



Powered by   
**Dalmia**  
Bharat Limited

# BWF TOUR SUPER 100 TOURNAMENT

12-17 December 2023

J N Indoor Stadium, Cuttack

**27**  
COUNTRIES

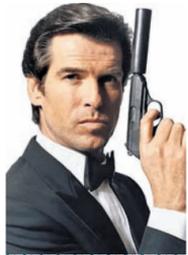
**324**  
PLAYERS

*“Sports for Youth  
Youth for Future”*



*Transforming The Sports Landscape | Empowering Athletes*

# leisure



## BROSNAN NEEDS ART AS THERAPY

GoldenEye actor Pierce Brosnan finds painting an 'essential' form of 'therapy' to process his thoughts and feelings. Brosnan first picked up a brush after his first wife, Cassandra Harris, died of cancer in 1991 and he's found it a great outlet for self-expression and a way of processing his thoughts and feelings ever since.

## GOMEZ HAS BEEN WITH BLANCO FOR 6 MONTHS

American singer Selena Gomez has been secretly dating producer Benny Blanco for six months. The 31-year-old confirmed speculation that she is romancing the producer and in another Instagram comment, she revealed they have been dating in secret for nearly six months.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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

**ARIES**  
Ganesh advises you to look before you leap. One hasty decision may undo a lot of hard work accomplished over a long period of time. After a tense morning, you may simply want an evening with kids, helping them grow the Dahlias.

**TAURUS**  
Impulsive action kicks in as you work and interact today. Do not let the pressure and strain cloud your thoughts, and instead focus on acting on the things at hand. If you find things spiralling out of control, take a break and listen to some music that soothes your heart, suggests Ganesh.

**GEMINI**  
Today, you will decide to become a bit more conscious about your health. You may or may not join a gym or measure your calories, but you will definitely sit up and take notice of your lifestyle and unhealthy food habits, predicts Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
Today, you will be extremely impulsive and spontaneous, feels Ganesh. You better get rid of your negative thoughts and beliefs and start taking charge of things at hand. Also, stop focussing so much on the pitfalls, and start working.

**LEO**  
Always dependable, that is what you are. And today, you will just underline this fact in bold strokes through your fine display of commitment to work, and your dedication to your family, says Ganesh. Your company may never find a better person for the job that you are assigned to do.

**VIRGO**  
Ganesh sees you keeping away from a joint venture. You are capable enough to handle big projects yourself. You are most likely to lead and coordinate large teams and extract work from them as you will.

**LIBRA**  
Expect some annoyance from the 'man in the chair', or people in charge who may be looking towards throwing a wrench in your way. But know that it is just a blip on the radar. Your fortune is too powerful for anyone to affect it negatively. Stick to your task and dig into your imagination to find a way around the blips. Your ability to think out-of-the-box will perplex your perpetrator, chuckles Ganesh.

**SCORPIO**  
The crown jewel of your character will be your supreme confidence today. Try to pick up tasks that require Herculean efforts, and you shall come close to achieving them, predicts Ganesh. Your nerves and buoyant nature will be infective and also leave people awestruck.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Your business may bring you faster growth rates than bacteria today. Moreover, banking transactions will fetch returns exceeding your expectation. Management institutes will value your expertise and experience, predicts Ganesh. All in all, a day when progressions are on the rise.

**CAPRICORN**  
Creativity is your innate trait. But how creative can you get when dealing with day-to-day issues? You will not only answer this question with utmost modesty, but will make a great display of your creative skills by cleverly sorting out problems with your siblings, says Ganesh.

**AQUARIUS**  
Money is on your mind today! If you want to sort out financial matters, today is the day. You may have a good time with friends in the evening. You will also realise how much your friends value you and the respect you command in your wider social circle.

**PISCES**  
Today, you will find yourself partitioning your time equally, and more importantly, excelling, at work as well as at home. So, while you will prove to be the right man for the job assigned to you at the office, at home you will establish yourself as the perfect family man, says Ganesh.

### ISRAELI BOMBARDMENT

## Priyanka for 'lasting humanitarian ceasefire'

Mumbai: Priyanka Chopra took to Instagram Stories Monday to reshare a post stressing for a ceasefire in Palestine as thousands of children and minors get killed and are missing under the rubble amid Israeli bombardment. The original post was shared by UNICEF,

an agency of the United Nations responsible for providing humanitarian and de-

velopmental aid to children worldwide.

The text on the post Priyanka Chopra reshared read a quote attributed to Catherine Russell, executive director of UNICEF, "Children need a lasting humanitarian ceasefire."

A part of the accompanying caption of the post that was originally shared by UNICEF on Instagram on December 2, read, "Today, the Gaza Strip is once again the most dangerous place in the world to be a child. After seven days of respite from horrific violence, fighting has resumed. More children will surely die as a result. Before the pause, more than 5,300 Palestinian children were reportedly killed in 48 days of relentless bombing - a figure that does not include many children still missing and presumed to be buried under rubble."

AGENCIES



## Ananya shares how she spent her first paycheck

Mumbai: Ananya Panday is gearing up for the release of her upcoming film *Kho Gaye Hum Kahan*, which is out on Netflix December 26. At the trailer launch of the film Sunday, the Liger actress was present with her co-stars Siddhanth Chaturvedi and Adarsh Gourav. There, the 25 year-old shared how she spent her first paycheck.

At the cast of the film was asked what they bought with their first big paycheck. To this, Ananya replied, "I actually paid for my sister's tuition classes because I wanted to contribute in her growing and learning in some way."

Ananya Panday is the daughter of actor Chunky Panday and costume designer Bhavana Pandey. She has a younger sister named Rysa Panday, who turned 19 this year.

Meanwhile, Siddhanth answered the same question and said, "I bought a PS5 for my brother who is 19 now. When I bought it, I thought we would play together but we got competitive and that has caused rift between us (laughs). So we have dropped the joystick and actually (mimics punching)." Adarsh said that he bought a vocal processor.

AGENCIES



## PANKAJ: NEVER FELT THAT I'VE ARRIVED

New Delhi: Acclaimed actor Pankaj Tripathi said that he never felt that he has 'arrived' in the industry, and shared how he works with equal sincerity and honesty in every project.

Pankaj made his acting debut in 2004. However, it was *Gangs of Wasseypur - Part 1* in 2012 after which there was no looking back for him.

Now that he has been in the industry for almost two decades, does he feel he has finally arrived in the industry?

Pankaj: "I never felt that I have arrived. I do my work with all my honesty. So, I don't know when I came. I work with the same sincerity and hard work in every project."

The actor, who is from the Gopalganj district of Bihar, has often stood out with his performances and has given memorable characters such as Kaleen Bhaiya, Madhav Mishra, Bhanu and

Pandit. Portraying his characters come to him naturally, said the actor, who plays one suffering from retrograde amnesia in the latest release *Kadak Singh*.

"Such roles come to me naturally. I don't do anything. I am fortunate that I get such good scripts," added the two-time National Film Award-winner. He went on: "It's a conscious decision. I feel cinema is not only for entertainment. It is more than entertainment. Cinema has its social responsibility. I maintain a balance of commercial, independent and sensible cinema."

Pankaj concluded that there are many roles that he still has to play on the screen.

IAN S



## Italy's highest civilian honour for Kabir Bedi

Mumbai: Veteran actor Kabir Bedi was awarded the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic (Merito della Repubblica Italiana), the highest Italian civilian award.

Alessandro De Masi the Consul General of Italy read the words of the President Mattarella of Italy in his speech at the event held in Mumbai.

"Kabir Bedi... is tied to Italy over the last 30 years by

an extraordinary human and artistic partnership". The scroll of honour was signed by President Mattarella and countersigned by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.

"This is a very emotional award for me," Kabir said.

He added: "Now it's time for the great film industries of Italy and India to produce world-class films together."

Kabir gave a heart-warming speech thanking Italy and the Italian people for their enduring love over the years. He thanked his wife, children, and grandchildren for their presence and the joy they bring into his life.

This honour, he said, was "a goosebumps moment" for him. He recalled that his journey of being Sandokan began one hundred meters from where they were standing today, at the iconic Taj Mahal Palace Hotel. That's where he met the director and Producer of the *Sandokan* series for the very first time. "Life has come full circle" Kabir said.

IAN S

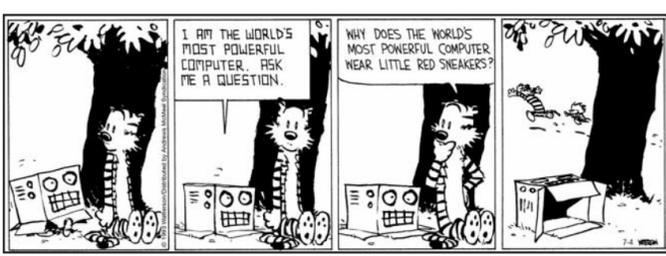


### FUN post

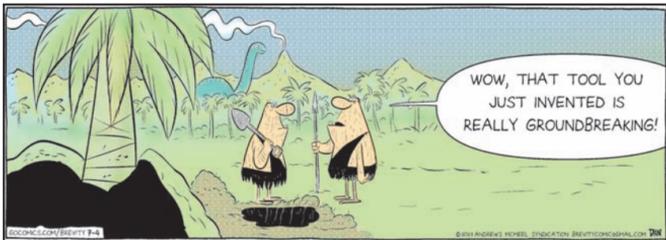
#### PEANUTS



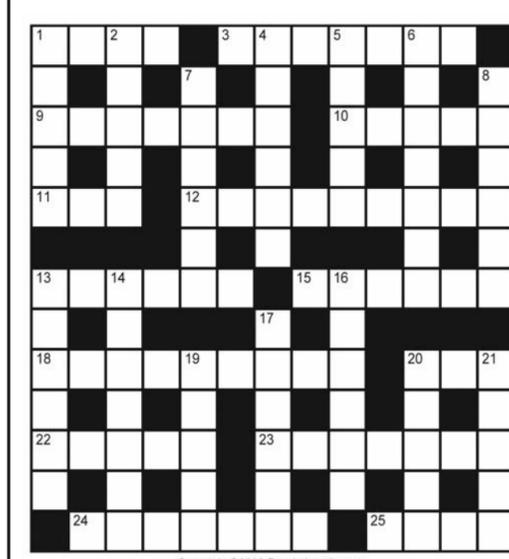
#### CALVIN AND HOBBS



#### BREVITY



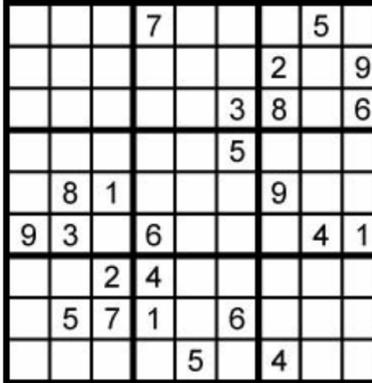
#### CROSSWORD



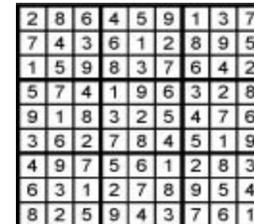
- Across
- 1 Soupçon
  - 3 Bodily disorder
  - 9 Taps
  - 10 Restrict
  - 11 Fish eggs
  - 12 Security agreement
  - 13 Docking facility
  - 15 Proposes
  - 18 Disguised
  - 20 Blubber
  - 22 Omit
  - 23 Egg-shaped instrument
  - 24 Olga Korbut, e.g.
  - 25 Shake off
- Down
- 1 Molière comedy, with "The"
  - 2 Shopworn
  - 4 Take a firm stand
  - 5 Back tooth
  - 6 Favourite son
  - 7 Aftershave
  - 8 Pressure
  - 13 Type of voyage
  - 14 Correct
  - 16 Arrangement type
  - 17 Swivels
  - 19 Collect slowly
  - 20 Metal worker
  - 21 Face fungus

#### 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



## CARE FOR SPORTSPERSONS

CM Naveen Patnaik unveils India's largest Sports Science Centre at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar

DOWNTOWN P2



## WAR INTENSIFIES

Israeli forces battle Palestinian militants in Gaza's two largest cities with civilians still precariously trapped

INTERNATIONAL P8



## INDIA FACE PROTEAS

After a washout in the series-opener, India will take on South Africa in the second game of the 3-match T20I series

SPORTS BACK PAGE \*\*\*\*

www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | TUESDAY DECEMBER 12 | 2023

P1

### SHORT TAKES

#### Mahua moves SC over expulsion

New Delhi: Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader Mahua Moitra moved Monday the Supreme Court challenging her expulsion from the Lok Sabha, after the House adopted the report of its ethics committee that held her guilty of accepting gifts and illegal gratification from a businessman to further his interest. After moving the top court, Moitra said that she will fight till the last to prove her innocence.

#### Telia brings luck to Paradip fishermen

Paradip: It was a windfall of sorts for a group of fishermen here Monday as they managed to earn a huge amount from their catch which included 17 large telia borei fishes weighing close to three quintals. As there were many takers, the fish was finally auctioned by the local traders. In the process, the fishermen managed to earn a whopping ₹25 lakh.

#### CISCE cancels 2024 compartment exams

New Delhi: The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) has cancelled compartment exams for the 2024 board exams. In its place the CISCE has decided to introduce the re-evaluation of answer scripts. As per a notice available on their official website, the ICSE, IC re-evaluation of results has been introduced 'in addition to the recheck of answer scripts after the result declaration'. ICSE exams 2024 will start February 21 and ISC from February 12. The results will be declared in May 2024.

#### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



It is an old video of the CM designate, sir, Swearing-in ceremony is yet to take place

#### MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	69928.53 ↑ 102.93
NIFTY	20997.10 ↑ 27.70
DOLLAR	83.42 ↓ ₹0.01
EURO	89.93 ↓ ₹0.13
GOLD	₹61,350 ↓ ₹369
SILVER	₹71,969 ↓ ₹549

#### WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	27.6°C	27.4°C
TEMP MIN	25.7°C	25.0°C
Humidity	68%	74%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Dry weather very likely	



TAKING A PLEDGE: Students, ASHA, Anganwadi workers and NCC cadets take a pledge during a programme on Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra at the police ground in Nimapara of Puri district, Monday

OP PHOTO

# Arunachal brews in Odisha 370 abrogation upheld

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, Dec 11: A consignment of smuggled Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) worth over ₹1.88 lakh, which was meant for retail sale in Arunachal Pradesh, was seized during a raid jointly conducted by the Central Excise Intelligence and District Excise sleuths at a den here, Monday.

Officials said Prasant Jena, 32, a bootlegger from Purushottampur and his associate, Rajendra Sahoo, 45, have been taken into custody. A case (No 173/2023-24) has been registered against the two under various sections of the Excise Act and they have been forwarded to a local court, officials said.

Excise sources said that on a tip-off, the sleuths carried out a raid at the residence and outlet run by Jena in Balgopalpur area



under Remuna police station in this district. The smuggled consignment stocked in 20 cartoons was seized during searches.

