



संयुक्त राष्ट्रकुलम्
ONE EARTH - ONE FAMILY - ONE FUTURE



Air Connectivity in Odisha gets a major boost under UDAN scheme of Government of India

"Aviation was once considered as the domain of a select few, but that has changed now with the advent of 'UDAN'. A common man who travels in 'Hawai Chappal' should also be seen in 'Hawai Jahaz'. This is my dream."

Narendra Modi,
Prime Minister of India

SAIL's Rourkela Airport operationalised

Flights on Rourkela-Bhubaneswar-Rourkela route have been started by Alliance Air

- The Rourkela Airport has been revived with allocation of more than Rs. 64 Crore through Ministry of Civil Aviation under the UDAN scheme
- Rourkela-Kolkata route has also been awarded for operationalisation under UDAN
- Rourkela Airport is open for connecting all other cities of the country

Thank you Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India for the visionary leadership

SAIL thanks Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia, Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Steel for operationalization of the airport and guidance and Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Education and Minister of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship for the support. SAIL also thanks the Government of Odisha for the help.



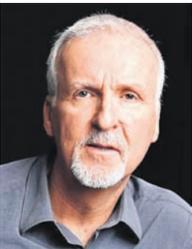


CITIZEN APP REVEALS LOCATION OF BILLIE'S FAMILY HOME TO 178K USERS

A push notification on the popular crime reporting app called Citizen disclosed the exact location of an alleged break-in at singer-songwriter Billie Eilish's family home to at least 178,000 people on the platform.

'AVATAR 2' WILL 'EASILY' BREAK EVEN AT BOX OFFICE: JAMES CAMERON

Award-winning filmmaker James Cameron said that 'Avatar: The Way of Water' will turn the profit it needs in order to get the remainder of his franchise sequels made. "I know what I'm going to be doing the next six or seven years".



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You can make a difference to others' lives. Considerate and thoughtful, today, you will be treasured more than ever as a boss, colleague, parent or beloved. Utilise this exchange of energy to sort out difficult issues. Ganesh gives a thumbs up to mega projects.

TAURUS
Ganesh sees you taking a day off from your work and immersing your self in domestic activities. A lot of time will be spent blissfully with your family folk chatting away or doing this and that. The idea of getting your interiors redone and give your house a new look will surely occur to you.

GEMINI
There is a likelihood of some household disturbance cropping up today. Your family members could make a lot of demands from you. You may feel angry because of your inability to meet all their needs and wants. Unexpected expenses are also indicated. You need to control your spending, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Watch out for winds of change and act accordingly. Ganesh warns you of drowning in a strong current. Your task will be easier if you adjust to circumstances. Fun and entertainment are today's password. In the social sector business, you will have success. This is the right time to enhance social prestige.

LEO
You are advised to be more attentive to your work today. You will try to do the best work possible by putting in your maximum efforts. However, the results might turn out to be lower than your expectations. You need to be wary of excessive expenses or financial loss today.

VIRGO
Family affairs will predominate today. They will even control your thoughts to the exclusion of everything else. Things will look up on the business front. You may spend time relaxing in the evening. Ganesh says a trip to a place of worship is on the cards.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will give more importance to your family and there may be concerns about the health of a family member. There may be news from abroad regarding the health of a close family member, which may disturb you today. Do maintain your mental balance today and remember that this too shall pass.

SCORPIO
A cloud of emotions surrounds you today and you would like to spend the entire day in introspection and self-analysis. You will try to raise your bar at professional level. Your far sightedness and capability to understand human psychology promises a leader in you, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Tough times do not last, but tough people do, remember this fact and move ahead in life. Try to make the complicated life simpler by your optimistic approach. Speak up when it is required and don't get bogged down by unnecessary pressure.

CAPRICORN
You will have heard of many emotional fools who let sentiments rule their lives. Try not to be one of them, and if it's too difficult a task, at least pretend not to be one of them, for Ganesh says going by your feelings can leave you at a low ebb.

AQUARIUS
You know how to examine the nuts and bolts of every assignment or project, and it consumes your resources to a great extent. But, like a stitch in time saves nine, your meticulous planning minimises the chances of a loss or a failure, feels Ganesh. Not many are good at this, and such efficient planning gives you an upper hand over others when the competition is tight.

PISCES
You could find yourself re-establishing contact with long lost friends abroad, possibly on matters of business. You will also likely find yourself attending social events. There is a possibility that those who are unmarried, may find their match in these social settings. Long term personal or business relationships will likely be established today, says Ganesh.



FOMO hits Alaya

Mumbai: Alaya F, who made her big hindi film debut with *Jawaani Jaaneman* co-starring Saif Ali Khan and Tabu, recently garnered much appreciation for her performance in *Freddy*. Alaya recently opened up about how she was afraid that people might forget her after her first film and had a fear of being missed out (FOMO). She said, "It was the pandemic that inspired me to do this. My film (*Jawaani Jaaneman*) was released, and the world went into lockdown. I felt like everyone was going to forget me. I was afraid that because of the high visibility I had received for my first film, the world would forget about me, and I felt compelled to ensure that people remembered me, that I was visible, and that I was relevant. What I could not control was what was going on outside, but what I could control was my social media".

AGENCIES



Rakul roots for sex education

Mumbai: The makers of the upcoming film *Chhatriwali* have unveiled the trailer, which focuses on sex education among the youngsters, led by Rakul Preet Singh's character. The trailer begins with the stereotypes in society surrounding sex and how women have to suffer because of lack of education. It then focuses on a professor played by Rajesh Tailang thinking how it is not really important and is a taboo to teach children about sex and 'copulation'. Then enters Rakul, who gets married to Sumeet Vyas who doesn't believe in using condoms. Rakul said, "In today's patriarchal society, every household needs a Sanya who holds the courage to single-handedly fight against all odds, traditions, social norms, and barriers". She added, "India's youth make up for majority of the population and educating them on safe sex is the need of the hour, so I am glad that *Chhatriwali* is catering to them and everyone else in a progressive and entertaining manner. I have respect and only respect for the incredible team behind this extraordinary project."

IANAS

Vidya urges families to invest in women's health

Kolkata: Actress Vidya Balan speaking at the 65th All India Congress of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Kolkata has urged families to give importance to their women's health. She highlighted that the onus doesn't lie with women alone. She said, "We keep talking about women's health. Families need to invest in the health of their women. If we want to be a progressive and successful nation, we must invest in the health of women. A small step will go a long way". Elaborating further, the *Kahaani* actress added, "A woman derives such a large part of her identity from her body. Yet we don't want to acknowledge the body, we don't want to acknowledge its desire and needs. We don't take adequate care of it. Every woman must acknowledge every part of her body and nurture it". While giving a small suggestion on how it can be achieved, Vidya added, "When a woman visits a gynaecologist, maybe she should insist her father, partner or son to come along. The more people see, the more they move forward and attitudes change".

AGENCIES



Shooting for Mood Banaleya was like real party: Amruta

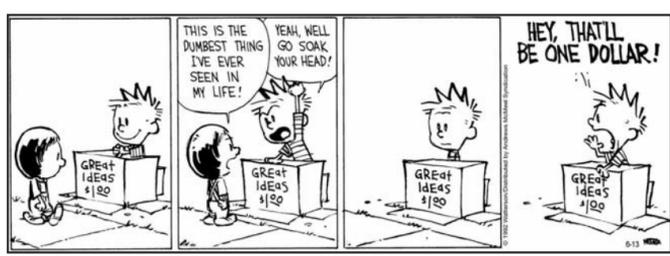
Mumbai: Actress Amruta Fadnavis will be seen in a music video *Mood Banaleya* and said that shooting for it was nothing less than a real bachelorette party. *Mood Banaleya* is a full of life, peppy track in the mellow voice of Amruta, produced by Bhushan Kumar. *Mood Banaleya*, a perfect go-to song for bachelorette parties this wedding season. Featuring the singer herself playing the bride's friend, the song also stars Mehak Ghai and Avinash Mishra, who portray the bride and the groom in this exciting wedding tale. The lyrics of this fun and lively song are penned by Kumaar, while the music video is directed by ace director Adil Shaikh. Excited to release the first song of 2023, Amruta said: "The song *Mood Banaleya* has such a positive and cheerful vibe to it that shooting for it was nothing less than a real bachelorette party". "Mehak and Avinash were a treat to work with and totally matched the energy that was required for the song. I'm thrilled to receive audiences' response to this song, I hope they love it".

IANAS

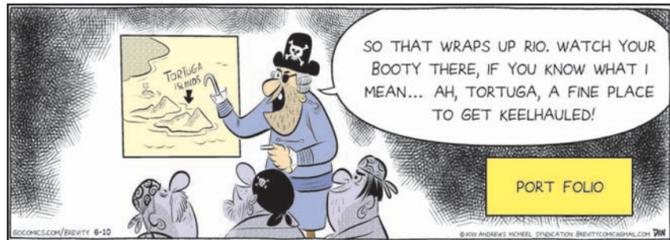
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

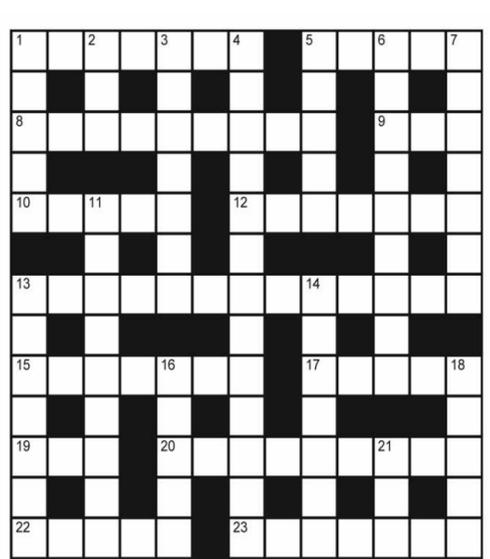


BREVITY



FUN post

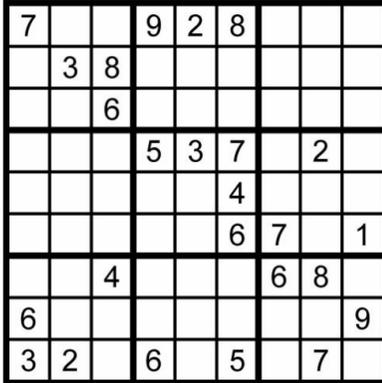
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Island music genre
 - 5 Balkan capital
 - 8 Devoted to a cause
 - 9 Barbary beast
 - 10 Cuban dance
 - 12 Binge
 - 13 From opposite ends, as in "opposed"
 - 15 Soapbox
 - 17 Bach composition
 - 19 Amazement
 - 20 Helps out (7,2)
 - 22 Gown fabric
 - 23 Cheese dish
 - 4 Small boat driver (8,5)
 - 5 Marsh plant
 - 6 Fipple flute
 - 7 In a proficient manner
 - 11 Has good intentions (5,4)
 - 13 Idle
 - 14 Itch reliever
 - 16 Sri Lanka coin
 - 18 Doctrine
 - 21 Blubber
- Down**
- 1 Fragrant wood
 - 2 Conducted
 - 3 Bundle

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.

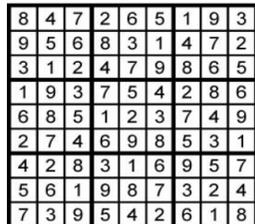


SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



VIDYA'S APPEAL

Actor Vidya Balan urges people to prioritise the health of women in their families

LEISURE



PACT INKED FOR DPIC

An MoU was signed between OCAC and University of Chicago Centre, India for setting up of DPIC

DOWNTOWN P2



IRAN HANGS TWO MEN

Iran hangs two men for allegedly killing a member of the security forces during the recent nationwide protests

INTERNATIONAL P7

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BHUBANESWAR | SUNDAY, JANUARY 8 | 2023

P1

SHORT TAKES

MCCARTHY ELECTED US HOUSE SPEAKER



Washington: Republican Kevin McCarthy was elected Speaker of the US House of Representatives Saturday, which is hopefully expected to bring an end to political paralysis that the country has seen for days now. McCarthy, 57, replaces Nancy Pelosi, 82 of the Democratic Party, which lost the majority in the House after the November 8 midterm elections wherein the Republicans won 222 seats in the 435-member House against 212 of the Democrats. P7

PANT UNDERGOES KNEE SURGERY

New Delhi: Indian wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant, who miraculously escaped a horrific car accident last week, has successfully undergone a knee surgery at a Mumbai hospital, according to the BCCI sources. The surgery took place at the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani hospital in Andheri West under the supervision of Dr Pardiwala, the head of the Centre for Sports Medicine, and Director of Arthroscopy & Shoulder Service. Pant was taken to Mumbai by air ambulance from Dehradun since he was not in a position to fly by a commercial airline.

SANIA TO HANG UP RACKET NEXT MONTH



New Delhi: Veteran Indian tennis player Sania Mirza has decided to draw curtains on her illustrious career at next month's Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championship. The former doubles no.1 has made this announcement to WTA. Sania initially intended to hang up her racket at the end of last season, but an elbow injury ruled her out of the US Open and forced her to stop playing in 2022 as early as August. BACK PAGE

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Good that I work for an Indian, and not a US, company. I can pee anywhere, abuse anyone, spread hatred,...

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	27.4°C	26.5°C
TEMP MIN	11.5°C	11.0°C
Humidity	46%	50%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Foggy weather	

COLD WAVE: SRC PUTS COLLECTORS ON ALERT

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: As cold wave conditions are very likely to prevail over some districts in Odisha for another day, the office of the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) has put all the Collectors on alert. In its bulletin, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said cold wave condition is very likely prevail in Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Sambalpur, Subarnapur, Boudh, Kandhamal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Angul and Dhenkanal from 8:30am of January 8 to next day morning. The Met department has issued yellow warning for these districts. There is an increased likelihood of cold related illnesses among people, which may get aggravated



GRABBING EYEBALLS: Beautification work at Capital city's Rajmahal Square in progress ahead of FIH Men's Hockey World Cup to be held in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela from January 13

Female jumbo tramples four to death in Angul

The marauding elephant got separated from a herd that stay put in Mandargiri area

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Jan 7: Panic gripped several villages under Angul forest division in this district after a female elephant went on a rampage and trampled four persons to death, Saturday. According to sources, Subhas Sahu, 55, of Chheliapada village, Aniruddh Sahu, 55, of Angarabandh; Ramesh Chandra Swain, 60, of Barasingha village under Sadar police limits, and Ajay Samal, 55, of Santri village under Banarpal police limits faced the wrath of the marauding jumbo and succumbed to the injuries.

The incident sparked tension in these areas when residents staged agitation demanding protection from elephant menace and job to the next of the kin of the deceased people. The family members of two of the deceased persons put their body outside the Collectorate and staged a dharna.

Angul divisional forest officer Vivek Kumar, ADM (revenue) Santosh Kumar Pradhan, ADM (general) Rajanikant Swain, Sub-Collector Baitura Deep, Angul SDPO Ramakant Mahalik made an attempt to placate the angry protesters.

The agitators relented after forest, police and administrative officials held talks with them and



ON A RAMPAGE

► The deceased are from Chheliapada, Angarabandh and Barasingha under Sadar police limits, and Santri under Banarpal police limits

► Residents staged an agitation demanding protection from elephant menace and job to the next of the kin of the deceased

gave away ₹55,000 from District Red-Cross, Forest department and block administration funds, and ₹1 lakh out of the ₹4 lakh government assistance to each of the bereaved families. The remaining ₹3 lakh government assistance will be provided after completion of necessary formalities, the officials said. Reports said that a herd of 25 elephants had stay put at Mandargiri under Angul forest division, Friday night. A female elephant got separated from the herd and moved towards Kantigadia bordering Dhenkanal district early morning Saturday. The animal after leaving Mandargiri reached the border of Chheliapada.

People were unaware of the presence of the animal due to the laxity of the Forest department, alleged some of the villagers. As a result, Subhas Sahu who was guarding his farmland came face-to-face with the animal. The elephant trampled Subhas to death and buried his head in the ground. Later, the killer elephant strayed into Angarabandh and trampled Aniruddh to death when he was on his farmland. Continued on P2

'Pee Gate' accused held; AI apologises

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Bengaluru, Jan 7: The man who allegedly urinated on a woman co-passenger on an Air India flight was arrested Saturday while the carrier's CEO issued an apology over handling of the incident and said four cabin crew and a pilot have been de-registered and the policy of serving alcohol on flights is being reviewed.

Delhi Police arrested Shankar Mishra, 34, from Bangalore after he was traced to that city through technical surveillance, officials said. A Delhi court later sent Mishra to judicial remand for 14 days while rejecting a plea by police for his custody. Police had sought his three-day remand, saying he was required to be identified by two cabin crew members and three captains and other co-passengers were also to be examined.

Delhi Police had registered an FIR against Mishra January 4 on a complaint given by the woman to Air India. He allegedly urinated on the woman, a senior citizen, in an inebriated condition in the business class of the Air India flight from New York to Delhi November 26 last year. Tata Group-owned Air India CEO Campbell Wilson issued a statement saying the airline could have handled the issue better and promised a robust reporting system.

"AI is deeply concerned about the in-flight instances where customers have suffered due to the condemnable acts of their co-passengers on our aircraft. We regret and are pained about these experiences," he said.

Bhub-Rourkela flight takes off from BPLA

Union ministers criticise Odisha govt for absence of PM Modi's picture in advertisements and hoardings



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: Ahead of the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup beginning January 13, flight operation from Bhubaneswar to Rourkela was launched Saturday.

However, a controversy erupted at the launch event as two Union ministers expressed their displeasure over the absence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's picture in the advertisement issued by the state government for the flight operation.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, along with Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, flagged off the maiden Bhubaneswar-Rourkela flight at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPLA) here, while Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia also joined the inaugural function vir-

■ The plane will take off from Bhubaneswar at 2:55pm and reach Rourkela at 3:50pm every day

■ On return journey, the flight will take off from Rourkela at 4:15pm and land in Bhubaneswar at 5:10pm

tually from Delhi. This route, being launched under Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) scheme, is important from the perspective of development of the mineral industry as well as the Hockey World Cup, Scindia said. Pradhan said, "Aspirations of the people of Rourkela and Odisha take yet another flight. Prime Minister Narendra Modi yet again delivers his promise made to the people of Odisha." Continued on P2

Natural, human factors behind 'sinking' Joshimath

Joshimath, which serves as a gateway to several Himalayan mountain climbing expeditions, is sinking because of factors building up for a long time, say experts

AGENCIES

Dehradun, Jan 7: Close on the heels of wide cracks appearing in Joshimath and its adjoining areas in Uttarakhand, a group of experts have revealed that both human and natural factors are responsible for the 'sinking' shrine.

"A variety of factors both anthropogenic and natural have led to the subsidence of Joshimath," director of Wadia Institute of

Himalayan Geology Kalachand Sain said. The factors are not recent, they have built up over a long period of time, he asserted.

"The three principal factors are: Joshimath's vulnerable foundations as it was developed on the debris of a landslide triggered by an earthquake more than a century ago, its location in Seismic Zone V which is more prone to earthquakes besides gradual weathering and water percolation which reduce the cohesive strength of the rocks over time," Mr Sain told PTI.

"Atkins had first written about Joshimath's location on landslide debris in the Himalayan Gazetteer in 1886. Even the Mishra Committee in its report in 1976 had written about its location on an old subsidence zone," he said.

The going down of the



Cracks have developed in over 550 houses in Joshimath owing to continued land subsidence in the area, according to the District Disaster Management department



The district administration has initiated relief and rescue operations and is moving residents to shelters

Himalayan rivers and heavy rainfall which is characteristic of the area beside the flashfloods in the Rishiganga and Dhauliganga rivers last year may also have worsened the situation, he said.

As Joshimath is the gateway to Badrinath, Hemkund Sahib and skiing destination Auli haphazard

construction activities have been going on in the area for a long time without thinking about the pressure the town is capable of coping with, he said, adding this may also have led to cracks appearing in the houses there.

"Hotels and restaurants have mushroomed everywhere. The

pressure of population and the size of the crowd of tourists has also increased manifold," he said.

"Many houses in the town are unlikely to survive and people living in them must be shifted to safe locations as life is precious," he said. After the evacuation of people in affected areas to safety, microzonation of the town, replanning of its drainage system and rainwater outlets besides assessment of rock strength among others should be undertaken, Sain suggested.

Cracks have developed in over 550 houses in Joshimath owing to continued land subsidence in the area, according to the District Disaster Management department. The district administration has initiated relief and rescue operations and is moving residents to shelters. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama visited the town Saturday. P5

Das in senior national selection committee



PNN/AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 7: In what has brought pride for Odisha sports, former Indian team test opener and cricketer Shiv Sundar Das has been included in the Senior Men's National Selection Committee.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Saturday reappointed Chetan Sharma as the chairman of the senior selection committee, exactly two months after his entire panel was disbanded by for the Indian team's semifinal exit in the T20 World Cup.

Chetan's new team, though, would have entirely new faces with junior chairman of selectors S Sharath of South Zone being promoted. The others in the panel are former seamer Subroto Banerjee from East Zone, Salil Ankola from West Zone and Test opener Shiv Sunder Das from the Central zone.

Das qualified from Central for being a former Vidarbha player after he finished playing for Odisha.

DPIC to aid evidence-based governance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The state government Saturday inked a pact with the University of Chicago Trust, India, to set up a Data, Policy, and Innovation Centre (DPIC) here that will enable rigorous, evidence-based governance while using new advances in econometrics, data science, and machine learning.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) CEO Manoj Kumar Pattnaik and University of Chicago Center, India executive director Leni Chaudhuri in the presence of Electronics and Information Technology (E&IT) Minister Tusharkanti Behera and E&IT Special Secretary, who is also OCAC MD, Manas Ranjan Panda here.

Taking to Twitter, Behera said, "Govt. of Odisha signed an MoU with the University of Chicago Trust to setup a Data, Policy, & Innovation Centre (DPIC) in the state. This will enable #Odisha to incorporate the best data-centric global practices in policy formulation and greatly benefit the people of the state."

The scope of the programmatic partnership will involve researchers from the University of Chicago providing data analysis and evaluation assistance to the government of Odisha schemes and policies to benefit the state districts and blocks



E&IT Minister Tusharkanti Behera, OCAC CEO Manoj Kumar Pattnaik and University of Chicago Center, India executive director Leni Chaudhuri among other dignitaries at the MoU signing ceremony, Saturday

PACT INKED

The scope of the programmatic partnership will involve researchers from the University of Chicago providing data analysis and evaluation assistance to the government of Odisha schemes and policies to benefit the state districts and blocks

The partnership will also entail capacity development of personnel and institutions for creating a hub for modern data analysis and knowledge sharing

ment of Odisha schemes and policies to benefit the state districts and blocks.

Talking about the collaboration, Pattnaik said, "We are excited to work with the researchers and it will help lead Odisha to become a leading data centre hub. Using evidence-based research, we hope the DPIC will act as a centre of excellence for collecting big data from

many sources, analysing that data using contemporary econometric and statistical models, and producing the necessary creative policy guides."

Under the partnership, researchers from the University of Chicago will aid the government of Odisha in conducting research, monitoring, impact evaluation, and project implementation in the

energy and environment, health, education, agriculture, and water and sanitation sectors.

Along with that, the partnership will also entail capacity development of personnel and institutions for creating a hub for modern data analysis and knowledge sharing, he said.

Outlining the different contours of DPIC with its technical and application possibilities, Anant Sudarshan, senior fellow at the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago, said, "To enable rigorous, evidence-based governance under the program, we have outlined a three-pronged strategy that would include creating a hub for modern data analysis, field pilots using randomized control trials and training and capacity building."

Chaudhuri said they have previously joined the state government in rolling out the star rating programme for industries, and now this new partnership will help source big data efficiently and design innovative energy and environment solutions.

"We aim to bring our expertise in applied research on innovative policy ideas to develop mechanisms that facilitate increased energy access and reduced health and environmental problems," Chaudhuri said.



HOCKEY FERVOUR: Youths participate in a cycle rally from Xavier Square to Master Canteen in Bhubaneswar, Saturday, ahead of the Men's Hockey World Cup

Mandaviya: Implement Ayushman Bharat in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya Saturday urged the state government to implement the Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme in Odisha so that beneficiaries can avail benefits of cashless hospitalisation.

Speaking to the media after participating in the 4th annual convocation of AIIMS-Bhubaneswar, he said the Health Ministry has also written to the state government in this regard.

The Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PM-JAY) aims to achieve the target of universal health coverage and provide access to free and affordable healthcare services to the people residing in the remotest of the areas. The scheme aims to provide free



and cashless healthcare services up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year to over 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable families (over 53 crore beneficiaries) as per the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC)-2011 database. The AB-PMJAY is implemented in all states and Union territories barring West Bengal, NCT of Delhi and Odisha.

Mandaviya said AIIMS Bhubaneswar has won the trust of the people in the field of quality healthcare not only in Odisha but also in adjoining states by fulfilling the mandate of equalising the regional imbalance in tertiary

healthcare delivery.

"This is a manifestation of the commitment of government of India under the leadership of the prime minister where quality tertiary healthcare and medical education have been prioritised as part of the National Health Agenda," he said addressing AIIMS Bhubaneswar students.

Mandaviya said new initiatives like "Heal in India" and "Heal by India" will give an impetus to medical value travel in the country and also fulfill the demand for skilled and qualified medical and para-medical human resource across the globe.

He urged the Odisha government to implement the AB-PMJAY in the state so that eligible beneficiaries can avail of the benefits of the scheme not only in the state but other states as well.

Mishra condoles demise of PK Das

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: PK Das, a Gujarat cadre IAS officer of 1965 batch, passed away at a hospital in Gandhinagar Friday. Das had the distinction of serving as Gujarat's first Chief Information Commissioner in 2005-06.

Condoling Das' demise, PK Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, said it is a personal loss for him. He expressed his dismay at having lost yet another colleague who was like a family friend, after the death of his batchmate Manjula Subramaniam just a few days back.

Mishra fondly recalled calling on him during his training days, when Das was serving as the Collector of Ahmedabad, and his many interactions with him over the course of the last five decades. Mishra also recalled his warm, affectionate, simple, amiable and unassuming nature. Mishra said Das had a distinguished career, recalling his contributions in diverse sectors such as institutional finance and power. Mishra recalled working together with him at the Gujarat Electricity Board (GEB).

Praising Das for being very thorough and hardworking, Mishra said that his contribution to society will be remembered for the time to come.

Feat for 26 KISS students

Bhubaneswar: In an encouraging development at the beginning of 2023, Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) has got a special reason to celebrate as 26 of its students have received their offer letters for lecture-ship through the State Selection Board (SSB). Saturday, the successful students of KISS had a courtesy call on the Founder of KIIT and KISS Achyuta Samanta in KISS campus.

'Talcher fertiliser plant to function by Oct 2024'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The ambitious Talcher fertilizer plant will be dedicated to the nation by October 2024, Union Fertilizer Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said Saturday.

While reviewing the progress of the Talcher fertilizer plant in the presence of Union Minister Dharma Pradhan, Mandaviya said, "India's agriculture sector requires fertilizers for the sector to flourish and the country is currently dependent on imports and domestic production of fertilizers. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister, India set out the target to become Aatmanirbhar in this field as well."

India's domestic production of urea will see a major boost with five new fertilizer plants coming up in the country. Four of these plants are already functional while a unit at Talcher is a coal gasification plant which will become functional by October 2024, he said.

Revival of Talcher unit is being undertaken by Talcher Fertilizers Ltd (TFL), a company promoted by GAIL (India) Ltd, Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd (RCF), Coal India Ltd (CIL) and Fertilizers Corporation of India Ltd (FCIL).

Mandaviya said, "The government is taking significant steps in making the country Aatmanirbhar. Fertilizer is one of them. By utilising new technological interventions like coal gasification in our fertilizer plants and using our own resources like coal, India is moving towards self-sufficiency in the urea sector," he said.

With this vision, the govern-

ment of India has been reviewing the progress of Talcher unit which will be India's largest and first coal gasification urea plant, added the Union Minister.

Mandaviya also said that this endeavour will be a significant step towards ensuring energy security of the country through harnessing the vast coal reserves of the country in a manner which is more environment friendly than direct fired coal projects.

While reviewing the work progress, Mandaviya & Pradhan were provided an overview of the project in the model room. Thereafter, they visited the plant site wherein the construction and erection activities of the project were reviewed carefully.

They emphasised upon the importance of the plant in the national context and instructed the concerned officials to meet the deadline for commissioning of the plant. Mandaviya emphasised on the coordinated efforts among all stakeholders for timely commissioning of the plant.

TFL has been mandated by the government to revive the erstwhile Talcher plant of FCIL by setting up a new coal gasification-based urea plant with the installed capacity of 12.7 lakh metric ton per annum (LMTPA). Since the project promotes coal gasification, it shall also aid in meeting the stated aim of gasifying 100 MT of coal by 2030.

Start of all five plants of FCIL would add 63.5 LMTP indigenous urea production capacity in the country. Out of five, four plants at Ramagundam, Gorakhpur, Sindri and Barauni have already started urea production in the country while Talcher plant is expected to start by October 2024.

Chief Secretary told for adverse entries in ACR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked the Chief Secretary to ensure adverse entries are made in the Annual Confidential Report (ACR) of Dhenkanal Collector as he allegedly shielded a miner engaged in illegal quarrying at Gandanali black stone quarry in Rasol area of the district.

The NGT move came while hearing a plea filed by Ghanashyam Rout, represented by advocate Sankar Prasad Pani, of Dhenkanal.

On January 3, 2023, the Collector had filed an affidavit in which he claimed that no forest land has been cleared and no trees have been felled by the miner, Soumya Ranjan Rout. "However, the photos taken by the complainant, show cause notices issued by Hindol tehsildar and previous affidavit of the collector clearly exposed the use of forest land measuring 660 feet by Rout at Kadalpal Mouza," the environment watchdog said, adding that Rout has also confessed about widening of roads on said forest land for transportation of miner minerals from the quarry.

The NGT also directed the Dhenkanal Collector and Divisional Forest Officer to ensure restoration of 660 feet of road in Kadalpal-Mouza in Hindol of Dhenkanal to its original form within two months.

The NGT instructed the Collector to take action against miner for clearing the forest land as shown and ensure the filing of an FIR in this regard within one month. The Collector has also been directed to take necessary steps for computation and recovery of environmental compensation for the damage caused to the forest land by Rout within two months.

RWSS techie with 14 plots under Vig glare

Bhubaneswar: Vigilance Saturday carried out simultaneous searches at six places related to senior engineer of Rural Water Supply & Sanitation Division (RWSS), Bijaynanda Sahoo on charges of amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. Sahoo works as the superintending engineer in the Bhubaneswar Division of RWSS. The places where searches were conducted include his triple-storey building at Mohan Das Enclave, Aiginia and his office chamber at RWSS Division at Khandagiri in Bhubaneswar, two-storey building at Dihadol, father-in-law's house at Pangatira in Parjanga of Dhenkanal district, three-storey building at Susuda under Town police station and official residence of his son-in-law located inside Nalco Campus in Angul. Five DSPs, 14 inspectors and 28 other staffers of the Vigilance conducted the raids. The anti-corruption sleuths have so far found Sahoo and his relatives possessing two triple-storey buildings, one double-storey house, deposits worth Rs 44, 84,485 in bank, postal and insurance policies, Rs 1,81,430 in cash, gold jewellery weighing 237 gm and silver ornaments worth over Rs 10 lakh, four-wheeler and 14 plots in prime areas of Bhubaneswar, Angul and Dhenkanal.

Notorious gang of snatchers busted

Bhubaneswar: The twin city Commissionerate Police Saturday claimed to have busted a notorious gang of criminals, involved mostly in snatchings, with the arrest of four of its members. The arrested were identified as Zahir Hussain alias Abu Talib, 21, Sanoj Kumbhar, 20, Kismat Ali, 32, and Sikandar Ali, 29, all residents of Khariar Road area under Junk police limits in Nuapada district. Addressing media, Bhubaneswar deputy commissioner of police (DCP) Prateek Singh said the gang was involved in multiple snatchings cases in Odisha and outside the state as well. The special squad of Bhubaneswar police, along with Saheed Nagar police officials, managed to track and arrest them from different places of the state. "So far, we have found their involvement in at least 22 snatchings cases in the state. Apart from Bhubaneswar, in Odisha they were active in Nuapada, Bolangir, Jharsuguda, Puri, Bhadrak and Cuttack. They were also involved in similar snatchings in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh," Singh said. The accused were Saturday produced before a court here that sent them to judicial custody.

Mahanadi tribunal hearing deferred

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Jan 7: The Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal Saturday deferred hearing on the application filed by Odisha against Chhattisgarh over sharing of Mahanadi river water as both states sought time to hold further meeting with the assessors to resolve discrepancies over the delineation of Mahanadi river sub-basin.

A three-judge bench of the tribunal headed by Justice AM Khanwilkar recorded the statement of counsels appearing for Odisha and Chhattisgarh and posted the matter for hearing February 4.

The counsels for Odisha and Chhattisgarh apprised the tribunal that a meeting between assessors and technical experts of Odisha and Chhattisgarh is scheduled January 16 and sought time from the tribunal.

Earlier, the tribunal had asked the two assessors appointed by it to hold meeting with Odisha and Chhattisgarh to delineate the Mahanadi river basin and sub-basin boundaries.

Female jumbo...

Continued from P1

The animal then moved towards Barasingha and trampled Ramesh to death when he had come out to attend nature's call.

The animal then strayed into Santri village under Banarpal police limits.

People shouted on seeing the elephant when Ajay who was sleeping at home came outside. The animal standing near his house then picked him up on its tusk and trampled him to death. All the four persons living in range of 20 km were killed within a span of two hours.

All the four persons were pronounced dead by the doctors at the district headquarters hospital and the bodies were handed over to their family members after post-mortem.



NEW JUDGES: Newly-recruited civil judges pose for a photo op with Orissa HC Chief Justice and other judges after the oath-taking ceremony at Odisha Judicial Academy in Cuttack, Saturday

Dist-level meeting of GM University held

Sambalpur/Bhubaneswar: A district-level meeting was conducted at the Amruta Vihar Campus of the Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur Saturday under Mo College Abhijan. The meeting was attended by Minister of Higher Education Rohit Pujari and Chairperson of Mo College Abhijan Akash Dasnyak along with Narayani Panda, the inspiring alumna of the Gangadhar Meher University. The other guest at the podium was Regional Director of Education Sambalpur Pravabati Guru. Speaking on the occasion, Pujari emphasised on the role of alumni for the development of universities and colleges. Dasnyak said, "GM University has achieved unparalleled success with the implementation Mo College Abhijan and it has also created a beautiful state of the art IT Skill Centre in the name of Narayani Panda.

Bhub-Rourkela flight takes off from BPIA

Continued from P1

However, during their address, both the Union ministers expressed displeasure over the absence of the Prime Minister's picture in the hoardings and advertisement issued by the Odisha government to kick-off the flight operation.

"The UDAN scheme is being implemented under the vision of Prime Minister Modi. Absence of PM's picture in the advertisement issued by the Odisha government is a matter of regret," Scindia said.

"We believe in working together. We are committed to render better services to the people. I hope this matter will reach the Chief Minister," he said.

Similarly, Pradhan too criticised

the state government on this issue, and termed the absence of Modi's picture in the advertisement and hoardings as unfortunate.

"It would have been appropriate if PM's picture was also included in the advertisement and hoardings," Pradhan said.

Later, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik took to twitter to thank Modi and the Civil Aviation Minister.

"Glad to have flagged off the 1st flight to #Rourkela Airport. Thanks Hon'ble PM Shri @narendramodiji for the support to improve connectivity to the hinterland of #Odisha under #UDAN. It will boost connectivity, commerce & tourism, fulfilling aspirations of the people of the region."

Patnaik also thanked Scindia for all the efforts, especially to coordinate between SAIL and DCGA for the flight service to Rourkela under UDAN ahead of the World Cup.

"It will offer seamless connectivity to sports fans coming to celebrate hockey in Odisha," Patnaik said.

Alliance Air will operate the flight between Bhubaneswar and Rourkela with a capacity of 72 passengers.

As per schedule, the plane will take off from Bhubaneswar at 2:55pm and reach Rourkela at 3:50pm every day. On its return journey, the flight will take off from Rourkela at 4:15pm and land in Bhubaneswar at 5:10pm.

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No action on polluting crusher, hot mix plant

These units have been operating near a reserve sal forest at Manoharpur in Keonjhar. They are triggering severe air pollution and affecting movement of elephants and other wild animals in the area

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 7: A hot mix plant is operational near the reserve sal forest at Manoharpur under Sadar block in Keonjhar district. A stone crushing unit is also operating in the vicinity. Both the units are allegedly triggering sound and air pollution in the area, apart from disturbing the movement of the wildlife, a report said.



As per pollution control norms, such units should have adequate pollution control measures and mechanism like high wind breaking walls and thick green cover around them. But, all such norms have been thrown to the winds, locals lamented.

Pollution Control Board (OSPCB), the Forest department, the Revenue department are taking no action against these polluting units. They have cast their doubts on the role of the OSPCB and two other departments.

“Dust particles emanating from the stone crushing unit are flying about in the ambient air and settling on houses and farmlands. Both humans and wildlife are affected by the pollution,” they alleged. Reports said, the stone crushing unit and the hot mix plant are just 500 metre from the reserve sal forest in Raghunathpur revenue circle. The area witnesses movement of elephants and other wild animals throughout the year.

The two units are operating day and night, causing severe air pollution, locals alleged.

They added that the Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB), the Forest department, the Revenue department are taking no action against these polluting units. They have cast their doubts on the role of the OSPCB and two other departments.

“We wonder if their owners have taken permission of the OSPCB or not. This needs to be investigated. Piles of stone blocks, chips and boulders are scattered near the forest,” locals said strongly objecting to such unauthorized use of the forest land for stone stocking. They have expressed their displeasure on it.

Besides, huge quantities of boulders have been stocked nearby. But no one knows where the stones were mined from.

Locals have demanded stern action against the polluting units according to provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act-1988.

However, manager of the hot mix plant Biranchi Behera said that the plant is operational on the SPCB permission. Sadar ranger Bijay Mohant said that no project should be executed in the area 500 metre from the forest fringes. “If such projects are proposed near forests, permission from the forest department is required. If the norms are found to be violated during a probe, action be taken,” the ranger added.

Regional officer of the OSPCB, Prashant Kar said that the matter will be investigated.

Sadar tehsildar Ashish Mohapatra said that action will be taken only after an investigation into the matter.

‘Nutrition at Doorsteps’ launched in Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chittrakonda, Jan 7: In a bid to effectively deal with malnutrition among children and pregnant women, the Agriculture and Farmers’ Empowerment department has launched ‘Nutrition at Doorsteps’ initiative in Malkangiri Saturday. Agriculture and Farmers’ Empowerment Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain inaugurated the project at Jantapai village under Chittrakonda block.



A millets procurement centre was also opened at Jantri panchayat.

Nabarangpur MP Ramesh Chandra Majhi, Principal Secretary of the Agriculture Department Dr Arabinda Kumar Padhee, Director of Agriculture and Food Production Prem Chandra Chaudhary and

Director of Horticulture Rohit Kumar Lenka among others were present on the occasion.

The ‘Nutrition at Doorsteps’ initiative has been aligned with the vision of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to provide nutrition-based food security to people throughout the state.

Man dies after falling off bridge

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, Jan 7: A moped rider died after accidentally falling off the bridge near Banijara under Junagarh police limits in Kalabandi district, late Friday night. The deceased was identified as Binod Hati, a native of Purunasar village. Locals rescued and rushed him in a critical condition to the Junagarh hospital where doctors pronounced him dead. A case was registered in this connection. Police conducted a post-mortem of the body and handed it over to his family members. The mishap occurred when Binod was returning home on his moped after attending to his works, late Friday night. He was crossing the bridge when he skidded off the bridge.

3 cops injured in attack by locals

Korukunda: Local people attacked three police officials while the latter were carrying out a raid on ganja cultivation at Rajabandh village under Orkel police limits in Malkangiri district Saturday. Local police got information about ganja farming at Rajabandh village. They rushed to the village to destroy the ganja plants. Local residents strongly opposed the police action. This led to a tussle between the police and the villagers. The villagers attacked the police personnel while three of them were injured in the attack. The injured were hospitalised. A constable was detained by them when the last report came in.

Infra boost for 5 Balasore hospitals

Jaleswar: Five hospitals in Balasore have been included in Ama Hospital Yojana in the first phase. GK Bhattar Hospital is one of them. Collector Bhausaheb Dattatraya Shinde visited GK Bhattar Hospital and said that patients will be provided treatment in the new building of the infant and maternity care department. Notably, the state government has planned to transform hospitals under 5T initiative. The Collector directed the officials to make arrangement for healthcare services to patients in the new building as soon as possible.



HORSE RIDING: A horse riding competition was organised at Lauguda village in Paparmetla panchayat of Swabhim Anchal under Chittrakonda block in Malkangiri district Saturday ahead of the district cultural festival Malyabanta Mahotsav scheduled to start from January 15

SHGs script success in fish farming

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Jan 7: The state fisheries department has encouraged women of various self-help groups (SHGs) to take up fish farming in Kendrapara. Its effort has paid off as many women have scripted success in this farming and become self-reliant. They have been earning a decent livelihood from the fish farming.

According to reports, over 4,000 members of 389 women self-help groups have taken up fish cultivation and are earning around ₹5,000 each per month.

Anjali Sethy, a native of Pegarpada village and secretary of Jaleswar women self-help group said, “Catching fish from the water bodies and selling it is our primary occupation. Our families would face hardship if the male members fail to carry on the occupation.”

She formed an SHG by initially involving 10 local women as mem-



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN KENDRAPARA

bers. The fisheries department encouraged them in fish cultivation. Two years back, they were given the panchayat and two other local ponds on lease. The SHG members started the fish cultivation and the earnings they got in the initial years encouraged them to expand the farming. They inducted more women in their group and took up 12 more ponds in the vicinity on lease for cultivation, Sethy said.

Lakshmi Priya Mallick, secretary of Siddha Mahaveer SHG at Entalpur village under Garadpur block said that the fish farming has shown them a way to earn a livelihood during the pandemic and proved to be a good source of earning for some families now.

She added that the women are using the ponds in the village for fish farming and earning around ₹5,000 each per month.

Jayanti Rout, an SHG member of Basantpur village under Rajnagar block, said that their livelihood is affected for around seven months due to restrictions on fishing in sea to ensure safe breeding of Olive Ridleys. They often go hungry during this period. However, the fish cultivation has saved them.

Mamatarani Samal, a member of Srisambhu self-help group at Bhektakola village under Rajnagar block, said they have been cultivating Rohu, Labeo Catla (Bhakur) and Mrigal Carp (Mirikali) in the village ponds. “Fish traders visit our village to purchase the fish from near the ponds. Payment is cleared immediately. Hence, we are earning good profits from this farming,” she added.

When contacted, district fisheries officer Maxama Mohapatra said that the women SHGs are cultivating fish in ponds measuring over 160 hectare of land. Every SHG is sanctioned ₹90,000 as loan to take up the farming with a subsidy of 60 per cent.

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ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସ୍ଥାବର ସମ୍ପତ୍ତି ନିୟମାବଳୀ ପ୍ରାଧିକରଣ

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- ରେଭା ଆଇନ {Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act,2016}ର ଧାରା 3 ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରେଭା(Odisha Real Estate Regulatory Authority)ଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ କୌଣସି ଉଦ୍ୟୋଗୀ(promoter) ସ୍ଥାବର ସମ୍ପତ୍ତି ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ(real estate project)ର ପ୍ରାକ୍ ପଞ୍ଜିକରଣ ନ କରି ଜାଗା, ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ କିମ୍ବା ଗୃହ ସମ୍ପର୍କିତ ବିଜ୍ଞାପନ, ବିପଣନ, ବିକ୍ରୟ କରିପାରିବେ ନାହିଁ ।
- ଯେଉଁ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଉନ୍ନତିକରଣ(development) ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବିତ ଜାଗାର ଆକାର 500 ବର୍ଗ ମିଟରରୁ ଅଧିକ ନୁହେଁ କିମ୍ବା ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବିତ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ ସଂଖ୍ୟା 8ରୁ ଅଧିକ ନୁହେଁ, ସେ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ପଞ୍ଜିକରଣର ଆବଶ୍ୟକତା ନାହିଁ ।
- କୌଣସି ଉଦ୍ୟୋଗୀ/ନିର୍ମାଣକାରୀ ସଂସ୍ଥାରୁ ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ନିୟମ ପରିସରଭୁକ୍ତ ଜମି କିମ୍ବା ଘର ବିନା ରେଭା ପଞ୍ଜିକରଣରେ କିଣନ୍ତୁ ନାହିଁ ।
- ସହରାଞ୍ଚଳ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ଏବଂ ଗ୍ରାମାଞ୍ଚଳ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ପାଇଁ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ କ୍ଷମତାପତ୍ର ପ୍ଲାନ ଅନୁମୋଦନକାରୀ ସଂସ୍ଥାରୁ ଅନୁମତି ପ୍ରାପ୍ତି ପରେ ରେଭା ପଞ୍ଜିକରଣ ପାଇଁ ଆବେଦନ କରିବା ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ।
- ରେଭା ଆଇନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକାରୀ ହେବା ଦିନ (ତା 01.05.2017 ରିଖ)ଠାରୁ ବିକ୍ରୟ ପାଇଁ ଉଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟ ସମସ୍ତ ଅସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଥିବା ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ଏବଂ ନୂତନ ଆପାର୍ଟମେଣ୍ଟ, ଗୃହ କିମ୍ବା ଜାଗା ସମ୍ପର୍କିତ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ରେଭା ନିକଟରେ ପଞ୍ଜିକରଣ ବାଧ୍ୟତାମୂଳକ ଅଟେ ।
- 500 ବର୍ଗ ମିଟରରୁ ଅଧିକ ଆୟତନର ଯେ କୌଣସି ପ୍ଲଟ୍ରେ ଫିଲ୍ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ପାଇଁ ରେଭା ପଞ୍ଜିକରଣ ଅପରିହାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ।
- ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବିତ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ଠିକ୍ ସମୟରେ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ନହେବା, ତୁଚ୍ଛି ମୁତାବକ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପରେ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ସୁବିଧା ସୁଯୋଗ ନଦେବା କିମ୍ବା ବିକ୍ରେତା ଅଧିକ ଅର୍ଥ ଦାବି କଲେ ଗ୍ରାହକ ରେଭାରେ ଅଭିଯୋଗ କରିପାରିବେ ।
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FOCUS POLITICS

THE PATH TO 2024



In the run-up to 2024, Modi faces the challenge of a resurgent Congress, especially in the wake of the overwhelming public response to the Bharat Jodo Yatra led by Rahul Gandhi

allies like Shiv Sena, Shiromani Akali Dal, and JD(U) have already parted ways and it may not be in a position to harvest a bumper crop of seats in Bihar and Maharashtra. Lean electoral prospects in Bihar and Maharashtra, strong anti-incumbency and interparty feud in Karnataka, and misgovernance and anti-incumbency in Madhya Pradesh along with internal dissensions within the state unit in Rajasthan, have given rise to deep concerns and discomfort to the BJP top brass which is seemingly putting up an exterior calm. The top brass has held two closely guarded meetings in Patna on 21 December and another in Hyderabad on 28 December where the prime focus of deliberations, as per media reports, has been on BJP's 'vulnerable' Lok Sabha seats, from 144 in the mid-2022 to 160 by the end of December, based on its internal survey. Some experts basing their surmise on recent media reports put the number of 'vulnerable' Lok Sabha seats at 204. Against this backdrop, it would be a herculean task for the BJP to win a clear mandate in 2024.

A divided Opposition has been the secret of Modi's success until now. While contending that a unified Opposition is an answer to BJP's hegemony, some analysts lament that at least half a dozen powerful regional satraps firmly holding on to their electorates, are seemingly inclined to the idea of keeping the option of the prime ministerial candidate open, and these satraps include TMC, BRS, DMK, and JD(U). The fact that previous efforts at Opposition unity have proved futile should not mean that Opposition parties cannot and should not be brought on one platform. While not falling prey to the Hamletian dilemma, the Opposition parties ought to re-strategise and re-assess their political and electoral plans to forge unity. 2023 Assembly polls may prove a harbinger.

The writer is Executive Editor, India Ahead News channel. Views are personal.

The recently-held elections in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh and Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) along with some byelections have been described by some experts as 'please-all' outcomes because there was something for the BJP, the Congress and the AAP as well as some regional parties.

Enthused by its spectacular victory in Gujarat, the BJP's top brass is seemingly burning mid-night oil to raise the morale of its cadres to galvanise them for the ensuing Assembly elections in eight states as a stepping stone to the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's larger-than-life and larger-than-party image has devolved upon him the onus of saddling the BJP in power at the helm in 2024. Undoubtedly, stakes in the Gujarat polls were high for BJP and Modi since losing Gujarat could have been a loss of face for Modi. Nevertheless, in the run-up to 2024, Modi faces the challenge of a resurgent Congress, especially in the wake of the ongoing Bharat Jodo Yatra (BJY) led by Rahul Gandhi and the overwhelming public response the BJY is receiving. Besides, the BJP also faces the challenge of regional satraps.

Undeniably, the electoral loss of Himachal has been disappointing for the BJP, especially as Modi had campaigned there heavily. The flurry of hectic activity in the BJP camp makes it discernible that the party is gearing up for 2023 Assembly elections and for 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Media reports indicate that the BJP is eyeing 350 plus seats in 2024 to improve its 2019 tally. Many experts have summed up the BJP's advantage over other political parties in terms of 4Ms - Money, Manpower, Machinery, and Media - which denotes that the BJP has immense financial resources garnered through electoral bonds relative to other political parties, manpower in terms of well-knit workforce and committed cadre, machinery in terms of official machinery at its command to get things done through ED,

CBI, Income Tax department, and a committed media which dances to the tunes of the BJP and denies any space to the Opposition. Besides, the BJP also has the advantage of the unflinching support from the RSS and the rest of the Sangh Parivar that work to mobilise voters in its favour.

Certain extraneous factors like triggering stage-managed communal violence to misinform the electorate, emphasis on anti-Pakistan and anti-Muslim rhetoric before elections to hoodwink gullible voters, making tall pre-poll promises to innocent voters, which have been successfully tested by the BJP in past elections, are likely to be deployed by the party more enthusiastically in the ensuing polls.

Undoubtedly, the victory of Congress in Himachal and its holding power in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan have enabled the party to disapprove of Modi's prediction of a Congress-Mukt Bharat; nonetheless, the party is still not in a position to challenge BJP's supremacy on a pan-India basis irrespective of the overwhelming response it is garnering through BJY. While referring to the political impact of the BJY for Congress in states like Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan where Congress and the BJP are pitted against each other, some experts have opined that the party is likely to give a tough run

to the BJP for its money. Despite its electoral drubbing in Gujarat and Delhi MCD polls, the Congress' victory in Himachal and two Assembly byelections has boosted the party's morale to some extent. Many experts point to the lack of a well-concerted policy or strategic design in Congress to win elections. With just a little over one year left for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and very little time for the 2023 Assembly polls, some experts feel that Congress has to put its house in order, especially the internal tussle for power in Himachal, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, focus on its organisational infrastructure, especially in UP, Bihar, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and other states where its presence is minimal.

While sanguine about the positive outcomes of the BJY, some analysts opine that this Yatra has galvanised Congress workers to some extent and emphasise that the follow-up action on organisational aspects and boosting the morale of workers needs to be worked out on regular basis. Calling upon the Congress leadership to keep its flock together, some experts stress on projecting younger leaders while retaining seniors with an eye on developing second-rung leadership.

The way ahead for BJP is going to be topsy-turvy where its electoral traverse is not going to be easy in 2024 because its traditional



Anil Singh

A DIVIDED OPPOSITION HAS BEEN THE SECRET OF MODI'S SUCCESS UNTIL NOW



Aakar Patel

Pakistan is an economy the size of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and Bangladesh is even bigger. And yet we have not done more to expand the market for our goods and services

We must march on with the quiet certitude that what has to be done will be done.

THE MOTHER



Damaging Ourselves

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said this week that the government and the RBI are in discussions with South Asian countries to have cross-border trade in the rupee. There was no other detail given, such as which countries India was in discussion with and at what stage these discussions were. But it is still a good move. The reason is that we in South Asia, or undivided India to make it more clear, are damaging ourselves by refusing to trade with each other. The World Bank says that trade between South Asian nations accounts for only 5 per cent of the region's total trade. To compare this, in the ASEAN region (comprising Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) intraregional trade is 25 per cent of the total, meaning five times as much. ASEAN has a three-point agenda when it comes to trading between each other: Economic integration, adherence to multilateral trade rules and gradual elimination of all barriers.

On the other hand, trade among South Asian countries currently totals just \$23 billion — below an estimated current value of at least \$67 billion. And most of this lost trade is our loss. Consider that with Bangladesh, of the \$18 billion in current trade, India's exports to Bangladesh are \$16 billion. Exports to Pakistan as less than \$1 billion and imports under \$100 million.

Pakistan is an economy the size of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and Bangladesh is even bigger. And yet we have not done more to expand the market for our goods and services. Of course, to do this we also have to open our borders to them and this is where the problem of will lies.

The World Bank says that "border challenges mean it is about 20 per cent cheaper for a company in India to trade with Brazil instead of a neighbouring South Asian country." The challenges being referred to are quite basic. Some are understandable, like the lack of infrastructure, whether through road, sea or air. The most feasible and economic route for trade with Pakistan is the land route. The only operational rail route was through the Wagah border. For the last four years there has been no train and no air linkages between the two nations. Goods from Kolkata were shipped to Karachi through Singapore.

Other problems include protective tariffs. Only 137 products were allowed through land route to Pakistan. In 2019, India hiked customs duty on all Pakistan goods to 200 per cent after the Pulwama attack. Still other non-tariff barriers include issuance of visas to traders and exporters and importers. Restrictions on investments and a general suspicion have hampered trade further. Even when the trains were running, there were problems. The numbers of wagons that can commute from Attari to Amritsar are restricted. Yet another problem is payments. Letters of credit, which are guarantees from a bank that the buyer will pay the seller on time and with the right amount, issued by Pakistani banks are not accepted in India and vice versa.

Customs clearance through e-filing is not available on the land route into India from Pakistan. They have also complained that our customs authorities create special problems, often on grounds of security and usually goods are held up for a long time. When I last visited Pakistan through the land border, in 2014, trucks were lined up with no sign of movement.

India does not allow Pakistan transit facilities through its territory to Bangladesh and Nepal, showing that it is not just security that is a concern but the idea that we do not want to trade with Pakistan even if it means harming our exports. This is the sort of mindset that exists and for this reason I said it is a good idea that we are thinking of more cross-border trade. The question is whether we have considered that this means two things. First that what we take we also have to give. In the past the taking and giving has all been negative for the most part. That is the reason why trade is so low, as the World Bank has noted.

The second reason is that we have to let go the mindset that we are dealing with a permanent enemy. India's national security focus has shifted in the last two and a half years from the western border to the eastern one. But our trade with China keeps rising. This trade is against our interest, because most of it comprises of Chinese imports. China's exports to India during January-November 2022 increased 24 per cent to \$108 billion over the previous year.

Our exports to China fell 38 per cent to \$16 billion. But we continue to trade with them, even though it is now generally accepted by everyone including the government itself that our primary national security threat is China. On the other hand, we have seemingly changed our position on our other neighbours, but for some reason we have not changed our attitude.

SPECTRUM DEVELOPMENT

The G20 and the G Minor

In December, India began its yearlong G20 presidency, taking over from Indonesia amid rising geopolitical tensions and economic uncertainty. Surging inflation has raised the spectre of a global recession. Supply chains, made more efficient but also more vulnerable by globalisation and the digital revolution, are crumbling under the weight of COVID-related disruptions and the war in Ukraine, both of which have revealed and deepened the fault lines of the international order.

During the Great Recession of 2008-09, the G20 arguably helped to prevent a worse crisis by persuading the world's biggest economies to coordinate their fiscal and monetary policies. With the global economy at a critical juncture, following decades of relentless globalisation that have made markets increasingly interconnected, the group could once again play this role.

To confront the looming global crisis, G20 countries must, first and foremost, coordinate macroeconomic policies. During and after the Great Recession, developed economies attempted to boost growth by keeping interest rates at or close to zero — or even negative. While this was necessary, ultra-low rates soon became a trap, preventing countries that wanted to raise interest rates from doing so, lest their currencies appreciate

and their exports decline.

The pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the spike in inflation have freed the world's largest economies from the low-interest-rate trap. But this transition could have been less painful had governments coordinated their macroeconomic policies. With the global economy on the verge of recession, the G20 must provide leadership on this issue and help policymakers avoid their predecessors' mistakes.

The pandemic and the war in Ukraine have also shown that in our globalised, interlinked world, every crisis is likely to have disproportionate economic effects. In a standard oligopoly, as described by the nineteenth-century economist Augustin Cournot, a few firms produce the same good, but this is no longer the case. For example, cars had once been produced in their entirety by a single manufacturer. Today, however, many firms manufacture the different parts separately — one company makes the chassis, another the wheels, and so on — creating what I have called a vertically serrated industry.

These intricate production processes have led to greater vulnerabilities. In a classic oligopoly, if a war or a pandemic broke out and 10% of manufacturers stopped producing cars, 10% fewer cars would be produced. Nowadays,

however, if the world's wheel manufacturers shut down, car production would fall by 100%. This is precisely what is happening today, as a chip shortage has disrupted the global car industry, leading to sharp price increases.

A vertically serrated industry could also be weaponised. Governments could, for example, threaten to shut down production of a critical component, such as computer chips, knowing that this would bring global production to a halt. Some policymakers, like US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, have touted friend-shoring, whereby countries like the United States intend to reduce their reliance on geopolitical rivals by limiting the sources of critical goods to a few trusted allies. But this approach could further exacerbate tensions and push the world closer to a disastrous war. Instead, the world's superpowers must commit to avoiding such tactics. The G20 could play a central role in facilitating tense negotiations, designing international agreements, and overseeing coordination strategies.

But first, G20 countries must overcome their tendency to favour the interests of major economies. The pandemic, during which lower-income countries were deprived of access to vaccines due to hoarding by developed economies, has highlighted the need for global sol-

idarity. As a 2020 letter to the G20 written by former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown and others noted, the group could provide the sort of coordinated global leadership needed to address health disparities between the Global North and South.

But even beyond the pandemic, emerging and developing economies, particularly in Africa and the Pacific, often find themselves at the mercy of major powers, their prosperity contingent upon election outcomes in developed countries. This year, the G20 could take a giant step forward by enabling several smaller countries to participate in its deliberations and make their voices heard.

We could call this proposed group G Minor. While the G20 represents the world's largest economies, the G Minor would represent the needs of emerging and developing countries that lack the diplomatic and military clout required to protect their interests on their own. Forming such a group would be an admirable gesture of inclusion, enabling India to make its mark on the G20 and achieve a more just international order.

The writer is a former Chief Economist of the World Bank and Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE



Kaushik Basu

TO CONFRONT THE LOOMING GLOBAL CRISIS, G20 COUNTRIES MUST, FIRST AND FOREMOST, COORDINATE MACROECONOMIC POLICIES

WISDOM CORNER

- When love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece. JOHN RUSKIN
- Kind words do not cost much. Yet they accomplish much. BLAISE PASCAL
- Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness. DESMOND TUTU

WORDSWORTH

Esulent

We have fallen out of love with this word, perhaps because its synonym edible has supplanted it. You can find examples widely distributed in older literature, since it has been in English since the seventeenth century. This is from the Milwaukee Advertiser of May 1838: "The common or garden asparagus, is one of the luscious esulent vegetables, with which tables can be furnished during the spring and early part of the summer." We might well expect to find it in Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management of 1861. She does not disappoint us: "Among esulent vegetables, the Lettuce, Salsify, Scorzonera, Cardoon, and Artichoke belong to the family." It's also in the Journals of Lewis and Clark, in which Meriwether Lewis notes on 30 April 1806: "Many of those plants produce those esulent roots which form a principal part of the subsistence of the natives." You can also turn it into a noun for something edible. This is from a publication of 1921 by the English seedsmen Sutton and Sons: "Although the Cardoon is not widely cultivated in this country, it is found in some of our best gardens, and is undoubtedly a wholesome esulent from which a skilful cook will present an excellent dish". The word comes from Latin esulentus, from esca, food, which derives from edere, to eat. Related words from Latin include comestible, edacious, edible, esurience, and obese.

Telemedicine is the solution

Sir, Today, one of the major technological advancements sweeping India's healthcare industry is telemedicine. Telemedicine has made it feasible to consult a doctor without even making an appointment for an in-person visit thanks to modern technology. People in far-flung hilly and tribal regions of the nation now have access to city-level medical facilities thanks to India's booming telemedicine industry. India reached a significant milestone in its digital health journey in March 2022 when it completed 170,000 teleconsultations in a single day through its national telemedicine programme, "eSanjeevani." The market for telehealth is projected to be worth US\$ 83.5 billion globally and to grow at a CAGR of 24% between 2023 and 2030. Experts predict that virtual reality and augmented reality will increase the scope of telemedicine. The latest technology will appear to test the patient as they are seated next to one another. The National Health Digital Mission, unique health IDs, and electronic health and medical records have all been introduced, and they have all helped to promote telemedicine by enhancing synergy and generating awareness across all e-platforms. Computer experts believe that 5G has the potential to greatly boost the telemedicine sector. As we saw during the COVID outbreak, 5G-enabled devices with cloud connectivity are valuable for more than only doctor-patient video calls. A medical expert can swiftly and efficiently retrieve a patient's vital signs via 5G to determine the state of the patient. There are a number of new technologies that can be applied in telemedicine to assist patients in adhering more closely to their prescription schedules and managing their illnesses more effectively. Telemedicine will carry on bridging the gap between patients, medical professionals, and healthcare systems in the future. Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Game-changing decision

Sir, The Centre's nod for the ₹20,000 crore national green hydrogen mission could be a game-changer. Out of the total allocation, ₹17,490 crore has been earmarked as an incentive for producing electrolyzers and green hydrogen. The Cabinet decision aims to make India a hub for export and decarbonising major economic sectors. By 2030, the project expects to bring in over ₹8 lakh crore investment and create over six lakh jobs. Besides, the mandatory purchase of green hydrogen by big consumers is a significant part of the government's plan to boost domestic production and demand for the new fuel. NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

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

of the day quote

A feel good situation is prevailing in poll bound Tripura and the law and order situation in the state is quite good



MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM

The Hemant Soren government must check infiltrators, out to grab land, by marrying tribal women



AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

I am a Hindu. How can I be anti-Hindu? I am opposed to Hindutva and politics around Hindu faith. All the faiths are equal according to the Indian Constitution



SIDDARAMAIAH | CONGRESS LEADER

Teacher detained

Surat: A tuition teacher was detained on Saturday on the charges of sodomising his student in Surat. The incident occurred on Thursday evening when the victim and his brother had gone to attend coaching class, run by Ganesh Ahire in the Navagam area. "As per the complaint, Ganesh Ahire took the student to washroom and sodomised him. After returning home, the victim narrated his ordeal to his parents who lodged the complaint at Dindoli police station on Friday evening," ASI Arjun Chaudhary said.

WARNINGS IGNORED Joshimath people fume over negligence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Joshimath, Jan 7: Strong resentment prevails among people here against the government for the indifference with which it treated the warnings about a dangerous situation of buildings in the Himalayan town due to heavy construction activities going on around it.

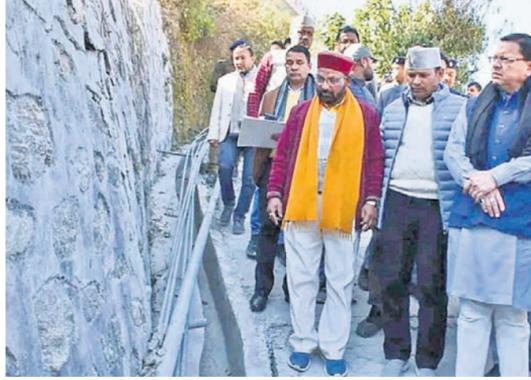
They hold the NTPC's Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project mainly responsible for the situation. "We have been drawing the attention of authorities for the past 14 months. But we were not heeded. Now when the situation is getting out of hand, they are sending expert teams to assess things," Joshimath Bachao Sangharsh Samiti convenor Atul Sati said.

"If attention was paid in time to what we were saying things would not have been so alarming in Joshimath," he added.

Land subsidence had made the houses of 14 families insecure in November 2021 itself, Sati recalls.

He said that people held a demonstration following this at the tehsil office on November 16, 2021 demanding rehabilitation and handed a memorandum to the SDM who acknowledged that even the tehsil office premises had developed cracks.

"If the government was aware of the problem why didn't it act for more than a year to address it? What does that show?" Sati asked. He said that under the pressure of people immediate steps have been taken like temporary stopping of the NTPC's Tapovan-



Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami inspects the landslide affected area of Joshimath in Chamoli district

Vishnugad project and construction of Helang-Marwari by-pass but they are not a permanent solution.

"The threat to Joshimath's existence will persist until these projects are started permanently," he said. Joshimath Bachao Sangharsh Samiti will continue to fight till the very end until it is done, he added.

Former Dharmadhikari of Badrinath temple Bhuvan Chandra Uniyal also holds the manner in which the NTPC works for the cracks. "The tunnel of Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project is located right beneath Joshimath. Big boring machines were brought for its construction which has been stuck in the ground for the past two decades. Tons of explosives are used on

a daily basis for the tunnel's construction. Land subsidence gained momentum on January 3 due to large amount of explosives used by the NTPC. Uniyal is also angry with the NTPC for breaking its promise made to people.

"The NTPC had earlier said that construction of the tunnel won't harm the houses of Joshimath. The company had even promised to do insurance of the infrastructure in town. It would have benefited the people. But it did not keep its word," he said.

"We should be told on the basis of scientific facts what is the future of Joshimath. Is it inhabitable or not. If yes, for how long. If not, then the government should take our land and homes and rehabilitate us or else we would lay down our lives on it," Uniyal said.

AAP MLA sworn in as Punjab Cabinet minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Jan 7: Senior AAP leader and Patiala Rural MLA Dr Balbir Singh was Saturday sworn in as the new Punjab Cabinet minister, shortly after Fauja Singh Sarari tendered his resignation following a controversy over an audio clip.

Balbir (66) has been allotted the Department of Health and Family Welfare, earlier held by Chetan Singh Jouramajra, as Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann rejigged portfolios of some ministers. Earlier in the day, Sarari resigned from the cabinet, months after he was embroiled in the controversy over an audio clip in which he allegedly discussed ways to "trap" some contractors in order to "extort" money. AAP's Punjab unit spokesperson Malvinder Singh Kang said Sarari has resigned from the cabinet, citing "personal reasons".

Sarari is the second minister to lose a ministerial berth in the over nine-month old Mann-led cabinet. Earlier, health minister Vijay Singla was sacked on corruption charges. Meanwhile, the chief minister also shed portfolios of technical education and industrial training and hospitality.

Balbir was administered oath by Governor Banwarilal Purohit at Raj Bhavan in the presence of Mann. Besides health portfolio, Balbir has been given medical education and research and elections. Balbir, an eye surgeon, had defeated senior Congress leader Brahm Mohindra's son Mohit Mohindra from Patiala Rural seat in the assembly polls held last year.

18 crosses vandalised at St Michael's Church

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Jan 7: In a shocking incident, an unknown person sneaked inside the historic St Michael's Church premises around dawn and vandalised 18 crosses in the graveyard of the 489-year-old church, near the Mahim station, officials of the Archdiocese of Bombay said here Saturday.

According to the church's Parish Priest, Fr. Bernard Lancy Pinto, the incident occurred around 6 a.m. when the unidentified miscreant entered the church premises and embarked on a damage-spree in the cemetery, sparking furious reactions among the Mumbai's Catholic community.

"A FIR has been lodged at Mahim police station and investigations have begun. The police have assured us that they will arrest the person concerned based on the CCTV footage and the statement of witnesses," he said.

He said the police have promised appropriate legal action against the vandal and they will also conduct a probe to check for any security lapses. "It is regrettable and painful that the graves of the Catholics were vandalised at the St Michael's Church. The sentiments of the community are deeply hurt as this act not only involved the destruction of religious objects but also disrespect for the dead," said an Archdiocese spokesperson Saturday evening.

"While the Church appreciates the support and assistance of various groups, we strictly do not wish to give this act a communal over-

MUMBAI SHOCKER



tone. The police are investigating the incident and we remain hopeful that the perpetrator of this vicious crime will be brought to task," the spokesperson added.

The St. Michael's Church is the oldest Portuguese-built church in 1534 in its former colony of isles and the then sea-trading centre known as 'Bom Bahia' (later Bombay). 127 years later in May 1661, when Britain's King Charles II married Princess Catherine of Braganza, the daughter of Portugal's King John IV, 'Bom Bahia' was transferred to her husband as part of her wedding dowry.

The Mahim Church is famed for its Wednesday 'novenas' where people from all religions flock to attend and pray for miracles that are believed to take place.

The Catholic community in Mumbai and elsewhere has reacted sharply to the vandalism in Mahim Church and urged the police and government to take prompt action in the matter, besides ensuring security for the 125-odd churches in the city.

Pushed out of forests, leopards spreading terror

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Jan 7: Karnataka is witnessing an unprecedented development regarding man-animal conflict. The leopard menace has caused major disruption to normal life, not only in residential settlements adjoining forest areas, but the big cats are prowling in state capital Bangalore as well as in other major cities such as Mysuru and Belagavi.

Many leopards have turned into man-eaters, forcing the people to live in fear. In some places, leopard attacks on livestock have become a common phenomenon, leading to forest authorities to be on their toes to tackle the situation.

Environmentalists say that the forests in the state have become a desert for the wildlife, pushing leop-



ards and elephants out in search of food. As the incidents of loss of life are increasing every day due to leopard attacks, the Karnataka government was compelled to announce Rs 15

lakhs as compensation for the victims' families. Earlier, this compensation amount was given to families of victims of elephant attacks. In the last week of December 2022, cel-

ebrations took place in Mysuru district as a seven-year-old man-eating leopard was finally trapped in Ukkalagere village of T. Narasipur taluk.

The leopard had killed two persons, a student and a 22-year-old woman, and also attacked livestock, creating terror for the residents of the region. Forest department authorities had tried to capture the leopard for two months. The incidents had created such chaos in the region as people took to streets to protest.

The major operation to catch the leopard was launched in Belagavi city in mid 2022.

After being spotted in the premises of eth Golf Club located at the heart of the city, the animal compelled the authorities to declare holidays and switch to online mode for 22 schools for more than a month.

India, Japan to hold maiden bilateral air drill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: India and Japan will hold their first bilateral air exercise from January 12 to 26, in reflection of the growing defence ties amid increasing concerns over China's military muscle flexing in the Indo-Pacific region.

The exercise 'Veer Guardian-2023' involving the Indian Air Force (IAF) and Japan Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) will be held at Japan's Hyakuri air base. The IAF said on Saturday that its deployment at the exercise will include four Su-30 MKI jets, two C-17 aircraft and one IL-78 plane.

The JASDF will be participating with four F-2 and four F-15 aircraft, it said. "To promote Air Defence co-operation between the countries, India and Japan are all set to hold the joint air exercise, 'Veer Guardian-2023,'" the IAF said in a statement.

India and Japan agreed to step up bilateral defence co-operation and engage in more military exercises, including holding of the first joint fighter jet drills, during the second '2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial dialogue in Tokyo in September. The IAF said the upcoming exercise will be another step in deepening strategic ties.

Branch / Name & Address of Borrowers / Guarantors	Description of the Immovable Properties	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession Notice	Outstanding Amount
PATIA BRANCH				
(1) M/s B S Engineering and Construction (Borrower-Partnership Firm), Plot No 125, Zone-A, Mancheswar Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khurda, Odisha-751010, (2) Mr Bibekananda Jena (Guarantor/Partner), S/o- Jogesh Chandra Jena, Plot No 124, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khurda, Odisha-751007 (3) Mr Sumit Kumar Pathy (Guarantor/Partner), S/o- Rama Chandra Pathy, (4) Mrs Babita Pathy (Guarantor/Partner), W/o- Sumit Kumar Pathy, both are resident of Flat No 5/A, Iscon Residency (Near KIIT Koel Campus), Patia, Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khurda, Odisha-751024.	Property 1: All the part and parcel of land situated on Plot No. 96/624 (Sub Plot No-485), Khata: 75/401, Mouza: Dasabatia, PS: Khandagiri, Tahasil/Sub-Registrar: Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khurda. Area: 0.059.68 dcml (2600 Sq.ft). Title Holder: Babita Pathy, Boundaries of Plot : North- Sub-Plot No.448, South: Sub-Plot No.328, East: Rev.Plot No.96(P), West: Road. Property 2: All the part and parcel of land situated on Plot No. 665/2651, Khata No.270/1811, Sub-Plot No.18, Mouza: Badaragunathpur, PS: Jatni, Thana No. 65, Tahasil/ Sub-Registrar: Jatani, Dist: Khurda. Area: 0.045.45 dcml (1980 Sq.ft). Title Holder - Babita Pathy, Boundaries of Plot : North - Rev.Plot No.660, South: Road, East: Sub-Plot No.17, West - Sub-Plot No.19.	21.10.2022	06.01.2023	Rs.82,80,777.38 with further interest, costs, charges & expenses thereon
BHUBANESWAR BRANCH				
Borrower: Mrs Bidulata Sahoo, W/o: Mr Tapas Ranjan Sahoo, Guarantor/Mortgagor: Mr Kishore Chandra Sahoo, S/o: Late Sri Ramachandra Sahoo, both are address at Mouza: Niamuan, Post: Dalatoia, Plot No.613/902, Dist: Khurda-752056.	Property 1: Land & Building over Hal Mutation Khata No.325/172, Plot No.612/952, Status: Stitiban, Kissam: Gharabari, corresponding Khata No.325/2, Plot No.612(P) having Area of Ac.0.240 dec. & Hal Mutation Khata No.325/173, Plot No.612/953, Status: Stitiban, Kissam: Gharabari, corresponding Khata No.325/2, Plot No.612(P) having Area of Ac.0.010 dec., Mouza: Niamuan, Tahasil: Begunia, Sub Registrar/PS: Khurda, Thana No.91, Dist: Khurda in the name of Mr Kishore Chandra Sahoo, S/o: Late Ramachandra Sahoo, Bounded by: East- Plot No.600, West- Plot No.611 & Plot No.612(P), North- Plot No.609, South- Plot No.610, Status: Stitiban, Kissam: Gharabari, corresponding to Khata No.140, having Area of Ac.0.065 dec. of Mouza: Niamuan, Tahasil: Begunia, Sub Registrar/PS: Khurda, Thana No.91, Dist: Khurda in the name of Mr Kishore Chandra Sahoo, S/o: Late Ramachandra Sahoo, Bounded by: East- Plot No.600, West- Plot No.611 & Plot No.612(P), North- Plot No.609, South- Plot No.612(P) & Kishore Chandra Sahoo. Property 3: Land & Building over Hal Mutation Khata No.325/107, Plot No.613/902, Status: Stitiban, Kissam: Gharabari, corresponding to Khata No.175, Plot No.613(Part) having Area of Ac.0.146 dec. of Mouza: Niamuan, Tahasil: Begunia, Sub Registrar/PS: Khurda, Thana No.91, Dist: Khurda in the name of Mr Kishore Chandra Sahoo, S/o: Late Ramachandra Sahoo, Bounded by: East- Road, West- Plot No.614, North- Plot No.613(P), South- Road.	28.10.2022	04.01.2023	Rs.16,83,338/- as on 03.01.2023 with further interest, costs, charges & expenses thereon
PURI DOLAMANDAP SAHI BRANCH				
(1)M/s Durga Madhab Handloom (Borrower), (2) Mrs Binodini Pradhan (Borrower/Proprietor/Mortgagor), (3) Mr Chiranjibi Pradhan (Guarantor/Mortgagor), (4) Mrs Itishree Pradhan (Guarantor/Mortgagor), all are address at Saraswati Vihar, Baliguali, Puri-752002.	All the part and parcel of Factory Shed and Building over Plot No.1285/6096, Khata No.521/2239, measuring Ac.0.014 decimal in Mouza: Balukhanda, Tahasil/Dist: Puri, Odisha belongs to Late Batakrushna Pradhan, S/o: Nilakantha Pradhan, Sale Deed No.1148/1201349, dt.24.02.2012, Boundaries: North- Basti Plot No.52, South- Road, East- Basti Plot No.69, West- Binodini Pradhan.	13.10.2022	05.01.2023	Rs.8,12,570/- with further interest, costs, charges & expenses thereon

Place : Bhubaneswar, Date : 07.01.2023
Authorised Officer, Indian Bank

TATA STEEL

PROFORMA :10-02
INDIAN RAILWAYS
TATA STEEL LTD.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION
INTRODUCTION OF AC 25 KV TRACTION
'WARNING TO ROAD USERS'

It is notified for information of the Public that in connection with introduction of 25 KV AC Electric traction for Railway siding line of TATA JODA take off from TATA -JODA existing line Ch.396/TS1/8 for Line no 5 & 6 upto location no. 397/TS6/12 including cross over line no 5 to 6 and cross over line 4 to 5 of Chakradharpur Division of South Eastern Railway, height gauges have been erected at all the level crossings with clear height between 4.76 m and 4.78 m above road level with a view to prevent loads of excessive height from coming into contact or dangerous proximity to live traction wire.

Public are hereby notified to observe the height specified above for the purpose of loading vehicle and to see that the loads carried in road vehicles do not infringe the height gauge under any circumstances.

THE DANGERS OF A LOAD OF EXCESSIVE HEIGHT ARE AS FOLLOWS:-

- Danger to the height gauge and consequent obstruction to the road as well as to the railway line.
- Danger to the materials or equipment carried or the vehicle itself.
- Danger of fire and risk of life due to contact with or dangerous proximity to the conductors.

Location of Existing Level Crossing Gate:-
1. Between Loc No. 397/TS6/10(Ch.397/335.00) to Loc No. 397/TS6/9 (Ch.397/303.50)

SR. DEE (TRD) SER, Chakradharpur
CHIEF PROJECTS (RAIL LOGISTICS) TATA STEEL LTD.

Registered Office: Bombay House, 24, Homi Mody Street, Fort, Mumbai 400 001, India
Tel.: 022 66658282 Fax: 022 66657724
(CIN) -L27100MH1907PLC000260
Website: www.tatasteel.com

TATA STEEL

PROFORMA :10-01
INDIAN RAILWAYS
TATA STEEL LTD.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

"Notice is hereby given to all users of Railway lines & premises situated on the completed sections of the under noted section of the South Eastern Railway that the 25,000 volts, 50 Hz, A.C. overhead traction wire will be energized on or after the date specified against the section. On & from the same date the overhead traction line shall be treated as live at all times and no unauthorized person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said overhead line."

Section	KM/Chainage	Total Length		Rty./Div.	Date			
		From	To					
Railway siding line of TATA JODA take off from TATA -JODA existing line Ch.396/TS1/8for Line no 5 & 6 including cross over line no 5 to 6 and cross over line 4 to 5.	Single Line Take off from Existing TATA JODA Siding to Line no.6.	396/TS1/9	396/308.00	397/TS6/3	397/110.00	0.802	South Eastern Railway Chakradharpur Division	25/01/2023
	Single Line Take off from Line no.6	396/TS1/8	396/275.50	397/TS5/3	397/114.50	0.839		
	Line No.6 with termination	396/TS6/15	396/961.50	397/TS6/12	397/362.00	0.400		
	Line No.5 with termination	396/TS5/16	396/966.00	397/TS5/8	397/299.00	0.333		
	Cross Over between Line No. 5 to Line 6	397/TS5/2/1	397/78.50	397/TS6/8	397/276.50	0.198		
Cross Over between existing Line No. 4 to Line no. 5	397/TS4/2A	397/103.50	397/TS5/8	397/299.00	0.194			
Feeder Line	N/A	396/TS1/16	396/375	396/TS1/22	396/412.2	0.07		
							2.836 K.M.	

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Website: www.tatasteel.com



BIHAR

TWO STATES



ASSAM

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P6

cmk

Caste-based survey begins in Bihar

CHIEF MINISTER NITISH KUMAR HAS SAID THAT THE CASTE-BASED ENUMERATION EXERCISE COULD BE BENEFICIAL FOR ALL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Jan 7: Terming the caste-based head count that began in Bihar Saturday as a 'historic step', Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav said the exercise will provide scientific data for carrying out welfare schemes for weaker sections of the society.

Noting that all the parties of the ruling 'Mahagathbandhan' were in favour of the exercise, the RJD leader claimed that the BJP was 'critical' about the survey.

"The enumeration exercise began in Bihar from today. It is a historic step taken by the 'Mahagathbandhan' government in the state. Once the



exercise is completed, it will provide scientific data to the state government for carrying out developmental work for people, including those who are deprived," Yadav said, while speaking to media persons here.

He also said, "The BJP is an anti-poor party which always opposed this exercise and has always been critical about the caste-based head count."

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar

had Friday said that the caste-based enumeration exercise could be beneficial for all.

The caste-based head count process has been a major issue in Bihar, as Kumar's JD(U) and all constituents of the ruling 'Mahagathbandhan' were demanding that the exercise be undertaken at the earliest.

The state government embarked on the exercise in the wake of the Centre expressing its inability to

undertake a caste-based enumeration other than SCs and STs.

The exercise will be conducted in two phases across Bihar, an official said.

"All households will be covered in the first phase, which will continue till January 21. In the second one which will start in March, data on people, belonging to all castes, sub-castes and religions, will be collected. Enumerators will gather information about the financial status of all people," Patna District Magistrate Chandrashekhar Singh told PTI.

Earlier in the day, he inspected the ongoing exercise being conducted by the state government employees in the Bank road area in Patna. "The exercise is being conducted in all 12,696 blocks in Patna district," he said.

The caste-based survey will be completed by May in 2023, and the state government will spend ₹500 crore from its contingency fund for the exercise.

The general administration department is the nodal authority for the survey.

Eviction drives will not stop in Assam: Sarma

AGENCIES

Guwahati, Jan 7: Even as the Guwahati High Court criticised the police for demolishing homes of at least six families in connection with an arson case in Assam's Nagaon district, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has said eviction drives will continue in the state till the end of his government's tenure.

Sarma said this while attending a few programmes in Guwahati recently. Asked about the high court's criticism of the police for bulldozing the houses of a few accused in the Batadrava police station torching case, he said: "Our government has done many such exercises in the state within the boundaries of the law. However, in the Nagaon police station case, the Superintendent of Police admitted before the court that there were some mistakes while carrying out actions.



Wherever any illegal encroachment is found, we will do an eviction. This government is not here to sit idle. For 365 days up to five years, we will continue our work

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | CHIEF MINISTER

It may happen sometime, and we should rectify our faults."

The Chief Minister said that the government will look into it and will initiate actions if any unlawful things were done by the officers.

"But this does not mean that the eviction will stop. Wherever any il-

legal encroachment is found, we will do an eviction. This government is not here to sit idle. For 365 days up to five years, we will continue our work," he added.

Sarma also mentioned that an eviction exercise will take place in the Paboi Reserve Forest area January 13 and 14.

'Job aspirants kept under house arrest during CM's yatra'



In a series of tweets, Sushil Modi claimed that Nitish Kumar is afraid of protests by aspirants for secretariat assistant and teacher posts in the state

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Jan 7: BJP Rajya Sabha MP Sushil Kumar Modi has alleged job aspirants in Champaran were kept under house arrest during Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's ongoing 'Samadhan Yatra' in the region.

In a series of tweets, Sushil Modi claimed that Nitish Kumar is afraid of protests by aspirants for secretariat assistant and teacher posts in the state.

"The officials of East and West Champaran districts went to the houses of secretariat assistant and teacher aspirants and threatened them to stay indoors or face the consequences. The administrations of these two districts have opted for dirty tricks to save Nitish Kumar from protests by job seekers. If Nitish Kumar is thinking that the issues will be resolved through this, it is his misconception," Sushil Modi said.

The BJP leader also slammed Nitish Kumar for the lathi charge on job aspirants January 3. "Nitish Kumar, who is also holding the post of Home Minister, is unaware of the lathi charge. Either Nitish Kumar was doing drama or the bureaucrats are misleading him. It is a serious issue..."

"Question paper leak has become a regular affair in Bihar. After eight years, the examination of secretariat assistant takes place and its question papers are leaked on the day of examination. Nine lakh candidates participated in it. Similar is the status of other examinations," Sushil Modi asserted.

"One-and-half crore aspirants participated in the railway examination but not a single time question paper was leaked. In a bid to make foolproof arrangements, the Bihar government can take the services of companies like TCS. Why it is not taking the help of TCS as the Central government does? The Chief Minister is not interested in the solution (Samadhan) to such issues, he is doing politics through Samadhan Yatra," he added.

97 bird species recorded at Assam's lone Ramsar site

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, Jan 6: Deepor Beel, the only Ramsar site of Assam, recorded over 26,000 birds of 97 species during a recent bird count against 10,289 birds of 66 species recorded in 2021, officials said.

Officials said that over 26,000 birds of 97 different species were recorded in the bird count at Deepor Beel organised by the Guwahati Wildlife Division of Assam Forest Department January 4.

Besides the bird count exercise, a spot bird photography contest was also held. A total of 37 individuals participated in the bird count exercise, including forest department officials, bird experts, students and representatives from NGOs. Birds were counted using the 'Visual Encounter Survey' methodology in nine areas of the wetland and in nine groups on foot and in country boats.

A renowned ornithologist, Anwaruddin Choudhury, former Assam Chief Secretary, accompanied the participants and provided guidance during the exercise.

The exercise was coordinated by Jayashree Naiding, Divisional Forest Officer Guwahati Wildlife Division, while Udayan Borthakur, Senior Scientist from leading research based biodiversity conser-



vation organisation 'Aaranyak', briefed on technical aspects of the bird count. Borthakur said: "The data on bird species and numbers obtained through such monitoring can help greatly in conservation planning in the long run."

Several NGOs including Help Earth, Rongmon, The Midway Journey, attended the bird count exercise. The bird count in Deepor Beel was a very important initiative undertaken by the Guwahati Wildlife. A total of eight wildlife photographers participated in the spot bird photography contest in Deepor Beel. A repeat of the bird count exercise is scheduled for the first week of February during the Asian Waterfowl Count.

Nitish likely to embark on country-wide yatra

THE BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER HAD EARLIER SAID SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE WAS WORKING HARD TO UNITE THE OPPOSITION PARTIES AHEAD OF THE 2024 ELECTIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bettiah (Bihar), Jan 7: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar hinted that his proposed country-wide tour for forging Opposition unity to take on the BJP in the next Lok Sabha polls may take place after the budget session of the Assembly next month.

Kumar had earlier said several times that he was working hard to unite the Opposition parties ahead of the 2024 elections.

The JD(U) leader ended his ties with the BJP-led NDA in August last year and formed an alliance government with the RJD and the Congress in Bihar.

Kumar launched his state-wide 'Samadhan Yatra', aimed at reviewing the implementation of



NITISH KUMAR HAS SEVERAL TIMES REJECTED THE SPECULATION OF BECOMING THE PRIME MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE, SAYING THAT HE WAS NOT A CONTENDER FOR THE POST

the ongoing projects and other schemes of the state government, from Bettiah in West Champaran district Thursday.

Asked by reporters about his plans to visit other states in a bid to bring together political parties

opposed to the BJP, he said he will complete the Samadhan Yatra first. "This yatra will be completed by February 8. The budget session of the Assembly will be there. Then I will think this over," the CM. While addressing party workers

in Patna in December last year Kumar had said, "I am working hard to unite all Opposition parties in the country. If all the parties come together and present a united fight, we can defeat BJP in 2024."

However, Kumar has several times rejected the speculation of becoming the Prime Ministerial candidate, saying he was not the contender for the post.

Earlier Thursday, Kumar visited Daruabari village in Bagaha sub-division as part of his Samadhan yatra, and reviewed the ongoing government schemes in the area.

He was accompanied by cabinet colleagues Vijay Kumar Choudhary and Sanjay Kumar Jha.

The CM also met schoolgirls and 'Jeevika Didis' - women associated with self-help groups under the Bihar Rural Livelihoods Project - in the village.

Kumar instructed officials to ensure that pending works related to construction of rural roads in the area are completed on a priority basis. "The CM directed officials to check river erosion and adopt all possible means with full alertness to stop the erosion of Gandak River," said a senior official, who was present there.

Later, Kumar chaired a meeting of senior officials of the state administration and reviewed several projects of the government.

Assam govt grants industrial status to tourism sector

WITH THE GRANT OF INDUSTRY STATUS TO THE TOURISM SECTOR, NOW, RESTAURANTS, CAFETERIAS, HEALTH CLUBS, SPAS AND WELLNESS CENTRES AMONG OTHERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR INCENTIVES UNDER THE STATE'S INDUSTRIAL POLICY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, Jan 7: The Assam government recently approved a proposal for granting an industrial status to the state's tourism sector to make it more appealing to global travellers.

Tourism Minister Jayanta Mallabarua highlighted that with such industry status, fresh investments in tourism infrastructure will contribute towards rapid employment generation, public-private partnership and infrastructure development.

With the grant of industry status to the tourism sector, now, restaurants, cafeterias, health clubs, spas and wellness centres among others are eligible for incentives under the industrial policy. This move will further encourage and boost private investment in the above areas of the tourism sector.



"Earlier, the tourism sector was not under the state industrial policy. This decision will bring a paradigm shift to the tourism sector. Previously only hotels and resorts above the three-star category and river cruises were included under trust areas of Assam industrial policy. But, now many new tourism units like heritage hotels, bunga-

lows, camping sites, restaurants, amusement parks, ropeways, museums, tour operator service, adventure park, water sports etc also be included in the trust areas of the industrial policy," said Mallabarua.

The newly-implemented policy aims for sustainable and environmentally friendly investment be-

sides capital formation and the creation of gainful employment. The ministry also mentioned that the infrastructure can be developed through Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode, which will contribute to the overall development of the region.

"Assam tourism sector will receive ample number of private in-

vestments due to the new status received which facilitates incentives, subsidies, reimbursements among others as per industry policy for the investors and eventually these investments will create new employment opportunities," he added.

Assam has now become a nationally and internationally acclaimed all-season tourist desti-

nation for its unique wildlife, biodiversity and experience of an unexploited wonderland.

Tourism is to be one of the main sources of income generation for the people over the years.

In its bid to rejuvenate tourism and hospitality sector in northeast India, Aizawl, the capital Mizoram, had hosted the 10th International Tourism Mart recently. The International Tourism Mart brought together the tourism business fraternity and entrepreneurs from the eight northeastern states. High on happiness index and banking on its 'Responsible tourism policy', Mizoram had chalked out grand plans to draw tourists to its lush green hills and forests.

The objective of International Tourism Mart 2022 is to highlight the tourism potential of the north-east region in domestic and international markets. The event was organised by the Ministry of Tourism of Government of India.

A lot of meetings of year-long G20 presidency of India will be held in northeastern parts of the country. Even meetings will be held at Itanagar, capital of Arunachal Pradesh. Sources said the Centre is also considering proposals for Guwahati, Imphal, Aizawl and Agartala as venues, of which Guwahati has been shortlisted and is expected to host four meetings.

Union Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy had recently said: "With our presidency, we definitely can stride ahead of these 4-5 countries to build the rightful place of India's tourism industry in the global arena. We must plan to showcase our northeastern cultural richness while welcoming the world to our country."

international



India's response to cash-strapped Sri Lanka's request for debt restructuring is expected by the end of this month

MT. MARAPI ERUPTS

The Marapi volcano in Indonesia's West Sumatra province erupted for about 45 seconds Saturday, throwing ash up to 300 meters above its peak, according to the Centre for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation



of the day quote

Pakistan is suffering not just from flooding but from recurring climate extremes - earlier in spring 2022, the country was in the grip of a scorching, drought-aggravating heatwave that caused forest fires in the west. The fact that some of the same areas that received record temperatures were subsequently submerged underlines the sharp swings in weather patterns that are becoming a norm

SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PAKISTAN PM

Bangladesh has never witnessed such a misrule with communalism and militancy that set an inhuman and worst example during the regime of BNP government. They established the culture of murder, disappearance (of people), rape, looting... now those evil forces are trying to grab power through back-door politicking

SHEIKH HASINA | BANGLADESH PM

One of the challenges is there is a political class in Alberta that has decided that anything to do with climate change is going to be bad for them or for Alberta

JUSTIN TRUDEAU | CANADIAN PM

Iran executes 2 more men detained amid nationwide protests



AGENCIES

Dubai, Jan 7: Iran said it executed two men Saturday convicted of allegedly killing a paramilitary volunteer during a demonstration, the latest executions aimed at halting the nationwide protests now challenging the country's theocracy. Iran's judiciary identified those executed as Mohammad Mehdi Karami and Mohammad Hosseini, making it four men known to have been executed since the demonstrations began in September over the death of Mahsa Amini. All have faced internationally criticised, rapid, closed-door trials.

The two men executed Saturday had been convicted of killing a member of the Basij paramilitary force militia

Three others have been sentenced to death in the same case, while 11 received prison sentences

said the trials "bore no resemblance to a meaningful judicial proceeding." State TV also aired footage of Karami and Hosseini talking about the attack, though the broadcaster for years has aired what activists describe as coerced confessions.

The judiciary's Mizan news agency said the men had been convicted of killing Ruhollah Ajamian, a member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's volunteer Basij force, in the city of Karaj outside of Tehran November 3. The Basij have deployed in major cities, attacking and detaining protesters, who in many cases have fought back.

Heavily edited footage aired on state television showed Karami speaking before a Revolutionary Court about the attack, which also showed a reenactment of the attack, according to prosecutors' claims. Iran's Revolutionary Courts handed down the two other death sentences already carried out.

The tribunals don't allow those on trial to pick their own lawyers or even see the evidence against them. Amnesty International has

At least 517 protesters have been killed and over 19,200 people have been arrested, according to Human Rights Activists in Iran, a group that has closely monitored the unrest.

The protests began in mid-September, when 22-year-old Amini died after being arrested by Iran's morality police for allegedly violating the Islamic Republic's strict dress code.

Women have played a leading role in the protests, with many publicly stripping off the compulsory Islamic headscarf, known as the hijab.

Also Saturday, Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei appointed a new hard-line chief of police, the official IRNA news agency reported. Gen. Ahmad Reza Radan replaced outgoing Gen. Hossein Ashtari after Ashtari's eight-year term of service ended.

McCarthy elected as House Speaker

McCarthy's victory in the 15th ballot ended the deepest congressional dysfunction in over 160 years

AGENCIES

Washington, Jan 7: Republican Kevin McCarthy was elected as the new speaker of the US House of Representatives in a dramatic post-midnight ballot Saturday, after days of intense negotiations and a series of humiliating defeats to finally capture the gavel on a historic 15th attempt.

McCarthy, 57, needed a simple majority to be elected as the speaker, who presides over the business and is second in line to the presidency. He defeated 52-year-old Hakeem Sekou Jeffries by 216 to 212 votes, in the 15th round of votes that went past midnight.

McCarthy replaces 82-year-old Nancy Pelosi of the Democratic Party, which lost the majority in the House after the November 8 midterm elections. The Republicans won 222 seats in the 435-member House against 212 seats secured by the Democrats.

President Joe Biden congratulated McCarthy on his election as the Speaker and said that this was a time to govern responsibly.

"This is a time to govern re-



McCarthy was elected only after agreeing to a demand by hardliners that any lawmaker be able call for his removal at any time

THAT WILL SHARPLY CUT THE POWER HE WILL HOLD WHEN TRYING TO PASS LEGISLATION ON CRITICAL ISSUES INCLUDING FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT, ADDRESSING THE NATION'S LOOMING DEBT CEILING AND OTHER CRISES THAT MAY ARISE

In his maiden speech as Speaker, McCarthy said he will look into the issue of public debt and pledged that the House will address the "rise of the Chinese Communist party"

responsibly and to ensure that we're putting the interests of American families first," he said. "I never thought we'd get up here"

work with Republicans, adding that voters made clear that they expect Republicans to be prepared to work with him as well. "Now that the leadership of the House of Representatives has been decided, it is time for that process to begin," he said. "As for the Chinese Communist Party, we will create a bipartisan Select Committee on China to investigate how to bring back the hundreds of thousands of jobs that went to China. Then we will win this economic competition," he said, evoking applause from the lawmakers.

Biden said he was prepared to

try, with each other. "In that spirit, I will work with anyone, everyone who shares our passion to deliver a better future for the nation. I hope you'll join me as a Congress can only operate if we cooperate," he said.

McCarthy opened his first speech with a nod to the many rounds of voting to secure the victory. "That was easy, huh?" he joked, adding, "I never thought we'd get up here"

Earlier, a beaming McCarthy hugged members of his leadership team and allies who stood with him throughout the days-long saga. Cheers broke out in the chamber and the galleries above, where family members watched the vote unfold.

After weeks of negotiating and days of deadlock, it took 15 rounds of voting for McCarthy to secure enough votes from Republican hardliners. The Republican leader was able to muster a majority from the lawmakers present on the floor only after six of his party rebels voted "present", which brought down the magic number from 218 to 215 votes.

McCarthy won the gavel after 15 rounds of voting held over five days, making it the longest election for the speaker.

SHORT TAKES

5 migrants die after boat sinks

Tunis: At least five African migrants died and another 10 were missing after a boat sank off Tunisia, as they tried to cross the Mediterranean to Italy, a judicial official said Saturday. The coastguard rescued 20 migrants who had been on the overcrowded boat, which sank off Louata in Sfax region Friday, the official told Reuters. The coastline of Sfax has become a major departure point for people fleeing poverty in Africa and the Middle East for a chance at a better life in Europe.

Oli again vents ire against India

Kathmandu: Chairman of Nepal's ruling party UML and former Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli once again vented his ire against India Saturday, saying that the neighbouring countries are taking unnecessary interest in the formation of the government in the Himalayan country. At a programme organised here, Oli said that external forces have developed an unnecessary interest in the formation of the government in Nepal. With the support of UML and Oli, the Chairman of CPN (Maoist Center), Pushpa Kamal Dahal aka Prachanda, has become the Prime Minister of Nepal after the single largest party in the Parliament, Nepali Congress, refused to hand over the PM's post to Prachanda.

Philippine military chief replaced

Manila: Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. On Saturday cut short the term of the military chief of staff he appointed five months ago and replaced him with a retiring general without explaining the surprise move. Marcos's office announced the replacement of Lt. Gen. Bartolome Bacarro, who had received the highest military award for combat bravery.

Minor gangraped for 8 months in Pak

Islamabad: A 13-year-old girl was allegedly gang raped by three people for eight months in Pakistan's Muzaffargarh district, using her naked photos and videos as blackmail, according to the police. The incident occurred at the Kotla Rahm Shah locality of Jatoti tehsil, Dawn reported.

UKRAINE HAILS US MILITARY AID AS CEASE-FIRE SAID TO FALTER

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, Jan 7: Ukraine's president praised the United States for including tank-killing armored vehicles in its latest multibillion-dollar package of military aid, saying they are "exactly what is needed" for Ukrainian troops locked in combat against Russian forces, even as both sides celebrated Orthodox Christmas Saturday.

The White House announcement Friday of \$3.75 billion in weapons and other aid for Ukraine and its European backers came as Moscow said its troops are observing a short Orthodox Christmas cease-fire.

Ukrainian officials denounced the unilateral 36-hour pause as a ploy and said it appeared to have been ignored by some of Moscow's forces pressing ahead with the nearly 11-month invasion.

Russia's Defense Ministry insisted Saturday that its forces along the 1,100-kilometer (684-mile) front line were observing the Kremlin-ordered truce, but returned fire when attacked.

The latest package of US Military assistance was the biggest to date for Ukraine. For the first time, it included 50 Bradley armored vehicles and 500 of the anti-tank missiles they can fire.

Together, this week's pledges were powerful signals that Ukraine can count on continued long-term Western aid against Russian President Vladimir Putin's drive to dismember the country.

The Putin-ordered Christmas cease-fire that started Friday was first proposed by the Russian Orthodox Church's Kremlin-aligned head, Patriarch Kirill. The Orthodox Church uses the Julian calendar and celebrates Christmas January 7.

Putin's order said a cease-fire would allow worshippers in combat zones to attend Christmas services.

UK leader calls crisis meeting over struggling health system

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Jan 7: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak gathered government ministers, medics and health service managers in 10 Downing St. On Saturday for talks aimed at fixing a health care crisis that has seen thousands of patients stranded outside overflowing hospitals.

The government said it was "bringing together the best minds from the health and care sectors to help share knowledge and practical solutions." The opposition Labour Party dismissed the gathering as "a talking shop," and experts warned there are no quick fixes for long-brewing problems in the state-funded National Health Service. Britain's health system faces an inferno of pressures, including rising demand for

care after pandemic restrictions were eased; a surge in flu and other winter viruses after two lockdown years; and staff shortages from pandemic burnout and a post-Brexit drought of European workers in the UK.

Thousands of hospital beds are occupied by people who are fit to be discharged but have nowhere to go because of a dearth of places for long-term care. Official figures show that last week only a third of patients ready to be released from a hospital in England actually left.

That has led to ambulances stuck outside hospitals with patients who can't be admitted, and in turn to people with health emergencies waiting hours for ambulances to arrive. Health leaders say the delays have likely led to hundreds of deaths.

China suspends social media accounts of Covid policy critics

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, Jan 7: China has suspended or closed the social media accounts of more than 1,000 critics of the government's policies on the Covid-19 outbreak, as the country moves to further open up.

The popular Sina Weibo social media platform said it had addressed 12,854 violations including attacks on experts, scholars and medical workers and issued temporary or permanent bans on 1,120 accounts.

The ruling Communist Party had largely relied on the medical community to justify its harsh lockdowns, quarantine measures and mass testing, almost all of which it abruptly



abandoned last month, leading to a surge in new cases that have stretched medical resources to their limits. The party allows no direct criticism and imposes strict limits on free speech.

The company "will continue to increase the investigation and cleanup of all kinds of illegal content, and create a harmonious and friendly community environment for the majority of users," Sina Weibo said in a

statement dated Thursday. Criticism has largely focused on heavy-handed enforcement of regulations, including open-ended travel restrictions that saw people confined to their homes for weeks, sometimes sealed inside without adequate food or medical care.

Anger was also vented over the requirement that anyone who potentially tested positive or had been in contact with such a person be confined for observation in a field hospital, where overcrowding, poor food and hygiene were commonly cited. The social and economic costs eventually prompted rare street protests in Beijing and other cities, possibly influencing the party's decision to swiftly ease the strictest measures.



Kurdish activists gather during a march in Paris, Saturday. Kurdish groups from around France and Europe are marching in Paris to show their anger over the unresolved killing of three Kurdish women activists in the French capital 10 years ago and also mourning three people killed outside a Kurdish cultural center in Paris two weeks ago in what prosecutors called a racist attack

Six-year-old shoots teacher in school

Norfolk: A six-year-old student shot and wounded a teacher at his school in Virginia during an altercation inside a first-grade classroom Friday, police and school officials in the city of Newport News said. No students were injured in the shooting at Richeck Elementary School, police said. The teacher - a woman in her 30s - suffered life-threatening injuries. Her condition had improved somewhat by late afternoon, Newport News Police Chief Steve Drew said. "We did not have a situation where someone was going around the school shooting," Drew told reporters, later adding that the gunshot was not an accident. Drew said the student and teacher had known in each other in a classroom setting. He said the boy had a handgun in the classroom, and investigators were trying to figure out where he obtained it. The police chief did not provide further details about the shooting or what happened inside the school. Joselin Glover, whose son is in fourth grade, told The Virginian-Pilot newspaper she got a text from the school stating that one person was shot and another was in custody. "My heart stopped," she said. "I was freaking out, very nervous. Just wondering if that one person was my son." Carlos, her 9-year-old, was at recess. But he said he and his classmates were soon holed up in the back of a classroom. Parents and students were reunited at a gymnasium door, Newport News Public Schools said via Facebook.

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, KONARK
 email: nackonark@gmail.com, Phone No.: 06758-236826
 No.65 Dt.07.01.2023

SHORT TENDER CALL NOTICE

No.C-2247:- Sealed tenders are invited Percentage rate BIDs from the registered contractor's 'D' & 'C' Class of the State / PWD/ PHD/ WR Deptt. for the following works. Tender documents can be purchased from the office of the undersigned on payment of non-refundable paper cost (in cash) as mentioned in Column No.-4 for each work as mentioned below during the office hour from Dt.9.1.2023 to Dt.16.1.2023 upto 5.00 P.M. every day except on Sundays and holidays.

Tender will be received upto 3.00 P.M. of Dt.17.1.2023 and will be opened on the same day at 03.30 P.M. in the office of the undersigned in presence of tenderers or their authorized agents. Tender received after due date and time shall not be entertained and the authority shall not be held responsible for delay or missing of the tender during the postal / courier transit. The tender along with EMD as mentioned in Column No.-5 of tender value in shape of NSC / KVP / B.D. / Bankers Cheque / M.R. of Konark N.A.C. Deposit receipt in schedule Bank duly pledged in favour of the Executive Officer, Konark N.A.C. in separate envelope, attested copies of up-to-date GST Regd. No., PAN, Contractors licences should be furnished along with the tender. The bidders are required to put their signature on any over writings & corrections.

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Approximate estimate cost with 1% Cess (in Rs.)	Cost of tender paper in Rs.	E.M.D. in Rs.	Class of contractor	Time of completion (days)
1	Weather coat painting of Triveniswar, Esaneswar, Dakhineswar Temple and Chotababa Matha on the occasion of Maghamela 2023	97,339.00	472.00	1000.00	'D' & 'C' class contractor	7 days
2	Repair and Cement painting Tirtha Puskarini Compound wall at Chandrabhaga and Approach road to Mela Ground on the Occasion of Maghamela 2023	1,45,126.00	708.00	1500.00	'D' & 'C' class contractor	7 days
3	Repair of Main gate with Painting of Boundary wall and out site of Office Building on the Occasion of Maghamela 2023.	1,26,607.00	708.00	1300.00	'D' & 'C' class contractor	7 days

The authority reserves all right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
 Sd./- EXECUTIVE OFFICER, KONARK N.A.C.
 OIPR-13174/11/0013/2223



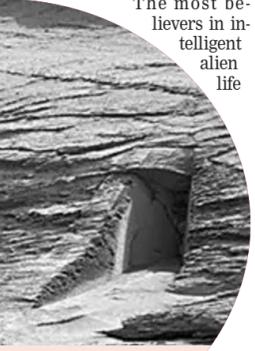
ARE WE ALONE?

THE MYSTERY AROUND ALIENS AND UFOs HAS ALWAYS EVOKED US. ALL OUR LIFE WE HAVE HEARD AND READ ABOUT PEOPLE SIGHTING SAUCER-SHAPED OBJECTS, BUT THERE WAS NEVER AN AUTHENTIC SOURCE TO CONFIRM THEM. DO ALIENS EXIST? EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE HAS NEVER BEEN DISCOVERED, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT DOESN'T EXIST. TO ADDRESS THAT, NASA HAS CREATED A TEAM THAT WILL TRY TO FIND THE ANSWERS

'Half of humanity believes in UFOs'

Nearly half of Earthlings believe that we aren't alone in the universe — and want to make contact with alien life, as per a study. The findings of the survey — conducted in 24 countries by research group Glocalities — showed that 47 percent of the survey's 26,000 respondents believe "in the existence of intelligent alien civilisations in the universe."

Scientists are preparing for the moment Earth will receive a message from extraterrestrial life. Researchers and scientists have come together to prepare a set of protocols for the people across the globe to follow if and when such an encounter takes place



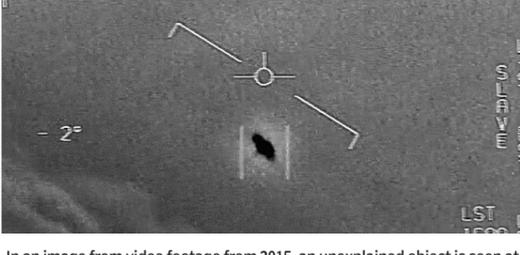
NASA's Curiosity rover took a photo which appeared to show a doorway on Mars

The most believers in intelligent alien life were in Russia, at 68 percent, trailed closely by Mexico and China, with the down-to-earth Dutch bottoming out the list at 28 percent. The Netherlands ranked as the most skeptical of life beyond Earth, with only 28 percent of Dutch survey-takers entertaining in the possibility, according to the findings. A UFO researcher claims to have spotted an extra-terrestrial spacecraft in a 55-year-old NASA photograph from the early days of America's space programme.

Scott C Waring, who lives in Taiwan, said he found an unexplained object in the image taken in 1960 by an unmanned probe sent out during NASA's Mercury project.

REPORTS

Of the thousands of declassified documents published online by



In an image from video footage from 2015, an unexplained object is seen at center as it soars among the clouds, traveling against the wind

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), one contains details about sightings of unidentified flying objects, or UFOs, in India, Nepal and Bhutan. The CIA documented a total of six UFO sightings over "south Ladakh, north east Nepal, north Sikkim and western Bhutan" in 1968. Three UFOs were sighted in Ladhak, India. Meanwhile, the Indian Army troops have sighted mysterious unidentified flying objects (UFOs) in the Ladakh sector along the Line of Actual Control with China in the year 2013. According to some Government reports, there have been 19 incidents of drones or unidentified flying objects (UFOs) flying around Indian airports since 2019. Meanwhile, intelligence agencies have opined that this could be a psychological operation of the Chinese army and a possibility of launching "Chinese lanterns" during day break and in night.

VIDEOS

In a first public Congressional hearing in over 50 years on UFOs sightings in the US, the country's military officials unveiled new footage of what they call as unidentified aerial phenomena, or UAP, but nothing suggests the presence of aliens. One of the videos taken from a US Navy ship through night vision goggles shows an unidentified triangular object. Another clip of the same phenomenon was also observed at a later date from a different location.

Search for extraterrestrial life

A new Pentagon office set up to track reports of unidentified flying objects has received "several hundreds" of new reports, but no evidence so far of alien life. The All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office (AARO) was set up in July last year and is responsible for not only tracking unidentified objects in the sky, but also underwater or in space — or potentially an object that has the ability to move from one domain to the next.

The office was established following more than a year of attention on unidentified flying objects that military pilots have observed but have sometimes been reluctant to report due to fear of stigma.

In June 2021 the Office of the Director of National Intelligence reported that between 2004 and 2021, there were 144 such encounters, 80 of which were captured on multiple sensors.

The office was set up not only to examine the question of whether there's extraterrestrial life, but also because of the security risk posed by so many encounters with unknown flying objects by military installations or military aircraft.

Last year May, Congress held its first hearing in more than half a century on the topic, with multiple members expressing concern that whether or not the objects are alien or potentially new, unknown technology being flown by China, Russia or another potential ad-

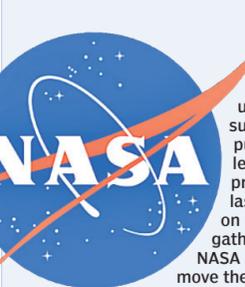
versary, the unknown creates a security risk.

So far, "we have not seen anything, and we're still very early on, that would lead us to believe that any of the objects that we have seen are of alien origin," said Ronald Moultrie, under secretary of defense for intelligence and security. "Any unauthorized system in our airspace we deem as a threat to safety," Moultrie added. The office is also working on ways to improve its ability to identify unknown objects, such as by recalibrating sensors that may be focused just on known adversary aircraft or drone signatures, Moultrie said.

"One reason for the hundreds of additional reports coming in may be the outreach the department has done to destigmatise reporting potential encounters. Each service has also established its own reporting processes," anomaly office director Sean Kirkpatrick said.

Beyond identifiable objects, there's a lot of new technology —

NASA JOINS HUNT



NASA is officially joining the hunt for UFOs. The space agency recently announced a new study that will recruit leading scientists to examine unidentified aerial phenomena — a subject that has long fascinated the public and recently gained high-level attention from Congress. The project will begin early this fall and last around nine months, focusing on identifying available data, how to gather more data in future, and how NASA can analyze the findings to try to move the needle on scientific understanding. While NASA probes and rovers scour the solar system for the fossils of ancient microbes, and its astronomers look for so-called "technosignatures" on distant planets for signs of intelligent civilizations, this is the first time the agency will investigate unexplained phenomena in Earth's skies. With its access to a broad range of scientific tools, NASA is well placed not just to demystify UFOs and deepen scientific understanding, but also to find ways to mitigate the phenomena, a key part of its mission to ensure the safety of aircraft, said the agency's chief scientist, Thomas Zurbuchen. Another overarching goal of NASA is to deepen credibility in this field of study.

such as future stealth bombers and stealth fighters, drones and hypersonic missiles being fielded by both the US and China — that could be mistaken for a UFO. Kirkpatrick said the new office has been coordinating with the Pentagon and the US intelligence community to get the signatures of US technology in order to rule out those aircraft or drones.



How do they look like



Humans could have more in common with our extra-terrestrial neighbours, than initially thought, new research suggests. The findings, led by scientists from the University of Oxford, revealed that aliens are potentially shaped by the same processes and mechanisms that shaped humans, such as natural selection. The new theory supports the argument that foreign life forms undergo natural selection, and are like us, evolving to be fitter and stronger over time. "In the study, we offer an alternative approach, which is to use evolutionary theory to make predictions that are independent of Earth's details. This is a useful approach, because theoretical predictions will apply to aliens that are silicon based, do not have DNA, and breathe nitrogen, for example," said Sam Levin, a researcher at the varsity.

The mystery of Oumuamua

Hawaiian for "scout"

The first interstellar asteroid known to enter our solar system

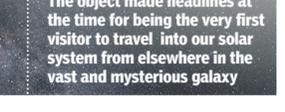
First viewed by telescopes in October 2017

However, the mystery is still unresolved, and with not much data to work upon, the origins of the cosmic visitor are unknown

Oumuamua - a long, cigar-shaped object that was spotted flying through our solar system five years ago - has finally made its way out

The object made headlines at the time for being the very first visitor to travel into our solar system from elsewhere in the vast and mysterious galaxy

Some researchers believed that about half a billion years ago, Oumuamua's parent planet was hit by an object, which sent it hurtling toward our solar system



WHY THERE IS NO SIGN OF ALIENS



In research aiming to understand how life might develop, the scientists realised new life would commonly die out due to runaway heating or cooling on their fledgling planets. About four billion years ago Earth, Venus and Mars may have all been habitable.

However, a billion years or so after formation, Venus turned into a hothouse and Mars froze into an icebox. Early microbial life on Venus and

Mars, if there was any, failed to stabilise the rapidly changing environment, said Associate Professor Charley Lineweaver from the ANU Planetary Science Institute.

"The mystery of why we haven't yet found signs of aliens may have less to do with the likelihood of the origin of life or intelligence and have more to do with the rarity of the rapid emergence of biological regulation of feedback cycles on planetary surfaces," said Dr Aditya Chopra from the Australian National University (ANU) Research School of Earth Sciences.

Wet, rocky planets, with the ingredients and energy sources required for life seem to be ubiquitous, however, as physicist Enrico Fermi pointed out in 1950, no signs of surviving extra-terrestrial life have been found. Today, scientists know that there are millions, perhaps billions of

planets in the universe that could sustain life. So, in the long history of everything, why hasn't any of this life made it far enough into space to shake hands (or claws ... or tentacles) with humans? It could be that the universe is just too big to traverse. It could be that the aliens are deliberately ignoring us. It could even be that every growing civilization is irrevocably doomed to destroy itself.

"One intriguing prediction of the Gaian Bottleneck model is that the vast majority of fossils in the universe will be from extinct microbial life, not from multicellular species such as dinosaurs or humanoids that take billions of years to evolve," said Lineweaver. The research was published in the journal Astrobiology.

EXPLANATIONS FOR UFO SIGHTINGS



- WEATHER BALLOONS:** Gas-filled balloons that measure conditions in the upper atmosphere to help forecasters.
- CLOUDS:** Saucer-shaped or "lenticular" clouds that form at high altitudes have been confused with UFOs.
- METEORS:** Space debris can create a spectacular lightshow when it burns through the Earth's atmosphere.
- CIVILIAN OR MILITARY AIRCRAFT:** Planes can look mysterious at night or in certain light conditions.
- BALL OR BEAD LIGHTNING:** Strange forms of lightning that are rarely seen and are the subject of scientific debate.
- SUNDOGS:** Also called "mock suns", these are bright spots on the solar halo that appear as balls of light in the sky.

of the day quote

We should leverage the prevailing policies and avail the ecosystem to position the country as a global powerhouse of software and hardware products by building made in India technology

DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT

In 2023 there will be a big focus on providing credit facilities to street vendors in a simplified manner to meet small credit requirements of ₹3,000-5,000

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | UNION IT AND TELECOM MINISTER

We are well on track in discussions with several other countries to look at bilateral trade agreements. We are looking at one or two multilateral trade agreements also where we believe we can get benefit

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Muted demand hits Tesla prices

Shanghai: Tesla cut prices in China for the second time in less than three months on Friday, fuelling forecasts of a wider price war amid weaker demand in the world's largest autos market. The US automaker also cut prices on its best-selling Model Y and Model 3 electric vehicles in Japan, South Korea and Australia in what a person with direct knowledge of the plan said was part of an effort to help stoke demand for output from its Shanghai factory, its single largest production hub. The shift is the first major move by Tesla since appointing its lead executive for China and Asia, Tom Zhu, to oversee global output and deliveries that have been at the heart of the company's recent challenges after falling short of its 2022 delivery target.

Titan reports 12% biz growth in Q3

New Delhi: Leading jewellery and watchmaker Titan has recorded 12 per cent growth in its standalone business in the December quarter, led by "healthy consumer demand" spurred by a vibrant festive season. "The positive consumer sentiment helped all categories clock healthy double-digit growth despite a high base in the same period of last year," as per the quarterly update by Titan for Q3 FY23. The Tata group firm also continued network expansion by adding 111 stores in October-December, taking the total number to 2,362 at the end of the quarter. During the quarter, Titan Jewellery, which generally contributes more than two-thirds of its revenue, achieved 11 per cent Y-O-Y growth.

Ather rolls out biggest upgrade

New Delhi: Homegrown electric vehicle company Ather Energy Saturday announced that it has rolled out 'AtherStack 5.0', the biggest upgrade to its software engine which drives the vehicle. "AtherStack 5.0 will be powering a brand new user interface (UI) for the dashboard in addition to launching vector maps powered by Google," the company said in a statement. Built on numerous interconnected layers of software, firmware, system intelligence and algorithms, AtherStack is the software engine that powers "every single user experience on the Ather 450X".



Air India is deeply concerned about the in-flight instances where customers have suffered due to the condemnable acts of their co-passengers on our aircraft. We regret and are pained about these experiences

CAMPBELL WILSON | CEO AND MD, AIR INDIA

SUSE EXPANDING FOOTPRINT

SUSE, a leading open source German software company, has said it is expanding its operations in India to support the company's growth in key markets. The company has already set up a centre of excellence in Bangalore at a time India and Germany are looking at boosting cooperation in the high-technology sector



DOWNTURN IN TECH WORLD

New Year heralds record tech layoffs

ALL EYES ARE NOW ON THE BIG TECH QUARTERLY RESULTS THAT WILL COME OUT AT THE END OF THIS MONTH, CLEARING THE AIR FURTHER ABOUT WHICH COMPANY IS SET TO REDUCE HEADCOUNT AS RECESSION LOOMS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 7: The New Year started on a super bad note for tech employees as e-commerce giant Amazon and enterprise-software company Salesforce together announced to lay off more than 25,000 workers, with others joining the ongoing layoff season amid recession fears.

To put this in perspective, tech companies globally sacked 28,096 workers in the January 1-January 5 period, according to layoff tracking website Layoffs.fyi.

In December last year, over 17,000 tech employees were shown the door (holiday season may be one of the reasons for lower numbers). The number of layoffs reached its nadir in November, which saw 51,489 tech workers lose their jobs. This shows 2023 may become the worst year in the history of the tech world.

Google is one big tech company that has avoided letting employees go to date. However, the search



TECH COMPANIES GLOBALLY SACKED 28,096 WORKERS IN THE JAN 1-5 THIS YEAR

GOOGLE LAYOFFS IN 2023 COULD SEE AS MANY AS 11,000 EMPLOYEES LOSE THEIR JOBS

IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, OVER 17,000 TECH EMPLOYEES WERE SHOWN THE DOOR

The next two years are probably going to be the most challenging. There is a real recession in large parts of the world and so the combination of pull forward and recession means we will have to adjust

SATYA NADELLA | MICROSOFT CEO

153,110 workers were given pink slips in 2022, led by firms like Meta, Twitter, Oracle, Nvidia, Snap, Uber, Spotify, Intel and Salesforce, among others

giant is expected to take harsh steps to reduce its headcount in early 2023.

Approximately 6 per cent of Google employees could be sacked over "not having enough impact," according to a report.

"A new performance management system could help Google managers push out thousands of underperforming employees starting early next year. Managers could

also use the ratings to avoid paying them bonuses and stock grants," according to the report.

Under the new system, managers have been asked to categorise 6 per cent of employees, or roughly 11,000 people, as low performers in terms of their impact for the business.

Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai aims to make Alphabet 20 per cent more efficient, hinting at job cuts. Pichai had said the company is "still investing in long-term projects like quantum computing. But it's important "to be smart, to be frugal, to be scrappy, to be more efficient".

According to reports that surfaced in October last year, tech giant Microsoft laid off nearly 1,000 employees across multiple divisions of the company. The cuts occurred across a variety of levels,

For Indian techies, is it end of American dream

As thousands of techies continue to lose jobs at Big Tech companies amid recession fears, most of them are finding it difficult to get jobs, as there is a freeze on new hirings at nearly every top firm, amid global macroeconomic conditions and recession fears.

In some cheer for those who have lost jobs in the ongoing funding winter and global macro-economic conditions, most laid-off tech employees landed new jobs within three months of starting their search for a new opening.

A ZipRecruiter survey revealed that nearly 79 per cent of terminated staff in the tech industry landed a new job within three months.

Nearly four in 10 previously laid off tech workers found jobs less than a month after they began searching, the survey found.

However, 2023 is set to become the worst year for tech layoffs and there may not be jobs available for those on H1-B visa anymore.

Several Indian-origin workers

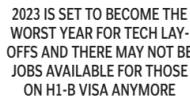
were left in the lurch in late 2022.

Now, with the latest layoffs announced by Amazon and Salesforce, and Google soon joining the list, several of H-1B visa holders will be left in a precarious situation. They will again have 60 days to find a new job or leave the US, ending their American Dream.

Meanwhile the application fees for employment-based visas, such as H1-B and L, are set to increase under a proposed US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) fee rule to recover operating costs and prevent case backlogs.

Under the new proposal, which will be subject to a 60-day comment period before it takes effect, the application fee for H-1B visas for high-skilled workers would jump by 70 per cent to \$780.

H-1B visa petitioners would also need to pay \$215 in pre-registration fees, up from the current \$10 fee. Linked in in late 2022 was flooded with stories of laid-off H-1B workers.



2023 IS SET TO BECOME THE WORST YEAR FOR TECH LAYOFFS AND THERE MAY NOT BE JOBS AVAILABLE FOR THOSE ON H1-B VISA ANYMORE

AMAZON, SALESFORCE, META, TWITTER, UBER AND OTHER TECH COMPANIES HAVE LAID OFF EMPLOYEES AS WELL AS PUT A TOTAL FREEZE ON NEW HIRINGS

teams, and parts of the world.

Meanwhile, for the first time since early 2021, Apple's market cap fell below \$2 trillion during

trading last week. The fall meant that in just one year, the tech

giant lost \$1 trillion in market capitalisation.

FPIs sold for 11 days in a row to the tune of ₹14,300 crore

IN DEC 2022, FPIs BOUGHT IN CAPITAL GOODS, FMCG AND FINANCIAL SERVICES. SELLING WAS MAINLY IN IT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 7: FPIs have turned sustained sellers in the Indian market and sold for 11 consecutive days taking the cumulative selling to ₹14,300 crore, says VK Vijayakumar, the Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

"And, the money taken out is being invested in the underperformers of last year like China and Europe, which are doing well now. Clearly, FPI money is chasing lower valuations by selling in overvalued markets like India," he added.

This is the important trend in near term FPI activity. If this trend continues it might weaken the Indian market further. However, the selling will not be indiscriminate.



"FPIs will sell stocks in which they are sitting on profits, like the banking segment. And this segment continues to be strong. Last year, too, selling by FPIs in banks turned out to be opportunities for domestic investors. Globally, the phenomenon of good economic news becoming bad news for markets might continue in the near term. The latest data from the US show increasing job creation and declining jobless claims," he added.

Share of Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) (which includes domestic Mutual Funds, Insurance Companies, Banks, Financial Institutions, Pension

Funds etc. as a whole) along with retail and High Net-worth Individual (HNI) investors reached an all time high of 24.03 per cent as September 30, 2022 from 23.54 per cent as June 30, 2022, on the back of net inflows from DIIs of ₹17,597 crore during the quarter, as per Primeinfobase, an initiative of Prime Database Group.

Meanwhile, despite net inflows from Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) of ₹48,570 crore during the quarter, FPI share declined further to a 10-year low of 19.03 per cent as September 30, 2022, down by 17 bps from 19.20 per cent as June 30, 2022.

UCO Bank celebrates 80th Foundation Day

Bhubaneswar: UCO Bank celebrated its 80th Foundation day January 6. On this occasion Zonal Office, Bhubaneswar conducted a walkathon. Goutam Patra, General Manager & Zonal Head; RC Sahoo, Deputy, General Manager; Subash Chandra Mohapatra, Deputy, General Manager, FI and other staff members of Zonal Office, Field Inspectorate, RTC, Bhubaneswar; staff members of city based branches participated in the walkathon including retired staff members. In the evening a cultural programme was conducted where staff and their family members took part.

Google challenges Android antitrust ruling in SC

REUTERS

New Delhi, Jan 7: Google has filed a legal challenge in India's Supreme Court to block a ruling by the country's antitrust watchdog that will force the US company to change how it markets its Android platform, court records showed Saturday.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) in October fined the Alphabet Inc unit \$161 million for exploiting its dominant position in the market for Android, which powers 97% of smartphones in

India and is a key growth region for the US giant.

The challenge comes after Google suffered a setback Wednesday when an appeals tribunal rejected its request to block the antitrust ruling. The company argued that implementation of the CCI's directives will hurt its long-standing business model and consumer interests.

Supreme Court records show Google filed a challenge against the tribunal ruling Saturday. A hearing date is yet to be fixed.

Sources earlier this week told

Reuters that Google considers a legal challenge as its last hope of blocking the ruling of the CCI, whose directives forcing the company to change its business model kick in Jan 19.

Google has been concerned about the Indian decision as the remedies ordered are seen as more sweeping than the European Commission's landmark 2018 ruling for imposing unlawful restrictions on Android mobile device makers. Google has challenged the record \$4.3 billion fine in that case.

CRACKDOWN BY CHINA

Jack Ma set to cede control of Ant Group

ANT'S \$37 BILLION IPO, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN THE WORLD'S LARGEST, WAS CANCELLED AT THE LAST MINUTE IN NOVEMBER 2020, LEADING TO SPECULATION THE CHINESE BILLIONAIRE WOULD HAVE TO CEDE CONTROL

REUTERS

Shanghai, Jan 7: Ant Group's founder Jack Ma will give up control of the Chinese fintech giant in an overhaul that seeks to draw a line under a regulatory crackdown that was triggered soon after its mammoth stock market debut was scuppered two years ago.

Ant's \$37 billion IPO, which would have been the world's largest, was cancelled at the last minute in November 2020, leading to a forced restructuring of the financial technology firm and speculation the

Chinese billionaire would have to cede control.

While some analysts have said a relinquishing of control could clear the way for the company to revive its IPO, the changes announced by the group Saturday, however, are likely to result in a further delay due to listing regulations.

China's domestic A-share market requires companies to wait three years after a change in control to list. The wait is two years on Shanghai's Nasdaq-style STAR market, and one year in Hong Kong

A former English teacher, Ma previously possessed more than 50% of voting rights at Ant but the changes will mean that his share falls to 6.2%, according to Reuters calculations.

Ma only owns a 10% stake in Ant, an affiliate of e-commerce giant Alibaba Group Holding Ltd, but has exercised control over the company through related entities, according to Ant's IPO prospectus filed with the exchanges in 2020.

Hangzhou Yunbo, an investment vehicle for Ma, had control over two other entities that own a combined 50.5% stake of Ant, the prospectus showed.

Ma's ceding of control

comes as Ant is nearing the completion of its two-year regulatory-driven restructuring, with Chinese authorities poised to impose a fine of more than \$1 billion on the firm, Reuters reported in November.

The expected penalty is part of Beijing's sweeping and unpre-



Jack Ma's departure from Ant Financial, a company he founded, shows the determination of the Chinese leadership to reduce the influence of large private investors. This trend will continue the erosion of the most productive parts of the Chinese economy

ANDREW COLLIER | MD, ORIENT CAPITAL RESEARCH

cedented crackdown on the country's technology titans over the past two years that has sliced hundreds of billions of dollars off their values and shrunk revenues and profits.

But Chinese authorities have in recent months softened their tone on the tech crackdown amid efforts to bolster a \$17-trillion economy that has been badly hurt by the Covid-19 pandemic.

"With the Chinese economy in a very febrile state, the government is looking to signal its commitment to growth, and the tech, private sectors are key to that as we know," said Duncan Clark, chairman of investment advisory firm BDA China.

"At least Ant investors can (now) have some timetable for an exit after a long period of uncertainty," said Clark, who is also an author of a book on Alibaba and Ma.

Ant's market listing in Hong Kong and Shanghai was derailed days after Ma publicly criticised regulators in a speech in October 2020. Since then, his sprawling empire has been under regulatory scrutiny and going through a restructuring.

Once outspoken, Ma has largely remained out of public view since the regulatory crackdown that has reined in the country's technology giants and did away with a laissez-faire approach that drove breakthrough growth.

As Chinese regulators frown on monopolies and unfair competition, Ant and Alibaba have been untangling their operations from each other and independently seeking new business.

Surya ton lifts India Neeraj aims to breach 90m mark



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rajkot, Jan 7: Suryakumar Yadav (112 n o, 51b, 7x4, 9x6) displayed his unmatched superiority yet again in the shortest format with a scintillating hundred as India outplayed Sri Lanka by 91 runs in the third T20I to secure a memorable series win here Saturday.

Surya played a sensational knock for his third T20I century and fired India to an imposing 228/5, making the job easier for his bowlers. He toyed with the Sri Lankan bowlers throughout, hitting fours and maximums at will and in his trademark manner all across the ground to notch his third century in the format.

The Indian bowlers then dominated as they skittled Sri Lanka for 137 in 16.4 overs to claim the series 2-1. While the first two matches were neck and neck, India dominated the

proceeding with both ball and bat in the decider, which is bound to boost the youngsters' morale.

Chasing the stiff target, Pathum Nissanka (15) survived a first-ball appeal as he chose to review a leg before call off a Hardik Pandya (2/30) delivery.

The two openers looked up for the challenge as they shared a brisk 44-run stand. While Nissanka hit Arshdeep Singh (3/20) for a couple of fours in the second over, he slammed consecutive sixes off Pandya in the next over.

With the pacers going for runs, Pandya introduced spin in the form of Axar Patel (1/19) and the left-arm spinner took the wicket of Kusal Mendis (23). Arshdeep Singh then dismissed Nissanka in the next over while Pandya got Avishka Fernando (1).

The wily Yuzvendra Chahal (2/30)

was the next bowler to claim a wicket in the form of Charith Asalanka (19) courtesy Shivam Mavi, who ran to his left from deep cover to complete an excellent catch.

The ever-increasing required run rate troubled the visitors as they started finding Indian fielders and giving away their wickets. Umran Malik (2/31) impressed with his raw pace again but India's affair with extras continued as the bowlers bowled a no ball and 11 wides, including four by Arshdeep.

Earlier, after completing his fifty in 26 balls, Surya took only 19 deliveries to reach the 100-run mark. He ended the innings in style, hitting a six and a four off Chamika Karunaratne (1/52) in the last over.

Shubman Gill (46, 36b, 2x4, 3x6), who failed to go beyond single digit scores in the previous two matches, was cautious as he opened his ac-

count after playing nine dots with a six, followed by a four off Dilshan Madushanka (2/55) in the third over.

Rahul Tripathi played a 16-ball 35-run (5x4, 2x6) knock after Ishan Kishan (1) was sent back in the first over. As soon as spin was introduced, Tripathi targeted Mahesh Theekshana (0/48). Tripathi assumed the role of the aggressor as he pummelled Karunaratne (1/52) for twin sixes before perishing off a short ball, caught at short third.

India collected 53/2 in the powerplay and while Gill continued to score at a slow pace, Surya was at his effortless best. The world's No.1 batter in the format looked like a man from another planet. He reached his half century by sending the ball to the boundary.

With Surya firing, Gill tried to put up the ante at the other end as well. He hit Wanindu Hasaranga (1/36) for a six but as the batter moved down the wicket to dispatch the ball for another boundary, a leg-break got the better of him to put an end to a 111-run partnership.

Gill's wicket saw a change in momentum as India lost skipper Pandya (4) and all-rounder Deepak Hooda (4) in quick succession. Meanwhile, it was business as usual for Surya as he repeatedly timed the ball to perfection. He hit nine sixes and seven fours in his blazing knock. Towards the end, he found an able ally in Axar (21 n o, 9b, 4x4) as the duo took India over the 220-run mark.

BRIEF SCORES: India 228/5 (Suryakumar Yadav 112 n o, Shubman Gill 46, Rahul Tripathi 35; Dilshan Madushanka 2/55) beat Sri Lanka 137 (Kusal Mendis 23, Dasun Shanaka 23; Arshdeep Singh 3/20, Hardik Pandya 2/30, Yuzvendra Chahal 2/30, Umran Malik 2/31) by 91 runs.

New Delhi, Jan 7: His "amazing athleticism" has left even the iconic Michael Johnson in awe recently and India's Neeraj Chopra has now set himself a target in the new year: breach the 90-metre mark with his javelin.

After the historic gold in Tokyo, the 24-year-old Olympic champion javelin thrower has continued to raise expectations with a silver at the World Championships, before adding another feather in his cap by winning the Diamond League Finals gold. However, despite his superlative shows, the magical 90m mark continues to elude him.

"In this new year, I hope I will put an end to this question," Chopra told reporters in a video interaction from England where he's doing off-season training.

He came agonisingly close with his 89.94m throw when he finished second in the Stockholm leg of the prestigious Diamond League. In hindsight, Chopra thinks he could have achieved the mark in Stockholm.

"I could have done that if I landed my foot a few centimetres ahead. Yes, it's just a matter of six centimeters - but a magical mark for an athlete. Whenever you talk about a top athlete we all say like this he's done 90m.

"But I'm not bothered about the pressure of expectations. It will happen when it has to. It could have happened last year or the year before, but maybe God has kept a perfect time and place for that."

He's not bogged down by the pressure of expectations and said he always took them positively. "I don't think much about the expectations. Yes, you have to handle both your own and others' expectations. But when I'm competing, my mind goes blank.



"It's about giving it your all, your 100 percent thinking that you have prepared for just this day. And somewhere these expectations from the people who love me play a positive part."

The penultimate year before the Paris Olympics has a host of important events lined up, including the rescheduled Asian Games in Hangzhou, and Chopra said they are yet to take a call on when to start preparations.

"Basically, I've got three big events this year - the World Championships, Asian Games and the Diamond League Final. About when to start, I have not thought about it. I will plan with the coach assessing the situation in China. If it happens as per schedule in October, we may start the season a bit late so that we can stretch it till the Asian Games."

Keeping that in mind, Chopra is just focused on strength building exercises in the indoor training in England and when they shift their training base to South Africa he would switch to javelin throws. Recently, four-time Olympic gold

medal winner Johnson posted a video of Chopra and praised his athleticism, saying he's "a javelin thrower with the movements of a sprinter/jumper".

Asked about Johnson's praise, Chopra said, "I can never do sprint. Their speed is at different level. Maybe he liked my techniques and my exercises. And my response was just in a funny way.

"But yes, if I ever bump into him, I will sprint a bit and show him a bit of my skills. As for me, I'm just focused on improving on my javelin throws."

An injured Chopra could not defend his gold at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games owing to an injury but his compatriots, such as long jumper Murali Sreeshankar and steeplechaser Avinash Sable, clinched historic silver while competing among the world's top pool.

Chopra believes Indian athletics is on the rise and hopes to see more glorious days ahead. "In world athletics, our men's field ranking is 9, it's a good thing. I think we will do better as athletes."

Surya 'wants to learn Brevis' no-look shots'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 7: India batting sensation Suryakumar Yadav is in awe of Dewald Brevis for his power-hitting abilities, saying he wants to learn the "no-look" shots from the South African when they share the Mumbai Indians dressing room in the upcoming IPL.

"I am just trying to copy you (Brevis) sometimes. The way you bat. You have to teach me one thing, how do you that no-look shot, no-look six? I just want to learn that from you," Surya said in a one-on-one interaction with Brevis posted on MI TV.

Brevis responded: "I would be an honour, but I would love to learn lots of shots from you as well. The funny thing is my no-look shot just happens, it's weird but I don't know it just happens."

Apart from sharing the dressing room with Surya in the IPL, Brevis will also represent MI Cape

Town in the inaugural edition of the upcoming SA20 in South Africa. Surya, the World No.1 T20 batter, lauded the young Brevis for his knock of 162 off 57 balls during a CSA T20 Challenge game.

"Last time I saw you smashed 160-165 runs off 50-55 balls in a T20 game. So now in ODIs, if you get to bat around 100 balls, are you going to score a triple hundred," Surya said.

To which Brevis replied: "It was like another normal day for me. It (that knock) just happened. I didn't even realise what I was doing at that moment, everything just happened in the moment, at one point I even told the non-striker that I think I'll try and hit every ball for six.

"I don't know it just happened it was a special innings. But I must say that what you have achieved is like incredible, congratulations on being the No.1 T20I batsman."

SANIA TO QUIT AT DUBAI MEET



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: Veteran Indian tennis player Sania Mirza has decided to draw curtains on her illustrious career at next month's Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championship. The former doubles No.1 has made this announcement to WTA.

Sania initially intended to hang up her racquet at the end of last season, but an elbow injury ruled her out of the US Open and forced her to stop playing in 2022 as early as August.

The 36-year-old Sania, who is married to Pakistan cricketer Shoaib Malik, has been living in Dubai for more than a decade, and will look to bid adieu to the game at her home base.

"I was going to stop right after the WTA Finals, because we were going to make the WTA Finals, but I tore my tendon in my elbow right before US Open so I had to pull out of everything," Sania told wtatennis.com.

"And honestly, the person that I am, I like to do things on my own terms. So I don't want to be forced out by injury. So I've been training."

Sania, a six-time major champion - three in doubles and three in mixed doubles - has signed up to compete in this month's Australian Open alongside Kazakhstan's Anna Danilina.

She has been suffering from a lingering calf problem but is hoping that the injury won't hamper her farewell plans. "The plan is to try and retire in Dubai during the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships," she said.

The Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships, a WTA 1000 event, begins February 19.

New Delhi, Jan 7: Former Arsenal manager and world governing body FIFA's current chief of global football development, Arsene Wenger will play a role in Indian football's grassroots programmes and talent development.

During the World Cup in Doha, All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Kalyan Chaubey had held deliberations with Wenger and other senior officials of the FIFA and Asian Football Confederation (AFC) regarding youth development projects in India.

"We have had extensive discussions with FIFA development team. Arsene Wenger is head of FIFA Task Force and they will help us in grassroots programme. Coaches from Wenger's team would come," Chaubey said after unveiling his 'Vision 2047' roadmap.

"About football budget cut, we have got lot of help from government and ministry and we have never been turned down when we requested for something. In future too, we will expect whatever we deserve in terms of help, government will give us," he added.

The roadmap hopes that in the country's centenary year of independence, India will also emerge as a new powerhouse of Asian football.

Developed in conjunction with all stakeholders of Indian football, the roadmap has also sought and incorporated inputs from the AFC and FIFA. The salient ambitions of the roadmap are to see India among the top four footballing nations in Asia, host one of the top leagues in the continent, and create a vibrant footballing ecosystem.

"Vision 2047" has been broken down, for diligent implementation, into six four-year strategic plans. The first of these will look to cover the period till 2026.

"With a shared vision and by sharing responsibility, we can implement targeted programmes to address key areas identified in this roadmap and help build capacity for the football ecosystem," Chaubey said.

1st goal is to reach semis, says Henning

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: Two-time champions Germany's first goal is to reach the semifinals of the upcoming FIH men's Hockey World Cup but their ultimate aim is to win their third world title, said head coach Andre Henning Saturday.

Germany, who have won the title twice in the past in 2002 and 2006, finished fifth in the last edition of the tournament here in 2018. But this time around, Henning said they are eager to go much deeper into the tournament.

"We had a strong year as we won 13 FIH Pro League matches and were between 5th and 6th in the world rankings. So, we are looking forward to playing in the tournament and if we reach the semis that would be a big success. However, our ultimate aim is to win the World Cup trophy," he said after arriving here Saturday.

The World Cup will be jointly hosted by Bhubaneswar and Rourkela from January 13 to 29. Germany are in Pool B alongside Japan, Belgium and Korea. The Germans will open their campaign against Japan January 14 at the Kalinga Stadium here.

"Our players did a lot of things while preparing for the tournament and are confident in their abilities. We worked on our defence and got better as a group. The players have gotten better tactically as well," Henning said.

Man United advance in FA Cup WENGER TO AID AIFF IN GRASSROOTS PROGRAMMES



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, Jan 7: Marcus Rashford scored his fifth goal in as many games after creating two others to help Manchester United beat Everton 3-1 and reach the fourth round of the FA Cup.

Rashford set up Antony's early opener Friday and saw a second-half cross turned into his own net by Conor Coady, scorer of Everton's

first time since 2019 when Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was in caretaker charge.

For Everton, there was consolation in a better performance after losing to Brighton 4-1 midweek left it 18th in the Premier League, the pressure firmly on manager Frank Lampard.

Erik ten Hag named a strong side for his first taste of the FA Cup, but notably selected Luke Shaw at center back while Lisandro Martinez - without a start since Argentina's World Cup group game against Mexico on November 26 - joined Harry Maguire and Victor Lindelof on the bench.

After the horror show of Tuesday night, Lampard reverted to the 3-5-2 system used to frustrate Manchester City last weekend.

The 9,000 travelling Everton fans arrived in Manchester still fuming over the latest capitulation, the first chant of "Sack the board" coming 15 minutes before kickoff. Their mood did not improve much.

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"About football budget cut, we have got lot of help from government and ministry and we have never been turned down when we requested for something. In future too, we will expect whatever we deserve in terms of help, government will give us," he added.

The roadmap hopes that in the country's centenary year of independence, India will also emerge as a new powerhouse of Asian football.

Developed in conjunction with all stakeholders of Indian football, the roadmap has also sought and incorporated inputs from the AFC and FIFA. The salient ambitions of the roadmap are to see India among the top four footballing nations in Asia, host one of the top leagues in the continent, and create a vibrant footballing ecosystem.

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He said the aim is to revive "the glory days of Indian football as it was in the 1950s and 60s and becoming a powerhouse of Asian football once again."

One of the key aspects of the roadmap is to ensure increased access to competition and games for players playing their trade in the country. By 2047, the federation wants to ensure players will be able to play at least 55 matches across different competitions every season.

"Transformation will begin at home through a reform of the organisational culture," secretary general Shaji Prabhakaran said, refer-

ring to a need for better governance of the game across the country.

"A restructuring exercise will be carried out to streamline current operations and develop a team which adopts the industry's best practices and is transparent in its dealings."

"By 2036, the centenary of the federation," Prabhakaran said, "India will be among the top seven countries in Asia, and a strong contender to qualify for the World Cup on merit."

The federation recognises that growth in modern sport requires a business outlook. The federation will dedicate an entire division - business and marketing - to develop, cultivate and invite investment and partnerships in Indian football.

The AIFF's 2026 target is to reach 35 million children through grassroots programmes and implement village grassroot programmes across 100 villages throughout India. The flagship grassroots project will also aim to register 1 million registered players and provide football education to 25 million children through 'Football for Schools'.