



Magic of India

Actor Elli AvrRam, who has Swedish-Greek roots, says she has embraced India completely as her home

LEISURE | P2



Power talks

Top leaders of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Pakistan Peoples Party discuss new power-sharing formula to form government

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Inflation cools

Retail inflation declines to a three-month low of 5.1 per cent in January, mainly due to subdued prices of food items

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Rahul ruled out

KL Rahul will not be part of third Test against England after failing to recover from his quadriceps strain

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SHORT TAKES

Delhi HC bail for journo killers

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court granted bail Monday to four convicts serving life imprisonment in the murder case of TV journalist Soumya Vishwanathan. A bench of Justices Suresh Kumar Kait and Manoj Jain suspended the sentence of Ravi Kapoor, Amit Shukla, Baljeet Singh Malik and Ajay Kumar till the pendency of their appeals challenging their conviction and sentence. The bench noted that the convicts have been in custody for 14 years. Vishwanathan, who worked with a leading English news channel, was shot dead in the early hours of September 30, 2008.

Former Maha CM Chavan quits Cong

Mumbai: In a setback to Congress ahead of Lok Sabha elections, former Maharashtra Chief Minister Ashok Chavan quit the party Monday, amid speculation that he is veering towards BJP. In a letter to state Congress president Nana Patole, Chavan (65) said he was resigning as a primary member of the grand old party. He also submitted his resignation as an MLA to Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar. His exit comes days after senior Maharashtra Congress leaders Baba Siddique and Milind Deora quit the party.

Nitish wins trust vote as Oppn walks out

Patna: The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in Bihar, led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, won Monday the trust vote in the state assembly, with 129 MLAs voting in favour of the motion, amid a walkout by all non-NDA members. Altogether, 129 legislators voted in favour of the motion. The NDA got the support of three RJD MLAs who joined the ruling side. BJP MLAs were overjoyed as they returned to power after 17 months.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Govt is your well-wisher. It has done all this because it wants you to travel by air...not by road

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	SENSEX	NIIFTY	DOLLAR	EURO	GOLD	SILVER
VARIATION	71072.49	21616.00	83.04	89.52	₹62,220	₹71,536
	↓ 523.00	↓ 166.50	↓ ₹0.03	↓ ₹0.02	↓ ₹74	↑ ₹76

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	32.7°C	31.5°C
Min Temp	18.1°C	18.0°C
Humidity	76%	86%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Partly cloudy sky and mainly clear sky later



IN NATURE'S LAP: Students, teachers and officials of Shailabala Women's Autonomous College in Cuttack pose with Padma Shri Kumkum Mohanty (in violet sari) and actor Akash Dasnayak after the inauguration of the new medicinal plant garden, Monday

Back from jaws of death

The eight, who were arrested in August 2022, finally walked out of jail late Sunday evening and arrived in New Delhi in the wee hours of Monday

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 12: Qatar has released eight jailed former Indian Navy personnel and seven of them returned home Monday morning, in what is being seen as a major diplomatic victory for India that came nearly three-and-a-half months after a Qatari court handed them death sentences that were subsequently commuted to jail terms.

Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra said Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself constantly supervised all the developments in the case and has never shied away from any initiative to ensure the return of the Indians.

At a media briefing later in the day, the foreign secretary announced that Modi will travel Wednesday to Qatari capital Doha after concluding his two-day trip to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), but indicated that the trip was long conceived.

In an early morning statement, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said India appreciates the decision by the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani enabling the release and home-coming of the Indians.

"The government of India welcomes the release of eight



One of the arrested ex-Indian Navy personnel upon his arrival Monday in New Delhi

Timeline

AUG 30, 2022: Eight Indian Navy personnel arrested in Doha for alleged espionage

OCT 26, 2023: Death sentence given to all eight arrested by lower court

NOV 9, 2023: Ministry of External Affairs starts diplomatic talks with Qatar

DEC 8, 2023: Court of Appeals in Qatar commutes death sentence to jail terms

FEB 12, 2024: Arrested Navy personnel released and seven return to India

All the eight personnel, including my brother have been released because of the government's efforts. I am very happy about it

DR MEETU BHARGAVA | SISTER OF PURNENDU TIWARI

Indian nationals working for the 'Dahra Global Company' who were detained in Qatar," the MEA said in a statement.

"Seven out of the eight have returned to India. We appreciate the decision by the Amir of the State of Qatar to enable the release and home-coming of these nationals," the MEA added. The eight Indian nationals who have been freed are Captains Navtej Gill and Saurabh Vasishth, Commanders Purnendu Tiwari, Amit Nagpal, SK Gupta, BK Verma and Sugunakar Pakala,

and sailor Ragesh. Commander Tiwari could not return due to some pending paperwork, people familiar with the matter said.

The Navy veterans were October 26 given death sentences by Qatar's Court of First Instance. The Court of Appeal in the Gulf nation December 28 commuted the capital punishment and sentenced them to jail terms for varying durations ranging from three to 25 years. The Court of Appeal had also given them 60 days to appeal against the prison terms.

BJD picks Debasish, Subhasish for RS



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who is also the president of the ruling BJD, nominated Monday former party MLA Debasish Samantary and BJD leader Subhasish Khuntia from Puri as the party's candidates for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections.

The seats will fall vacant in April when the terms of Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and BJD leaders Prasant Nanda and Amar Patnaik in the Rajya Sabha will come to an end.

According to a notification, election to the three Rajya Sabha seats in Odisha will be held February 27 between 9.00am and 4.00pm on the Assembly premises. Counting of votes will take place at 5.00pm. The last date for filing of nominations is February 15.

Though the poll will be held for three seats, the BJD has so far nominated two names. The party may come up with another name in next one to two days.

In the 2019 Rajya Sabha polls, the ruling BJD had supported Vaishnaw.

Ragging rears its ugly head at MKCG again

The Orissa HC had come down heavily on the college authorities for their failure to eradicate ragging in Sept 2023

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Feb 12: Ragging reared its ugly head at the MKCG College and Hospital here with a student's father lodging a complaint with the police. It has been alleged that the first year MBBS student sustained injuries after being thrashed by seniors. The incident took place February 9, but the matter came to the fore Monday when the victim lodged separate complaints at the Baidyanathpur police station and at the headquarters of anti-ragging cell in New Delhi.

It should be stated here that in September 2023, the Orissa High Court had come down heavily on the authorities of MKCG College and Hospital for their failure to control ragging. It had asked the authorities to ensure the safety of freshers.

Meanwhile, the Directorate of Medical Education and Training (DMET) has taken note of the latest ragging incident and have formed a four-member panel to probe into the incident.

Additional DMET, Prof Umakant Satpathy informed that as per Supreme Court guidelines, another investigation is also being undertaken by the police.

"Already there is an anti-ragging cell and authorities are taking steps. In this particular case, the institution authorities are investigating the matter along with police. Whatever comes out from the inquiries, appropriate steps will be taken," said Satpathy.

It has been alleged that the student was returning from his



rehearsal with a musical band when he was accosted and beaten up by two seniors in the medical college premises. In the process, the victim suffered injuries on his face and neck.

"The student has reported the matter to the anti-ragging cell in New Delhi which has directed to conduct a probe. A probe is being conducted and necessary action will be taken after the investigation," said Santosh Kumar Mishra, principal, MKCG Medical College here Monday. Meanwhile police have called the accused for questioning.

Interest-free loans for 2 lakh Odisha youths

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: The Odisha government announced a new scheme Monday which will facilitate self-employment among youths in the state, Chief Secretary PK Jena informed after a meeting of the Naveen Patnaik-led state Cabinet here. The scheme Swatantra Yuva Udyami (SWAYAM) will help unemployed youths in Odisha, Jena added.

It was also decided during the meeting that the Odisha government will provide one-time livelihood assistance of ₹1,000 to the beneficiary families under the public distribution system (PDS) in the state. A total of 95,90,526 families will benefit from this one-

time assistance, Jena informed. The state government will spend ₹959.05 crore to provide the one-time assistance, Jena pointed out.

Under the SWAYAM scheme, the Odisha government will provide interest free bank loans up to ₹1 lakh to the unemployed youths in the age group of 18-35 years in both rural and urban areas of the state. The Odisha government will spend ₹448 crore for this purpose, informed Jena and added that the loans will be provided to start new business or expand existing ones.

For rural areas, the income of the applicant's family should not be more than ₹2 lakh while for urban areas the ceiling is ₹3 lakh, the Chief Secretary informed.

Dine in a prison cell to lock your love

LOVE KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES AND PEOPLE IN LOVE BREAK BARRIERS ON A REGULAR BASIS TO EXPERIENCE NEW THINGS. WELL, A PRISON IN ENGLAND IS OFFERING THEM JUST THAT OPPORTUNITY

AGENCIES

London, Feb 12: The early days in a relationship are always hunky dory. Praises ooze out like poetry and the couple always seems engrossed with one another. Holding hands, visiting exotic places and spending

quality time together is the order of the day.

Things however, do change after tying the nuptial knot. The man and the woman then take each other for granted. The monotony of life then prompts many to pass 'life is like a prison' comment. Marriage responsibilities, to a certain extent, do affect romanticism.

To get over the monotony in life, a prison in the United Kingdom is offering couples to feel the 'real' jail experience on Valentine's Day (Wednesday). The Oxford prison is ready to offer a unique dining and staying experience for the 'lovebirds' so that they can experience life locked in a cell.

As per a report in *New York Post*, the caretakers of the English jail are offering adventurous couples the opportunity of fine din-



ing in a closed cell. No one will be allowed to enter the cell and the visitors will have to serve their own food and drinks.

However, it will come at a significant cost. But then the cuisine on offer will definitely be a lot better than average prison food. People can dine in a shut cell for \$215 (approximately ₹17,000).

Not only this, guests have an option to even dine in the prison cells of notorious criminals accused of murders like Mary Blandy or Anne Greene. They

can also enjoy 'the creepy, 900-year-old Norman crypt' for \$230 (approximately ₹19,000). Journalists might seek the cell of Rowland Jenkes, who was convicted of libel.

The three-course meal will take place around a table lit with candles and flowers located within the cell blocks' closed areas. Tomato tartare accompanied by charcoal crackers and aged parmesan black garlic emulsion will be served as the appetizers.

Further, there are three options for the main course: braised beef blade, short rib pierogi or miso-braised cabbage. A twice-baked cheese soufflé or a barbecued leek terrine with a white wine and watercress sauce are also available as vegetarian options. The dessert will be white chocolate mousse custard topped with raspberries.

leisure



USHER SETS OFF RUMOURS OF MARRIAGE WITH GOICOECHEA

Singer-songwriter Usher has set off rumours that he plans to marry his girlfriend Jennifer Goicoechea in secret during his trip to Las Vegas for the *Super Bowl* final. It has been learnt that the singer and his partner obtained a marriage licence in Clark County, Nevada February 8, reports *Female First UK*.

SOPHIE TURNER ENJOYS PUBLIC DATE WITH PEREGRINE PEARSON

Actress Sophie Turner has been spotted on a date night with her new boyfriend Peregrine Pearson, days after going official with their romance. The *Game of Thrones* star split from ex-husband Joe Jonas last summer after four years of marriage.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Carry the peace sign if you have to, because today, people will literally pull you into arguments. You could even be facing some kind of litigation or trouble with peace-keeping forces, warns Ganesha. Meditate, walk, or simply seek the company of friends and loved ones.

TAURUS
Your business is going to thrive this day, says Ganesha. Your plans, projections, speculations and gambles are likely to pay off and give you good dividends. You will be admired and respected in the business world for your honesty and integrity. You will be in the right frame of mind to think about expanding your business.

GEMINI
Today, you may decide to get a little more conscious about your health. Filled with positive drive, you may even plan to join a gymnasium or start taking a hard look at your calorie intake. Don't go overboard, though! You don't want to do it only today, and forget it tomorrow - plan and execute in a step-wise manner, so it doesn't get a bit too much.

CANCER
Not a good day for you in terms of fortune and opportunities. You will constantly find yourself in unwanted tricky situations without any fault of yours. You, however, are likely to know what to do in such situations by now, for you have been in too many of those in the past.

LEO
Working hard, or hardly working - there is a vast difference between the two. You would be wiser to be working hard today, especially if it is success that you desire, says Ganesha. Remember that there is no substitute for hard work, and the sooner you realise this, the better. So sweat it out today.

VIRGO
You may relieve all the tension and pressure inside you today, a day which will be full of light and relaxing moments. Ganesha foretells a beneficial and progressive day for you. You will receive many invitations to social gatherings and parties.

LIBRA
Letting things build up inside you is never a good idea. Learn from this as there is every possibility that today might turn out to be an aggravating and exasperating day for you. You may feel that way due to all the amassed emotions and resentments, so let it all go. It would be a good idea to take a break from the routine and bring in some freshness.

SCORPIO
Ganesha predicts today will be a day full of focus and a clear thought process. The clarity of thought you have been acquired over a period of time, says Ganesha, and that could make all the difference. A crisp application of thoughts to ideas and actions will bring much appreciation from bosses and peers.

SAGITTARIUS
The winds of fortune will usher in your dreams and make them come true. Be careful not to go overboard with your foresightedness, lest they be marked delusions, warns Ganesha. You must realise that the only thing permanent is change, and hence, you must overcome any disappointment with strong will and determination.

CAPRICORN
It may seem too far-fetched, but your boss will bank on your brilliance and unmatched abilities to get respite from the existing problems, says Ganesha. Moreover, much to the dismay of your rivals, you will have your way and gain popularity by winning the hearts of your clients.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will iron out any trouble with ease. But you may choose to play martyr and shoulder a bit of blame. That's quite a lot to do for others, even if it is done out of compassion. You may think you are setting standards for others to follow, says Ganesha, but that may not be the case.

PISCES
Needless rigidity only serves to imprison you within outmoded walls of faulty reasoning. Inculcating some flexibility will give you some much-needed wriggle room to manoeuvre things your way for good, says Ganesha.

Elli embraces India as home

Mumbai: Actor Elli AvrRam, says the biggest challenge she faced in the Indian film industry was to break the perception that she could only do "glamorous roles and dance numbers." She told us, "it's just that the opportunities to do something more raw and unglamorous were less."

AvrRam, who has Swedish-Greek roots, entered the Indian showbiz in 2013, and has been part of films *Mickey Virus* (2013), *Kis Kisiko Pyaar Karoon* (2015), *Jabariya Jodi* (2019), *Malang* (2020), *Goodbye* (2022) and *Ganpath* (2023). "To be honest I have embraced India completely as my home. I will fight with anyone who speaks bad about it," the 33-year-old said.

AvrRam is currently travelling across India to shoot her show *India With Elli AvrRam* season 2. Speaking

on her latest pitstop Ayodhya where she visited the Ram Mandir, the actor shared that she was amazed to see the devotion in the air, where the Ram Mandir was inaugurated amid fanfare recently.

She said, "Lord Ram is beautiful, I just wanted to stand and watch him. Hearing the crowd go 'Jai Shree Ram', was really cool to witness. Watching documentaries or films will only give you little understanding. It's very different when you are actually there physically in all your senses. I've always had curiosity regarding Hinduism and ancient knowledge."

Her last release *Conjuring Kannappan* (2023) received positive reviews.



Mumbai: Renowned singer Usha Uthup has taken the internet by storm with her captivating cover of Miley Cyrus' hit song *Flowers*, for which the pop sensation even won a Grammy this year. The Indian music icon's rendition of the song has gone viral, garnering praise and admiration from fans.



Usha hopes to collab with Miley



Overwhelmed by the responses, Uthup shares, "I am so thrilled and grateful to the people for loving my version as well. I just sang the song because my daughter Anjali introduced me to it randomly one day. When I heard it, I just loved the song so much."

Describing the widespread appeal of her version, Uthup tells us, "I've been singing it in all my shows and everybody loves it so much. I was so excited to know that my cover version is being appreciated like this."

Expressing her admiration for Miley Cyrus and her recent Grammy win for the song, the 76-year-old says, "I am so excited for Miley Cyrus for getting the Grammy for this song. I can't wait for her to listen to the song and I hope she would like it. I am sure we will work together very soon."

WHEN ALIA OPENED UP ABOUT HER BAD DATE

Mumbai: Alia Bhatt has had enough of the craze around Valentine's Day. The actor had shared that she finds the day "overrated" when she had come on the celebrity talk show *Koffee With Karan* a decade ago.

In the episode that aired in 2014, Alia appeared on the show with actor Parineeti Chopra. When Karan asked them about being single, Alia shared that she is okay to be single but feels bad when it's a holiday and she is surrounded by couples. She then added, "Valentine's Day is really overrated!"

When Karan said that she was saying so because she doesn't have a boyfriend, Alia said, "No! Valentine's Day and New Year's. Once my boyfriend took me out on Valentine's Day and he didn't talk to me the whole time. So I

think it is overrated."

When Karan and Parineeti asked why and wanted to know what exactly happened, Alia added, "Didn't do anything, we were just small. We were young." Parineeti interrupted with a joke and said, "I think that's why he didn't talk to you because you didn't do anything!" Alia Bhatt tied the knot with Ranbir Kapoor tied the knot April 14, 2022 and turned parents to daughter Raha November 6, 2022.

Meanwhile, a viral edited photo which features the late Rishi Kapoor with his granddaughter Raha Bhatt Kapoor has gone viral on internet.



BHARAT RANG MAHOTSAV - DAY 5



A scene from Hindi play *Naagmandal* presented by the artistes of Black Pearl Arts troupe of New Delhi at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Monday. Written by legendary playwright Girish Karnad and directed by eminent dramatist Satyabrata Rout, the famous play exposed the exploitation of women in Indian society. The six-day event is being organised by the National School of Drama, New Delhi in collaboration with Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi to popularise theatre across several cities of India.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

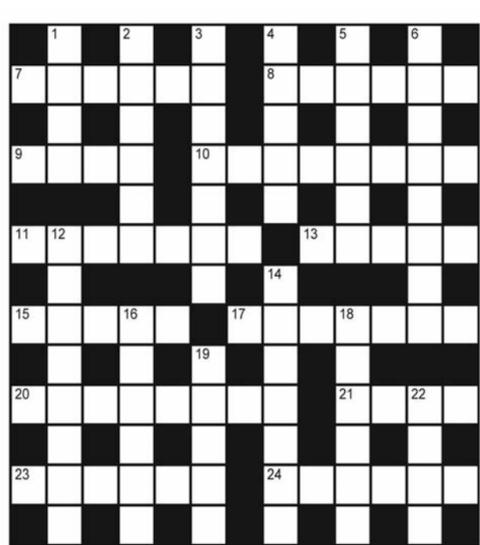


BREVITY



FUN post

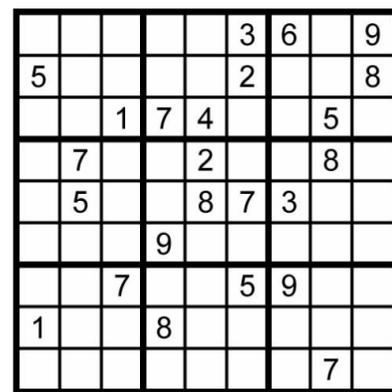
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Ravel classic
 - 8 Layered
 - 9 Sitar music
 - 10 Coalition
 - 11 Infatuated
 - 13 Feign
 - 15 Run off together
 - 17 Squirm
 - 20 Mammoth
 - 21 Nothing
 - 23 Detective
 - 24 Hairy
 - 5 Remember
 - 6 Compassionate
 - 12 Reproduce
 - 14 Golden Rule, e.g.
 - 16 Oil source
 - 18 Chug-a-lug
 - 19 Fidgety
 - 22 Catch one's breath
- Down**
- 1 Roman wrap
 - 2 Retract
 - 3 Traveller
 - 4 Bikini, for one

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

CABINET NOD TO BRIDGE ON MAHANADI

BHUBANESWAR: The much-awaited second high level bridge on River Mahanadi connecting Baunsuni in Boudh district with Biramaharajpur in Subarnapur district is set to be completed in a record 36 months, the state Cabinet said Monday. The project will benefit people residing on both sides of the river by providing direct connectivity and economic opportunity. A press release issued by the government stated that the construction of the bridge under State Plan during 2023-24 has been awarded to RKD Constructions Pvt. Ltd at ₹105,70,99,350 following bidding for a tender issued for the purpose, the release added.

CM launches LAccMI in 5 more dists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched affordable bus service under LAccMI (Location Accessible Multimodal Initiative) in Bolangir, Bargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh districts through video conferencing from the Capital City here, Monday.

With this, the state government's ambitious initiative has covered 14 districts.

Speaking on the occasion, Patnaik said his government is committed to people and it launches schemes keeping the aspirations of the public in mind.

After the visit of 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian and officials of the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) to various districts, the government felt the problems faced by the people, and as per their suggestions, the roadmap for the bus service was prepared to provide communication facilities to people in rural areas, he said.

After Monday's launch, 425 buses will ply on different routes in 1,457 panchayats of the five districts. The move will benefit more than 90 lakh people in these districts. Altogether 68 buses (57 non-AC and 11 AC) will ply across Bargarh district, connecting 243 gram panchayats and 11 blocks. It will benefit more than 14 lakh people in the district.

In Bolangir, a fleet of 55 buses (42 non-AC and 13 AC) will improve connectivity across 11 blocks and 317 gram panchayats, benefiting almost 16 lakh people.



CONNECTIVITY BOOST: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, in presence of 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian, flags off LAccMI bus service in Bolangir, Bargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh districts through video conferencing from Bhubaneswar, Monday



OP PHOTO

STATE GOVERNMENT'S AFFORDABLE BUS SERVICE NOW COVERS 14 DISTRICTS

As many as 130 buses (104 non-AC and 26 AC) will connect 386 gram panchayats and 26 blocks in Mayurbhanj district, benefiting at least 24 lakh people.

In Sundargarh district, a fleet of 81 (65 non-AC and 16 AC) buses will ply across 240 gram panchayats and 17 blocks under the scheme. Similarly, 91 buses (78 non-AC and 13 AC) will boost connectivity across 271 gram panchayats and 13 blocks of

Keonjhar. The affordable bus services will benefit more than 35 lakh people in the two districts. The CM also said, "Our aim is to make panchayat the epicentre of development and strengthen rural economy. LAccMI bus service will play an important role in this direction."

The LAccMI bus service connecting one village with another will strengthen social connect as well as the economy of the state, he added. Patnaik said the service will help connect children to schools and colleges, farmers to markets. Women, students and differently-abled persons can use the bus service by paying only Rs 5 as fare, he maintained.

The affordable bus service was first launched in Malkangiri district October 12, 2023. It was later extended to Gajapati district (October 20), Kalahandi district (November 1), Rayagada district (November 25), Nabarangpur district (November 30), Koraput district (December 14).

The services were further extended to Deogarh, Angul and Dhenkanal districts January 31. As per plans, LAccMI will cover all 30 districts of the state by end of this month.

Staff crunch cripples Vigilance Forest wing

SATYAJIT ROUT, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: The Forest wing of state Vigilance department - which has been functioning since 1979 - is presently grappling with severe manpower crunch that has hindered effective action against smuggling of forest produce and minerals.

According to sources, the primary role of the Forest wing is to stop smuggling of forest produce and minerals while simultaneously giving technical assistance to the Vigilance in regard to cases pertaining to agriculture and forest.

The sources also said that the Forest wing officials are deputed from the Vigilance department. The wing, under the Directorate of Vigilance, is split into two ranges - Southern range and Northern range. While Southern range covers Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Berhampur divisions, Sambalpur, Balasore, Koraput and Rourkela divisions fall under Northern range.

Initially, a deputy superintendent of police (DSP)-rank official was heading the Forest wing which was headquartered in Cuttack. Each unit of the Forest wing was having a ranger, forester and a guard. However, in subsequent years, some structural changes were effected as per the decision of the Vigilance and Forest department.

Consequently, one forester and two guards were appointed under the deputy conservator of forests (DCF).

However, it is a matter of grave concern that the Forest wing is presently gasping for life, while it has no presence in Rourkela. This apart, ACF and ranger posts in Sambalpur, Berhampur and Koraput division units are lying vacant.

Similarly, forest guards have not been deployed in Balasore and Cuttack units, while the situation in Bhubaneswar unit is no different. Moreover, Berhampur and Koraput units are manned by only one forester and guard each while Sambalpur unit is having only one forester.

According to sources, the Vigilance directorate has instructed all its Forest wing units to register at least 180 cases with regard to smuggling of forest produce and minerals. But the target has remained a distant dream, thanks to severe manpower crunch.

The situation has come to such a pass that officials and employees of Cuttack unit are helping in the raids conducted by Balasore, Berhampur and Bhubaneswar units.

As per data, the Forest wing had registered 90 cases in 2017, 122 in 2018, 146 in 2019, 96 in 2020, 88 in 2021, 140 in 2022 and 114 in 2023.

Vigilance Director Yashwant Jethwa said, "Recruitments to the vacant posts in this wing is a continuous process. The directorate has sent a proposal to the government in this regard and the vacant posts will be filled in coming days."

DSPL-648

Nua-0 State Level Cricket Competition

Shree Jagannath Cricket Stadium, Puri

13 February, 2024

Women's Final
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Balangir

Vs

Nabarangpur

Men's Final
02:00 PM to 04:00 PM

Kendrapada

Vs

Nayagarh

Shri Naveen Patnaik
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

Amount of Cash Awards to Winning Teams

Cash Award in Rs.	
Champion Team Prize	₹2.00 lakhs
Runner Up Prize Money	₹1.00 lakh
3rd & 4th Prize	₹50,000/-
Best Player of the Tournament	₹10,000/-

OIPR-2900/1/13/0230/2324

Naveen launches 87 transformed schools

Addressing the students, the Chief Minister explained the importance of 5T values while also advising them to implement these values in their lives to achieve success



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday inaugurated 87 transformed schools in Jajpur districts on last day of 4th phase of the state government's ambitious school transformation programme under the 5T Initiative. 5T and Nabin Odisha chairman Kartik Pandian was also present during the event.

During the fourth phase of the programme, a total of 1,794 schools across the state were transformed with modern infrastructure. With completion

During the fourth phase of the school transformation programme, a total of 1,794 schools across the state were transformed with modern infrastructure

With completion of this phase, a total of 8,681 schools in Odisha have been transformed through the 5T Initiative

the collective mindset of our society. The transformation of schools has paved the way for the new awakening in the Odia people. Starting from schools, colleges, hospitals, tourist areas, monasteries, temples, panchayats and villages, the work of transformation is going on everywhere. This transformation is paving the way for building a New Odisha, a strong Odisha," Patnaik said.

He added that the most important and best among these transformation programmes is the school transformation program as the future of a nation is built in its schools.

Addressing the students, the Chief Minister explained the importance of 5T values while advising them to implement these values in their lives to achieve success.

of this phase, a total of 8,681 schools in Odisha have been transformed through the 5T Initiative.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that the transformed schools have all the facilities and opportunities for successful future of the children. Patnaik expressed strong hope and confidence that the children of today will help build the 'New Odisha,' a stronger Odisha in the coming days.

The CM further said that Odisha is going through an era of transformation. "Education is what elevates

UU TO HOST INTER-VARSITY ATHLETIC MEET FROM FEB 15

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: The Utkal University in Bhubaneswar will host the inter-university athletic competition from February 15 to February 19.

The event will be organised by department of Higher Education, state Higher Education Council and Utkal University. It will be funded and curated by the state government.

Briefing the media, Utkal University VC Sabita Acharya said that the competition will be held at the Biju Patnaik Sports Complex of Utkal University and Kalinga Stadium.

More than 1,000 students from 38 public and private universities will participate in the competition. The competition will feature javelin throw, discus throw, shot put, high jump and long jump, 100, 200, 400 and 1500 metre race, hurdles and relay races.

Two students from a university can participate in each event. They can be accompanied by their coaches and teachers. Cultural programmes will also be organised every evening during the sports meet.

The first day of the event will be graced by Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak, Minister of Higher Education, Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Co-operation. Aravind Agarwal, Commissioner-Secretary, department of Higher Education will be the guest of honour. Anuradha Biswal, Odia Olympian who represents the spirit of Indian sports at the global level will also be present on the occasion.

16th Foundation Day at IIT Bhub

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar observed its 16th Foundation Day, Monday. The commemoration was to celebrate the foundation stone laying of the campus of the Institute at Argul in February 12, 2009.

To mark the occasion, a special interactive session with the first regular director of IIT Bhubaneswar, Madhusudan Chakraborty was organised for

the members of the faculty and staff of the institute.

IIT Bhubaneswar director Shreepad Karmalkar welcomed and introduced Chakraborty. He briefly described the history of the institute and the campus of IIT Bhubaneswar.

Addressing the gathering, Chakraborty shared his experience in the establishment of IIT Bhubaneswar and the efforts made towards the development of the dedicated campus of the Institute.



RAISING VOICE: Members of All Odisha Hindi Teacher Aspirants' Association stage a demonstration at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar seeking fulfillment of their demands, Monday

384 appointment letters distributed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Monday distributed appointment letters to 384 youths of Odisha as part of the Rozgar Mela launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Pradhan congratulated the newly-inducted recruits who have achieved success after hard work.

Rozgar Mela, which was launched under the inspiration and guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, provides an opportunity to empower youths to directly participate in the development of the nation, he said, adding, that the hard work of



the recruited youths will take the country forward.

Pradhan said that India has a strong economy due to the dy-

namic leadership of PM Modi, and added, "India has become the fifth largest economy in the world and is poised to become the third

largest economy by another three years."

Nowadays, skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling have become a routine programme. New technologies are evolving with time. The digital world is taking India forward, he said.

The Union Education minister said, "By 2047, when India will be moving towards the goal of a developed nation, the newly recruited candidates need to make efforts from today itself to multiply their skills during the next 25 years."

In 2036, Odisha will celebrate 100 years of its formation as a linguistic-based separate state. India will develop only if Odisha develops, he added.

COMMUNICATION WOES IN KORAPUT

NHRC seeks report from Chief Secy

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought an action-taken report (ATR) from the Odisha Chief Secretary and Koraput District Magistrate over the allegations of government apathy towards the plight of residents of three blocks in tribal-dominated Koraput district, who are facing many hardships due to lack of communication facilities.

Acting on a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy,

the apex rights body asked the Chief Secretary and the District Collector to submit the ATR within four weeks.

Tripathy in his petition said that the locals, who are residing in different villages living across Koraput, Lamatapat and Nandapur blocks are crossing Kolab reservoir through a dilapidated bridge risking their lives.

He further asserted that hundreds of habitations situated near Kolab reservoir remain cut off from the mainland due to submergence after heavy rainfall.

Bodasuku and Lankaput gram panchayats are situated just a few

kilometres away from the district headquarters of Koraput.

"Earlier acting on a petition filed by me in 2015, the NHRC asked the district administration to file an enquiry report after it found the ATR was unsatisfactory Pursuant thereto, August 9, 2017, enquiry was conducted and concluded that the bridge is necessary. However, despite the administration's admission and assurance to this commission after enquiry, no concrete steps have been taken by the district administration to construct a bridge over Kolab river to

Suku," Tripathy alleged.

There is no all-weather road in the area so the locals are facing extreme difficulties during emergencies like health complications and fire incidents which get aggravated due to lack of communication facilities in the area.

Stating the bridge between Suku and Koraput in Kolab region can allow road connectivity to these cut-off areas and improve access to communication, health, education and other facilities, Tripathy requested the NHRC for action on a war footing.

Habitats to prevent man-elephant conflict

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: To prevent human-elephant conflict, Voices for Asian Elephants (VFAE), a California-based elephant conservation organisation, has planted over 20,000 fruit trees and dug seven large water holes in partnership with the local conservation group Paribartan in Balasore and Angul districts that can support around 210 elephants.

VFAE founder and filmmaker Sangita Iyer said, "We employed the local tribal people in our efforts to empower them economically, while soliciting their cooperation in helping alleviate human elephant conflict, avert tragedies, and ultimately foster a peaceful coexistence."

"Distressed elephants are entering villages for food and water by crossing major highways. This is intensifying human-elephant conflict and has caused a staggering number of elephant deaths. Restoring degraded habitats with favored elephant plant species and creating waterholes in their habitats can prevent them from crossing treacherous roads," she said.

She added, "The project's goal is to ensure availability of sufficient fodder and water in core elephant habitats by growing nurseries of elephant favoured plants such as Bauhinia vines, jackfruit and mango, monitoring them until maturity, while at the same time also creating water bodies in core forests."

In its initiatives, the organisation is employing Tribal people from the region, by training them in environmental conservation to create sustainable human habitations in elephant corridors. As per Iyer, this innovative initiative will mitigate human-elephant conflict by re-



ducing animosity and fostering harmonious coexistence.

Iyer also mentioned that they had a meeting with the state government and with officials of the Forest, Environment and Climate Change department about starting a pilot project under which the department will use VFAE's state-of-the-art EleSense technology to prevent elephant deaths on train tracks.

EleSense, a sensor-based early warning system, is designed with siren, light and GPS modules by indigenous tech experts. It cautions train drivers of elephant presence, giving them enough time to apply brakes and prevent tragedies. The system is resistant to damage from the elements and wildlife, thus cutting down maintenance costs, and protecting the capital investment.

VFAE had earlier implemented this system in West Bengal where 627 elephant deaths were averted by the state-of-the-art EleSense technology.

The group has also installed reflective road signage in 8 elephant crossing zones in collaboration with Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI) and has installed barricades around 100 open wells after conducting field studies on live wires in the forests to prevent elephant electrocution.

SJTA finalises temple schedule

AGENCIES

Puri, Feb 12: The Anasari ritual of Lord Jagannath and sibling deities Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra will be observed for 13 days, instead of 15 days, this year, as per the almanac.

Usually Anasari ritual is observed for a fortnight before the commencement of the annual Rath Yatra.

Important rituals like 'Ubha Yatra' and 'Netra Utshav' will be performed simultaneously. Deities will appear in new youthful images and priests will perform the required rituals of the Besha sans public darshan.

The birthday of Lord Hanuman on 'Pana Sankranti' will be observed April 14 at Srimandir.

Temple sources said 'Panchuka', the last five days of Kartik Brat, has been reduced to four days. As a result, one ceremonial Laxmi-Nrusingh Vasha, which is regularly observed on the 15th day of the Panchuka, has been dispensed with.



The presiding deities of the Sri Jagannath temple are dressed in five different 'Beshas' on these last five days of Panchuka during the holy 'Kartik' month.

Srimandir records reflect that a similar astronomical conjunction was experienced in 1959-60 and 1971-72.

The Sri Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) had then resolved to follow the procedures

adopted in observance of rituals of lord Jagannath and his siblings.

The temple administration has approved these new calculations after much hue and cry among devotees over the confusion regarding the observation of festivals as almost all Panzikas differ from one another.

Sri Jagannath temple administration organised a meeting of all Panzika (almanac) publishing houses and Panzeeekars (astrologers) of the state including Panjeeekar of the Srimandir Monday to sort out anomalies that have confused devotees.

Prafulla Mishra, secretary of Mukti Mandap Pandit Sabha, astrologer Nilamadhab Dash, M K Bisi the publisher of the astrological journal Bhagyaliipi, Jagannath Rath Sharma editor of G N Tripathy publication, Dolagobind Panda Panzikar of Samant Chandrasekhar Panzika, and Baikunthnath Nayak a noted astrologer participated in the meeting.