District Excise Superintendent Susanta Kumar Padhi, who led the raiding team comprising Jaleswar Excise Intelligence official Satyajit Khatua, Nilagiri Excise Inspector Galuram Soren and District Mobile Excise unit

official Kesab Das, said investigation is on to find out how the smugglers managed to sneak the consignment into Odisha.

It is also a matter of investigation to establish how long they had been carrying out the operations right under the nose of enforcement officials, sources said. It is reliably learnt that some

authorised liquor traders are working in tandem with the traders of others states in pilfering illegal liquor consignments worth lakhs of rupees through various transport modes for years together.

Sources claimed that they would strike deals with trucks carrying goods to Arunachal to transport liquor from the north-eastern state. The cargo would be offloaded and stored at Remuna which acts as an epicentre for the distribution network.

The liquor obtained at a cheaper price is then sold across the coastal districts at premium rates. This is not only resulting in Odisha losing revenue worth several crores of rupees, but also helping the smugglers mint money, officials pointed out.

## SUPREME COURT ASKS EC TO CONDUCT JAMMU & KASHMIR ASSEMBLY POLLS BY SEPT 30, 2024

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 11: The Supreme Court unanimously Monday upheld the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 bestowing special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, and directed restoration of statehood 'at the earliest' as well as elections to the Assembly by September 30 next year.

Ending a decades-long debate, a five-judge Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, delivered three concurring judgements upholding abrogation of the Constitutional schemes that provided special status to Jammu and Kashmir when it was annexed to the Union of India in 1947.

Writing the judgement for himself and Justices BR Gavai and Surya Kant, the CJ said Article 370 was a temporary provision and the President was empowered to revoke it in the absence of the Constituent Assembly of the erstwhile state. Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sanjay Khanna penned separate and concurring verdicts on the issue.

The apex court also upheld the validity of the decision to carve out the Union Territory of



Ladakh from Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019. On that day, the government abrogated Article 370 and divided the state into two Union Territories - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

In his verdict, the CJ stated that the Constitution of India was a complete code for constitutional governance. "The President had the power to issue a notification declaring that Article 370(3) ceases to operate without the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly. The continuous exercise of power under Article 370(1) by the President indicates that the gradual process of constitutional integration was ongoing," the CJ said while pronouncing the verdict.

"We direct that steps shall be taken by the Election Commission to conduct elections to the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir constituted under Section 14 of the Reorganisation Act by September 30, 2024. Restoration of statehood shall take place at the earliest and as soon as possible," the CJ said. However, no timeframe was fixed for the restoration of statehood for Jammu and Kashmir.

## BJP picks Mohan as Madhya Pradesh CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Dec 11: Springing a surprise Monday, the BJP picked Mohan Yadav, a leader of Other Backward Classes (OBC) and a three-time MLA, as the next Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, state president VD Sharma said. The BJP legislature party elected Yadav (58), a minister in the outgoing government, as its leader, paving the way for him to take over as the next CM of MP. Outgoing CM, Shivraj Singh Chouhan proposed the name of Yadav, the BJP MLA from Ujjain (South). Later in the day, MP Governor Mangubhai Patel invited Yadav to form the government.

## Minor girl immolates self in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Aska, Dec 11: A 17-year old girl died by self-immolation Monday by pouring kerosene and then setting herself on fire at her house in Bhetanai village under Kotinada police limits in Ganjam district over unknown reasons. The deceased was identified as Puja Goud, 17, daughter of Debaraj Goud a resident of the same village. The deceased was a Plus-II first year student at the Ahalya Devi Junior Women's College in Balipadar. She used to stay with her mother and brother while her father was working at Surat.

Police seized the body of the deceased and sent it for post-mortem to the MKCG Medical



College and Hospital in Berhampur. Police are yet to ascertain why the minor girl took such a drastic step.

Locals said that Puja had been to her maternal grandfather's house at Saibagad village Sunday and returned with him to the her native place, Monday. The incident occurred after her mother and maternal grandfather left for Bellguntha to at-

tend the post-death rituals of a relative while her brother had gone to the college.

Puja was alone inside the house when she poured kerosene on her and immolated herself. Neighbours saw smoke billowing out of the house and called her uncle before rushing inside. However, by then she had been charred to death.

Kotinada police registered a case after the deceased's mother Anita lodged a complaint at the police station, IIC Krushna Chandra Saha said. Police also seized the mobile phone of Anita and Puja to check the call records. It is being apprehended that Puja took the drastic step after a telephonic tiff with her mom.

It is a resounding declaration of hope, progress and unity for our sisters and brothers in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The court, in its profound wisdom, has fortified the very essence of unity that we, as Indians, hold dear and cherish above all else

NARENDRA MODI

Disappointed but not disheartened. The struggle will continue. It took the BJP decades to reach here. We are also prepared for the long haul

OMAR ABDULLAH (NC)

## ATM loot yet again

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 11: ATMs continue to be the main target for miscreants with another one being broken open late Sunday night here. Miscreants looted more than ₹10 lakh from the SBI ATM at Hatasahi locality under Lingaraj police limits in the Odisha capital. Police said Monday that the looters used a gas cutter to break open the machine and then decamped with the cash.

In November and December there have been numerous attempts on ATMs spread across the state. An ATM in Balasore was ransacked as the burglars decamped with more than ₹20 lakh. Earlier this month, hooligans had tried to break open an ATM

in Puri. When they failed, they destroyed the CCTV cameras at the kiosk. In August, after failing to get the cash from an ATM, the miscreants allegedly took the machine away in Jajpur district.

Meanwhile sources informed Monday that noticing suspicious movements near the kiosk, locals had informed the police. However, the cops were late in arriving at the crime spot. By the time, they arrived the criminals had fled the scene with the cash. Locals also alleged that despite requests, police do not patrol the area.

Police meanwhile have started investigation into the matter. They are examining CCTV footage of other cameras installed near the ATM kiosk, to identify the miscreants.

## Jonathan turns 191, the world's oldest living being

THE TORTOISE ARRIVED AT ST HELENA ISLAND IN 1882 AND SINCE THEN HAS BEEN LIVING IN THE GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE

AGENCIES

St Helena, Dec 11: Jonathan has seen many wars, survived epidemics and pandemics and above all triumphed over many volcanic eruptions. As he turned 191 years old in the first week of December, Jonathan, a tortoise extended his record as the oldest living creature. The previous record was held by 'Tu'i Malila, a Madagascar-radiated tortoise gifted to Tonga's royal family in 1777. It died in 1965 at 188 years old.

According to information available, Jonathan was born in 1832 and arrived at St Helena as a gift to Sir William Grey-Wilson

in 1882, who later became governor of the island. Since then, Jonathan has wandered and grazed the gardens of the Plantation House here, the governor's residence, where he has seen 31 governors come and go. According to a report in CNN.com, Jonathan resides there with three other giant tortoises: Emma, David, and Fred.

"Well he may be more than 191 years," said 64-year-old Joe Hollins, a veterinarian who looks after Jonathan. "He arrived here in 1882 and at that time he was fully grown which means he was at least 50 years old. So going by that mark, we can safely assume that he is 191 years old



and the oldest living being," added Hollins.

The Guinness World Records (GWR) also confirmed Jonathan's age as 191. It also states that Jonathan has far surpassed his

species' average life expectancy of 150 years. The giant tortoise is still hale and hearty, according to Hollins. "In spite of losing his sense of smell and being virtually blind from cataracts, his appetite remains voracious," Hollins was quoted as saying by GWR.

"He is still being hand-fed once a week with a fortifying helping of fruit and vegetables by a small, dedicated team. This not only supplements his calories

but provides those essential drivers of his metabolism: vitamins, minerals, and trace elements," Hollins added. "It is extraordinary to think that this gentle giant has outlived every other living creature on land, including of course the whole human race," pointed out Hollins.

"He (Jonathan) enjoys the sun, but on very hot days takes to the shade. On mild days, he will sunbathe - his long neck and legs stretched fully out of his shell to absorb heat and transfer it to his core," informed Hollins. He added that Jonathan's favourite foods include cabbage, cucumbers, carrots, lettuce hearts and apples and he especially enjoys bananas.

HIGHEST-EVER CASH HAUL

# Hawala operators, shell cos' role to be probed



AGENCIES

**New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, Dec 11:** With the 'highest-ever' cash seizure of ₹353 crore (till Sunday night) by Income Tax (I-T) sleuths during raids against a distillery company owned by a Congress MP's family, the role of hawala operators and shell companies that were allegedly used to channel the 'illicit' funds has come under the scanner, official sources said Monday.

An interim report on the action has also been sent by the field investigation wing of the I-T department to the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) in Delhi, the administrative body for the department.

The searches that began against the Bhubaneswar-headquartered Boudh Distillery Pvt. Ltd. (BDPL) are continuing at about seven locations Monday, the sixth day, after they were launched by the taxman December 6 on charges of alleged tax evasion and 'out of book' transactions.

The searches are expected to be called off soon after the signing of some 'panchnamas' and recording of statements, they said.

The I-T department has effected the country's highest-ever cash seizure of ₹353 crore by any agency in a single operation after the five-day counting ended, Sunday.

As many as 30-34 premises in

Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal were searched, the sources said.

About 3 kg of gold jewellery was also seized by the department, they said.

A number of hawala operators working in these three states and the incorporation of some 'shell' or dubious companies are under the scanner of the department after documents indicating their roles were recovered during these searches and recovery of the huge cash, the sources said.

The premises of the Congress Rajya Sabha MP from Jharkhand, Dheeraj Prasad Sahu, in Ranchi and other places, were also covered during the searches by the department. The company and Sahu did not respond to PTI's queries regarding the action being carried out against them.

BJP MPs led by party chief JP Nadda Monday held a protest near the Mahatma Gandhi statue in the Parliament Complex, alleging the cash seized during the raids proved that the Congress was 'neck-deep' in corruption.

"This is just the tip of the iceberg... Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi will have to answer whose money it is and how it was looted," Nadda said.

BJP members in Lok Sabha also raised the issue in the House, Monday.

The Congress has distanced it-

## Odisha BJP attacks, BJD counters

**O**pposition BJP in Odisha Monday intensified its attack on the ruling BJD and the Odisha government, accusing them of 'facilitating illegal liquor trade in the state and proliferation of black money'. The saffron party held protests in front of all the sub-divisions across the state against the alleged black money transactions. Meanwhile, the BJD held a press conference in a bid to expose the 'evil design' of the saffron party. Party spokesperson Lenin Mohanty said while leaders such as BJP president JP Nadda, Union ministers Smriti Irani, Anurag Singh Thakur and others have raised questions primarily on the Congress, here they (BJP) speak in different voice. "Odisha BJP leaders are doing just the opposite here. In a way, Odisha BJP leaders have pledged to somehow save the Congress on this issue," Mohanty said.

self from the MP, claiming that the party has nothing to do with his business.

"The Indian National Congress is in no way connected with the businesses of Dheeraj Sahu, MP. Only he can explain, and should explain, how huge amounts of cash have been reportedly unearthed by the income-tax authorities from his properties," AICC general secretary Communications Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X last week.

Targeting the Opposition parties, Union Home Minister Amit Shah Sunday said it is now clear that their 'propaganda' about probe agencies being misused was driven by the fear that their corruption will be exposed.

In a statement, the senior BJP leader questioned the 'silence' of INDIA bloc leaders, saying he could understand why the Congress is keeping mum but wondered why parties like the TMC, DMK, JD(U) and the RJD were doing the same.

## Naveen inaugurates EY technology hub

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 11:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday inaugurated the Ernst & Young new technology hub in Bhubaneswar.

Ernst & Young (EY) is a global leader in assurance, tax, strategy, transaction, and consulting services. Its new hub in Bhubaneswar is its 15th city of presence in India.

"Over the years, Odisha has scripted success stories in many spheres. It is marching ahead with renewed confidence towards a new Odisha adopting new ideas, innovation, and entrepreneurship. All these factors have become the cornerstones of our state's journey towards growth and development," Patnaik said after inaugurating the facility here.

Stating that Odisha is embracing the digital era and fostering an environment ripe for ground-breaking advancements, Patnaik said the state's growth trajectory is fuelled by a robust ecosystem that encourages entrepreneurship, technological innovation, and new age businesses.

"EY's expertise in these areas will undoubtedly add immense value to our endeavours. Opening of the EY Technology Centre marks yet another watershed moment, signifying the fast-changing IT, strategy and consulting ecosystem in the state," the chief minister said.

# CM opens India's largest Sports Science Centre



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 11:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated India's largest Sports Science Centre at the Kalinga Stadium here, Monday.

The centre, established in partnership with Olympian Abhinav Bindra, is designed to cater to athletes across various disciplines, and is poised to become a hub for injury management, rehabilitation, recovery, and performance enhancement, a statement said. It is the largest such facility in the country and has specialised laboratories to ensure that athletes receive care and support tailored to their needs, it said.

"The establishment of this Sports Science Centre marks a pivotal milestone in our commitment to nurturing sporting talent. By integrating top-notch equipment and expertise, this Centre will serve as a catalyst for our athletes' growth, enabling them to achieve their fullest potential," Patnaik said.

"Science has to be integrated with sports to give the winning edge to our sportspersons," he said. Advancements in sports science and technology have revolutionised athletic performance, enabling smarter training methods, Patnaik said.

"This state-of-the-art facility, the largest in the country, stands as a testament to Odisha's com-

mitment to nurturing sporting excellence. Equipped with cutting-edge technology, the centre incorporates the best of global best practices," he added.

The centre will have bio-mechanists, sports scientists, physiotherapists, exercise physiologists, strength and conditioning specialists and nutritionists, among others. A special focus has been ensured for the care of para-athletes with custom-designed equipment.

The facility also integrates technologies such as anti-gravity weight-bearing, sensory deprivation, and cryogenic therapy, expediting recovery and ensuring a swift return to the field, the statement said.

# SAI students excel in CLAT

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 11:** SAI International School chairperson Silpi Sahoo Monday congratulated school students for their outstanding performances in the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT), 2023 results published Sunday.

Arush Sarma became the 3rd state topper with an impressive all India rank (AIR) 44. Adyasha Syam secured a commendable AIR 413, while Fiona Debsmita



Alone got AIR 533. "More than six students of the school have secured good scores in CLAT 2023," informed a school staffer. Hailing

the students, Sahoo said that it brings her joy to see "each student embark on their unique journey, turning dreams into reality and achieving remarkable success."

"I am extremely happy and feel blessed to have achieved the 3rd rank, but yes, I was eyeing at rank one. But I'm happy with what I have achieved. I am thankful to my alma mater SAI International for guiding me at each point of time to realise my goal. I hope to get the top NLU," said Arush Sarma.

## Criminal hurt in encounter

**Puri:** A dreaded criminal, who was on the run after opening fire on a woman November 29, suffered bullet injuries in an encounter with police in the Pilgrim City here, Monday. According to Brahmagiri police, Santosh Barik suffered bullet injuries in his right leg in an exchange of fire with police personnel near a forest in Girala area here in the afternoon. He was initially admitted to the district headquarters hospital and later rushed to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack where he is stated to be stable, they said, adding that Barik was on the run after opening fire on Jhali Sahoo, November 29.

