not to a lesser degree than a lay person does by smearing pastry on his own and others' faces or sprinkling champagne. In a society where ostentation and cosmetic concerns outweigh philanthropy and genuine sympathy for others, the journey of lone creative has his own suffering, however he is prepared for it. He has no compunction to be deprived of the myriad cosmetic pleasures of life available to people not doing hard thinking. Celebrations of the New Year or anniversaries of various descriptions by putting on smiling façades and posting e-wishes via

messages on social media make little sense to the truth seeker because to him the show of ostentation is often a cover for a deep lacuna within.

Knowing that time is continually fleeting and each moment counts, he shall not be a time waster. He understands that the way one utilises 24 hours a day determines the tenor and the drift of one's future. Those who value life shall not while away an iota of it, said Acharya Shriram Sharma, the founder of Shantikunj, Haridwar. Before embarking on a set goal, he is clear about what he wants in life, the fleeting nature of time and what to expect from others. Clarity about his goals, thought and action accords him a stellar status, a torch bearer to the society. Spiritually and materially man has not been designed to stay in constraints and improper choices disable him to stay spontaneous and in carefree mode. He knows that the angel in him is his pure self, and needs to be nurtured.

The writer is a Delhi-based journalist & blogger.



Harish Barthwal

OUR LIVES ARE NOT LONG ENOUGH TO OVER-THINK, STAY STUCK TO THE PAST OR PROCRASTINATE ACTING UPON THE PLANS THAT WE ESPOUSE IN OUR BEST INTERESTS

Worrying financial trend

Sir, The banking sector witnessing a rise in cases of fraud is a matter of grave concern. The rising trend relates to both in numbers and amount involved. The amount involved is ₹19,485 crore numbering 5,406 in the first half of 2022-23 compared to a gargantuan ₹36,316 crore numbering 4,069 in the corresponding period of last year. As far as data is concerned variance, big or small, is not at all an issue. The crux of the problem is the temerity of the people involved to defraud the banks. The presence of a plethora of laws, acts as a deterrent notwithstanding, frauds going on occurring year after year is a matter of surprise. The amount of fraud coming down to almost half from last year is, no doubt, a welcome sign. But it's not enough for a fast-moving economy. The big question is, whose money is it anyway? Obviously, it is the taxpayers' hard-earned money. And we can't be a mute spectator to such rampant wastage of public money. Another curious thing is the number of fraud cases reported by private sector banks outnumbered those by public sector banks. The matter certainly needs a deeper introspection. Another area for concern is that a maximum number of frauds were witnessed in cards and internet-based transactions. With technology spreading its wings and people becoming increasingly more tech-savvy, a foolproof security system needs to be created. Frauds are attacks on the banking sector and hence affect the entire financial sector and the economy.

Pratap Nayak, BHUBANESWAR

Validating a fiasco

Sir, It is regrettable that the Supreme Court's 4:1 verdict on the 2016 demonetisation merely upholds the right of the Executive, but in no way endorses the huge problems and difficulties it clamped on the common man of the country. Most petitions questioned the legality of the sudden and unexpected move that resulted in currency notes worth 86 per cent of the money in circulation becoming "unworthy pieces of paper" overnight. Demonetisation was a fiasco in achieving its stated objectives, apart from being a disaster for the people. This is not the first instance where the apex court has acted in favour of the Executive without undertaking a thorough judicial review of the proceedings. The SC's verdict is questionable, since after six years, it turned the demonetisation a mere "academic exercise" and a "fait accompli."

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 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

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national



The BJP government is only making noise in the name of investors' conferences and its results will be zero
AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

'PATHAAN' TROUBLES GROW

Shah Rukh Khan-starrer "Pathaan" slid further into trouble with posters of the film being vandalised in an Ahmedabad mall and members of the VHP and Bajrang Dal saying they would not allow its screening in Gujarat unless their problems over its song "Besharam Rang" are resolved



of the day quote

You are aware of India's long-standing position - that ensuring peace and tranquillity in the border areas is essential for the development of our relationship
ARINDAM BAGCHI | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

When we go for election we will go with a report card, every single of our leaders, thumping their chests with pride, will say we had promised this and we have done it, we had not promised something, but still we have done it
J P NADDA | BJP NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Every state has its own strength, every state has its own geography and natural advantages and as per natural advantages, businesses tend to go there
DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHA DEPUTY CM

Foreign varsities can now set up campuses in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 5: Foreign universities will be able to set up their campuses in India for the first time with the UGC Thursday unveiling draft norms, under which these varsities can also decide on the admission process, fee structure and repatriate its funds back home. Noting that foreign universities with campuses in the country can only offer full-time programmes in offline mode and not online or distance learning, UGC chairper-

son M Jagadeesh Kumar said the foreign universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) will need a nod from the UGC to set up their campuses in India.

The initial approval will be for 10 years and will be renewed in the ninth year subject to the meeting of certain conditions, he added and clarified that these institutions shall not offer any such study programme which jeopardises the national interest of India or the standards of higher education here. The University Grants



Commission (UGC) announced the draft regulations for 'Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India' and the final

norms will be notified by the end of the month after considering feedback from all stakeholders.

While these universities will have the freedom to decide their admission criteria and fee structure, the commission has advised keeping the fees "reasonable and transparent".

"The new National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 has envisioned that top universities in the world will be facilitated to operate in India. For this, a legislative framework facilitating such entry will be put in place, and such universi-

ties will be given special dispensation regarding regulatory, governance, and content norms on par with other autonomous institutions of India," Kumar said. On matters related to funds and funding, he said that the cross-border movement of funds will be according to the Foreign Exchange Management Act. There will be two categories of foreign institutions eligible to apply for setting up their campuses in India—the universities that have secured a position within the top 500 of overall or subject-

wise global ranking or a reputed institution in its home jurisdiction.

The foreign institution shall have the autonomy to recruit faculty and staff from India and abroad as per its recruitment norms.

According to a survey by the National Institute of Education Planning and Administration (NIEPA), eight foreign universities have expressed interest in setting up their international campuses in India. Five of these are US universities and one each from the UK, Australia and Canada.

Another mid-air 'peeing' incident

The incident came just over a week after the November 26 episode where a man allegedly urinated on a female co-passenger onboard a New York-Delhi Air India flight

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 5: Ten days after the shocking November 26 incident on a New York-Delhi Air India flight, another episode of a drunk male passenger allegedly urinating on a female passenger's blanket was reported on the Paris-Delhi sector but there was no penal action after he gave a written apology, officials said on Thursday.

This incident happened December 6 on Air India flight 142 and the pilot of the aircraft reported the matter to the Air Traffic Control (ATC) at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport about it, following which the male passenger was apprehended. It is not known which class the passengers were travelling in.

The flight landed around 9:40 AM at Delhi and the airport security was informed that the male passenger was "under the influence of alcohol and he was not following the instructions of the cabin crew and he later peed on a blanket of an onboard lady passenger", airport officials told PTI. The male passenger was apprehended by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) as soon as he deboarded the plane but was later allowed to leave after the two passengers had a "mutual compromise" and the accused tendered a "written apology", they said.

The lady passenger, who had initially made a written complaint, refused to file a police case and hence the passenger was allowed to go by the airport security after

DGCA show cause notice to Air India

Mumbai: Holding that Air India's conduct appeared to be "unprofessional", aviation regulator DGCA Thursday issued notices to the officials and crew of the New York-Delhi flight, asking why action should not be taken against them for "dereliction" of duty while handling the November 26 'urination' incident. The Tata Group-owned airline Wednesday had said it has imposed a 30-day travel ban on the man and instituted an internal probe to find if there were lapses in handling the situation by the crew. The accused Shankar Mishra is the vice-president of the India Chapter of an American multinational financial services company headquartered in California. The Delhi Police sent multiple teams to nab the man, but he was absconding, officials said Thursday.

he cleared immigration and customs formalities, they said.

The incident came just over a week after the November 26 episode where a man allegedly urinated on a female co-passenger onboard a New York-Delhi Air India flight.

The Delhi Police has now registered an FIR in the November incident, based on a complaint by the victim to Air India, and has formed several teams to nab the accused.



No criminality found against Zubair: Police



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 5: The Delhi Police told the high court Thursday that it has found no criminality against fact-checking website Alt News co-founder Mohammad Zubair in a case lodged against him for allegedly threatening and torturing a minor on social media.

Taking note of the submissions of the city police, the court asked the probe agency to place the chargesheet filed in the case before it. "Before proceeding further, let a copy of the chargesheet be filed before the next date of hearing," Justice Anup Jairam

Bhambhani said. The counsel for the Delhi Police informed the court that the probe agency has found no criminality against Zubair and his name has not been included in the chargesheet. The court also asked police to give a copy of the chargesheet to Additional Solicitor General K M Natraj, who is representing complainant National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) in the matter.

The law officer said he would take further instructions, after which the court listed the matter for the next hearing March 2.

On the basis of a complaint from the NCPCR, the Delhi Police lodged an FIR against Zubair August 9, 2020 under the provisions of the Information Technology Act for allegedly threatening and torturing a girl on Twitter. The NCPCR complaint referred to a photo of the girl and her father shared by Zubair on Twitter during an online spat with the man. The journalist has approached the court seeking quashing of the FIR against him.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the party's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' in Shamli, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

Centre stays tourism activities in Parasnath

Jains across the country have been demanding the scrapping of a 2019 Jharkhand government notification designating Parasnath Hills as a tourist place, fearing this would lead to an influx of tourists who may consume non-vegetarian food and liquor at their holy site



Sammed Shikharji on Parasnath Hills in Jharkhand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi/New Delhi, Jan 5: Even as the Centre stayed the Jharkhand government's move to promote tourism at the holy Parasnath hill after protests by Jains, tribals jumped into the fray staking a claim to the land and asking for it to be freed. The state's tribal com-

munity led by Santhal tribe termed Parasnath hill as 'Marang Buru' (hill deity or supreme source of power) and warned of a revolt if their demands were not heeded.

"There will be a revolt in five states if the government fails to free Marang Buru from the clutches of Jains. "We want the government to take step based on documentation...The 1956 gazette mentions it as 'Marang Buru'...The Jain community had lost a legal battle for

Parasnath in the past", Working President, International Santhal Council, Naresh Kumar Murmu claimed. Murmu told PTI: "Earlier the issue of Parasnath had gone to the privy council (the highest court in the British Empire) and it was held that Santhals have the rights of hunting on Parasnath Hills...We have record of the rights also."

He claimed that documents show Parasnath as 'Marang Buru' or hill deity of Santhals. "Each year we assemble on full moon in Baishakh for a religious hunt for three days..." the tribal leader said. Murmu claimed that the patron of the Council is President Droupadi Murmu herself and the President is P Manjhi, former MP from Assam.

Another tribal body Adivasi Sengel Abhiyan (ASA) too chipped in to allege that Jains have illegally grabbed the highest place of worship of the Santhals.

North India reels under cold wave

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 5: Several parts of north India reeled under severe cold and dense fog affected railway movement, with Delhi recording a minimum temperature of three degrees Celsius -- the lowest in January in two years -- making it cooler than several hill stations.

Most people kept indoors and turned to space heaters and cups of hot beverages to keep themselves warm as frosty winds from the snow-clad Himalayas barrelled through the plains, including the national capital.

The Meteorological (MeT) Department had on Wednesday issued an orange alert for Delhi-NCR for Thursday and Friday.

Much on expected lines, Delhi's minimum temperature was lower than Dalhousie (4.9 degrees Celsius), Dharamshala (5.2 degrees Celsius), Kangra (3.2 degrees Celsius), Shimla (3.7 degrees Celsius), Dehradun (4.6 degrees Celsius), Mussoorie (4.4 degrees Celsius) and Nainital (6.2 degrees Celsius), according to official data.

Parole period granted to prisoner to be excluded from sentence: SC

A Bench of Justices MR Shah and CT Ravikumar held that if the parole period is included as part of the sentence period, then any prisoner who is influential enough may get parole several times. This is against the purpose of actual imprisonment, the Court said



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 5: The Supreme Court ruled Thursday that the period of parole granted to a prisoner is to be excluded from the sentence while considering his premature release.

Upholding a Bombay High Court order, a bench of justices MR Shah and CT Ravikumar said if the period is included in the sentence, then a prisoner who may be influential

may get parole a number of times. "If the submission on behalf of the prisoners that the period of parole is to be included while considering 14 years of actual imprisonment is accepted, in that case, any prisoner who may be influential may get parole for a number of times as there is no restrictions and it can be granted a number of times and if the submission on behalf of the prisoners is accepted, it may defeat the very object and purpose of actual im-

prisonment.

"We are of the firm view that for the purpose of considering actual imprisonment, the period of parole is to be excluded. We are in complete agreement with the view taken by the high court holding so," the bench said. The top court was hearing an appeal filed by some convicts undergoing life imprisonment, who were released on parole under the provisions of the Goa Prisons Rules, 2006.

All the petitioners had applied

for a premature release under the 2006 rules and the State Sentence Revenue Board had recommended their premature release.

The state government sought the convicting court's opinion on the petitioners' premature release. The court opined that the convicts shall not be released prematurely, considering the gravity of their offence.

Therefore, the state government rejected the petition seeking a premature release of the petitioners. The convicts then approached the Bombay High Court, challenging the state's decision not to consider their case for a premature release.

The apex court said the submission on behalf of the petitioners relying upon section 55 of the Prisons Act, 1894 that even on parole, prisoners shall be deemed to be in custody and therefore, the said period is to be included for the purpose of actual imprisonment had no substance.

national

of the day quote

By February 2023, the Bangalore-Mysuru Highway Project will be completed. I saw some work pending on the stretch. We will invite either Prime Minister Narendra Modi or President Droupadi Murmu

The only workable arrangement is regularisation. Both BJP & INC must accept their hypocrisy. They've routinely regularised illegal settlements in Delhi. Modi govt has regularised settlements twice, but according to BJP, Muslims only deserve bulldozers

Arming people with weapons will only serve the BJP's agenda of creating an atmosphere of fear, suspicion and hatred. It will pit one community against the other



Our soldiers are always ready to lay down their lives for the country and countrymen. You should feel privileged to provide service and support to the brave sons and daughters of the motherland

OVER 50 WILD BOARS DIED DUE TO AFRICAN SWINE FLU

Nilgiris District Collector S P Amrit Thursday confirmed that the death of over 50 wild boars near Mudumalai Tiger Reserve in the district was due to African Swine Flu. Also, few wild boars were found dead in Kothagiri, Keelkothagiri, Coonoor, Manjoor and in Ooty in the last 10 days, apart from Bandipur area in Karnataka, bordering Tamil Nadu



SC stays U'khand HC's Haldwani eviction order

Nearly 50,000 people, a majority of them Muslims, belonging to over 4,000 families reside on the disputed land

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 5: The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the Uttarakhand High Court direction for eviction of over 4,000 families from the railway land in Haldwani in the state's Nainital district. A bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Abhay S Oka said: "There is a human angle to it", and added there cannot be uprooting of several thousand people in seven days. The bench also noted that it may not be correct to say that paramilitary forces have to be deployed to remove people, who have been living there for many decades.

by a division bench of the high court December 20, 2022.

During the hearing, the top court asked the railways to find a practical solution to the issue and stressed that many of the occupants have been residing there for decades, claiming rights on the basis of leases and auction purchases.

The bench said, "There are two aspects of the issue. One, they claim leases. Two, they say people migrated after 1947 and the lands were auctioned."

Justice Kaul said that there are establishments on the land in question and questioned, "how can you say in seven days clear them off?"

Justice Oka noted that the people have been staying there for 50 years. He further added: "How do you deal with the scenario of people who have purchased the land in auction. You may acquire the land and utilise..." Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhat, representing the Railways, submitted that the land belongs to the Railways and several orders for eviction have been passed under the Public Premises Act. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, representing some of the petitioners, submitted that they were ex-parte orders passed during the Covid period. Bhati contended that the petitioners claim the land as their own and that they have not sought rehabilitation.

According to the railways, there are 4,365 encroachers on the land, while the occupants are holding protests at Haldwani asserting they are its rightful owners



Farmers plant paddy saplings in Nadia district, West Bengal

PTI PHOTO

Mamata locks horn with Centre over team to check PMAY housing scheme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata/Gangasagar/Kanthe, Jan 5: A Central team's Bengal visit to look into allegations of irregularities in allotment of houses under PMAY Thursday sparked off a political slugfest with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee accusing Delhi of sending officers to check on "trivial matters" while denying the state funds.

The ruling TMC termed the visits by the central teams to Malda and East Midnapore districts as "political vendetta" by the BJP-led government at the Centre, while the state BJP alleged there had been a scam in the PM's Awas Yojana (Rural housing scheme) and which is why "Centre has sent teams to the state".

The state's political cauldron has been on the boil for the last few days over allegations and counter-allegations of irregularities in the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) after it was found applications by several people having multi-storied homes were approved in some districts. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, reacting to the central teams' visit, lashed out stating, "The Centre is sending teams to Bengal for trivial matters - even if there is an incident of cracker being burst, it sends teams."

Raking up the issue of non-payment of funds for the 100 days' work scheme to the state, she said at a function at Gangasagar, "The Centre is not releasing funds under MGNREGS. She also accused BJP leaders of having "taken the money from PMAY despite having two-three storied buildings."

The Union Rural Development ministry had sent a communication to the state government on January 3 informing it about the visit. Deputy secretary Shakti Kanti Singh and director Shailesh Kumar of the central rural development department are leading the teams in Malda and East Midnapore respectively. Echoing Banerjee, TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh also took on the Union government alleging that it was pursuing political vendetta.

KANJHAWLA INCIDENT POLICE LOOKING FOR 2 MEN WHO 'SHIELDED' ACCUSED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, Jan 5: Delhi Police Thursday said it was looking for two men who are suspected to have shielded the five persons accused of dragging a woman under their car. Amid demands that murder charges be invoked against the accused in the Kanjhawla incident, police said they have not found any previous link between victim Anjali Singh and the accused. They added that for murder charges to be pressed, intention behind the killing needs to be established. Addressing a press conference,

A Delhi court Thursday extended the police remand of the five accused

Special Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Sagar Preet Hooda said 18 teams are working on probing the case and all angles are being looked into. He also sought to dismiss claims by Anjali's family that that never heard or met her 'friend' Nidhi. Hooda said around 25 to 30 calls were exchanged between Anjali and Nidhi from December 29-31. Nidhi had claimed she was with Anjali when their two-wheeler was hit by the Baleno car, with Anjali getting stuck under its wheels and succumbing to the grievous injuries sustained during the accident.

Anjali's family Wednesday had questioned Nidhi's claims and denied having heard of her or even meeting her.

Nidhi had fled the spot out of fear, without informing anyone. Investigating into the CCTV camera footage and call detail records, police zeroed in on two more suspects - Ashutosh and Ankush Khanna - and said they were involved in shielding the accused. Police are on the look out for the duo.

Deepak Khanna (26), Amit Khanna (25), Krishan (27), Mithun (26) and Manoj Mittal have been arrested so far. Ankush is accused Amit's brother. Amit does not have a driving license and after he informed Ankush about the accident, his brother convinced Deepak, who is a Gramin Seva driver, to tell police that he was behind the wheel on the fateful day, the officer said.

He said Ashutosh and Ankush were not in the car. Ashutosh also misled the police by claiming that Deepak took the car when it was Amit, who had taken the car. Deepak also happens to be Amit and Ankush's cousin, Hooda said.

11 Omicron variants detected in int'l travellers

The government has made random Covid tests mandatory for two per cent of the passengers arriving on each international flight, irrespective of their port of departure, since December 24

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 5: Eleven Omicron sub-variants were found among the 124 international travellers who tested positive for Covid-19 between December 24 and January 3 and the presence of all these variants was earlier reported in India,



official sources said Thursday. They said 19,227 international travellers were tested at airports, sea ports and land ports in the said period, 124 of them were found Covid positive and put in isolation. The sources said of the 124 positive samples, the genome-sequencing results of 40 were received, of which XBB was found in 14 samples and BF 7.4.1 in one sample.

Meanwhile, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya urged citizens not to panic unnecessarily but remain alert, follow the directives issued by the government and not get carried away by misleading reports related to Covid. The government has made random Covid tests mandatory for

two per cent of the passengers arriving on each international flight, irrespective of their port of departure, since December 24. Besides, passengers arriving in India from China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Singapore and Thailand are being mandatorily required to provide Covid-negative reports from January 1. The test has to be conducted not more than 72 hours prior to undertaking the journey to India and the negative report from the RT-PCR test has to be uploaded on the Air Suvidha portal before departure. This will also apply to the passengers transiting through the six countries, irrespective of their originating nations, before arriving at any Indian airport.

Ram Mandir to be ready by Jan 1, 2024: Shah

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sabroom (Tripura), Jan 5: Union Home Minister Amit Shah Thursday announced the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya will be ready by January 1, 2024, the year the Lok Sabha elections will be held.

This is being seen as an indication that Ram Mandir, a plank raked up by the saffron camp since 1990 when BJP leader L K Advani started out on a Rath Yatra to focus on the issue, may again be one of the cornerstones of BJP's campaign in the next general election.

"Rahul baba, listen from Sabroom that a mammoth Ram Mandir will be ready January 1, 2024," he said attacking Congress leader Rahul Gandhi who is in the midst of the Bharat Jodo Yatra, a 3500 kilometre long march from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.

Secretary of Ram Mandir Trust Champat Rai and chief priest of Ram Janmabhoomi temple Acharya Satyendra Das had come out with separate statements appreciating Gandhi for the Bharat Jodo Yatra earlier this week.

After decades-long legal battle, the Supreme Court November 9, 2019, paved the way for the construction of the Ram temple in the disputed site at Ayodhya, where Babri Masjid was demolished December 6, 1992.



WB TO SERVE CHICKEN, FRUITS IN MID-DAY MEALS

THE MOVE, HOWEVER, TRIGGERED A POLITICAL ROW, WITH THE BJP QUESTIONING WHY SUCH A DECISION WAS TAKEN AHEAD OF THE PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS DUE THIS YEAR AND LOK SABHA POLLS IN 2024, WHILE THE TRINAMOOL CONGRESS ACCUSED THE OPPOSITION OF "SMELLING POLITICS IN EVERYTHING"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 5: Ahead of the panchayat elections due this year, the West Bengal government has decided to introduce chicken and seasonal fruits in mid-day meals for a four month period from January. In addition to the existing mid-day meal menu of rice, potato, soybean and eggs, chicken and seasonal fruits will be served weekly once for additional nutrition under PM POSHAN, according to a noti-

fication. An amount of ₹371 crore has been sanctioned for the extra nutrition scheme.

A school department official, who confirmed that the extra nutrition scheme was being rolled out, added that as yet no decision has been taken on whether it would be continued after April. Students are currently given rice, pulses, vegetables, soybean and eggs in schools as part of mid-day meals.

An amount of ₹20 will be spent per week on providing additional



nutrition to every student, and the process will continue for 16 weeks, according to the January 3 notification, a copy of which is available with the PTT. Over 1.16 crore students in state-run and aided

schools are beneficiaries of the mid-day meal scheme, for which the state and Centre share the cost on a 60:40 ratio.

The additional allocation of ₹371 crore, however, was made entirely by the state. He said the additional items will be served with immediate effect in every block on different days of the week.

The move, however, triggered a political row, with the BJP questioning why such a decision was taken ahead of the panchayat elections due this year and Lok Sabha polls in 2024, while the Trinamool Congress accused the Opposition of "smelling politics in everything". "The decision to serve chicken to school children ahead of elections raises questions about the change of heart of the TMC government. Why were poor children deprived

of these items and only given rice and lentils till recently? The decision smacks of a political motive to secure votes as panchayat polls are around the corner," BJP leader Rahul Sinha said.

TMC's Rajya Sabha MP Santanu Sen said party supreme and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee always stands by the side of the common people, and this decision "reaffirms that fact".

"Trinamool Congress is a people-centric party, unlike the BJP which wants to do politics on every issue. During the COVID pandemic and lockdown, our state ensured that children were not deprived of mid-day meals and distributed rice, pulses, potato, soybean regularly from school buildings. Despite difficulties, we did not shut down mid-day meals," he added.

international



Will work night and day to deliver for the British people. The government will halve inflation this year to reduce the cost of living and give people financial security
RISHI SUNAK | UK PM

WAKE-UP CALL

Heatwaves such as those that enveloped Europe in recent years are bound to become more frequent and more intense and their impacts will be dramatic, a Swedish expert has said



of the day quote

Peace efforts in the Russia-Ukraine war should be supported by a unilateral ceasefire and a vision for a fair solution
TAYYIP ERDOGAN | TURKISH PRESIDENT

Terrorism remains a scourge that has taken so many Pakistani, Afghan, and other innocent lives. The United States and Pakistan do indeed have a shared interest in ensuring that the Taliban live up to the commitments and that terrorist groups like ISIS-K, like the TTP, like al-Qaeda are no longer able to threaten regional security
NEED PRICE | US STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON

We are monitoring whether, and to what extent, XBB.1.5 occurs in Germany
KARL LAUTERBACH | GERMAN HEALTH MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Huge storm hits California

San Francisco: Damaging winds and heavy rains hit California on Thursday, knocking out power to tens of thousands, causing flash flooding, and contributing to the deaths at least two people, including a child whose home was hit by a falling tree. Officials had ordered evacuations in a high-risk coastal area where mudslides killed 23 people in 2018 as the huge storm barreled into the state on Wednesday. Authorities warned residents to hunker down at home in anticipation of flooded roads, toppled trees and other risks.

Israeli forces kill Palestinian teen

Jerusalem: Israeli forces killed a 16-year-old Palestinian during an arrest raid in the occupied West Bank city of Nablus on Thursday, Palestinian health officials said. This latest incident comes on the heels of what was the deadliest year for Palestinians since 2004, an intense period of violence known as the Second Intifada, or Palestinian uprising. The Palestinian Health Ministry said Amer Abu Zeitoun, 16, died after he was shot in the head by Israeli soldiers.

Earthquake jolts Afghanistan

New Delhi: An earthquake of 5.9 magnitude jolted Afghanistan Thursday and strong tremors were felt in Delhi and surrounding areas. There was no immediate report of any injury to anyone. The earthquake hit the Hindu Kush region of Afghanistan around 7:55 pm. The epicentre was 79 km south of Fayzabad in Afghanistan at a depth of 200 km. This was the second time in a week that Delhi was jolted by an earthquake. On January 1, an earthquake of magnitude 3.8 struck Jhajjar in Haryana and tremors were felt in Delhi.

Afghan Taliban kill 8 IS militants

Islamabad: Afghanistan's ruling Taliban killed eight Islamic State militants and arrested nine others in a series of raids targeting key figures in a spate of attacks in Kabul, a senior Taliban government spokesman said Thursday. Zabihullah Mujahid, spokesman for the Taliban government, said the raids in the capital city and western Nimroz province on Wednesday targeted IS militants who organised recent attacks on Kabul's Loggan Hotel, Pakistan's embassy and the military airport.

LEADERSHIP FIGHT DRAGS ON

Anger rises among US House Republicans

A weaker-than-expected performance in the November midterm elections gave Republicans a smaller-than-expected 222-212 majority in the House
The leadership fight has prevented individual lawmakers from taking their oaths of office and pursuing priorities like investigating the administration of the Democratic president
The last time the House failed to elect a speaker on the first ballot was in 1923, during a contest that took nine ballots to resolve

REUTERS

Washington, Jan 5: Three days into a standoff over who would lead the Republican-majority U.S. House of Representatives, members of the party expressed anger that a small group of hardline holdouts were squandering their chance to use the power they had won. The party's leader in the chamber, Kevin McCarthy, was set to make another bid on Thursday for the powerful position of speaker, after being rejected in six votes by a group of 20 hardline Republicans who represent less than 10% of the caucus. "You have 20 people demanding that 201 surrender to them unconditionally. Well, I am not going to surrender," Republican Representative Trent Kelly told reporters after a late Wednesday vote rejecting McCarthy. He was joined by 17 other Republicans who expressed similar views, with Representative John James accusing the 20 holdouts of "governing on fear." A weaker-than-expected performance in the November



US House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) talks with Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA) on the floor of the House Chamber as the competition for Speaker of the House continues

midterm elections gave Republicans a smaller-than-expected 222-212 majority in the House. McCarthy would need 218 votes to be elected speaker, a role second in line to the Oval Office, and the narrow margin gives the hardliners outside influence. Members of the opposition say they are concerned McCarthy

would not pursue the scorched-earth tactics they want to take to counter Democratic President Joe Biden and the Democratic-controlled U.S. Senate. "Is he going to fight for us? Is he willing to shut the government down?" Representative Ralph Norman, who has voted against McCarthy all six times, said. "His history has not been that."

The leadership fight has prevented individual lawmakers from taking their oaths of office and pursuing priorities like investigating the administration of the Democratic president. The inability to agree on a leader also raises questions about how lawmakers will be able to reach accord on key issues that will arise later this year, including funding the government and addressing the nation's approaching debt ceiling. The last time the House failed to elect a speaker on the first ballot was in 1923, during a contest that took nine ballots to resolve. McCarthy said late on Wednesday that he was making progress, but it was not clear whether he would win over the holdouts or if the party would have to search for an alternative when the chamber reconvenes at noon (1700 GMT) on Thursday. Possibilities include number two House Republican Steve Scalise and Representative Jim Jordan, who have both said they backed McCarthy.

Making every effort to reduce visa interview appointment time: US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Jan 5: The US is making every effort to reduce the waiting time for a visa interview appointment in India, a top State Department official has said, asserting that the visa processing is recovering faster than projected and is expected to reach pre-pandemic levels over the coming year. Addressing the growing concern over the backlog of visa applications from countries like India, State Department spokesperson Ned Price told reporters at his daily news conference on Wednesday that he certainly understands the frustrations of those who have to wait for a long time. As of November 2022, the median worldwide wait time for a tourist visa (B1/B2) interview appointment was about two months, and applicants with urgent travel needs who meet certain criteria can apply for an emergency appointment, usually available within days. "Visa processing is recovering faster than projected and over the coming year, we expect to reach pre-pandemic processing levels," Price said. The US issued more student visas in the fiscal year 2022 than in any year since 2016, he said, adding that its embassy and consulates in India in particular broke their all-time record for the number of student visas issued in a single fiscal year. "We issued nearly 1,25,000 student visas. We recognise that some applicants may still face extended visa wait times, and we're making every effort to further reduce visa interview appointment wait times as quickly as possible in India and around the world, including for first-time tourist visa applicants," he said. "I can tell you that it is a priority of the Secretary and of the Department to do everything we can to reduce that backlog and ultimately to reduce the wait times," he said.



Nuns read a newspaper at St. Peter's Square on the day of the funeral of former Pope Benedict at the Vatican

Send us tanks, Zelenskyy urges West

REUTERS

Kyiv, Jan 5: Ukrainian and Russian troops battled in eastern regions Thursday as Kyiv tried to push back occupying forces, while President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged the West to provide his army with heavy tanks to boost their firepower. The Ukrainian military said the Russians were focused on an offensive in the Bakhmut sector of the Donetsk region, but their attacks in the Avdiivka and Kupiansk sectors were unsuccessful. The governor of neighbouring Luhansk region, meanwhile, said Ukrainian troops were recapturing areas there "step-by-step" but cautioned it was "not happening fast". Luhansk and Donetsk make up the Donbas region, Ukraine's industrial heartland, parts of which were seized by Russian-backed proxies in 2014. Russia declared Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions as part of its territory in September after referendums condemned by Ukraine and Western

- US PREDICTS MONTHS OF INTENSE FIGHTING IN BAKHMUT IN EAST
- LUHANSK GOVERNOR SAYS TROOPS ADVANCING 'STEP BY STEP'
- PUTIN THURSDAY ORDERED MOSCOW'S ARMED FORCES TO HOLD A 36-HOUR CEASE-FIRE IN UKRAINE THIS WEEKEND FOR THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY, THE KREMLIN SAID

countries. Russia does not fully control any of the four regions. Bakhmut, which is now largely in ruins after months of battering by Russian artillery, is important because the Russian leadership wants a success to hold up to its public after a series of setbacks in the war. It is located on a strategic supply line between the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Gaining control of the city, with a pre-war population of 70,000-80,000 that has shrunk to close to 10,000, could give Russia a stepping stone to advance on two bigger cities - Kramatorsk and Sloviansk.



Fighting has been particularly tough there, with commanders on both sides describing it as a "meat grinder". Ukraine's military said it estimated 800 Russian soldiers were killed in the past day, mostly in fighting in Donetsk. The figure - which would signify a huge loss of life for a single day - could not be independently confirmed.

HEAVY WEAPONS

A senior U.S. administration official also predicted a long road

China defends its Covid response



REUTERS

Beijing/Shanghai, Jan 5: China defended Thursday its handling of its raging COVID-19 outbreak after US President Joe Biden voiced concern and the World Health Organisation (WHO) said Beijing was under-reporting virus deaths. The WHO's emergencies director, Mike Ryan, said Wednesday that Chinese officials were under-reporting data on several fronts, some of the U.N. agency's most critical remarks to date. China scrapped its stringent COVID controls last month after protests against them, abandoning a policy that had shielded its 1.4 billion population from the virus for three years. China's foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a regular media briefing in Beijing that China had transparently and quickly shared COVID data with the WHO and said China's "epidemic situation is controllable". "Facts have proved that China has always, in accordance with the principles of legality, timeliness, openness and transparency, maintained close communication and shared relevant information and data with the WHO in a timely manner," Mao said. China reported one new COVID death in the mainland for Wednesday, compared with five a day earlier, bringing its official death toll to 5,259. Ryan said China's numbers under-represented hospital admissions, intensive care unit patients and deaths, and said Beijing's definition of COVID-related deaths was too narrow.

- China says outbreak is controllable
- WHO says China under-reporting hospital admissions, deaths
- Official data at odds with packed hospitals, crematoriums

Hours later, U.S. President Joe Biden raised concern about China's handling of a COVID outbreak that is filling hospitals and overwhelming some funeral homes. "They're very sensitive... when we suggest they haven't been that forthcoming," Biden SAID. The French health minister voiced similar fears.

CROWDED HOSPITAL

The United States is one of more than a dozen countries that have imposed restrictions on travellers from China. Germany announced tighter rules on Thursday. China, which criticised such border controls, said its border with its special administrative region of Hong Kong would reopen on Sunday, for the first time in three years. Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific Airways (0293.HK) said on Thursday it would more than double flights to mainland China. Millions of people will travel within China later this month for the Lunar New Year holiday, an event that the WHO has said could generate another wave of infections without more higher vaccination rates and other precautions. China has played down the severity of the situation.

TRUST VOTE AHEAD

Nepal PM intensifies talks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, Jan 5: Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has intensified negotiations with other parties to secure the required majority votes ahead of a vote of confidence in Parliament. The Prachanda-led coalition government requires at least 138 votes in the 275-member House of Representatives to survive the vote of confidence. Prachanda claims that he has the support of 169 lawmakers. Prachanda held a meeting with former premier and CPN (Unified Socialist) Chairman Madhav Kumar Nepal to seek his support. The Madhav Nepal-led party has 10 seats in the House of Representatives (HoR). During the meeting held at the Maoist Centre's Parliamentary Party office in Singha Durbar, Prachanda proposed to work together in the new government, MyRepublica newspaper reported Thursday.

UK saw hottest-ever year in 2022 as Europe's climate warms

Britain is not alone. France's average temperature was above 14 Celsius (57.2 Fahrenheit) in 2022, making it the hottest year since weather readings began in 1900

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Jan 5: Britain had its warmest year on record in 2022, official figures showed Thursday; the latest evidence that climate change is transforming Europe's weather. The Met Office weather agency said the provisional annual average temperature in the UK. Was 10.03 degrees Celsius (50 Fahrenheit), the highest since comparable records began in 1884. The previous record was 9.88 Celsius (49.8 Fahrenheit) set in 2014.

Met Office scientists said human activity - primarily fossil fuel emissions - has made such warm conditions vastly more likely. "The results showed that recording 10C in a natural climate would occur around once every 500 years, whereas in our current climate it could be as frequently as once every three to four years," said Met Office climate attribution scientist Nikos Christidis. Britain is not alone. France's average temperature was above 14 Celsius (57.2 Fahrenheit) in 2022,



making it the hottest year since weather readings began in 1900. In Spain, preliminary data from the end of December indicated that 2022 was the hottest year since records started in 1961. Last year saw summer drought

and heat waves across much of Europe, with the temperature in Britain rising above 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) for the first time on record. Norway's Svalbard islands in the Arctic had their warmest summer in more

than a century of record-keeping. The archipelago's average temperature for June, July and August was 7.4 Celsius (45.3 Fahrenheit), the Norwegian Meteorological Institute said. Autumn brought more heavy rain in parts of Europe, including the mountainous Italian island of Ischia, where downpours in November triggered a massive landslide that pushed cars and buildings into the sea and killed at least a dozen people. Unlike the US and Canada, which have been hit by bitter cold and snowstorms, much of Europe is experiencing unseasonably warm winter weather. In Germany, the year ended with the warmest New Year's Eve on record, with tem-

peratures reaching 20 Celsius (68 Fahrenheit) in the south of the country. Belarus, Belgium, Czechia, Latvia, Poland and the Netherlands all set national record daily highs for Dec. 31 or Jan. 1. As 2023 begins, many low and medium-altitude ski resorts in the Alps, the Pyrenees and other European ranges are suffering from a lack of snow. In Bosnia, spring-like weather has foiled even artificial snow - either it's too warm to make it, or it melts soon after being spit out onto the slopes. Along the slopes in Bjelasnica near Sarajevo on Wednesday, snow accumulation amounted to little more than several white patches on an otherwise grassy landscape of brown and green.

Amit Shah
I urge the opposition parties in Maharashtra and Karnataka not to politicise this issue. We should wait for the outcome of the discussions of the committee formed to resolve this issue and the decision of the Supreme Court. I'm confident that the NCP, the Congress and the Uddhav Thackeray group will cooperate

Uddhav Thackeray
It is not just a case of language and border, but of 'humanity'. The Marathi-speaking people have been residing in the border villages from generations. Their daily life, language and lifestyle is Marathi. Till the issue is pending before the Supreme Court, the Karnataka-occupied Maharashtra should be declared as a Union Territory by the central government. The matter is sub-judice and there is a status quo on it, but who is spoiling the atmosphere? Has the central government acted as guardian. We expect the central government to act as the guardian

Sanjay Raut
The way China has invaded (Indian Territory), we will do the same in Karnataka. We do not need anyone's permission to do so. We want to resolve the issue through dialogue but the Karnataka Chief Minister is setting everything ablaze (with his statements). Maharashtra has a weak government (in power) and thus could not take any stand against that state

Devendra Fadnavis
The state government will fight even for an inch of land, amid the simmering boundary dispute with Karnataka. The state government will do whatever it can to ensure the Marathi-speaking people in Karnataka get justice. We will fight even for an inch. We will do whatever we can for the justice of the Marathi-speaking population in Karnataka

Sharad Pawar
The situation in the border areas of Maharashtra and Karnataka is 'worrisome.' Time has come to take a stand after seeing what is happening there

Siddaramaiah
Maharashtra has no right to make such a resolution and it has no value, as the Mahajan Commission report is final on the border issue. Maharashtra has repeatedly raked up the border issue for politics. The case filed by that state in the Supreme Court is not maintainable

DK Shivakumar
Not even a single village will be ceded to Maharashtra. I condemn the resolution passed in the neighbouring state's legislature regarding inclusion of Marathi-speaking villages here. The whole state is united on this issue, strongly condemns and opposes the resolution by Maharashtra Assembly

The decades-old boundary dispute between Karnataka and Maharashtra over Belagavi has again flared up as both the state governments are readying for a legal battle. Belagavi bordering Maharashtra has a significant population of Marathi-speaking people and has for decades been a bone of contention between the two states

After the Maharashtra Legislature adopted a resolution unanimously expressing full solidarity with the Marathi-speaking people living in villages along the border with Karnataka, all eyes are on the Supreme Court which is likely to take up the Maharashtra-Karnataka border row this year.

The border dispute between the states dates back to 1960s, after the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines. On November 30 last year, the Apex court was scheduled to hear the arguments on the maintainability of Maharashtra government's petition challenging some provisions of the State Reorganisation Act, 1956 and demanding to merge 865 villages from five districts in Karnataka with Maharashtra. The matter was listed before the bench headed by Justice K.M. Joseph, but since the judges were busy in the constitution bench hearing in a matter related to Jallikattu, the border dispute could not be taken up then.

The resolution passed by Maharashtra Legislature said the government will pursue the legal battle before the Supreme Court to merge the 865 Marathi-speaking villages in Belagavi (Belgaum), Karwar, Nippani and other

BORDER BATTLE

The border dispute between the states dates back to 1960s, after the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines. The resolution passed by Maharashtra Legislature said the government will pursue the legal battle before the Supreme Court to merge the 865 Marathi-speaking villages in Belagavi (Belgaum), Karwar, Nippani and other towns with Maharashtra. The Karnataka Legislature too has passed a similar resolution

towns with Maharashtra. According to sources, the matter is likely to be mentioned before the Supreme Court for an early hearing.

Ever since the State Reorganisation Act was passed by the Parliament in 1956, Maharashtra and Karnataka have sparred over the inclusion of some towns and villages along the border. Justice Fazal Ali Commission was appointed in 1953 and the commission submitted its report two years later, and the 1956 Act is based on its findings. The Maharashtra government moved the apex court

seeking transfer of some villages in Karnataka to its side. However, almost two decades after the petition was filed, its maintainability remains challenged. Maharashtra is of the view that the north-western district of Belagavi, which was part of the erstwhile Bombay Presidency, should be part of the state as it has a sizable Marathi-speaking population. The Maharashtra government also laid claim on some Marathi-speaking villages, which are currently part of Karnataka.

The resolution, which was moved by Maharashtra Chief minister Eknath Shinde and adopted by the House, said, "The state government remains firmly and with full commitment with the

Marathi-speaking people from the 865 villages." The Karnataka Legislature too had passed a similar resolution. Citing Article 3 of the Constitution, Karnataka had argued that the apex court does not have the jurisdiction to decide states' border issues, and only the Parliament has the power to decide matters of this nature. However, Maharashtra referred to Article 131 of the Constitution, which says the top court has the jurisdiction in cases connected with disputes between the Centre and states.

Last year, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had chaired a meeting with Maharashtra and Karnataka Chief Ministers over the border dispute. Shah had said that both sides have agreed to resolve the issue in a constitutional manner.

Urging the opposition parties to cooperate, Shah had said: "I urge the opposition parties in Maharashtra and Karnataka not to politicise this issue. We should wait for the outcome of the discussions of the committee formed to resolve this issue and the decision of the Supreme Court. I'm confident that the NCP, the Congress and the Uddhav Thackeray group will cooperate."

We strongly condemn Maharashtra's resolution. It has been so long since the State Reorganisation Act 1956 came in, and people on both sides are living peacefully. Maharashtra has the practice of making such statements and resolutions for the sake of their politics. Karnataka is firm and clear on its stand that it will not cede even an inch of land, and this government is committed to protect the interest of Kannadigas on the other side of the border. Look at the difference between our resolution and theirs. We are saying that we will not cede our land, while they want to take our land. There is no meaning to such things when the matter is before the Supreme Court. We are confident about getting justice as our stand is both constitutional and legal

Those who lost lives in the border row will be treated as 'martyrs' and their kin will get Rs 20,000 per month. For students from Marathi-speaking areas in Karnataka, the Maharashtra government will reserve five per cent of seats for the training of students for Union Public Service Commission exams and 20 seats for engineering exams. Similarly, eight seats in government medical colleges, two in dental colleges, and five in Ayurvedic government-aided colleges will be reserved for students from the Marathi-speaking population. The state government stands resolutely with the Marathi-speaking people in 865 villages and cities of Belgaum (also called Belagavi), Karwar, Nipani, Bidar and Bhalki that are being contested in the Supreme Court

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHARASHTRA CM



A mere showpiece

The Suvarna Vidhana Soudha in Belagavi, which has been hosting the Winter Session of the Karnataka Assembly since 2012, was primarily meant to assert the rights of the state over the disputed border region. It may have served as a stately symbol built at a cost of Rs 500 crore, but it has not done anything to get the wheels of development moving in northern Karnataka, which continues to be the backward child of an otherwise prosperous state.

The Karnataka government has been holding the winter sessions of the state legislature at the Suvarna Soudha since 2012. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai's government held the session even when Covid-19 was raging last year to show its commitment to Belagavi and north Karnataka. When the idea of the Suvarna Soudha was mooted, it was appreciated by all. The expenditure incurred on maintaining the venue for holding just one session in a year; however, has been questioned. Many a times the building is described as a white ele-

Karnataka has been holding the winter sessions of the state legislature at the Suvarna Soudha since 2012. Basavaraj Bommai's government held the session even when Covid was raging last year



phant. The name of the building, incidentally, commemorates the golden jubilee of state's formation.

The late former President Pranab Mukharjee inaugurated the Suvarna Soudha on October 11, 2011. The construction had started in 2007. Then BJP-JD(S) coalition government headed by HD Kumaraswamy, with BS Yediyurappa as his deputy, took it up on a priority basis and got the project completed within a short time. The Suvarna Soudha complex is spread across 127 acres. The state has spent about Rs 500 crore for the building and the inauguration ceremony cost another Rs 15 crore.

It was once proposed that departments overseeing north Karnataka-specific projects be shifted to Belagavi. And a few secretary-level offices and government departments also be shifted to the Suvarna Soudha. The bureaucracy, however, has made sure the state government turns a deaf ear to the demand. Politicians in north Karnataka, too, prefer the comfort of metro city Bangalore.



Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai condemned the painting of pro-Maharashtra slogans on Karnataka buses



Karnataka Rakshana Vedike workers stage a rasta roko in protest against Maharashtra's interference in Karnataka's border near Belagavi



Tensions boiled over as Karnataka Rakshana Vedike activists pelted stones on a Maharashtra-registered vehicle that was heading from Pune towards Bangalore damaging its front glass panes

AN UGLY CHAPTER

A bloody chapter of the still continuing border row between Maharashtra and Karnataka still haunts the latter's Belagavi district. Following incidents of violence, Karnataka police shot dead nine persons in the district in 1986.

Protesters had ripped up railway tracks, attempts were made to poison drinking water units, and post offices were attacked in Belagavi against the backdrop of language row, say elders. A mob even tried to torch a cop of the District Armed Reserve (DAR), they said.

The Maharashtra Ekikarana Samiti (MES) claims that three persons on satyagraha died in prison. The bigwigs of Maharashtra politics took part in the agitation for Belagavi and were jailed in Karnataka. Present Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, and NCP leader Chhagan Bhujbal

were jailed by the Karnataka government. Shinde had taken part in the agitation as an ordinary worker then.

Maloji Shantaram Astekar, the MES General Secretary and former Mayor of Belagavi, says he was in Dhund jail in Dharwad with Bhujbal for about 15 to 20 days. In 1986, the Karnataka government made Kannada compulsory in the state. NCP chief Sharad Pawar, who was then in the Congress,

came down to Belagavi and started the 'Seema Ladai', he says.

Belagavi was literally on fire. At Hindalaga in the district, nine were killed in police firing. Four were from Hindalaga, three from Belagundi, one from Junne Belagavi and another from Anandwadi in Belagavi. Before that in 1956, five persons were killed in police firing in Belagavi, Astekar said.

Hundreds were sent to jail and many were injured in 1986 incident,

he added. Ashok Chandaragi, President of Belagavi Karnataka Association Organisations Action Committee, said that the 'Seema Ladai' launched by Maharashtra leaders had literally shaken the state in 1986 but the police did a commendable job in containing the violence.

Maharashtra bigwigs like Pawar, Bhujbal, and thousands of Shiv Sena workers started a violent agitation in Karnataka, then ruled by Ramakrishna Hegde, he says.

As water was poisoned, water supply was disconnected in Belagavi for eight days. The mob targeted Hindalaga Water Processing Unit, which

supplied water to the Belagavi city. Then Belagavi SP R. Narayan ordered firing on mob in which nine were killed.

After the firing, the violence stopped in the border district. Maharashtra government considers those killed as martyrs and is providing pension to all the families till date, he says. Shinde participated in the agitation as an ordinary worker in 1986 and was behind bars for 40 days in Ballary jail. The fact was confirmed by Shinde himself in an interview recently, he says.

Deepak B. Gudanagatti, the Belagavi District President of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike, says that Kannadigas were attacked in Belagavi and treated as second-grade citizens. They were attacked for watching Kannada movies. Now, after Kannada organisations started standing up for Kannada people, these incidents and domination have stopped, he adds.



of the day quote

India may be impacted in the short term but in a country with the GDP net growth of 7 per cent, the market is expected to see a balanced approach with growth in the tech sector and startups

SANDEEP GULATI
| MD, MANPOWERGROUP INDIA

Banks and financial institutions need to design products in sync with requirements of infra projects in view of the whopping ₹111 lakh crore National Infrastructure Pipeline

VIVEK JOSHI
| FINANCIAL SERVICES SECRETARY

We will try to follow up with the government on all our industry issues pending and liaison with them to make things suitable for us to work under. We will make our best efforts to bring the entire industry on one platform to discuss various policy matters

SAIYAM MEHRA | CHAIRMAN, GJC

SHORT TAKES

NTPC breaches generation feat

New Delhi: State-owned power giant NTPC Thursday crossed the 300 billion units (BU) mark of electricity generated during the current fiscal year. As of January 5, 2023, NTPC has recorded a PLF (plant load factor or capacity utilisation) of 73.7 per cent, compared to 68.5 per cent during the corresponding period in FY22, against the overall all India PLF of 63.27 per cent, a company statement said. The public sector undertaking has registered generation of 300 BU of electricity in 279 days, as of Thursday. The company achieved the 300 BU accomplishment a month before it had crossed the same mark in FY22, it added. In 2021-22, the company had crossed the 300 BU generation mark in 300 days February 5.

Redmi Note 12 series launched

Mumbai: Global technology brand Xiaomi Thursday launched the Redmi Note 12 series, which includes Note 12 Pro+ 5G, Note 12 Pro 5G, and Note 12 5G, for consumers in India. Redmi Note 12 5G starts at ₹17,999, Redmi Note 12 Pro 5G at ₹24,999, and Redmi Note 12 Pro+ 5G at ₹29,999, and all will be available from the company's official website and online and offline stores. "The Redmi Note 12 series carries this tradition forward, bringing features like the greatest ever resolution seen on a smartphone camera, top-notch display quality, cutting edge connectivity and insanely fast charging speeds, all at the trademark honest price that marks Xiaomi's product portfolio," said Anuj Sharma, Chief Marketing Officer, Xiaomi India.

Delhi EV sales highest in Dec

New Delhi: Delhi has created history by achieving the highest ever state-UT-wise monthly electric vehicle sales in the country. In December, Delhi registered 7,046 electric vehicles with a year-on-year growth of 86 per cent. Since the launch of the EV policy, the UT registered 93,239 electric vehicles, of which two-wheelers contribute nearly 55 per cent of the total EV sales in the year 2022. Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot, in a media address, said, Delhi has always led from the front making it the EV capital of the country and it is ready with the required private and public charging infrastructure with a total of 2300 charging points and 200 batteries swapping stations in operation across the city.



Vodafone (Idea) has many requirements. It has a particular requirement of capital. How much capital, who will infuse? All those things are under discussion at this point of time

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | TELECOM MINISTER

LARGEST ANGEL INVESTOR IN 2022

We Founder Circle (WFC), a founders' led early-stage startup investment platform, have closed their second year as the largest Angel Network in India of the year 2022. The platform became one of the fastest-growing angel network communities and has already facilitated funds worth over ₹100 crore across 53 startups with 71 deals



RECORD PINK SLIPS

Amazon, Salesforce jettison jobs in latest techie purge

A slew of firms hit by geopolitical downturn have reduced their workforce exponentially after hiring aggressively during the pandemic

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Jan 5: E-commerce giant Amazon and business software maker Salesforce are the latest US technology companies to announce major job cuts as they prune payrolls that rapidly expanded during the pandemic lockdown.

Amazon said Wednesday that it will be cutting about 18,000 positions. It's the largest set of layoffs in the Seattle-based company's history, although just a fraction of its 1.5 million global workforce.

Amazon CEO Andy Jassy said the layoffs will mostly impact the

company's brick-and-mortar stores, which include Amazon Fresh and Amazon Go, and its PXT organizations, which handle human resources and other functions.

In November, Jassy told staff that layoffs were coming due to the economic landscape and the company's rapid hiring in the last several years. Wednesday's announcement included earlier job cuts that had not been numbered. The company had also offered voluntary buyouts and has been cutting costs in other areas of its sprawling business.

Salesforce, meanwhile, said it



AMAZON TO CUT ABOUT 18,000 POSITIONS

SALESFORCE TO AXE 8,000 EMPLOYEES; 10% OF WORKFORCE

is laying off about 8,000 employees, or 10% of its workforce.

The cuts announced Wednesday are by far the largest in the 23-year history of a San Francisco company founded by former Oracle executive Marc Benioff. Benioff pio-

neered the method of leasing software services to internet-connected devices—a concept now known as "cloud computing."

Salesforce workers who lose their jobs will receive nearly five months of pay, health insurance, career resources, and other benefits, according to the company. Amazon said it is also offering a separation payment, transitional health insurance benefits, and job placement support.

Meta Platforms CEO Mark Zuckerberg also acknowledged he misread the revenue gains that the owner of Facebook and Instagram was reaping during the pandemic when he announced in November that his company would be laying off 11,000 employees, or 13% of its workforce.

Amazon has weathered uncertain and difficult economies in the past, and we will continue to do so. These changes will help us pursue our long-term opportunities with a stronger cost structure

As the revenue accelerated through the pandemic, we hired too many people leading into this economic downturn we're now facing, and I take responsibility for that

ANDY JASSY | CEO, AMAZON
MARC BENIOFF | CEO, SALESFORCE

'India's growth to dip to 5.5% in '24 from 6.8% in 2023'

REUTERS

Mumbai, Jan 5: India's economy is expected to grow 5.5% in the next financial year, a notch below the expected potential rate of 6%, as growth momentum in the country was slowing gradually, an economist at HSBC said Thursday.

The Indian economy grew 8.7% in year ended March 2022, and is expected to grow by 6.8% in the current financial year.

A Reserve Bank of India survey of professional forecasters released in December had pegged growth at 6% in 2023/24.

"While both exports and imports have slowed over the last few months, the former has slowed more sharply than the latter, indicating a sharper fall in the global growth momentum," Pranjul Bhandari, chief India and Indonesia economist at HSBC Securities and Capital Markets (India) said in a note to clients.

Economists at the brokerage expect domestic demand to remain stronger as compared to global demand, the note said, adding that demand for goods - higher than services demand during the pandemic - has fallen in recent months.

"Urban demand has far outstripped rural demand over 2022, but is also moderating since mid-2022, led primarily by goods," the note added.

Vehicle retail sales jump in '22

IN 2022 THE AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY REGISTERED POSITIVE GROWTH AFTER SURPASSING THE PANDEMIC GLOOM AND SEMICONDUCTOR CRUNCH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 5: Retail sales of overall vehicles in India grew by 15.28 per cent to 2,11,20,441 units in 2022 led by record sales of passenger vehicles and tractors, Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) said Thursday.

In 2021, total retail sales of vehicles in India were at 1,83,21,760 units, FADA said in a statement.

Two-wheelers retail sales stood at 1,53,88,062 units last year, a growth of 13.37 per cent from 2021 when sales stood at 1,35,73,682 units.

Passenger vehicles (PV) retail sales were at 34,31,497 units in 2022, as against 29,49,182 units in 2021, up 16.35 per cent, it added.

FADA President Manish Raj Singhania said, "For CY2022, while total vehicle retails grew by 15 per cent year-on-year and 17 per cent compared to CY20 it failed to surpass CY19 retails, (a pre-Covid year) and registered a fall of 10 per cent."

He further said, "The PV category during this period continued to gain new grounds by clocking 34.31 lakh retails during the full year. This is by far, the highest retails which PV has done till date."

Singhania, however, lamented that the two-wheeler segment once again failed to impress as retail



TOTAL VEHICLE RETAIL SALES JUMP 15.28%

TWO-WHEELERS RETAIL GROWS OF 13.37%

PV RETAIL SALES WITNESSED RISE OF 16.35%

CV RETAIL SALES SAW SURGE OF 31.97%

THREE-WHEELER RETAIL SALES UP 71.47%

TRACTOR SALES RECORD NEW LIFETIME HIGH

sales during December 2022 continued to fall after two good months.

"Reasons like rise in inflation, increased cost of ownership, rural market yet to pick up fully and increased EV sales, the ICE (internal combustion engine) two-wheeler segment is yet to see any green shoots," he added.

In 2022, commercial vehicles re-

tail sales stood at 8,65,344 units, as against 6,55,696 units in 2021, a growth of 31.97 per cent.

"The CV segment has continued to grow during entire CY2022 and is now almost at par with CY2019 retails. With an uptick in demand in LCV (light commercial vehicles), HCV (heavy commercial vehicles), buses and construction

equipment, the government's continued push for infrastructure development has kept this segment going," Singhania said.

He also said the three-wheeler segment which was completely down during Covid has recovered well and has narrowed its gap when compared to CY2019.

"Within the segment it's the electric rickshaw sub-segment which is showing triple-digit growth thus pushing the EV market share above 50 per cent mark," he added.

Three-wheeler retail in 2022 stood at 6,40,559 units, as compared to 3,73,562 units in 2021, up 71.47 per cent.

Singhania said the tractor segment was the only other segment apart from PV which has grown well above calendar years 2021, 2020 and pre-Covid year of 2019.

"It has also registered a new lifetime high sales of 7.94 lakh units. This feat was possible due to consistently good monsoon, improved cash flow with farmers, better MSP of crops and government's focus on better procurements," he added.

Tractor retail sales in 2021 were at 7,69,638 units.

Apart from this, timely sowing of rabi crops also helped to continue this momentum. Festive season sales which were normal after 3 years also played its part in this strong momentum, Singhania said.

Dec air passenger traffic surges 15%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 5: Domestic air passenger traffic grew 15 per cent year-on-year to around 129 lakh in December 2022 but remained 1 per cent lower than the pre-pandemic level (December 2019), rating agency Icra said Thursday.

Icra has also maintained a 'Negative' outlook on the Indian aviation industry.

In the April-December period of the current fiscal, domestic passenger traffic is estimated at around 986 lakh, registering around 63 per cent year-on-year growth and lower by approximately 9 per cent compared to April-December 2019 (pre-Covid levels), it said.



At the same time, the airlines deployed slightly higher capacity (less than 1 per cent) in the previous month over the year-ago period, the rating agency said, adding that it, however, was lower by around 7 per cent than the pre-Covid levels.

According to Icra, the domestic aviation industry operated at an estimated passenger load factor of around 91 per cent in December 2022 against approximately 80 per cent in December 2021 and about 88 per cent in December 2019.

The agency said it expects a fast-paced recovery in domestic passenger traffic in FY2023, aided by normalcy in operations. However, the earnings recovery for domestic airlines is likely to be decelerated due to sharp escalations in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices and depreciation of the rupee against the US Dollar in the backdrop of increased competition.

While a meaningful improvement in passenger traffic is expected in FY2023, the pace of recovery in the industry earnings will be sluggish, and the industry is expected to incur a net loss of around ₹150-170 billion owing to elevated costs, the report said.

However, this will be notably lower compared to the ₹235 billion net loss in FY2022, primarily driven by a recovery in passenger traffic and lower interest burden, following the significant reduction in Air India Limited's debt before the divestment by the central government, it stated.

HAWKISH FED WEIGHS

Stocks skid for second day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 5: Equity benchmarks buckled under selling pressure for the second straight session Thursday as traders reduced their exposure to riskier assets after minutes from the US Federal Reserve's latest meeting indicated more rate hikes this year.

Continuous foreign fund outflows added to the selling pressure, market participants said.

Paring initial gains, the 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 304.18 points or 0.50 per cent to close at 60,353.27. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty dipped 50.80 points or 0.28 per cent to end at 17,992.15.



Bajaj Finance was the top loser among Sensex constituents, plunging 7.21 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finserv, ICICI Bank, Infosys, Power Grid, Titan, Axis Bank, and Tech Mahindra.

In contrast, ITC, NTPC, Hindustan Unilever, Mahindra &

Mahindra, Nestle India, Sun Pharma and Tata Steel were among the gainers, climbing as much as 1.91 per cent.

The market breadth was negative, with 18 declines compared to 12 advances.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures rose 2.62 per cent to \$79.88 per barrel.

Rallying for the second straight session, the rupee jumped 37 paise to close at 82.45 against the US dollar amid a weak greenback overseas.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the capital markets Thursday as they offloaded shares worth ₹1,449.45 crore, according to exchange data

Tanishq launches 'The Spring Summer Edit'23'

Bhubaneswar: India's top jewellery retailer, Tanishq, from Tata Group, introduces the largest assortment of diamond jewellery ever with the launch of 'The Spring Summer Edit'23' featuring distinct



BIZ BUZZ

diamond looks to celebrate many styles. The wide range of new designs under 'The Spring Summer Edit'23 are available across all product categories such as rings, earrings, pendants, necklaces, bracelets, bangles, and many more. It's truly a festival of diamonds this season with Tanishq's Spring Summer Edit'23 and to make it even more attractive, Tanishq is offering up to 20% discount on diamond jewellery value. The offer is valid across all Tanishq stores in India and is valid for a limited period only.

Microsoft to push India's \$1trn digital economy dream

IT and BPM sector has become one of the most significant growth catalysts for the Indian economy, contributing significantly to the country's GDP and public welfare

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Jan 5: As India embarks on its digital journey with full steam, Microsoft wishes to move in and provide every part of its tech stack to the country and its innovators, to help it become the \$1 trillion digital economy as the country spends more on its tech sec-

tor, the company's Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella said Thursday.

Nadella told IANS that India's tax spend as a percentage of its GDP is becoming normalised when compared to the developed world, and is now among the top 10 countries.

"I ask, what happens if India spends more on its tech sector? What is the productivity gain that the world can benefit from? And here, we want to move in with our world-class offerings," Nadella said during a closed-door session.

"We want to be the infrastructure provider. We want to be the developer amplifier. We want to provide every part of our tech stack to basically help the country gain that leverage towards becoming a \$1 trillion digital economy soon," he



We're making everything and we are making them in India, so that others can make in India as well, whether it's a small business or a public sector project

SATYA NADELLA | CEO, MICROSOFT

emphasised. At the opening ceremony of the BRICS Business Forum in

virtual mode last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India's digital sector valuations

Nadella meets Modi

New Delhi: Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella, who is on a four-day visit to India, met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and pledged the company's support in helping the country realise the Digital India vision. The Microsoft top honcho described his meeting with the PM as "insightful", and lauded the government's deep focus on sustainable and inclusive economic growth driven by digital transformation.

will cross \$1 trillion soon. Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar said in November that over the next 5-7 years, "we will

surely see our trillion-dollar digital economy goal become reality."

According to India Brand Equity Foundation, the IT industry accounted for 7.4 per cent of India's GDP in FY22 and is expected to contribute 10 per cent to India's GDP by 2025.

Nadella said that we are no longer just a software company but a full systems' provider. "We're making everything and we are making them in India, so that others can make in India as well, whether it's a small business or a public sector project," he noted.

The Microsoft CEO said that they are investing capital in India, like in building new data centres. "We now have three data centres and the fourth one is coming soon," he informed.

AXAR, SURYA KNOCKS IN VAIN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, Jan 5: Suryakumar Yadav (51, 36b, 3x4, 3x6) and Axar Patel (65, 31b, 3x4, 6x6) struck blistering fifties in a stunning 91-run stand, albeit in a losing cause as Sri Lanka tightened the screws in the nick of time to beat India by 16 runs in the second T20I and level the three-match series 1-1 here Thursday.

Skipper Dasun Shanaka made a rear-guard unbeaten 56 (22b, 2x4, 6x6), while wicketkeeper Kusal Mendis hit a 31-ball 52 (3x4, 4x6) to power Sri Lanka to an imposing 206/6.

India had a nightmarish start to their chase slumping to 57/5 before Axar and Surya raised hopes of an improbable win with a scintillating sixth-wicket stand. The task became tough once Surya departed in the 16th over, but Axar and Shivam Mavi (26, 15b, 2x4, 2x6) shared quick 41 runs to bring down the equation to 21 off the last over.

But Axar's dismissal in the third ball of the final over was the last nail in the coffin for India. Chasing the total, India lost openers Ishan Kishan and Shubman Gill in the second over to Kasun Rajitha (2/22).

If that was not enough debutant Rahul Tripathi sneaked one to Mendis off Dilshan Madushanka (2/45) in the next over before skipper Hardik Pandya (12) departed an over later as India slumped to 34/4 in 4.4 overs.

Surya and Deepak Hooda (9) tried to stabilise the innings with a hard-fought 23-run partnership but with the asking rate creeping up, the latter departed in search of a big shot, caught by Dhananjaya de Silva off Wanindu Hasaranga as India lost half of their side for 57.

Surya and Axar tried to up the ante with a sensational 91-run sixth-wicket partnership off just 40 balls to keep India afloat after a forget-



Axar Patel and Suryakumar Yadav (inset) in action during the second T20I against Sri Lanka, Thursday

table start. The duo raised hopes of a famous victory but it was not to be as the visitors pulled the strings just in time to level the series.

Earlier, it was a disastrous performance from the Indian bowlers after electing to field as the Lankan batters went hammer and tongs from the onset. Barring Axar (2/24), all other Indian bowlers went for runs.

Even though speedster Umar Malik (3/48) picked up three wickets, he too was taken to the cleaners, while last match's hero Mavi (0/53) looked a pale shadow of himself.

Arshdeep Singh conceded 19 runs of the second over, which included two back-to-back no balls that yielded 17 runs. Hardik too went for 11 runs from his second over as

Mendis top-edged one over deep third man. Mavi was also taken to the cleaners by Mendis in his opening over, which yielded 15 runs.

Spin duo of Axar and Yuzvendra Chahal (1/30) gave respite for two overs before Pathum Nissanka (33) struck a four and then a mammoth six over deep midwicket. India's first breakthrough came in the ninth over when Chahal had Mendis LBW after Hardik went for a successful review.

Sri Lanka suffered their second blow in the first delivery of the next over when Malik beat Bhanuka Rajapaksa by pace to clean his stumps. Despite losing two wickets, Sri Lanka reached a healthy score of 89 at the half-way mark.

But Axar tasted success soon when he dismissed Nissanka, caught by Tripathi. He snared his second victim of the day in his next over when De Silva was caught by Hooda at long on. Charith Asalanka (37) looked in ominous mood before Malik got rid of him. Malik knocked off the timbers off Hasaranga with a pacy delivery a ball later. Then it was all Shanaka till the end.

BRIEF SCORES

Sri Lanka 206/6 (Dasun Shanaka 56 n o, Kusal Mendis 52; Umran Malik 3/48, Axar Patel 2/24) beat India 190/8 (Axar Patel 65, Suryakumar Yadav 51; Dasun Shanaka 2/4, Kasun Rajitha 2/22) by 16 runs.

Green rubbishes rumours about his IPL unavailability

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Jan 5: Young Australian all-rounder Cameron Green is puzzled by rumours that he will not be able to bowl in the early part of the Indian Premier League (IPL) this year, saying he will be "100 percent available" to bat and bowl for Mumbai Indians.

Reports have circulated that Green, who suffered a broken finger after being hit by an Anrich Nortje bouncer during the second Test against South Africa, can only bowl in IPL 2023 after April.

But the 23-year-old, bought by the most successful IPL franchise for Rs 17.50 crore – the second-most costliest player in the history of IPL auction – rubbished the rumours Thursday, saying he doesn't know how and where the news originated.

"No, that's not correct," Green was quoted as saying by SEN. "I've heard about this for quite a while now, I think. I don't know where it's come from. I've heard that I'm 100 per cent available for both skill sets in the IPL at the start, so yeah, I'm not too sure where that's kind of come from," added Green.

Green and pace bowler Mitchell Starc are both missing the third and final Test against South Africa, currently underway at the Sydney Cricket Ground, due to finger injuries.

The all-rounder, after retiring on day two of the Boxing Day Test following the injury, returned the next day to complete his half-cen-

tury. Australia won the second Test to take a 2-0 lead in the three-Test series.

Doctors have recommended surgery for Green and he is expected to be fit in time for the opening Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, scheduled to begin on February 9. Green said he has set his sights on the opening Test in India.

"Obviously my first priority is the Test series that's beforehand (before the IPL)," Green added. "I think me and Starc (Starc) are maybe touch and go for that first one (Test) but obviously we'll give ourselves the best chance."

Green said money earned during the IPL auction in Kochi recently will not be a distraction for him when it comes to playing his natural game.

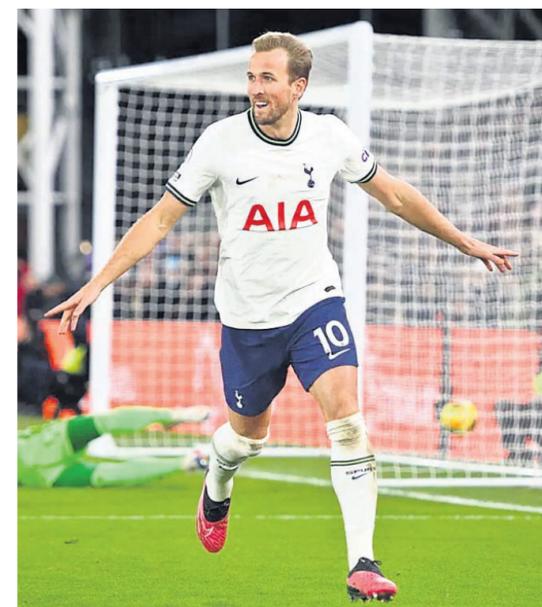
"Yeah obviously it (auction) turned out really well but I think at the same time you want to go out there and perform and kind of re-pay the faith they showed you," said Green.

"I think just having the right people around you I think keeps you pretty humble in a way. You've got the right people to drag you down if you get too ahead of yourself, but also the right people to bring you back up when you're going not as great as you like."

"I think that's kind of cricket. It's a game of failures, you're going to fail more than you succeed. As long as you have the right people around you to kind of bring you back up is probably key," added Green.



Kane scores brace in Spurs' win vs Palace



SPLENDID SHOW: Harry Kane celebrates one of his goals against Crystal Palace, Wednesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Jan 5: With two classic centre forward's finishes, Harry Kane showed he is not suffering any lasting effects from his World Cup disappointment with England.

It's now three goals in three Premier League games for Tottenham since returning from Qatar after his double in a 4-0 win over Crystal Palace late Wednesday.

Kane has had to shoulder the burden of missing a late penalty in England's 1-2 loss to France in the quarter-finals December 10.

Back with the Spurs, he scored in the 2-2 draw with Brentford on the first day of the league's resumption and added two more against Palace – a header at the back post and an emphatic low finish into the bottom corner.

It was a reminder, not that it was really needed, of Kane's opportunism in front of goal and brought some respite for his manager, Antonio Conte, who was pessimistic about his team's top-four chances after a 0-2 loss to Aston Villa Sunday.

The win over Palace moved fifth-place Tottenham five points clear of sixth-place Liverpool, and two points behind both Newcastle and Manchester United, who are in third and fourth, respectively. United has a game in hand.

Matt Doherty and Son Heung-min also scored at Selhurst Park, with all goals coming in the space

Ishan jumps 10 places to 23rd, Hooda in top 100

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Jan 5: India opener Ishan Kishan jumped 10 places to 23rd position while Deepak Hooda re-entered the top-100 in the latest ICC rankings for T20I batters issued Thursday.

Both moved upwards in the chart after their impressive performances in the first T20Is against Sri Lanka in Mumbai Tuesday, which India won by two runs.

Hooda moved up 40 places to 97th after his unbeaten 41 off 23 balls while Kishan was rewarded for his brisk 37-run knock at the top of the order.

The swashbuckling Suryakumar Yadav continued to hold the top spot for batters despite a rare failure in Mumbai. India's new T20I captain Hardik Pandya, up nine places to 76th among bowlers, is the other to move up the rankings.

In the Test rankings for batters, Marnus Labuschagne remains at the head of proceedings with a healthy lead despite his failure in the Boxing Day Test against South Africa.

However, his closest rivals, teammate Steve Smith, Pakistan skipper Babar Azam and former New Zealand captain Kane Williamson all are closing in on the 28-year-old Labuschagne.

of 24 minutes in the second half.

Southampton adrift At the other end of the standings, Southampton is two points adrift in last place after a 1-0 home loss against Nottingham Forest, which moved out of the relegation zone. Taiwo Awoniyi scored in the 27th minute at St. Mary's to earn Forest's first away win of the season. The team climbed three places to 15th.

Southampton have lost all four of their league games since Nathan Jones was hired as manager as the replacement for the fired Ralph Hasenhuttl November 10. There were loud jeers at the final whistle.

Bailey's tears A tearful Leon Bailey had to be helped off the ground after the final whistle after his glaring late miss for Aston Villa in its 1-1 draw with next-to-last Wolverhampton.

Bailey rounded goalkeeper Jose Sa after being played through by Danny Ings, Villa's scorer, but mishit a shot that bobbed wide of the goal. The Jamaica international slumped to the ground at fulltime and was eventually applauded off the field at Villa Park by home fans as Bailey covered his face with his jersey.

Daniel Podence scored in the 12th minute for Wolverhampton. Ings came on as a substitute and equalised in the 78th when he split two defenders and ran onto a ball over the top from Tyrone Mings before beating Sa. Wolves stayed in next-to-last place but are now two points ahead of Southampton.

Chile bank on tenacity for success: Coach

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 5: Debutants Chile will bank on their tenacity to counter tough teams like the Netherlands, Malaysia and New Zealand in their group in the men's hockey World Cup, scheduled to commence in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela January 13.

Led by Fernando Renz, Chile, who are playing in their first World Cup, arrived here Thursday and will play their opening game against New Zealand January 14.

While their head coach Jorge Dabanch is wary of the challenge the top teams will pose for his side in Group C, he is confident the fighting spirit of his players will ensure good performances.

"There are many top teams in the World Cup and, of course, hosts India are one of them as well. Australia, Belgium and the Netherlands will be tough teams to beat and we will look to register a win against these top sides in the tournament."

"We have a very big heart and we will fight for every match. I believe that tactically our team is really good and we are excited to see the kind of challenges we will face in the tournament," said Dabanch.

Chile skipper Renz said the players in the squad have been together for the last four years, which has helped them become a strong unit. "We have a good mixture of



young and senior players in our squad. Our team is really good and we have been playing together for four years. So, we are a team that is really tough to beat and will be doing our best here," said Renz.

Following their opening match, Chile will take on Malaysia in Rourkela on January 16 and conclude their group engagement with the match against three-time world champions Netherlands on January

19 in Bhubaneswar.

Renz also touched upon the challenges his team is expected to face in the tournament, saying, "This is our first time in the World Cup. We qualified for the tournament in Santiago, Chile almost a year back and since then, we have been preparing for this."

"We knew that we will be playing huge games here in India. We have a tough group and will be up against

teams like the Netherlands, Malaysia and New Zealand. Every game will be very tough for us but we have been preparing for this tournament the whole year, so, we know we are going to do our best in the competition." The 16 competing teams are Australia, Belgium, Netherlands, India, Argentina, Germany, New Zealand, England, France, Korea, Malaysia, Spain, South Africa, Japan, Chile and Wales.

Barca battle past resolute Intercity



Ansu Fati (C) rejoices with teammates after scoring the winner against Intercity

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, Jan 5: Barcelona struggled to advance in its Copa del Rey debut, needing extra time to defeat third-division club Intercity 4-3.

Ansu Fati scored the winning goal for Barcelona in the 104th minute Wednesday night after the Catalan club relinquished a lead three times in the 3-3 draw in regulation. Oriol Solde scored a hat-

trick for the hosts in the city of Alicante in southeastern Spain.

Barcelona, playing without some of their regular starters, scored with Ronald Araujo in the fourth minute, Ousmane Dembele in the 66th and Raphinha in the 77th. Solde scored in the 59th, 74th and 86th minutes.

The game was played not long after Spain's administrative court for sports upheld a three-game sus-

pension for Barcelona striker Robert Lewandowski in the Spanish league, taking him out of the league match against Atletico Madrid Sunday. He had not been in the squad for the Copa match against Intercity.

The suspension had been lifted by a court of disputes after an appeal by Barcelona. The Poland striker had been allowed to play in last weekend's 1-1 league draw against Espanyol, which later challenged the result of the derby saying it was harmed by the unexpected decision by the Madrid court to temporarily lift the suspension.

Barcelona, Real Madrid, Valencia and Real Betis had not played until this round because they are part of the Spanish Super Cup that will begin next week. Madrid advanced past fourth-division club Cacereno 1-0 Tuesday.

ATLETICO ADVANCE

Marcos Llorente and teenager Pablo Barrios scored a goal in each half as Atletico Madrid eliminated second-division Oviedo 2-0. Antoine Griezman helped set up both goals for Diego Simeone's team. Atletico played without Joao Felix, Rodrigo De Paul and Stefan Savic.

Shantanu ton puts Odisha in control versus Nagaland



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Jan 5: Shantanu Mishra (134 batting, 323b, 15x4) scored a watchful century to help Odisha get closer to Nagaland's total in their Ranji Trophy Elite Group A match at the DRIEMS Ground in Tangi, Thursday.

Resuming the play at an overnight score of 111 for no loss, Odisha reached 392/6 at stumps on the third day of the match. Odisha were still 41 runs behind Nagaland's first innings total and

Prayash Singh (42 batting, 69b, 5x4, 1x6) was giving Shantanu company when the balls were drawn.

Akash Singh (4/57) sent Odisha into back-foot when he gave the hosts a double blow in the 11th over of the day. The pacer first broke the 128-run opening stand between Shantanu and Anurag Sarangi (84, 140b, 16x4) dismissing the latter. Then he got rid of Swastik Samal three balls later reducing Odisha to 128/2.

Shantanu the found an able ally in his skipper Subhranshu Senapati (67, 78b, 7x4) as the duo stitched together 115 runs for the third wicket. Kartik Biswal (12) joined Shantanu at the crease, only for a 37-run stand, before seasoned Govind Poddar (41, 66b, 8x4) added 50 runs with Shantanu to take Odisha total to 330. Rajesh Duper too was dismissed shortly after Poddar's departure.

However, Shantanu and Prayash held their nerves ensuring Odisha of no further damage on the day. The pair had already added 60 runs for the seventh wicket before the end of play.