'Fisheries key in multiplying income'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: A significant number of people in rural Odisha depend on fisheries and animal husbandry for livelihood and income generation. Fisheries and Animal Resources Development sector acts as a key player in multiplying farmers' income in the state, said Ranendra Pratap Swain, Minister, Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, Fisheries and ARD.

As a measure of educating farmers on enhanced production and productivity through adoption of modern technology in fisheries and animal husbandry sector, Fisheries and Animal Resources Development department is organising a state-level 'Matsya Pranees Samavesh Odisha (MPSO-2024)'.

Swain said that the Samavesh with the theme 'Multiplying Farmers' Income through Fisheries and Animal Husbandry' shall be held for three days from February 16 to 18 at Janata Maidan.

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Gupteswar forest declared as 4th Biodiversity Heritage Site



PHOTO: PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: The state government has declared Gupteswar Forest - adjacent to the famous Gupteswar Shiva shrine in Dhondrakhol reserve forest in Koraput district - as the fourth Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) of Odisha.

The government has also asked the Odisha Biodiversity Board to prepare a long term action plan for the intensive conservation and development of all the four biodiversity heritage sites including Gupteswar forest.

The government has provided ₹35 lakh for preparation of action plan and awareness building activities in the localities.

Along with its sacred grooves traditionally worshipped by the local community, the site, spread over 350 hectares of demarcated area, is bestowed with a wide range of flora and fauna.

"Biodiversity inventory and survey conducted by the Odisha Biodiversity Board shows the presence of at least 608 faunal species including 28 species of mammals, 188 species of birds, 18 species of amphibians, 48 species of reptiles, 45 species of pisces, 141 species of butterflies, 43 species of moths, 41 species of odonates, 30 species of spiders,

182 species of scorpion, and 20 species of lower invertebrates," official sources added.

The board during its survey has also documented the presence of significant faunal species like mugger crocodile, Kanger Valley rock gecko, sacred grove bush frog, and avifauna like black baza, Jerdon's baza, Malabar trogon, common hill myna, white-bellied woodpecker, and banded bay cuckoo, etc.

The limestone caves of Gupteswar are inhabited by eight species of bats out of the total 16 species found in southern Odisha. Among them, two species *Hipposideros galeritus* and *Rhinolophus rouxi* are under the near threatened category of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

This site also boasts of rich floral diversity including 182 species of trees, 76 species of shrubs, 177 species of herbs, 69 species of climbers, 14 species of orchids and threatened medicinal plants like Indian trumpet tree, Indian snake root, Cumbi gum tree, Garlic pear tree, Chinese fever vine, Rohituka tree, Jodpakli, Indian jointfir, and a number of wild crop relatives of ginger and turmeric.

In addition to this, many agriculturally and industrially important micro-organisms have also been found to exist in this primeval ecosystem.

The other three biodiversity heritage sites include Mandasaru Hills in Kandhamal district, Mahendragiri Hills in Gajapati district and Gandhamardan Hills in Bolangir and Bargarh districts.

Minor girl critical after firecracker explodes in mouth

POST NEWS NETWORK

Ghasipura, Feb 12: A girl aged around six years sustained critical injuries Monday after a live firecracker, which she chewed during play, went off in her mouth at Duarasuni village under Mahuladiha police limits bordering Anandapur in Keonjhar district.

The injured girl was identified as the daughter of Pakan Kudada, a native of the village. The incident occurred when the kid was playing along with her friends outside her house. She found a firecracker lying on the ground and put it inside her mouth. However, the live firecracker exploded inside her mouth when she chewed it, leaving her critically injured.

Family members and villagers rescued the girl and rushed her in a 108-ambulance to Anandapur Sub-Divisional Hospital. Doctors at the hospital administered her primary treatment but shifted her to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Postgraduate Institute of Paediatrics (Sishu Bhawan) in Cuttack after her health condition deteriorated.



PHOTO: PNN & AGENCIES

Double whammy for Sundargarh Congress

POST NEWS NETWORK



Recently appointed Sundargarh DCC chief has been removed and the party's Rourkela women cell chief has resigned

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Feb 12: With the elections around the corner, the Congress party in Sundargarh district has received two big jolts in quick succession. While the District Congress Committee (DCC) chief has been removed, one ad-hoc president has been appointed as his replacement. At the same time, another leading member, the president of the party's women wing here has resigned.

Just five days after the 'successful' Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra of Rahul Gandhi, DCC chief Rashmi Padhi has been removed. In his place a former chief Rabi Rai has been appointed as the ad-hoc president. Observers feel

this move may prove costly to the party's already sinking fortune.

Meanwhile, Nirupama Baliyarsingh, the president of Mahila Congress Committee of Rourkela, resigned from her post and the party Monday. She has blamed the leadership and its activities at Rourkela for her move. They have deviated from the basic philosophy and ideals of the party and this was visible during Rahul Gandhi's visit to Rourkela, she said. More than 80 per cent cadres during the yatra were from outside the district, she said. This shows the inefficiency of the leadership here. That is why Rahul Gandhi, instead of undertaking padyatra, preferred to travel in a four-wheeler. "Besides, I am facing a lot of opposition for speaking straight, which has put many in the party in an awkward position," she added.

Padhi's removal is seen as fallout of his direct refusal to PCC on some accounts. Speaking over the phone Padhi said, "I am with the party and will work for it despite my removal. I am a fighter and have faced many tough situations so I accept this as a challenge." He expressed his ignorance about the possible reasons for his removal. "The PCC has removed 13 DCCs at one go and I am one of them, so cannot tell anything about my removal," said Padhi.

Man held for duping job seekers of lakhs

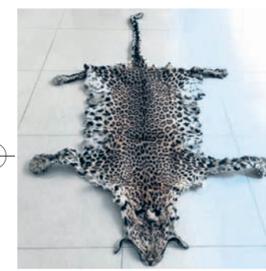
POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Feb 12: Koraput cyber police Monday arrested a fraudster from West Bengal for allegedly duping many youths online of lakhs of rupees by giving false ads in the pretext of providing jobs for installation of ATM counters. Police also seized ₹2 lakh in cash and three mobile phones from the possession of the accused.

As per reports, the accused Malaya Maitree had given a false advertisement regarding candidates required for ATM counter installation. Some individuals then called the accused to know the details of the advertisement. The job-seekers were then told that they needed to provide a location and select people for setting up an ATM counter. They were also told to pay for providing ownership of the ATM counter. However, after getting money from them, the accused did not provide them any job and started avoiding them.

Malaya, using such tactics, has duped many youths online of lakhs of rupees. The matter came to the fore when Manasi Mishra, a victim from Borigumma area in Koraput, registered a written complaint with Koraput cyber police. Acting on the complaint, police registered a case and as per the direction of the Superintendent of Police, Koraput, a team of cyber police tracked the mobile phone of the accused and arrested him from West Bengal.

Leopard hide seized; one arrested



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: One person was arrested and a leopard skin seized from his possession in Kandhamal district Monday, police said.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of Special Task Force of Odisha Police and Forest officials conducted a raid at Daringbadi Ghati in Daringbadi police station area. A leopard skin and a coun-

try-made pistol were seized from the wildlife criminal, identified as 35-year-old Gheneswar Pradhan of Gohibadi village in Kandhamal district, an STF officer said.

A case was registered under sections of the Indian Penal Code, Arms Act, 1959 and Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, he said, adding further investigation is underway.

The accused person was arrested as he could not produce any authority in support of the possession of leopard skin and country-made pistol and will be forwarded to the Court of JMFC, Daringbadi.

STF sources said the seized tiger skin will be sent to Director, WII, Dehradun for biological examination and the seized country made pistol will be sent to SFSL, Rasulgarh here for ballistic examination.

U'khand team visits model gram sabhas in Puri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: A 35-member team of Haridwar Zilla Panchayat in Uttarakhand visited Raghurajpur panchayat and Danda Mukundpur Gram Sabha in Puri district as part of an exposure visit to gain firsthand knowledge about the development and planning of gram sabhas, sources said Monday.

The visit was organised under the leadership of Nidhi Yadav, Director, Directorate of Panchayati Raj, Uttarakhand. Nodal officer Aslam Ali accompanied the team during the visit organised for the elected representatives to learn about the development works being done in model panchayats in various states of the country and implement the same in their area. Ali said that it was a five-day ex-



PHOTO: PNN & AGENCIES

posure visit-cum-residential training programme under Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA). At the outset, the team members visited Raghurajpur panchayat in Puri district, which holds a special place in the cultural and artistic map of India. There are 160 model houses in this area. They are decorated with folk paintings. A shopping complex has been built in the

include a children's playground and a gym. The members also watched Gotipua folk dance here and encouraged the artistes. Raghurajpur panchayat is also famous for Padma Vibhushan Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra and Shilpi Guru Jagannath Mohapatra, who is known for propagating Patta art. The members then visited Durgadaspur gram sabha where they were welcomed by the vil-

lage head Bibhuti Bhuvan Nath. He took the members around the village and showed them the hi-tech panchayat and library buildings. Nath also showed them the local haat built near the panchayat building.

Later, they visited Danda Mukundpur gram sabha, located five kilometres from Durgadaspur and took stock of the panchayat building, open gymnasium, market complex and a modern park. The team members also visited Srimandir at Puri and the Sun Temple at Konark.

The Directorate of Panchayati Raj, Uttarakhand and Rajendra Singh, President of Haridwar Zilla Panchayat, have expressed their thanks to the Director, SIRD & PR, Odisha and Deputy Director Amita Patra for their cooperation and support in making the visit successful.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender No. ST-01-TRANSIT-ORH-502, Dt: 06.02.2024

NAME OF WORK: (i) TELECOM WORK AT TRANSIT REST HOUSE AT RAILKUNJ, CHANDRASEKHARPUR, BHUBANESWAR. (ii) PROVISION OF FOIS CONNECTIVITY AT BBMT SIDING FOR INTEGRATION OF EIMWB WITH FOIS IN MCL SIDING OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION. (iii) TELECOM WORK AT PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF OFFICERS REST HOUSE AT CUTTACK OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION. (iv) TELECOM RELATED ITEMS AT CONFERENCE HALL, DRM OFFICE OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

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Court lays strict conditions for release of 'cocaine ship'

PNN & AGENCIES

Paradip, Feb 12: A court in Jagatsinghpur district Monday laid stringent conditions, including a bond of ₹100 crore along with a bank guarantee of ₹10 crore, for the release of cargo ship MV Devi, from which cocaine worth ₹220 crore was

seized in December last year, lawyers said.

The conditions were laid by the NDPS court in Kujang while hearing the case of the seizure of 20 packets of cocaine from the ship at Paradip International Cargo Terminal (PICT) berth.

Following court proceedings, the ship's release

is contingent upon the fulfilment of these financial obligations by the shipping agency, they said.

In one of the biggest drug hauls in state, Customs officials seized 22 kg of cocaine, estimated to be worth around ₹220 crore in the international market, from the container ship at Paradip

Port December 1 last year. The bulk carrier arrived at Paradip Port from Indonesia and was about to depart for Denmark. All 21 Vietnamese crew members have been detained on the ship, which is currently anchored some four-five km from the port under the supervision of the Customs department.

SURYO FOODS & INDUSTRIES LIMITED
Regd. Office: A-54/1 & A-55/1, Dinalipi Bawan, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar-751003
Email: suryofoods.industries@gmail.com, web site: www.suryofoods.com, CIN - L05004OR1989PLC002264

Extract of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine months ended 31st December, 2023
(Rs. in 'Thousands', Except EPS)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Nine Month Ended		Year Ended
		31.12.2023 (Unaudited)	30.09.2023 (Unaudited)	31.12.2022 (Unaudited)	31.12.2023 (Unaudited)	31.12.2022 (Unaudited)	31.03.2023 (Audited)
1	Total Income	2,507	2,561	704	15,813	2,133	4,247
2	Net Profit / (Loss) (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	1,573	1,632	(442)	12,576	(2,844)	(1,614)
3	Net Profit / (Loss) before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	1,573	1,632	(442)	12,576	(2,844)	(1,614)
4	Net Profit / (Loss) after Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	1,573	1,632	(442)	12,576	(2,844)	(1,604)
5	Total Comprehensive Income [Comprising Profit / (Loss) after Tax and Other Comprehensive Income after tax]	1,573	1,632	(442)	12,576	(2,844)	(1,604)
6	Equity Share Capital (Face Value of Rs. 10/- each)	39,600	39,600	39,600	39,600	39,600	39,600
7	Reserves (Excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of P. Y.	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Earnings per share (of Rs.10/- each) Basic & Diluted (Rs.)	0.40	0.41	(0.11)	3.18	(0.72)	(0.41)

Note:
a) The above Unaudited financial results of the Company for the Quarter and Nine months ended 31st December, 2023 have been reviewed and recommended by the audit committee and approved by the Board of Directors of the Company in their respective board meetings held on 12th February, 2024. These results are being published in accordance with Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015.
b) The above is an extract of the detailed format of Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine months ended 31st December, 2023 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine months ended 31st December, 2023, are available on the website of the Stock Exchanges - www.bseindia.com and on the website of the Company - www.suryofoods.com.

For Suryo Foods & Industries Limited
Sd./- Amarendra Dash
(Chairman Cum Managing Director)

Place: Bhubaneswar
Date: 12th February, 2024

Central Bank of India
Regional Office: Sambalpur, Quantum Building, Farm Road, P.O.: Modipara, Sambalpur - 768002, Phone: 0663-2533091/2522954, Email: cm1sambro@centralbank.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE
(For Immovable Property)
[See Rule 8(1)]

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Central Bank of India under the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 & in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice to the concerned Borrower on the date mentioned against their names, calling upon them to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Said Rules on the date mentioned against the accounts. The Borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the said property and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the charge of the Central Bank of India, for the amount stated below with further interest and cost thereon.

The borrower's attention is hereby invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of the time available to redeem the secured assets.

LATHORE BRANCH/ Name and Address of Borrower	Amount in Demand Notice	Date of Demand / Possession Notice	Description of Mortgaged Property
Borrower: Mr. Rashmi Ranjan Sadangi, S/o: Mr. Trinath Sadangi, At: Lathore (Shivmandirpada), P.O.: Harishankar Road, P.S.: Lathore, Dist.: Bolangir-767038	₹ 19,79,510/- as on 06.05.2023 plus interest, other charges & expenses thereon	06.05.2023 / 06.02.2024	All that part and parcel of property consisting of Land and Building at Mouza: Lathore, Khata No.: 288/546, Plot No.: 2839/2883, having an Area: Ac.0.050 Dec, Tahasil: Knaprakhol, Dist.: Bolangir, Odisha, standing in the name of Mr. Rashmi Ranjan Sadangi, S/o: Mr. Trinath Sadangi, Bounded by East: Land of Rabi Sahu, West: Land of Ganeswar Thanapati, North: Road, South: Land of Rabi Sahu

Place: Sambalpur, Date: 12.02.2024
Sd/- Authorised Officer, Central Bank of India

Bank of India
Zonal Office : Bhubaneswar Zone, 1/1D, Star House, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, Mob.: 8337911737

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE
E-Auction Sale Notice under SARFAESI ACT, 2002

Whereas the Bank acting through its Authorised Officer in exercise of its powers under-Section 13(4) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI) has decided to put up for E-auction of the following properties for realization of the debts due to the Bank.

Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrowers / Guarantors / Total Dues	Description of the Properties	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount
1.	POKHARIPUT BRANCH, Ph.9731325932 Borrower/Mortgagor: Mrs Pratima Sahoo, W/o: Mr Prasanta Kumar Sahoo, Borrower: Mr Prasanta Kumar Sahoo, S/o: Mr Raghunath Sahoo, both are residing At Plot No.512, Jagamara Tala Sahi, Po.- Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khurda, Pin- 751030 . Total Dues: 26,44,330.98P+ Interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid .	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Khata No.1133/3645, Plot No.727/6606 (Area: Ac.0.017 dec.) & 727/6951 (Area: Ac.0.003 dec.), Total Area: Ac.0.020 dec., (871.2 sqft), Mouza: Jagamara, Unit: 20, Tahasil: Bhubaneswar, SRO: Khandagiri, Dist: Khurda, in the name of Mrs Pratima Sahoo, W/o: Mr Prasanta Kumar Sahoo, Bounded by North- Plot No.726, South- Revenue part of the Plot No.728, East- Rest part of the Plot No.727 West- Road .	Rs.31,36,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / Rs.3,13,600/- / Rs.50,000/-
2.	BHUBANESWAR SME BRANCH, Ph.9937640878 Borrower/Mortgagor: Mrs Rina Barik, W/o: Mr Sanjay Kumar Barik, Co-Applicant: Mr Sanjay Kumar Barik, S/o: Mr Niranjan Barik, both are residing At: Umadeibrahmapur, PO.: Baliana, Dist: Khurda, Pin-752100 . Total Dues: 16,85,211.57P+ Interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid .	All that piece and parcel of the Land and Building situated at Khata No.145/110, Plot No.128, situated near Tankapani UP School at Mouza: Umadei Brahmapur, Tahasil/SRO/PS: Baliana, Dist: Khurda, KISSAM: Gharabari, Area: Ac.0.010 dec. i.e. 435 Sqft, standing in the name of Mrs Rina Barik, W/o: Mr Sanjay Kumar Barik, Bounded by East- Dijabar Sahoo, West- Road, North- Boundary of Mouza Alarpur, South- Road .	Rs.16,03,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / Rs.1,60,300/- / Rs.50,000/-

DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION
dt.20.03.2024 at 11.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M with unlimited extension of 10(Ten) minutes each
Last date & time for submission of EMD & Documents - dt.19.03.2024 upto 4.00 P.M.
Inspection will be provided to the prospective bidders on any working day before 19.03.2024 with prior appointment of the authorised officer

The Sale shall be subject to the terms and conditions and provisions prescribed in the SARFAESI Act 2002 read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. This is also a 30days sale notice to the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) of the aforesaid loan account for settlement of their outstanding dues with the Bank and to participate in the public auction on the above mentioned date . For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in (1) <https://www.ibapi.in> (2) <https://www.mstccommerce.com> (3) www.bankofindia.co.in

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 12.02.2024
Authorised Officer, Bank of India

Never grumble. All sorts of forces enter you when you grumble and they pull you down.