# Centurion University holds 11th convocation



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 11:** Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM) organised its 11th convocation ceremony on its campus here, Saturday. A total of 2,751 students graduated on this occasion in presence of Governor Raghubar Das.

The chief guests on the occasion included the judge of the Supreme Court Justice CT Ravikumar, Cyient and NASSCOM founder chairman BVR Mohan Reddy, and HPCL chairman cum managing director Pushp Kumar Joshi.

Addressing the gathering, the Governor congratulated the graduating students, commending Centurion University for its unwavering dedication to shaping a dynamic workforce through meticulously crafted educational initiatives.

Reddy expressed his admiration for the graduating class, acknowledging their unwavering dedication and hard work. He lauded the visionary

founders, Mukti Kanta Mishra and DN Rao for establishing a pioneering skills-based university that embraces international diversity.

University VC Supriya Pattanayak, in her speech, said, "This ceremony is not just a milestone for our graduating students but also a testament to the university's continuous pursuit of excellence in education and skill development. Our commitment to quality education, sustainability, and social impact is evident through A+ NAAC accreditation and alignment with UN SDGs."

"This year, 203 companies offered 2358 jobs, highlighting our successful placement season. I urge graduates to contribute to underprivileged communities, embodying our ethos of disruption for a sustainable society," she added.

Among the dignitaries present on the occasion were University president Mukti Kanta Mishra, vice president DN Rao, registrar Anita Patra, and pro vice chancellor Biswajit Mishra.

## Rath takes over as CSI president

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 11:** The platinum jubilee celebration of the Cardiological Society of India (CSI) was held from December 7 to December 10 in Kolkata.

Vijay Bang, the 74th president of CSI and the scientific chairman PC Rath presided over the event.

On this occasion, Rath was given the charge of president of CSI for the year 2023-24. It is for the first time that an Odia person became the president of CSI.

As president, Rath will coordinate with different state branches and different cardiological society of other countries. He will also coordinate with government of India and state governments to formulate different healthcare policies.

The event was inaugurated by Air Marshal Arup Raha and the guest of honour was world famous Interventional Cardiologist from France, Alain Cribierfrom.

The event was attended by more than 4,000 delegates from India and abroad including 47 international faculties from USA, Europe, Africa, Argentina and Russia. There were special sessions on women and cardiovascular health, pollution and cardiovascular health and latest interventional techniques.



# BJD for more CGHS wellness centres

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, Dec 11:** Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Achyuta Samanta Monday urged the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) to open more Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) wellness centres in Bhubaneswar and other parts of the state.

While speaking during the Zero Hour of the Lok Sabha, the BJD MP said there are five wellness centres in Odisha. However, they fail to cater to the needs of the CGHS beneficiaries of the state as a whole.

While Bhubaneswar has three CGHS Wellness Centres, Cuttack and Berhampur have one such facility each. These five centres cater mostly to the beneficiaries of eight districts. However, Central government employees and pensioners including the eligible beneficiaries of the legislature, judiciary and press of the other 22 districts are deprived of getting proper CGHS facilities due to unavailability of such wellness centres nearby," the Kandhamal MP informed the House.

Samanta also highlighted that the Confederation of Central Government Employees' and Workers' Federations have already submitted a proposal with the Union Ministry of H&FW for opening of more CGHS Wellness Centres/extension counters to provide comprehensive medical care to the Central government employees and pensioners in particular and to meet the healthcare needs of eligible beneficiaries.

## Sujeet seeks revision of criteria for Eklavya schools

**New Delhi:** BJD MP Sujeet Kumar requested the Union government to revise guidelines for setting up Eklavya Model Residential Schools. Kumar said that as per the current guidelines laid by the Union

## Pujari for high-level inquiry into OPGC ash pond breach

**New Delhi:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Suresh Pujari Monday urged the Centre to constitute a high-level committee of technical experts to inquire into the breach in an ash pond of a thermal power plant run by the state-owned Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC) at Banharpali in Jharsuguda December 9.

Raising the issue in the Lok Sabha during the Zero Hour, Pujari requested the Ministry of

Power, Ministry of Jal Shakti and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to launch an inquiry into the matter in order to find out causes, fix the responsibility and subsequently take stern action against those found guilty.

The BJD MP from Bargharh said that a breach occurred in the OPGC-C ash pond at Banharpali village in the district December 9 morning, causing slurry to enter into nearly 120 acres of cultivable land with standing crops.



## BJD reiterates demand for 'Ahimsa' in Preamble

**New Delhi:** Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Sasmitha Patra Monday reiterated the party's longstanding demand for inclusion of 'Ahimsa' (non-violence) in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had requested for inclusion of 'Ahimsa' in the Preamble during the meetings of national committee for commemoration of 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in 2018 and

2019, Patra said while speaking during the Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha.

The Odisha Assembly had in March 2021 unanimously passed a resolution to include 'Ahimsa' in the Preamble. The resolution was passed to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's first visit to Odisha March 23, 1921. Patra said requesting the Centre to bring a proposal in order to include Ahimsa in the Preamble of the Constitution.

**FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS**

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954718084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

## BEE ATTACK KILLS 2 IN DHENKANAL

PNN & AGENCIES

**Dhenkanal, Dec 11:** Two persons were killed in a bee attack in Dhenkanal district, police said Monday. The deceased were identified as Jhumar Sethi (55) and Mayadhar Dehury (60) of Kadua village in the district.

A swarm of bees attacked Mayadhar while he was returning from his field Sunday. Locals first took him to Kamakhyanagar hospital before being shifted to Dhenkanal district headquarters hospital in a critical condition, where he succumbed while undergoing treatment Monday, said Prabhat Kumar Tripathy, subdivisional police officer (SDPO), Kamakhyanagar.

Jhumar was attacked by bees while he was returning home after taking a bath in a village pond. He was taken to Kamakhyanagar hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead, he said.



**DRAMA FEST:** Artistes enact a scene from a Bengali play 'Teen Nombor Chokh' staged by Ballygunge Swapna Suchana, Kolkata at the National Theatre Festival 'Shree Ranga Samagam' organised by Shree Cultural Association at the Biju Patnaik Auditorium inside Sambalpur University premises in Sambalpur, Monday

## Man gets 20-year RI for minor's rape

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasure, Dec 11:** A special POCSO court here convicted a man for the rape of a five-year-old girl and sentenced him to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI), Monday.

The convict was identified as Pradip Bangari, a resident of Sahadevkhunta area in Balasure. Special POCSO court Judge Ranjan Kumar Sutar also slapped a penalty of ₹5,000 on him apart from the punishment. In default, he has to undergo an additional two-year imprisonment, the judge observed while delivering the order.

The judge passed the order after examining the statements of 13 witnesses and 29 documents including the police charge-sheet. This was stated here by special public prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda, who pleaded the matter on be-



half of the state government. The incident occurred when Bangari called the minor residing in his neighbourhood and raped her inside an under-construction house, August 21 this year. Locals rushed to the spot and rescued her when she screamed for help. Later, her family members lodged a complaint at Sahadevkhunta police station. Police registered a case and arrested Bangari in this connection.

# Alaka rejuvenation plan goes haywire



Once deep enough to let ships transport various goods in it, the river had helped the British to establish a commercial centre at erstwhile Hariapur, now known as Jagatsinghpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jagatsinghpur, Dec 11:** Rejuvenation of Alaka river in this district at a plan outlay of ₹17 crore has gone haywire with the water body losing its existence. Whatever is left of the river now acts only as a grim reminder of its glorious past.

Alaka is a distributary of Biluakhai river flowing in Birabarapatana area under Biridi block in Jagatsinghpur district. The river used to sustain thousands of villages under Biridi, Jagatsinghpur, Balikuda and Erasama blocks. However, with the water flow getting restricted due to invasion of weeds and siltation, it soon ran out of its purpose. At present, while the dead river runs for 52 km, the portion which is still active runs for 22 km.

The river was once so deep that even ships used to transport various goods in the river. This had helped the British to establish a commercial centre at erstwhile Hariapur, now known as Jagatsinghpur. However,

the river has almost lost its existence with passage of time. Realising the same, the state government launched plans to rejuvenate the river at an outlay of ₹17 crore.

Rejuvenation of the river stretch of around 52.39 km from Asilo near Borikina to Birabarapatna was to be done in three phases. The state government floated the tender after the plan received approval of the technical advisory committee and administrative clearance.

This spread cheers among the residents as successful renovation of the river would help in drainage of storm and rain water. Locals also hoped that the move would also give way to greater infrastructure for fish farming which will indirectly benefit them. They, however, alleged that the river rejuvenation plan has gone haywire.

According to the residents, dredging of the river, yet to be completed till date, is being done only for name's sake. The land measurement at many places has not been done properly while officials have allegedly changed the course of the river and tried to reduce it by size at stretches where there are lands of influential people.

Moreover, when the state government prepared a plan for Alaka rejuvenation, it completely overlooked the construction and strengthening of the embankment. The consultancy agency while dredging the river dumped the excavated soil and sand

on both sides of the embankment.

Dumping of soil and sand has only weakened the embankment at many places instead of strengthening it. It is apprehended that this may lead to a breach on the embankment like last year and further weaken it.

Locals also fear that during rain, soil and sand dumped on both sides of the embankment will flow back into the river and bury it. Residents Nilu Mitra, Saroj Nayak and Antaryami Biswal alleged that this has led to misutilisation of funds benefitting only the contractor and engineers.

It has also been alleged that encroachment by land sharks has also affected the river. Many persons with help of some unscrupulous revenue officials have grabbed large patches of river lands. The sorry state of the river concerned the state government in 2016.

The state government decided to dredge the river for proper drainage of flood water as well as to start fish farming in the river. The state Fisheries department prepared a detailed project report in this regard the same year.

Later, a team from Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI) in Assam toured the district for four days and gave approval to fish farming after reviewing the situation. The team members had then conducted a survey of the river stretch at Biridi, Jagatsinghpur and Naugaon blocks.

The team opined that the plan when implemented would lead to fish farming on 150 hectare of riverbed and result in harvesting of 600 tonne of fish per annum. This would bring revenue to the tune of ₹7 crore per annum and lead to employment of hundreds of youths.

The scheme would also benefit the women self-help groups and the local entrepreneurs. However, the plan has failed to make any headway with the river dying a slow death.

## SILK CITY SEES 5 MURDERS IN 2 MONTHS

# Miscreants kill man by slitting throat

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, Dec 11:** Miscreants killed an elderly man by slitting his throat during his morning walk at Gandhi Nagar lane-2 under Town police limits here, Monday.

The deceased was identified as Ranka Sethy, 67, of Ambika Nagar lane-2 in the Silk City. The matter came to the fore after locals spotted the body lying in a pool of blood outside a house and informed the Town police and Sethy's family members. The incident has sent shockwaves in the area.

On being informed, his two sons Rama and Santosh



reached the spot and identified the body as that of their father. His family members have expressed surprise over his murder as he had no enmity with others. Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M and Town police IIC Suresh Tripathy reached the spot and conducted a probe into the murder. A scientific team

and sniffer dogs were also pressed into service.

A special team was formed to nab the culprits while police are trying to scan the CCTV cameras installed in the area to get any footage or clue into the brutal murder.

The incident occurred when Sethy left home in the wee hours on a morning walk like any other day. Family members have demanded to nab the culprits and take stringent action against them.

It is alleged that Berhampur has become a safe haven for criminals and miscreants having no regards for rule of law. Law and order situation is slowly deteriorating in the Silk City as the

murder of Sethy early Monday morning is the fifth murder during the last two months.

Locals alleged that lack of proper policing and stringent action has emboldened the criminals to carry out wrongdoings with impunity.

When contacted, the SP said unknown miscreants have murdered Sethy by slitting his throat. Two special police teams have been formed to trace the culprits. One of the teams is scanning the CCTV footages while the other team is conducting raids at various locations to nab the accused persons. Very soon the accused will be arrested, he added.

## Paradip Port: ICG divers search for dumped cocaine

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Paradip, Dec 11:** Days after Customs officials seized 22 kg cocaine worth ₹220 crore from cargo vessel MV Devi docked at the International Cargo Terminal of Paradip Port in Jagatsinghpur district, Indian Coast Guard's special scuba divers have launched an underwater search for the drug.

It is suspected that some staffers of the ship had thrown some cocaine packets into the sea before the raid by Customs officials.

While the Customs department, Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), and various agencies are investigating the cocaine haul in the crane chamber of the ship, permission has been obtained from Kujang court for the sample test of the drug.

The seized cocaine has been kept in the custody of the ICG, some of it has been sent for sample testing. Various tanks and the lower part of the ship are being searched by ICG divers for any additional cocaine.

## Retd engr, wife arrested for DA

PNN & AGENCIES

**Koraput, Dec 11:** A retired engineer and his wife have been jailed for three and two years, respectively, in a disproportionate assets (DA) case, state Vigilance department said Monday.

Simadri Nayak, a former executive engineer of Rural Works Division at Umakote in Nabarangpur district, and his wife Laxmi Nayak were convicted by a Special Court in Bhubaneswar for possessing disproportionate assets of ₹38.40 lakh, the department said in a release. The court slapped a fine of ₹10 lakh on Nayak and ₹2 lakh on his wife. If

they fail to pay the fine, Nayak and his wife will undergo an additional rigorous imprisonment of six and three months, respectively, it said.

In another case, Ananda Chandra Behera, ex-superintendent (retired), Odisha Warehousing Corporation, Malmunda in Bolangir district, has been convicted in a graft case filed by the Vigilance department.

A court in Bolangir sentenced Behera to undergo rigorous imprisonment for one year and slapped a fine of ₹2 lakh. In case Behera fails to pay the fine, he has to stay in jail for two more months, the department said.

## Septuagenarian woman dies after assault by relative

PNN & AGENCIES

**Berhampur, Dec 11:** A septuagenarian woman died Monday, a day after she was allegedly assaulted by a 22-year-old man in a village in Ganjam district, police said.

The deceased was identified as Kuntala Nayak (78) of Mamudiha village in Aska area.

The elderly woman was allegedly attacked by her distant relative Muna Nayak with a stone slab and iron ham-

mer, owing to a family dispute, a police officer said, adding, the accused has been arrested.

She was first admitted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital here with serious injuries, and later referred to SCB Medical College and Hospital, Cuttack, he said.

However, she died while being taken to the hospital in Cuttack Monday, the officer said. "We are still investigating the reason behind the assault on the woman," he added.

## Coins of different designs in same denomination remain in circulation at the same time as coins have a long life.

Accept them without hesitation



- Do not believe in misleading information or rumours about coins
- Bank branches are required to accept coins from the public\*

\*Terms & conditions apply



For more details, give a missed call to 14440 or visit <https://rbikehtahai.rbi.org.in/coins> For feedback, write to [rbikehtahai@rbi.org.in](mailto:rbikehtahai@rbi.org.in)



Issued in public interest by  
**भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक**  
**RESERVE BANK OF INDIA**  
[www.rbi.org.in](http://www.rbi.org.in)

It is not because a thing is difficult that one should give it up, on the contrary, the more a thing is difficult the more determined should one be to succeed it.

THE MOTHER



# Undoing History

The Supreme Court verdict validating the abrogation of Article 370 according special powers to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir could not come at a more opportune moment for the BJP which is already basking in the glory of crucial victory in the Assembly elections to Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led BJP is all set to go to Lok Sabha polls a few months away with renewed vigour and a confidence that seemed to be ebbing away only a few weeks back. When the Modi government revoked Article 370 of the Constitution on 5 August, 2019, it acted to fulfil its long-standing electoral pledge virtually triggering a constitutional-political controversy. The provision had granted special privileges to the people of Jammu & Kashmir state. The Assembly, overseeing the state's budget, spending, employment, education, and economic activity, was dissolved. It appeared in one fell stroke the government not only made a surgical strike at the Constitution, but also played havoc with the state's character bifurcating it into two Union Territories downgrading the status of a full-fledged state. Article 370 enabled J&K to make its own rules relating to permanent residency, ownership of property and fundamental rights. It could also bar Indians from outside the state from purchasing property or settling there.

The BJP had long opposed Article 370 and clamoured for scrapping it to integrate Kashmir and put it on the same footing as the rest of India. After returning to power with a massive mandate in the April-May general elections in 2019, the government lost no time in acting on its pledge. Critics have apprehension that the BJP ultimately wants to change the demographic character of the Muslim-majority region by allowing non-Kashmiris to buy land there.

A batch of nearly 23 petitions was filed in the Supreme Court challenging the abrogation. The state comprised the Muslim-majority Kashmir valley, the Hindu-dominated Jammu region and the high altitude Buddhist enclave of Ladakh. The petitioners argued that the state's reorganisation into Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as federally administered territories violated India's Constitution, which requires the state legislative Assembly's approval to reduce a state to a Union territory. The apex court took almost the entire tenure of the government to deliberate on the momentous issues involved to pronounce its verdict. The verdict has made the ruling party jubilant and the main regional players of J&K disappointed.

The verdict, it appears, has sought to take a balanced position on the thorny matter. The apex court has given its seal of approval to the government's act of repealing the special constitutional provision, but at the same time it has questioned the wisdom of the decision to reduce a state into a Union territory. In its opinion a fresh call needs to be taken on the matter. The court held that the government should hold elections in the region latest by September 2024. This is one way to ensure that the government honours its promise of upgrading the status of J&K from a UT to a state.

The Bench, headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, has held that the state of Jammu and Kashmir does not have internal sovereignty different from other states. It means retention of Article 370 is untenable. In fact, the provision was included in the Constitution as a temporary feature. The question is what length of time a "temporary" measure should take.

The verdict will have far-reaching political, economic and administrative consequences. The ruling party will predictably showcase it as an outcome of strong political will of the Modi government. As the verdict has proved, contrary to the arguments of the petitioners, the withdrawal of special powers from J&K is in accordance with the law, the Opposition - Congress and its allies - can now be questioned why the decisive step was not adopted during the past few decades.

Without internet for so many years and the local media muzzled openly, there is hardly any truth in the propaganda that the people of J&K will taste the fruits of prosperity once the state is stripped off its special powers and investments from outside will flow. While purchase of land in Kashmir was recently opened to citizens from other parts of India, the local prevailing situation has not been inviting enough for people to buy land or invest.

Now that Article 370 has become nonexistent, the political process of granting status of a full-fledged state to Jammu & Kashmir should start in earnest.

# DEVELOPMENT, DEMOCRACY & DIGNITY

FOCUS JAMMU, KASHMIR & LADAKH

On 11th December, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India delivered a historic judgment on the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35(A). Through its judgment, the Court has upheld the sovereignty and integrity of India, something that is cherished by every Indian. The Supreme Court rightly observed that the decision taken on 5th August 2019 was done with the purpose of enhancing constitutional integration and not disintegration. The Court has also recognized the fact that Article 370 was not permanent in nature.

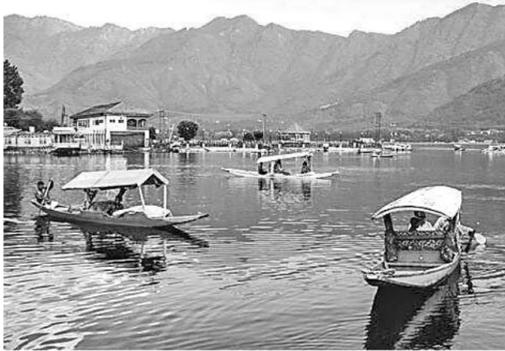
Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh's breathtaking landscapes, serene valleys, and majestic mountains have captivated the hearts of poets, artists and adventurers for generations. It is a place where the sublime meets the extraordinary, where the Himalayas reach for the sky, and where the pristine waters of its lakes and rivers mirror the heavens. But, for the last seven decades, these places have witnessed the worst form of violence and instability, something which the wonderful people never deserved.

Unfortunately, due to centuries of colonisation, most notably economic and mental subjugation, we became a confused society of sorts. Rather than taking a clear position on very basic things, we allowed duality, leading to confusion. Sadly, Jammu and Kashmir became a big victim of such a mindset. At the time of independence, we had a choice of making a fresh start for national integration. Instead, we decided to continue with the confused society approach even if it meant ignoring the long-term national interests.

I have had the opportunity of being connected with the Jammu and Kashmir Andolan from a very early part of my life. I belong to an ideological framework where Jammu and Kashmir was not merely a political issue. But, it was about addressing the aspirations of society. Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee held an important portfolio in the Nehru Cabinet and could have remained in government for a long time. Yet, he quit the Cabinet over the Kashmir issue and preferred the tough road ahead, even if it meant paying with his life. His efforts and sacrifice led to crores of Indians becoming emotionally attached with the Kashmir issue. Years later, Atal Ji, at a public meeting in Srinagar gave the powerful message of 'Insaniyat', 'Jamhooriyat' and 'Kashmiriyat', which has also always been a source of great inspiration.

It was always my firm belief that what had happened in Jammu and Kashmir was a great betrayal - to our nation and to the people living there. It was also my strong desire to do whatever I can to remove this blot, this injustice done to the people. I have always wanted to work to alleviate the suffering of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

In very basic words - Articles 370 and 35 (A) were like major



Today, every child born in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh is born with a clean canvas, where he or she can paint a future full of vibrant aspirations

obstacles. It seemed like an unbreakable wall and the sufferers were the poor and downtrodden. Articles 370 and 35(A) ensured that the people of Jammu and Kashmir never got the rights and development that the rest of their fellow Indians got. Due to these Articles, a distance was created between people belonging to the same nation. Due to this distance, many people from our nation who wanted to work to solve the problems of Jammu and Kashmir were unable to do so even if they clearly felt the pain of the people there.

As a Karyakarta who has seen the issue closely over the last several decades, I had a nuanced understanding of the specifics and the complexities of the issue. Yet, I was crystal clear about one thing - that the people of Jammu and Kashmir want development and they want to contribute to the development of India based on their strengths and skills. They also want a better quality of life of their children, a life free from violence and uncertainty.

Thus, while serving the people of Jammu and Kashmir, we gave primacy to three pillars - understanding of the citizens' concerns, building trust through supportive actions, and prioritising development, development and more development.

In 2014, just after we assumed office, deadly floods struck Jammu and Kashmir, with a lot of damage in the Kashmir valley. In September 2014, I went to Srinagar to assess the situation and also announced Rs 1000 crore as a special assistance for rehabilitation, signalling our government's commitment to supporting the people during crises. I had the opportunity to meet people from different walks of life and there was one common thread in these interactions - the people not only wanted development but they also wanted freedom from the rampant corruption prevailing for decades. The same year, I decided not to mark Diwali in remembrance of those we lost in Jammu and Kashmir. I also decided to be in Jammu and Kashmir on Diwali day.

In order to further strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's development journey, we decided that our Government ministers would frequently go there and interact with people di-

rectly. These frequent visits also played a crucial role in building goodwill in Jammu and Kashmir. From May 2014 to March 2019, over 150 ministerial visits took place. This is a record in itself. The special package of 2015 was a significant step in addressing the developmental needs of Jammu and Kashmir. It contained initiatives for infrastructure development, job creation, tourism promotion and support to the handicraft industry.

We harnessed the power of sports in Jammu and Kashmir, recognising its potential to ignite the dreams of the youth. Through sporting initiatives, we witnessed the transformational impact of athletic pursuits on their aspirations and futures. Sporting venues were upgraded, training programmes were organised and coaches were made available. One of the most unique things was to encourage the setting of local football clubs. The results were outstanding. The name of the talented footballer Afshan Ashiq comes to my mind - in December 2014 she was a part of a stone pelting group in Srinagar but with the right encouragement she turned to football, she was sent for training and excelled in the game. I recall interacting with her in one of the Fit India Dialogues where I said its time to move over 'Bend it like Beckham' because it is now 'Ace it like Afshan'. Other youngsters began to shine in kick-boxing, Karate and more.

The Panchayat polls were also a watershed moment in the region's quest for all-round development. Once again, we were faced with a choice of either remaining in power or standing by our principles - the choice was never tough and we let go of a Government but preferred that that ideals that we stand for, the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir are given top priority. The success of Panchayat polls indicated the democratic nature of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. My mind went back to an interaction I had with Pradhans from the villages. Among other issues, I made a request to them - that at no point must schools be burnt and that must be ensured. I was delighted to see that this was adhered to. After all, if schools are burnt the biggest sufferers are the small children.

The historical day of 5th August is etched in the hearts and minds of every Indian. Our Parliament passed the historic decision to abrogate Article 370. Since then, much has changed in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The judicial court verdict came in December 2023 but seeing the wave of development across Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, the people's court has given a resounding thumbs up to the Parliament's decision of abolishing Articles 370 and 35(A) for four years now.

At a political level, the last 4 years have been marked with a renewed faith in grassroots democracy. The women, tribals, SC, ST and marginalised sections of society were not getting their due. At the same time, the aspirations of Ladakh were totally ignored. 5th August 2019 changed all that. All Central laws now apply without fear or favour. Representation has also got more widespread - a three tier Panchayati Raj System is in place, BDC elections have been held, and refugee communities who were all but forgotten have begun to enjoy the fruits of development.

Key Central Government scheme have attained saturation levels, thus covering all sections of society. These include Saubhagya, Ujjwala and Ujjwala schemes. Strides have been made in housing, tap water connection and financial inclusion. Healthcare, otherwise a major challenge for the people has witnessed an upgradation of infrastructure. All the villages achieved ODF Plus status. Government vacancies, which were otherwise a den of corruption and favouritism have been filled in a transparent and process driven manner. Other indicators like IMR have shown betterment. The boost to infrastructure and tourism has been for everyone to see. The credit for this naturally goes to the resilience of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, who have shown time and again that they want only development and are willing to be drivers of this positive change. Earlier, there was a question mark on the status of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Now there are only exclamation marks about record growth, record development, record tourist inflow.

In its verdict on 11th December, the Supreme Court has strengthened the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' - it has reminded us that what defines us is the bonds of unity and a shared commitment to good governance. Today, every child born in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh is born with a clean canvas, where he or she can paint a future full of vibrant aspirations. Today, the dreams of the people are no longer prisoners of the past but are possibilities of the future. After all, development, democracy and dignity have replaced disillusionment, disappointment and despondency.

The writer is the Prime Minister of India.



Narendra Modi

EARLIER, THERE WAS A QUESTION MARK ON THE STATUS OF JAMMU, KASHMIR AND LADAKH. NOW, THERE ARE ONLY EXCLAMATION MARKS ABOUT RECORD GROWTH, RECORD DEVELOPMENT, RECORD TOURIST INFLOW

## WISDOM CORNER

Do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step. LAO TZU

True wisdom comes to each of us when we realize how little we understand about life, ourselves, and the world around us. SOCRATES

Notice that the stiffest tree is most easily cracked, while the bamboo or willow survives by bending with the wind. BRUCE LEE

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1846: New Granada (now Colombia and Panama) signed the Bidlack Treaty with the United States, granting US right-of-way across the Isthmus of Panama in exchange for a guarantee of neutrality for the isthmus and the sovereignty of New Granada.

1964: Kenya became a republic on the first anniversary of its independence from Britain.

1977: The music drama Saturday Night Fever, starring John Travolta, had its world premiere; the film was a huge hit, as was the accompanying disco sound track by the Bee Gees.

2000: US Supreme Court decision on the presidential election. On this day in 2000, the US Supreme Court effectively awarded the presidency to George W. Bush, ruling that a fair recount of ballots in Florida could not be performed by the deadline for certifying the state's electors.

## LOL

### Dealing with criminals

A local policeman had just finished his shift one cold November evening and was at home with his wife. "You just won't believe what happened this evening, in all my years on the force I've never seen anything like it."



canal, one of them was drinking battery acid and the other was eating fireworks." "Drinking battery acid and eating fireworks!! What did you do with them?" "Oh yes dear, what happened?" "I came across two guys down by the

## Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

### Russian strongman

Sir, This refers to "Putin again," OrissaPOST, December 11. Russian President Vladimir Putin, who announced Friday that he is running for a fifth term, has over the past two decades built a system of domestic repression and confrontation with the West that is almost certain to guarantee his reelection. Ever since the former little-known KGB agent first became president on New Year's eve 1999, he has consolidated power by bringing oligarchs to heel, banning any real opposition, and turning Russia into an authoritarian state. Abroad, he has led world efforts to challenge the dominance of the West. His grip on power further tightened in the wake of his decision to invade Ukraine in February 2022, with public dissent against the war effectively silenced through lengthy prison terms for critics. But in recent months, Putin has demonstrated his lasting power. Domestic opposition has been largely silent, the economy is growing again, the Russian military has largely repulsed a recent Ukrainian offensive, and he has resumed foreign travel. Opponents have suggested they have some hope that the war in Ukraine, and the Western sanctions it has triggered - as well as a failed mutiny by mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin in June - could see the Kremlin chief's standing in the upcoming elections challenged. But independent polling suggests that support for Putin remains strong, with approval ratings of above 80 per cent. N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

### Juvenile delinquency

Sir, India is witnessing a dangerous spurt in juvenile crimes - more and more teenagers below the age of 18 are resorting to violence and murder. There are several reasons for teens straying from their normal life course. Nowadays, crimes are being made to appear routine or normal by social media, and this has enthused young and inquisitive minds. A fragile criminal justice system, especially the judiciary, has emboldened and buoyed the youngsters. Unfortunately, today's education has miserably failed to tune their mindset with sanity and decency. Families, too, are not doing much to buffer the young minds. Many crumbling families are heaping problems upon their young inmates. Domestic violence has been a documented factor that can have a vicious influence on children thereby depriving them of the all important support system. Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

### Historic verdict

Sir, Article 370 of the Constitution was a provision that gave special status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, allowing it to have its own constitution, flag, and autonomy over most matters except defence, foreign affairs, finance, and communications. It was drafted in Part XXI of the Constitution titled "Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions" and was considered a temporary measure until the state's constituent assembly decided its fate. On 5 August 2019, the Government of India issued a Presidential Order superseding the 1954 order that defined the application of the Indian Constitution to Jammu and Kashmir, and making all the provisions of the Indian Constitution applicable to the state. A further order on 6 August made all the clauses of Article 370 except clause 1 to be inoperative, effectively abrogating the Article. In addition, the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 was passed by the Parliament, enacting the division of the state into two union territories. On Monday, the Supreme Court delivered a unanimous verdict upholding the validity of the Presidential Order and the Reorganisation Act, and rejecting the argument that Article 370 was a permanent provision. Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

# MOITRA VOWS TO CONTINUE FIGHT AGAINST EXPULSION

THE TMC LEADER CONVEYED A RESOLUTE MESSAGE TO HER CONSTITUENCY KRISHNANAGAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Dec 11:** Recently expelled from the Lok Sabha in the 'cash-for-query' case, TMC leader Mahua Moitra conveyed a resolute message to her constituency, Krishnanagar Lok Sabha seat, emphasising her commitment to the ongoing battle and pledging to remain steadfast in the fight against perceived injustice.

Moitra, a first-time MP, was expelled from the House Friday.

The Ethics Committee's report, which held her accountable for accepting gifts and illegal gratification, paved the way for her expulsion.

Following a contentious debate where Moitra was denied the opportunity to speak, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi proposed a motion to expel the TMC member for "unethical conduct," a motion that was adopted through a voice vote.

Expressing gratitude in a video message to her former con-



stituency, Moitra thanked her supporters and party activists for their unwavering support.

"I want to thank all the residents of Krishnanagar and party workers for supporting me and standing by me from the core of

my heart. I am your daughter; I am the daughter of the soil. I will be with all of you as long as you want me," she said.

"I am here to win this fight. This is a fight we will win. I will not leave the battleground," she asserted in a video circulated Sunday.

Moitra moved the Supreme Court Monday challenging her expulsion from the Lok Sabha, after the House adopted the report of its Ethics Committee that held her guilty of accepting gifts and illegal gratification from a businessman to further his interests.

According to TMC sources, the party leadership has affirmed Moitra's candidacy for the Krishnanagar seat in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Additionally, she has been recently entrusted with the responsibility of fortifying the party's organisation in Nadia district ahead of the upcoming elections, underscoring the party's unwavering support.

# 'Implemented 3 poll guarantees'

Addressing a rally at Dharamshala Police Ground to mark one year of his government, the Himachal CM lashed out at the BJP for alleging that the government failed to implement the poll guarantees

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dharamshala/Shimla, Dec 11:** Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu Monday said that acute financial crunch and monsoon disaster came as a major hurdle in fulfilling the poll guarantees but still the Congress government implemented three major promises.

Addressing a rally at Dharamshala Police Ground to mark one year of his government, Sukhu lashed out at the BJP for alleging that the government failed to implement the poll guarantees and said that three main guarantees, including restoration of old pension scheme, introducing English in the government schools and Rs 680 crore Rajiv Gandhi start-up scheme have been implemented, despite acute financial crunch.

He added that three more guarantees would be fulfilled next year.

The BJP Monday hit out at the Congress government for celebrating one year in office and held Aakrosh rallies across the state.

Addressing his party workers and leaders at Central Telegraph Office in Shimla, State Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief Rajiv Bindal asked what is there to celebrate when there is no achievement of the government except for closing over 1,500 institutions.

Bindal said that over 500 persons have died and thousands have become homeless during the monsoon disaster that wreaked havoc in July and August.

Sukhu further said the government has initiated the process to give Rs 1,500 per month to the women in the 18 to 60 years age bracket but natural disaster put spokes. "I am now declaring that the women in Lahaul and Spiti district would get Rs 1,500 per month and 2.37 lakh women in the state drawing Rs 1,100 pension per month would get Rs 1,500 from the next year," he added.

The chief minister had earlier on Himachal Day, which is observed April 15, announced to provide Rs 1,500 to all the 9,000 women of Spiti above 18 years of age from June 2023.

Taking potshots at the Centre and state BJP leaders for not giving adequate relief to the state during the worst ever nat-



**FIRST ANNIV:** Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu and senior Congress leader Rajeev Shukla being garlanded during a function to celebrate the completion of one year of government in the state, in Dharamshala, Monday

ural disaster, Sukhu said that neither our demand to declare the calamity in the state as 'National Disaster' was fulfilled nor were we given a special relief package of Rs 12,000 crore.

The chief minister said that a plan has been chalked out to purchase cow dung at Rs 2 per kilo and procurement price of milk would be increased from Rs 31 to Rs 37 per litre from January next year and 20,000 jobs would be given in one year.

He said that every Himachali is today under a debt of Rs 1.02 lakh due to the previous BJP government's financial mismanagement.

Sukhu added that his government would keep the foundation of self-sufficient Himachal Pradesh and also bring changes in the system.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri said that the BJP leaders have become blind and cannot see development in the state.

The government is stable and lasting which would complete its five-year term and no conspiracy to destabilise the government would succeed, he

added. Congress MP and party's Himachal Pradesh in-charge Rajiv Shukla lambasted the ruling BJP at the Centre for discrimination with the state.

"Why discrimination with Himachal, which the prime minister claimed to be his second home... The Union government has not even given Rs 12 let go of Rs 12,000 crore special package as sought by the state government," said Shukla.

"Where was the PM when the people at his home (HP) were facing disaster?" he asked taking a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi stating that he would only be spotted during the elections.

Himachal Pradesh Congress chief and Mandi MP Pratibha Singh on her part said that after implementing the old pension scheme, the state government was moving towards providing Rs 1,500 to the women per month but the monsoon disaster struck

and life went haywire in the state.

"We would fulfil our promise," she asserted.

Singh said, "I am upset that despite meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the Parliament Session and asking him to declare calamity in Himachal Pradesh as a national disaster on the pattern of Bhuj and Kedarnath disasters, he ignored my plea and did not even help us financially."

"We could not give pace to work in the past one year but keep faith in us that we would fulfil all the promises in the next four years and have started providing employment to the youth," she added.

The posters and banners highlighting the Congress government's achievements in the past one year adorned Dharamshala and the people clad in traditional costumes were seen dancing to the tunes of their folk music outside the venue.

# Museum dedicated to Dalai Lama opens in Mcleodganj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dharamshala, Dec 11:** Congress national secretary Sudhir Sharma Sunday inaugurated a new museum dedicated to Buddhist religious leader the Dalai Lama in Mcleodganj.

The Dharamshala MLA Sharma said the museum will begin a new chapter in the state's religious tourism.

The museum will contain gifts received by the Dalai Lama, among other things related to the religious leader.

Sharma said tourists from all over the world come to Mcleodganj, which has become the backbone of Himachal Pradesh's tourism.

Domestic and foreign tourists come to visit Maa Chamunda Temple, Bajreshwari Devi Temple and Jwalaji Mata Temple, which has given a boost to religious tourism. He added that work on the Dharamshala smart city project is being expedited.

# Bengal govt to take over some closed tea gardens in state

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, Dec 11:** The West Bengal government is considering taking over some closed tea gardens in Jalpaiguri district to provide renewed income for their workers, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced Monday.

Addressing a public rally at Banarhat in Jalpaiguri, she said that in the initial stage, six such closed tea gardens in the district will be taken over by the state government.

On the occasion, Banerjee again launched a scathing attack against BJP and the Union government over the non-payment of central dues under different Centrally-sponsored projects to the state government.

"The Union government is collecting huge money under GST from West Bengal but they are not releasing our due share of central funds. They spoke of 'one country, one tax'. We supported that thinking that this system will be good for the country. The Union government al-

ways deprives the state government," she said.

She claimed that the West Bengal government is yet to receive Rs 7,000 crore from the Union government as central funds under the 100-day job scheme under MGNREGA. "I have sought an appointment with the Prime Minister later this month to discuss the issues," she added.

Banerjee also accused the Prime Minister Narendra Modi of not fulfilling his promises that the latter makes before every election.

"The Prime Minister is now promising free ration. I am sure that the promise will not be fulfilled after the elections are over," she said.

At the same time, she added that she had fulfilled all the promises that she made before any election.

"The Union government stopped the system of free ration that was started during the Covid-19 pandemic period. But we have continued with that free ration," the Chief Minister said.

# HC suggests PPP model for tram services in Kolkata

TRAM SERVICES STARTED IN 1873 AS HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGES IN KOLKATA, THE THEN CAPITAL OF BRITISH INDIA, AND ELECTRIC TRAMCARS STARTED IN THE CITY IN 1902. THEY RUN IN ONLY A FEW ROUTES AT PRESENT



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Dec 11:** The Calcutta High Court Monday suggested that the public-private partnership (PPP) model can be used to restore and rejuvenate tram services in Kolkata, the only city in the country to still have them functional.

Tram services started in 1873 in Kolkata, the then capital of British India, as horse-drawn carriages, and electric tramcars started

in the city in 1902. They run in only a few routes at present.

Observing that world over old tramcars have been restored, a division bench comprising Chief Justice TS Sivagnanam and Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharyya suggested that the tramcars be aesthetically done up and painted in colours that match the culture of the city.

Provided that a proper PPP model is created, several private players would be willing to partici-

pate in the exercise that may be undertaken by the West Bengal government, the court said.

This aspect can be considered by a court-appointed committee in its deliberations, and appropriate recommendations made, it added.

The court said that the committee needs to consider the modernisation of tramcars and make them appealing, and provide better seats and lighting, which will not only encourage office-goers but will also act as a source of en-

tertainment.

The court adjourned the hearing of the PIL seeking restoration and rejuvenation of tram services in the metropolis, expressing hope that the government will give a thought to its suggestion of the PPP model.

The bench noted that two meetings of a court-appointed committee for the rejuvenation of tram services and preserving the cultural heritage of Kolkata were held and a report was submitted.

Noting that the Kolkata Police objected to the running of trams in several routes on the ground that trams are very slow and causes traffic congestion, the court said that they are only one of the stakeholders and their view alone cannot be the final word.

The court noted that people have fond memories of tram services in Kolkata, and several youngsters are also keen on the restoration of the services and maintaining the rich heritage. Holding that the objections raised by the Kolkata Police or any other governmental authority should be examined, the court said that ways and means have to be found as to how best those can be addressed.

The bench said that the 18-member committee, which has members from various professions, should bear in mind that it has been constituted for the restoration of tram services in the city and not otherwise.

The court noted that the police have given a report suggesting that tramcars can ply in the city only in the Esplanade-Khidirpur and the Esplanade-Nonapukur routes.

## EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. ST-07/AMRIT-BHARAT-06-360 Dt. 05.12.2023

**Name of the Work:** PROVISION OF VARIOUS TELECOM PASSENGER AMENITIES (CIB & TIB) IN CONNECTION WITH AMRIT BHARAT STATION SCHEME (ABSS) AT MANCHESWAR (MCS), DHENKANAL (DNKL), TALCHER (TLHR) AND ANGUL (ANGL) STATIONS OVER KHURDAROAD DIVISION.

**Tender Value:** ₹ 5,06,05,127.86, EMD: ₹ 4,03,000/-

**Bidding start date:** 13.12.2023, **Tender closing date & time:** at 11:00 hrs. of 27.12.2023.

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 in website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

**Note:** The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecom), PR-868/O/23-24, Khurda Road

## EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 57/ET/SBP/ENGG/2023-24, Dt.: 04.12.2023

e-Tender No. 41-e-T-SDENC-SBP-23

**Name of the Work:** UPKEEPING AND MAINTENANCE OF OFFICERS REST HOUSE AT RAILNAGAR, OFFICERS REST HOUSE AT STATION BUILDING AND SUBORDINATE REST HOUSE AT SECTOR-A IN SAMBALPUR FOR A PERIOD OF 24 MONTHS.

**Approx cost of the work:** ₹ 81,67,330.56, Bid Security: ₹ 1,63,400/-, Cost of tender form: ₹ 5,900/-, Completion Period for the work: 24 months.

**Tender closing date & time:** at 15:00 hrs. of 29.12.2023.

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 in website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

**Note:** The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 (fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), PR-871/O/23-24, Sambalpur

राजिस्त्री सं. डी.एल. - 33004/99 REGD. NO. D.L.-33004/99

**भारत का राजपत्र**  
The Gazette of India

सं. डी. - डी.एल. - अ-02022023-243338  
CG-DL-E-02022023-243338

असाधारण  
**EXTRAORDINARY**  
भाग II-खण्ड 3-उप-खण्ड (ii)  
PART II-Section 3-Sub-section (ii)  
प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित  
**PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY**

सं. 3486] नई दिल्ली, सोमवार, अगस्त-14, 2023/श्रावण 23, 1945  
No. 3486] NEW DELHI, MONDAY, AUGUST-14, 2023/SHRAVANA 23, 1945

**MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS**  
**NOTIFICATION**  
New Delhi, the 14th August, 2023

S.O. 3645(E)- in exercise of powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 3A of the National Highways Act, 1956 (48 of 1956) (hereinafter referred to as the said Act), the Central Government, after being satisfied that for the public purpose, the land, the brief description of which is given in the Schedule below, is required for building (widening/two lane with paved shoulder/four laning etc.), maintenance, management and operation of NH-16 in the stretch of land from Km. 98 to Km. 111 (office of the Tahasildar, Bhandaripokhari, At/Po/PS- Bhandaripokhari, Dist-Bhadrak, Pin-756120, Odisha) in the village(s) namely, Dakshinabar-42 & Chingudipur-2/1 in the District of Bhadrak in the state of Odisha, hereby declares its intention to acquire such land.

Any person interested in the said land may, within twenty-one days from the date of publication of this notification in the Official Gazette, object to the use of such land for the aforesaid purpose under sub-section (1) of section 3C of the said Act.

Every such objection shall be made to the Competent Authority, namely, Tahasildar, Bhandaripokhari in writing and shall set out the grounds thereof and the Competent Authority shall give the objector an opportunity of being heard, either in person or by a legal practitioner, and may, after hearing all such objection and after making such further enquiry, if any, as the Competent Authority thinks necessary, by order, either allow or disallow the objections.

Any order made by the Competent Authority under sub-section (2) of section 3C of the said Act, shall be final.

The land plans and other details of the land to be acquired under their notification are available and can be inspected by the interested person at the aforesaid office of the Competent Authority

**SCHEDULE**

Brief Description of the land to be acquired with or without structures falling NH-16 in the stretch of land from Km. 98 to Km. 111 in the village(s) of Dakshinabar-42 & Chingudipur-2/1 in the district of Bhadrak in the state of Odisha.

File Number: NHA1/BOT/11012/58/2005/PL/LA/NH-16/3A

District: Bhadrak  
<https://egazette.gov.in>  
Publication date, 14 August 2023  
<https://egazette.gov.in/WriteReadData/2023/248127.pdf>



An Israeli soldier looks on from a Merkava tank while operating in a location in Gaza



Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang receives Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama upon the latter's arrival in East Sikkim after 13 years



A serviceman watches debris of houses ruined in the Russian missile attack in Kyiv, Ukraine



Damaged vehicles and homes sit in the aftermath of storms in the West Creek Farms neighbourhood in Clarksville, Tenn. Central Tennessee residents and emergency workers are continuing the clean-up



A pedestrian during a cold winter morning in New Delhi



Devotees take groundnuts after a special 'puja' during the annual Kadalekai Parishe (groundnut fair), at Basavanagudi in Bangalore



Pro-Palestinian demonstrators display signs during a protest in Mansfield, Mass., held to call for a ceasefire in the war in Gaza



A vendor sells Kangri (traditional firepot) on a cold winter morning at Lal Chowk in Srinagar

# national

## of the day quote

More than 12,000 newly-manufactured train coaches have digital display boards containing information such as forthcoming station, destination and running status, among others

Participate in the global strike demanding a ceasefire in Gaza to stop the massacre of the Palestinian people and their children today, the 11th of December, 2023. We must all raise our voices against the horrific injustice being perpetrated against them

Those who have declared themselves as number one through false propaganda should also get the elections done through the ballot paper as is done in the countries, which are number one in the world

BJP to announce Rajasthan CM today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Dec 11: The newly elected BJP MLAs in Rajasthan will meet here Tuesday to formally pick the next chief minister of the state, ending days of suspense after the party won the assembly elections.

"The meeting of the BJP Legislature Party has been called at 4 pm on Tuesday at the BJP state office. Registration of all newly elected MLAs of the BJP will start at 1.30 pm," BJP state general secretary and MLA Bhajanlal Sharma said.

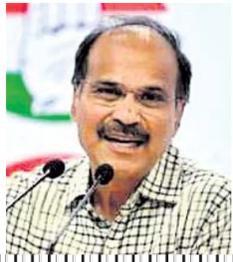
He said all newly elected MLAs have been asked to compulsorily attend the meeting. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who has been appointed as observer by the party, and the two co-observers -- national vice president Saroj Pandey and national general secretary Vinod Tawde -- will be present at the meeting, BJP leader in charge for Rajasthan Arun Singh told reporters.



When asked about the possibility of a Dalit leader being chosen as the CM, Singh said, "Everything will be revealed tomorrow." Former chief minister Vasundhara Raje and Union ministers Arjun Ram Meghwal, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Ashwini Vaishnaw are said to be in the running for the CM's post in Rajasthan, one of three states that the BJP won in the recent elections.

The MLAs were informed Monday about the meeting of the legislature party, where the BJP's central leadership will make known its choice for the post, nine days after the results of the November 25 elections came in. The BJP won 115 seats out of the 199 where polling took place. Polling was postponed in one constituency due to the death of a candidate.

Earlier, BJP MLA Jogeshwar Garg said the observers will hold one-on-one talks with the MLAs before the meeting to formally elect the legislature party leader, or the CM-designate. When asked about the new legislators who met former chief minister Vasundhara Raje at her home Monday, Kirodi Lal Meena said 17 MLAs visited him as well after the results and this should not be seen as lobbying. Meena resigned from the Rajya Sabha after his election as an MLA. Several MLAs have called on former Raje in recent days in what was seen as a show of support, amid speculation over what the party will decide. She also met party leaders in Delhi.



We have been demanding in Parliament that when you restore the statehood. Inside Parliament, (Home Minister) Amit Shah was saying with great conviction that we will reclaim Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, so they should tell us when will they reclaim PoK. Elections will come and go but reclaim PoK before this election

ADHIR NANJAN CHOWDHURY | CONGRESS LEADER

## SOREN GETS FRESH SUMMONS

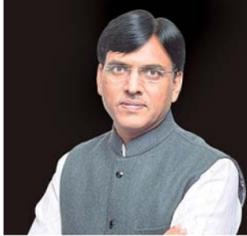
The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued a fresh summons to Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren for questioning in a money-laundering case linked to an alleged land scam Tuesday, official sources said



# Why rural India needs women drone pilots Woman paraded naked

Women empowerment is undeniably the key towards building a strong and developed nation. It becomes all the more purposeful when women prosper economically and contribute to rural prosperity. NAMO Drone Didi, an initiative announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 30, 2023, during interaction with beneficiaries in Vikasit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, aims to provide drones to 15,000 women Self Help Groups (SHGs) for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purposes. It is an excellent example of harnessing technological innovation to empower the rural women to usher in a new era of rural prosperity. This multifaceted scheme effectively addresses the need to modernize our agricultural practices and increase agricultural productivity by placing cutting edge technology in the hands of rural women. This makes them the epicentre of the rural economy and spearheading the new agricultural revolution.

The emergence of innovative new liquid fertilizers like Nano Urea and Nano DAP with foliar application has thrown up the need for development of efficient fertigation system. Only the Prime Minister could have envisioned such a brilliant idea of putting the drone technology



Mansukh Mandaviya

in the hands of the women pilots from Self Help Groups.

Though India is the second largest producer of fertilizers, it is also the second largest importer of fertilizers due to inadequate availability of natural resources -- gas, phosphatic and potassic minerals, etc. To overcome this dependence on imports, the government has facilitated revival of several closed down fertilizer units and encouraged setting up of new fertilizer units under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' scheme. These steps have successfully protected the Indian farmers from the price volatility of fertilizers in the international markets. By means of fertilizer subsidies, the government has been able to ensure that adequate quantities of fertilizers are made available to farmers at the right price at the right time.

The COVID pandemic and the

recent global geo-political situation posed some of the toughest challenges when the fertilizer prices soared world over to never before heights. We decided to convert these challenges into opportunities. The government encouraged indigenous research for development of alternate fertilizers, the outcome of which is the path breaking liquid nano fertilizers. The next challenge to this new invention was to develop an efficient fertigation system. That is where the emerging drone technology provided an answer.

Emergence of Kisan Drones has opened up immense possibilities towards revolutionizing the agricultural practices. The conventional system of spraying pesticides and liquid fertilizers through hand held back strapped pumps is not only time consuming and cumbersome but is also fraught with many dangers from the poisonous reptiles and lurking wild animals in the fields. The automation of the spraying system by means of agri drones provides a time saving and efficient application system. The need for Kisan Drones has opened up a whole new gamut of opportunities for the young startups to fulfill their aspirations. Drone manufacturing activity has created tremendous employment opportunities for

the youth of the country. Going further, this new field will also create opportunities for rural women pilots, mechanics, and spare part dealers.

I am of the firm belief that women empowerment is a prerequisite for achieving the concept of 'Vikasit Bharat'. The NAMO Drone Didi Scheme provides new work opportunities to women so as to make them the backbone of the rural economy. This will go a long way in making our agrarian family culture more equitable and stronger. A woman drone pilot can play a vital role in increasing the agricultural productivity and efficiency. The application of pesticides and liquid fertilizers through drones will not only save the physical toil and hardship to the farmers but will also be quicker and save precious time which can be utilized for more productive work.

The NAMO Drone Didi scheme will definitely be a gamechanger. It will usher in a new chapter of women empowerment and effectively address multiple issues by providing an opportunity to the rural women to be at the center stage of the economic activity and rural prosperity.

The writer is Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilisers and Health and Family Welfare

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Belagavi (Karnataka), Dec 11: A woman was allegedly assaulted, paraded naked and tied to an electric pole in a village in this district, after her son eloped with a girl who was to get engaged with someone else, police said Monday.

On getting to know about the girl's act, her family members attacked his house in new Vantamuri village, damaging it. They are then said to have dragged his mother away, paraded her naked and tied her to an electricity pole, they said.

The police, who rushed to the spot and set her free, have arrested seven persons in connection with the incident, and are investigating the matter. Additional forces have been deployed to avoid any untoward incident.

Belagavi Police Commissioner Siddramappa said both the 24-year-old Ashok and 18-year-old

Priyanka belonging to the same community and from the same village were in love. At around 12:30 am on Monday, they left the village.

Angered by this, the girl's parents and relatives barged into his house, and treated his mother inhumanly, police said. "On getting the information at 4 am, our Police Sub Inspector visited the village, followed by other senior officials, and seven people have been arrested," he said, adding that a case has been registered in Kakati police station. Commenting on the incident, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said, "strict action will be taken against those who have committed the offence."

Terming the incident "extremely inhuman", Siddaramaiah, later in a post on 'X', said: "This has made the whole society bow their head in shame. Our government will not tolerate such heinous acts for any reason."

**OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, DHENKANAL**  
DHENKANAL (ODISHA), PIN - 759001  
E-mail: dhenkanal.hud@gmail.com

Letter No. 4824 Date: 08.12.2023

**QUOTATION CALL NOTICE**

No. C-2062: Sealed quotations are invited from Authorised Firms/Dealers/Suppliers/Manufacturers for 'Supply of Laboratory Chemicals and Glassware for Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant of Dhenkanal Municipality'. The rate to be quoted shall be inclusive of the installation, handling and transportation delivery charges (exclusive of GST) as per the list attached in Annexure-A. The quotationer are essentially required to enclose their GST Registration Certificate, PAN Card, Firm Registration Certificate etc. The quotationer shall be required to produce the original copy of the required document before the undersigned at the time of opening of Quotation. The sealed quotation should be superscribed on the cover as "Quotation for Supply of Laboratory Chemicals and Glassware for Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant of Dhenkanal Municipality". A detailed list of Chemical requirements can be downloaded from the official website (<http://www.dhenkanalmunicipality.com>). The quotation will be received on or before Dt. 19.12.2023 at 5.00 P.M. on Speed Post/Registered Post/By Hand and the same will be opened on Dt. 20.12.2023 at 4.00 P.M. in the presence of respective quotationers or their authorized representatives. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all the quotations without assigning any reasons thereof.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- Only eligible authorized firms can participate in the tender. Supporting proof to be submitted during purchase of quotation schedule.
- Valid PAN Card/GSTIN Registration must be attached with the Quotation Paper.

Sd./- Executive Officer, Dhenkanal Municipality  
OIPR-13146/11/0035/2324

# Art 370 verdict: Life as usual in Kashmir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar/Jammu, Dec 11: There were celebrations across Jammu Monday but life went on as usual in Srinagar and other district headquarters in the Kashmir Valley as the Supreme Court upheld the Centre's decision to abrogate Article 370 and reorganise Jammu and Kashmir into two Union territories.

Shops and business establishments opened in Srinagar and elsewhere as per usual while public transport also plied normally, in sharp contrast to what was witnessed on August 5, 2019, when the Centre moved to scrap Jammu and Kashmir's special status. There was radio silence from Kashmir that day.

The scenes in Jammu -- the winter capital -- were different Monday as several organisations held events to celebrate the top court ruling and lauded it as a momentous decision.

In the summer capital, municipal workers were seen going about their work in the morning and tourists were busy clicking photographs at Lal Chowk in the city centre as taxis that ply between Srinagar and Jammu queued up at the tourist reception centre.

Shop owners along the upmarket Residency Road were seen lifting the shutters, unmindful of the fact that the top court of the country was scheduled to deliver the verdict on petitions challenging the abrogation of Article 370.

Muntazir Muzamil, a trader, said, "The verdict has been pronounced by the Supreme Court and there's no point debating it now. For the past 35 years, Kashmir has seen only violence... Now, we are hopeful that the pace of development happening in Kashmir won't slow down."

"The situation should remain peaceful. What else can a common man expect? We have to think of our future. Whatever happened has happened, it can't be undone now," he added.



Security personnel at Lal Chowk after the Supreme Court upheld the Centre's decision to abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution, in Srinagar, Monday

Although there were more uniformed men on the streets in the morning, the numbers were not large enough to rouse any apprehensions. There were no concertina wires or special barricades erected on the roads to check the movement of people.

In Jammu, organisations like the Dogra Front Shiv Sena (DFSS), Rashtriya Bajrang Dal and the West Pakistan Refugees hosted events to celebrate the top court verdict. Led by DFSS chairman Ashok Gupta, scores of DFSS activists carrying national flags and pictures of Prime Minister Narendra Modi gathered in the Rani Park area. They danced to the beat of drums and dholaks and distributed sweets.

Reacting to the SC verdict, Gupta said, "It was the last nail in the coffin of Article 370. We are pleased with the decision. Article 370 is now conclusively laid to rest." Rashtriya Bajrang Dal president Rakesh Kumar organised several events as well. "The SC upheld the government's decision. Celebrations took place when Article 370 was abrogated. Today, with this decision, there is widespread happiness in Jammu and Kashmir and the country," he said.

## Parliament passes 2 J&K Bills

New Delhi: Parliament Monday passed two Bills related to Jammu and Kashmir as Rajya Sabha cleared them with a voice vote, with Home Minister Amit Shah assuring the country that the beginning of a "new and developed Kashmir" that will be free from terrorism has been made under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The two bills - JK Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill and JK Reservation (Amendment) Bill - seek to nominate two members from the Kashmiri migrant community and one representing the displaced persons from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) to the legislative assembly, besides providing reservation to certain communities in Jammu and Kashmir. They were passed by Lok Sabha last week. The home minister said the two Bills related to Jammu and Kashmir brought by the government would give justice to those deprived of their rights for the last 75 years and asserted that reservation to the displaced people would give them a voice in the legislature. He also alleged that Jammu and Kashmir suffered due to the "mistakes" of first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and listed decisions like the "untimely" ceasefire and taking the Kashmir issue to the United Nations among them.

**OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, ATHMALLIK FOREST DIVISION**  
A.U.P.O.: Athmallik, Dist.: Angul - 759125  
E-mail: dfoathmallikt@gmail.com, Tel.: 06763-254008, Mob.: +91-9437004236

**NOTIFICATION**

No. MM-360: This is for information of all concerned that the following Forest Roads of Athmallik Forest Division in Angul District shall remain closed to traffic on Dt. 30.12.2023 from Zero hour to 24 hours in accordance with Rule 284 of Odisha Forest Department Code 1979. The movement of traffic on the date and time specified above will be treated as violation of Section 26 of Odisha Forest Act, 1972 and hence will be liable for prosecution.

**LIST OF FOREST ROADS OF ATHMALLIK DIVISION**

Sl. No.	Name of Forest Road	Forest Range	Length in Km.
1	Jadupur to Daruha	Athmallik	10.5
2	Khadarapada to Ketakijharan	Athmallik	2
3	Khadarapada to ketakijharan	Madhapur	10
4	Girida to Lenkedachhida	Madhapur	13
5	Dhandatopa to Bipradiaha	Dhandatopa	26
6	Girida to Lenkedachhida	Dhandatopa	12
7	Bipradiaha - Dandapathar	Dhandatopa	3
8	Kamrei-Udol-Dimiridih	Handapa	23
9	Handapa to Gundurijharan	Handapa	15
10	Udal - Khola	Handapa	5
11	Haripur-Dimiridih-Pathargarh	Bamur	22
12	Phulamba to Purunapani	Bamur	4
13	Pathargarh - Sureswari	Bamur	4
	<b>Total</b>		<b>149.5</b>

Sd./- (Sri Santosh Kumar Koppula, IFS)  
Divisional Forest Officer  
Athmallik Division  
OIPR-08125/11/0014/2324

## VD Sai to take oath Wednesday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, Dec 11: Chhattisgarh's Chief Minister-designate and BJP leader Vishnu Deo Sai will take oath along with his cabinet colleagues December 13 at a ceremony in Raipur in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other dignitaries, it was announced Monday.

Besides Sai (59), who will be the BJP's first tribal CM, his council of ministers will also be sworn-in at the ceremony, an official release said. As per constitutional norms, Chhattisgarh, which has a 90-member assembly, can have a maximum of 13 ministers, including the CM.

The swearing-in ceremony will be held at Science College Ground in the state capital at 2 pm, the release issued by the state public relations department said. Besides Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP president JP Nadda, Union minister Mansukh Mandaviya, party's Chhattisgarh in-charge Om Mathur and CMs of some other states will be present at the function, it said.

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (AGRI.), KORAPUT DIVISION, JEYPORE**  
Email Id: eeagri.koraput@gmail.com

**INVITATIONS FOR BIDS THROUGH e-Procurement**

No. 4030 Date: 08.12.2023

**Bid Identification No./e-Procurement Notice No. E.E. (Agril.), Koraput Division, Jeypore - 06/2023-24**

No. L-179: The Executive Engineer (Agril.), Koraput Division, Jeypore on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate Bids in Single Cover system for the works as detailed in table below.

Sl. No.	Nos. of the Work/ Nature of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Lakh)	Cost of Bid Documents (in Rs.)	EMD	Class of Contractor	Period of Completion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
01	12 (Twelve) Nos. of Civil Works	Rs. 05.80 Lakh to Rs. 18.09 Lakhs	Rs. 4000/- to Rs. 6000/-	1% On Estimated Cost	C & D	90 days to 180 days

a) The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only.  
b) The website for "Online Bidding" is <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>.  
c) Bid documents will be available in above website from date 13.12.2023 at 10.00 A.M. to Date 19.12.2023 upto 5.30 P.M. for "Online Bidding".  
d) Date of original bid document submission from Dt. 13.12.2023 at 10.00 A.M. to Date: 21.12.2023 upto 5.30 P.M.  
e) Bids shall be opened at 11.00 A.M. on Dt. 22.12.2023.  
f) The Tender Paper cost will be deposited in shape of Bank Draft in favour of Executive Engineer (Agril.), Koraput Division, Jeypore payable at Jeypore.  
g) The EMD amount will be deposited in shape of Bank TDR duly pledged with Executive Engineer (Agril.), Koraput Division, Jeypore by the awarded contractor only.  
h) Henceforth all the correspondence will be made to the contractor/bidder through e-mail only (please quote your email with the tender paper).

The bidder must possess matching class compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC).  
Further details and other terms and conditions can be seen from DTCN in the e-Procurement website [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in).  
N.B.: Subsequent Corrigendum/Addendum if required shall be available in the website as indicated above.  
OIPR-01472/11/0006/2324 Sd./- Executive Engineer (Agril.), Koraput Division, Jeypore

**OFFICE OF THE PURI MUNICIPALITY, PURI**  
Letter No. 11351 Dated. 08.12.23

**RFP FOR EMPANELMENT OF INDEPENDENT ARTISTS, ART EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES, NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS TO UNDERTAKE PUBLIC ART WORKS, WALL PAINTING, STREET ART AND MURALS**

No. C-2061:- Sealed Request for Proposals (RFP) are invited from reputed independent artists, art educational institutes, Non-government Organizations to undertake public art works, wall painting, street art and murals for beautification of Puri City in view of inauguration of "Parikrama Marga of Shree Jagannath Temple". The details of Terms & Conditions can be downloaded from the website [www.purimunicipality.nic.in](http://www.purimunicipality.nic.in) & [www.puri.nic.in](http://www.puri.nic.in). The terms & conditions & Technical specifications shall be submitted to the Office of the Executive Officer, Puri Municipality, Puri on or before 18.12.2023 at 4 P.M. through Speed Post/ Regd. Post/ Courier only. The tenders will be opened on 18.12.2023 at 05 P.M. in the office chamber of the Executive Officer, Puri Municipality, Puri.

The authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd./- Executive Officer  
Puri Municipality, Puri  
OIPR-13159/11/0036/2324

**The Odisha Small Industries Corporation Ltd.**  
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)  
(An ISO:9001:2008 certified Govt. Company)  
Industrial Estate, Madhupatna, CUTTACK - 753 010, Odisha.  
Tel No. : 0671-2341204, 2342816 Fax : 0671-2341875/2342561  
e-mail: osicidtd@gmail.com, osicrmd@gmail.com, website: osicidtd.in No.CAD-3227 OSIC GST No. 21AAAC02019M1Z1

**e-Procurement Notice for Building works**

Tender Notice No.6354 Date: 11.12.2023  
Identification No. On line Bidding OSIC/Constn/2023-2024/007

(A)1. Name of the work : Construction of Biju Sabha Gruha, Library cum skilled training center At Nuapada in Cuttack District of Odisha.  
2. Total No of work : 01 No.  
3. Estimated cost : Rs. 1,48,62,956/-(approx)  
4. Class of Contractor : A & B Class as per eligibility Criteria online.  
5. Period of completion : Twelve calendar months.

(B) Other details

Procurement online	Bid Identification No	Availability of tender online for bidding		Date & time of opening of Tender in O/O MD OSIC Ltd., Cuttack
		From	To	
MD OSIC Ltd., Cuttack.	007 of 2023-2024	11.12.2023	26.12.2023	27.12.2023 at 11.00 A.M

Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in) or [www.osicidtd.in](http://www.osicidtd.in). Any amendment corrigendum, cancellation or re-tender may please be referred to the website.

Sd./- GENERAL MANAGER(O)  
OIPR-14073/11/0082/2324

# international



**I'll take appropriate action at the appropriate time to restore public trust and to avoid delays in national politics**  
FUMIO KISHIDA | JAPAN'S PM

## SUNAK APOLOGISES

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Monday apologised to the families who lost loved ones in the COVID-19 pandemic as he opened his evidence to an ongoing public inquiry in a tough week, which will also see him tackle a feared revolt over a parliamentary vote on his Rwanda policy to deport illegal migrants



## of the day quote

It is already the sixth straight day that we don't know where Alexei is and what is happening to him



KIRA YARMYSH | RUSSIAN WRITER

We will do our best to get the International Criminal Court to punish [Israel] for this genocide



RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN | PRESIDENT OF TURKEY

Everything that can be in the hands of the private sector will be in the hands of the private sector



JAVIER GERARDO MILEI | ARGENTINE POLITICIAN

## SHORT TAKES

### Snow blankets northern China

**Beijing:** Overnight snowfall across much of northern China prompted road closures and the suspension of classes and train service Monday. A red alert for a blizzard was in effect until mid-morning in Zhengzhou, the capital of Henan province, and schools were closed there and in two other cities in Henan. The Zhengzhou airport was also closed until 11 a.m. A total of 134 road sections in 12 provinces, including 95 on highways, were closed as of 7 a.m. because of snowfall and icy conditions, CCTV said.

### Bilawal moves SC

**Islamabad:** Pakistan People's Party chairman and ex-foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari Monday approached the Supreme Court for live streaming of proceedings on a case seeking to revisit the controversial death sentence given to the party founder and former premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. In March 1978, a four-member bench of Lahore High Court had given the death sentence to Bhutto, which was later challenged in the Supreme Court. In a four to three split verdict, a seven-judge apex court bench upheld the sentence during the military regime of the then-army chief Gen Ziaul Haq in March 1979.

# Israel battles militants in Gaza

AGENCIES

**Rafah (Gaza Strip), Dec 11:** Israeli forces battled Palestinian militants in Gaza's two largest cities Monday, with civilians still trapped in the fighting even after hundreds of thousands have fled to other parts of the besieged territory.

Residents said there was heavy fighting in and around the southern city of Khan Younis, where Israeli ground forces opened a new line of attack last week, and battles were still underway in parts of Gaza City and the urban Jabaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza, where large areas have been reduced to rubble.

In central Gaza, an Israeli airstrike overnight flattened a residential building where some 80 people were staying in the Maghazi refugee camp, residents said.

Ahmed al-Qarah, a neighbor who was digging through the rubble for survivors, said he knew of only six people who made it out. "The rest are under the building," he said.

Several of the dead were brought to a nearby hospital, where their loved ones could be seen sobbing and holding funeral prayers.

In Khan Younis, Radwa Abu Frayeh saw heavy Israeli strikes overnight around the European Hospital, where the UN Humanitarian office says tens of



Israeli soldiers stand by a truck packed with bound and blindfolded Palestinian detainees, in Gaza. Israeli forces have been rounding up Palestinians in northern Gaza for interrogation as they search for Hamas fighters AP/PTI PHOTO

thousands of people have sought shelter. She said one hit a home close to hers late Sunday.

Hamas is believed to have suffered heavy losses, but Monday it fired a barrage of rockets that set off sirens in Tel Aviv. One person was lightly wounded, according to the Magen David Adom rescue service, and Channel 12 broadcast footage of a cratered road and damage to cars and buildings in a suburb.

### FEARS OF PERMANENT DISPLACEMENT

With very little aid allowed into Gaza, Palestinians face severe shortages of food, water and other basic goods. Some openly worry that Palestinians will be forced out of the territory altogether in a repeat of the

mass exodus from what is now Israel during the 1948 war surrounding its creation. That gave rise to built-up and seemingly permanent refugee camps like Jabaliya and Maghazi.

"Expect public order to completely break down soon, and an even worse situation could unfold including epidemic diseases and increased pressure for mass displacement into Egypt," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told a forum in Qatar Sunday.

At the same time, it's not clear when or if Palestinians would be allowed to return to Gaza City and much of the north — home to some 1.2 million before the war — where entire neighbor-

hoods have been flattened. **HARSH CONDITIONS IN THE SOUTH** Israel says it tries to avoid harming civilians and blames their deaths on Hamas, saying it endangers residents by fighting in dense areas and positioning military infrastructure — including weapons, tunnels and rocket launchers — in or near civilian buildings.

The military said five soldiers were killed in a battle in southern Gaza Sunday, after militants fired at them from a school and set off an explosive device. It said the troops, backed by aircraft and tanks, returned fire and killed the militants.

The war has killed thousands of Palestinian civilians and driven nearly 85% of the territory's 2.3 million people from their homes

# New COP28 draft deal stops short of fossil fuel 'phase out'



REUTERS

**Dubai, Dec 11:** A draft of a potential climate deal at the COP28 summit Monday suggested a range of options that countries could take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but omitted the "phase out" of fossil fuels many nations have demanded.

The draft will set the stage for a final round of contentious negotiations in the two-week summit in Dubai, which has laid bare deep international divisions over whether oil, gas and coal should have a place in a climate-friendly future.

COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber urged the nearly 200 countries at the talks to redouble their efforts to finalize a deal ahead of the scheduled close of the conference on Tuesday, saying they "still have a lot to do".

"You know what remains to be agreed. And you know that I want you to deliver the highest ambition on all items including on fossil fuel language," he said.

U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres said earlier in the day a central benchmark of success for COP28 would be whether it yielded a deal to phase out fossil fuels fast enough to avert disastrous climate change.

The new draft of a COP28 agreement, published by the United Arab Emirates' presidency of the summit, proposed various options but did not refer to a "phase out" of all fossil fuels, which had been included in a previous draft.

Instead it listed eight options that countries "could" use to cut emissions, including: "reducing both consumption and produc-

tion of fossil fuels, in a just, orderly and equitable manner so as to achieve net zero by, before, or around 2050".

Other actions listed included tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030, "rapidly phasing down unabated coal" and scaling up technologies including those to capture CO2 emissions to keep them from the atmosphere.

One European diplomat told Reuters the new text was "weak as shit" and read like a "menu where you can pick and choose your dish at will".

Representatives from Pacific island nations Samoa and the Marshall Islands, already suffering the impacts of rising seas, said the draft was a death warrant. "We will not go silently to our watery graves. We will not accept an outcome that will lead to devastation for our country, and for millions if not billions of the most vulnerable people and communities," said John Silk, the head of the Marshall Islands delegation.

A coalition of more than 100 countries including oil and gas producers the United States, Canada and Norway, as well as the European Union and climate-vulnerable island nations, wanted an agreement that included language to phase out fossil fuels, a feat not achieved in 30 years of the UN summits.

The emissions from burning fossil fuels are by far the main driver of climate change.

Sources familiar with the discussions said the UAE had come under pressure from Saudi Arabia, de facto leader of the OPEC oil producers' group of which UAE is a member, to drop any mention of fossil fuels from the text.

## Morawiecki's govt loses confidence vote

**Warsaw:** Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki's government lost a confidence vote in parliament Monday, ending the rule of his national conservative party after eight years in power. The vote paves the way for the majority in parliament to elect Donald Tusk, a centrist and former EU leader, as Prime Minister, a role he held already from 2007-2014. The lawmakers plan to tap him later Monday. Morawiecki's government was defeated 266-190 in the 460-seat lower house. The vote was a key step in a power transition that began Monday in the Polish parliament, where the outgoing national conservative leaders made their farewell statements as a majority of lawmakers prepared to elect Tusk. The power transition, two months since Poles turned out in huge numbers to vote for change, was delayed for weeks by the president, who chose to keep his political allies in office as long as possible.

## Russia targets Kyiv with ballistic missiles

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Kyiv, Dec 11:** Russia fired eight ballistic missiles at Kyiv early Monday, all of which were shot down, Ukraine's Air Force said. The thwarted attack still left one person injured by shrapnel and three more suffered severe stress reactions, officials said.

A series of loud explosions rang out in Ukraine's capital just after 4 a.m., as the city was under its nightly curfew, followed by air raid sirens.

Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said that in Darnytskyi district of eastern Kyiv the debris of an intercepted missile fell without catching fire, and elsewhere in the capital the explosive wave damaged the windows of a house.

The attack also left 120 households in the city without electricity, Ukraine's Ministry of



Energy said. Last winter Russian troops were deliberately targeting Ukrainian energy system causing power outages and blackouts across the country.

Over the weekend the UK Ministry of Defence noted that Russia last week used its heavy bomber fleet for the first time since September. It predicted

the start of a more concerted campaign aimed at degrading Ukraine's energy infrastructure as winter sets in.

Just over two weeks ago, Kyiv came under what Ukrainian officials said was the most intense drone attack since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. Ukraine's air force said Russia launched 75 Iranian-made Shahed drones against the capital, of which 74 were destroyed by air defenses.

Monday's attack on the capital happened as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was in Argentina, where he attended the swearing-in of the country's new president, Javier Milei.

It was the Ukrainian leader's first official trip to Latin America as Kyiv continues to court support among developing nations for its 21-month-old fight against Russia's invading forces.

# ARMENIA UNDER THE GUN

In late September, one of the most shocking human upheavals since the century began took place in the former Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, a small, hilly patch of territory nestled within Azerbaijan. After three decades of tensions and conflict, it took just one day in September for Azerbaijan to seize the disputed enclave. Armenia stood largely on the sidelines, not strong enough to intervene, causing Nagorno-Karabakh's population of some 1,20,000 ethnic Armenians to flee en masse in one of the starkest examples of forced displacement in the twenty-first century.

The fall of Nagorno-Karabakh did not resolve all the problems between Armenia and Azerbaijan. These two neighbors have never established diplomatic ties and do not engage in trade, and their citizens cannot freely visit one another. Both countries have now raised three generations of people who view the other side as the enemy.

Observers fear that Azerbaijan might be preparing another offensive, with the goal of securing a route to its own enclave of Nakhichevan—a region of around 1,00,000 people that is separated from Azerbaijan by a sliver of Armenian territory.

Western powers have tried to put pressure on Azerbaijan by signaling that its reluctance to return to talks may cost it bilateral trade deals and other planned projects. But it could simply decide that the battlefield is once again preferable to the negotiating table, flexing its superior military muscle in pursuit of its growing ambitions.

The conflict over the status of Nagorno-Karabakh has flared periodically for around a century, but it became deadlier in the wake of the col-



Azerbaijani troops parade in the formerly Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh REUTERS

lapse of the Soviet Union, when Armenia and Azerbaijan reemerged as independent states. Competing territorial claims and interethnic tensions led to the first Nagorno-Karabakh war in the early 1990s, which the Armenian side won decisively.

### SWORD OF DAMOCLES

Tens of thousands of displaced people have spent the last two months in search of new homes in Armenia. Few of these refugees believe that the war is over. During my travels to these border areas in recent weeks, almost everyone I spoke with feared the break-out of a fresh war.

Armenia has every reason to be worried. A new conflict over the southern part of the country would in military terms closely resemble the recent Nagorno-Karabakh operation, but on a bigger scale and with the added significance of occurring on what is indisputably the sovereign territory of

another state. It would take mere hours for Azerbaijani troops to seize much of Armenia's critical infrastructure, particularly in the country's southern regions, leading to the major displacement of civilians. Armenia could well have no alternative but to surrender and accept any terms proposed by Azerbaijan.

One area where Armenia is particularly vulnerable is near Jermuk, a once popular mountain spa resort. In September 2022, Azerbaijan made incursions along 120 miles of its border with Armenia, leaving its troops deep inside the neighboring country, including near Jermuk.

**Arch-foes Armenia and Azerbaijan have said they will exchange prisoners of war and work towards normalising relations, a breakthrough that has been hailed internationally**

Azerbaijani troops there have fortified their positions on the mountains overlooking an uninhabited gorge through which a road passes to Azerbaijan's enclave of Nakhichevan. Military experts say that Azerbaijani troops would likely require just two days to traverse the gorge, a feat that could effectively sever the southern region of Armenia, known as Syunik, from the rest of the country.

Armenia fears this sword of Damocles dangling over its head.

Since fighting flared last year, Armenia has been calling for the withdrawal of Azerbaijani troops from its territory and has advanced specific proposals to limit weaponry and increase the physical separation between armed forces stationed along the border.

The peculiar geography of South Caucasus fuels these tensions. Azerbaijan's enclave of Nakhichevan is separated from Armenia by a narrow strip of southern Armenia. Azerbaijan has long demanded the creation of a special route through this territory to connect Azerbaijan with its enclave. It has ad-

vocated a route, which it calls the Zangezur corridor, that would run through Armenian territory near the border with Iran. Ultimately, that corridor would also give Azerbaijan greater access to Turkey, which borders Nakhichevan. The proposed route would go through about 25 miles of Armenian territory. In the final article of the Russian-brokered cease-fire deal in 2020, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia committed to establishing special controls along this route exercised by the Russian border guards.

For its part, Azerbaijan claims it is willing to discuss Armenian participation in passport and customs controls but still insists on special security protections, which in its view, has thus far been offered only by Russia.

Since the deal was first brokered, both local and foreign diplomats have considered this topic "low-hanging fruit" because the warring countries had an interest in making the agreement happen. Azerbaijan seeks an additional route through Nakhichevan to Turkey.

If Armenia and Azerbaijan do not return to the negotiating table, a war grows ever more likely. Over more than 30 years of their conflict, these two countries have been close to sealing a deal many times. They failed on every occasion, leading to greater militarization of the region, increased tensions, new wars, and more circumscribed prospects for peace and development. The recent events in Nagorno-Karabakh and the exodus of the entire Armenian population from the enclave are tragic. But in the absence of a diplomatic solution to the remaining issues relating to border demarcation and the corridor, a new war could carve up Armenia. AGENCIES

## Navalny disappears mysteriously ahead of Presidential polls



REUTERS

**London, Dec 11:** Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny has been removed from the penal colony where he had been imprisoned since the middle of last year and his current whereabouts are not known, his allies said Monday.

Navalny aides have been preparing for his expected transfer to a "special regime" colony, the harshest grade in Russia's prison system, after he was sentenced in August to an additional 19 years in prison on top of 11-1/2 years he was already serving.

Navalny's spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh said staff at the IK-6 facility in Melekhovo, 235 km (145 miles) east of Moscow, had told his lawyer waiting outside that the opposition leader was no longer among its inmates.

"Where they have taken him, they refuse to say," she said on social media platform X.

His disappearance comes at the start of the campaign period for a presidential election in which Vladimir Putin confirmed Friday that he would stand for another six-year term.

# business

## of the day quote

In India, the transition away from coal or Just Transition is not happening in the foreseeable future

**PRALHAD JOSHI** | COAL AND MINES MINISTER

99% local mobile phone market is being met through domestic manufacturing, and for next phase of growth companies need to export by improving competitiveness and enhancing value addition

**S KRISHNAN** | SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND IT

This multipronged approach reflects our unwavering commitment to making a meaningful impact on the environment and paving the way for a more sustainable future

**JOHN SLAVEN** | CEO, VEDANTA ALUMINIUM

## SHORT TAKES

### EPFO invested ₹27,105cr in ETFs

**New Delhi:** Retirement fund body Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has invested ₹27,105 crore in exchange-traded funds (ETFs) during the current fiscal till October, Parliament was informed Monday. EPFO had invested ₹53,081 crore in the ETFs during the fiscal 2022-23, higher than ₹43,568 crore in 2021-22, Minister of State for Labour and Employment Rameshwar Teli said. This showed that the EPFO has invested ₹27,105 crore in the ETFs so far in the current fiscal 2023-24 till October 2023. The body had invested ₹14,983 crore in ETFs in 2016-17, ₹24,790 crore in 2017-18, ₹27,974 in 2018-19, ₹31,501 crore in 2019-20 and ₹32,071 in 2020-21.

### Adani EBITDA at record high in H1

**New Delhi:** Adani Group Monday said pre-tax profit or EBITDA of its portfolio companies that span from apples to airports jumped 47 per cent in the first half of the current fiscal year to ₹43,688 crore on growth across businesses. "Core infrastructure businesses that provide a high degree of predictability, stability and multi-decadal visibility contributed 86 per cent of total EBITDA," it said in a statement. Trailing 12-month EBITDA of ₹71,253 crore is around 3x of FY19 (April 2018 to March 2019 fiscal year) EBITDA. The group had the highest-ever cash balances of ₹45,895 crore at the end of September.

### Ola E profit up 6X

**New Delhi:** Ola Electric Monday said its total revenue grew over six-fold year on year to ₹2,782 crore in 2022-23. The total revenue of Ola Electric Mobility Business stood at ₹456 crore in 2021-22, it said. The company said it has set in motion a number of initiatives like new product introductions, sales and service network expansion and strengthening of R&D function for growth and profitability.

### BMW to hike rates

**New Delhi:** German luxury carmaker BMW Monday said it will increase the prices of its vehicles by up to 2 per cent across the model range from January 1 to partially offset the adverse impacts of fluctuations in foreign exchange rates and rising input costs. The company joins the likes of other automakers such as Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai Motor, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Honda, and Audi, among others, which have also announced plans to increase vehicle prices in January.



The retail inflation is now stable and within the notified tolerance band of 2 per cent to 6 per cent. A steady decline in core inflation, estimated after removing volatile food and fuel items from retail inflation, has been critical in weakening the inflationary pressure in the Indian economy

**NIRMALA SITHARAMAN** | FINANCE MINISTER

## SPICEJET TO LIST SHARES ON NSE

No-frills airline SpiceJet Monday said it will soon be listing its securities on the National Stock Exchange. Shares of the carrier, which is navigating financial turbulence, jumped more than 8 per cent in the morning trade on the BSE



# BULL RALLY

## Dream run for D-St

**SENSEX SCALES 70K-PEAK, NIFTY CLOSES JUST SHY OF 21K ON GAINS IN METAL, IT SHARES**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Dec 11:** Equity benchmark Sensex breached a new milestone of 70,000 points before closing 102 points higher, while Nifty settled just shy of the 21,000 mark Monday, driven by gains in banking, IT and metal shares.

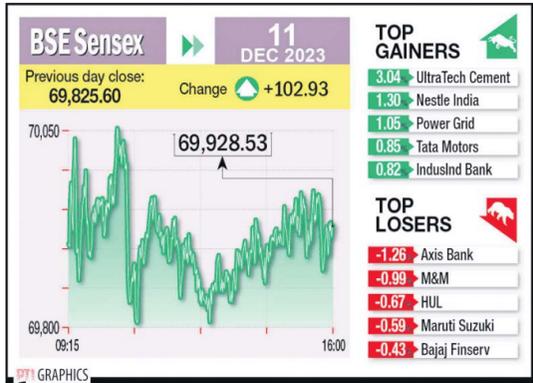
After a gap-up opening, the 30-share index rose to a record intra-day high of 70,057.83 points. Later, it shed some of the gains to close at 69,928.53 points, showing a rise of 102.93 points or 0.15 per cent.

As many as 18 Sensex shares closed in the green, 11 declined, and one settled unchanged.

The broader Nifty also hit its record trading high of 21,026.10 amid early gains in global markets. The 50-share index gained 27.70 points or 0.13 per cent to settle just below the 21,000 level at 20,997.10, its all-time closing high.

Among Sensex shares, Ultratech Cement jumped the most by 3.04 per cent. Nestle rose 1.3 per cent, Power Grid 1.05 per cent and Tata Motors 0.85 per cent. Gains in IndusInd Bank, HCL Tech, TCS, Tech Mahindra, NTPC, ITC, JSW Steel and Tata Steel helped the barometer scale a fresh high.

Axis Bank fell the most by 1.26 per cent, M&M by 0.99 per cent and Hindustan Unilever by 0.67 per cent. Maruti, Bajaj Finserv, Bharti Airtel, and HDFC



A decisive breakthrough above 21,000 is necessary to resume the uptrend. Until then, it's anticipated that the market will consolidate within a broader range

**RUPAK DE** | SENIOR TECHNICAL ANALYST AT LKP SECURITIES

Bank and Infosys also declined.

"The market crossed 70,000 levels today, while the broader market outperformed the main indices. However, profit booking was evident at higher levels as traders anticipated clues from tomorrow's significant data releases on inflation from the US and India, as well as the IIP," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Investors will be closely watching the upcoming FOMC meeting tomorrow for clues about potential future rate cuts while expecting to keep rates the same this time, Nair added.

The US Federal Reserve will announce its next move on interest rates Wednesday. The US

government will report on consumer inflation Tuesday.

In the broader market, BSE LargeCap advanced by 0.21 per cent, BSE MidCap by 0.91 per cent, while SmallCap rose by 0.71 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Commodities rose by 1.16 per cent, BSE Metal by 1.1 per cent, BSE Services by 0.95 per cent, BSE Capital Goods by 0.76 per cent, BSE Utilities by 0.67 per cent, and BSE Auto by 0.48 per cent.

However, BSE Healthcare dropped 0.38 per cent and Oil & Gas by 0.15 per cent.

The rupee appreciated 3 paise to 83.37 against the American dollar.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets Monday as they bought shares worth ₹1,261.13 crore, according to exchange data.

Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have turned bullish, investing ₹26,505 crore into domestic equities in the first six trading sessions of December.

## 7 airlines owe over ₹95 crore to AAI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 11:** Seven airlines, including Alliance Air, SpiceJet, IndiGo and Emirates, together have pending dues of more than ₹95 crore to the Airports Authority of India (AAI), according to the government.

Other foreign airlines that have pending dues are Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd, British Airways Plc and Qatar Airways, as per data provided to the Rajya Sabha Monday.

The figures exclude interest and take into account only dues that are over ₹1 crore pending for more than one year as of November 30, 2023.

As per the data provided by Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia in a written reply, three domestic carriers - Alliance Air, SpiceJet and IndiGo together owe ₹86.89 crore to the AAI.

Out of them, the maximum dues amount is that of Alliance Air at ₹83.38 crore, followed by SpiceJet (Rs 2.13 crore) and IndiGo (Rs 1.38 crore).



Among the four foreign airlines, Biman Bangladesh Airlines has the highest dues of ₹4.02 crore, followed by British Airways (Rs 1.85 crore), Emirates (Rs 1.44 crore) and Qatar Airways (Rs 1.01 crore).

"No dues exceeding ₹10 lakh have been reported on the part of any now-defunct airlines to AAI since 2021," Scindia said.

## JSP bags CSR Excellence Award

**New Delhi:** Jindal Steel & Power (JSP), a global leader in the steel industry, has been conferred with the CSR Excellence Award by The CSR Journal in recognition of its outstanding contribution to the promotion of sports in rural and tribal areas of the country.



Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh, presented the honour to the president and Group Head (CSR), Prashant Kumar Hota, in the presence of the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Eknath Shinde, during a programme held December 9, at the Bombay Stock Exchange, Mumbai. Renowned actor Amir Khan, noted poet Kumar Vishwas, and various senior corporate executives were also present on the occasion. Expressing her gratitude to the jury for the CSR Excellence Award, the chairperson of the JSP Foundation, Shalini Jindal, said, "We are building an inclusive sports eco system by nurturing 25,000 rural and tribal sporting talents of the country and making enabling infrastructures for coaching and grooming those talents to bring glory to our countrymen. It is satisfying to see our sporting talents are now champions in national and international tournaments." Guided by the leadership of Chairman Naveen Jindal, JSP has played a significant role in advancing sports development in the rural and tribal regions of India. Through its social arm, the JSP Foundation, the steelmaker has been instrumental in fostering the growth of more than 25,000 sports enthusiasts, with a predominant focus on tribal-dominant geography. This inclusive effort includes nurturing approximately 5,000 budding hockey talents in the Sundargarh district of Odisha.

## CONSISTENT INFLOWS

# Small-cap AUM past ₹2L-cr mark

On the other hand, the large-cap category saw a pull out of ₹2,688 crore in 11 months of 2023

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 11:** Strong, incessant net flows and favourable market conditions propped up the assets base for the small-cap mutual fund category to cross ₹2 lakh crore mark in November-end, a sharp surge of 69 per cent from a year earlier.

On a month-on-month basis, the Assets Under Management (AUM) of the category grew 10 per cent to ