



### PIA'S PICK

Actor Pia Bajpee says she doesn't want to be part of something vulgar and tasteless

LEISURE P2



### POLICE TERROR ROCKS US

Authorities release video footage showing Tyre Nichols being brutally beaten by five police officers as he screamed for his mother

INTERNATIONAL P10



### INDIA LOOK FOR GLORY

Shafali Verma-led India lock horns with England for the inaugural ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup crown

SPORTS P12

## Renowned writer Hussain Rabi passes away at 74



PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** Renowned writer and former president of Odisha Sahitya Akademi Hussain Rabi Gandhi passed away Saturday while undergoing treatment at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. He was 74.

Hussain primarily wrote in the Odia language. For his significant contributions to the field of Odia poetry, former President Giani Zail Singh presented him with the Secular India Harmony Award in 1993, and he was also awarded the Gangadhar Meher Kabita Award in 2015.

Hussain was one of the founding members of Biju Janata Dal (BJD). Taking to Twitter, Naveen said Hussain was a veteran leader long associated with Biju Babu and later with BJD. "He has contributed immensely in strengthening the BJD and promoted the values of Biju Babu and the party as well," said the CM.

Gandhi was associated with legendary leader Biju Patnaik and served the BJD as its General Secretary from 1998 to 2005. He was born as Chowdhury Fazal Haq Mohammad April 23, 1948, in Mufti Bagh of Jajpur district. He did his master's degree in history from Gangadhar Meher College in Sambalpur and then LLB and practised law for a brief period in Orissa High Court. **MORE P3**

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



People have stopped cursing each other. Now, all they say is 'may Hindenburg bless you!'

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
MAX	32.0°C	32.0°C
MIN	18.5°C	18.0°C
Humidity	79%	85%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Mainly clearsky	

# IAF jets crash; pilot killed

DEFENCE EXPERTS SAY IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE RUSSIAN-DESIGNED SUKHOI-30MKI JET AND THE FRENCH MIRAGE-2000 HAD A MID-AIR COLLISION, BUT THERE WAS NO CONFIRMATION FROM THE IAF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Morena/Bharatpur, Jan 28:** In a rare and tragic accident, two frontline combat aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF) crashed during a training mission in Madhya Pradesh's Morena district Saturday, resulting in the death of a wing commander while two other pilots ejected safely.

Defence experts said it is probable that the Russian-designed Sukhoi-30MKI jet and the French Mirage-2000 had a mid-air collision, but there was no official comment on it from the IAF.

The deceased pilot of the Mirage aircraft was identified as Wing Commander Hanumanth Rao Sarathi, officials said, adding that a high-level probe has been ordered into the accident.

The two pilots of the Sukhoi aircraft managed to eject and were taken to a military hospital, they said. The Mirage-2000, which is a single-seater jet, was flown by Sarathi.

"Two fighter aircraft of IAF were involved in an accident near Gwalior today morning. The air-



15 MISHAPS IN 5 YEARS

Deeply anguished by the loss of brave air warrior, Wg Cdr Hanumanth Rao Sarathi, who suffered fatal injuries during an accident near Gwalior. My deepest condolences to his bereaved family. We stand by his family in this difficult hour

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

Dismayed to hear about the unfortunate aircraft crash involving two fighter jets of Indian Air Force. Salutations to the pilot who made the supreme sacrifice. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones. Wishing speedy recovery to the injured pilots

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

craft were on routine operational flying training mission," the IAF said in a brief statement.

"One of the three pilots involved sustained fatal injuries. An inquiry has been ordered to determine the cause of the accident," it said.

The accident came nearly four years after two Hawk aircraft of the IAF's aerobatic team, Surya Kiran, crashed in Bengaluru after a mid-air collision.

Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari briefed

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on the crash.

"Deeply anguished by the loss of brave air warrior, Wg Cdr Hanumanth Rao Sarathi, who suffered fatal injuries during an accident near Gwalior. My deepest



### FLYING COFFINS!

- 31 PEOPLE lost their lives in accidents involving 15 military helicopters between March 2017 and December 2021
- TWO IAF PILOTS were killed in July 2022 when a twin-seater Mig-21 aircraft crashed in Rajasthan
- TWO ARMY PILOTS were killed as ALH-WSI crashed into the massive Ranjit Sagar reservoir near Pathankot August 3, 2021

condolences to his bereaved family. We stand by his family in this difficult hour," the defence minister said on Twitter. The officials said the recovery of the flight data recorders of the two aircraft would throw some light on what led to the crash. **Continued on P4**

## BJD to raise free rice, housing issues in Parl

Chief Minister asks all the party MPs to lay emphasis on passage of Women's Reservation Bill during the Budget Session

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) would raise its demand for continuation of the 5-kg free rice scheme to the poor under public distribution system (PDS) during the upcoming Budget Session of the Parliament.

This was revealed during the BJD parliamentary party meeting headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here Saturday, to prepare strategy for the Budget Session beginning January 31.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister asked the party MPs "to give a strong response to the false propaganda made by BJP leaders at various times hampering development of the state".

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, BJD MP Pinaki Misra said, "Discontinuation of the 5-kg free rice by the Centre has affected the people from the most marginalised section of our society. As the Centre will spend a very minimal amount of about ₹8,000 to ₹9,000 crore on the scheme, we will demand for resumption of the scheme."

He also said that the scheme should be immediately restarted as its discontinuation will adversely affect the food security of crores of poor people not only in Odisha but also across the country. It would have an adverse impact on paddy procurement too, Misra asserted.

The Chief Minister has asked all the party MPs to lay emphasis on passage of Women's Reservation Bill in the Parliament. He has directed to create a pressure group in Delhi including MPs from other parties like TMC and DMK, who have supported the move of BJD, to put pressure on the Centre for introduction of the Bill, the BJD leader said.

The BJD has also decided to raise non-sanction of around 4 lakh houses for Odisha under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). "Due to political reasons, the Centre has cut down about 4 lakh PMAY houses for Odisha," he alleged. The party would also raise the demand for inclusion of 169 communities in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) list of Odisha.

Besides, issues including special category status for Odisha, revision of coal royalty, special assistance for construction of disaster resilient infrastructure, inclusion of 'Ahimsa' (non-violence) in the Preamble of the Constitution and implementation of recommendations of Swaminathan Commission report to enhance farmers' income will be raised by the BJD in the Parliament.



FAIR TIME: Naga Sadhus from different parts of the country have congregated at Khandagiri in Bhubaneswar as the 'Magha Saptami Mela' kicked off, Saturday, following two-year Covid hiatus

## Mughal Gardens is now 'Amrit Udyan'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 28:** Rashtrapati Bhawan's famed Mughal Gardens will now be known as 'Amrit Udyan', an official statement issued Saturday said. The resplendent gardens are open to the public once a year and people can visit from January 31 this time.

President Droupadi Murmu will grace the opening of the gardens of Rashtrapati Bhawan - Udyan Utsav 2023 - Sunday, the statement



said. "On the occasion of the celebrations of 75 years of Independence as 'Azadi ka Amrit

Mahotsav', the President of India is pleased to give a common name to the Rashtrapati Bhawan gardens as 'Amrit Udyan'," Navika Gupta, Deputy Press Secretary to the President, said in the statement.

The government had last year renamed Delhi's iconic Rajpath as "Kartavya Path". The renaming of the stretch and other institutions is in line with the Centre's effort to remove any trace of colonial mindset, it has maintained. **Continued on P4**

## 5 killed, 7 hurt in road mishaps



Agitation in Keonjhar after the mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar/Rayagada, Jan 28:** At least five people including four farmers were killed and seven others sustained injuries in two separate road accidents in Keonjhar and Rayagada districts, Saturday. In Keonjhar, the incident took place near Basantpur when the farmers were returning home from market. The auto-rickshaw in which they were travelling in collided with a pick-up van, police said.

While three persons died on the spot, another man succumbed to his injuries at Keonjhar district headquarters hospital here, police said.

The deceased were identified as Jeevan Naik, Naveen Naik, Radhu Naik and Prahlad Naik. The driver of the van fled the spot. Police have seized the vehicle and started a probe.

In the second incident, a woman was killed while two others were injured after an auto-rickshaw had a head-on collision with a truck at Tala Sankesh under Sadar block in Rayagada district, Saturday. The deceased was identified as Tulasi Miniaka, 22, and the critically injured are two occupants of the auto-rickshaw.

# NASA's mega moon rocket all set for crewed mission

Through Artemis, NASA will land the first woman and the first person of colour on the surface of the moon, paving way for a long-term lunar presence

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Washington, Jan 28:** NASA's mega moon rocket has cleared all performance tests and engineers are now taking a closer look at the Space Launch System (SLS) performance to prepare for the first crewed Artemis missions.

NASA continues to evaluate data and learn more about the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket's debut performance during the agency's Artemis I launch November 16 this year.

"NASA's Space Launch System rocket has laid the foundation for the Artemis Generation and the future of spaceflight in deep space," said John Honeycutt, SLS

Programme manager. "There is engineering and an art to successfully building and launching a rocket, and the analysis on the SLS rocket's inaugural flight puts NASA and its partners in a good position to power missions for Artemis II and beyond," he said.

The preliminary post-flight data indicated that all SLS systems performed exceptionally and that the designs are ready to support a crewed flight on Artemis II.

The core stage of NASA's Space Launch System (SLS) rocket has more than 1,000 sensors and 45 miles of cabling.

The Artemis I flight test was the only way to gather real data on how



The core stage of NASA's Space Launch System rocket has more than 1,000 sensors and 45 miles of cabling

The Artemis I flight test was the only way to gather real data on how the rocket performed during events like booster separation

the rocket performed during events like booster separation.

Artemis I is critical in building confidence in this rocket to send humanity back to the Moon," said

John Blevins, SLS chief engineer. "The SLS team will use what we learn from this flight test to im-

prove future flights of the rocket, and we are already taking what we've learned about operations and assembly and applying it to streamline future missions," he added.

Cameras and sensors also allowed teams to monitor how the rocket performed during its in-space manoeuvres. Engineers also monitored the extreme temperatures and sounds the rocket experienced just after liftoff.

Through Artemis, NASA will land the first woman and the first person of colour on the surface of the Moon, paving the way for a long-term lunar presence and serving as a stepping stone for astronauts on the way to Mars.

# leisure



## HARRY STYLES SUFFERS WARDROBE MALFUNCTION BEFORE ANISTON

Singer Harry Styles was left red-faced after suffering a wardrobe malfunction while performing in front of his first celebrity crush Jennifer Aniston. The 28-year-old singer split his trousers right down the middle during his Los Angeles concert on Thursday night.

## VIOLA DAVIS SLAMS 'SHAME FACTOR' OF AGEING IN HOLLYWOOD

The 57-year-old Hollywood actress has hit out at the "societal pressure" placed on women in the "image-conscious" movie business to maintain their youthful looks. She said, "I'm probably not the best person to ask about my age, I love my age. But yes, the industry is very image-conscious, and then you have the societal pressure on people."



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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

#### ARIES

Today nostalgia tinges your mood, and this reflects in your dealings at work, where others see your softer side. You even spend carefully, seeming to be wiser regarding your savings. Ganesh sees profits for cashiers and money lenders.

#### TAURUS

Today is a perfect day to relax and enjoy your health, feels Ganesh. However, precaution should be the buzzword while dealing in money matters. You may develop a new interest in jewellers, artists, bankers and orators. Dinner will be laced with all the deserving delicacies of a hearty meal.

#### GEMINI

It is a good day for you to participate in cultural events and group activities, predicts Ganesh. You are likely to be an important part of some convention or joint venture, but don't get too bogged down by it. In the evening, you may take a fancy to fine arts, such as drawing or classical music.

#### CANCER

You are known for your ability to set the ball rolling. Once you set your mind to do something, it is generally considered done by your peers. Today, you are eyeing a few accomplishments on the monetary front. Most part of your day will go in dealing with financial transactions, and importing and exporting goods.

#### LEO

The desire and passion for learning is a life-long quest, says Ganesh. It may be that you love to learn, but dissipating the knowledge you have acquired is equally important. So on this day, it is through teaching that you shall learn just how fascinating and frustrating children can be.

#### VIRGO

Money matters will hit a major snag today, says Ganesh. Let your mind overrule your heart. Take extreme care of personal belongings, legal responsibilities and new ventures with long-term effects in mind.

#### LIBRA

Ganesh says today will be the start of a new love story for you and you will be able to spend time with someone very dear to you. You will be more conscious today about your appearance and may even go to the beauty parlor. Do remember the saying - beauty lies in the eye of the beholder. Ganesh says that you will be equally conscious of your dressing style and clothes and may go in for a new wardrobe today.

#### SCORPIO

You may be bored with the same, old routine. In short, you feel like you are stuck in a rut and desperately need to do something exciting. Hanging out with friends of opposite sex may bring some respite to your restless soul.

#### SAGITTARIUS

Your leadership qualities are likely to bag compliments today. As you follow law and order and also make others follow it. You leave no stone unturned to get the work done, and that too systematically. However, make sure you also give them space and freedom to express themselves. It would earn you brownie points, says Ganesh.

#### CAPRICORN

The journey from defeat to success is driven by optimism. You will be very optimistic today - about your work, future and everything that can lead you to success, says Ganesh. You will also be very careful while dealing with day-to-day work, and will capitalise on every opportunity that can get you a step closer to your goals. Determination and good luck is all you need to realise your dreams; you will have both today.

#### AQUARIUS

You have already fulfilled your short-term objectives. But you are ambitious, and straightaway begin setting your long-term goals. But all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, says Ganesh. Leisure time with family will rejuvenate and prepare you for a better stint at work.

#### PISCES

The focus will be on children today, says Ganesh. While they will be the cause of an unfair share of your headache, you will be surprised at their ability to step up to the occasion, with just a little amount of coaching.

Kolkata: Actress Pia Bajpiee, who is known for her role in the film *Laal Rang*, firmly believes that the theatre release of films is unmatched.

While speaking to the media, she said that watching films on the silver screen transforms the content into a larger-than-life experience. There is a big difference between digital and theatrical releases. She can never be happy if her films

## Pia reveals her definition of good work

are directly released on OTT. But, in today's scenario, things are very unpredictable and actors

and actresses have very less say in this aspect. Also, till date, it's difficult for her to decode a hit or a flop on digital platforms.

Bajpiee further revealed her definition of good work and said she doesn't want to be part of something vulgar and tasteless. She has said no to quite several projects due to unnecessary skin show. The actress can't take up things that make her uncomfortable doing and watching them on screen.

Bajpiee is currently waiting for the release of her next film *Lost*, which opened at the Chicago Film Festival.

AGENCIES



## Anil Kapoor has an appetite for current and latest: Tillotama

Mumbai: Actress Tillotama Shome, who is gearing up for the release of her streaming show *The Night Manager*, has shared an interesting anecdote about actor Anil Kapoor. The actress said that Anil loves to engage with new actors and actresses.

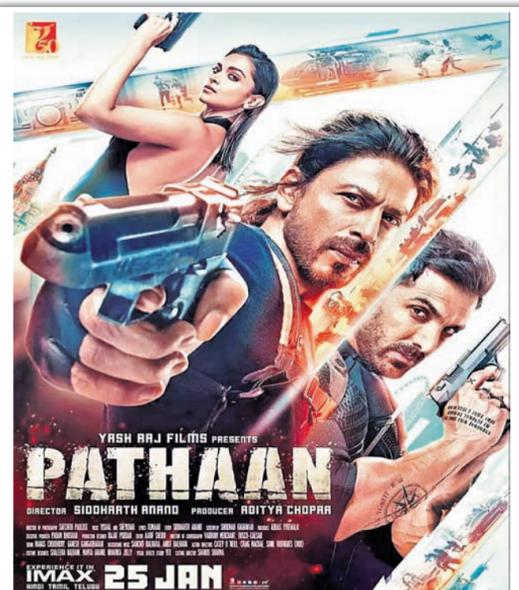
She likes to keep himself updated on trends and current affairs.

Elaborating on the same, Tillotama said: "Anil Kapoor is not just physically youthful but has an appetite to engage with new actors. His curiosity is humbling. He can make you really nervous with the amount of homework he does. And that makes you work harder".

She

further mentioned, "Saswata da and I had no scenes in this sadly, but he is the warmest. I had such a wonderful time working with Anand Potdhuke. Our directors Sandeep and Priyanka went above and beyond to keep everyone comfortable".

*The Night Manager*, which is a Hindi-language adaptation of John Le Carre's eponymous novel, has been produced by The Ink Factory and Banijay Asia, the series is created and directed by Sandeep Modi and second director Priyanka Ghosh.



## Pathaan making waves at box office

Mumbai: Superstar Shah Rukh Khan's film *Pathaan*, directed by Siddharth Anand, has recorded the biggest opening weekend in the history of Hindi cinema, on day 3, *Pathaan*, which released on January 25th, collected Rs 38 crore net in Hindi format, while dubbed formats earned Rs 1.25 crore net. The total India collection on Day 2 was Rs 39.25 crore net (47 crore gross). Meanwhile, overseas collection was also astronomical as it collected Rs 43 crore gross (\$5.3M). The total worldwide collection on Day 3 was a whopping Rs 90 crore worldwide gross box office.

The total India GBOC after 3 days stands at 201 crore gross and total overseas collection is at Rs 112 crore gross.

Akshay Widhani, CEO of Yash Raj Films, said: "It is incredible that *Pathaan* has registered the biggest all-time opening in India and overseas, considering the collections of the film in the first 3 days of release which is dubbed as the opening weekend for any film".

"*Pathaan* has been blessed by Indians across the globe and what is happening with this film is unprecedented and historic".

### 12TH IFFB: DAY 6

## Manipuri film *Our Home* showcases life's stillness

Bhubaneswar: *Our Home*, A pragmatic work of Manipuri filmmaker Romi is a stunning meditation on life around Loktak Lake in Manipur and the displacement of inhabitants by the government. Screened Saturday, on the sixth day of Indian Film Festival Bhubaneswar (IFFB) here at Odissi Research Centre, the film showcases the stillness of life at Loktak Lake.

In the post screening interaction with scholar Sneha Krishnan, the director said, "The subtlety and the stillness is what I wanted to capture and translate onto the



screen. We are living in a very community-based society, in a sharing economy".