THE MOTHER

Jittery Junta

Myanmar's junta appears to be desperate and on the back foot in the face of spirited resistance by united and rejuvenated armed rebel forces fighting for greater autonomy in various parts of the country and for an end to the dictatorship of the army. Three major ethnic groups have sunk their differences and are more determined than ever before to take on the junta. The latter - mainly belonging to the majority Bamar group - has all along thrived by pitting one minority ethnic group against another through false propaganda and exploiting acrimonious relationships among different groups. The situation has come to such a pass that the army is facing an alarming shortage of foot soldiers and simmering discontent among middle and lower ranks of the force. This has compelled it to take the unprecedented course of enforcing mandatory military service for all young men and women.

According to a new fiat issued by the junta, all men aged 18-35 and women aged 18-27 must serve for up to two years, while specialists like doctors aged up to 45 must serve for three years. The service can be extended to a total of five years in the ongoing state of emergency. The junta appears to have been so scared that it has issued the notification of the effectiveness of People's Military Service Law starting from 10 February.

Myanmar army's brutal crackdown on the country's pro-democracy supporters started after the military seized power from an elected government in a 2021 coup, which sparked mass protests. Initially, the junta went ahead merrily with gunning down protesters, arresting thousands of them, setting their homes ablaze and bombing through airstrikes. But, three years on, it is now met with fierce resistance from armed groups. Since October, the Tatmadaw, as the military is known, has suffered personnel losses while fighting against a well orchestrated offensive by an alliance of three ethnic minority insurgent groups coupled with allied pro-democracy fighters who have taken up arms against the junta. The success of this offensive and the military's failure to contain it has damaged the morale among low and mid-level officers, according to experts. As it is increasingly finding it difficult to recruit regular soldiers, the junta has now begun to force non-combat personnel to go to the frontline. Its helplessness and desperation can be gauged from the audio message released by the junta's information team which says "a national military service system involving all people is essential because of the situation happening in our country."

A law mandating conscription was introduced in 2010 but has not been enforced until now. Those who fail to comply with the draft face imprisonment for up to five years, the legislation says. The official statement did not give further details but said the junta's defence ministry would release necessary bylaws, procedures, announcements, orders, notifications and instructions. More than 4,500 people have been killed in the military's crackdown on dissent and over 26,000 arrested, according to a local monitoring group.

In a related development, Amnesty International has said Myanmar's military should be investigated for war crimes over an air attack last month that killed 17 villagers, including nine children, as they attended a Sunday church service. Amnesty claims it has clinching evidence to prove the Myanmar air force had dropped bombs on three locations near the church. The village is in the Sagaing region, not far from Myanmar's border with India.

The director of Amnesty Matt Wells is among those demanding that the "war crimes" by Myanmar military need to be referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC). It is not difficult to understand why the military chose the village for the brutal attack since it is under the control of a unit of the People's Defence Force (PDF), an anti-coup armed group established by the National Unity Government of lawmakers removed in the coup and pro-democracy activists. This is yet another evidence of the nervousness of the junta.

However, the international community needs to take tangible measures to stop the genocide in Myanmar instead of merely making demands for justice. According to United Nations estimates, at least 2.6 million people have been forced out from their homes by the fighting and millions are in need of humanitarian assistance. Though the US and its allies have imposed some sanctions, these are too little compared to the magnitude of the sufferings of the people. It is for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to take concrete steps to stop the human tragedy as Myanmar belongs to this regional grouping which it joined in 1997. China's current stand of not discouraging the armed groups from taking on the junta should propel ASEAN to act effectively for the restoration of the democratic process in Myanmar. Though a neighbor, unfortunately India is now being treated as a pariah by all the countries surrounding it. The unpopular junta of Myanmar might be getting support from India but when the situation changes, the pro democracy groups would rather tilt towards China because of India's past leanings against them. Such poor foresight in foreign policy is going to damage the Indian interests for a long time.

WISDOM CORNER

If you want special results, you have to feel special things and do special things together. You can speak about spirit, or you can live it.

JURGEN KLOPP

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be.

ANNE FRANK

The greatness of a man is not in how much wealth he acquires, but in his integrity and his ability to affect those around him positively.

BOB MARLEY

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1649: English author John Milton published his first political tract, The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, in response to the execution of King Charles I.
- 1960: France detonated its first atomic bomb in the Sahara desert.
- 1991: Two "smart bombs" kill at least 408 civilians in Baghdad. The Amiriyah shelter bombing was one of the worst cases of civilian killings during "Operation Desert Storm."
- 2000: The last Peanuts comic strip was published in newspapers, just hours after the death of creator Charles Schulz.
- 2002: The Scottish Parliament passed the Protection of Wild Mammals Bill, which made it illegal to hunt wild mammals with dogs, effectively outlawing foxhunting in Scotland.
- 2008: Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd apologises to Indigenous Australians for the "stolen generations." Between 10 and 30 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Islander children were removed from their families until the 1960s.

OVERSTATING ACHIEVEMENT

FOCUS POVERTY

The Union Budget for 2024-25 presented as a vote on account once again spoke of India's reported dramatic reduction in what is called multidimensional poverty. This reiterates earlier announcements with a string of eye-catching headlines. The claim is that 248.2 million Indians have escaped "multidimensional poverty" in the last nine years, including some 60 million people in UP, followed by Bihar at 38 million and MP at 23 million.



Jagdish Rattanani & Sunil Ray

IN THE WORK OF DEVELOPMENT, THERE ARE NO QUICK FIXES, AND THERE IS NO MAGIC WAND

The data is based on the Niti-Aayog report "National Multidimensional Poverty in India since 2005-06 - A Discussion Paper," and was also cited by PM Narendra Modi to talk of development as a "chariot of trust" that is changing India.

How fair is the claim and does it stand scrutiny? In brief, the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) is based not on income or expenditure of households but on National Family Health Survey (NFHS) data that captures access across three equally weighted dimensions - health, education and standard of living - measured through 12 indicators. The national MPI retains all the ten indicators from the global MPI and incorporates two additional indicators, maternal health and bank accounts. Each indicator then has a set cut off, below which the individual is considered deprived. A weighted sum of deprivations gives a score. An individual is considered MPI poor if their deprivation score equals or exceeds the poverty cutoff of 33.33%.

The MPI calculations admittedly exclude the impact of COVID-19, as if health, schooling, standards of living were unimpacted during the pandemic, contrary to the real burdens brought by the pandemic precisely in these areas, not only in the immediate but also follow-on impacts that carry into the later years. The discussion paper notes that "since part of the NFHS-5 data were collected before the pandemic, the estimates presented in this paper may not fully reflect the impact of COVID on the economy or



The overall and simple fact is that on the road to development, India has many things going for it and many, many others that are failing

the implications of subsequent government interventions."

In the Indian context, multidimensional poverty calculated thus runs into some very special difficulties. Schooling carries a one-third weightage in the index and within it has two indicators: A household is considered deprived if a) not even one member of the household aged 10 years or older has completed six years of schooling; b) any school-aged child is not attending school up to the age at which he/she would complete class 8.

Even if the COVID impact is left aside, and even if the answer to both questions on education results in a finding of "not deprived," there is data to show that this may not amount to much. Given doubts on the quality of the school infrastructure, the availability and quality of teachers, and other issues plaguing the school system, it is clear that goals of schooling cannot be said to be met, and in fact are not met. This is amply clear from the Annual Status of Education Report Rural (ASER 2023: Beyond Basics) under the aegis of the noted non-profit Pratham, released in New Delhi last month.

ASER 2023 notes that "nearly 85% of surveyed youth can measure length using a scale when the starting point is 0 cm. This proportion drops sharply to 39% when the starting point is moved." In the age group 14-18 years, "more than half struggle (56.7% with (simple) division (3-digit by 1-digit) problems," which is a skill usually expected in Std-III/IV, the ASER 2023 survey

notes.

Consider the standards of living indicator that says a household is deprived if no one in the family has a bank or post office account. Bank accounts may have been opened on a large scale but how much of that can be a reliable indicator of lack of deprivation, when there is no view on how many of these are operational, or if this led to banking transactions or related financial activity like, say, insurance coverage?

So apart from methodology, choice of indicators, the extrapolations used for the COVID years, and related technical issues, this raises questions on numbers that indicate progress but may not reflect ground realities. This is not to say that MPI is to be rejected in toto but that the dramatic numbers and fantastic conclusions being drawn are contestable. They point to an overreach of marketing that tends to overstate achievement, can build a sense of complacency and can stifle new efforts since the picture presented is already rosy.

Meanwhile, jobs and quality of jobs continue to be an area of concern. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, CMIE, reported that rural unemployment in December 2023 at 8% marked a record high in the past seven years (barring 2020). The rate has been steadily climbing since December 2017, when rural unemployment was 4.6%. In urban India, the unemployment rate increased to 10.1% in December 2023, similar to the level a year ago but higher than

the rate of around 9% in December in the past three years.

The overall unemployment rate in India fell sharply to 6.8% in January 2024 but this fall "concealed the stress in the labour market that was shown by a fall in the Labour Participation Rate (LPR) as well as employment rate. Total employment in India declined, mainly driven by significant loss of employment in agriculture. Although the services sector absorbed labour to a large extent, the quality of these jobs evidently deteriorated," according to CMIE.

A dramatic reduction in poverty sits at odds with the need for the Central government to provide free food grains to about 813.5 million beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana for a period of five years with effect from January this year. Almost the same number of beneficiaries were provided free food earlier. The programme in itself is laudable but what happens to poverty if food grain distribution is stopped? The food security covers 75% of the population in rural areas and 50% in urban areas, making it one of the largest programmes of its kind in the world.

The overall and simple fact is that on the road to development, India has many things going for it and many, many others that are failing. Integrity, commitment and the willingness to truly attack poverty demand that we read the indicators with caution and work to fix the deep-seated structural issues that require both time and effort. In the work of development, there are no quick fixes, and there is no magic wand.

Jagdish Rattanani is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR. Sunil Ray, a former director of AN Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna, is advisor, Impact and Policy Research Institute, Delhi and Centre for Development Studies and Communication, Jaipur. Views are personal.

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SPECTRUM CLIMATE ACTION

Leveraging the loss & damage fund

In the vein of "We Are the World," the 1985 hit that sold more than 20 million copies globally, the song "Lasting Legacy" was released at the COP28 in Dubai. The official charity anthem features 13 artists from around the world singing about unity, cooperation, and climate action. One legacy of COP28 that ought to be commemorated in song is the launch of the Loss and Damage Fund. This new channel for multilateral finance aims to support developing countries that are facing ballooning costs from storms, heatwaves, floods, landslides, wildfires, droughts, sea-level rise, biodiversity loss, and desertification. These adverse effects of global warming are causing hundreds of billions of dollars in damage every year.

Currently, however, pledges to the Loss and Damage Fund are well below target. At COP28, donor countries, led by France, Germany, Italy, the UAE, and the UK, promised around \$700 million - far short of what is needed to meet the challenge. Despite that, the UAE's commitment is a welcome departure from the widely held view that only those countries with a historic responsibility for climate change should pay for loss and damage. It signals to today's world that the responsibility for the state of the planet and its climate must be borne by everyone, while underscoring the importance of multilateral cooperation, especially among powerful governments.

To be sure, billions of dollars are already being invested in climate-change mitigation and adaptation through the multilateral system. Nearly all international financing institutions have facilities devoted to this end. The IMF, for example, has its Resilience and Sustainability Trust, which received at least \$41.1 billion in pledges as of November 2023. Meanwhile, the UN has several, including the Central Emergency Response Fund, which spent around \$2.2 billion between 2006 and 2022 on efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change, and Country-Based Pooled Funds. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Synthesis Report on Loss and Damage

(which one of us co-authored) identified some 45 funding windows dedicated to disaster preparedness, with 13 more focused on emergency response.

This raises the question of where the Loss and Damage Fund fits in this crowded and complex terrain. Certainly, there is still a great need for financing: significant gaps remain, and the lack of grant funding, especially for recovery and reconstruction, is particularly worrisome. It will also be crucial to expand climate-risk insurance coverage and facilitate debt swaps (and deferrals) to create more fiscal space amid surging global interest rates. On the other hand, the new fund risks becoming another vain attempt to mend a multilateral system that is outdated and unfit for purpose - especially if it is underfunded.

To avoid that outcome, the Loss and Damage Fund should move away from a project-based model that involves doling out small amounts of money. Given the scale of the challenge and the intensity of people's suffering, the Fund should instead embrace structural and policy innovations that would help establish a new generation of multilateral organisations. The Summit for a New Global Financing Pact, convened by French President Emmanuel Macron last year, and the Bridgetown Initiative led by Barbadian Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley provide many starting points and proposals for redesigning the global financial system.

In today's fragmented world, the Loss and Damage Fund could easily be derailed. But it is in our common interest to assist the most climate-vulnerable countries with recovery and reconstruction in a way that does not compromise development gains achieved over past decades. Providing these countries with enough resources, financial and otherwise, would ensure stability for us all.

Monique Barbut is former CEO of the Global Environment Facility. Robert R. Philipp is President of the Innovative Finance Foundation.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE



Monique Barbut & Robert R. Philipp

IT IS IN OUR COMMON INTEREST TO ASSIST THE MOST CLIMATE-VULNERABLE COUNTRIES WITH RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION

Global platform

Sir, Radio is a powerful way for people to share different ideas and talk about important things together. It's a popular global platform that reaches many people. Radio makes sure everyone's voice is heard. Because it's not too expensive, radio can help people in faraway places and those who need help the most. It also helps during emergencies like disasters. UNESCO celebrates World Radio Day on February 13, 2024, recognising radio's history, current importance, and promising future. Despite being over 100 years old, radio encounters challenges from digital platforms, social media, censorship, consolidations, and economic difficulties. Over its century-long journey, radio has changed to bring communities together, encouraging positive conversations for improvement. UNESCO invites the worldwide radio industry to join in celebrating radio's strengths and finding solutions to the challenges. Radio is an essential platform for promoting diversity and encouraging democratic discussions, reaching a broad global audience. Despite facing challenges, radio continues to play a critical role in emergencies. This year's World Radio Day spotlights radio's influence on news, drama, music, and sports, underscoring its practical role as a portable safety net in emergencies. It acknowledges radio's democratic value in connecting underserved groups. UNESCO encourages global on-air connections among stations, urging them to initiate such broadcasts.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Brilliant Bumrah

Sir, Kudos to Team India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah for becoming the first player in cricket history to achieve the number one position in ICC rankings for bowlers across all three formats at the same time. Bumrah's incredible journey to the top of the ICC rankings is a testament to his dedication and skill, which he amply demonstrated in the second Test against England at Visakhapatnam. His remarkable figures of 9 for 91 in the Test on a spinner-friendly track showcased his mettle as a proven match winner. His unforgettable delivery to dismiss Ollie Pope, a thunderous reverse-swinging yorker, echoed throughout the world, earning him widespread appreciation. Bumrah's stellar performance in the last one year, especially after coming out of his back surgery, solidifies his status as one of the premier fast bowlers in contemporary cricket.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



TN Guv ends address to Assembly in minutes

HIS 'PERSONAL' REMARKS EXPUNGED, SAYS SPEAKER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Feb 12: Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi Monday refused to read out the complete text of the customary address to the state Assembly, claiming it has 'misleading facts', and lambasted the ruling DMK over the National Anthem issue, remarks that were 'expunged' in yet another showdown between the Raj Bhavan and the state government.

The expunged remarks were Ravi's 'personal' comments and only the approved text would be in the records, Speaker M Appavu said. The Governor also walked out of the House before the National Anthem was played.

Ravi reading out from such a text would be a 'Constitutional travesty', the Raj Bhavan later said, explaining the sequence of events.

This was the Governor's inaugural address for the year to the House. The National Anthem was also at the centre of controversy as Ravi demanded it be played before and after the address while the government maintained it was not in lines with the House tradition and rules.

For the second year in a row, the state Assembly witnessed controversy during the Governor's Address. Last year, January 9,



Ravi omitted some portions of the government-prepared address and also included few points on his own before a resolution was adopted to restore the original draft in the records.

Ravi only read out from the first of the 46-page speech Monday.

The Raj Bhavan charged Appavu with launching a tirade on Ravi and insisted he walked out to uphold the dignity of the office of the Governor.

The draft Governor's address was received February 9 and it had 'numerous passages' with 'misleading claims far from truth.' Ravi, therefore, returned the file and also advised the government to show due respect to the National Anthem by playing it at the beginning and end of the Governor's address.

In this regard, the Governor

had written to the Chief Minister and the Speaker in the past as well. The state government, however, 'chose to ignore' his advice, it said in a release.

"The Governor's address should reflect government's achievements, policies and programmes and to inform the House of the causes of its summons and should not be a forum for peddling misleading statements and venting blatantly partisan political views."

Speaker Appavu said Ravi's personal views and also what he had said thereafter were expunged. "Only the printed text will be on the Assembly record."

"We have been following the tradition. The printed text was approved by the Governor and we requested him to read it out. He could have chosen not to read or ab-

stained from the House..." he said.

Normally, the National Anthem was played when the Speaker, accompanied by the Assembly Secretary, received the Governor with a Guard of Honour; Appavu said. "But inside the House, the customary address commences with the Tamil Thaa Vazhthu (Tamil anthem) and the National Anthem is played after the Governor's address, delivered in English, is read out in Tamil by him (Speaker)," he clarified. This was in strict compliance to the Assembly rule 176 (1) for the first sitting of the Assembly.

Soon after Appavu completed making some comments, Ravi quickly walked out even as the former announced that the National Anthem would be played after the passage of the resolution on including the customary address. The Governor continued and moved out of the House with officials in attendance.

Leader of Opposition K Palaniswami said what happened Monday was an issue between the government and the Governor but asserted 'there was no problem when we (AIADMK) were there,' in the ruling saddle and that things 'were fine' then.

BJP Legislature Party Leader Nainar Nagendran alleged Appavu 'violated' tradition by speaking on certain issues and wondered how the Governor could stay in the House after that.

The Governor later shared a video on 'X,' of his expunged remarks.

AAP SLAMS BJP OVER DEMOLITIONS IN DELHI

New Delhi: The AAP Monday hit out at the BJP over 'demolition actions' in the city allegedly by the Central agencies in the past few months, as it sought to know the stand of seven Delhi MPs of the saffron party on the issue. Addressing a press conference here, Delhi Urban Development Minister and AAP's national spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj also claimed that people were being 'rendered homeless' as JJ clusters and other structures were being dismantled 'without rehabilitating' the affected people. One can see many people living beneath flyovers and on footpaths, and these are people who have been rendered homeless 'due to such actions', the AAP leader told reporters. A number of 'demolition actions' are being taken in the national capital by Central agencies, Bharadwaj claimed, as he hit out at the BJP, the ruling party at the Centre. He alleged that bulldozers have also been run over 'listed' clusters. As per rules, such listed structures warrant that rehabilitation of affected people be undertaken before taking any demolition action, he added. "I want to ask all the seven MPs of BJP in Delhi whether they are standing with these demolition actions. If not, what have they done to stop demolition, have they met the vice chairman of the DDA or written any letter to him? Were any of them present at the site of demolition when such actions were being taken? Have they met the (Delhi) LG," Bharadwaj asked.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, SUNDARGARH
 Email:rw_sundargarh@yahoo.co.in
E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
BID IDENTIFICATION NO.ONLINE-SESG-30 of 2023-24
 No.O-2508: 1. Name of the Work: Building Works, 2. Total No. of Works: 34 nos. Building, 3. Estimated Cost: Rs.36.44 Lakhs each, 4. Class of Contractor: 'C' & 'B', 5. Period of Completion: 06 Calendar Months, 6. Type of Tender: Single Cover, 7. Other details:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding	
		From	To
1	2	3	4
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Sundargarh	Online-SESG-30 of 2023-24	15.02.2024 10.00 A.M.	22.02.2024 05.30 P.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
 Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Sundargarh
 OIPR-25046/11/0042/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. O-2512
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, RAIRANGPUR (MAYURBHANJ)
 Email ID: eerwairangpur@yahoo.com
 Letter No. 855 / Date- 09.02.2024
"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works Bid Identification No.: RWRDRP-31/2023-24

1. Name of the Work : S/R to RD road to Rahilbeda (Badampahad to Upebeda) road for the year 23-24. 2. Estimated Cost: Rs. 50.41 lakhs (Approximately). 3. Class of Contractor : "B" Class or relevant Class of works license. 4. Period of Completion : 1 (One) Calendar month. 5. Tender Paper Cost : Rs. 10,000/-.

The details are as follows:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/S.E.R.W. Division, Rairangpur.	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
S.E.R.W. Division, Rairangpur	RWRDRP-31/2023-24	13.02.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	17.02.2024 up to 5.00 P.M.	16.02.2024 up to 5.00 P.M.	19.02.2024 at 11.30 A.M.	20.02.2024 at 11.30 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
 OIPR-25107/11/0037/2324
 Sd./- Er. D. Behera, Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division, Rairangpur

FARMERS' MARCH

Section 144 in Delhi for a month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: There will be a complete ban on gathering, processions or rallies and entry of tractor trolleys carrying people in the national capital as the Delhi Police has imposed Section 144 for a month in the view of intended widespread tension and 'social unrest' due to the farmers' 'Delhi Chalo March' Tuesday.

The order issued by Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora prohibited any type of rally or procession and blocking of roads and passages.

The order came into force February 12 and shall remain enforce up to March 12. Delhi Police order has imposed a ban on tractor rallies trying to cross the borders of the national capital.

The farmers from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana are expected to enter Delhi during their march.

The order, issued February 11, reads, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha



(SKM), the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) and several other farmers unions and associations have announced a 'Delhi Chalo March' February 13 to hold a protest outside the Parliament House to press for their demands.

"There is an imminent risk of widespread tension, public nuisance,

public annoyance, social unrest and the potential for violence on account of the participants of the march entering into the territory of New Delhi," it said.

The order said, "The participants are likely to use tractors, trolleys, trailers as mode of transport for entering into the territory of Delhi which will inevitably be a great hazard on roads and will cause danger to other road users, residents of Delhi."

The order also said, "There is a likelihood that some anti-social elements, agitator groups may take advantage of the situation and indulge in activities prejudicial to the maintenance of peace, public order as well as law and order in Delhi."

"Therefore, to ensure public safety, tranquility and public order in Delhi, it has become imperative to take all required precautionary steps to keep a check on the activities of the participants of the above-mentioned march for which no permission has been granted," it added.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, SONEPUR
 E-mail: sonepurn.hud@nic.in
 Website Address:www.subarnapur.nic.in
 Letter No.724 Date:09.02.2024
Request For Proposal (RFP)

No.C-3068:Sonepur Municipality proposes to undertake "Preparation of Storm Water Drainage Master Plan and DPR for Sonepur Municipality area". Proposals are invited to conduct the assignment and submit the deliverables from Public Sector Undertakings/ Autonomous Bodies/ consulting registered architectural firms that have requisite experience in preparation of drainage/ pipeline/ sewerage network plan and infrastructure. The details may be accessed and the RFP/ Application forms can be downloaded from the District website www.subarnapur.nic.in. The completed application as per the instructions in the EOI document, should reach the following address by Speed Post/ Registered Post & by hand latest by 5 pm on dated 26.02.2024.

The authority reserves the sole right to accept or reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Sd./- Executive Officer
 Sonepur Municipality
 OIPR-13098/11/0024/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, DEOGARH
 E-mail:- eerw_deogarh@yahoo.co.in
CORRIGENDUM NOTICE
1st Corrigendum to TCN No. SERWDGH-Online-13 of 2023-24 dtd.29.01.2024

No. O-2522:- Due to unavoidable circumstance partial modification is hereby made to the e-Procurement Notice invited vide this TCN No. SERWDGH-Online-13 of 2023-24 as follows.

- Availability of Tender online for bidding was 05.02.2024, 10.00 A.M. to 14.02.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.

Now Availability of Tender on-line for bidding is re-scheduled 15.02.2024, 10.00 A.M. to 23.02.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.

- Date & Time of opening of tender was 15.12.2023 at 11.00 A.M. Now is on dt.26.02.2024 at 10.00 A.M.

Rest of the terms and conditions remain unchanged.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
 R.W. Division, Deogarh
 OIPR-25087/11/0027/2324

REGULATED MARKET COMMITTEE
KHARIAR ROAD

Tender Call Notice No.-38 Date:08.02.2024
 No.H-91:Collector-cum-Chairman, RMC, Khariar Road, Dist-Nuapada invites sealed tenders from reputed firms/ individuals having valid HT License issued by ELBO, Govt. of Odisha for execution of shifting of existing LT line and construction of new LT line in the premises of R.M.C., Khariar Road. For more details please log in to the Dist website- <https://nuapada.nic.in>.

Sd./- Collector-cum-Chairman
 RMC, Khariar Road
 OIPR-07085/11/0001/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.A-1486:
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
EARTH DAM DIVISION, AT/PO-CHITRAKONDA
DIST-MALKANGIRI (ODISHA)
 e-mail Id: executiveengineeredckd@gmail.com
e-Procurement Notice No.SE-EDD-CKD-03/2023-24

- No. of Works : 2 (Two)
- Approx. Estimated Cost : (1) Rs.31.27 Lac and (2) Rs.6.95 Lac
- Eligibility of the bidders : Registered & Licensed security service agencies for deployment of security personnel.
- Period of Completion : 365 days
- Date & Time of availability of bid document : (1) 13.02.2024 (10.00 A.M.) to 22.02.2024 (05.00 P.M.) for the portal
- Last date/time for receipt of bid in the portal : 22.02.2024 (05.00 P.M.)
- Date of Opening of the Bids Online : 23.02.2024 (11.00 A.M.)
- Name & Address of the O.I.T. : Superintending Engineer Earth Dam Division At/Po-Chittrakonda District: Malkangiri

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>.

Sd./-Superintending Engineer
 Earth Dam Division, Chittrakonda
 OIPR-32019/11/0006/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.A-1485:
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
SUBARNAREKHA IRRIGATION DIVISION NO-I, JHARPOKHARIA
 At/P0:-Sankucha, Via:- KM Katta, Dist:-Mayurbhanj
 Mail id.sidivision1@gmail.com

Government of Odisha "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
 Bid Identification No.04/ 23-24 of S.E.S.I. Division No-1, Jharpokharia

Name of Work	
1	Construction of Community Hall at Karkachia near Gothanisahi Sitalamandira of Haladia Reservoir of Subarnarekha Irrigation Project.
2	Construction of Market Complex Building 4no. at Hatimoda, Rangibeda and 4nos at Nodhabani and Rangisole Hata Chnk. under Periphery Development work of Haladia Reservoir of Subarnarekha Irrigation Project.
3	Construction of Community Hall at Rangisole under R & R assistance of Haladia Reservoir of Subarnarekha Irrigation Project.
4	Construction Compound wall of Karkachia Jahira under Periphery Development Works of Haladia Reservoir of Subarnarekha Irrigation Project.
5	Improvement of Cement Concrete Road from Rangisole AWC to Chhatris Dhir House under Periphery Development of Haladia Reservoir in Subarnarekha Irrigation Project.
6	Construction of Cement Concrete Road from Rangisole Suna Hansda House to Rajanikanta Naik House under Periphery Development of Haladia Reservoir in Subarnarekha Irrigation Project.
7	Constn. of Cement Concrete Road from Rangisole Cultivation to SMC via Dhaneswar House under Periphery Development Works of Haladia Reservoir in Subarnarekha Irrigation Project.
8	Constn. of Cement Concrete Road from Rangisole RD Road to Basant Dhal Sahi under R & R assistance of Haladia Reservoir in Subarnarekha Irrigation Project.
9	Cement Concrete Road from Rangisole AWC to Ballochan Naik House under R & R assistance of Haladia Reservoir in Subarnarekha Irrigation Project.

2	Estimated Cost	(1)Rs 9.35 Lakhs 2) Rs 17.16 Lakhs 3) Rs 9.27 Lakhs 4) Rs 14.85 Lakhs 5) Rs 3.87 Lakhs 6) Rs 5.35 Lakhs 7) Rs 3.28 Lakhs 8) Rs 3.06 Lakhs 9) Rs 2.04 Lakhs
3	Bid Security/ E.M.D.	(1) Rs. 9400/- (2) Rs. 17200/- (3) Rs. 9300/- (4) Rs. 14,900/- (5) Rs. 3,900/- (6) Rs. 5,400/- (7) Rs. 3,300/- (8) Rs. 3,100/- (9) Rs. 2,100/-
4	Period of Completion	06 (Six) calendar months for the works SI No 01 to SI No 04 and 03 (Three) Calendar months for the works SI No 05 to SI No 09
5	Class of Contractor	'C' and 'D' Class Contractor
6	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	16.02.2024 at 10.00 AM
7	Last date/time for receipt of bid in the portal	25.02.2024 upto 5.00 PM
8	Date of Opening of Bid	26.02.2024 at 11.00 A.M.
9	Name & Address of the O.I.T.	Superintending Engineer, Subarnarekha Irrigation Division No.1, Jharpokharia

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.
 Sd./- Superintending Engineer
 Subarnarekha Irrigation Division No.1 Jharpokharia
 OIPR-32085/11/0005/2324

TN: Friends turned foes slug it out in charged-up poll battle

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Feb 12: Friends turned foes - the BJP and AIADMK - are locked in a rancorous war in a charged-up political atmosphere in Tamil Nadu ahead of the Lok Sabha election. Anticipating the early announcement of the poll, the ruling DMK has initiated talks with its allies on seat-sharing and is gearing up to bring out its poll manifesto. Though a multi-cornered contest appears imminent, as of now, the political parties barring the DMK and allies are still hazy on alliance.

While former Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami sees red at the mention of DMK president and Chief Minister MK Stalin, the loose cannons in his AIADMK devote more time on personally targeting Tamil Nadu BJP chief K Annamalai and sustain themselves in the limelight.

"Much of their ire is due to the BJP's preference for former Chief Minister O Panneerselvam as a reliable ally than to AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami," a senior BJP leader said.

The BJP has never been comfortable in the company of ambitious Palaniswami, who in a bid to garner the minority votes has expressed opposition to the Uniform Civil Code. The AIADMK general secretary, who severed poll ties with the BJP in September last year due to Annamalai's aggressive politics, is engaged in forming an alliance under his leadership.



Another cause for heartburn for the AIADMK was the shifting of loyalties by 12 of its former legislators and an MP, recently, to the BJP. A former MLA each from the DMK, the Congress and the DMDK, too joined the BJP. Ridiculing it, former AIADMK minister D Jayakumar remarked: "The Tamil Nadu Governor will invite Annamalai to form the government with those former MLAs."

Further, he likened the BJP state president to a "mud horse" and said Annamalai was creating an illusion that people were joining the BJP. "Those who follow him are likely to disappear when the mud horse disintegrates in water," Jayakumar claimed.

Both the Dravidian majors too have been welcoming a steady trickle of workers from other parties, as it is election time. Though the Congress, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi and the Left parties too have a presence in certain pockets in the state, they toe the DMK's line.

While the ruling DMK is comfortably placed as its alliance is intact, the AIADMK and the BJP are vying to form an alliance with smaller parties. Other political parties such as the Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK) and the Pattali Makkal Katchi are yet to decide on an alliance and the options before them are only a few - either the BJP or AIADMK. Parties such as actor Kamal Haasan's Makkal Needhi Maiam and actor Seeman-led Naam Tamilar Katchi would also be in the fray.

"Annamalai's politics of publicity won't work in Tamil Nadu," claimed former AIADMK state minister Kadambur Raju while Jayakumar, training his guns on Panneerselvam, claimed the latter would join the BJP after the Lok Sabha election.

Former AIADMK minister RB Udayakumar, who appeared to go overboard in his criticism, called Annamalai a 'leghiyam' (a traditional thick herbal medicine that boosts immunity) seller and said the BJP president was a political novice.

"Yes, I am leghiyam trader. I sell the best leghiyam to banish corruption, rowdysim and anarchy in Tamil Nadu. Those who consume my leghiyam can see results of a good administration, and good leadership," Annamalai, dismissing Udayakumar as an 'invalid currency' retorted while leading his six-month-old En Mann, En Makkal (My Land, My People) yatra, recently.



Agitators block railway tracks during a protest organised by Tipra Indigenous Students Federation (TISF) demanding to instate Roman script for Kokborak language along with Bengali in Tripura Board of Secondary examination, on the outskirts of Agartala



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, right, and Boris Pistorius, Federal Minister of Defence, inspect a production hall with armoured vehicles from the Rheinmetall armaments group in Unterlues, Germany



Spanish farmers stand near fire, as they block access to the Castellon port during a protest against high costs, bureaucracy and competition from non-EU countries, in Castellon, Spain



A child moves between tractors during a farmers' protest over price pressures, taxes and green regulation in Barcelona, Spain



National Coalition Party candidate Alexander Stubb celebrates after winning the second round of the presidential election during an election party night, Sunday in Helsinki. Ex-Prime Minister Stubb has narrowly won Finland's presidential election runoff Sunday against former foreign minister Pekka Haavisto



Mahant of Baghambari Math Balveer Giri Maharaj feeds Siberian seagulls during the annual 'Magh Mela' at Sangam in Prayagraj



Students leave after attending school that reopened days after violence broke out over the demolition of an 'illegally built' madrasa in Haldwani



Women in bridal attire perform rituals as they celebrate ancient Nag festival 'Kanchoth', also known as 'Gouri Tritiya', in Bharderwah of Jammu & Kashmir

national

of the day quote

The government has worked in the last 10 years by linking the health sector with development to ensure every citizen gets healthcare facilities with the same quality standard

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

The Centre has sanctioned Rs 2,378.72 crore for the construction of two sections of the frontier highway with a total length of 93 kilometres in Arunachal Pradesh

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

Previous governments in the state were involved in nepotism and corruption, and appointed their relatives to government positions while disregarding merit

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

SHORT TAKES

One dead, 16 hurt

Kochi: One person died and 16 others, including women and children, sustained injuries in a massive blast at an illegal fireworks warehouse operated from a residential area at Tripunithura near here Monday, police said. The mishap happened when crackers were brought to be stored at the warehouse for an ongoing festival at a local temple. The Hill Palace police registered a case against five persons, including three officials of the shrine management for the mishap.

ED remand of Soren extended

Ranchi: A special PMLA court Monday extended the ED remand of former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren by three days in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam, lawyers said. The Enforcement Directorate prayed for four days of remand of the JMM leader. "They (ED) were asking for a four-day remand...They have no ground left for any further remand. They (ED) just want to buy time...They didn't have any new ground. They just want the case to be alive and stretch the remand period," Advocate General Rajeev Ranjan, Soren's counsel, said.

PM to visit Qatar

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to Qatari capital Doha February 14 after concluding his two-day visit to the United Arab Emirates. The announcement about Modi's visit to Qatar came a day after the Gulf nation released eight jailed former Indian naval personnel. Seven of them returned to India Monday morning. Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra said Prime Minister Modi had personally supervised developments in the case. "We are gratified by Qatar's decision to release the Indians," he said.

Mob kills history-sheeter

Jamshedpur: A history-sheeter was killed while his accomplice sustained severe injuries after local residents caught the duo with a stolen LPG cylinder and thrashed them around 5am here Monday, a police officer said. The incident took place when victim Aman Mandal and Sanjit Dhan, both in their mid-20s, were trying to sell the stolen cylinder at Jaher Tola locality within Sidgora police station limits, police added. On being informed, a police team rushed to the spot and rescued both the youths, who sustained severe injuries.

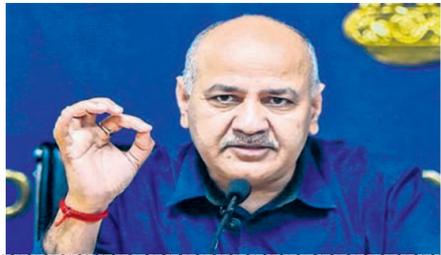


The arrest of Hubballi farmers by the Madhya Pradesh government, as they were heading to New Delhi to take part in the protest, is highly condemnable

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

SISODIA GETS 3-DAY BAIL

A Delhi court Monday granted three-day interim bail to senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia, arrested in the alleged excise policy 'scam', to attend his niece's wedding



Former Maha CM Chavan quits Cong



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 12: In a setback to Congress ahead of Lok Sabha polls, former Maharashtra Chief Minister Ashok Chavan resigned from the grand old party Monday, amid speculation that he may join the BJP. Chavan's exit from Congress came days after senior Maharashtra Congress leaders Baba Siddique and Milind Deora quit the party.

There was no confirmation either from Chavan or the BJP of reports that the 65-year-old leader will be fielded for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections. Amid the buzz that Chavan will join the BJP, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said, 'Agee agey dekho hota hai kya' (wait and watch what happens).

Chavan said the decision to quit the Congress was a personal one, adding he will announce his next course of action in a day or two. "I have not yet made any decision to join BJP," he added. In a letter to state Congress president Nana Patole, Chavan said he was resigning as a primary member of the party. He also submitted his resignation as an MLA to assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar.

Speaking to reporters, Chavan said, "I am not going to discuss anything happening in the

Congress party on a public forum." Asked if he would join the BJP, Chavan said, "I haven't taken any decision yet on joining the BJP and don't know BJP's working system." He also said his decision to quit the Congress is a personal one and he does not want to ascribe any reason to it.

Chavan also refuted claims that the white paper tabled in Parliament prompted him to resign from Congress. The white paper had mentioned the Adarsh Building scam, pertaining to a housing society in Mumbai, due to which Chavan had to step down as the chief minister of Maharashtra in 2010. There were reports since the last few months that Chavan would be quitting Congress, so the news of his resignation did not come as a total surprise to the state party leaders.

"Voters will teach those who deserted them a lesson," said former CM Prithviraj Chavan. The senior Congress leader also said he was unaware of the compulsion due to which Ashok Chavan left Congress. "This is an unfortunate decision. Never thought a person like him would take such a step," Prithviraj Chavan said.

Chavan's exit from Congress comes days after senior Maharashtra Congress leaders Baba Siddique and Milind Deora quit the party.

Chavan said the decision to quit the Congress was a personal one, adding he will announce his next course of action in a day or two

LAKHIMPUR VIOLENCE

SC extends Ashish Mishra's interim bail



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: The Supreme Court Monday extended the interim bail granted to Union minister Ajay Kumar Mishra's son Ashish Mishra in the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence which claimed eight lives.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and K V Viswanathan directed the apex court registry to obtain a report from the trial court on the progress of the case and adjourned the matter. September 26 last year, the top court had relaxed the bail conditions of Mishra to enable him to visit and stay in the National Capital Region (NCR) to look after his ailing mother and for the treatment of his daughter.

The case pertains to an incident of violence on October 3, 2021, in which eight people, including four farmers, were killed in Tikunia in Lakhimpur Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh. The apex court had relaxed the interim bail conditions imposed on Mishra by the trial court on January 25. Mishra was asked not to stay either in Uttar Pradesh or in Delhi during the period.

The court had passed the order on a modification application filed by Mishra which stated that his mother was admitted to the Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital in Delhi. He had further said in the application that his daughter needed treatment for certain deformities in her legs.

Rahul's Nyay Yatra to skip western UP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Feb 12: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has decided to cut short his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Uttar Pradesh by skipping the western region of the state and saving five days, state party chief Ajay Rai said Monday, citing board exams.

The decision follows indications that Samajwadi Party ally Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) may join hands with the BJP for the April-May Lok Sabha elections after Bharat Ratna was conferred on former Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh, a prominent Jat leader considered

as a messiah of the farmers. SP president Akhilesh Yadav is likely to join the yatra in Rae Bareilly February 20. Rai dismissed the speculation that the yatra is skipping western UP region because of the recent and visible shift of RLD chief Jayant Singh towards the BJP.

"It has nothing to do with the RLD factor. It is primarily because of the concern for the UP board examinations," Rai said. "Rahul Gandhi will be accompanied by his sister Priyanka Gandhi during the entire UP chapter of the yatra," Rai said.

Elaborating on the schedule of the yatra in Uttar Pradesh, state



party spokesperson Anshu Awasthi said the yatra will enter the state through Varanasi on February 16 and then reach Amethi on February 19 via Bhadohi, Prayagraj and Pratnagarh.

February 19, Rahul Gandhi will address a public meeting at Gauriganj in Amethi Lok Sabha constituency. The yatra will reach Raebareilly

the next day from where it will proceed for Lucknow where Rahul Gandhi and other participants are likely to make a night halt.

Raebareilly is the only Lok Sabha seat which is held by the Congress in UP. Currently Sonia Gandhi is the Lok Sabha MP from the constituency. In the 2019 Lok Sabha election, Rahul Gandhi had lost Amethi seat to Union minister Smriti Irani.

Sonia Gandhi's representative Kishori Lal Sharma and Congress secretary Rajesh Tiwari Monday reached the party office in Gauriganj and held a meeting with the office-bearers.

1 in 5 migratory species faces extinction: UN report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: One in five migratory species is threatened with extinction and 44 per cent have a decreasing population trend, according to the United Nations' first 'State of the World's Migratory Species' report released Monday.

The situation is far worse in aquatic ecosystems, with 97 per cent of the migratory fish listed for protection under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) at risk of extinction.

Established in 1979, the CMS focuses on bringing countries and stakeholders together to agree on the actions needed to ensure that migratory species survive and thrive.

The report launched at the opening of the 14th conference of parties to CMS in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, said 82 per cent of the species listed under Appendix I of the convention are threatened with extinction and 76 per cent have a declining population trend. Eighteen per cent



Migratory birds fly through the sky of southern Lebanon

REUTERS

of Appendix II species are globally threatened, with almost half (42 per cent) showing decreasing population trends. The convention's Appendix I lists migratory species which are endangered.

Appendix II lists migratory species "which have an unfavourable conservation status and require international agree-

ments for their conservation and management". The report also identifies 399 globally threatened and near-threatened migratory species (mainly birds and fish) that are not yet listed in the CMS Appendices that may benefit from international protection.

According to CMS Executive Secretary Amy Fraenkel, over-

exploitation (hunting and fishing, both targeted and incidental) emerges as the greatest threat for many migratory species, surpassing habitat loss and fragmentation.

The report said the habitat fragmentation resulting from dams is currently greatest in East Asia, Europe, the Indian sub-continent, North America and Southern Africa. By-catch of non-target species in fisheries is a leading cause of mortality of many CMS-listed marine species. Other key threats to migratory species include pollution (including light and noise pollution), climate change and invasive species. Over the past 30 years, 70 CMS-listed migratory species - including the steppe eagle, Egyptian vulture and the wild camel - have become more endangered.

Just 14 species have an improved status. These include blue and humpback whales, the white-tailed sea eagle and the black-faced spoonbill, the report said. It said 58 per cent of the monitored sites recognized to

Shukla, Malik and Kumar to double life imprisonment, the trial court had also imposed a fine of Rs 1.25 lakh on each of them. It had imposed a fine of Rs 7.25 lakh on Sethi.

Recently, the high court denied parole to Kapoor, considering the gravity of the offences committed by him. Out of the four convicts, Kapoor, Shukla and Malik were also convicted of killing IT professional Jigisha Ghosh. The trio later confessed to police they were also behind Vishwanathan's murder, and the weapon used for killing her was recovered from their possession. The Delhi Police had said the motive behind Vishwanathan's killing was robbery.

The trial court had awarded the death penalty to Kapoor and Shukla and sentenced Malik to life imprisonment in the 2009 Jigisha Ghosh murder case. However, the death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment by the high court. The high court upheld Malik's life sentence.

According to the prosecution, Kapoor shot Vishwanathan with a country-made pistol while chasing her car to rob her. Shukla, Kumar and Malik were also with Kapoor.

ED issues fresh summons to Farooq

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar/New Delhi, Feb 12: The Enforcement Directorate has issued a fresh summons to National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah for questioning in a money laundering case pertaining to the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA), official sources said Monday.

He has been asked to depose at the ED office in Srinagar Tuesday. The 86-year-old politician was last called by the central agency in this case on January 11 but he did not appear before it.

He is not expected to appear at the Srinagar office of the central agency this time too, sources close to him said. The ED investigation pertains to alleged financial irregularities at the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association.

The MP from Srinagar was charge-sheeted by the Enforcement Directorate in this case in 2022.

The case relates to siphoning off JKCA funds by way of transfer to various personal bank accounts of unrelated parties, including those of JKCA office-bearers, and by way of unexplained cash withdrawals from its bank accounts, the ED had said.

The agency's case is based on a 2018 charge-sheet filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against the same accused.

be important for CMS-listed species are facing unsustainable levels of anthropogenic pressure. Inger Anderson, the Executive Director of the United Nations' Environment Programme, said the report is a significant step forward in the development of a conservation roadmap for migratory species.

"Given the precarious situation of many of these animals, and their critical role for healthy and well-functioning ecosystems, we must not miss this chance to act starting now by urgently implementing the recommendations set out in this report," she said. Action under the Convention is crucial for achieving the global commitments set out in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including commitments to restore and establish well-connected networks of protected areas, halt human-induced extinctions and to ensure that any taking of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal.

international

of the day quote

There is no alternative to the EU, NATO, transatlantic cooperation
DONALD TUSK | POLAND'S PM

The market and the energy companies that are part of it are not fulfilling their responsibility to reduce the dependency on Russian gas sufficiently
LEONORE GEWESSLER | AUSTRIA'S ENERGY MINISTER

What needs to be done in Africa is to build cooperation and serious strategic relationships as equals, not predators
GIORGIA MELONI | PRIME MINISTER OF ITALY

SHORT TAKES

Trump arrives in federal court

Fort Pierce: Former President Donald Trump arrived Monday morning at a federal courthouse in Florida for a closed hearing in his criminal case charging him with mishandling classified documents. The hearing was scheduled to discuss the procedures for the handling of classified evidence in the case, which is currently set for trial May 20. Trump faces dozens of felony counts accusing him of hoarding highly classified records at his Mar-a-Lago estate and obstructing FBI efforts to get them back. US District Judge Aileen Cannon expects to hear arguments in the morning from defense lawyers and in the afternoon from prosecutors, each outside of the other's presence.

Woman opens fire at church, killed

Houston: A 5-year-old child and a man were injured and a woman was killed after she opened fire inside a church here in the US state of Texas, police said. The violence erupted at pastor Joel Osteen's Lakewood Church in Houston Sunday where a 2 p.m. Spanish service was set to begin. Two off-duty law enforcement officers -- a Houston police officer and an agent with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission -- engaged and struck the woman who entered the massive church with the boy who was later hurt in the shootout.

Fire breaks out at water park, 12 hurt

Copenhagen: Black smoke rose over Sweden's second-largest city Monday after a fire broke out at a water park under construction at one of the country's biggest amusement centers. The blaze at the Oceana water park in the popular Liseberg amusement complex in downtown Göteborg spread across several water slides and a hangar-like building. Police and fire officials could not immediately say what caused the fire.

IMF team likely to visit Pakistan

Islamabad: A delegation of the IMF may visit cash-strapped Pakistan once a new federal government is formed, negotiations for which are ongoing between the major political parties after the general elections threw a hung Parliament, a media report said Monday. The International Monetary Fund's review mission might visit Islamabad by the end of this month or early next month, provided the government formation at federal and provincial levels was complete, according to the Ministry of Finance's assessment, *Geo News* reported.



The success of the Eurostar is a vital part of London's and the UK's economic success
SADIQ KHAN | LONDON MAYOR

AUSTIN UNWELL

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin was hospitalised again Sunday to address a bladder issue as he continues to recover from prostate cancer and has transferred authorities to his deputy, the Pentagon said



Israel frees 2 hostages in dramatic Gaza raid

AGENCIES

Rafah (Gaza Strip), Feb 12: Israeli forces rescued two hostages early Monday, storming a heavily guarded apartment in a densely packed town in the Gaza Strip and extracting them under fire and covering airstrikes that local officials said killed at least 67 Palestinians.

The plight of the hostages has profoundly shaken Israelis, and the rescue in Rafah briefly lifted the spirits of a nation still reeling from Hamas' cross-border raid last year that started the war. Israel has described Rafah — a city on the southern edge of the Gaza Strip where 1.4 million Palestinians have fled fighting elsewhere — as the last remaining Hamas stronghold in the territory and signalled that its ground offensive may soon target the city.

In Gaza, the operation unleashed another tragedy in a war that has killed 28,340 Palestinians in the territory, displaced over 80 per cent of the population and set off a massive humanitarian crisis.

More than 12,300 Palestinian minors — children and young teens — have been killed in the conflict, the Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said Monday. About 8,400 women were also among those killed. That means minors make up about 43 per cent of the dead and women and minors together make up three quarters.

The ministry, which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians, provided the breakdown at the request of The Associated Press. Israel claims to have killed about 10,000 Hamas fighters. In Hamas' cross-border raid October 7, an esti-

mated 1,200 people, mostly civilians, were killed, and militants took 250 people captive, according to Israeli authorities. Israel says about 100 hostages remain in Hamas captivity after dozens were freed during a cease-fire in November. Hamas also holds the remains of roughly 30 others who were either killed October 7 or died in captivity.

The government has made freeing the hostages a top aim of its war, along with destroying Hamas' military and governing capabilities. But as the fighting drags on, now in its fifth month, rifts have emerged in Israel over how to retrieve them.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says persistent military pressure will bring about the captives' freedom even as families of the hostages and many of their supporters have called on the government to make another deal with Hamas.

A DRAMATIC RAID

Israeli military spokesman Read Adm. Daniel Hagari said special forces broke into a second-floor apartment in Rafah under fire at 1:49 am Monday, accompanied a minute later by airstrikes on surrounding areas. He said Hamas militants were guarding the captives and that members of the rescue team shielded the hostages with their bodies as the battle erupted.

DOZENS KILLED

The airstrikes hit jam-packed Rafah in the middle of the night and dozens of explosions could be heard around 2 am.

Ashraf al-Qidra, spokesman for the Health Ministry, said at least 67 people, including women and children, were killed in the strikes.



A float with a figure of US presidential candidate Donald Trump holding a US flag and scissors in his hand is driven during the Rose Monday parade, in Düsseldorf, Germany

PAK POLLS Power sharing on cards

The leaders of PML-N and the PPP discussed the idea of appointing a Prime Minister for half the term during their first meeting held Sunday as part of their efforts to form a coalition government

AGENCIES

Islamabad/Lahore, Feb 12: The top leaders of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and the Pakistan Peoples Party have discussed a new power-sharing formula for dividing the five-year tenure between them, as efforts to form a coalition government gathered pace Monday following a split verdict in the elections.

Despite independent candidates backed by jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party winning the most seats in Parliament, questions loom over what the next government of Pakistan will look like.

None of the three major parties, the PML-N, the PPP, or the PTI have won the necessary seats to secure a majority in the 266-member National Assembly and, therefore, will be unable to form government on their own, leaving it unclear who will be picked as the cash-strapped country's next Prime Minister.

"It has been proposed that a PML-N candidate will serve as Prime Minister for three years and PPP's leader for two years," the source said, adding that it was not yet decided who will get the first term. The meeting was attended by PPP-Parliamentarian



ECP blames mobile service suspension

Islamabad: Contrary to its earlier claim, Pakistan's top election watchdog Monday blamed the suspension of internet and mobile services Thursday when country-wide polling took place for general elections, which it said did "create hindrance" in declaring results in a timely manner. In an unusual move, Pakistan's two political parties Monday announced to forfeit three provincial assembly seats in Sindh as a protest against alleged rigging in the February 8 elections, the claims rejected by the country's top election body.

President Asif Ali Zardari, PPP Chairman Bilawal-Bhutto Zardari, and former Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif from the PML-N. The same power-sharing formula was chalked out by PML-N and National Party (NP) in Balochistan in 2013 when two Chief Ministers from the two parties held office for half of the five-year term. PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif is still in

the race for the prime ministerial slot despite his party not securing a simple majority in the Feb 8 general elections in Pakistan, some PML-N leaders said Monday.

"We are having discussion with the PPP over power-sharing formula in the upcoming coalition government in the Centre and Nawaz Sharif cannot be ruled out as the prime ministerial candidate," PML-N Senator Irfan Saddique told a private news channel.

He said Nawaz Sharif, 74, is the candidate for the Prime Minister slot from the PML-N.

In the Sunday meeting at the Bilawal House in Lahore, the two sides agreed in principle to cooperate for the country's political stability following the general election, the sources said.

They confirmed that so far several open and behind-the-scenes meetings have been held between the leaders of PML-N and PPP and other parties since the powerful Pakistan Army has also indicated that they will back a unity government to pull the country out of the challenges it faced.

Former PM Stubb wins Finland Prez election

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Helsinki, Feb 12: Finland has a new president after former Prime Minister Alexander Stubb narrowly won a runoff vote Sunday for the key post in this Nordic country. Stubb, who takes over in March, will steer Finland's foreign and security policy, including integrating the NATO newcomer into the alliance's core structures.

The final tally shows Stubb, of the centre-right National Coalition Party, had 51.6 per cent of the votes, while independent candidate and former Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto from the green left got 48.4 per cent of the votes. The two were the contenders in the second round of the election. Haavisto had served as Finland's top diplomat from 2019-2023.

Stubb is taking over from the hugely popular President Sauli Niinistö, whose second six-year term expires next month and who wasn't eligible for reelection.

SNIPPETS

Houthis fire missiles at ship bound for Iran

Dubai (UAE): Yemen's Houthi rebels fired two missiles at a ship bound for a port in Iran Monday, causing minor damage but no injuries to its crew, authorities said. The attack on the Marshall Islands-flagged, Greek-operated bulk carrier *Star Iris* shows just how widely the Houthis now target ships travelling through the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait connecting the two waterways. The *Star Iris* had been heading from Brazil to Bandar Khomeini in Iran, the main backer and armer of the Houthis in Yemen's years-long war.

Dutch court bans export of F-35 parts to Israel

The Hague: An appeals court ordered the Dutch government Monday to halt the export of F-35 fighter jet parts to Israel, citing a clear risk of violations of international law. A trio of human rights organisations brought a civil suit against the Netherlands in December, arguing authorities needed to reevaluate the export license in light of Israeli military action in the Gaza Strip. "It is undeniable that there is a clear risk that the exported F-35 parts are used in serious violations of international humanitarian law," Judge Bas Boele said in reading out the ruling, eliciting cheers from several people in the courtroom. The exports must cease within seven days.

Tusk heads to France, Germany

Paris: Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk vowed to "revitalise" his nation's relations with its key European partners during a trip to Paris and Berlin Monday as fears grow that former President Donald Trump could return to power in the United States and give Russia a free hand to expand its aggression following its invasion of Ukraine. The meetings Monday come after Trump shocked many in Europe over the weekend by inviting Russia to invade any NATO member not spending enough on its own defences. The words were particularly shocking for front-line NATO countries like Poland, which has endured Russian control and occupation, and where anxieties run high over the war just across its eastern border in Ukraine.

What it means to be born in the Year of the Dragon

A camel's head, a deer's horns and a demon's eyes. A bull's ears, a snake's neck and a clam's belly. A carp's scales, an eagle's claws and a tiger's paws. Pieced together, these disparate physical features yield an illustrious creature of Chinese legend: the dragon.

Believed to soar through the waters and heavens as a nature deity ruling over the rains, the dragon is a dominant figure in Chinese mythology, perched at the centre of longstanding creation tales. Ancient legends depict the mythical being, called long in Chinese, descending to the ground with the fog and rising out of the ocean with the sun, moving the seasons in its wake. Initially a vague motif in ancient Chinese art, the dragon is now an emblem of benevolent divinity, imperial power

and sweeping unity. Its symbolism builds on thousands of years of folklore and Chinese history. And, as the only mythological animal in the Chinese zodiac system, the dragon takes on yet another layer of meaning.

The Chinese zodiac consists of 12 animals—the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and pig—that alternate every Lunar New Year. Though the timing of the Lunar New Year changes based on cycles of the moon, the celebration generally falls between January 21 and February 20, beginning with the second new moon after the winter solstice. Every Lunar New Year, a new zodiac animal takes over the reins of fate. Its character guides the course of the year, and individuals born under its sign are said to adopt its be-



havior, character traits and compatibility standards. Arriving fifth in the sequence, the dragon is the most potent—

lieve that a child born during this year, a lucky dragon baby, will be destined for success. Though this perception is often a self-fulfilling prophecy, with parents invest-

MANY PARENTS BELIEVE THAT A CHILD BORN DURING THIS YEAR, A LUCKY DRAGON BABY, WILL BE DESTINED FOR SUCCESS

ing greater resources in their dragon child, the extraordinary expectations surrounding the zodiac creature speak to its deep associations with intelligence, authority and

good fortune. This year, the dragon will take the helm from the rabbit February 10, ushering in a long-anticipated period of prosperity unique to the mythical being.

The 12-year Chinese zodiac cycle has ancient origins, but exactly when it became associated with specific animal symbols is subject to debate.

Zodiac creatures are represented in artifacts and depicted in Chinese literature as early as the Warring States period, which spanned 475 to 221 B.C.E., and some scholars assert that a Chinese zodiac system has existed since the reign of Qin Shi Huang, the first Qin emperor, who ruled immediately after that period. But the classification scheme was only widely adopted during the Han dynasty, which presided over China from 206 B.C.E. to 220 C.E. **AGENCIES**

of the day quote

As of today, the procurement has crossed Rs 3 lakh crore and going by the trend, the procurement this fiscal will reach Rs 4 lakh crore

PK SINGH | CEO, GEM

Our pledge to attain net-zero emissions across our Passenger Vehicles (PV) business by 2040, and our Commercial Vehicles (CV) business by 2045, is a testament to our commitment to a greener future

SIR KUTTY | VP AND CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER, TATA MOTORS

Green hydrogen is pivotal in the world's transition to sustainable energy, and Gensol, leveraging this opportunity, aims to foster global partnerships, technological exchange, and innovation

ALI IMRAN NAQVI | CEO, GENSOIL ENGINEERING

Q3 RESULTS

HAL profit jumps

Bangalore: India's Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) reported a 9% rise in third-quarter profit Monday, helped by aircraft demand from the defence sector and an inventory-related gain. Consolidated net profit came in at Rs 12.61 billion (\$151.92 million) for the three months ended December 31, the state-owned aerospace and defence company said in a filing. Capital goods and manufacturing companies have benefited from the Indian government's push for higher capital expenditure in its last full budget announced in February 2023, before the next general elections this year.

NHPC net plunges

New Delhi: State-owned NHPC Monday posted a 19 per cent fall in its consolidated net profit to Rs 628.44 crore for the October-December quarter of 2023-24 due to higher expenses. The hydro-power producer had reported a net profit of Rs 775.99 crore in the October-December period of 2022-23, the company said in an exchange filing. The company's total income also fell to Rs 2,549.69 crore in the quarter from Rs 2,691.34 crore a year ago. Expenses rose to Rs 1,727.85 crore in the quarter under review from Rs 1,303.06 crore in the third quarter of the last fiscal.

SAIL profit drops

New Delhi: State-owned Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) Monday reported a 22 per cent fall in its consolidated net profit to Rs 422.92 crore for the quarter ended in December 2023 due to lower income. The steel maker had posted a net profit of Rs 542.18 crore during the October-December period of 2022-23. The company's total income fell to Rs 23,492.33 crore in the third quarter of FY24 from Rs 25,140.16 crore a year ago, according to an exchange filing by the company.

CIL profit surges

New Delhi: Coal behemoth CIL Monday reported a 16.9 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 9,069.19 crore for the December quarter. The company's consolidated net profit stood at Rs 7,755.55 crore in the year-ago period. Coal India Ltd (CIL) said in a regulatory filing. Its consolidated revenue from operations in the October-December period increased to Rs 36,153.97 crore from Rs 35,169.33 crore a year ago. CIL accounts for over 80 per cent of domestic coal production.



Tourism has a huge multiplier impact for every direct job that you create, you create seven indirect jobs, but I think somehow the tourism industry has failed to tell the politicians that we are a big creator of jobs

AMITABH KANT | G20 SHERPA

UPI LAUNCHED IN SL, MAURITIUS

Unified Payment Interface (UPI) services were rolled out in Sri Lanka and Mauritius Monday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing it as linking historic ties with modern digital technology. India's RuPay card services were also launched in Mauritius at a virtual ceremony attended by Modi, his Mauritian counterpart Pravind Jugnauth and Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe



INFLATION EASES TO 5.1%

The fall indicates that retail inflation is inching towards the RBI's comfort level of 4%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: Retail inflation declined to a three-month low of 5.1 per cent in January, mainly due to subdued prices of vegetables, fruits and other food items, according to government data released Monday.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation was on the rise for two straight months after touching a trough of 4.9 per cent in October 2023. In December, it stood at 5.69 per cent.

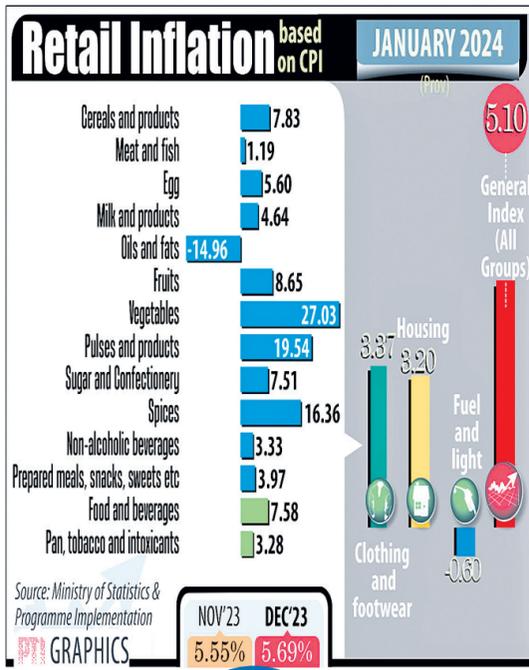
In January, inflation in the food basket eased to 8.3 per cent from 9.53 per cent in the preceding month. It was at 6 per cent in January 2023, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).

Food inflation was lower in rural areas at 7.91 per cent compared to 9.02 per cent in the urban centres of the country.

The latest data showed that inflation in 'oils and fats', 'pulses and products', spices, fruits, and vegetables segments was lower in January 2024 compared to December 2023.

However, inflation was marginally higher in the 'fuel and light', 'clothing and footwear', 'cereals and products', 'meat and fish', and eggs segments on a month-on-month basis.

As per the data, inflation was more than the national average of 5.1 per cent in Assam, Gujarat, Haryana,



Odisha among the states where inflation was more than the national average of 5.1%

Icra, said while rabi sowing has caught up with last year's level, reservoir storage remains well below the year-ago levels in most regions, continuing to imbue caution in terms of the outlook for the rabi harvest.

The government has mandated the Reserve Bank of India

TIDBITS

Maruti Suzuki setting sights on the sky

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki is now poised to soar into the skies with its latest venture - electric air copters. With a vision to pioneer new mobility solutions, the company is gearing up to introduce compact air taxis designed to transport up to three passengers, including the pilot, according to reports. As per the report from the publication, the project aims to take flight initially in Japan and the United States before venturing into the Indian market. The debut of the SkyDrive, featuring 12 units of motors and rotors, is slated for the 2025 Osaka Expo in Japan.

SpiceJet plans to show the door to 1K

Mumbai: Crisis-hit SpiceJet plans to hand out pink slips to at least 1,000 employees in the coming days as the airline works to significantly reduce costs and streamline operations of its depleted aircraft fleet, officials said Monday. Faced with financial woes, legal battles and other headwinds, the no-frills carrier might ask more staff to leave as there is excess manpower now compared to the number of planes in service. The airline has around 9,000 employees and is now looking at reducing the strength by 10-15 per cent, the official said, adding that layoffs are necessary to reduce the overall costs and annual savings could be up to Rs 100 crore.

Apple leads India tablet PC mkt in '23

New Delhi: Apple led the India tablet PC market in 2023 as well as in the December quarter with a 25 per cent share notwithstanding a decline in its shipments, according to a report. Samsung was at the second spot with a 23 per cent market share in 2023, market research firm CyberMedia Research said Monday. "In CY (in calendar year) 2023, Apple led the tablet market with a 25 per cent market share, followed by Samsung at 23 per cent in CY 2023," CyberMedia Research (CMR) India Quarterly Tablet PC Market Review report said.

D-St tanks on profit booking

Metal, banking and select oil shares succumbed to selling while pharma and IT shares bucked the trend

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 12: Benchmark Sensex plunged by 523 points Monday due to profit taking in metal and banking shares amid mixed trends in global markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex settled 523 points or 0.73 per cent lower at 71,072.49 as 22 of its components closed in the red and eight in the green. The barometer opened higher and touched a high of 71,756.58 in early trade.

However, profit taking in Reliance Industries, metal giants and banking shares dragged the index to a low of 70,922.57 during intra-day trade.

The broader NSE Nifty also closed 166.45 points or 0.76 per cent lower at 21,616.05 with 34 of its constituents ending in the red.



An uptick in exchange margin requirements caused a decrease in positions, primarily in mid and small caps. Aside from the pharma and IT sectors, selling was widespread, with notable struggles seen in PSU banks

VINOD NAIR | HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

In the Sensex pack, Tata Steel fell the most by 2.76 per cent, followed by NTPC (2.72 per cent) and SBI (2.26 per cent). Private banks IndusInd, Kotak Bank, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank also declined.

Factory production slows in December

INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT GROWTH SLOWS TO 3.8% IN DEC 2023

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: India's industrial production growth slowed to 3.8 per cent in December 2023, mainly due to poor performance of mining and power generation segments, according to official data released Monday.

The factory output growth measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) was at 5.1 per cent in December 2022.

In November last year, IIP growth stood at 2.4 per cent.

During April-December period of this fiscal, IIP growth touched 6.1 per cent, up from 5.5 per cent in the corresponding period a year ago.

"India's Index of Industrial Production grows by 3.8 per cent in December 2023," Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation said in a release.

As per the latest data, the manufacturing sector's output growth accelerated to 3.9 per cent in December 2023 as against 3.6 per cent a year ago.

However, the power generation growth slowed to 1.2 per cent in December 2023 from 10.4 per cent growth in the year-ago period.

The mining output growth also declined to 5.1 per cent in the month under review from 10.1 per cent in the same period a year ago.

Amiti Nayar, Chief Economist at rating agency Icra, said that in contrast to the slowdown in the



core sector growth, the year-on-year growth in IIP rose to 3.8 per cent in December 2023 from 2.4 per cent in November 2023, led by an improvement in the performance of manufacturing sector.

"In terms of the use-based categories, only primary goods reported a sequential moderation in December 2023, with all five other categories reporting an improvement," she said.

As per use-based classification, the capital goods segment growth decelerated to 3.2 per cent in December 2023 compared to a growth of 7.8 per cent in the year-ago period.

In December last year, consumer durables output expanded 4.8 per cent. It had contracted 11.2 per cent in December 2022.

Consumer non-durable goods output slowed to 2.1 per cent compared to 7.9 per cent expansion in December 2022.

According to the data, infrastructure/construction goods too reported a deceleration at 4.1 per cent in December 2023 compared to 11 per cent expansion in the same period a year ago.

The data also showed that the output of primary goods logged 4.6 per cent growth in December last year, down from 8.5 per cent in the year-ago period.

88th Foundation Day: IOB holds walkathon



Ganjam: Indian Overseas Bank (IOB), Regional Office, Berhampur has organised a walkathon programme on the eve of its 88th Foundation Day. Under the leadership of Manish Kumar, Senior Regional Manager, many officers and employees participated in the event. In an interaction with media, Kumar said, "We are celebrating this day by organising activities like blood donation camp, tree plantation, walkathon etc across India". Further he thanked all the customers of IOB for their support, love and affection. Ratikanta Behera, Chief Manager said that the theme for the walkathon was "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" and "Preferred Bank connecting Generations". Further, he wished the support of customers for the development of the bank.

Vegoil imports dip 28% in Jan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: The country's vegetable oil imports declined by 28 per cent to 12 lakh tonne in January from a year-ago period, industry body SEA said Monday.

Vegetable oil imports stood at 16.61 lakh tonne in January 2023. India is a leading vegetable oil buyer in the world.

In the first quarter (November-January) of the current oil year, total imports dropped 23 per cent to 36.73 lakh tonne as against 47.73 lakh tonne in the same quarter of previous year.

According to the Solvent Extractors Association of India (SEA), about 7,82,983 tonne of palm oil and 4,08,938 tonne of soft oil were imported in January this year out of total vegetables oils.

Top 500 firms' valuation at \$2.3tn, 71% of GDP

RELiance CONTINUES TO RETAIN THE TOP SLOT FOR THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW WITH A VALUE OF ₹15.65L-CR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 12: Led by Reliance Industries, the top 500 private sector companies are valued at \$2.8 trillion or Rs 231 lakh crore, which is more than the combined GDP of Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, and Singapore, and also equivalent to 71 per cent of the nation's GDP, according to a report.

Reliance Industries continues to retain the top slot for the third year in a row with a value of Rs 15.65 lakh crore and leads the No 2, which is TCS, by at least Rs 3 lakh crore, the report stated.

Thanks to the merger of HDFC twins, HDFC Bank has become the third most valued company surpassing Rs 10 lakh crore market capitalization, according to a Hurun India-Axis Bank 2023 most valued companies list.

The top 500 private sector companies list (both listed and unlisted) excludes public sector as well as foreign companies, has a cumulative value of USD 2.8 trillion or Rs 231 lakh crore which is more than the combined GDP



of Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, and Singapore, the report said on Monday.

The list is led by Reliance with a value of Rs 15.6 lakh crore (as of October 2023), followed by Tata Consultancy Services at Rs 12.4 lakh crore and HDFC Bank with Rs 11.3 lakh crore.

Jio Financial Services is ranked 28th in the list and HCL Technologies and Kotak Mahindra Bank have returned to the top 10 list in the 2023 edition.

Of these, 342 companies saw an increase in value compared to 310 companies in 2022 with 18 of them doubling during the

year and three of them-- HDFC Bank, Larsen & Toubro and ITC-- saw growing by Rs 1 lakh crore.

More than half in the list registered a value growth of over Rs 1,000 crore over 2022 of which 75 added more than Rs 10,000 crore.

The top value creators of the year in terms of percentage are Suzlon Energy, which registered a value growth of 436, followed by Jindal Stainless and JSW Infrastructure which grew by almost five and four times respectively over 2022, Megha Engineering (150), manufacturing services startup Zetwerk (100) and Bennet

These companies have recorded 13 per cent sales growth in the year and had combined sales of \$952 billion, which is again more than a quarter of the national GDP which is likely to close the current fiscal at \$3.9 trillion

ANAS RAHMAN JUNAID | MD, HURUN INDIA

Coleman (100).

On the other hand vaccine maker Serum Institute saw its value fall by 13 per cent to Rs 1.9 lakh crore but continues to be the most valuable unlisted company in the country.

As much as 44 per cent of the companies in the list provide services and the rest 56 per cent sell physical products and 66 per cent of them are consumer-facing, 34 per cent are B2B.

Of the 500 companies, 61 are debutants, led by 16 from the industrial products, and 10 from the

financial services segment.

The top 500 companies come from 44 cities, led by Mumbai (156), Bangalore (59) and New Delhi (39). These top three cities contributed 254 entrants, up from 264 in the 2022 list.

Financial services, healthcare and consumer goods companies lead the pack with 76, 58 and 38 respectively.

Services sector was the largest value creator led by Info Edge (ranked 88), which grew by 4.5 times and the cumulative value of these services sector companies grew by 235.1 per cent.

Due to the funding winter, startups in the list cumulatively lost Rs 4 lakh crore, led by Byjus, Dealshare, and Pharmeasy. Yet the year saw the cumulative value of the six listed unicorns gaining Rs 62,837 crore, as against a valuation loss of Rs 1,66,013 crore in 2022. With a value of \$1.1 billion, Incred Finance is the newest unicorn to debut in the list.

Similarly, with a cumulative loss of Rs 5,75,234 crore, 10 companies from the retail sector dropped out of the list.

EVES LOSE TO CHINA



Rourkela, Feb 12: Indian women's team's poor run of form continued Monday as they suffered a 1-2 loss against lower-ranked China in their FIH Pro League match at the Barabati Stadium here.

The hosts made their intentions clear – playing attacking hockey – fielding as many as six players in the forward line. To the delight of more than 7,000 crowds the eves kept changing flanks from time to time to keep the opposition a little confused.

In the fifth minute the Chinese team asked for video referral

for stick obstruction by one of the Indian players, which was turned down by the referee.

India drew the first blood through mercurial Sangita Kumari in the seventh minute. It was a brilliant move as she received one stinging pass from right and scored with aplomb.

China won back-to-back penalty corners just before the end of first quarter. China capitalised on the second one in the 14th minute as Bingfeng Gu made no mistake in slotting the ball into the nets to restore parity.

In the beginning of the second quarter, China put pressure through some deft passing and

quality tackling. To the visitors' delight, India were down to 10 players for a couple of minutes after Udita was shown a green card for a foul in the 21st minute.

The Indian eves became more aggressive and one pass from a player had almost left the defence in disarray inside the Chinese box. However, the scoreline remained intact. The Chinese won their third PC in the 25th minute and it was padded out by the Indian goalie and the hosts opened a counter attack to earn a PC – their fourth in the match – but yet again they failed to find the target.

While, Jiaqi Zhong was giving

Indians some tough time, Baljjeet Kaur proved to be too much for the Chinese defence in the right with quality penetration. The second quarter was goalless.

Sunelita Toppo and Navneet Kaur moved in tandem from the very beginning of the third quarter and made life difficult for the Chinese defence. However, it was the visitors who almost had a PC, but a referral saved the Indians any trouble as the third quarter too couldn't change the scoreline.

The final quarter saw some fast paced hockey as both the sides were desperate for the winning goal. India almost found the winner following a counter attack, but Chinese defence stood tall.

Midway through the game – in the 53rd minute, China won their fourth PC and India lost the referral. The referral, however, was a blessing in disguise for the visitors as referee changed his decision from PC to a penalty stroke. Bingfeng stepped in and comfortably slotted it past Indian skipper and custodian Savita.

India won yet another PC with five minutes to go following a stick infringement. The clever tactic of indirect conversion did not give any joy to the Indians. The hosts tried their best to breach Chinese wall of defence, but to their agony, they couldn't find an equaliser.

Rahul ruled out of third Test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Rajkot, Feb 12: Senior India batter KL Rahul was Monday ruled out of the third Test against England after failing to fully recover from his quadriceps strain that forced him to miss the second match in Visakhapatnam.

Devdutt Padikkal, the talented Karnataka left-hander who is enjoying a great first class season, replaced Rahul in the squad. "KL Rahul, whose availability for the remaining three Tests was subject to fitness, has been ruled out of the third Test against England in Rajkot. Rahul has reached 90 per cent of match fitness and is progressing well under the supervision of the BCCI Medical Team," the BCCI said in a press release.

Rahul will continue his recovery at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru as he looks to return for the fourth and fifth Test. The series is currently locked 1-1. The selectors had earlier named both Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja in the squad subject to clearance from the BCCI's medical team.

"KL Rahul hasn't yet reported in Rajkot. Ravindra Jadeja, the local boy has linked up with the team. It was always a case of subject to fitness and BCCI medical team is still not confident that he is match fit," a senior BCCI source told PTI on the condition of anonymity.

In his most recent Ranji Trophy match, the 23-year-old Padikkal scored 151 with the chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar watching his knock from the stands. Padikkal has been in excellent form this season. Having started with a 193 against Punjab in the opening game, he struck 103 against Goa.

Besides his exploits in Ranji, Padikkal also scored 105, 65 and

21 in his three innings for India A in the two unofficial Tests against England Lions.

Coming back to Rahul, the 31-year-old batter's extended break raises a serious question about whether the senior India players and the BCCI's medical team are giving proper picture about the injury status of certain players.

Another senior player, who was recently told that he would be dropped for his poor form, pulled out on pretext of multiple injuries, something that the board hasn't even mentioned.

The case of Ishan Kishan is even more curious as he hasn't even spoken to his home state unit on whether he would play a Ranji Trophy match or not.

With Rahul ruled out of the third Test and possibly fourth, the doors could open for Sarfaraz Khan in the middle-order now that Shreyas Iyer has also been

dropped.

However, there will be more selection conundrum if Jadeja takes his rightful place in the XI. Axar Patel has batted well in the two Tests so far and Kuldeep Yadav was the second best Indian bowler in Visakhapatnam after Jasprit Bumrah.

As far as the keeper's slot is concerned, time is running out for KS Bharath with Dhruv Jurel breathing down his neck, but the former could still get one last chance in Rajkot.

UPDATED SQUAD FOR THE 3RD TEST: Rohit Sharma (C), Jasprit Bumrah (VC), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Rajat Patidar, Sarfaraz Khan, Dhruv Jurel (WK), KS Bharat (WK), R Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd. Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Akash Deep, Devdutt Padikkal.

Odisha go down against U'khand in Ranji Trophy

Cuttack, Feb 12: Odisha batters' poor show continues as they suffered a 162-run defeat against Uttarakhand in their Ranji Trophy Elite Group D encounter at the Barabati Stadium here, Monday.

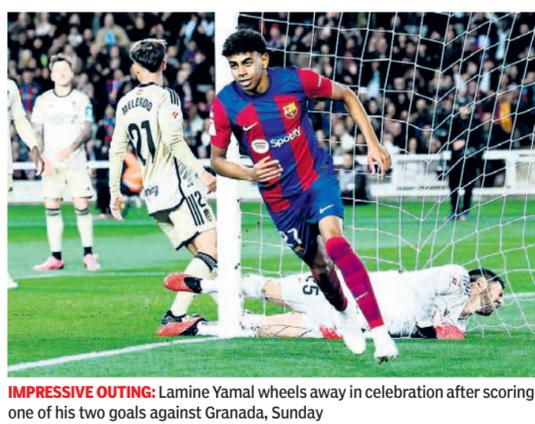
Having resumed the day on 17/2 while chasing a stiff target of 377 on the final day of the match, Odisha were bundled out for 214. Subhranshu Senapati (61, 151b, 9x4) was the top scorer for the home team, while Deepak Dhapola (5/74) bagged a five-wicket haul.

After dismissing the openers early in Odisha's chase Sunday, Dhapola sent Sandeep Pattnaik (8) back to pavilion in the second over of the day. However, the other overnight batter Debabrata Pradhan (37, 75b, 6x4) was joined by Subhranshu and the duo slowly built a partnership.

The duo shared a 49-run stand for the fourth wicket before Mayank Mishra (2/28) broke the partnership getting rid of Debabrata. Then experienced Govinda Poddar (19) joined Subhranshu at the middle and the pair forged a 47-run stand for the fifth wicket before Kunal Chandela (1/8) got the prized wicket of Poddar.

Odisha then kept losing wickets at regular intervals to be reduced to 176/8. Rajesh Mohanty (19) and Harshit Rathod (16) tried to delay the inevitable with a fighting 34-run stand for the ninth wicket. However, Uttarakhand wrapped up the match shortly after breaking the stand.

Barca fans jeer team after Granada draw



IMPRESSIVE OUTING: Lamine Yamal wheels away in celebration after scoring one of his two goals against Granada, Sunday

Madrid, Feb 12: Barcelona heard from their fans again after their chances of successfully defending the Spanish league title took another hit.

Barcelona were jeered at home following a 3-3 draw against second-to-last Granada, a setback that saw the Catalan club move 10 points behind leader Real Madrid, which defeated second-placed Girona 4-0 Saturday.

Barcelona trail Girona by five points and are three ahead of fourth-placed Atletico Madrid, who lost 0-1 at Sevilla earlier Sunday. The draw is likely to add more pressure on Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez, who recently said he will not return after the end of the season.

Barcelona were heavily favoured to win against a Granada team that have only one win in their last 13 matches in all competitions. Teenager Lamine Yamal was the man of the match for Barcelona, scoring twice.

Lamal opened the scoring in the 14th minute before Granada rallied with goals by Ricard Sanchez in the 43rd and Facundo Pellistri in the 60th. Robert Lewandowski equalised in the 63rd and Ignasi Miquel put the visitors ahead again in the 66th before Yamal leveled the match with low shot into the corner in the 80th.

Granada haven't won in five straight league matches, with three losses and two consecutive draws in their last two games. They stayed in 19th place, seven points from safety.

Maxwell opens up on night out fiasco

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Feb 11: Ending up in hospital after a late-night party in Adelaide was "less than ideal", conceded Australian swashbuckler Glenn Maxwell about the headline-grabbing incident last month, saying his family was affected more than him by the dramatic turns of events.

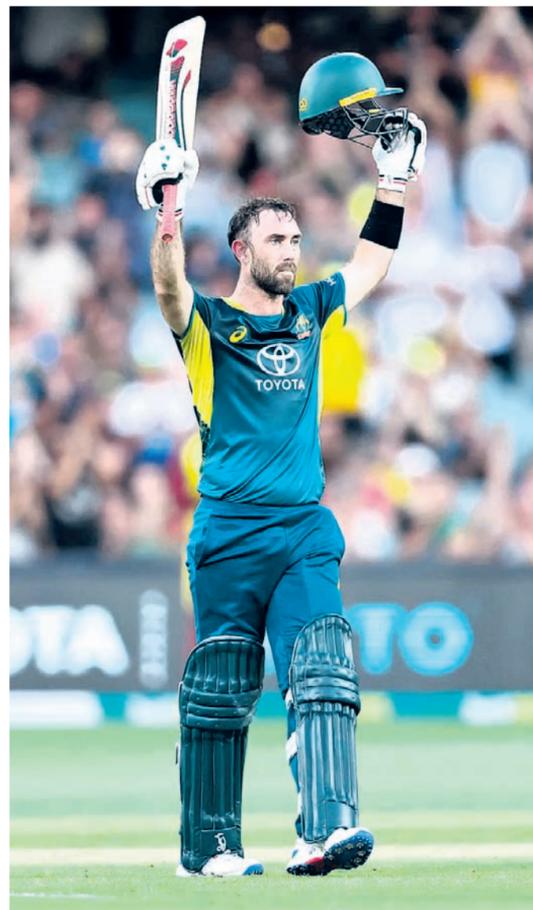
Maxwell was out drinking and watching a concert by 'Six and Out', the band featuring former Australian fast bowler Brett Lee, when he felt unwell and was rushed to hospital in an ambulance last month. He reportedly lost consciousness during the ride.

"I think probably it affected my family a little bit more than it affected me. I knew I had that week off. And obviously that incident was less than ideal, and the timing," Maxwell was quoted as saying by the 'Australian Associated Press'.

"But I had that week (during which the incident took place) off, I knew I had that week off away from the game," he said.

Sunday, the 35-year-old showed that he remains Australia's most dangerous batter in the shorter formats as he smashed a sensational 120 not out off 55 balls against the West Indies. It was a record-equalling fifth T20I hundred for him.

"I came back and got back into my running, my gym program and it felt really good and refreshed once I got back. And it's all been focused on getting myself ready for this (T20) series and what's to come," he said.



Glenn Maxwell celebrates his century against West Indies in their second T20I between Australia and West Indies, Sunday

Cricket Australia (CA) had launched an investigation into the incident and as a result, he was not a part of the preceding ODI series against the West Indies. Later, head coach Andrew McDonald urged the big-hitter "to hold up his end of the bargain" and "take care of himself".

"He needs to obviously have a look at what he's doing at his end and is that the right thing to be doing at that time?" McDonald had stated.

Maxwell said he moved on quickly from the incident in Adelaide. "I just moved on pretty quickly. I was back in training Monday so I was pretty good. The coach, Bails, everyone really, they have been outstanding."

Talking about his life off the field, Maxwell said it is mostly devoted to chilling with his young family. "Just a lot of family time. I think having that much downtime with the family at the moment, it has just been so good for me away from cricket. And I sort of come to cricket, it is just fun now, I'm able to just go out and just enjoy it," he said.

Maxwell is not new to being in the news for off-field drama. Last year, he faced a series of injuries but despite that, he performed admirably in the World Cup. During the ODI World Cup in India, Maxwell suffered concussion when he fell off a golf cart in Ahmedabad.

In 2022, he broke his leg when he slipped while running at a friend's birthday party and remained out of action for more than three months.

Marathon WR-holder Kelvin Kiptum dies in car crash

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nairobi (Kenya), Feb 12: Marathon world record-holder Kelvin Kiptum, who was set to be a superstar of long-distance running and was a top contender for gold at the Olympics in Paris this year, was killed along with his coach in a car crash in Kenya.

Their vehicle was the only one involved in the crash late Sunday and Kiptum was driving when it veered off a road and into a ditch before hitting a tree, police said.

Kiptum was 24 and one of the most exciting prospects to emerge in road running in years, having broken the world record in only his third appearance in an elite marathon. His record, set at last year's Chicago Marathon, was ratified by international track federation

World Athletics just last week.

His death reverberated through Kenya, where runners are the biggest sports stars. Kenyans have also gotten used to tragic tales involving their top athletes after a number have died in road crashes, other accidents and domestic violence cases.

"He was only 24," Kenyan President William Ruto said in a statement offering his condolences. "Kiptum was our future."

Kiptum and his Rwandan coach, Gervais Hakizimana, were killed in the crash at around 11 pm, police said. It happened near the town of Kapsabet in western Kenya, in the heart of the high-altitude region that's renowned as a training base for the best distance runners from Kenya and across the world.

Kiptum was born and raised



in the area. A third person, a 24-year-old woman, was also in the car and was taken to a hospital with serious injuries, police said. Kiptum and Hakizimana died at the scene.

Athletes and family members, including Kiptum's father, gathered at the hospital mortuary where the bodies of Kiptum and his coach were taken. One of the athletes, former women's steeplechase world champion Milcah Chemos, struggled to speak while breaking down in tears. "I have no words to explain the loss of Kelvin," she said.

Kenneth Kimaiyo, a friend of

Kiptum, said he arrived at the crash scene soon after it happened and Kiptum had been thrown out of the car. Photos showed the silver car with a badly mangled roof and one of the doors flung open.

Kiptum was the first man to run the marathon in under 2 hours, 1 minute in an official race when he set the world record of 2:00.35 in Chicago in October, beating the mark of fellow Kenyan and marathon great Eliud Kipchoge.

Kiptum and Kipchoge were expected to provide an enticing all-Kenyan battle for marathon gold in Paris and Kiptum was due to start his season at the Rotterdam Marathon in April, which would have been his first event since breaking the world record.

World Athletics President Sebastian Coe was one of the first to offer his condolences in

a statement on X, formerly Twitter. David Rudisha, Kenya's two-time Olympic champion in the 800 meters, wrote on X that Kiptum's death was "a huge loss."

David Lelei, an All-Africa Games silver medalist, died in a car crash in 2010. Marathon runner Francis Kiplagat was among five people who were killed in a crash in 2018. Nicholas Bett, who won gold in the 400 meter hurdles at the 2015 World Championships, also died in a car crash in 2018.

Samuel Wanjiru, the 2008 Olympic marathon champion, died in 2011 at the age of 24 after falling from a balcony at his home in Kenya. Kenyans were perhaps most shocked when Agnes Tirop, a multiple cross-country world champion, was stabbed to death in her home in 2021, allegedly by her husband.

Gukesh goes down fighting vs Caruana

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wangels (Germany), Feb 12: Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh fumbled again and went down fighting against world number two Fabiano Caruana of USA in the first game of the quarterfinals in the Weissenhaus Freestyle Chess challenge here.

With just one game under the classical time control, Gukesh needs to win the return game to stay in contention to go to the semifinals. After three losses under rapid time control, this was Gukesh's fourth straight loss.

Alireza Firouzja of France scored an upset victory over World No.1 Magnus Carlsen of Norway, while Nodirbek Abdusattarov of Uzbekistan stunned World Champion Ding Liren of China.