



Ash comes clean

Actor Aishwarya Rai shuts off divorce rumours by clicking a selfie with Abhishek Bachchan at a recent party

LEISURE | P2



Assad gets support

Iran will send missiles, drones and more advisers to Syria, according to a senior Iranian official, Friday

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Costlier automobiles

Maruti Suzuki India, Mahindra & Mahindra and JSW MG Motor announce plans to hike vehicle prices from January

BUSINESS | P11



Starc shines

Mitchell Starc bags 6 wickets to help Australia grab advantage in the pink ball Test against India

SPORTS | P12

Currency note bundle from Singhvi's seat rocks Rajya Sabha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: A wad of ₹500 notes found from the seat allotted to Congress Member of Parliament Abhishek Manu Singhvi in the Rajya Sabha rocked the Upper House Friday with the Opposition and ruling alliance MPs trading charges and the Congress MP demanding a probe into the 'security lapse.'

Singhvi also suggested that glass enclosures should be erected to prevent anyone from planting 'ganja' on seats in an MP's absence.

The Rajya Sabha was adjourned for the day within minutes of meeting after lunch as treasury benches were on their feet seeking answers from the opposition.

Deputy Chairman Harivansh, who was in Chair, sought to pacify the members of the ruling party and urged them to sit down and allow the House to function. As unrelenting BJP members continued to raise slogans, he adjourned the House for the day.

Soon after the official papers were laid on the table in the morning, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said security staff had recovered a wad of ₹500 notes from the seat allotted to Congress MP Singhvi, leading to an uproar in the House.

While Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge said the chairman should not have named the member without an investigation being completed, Leader of the House JP Nadda accused the opposition of showing eagerness on 'some issues' while wanting to cover up other issues.

The currency was recovered from seat 222, which is allotted to Singhvi, during an anti-sabotage check Thursday, Dhankhar said.

"After the adjournment of the House yesterday, a wad of currency notes was apparently recovered by security officials from seat no 222 presently allotted to Abhishek Manu Singhvi, elected from the state of Telangana," he added.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I know how I won't try to tell me you voted for me



ON WAR PATH: Tear gas being used by security personnel to disperse farmers during their foot march towards Delhi, at Shambhu border in Patiala district, Punjab, Friday. The protest was aimed at pressing for various demands, including a legal guarantee for MSP. The farmers Friday suspended their foot march to Delhi for the day after a few of them suffered injuries due to tear gas shells lobbed by security personnel, according to a Punjab farmer leader (MORE P8)

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for ex-Chile Prez

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2024 will be conferred on former Chile president and prominent human rights voice Michelle Bachelet, the international jury for the award chaired by former National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon announced Friday.

"President Michelle Bachelet is one of the world's most prominent voices for human rights, peace, and equality. In her various roles as the founding director of UN Women, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and as President of Chile, she has spoken strongly for gender equality and the rights of the most vulnerable sections of the population at home and across the world," a statement issued by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust said.

"Her personal courage and example in standing for peace and the rights of marginalised people continue to inspire men and women around the world," it added.

The Indira Gandhi Peace Prize is awarded to Bachelet for the example and inspiration that she is to women and men around the world for steadfastly striving for peace, gender equality, human rights, democracy and development in difficult circumstances, and her contributions to India's relations with Chile, the statement said.

Growth to slide further

All eyes were on Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting Friday, following National Statistical Office data, published last week, that put the country's economic growth at near two-year-low at 5.4 per cent in the July-September quarter, thanks to poor performance of manufacturing and mining sector. Though the MPC appears to have made an attempt to restore the balance between inflation and growth in the overall interest of the economy, the policy statement is far from encouraging. While the gross domestic product (GDP) forecast for 2025 fiscal has now been significantly lowered from RBI's earlier prediction, the rate of inflation is also projected to shoot up during the year. The six-member MPC, led by Governor Shaktikanta Das, decided by a 4 to 2 majority to keep the benchmark repo (key lending) rate untouched for the 11th straight time, and maintain the monetary policy stance 'neutral' citing concerns over inflation and the uncertain growth outlook. This forecast was in stark contrast to the growth of 8.1 per cent in the corresponding quarter of 2023-24 fiscal. The previous low level of GDP growth at 4.3 per cent was recorded in the third quarter of 2022-23



HIGHLIGHTS OF RBI MONETARY POLICY

- Key interest rate (repo) kept unchanged at 6.5 pc
- RBI continues with 'neutral' monetary policy stance
- Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) reduced to 4 pc from 4.5 pc, to unlock ₹1.16 lakh crore of bank funds
- RBI sharply lowers GDP growth forecast for FY25 to 6.6 pc from 7.2 pc
- Inflation projection for FY25 raised to 4.8 pc from 4.5 pc
- Next monetary policy meeting scheduled for February 5-7, 2025.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 6: The Reserve Bank of India Friday decided to keep the policy rate unchanged for the 11th time in a row but sharply lowered the GDP growth forecast to 6.6 per cent for the current fiscal, as against earlier projection of 7.2 per cent.

The RBI maintained the status quo on interest rate despite July-September quarter GDP growth falling to seven-quarter low of 5.4 per cent, as against its own projection of seven per cent.

The rate increase cycle was paused in April last year after six consecutive rate hikes, aggregating to 250 basis points

since May 2022.

Announcing the fifth bi-monthly monetary policy for the current financial year, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has decided to keep the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent while keeping policy stance unchanged at neutral.

He said MPC will remain watchful of incoming macroeconomic data for future action.

The RBI sharply cut the GDP growth projection to 6.6 per cent from the earlier level of 7.2 per cent, while raising inflation target to 4.8 per cent from the previous projection of 4.5 per cent for the current fiscal.

In a bid to make available more money with banks for lending so as to boost economic activity, the RBI slashed Cash Reserve Ratio to 4 per cent from existing 4.5 per cent. This would lead to release of ₹1.16 lakh crore to banks and improve their lending capacity.

This was the second MPC meeting of the reconstituted panel with three newly appointed external members -- Ram Singh, Saugata Bhattacharya and Nagesh Kumar.

₹1cr fine, 5-year jail for exam malpractice

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: The state Assembly Friday passed the Odisha Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024, making cheating in examinations a cognisable, non-bailable and non-com-

IN THE HOUSE

poundable offence. It mandates a hefty fine of ₹1 crore for institutions found involved in malpractices along with blacklisting. Similarly, as per the Bill, introduced in the House by CM Mohan Charan Majhi, individuals resorting to unfair means and offences will be punished with imprisonment ranging from three to five years and a fine of up to ₹10 lakh.

Majhi said the law was required to deal with vulnerabilities of the examination system. "Impersonation, cheating, disruptions and questions leak adversely affect the prospects of millions of youths," he said, adding, the Bill is aimed at effectively and legally deterring individuals, organised groups and institutions that indulge in

POLAVARAM HEAT

Bhubaneswar: Assembly was adjourned Friday till 4 pm due to a din created by opposition Congress and BJD MLAs over the controversial Polavaram Dam project in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. As soon as the House assembled for Question Hour, Congress members rushed to the Well and staged a protest after their notice for a discussion on the Polavaram issue was rejected by the Speaker. They shouted anti-BJP slogans and accused the saffron party of sacrificing the interest of Odisha. The BJD members also shouted against the government. The Speaker said she couldn't allow a discussion on the issue as sought by Congress members because the matter was sub-judice.

various unfair means.

The CM alleged that the previous BJD government had 'sold' jobs such as Assistant Section Officer (ASO) for around ₹30 lakh. Chief Minister Majhi said the corruption that occurred during the previous government has come to an end.

232-yr-old cricket painting, India's first, to go under hammer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: A rare oil on canvas work by iconic British painter Thomas Daniell, touted to be the first painting of a cricket match in India, will be among the artworks to go under the hammer at an upcoming auction at AstaGuru, the auction house announced Friday.

Executed in 1792, the painting titled *Cricket Match In India* will be part of AstaGuru's upcoming *Historic Masterpieces* auction from December 14-16 along with a collection of works by iconic modern Indian artists.

Daniell, who was known for documenting landscapes, peo-



ple, and buildings, is believed to have worked on this piece

during his visit to Chennai, then Madras, between 1792 and

1793. The location depicted in the painting is believed to be

The Island, the sole cricket ground in Madras at that time.

The work depicts the players engaged in the game in the foreground surrounded by lush greenery, the fielders are dressed in coloured trousers while the scorer sits on the side, and the tent likely serves as the pavilion. The beautiful sky in subtle shades and clusters of trees represents Daniell's signature style.

"This painting by Thomas Daniell is a monumental piece of art that not only reflects the evolving cultural fabric of India during the 18th century but also celebrates the country's love for cricket, a sport that has become an integral part of its identity. It is a privilege

to present such a rare work at our upcoming auction, and we are confident it will captivate collectors who value historical and artistic significance," Sneha Gautam, senior vice president at AstaGuru Auction House, said.

The auction will showcase works by artists like Jamini Roy, Manu Parekh, SL Haldankar, KM Adimoolam, B Prabha, Bikash Bhattacharjee, Ganesh Pyne, Homi J Bhabha, Rabin-dranath Tagore, A Ramachandran, Paresh Maity, Jehangir Sabavala, and BC Sanyal.

The collection also includes sculptures by eminent artists such as Himmat Shah, T Vaikuntam, Krishen Khanna and Sankho Chaudhuri.

Class XII student shoots dead principal in MP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chhatrapur, Dec 6: A Class XII student allegedly shot dead the principal of his school in this district of Madhya Pradesh Friday afternoon and fled from the spot on the deceased's scooter along with an associate, a police official said.

Superintendent of Police Agam Jain said Principal SK Saxena (65) was shot in the head at the entrance of the toilet of Dhamora Government Higher School at around 1:30pm. Saxena died on the spot, he said. The alleged shooter's associate is also a student of the same institution, Jain informed. Saxena was the principal of the school for the past five years, in charge district education officer RP Prajapati added.

leisure



BILLIE EILISH REVEALS SHE HAD 'BODY ISSUES' AT 10
Grammy winner Billie Eilish revealed that she began developing problems with her body image when she was just 10. The singer explained she opted for the loose-fitting garments as a way to feel more 'comfortable' after growing unhappy with her shape at a young age.

AMBER HEARD PREGNANT WITH SECOND CHILD
After an ugly legal battle against her ex-husband and Hollywood star Johnny Depp, things are looking bright for actress Amber Heard. The actress is expanding her family as she is expecting her second baby, reports People magazine.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today you will feel like going green, and Ganesha approves. You could plant a sapling, or organise some dustbins to keep the neighbourhood clean. If you wish to make the world a better place to live in, do it but take it step by step.

TAURUS
You are likely to become too ambitious today and strive to outdo others. So says Ganesha. You will be over eager to do something big, lay your hands on something precious and valuable. Though you are quite likely to succeed to some extent your over enthusiasm may land you in serious problems that may affect your persona; and private life.

GEMINI
Putting things in order will be your top priority, says Ganesha. You will possibly have a romantic dinner with your sweetheart. Seductive conversations may culminate in sensuous consummation. Your personal feelings will stir up your partner's private thoughts.

CANCER
It is high time you paid attention to your family. You have been so lost in work and in making money that you have almost forgotten the very people you have been slogging for. Your spouse has been trying hard to improve the relationship. Ganesha feels it is time you respond to your partner's needs.

LEO
You will leave no stone unturned to satisfy and please your partner today. So your chances of slipping up are very slight. You will be able to impress your partner today. You need to be careful in all your financial dealings today, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
Your communication and creative abilities are your best weapons. You will be overflowing with zest for life and will exude cheerfulness. However, Ganesha warns that your creativity will bloom fully only in situations where there is no pressure or strain.

LIBRA
Ganesha says that you will be full of joy, enthusiasm and vigor today. Your knowledge will improve by being in the company of intelligent people. Anything that you take up today will have your luck or destiny supporting you. Ganesha wishes you success in all your undertakings

SCORPIO
Focus is the buzzword for you; your eyes should be set on the things you aim, advises Ganesha. You may even indulge into some kind of research work. Today, you may bump into an old pal with whom you relive those good old school days and rejuvenate yourself.

SAGITTARIUS
Benevolence will be your middle name today. Being frank and open-minded will have its own advantages. You might just give your life partner a patient ear. This will make them feel treated well, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
You have been waiting to hear some good news for long, and today is the day when the wait will be finally over. With your eyes firmly set on your goal, you will develop likings for your work. This will help you make plans and take decisions for the future, feels Ganesha. You wished to change your current job, but with some good news coming in you may not wish for the same any more.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will want to expand your horizon of knowledge. You will give a tough fight to your opponents and come out triumphant, feels Ganesha. Troubles will not be able trouble you as you will be able to turn them into your advantage. You are clever, talented and have all that it takes to fly high. Just believe in the strength of your wings.

PISCES
Today you will feel generous and calm. You will shower those in the family who are younger than you with this generosity and as a result be the object of their fondness. With a clear perspective you will be able to see things for what they are. The only downside of the day is that your expenses might take a toll on your wallet, says Ganesha.

INTERNATIONAL THEATRE'S GOLDEN JUBILEE FEST CONCLUDES



Artistes of Bharatendu Natya Akademi (Lucknow) presented Hindi play *Nirmanse Nirban Tak*, translated from Odia playwright Bijay Mishra's famous work *Tata Niranjana* by Rajendra Prasad Mishra, at Rabindra Mandap, Friday, on the last day of the national drama festival. The play was directed by Bipin Kumar. Several luminaries from various walks of life were in attendance during the show.

MUMBAI: Actress Shweta Tripathi, known for her work in projects such as *Masaan*, *Haraamkhor* and *Mirzapur*, has revealed her playlist and a carefully selected perfume play pivotal roles in helping her understand and embody her roles.

Here's how Shweta embodies her role

Talking about her creative process, Shweta said, "Two things really help me to prep my character. One is my playlist, which is full of songs that evoke longing and love. I am a sucker for love stories, and this is one genre I would love to explore more."

She talked about how music helps to get into the skin of the character. "The music helps me tap into the emotions and psyche of the character—it's like an emotional trampoline. Because I tune my emotions as per the mood of the music."

She then revealed that the other element is "perfume." "I always choose a scent that resonates with the essence of my character. Every character has a unique aura, and perfumes help me embody their spirit on a deeper level. It's fascinating how a whiff of the right fragrance can immediately transport you into a character's world," shared the actress.



MUMBAI: Amid divorce rumours about actor-couple Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai, new pictures of the duo have emerged on social media platforms. Taking to their respective Instagram accounts, entrepreneur Anu Ranjan and actor Ayesha Jhulka posted photos featuring Aishwarya and Abhishek Bachchan.

In a photo shared by Anu, Aishwarya was seen clicking a selfie as she stood in front of her mother, Brindya Rai. Anu held Brindya's hand while Abhishek stood behind them. All of them smiled and posed for the camera. For the event, Aishwarya and Abhishek twinned in black outfits. She wore a suit,



Ash dispels divorce rumours

while Abhishek was seen in a bandhgala and trousers. Anu captioned the post, "So much love warmth (pink heart emojis)." Reacting to the post, a fan said, "Love this, Anu... you really changed everyone's mindset." A comment read, "Shutting off all false rumours." A person wrote, "Strong women don't just divorce to avoid the problem. They look for solutions. Aishwarya Rai with her mother and husband Abhishek Bachchan last evening at a party."

Katrina's deepest relationship fear

MUMBAI: Before her marriage to Vicky Kaushal, Katrina Kaif once discussed her fears during her relationship with Ranbir Kapoor. In an old interview, she revealed worries that he might not fully love her or be prepared for commitment.

In a 2015 interview with *GQ India*, the actress expressed her deepest fear regarding her relationship. She revealed that her greatest concern was standing at the altar or mandap and worrying that he might not love her completely. She feared that he might not be certain enough to make such commitments, and the anticipation of heartbreak was her only fear.

Katrina confessed that she wasn't as close to Ranbir Kapoor's family as she desired, expressing a wish to spend more time with them. She stated that family would be a crucial factor in her decision to marry. Katrina described herself as a responsible partner, capable of being the best girlfriend if her needs were met.

On the work front, Katrina was last seen in *Merry Christmas* alongside Vijay Sethupathi. While she hasn't announced her next film, she is confirmed to star in Farhan Akhtar's upcoming project *Jee Le Zaraa*, featuring Alia Bhatt and Priyanka Chopra. Details about the film are currently unknown, and fans are eagerly awaiting updates.



PEANUTS



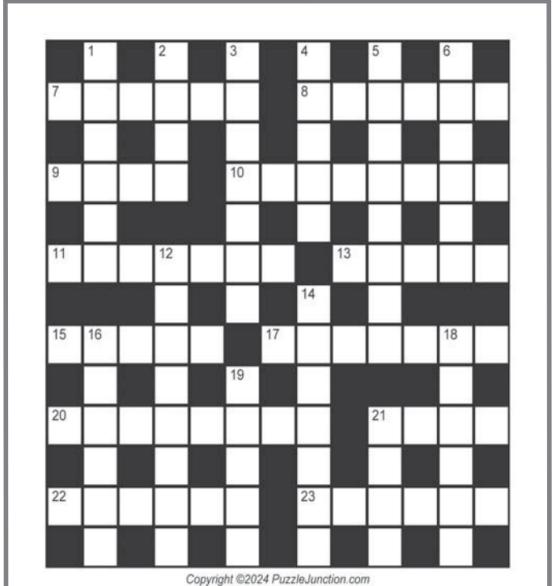
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



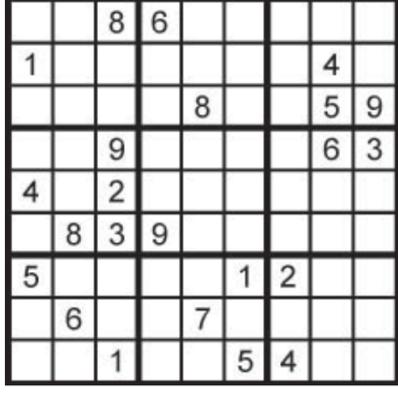
FUN POST CROSSWORD



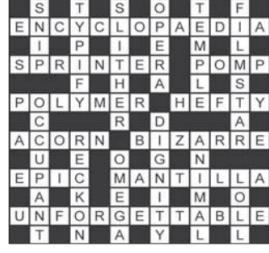
- Across**
- 7 Washed-out
 - 8 Space invader?
 - 9 Motel employee
 - 10 Magic trick
 - 11 Puerto Rican city (3,4)
 - 13 Dracula, for one
 - 15 Analyse
 - 17 Misrepresent
 - 20 Approve
 - 21 See socially
 - 22 Abrasion
 - 23 Flamethrower fuel
- Down**
- 1 Garam (spice mixture)
 - 2 Trudge
 - 3 Commander of a fleet
 - 4 Whimsical
 - 5 Tailor's tool
 - 6 Eminence
 - 12 Type of decision or robe
 - 14 Caveat
 - 16 Hypnotic state
 - 18 Pointless
 - 19 Equestrian
 - 21 Pickpockets

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Well-known environmentalist and head of Jungle Lore Foundation Akash Ranjan Rath receives Rs 1 lakh climate grant for forest conservation efforts from leading Odia daily Dharitri's Deputy News Editor Jitendra Kumar Nayak at the newspaper's office in Bhubaneswar Friday, as Editor Tathagata Satpathy, Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy and staffers look on



downtown

SC asks states to verify employees' credentials



THE SC PASSED THE DIRECTION WHILE SETTING ASIDE THE TERMINATION OF AN OPHTHALMIC ASSISTANT TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO THE DATE OF RETIREMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: The Supreme Court has directed police officials of all the state governments to check and verify documents pertaining to the character, antecedents, nationality and genuineness produced by the candidates selected for government jobs within six months from the date of their appointment.

In an order passed December 5, a bench of Justices JK Maheshwari and R Mahadevan said appointments to government posts would have to be regularised only after verification of the credentials of the candidates.

The top court passed the direction while setting aside the termination of an ophthalmic assistant two months prior to the date of retirement.

The petitioner joined the public service March 6, 1985, but the verification report was communicated by the police to the department only July 7, 2010, on-

ly two months prior to the date that he was not citizen of the country.

"The given factual matrix would also compel this court to issue a direction to the police official(s) of all the states to complete the enquiry and file report as regards the character, antecedents, nationality, genuineness of the documents produced by the candidates selected for appointment to the government service, etc., within a stipulated time provided in the statute/GO, or in any event, not later than six months from the date of their appointment," the SC said.

The bench went on, "It is made clear that only upon verification of the credentials of the candidates, their appointments will have to be regularised so as to avoid further complications, as in the case on hand."

The SC was hearing a plea filed by Basudev Dutta challenging an order of the Calcutta High Court which set aside direction passed

by the West Bengal State Administrative Tribunal.

The petitioner challenged the termination order before the tribunal which while allowing his plea granted liberty to the authority concerned to proceed against the appellant in accordance with law.

The HC affirmed the order of termination passed by the authority concerned.

Referring to the case, the SC said it is manifestly clear that reasons were heartbeat of every order and every notice must specify the grounds on which the administrative or quasi-judicial authority intended to proceed.

"In the light of the same, we have no hesitation to hold that the order of termination passed against the appellant is arbitrary, illegal and violative of the principles of natural justice and it cannot be sustained," it underlined. In its 'ultimate analysis', the SC found that the tribunal was right in observing that without following the principles of natural justice and without affording any opportunity to explain his case before it, the appellant was terminated.

"Hence, his termination order cannot be sustained in the eye of law; and accordingly, set aside the order of termination," the bench held.



BOOK LOVERS' DELIGHT: Visitors crowd a stall at the State Book Fair which was inaugurated at Exhibition Ground in Bhubaneswar, Friday

State to curb obscenity in jatra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: The state government has been preparing guidelines to curb obscene dance in jatra shows in the state. Odia Language, Literature and Culture Minister Suryabanshi Suraj told the state Assembly Friday.

In a written reply to a question of Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati, the minister said the state government has been thinking seriously to clamp down on obscene dance shows by jatra parties. Guidelines are being prepared for this purpose, he said.

Last year, the previous BJD government had issued a direction to all District Collectors and SPs to prohibit obscene dances and dialogues with 'double meaning' that are part of jatra and melody programmes.

MOUNTING UNEMPLOYMENT

Over 12 lakh youths waiting for jobs

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: The unemployment situation in the state appears to be grim, if the data revealed by a minister in the Assembly is any indication.

Replying to a question posed by BJD MLA Sarada Prasad Nayak in the House Friday, Skill Development and Technical Education Minister Sampad Chandra Swain said that more than 12.13 lakh jobless youths, who registered themselves

with different employment exchanges in the state during the last five years, are waiting for jobs.

Swain said 12,13,924 unemployed youths have registered their names in the employment exchanges between 2019-20 and 2023-24.

The job aspirants include 3.19 lakh graduates, 51,956 postgraduates, 4.22 lakh intermediates, 1.80 lakh matriculates, 42,916 diploma pass-outs, 74,827 trained teachers, 33,691 ITI pass-outs and 14,750 under-ma-



trich students, he said. Interestingly, 836 medical postgraduates and two medical graduates were also waiting for jobs in the

state, the minister added.

"During the last five years, the government has given employment to 2,274 youths through the exchanges," he informed.

In another written statement, Swain said, "The state government has provided training to 36,329 youths through placement linked training programmes from 2019-20 to 2023-24, of which 15,068 got employment."

"Over 18.42 lakh youths have been made self-em-

ployable by providing training under the Chief Minister's Employment Generation Programme during 2014-15 to 2023-24," he added.

To create employment opportunities, "Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) has been organising job fairs. Between 2019-20 and 2023-24, 226 job fairs were organised at a cost of Rs 3.80 crore, and appointment letters were given to 1,05,444 people," he said.

Youth Congress members hurl eggs, tomatoes at cops

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Youth Congress members hurled eggs and tomatoes at police during a scuffle while attempting to gherao the residence of ST and ST Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare Minister Nityananda Gond here Friday, officials said.

Holding posters and banners, the members took out a protest rally, alleging irregularities in the award of tender for the construction of schools for ST/SC students in the state.

As they marched to gherao the Minister's house, youth Congress members clashed with police personnel, who prevented them midway. Police took some of the activists into preventive custody and later released them, officials said.

8 more KVs in state soon

PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Friday approved establishment of eight new Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) in Odisha.

The eight are among the 85 new KVs to be set up across the country, while another one in Shivamogga district of Karnataka will undergo expansion.

The opening of these new KVs will provide an opportunity for over 82,000 students to receive affordable and high-quality education across the country, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said.

"Rs 5,872.08 crore will be spent over a period of eight years from 2025-26 towards establishment of the 85 new KVs and expansion of the existing one. It includes capital expenditure com-



ponent of ₹2,862.71 crore and operational expenditure of ₹3,009.37 crore," the Minister said. The eight new KVs are: Railway Titagarh and Patnagarh, both in Bolangir district, ITBP Khurda in Khurda district, Athmallik and Talcher, both in Angul district, Kuchinda in Sambalpur district, Kamakhyanagar in Dhenkanal and Jeypore in Koraput district.

As of date, there are 1,256 functional KVs, including three abroad - Moscow, Kathmandu and Tehran, and 13.56 lakh students are studying in these schools, an official statement said.

The administrative structure for implementing the project will require creation of posts at par with the norms fixed by the

Sangathan for running of one full-fledged KV with a capacity of approximately 960 students. "Hence, 960 X 86 = 82,560 students would benefit. As per norms, a full-fledged KV provides employment to 63 persons and accordingly, approval of 85 new KVs and the expansion of one existing nearby KV, which will add 33 new posts, a total of 5,388 direct permanent employment opportunities will be created," it said.

Construction and allied activities associated with augmentation of various facilities in all KVs are likely to generate employment opportunities for many skilled and unskilled workers. The statement also said that construction and allied activities for creating school infrastructure are likely to generate employment opportunities for many skilled and unskilled workers.

Decked up Cuttack rly stn opens today

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: The decked up East Side Station Building (facing National Highway 16) of the century-old Cuttack railway station will be dedicated to people by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw in the presence of several distinguished leaders, including Cuttack MP Bhartruhari Mahtab, December 7.

The railway station in the Millennium City which was set up during the British era in 1899, is presently undergoing major transformations under the Amrit Stations Scheme in order to become a modern transportation hub offering world-class amenities.

This ambitious project, with an investment of Rs 303 crore, aims at amplifying passenger experience and improving connectivity across the region.

The East Side Station Building, constructed at a cost of Rs 14.63 crore, will significantly improve



Established in 1899, Cuttack Railway Station on the East Coast Railway has a facade in the shape of the ramparts of the old fort in the city, a novel concept adopted by the Railway. It is a railway junction operating under Khurda Road Division of East Coast Railway. It is among the top hundred booking stations of Indian Railway. The station, having five platforms, records footfall of 12,000 people per day.

passenger convenience as well as safety through hassle-free access for travellers arriving from NH-16 side. This development is expected to streamline station operations and offer seamless passenger movement.

Key features of the East Side Station Building include 21,270 sqft air-condi-

tioned space with modern facilities such as a food court (2,100 sqft), modern toilets (including accessibility for differently-abled passengers), ticket counters, waiting areas, escalators and lifts.

The station features enhanced accessibility with Sugamya-compliant escala-

tors and lifts for all passengers, including those with disabilities.

A spacious circulating area, ample parking, and pick-up/drop-off facilities are poised to make the station more accessible to travelers from Cuttack and surrounding districts.

The station will also host Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Kendra (PMBJK), ATM kiosk, and One Station One Product (OSOP) trolleys, showcasing handicrafts made by women self-help groups supported by NABARD.

The new building is designed to address the needs of passengers not only from Cuttack but also from nearby areas like Paradip, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Jajpur, Badamba, Narasinghpur and Niali.

With a focus on safety, convenience, and comfort, the building provides passengers with hassle-free access, easing the time-consuming entry traditionally faced at the station.



Convocation Ceremony

7TH DECEMBER 2024 at 10 AM



Centurion UNIVERSITY
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His Excellency Shri Raghubar Das
Hon'ble Governor of Odisha
and
Visitor, Centurion University

Will preside over the Ceremony

The Commencement and Convocation Address will be delivered by the following Distinguished Dignitaries



Hon'ble Justice Shri Sandeep Mehta
Judge, Hon'ble Supreme Court of India



Dr Sreedhar Panicker Somanath
Secretary, Department of Space,
Chairman, Space Commission,
Chairman, ISRO

Venue : Centurion University Campus | Bhubaneswar | Odisha

ODISHA INCLUSIVE SUMMIT 2024

Call for action to integrate differently-abled persons



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: In a bid to generate awareness and create actionable solutions for the inclusion of differently-abled persons in various sectors, Odisha Inclusive Summit 2024 was organised by the Odisha Rising Foundation (ORF), in association with the SSEPD department at Rama Devi Women's University here Friday.

At the event, representatives from government, academia, corporate sector, and civil society came together to share insights on innovative approaches and inclusive practices that enhance education, employment, and social integration of differently-abled persons in the state.

A 'Sign Language Anthem' was performed by trainees from the 'Sanketa Mo-Bhasa' project at the event. Odisha Rising Foundation co-founder and chairman Akhaya Sagar gave the opening remarks and emphasised the need for inclusive growth.

Joining the event, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said, "We are focused on ensuring that persons with disabilities are integrated into every aspect of society, with policies that promote their rights and opportunities."

University vice-chancellor Aparajita Chowdhury spoke on inclusive education, saying, "Disabilities can take many forms—physical, mental, emotional, or visual. Our

goal is to create an academic environment where every student, regardless of ability, can thrive."

Notable dignitaries, including SSEPD department principal secretary Bishupada Sethi and director Niyati Pattnaik reinforced the importance of policy-driven initiatives for differently-abled persons.

A key moment at the event was the distribution of certificate to the first batch of Indian Sign Language students, a landmark achievement for the inclusivity movement in the state.

The summit featured panel discussions. The first panel discussion, 'Leveraging Innovation and Technology to Enhance Education and Employment Opportunities for PwDs' explored how educational institutions can integrate practices into their systems for inclusivity.

The second panel discussion, 'Role of Innovative Technology and Accessibility Solutions in Enhancing Employability for PwDs' featured corporate leaders from Infosys, Cognizant, and LTI Mindtree, who discussed the role of technology in creating accessible employment opportunities.



CULTURAL FEST: Khurda Collector Chanchal Rana lights the ceremonial lamp during the inauguration of Junior Parents' NITE 2024, at Loyola School in Bhubaneswar, Friday. Principal Father A Amaladoss, Rector Father Augustine Ezhakunnel, senior section vice-principal Nandita Pattanayak and junior section vice-principal Sr Esther Toppo are present on the dais

'Efforts on to make OUAT a world-class varsity'

Deputy CM KV Singh Deo reviews functioning of OUAT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: With the state government is taking several initiatives to strengthen the agriculture sector and empower farmers, efforts are underway to upgrade the Odisha University of Agriculture Technology (OUAT) and transform it into a world-class university," Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo said Friday.

"This vision encompasses not just the Bhubaneswar campus but also the development of OUAT campuses in other dis-



tricts of Odisha," said Singh Deo who is also the Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment and Energy.

Earlier the deputy chief minister chaired a review meeting on various functions of OUAT

A detailed review was conducted on OUAT's activities, infrastructure, classrooms, hostel facilities, teaching staff, and vacant positions. The Deputy CM emphasised the timely completion of ongoing developmental works and provided necessary guidance to expedite progress.

The review meeting was attended by Agriculture department principal secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee, Independent Secretary Dillip Kumar Parida, OUAT vice-chancellor Prabhat Kumar Raul, and other senior officials who shared their valuable suggestions during the discussion.

Conference on climate resilience at XIM varsity

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Youth4Water India and the School of Sustainability, XIM University hosted 'Water and Climate Academy: Young Leadership Programme - Nature Based Solutions for Climate Resilience,' here Friday bringing together prominent figures in environment conservation, education, and leadership development.

The conference, in collaboration with the UN University - Brussels and other partners, started off with an inspiring address by Fr S Anthony Raj SJ, who emphasised the crucial role of empowered women and youth in driving positive social and environmental change.

School of Sustainability dean Sutapa Pati showcased the institute's dedication to sustainability through initiatives like planting a Miyawaki forest, creating a butterfly garden, and meticulously measuring climatic data. Additionally, Pati highlighted their participation in the OCEAN (Odisha Climate Education and Awareness Network) initiative.

Conference's inaugural speaker Anil Kumar Gupta explored the trajectory of human development, drawing inspiration from nature's ingenuity in inventions like aviation and neural networks.

Best Multi-Speciality honour for Bhub Manipal Hospitals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Manipal Hospitals, Bhubaneswar, has been recognised as the Best Multi-Speciality Private Hospital in the Bhubaneswar City category at the prestigious THE WEEK-Hansa Research Survey 2024: Best Hospitals in India.

The award ceremony, held in Hyderabad Friday, was attended by Telangana's Health Minister, C Damodar Raja Narasimha, and other distinguished guests.

The 20th edition of the survey, conducted in collaboration with Hansa Research, assessed hospitals across 17 cities, including the National Capital Region. Rankings were based on reputation, doctor competency, infrastructure, research and innovation, and patient care. The survey included feedback from 853 general physicians and 1,470 specialists, ensuring broad representation.

The event was attended by key figures from Manipal Hospitals, including chairman of Manipal Health Enterprises H Sudarshan Ballal, hospital director Saktimaya Mohapatra, senior consultant in neuro surgery Amit Jaiswal and senior consultant in Interventional Cardiology Jagati Keshari Padhi.

Mohapatra expressed pride in the achievement, stating, "We are immensely proud to be recognised as the best multi-speciality private hospital in Bhubaneswar for the second year in a row. This reflects the dedication of our medical professionals and our patient-centered care."

Ballal also noted, "Being named the best hospital in both Bangalore and Bhubaneswar is a proud moment for us. We are motivated to continue our commitment to excellence and ensure the best outcomes for our patients."



Odisha, Grant Thornton discuss agri energy plan

Bhubaneswar: A delegation from Grant Thornton Bharat, a leading global consulting firm, met Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Agriculture, Farmers' Empowerment, and Energy, Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, here Friday to discuss strategies for enhancing the agriculture and energy sectors in the state. The meeting, held in Bhubaneswar, was attended by key officials, including Energy department principal secretary Vishal Kumar Dev, Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment principal secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee, and senior officers from both departments. Representing Grant Thornton Bharat were Manoj Kharb, Amit Kumar, Ramendra Verma, Padmananda V, and Prasad N. During the discussion, the Grant Thornton Bharat team expressed their interest in collaborating with the Odisha government to bring innovative solutions in agriculture and energy.

KIIT hosts KI3 Fest in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: The Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) - deemed university hosted KI3 Fest— Idea, Innovation and Impact here, Friday.

Organised by the Dean's Gold Klub, in collaboration with IQAC, SRC, CRF, KSAC, and IE, the event showcased the potential of young innovators under the theme, 'Frontier Technologies for Viksit Bharat @ 2047'.

With over 250 prototypes displayed by 600 students from 24 different schools of KIIT group of institutes, the fest highlighted the ground-breaking work being done by future leaders.

Joining the event, former chairman of OPSC Brig Laxmi Charan Patnaik highlighted the importance of innovation



originating from educational institutions. "All major innovations in the world, from 3D printing to block chain technology, started in universities. Today, India, under the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat initiative, is exporting defence products worth millions of dollars, reflecting the strength of our innovation ecosystem," he said. Patnaik praised the government's supportive policies, particularly in Odisha, for nurturing start-ups and entrepreneurs.

KIIT, KISS, and KIMS founder Achyuta Samanta, speaking

on the occasion, emphasised the transformative power of ideas. "If ideas exist but have no impact, they hold no value. This fest is a platform to turn ideas into meaningful innovations," Samanta stated, reinforcing KIIT's commitment to fostering a culture of innovation.

KIIT vice-chancellor Saranjit Singh attributed the success of the event to the vision of KIIT's founder. "Startups are the future, and events like KI3 Fest provide the perfect foundation for nurturing entrepreneurial talent," Singh remarked.

New chapter in IIM Sambalpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: In a groundbreaking initiative aimed at bridging the gap between industry and academia, the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Sambalpur has partnered with the National Human Resource Development Network (NHRDN) to establish a new chapter on its campus.

The announcement was made during an event held in New Delhi Friday, marking a significant milestone as IIM Sambalpur becomes the first IIM to host an NHRDN chapter.

The collaboration seeks to create a robust platform for advancing human resource development and thought leadership in India. With over 20,000 active members, including senior HR professionals, academicians, and students, the NHRDN network will facilitate discussions, promote best practices, and un-

dertake initiatives that shape the future of HR strategies and policies in the country.

Notably, the NHRDN is a leading professional organisation in the field of Human Resources, recognised for its pivotal role in shaping HR practices across various industries. The IIM Sambalpur chapter will be the 52nd in NHRDN's expansive network, which includes three international chapters in Singapore, the Middle East, and Nepal, along with nine student chapters.

Commenting on the occasion, IIM Sambalpur director Mahadeo Jaiswal highlighted the institute's commitment to developing future-ready HR leaders. "The collaboration aligns with our core mission to contribute to the creation of visionary HR leaders equipped with contemporary strategies. Through this chapter, we aim to organise cutting-edge pro-

grammes, foster collaborative research, and bridge academic insights with real-world applications," he stated.

The initiative will focus on hosting workshops, seminars, and networking events to enhance professional skills and foster collaboration between industry experts and students. Additionally, it aims to promote a deeper understanding of human resource development through rigorous research and knowledge dissemination.

The chapter's activities will emphasise the theoretical and practical dimensions of HRD, offering a comprehensive perspective on its philosophy, processes, and applications. By facilitating the exchange of insights among professionals and practitioners, the programme aspires to strengthen the HR field and its impact across industries.

BMPS Takshila celebrates Annual Day Twisha 2024

Bhubaneswar: Bhubaneswar Model Public School (BMPS), Takshila, celebrated its 14th Annual Day, Twisha 2024, with a vibrant display of talent, marking the institution's journey of academic excellence. The event brought together students, parents, and staff, with school chairman Tutul Kishore Das, director Sikata Das, and principal Lipsita Mohanty gracing the occasion. The celebrations commenced with Vedic chanting, followed by the school song. A series of cultural performances set a festive mood, beginning with a musical festa by the school choir. Enthralling performances such as Chaturdevi, Sizzling Sambar - a South Indian dance, Dhensa folk dance, and the English play Aladdin's Quest 2.0 received thunderous applause. Highlights of the closing ceremony included Raag Bihaag, Dance in Drizzle, The Tempest, TriTaal Classical Fusion, and a live orchestra by the Melody Makers. Plays such as Gatha Baal Nayakon Ki and the dance drama Nritya Navranga showcased the students' diverse talents. Speaking on the occasion, the guests commended the students' dedication and praised the school's achievements in academics and co-curricular activities. Principal Mohanty thanked the dignitaries for their presence and reaffirmed the school's commitment to holistic education. She also presented a brief report



on the students' accomplishments, highlighting their contributions to the school's legacy of excellence. The day concluded with resounding applause, leaving an indelible mark of celebration and pride.

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	31.6°	29.8°
Min Temp	19.3°	19.0°
Humidity	80%	85%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST		
Mainly clear sky		

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX	VARIATION	
SENSEX	81709.12	↓ 56.74
NIFTY	24677.80	↓ 30.60
DOLLAR	84.77	↓ 0.05
EURO	89.83	↑ 0.48
GOLD	₹76,650	↑ ₹174
SILVER	₹92,481	↑ ₹57

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Marketing woes hit cotton farmers

ANDHRA TRADERS MAKE HAY AS ONLY TWO COTTON MANDIS OPERATIONAL IN RAYAGADA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Dec 6: With cotton farming proving to be more profitable than paddy, its cultivation has steadily increased in Rayagada district. This trend is evident in both Rayagada and Gunupur sub-divisions.

Currently, cotton is being cultivated on 49,810 hectares of land with a target to collect 7,20,000 quintals of the fibre this year.

However, farmers have reported significant difficulties in selling off the harvested cotton due to limited market facilities in the district which has only two operational mandis operated by the Regulated Market Committee (RMC) in Rayagada and Gunupur for cotton.

While government records claim there are six cotton mandis in the district, including Chatikana in Bissamcuttack block, Lekapai in Kolnara block, Budagada in Kalyansinghpur block and another in Ramanaguda block, cotton procurement takes place only in Rayagada and Gunupur.

This forces farmers to travel long distances to sell their produce, creating opportunities for middlemen and traders from neighbouring states like Andhra Pradesh. These intermediaries often purchase cotton directly from farmers



at lower prices, exploiting the situation and forcing farmers to resort to distress sale.

Compounding the issue, recent rains caused by Cyclone Fengal and pest infestations have added to cotton farmers' woes this year. Waterlogging during the harvest season has further impacted crops.

According to details available from the Agriculture department, cotton was cultivated on 45,084 hectares in 2021-22 yielding 90,387 quintals. In 2022-23, 45,967 hectares yielded 97,625 quintals, and in 2023-24, 49,097 hectares yielded 1,03,803 quintals. Cotton acreage has seen a steady increase over recent years, but the operational challenges in selling the produce have cast a shadow

over the sector's growth.

Cotton harvest has started in phases in the last two weeks. However, the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), which has received approval to procure cotton, is yet to start procurement of the crop.

At a recent Cotton Procurement Committee meeting, it was decided that procurement markets would start November 26 in Gunupur sub-division and December 10 in Rayagada sub-division. However, hundreds of farmers in Gunupur sub-division report that cotton purchases are yet to begin. This has led to harvested cotton lying unused in their fields.

Farmers have urged authorities to expand the number of operational markets to allevi-

ate their hardships and ensure fair prices for their produce.

The delay has posed a significant issue for CCI due to the lack of storage facilities. Despite years of cotton collection from Rayagada district, neither CCI nor the RMC has established dedicated warehouses.

As a result, CCI depends annually on private cotton mills for storage. Some mill owners exploit this situation for personal gain as admitted by CCI officials during the November 16 committee meeting.

Rayagada MLA Kadraka Appala Swamy expressed dissatisfaction over the situation during the same meeting. When contacted, District Agriculture Officer Bishnu Prasad Kar stated that there was no complaint of cotton crop damage from the ongoing unseasonal rains.

Meanwhile, mandis operated by the RMCs in Rayagada and Gunupur have been set up for cotton sales, and temporary markets will be arranged by the RMC if needed, according to Cotton Scheme Officer Rahul Kumar Nayak.

While the market in Gunupur has opened from November 26, the Rayagada market would commence operations December 10, Nayak added.

PNN & AGENCIES

Rairangpur, Dec 6: President Droupadi Murmu Friday turned emotional while visiting her birthplace Uparbeda village in Mayurbhanj district and said she has never felt the village as a place but a family.

Murmu, who was born in a Santali family of Uparbeda village under Bamanghati sub-division June 20, 1958, for the first time came to her village and her ancestral house after assuming the country's topmost Constitutional post. She assumed office of the President of India July 25, 2022.

As soon as Murmu reached the village, she rushed to Uparbeda Government Upper Primary School, her alma mater, where she spent her early years as a student. The school and the entire village were decorated to welcome her. She was received by teachers, students and villagers.

While interacting with the students, Murmu said, "I am 66 years old and do not feel like growing up. I still feel like a child at my school and village. I recall how teachers were teaching us in mud-walled classrooms here." Murmu also said that the teachers and the villagers treat her like a family member.



"I still recall the days when I was preparing for the Class-VII scholarship examination. Our teacher Madan Mohan Sir took me to his family home and I lived with his children while preparing for the examination. The love and affection that I have received from this village and school is heavenly," she said. Murmu also recalled teachers like Basant Sir and Biswambar Babu and some others who had witnessed her childhood.

At a function, the President felicitated her teachers - Bishwesar Mohanta, Headmaster of her school, Basudev Behera and Basanta Kumar Giri, her class teachers in Classes IV and V. She gifted school bags containing chocolates and tiffin box to about 200 students of the Uparbeda Upper Primary School.

In her speech, Murmu told the students to study sincerely

and abide by the advice of teachers, parents and elderly persons in the village.

Ahead of Murmu's visit, the entire village was decorated. State Forest and Environment Minister Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia supervised the preparations at the village. "The President is visiting her birthplace for the first time since assuming the highest office. The entire area is thrilled and proud to see her," said Khuntia.

Apart from neatly cleaning the village and decorating their houses with new paint, the villagers also performed their traditional tribal dance to welcome Murmu. The village roads were decorated with 'jhooti' (Rangoli) to welcome her. Her relatives have also baked different types of cakes, including 'arisa' and 'manda pitha', and rice and saga delicacy.

Probe ordered after viral video shows teachers thrashing boy



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kendrapara, Dec 6: An investigation was ordered Friday after the video of a seven-year-old boy getting thrashed by teachers after being tied to the school's main gate went viral on social media, a state government official said.

The incident happened at a private English medium school under Marshaghai police station limits in Kendrapara district November 25 but came to light after photos and videos of the incident went viral, triggering outrage among the people.

The boy was punished for allegedly creating disturbances in the classroom.

Block Education Officer (BEO) Prafulla Kumar Swain said the principal of the school was issued a show-cause notice.

It's an unfortunate incident. An inquiry has been started. The principal of the school has been issued a show-cause notice. Action will be taken after the inquiry process is complete in a day or two, he said.

The state government banned corporal punishment in schools in September 2004.

MKCG MEDICAL COLLEGE GETS PAIN CLINIC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, Dec 6: The state-run MKCG Medical College and Hospital here opened a pain clinic to cater to patients with acute and chronic pain.

Suchitra Dash, Principal-cum-Superintendent of the medical college and hospital, inaugurated the special clinic at the Outpatient department (OPD) of the hospital, which

will run Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

It is the first such clinic to come up in a government hospital in the state, sources said.

Patients of all age groups with acute pain inflicted due to various reasons such as cancer or problems of musculoskeletal, joints, spine and bones will be treated in the

new facility.

Chronic pain is no longer limited to the elderly or persons with severe illness. It also affects people of all age groups due to sedentary lifestyles, lack of physical exercise etc, said Dash.

"We hope the pain clinic will help the people with chronic pain," she said.

She said they would try to

run the clinic in a full-fledged manner with installation of the modern equipment to treat the patients.

Presently the clinic has the basic equipment to manage it. The patients suffering from pain will be treated as per the guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO), said Khageswar Raut, Head of the Anaesthesia department.

"We deal with pain in a holistic manner and focus on diagnosing the cause of pain, followed by treatment with medicines and exercises," said Jagdeep Nayak, Assistant Professor of the Anaesthesia department.

Doctors from various departments were present at the inauguration of the new clinic set up in the hospital.

NITR professor bags IGU-Krishnan Medal

Rourkela: A professor from NIT, Rourkela has been honoured with the IGU-Krishnan Medal for 2024 in recognition of his contributions to Earth Sciences. Prof. Bhaskar Kundu, associate professor in the department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, was presented with the prestigious award during the 61st Annual Convention of the Indian Geophysical Union (IGU) at Banaras Hindu University. The medal was awarded to Prof. Kundu by Dr. VK Saraswat, Member of NITI Aayog, and Dr. M Ravichandran, President of IGU and Secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES). Prof. Kundu was recognised for his pioneering research in earthquake seismology, geodesy, and their applications to crustal dynamics, plate boundary deformation, earthquake processes, and the interplay between tectonics and climate. The IGU-Krishnan Medal is an esteemed national award given annually to a distinguished geophysicist or geologist in India.

Looters' gang busted; 3 minors among 4 held

Rourkela: The Plant Site police Friday busted a gang of looters involved in two consecutive loot incidents that took place December 2 and 3 and arrested four persons, including three minors. The first incident occurred around 2:45am December 2, when the gang members on a Bajaj Pulsar bike attacked a biker, threatened him with weapons and stole his bike, helmet, and ₹11,200 in cash. The following night, the armed looters struck again and robbed a man of his motorcycle, ₹10,000, mobile phone, wristwatch, and a jacket. The police registered cases for both incidents at Plant Site PS. During the investigation, the authorities arrested Jit Badaik, 19, who led them to the arrest of the three minors from various locations in Rourkela. From their possession, the police recovered ₹71,860 in cash, a mobile phone, and the Bajaj Pulsar used in the robberies.

DSPL-238

ARMED FORCES FLAG DAY MESSAGE

On the occasion of Armed Forces Flag Day-2024, I extend my warm felicitations and best wishes to all ranks of Armed Forces as well as our Ex-Servicemen and their families.

The Armed Forces Flag Day offers us a unique opportunity to express our gratitude to Armed Forces personnel who not only resolutely defend the borders of our great nation but also render valuable service during the natural calamities and in combating internal disturbances. Their patriotism, valour and sacrifice has earned them a special place in the hearts of the people.

By proudly wearing the Armed Forces token Flag and donating to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund, the nation expresses solidarity and support for the gallant heroes of our Armed Forces, rehabilitation of War Widows, Disabled Soldiers and Ex-Servicemen.

On the occasion, I appeal to my fellow citizens to donate generously to the "Armed Forces Flag Day Fund".

Jai Hind !

(Raghubar Das)
Governor, Odisha

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by **Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw**
Union Minister of Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology
on **07th December, 2024**

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FOCUS NEIGHBOURHOOD

BANGLADESH'S DESCENT



The 84-year-old Yunus has become little more than the civilian face of what is effectively military-mullah rule

borders, this would present the country with an unpalatable choice between taking on more than it can handle and turning away people fleeing religious or political persecution.

Hasina's ouster has thrown into sharp relief the divergence between India's perspective and that of the US, which has welcomed the regime change. This contrast can also be seen elsewhere in India's immediate neighbourhood. Under President Biden, the US has aided the military-backed regime in Pakistan and provided "non-lethal" military aid to the rebels attempting to overthrow Myanmar's military junta, even as cross-border arms flows fuel ethnic conflict in India's Manipur.

Fortunately, there is reason to think that US President-elect Donald Trump will rethink some of these stances - starting with America's approach to Bangladesh. Trump has a long-standing aversion to America's foreign commitments, and he is probably no fan of Yunus, who maintains close ties with prominent US Democrats and publicly lamented Trump's 2016 victory over Hillary Clinton. Shortly before the recent US election, Trump posted: "I strongly condemn the barbaric violence against Hindus, Christians, and other minorities who are getting attacked and looted by mobs in Bangladesh, which remains in a total state of chaos."

An unstable Bangladesh mired in radical Islamism and political violence has long been India's geopolitical nightmare. One hopes that the US soon recognises that this is not conducive to its interests either, and puts pressure on Bangladesh's interim regime to protect minorities and restore stability. Beyond strengthening regional security, such a policy shift could go some way toward restoring America's fraying relationship with India.

The writer is Professor Emeritus of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

journalists have been slapped with trumped-up murder, abduction, or assault charges. Scholars, lawyers, and others - anyone viewed as a critic of the regime - have also faced legal harassment. In a single week in October, more than 7,000 individuals were arrested, and political detainees have sometimes suffered physical assaults while in custody.

Last week, the regime trained its sights on a Hindu monk, who was arrested on charges of sedition after leading peaceful protests demanding protections for Bangladesh's Hindu minority. But Hindus are under attack in Bangladesh. They have been the victims of jihadist mobs, which have also targeted other minorities, including Buddhists, Christians, indigenous people, and members of Islamic sects that Islamists consider heretical. At one anti-Hindu protest, Islamist marchers chanted, "Catch them and slaughter them."

It is not difficult to see why Islamist violence is gaining ground. The interim regime has lifted bans on jihadist groups with links to terrorism and freed violence-glorifying Islamist leaders, including one who was convicted for the murder of a secularist blogger. Yunus' administration also seeks to remove the reference to secularism in the constitution. All this appeasement has emboldened the Islamists, who have, at times, sought to enforce their own extreme vision of morality by hounding

"immodestly" dressed women. In the four months since Hasina's ouster, hundreds of Bangladeshis have died as a result of violence. The situation has become so dire that even the secretary general of the Islamist-leaning Bangladesh Nationalist Party - the arch-rival of Hasina's secular Awami League - has criticized the regime, lamenting that "people are shedding each other's blood" on the streets and "newspaper offices are being set on fire."

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's once-booming economy is in shambles, with growth slowing, stocks sinking to their lowest level since the COVID-19 pandemic, and foreign debt spiraling upward. The ratings agency Moody's recently downgraded its outlook for Bangladesh's economy from "stable" to "negative," and cut the country's credit rating from B1 to B2, sending the country's bonds deeper into junk territory. These problems will not go away, even if Bangladesh is granted the billions of dollars in bailouts it has requested.

Neighbouring India is watching events in Bangladesh with considerable apprehension (and, when it comes to attacks on Hindus, significant anger). Fears are rising that Bangladesh will go the way of the dysfunctional Pakistan, a terrorist hub and key source of regional insecurity. If nothing else, India would face an influx of refugees. With millions of illegally settled Bangladeshis already living within India's

In August, popular protests - and a harsh government crackdown - culminated in the military-backed ouster of Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who lurched toward authoritarianism. But far from ushering in a democratic transition, the regime change has plunged Bangladesh into deeper turmoil, with mounting human-rights abuses and lawlessness by ascendant Islamist groups threatening to turn the country into yet another global flashpoint. Hasina may have forsaken her democratic credentials once in power - in 1990, six years before she was first elected prime minister, she led the pro-democracy uprising that toppled Bangladesh's military ruler - but the "iron lady" also kept both the powerful military and Islamist movements in check.

As South Asia has seen firsthand, military-backed regimes tend to crush anti-government protests, whereas militaries with unfulfilled ambitions might facilitate violent unrest to create a pretext to swoop in, seize power, and "restore order." Bangladesh's military refused to enforce a lockdown even as protesters rampaged through the streets, and as soon as Hasina was gone, it installed an interim administration. Tellingly, the military packed her off to India even before she could formally resign.

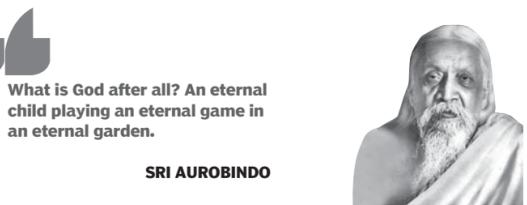
To be sure, the interim regime is led by Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who was selected with the support of the student-led, Islamist-backed protest movement. But the 84-year-old Yunus has become little more than the civilian face of what is effectively military-mullah rule. And despite lacking constitutional legitimacy, the interim regime has offered no time frame for holding national elections.

Instead, the regime has overseen new curbs on press freedom, including "persistent attacks, ill-motivated lawsuits, and widespread harassment." The credentials of 167 journalists have been revoked without explanation, and 129



Brahma Chellaney

AN UNSTABLE BANGLADESH MIRED IN RADICAL ISLAMISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE HAS LONG BEEN INDIA'S GEOPOLITICAL NIGHTMARE



What is God after all? An eternal child playing an eternal game in an eternal garden.

SRI AUROBINDO

The Great Exodus

India's bureaucracy, often seen as the steel frame of governance, is experiencing a curious phenomenon: an increasing number of its officers seem to be trading government desks for greener pastures. Under the Modi regime, hundreds of officers, particularly from the Indian Revenue Service (IRS), are opting for voluntary retirement.

Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary recently informed Parliament that 853 IRS officers have taken Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) since 2014, showing no signs of abating. In 2014, 20 IRS (Income Tax) officers took VRS; by 2024, the number had almost tripled to 57. The Customs and Indirect Taxes cadre saw a similar surge, with 24 officers opting out in 2014, rising to 73 in 2024. And while data on IAS and IPS officers taking VRS is not centrally maintained, anecdotal evidence suggests that they, too, are part of this growing exodus.

What's driving this flight? For starters, the private sector offers better pay, more creative freedom, and fewer bureaucratic shackles. With years of experience and insider knowledge, these officers are hot commodities for corporations eager to navigate India's complex regulatory landscape.

However, there's a deeper malaise. Critics argue that the centralisation of power under the Modi government and an increasingly hostile work environment are pushing officers to the edge. Many find themselves sidelined, their expertise underutilised, or their decision-making curtailed. For some, VRS is not just an escape but a statement.

If this trend continues, who will keep the machinery of governance running? India's civil service is already overstretched, and losing experienced officers in droves doesn't bode well for its future. Perhaps it's time to address the elephant in the room - why the "steel frame" is beginning to buckle.

Retirement goals or Great Escape?

Retirement goals, anyone? Former SIB chief and retired IPS officer T. Prabhakar Rao has rewritten the playbook with a bold, some might say audacious gambit: seeking political asylum in the United States. While officials remain tight-lipped, reports suggest that Rao has petitioned to be recognised as a "political refugee," citing harassment from his former associates.



BABUDOM BYTES Dilip Cherian

Now residing with his son in sunny Florida, Rao appears to have traded bureaucratic files for medical reports as he undergoes cancer treatment. But this isn't just a tale of a quiet retreat to American suburbia. Rao's departure comes under a cloud - he's the prime accused in a phone-tapping case that has Telangana police scrambling to bring him back, Red Corner Notice and all.

Here's the timeline of his Houdini act: the case was filed on 10 March, and by 11 March, Rao was boarding a flight to the US, leaving his alleged co-conspirators to fend off the law. That's precision planning worthy of a thriller.

But Rao's move raises bigger questions. What if this sets a precedent? Could political asylum become the latest escape route for beleaguered IAS and IPS officers? After all, who wouldn't want to swap bureaucratic turf wars for Floridian beaches under the guise of political persecution?

For the Indian civil services, this is more than just a scandal. It's a moment of introspection. What does it say about the state of our bureaucracy when its stalwarts would rather flee than face the music? As Rao basks in Florida's sunshine, one thing is clear: this saga is far from over. Stay tuned.

Jharkhand's DGP drama

Jharkhand's top police post seems to be less about law and order and more about political ping-pong. The tussle between Chief Minister Hemant Soren's government and the Election Commission of India (ECI) over the state's DGP has turned into a spectacle of governance - or the lack thereof. The latest move? Anurag Gupta (IPS: 1990 batch) is back as DGP, replacing Ajay Kumar Singh (IPS: 1989 batch), who has been shuffled off to helm the Jharkhand Police Housing Corporation Limited.

Gupta was unceremoniously removed by the ECI during the Assembly elections, with the Commission citing "administrative propriety." Ajay Kumar Singh was installed in his place, plucked from a shortlist of three IPS officers, in what seemed like a final word on the matter. Now, Gupta is back in the saddle, with Singh now nudged into a corner office that sounds important but is far removed from the policing frontlines.

Just weeks after the Soren government took charge, the reshuffle seems more than coincidental. Is this a signal from Soren of his intent to assert control? Or simply a redux of the tug-of-war that began under the ECI's watch?

This merry-go-round of appointments risks turning into a distraction from real policing priorities. Stability in leadership isn't just a bureaucratic nicety or just a buzzword; it should mean something. But in Jharkhand, the DGP's chair seems more like a revolving door than a seat of steady authority.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

Victorious warriors win first and then go to war, while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win.

SUN TZU

To know what you know and what you do not know, that is true knowledge.

CONFUCIUS

If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.

DALAI LAMA

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1732: Royal Opera House opens its doors. The popular performing arts venue in Covent Garden, London houses the Royal Opera and the Royal Ballet.
1787: First state to ratify the U.S. Constitution. Delaware became the first state to ratify the United States Constitution. Because of this, it is sometimes called the First State.
1917: The United States declared war on the Austro-Hungarian Empire during World War I.
1941: Adolf Hitler issued his Night and Fog Decree, a secret order for the arrest and execution of "persons endangering German security."
1941: Pearl Harbor attack. On this day in 1941, Japanese bombers launched a surprise aerial attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu, Hawaii, precipitating the entry of the United States into World War II.

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Vox Populi, Vox Dei

The political and moral foundation of liberalism as a movement originated as a critique of feudalism, religion, monarchy, and conservative traditions. Its primary aim was to ensure individual liberty, egalitarian democratic governance based on the consent of the people, and equality before the law. The struggles of working people and their revolutionary class struggles were instrumental in bringing these liberal and secular ideas to life. However, over time, the elites co-opted liberalism, aligning it with market democracy and transforming liberal society into a market-driven society. Such a transformation granted social legitimacy to capitalism, empowering its narrow and authoritarian market forces as well as reactionary social and political elements.



Bhabani Shankar Nayak

THE LOCKEAN SOCIAL CONTRACT HAS BEEN REDUCED TO LITTLE MORE THAN A CONSUMER WARRANTY CARD WITH AN EXPIRATION DATE

The Lockean social contract was redefined into market contracts rooted in purely economic relations, forming the foundation of capitalism in Lockean Europe. This system was later internationalised through European colonialism

across Asia, Africa, the Americas, Oceania, and the Arabian and Middle Eastern regions. Contrary to advancing liberal and constitutional democracy in the former colonies, European colonialism reshaped liberalism in a way that transformed egalitarian natural rights into property rights, favouring Europeans' domination over people and their resources in colonies. However, the struggles of the working class against European colonialism played a pivotal role in establishing democracy. These struggles not only advanced liberal and constitutional democracy in the colonies but also deepened democratic principles and strengthened liberal society within Europe itself.

In a cruel twist of ideological bankruptcy, contemporary liberals have become deeply entangled with various forms of capitalism and its expansion. Such an alliance has destroyed both the objective and subjective foundations of liberalism and its moral calibre. However, this illiberal alliance between liberals and their capitalist counterparts, aimed at build-

ing a market democracy, has undermined both democracy and liberalism in society, politics, culture and economy. The Lockean social contract has been reduced to little more than a consumer warranty card with an expiration date.

Rather than questioning power and authority, liberals have forged alliances with them, contributing to the rise of reactionary, right-wing, and religious forces that have gained social and political legitimacy worldwide. The rise of a new form of liberalism under neo-liberalism, along with its social, economic, and cultural order, has normalised the market and naturalised its culture of consumerism. This shift has effectively undermined both the culture of consumption and the democratic choices available to consumers. The corporatisation of agricultural production and consumption has led to widespread hunger and food insecurity in a world abundant with resources. Similarly, the rise of monopolistic supermarkets has eroded local markets and destroyed the direct rela-

tionship between consumers and producers.

Economic policymakers and their political allies continue to pursue and implement illiberal policies to uphold capitalism. Politically, the world is witnessing a forward march of an illiberal order marked by inter-imperialist wars, regional resource conflicts, and the rise of right-wing politics, spanning from the Lockean heartland of Europe to the capitalist core of the US. Asia, Africa, and Latin America remain trapped in the oppressive grip of this illiberal world order, emanating from Western Europe and the US.

In such a situation, it is imperative to reclaim the liberal social order and rescue liberalism from both liberal and illiberal forms of capitalism. It is the working people who have the power to defeat the tyranny of capitalism's illiberal and imperialist orders. History stands as a testament to the truth in the adage: Vox Populi, Vox Dei - the voice of the people is the voice of God.

The writer teaches at the London Metropolitan University.

Melanistic marvels

Sir, The sighting of two melanistic tiger cubs with their mother in the Simlipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district has set wildlife lovers' pulse racing. Excessive production of melanin pigment gives rise to this condition; the dark spots and enlarged black and yellow stripes provide these tigers a melanistic touch. STR is the only natural habitat of melanistic tigers. These tigers are said to have come from a small founding population that may have led to inbreeding. However, experts are worried that the negative effects of inbreeding may adversely affect the long term conservation of melanistic tigers due to reduced genetic diversity and heightened susceptibility to diseases. Be that as it may, the dense forests and water bodies of the Simlipal reserve, diverse flora and fauna in addition to the rich prey base, have boosted the melanistic tiger population.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Unsafe social media

Sir, This refers to "Dopamine hits," Orissa Post, Dec 6. Australia's new law to keep kids off social media until they turn 16 is an ambitious social experiment something that parents, schools and governments have attempted with varying degree of success. This is, after all, 21st century - an era when social media is the primary communications tool for most of those born in last 25 years. Leaders and parents around the world are watching Australia's policy closely as many seek to protect young kids from the internet's dangerous corners. What's most important for kids is real human connection. Less time on screen means more time to connect. Kids who spend more time on social media, especially as teenagers, are more likely to experience depression and anxiety. Many are exposed to content that is not appropriate for their age like pornography and violence, as well as social pressures about body image and makeup. They also face bullying, sexual harassment and unwanted advances from their peers and as well as adults. Against this backdrop, even US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy said there is insufficient evidence to say social media is safe for kids. He urged policymakers to treat social media like car seats, baby formula, medication and other products children use.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

Cops lathi-charge BPSC aspirants

Candidates protest against reports of potential normalisation in the 70th Combined Preliminary Examination scheduled in Bihar Dec 13

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Dec 6: Patna Police Friday lathi charged hundreds of aspiring Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) candidates protesting outside the commission's office at Bailey Road.

The candidates were protesting against reports of potential normalisation in the 70th Combined Preliminary Examination scheduled in Bihar December 13.

However, Secretary of the BPSC, clarified that the commission has not announced any plan for normalisation.

While the commission has dismissed rumours about normalisation, the candidates are seeking official assurance to avoid any last-minute surprises that could affect their prospects.

Supported by student leaders, the candidates demanded that the exam be conducted without normalisation, as has traditionally been the case.

Protesters argued that normalisation is unnecessary, especially when the exam is being conducted in one shift across all centres.

The demand is for the exam process to remain as it has been in the past, ensuring uniformity and fairness without additional calculations.

Since a single set of questions is being used, candidates believe normalisation — a method often applied to adjust for



Why should the commission clarify regarding the misleading talks about normalisation? Those protesting are not serious candidates but individuals who do not focus on their studies

SATYA PRAKASH SHARMA | SECRETARY, BPSC

Since a single set of questions is being used, candidates believe normalisation — a method often applied to adjust for variations in difficulty across multiple shifts — is irrelevant. Meanwhile, Satya Prakash Sharma, Secretary of BPSC, clarified that the commission has not announced any plan for normalisation. "If normalisation were to be applied, the commission would have mentioned it explicitly in the notification

or issued a separate notice," Sharma said. He dismissed the protests as baseless, stating: "Why should the commission clarify regarding the misleading talks about normalisation? Those protesting are not serious candidates but individuals who do not focus on their studies."

He emphasised that only one per cent of candidates typically pass, and those genuinely preparing for the exam are not involved in such demonstrations.

The preliminary examination for the 70th combined BPSC examination is scheduled December 13, 2024, in a single shift across 925 centres

across Bihar and around 4.80 lakh candidates are appearing in the examination.

The protests highlight a broader concern among candidates about transparency and fairness in recruitment processes. This growing unrest underscores the importance of clear communication between examining bodies and aspirants to ensure trust in competitive examination systems. Earlier, RJD leader and Leader of Opposition in the Bihar Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav, extended his support to the protesting candidates,

amplifying their demands for clarity and fairness in the examination process.

'POVERTY, BLACK MARKETING OR ILLEGAL MIGRANTS'

Bengal's unusual kerosene consumption in spotlight

The state alone consumes 66.38% of the national consumption of kerosene while Bihar comes in the distant second position at 6.02%

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Dec 6: Amit Malviya, BJP's in-charge of the National Information & Technology Department and Co-in-charge for the West Bengal unit, Friday, questioned the exorbitantly high percentage of kerosene consumption in the state in comparison to the national statistics.

According to recent statistics provided by the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in Parliament based on specific questions raised by BJP's Rajya Sabha member from West Bengal Samik Bhattacharya, the state alone consumes 66.38 per cent of the national consumption of kerosene. Bihar comes in the distant second position



at 6.02 per cent.

Malviya, Friday, made a significant post on his official X handle in the morning raising questions on this high consumption percentage of kerosene in West Bengal.

According to Malviya, the fact that despite saturated coverage of LPG West Bengal consumes nearly 67 per cent of the national kerosene makes it clear that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is going to leave the state in ruins.

"What could be the reason?"

Poverty, black marketing or large numbers of illegal migrants, doubling up as vote banks for the ruling TMC? Malviya questioned.

Recently, another set of questions raised by Bhattacharya in the Rajya Sabha prompted answers from the Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs highlighting the flight of corporate entities from West Bengal.

As per the statistics, a total of 2,227 companies have shifted their base from West Bengal to other states during the last five years from 2019 to 2024. Out of the 2,227 companies, 39 are enlisted with the Mumbai Stock Exchange.

As per the reply of the Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs, under Section 13(4) of the Companies Act, 2013 a corporate entity has the freedom to shift its registration from one office to another and there are several reasons for that shifting, including flexibility in operations, smooth management, cost of company administration and better infrastructure facilities, among others.

BIHAR BYPOLL ANOMALY

Every fifth voter of polling booth has dad of same name

The irregularity has come to light in the Aurai block of Muzaffarpur, where at one polling booth, "Munna Kumar" has been stated as the father's name for 138 out of 724 voters

Kumar" has been stated as the father's name for 138 out of 724 voters. Tirhut Divisional Commissioner Sarvanan M said.

"None of the voters would be deprived of their right to franchise because of the anomaly which seems to have been caused by some technical factors. Upon the completion of the by-election process, we will take necessary action," the commissioner told PTI over phone.

A multi-cornered contest was witnessed in the by-poll necessitated by the resignation of senior JD(U) leader Devesh Chandra Thakur, who is now the Sitamarhi MP.

Many of the candidates seem vexed at the comedy of errors.

"It is bizarre. So many voters, men and women of all age groups and of various religious affiliations, have the same name as the father," said Abhishek Jha, the JD(U)'s nominee in the by-poll.

Independent candidate Banshi Dhar Briwasi alleged, "I had flagged the discrepancy before the authorities in time but no action was taken. The voters are worried."

The voters, numbering slightly over 1.5 lakh, are spread across 197 booths in the districts of Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur, Vaishali and Sheohar.

The anomaly has come to light in the Aurai block of Muzaffarpur, where at one polling booth, "Munna

had flagged the discrepancy before the authorities in time but no action was taken. The voters are worried

BANSHI DHAR BRIWASI | INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE

Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh Road, New Delhi- 110003
No.01/01/2022P.III

WITHDRAWAL OF ADVERTISEMENT
The Advertisement No. 01.01.2022-P.III for filling up three (03) Posts of Scientist 'C' in Zoological Survey of India (POST NO. 15-17/C/ZSI) and one (01) Post of Scientist 'C' in Botanical Survey of India (POST NO. 27/C/BSI) on Direct Recruitment basis, published in the Employment News dated 24.12.2022, may be treated as withdrawn as per provisions under Clause 19 (a) of 'General Instruction, Essential Information and Clarifications' as mentioned in Advertisement No. 01.01.2022-P.III dated 24.12.2022. This is for information of all concerned.

Sd./- (Satya Prakash)
Under Secretary (P.III)

CBC-13101/11/0011/2425

Government of India
Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
Department of Sports
Appointment of Vice-Chancellor in National Sports University, Manipur (A Central University)

Applications are invited from eligible candidates for the post of Vice-Chancellor of National Sports University, Imphal, Manipur. Details of essential qualifications, general instructions, information, application proforma and other details required for the post are available on the website of Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports www.vas.nic.in.

Applications completed in all respects in the prescribed format should reach Shri Sandeep Kumar Sinha, Deputy Secretary, Hall No.101, JLN Stadium, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003, within 30 days from the date of publication of this advertisement, by Registered / Speed Post. Applications received after the due date will not be considered.

Only offline applications will be accepted. (Online applications will not be accepted).

CBC-47116/12/0006/2425

Government of India
Ministry of Science & Technology
Department of Science & Technology
ADVT. NO. DST/02/2024-E-III.

Applications are invited for filling up of one post of Mission Director, National Mission Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems, Group 'A' Gazetted Non-Ministerial, [Level-14 in the pay matrix (Rs.1,44,200-Rs.2,18,200)] on deputation (including short-term contract) basis in the Department of Science & Technology. Eligible candidates are required to fill the application online, through the online portal <https://recruitment.dst.gov.in/> using valid email ID. This online portal for applying shall be available for a period of 45 days from the date of advertisement in Employment News/Rozgar Samachar. This application form duly signed by the candidate along with attested copies of ACRs/ APARs for the last five years may be forwarded through proper channel so as to reach this Department by Registered Post or by Speed Post within 30 days (45 days for remote areas) from the date of clouser of online portal. For application process and details of qualifications, experience, age limit, last date of application & other requirements etc. visit our website www.dst.gov.in.

Sd./- (Vinod Kumar Sharma)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

CBC-36101/11/0001/2425

EAST COAST RAILWAY

(1) Notice No.: e-Tender-Elect-G-45-24
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: PROVISION OF WEB BASED ENERGY METERING SYSTEM AT RAILSADAN, RAILVIHAR & MANCHESWAR COLONY OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of Work: ₹ 2,27,15,844.73, EMD: ₹ 2,63,600/-

(2) Notice No.: e-Tender-Elect-G-46-24
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: PROVISION OF WEB BASED ENERGY METERING SYSTEM WITH MONITORING OF POWER SUPPLY SYSTEM AT DIFFERENT STATIONS AT KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of Work: ₹ 2,01,93,365.83, EMD: ₹ 2,51,000/-

(3) Notice No.: e-Tender-Elect-G-47-24
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: PROVISION OF FLOOD LIGHTING ARRANGEMENT AT NEW ECORSA-KUR FOOT BALL GROUND AT KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of Work: ₹ 83,40,501.63, EMD: ₹ 1,66,800/-

(4) Notice No.: e-Tender-Elect-G-48-24
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: PROVISION OF BOUNDARY WALL FRP TYPE FENCING WITH SPREADING OF SAND & BALLAST IN SUBSTATIONS AT WAY SIDE STATIONS OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of Work: ₹ 2,58,73,061.08, EMD: ₹ 2,79,400/-

Completion Period: 4 Months (for Sl. No. 1 & 2), 3 Months (for Sl. No. 3) & 6 Months (for Sl. No. 4).

Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1500 hrs. of 24.12.2024 (for all the Tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post/ Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tender is available at website: www.ireps.gov.in

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website ten (10) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer(s)/ bidder(s) can participate on e-tendering.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/ PR-778/P/24-25
Khurda Road

National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

Corporate Office : First Floor, Tower-A, World Trade Centre, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi-110029

F.No. NHIDCL/2(24)/Rectt. CS/2024/HR Dated: 07.12.2024

National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (hereinafter referred to as 'NHIDCL', has been set up by the Government of India as a Corporation under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways to fast pace construction/up-gradation/widening of National Highways in the North-Eastern Region and areas that share international boundaries with neighboring countries.

Applications are invited from dynamic, effective and experienced eligible Officers retired from the Central/State Public Sector Enterprises or working in Private entities for engagement as Consultant in NHIDCL on Contract basis for the following post:

Sl. No.	Name of the Posts	No. of Vacancy	Consolidated Salary*
1.	Company Secretary	01	Rs. 1,50,000/-

*Detailed advertisement may be seen at NHIDCL website www.nhidcl.com.

CBC-37112/12/0016/2425

Col. Vivek Jain (Retd.)
Dy. General Manager (HR)

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, BUILDING THE NATION

Bank of Maharashtra
Bhubaneswar Branch
Plot No.: 426/2260, N.B. Tower, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751012, Ph.: 0674-2564018, E-mail: bom1182@mahabank.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE
[Rule-8(1)]

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under sub-section (12) of section 13 read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest and expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of Maharashtra for an amount stated below with interest & expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Name & Address of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s)	Description of the Security Interest taken over possession	Liabilities due on the specified date as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession
Borrowers: 1) M/s. Swornlata Traders, Regd. Address: Plot No.: 107, At: Sahani Kashipur, PO: Tamando, Via: Jankia, Bhubaneswar-752054, Odisha, 2) Mr. Susil Kumar Mohanty, House No.: 39, Sahani Kashipur, PO: Tamando, Dist.: Khurda / Guarantors: 1) Mrs. Swarnlata Mohanty, 2) Mr. Susil Kumar Mohanty, Both are at Address: House No.: 39, Sahani Kashipur, PO: Tamando, Dist.: Khurda.	Equitable mortgage of property i.e. Residential Land & Building situated at Mouza: Dasbatia, Tehsil: Bhubaneswar, (1) Khata No.: 18, Plot No.: 100, Sarad-2, Area: Ac.0.041 dec., As per Present Mutation in the name of Mrs. Swarnlata Mohanty, Khata No.: 75/604, Plot No.: 100/826, Gharabari, Area: Ac.0.041dec. Bounded by- East: Land of Swarnlata / Mohanty, West: Prasant Kumar Mohanty, North: Land of Prasant Kumar Mohanty, South: Road (Symbolic Possession). (2) Khata No.: 18, Plot No.: 100, Sarad-2, Area: Ac.0.180dec., As per Present Mutation in the name of Mrs. Swarnlata Mohanty, Khata No.: 75/596, Plot No.: 100/818, Gharabari, Area: Ac.0.180dec. Bounded by- East: Land of Prasant Kumar Mohanty, West: Road, North: Plot No. 97 & 109, South: Plot No. 98 & 99 (Symbolic Possession).	₹ 85,62,458.61 as on 28.08.2024 + interest & other charges thereon	28.08.2024 / 02.12.2024

Date: 06.12.2024, Place: Bhubaneswar Authorized Officer, Bank of Maharashtra

Bank of India
Zonal Office: Bhubaneswar Zone, 1/1D, Star House, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015, Ph.: 0674-2362249

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

Where as 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 "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for realization of the debts due to the Bank.

Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower/Guarantors/Total Dues	Description of the Properties	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount
1.	JAYADEV VIHAR BRANCH, PH.: 7977662475 / Borrower: M/s. Sai Amrit Diagnostic Private Limited, Registered Address at Plot No.: 10/834, 11 & 12, Mouza: Cuttack Sahar Unit-20 Mangalabag, Kathgola Sahi (Near Ring Road), Cuttack, Odisha-753008 / Managing Director/Guarantor: Dr. Manas Kumar Patra, S/o: Dr. Anadi Krushna Patra, At: Amrit Cottage, Journalist Colony, Madhusudan Nagar, Tulisipur, Cuttack-753008 / Guarantors: 1) Dr. Anadi Krushna Patra, S/o: Late Pyari Mohan Patra, At: Flat No.: A-144, Kalyani Apartment, Near Friends Colony, Cuttack-753001, 2) Mr. Tapas Kumar Patra, S/o: Dr. Anadi Krushna Patra, At: HIG-212, Phase-VII, Sailashree Vihar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751021 / Total Dues: ₹ 4,46,65,137.26 + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.	Land and Diagnostic Centre Building constructed thereon pertaining to 1) Khata No.: 131/30, Plot No.: 11, Area: Ac.0.207 Dec., Plot No.: 12, Area: Ac.0.032 Dec., 2) Khata No.: 131/48, Plot No.: 10/834, Area: Ac.0.007 Dec., 3) Khata No.: 131/18, Plot No.: 789/801, Area: Ac.0.014 Dec., Plot No.: 13/802, Area: Ac.0.031 Dec., Total Land Area: Ac.0.291 Dec. i.e. 12,676 Sqft., Mouza: Cuttack Sahar Unit No.: 20 Mangalabag, P.S.: Mangalabag, P.S. No.: 02, Tahasil: Cuttack, Tahasil No.: 220, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha, PIN-752054 having KISSAM: Gharabari-I & Gharabari-II, jointly in the name of Dr. Manas Kumar Patra, S/o: Dr. Anadi Krushna Patra & Dr. Anadi Krushna Patra, S/o: Late Pyari Mohan Patra, Bounded by East: Road, West: Rev. Plot No.: 14, North: Rev. Plot No.: 10, South: Rev. Plot No.: 59	₹ 79,74,15,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹ 97,41,500/- / ₹ 50,000/-

Date & Time of E-Auction: 09.01.2025 From 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: 09.01.2025 upto 4.00 P.M.

Inspection will be provided to the prospective bidders on any working day before 08.01.2025 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 30 days 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 <https://BAANKNET.com>

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 07.12.2024 Authorized Officer, Bank of India





The BJP has filed an application to delete the names of 11,018 voters in the Shahdara area, but when we cross-checked that application on 500 names, 75 per cent of people were still living there, but their names can be deleted from the electoral roll

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | AAP NATIONAL CONVENER

MADHUKAR PICHAD PASSES AWAY AT 84

Tribal leader and former Maharashtra minister Madhukar Pichad (84) passed away Friday at a hospital in Nashik following a brief illness



of the day uote

We can say with a very high degree of confidence that India will continue to grow at 6-8 per cent real growth, 10-14 per cent nominal growth and a very moderate inflation for the coming five years and this confidence is due to the change that has happened in people's lives

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING MINISTER



We have taken note of the recent escalation in fighting in the north of Syria. We are closely following the situation. There are about 90 Indian nationals in Syria, including 14 who are working in various UN organizations

RANDHIR JAISWAL | EAM SPOKESPERSON



PM Modi's 'ek hai to safe hai' slogan caught the imagination of the people

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA CM



Police fire tear gas at protesting farmers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shambhu, Dec 6: Protesting farmers Friday suspended for the day their foot march to Delhi to press for various demands, including a legal guarantee for MSP, after some of them suffered injuries due to tear gas shells at the Punjab-Haryana border.

Earlier in the day, a 'jatha' of 101 farmers began to march towards the national capital from their protest site at the Shambhu border but was stopped a few metres away by multilayered barricading erected by Haryana security personnel. As the group reached the barricades, security personnel lobbed multiple tear gas shells to disperse the protesting farmers and force them to retreat to their protest site.

Covering their eyes and mouths, several protesting farmers rushed to cover the tear gas shells with wet jute bags to counter the smoke. Many of them were seen uprooting iron nails and barbed wire installed on the road to deter their march. Chanting 'Sataam Waheguru' and holding their union flags, several farmers of



the 'jatha' crossed the initial layer of barricades easily but could not proceed further.

A few of them were seen pushing an iron mesh put up by security personnel down the bridge constructed over the Ghaggar River. One of the protesters climbed the roof of a tin shade where security forces had been stationed. He was forced to climb down.

Water cannon vehicles have also been deployed at the Shambhu border point. The Haryana Police asked the farmers not to proceed further, citing a pro-

hibitory order clamped by the Ambala district administration under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNS) that prohibits the assembly of five or more people.

A farmer leader claimed that five to six farmers were injured due to the tear gas shelling. Sarwan Singh Pandher later an-

nounced the suspension of the march for the day and said the injured farmers were taken to a hospital. "We have called back the 'jatha' for today in view of the injuries suffered by a few farmers," Pandher said here.

He added that the two forums of the farmer bodies, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, would decide the next course of action after a meeting. Earlier, Pandher termed the 101 farmers who were part of the jatha "marjeevras" (someone willing to die for a cause) and slammed the Haryana government for not allowing them to march even on foot.

The farmers are marching towards Delhi to press the Centre for a legal guarantee

of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for crops. The Haryana government Friday suspended mobile internet and bulk SMS service in 11 vil lages of Ambala district till December 9. The ban was enforced in Dangdehri, Lohgarh, Manakpur, Dadiyana, Bari Ghel, Lhars, Kalu Majra, Devi Nagar, Saddopur, Sultanpur and Kakru villages.

District authorities in Ambala have ordered the closure of all government and private schools. Pandher had Thursday told reporters that if the government stopped them from carrying out their march, it would be a "moral victory" for the farmers. Sikh Guru Teg Bahadur's martyrdom day was also observed at the Shambhu and Khanauri border points by the farmers.

Meanwhile, SKM leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal continued his fast-unto-death at the Khanauri border point Friday. The farmers, gathered under the banner of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, have been demanding that the Centre give them a legal guarantee for MSP.

23 dead, dozens injured in multiple road mishaps in UP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kannauj/Chitrakoot/Pilibhit, Dec 6: Twenty-three people were killed and several injured in separate road accidents in various districts of Uttar Pradesh Friday, police said.

In Pilibhit, six people were killed when a car carrying a wedding party crashed into a tree, before plunging into a ditch around midnight. In Chitrakoot, six people were killed when a sports utility vehicle (SUV) collided head-on with a truck. In Kannauj, eight passengers lost their lives when a private bus hit a water tanker on the Agra-Lucknow Expressway. In Lucknow, three men were killed when their motorcycle was hit by an unidentified vehicle in the Mall police station area.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the loss of lives in the Kannauj incident and announced an ex-gratia relief of ₹2 lakh each from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) for the families of the deceased and ₹50,000 each for the injured.

"Saddened by the loss of lives in the bus accident in Kannauj, Uttar Pradesh. May the injured recover soon. The local administration is assisting those affected. An ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh from PMNRF will be given to the next of kin of each deceased, and the injured will receive ₹50,000," Modi said in a post on X. In the Pilibhit incident, a car with 11 people on board rammed into a tree before falling into a ditch on the Pilibhit-Tanakpur road in the Neora police station area. The driver lost control over the car while trying to overtake another vehicle.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Avinash Kumar Pandey told PTI Videos that the rescue operation lasted for more than an hour and a half, with a bulldozer used to clear a fallen tree that had trapped the vehicle. The victims, all from Uttarakhnad's Khatima district, were returning from a wedding in Chandoi village when the tragedy struck.

Gyanvapi Mosque panel moves SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: The Gyanvapi Mosque management committee has moved the Supreme Court to oppose several pending petitions that challenge the constitutional validity of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.

The 1991 law prohibits conversion of any place of worship and provides for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed August 15, 1947. The law, however, made only one exception - dispute over the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid in Ayodhya.

The top court is already seized of about six petitions, including the PILs filed by lawyer Ashwini Upadhyay and former Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy, against certain provisions of the law. The committee of management, Anjuman Intezamia Masjid, Varanasi, in its plea filed through lawyer Fuzail Ahmad Ayyubi, filed an intervention application in the top court seeking dismissal of the pending pleas against the 1991 law on the ground that they were based on "rhetorical and communal claims" that could disrupt commu-

nal harmony and the rule of law. The committee said the plea challenging a legislative enactment must indicate the unconstitutionality of the provisions based on constitutional principles. It said the 1991 law was a "legislative instrument designed to protect the secular features of the Indian polity and an enforcement of constitutional commitment".

The mosque committee further underscored the potential "drastic consequences" of overturning the law, citing incidents like the Sambhal case, where a recent survey order reportedly triggered widespread protests and resulted in six fatalities. The committee warned that repealing the Act could lead to a surge in disputes over religious sites across the country, prompting tensions in "every nook and corner" while threatening communal harmony.

The intervention plea listed a series of contentious claims made over the years concerning various mosques and dargahs (shrines), including the Shahi Idgah Masjid in Mathura, the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque near Delhi's Qutub Minar, the Kamal Maula Mosque in Madhya Pradesh, and others.



A mock rescue being performed during the 62nd All India Civil Defence and Home Guards Day celebrations, in Guwahati, Assam

India seeks strong action against Azhar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: India asked Pakistan Friday to take strong action against Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) chief Masood Azhar, after reports emerged that he delivered a speech recently at a public gathering in the Pakistani city of Bahawalpur.

New Delhi said if the reports of Azhar's location are correct, then Pakistan's "duplicitous" has been exposed as it has been maintaining that the JeM chief is not in that country.

Azhar, known to be the mastermind of the 2019 Pulwama terror attack, was designated as a global terrorist by the UN Security Council the same year. "He is a UN-designated terrorist. We demand that strong action be taken against him, that he is brought to justice," Ministry of External Affairs' (MEA) Spokesperson Randhir



Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing. His remarks came when asked about reports that Azhar delivered a speech at a public gathering in Bahawalpur last month. Jaiswal also questioned Pakistan's persistent position that Azhar is not in the country.

"There has been denial that he is not there in Pakistan. If the reports (of his location) are correct then it exposes the

duplicitous of Pakistan," he said. "Masood Azhar is involved in cross-border terror attacks against India and we want that strong action be taken against him," Jaiswal added.

In 2022, the then Pakistani foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto had reportedly said that Azhar had fled to Afghanistan. India had released Azhar in 1999 in exchange for freeing the hostages of hijacked Indi-

Azhar, known to be the mastermind of the 2019 Pulwama terror attack, was designated as a global terrorist by the UN Security Council the same year

an Airlines Flight 814 (IC814). In his speech last month, Azhar reportedly said "fearful rulers" who do not believe in the word of Allah and "jihad" have "led us to defeat" in Kashmir, Palestine and other Muslim lands. Azhar is also believed to be the mastermind of the 2001 terror attack on Parliament and the 2016 Pathankot strikes.

Over the last few years, India has been asking Pakistan to take stringent action against the JeM chief.

Speedy trial fundamental right: Top court

A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and Pankaj Mithal grants bail to a man, who was in custody for about 4.2 years in a case lodged in Bihar, observing the case's trial wouldn't be over soon



A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and Pankaj Mithal therefore granted bail to a man, who was in custody for about 4.2 years in a case lodged in Bihar, observing the case's trial wouldn't be over soon.

The top court's order came on a plea filed by one Raushan Singh, who challenged the Patna High Court's June verdict dismissing his bail application.

"An undertrial cannot be subjugated to indefinite incarceration. Speedy conclusion of trial is a fundamental right, well-recognised in our jurisprudence," the bench said.

Singh's counsel informed the bench that the petitioner was in custody since his arrest in October, 2020, and the case's trial was still inconclusive. The counsel appearing for the state

said three more prosecution witnesses were to be examined in the case.

The bench noted as per the state's counsel, the delay in trial was attributed to a discharge application filed by one of the accused in the case. "Having considered the period of incarceration and the fact that trial may not be concluded on a near date, we deem it appropriate to allow bail to the petitioner - Raushan Singh," held the bench, adding appropriate bail conditions were to be imposed by the trial court.

While dismissing his bail application previously, the high court directed the trial court to conclude the trial as expeditiously as possible, preferably within six months.

CM Hemant Soren distributes portfolios

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, Dec 6: Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Friday distributed portfolios among the new ministers, keeping key departments such as Home, Personnel and several others to himself, according to a government notification.

Radhakrishna Kishore, a Congress MLA, got Finance, Commercial Tax, Planning and Development Department, and Parliamentary Affairs departments. Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) legislator Deepak Biruwa was allotted the departments of Revenue, Registration and Land Reforms (non-registration), and Transport, the

notification said. Chamra Linda, another JMM leader, was allotted the departments of Schedule Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes (except Minority Welfare).

Irfan Ansari of the Congress got Health, Medical Education and Family Welfare, besides Food, Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs, and Disaster Management departments, the notification said.

The Chief Minister also kept to himself the departments of Cabinet Secretariat, Personnel, Administrative Reforms and Official Language, Road Construction, Building Construction, and those departments yet to be distributed to anyone.

Three killed as SUV overturns

Surajpur: Three persons were killed and two others injured Friday morning when their Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) overturned following a tyre burst on a highway in Chhattisgarh's Surajpur district, police said.

Five Naxalites surrender in Bijapur

Bijapur: Five Naxalites, including three with a cumulative reward of ₹11 lakh on their heads, surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district Friday, a police official said. They laid down arms citing the hollow Maoist ideology and due to the impressive 'Niyad Nellanar' (your good village) scheme of the state government, Bijapur Superintendent of Police Jitendra Kumar Yadav said. All the surrendered Naxalites were provided assistance of ₹25,000 each and will be further rehabilitated as per the government's policy, he said.

national



Firing tear gas shells on them and trying to stop them in various ways is condemnable. The government should listen to their demands and problems seriously

112 DIED IN 3 YEARS AFTER FREE TREATMENT AT PVT HOSP

As many as 112 people have died in the last three years after or during treatment under government healthcare schemes at a private hospital here which is under the lens for the death of two PMJAY beneficiaries following botched angioplasty, police said Friday



of the day quote

In 2017, it was the first year of the Trump administration when it (Quad) started at the vice-minister's level. Then in 2019, it was again under the Trump administration that it moved from the vice-minister's level to the foreign minister's level

They (Fadnavis, Shinde and Pawar) took oath yesterday (December 5). If they don't address the demands of the Maratha community in the next one month (by January 5), we will declare a fresh date for our agitation

Eknath Shinde had to take oath as deputy chief minister. BJP had planned to go ahead with the swearing-in ceremony without Eknath Shinde. Had he maintained the stubborn attitude to pressure the BJP, its brass had informed (the state leadership) to go ahead without him

UP: Temple-mosque disputes simmer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Dec 6: As the 32nd anniversary of the Babri mosque's demolition was observed Friday, there are several temple-mosque disputes simmering across Uttar Pradesh



Friday marked the first anniversary of the demolition of the Babri masjid after the consecration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya January 22

Violence erupted during a second survey November 24 as protesters gathered near the Shahi Jama Masjid and clashed with security personnel. Four people were killed and several injured in the violence

Friday marked the first anniversary of the demolition of the Babri masjid after the consecration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya January 22

Some Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders like former Uttar Pradesh minister and Vishva Hindu Parishad's (VHP) Vinay Katiyar have even claimed that Agra's Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the world, was actually built over a "Tejo Mahalaya" or Shiva temple

A site that Hindu devotees claim is the Mahabharat-era "Lakshagriha". The petitioners had claimed that it was a graveyard and the dargah of Sufi saint Sheikh Badruddin

Sambhal has been in the eye of the storm since November 19, when a Mughal-era mosque was surveyed on court orders following claims that a Harihar temple

In Lucknow, the additional district judge February 28 dismissed a revision plea that had challenged a lower court's order rejecting an objection against a civil suit that had sought the right to worship at the Laxman Teela, where the Teelewali Masjid is situated

In Budaun, a Hindu outfit has moved a local court seeking permission to offer prayers at the Jama Masjid Shamsi, claiming it to be a temple. The court asked the Muslim side Tuesday to conclude their arguments in the matter by December 10

ADANI ISSUE

Wearing black masks, Oppn MPs hold protest



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: Wearing black masks with "Modi, Adani bhai-bhai" printed on them and holding a copy of the Constitution, several Opposition MPs led by the Congress held a protest march inside the Parliament complex on the Adani issue Friday

The protest saw several leaders from some of the INDIA bloc parties marching and raising slogans against the Adani group, its owner Gautam Adani and the government

MPs from the Rashtriya Janta Dal, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and the Left parties joined the protest

The protest saw several leaders from some of the INDIA bloc parties marching and raising slogans against the Adani group, its owner Gautam Adani and the government

The Trinamool Congress and the Samajwadi Party, which have so far stayed away from any denunciation of Adani, stayed away from Friday's protest as well

The decision has been seen by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as a "division" in the Opposition bloc. Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra,

the newly elected MP from Wayanad, were among those who led the agitation

Priyanka Gandhi later alleged that the government was scared of holding a discussion on the Adani issue and wondered why it was so. "They don't have the courage to discuss the Adani issue (in Parliament). Why is there a problem in discussion... discussion happens in democracy only, they are afraid of it as well," she said

The Opposition MPs Thursday protested outside the Makkah Dwar of Parliament wearing black jackets with "Modi, Adani Ek Hai" and "Adani Safe Hai" stickers on them. They also raised slogans on the Parliament premises to demand a joint parliamentary probe into the Adani issue

POST OF THE DAY

BREAKING: Arvind Kejriwal exposes massive voter list scam by BJP and ECI. Shahdara AC has 1,86,362 total votes. BJP has applied to cut votes of 11,000 people by either saying they are dead or have shifted. After investigation, it was found that 75% people were still present at their address and alive. BJP had lost this seat by 5294 votes in 2020.

SNIPPETS

Govt okays Rithala-Kundli corridor of Delhi Metro

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet approved Friday the 26.463-km Rithala-Kundli corridor of the Delhi Metro's Phase-IV project that will further enhance connectivity between the national capital and neighbouring Haryana. The entire stretch will comprise 21 stations, all of them elevated. The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Delhi's air quality nears 'poor' category

New Delhi: Delhi's air quality inched closer to the 'poor' category Friday, with forecasts suggesting similar conditions could persist over the weekend. Meanwhile, residents experienced a winter chill during the early hours and evenings with cold winds, while the daytime remained mostly clear and sunny

BSF launches special surveillance project on Pak, Bangla borders

Jodhpur: The Border Security Force (BSF) has initiated a special electronic surveillance project to secure over 600 "vulnerable patches" along the India-Pakistan and India-Bangladesh borders, covering areas where physical fencing is not feasible, the force chief said Friday



A farmer on a bullock cart passes by a mustard field in Nadia, West Bengal

Actor Sidhique held in rape case, released on bail

Thiruvananthapuram: Weeks after the Supreme Court granted protection from arrest to veteran Malayalam actor Sidhique in a rape case, he appeared before the investigating agency Friday when he was formally arrested and then released on bail

PM should speak to farmers: Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: The Congress Friday demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi invite farmers for talks and accept their demand to provide a legal backing to minimum support price (MSP) of agriculture produce and enact a law to this effect in the current Winter Session of Parliament



should speak with them and address their concerns and grievances. "We demand the Prime Minister that he invite farmers for talks and pass a law for giving legal backing to MSP after

agreeing to their demands. A Bill in this regard should be brought in this Winter Session of Parliament and passed," Surjewala said. Taking a swipe at the Prime Minister, he said, "The PM has time to see movies but not meet farmers"

The senior Congress leader observed that the farmers were only demanding what had been promised to them by the Prime Minister after their year-long protest at Delhi borders

BJP, AAP cross swords over 'bogus voters'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 6: A verbal duel broke out between the Delhi BJP and the AAP over bogus voters in the electoral rolls for the forthcoming Assembly polls, with the Opposition reminding illegal voters of one-year jail term for impersonation and the ruling party alleging a conspiracy to delete names of its supporters from the voters' list



Delhi Assembly elections Releasing videos shot by BJP's booth level workers during their visits to homes of alleged bogus voters in Moti Nagar and Trilokpuri constituencies, Delhi BJP chief Virender Sachdeva said, "Kejriwal is shaken as his fraud is being exposed. Bogus Rohingya and Bangladeshi voters are being caught and voters living in Uttar Pradesh who come to vote in Delhi are being exposed"

"The way Kejriwal has started questioning constitutional bodies shows he has nothing concrete to say about the exercise to remove bogus voters," he claimed. Sachdeva alleged Kejriwal was objecting to removal of names of 6,584 voters who have either died or shifted out of Moti Nagar constituency. "What is the reason behind retaining these names?" he asked

and presenting no proof to substantiate his claim of illegal removal of names from the electoral list

Earlier, Kejriwal alleged a conspiracy involving the Election Commission and the BJP behind large-scale deletion of names of his party's supporters from electoral rolls, especially in Shahdara constituency. "There is a threat to democracy. A voter has the right to cast a vote and pick a government of his choice as mandated by B.R. Ambedkar, but the EC is blatantly deleting names of voters based on applications given by the BJP," said Kejriwal, adding that names of 11,000 voters from Shahdara constituency were being removed illegally

Advertisement for the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Rural Water Supply & Sanitation Division, Sonepur. Includes details about a tender for shifting and laying of pipeline, contact information, and a table with procurement details.

international



CONGRATULATIONS BITCOINERS!!! \$100,000!!! YOU'RE WELCOME!!! Together, we will Make America Great Again! DONALD TRUMP | PRESIDENT-ELECT, US

SL'S INTERIM BUDGET PASSED
The interim budget covering the first four months of 2025 was approved in parliament Friday without a vote at the end of a two-day debate. The government presented a vote on account Friday while a formal budget would be presented in February for the next fiscal year



of the day note

To attack a place of worship is an attack on Australian values. To attack a synagogue is an act of antisemitism, is attacking the right that all Australians should have to practice their faith in peace and security



The alternative is what we've seen here in the United States and in many democracies around the globe - not just more gridlock, not just public cynicism, but an increased willingness on the part of politicians and their followers to violate democratic norms, to do anything they can to get their way



I'm well aware that some want to pin the blame on me for this situation, it's much more comfortable



AMID MIDDLE EAST TENSIONS

Iran launches heaviest space payload into orbit

Manama (Bahrain), Dec 6: Iran said Friday it conducted a successful space launch, the latest for its programme the West alleges improves Tehran's ballistic missile programme. Iran conducted the launch using its Simorgh programme, a satellite-carrying rocket that had had a series of failed launches, at Iran's Imam Khomeini Spaceport in rural Semnan province. That's the site of Iran's civilian space programme. The Simorgh carried what Iran described as an "orbital propulsion system," as well as two research systems to a 400-kilometre orbit above the Earth. A system that could

change the orbit of a spacecraft would allow Iran to geo-synchronize the orbits of its satellites. Tehran has long sought that ability. Iran also put the payload of the Simorgh at 300 kilograms, heavier than its previous successful launches. There was no immediate independent confirmation the launch was successful. The US military did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The announcement comes as heightened tensions grip the wider Middle East over Israel's continued war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip and as an uneasy ceasefire holds in Lebanon. The United States has previously said Iran's satellite



launches defy a UN Security

Iran conducted the launch using its Simorgh programme, a satellite-carrying rocket that had had a series of failed launches, at Iran's Imam Khomeini Spaceport in rural Semnan province. The Simorgh carried what Iran described as an "orbital propulsion system," as well as two research systems to a 400-kilometre orbit above the Earth.

Council resolution and called on Tehran to undertake no activity involving ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons. UN sanctions related to Iran's ballistic missile programme expired in October 2023. "Iran's work on space-launch

vehicles — including its Simorgh — probably would shorten the timeline to produce an intercontinental ballistic missile, if it decided to develop one, because the systems use similar technologies," a US intelligence community report released in July said. Under Iran's relatively moderate former President Hassan Rouhani, the Islamic Republic slowed its space programme for fear of raising tensions with the West. The Simorgh launch represented the first for his administration from the country's civil space programme. Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard conducted a successful launch in its parallel programme in September.

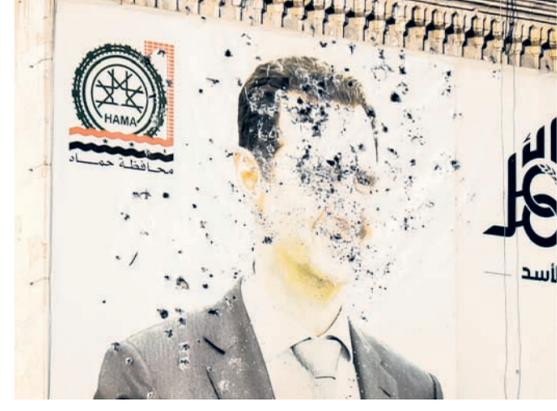
Romanian top court annuls presidential election results



Bucharest, Dec 6: Romania's top court annulled the result of the first round of the country's presidential election Friday, adding that the entire election process would have to be rerun. The second round had been due to be held Sunday and voting is already underway in polling stations abroad. Having polled in single digits before the first presidential election round Nov 24, Calin Georgescu - who wants to end Romanian support for Ukraine against Russia's invasion - surged to a victory that raised questions over how such a surprise had been possible in a European Union and NATO member state. Documents declassified by Romania's top security council Wednesday said the country was a target of "aggressive hybrid Russian attacks" during the election period. "The electoral process to elect Romania's president will be fully re-run, and the government will set a new date and calendar for the necessary steps," the court said in a statement. The second round of the presidential contest that had been due to take place Sunday would have pitted Georgescu, a far-right, pro-Russian candidate against pro-EU centrist leader Elena Lasconi. Far-right parties also performed well in last Sunday's parliamentary election in Romania, though the ruling Social Democrats emerged as the largest grouping and hope to cobble together a pro-EU coalition government. The court has not called into question the integrity of the parliamentary vote

Iran, Hezbollah aim to reinforce Assad

Seizing Homs would cut off Syria's capital Damascus from the coast, a longtime redoubt of Assad's minority Alawite sect and where his Russian allies have a naval base and air base



Beirut/Amman/Dubai, Dec 6: Iran will send missiles, drones and more advisers to Syria, a senior Iranian official said Friday, as rebel forces pushed their lightning offensive south towards the city of Homs in the biggest challenge for years to President Bashar al-Assad's rule. Seizing Homs would cut off Syria's capital Damascus from the coast, a longtime redoubt of Assad's minority Alawite sect and where his Russian allies have a naval base and air base. After years locked behind frozen front lines, the insurgents have burst out of their northwestern Idlib bastion to achieve the swiftest battlefield advance by either side since a street uprising against Assad mushroomed into civil war 13 years ago. Assad regained control of most of Syria after his key allies - Russia, Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah group - came to his support. But all have recently been weakened and diverted by other crises, giving Syrian Sunni Muslim militants a window to fight back. The head of the Syrian faction leading the sweeping assault told CNN that his group - a former Al-Qaeda affiliate now known as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) - aimed to "build Syr-

- HTS leader Golani aims to 'build Syria', return refugees
- Israeli airstrikes target Lebanon-Syria border crossings
- Rebels' offensive catches Assad government off guard
- Residents flee Homs for pro-Assad coastal region
- Russian forces destroy bridge to hamper rebel progress

intelligence and satellite support to Syria." The Israeli military said it was reinforcing aerial and ground forces in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights in Syria and was prepared for all scenarios. Iran-backed Hezbollah, meanwhile, sent a small number of "supervising forces" from Lebanon to Syria overnight to help prevent anti-government fighters from seizing Homs, two senior Lebanese security sources told Reuters.

Pak witnessed 61 terror attacks in Nov

Islamabad: Sixty-one terror attacks occurred across Pakistan in November, marking a 27 per cent increase compared to the previous month, according to a think-tank report. According to the monthly security review of Pakistan by the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), an Islamabad-based think-tank, 169 people were killed in terror attacks in November. "The number of fatalities rose sharply by 69 per cent, increasing from 100 in October to 169 in November. Another 225 people were injured in these attacks," it stated. As many as 41 attacks occurred in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which claimed 114 lives and injured 95 others.

Putin pushes Belarus security guarantees

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Belarus Friday to sign a treaty offering security guarantees to Moscow's closest ally. The planned signing of the document follows the publication of a revised version of Russia's nuclear doctrine, which for the first time placed Belarus under the Russian nuclear umbrella amid the tensions between Moscow and the West over the Ukrainian conflict. Speaking alongside Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko, Putin emphasised that the new document includes a potential use of Russian tactical nuclear weapons deployed to Belarus in response to an aggression.

Quake triggers tsunami warning

San Francisco: A 7.0 magnitude earthquake shook a large area of Northern California Thursday, knocking items of grocery store shelves, sending children scrambling under desks and prompting a brief tsunami warning for 5.3 million people along the US West Coast. The quake struck at 10:44 am west of Ferndale, a small city in coastal Humboldt County, about 130 miles (209 km) from the Oregon border, the US Geological Survey said. It was felt as far south as San Francisco, some 270 miles (435 km) away, where residents felt a rolling motion for several seconds. It was followed by multiple smaller aftershocks. There were no immediate reports of major damage or injury. The tsunami warning was in effect for roughly an hour. It was issued shortly after the tremor struck and covered nearly 500 miles (805 km) of coastline, from the edge of California's Monterey Bay north into Oregon.

LADAKH STANDOFF

India, China to further ease border tensions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Dec 6: India and China agreed to take measures to further ease the situation at the borders while continuing to implement the October agreement to resolve the standoff in eastern Ladakh comprehensively, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said a day after talks in New Delhi. China and India held the 32nd meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on China-India Border Affairs (WMCC) Thursday in New Delhi, and the two sides agreed to maintain communication through diplomatic and military channels, and safeguard sustainable peace and stability in the border areas. Both sides positively assessed the solutions reached on border-related issues and agreed to continue implementing them comprehensively and effectively, while taking measures to further ease the border situation, a press release issued by the Ministry here Friday.



This is the first meeting of WMCC after the October 21 agreement between the two countries to resolve the over four yearlong military standoff in eastern Ladakh that had brought the relations between the two countries to a standstill. Following the important consensus reached by the leaders of both countries, the meeting focused on preparations for the next round of Special Representatives' talks on the China-India border issue, it said. The two sides also agreed to continue leveraging the role of the border negotiation mechanism, maintaining communication through diplomatic and military channels, and safeguarding sustainable peace and stability in the border areas, the release said.

Lebanon shuts land border with Syria

Lebanon's General Security Directorate said Friday the country is closing all land border crossings with Syria except for a main one that links Beirut with the Syrian capital Damascus. The decision by the security agency in charge of border crossings came hours after an Israeli airstrike damaged the Arida border crossing with Syria in north Lebanon, days after it was reopened. Separately, Jordan's Interior Minister al-Fraiyeh said Friday the Naseeb border crossing with Syria had been closed because of the security situation on the Syrian side. He spoke after Syrian opposition activists said insurgents had captured the main border crossing with Jordan, forcing the Syrian authorities to leave.

intelligence and satellite support to Syria." The Israeli military said it was reinforcing aerial and ground forces in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights in Syria and was prepared for all scenarios. Iran-backed Hezbollah, meanwhile, sent a small number of "supervising forces" from Lebanon to Syria overnight to help prevent anti-government fighters from seizing Homs, two senior Lebanese security sources told Reuters.



Palestinian women and girls struggle to reach for food at a distribution center in Khan Younis, Gaza Strip Friday

US to close Dublin women's prison after years of inmate abuse

The closures are a striking coda to the Biden administration's stewardship of the Justice Department's biggest agency

Washington, Dec 6: The federal Bureau of Prisons is permanently closing its "rape club" women's prison in California and will idle six facilities in a sweeping realignment after years of abuse, decay and mismanagement, The Associated Press has learned. The agency informed employees and Congress Thursday that it plans to shutter the Federal Correctional Institution in Dub-

lin, California, and its deactivate minimum-security prison camps in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Colorado, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Florida. Staff and inmates are being moved to other facilities, the agency said. In a document obtained by the AP, the Bureau of Prisons said it was taking "decisive and strategic action" to address "significant challenges, including a critical staffing shortage, crumbling infrastructure and limited budgetary resources." The agency said it is not downsizing and is committed to finding positions for every affected employee. The closures are a striking coda to the Biden administration's stewardship of the Justice Department's biggest agency. After repeatedly promising to reform FCI Dublin and other troubled facilities, the



Bureau of Prisons is pivoting to closures and consolidation, citing inadequate staffing and staggering costs to repair aging infrastructure. The permanent shutdown of FCI Dublin seven months after

After repeatedly promising to reform FCI Dublin and other troubled facilities, the Bureau of Prisons is pivoting to closures and consolidation, citing inadequate staffing and staggering costs to repair aging infrastructure

it was temporarily closed in the wake of staff-on-inmate abuse is the clearest sign yet that the agency, which has more than 30,000 employees, 158,000 inmates and an annual budget of about \$8 billion, is unable or unwilling to rehabilitate its most problematic institutions. The Bureau of Prisons and the union representing correctional officers have repeatedly pushed for additional federal prison funding, highlighting what they

say is an inadequate amount of money to address pay increases, staff retention and a multibillion-dollar repair backlog. In a document summarising the closures, the Bureau of Prisons said it decided to close FCI Dublin after a security and infrastructure assessment following its temporary closure in April. At the time, it appeared the agency was set on closing the low-security prison, but officials held out the possibility that it could be repaired and reopened for a different purpose, such as housing male inmates. The assessment identified considerable repairs necessary to reopen the FCI Dublin, the agency said. Low staffing, exacerbated by the high cost of living in the Bay Area, also contributed to the decision to close the facility, the agency said.

Business

of the day quote

With the steady growth of India's economy and increased infrastructure spending, there is a rising demand for hardware and building materials

ASHWANI KUMAR | PRESIDENT, FIEO

From clean energy innovations unlocking new avenues for sustainable development to AI-powered tools tipping the scales in the fight against disinformation, we are witnessing technology augment human ingenuity in inspiring ways

WERNER VOGELS | CTO, AMAZON

The opening of the Nissan Academy in Chennai is a significant step in our commitment to delivering innovation and excellence in customer service for Indian customers

FRANK TORRES | OPERATIONS PRESIDENT, NISSAN INDIA

There is a proposal for making hallmarking of gold bullion mandatory and this is under consideration in the department

NIDHI KHARE | CONSUMER AFFAIRS SECRETARY

SEBI REVAMPS INVESTOR CHARTER

Capital markets regulator Sebi Friday unveiled an updated investor charter aimed to enhance investor protection, market transparency, and trust and confidence among investors. The updated charter has emphasised on ensuring confidentiality of investor information and providing the right to exit at fair and reasonable terms from the securities market related products or services



Experts hail RBI's hawkish stance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 6: The Reserve Bank's credit policy seeks to strike a balance between keeping a check on inflation and encouraging sustained growth, experts opined Friday as they emphasised that a lower cash reserve ratio requirement is a big positive amid mixed economic signals.

The RBI Friday kept its key interest rate unchanged citing inflation risks, but cut the Cash Reserve Ratio that banks are required to park with the central bank, boosting money with lenders to support a slowing economy.

Harsha Vardhan Agarwal, President at FICCI, said that while the RBI's stance on the repo rate was widely expected, the industry body welcomes the 50-bps cut in the CRR rate.

"This move is well-timed and practical and should help ease out the liquidity situation supporting credit and overall growth," he said.

Agarwal further said food prices have been driving the current spurt in prices and a seasonal correction is on anvil. "It is pertinent to ensure a seamless supply-side framework through better planning, logistics and distribution management of food items leveraging careful monitoring of production data," he added.

Welcoming the reduction in CRR, Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General of CII, said the decision will help ensure the availability of additional resources for all pro-

RBI Friday kept its key interest rate unchanged citing inflation risks, but cut the Cash Reserve Ratio that banks are required to park with the central bank, boosting money with lenders to support a slowing economy

ductive sectors of the economy, especially in anticipation of a near-term tightening of systemic liquidity. "This was a specific CII ask along with a request for moderation in headline interest rates. However, we draw satisfaction from the overall statement that the neutral stance has been maintained and with the anticipated easing of inflation, we can expect rate cuts in the foreseeable future," he said.

Banerjee further said the measure to introduce Mule-hunter.AI to hunt for mule accounts will help reduce frauds in digital space and thus improve confidence amongst end users as well as service providers to promote digital financial transactions.

Secretary General of another industry chamber Assocham Deepak Sood said while the downward GDP growth projection at 6.6 per cent for the current fiscal is realistic, the growth trajectory would normalise above 7 per cent from the fourth quarter of 2024-25 into the next financial year.

"We agree with RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das's assessment that the slowdown in economic activity has bottomed

out," Sood said.

Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist at Bank of Baroda, said the RBI has also raised the flag that core inflation can increase as several manufactured and service industry products have witnessed increases in costs and hence prices.

However, given a more benign forecast of 4.5 per cent inflation for the fourth quarter, there is a good chance of a reduction in the repo rate in the next policy.

"The market reaction in terms of bond yields and stock indices have been largely neutral to these announcements. We can expect an impact on yields once the CRR funds get released in the market," Sabnavis said.

The Reserve Bank Friday slashed Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) by 50 basis points to 4 per cent, a move that would unlock ₹1.16 lakh crore bank funds to ease the potential liquidity stress.

To attract more capital inflows, the RBI also announced to increase the interest rate ceilings on FCNR(B) deposits.

The next monetary policy meeting of the Reserve Bank is scheduled for February 2025.

Forex reserves halt 8-week losing streak

REUTERS

Mumbai, Dec 6: India's foreign exchange reserves rose for the first time in nine weeks and stood at \$658.09 billion as of November 29, coming off five-month lows, data from the Reserve Bank of India showed Friday.

The reserves rose by \$1.5 billion in the reported week. They had dropped by \$48.3 billion cumulatively in the last eight weeks.

Changes in foreign currency assets are caused by the central bank's intervention in the forex market as well as the appreciation or depreciation of foreign assets held in the reserves.

The RBI intervenes on both sides of the forex market to curb undue volatility in the rupee. The rupee has largely remained under pressure over the last two months on the back of heightened foreign portfolio outflows and a wave of dollar strength sparked by Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election.

The RBI's "central tenet" is to maintain orderliness and stability in the exchange rate, without compromising market efficiency, Shaktikanta Das, the central bank's governor, said Friday.

The decision of the Monetary Policy Committee was along expected lines, with the CPI inflation exceeding the MPC's upper threshold of 6 per cent. However, the cut in the CRR by 50 bps would help support growth, after the sharp downward revision in the forecast for FY2025. If the CPI inflation retraces to below 5 per cent by the December 2024 print, the likelihood of a repo cut in February 2025 will rise sharply

ADITI NAYAR | CHIEF ECONOMIST AT ICRA



CEAT inks pact with Michelin to acquire Camso brand's OHT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 6: Tyre maker and RPG Group company CEAT Friday said it has entered into a definitive agreement with Michelin to acquire its Camso brand's off-highway tyres (OHT) and tracks business for about \$225 million (Rs 1,905 crore).

The acquisition is significant for CEAT in its ambition to become a leading global player in the high-margin OHT segment, as it will give the company access to a global customer base, including over 40 international OEMs and premium international OHT distributors, the company said in a statement.

The transaction, subject to regulatory approvals from relevant authorities, will include the business with revenues of about \$213 million for CY2023 and global ownership of the Camso brand, along with two manufacturing facilities, in Sri Lanka, it said.

"CEAT and Michelin announce that they have entered into a definitive agreement for CEAT to acquire Camso brand's off-highway construction equipment bias tyre and tracks business from Michelin in an all-cash deal valued at about \$225 million," it added.

'GDP slowdown in Q2 not systemic, Q3 to compensate for moderation'

India recorded a 7-quarter low GDP growth of 5.4% in July-Sept FY25. In the first quarter, the growth was 6.7%



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: The GDP slowdown in September quarter was not "systemic" and the economic activity in third quarter, with better public expenditure, is likely to compensate for the moderation, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said Friday.

India recorded a 7-quarter low GDP growth of 5.4 per cent in July-September FY25. In the first quarter, the growth was 6.7 per cent. "It is not a systemic slowdown. It is more of absence of activity on public expenditure, capital expenditure and so on...I expect Q3 to make up for all these," Sitharaman said. So, growth number is some-

Purchasing power of Indians is improving, but within India, you also have concerns of wages saturating. We are quite seized of these factors which might have a play on India's own consumption

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

thing which is not necessarily going to get badly affected, she added.

"We need to push up on many other factors," she said adding India would continue to be the fastest-growing economy next year and thereafter. Growth momentum was low

in the first quarter due to general election and reduction in capital expenditure. This has had a bearing on the second quarter as well.

In the first half, the government spent only 37.3 per cent of its capital expenditure target of Rupee Foradian1.11 lakh crore for FY25.

The minister's comments came moments after the Reserve Bank of India sharply slashed its growth projection to 6.6 per cent for the current fiscal from 7.2 per cent earlier.

Other factors affecting growth include plateauing global demand that affected export growth, Sitharaman said.

The finance ministry, in its Economic Survey for FY24, had estimated a GDP growth of 6.5-7 per cent for the current fiscal year.

Referring to the India-Japan relations, she said the two countries shared strong business ties. "Between India and Japan, other than just the governments, what needs to be sustained is the people-to-people and business-to-business interest. Despite some ups and downs, relationship between countries remains strong and at a stable level when people-to-people and business-to-business contacts are safe, strong and deepened," she said.

Indices snap 5-day win run as RBI cuts growth hope

In the past five trading days, the BSE benchmark jumped 2,722.12 points or 3.44%



Markets had been rising for the past five trading sessions and hence a small breather was expected. With RBI springing no major surprise in its credit policy announcement, investors booked profit in select frontlines

PRASHANTH TAPSE | SENIOR VP (RESEARCH), MEHTA EQUITIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 6: Snapping the five-day winning run, benchmark Sensex dropped by 56 points in a highly volatile trade Friday after the Reserve Bank cut the growth projection for 2024-25 and kept the policy rates unchanged.

After oscillating between highs and lows during the day, the 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex declined 56.74 points or 0.07 per cent to settle at 81,709.12. Intra-day, it swung 419.72 points, hitting a high of 81,925.91 and a low of 81,506.19.

The NSE Nifty dipped 30.60 points or 0.12 per cent to settle at 24,677.80.

The Reserve Bank of India Friday kept its key interest rate unchanged citing inflation risks, but cut the Cash Reserve Ratio that banks are required to park with the central bank, boosting money with lenders to support a slowing economy.

With India's GDP seeing a sharper-than-anticipated dip in the July-September period to 5.4 per cent -- its slowest pace in seven quarters, inflation on the uptick and rupee under pressure, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had few choices to make.

From the 30-share pack, Adani Port, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Reliance Industries, Infosys, UltraTech Cement, HDFC Bank, HCL Technologies and ICICI Bank were among the laggards.

Maruti, Larsen & Toubro, ITC and Tata Steel were among the gainers.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rupee Foradian8,539.91 crore Thursday, according to exchange data. The BSE small cap gauge climbed 0.60 per cent and midcap index shot up by 0.36 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, metal jumped 1.17 per cent, consumer durables (1.16 per cent), auto (0.92 per cent), services (0.82 per cent) and consumer discretionary (0.63 per cent). Tech, BSE Focused IT and IT were the laggards.

In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo settled lower, while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the green.

European markets were trading on a mixed note. US markets ended lower on Thursday.

"Though benchmark indices concluded on a flattish trend, Indian broader indices displayed optimism as the RBI acknowledged the downward growth trend while last-mile inflation persisted. By lowering the CRR and injecting Rupee Foradian1.16 lakh crore into the financial system, the RBI aims to stimulate economic growth amid increased liquidity. The overall market exhibited a mixed outlook, reflecting a cautious yet resilient stance, with sector rotation and specific stock movements shaping market sentiment," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

Cars to get dearer from New Year

Auto majors to put the pressure on consumers to tackle rising raw material and operational costs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: Maruti Suzuki India and Mahindra & Mahindra Friday announced plans to hike vehicle prices from January in order to offset the impact of rising input costs and operational expenses.

Maruti Suzuki, the country's largest carmaker, will hike prices of its model range by up to 4 per cent from January. Mahindra & Mahindra is increasing prices of its SUV models and commercial vehicles by up to 3 per cent.

Maruti Suzuki India said in a regulatory filing said that in light of rising input costs and operational expenses, the company has planned to increase the prices of its cars from January 2025.

The price increase is expected to be up to 4 per cent and will vary depending on the model, it added.

"While the company continuously strives to optimise costs and minimise the impact on its customers, some portion of the increased cost may need to be passed on to the market," it stated.

Maruti Suzuki sells a range



Maruti Suzuki to hike prices by up to 4%

M&M to raise prices of SUVs, CVs by up to 3%

Hyundai to hike prices by up to ₹25,000

Luxury carmakers have also announced hikes

of models, ranging from Alto hatchback to Invicto multi-utility vehicles, in the domestic market.

Mahindra & Mahindra said it will hike prices of its SUVs and commercial vehicles by up to 3 per cent from January next year.

The adjustment is in response to the rising costs due

to inflation and increased commodity prices, Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) said in a statement.

The automaker has made efforts to absorb as much of these additional costs as possible however, a portion of this increase will need to be passed on to customers, it added.

The extent of the price increase across different SUVs and commercial vehicles will be up to 3 per cent, the auto major stated.

Similarly, JSW MG Motor India said it will also increase prices of its entire model range by up to 3 per cent from next month.

The price increase is a re-

sult of continuously rising input costs and other external factors, the automaker said in a statement.

"Our dedication to quality, innovation and sustainability remains a priority and drives us to improve our offerings continuously. In doing so, minor price adjustments are inevitable to offset the rising input costs," JSW MG Motor India Chief Commercial Officer Satinder Singh Bajwa said.

While the company tries to minimise impact on customers, a marginal price increase shields it from inflationary challenges, he added.

On December 5, Hyundai Motor India announced to increase prices of its vehicles across the model range by up to Rupee Foradian25,000 from January 1, 2025.

The price increase has been necessitated owing to an increase in input costs, adverse exchange rate and increase in logistics costs, it has stated.

Various luxury automakers Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Audi have also announced to hike vehicle prices from next month.

Advantage for hosts at the end of day as Aussie pacers bowl out India for 180 in 1st innings

Starc reality hits India

AGENCIES

Adelaide, Dec 6: Seasoned pacer Mitchell Starc (6/48) made the most of a moving pink ball for a career-best haul as India flattered to deceive to let Australia hold all the aces on day one of the day-night Test here Friday. Opting to bat, India had it under control at 69 for one before they lost their way to settle for 180 all out at the stroke of dinner.

A fearless Nitish Reddy (42, 54b, 3x4, 3x6) was the sole man responsible for taking his team past the 150-run mark, adding valuable runs with the lower-order.

Australia did well to reach 86 for one at stumps with Marnus Labuschagne (20 batting) and Nathan McSweeney (38 batting) finding welcome runs.

The hosts would be backing themselves to surpass India's total on day two, considering the easier batting conditions in daylight. Labuschagne, fighting for his place in the side, once again took a long time, 19 balls to be specific, to get off the mark but then found ways to score runs. McSweeney was dropped by Rishabh Pant off Jasprit Bumrah early in his innings and he rode that luck to frustrate the opposition.

Birthday boy Bumrah was once again the best Indian



(Left) Mitchell Starc demolished India with a fiery spell; Nitish Kumar Reddy played a gutsy knock

Bumrah joins elite company

Adelaide: Jasprit Bumrah celebrated his 31st birthday in style, becoming the first pacer to notch 50 Test wickets in 2024. The milestone was achieved during the first day of the pink-ball Test against Australia here Friday when Bumrah dismissed opener Usman Khawaja. With this feat, Bumrah joins the elite company of Kapil Dev and Zaheer Khan as the only Indian pacers to take 50 Test wickets in a calendar year. Bumrah reached the landmark in his 11th Test of 2024. Kapil Dev remains the highest wicket-taker for Indian pacers in a year, with 75 Test wickets in 1983, followed by his 74 in 1979. Zaheer Khan stands third with 51 scalps in 2002.

Scott Boland (2/54) with a ball that jagged back from length. Reddy, who impressed on his debut in Perth, added much-needed runs to the total alongside Ashwin who replaced Washington Sundar in the playing XI. Seeing the wickets falling at the other end, Reddy went for his shots and that included a couple of sensational sixes off Starc and Boland to take the total past 150. He first dispatched a wide ball from Starc over extra cover before reverse scooping Boland for a maximum over the slip cordon. Four balls later, Reddy pulled Boland for another six.

In the first session, it was Starc who landed the timely blows as India squandered a promising start to reach 82 for four at tea. Starc removed opener KL Rahul (37) and Virat Kohli (7) in quick succession to turn the tide in Australia's favour. That was after a 69-run stand between Rahul and Shubman Gill (31) for the second wicket.

Brief scores
India 180 (Nitish Kumar Reddy 42, Mitchell Starc 6/48); Australia 86 for 1 (Nathan McSweeney 38 batting).

bowler on show and picked up the only wicket to fall in Australia's innings, having Usman Khawaja (13) caught at first slip with a beauty.

In the second session of the game, Starc made the pink ball talk to take his maiden five-wicket haul against India. Having reduced the visitors to 82 for four at tea, Australia took the remaining six wickets at the cost of 98 runs before dinner break was taken.

Starc sizzled with his trademark inswingers to remove Ravichandran Ashwin (22) and Harshit Rana (0) while skipper Pat Cummins (2/41) used the short ball effectively. Indian skipper Rohit Sharma (3) batting in the middle order after six years, was trapped in front by

Suryavanshi show destroys Sri Lanka



Vaibhav Suryavanshi played a match-winning knock for India

India in final of under-19 Asia Cup with thumping victory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sharjah, Dec 6: Vaibhav Suryavanshi (67, 36b, 6x4, 5x6) was the star of the show again with a second successive half century as India stormed into the U-19 Asia Cup ODI final with a comprehensive seven-wicket victory over Sri Lanka here Friday. The 13-year-old, who became the youngest cricketer ever to be bought at an IPL auction last month, played a scintillating knock as India chased down a target of 174 with 170 balls to spare.

India will face Bangladesh in the final at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium, Sunday. Bangladesh defeated Pakistan by seven wickets, completing a modest chase of 117 in 22.1 overs in the first semifinal in Dubai.

Opting to bat, Sri Lanka could only manage 173 in 46.2 overs despite a valiant effort from Lakvin Abeysinghe (69, 110b, 3x4, 2x6) and Sharujan Shanmuganathan (42, 78b, 2x4).

Their innings struggled to gain momentum as Indian bowlers were in full control with Chetan Sharma (3/34), Kiran Chormale (2/32) and

Ayush Mhatre (2/37) wreaking havoc in the middle overs.

India's chase was built on a solid foundation laid by Ayush Mhatre (34) as he put on a stand of 91 with Suryavanshi for the opening wicket. Suryavanshi, the young left-hander from Bihar troubled the Sri Lankan bowlers from the beginning as he started with consecutive sixes and a boundary off Dulnith Sigera, who ended up giving away 31 runs in his opening over.

Mhatre too played his strokes at the other end as the duo raced to 87 for no loss in eight overs before Vihasa Thevmitika gave Sri Lanka their first breakthrough by removing the batter.

But Suryavanshi showed remarkable maturity as he kept the run-rate ticking despite losing his opening partner, forging another crucial association with C Andre Siddharth (22). He didn't stop there, taking the attack to the opposition bowlers with his aggressive strokes, including hitting two sixes off Aayan Khan.

Skipper Mohamed Amaan (25 n o) and KP Karthikeya (11 n o) then completed the chase.

Brief scores: Sri Lanka 173 in 46.2 overs (Lakvin Abeysinghe 69, Sharujan Shanmuganathan 42; Chetan Sharma 3/34, Kiran Chormale 2/32, Ayush Mhatre 2/37) lost to India 175/3 in 21.4 overs (Vaibhav Suryavanshi 67, Ayush Mhatre 34) by seven wickets.

SHORT TAKES

Odisha eves finish 3rd in sub-junior hockey

Secunderabad: Hemrom Leoni scored the decisive goal as Hockey Jharkhand defeated Hockey Madhya Pradesh 1-0 in the final of the 14th Hockey India Sub-Junior Women National Championships, here Friday. Odisha finished third defeating Hockey Mizoram 4-3 in a match played at the South Central Railways Sports Complex, RRC Ground, Rail Nilayam here. Priyanka Minz scored three goals and Anjana Xaxa one for Odisha. Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy announced a cash prize of ₹3 lakh for the champions, ₹2 lakh for the runners-up and ₹1 lakh for the bronze medallists.

Silva replaces Shah as ACC president

Dubai: Sri Lanka's Shammi Silva has taken over as the president of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), succeeding Jay Shah, who recently became the chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC). It won't be Silva's maiden role with the ACC, having previously functioned as the chairman of the organisation's finance and marketing committee. "It is a great honour to lead the Asian Cricket Council. Cricket is the heartbeat of Asia, and I look forward to working closely with all member nations to elevate the game, provide opportunities for emerging talent, and strengthen bonds that unite us through this beautiful sport," said Silva in a statement.

Direct entry for Nagal

Melbourne: Indian tennis star Sumit Nagal is set for his fifth appearance in a Grand Slam after earning a direct entry for the main draw of next year's Australian Open. The 98th-ranked Nagal, who features in the entry list released Friday by Tennis Australia, had to go through the qualifying rounds in the competition's previous edition. Meanwhile, reigning World No. 1 and defending champion Jannik Sinner is set to see for the Australian Open, followed by Alexander Zverev and Carlos Alcaraz. In women's singles Aryana Sabalenka is the top seed in the tournament.

Amir to play with his idol Manpreet

Junior India captain talks about his dreams and aspirations

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Dec 6: From walking 10 kilometres to watch his idol Manpreet Singh in action to now gearing up to play alongside him in the upcoming Hockey India League (HIL), life has come full circle for Indian junior team skipper, Amir Ali. Amir is set to share the field with Tokyo Olympics bronze medal-winning India captain as a member of Team Gonasika.

"To think that I once went to watch HIL matches, and now I'll be playing in them, is a very special feeling," the 20-year-old who led the Indian team to a record-extending fifth title at the Junior Asia Cup recently, said in a Hockey India (HI) release.

"I am very excited to play alongside my idol Manpreet Singh and look forward to learning from



him and give my best under his guidance," Amir added.

Son of a motorcycle mechanic, the India defender from Lucknow grew up witnessing financial struggles firsthand.

"During my teenage years, I felt embarrassed by my father's job as a bike mechanic, because I wasn't mature enough to realise that no work is insignificant," said Ali who was bagged by Team Gonasika for ₹34 lakh in the HIL 2024-25 auctions.

"But it was our family's struggles which pushed me to pursue my dreams in hockey. I wanted to change our financial situation and make my family and country proud. That desire became my greatest motivation," the player added.

Time running out for Gukesh

Indian challenger may suffer having let go of some winning opportunities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, Dec 6: Half a dozen draws and some missed opportunities later, spirited challenger D Gukesh and resolute defending champion Ding Liren would be desperate for a breakthrough when they clash in the 10th game of the World Chess Championship here Saturday.

Gukesh has explored several winning lines but the advantage has not translated into victories for the Indian, and with just five more classical games left to be played in the USD 2.5 million prize money championship, the 18-year-old would look to break the deadlock and hope to take a decisive lead after a day's rest Friday.

The draw Thursday, which was the seventh of the match and sixth on the trot, has left



both players on an identical score of 4.5 points each, still three shy of the championship-winning tally.

World No. 1 and five-time World Champion Magnus Carlsen minced no words while doing a recap of the ninth game and said that the time was running out for Gukesh.

"I think we have finally arrived at a moment when Gukesh is not a favourite in this match anymore, it's as pure a 50-50 match as it comes," said Carlsen.

If the deadlock is not broken after 14 rounds, Gukesh could

There is no disadvantage playing with black, the computers have seen to that and now it's an equal game

well surrender the initiative to his Chinese opponent when the games are played under the faster time control to determine the winner. Liren is said to have an advantage in short games.

Gukesh, said after the draw in the ninth game Thursday

that he would like to improve his performance in critical moments. "...hopefully, at some point when I do the right things, I believe that the results will come," he stated.

Gukesh could be slightly disadvantaged in the remaining five games as Liren will have white thrice, but the Indian said there was not much difference having black or white pieces.

"Nowadays there is not much difference between white and black, because of the computers... all the lines that were considered dubious, the computers make them work. Now it's an equal game with both colours, so I wouldn't say it's a huge advantage," Gukesh had said Thursday.

"It is still the same, the approach... we just try to play good chess. In the last few games I have managed to play very good chess and for me the main thing will be go there with the same energy, play the same level of chess and slightly improve on some critical moments," he added.

Indian Universities win series

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: The bilateral cricket series between the Australian Universities team and their counterparts of the Indian Universities ended Thursday. The Indian Universities team won the three-game T20 series 2-1. They also won the single ODI which was played at the KIIT Cricket Stadium here.

In the ODI played Thursday, the Indians won the game by an emphatic margin of 113 runs. Batting first, the Indian Universities team posted a total of 296 in 44.3 overs. Pranjal Saini (57, 60b), Dipin Chitkara (51, 30b) and Parthasarathi Nayak (44, 43b) batted well for the Indian team. Captain Kavvy Saini (5/61) was the pick of the



bowlers for the Australian Universities team.

In reply the Australian team lost wickets at regular intervals and were dismissed for 183 in 42.1 overs. Only Jason Kent (31) and Tom Connolly (30) offered some resistance to the opposition bowlers. The bowlers of Indian Universities maintained a steady line and length to hasten the downfall of the opposition bat-

ters. Chitkara, Tushar Chordia and Nitish Samantary picked up two wickets each for the Indian Universities team. Chitkara was adjudged player of the match for his all-round performance.

There were three players from Odisha, Maroju Prasanth and Partha Sarathi Nayak from KIIT University and Sujal Kumar Singh from Sambalpur University in the Indian squad.

KIIT EMERGE CHAMPS IN KHO KHO TOURNAMENT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: The men's team of KIIT emerged champions of the East Zone Inter University Kho Kho Championships 2024-25 which concluded Friday at the Fakir Mohan University in Balasore. The matches were played in the league format with four teams participating in the tournament. KIIT won all their matches to top the pool and emerge champions.

Hemchand Yadav Vishwavidyalaya, Durg, secured the first runners-up position with two wins, while Pandit Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur, earned the second runners-up spot with one victory.



Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur, finished as the last team of the pool after they failed to win a single match and in the process suffered three losses.

All four teams however, qualified for the All India Inter University Inter Zone Kho Kho (Men) Championships 2024, to be held at Mangalore University.

The KIIT kho kho team were very dominant in the tournament and earned easy victories over all their opponents. They played well and won all their matches convincingly.

Odisha eves lose to Uttarakhand

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Despite a fighting half century by skipper Sushree Dibyardshini (52, 69mb, 6x4), Uttarakhand defeated Odisha by 50 runs in a match of the BCCI Senior ODI women's tournament at the Gujarat College ground in Ahmedabad, Friday. After scoring 176 all out in 49.4 overs, Uttarakhand dismissed Odisha for a paltry total of 126 in 41.4 overs to emerge winners.

Prema (47, 72b, 3x4) and Raghvi (38, 54b 6x4) took Uttarakhand to a fighting total. Jyoti K Prasad (3/27) and Rasanara Parwin (2/28) bowled well for Odisha.

Then Prema (3/30) and Neelam (3/27) picked up wickets to derail Odisha's chase and script victory for their side.