The film depicts how the rapid

globalisation and capitalism impacts the many levels of this community-based living. On the other hand, globalisation or the development process cannot be stopped at any cost.

Other highlights of the penultimate day of the IFFB '23 include the screening of Satyajit Ray's *Pratidwandi* (Bengali), Ritesh Sharma's *Jhini Bhini Chadariya* (Hindi), which is also followed by a post-screening interaction with the director Ritesh Sharma, followed by Aditya Vikram Sengupta's acclaimed *Once Upon A Time In Calcutta*.

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

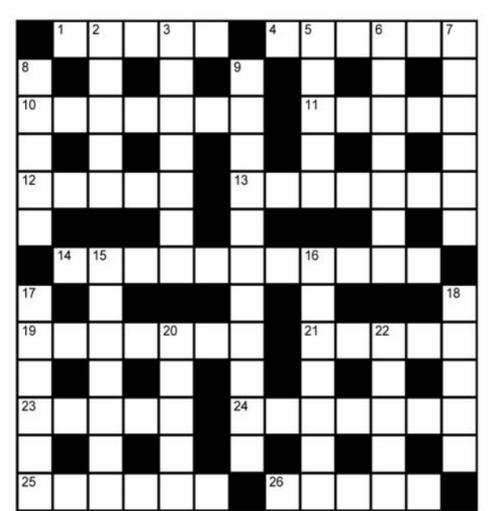


### BREVITY



### FUN post

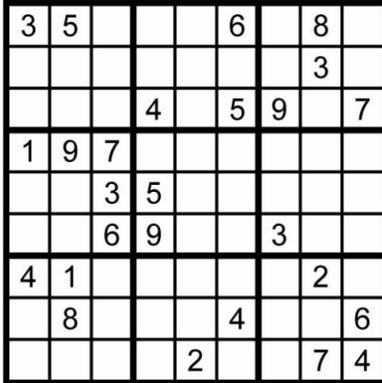
### CROSSWORD



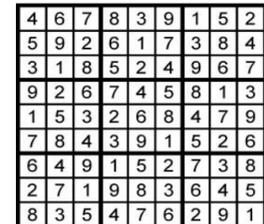
- Across
- 1 Bakery item
  - 4 Misbehaves (4,2)
  - 10 Invade in great numbers
  - 11 Whiskers
  - 12 Chores
  - 13 Medical dressing
  - 14 Legendary ocean creatures (3,8)
  - 19 Displays ostentatiously
  - 21 Abruptness
  - 23 Fragrance
  - 24 Vivacious
  - 25 Domestic fowl
  - 26 Stair parts
  - 5 Stateroom
  - 6 Caulking, e.g.
  - 7 Stuffed, like a cushion
  - 8 Ship targets
  - 9 Not quite noticeable
  - 15 Beguile
  - 16 Demonstrate
  - 17 Travail
  - 18 Heavy and strong
  - 20 Nanny
  - 22 Astute
- Down
- 2 Tall woody grasses
  - 3 Pinches

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



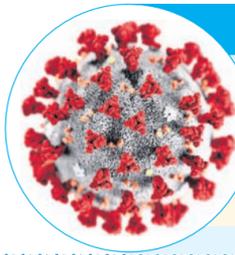
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## STAGE CRAFT

Artists during a stage play on the second day of Theatre Movements' silver jubilee celebration at KVK Auditorium in Cuttack, Saturday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	67,46,43,524	64,67,65,670	67,57,380
India	4,46,82,530	4,41,49,949	5,30,739
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

## Srimandir Parikrama Project to be ready in 3 months: CS



"Currently, there're 28 'pindis' at Swargadwar where pyres can be lit for cremating equal number of bodies at a time. It is sufficient for now as 70-80 bodies are cremated daily. Now, there are facilities like a restaurant, washing room for those who come accompanying the body and have to wait," said Mahapatra.

Soon after, he reviewed the progress of the Srimandir Parikrama Project.

The Parikrama project will be completed within three months. The work is being executed expeditiously, Mahapatra said.

He added, "Khondalite stone is being used for cladding of all structures that are being installed and floor is also being paved with Khondalite stone slabs."

Mahapatra was accompanied by Puri Collector and District Magistrate Samarth Verma and other senior officials during his visit to various projects for review.

PNN & AGENCIES

**Puri, Jan 28:** Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra Saturday reviewed the progress of the Srimandir Parikrama Project and exuded confidence that it will be completed within three months.

Mahapatra reviewed progress of various development and beautification works during his visit to the Holy City here.

The Chief Secretary initially visited Swargadwar and reviewed the progress made in the renovation of the 'gateway to heaven'.

## CENTRE FOR JUDICIAL ARCHIVES & COURT EMPLOYEES' RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX

FOUNDATION STONE LAYING CEREMONY



**INFRA BOOST:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik lays the foundation stone of Centre for Judicial Archives and High Court Employees' Residential Complex at CDA Sector - 1 in Cuttack, Saturday. Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar, Justice Sanjeeb Kumar Panigrahi and former Supreme Court Judge Vineet Saran are seen

OP PHOTO

# Thousands take holy dip in Chandrabhaga

AGENCIES

**Puri, Jan 28:** Thousands of devotees took a holy dip in the Chandrabhaga, around three-kilometre from the Konark Sun Temple, on the auspicious occasion of Magha Saptami Saturday.

On Friday-Saturday midnight, the Tribeniswar, Dakshineswar and Ishaneswar - the three Shiva deities from three different villages were brought in a procession to the Chandrabhaga mela site.

Bhog (food offerings to the gods) was offered and the pilgrims feasted on Sukhua (dry sea fish) curry and rice which they prepared and cooked in earthen pots.

As per tradition, after consuming the food, they smash the pots and wait for their turn to take the dip in the holy pond.

Popular belief goes that taking a bath in the holy pond cures all skin diseases.

The devotees offer prayers to the rising Sun God. The visibility of the rising sun was delayed as the horizon was covered with dense fog.



## MAGHA SAPTAMI

As per mythology prince Samba, the son of Lord Krishna, because of a curse was suffering from leprosy. Lord advised him to go to Arka Kshetra and worship Sun. After years of penance, Samba was cured on this day by taking bath in Chandrabhaga river and offered prayers to the Sun God.

However, the river has become nearly extinct. The administration has dredged a portion of the riverbed converting it into a large

pond wherein devotees took bath.

As many as 30 platoons of police force were deployed for smooth conduct of the mela while the entire site and approach roads were illuminated.

Barricades were installed to conduct devotees in queue for the bath.

District Magistrate Samarth Verma and Superintendent of Police Kanwar Vishal Singh had made elaborate arrangements for lakhs of devotees.

## Nobel laureate's praise for state's 'Drink from Tap'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** Economics Nobel laureate Michael Kremer appreciated the state government's efforts in providing 24x7 quality drinking water to every household particularly the urban poor.

A five-member team led by Kremer visited Puri and Bhubaneswar last Thursday and Friday to understand the efficacy of Odisha's flagship programme 'Drink from Tap Mission'.

The team also interacted with Housing and Urban Development department secretary G Mathi Vathanan to gain more insights into the Drink from Tap Mission and other such transformative initiatives taken up by the department like JAGA Mission.

Michael Robert Kremer is an American development economist who is University Professor in Economics and Public Policy at the University of Chicago.

According to sources, the department secretary discussed with Kremer areas of collaboration that will help strengthen the strategic partnership between University of Chicago, USA, and government of Odisha in the long run.

# In a first, a folk song wins 3 Padma awards in 5 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** 'Rangabati', the famous Sambalpuri folk song which has gained popularity across the country, has won three Padma Shri awards in a span of five years, a feat which is the first of its kind in India.

The prestigious award has been bestowed on the writer and singers, both male and female, of the four decades old romantic song.

Veteran vocalist Krishna Patel won the Padma award this year. Earlier, its male singer Jitendra Haripal and writer Mitrabhanu Gauntia were conferred the prize in 2017 and 2020 respectively.

Taking to the Twitter, senior BJP leader and Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for recognizing the folk music artists, particularly those involved in the making of the 'Rangabati' number.

"The Prime Minister has honoured the song by announcing its

## RANGABATI

writer Mitrabhanu Gauntia's village Bilung as Rangabati Bilung," Pradhan said in a statement.

The Centre, he said, has honoured the sentiments of the people, their art, culture and music.

'Rangabati' is the combination of two words 'ranga', which means colour and 'bati' a young woman. The folk song narrates the romantic feelings of two lovers in a forested village.

It was first recorded by All India Radio in the mid-1970s. Kolkata-based Indian Record Manufacturing Company Limited (INRECO), re-recorded the song in 1976. However, the disc release was delayed due to a dispute and it was finally done in 1978-79.

The song gained popularity in the 1970s and 1980s. Playing or singing it has become a part of community events and often features in marriage processions and immersion of Goddess Durga idols in the state.

"The song continues to dominate

the music world for the last four decades and still attracts the young and old," Pradhan said.

So much so that the song was played in Odisha's tableau in the Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi in 2007.

Overwhelmed by the success of 'Rangabati', Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik felicitated Haripal thereafter.

The same song was aired during an international cricket match at Barabati Stadium in Cuttack in 2010. In June 2012, the state Culture department even named a three-day festival of dance and music of western Odisha as 'Rangabati Utsav'.

'Rangabati' has been recreated in different languages and even used in a Telugu movie. Its popularity is also seen West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

The song also featured in Hindi movie 'Kaun Kitne Pani Mein'.

There have, however, been controversies when different singers used different tunes for the song.



**PACKAGING MATTERS:** Dignitaries, including MSME Principal Secretary Saswat Mishra, during the inauguration of a national seminar on packaging of food products at a hotel in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

OP PHOTO

## 'Enough rare earth minerals to fuel green energy shift'

The world has enough rare earth minerals and other critical raw materials to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy to produce electricity and limit global warming, according to a new study that counters concerns about the supply of such minerals.

A team of scientists looked at the materials - many not often mined heavily in the past - and 20 different power sources. They calculated supplies and pollution from mining if green power surged to meet global goals to cut heat-trapping carbon emissions from fossil fuel.

Much more mining is needed, but there are enough minerals to go around and drilling for them will not significantly worsen warming, the study in Friday's scientific journal Joule concluded.

"Decarbonization is going to be big and messy, but at the same time



A piece of bastnasite ore, which contains rare earth elements

we can do it," said study co-author Zeke Hausfather, a climate scientist at the tech company Stripe and Berkeley Earth. "I'm not worried we're going to run out of these materials."

Much of the global concern about raw materials for decarbonization has to do with batteries

and transportation, especially electric cars that rely on lithium for batteries. This study doesn't look at that.

Looking at mineral demands for batteries is much more complicated than for electric power and that's what the team will do next, Hausfather said. The power sector is still about one-third to half of the resource issue, he said.

A lot depends on how fast the world switches to green energy.

There will be short supplies. For example, dysprosium is a mineral used for magnets in wind turbines and a big push for cleaner electricity would require three times as much dysprosium as currently produced, the paper said. But there's more than 12 times as much dysprosium in reserves than would be needed in that clean energy push.

AP

## Hussain contributed immensely in strengthening BJD: Naveen

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** Hussain Rabi Gandhi has contributed immensely in strengthening the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and promoted the values of Biju Babu, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said as he condoled the demise of Gandhi, an eminent writer and BJD leader, Saturday.

Taking to Twitter, Naveen said Hussain was a veteran leader long associated with Biju Babu and later with BJD. "He has contributed immensely in strengthening the BJD and promoted the values of Biju Babu and the party as well," said the CM.

According to sources, Hussain passed away following protracted illness at SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH) in Cuttack at the age of 74.

Gandhi was associated with legendary leader Biju Patnaik and served the BJD as its General Secretary from 1998 to 2005.

Hussain was born as Chowdhury Fazal e Haq Mohammad April 23, 1948, in Mufti Bagh, Haldigadia village of Jajpur district into the ruling family of Tarakot.

He did his master's degree in history from Gangadhar Meher College in Sambalpur and then LLB and practised law for a brief period in Orissa High Court.

Hussain's political career started as early as in his youth when he was elected as the president of the students union at Gangadhar Meher College. He also served as the president of the students union at LR Law College at Sambalpur.

During the 1969 historic students strike in Odisha, he was ap-

pointed the chairman of the Western Odisha Students' Action Committee.

He had conducted and participated in various strikes all over Odisha and was imprisoned several times for the same.

Hussain also wrote poems to mobilise the students which earned him the titles of 'Rabi' and Gandhi.

In 1985, he contested the state Assembly elections from Korai constituency under the Jagrat Odisha party formed by former Odisha chief minister Nandini Satpathy.

He also served as the president of the Jan Morcha's regional youth branch in Odisha but later joined

the Janata Dal in 1988 and was appointed the General Secretary of the party by Patnaik.

Hussain was appointed as the chairman of Odisha State Leather Corporation Limited by Biju Patnaik. In December 1997, the Janta Dal was divided and a new political party called

the BJD was formed. Hussain was one among the founding members of the party.

In January 1998, he was appointed the General Secretary of the BJD by party chief Naveen Patnaik. Gandhi was active in politics as well as in Odia literary scene. He was associated with the movement to revive Revolutionary Humanism in Odia poetry.

Gandhi served as the Vice-President (2005-2008) and then the President of Odisha Sahitya Akademi.

People from various walks of life condoled Hussain's demise.



## NHRC seeks ATR on woman cricketer's death

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought an Action Taken Report (ATR) from Puri district Collector, Superintendent of Police and Cuttack Deputy Commissioner of Police on the suspicious death of Rajashree Swain, a woman cricketer.

Adjudicating a petition filed by rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy, NHRC asked the authorities to submit the report within four weeks.

Rajashree's body was found hanging from a tree in a dense forest under Gurudijhatia police limits in Cuttack January 13.

Rajashree went missing from a selection camp in Bajrakabati road of Cuttack January 11 after she did not find a place in the list of selected candidates for the senior women one-day cricket match to be held at Puducherry.

Rajashree, who belonged to Bhugaon village under Ramachandi police limits in Puri, was among the 25 players who joined the camp organised by the Odisha Cricket Association (OCA) for the selection of players. Rajashree's family members held the OCA authorities responsible for her death.

Tripathy contended that the victim's family was leading a miserable life as they have been denied the benefits of the state's welfare schemes. The rights activist pointed out that the sequence of events raises serious questions of human rights.

Tripathy requested the NHRC to ensure an independent and impartial investigation of the case and ensure the benefits of the welfare schemes be given to the bereaved family with heavy compensation.

# NGT respite for state on waste management

THE STATE CHIEF SECRETARY ACCEPTED THAT THE STATE IS GENERATING 642.373 MLD OF SEWAGE OF WHICH 128 MLD IS BEING TREATED EVERY DAY



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** The National Green Tribunal (NGT), for the time being, has refrained from slapping a fine of Rs 1,138 crore on the state government for improper management of solid and liquid waste. The green panel noted that the state government had submitted an undertaking, saying Rs 1,152 crore will soon be credited to a separate ring-fenced account for the management of solid and liquid waste. A bench comprising chairperson Justice AK Goel noted that there was a gap of 514 million litres daily (MLD) in sewage generation and treatment, besides the legacy waste of 37 lakh metric tonnes. The bench, also comprising ju-

dicial member Justice Arun Kumar Tyagi and expert members A Senthil Vel and Afroz Ahmad, said it was the responsibility and absolute liability of the state government to have a comprehensive time-bound plan with tied-up resources to control pollution. "Long future dates, breach of which has taken place frequently in the past without accountability, is not a convincing solution. It is a poor substitute for compliance...", the bench said. It is the mindset and determination to act on a mission mode that can produce results, it added. "We hope that in the light of the interaction with the chief secretary, the state of Odisha will take further measures in the matter by an innovative approach and stringent

monitoring, ensuring that 37 lakh tonnes of legacy waste and 514 million litres per day liquid waste generation and treatment are bridged at the earliest, shortening the proposed timelines, adopting alternative or interim measures to the extent and wherever found viable," the bench said. It will also be open to the state to plan to raise the requisite funds from generators or contributors of waste or by any other legal means, it added. "In normal circumstances, the state would be liable to pay a compensation of about Rs 1,138 crore at the scale of compensation fixed in other states. However, it is stated that in Odisha, a higher amount stands allocated and Rs 1,152 crore will soon be credited to a separate ring-fenced account for the purpose," the tribunal said. Taking note of the state government's undertaking, the green panel said, "We refrain from levying environmental compensation on the state of Odisha for the time being. The ring-fenced account may be kept as a 'non-lapsable' fund." It directed the chief secretary of the state to file six monthly progress reports. The NGT is monitoring the compliance with the Municipal Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 and other environmental issues by states and Union territories.



**PRIORITISING HEALTH:** Guests attending the National Homoeopathy Seminar and 5th Alumni Meet of Dr Abhin Chandra Homeopathic Medical College and Hospital at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

# Khandagiri Mela attracts massive crowd

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** The renowned Khandagiri Mela kicked off in the Capital city after a hiatus of two years Saturday. Hundreds of Naga Sadhus from different parts of the country have congregated at Khandagiri to indulge in intense 'Sadhana' over next few days. Expecting a mammoth turn out, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has undertaken all necessary measures to keep the mela trouble free. The BMC has engaged four different teams in the fields of sanitation, tax

collection, health and engineering and personnel of each team are expected to be present in the fair round-the-clock. Speaking to Orissa POST, south-west zone deputy commissioner Rabi Narayan Jethy said, "We are fully prepared to ensure smooth conduct of the fair. The 308 temporary stalls have been allotted to vendors. The BMC has erected a control room from which all units of BMC as well as other authorities will operate. One ambulance has been stationed there; few others have been kept at standby to tackle any health emergency arising during the fair."



The BMC will be engaged round the clock in garbage collection and its proper disposal. Every temporary stall has been strictly ordered to follow the guidelines issued by BMC earlier regarding waste management failing which they are to be heavily penalized. In view of massive crowd convergence, six platoons of police

force have been deployed, two platoons of which have been engaged in traffic regulations. A number of CCTVs has been installed at various spots to counter any anti social activity in the fair. "We are expecting 35,000-40,000 footfalls during peak hours. 5 separate parking places have been identified to avoid traffic congestion. Proper layouts and signage have been designed to effectively guide people to those parking spots. A temporary camp has been set up near Khandagiri police station to effectively regulate the traffic," said Swastik Panda Assistant Commissioner of Police, Traffic.

Continued from P1

## IAF jets crash; pilot...

Morena Collector Ankit Asthana said the debris of both the aircraft fell in the Pahargarh area of the district. Some debris also fell in Rajasthan's Bharatpur, which borders Madhya Pradesh, he added. Two pilots survived the crash, Asthana said, adding that the body parts of another were found in the Pahargarh area. Earlier in the day, Bharatpur Superintendent of Police Shyam Singh had said an aircraft crashed in an open field in the Uchain area. Locals were the first to reach the site where the debris from one of the aircraft fell, police in Bharatpur had said. According to an aviation expert, it was the first Mirage 2000 as well as Sukhoi-30MKI that the IAF lost in a mid-air collision. The SU-30MKI is a twin-seater combat jet, while the Mirage 2000, manufactured by French aerospace major Dassault Aviation, is a single-seater aircraft. Both the jets took off from the Gwalior Air Force station. The base has squadrons of both Sukhoi-30MKIs and the Mirage 2000 jets. Aviation historian Anchit Gupta tweeted that mid-air collisions (MAC) are not that uncommon and at least 64 aircraft and 39 pilots have been lost in MAC in the last more than 70 years in India. He said the country lost 11 Mig-21 aircraft in MAC, while the numbers for the Hunter and Jaguar aircraft are eight and five respectively. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, in a tweet, said: "The news of the crash of Sukhoi-30 and Mirage-2000 aircraft of the Air Force near Kolaras in Morena is very sad." "I have instructed the local administration to cooperate with the

Air Force in quick rescue and relief work. I pray to God that the pilots of the planes are safe," he added. Two pilots of the IAF were killed in July last year when their twin-seater Mig-21 trainer aircraft crashed during a training sortie near Rajasthan's Barmer. In March last year, Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhat told the Rajya Sabha that 42 defence personnel were killed in accidents involving aircraft and helicopters of the three services in the last five years. In October last year, a weapon system integrated version of an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) of the Indian Army crashed near Tuting in Arunachal Pradesh. Another ALH-WSI had crashed into the massive Ranjit Sagar reservoir, near Pathankot, August 3, 2021, killing two Army pilots. In October 2019, a Dhruv helicopter of the Indian Army carrying the then Chief of the Northern Command, Lieutenant General Ranbir Singh, and other senior officers had crash landed in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch. Between March 2017 and December 2021, 31 people lost their lives in accidents involving 15 military helicopters that included four ALH, four Cheetah, two ALH (WS), three Mi-17V5, an Mi-17 and a Chetak, according to official records. The deceased in the 15 accidents included 14 people in a crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu December 8, 2021. Then Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika and 12 armed forces personnel were killed in the crash. Seven helicopters each from the Army and the IAF were involved in accidents in the said period, while the number from the Navy was one.

## Mughal Gardens is now...

"Rashtrapati Bhawan is home to a rich variety of gardens. Originally, they included East Lawn, Central Lawn, Long Garden and Circular Garden. During the term of former Presidents Dr APJ Abdul Kalam and Ram Nath Kovind, more gardens were developed, namely Herbal-I, Herbal-II, Tactile Garden, Bonsai Garden and Arogya

Vanam," the statement issued Saturday said. In this year's Udyan Utsav, among several other attractions, visitors will be able to see specially cultivated tulips of 12 unique varieties which are expected to bloom in phases. This time the gardens (Herbal Garden, Bonsai Garden, Central Lawn, Long Garden and Circular Garden) will be open for about two months.



**LIT FEST:** Dignitaries at Bhubaneswar Literature Festival organised by Bhubaneswar Sahitya Samaj Trust at Sookhana Bhawan, Saturday

## SAI INT'L HOSTS ONLINE DEBATE COMPETITION

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** To intensively engage young learners in instilling contemporary skills of critical thinking, communication and collaboration, SAI International School conducted the 3rd edition of the SAI Global Debate, Saturday. The online debate competition received overwhelming responses from over 45 schools across 8 countries such as Dubai, South Africa, Morocco, Ghana, Namibia, Oman (Muscat), Pakistan and India. The debating forum laid special focus on fostering awareness and allowed in-depth discussions on the subjects of Political Border Security and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the opening ceremony, speaker Paul Ellis, Head of Teaching and Learning, Cambridge Assessment International Education greeted the national and international participants by saying, "Debates are not arguments, they are more like creative conversations." Paul shared some light to help participants in



making balanced arguments by focusing on facts, anecdotes, rhetorical questions, emotive language and statistics. "We never lose, we either win or we learn," he added. While addressing the event Silpi Sahoo, chairperson SAI International Education Group said, "It is heartening to see such a large and enthusiastic group of young adults engaged in global issues and coming together in finding solutions to the problems through constructive debate". Adrian Johnson, renowned storyteller, former poet laureate Birmingham, UK graced the closing ceremony of the Global Debate.

## KIMS organizes workshop on Kangaroo Mother Care

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** Doctors, paramedics and frontline health workers recently met at Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) and elaborated on how Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) could help bring down neonatal mortality rate (NMR) in India and how there could be more sensitization among the people involved in health sector. State Health and Family Welfare department, National Health Mission, UNICEF, Norway India Partnership Initiative (NIPI), Canadian Neonatal Network (CNN), KMC Foundation, National Neonatology Forum, Indian Academy of Paediatrics and AIIMS Bhubaneswar were the organizers of the event. At the conference, experts including doctors from Paediatrics, gynecology, nursing and front-line health workers participated from West Bengal, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu,



Uttar Pradesh and Odisha, which was organised under the leadership of KIMS neonatologist Santosh Kumar Panda. "As the kangaroo infant stays connected to its mother and goes out of the pouch after its growth period is over; through KMC low birth weight (LBW, birth weight of neonate less than 2500gram) babies can be kept to the chest of mothers to keep them warm and provision of breast milk can be feasible for the infant helping its survival," said Santosh.



## Robotic-assisted knee surgery at SUM hosp

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** Robot-assisted knee replacement surgery which ensures greater precision and better result and is seen as the future of joint replacement, was conducted for the first time in state at the Institute of Medical Sciences and SUM Hospital here Saturday. The surgery was conducted under the supervision of Shekhar Srivastav, one of India's leading experts in knee replacement. Srivastav, head of the department of orthopedics at Sant Parman and Hospital, New Delhi, said, "Accuracy and balancing of soft tissue around the knee are important and robotic surgery is making it possible." "But technology has enabled the experts to go for robotic-assisted surgery as it ensures consistency, accuracy and balance and

in which the soft tissue damage is less and the patient can return to normal life much faster after the procedure," he said. Robot-assisted surgery ensures that implant alignment is better, causes less pain and leads to faster healing, said Srivastav adding that young people need joint replacement in greater numbers now compared to earlier. Medical superintendent of the hospital Pusparaj Samantansinhar said that the facility greatly minimises human error. Aniruddha Das, head of department of orthopedics said the patient had been suffering for 4 years.

**FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS**  
Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

# Order to waive off market fee on millers sparks row



FILE PHOTO

It is alleged that the district administration is showing undue favour to the cotton millers from outside of the state despite the latter making huge profit from the procurement

price more than the MSP has been proved false during an inquiry. The middlemen and agents are purchasing cotton from the farmers and selling it at a higher price.

A cotton farmer alleged that the middlemen and agents are actually reaping huge profit while the millers are trying to get benefit from the sale by hoodwinking the district administration with false claims and figures.

The farmers are not going to get any benefit if the market fee is waived off on the millers but rather the district administration will face revenue loss.

A cotton miller during a discussion with this correspondent said that market fee has been also waived off in cotton producing areas like Kalahandi, Bolangir and Nuapada districts. The Collector was apprised of the steps taken by these districts in waiving off the market fee following which he directed the RMCs to waive off the market fee in Rayagada district. However, the order is yet to be implemented.

RMC officials said that the cotton procurement is yet to start in Rayagada district. Local intelligentsia said that as per OAPM Act-1956, the traders and millers are liable to pay market fee. However, they questioned the wisdom behind the waiver of market fee and incurring an annual revenue loss of Rs 4 crore.

After the order, the RMC officials have been left without any work.

When contacted, food supplies and consumer minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak said that he will make a review of the circumstances that led to the waiver of market fee in Rayagada district.

side the state earn huge profits.

It is alleged that the district administration is showing undue favour to the cotton millers from outside of the state despite the latter making huge profit from the procurement.

According to the letter issued to the Rayagada and Gunupur RMCs, the cotton millers had submitted a memorandum to the district Collector January 5. The millers had stated that currently the price of cotton has remained more than that of the minimum support price (MSP) as fixed by the state government while cotton production declined due to unfavourable climatic conditions this year.

Taking cognizance of this letter, the residential office of the district Collector directed the RMCs to waive off the market fee on cotton from the millers during procurement. They informed in the letter that the state government has fixed the MSP at Rs 6,380 per quintal of cotton while farmers sell cotton to the traders and middlemen at Rs 1000 more than the MSP which results in loss for the millers.

The RMCs have no role to play as traders and middlemen are directly purchasing the cotton from the farmers for which they pleaded to waive off the market fee in their memorandum.

On the other hand, farmers have alleged that the fee waiver is not going to benefit them. The claim that the farmers are selling cotton at a



SPLENDID PERFORMANCE: Girls performed a dance at the Grandparents' Day of Kendriya Vidyalaya No-1 in Sambalpur, Saturday

OP PHOTO

## Missing vice-chairperson rescued from Sonepur

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bonai, Jan 28:** Police rescued the vice chairperson of Bonai Block in Sundergarh district, Friday who had been missing since January 4 from Sonepur in Subarnapur district.

Tikayatpali police had launched a search operation for the missing block VC after her husband

Prasanna Behera lodged a complaint at the police station. In his complaint, he had alleged that his wife was kidnapped.

On receipt of the complaint, police registered a case and launched a search operation to trace missing vice-chairperson of Bonai block.

Police, after the rescue, brought back the missing VC Binati Behera to Bonai. Police tracked her mobile phone and nabbed a contractor Janmejaya Sahu of Telkoi area



bile phone and nabbed a contractor Janmejaya Sahu of Telkoi area

in Keonjhar district. Later, assisted by Sahu, police rescued Behera from Sonepur.

They were taken for questioning where the woman stated to have gone with Janmejaya on her own volition and will stay with him in coming days.

However, police refused to speak on the issue and share any details about the case.

## Maoists oppose sale of MFP of 6 districts to Hyderabad agency

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Malkangiri, Jan 28:** Maoists have come out against the state government's alleged bid for sale of minor forest produce (MFP) of six districts through a Hyderabad based agency ISB, a report said.

The matter came to the fore after Andhra-Odisha Maoist outfit published a press notification in this regard. The press release has been issued by Ganesh, secretary of Andhra-Odisha Maoist outfit, Friday.

In the press release, Ganesh has alleged that the state government is handing over the land and rights of tribals to the capitalists on the pretext of the development of tribals. He has warned to punish those local people acting as agents of the corporate sector.

The state government organised Odisha Conclave at Bhubaneswar December 3 where it had announced to handover the sale rights of minor forest produce of six districts to a Hyderabad based private agency ISB. The state government has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with ISB where it will purchase minor forest produce like Tola, Mohua and among others through women self-help groups and sale it to others in af-



REPRESENTATIVE PICTURE

filiation with Mission Shakti.

These minor forest produce will be purchased from six tribal dominated districts like Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Koraput, Rayagada, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar in the state.

This move has drawn severe flak from the leaders and cadres of Andhra-Odisha special border zonal committee.

When contacted, Malkangiri SP Nitish Wadhvani said he has no knowledge about such outfits or any press release issued by them.

## Couple hang themselves in Bargarh

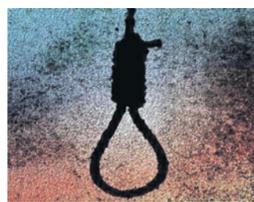
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Sambalpur, Jan 28:** Two months after the murder of their only daughter, a couple in Bargarh district was found hanging in their house, police said Saturday.

The bodies of Raghu Bhu, 55, and Pratishtha Bhu, 50, were found hanging in their house and sent for autopsy. A case of unnatural death has been registered by police and investigation into the incident is underway, an officer said.

According to preliminary investigation, it appears that the couple could not overcome the death of their only daughter and took the extreme step. However, the matter is under investigation,

**TWO MONTHS AFTER DAUGHTER'S MURDER**



the officer said.

The only daughter of the couple Sasmitha Bhu, 24 was murdered on December 2 last year by a youth of the village when she had gone

to collect water from the tube-well. The youth was arrested and is now in jail now, the officer said.

Inspector-in-charge (IC) of the Bhatli police station, Ranjit Naik said, the couple was in deep grief after the death of their daughter. They were hardly coming out of their house and even stopped talking to their neighbours.

My elder brother Raghu and sister-in-law were always crying after the death of their daughter. They didn't open the door this morning. And when we opened the door, we found them dead, said the deceased Raghu's younger brother Narendra Bhu. The family members decided to donate the eyes of the couple.

## Detailed procedure needed for declaring MNIs: EAC-PM

The AMASR Act, 1958 provides for the declaration and conservation of ancient and historical monuments of national importance (MNIs)

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Jan 28:** The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) has suggested that the government should come up with substantive criteria and a detailed procedure for declaring monuments to be of national importance.

In a report titled 'Monuments of National Importance - Urgent Need for Rationalisation', the EAC-PM pointed out that expenditure on the conservation and maintenance of monuments of national importance is inadequate.

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) should come up with substantive criteria and a detailed procedure for declaring monuments to be of national importance.

It also should publish a book of notifications with detailed information about the provenance of all Monuments of National Importance (MNIs), the report said.

India currently has 3,695 MNIs that are under the protection of ASI. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (AMASR Act), 1958, (amended in 2010) provides for the declaration and conservation of ancient and his-



FILE PHOTO

torical monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance.

The report prepared by EAC-PM member Sanjeev Sanyal has also recommended that the proceeds from these monuments should vest with the implementing bodies.

As per the report, a large number of entries in the present list of MNIs were identified as such before 1947 under colonial-era laws.

No attempts were made to comprehensively review the list after independence, it added.

EAC-PM also recommended that minor monuments and antiquities protected as monuments should be denotified as MNI and monuments with local importance should be transferred to respective states for protection.

Allocation of funds for the protection of MNI should be increased, the report said, adding that at the same time, revenue streams such as tickets,

events, fees and other sources should be leveraged more proactively.

The EAC-PM is of the view that an effort should be made to restore geographical balance in the list of MNI.

Along with rationalising the existing list, other monuments should be added to the list based on well-defined criteria and procedures, it said.

According to the report, around 75 British cemeteries or graves are considered as 'monuments of national importance'.

Also, various monuments declared as MNI are of local importance and do not necessarily have national significance per se, the report said, adding that 24 monuments of national importance are untraceable.

The report pointed out that over 60 per cent of MNI are located in just 5 states - Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

While the city of Delhi alone has 173 MNI, states like Telangana(8),

- A large number of entries in the present list of MNIs were identified as such before 1947 under colonial-era laws

- Around 75 British cemeteries or graves are considered as 'monuments of national importance'

- Over 60 per cent of MNI are located in just 5 states - Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra

- While the city of Delhi alone has 173 MNIs, states like Telangana (8), Bihar (70), and Odisha (80) have disproportionately fewer MNIs

- Various monuments declared as MNIs are of local importance and do not necessarily have national significance per se. 24 monuments of national importance are untraceable

Bihar (70), and Odisha (80) have disproportionately fewer MNI, it noted.

As per the report, the government had allocated Rs 428 crore for the upkeep and protection of 3,695 monuments, which is approximately Rs 11 lakh per MNI.

This is too little for a culturally rich and civilisational state like India. Therefore, there is an urgent need to exponentially increase the allocation of funds for the protection and upkeep of monuments, the EAC-PM said.

**Union Bank of India**  
MID CORPORATE BRANCH  
Bajrakabati Road, Cuttack-753001, Tel No.: 0671-2318615/  
2319018, Email: ubin0902110@unionbankofindia.bank

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas you, the below mentioned Locker holders have committed default in payment of Locker fees and contact to the branch despite various notices given by the bank on the registered address with it. You are therefore called upon to contact the branch immediately within 7 days from date of this notice and repay the dues of the bank immediately.

Whereas, you have not cleared the dues and despite diligent and repeated follow up for recovery of dues you are still default. Consequently all your rights over the hired locker stands forfeited and Bank was entitled for possession of the locker allotted to you.

Whereas, in exercise of said right of repossession Bank took possession of your said locker and decided to break open the at your cost and consequences on 24.02.2023 at 11.00 AM.

You are hereby called upon to pay the dues within 15 days hereof.  
Please take notice that in the event of your failure to pay the above costs and take custody of the articles within 15 days hereof. Bank shall put on sale such portion of the articles / properties as may seem necessary to satisfy the above dues, costs as well as the cost of sale. Further please take notice that the remaining articles after auction sales, if any shall kept in safe place at annual rent double the present rent that you are liable to pay.

Sl. No.	Locker No.	Locker Rent Due from	Name & Address of Customers / Locker Holders
1.	925	01.08.2019	Mr. Ram Bhagat Khetan, S/o.: Mr. Radha Khetan and Mrs. Parwati Modi, W/o.: Mr. Aswini Kumar Modi, C/o.: Loknath Jugti, Bakharabad, Cuttack - 753003
2.	937	01.08.2017	Mr. Himanshu Kumar Mohapatra and Mrs. Sumitra Dash, At: Plot No.: 140/907, Srujan Institute of Mobile, Behind Govt. Bus Stand, Bikash Nagar, Arunodaya Market, Cuttack - 753012

Place : Cuttack, Date: 27.01.2023 Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India

### STATE SELECTION BOARD ODISHA POLICE, CUTTACK

Advertisement No. 04/SSB Date: 29.01.2023

#### Recruitment of 4790 Constables (Civil) in Odisha Police CORRIGENDUM

No. D:- Pursuant to Judgement dtd. 24.01.2023 of the Hon'ble High Court, Odisha in WP(C) No.341/2023, No. 314/2023 & No. 880/2023, raising the upper age limit by four (04) years for the ongoing recruitment for the post of Constables (Civil) in Odisha Police, the Advertisement No. 02/SSB dtd.30.12.2022 shall stand modified to provide for age relaxation of four (04) years for all categories of candidates as indicated in the table below:-

Sl. No.	Category	Maximum age as on 01.01.2022 prescribed earlier	Revised maximum age as on 01.1.2022
1	Un-reserved	23	27
2	SEBC, SC, ST & Women candidates of all category	28	32
3	Home Guards	28	32
4	Group-D	43	47

Interested candidates may apply in online mode by visiting the websites [www.odishapolice.gov.in](http://www.odishapolice.gov.in) and [www.opssb.nic.in](http://www.opssb.nic.in). The websites will remain open for submission of application from 30.01.2023 (09.00 A.M.) to 10.02.2023 (11.59 P.M.). The candidates who have applied earlier for the post need not apply again.

All other terms and conditions of eligibility for the post shall remain unchanged.

Sd./- Chairman  
State Selection Board  
Odisha Police, Cuttack

Reserve Police Lines  
Buxibazaar, Cuttack- 753001  
E-mail-opssb.odipol@nic.in  
OIPR-12028/11/0004/2223

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

# TECHNOFIXING OUR PROBLEMS



Roughly seven million people are already dying each year from air pollution, which is largely caused by the burning of fossil fuels

more vocal about it. As a result, public discourse remains a caricature. With a more nuanced debate, the public would appreciate that not all technological solutions are created equal. Induction stoves, heat pumps, retrofitting, and solar and wind power are all ready to be deployed at scale – immediately. But other technologies – chiefly nuclear fusion, but also green liquid fuels for uses where electrification is much more efficient – are not. They are at best a distraction, or, worse, an excuse for continued inaction. They could still deliver future benefits with more research and development funding, but that must not detract from cutting CO2 emissions this decade.

As the joke goes, nuclear fusion has been 30 years away for decades. Now that it has been achieved in a lab setting, those 30 years may actually be true. That means the technology could well become an essential part of the low-carbon electricity mix in the second half of this century. But, given that timeline, nobody who understands the climate science would suggest nuclear fusion as the only technofix. Roughly seven million people are already dying each year from air pollution, which is largely caused by the burning of fossil fuels, and our ability to keep climate change in check depends on what we do between now and 2030, and then between 2030 and 2050.

No solution is sufficient on its own. But speeding up the adoption of already proven and scalable technologies is a necessary goal, especially when the many hidden costs associated with fossil fuels are included in the calculus, and will require new policies to guide investments in the right direction. Techno-optimists ought to be their loudest advocates.

Technology alone will not save us. But nothing else on its own will, either.

*The writer is a climate economist at Columbia Business School.*  
©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Technology will save us! No, it won't! Whenever the climate-policy debate addresses specific economic sectors, potential carbon-abatement technologies, or energy strategy, the same fundamental question always arises: How much can we rely on "simple," preferably "cheap," technofixes? Can climate change be addressed by counting on people to switch to lower-carbon technologies, or will it take more fundamental changes to how we live and organise ourselves as a society?

These are not just philosophical or academic questions. In today's political culture, they have been among the issues that most divide right and left. One side trusts markets and new technologies to fix everything, while the other insists that public policy must play a leading role. Yes, this caricature is far too crude. But recognising that it is how many politicians, polemicists, and their followers frame the matter can help us analyse, and ultimately improve, how new clean-technology developments are received.

Consider the apparent scientific breakthrough in nuclear fusion last month. Longstanding debates about nuclear energy returned to the fore. Techno-optimists seized on the idea that we may have unlocked a source of truly unlimited clean energy. That would be in everyone's interest, regardless of political stance, and it would seem to confirm that human ingenuity holds the key to our salvation.

But not even the most ardent techno-optimists can claim that technology will save us on its own. After all, this first-ever fusion ignition happened at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, a US federal research facility where government scientists conduct experiments paid for with taxpayer money.

Yes, there are also startups working on fusion, in the hope of launching the first demonstration plants in the coming decade. But they, too, are clamoring for government

funds, whether direct subsidies or the Department of Energy loan guarantees enabled by the Inflation Reduction Act. The picture is no different in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, nor is it confined to fusion technology. Silicon Valley, that bastion of techno-libertarianism, depends on government funding and favorable policies more than many other industries do.

None of this will come as a surprise to those working in the energy sector, which includes some of the world's most heavily regulated, taxed, and subsidised industries. Governments pick winners all the time, and lobbying plays no small part in the process.

Now consider a second recent episode. Cookstoves have been catapulted into the center of the US culture wars, following a statement by a federal consumer-protection agency voicing concerns about their effects on household air quality. Induction represents the new technology, gas the old, and the debate has both too much nuance and too much nonsense for the public to make sense of it easily.

In this case, many on the right – who would ordinarily trust technology to save us – are siding with the old technology in the name of opposing government "overreach." But unlike in the past, they can no longer argue against induction on the grounds that it costs more.



Gernot Wagner

**TECHNOLOGY ALONE WILL NOT SAVE US. BUT NOTHING ELSE ON ITS OWN WILL, EITHER**



Aakar Patel

**Now for some reason, Indian mutual funds have avoided investing in Adani for the most part. However, the government owned Life Insurance Corporation of India has about ₹75,000 crore or more of taxpayer money invested in Adani**

**You must abstain from thinking about someone when you cannot think well of him.**

THE MOTHER



## Where's Govt Action?

Readers may be familiar with the fall in the Adani group's share prices last week. Indian investors were reacting to the findings from Hindenburg, an American investment firm which released an extremely detailed and damning report on the group's practices. Hindenburg has taken a short position on Adani shares, meaning that it stands to make money if the price falls. Therefore it has, as Adani points out, a vested interest in bringing down the price. On the other hand, Hindenburg also has a genuine stake in what it has done and is putting its money where its mouth is.

Now for some reason, Indian mutual funds have avoided investing in Adani for the most part. However, the government owned Life Insurance Corporation of India has about ₹75,000 crore or more of taxpayer money invested in Adani. It is important therefore for Indians to know what the allegations against Adani are and am setting down here what the big issues are. The primary one is that foreign ('offshore') companies, which are disguised group companies, hold most of the non-promoter shares of Adani firms. If this is proven to be the case, it would mean the delisting of these companies by the Securities and Exchange Board of India, or SEBI. If promoters hold most of the shares in their company, they can manipulate the price by tightly regulating supply. Can we see evidence of this happening?

A Bloomberg piece last year reported that the Adani group's combined value was \$255 billion "even when the combined annual net income of its seven publicly traded firms is less than \$2 billion" and that "shares of Adani Green Energy Ltd. have jumped 4,500% over the past three years." The wealth of Adani, who till recently was the world's second richest individual, is from the valuation of these companies and not from the profit they make.

Adani Enterprises had revenue of ₹15,500 crore in 2019, ₹16,200 crore in 2020, ₹13,358 crore in 2021 and then ₹26,800 crore in 2022. Net profit in 2020 was ₹698 crore, falling to 368 crore in 2021 and returning to ₹720 crore in 2022. As a column in the Business Standard points out "these are not the financials that one would expect from companies valued at 300 and even 600 times earnings — stratospheric multiples that one might understand for small start-ups with exponential growth potential, not for companies in capital-intensive infrastructure businesses."

The companies abroad Hindenburg refers to appear to be set up purely to hold Adani group shares. For example, the report talks of "Elara, an offshore fund with almost \$3 billion in concentrated holdings of Adani shares, including a fund that is 99% concentrated in shares of Adani."

Parliament has been told that neither the funds nor Adani firms were being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate, which is the agency that looks at money laundering. The government said in 2021 that SEBI was looking at some "compliance" issues at Adani and that the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence was "investigating certain entities" of the Adani group. However nothing has come of this so far. Even when Bloomberg News reported it couldn't find contact details for Markus Beat Dangel, Anna Luzia Von Senger Burger, and Alastair Guggenbuchi-Even and Yonca Even Guggenbuehl, the names the government gave in Parliament as persons responsible for the funds, there was no response. Contrast this to the speed with which the government raids and freezes accounts and arrests its opponents and dissenters, using the ED.

Some of the other things that Hindenburg has found are quite concerning from the corporate governance point of view. For instance Adani Enterprises, the listed company which recently put up further shares for sale worth ₹20,000 crore has an independent auditor called Shah Dhandharia which had four partners and only 11 employees, Hindenburg said. The same firm also audits Adani Total Gas.

Another thing to know is that these accusations have been made before, by reputable news agencies, but this has not resulted in government action. The Financial Times in November 2020, ran a report headlined "Modi's Rockefeller: Gautam Adani and the concentration of power in India". It said that rules were bent to allow Adani, who had no experience in the sector, to take all six airports being privatised in 2018. "Overnight Mr Adani became one of the country's biggest private airport operators. He is also its largest private ports operator and thermal coal power producer. He commands a growing share of India's power transmission and gas distribution markets."

So far the government has been silent on the charges being levelled, even after the stock price rout. Perhaps it is hoping for the share price to settle so that the matter goes away. That might happen, and we should not be surprised if nothing more comes of this, given that nothing has come of it in the past either. But very important and crucial questions about this government, the nature of the economic plan it has centred around "national champions" like Adani, on crony capitalism and rule of law have been raised. They have not been fully answered.

After Adani hinted at filing a case against Hindenburg, the company invited the lawsuit, asking Adani to file it in America, where it would ask for documents to be produced. One hopes that this case is filed so that things become clear.

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

## The rise in crime against women

Crime against women in Odisha has been increasing for the past few years. From 81.9 per one lakh population in 2015, it went up to 137.8 in 2021. Between 2019 and 2021, as per the NCRB data, the IPC crime rate for women in India has increased from 52.8 to 53.8 per lakh female population, while that in Odisha has increased from 103.5 to 122.2 per lakh. At the national level, after Assam and Delhi, Odisha has reached the highest position in crime against women in 2021. Of the total IPC crimes in the state, 22.2% were crimes against women in 2021, an increase from 20.7% in 2020. Within the IPC crime against women in the state, the share of different types of crimes was as follows: assaulted with the intent to outrage modesty (54%), kidnapping and abduction (19%), cruelty by husband and relatives (18%), rape (5%) and sexual harassment (3%). There are also reports of trafficking of women from the state in the media, which is reflected in the data. With the increasing presence of women in social media, cyber-crime is another emerging issue for women in recent years. Out of total crimes against women, around 2% of crimes are related to publishing or transmitting of sexually explicit material and other women centric cybercrimes

(blackmailing, defamation, morphing, fake profile).

Unfortunately, crime against women in the state is likely to be much higher than what is reflected in statistics. Women face violence both in private and public spheres. These include violence that is physical, sexual and psychological. Women often do not disclose the violence they undergo due to socio-cultural, economic and other reasons. Even when they want to report the crime, women are generally discouraged from doing so by family, relatives and institutions. Thus, it is hardly surprising that many crimes remain unreported. According to NFHS-5 (2019-21) data, 81.5% of women in Odisha who experienced violence have never sought help and never told to anyone. Women in rural areas find greater impediments to reporting violence against them and remain behind media attention.

Women in Odisha live in a patriarchal society. The male head of the household primarily takes significant decisions, including the decisions that affect the life and livelihood of the women of the family. Recently published NFHS-5 data indicate that 32.3% of men in the age group of 15-49 years justify hitting or beating their wife for at least one of the following reasons - not seeking permission to go out, neglecting the

house or children, if a woman argues, refuses to have sex, not cooking properly, suspects her of being unfaithful, shows disrespect for in-laws. Unfortunately, 49% of women also agree with this justification. Besides, women bear the brunt of unemployment, poverty, and frustration of men within the private sphere. Alcohol consumption by men further aggravated violence against women. For example, NFHS-5 indicates that women in Odisha are more likely to experience spousal violence if their husbands often get drunk.

The state has taken several initiatives in the last few years to curb gender inequality and enhance women's empowerment. Researchers have attempted to establish a relationship between increasing education, employment, and political representation of women and reducing violence against women. Kerala, which achieved so much in women's education and empowerment, has also recorded a relatively high rate of violence against women. Despite Odisha's recent progress in many development parameters, crime against women has been rising. Improvements in the conditions of women and gender-sensitive law enforcement also lead to an increase in the reporting of crime. Increasing visibility of women in public sphere and their

participation in education, jobs and markets often creates a patriarchal backlash in conservative societies.

Stringent measures need to be taken by the government to curb violence against women. A gender-focused approach towards law enforcement, intense police vigil in different areas, community initiatives, gender sensitisation at various levels, a system to lodge hassle-free complaints, safe transport, could be the measures the government can initiate. At the same time, there is a need to address the patriarchal bias in social norms and attitudes. The culture of victim blaming in cases of sexual violence directly protects the perpetrators. The role of vigilant media is equally crucial for unbiased and sensitive reporting of violence against women. Unfortunately, mindless TRP-chasing has often led to careless and sensationalised reporting of crime against women in the media. Media houses in the state must come up with a set of self-regulating guidelines on how to report violence and crime against women. To be a safe and progressive state, Odisha must pay due attention to the safety and wellbeing of women.

*The writer is an independent researcher based in New Delhi. Views are personal.*

WISDOM CORNER

**If you don't stand your ground, then all that happens is people push you backwards.**

JORDAN PETERSON

**Many of life's failures are people who did not realise how close they were to success when they gave up.**

THOMAS A. EDISON

**They who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night.**

EDGAR ALLAN POE

WORDSWORTH

Flabbergasted

The British comedian Frankie Howerd used to say in mock astonishment: "I'm flabbergasted — never has my flabber been so gasted!" That's about as good an explanation for the origin of this strange word for being surprised or astonished as you're likely to get. It turns up first in print in 1772, in an article on new words in the Annual Register. The writer couples two fashionable terms: "Now we are flabbergasted and bored from morning to night". (Bored — being wearied by something tedious — had appeared only a few years earlier.) Presumably some unsung genius had put together flabber and aghast to make one word. The source of the first part is obscure. It might be linked to flabby, suggesting that somebody is so astonished that they shake like a jelly. It can't be connected with flapper, in the sense of a person who fusses or panics, as some have suggested, as that sense only emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. But flabbergasted could have been an existing dialect word, as one early nineteenth-century writer claimed to have found it in Suffolk dialect and another — in the form flabrigast — in Perthshire. Further than this, nobody can go with any certainty.

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

**OrissaPOST**  
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Investor concerns

Sir, This refers to "Adani's \$48bn rout", **Orissa POST**, Jan 28. The souring of investor sentiment on the Adani Group's companies is triggered by the release of a report by Hindenburg Research, a New York-based investor research firm, which has raised several questions and concerns that range from the group's high debt levels and negative cash flows to the use of shell companies based in tax havens such as Mauritius. In its response, the Adani Group has called the report a "malicious combination of selective misinformation and stale, baseless and discredited allegations." Notwithstanding the Hindenburg report and the Adani Group's response to it, concerns have been flagged in the past as well. However, the sheer size of the Adani Group — it has interests across large swathes of the Indian economy — and the implications for the larger financial system, call for far greater scrutiny and transparency than what has been on display. The interests of the average Indian investor need to be protected, and the sanctity of capital markets must be maintained. The sell-off may have put a cloud over the firm's secondary share sale but how the group responds to the market — and addresses the concerns raised — has ramifications that go beyond just its own boardroom. The regulator, too, has its task cut out.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Undemocratic move

Sir, N Ram, one of India's highly regarded journalists, has said the government's attempt to block the BBC documentary on PM Modi on YouTube and Twitter is "not only tantamount to unacceptable censorship but going over the top." Ram, the former editor-in-chief and publisher of The Hindu, said the govt has "gone ballistic" and scored "an own goal." He says: "a mature govt would have said no comment or simply disagreed with it." Ram goes on to say, "It is a carefully rigorously researched, well-presented piece of investigative journalism," and the documentary has "followed every rule in the book." Called the documentary "a propaganda piece designed to push a particular discredited narrative" even without seeing it is wrong. If the BBC commits any wrongdoing or bias it can be prosecuted under the law and for that, there is an international forum. But banning the reporting of any agency in the media is unconstitutional and undemocratic.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR



**Any opposition platform to defeat the BJP must be based on two realities - Congress must be the pivot or the fulcrum of any Opposition alliance, without the Congress, no opposition alliance is relevant or meaningful**

**JAI RAM RAMESH | SR CONG LEADER**

## UDUPI SHOCKER

Karnataka Police have registered an FIR against two persons on charges of brutally killing a dog in Udupi district. A video of the incident has gone viral on social media, prompting animal lovers to sharply condemn the incident



## of the day quote

The people will no longer vote on religious issues. The masses are being divided on religious lines, which will not work anymore



SHARAD PAWAR | NCP PRESIDENT

Thousands of husbands will be arrested in the next five-six months as it is a crime to have sexual relations with a girl below 14 years of age, even if he is her legally wed husband



HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

I request Tejashwi to talk to the chief minister and restart the liquor operation in the state. If we want the foreign tourists to stay longer and spend more here, their meals and drinks will have to be taken care of. If liquor is restarted, their arrival will surely increase ten-fold



JITAN RAM MANJHI | FMR BIHAR CM

## 'DEADLY FOR DEMOCRACY'

# Ex-SC judge slams Rijju's remarks against collegium

**THE RETIRED JUDGE ALSO BATS FOR A 30-DAY DEADLINE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COLLEGIUM**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: Amid the on-going row between the Centre and the judiciary over judges appointment, former Supreme Court Judge Rohinton Fali Nariman, speaking at a public event, slammed Law Minister Kiren Rijju for his "diatribe" against the collegium system for appointment of judges.

On Centre sitting on candidates recommended by the collegium for judgeship, Justice Nariman termed it "deadly for democracy".

"This sitting on names is a very deadly thing which is against the democracy of this country. Because what you are merely doing is you are waiting for a particular collegium and hoping that the next collegium changes its mind," he said.

Nariman was part of the Supreme Court collegium till he retired in August 2021. He also suggested a 30-day deadline for the government to respond to the recommendations made by the collegium.

Nariman also called for the formation of a special five-judge bench, and a judgment should be passed that when collegium sends a name



**If you don't have fearless and independent judges, say goodbye... There is nothing left. As a matter of fact, according to me, if finally this last bastion falls or is to fall, we would enter the abyss of a new dark age**

**ROHINTON FALI NARIMAN | FMR SC JUDGE**

to the government, and if there is nothing comes the government within a period of 30 days, then it will be taken as it has nothing to say.

Nariman was speaking Friday at the Mumbai University while delivering the seventh Chief Justice MC Chagla Memorial Lecture.

He said if the last bastion of independent judiciary falls, the country would enter the "abyss of a new dark age", and added that what is the independence of the judiciary if judges, who are fearless and independent, are not appointed.

Nariman said, "If you don't have fearless and independent judges, say goodbye... There is nothing left. As a matter of fact, according to me, if finally this last bastion falls or is to fall, we would enter the abyss of a new dark age."

"In which, RK Laxman's Common Man will ask himself only one question: If the salt has lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?"

The Law Minister had termed the collegium system alien to the

Constitution, and had also said that it is "opaque and not transparent". Nariman said, "We have heard a diatribe by the Union Law Minister of the day against this process (judges' appointment). Let me assure the Law Minister that there are very basic constitutional fundamentals he must know. Unlike the United States, a minimum of five unelected judges are trusted with the interpretation of the Constitution."

He pointed out that judicial appointments in the United States do not involve any decision-making process from the judiciary at all, but India adopted a different approach. The former apex court judge, on a basic doctrine structure issue, said that in the past over 40 years ago, it was sought to be undone twice and since then not a word has been said against it, except very recently.

"So let us be clear that this is something that has come to stay, and thank god it has come to stay," Nariman said.

## ED arrests 4 from Ch'garh

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Saturday made four fresh arrests in Chhattisgarh in connection with a Prevention of Money Laundering case pertaining to illegal commission on coal sale by state government officials

The accused were identified as Dipesh Tonk, Sandeep Nayak, Shiv Shankar Nag and Rajesh Chaudhary. Tonk is said to be a close associate of Saumya Chaurasia, the Deputy Secretary to Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel. Meanwhile, Chaudhary had carried a fake ED ID card to dupe the probe agencies. Meanwhile, Chaurasia, IAS Sameer Vishnoi and a few others are under the scanner in the case. Vishnoi and Chaurasia were already arrested by the ED.

In December 2022, the ED had attached movable and immovable properties worth ₹152.31 crore belonging to Suryakant Tiwari, Chaurasia, Vishnoi, Sunil Agarwal of the Indramani Group and others in the matter. In September, the ED had arrested Vishnoi, Agarwal and Laxmikant Tiwari.

## COMMISSION ON COAL SALE

The following month, the absconding accused Suryakant Tiwari surrendered before a court and was arrested. A IAS Ranu Sahu was reportedly missing but she wrote a letter to the ED in October and told the officials that she was on medical leave. Later, the probe agency conducted search operations at her mother's house. Vishnoi was questioned by the ED officials regarding alleged commission of ₹25 per ton coal which would be taken out from mines.

The ED had also raided locations in Chhattisgarh for two consecutive days and had recovered around ₹4 crore.

## TRIPURA ASSEMBLY POLLS

# BJP releases list of 54 candidates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: The BJP Saturday announced the names of its 54 candidates for the February 16 Tripura Assembly polls, fielding Chief Minister Manik Saha from Town Bordowali and Union minister Pratima Bhoumik from Dhanpur again.

Party leaders Anil Baluni and Sambit Patra named 48 candidates at a press conference at the BJP headquarters here and another list of six more was released later. The seats included some where the party's ally and tribal outfit Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) had contested last time.

In Agartala, Chief Minister Manik Saha announced the seat-sharing deal with IPFT which has been allocated five constituencies, four less than what it got in the 2018 polls. Saha told a press conference that the BJP will contest in 55 constituencies.

The IPF's power has considerably waned with the rise of TIPRA Motha - a regional party founded by former Congress leader and royal scion Pradyot Deb Barman.

The BJP had reached out to the TIPRA leadership for a tie-up but the regional party's insistence that the Centre agree to its demand for a separate state for the indigenous population ruled it out. The state assembly has 60 seats.

Bhoumik was a first-time MP and was elected from the West Tripura Lok Sabha constituency. She was the first person hailing from the state to become a central minister. In 2018, she had lost the election in Dhanpur assembly seat against the then Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar.

In the last assembly polls in 2018, the BJP for the time had formed a government in Tripura, demol-



## Cong announces 17 candidates

Agartala: The opposition Congress, which would contest the February 16 elections to the 60-member Tripura Assembly in alliance with the CPI-M-led Left parties, announced 17 candidates' names Saturday. The five Left parties led by CPI-M announced the names of 47 candidates Wednesday, leaving 13 seats to their new ally Congress while dropping eight sitting MLAs. Congress leaders, who were upset over the paltry allotment of seats by the Left parties, refused to make any comments about the candidates' list. Congress leader and the party's lone MLA in Trprua, Sudip Roy Barman, had said that they had first demanded 27 seats, and then 23 seats from the Left parties. "They (Left parties) have taken the decision as per their whims and fancies, but we would go as per the wishes of the people," Roy Barman said.

ishing a Left bastion. The CPI(M) ruled the state for 25 years. The CPI(M) is contesting the state elections in alliance with the Congress this time.

## SHORT TAKES

### GP Singh next Assam DGP

**Guwahati:** Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Gyanendra Pratap Singh will be the next Director General of Police (DGP) of Assam, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said Saturday. Singh, currently a special DGP in the state police force, will take over from Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta, who retires at the end of this month. Sarma mentioned Singh as the next DGP during a speech at a government function here. When later asked by reporters about the new appointment, he said, "It is a routine affair..." Singh, expressing his gratitude for the appointment, said he will continue to give his best for the state.

### Maoist killed in gunfight

**Chatra:** A Maoist was killed in a gunfight with security forces in Jharkhand's Chatra district Saturday, police said. The encounter between security forces and Maoist took place in a forest adjacent to Karimandar-Butkuiya village, some 250 km from the state capital Ranchi, police said. Chatra Superintendent of Police (SP) Rakesh Ranjan said that CRPF and district police teams were on their anti-Maoist movement. "Meanwhile, a gunfight between the security forces and Maoist took place, in which a Maoist was killed," he said.

### Woman, 2 kids found dead

**New Delhi:** Delhi Police Saturday found three bodies, including that of a woman and two children, with injury marks on their heads near the railway tracks in North-West Delhi's Narela area. The bodies, which were recovered by Delhi Police's railway unit, have been sent to the hospital and the police are trying to ascertain their identities.

### Over 160 IEDs found in Bihar

**New Delhi:** Security forces led by the CRPF seized more than 160 improvised explosive devices (IEDs) during an anti-Naxal operation in Bihar, officials said Saturday. The recovery was made from near the Laduiya Pahad area in Aurangabad district of the state Friday. The patrol team first found 13 pressure IEDs and later recovered 149 such bombs, weighing about one kilogram each, from a nearby cave in the area, the officials said. The operation was jointly conducted by the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the Bihar Police.



Army personnel during an exercise in Ahmednagar, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

## Terrorist in Batla House encounter dies in AIIMS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Jan 28:** An Indian Mujahideen terrorist, Shehzad Ahmed alias Pappu (33), who was convicted and awarded life imprisonment by a Delhi court in connection with the 2008 Batla House encounter case, died during the course of treatment

Saturday morning.

He was undergoing treatment at AIIMS hospital for pancreatitis. Ahmed was a resident of Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh. On February 6, 2010, he was lodged at Tihar Jail in connection with Batla House Encounter case. Later on, he was transferred to central jail number 15 in Mandoli on July 7, 2022.

Apart from Batla House encounter, he was also facing prosecution in six other cases. One of the cases was lodged against him with Bengaluru Police.

On December 8, 2022, Ahmed was admitted at GTB Hospital for the treatment of gallbladder stone-induced acute necrotizing pancreatitis with modified CTSI.

# 'Pathaan' first film in 33 yrs to have houseful shows in Valley

**BESTING BOYCOTT CALLS OVER THE SONG BESHARAM RANG, PATHAAN HAS PERFORMED PHENOMENALLY AT THE BOX OFFICE**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, Jan 28:** People of Kashmir are queuing up to watch Shah Rukh Khan-starrer Pathaan, making it the first film to have houseful shows in 33 years in the Valley.

The cinema halls reopened in Kashmir last year after being shut for three decades due to threats and attacks by militants.

Vikas Dhar, owner of Kashmir's only multiplex theatre, said all the shows of the spy thriller were houseful on the first day of its release Wednesday.

"I did not know Shah Rukh Khan has such a massive fan following

in Kashmir. All shows on the first day were fully booked while five of the seven shows on Republic Day were also sold out," Dhar told P.T.I.

It was due to restrictions on movement of people on account of the Republic Day parade in the vicinity of the multiplex in Badambagh area of the city that the first two shows had less than expected audience, he added. Dhar opened his multiplex theatre last year in September. The theatre has three screens with a total capacity of 520 seats.

"This is after 33 years that people are queuing up to watch movies in Kashmir. This was the dream when we set out with this project



and it has come true," he said.

Besting boycott calls over the song Besharam Rang, Pathaan has performed phenomenally at the box office, raising ₹219.6 crore gross worldwide in just two days. The film released January 25 amid high

security across the country.

Dhar said much-like the rest of the country, there has been no effect of the controversy on the film's run. Everyone here is coming for entertainment, he added.

The Valley had nearly a dozen

stand-alone cinema halls functioning till the late 1980s, but they had to wind up businesses after militant outfits threatened the owners

Mohammad Iqbal, an avid cinema viewer, said the last time he saw a houseful board outside a theatre was in 1989 when Sunny Deol's Tridev was released

stand-alone cinema halls functioning till the late 1980s, but they had to wind up businesses after militant outfits threatened the owners. Though attempts were made to reopen some of the theatres in the late 1990s, militants thwarted such efforts by carrying out a deadly grenade attack on Regal Cinema in the heart of Lal Chowk in September 1999. Two other the-

atres -- Neelam and Broadway -- had opened their doors but had to shut business due to poor response.

Mohammad Iqbal, an avid cinema viewer, said the last time he saw a houseful board outside a theatre was in 1989 when Sunny Deol's Tridev was released.

"It has been 33 years since I saw a house full board outside a theatre. The last I saw such a board was for Sunny Deol's 'Tridev' in 1989 at Khayyam cinema," he said.

"Pathaan" opened Wednesday in over 5,000 screens across the country. Due to high demand, the film's total screen count was later increased to 8,500 worldwide. A Yash Raj Films project, Pathaan is directed by Siddharth Anand. It also features John Abraham and Deepika Padukone. The film is Shah Rukh's first big screen release as a lead after over four years.

# Mins assaulting cadres leaves DMK in spot

# AIADMK bickering: BJP top brass to intervene

The national leadership of BJP is expecting a few seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections from Tamil Nadu and for that the saffron party knows that a unified AIADMK is a must



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Jan 28:** The national leadership of the BJP is in all likelihood intervening in the internal bickering of AIADMK which is a major ally of the saffron party in Tamil Nadu.

The AIADMK general council of July 2022 had expelled OPS and other leaders close to him and the faction led by EPS including leaders like former ministers D Jayakumar and CV Shanmugham is totally against a re-entry of OPS.

The southern Tamil Nadu area has always been a stronghold of the AIADMK but with OPS and VK Sasikala, leaders of the powerful Thevar community out of the party, the AIADMK is in a sticky situation in its stronghold. The national leadership of BJP is expecting a few seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections from Tamil Nadu and for that the saffron party knows that a unified AIADMK is a must.

OPS stated last Tuesday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always been enquiring about

the AIADMK and that he speaks about the party being unified. This is in contradiction to the statement of EPS and those surrounding him that the BJP never interfered in the affairs of the AIADMK.

In another related development, the founder leader of AIADMK, AC Shanmugham who is presently the president of the New Justice Party of India has also expressed his wish to mediate between the two factions of AIADMK led by OPS and EPS. Shanmugham has also called upon OPS to not field a candidate in Erode East by-election as that would lead to the freezing of the 'two leaves' symbol of the party. Shanmugham also said that the AIADMK was defeated bitterly after the death of MG Ramachandran as there were two factions led by J. Jayalalithaa and Janaki Ramachandran.

Sources in the Tamil Nadu BJP told IANS that the BJP national leadership is keenly watching the developments in the AIADMK and would intervene at an appropriate time to settle the differences between the two leaders, OPS, and EPS.

## Will chop off hand of anyone touching my leader, this is my dharma: DMK leader

**Madurai:** Former Union Shipping Minister and senior DMK leader TR Baalu Saturday courted a controversy by remarking that he will chop off the hand of anyone touching his party president, Chief Minister MK Stalin or Dravidar Kazhagam chief K Veeramani. He asserted that doing it is his dharma. The senior Parliamentarian who lashed out at the BJP-led government at the Centre over the Sethusamudram Ship Canal Project, cursed the BJP for 'abruptly halting the project' akin to pulling the chain to stop the train midway. Speaking at an event organised by the Dravidar Kazhagam (DK), the ruling DMK's ideological parent organisation at Palanganatham, here, late Friday night, Baalu said, apparently referring to party president and Chief Minister Stalin and Veeramani, that he would not tolerate anyone touching his leader and the DK president. "I will not hesitate to chop off the hand of anyone touching my leader (Stalin) or ayya (Veeramani). This is my dharma. If you feel this is not right, then you can go to court and say so. But by then, I would have done the deed," Baalu said with a smirk.

IANS that the Chief Minister had pulled up both the ministers and told them strictly not to go overboard even in extremely tense situations.

While speaking to IANS, GR Mukunda Raja, Professor of Sociology in a college at Tirunelveli, said, "The ministers are slowly showing their true colours. The DMK is a political party which has always had a violent past and the ministers throw-

ing stones at party cadres and holding a cadre by the cuff of his neck are scenes which we will witness in the days to come. If the party and its allies win a large chunk of Lok Sabha seats in the 2024 general elections, the party cadres and leaders will show their true colours to the people. It is better for Chief Minister Stalin to control these arrogant ministers, lest it will affect the image of the party badly."



**Looks like the DMK ministers have taken a pledge to beat up people. A minister throwing stones at party cadre a few days back and now another roughing up people. Request the Chief Minister to provide protective equipment to keep us safe**

K. ANNAMALAI | BJP TAMIL NADU UNIT PRESIDENT

Request the Chief Minister to provide protective equipment to keep

us safe."

It may be recalled that KN Nehru had a few days before was caught on camera hitting a DMK councillor.

A few days back, DMK leader and Minister for Dairy development, SM Nasar, in a video, was seen throwing a chair at party workers during a programme at Tiruvallur district. The minister was infuriated as the party cadres were taking time to bring him a chair to sit on.

With the actions of the party minister being caught on camera and turning viral, the party leadership is in a spot. Sources told

# Children's 'negligence' leads to elderly people in TN revoking wills



**CHENNAI AND OTHER PARTS OF THE STATE ARE WITNESSING AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF SUCH ELDERLY PEOPLE WHO ARE POINTING OUT THE PROVISIONS IN THE MAINTENANCE AND WELFARE OF PARENTS AND SENIOR CITIZENS ACT**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Jan 28:** The incidence of elderly people revoking the wills where they unconditionally wrote the names of their children is on a rise in Tamil Nadu, due to the children not taking care of their parents when they are in dire need.

Chennai and other parts of the state are witnessing an increase in the number of such elderly people who are pointing out the provisions in the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act. The provisions in this Act make it mandatory for the children to look after their parents. If any child fails to take care of his/her parent, the Act allows the unilateral revocation of the will.

Talking to IANS, Dr Ramachandra Kumar, a retired medical service practitioner living in Tambaram, Chennai, said: "I want to revoke my will which I had lovingly given to my son. Now it's difficult for me as my son and daughter-in-law are not looking after me and my wife. We don't have anything on our own. So I want to revoke this will."

A senior officer with the Tamil Nadu Revenue Department told IANS that around 8,500 such petitions were received across the state in the last two years and 6,125 of them were disposed of.

However, sadly most of these settlement deeds do not comply with the recent verdict of the Supreme Court, which states specifically that the settlement should be conditional and the parents should mention a condition that they were gifting their property to the children in lieu of them being taken care of.

The revenue officer said that this has become a handicap as a majority of the parents have not mentioned this in the deeds that were registered earlier.

Despite the growing number of disillusioned senior citizens, revenue officials are in a bind as many of these settlement deeds do not comply with the recent Supreme Court ruling - the settlement should be conditional and the parents should mention a condition that they were gifting their property to children in lieu of being cared for. With the revenue officials finding it difficult to cancel the deed, the senior citizens are approaching the Special Cell in Chief Minister's office hoping for a solution to their woes.

Madurai-based advocate Manonmani Govind told IANS that "most of the senior citizens prefer a settlement deed instead of a will to avoid the requirement to probate the will and most of the settlement deeds do not contain any condition precedent to retain the right putting the senior citizens in difficulties."

She said that the senior citizens must approach good lawyers who are well acquainted with the latest provisions of the law.

The senior lawyer also said that the legal services authority should take up an awareness programme regarding the latest provisions in the law among the senior citizens and suggested that local resident associations and non-government organisations (NGOs) could be roped in to execute the programme.

V. Shivakumar of HelpAge India said that they are creating awareness among the senior citizens about the 'condition' to be included in the deed.

# Kerala's design policy to promote innovations: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 28:** The Kerala government is planning to come out with a State Design Policy that will promote innovations and competitiveness through focused interventions to build a design-integrated ecosystem and mark the state as a major design hub, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has said.

The new policy should build capabilities, support technical development, enable financial interventions and bridge the gap between creativity and innovation, he said. "The Design Policy should involve strategies to promote innovations and competitiveness and guide through a design-integrated ecosystem that aims at tapping the domestic and global market capitalisation," the Chief Minister said while inaugurating a three-day Design Policy workshop, jointly organised by the Departments of Tourism and Public Works here Thursday.

"Design by Future" is the theme of the workshop that began at Craft Village at Vellar, near Kovalam.

It will evolve a draft design policy that factors in Kerala's traditional design concepts while imbibing new trends and foreseeing the future needs, while creating and preserving public assets including the tourism-related infrastructure. The policy will lay down good practices to be followed while designing physical assets such as roads, bridges, streets, street furniture, signage and public spaces, which are crucial in enhancing the experience of tourists.

"The focus should be on promoting the adoption of design in businesses as well as in the public



**The policy will lay down good practices to be followed while designing physical assets such as roads, bridges, streets, street furniture, signage and public spaces, which are crucial in enhancing experience of tourists**

sector. The policy should be less of a regulatory framework and more of a capacity building one. It should enable the growth of the design sector by facilitating designers and design firms," the Chief Minister said.

Noting that the Design Policy should provide a framework to stakeholders and decision makers, Vijayan said critically approaching the design of a project right at the planning stage itself is imperative to ensure that time and resources are not wasted.

The Chief Minister also lauded

the Tourism and Public Works Departments for bringing together all stakeholders from the design sector to the workshop to draft a policy that is going to bring about a paradigm shift. He also released the Kerala State Design Policy Workshop 2023 logo at the function.

State Tourism and Public Works Minister PA Mohamed Riyas said that the draft policy evolving from the workshop will be the country's first going by its aims and objectives.

"This policy will radically change how we imagine, design and construct our public utility buildings in PWD and Tourism, when Kerala is set to emerge as a global tourist destination," he said.

As part of framing the Design Policy, all the 140 assembly constituencies across the state were visited. The policy will bring in a radical change in the planning and designing, Riyas said.

Vacant spaces under bridges will be converted into utility spaces and the lower part of bridges across rivers will also be illuminated, the Minister said.

# Kerala's 'role model' struggles to make ends meet in real life

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 28:** The Kerala tableau portraying Karthyayani Amma, the winner of Nari Shakti Puraskar, stole the show at the 74th Republic Day parade in New Delhi. However, in real life, the bedridden Amma is finding it tough to make both ends meet.

Her daughter is working as a domestic help to take care of her.

Thursday, when the impressive parade was going on and the Kerala tableau was shown on TV channels with the commentary describing the tableau and about Amma, a crowd had gathered at Amma's house near Kollam and they were showing the live visuals to her on a mobile phone.

Amma, who is into her 100th year, is now completely bedridden after suffering a stroke and is paral-

ysed below the hips.

In 2018, she was inspired to take a learning course by her daughter, who had passed an examination at the age of 60.

In August 2018, she took an examination alongside 40,362 other people, as part of the Kerala State Literacy Mission Authority's Aksharalakksham ('Million Letter') programme.

At the age of 96, she was the oldest person to take the test in her district. She had been given lessons in reading and writing by her great-grandchildren, who were nine and 12 years old.

Tested on reading, writing and mathematics, Amma scored 98 out of a possible 100 marks, giving her the top grade.

In March 2020, she was honoured with the Nari Shakti Puraskar 2019, presented by then President Ram Nath Kovind.



# A 'rice-loving' jumbo destroys ration shop

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Idukki, Jan 28:** A rice-loving wild tusker, which frequently strays into human settlements in search of the grain, destroyed a ration shop in an estate in this Kerala district in the early hours of Friday villagers here complained.

The rogue elephant, known as 'Arikomban' among local people due its love for 'ari' (rice), has been a nightmare for those in Santhanpara in this high range district for some time. 'Ari' means rice and 'komban' means tusker in local parlance.

However, Wildlife officials said the shop is located in the traditional route of the jumbos and they are yet to confirm whether the same jumbo was raiding ration shops.

The elephant raided the ration shop, located in Panniyar Estate, four times in the last 10 days and destroyed it completely this morning, Antony, the shop owner, said. The shop was already in a di-

apidated condition due to the frequent jumbo attacks and it was completely ruined in the latest outing, he said.

"It used to eat rice and other provisions stored in the ration shop. But, this morning, the elephant could not find anything to eat as we already shifted all articles to another room anticipating the attack," the desperate man said.

Detailing its modus operandi, Antony said the elephant usually raids the tiny shop and removes its 'koluthu' (metal lock) and eats the rice after putting it on the ground from the sacks. Besides 'ari', sugar and wheat are also its favourites.

Apart from 'Arikomban', two other elephants also used to raid ration shops in the region and they were locally known as 'Chakkakomban' and 'Murlivaalan', he said. The owner said it was tough to run the shop in the same place as the animal would attack it again.

Asked why the elephants were particularly raiding ration shops,



Punyavel, another villager, said these animals somehow tasted rice and are frequently coming in search of places where it is available.

Punyavel's grocery shop, located at Chokkanad Estate, was also attacked by another elephant recently. He said the only solution

is to capture these rogue jumbos just like Palakkad Tusker-7 (PT-7), another wild jumbo which had been wreaking havoc in a few villages in Palakkad district for over two years, which was caught Sunday last.

Meanwhile, a forest official told PTI that besides the ration shop, a house was also destroyed in elephant attack in the early morning. "But, we are yet to confirm whether the jumbo attacked the shop and the house were the same," he said.

The official also said they cannot say that the jumbo was particularly raiding ration shops.

"These areas are the traditional route of wild elephants. These estates, shops and 'layams' (small houses of estate workers) all are located in the route. These jumbos do not go to any other area as they traditionally belonged to these places," he explained.

An all-party meeting was also held in Idukki the other day seeking a permanent solution to end the jumbo menace.

## of the day quote

Rahul Gandhi's yatra comes like a breath of fresh air in Kashmir. It is the first time since 2019 that Kashmiris have come out of their homes in such massive numbers. It was a great experience to walk with him

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

India holds the key to securing peace and prosperity for the entire world. India this year holds the presidency of G20. The close synergy between India and Japan is more important than ever

HIROSHI SUZUKI | AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO INDIA

Women today are taking big strides in different walks of life, including education, sports and health. Their role in the struggle for creation of a separate state of Uttarakhand cannot be forgotten

PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI | CM, UTTARAKHAND



The government job mind-set is proving an impediment to startup culture, mainly in north India. The youth of Jammu and Kashmir need not miss the startup bus, which is playing a crucial role in India's technological and economic journey to emerge as a frontline nation in the world

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

## CBI BOOKS IMPOSTER IAS OFFICER IN PMO

The CBI has registered a case against one Ankit Kumar Singh for allegedly impersonating a secretary in the PMO handling the Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency and seeking favours from senior government officials



## PM cautions against attempts to create divisions in country

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday cautioned against attempts to sow differences and create divisions in the country but asserted that such efforts will not succeed.

Addressing a rally of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) at the Cariappa Ground in Delhi Cantonment, Modi said the mantra of unity was the only way for India to achieve grandeur.

The prime minister said that the entire world was looking towards India because of the youth of the country.

This is the time of new opportunities for the youth of India. Everywhere it is evident that India's time has arrived, Modi said addressing the NCC cadets who took part in the Republic Day celebrations.

At the same time, the prime minister urged caution against attempts to divide the country.

Despite such efforts, there will never be differences among the

people of India, he said.

For this, the mantra of unity is the ultimate antidote. The mantra of unity is a pledge as well as India's strength. This is the only way India will achieve grandeur, the prime minister said.

The prime minister's remarks came against the backdrop of the raging controversy over a BBC documentary on the 2002 Gujarat riots and Modi that has been banned in India.

Modi lauded the NCC cadets who participated in the Republic Day celebration and said the priority for the country would always be the young people who are brimming with energy and enthusiasm.

He said the youngsters have immense opportunities as his government was encouraging private participation in space and defence sectors where start-ups were making huge strides.

Modi said his government had unleashed a digital revolution, start-up revolution and innovation revolution.



SDRF personnel demolish the Malari Inn hotel, which was marked unsafe in the land subsidence affected area, in Joshimath, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

## BJY enters its last lap

PRIYANKA, MEHBOOBA JOIN MARCH A DAY AFTER SECURITY FIASCO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pulwama (J&K), Jan 28: The Congress' Bharat Jodo Yatra Saturday entered its last lap as the Rahul Gandhi-led march was joined by his sister Priyanaka Gandhi Vadra and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, who termed the initiative a breath of fresh air.

Rahul Gandhi resumed his walk from Chursoo in south Kashmir's Awantipora at 9.20am, a day after cancelling the march in Anantnag after his party alleged that police arrangements by the J&K administration completely collapsed during the yatra.

Reacting to the allegation, the Jammu and Kashmir administration had said pressure on security resources due to the size of the crowd, larger than planned, may have created an impression of lack of security arrangements during the march.

However, Saturday, the party said the security arrangements were stricter as security forces sealed off all roads leading to the yatra's starting point and allowed only authorised vehicles to reach the venue.

There was also a three-layered security ring around Gandhi as part of the heightened security measures.

As Gandhi started walking, he was joined by PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, her daughter Iltija Mufti and her mother Gulshan Nazir, as well as a large number of Congress and PDP workers as the march traversed through Awantipora.

A large number of women supporters also joined the yatra Saturday.

While Nazir walked only for about 10 minutes, Mehbooba and her daughter walked with the Gandhi family scion till Lethpora where the yatra took a tea break.

The PDP president said the yatra was like a breath of fresh air in



Kashmir as it allowed people to come out of their homes in numbers for the first time since 2019.

The Centre, on August 5, 2019, revoked Article 370 that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

A civil society contingent led by Yogendra Yadav also joined the yatra in the morning.

Later, Gandhi was joined by Priyanaka Gandhi Vadra who walked with him till the Galandara area of Pampore, from where both of them drove to the night halt destination at Pantha Chowk on the outskirts of Srinagar.

Despite stringent security measures, hundreds of enthusiastic locals lined up along the Srinagar-Jammu national highway from Awantipora to Pampore to catch a glimpse of the former Congress president.

Gandhi was in his now-trade-mark white T-shirt, but wore a sleeveless jacket over it for some time before taking it off again. He, however, sported a headgear as the temperatures hovered around four degrees.

On the way, Gandhi waved at the crowd, shook hands with many, and hugged some kids, even as at one place, candies were showered on the yatra.

Security forces had a tough time in dealing with the crowds, but the day was managed without any inconvenience to the yatra.

Gandhi had to cancel his walk Friday from the Qazigund area as security forces failed to manage the large crowd that had gathered on this side of the Banihal tunnel through which the leader entered the Kashmir Valley.

Barely able to walk about 500 metres amid jostling by the huge crowd, the yatra had to halt and Gandhi's security team advised him not to go ahead.

Gandhi then drove to the Khanabal area of Anantnag district where he stayed for the night.

On Saturday, Gandhi also stopped the yatra for a few minutes to pay floral tributes to the 40 CRPF personnel killed in a car bomb blast in Lethpora area of Pulwama district in 2019.

Gandhi laid a flower bouquet at the spot where the CRPF bus was blown up by a Jaish-e-Mohammad suicide bomber along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway four years ago.

The yatra which started from Kanyakumari September 7 reached Pantha Chowk on the outskirts of Srinagar Saturday.

## ADANI STOCK FALL

## LIC, SBI 'lost over ₹78k-cr' in market cap, FM still on mute mode, says Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: The Congress Saturday questioned the silence of the Union finance minister and probe agencies after LIC and SBI lost over ₹78,000 crore in market capitalisation of their shares due to exposure in Adani Group.

LIC and SBI continue to invest in the Adani group even after the Hindenburg research report alleged share price manipulation and financial misappropriation by the group, Congress general secretary Randeep Surjewala claimed.

"LIC is public money! Post Hindenburg Report, the value of LIC investment in Adani Group shares have fallen from ₹77,000 Crore to ₹53,000 crore -- loss of ₹23,500 crore. Also, LIC shares have lost ₹22,442 Crore. Why is LIC still investing ₹300 crore in Adani Group," Surjewala asked.

The Congress leader claimed that after the publication of the report, the SBI share's market cap has declined by a whopping ₹54,618 crore.

Also, the loan exposure of SBI and other banks to Adani Group is

₹81,200 crore, he claimed.

"The question is, why are SBI Employees Pension Fund and SBI Life still investing ₹225 crore in Adani Group," Surjewala asked.

The Rajya Sabha MP also claimed that between January 24 and 27, the SBI and LIC lost a market cap of ₹78,118 crore in value of their shares alone.

The loan exposure of SBI and Invest Value decline of LIC in Adani Group is in addition thereto. Yet... RBI, SEBI, ED, SFIO, CBI, and the FM remain on 'mute' mode, Surjewala said in a series of tweets.

The Congress leader has earlier said that elsewhere the prime minister would be asked to explain, the finance minister would be sacked and a full investigation would have been ordered.

The Hindenburg Report has pointed to the alleged manipulation of stock price by the Adani Group and alleged financial irregularities. The Adani Group has denied the allegations and termed it a campaign to defame the company ahead of its follow on a public issue.

## TISS students cancel show as BJYM protests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 28: The premier Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)'s Progressive Students Forum cancelled the planned screening of the controversial BBC documentary on Prime Minister Narendra Modi after strong protests by the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha activists, here Saturday evening.

## BBC DOCUMENTARY ROW

A student leader - declining to be quoted - said that the film and the projector could not be taken to the venue in view of the protests and pressures from the TISS management and the Mumbai Police.

"Accordingly, we decided to cancel the screening. However, we have forwarded the entire documentary to all the students and they are watching it on their gadgets like mobiles, laptops or tablets," he told IANS, adding it has reached over 600 students on the TISS Deonar campus and outside. The developments came even as the TISS management issued a stern 'advisory' Thursday warning the students of strict action if they went ahead with the plans, followed by another circular this afternoon. Unrelenting, the Progressive Students Forum (PSF) had said it was intended to be "a symbolic protest" against the government's move to block access to the documentary and their move was in solidarity with other students' organisations in campuses across the country.

## 'Minor confrontation' between Assam Rifles, Nagaland's NSCN (IM)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Jan 28: An Assam Rifles team and a group of NSCN (IM) cadres were engaged in a minor confrontation in Intanki National Park in Nagaland, an army source said here Saturday.

The incident, which happened Friday evening, lasted for around 40 minutes, though it did not escalate, he said.

"Multiple Assam Rifles teams were out for patrolling for durations varying from 72 to 96 hours in the run-up to Republic Day celebrations. One such patrolling team, while returning after completing the assigned task, took a break at Intanki National Park around 4 PM Friday.

According to the ceasefire agreement, the Assam Rifles patrolling team leader "decided to disengage his troops and ensured that the incident did not escalate", the source said. A purported video of the incident showed a discussion between the two sides in which the paramilitary personnel claimed that they had lost their way.

The framework agreement came after over 80 rounds of negotiations since the ceasefire pact was sealed in 1997 following decades of insurgency, which started in Nagaland soon after Independence in 1947. However, the final solution is yet to see the light of the day.

## BEATING RETREAT CEREMONY

THE MAGNIFICENT DRONE SHOW WILL LIGHT UP THE EVENING SKY OVER THE RAISINA HILL, WEAVING MYRIAD FORMS OF NATIONAL FIGURES, EVENTS THROUGH SMOOTH SYNCHRONISATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: Tunes based on Indian classical music will be the flavour of the Beating Retreat ceremony which will also include the country's biggest drone show comprising 3,500 indigenous drones, officials said Saturday.

For the first time, a 3-D anamor-

## Ragas, country's biggest drone show and more

phic projection will be done on the facade of North Block and South Block during the grand event at Vijay Chowk Sunday, the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

The Beating Retreat ceremony marks the formal end of Republic Day celebrations. Tunes based on Indian classical ragas will be the flavour of the Retreat ceremony this year, the ministry said.

The ceremony will be graced by President Droupadi Murmu. The president is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

As many as 29 captivating and foot-tapping Indian tunes will be played by the music bands of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and the State Police and Central Armed Police Force (CAPF), the statement said. The ceremony will also be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

It will also witness the country's biggest drone show, comprising 3,500 indigenous drones, the state-



ment added. The magnificent drone show will light up the evening sky over the Raisina Hill, weaving myriad forms of national figures, events through smooth synchronisation.

It will depict the success of start-up ecosystem, technological prowess of the country's youth and pave

the way for future path-breaking trends, it said.

The ceremony will begin with the massed band's Agniveer tune which will be followed by the enthralling tunes like Almora, Kedar Nath, Sangam Dur, Queen of Satpura, Bhagirathi, Konkan Sundari by

pipes and drums band, the Defence Ministry statement said.

Indian Air Force's band will play Aprajey Arjun, Charkha, Vayu Shakti, Swadeshi, while fascinating Ekla Cholo Re, Hum Taiyyar Hai, and Jai Bharati will be played by the band of Indian Navy.

The Indian Army's band will play Shanknaad, Sher-e-Jawan, Bhupal, Agranee Bharat, Young India, Kadam Kadam Badhaye Ja, Drummers Call, and Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon, it said. The event will come to a close with the ever-popular tune Sare Jahan se Achha.

The principal conductor of the ceremony will be Flt Lt Leimapakpam Rupachandra Singh. While the Army Band will be led by Sub Maj Digger Singh, the Naval and Air Force band commanders will be M Anthoni Raj and Warrant Officer Ashok Kumar respectively.

The conductor of the State Police and CAPF bands will be Assistant Sub-Inspector Prem Singh, it said.

The Buglers will perform under the leadership of Naib Subedar Santosh Kumar Pandey, and pipes and drums band will play under the instructions of Subedar Major Baswaraj Vagge.

The august ceremony has emerged as an event of national pride when the Colours and Standards are paraded. The ceremony traces its origins to the early 1950s when Major Roberts of the Indian Army indigenously developed the unique ceremony of display by the massed bands.

It marks a centuries-old military tradition, when the troops ceased fighting, sheathed their arms and withdrew from the battlefield and returned to the camps at sunset at the sounding of the Retreat, the Defence Ministry statement said.

Colours and Standards are cased and flags lowered. The ceremony creates nostalgia for the times gone by, it added.

# international



The hybrid wars of the West can stop the development of new centres of economic power, financial and political influence. Countries like China and India are already ahead of the US and EU members in many respects  
SERGEI LAVROV | FOREIGN MINISTER, RUSSIA

## TRUMP KICKS OFF 2024 ELECTIONS BID

Former President Donald Trump is set to kick off his 2024 White House bid January 28 with visits to a pair of early-voting states, his first campaign events since launching his bid more than two months ago



### of the day quote

On the anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi German death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, let us remember that to the east Putin is building new camps  
MATEUSZ MORAWIECKI | PM, POLAND

Let me be clear about something: Those classified documents should not have been in my personal residence. So help me God. Mistakes were made  
MIKE PENCE | FORMER VP, US

Moving elections to later this year could help the country get out of this quagmire we're in  
DINA BOLUARTE | PRESIDENT, PERU

### SHORT TAKES

#### New political party law in Myanmar

**Bangkok:** Myanmar's military-controlled government has enacted a new law on registration of political parties that will make it difficult for opposition groups to mount a serious challenge to army-backed candidates in a general election set to take place later this year. The new electoral law, published Friday in the state-run Myanmar Alinn newspaper, sets minimum funding and membership levels for parties participating in the polls. It also bans participation by parties or candidates deemed unlawful or linked to organizations declared by the military government to be terrorist groups. The army seized power in February 2021 from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, arresting her and top members of her governing National League for Democracy party, which had won a landslide victory for a second term in a November 2020 general election.

#### 3 dead in latest Calif shooting

**Beverly Crest:** At least three people were killed and four others were wounded in a shooting in California area early Saturday morning. Sgt Frank Preciado of the Los Angeles Police Department confirmed the shooting happened just after 2:30 am in Beverly Crest, an upscale Los Angeles neighbourhood. Of the seven people who were shot, four were standing outside. The three who were killed were in a vehicle. Their identities were not released. Those who were injured were taken to a hospital and are in critical condition. Preciado said he did not have information on what led up to the shooting, or if it occurred at a residence. This is the fourth mass shooting in California this month.

# Cops' brutality continues in US

THE HORRIFIC INCIDENT DREW IMMEDIATE COMPARISONS WITH THE MAY 2020 KILLING OF GEORGE FLOYD, ANOTHER BLACK MAN WHOSE SUFFOCATION BY A WHITE POLICE OFFICER IN MINNEAPOLIS WAS CAUGHT ON FILM

REUTERS

**Memphis, Jan 28:** Tyre Nichols repeatedly cried, "Mom! Mom!" as the five Memphis police officers now charged with the Black motorist's murder pummeled him with kicks, punches and baton blows after a January 7 traffic stop, video released by the city Friday showed.

The video from police body-worn cameras and a camera mounted on a utility pole were posted online a day after the officers were charged with second-degree murder, assault, kidnapping, official misconduct and oppression in Nichols' death.

The officers, all Black, were dismissed from the police department last week. Nichols, 29, was hospitalized and died of his injuries three days after the confrontation in the city where he lived with his mother and stepfather and worked at FedEx.

The four video clips chronicle an aggressive escalation of violence directed at a motorist who police had initially said they pulled over for reckless driving. The police chief has since said the cause for the stop has not been substantiated.

The beatings appeared to continue far beyond a point where Nichols could pose any threat to police. At one stage, two officers hold him upright as another punches him repeatedly in the face, while other officers on the scene stand by without intervening.

The ordeal captured in the video has transformed Nichols, the father of a 4-year-old, into the latest face of a US racial justice movement galvanized by the 2020



VIDEO SHOWS MEMPHIS POLICE OFFICERS KICKING, BEATING TYRE NICHOLS

THE BLACK MAN WAS SEEN CRYING OUT FOR HIS MOM REPEATEDLY

PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS WERE SEEN IN MAJOR US CITIES

THE OFFICERS, ALL BLACK, WERE DISMISSED FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Like so many, I was outraged and deeply pained to see the horrific video of the beating that resulted in Tyre Nichols' death. It is yet another painful reminder of the profound fear and trauma, the pain, and the exhaustion that Black and Brown Americans experience every single day  
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

No mother should go through what I am going through right now, no mother, to lose their child to the violent way that I lost my child  
ROWVAUGHN WELLS | VICTIM'S MOTHER

killing of George Floyd at the hands of police in Minneapolis.

After the video's release Friday evening, several dozen demonstrators in Memphis marched along Interstate 55, shutting down traffic near a bridge that crosses the Mississippi River into Arkansas.

The first video released Friday shows officers dragging Nichols from the driver's seat of his car stopped at an intersection as he

yells, "I didn't do anything ... I am just trying to go home." Officers force him to the ground as they order him to lie on his stomach and squirt him in the face with pepper spray.

Nichols breaks free and sprints away down a road with officers chasing him on foot. At least one fires a stun gun at him.

Other footage shows a subsequent struggle after officers catch

up with Nichols again in a nearby neighborhood. Two officers are seen holding him down as a third kicks him and a fourth delivers blows with what appears to be a baton before another punches Nichols.

'Black Lives Matter'

Protests under the banner of the "Black Lives Matter" movement against racial injustice erupted globally following the May



### ESCALATIONS SIMMER

## 7 KILLED IN ISRAEL SHOOTING

The attack came a day after Israeli forces killed 10 Palestinians during a raid in the West Bank town of Jenin, nine of them in the army operation, in what was the bloodiest day in the Palestinian Authority controlled area in many years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jerusalem, Jan 28:** At least seven people have been killed and three others injured in a shooting incident at a synagogue in the Neve Yaakov neighbourhood of Jerusalem, police and medics have said.

The shooting took place Friday evening in the northern part of East Jerusalem, they said.

"The terrorist arrived by car at a building used as a synagogue in the neighbourhood in the northern part of East Jerusalem and opened fire," police said.

Police located and shot the gunman. A handgun apparently used in the attack was seized, they said.

Seven people were shot and killed and at least three others were wounded in a terror shooting attack, The Times of Israel newspaper said, quoting police and medics.

Police said the terrorist — a resident of East Jerusalem — was shot dead after he exited the car and opened fire on the officers while trying to escape on foot, the report said.

Magen David Adom (MDA) rescue services said its medics declared five victims dead at the scene, and another two victims were declared dead at hospitals in



Jerusalem, it added.

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, speaking after visiting the scene, called the attack "one of the most severe we have known in years."

"Our hearts are with the families. I commend the police officers who took action so quickly. We must act with determination and composure. I call on people not to take the law into their own hands," he was quoted as saying in the report.

He said the cabinet would convene Saturday, adding, "We have decided on several immediate steps that will begin tonight."

A woman in her 70s was listed in critical condition, a 20-year-old man in serious condition, and a 14-year-old boy in moderate-serious condition, MDA staff said.

The Palestinian Authority suspended its ongoing coordination with Israeli security forces in response.

Two rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip towards Israeli territory shortly after midnight which were intercepted by Israel's air defence system, an army spokesperson said.

Israel carried out air strikes on Hamas and Islamic Jihad's weapons facilities, the army said.

## Archaeologists hail 'oldest' mummy yet found in Egypt

THE 4,300-YEAR-OLD MUMMY WAS ONE OF DOZENS OF ANTIQUITIES DISCOVERED IN THE DIG NEAR CAIRO

REUTERS

**Cairo, Jan 28:** Egyptologists have uncovered a Pharaonic tomb near the capital Cairo containing what may be the oldest and "most complete" mummy yet to be discovered in the country, the excavation team leader said.

A team uncovered the ancient find at the bottom of a 50ft shaft at Egypt's first pyramid.

The 4,300-year-old mummy was found at the bottom of a 15-metre shaft in a recently uncovered group of fifth and sixth dynasty tombs near the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, Zahi Hawass, director of the team, told reporters.

The mummy, of a man named Hekashepes, was "completely covered in layers of gold" in a limestone



sarcophagus that had been sealed in mortar.

The ancient man's well-preserved sarcophagus has been discovered after a year-long excavation just

outside of the capital Cairo. It is just one of dozens of new archaeological discoveries found in Egypt.

"This mummy may be the oldest and most complete mummy

I put my head inside to see what was inside the sarcophagus: A beautiful mummy of a man completely covered in layers of gold  
ZAHY HAWASS | DIRECTOR OF THE EXCAVATION TEAM

found in Egypt to date," Hawass, one of Egypt's former ministers of antiquities, said in a statement.

The team added that the mummy dates back to the fifth and sixth dynasties of the Old Kingdom, which spanned from roughly 2,500 BC to 2,100 BC.

Among other tombs found was one belonging to Khnumdjedef, an inspector of officials, a supervisor of nobles and a priest during the reign of Unas, last pharaoh of

the fifth dynasty. It was decorated with scenes of daily life.

The discovery follows the digital unwrapping of a mummified teenager with a heart of gold, 2,300 years after it was buried. CT scans revealed the lengths his family went to in attempting to ensure the 14 or 15-year-old's safe passage to the afterlife. He was buried with 49 amulets - including a golden scarab where his heart would have been - and a golden tongue inside his mouth.

Another tomb belonged to Meri, "keeper of the secrets and assistant to the great leader of the palace".

Numerous statues were found among the tombs, including one representing a man and his wife and several servants, the statement said.

REUTERS

**Washington, Jan 28:** A four-star US Air Force general said in a memo that his gut told him the United States would fight China in the next two years, comments that Pentagon officials said were not consistent with American military assessments.

"I hope I am wrong," General Mike Minihan, who heads the Air Mobility Command, wrote to the leadership of its roughly 110,000 members. "My gut tells me will fight in 2025."

The letter was dated February 1 but had been sent out Friday.

The general's views do not represent the Pentagon but show concern at the highest levels of the US military over a possible attempt



by China to exert control over Taiwan, which China claims as a territory. Both the United States and Taiwan will hold presidential elections in 2024, potentially creating an opportunity for China to take military action, Minihan wrote.

China has stepped up its diplomatic, military and economic pressure in recent years on the self-governed island to accept Beijing's rule.



It is time that the government of India comes out with a research and development policy for the pharmaceutical sector

KARUN RISHI | PRESIDENT, USA-INDIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## GROVERS TOOK HEFTY SALARIES

Fintech platform BharatPe paid a salary of Rs 1.69 crore to its co-founder and MD Ashneer Grover in FY22, while his wife Madhuri Jain Grover who was former head of controls at the company took home Rs 63 lakh. Currently, the firm is involved in a legal battle with Ashneer, after suing him and his family for allegedly siphoning off company funds worth Rs 88.6 crore



## of the day quote

We must create an international network of mentors, investors and entrepreneurs to strengthen the global startup ecosystem



PIYUSH GOYAL | UNION MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Among the host of expectations from the budget, the proposal to increase the FDI limit to 100 per cent in insurance is unlikely to be introduced in the upcoming Budget, especially since the FDI limit has just been recently increased to 74 per cent



ANUP RAU | MD AND CEO, FUTURE GENERALI INDIA INSURANCE

The banking sector -- government and private -- is stable now. We don't expect any capital infusion announcement by the Finance Minister for the public sector banks



SAJAY AGARWAL | SENIOR DIRECTOR, CARE RATINGS

## SHORT TAKES

### NTPC profit rises nearly 5% in Q3

New Delhi: State-owned power giant NTPC Saturday reported a nearly 5 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 4,854.36 crore for the December quarter, mainly due to higher revenue. The company's consolidated net profit was Rs 4,626.11 crore in the quarter ended December 31, 2021, as per a BSE filing. The total income rose to Rs 44,989.21 crore in the quarter from Rs 33,783.62 crore in the year-ago period. The Board of Directors also decided to pay an interim dividend at the rate of 42.50 per cent (Rs 4.25 per share) on the face value of paid-up equity shares of Rs 10 each for the financial year 2022-23. The average power tariff of the company during April-December 2022 stood at Rs 4.96 per unit compared to Rs 3.95 per unit a year ago.



Processing in November fell to 19.58 million tonne, while crude oil production was 586,000 bpd, down 1.1% versus last year, the data from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas showed.

### Social media firms under strict vigil

New Delhi: The Grievance Appellate Committees set up by the government to look into users' complaints against large social media companies like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram will commence operation from March 1, the Ministry of Electronics and IT said Saturday. The Centre Friday notified three Grievance Appellate Committees (GACs) under an amendment to IT Rules 2021 notified in October. "Keeping in view of the transition period required for the intermediaries as per their requests and technical requirement, the online platform will be operational in one month of this notification of the Grievance Appellate Committee, from 1st March 2023," an official statement said. According to the notification, each of the three GACs will have a chairperson, two whole-time members from different government entities and retired senior executives from the industry for a term of three years from the date of assumption of office.

### Bank unions defer Jan 30-31 strike

Chennai: The United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) has deferred the two-day nationwide bank strike January 30-31 following an understanding at the conciliation meeting held in Mumbai, said CH Venkatachalam, General Secretary, All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBE). According to Venkatachalam, the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) has agreed to hold a meeting with the unions January 31.

## SINKING ECONOMY

# PAKISTAN RUPEE MAINTAINS FREEFALL

The country's foreign exchange reserves have further depleted by \$923 million to an alarming level of \$3.7 billion, the central bank said in its latest weekly update Thursday. The reserves are barely enough for two to three weeks' import requirement



PAKISTANI CURRENCY AT ALL-TIME LOW OF RS 268.30 AGAINST \$ IT HAS RECORDED A CUMULATIVE DROP OF ALMOST 14% IN JUST TWO DAYS

If Allah can create Pakistan then he can also protect, develop, and make it prosper

ISHAQ DAR | FINANCE MINISTER

to Rs 255.43 against the greenback. Accordingly, the rupee has recorded a cumulative drop of almost 14 per cent (or Rs 37.41) in just two days, Express Tribune reported.

The currency saw a steep fall following the government ending its control over the rupee-dollar exchange rate and letting market forces determine it under an International Monetary Fund (IMF) condition, it reported.

Pakistan is all for reviving the stalled IMF loan programme of \$6.5 billion to avert the looming high risk of default on international payments.

The country's foreign exchange reserves have further depleted by

\$923 million to an alarming level of \$3.7 billion, the central bank said in its latest weekly update Thursday. The reserves are barely enough for two to three weeks' import requirement, Express Tribune reported.

Besides, Pakistan is scheduled to repay foreign debt worth \$7 billion in the last five months (February-June) of the current fiscal year 2023. It will repay another \$74 billion in the next three years: FY24 to FY26.

The revival of the IMF programme will help the country raise a new debt of around \$3-\$4 billion from multilateral and bilateral creditors soon, including the Fund, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank.

Moreover, the rupee devaluation will increase the flow of workers' remittances and export earnings through official channels. This will lead to an improvement in the foreign exchange reserves, Express Tribune reported.

## 5G phones at 32% mkt share in India

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: Premium segment (Rs 30,000 and above) contributed 11 per cent to India's smartphone shipments and 35 per cent to overall market revenue in 2022, the highest ever.

Samsung led the market in 2022 in terms of shipment value share with a 22 per cent share, followed by Apple, in the country, according to Counterpoint Research.



However, in terms of shipment volume, Xiaomi led the market in 2022 with a 20 per cent share, closely followed by Samsung. Xiaomi slipped to third position in Q4 2022 with Samsung and vivo capturing first and second spots respectively. 5G smartphones captured a 32 per cent share in 2022. Samsung became the top-selling 5G brand in 2022 with a 21 per cent share.

Apple continued to lead the premium smartphone segment, with the iPhone 13 emerging as the top-selling model. Apple also led the market in Q4 2022 in terms of shipment value.

Inventory build-up across channels after the second quarter led to lower-than-expected shipments throughout the second half of the year: India's smartphone shipments declined 9 per cent YoY to reach over 152 million units in 2022, according to the report.

The decline, which is the second ever in India's smartphone market, can be attributed to the decline in entry-level and budget segments which faced supply constraints at the beginning of the year and then witnessed lower demand throughout the year.

Overall, India smartphone market revenue remained flat despite a 9 per cent YoY decline in shipments.

OnePlus grew 50 per cent YoY in 2022 driven by the OnePlus Nord CE 2 series. It focused on diversifying and expanding its product portfolio across different price points and increasing its offline presence to drive sales, the report mentioned.

## Oil processing in Dec rises 4% YoY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: Indian refiners' crude oil processing in December rose about 4% from a year earlier, provisional government data showed, in line with elevated demand in the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer.

Crude oil production last month was at 586,700 barrels per day (2.48 million tonne), down nearly 1.2% year on year; the data showed, on lower output at certain Oil and Natural Gas Corporation clusters.

Crude oil imports rose meanwhile to a five-month high on refiners stocking up on cheaper Russian fuel amid a steady increase in consumption in the country.

"Discounted crude oil from Russia will help refiners boost runs," said Ehsan Ul Haq, an analyst from Refinitiv.

## STRUCK BY STORM

# Adani's FPO plans on track

ADANI GROUP HAS DISMISSED HINDENBURG RESEARCH REPORT AS MALICIOUS AND BOGUS AIMED AT TORPEDOING THE FPO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



₹20,000 CRORE FPO GOT SUBSCRIBED JUST 1% ON THE OPENING DAY FRIDAY

AGAINST AN OFFER OF 4.55CR SHARES OF ADANI ENTERPRISES, ONLY 4.7L WERE SUBSCRIBED

ADANI HAS LOST A COMBINED \$48 BILLION IN MARKET VALUE SINCE HINDENBURG RESEARCH

New Delhi, Jan 28: Billionaire Gautam Adani's group Saturday ruled out any changes in price or the dates of the ₹20,000 crore follow-on share sale at the conglomerate's flagship firm despite its stocks being hammered below the offer price after a scathing report by a US short seller.

"Adani Enterprises Limited's further public offer (FPO) is going as per schedule and the announced price band. There is no change in either the schedule of the issue price," a group spokesperson said.

The FPO got subscribed just one per cent on the opening day Friday. Against an offer of 4.55 crore shares of Adani Enterprises Ltd, only 4.7 lakh shares were subscribed, according to information available from the BSE. The FPO closes January 31.

Adani Enterprises fell almost 20 per cent to below the offer price of its secondary sale as all the seven listed companies of the con-

glomerate took a beating in the aftermath of Hindenburg Research alleging that the group was "engaged in a brazen stock manipulation and accounting fraud scheme over the course of decades".

Seven listed companies of the conglomerate controlled by one of the world's richest men, Gautam Adani, have lost a combined \$48 billion in market value since Hindenburg Research Tuesday flagged concerns about debt levels and the use of tax havens.

Adani Enterprises is selling shares in a price band of Rs 3,112 to ₹3,276. On Friday, its share price closed at Rs 2,762.15 on the BSE.

"All our stakeholders including bankers and investors have full faith in the FPO. We are extremely confident about the success of the FPO," the spokesperson added.

On Wednesday, Adani

Enterprises raised Rs 5,985 crore from anchor investors.

The company allotted 1.82 crore equity shares to 33 funds at ₹3,276 apiece, taking the transaction size to ₹5,985 crore, according to a circular uploaded on the BSE website.

Foreign investors who picked up the shares included Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, BNP Paribas Arbitrage, Societe Generale, Goldman Sachs Investment (Mauritius) Ltd, Morgan Stanley Asia (Singapore) Pte, Nomura Singapore Ltd and Citigroup Global Markets Mauritius.

A slew of domestic institutional investors, including LIC, SBI Life Insurance Company, HDFC Life Insurance Company and State Bank of India Employees Pension Fund, also participated in the anchor book. Adani Enterprises is India's

# 'Govt may keep gross borrowing under ₹16 trillion'

THE GOVERNMENT HAS SO FAR RAISED ₹12.93 TRILLION UP TO JANUARY 27, WHICH IS 91% OF THE OVERALL GROSS BORROWING TARGET OF ₹14.21 TRILLION IN THE 2022/23 FISCAL YEAR WHICH ENDS MARCH 31

REUTERS

New Delhi, Jan 28: India's government is likely to keep its gross market borrowing below Rs 16 trillion for 2023/24 as it does not want to destabilise the bond market with any negative surprises, two sources close to the deliberations said.

"Feedback from the market participants is that a borrowing of Rs 15.5-16 trillion can be absorbed well in the next financial year," one

of the officials told Reuters.

The second official said that based on the discussions held so far within the government, the view has emerged that borrowing should be consistent with the market's expectation.

Traders are waiting for the Union budget February 1, with the government's fiscal consolidation path and its borrowing calendar for fiscal year 2024 set to be the next market-moving trigger. The government's gross in-



debtedness has more than doubled in the past four years as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has spent heavily to cushion the economy from the effects

of the Covid-19 pandemic and to provide relief to the poor.

In a Reuters poll, economists forecast the government will borrow a record Rs 16 trillion in the fiscal year to March 2024 on higher infrastructure spending.

The poll also suggested that the government would bring the budget deficit down to 6.0% of GDP in 2023/24. It aims to reach a target of 4.5% by 2025/26.

The indebtedness of federal and state governments is equal to 83%

of annual gross domestic product (GDP), a ratio higher than that of many other emerging economies. The country's sovereign credit rating is just a notch above junk level.

The International Monetary Fund said last month India needed a more ambitious plan for fiscal consolidation to ensure debt would be sustainable in the medium term. The government says its current plan is already enough for the task.

# US industry urges FM to rationalise, simplify direct, indirect taxes

Direct taxes can be in the form of income tax, capital gains tax or securities transaction tax, while indirect taxes such as GST, Customs duty or VAT are levied on all end-consumers to buy any goods or services

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Jan 28: Ahead of the annual budget presentation, an India-centric top US strategic and business advocacy group has urged Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to simplify and rationalise direct and indirect taxation system in India, a move it believes would increase the confidence of global investors and yield greater foreign direct investment.

"Rationalise corporate tax rates for foreign companies," said the US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum (USISPF) in its submission to the finance ministry ahead of the annual budget presentations

February 1. It said that the rate for foreign companies, including banks to be reduced to bring parity and sought to rationalise tax for new manufacturing companies.

Urging India to simplify capital gain tax reforms, USISPF sought harmonising holding periods and rates of different instruments.

"Reiterate India's commitment to the global tax deal," it said and urged the Union Finance Minister to extend the concessional tax regime to Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) from investment in securities.

USISPF has also suggested tax incentives to specific sectors like renewable energy and R&D in-



vestment in the health sector.

Among the Forum's recommendations include advocating for a stable and predictable tax environment, improving the ease of doing business environment, rationalisation of the cost of doing business, and rationalisation of tax rates and tariffs.

On indirect taxes, the USISPF

sought clarification on customs duty exemptions provided to oil and natural gas companies, reduction in customs duty rates for x-ray machines from 10 per cent to 7.5 per cent and providing customs duty exemption on all items imported by specified research and development units.

USISPF urged the finance min-

## 'R&D policy for pharma sector'

Ahead of the Union Budget 2023-24, the US pharmaceutical industry has said that India should come out with a research and development policy for its pharmaceutical sector. "It is time that the government of India comes out with a research and development policy for the pharmaceutical sector," Karun Rishi, president of USA-India Chamber of Commerce (USAIC) told PTI. Based out of Boston, the USAIC for the last 16 years has been organising the India-US health care summit which is attended by the who's who of the pharma sector from both India and the United States. "In the BioPharma sector, the budget should aim to move up the value chain driven by research and development. Right policy push can provide India the fuel to become the R&D hub of the world," Rishi said in response to a question. For national security and stabilising the global supply chain, the budget should incentivise R&D and manufacturing, especially enhancing API (active pharma ingredients) manufacturing in India, he asserted. Observing that in the midst of a global downturn, India is a bright spot, he said Sitharaman and her team should focus on growth strategies, increasing public expenditure on healthcare, capacity building, skills development and employment creation.

ister to roll back the customs duty increase on nutritional products considering the importance and significance of the product and encourage the availability of scientifically designed nutritional food in India.

Among its recommendations on customs tariffs and duties and cus-

tomers, processes include addressing ambiguities in the customs tariff act on telecom products, an extension of concessional customs duty to advanced biofuel projects and strengthening the process on the ground with respect to trade facilitation schemes like CAROTAR and Faceless Assessment.

# BELGIUM WARY OF GERMAN RESILIENCE



Germany and Belgium players in action during their Pool B match, which ended in a draw, at Kalinga Stadium

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 28:** Belgium will aim to become only the fourth team to defend the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup title when they lock horns with a resilient Germany side at the Kalinga Stadium here, Sunday.

Belgium will join the elite club of teams - Pakistan, Australia and their opponents for the final Germany - who have won back-to-back titles in the past. Belgium, who made it to the world's elite just around a decade ago, had won the title in 2018 at the same venue.

With 11 players aged above 30 and three above 35, Belgium's 'golden generation' of players, who have won the 2018 edition and Tokyo Olympics gold, have shown that they are tough to beat having several experienced campaigners in their squad.

Belgium have come with the bulk of team which had won the 2018 edition and Tokyo Games. It is difficult to find out any major weakness in this side which has some of the world's finest attacking and defensive players as well as penalty corner specialists. They also have one of the best goal-

keepers in the world in the form of Vincent Vanasch.

Belgium have scored 18 goals with star striker Tom Boon contributing seven, and conceded just five in as many matches. But the World No.2 side would be wary of the "German culture of resilience" which has been in full display in this World Cup as the Die Honamas twice came back from 0-2 down to reach the final.

Two-time champions Germany (2002 and 2006) were trailing by two goals against England in the quarterfinals but struck twice in the last two and half minutes to take the game into penalty shootout, where they emerged winner.

In the semifinals Friday, World No.4 Germans were again trailing Australia, one of the title contenders, by 0-2 at half time but their never-say-die attitude came to the fore as they made fought back to level the scores before finding the winner in dramatic fashion with just six seconds left on the clock.

The depth in the Belgium team can also be gauged from the fact that the absence of penalty corner expert and star defender Alexander Hendrickx due to injury early in the

tournament was not felt.

The only chink in their armour could be that Belgium have depended mostly on Boon to score the goals. Florent Van Aubel, Cedric Charlier and Sebastien Dockier have scored just two goals each.

Arthur Van Doren and Arthur de Sloover will be the main men at the Belgium defence while captain Denayer and Victor Wegnez will try to control the midfield.

Germany, on the other hand, will be looking to clinch their first title after 2006 and join the club of other three countries to have won the World Cup thrice or more. Apart from the advantage of having recorded two come-from-behind wins, the Germans have been able to succeed in different playing situations.

Germany adopted man-to-man marking game against England, while they played a zonal system against Australia in the semifinals. They did not allow the normally fluid Australians to play their attacking style of play, with more ball possession.

The form of penalty corner expert Gonzalo Peillat, who won the 2016 Olympics gold with Argentina but now represents Germany, will

be key for the Die Honamas as his hat-trick was instrumental in the 4-3 win over Australia.

The two sides were together in the same group and there was nothing to separate between them in their 2-2 draw Pool B match.

Tom Grambusch, the younger brother of captain Mats, and Niklas Wellen scored in that match, and the duo will be Germany's key players once again on Sunday.

Tom will be the defensive bulwark while Wellen, the man of the match against Australia, has been the standout player for Germany in this event with his mesmerising forays in opposition circle yielding six goals in as many games.

Historically also, there is not much to differentiate between the two teams with Belgium having won 15 out of the 35 matches they have played against each other. Germany have won 13 times while seven matches were drawn. Germany have beaten Belgium just once - in FIH Pro League match in November last year - since July 2017.

Losing semifinalists Australia and Netherlands will face each other in the bronze medal match earlier in the day.

## India finish joint 9th in FIH WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Rourkela, Jan 28:** A dominant India scored twice in the first and fourth quarters to beat South Africa 5-2 in a classification match and finish joint ninth in the FIH Men's World Cup here Saturday.

World number six India earned six penalty corners in the match and scored one from them while South Africa, ranked 14th, got three PCs without converting any one of them. India had 31 circle penetrations in total while South Africa had 22. With around 60 per cent ball possession, the home side had 14 shots at goal as against nine by South Africa.

Abhishek, who was named player of the match, opened the scoring for India in the fifth minute before captain Harmanpreet Singh struck from his drag flick in the 12th minute.

The second quarter did not yield any goal from either side though India kept on attacking and made several circle penetration. India, who led 2-0 at half time, had 15 circle penetration as against eight by

South Africa at the breather.

In the third quarter, Amit Rohidas was shown a yellow card and India had to play one man short for five minutes. But once Rohidas came back, India scored a goal in the last minute of the third quarter through Shamsher Singh (45th).

The South Africans did better in the second half as they made more circle penetration than the first 30 minutes. The fourth quarter produced four goals - two from each side. India's fourth goal came in the 49th minute from a fine team effort. Off a Raj Kumar Pal pass, Jarmanpreet Singh sent a low cross from near the right side which Akashdeep simply tapped in.

But just a few seconds later, South Africa scored their first goal of the match through Mvimi Samkelo (49th), who controlled a long scoop from a teammate inside the Indian 'D' and then fired a powerful shot past India custodian PR Sreejesh.

Sukhjeet was suspended for five minutes in the 50th minute after getting a yellow card for a foul and India were one man down. But South

Africa failed to capitalise on this.

Sukhjeet returned to score India's fifth goal in the 58th minute. Akashdeep was involved in the goal as his reverse shot rebounded from the South Africa goalkeeper and Sukhjeet was at the right place to slam the ball home.

South Africa earned a penalty stroke with just one minute left in the match after Sreejesh fouled Cassiem Mustaphaa in the Indian circle. Mustaphaa himself stepped up and scored from the spot as the Birsa Munda Stadium saw India win for the final time in this World Cup.

In the earlier matches of the day, Argentina thrashed Wales 6-0 to share the ninth spot with India, while Malaysia beat Japan 3-2 to end their campaign at joint 13th along with France, who emerged 4-2 winners over Chile. Wales and South Africa finished at joint 11th while Japan and Chile took the joint last (joint 15th) position.

India had finished ninth in 1998 and 2014 also. They had finished 10th in 1990 and 2002, 11th in 2006 and 12th in 1986.



Shamsher Singh (C) celebrates his goal with teammates at Birsa Munda Int'l Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Saturday

## SHAFALI IN PURSUIT OF WORLD CUP TITLE



**GLORY AWAITS:** Shafali Verma and Grace Scrivens pose with the ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup trophy, Saturday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Potchefstroom, Jan 28:** Batting sensation Shafali Verma will chase history when she leads India against England in the first-ever ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup final here Sunday.

For all their success at the international stage, the Indian women's cricket team has never won a World Cup at any level and the young batter, who has been part of two World Cups and one Commonwealth Games final with the senior team, will look to bring the elusive title home.

The seniors have made the World Cup final on three occasions across formats only to have returned with bitter memories - losing to Australia by 98 runs in 2005 and losing to England by 9 runs in 2017 in the ODIs, and in T20Is they went down in the 2020 final to the Aussies by 85 runs.

The youngster from Rohtak has been part of two World Cups across formats and she also witnessed another final defeat when India had settled for a silver medal in last year's Birmingham CWG.

Shafali, however, does not want to let go of the opportunity this time. "Haan bahut finals khela hai (Yes, I've played a lot of finals and

seen it all)," Shafali, who turned 19 on Saturday, said on the eve of the final.

"It's about going out there and enjoying the game. I've told the teammates 'don't stress, just give your 100 percent without thinking of it as the final. Just believe in yourself. It's all past and that cannot be recreated. We are determined to bring the World Cup this time and are trying to improve day by day," she added.

India suffered one defeat in the Super Six league stage where they lost to their 'nemesis' Australia after being bowled out for 87.

Personally, Shafali is also living her father's dream. She remembered her father Sanjeev Verma's words that she would one day win the World Cup.

"He has always told me that 'I'm the best and I will one day win the World Cup'. He kept pushing me always and here I'm because of all his and my family's sacrifices. Thank you papa for backing me. I will always be grateful to you and the whole family," Shafali signed off with a promise.

India will be up against a strong England side that topped their Super Six group by winning all the four matches.

## India face NZ in must-win tie

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, Jan 28:** India will have to raise their game a few notches as the Hardik Pandya-led side faces a must-win situation to level the three-match T20I series against New Zealand, here Sunday.

India were caught in a spin web on the Ranchi pitch and lost the opener by 21 runs Friday. The loss also highlighted India's bowling profligacy, especially by the pace duo of Arshdeep Singh and Umran Malik.

If tearaway pacer Malik conceded 16 runs in one over, Arshdeep leaked 27 runs in the last over, which put pressure on the India batters while chasing. That expensive over from the young left-arm quick was the turning point as he was smashed for three sixes and a boundary.

India's batters were off to an inauspicious start with the top-three managing just 15 runs. The hosts ended up scoring 155/9, which would have been a par score to defend on the wicket, as indicated by Washington Sundar after the match.

Skipper Pandya, however, is unlikely to bring in uncapped pace bowler Mukesh Kumar for the second T20I and will probably back Arshdeep to bounce back.

Kishan, Hooda under scrutiny While Shubman Gill, who has been in red-hot form in the ODIs, has played just four T20Is and is still learning the nuances of the short-format, the big concern will be the two key batters - Ishan Kishan



Ishan Kishan, who would be eager to end his poor run of form, was bowled by Michael Bracewell (not in pic) in the first T20I

and Deepak Hooda.

Occupying the opening spot, Kishan is nowhere near the ominous form he showed while slamming a record-breaking ODI double-century against Bangladesh last December. If one just considers the T20Is, it's been a while since he last scored a fifty - against South Africa, June 14, 2022.

Hooda, too, hasn't enjoyed much success as a lower middle-order batter and averages just 17.88 in the last 13 innings, with the highest being the unbeaten 41 against Sri Lanka at the Wankhede.

His innings of 10 runs from 10 balls at No.7 Friday lacked impact and the rotation of strike also came under scrutiny, especially when the NZ spinners were bowling.

While India are unlikely to try out newcomer Jitesh Sharma in the role of wicketkeeper-batter in the

## It was just one-off game: Washington

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ranchi, Jan 28:** India all-rounder Washington Sundar termed their loss to New Zealand in the opening T20I here as a "one-off" defeat and backed the hosts to bounce back in the three-match series.

"I think it was just a one-off game," said Washington, who scored a quickfire 28-ball 50, besides returning with tidy figures of 2/22. "I don't think that just because it was spinning so much, we have to address anything. Just that one-off game. Had we got off to a flier or a better start, things would've been much different. Obviously, it did spin, and you will see such wickets here and there.

"People over here and players in our team have played on such wickets in the IPL and even in the Indian team. So, just that one-off game where certain things didn't go our way," he added.

But his responses seemed "unconvincing" for a journalist, who went on to probe further and asked whether they should "change" their top order. This time, the youngster was at his wittiest best.

"Do you really think a change is needed? If you don't get your favourite biryani in one of the restaurants, you will never go to that restaurant? All of them have made so many runs. It's just one day. It happens to anyone - even New Zealand collapsed in Raipur (108 all



Washington Sundar plays a shot during his innings against NZ in first T20I, Friday

out in 34.3 overs in the second ODI," Washington said.

"It did not mean they had to change their top order. It's a game where anything can happen. We will have to be patient. At the end of the day, it's a sport where both teams cannot win and all 22 players cannot perform. All of them have done well to get to this stage."

The 23-year-old backed left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh, who registered poor figures of 4-0-51-1 and young pace sensation Umran Malik, who conceded 16 runs in the only over he bowled during New Zealand's innings.

## SABALENKA BEATS RYBAKINA FOR AUSTRALIAN OPEN TITLE

ASSOCIATED PRESS



**Melbourne, Jan 28:** The serves were big. So big. Other shots, too. The points were over quickly. So quickly: Seven of the first 13 were aces. And so it was immediately apparent in the Australian Open women's final between Aryna Sabalenka and Elena Rybakina that the one who could manage to keep her serve in line, get a read on returns and remain steady at the tightest moments would emerge victorious.

That turned out to be Sabalenka, a 24-year-old from Belarus, who won her first Grand Slam title by coming

back to beat Wimbledon champion Rybakina 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 at Melbourne Park Saturday night, using 17 aces among her 51 total winners to overcome seven double-faults.

It was telling that Sabalenka's remarks during the post-match ceremony were directed at her coach, Anton Dubrov, and her fitness trainer, Jason Stacy - she referred to them as "the craziest team on tour, I would say."

"We've been through a lot of, I would say, downs last year," said Sabalenka, who was appearing in her first major final. "We worked so hard and you guys deserve this trophy. It's more about you than

it's about me."

Now 11-0 in 2023 with two titles already, she is a powerful player whose most glowing strength was also her most glaring shortfall: her serve. Long capable of hammering aces, she also had a well-known problem with double-faulting, leading the tour in that category last year with nearly 400, including more than 20 a piece in some matches.

After much prodding from her group, she finally agreed to undergo an overhaul of her serving mechanics last August. That, along with a commitment to trying to stay calm in the most high-pressure moments, is really paying off now.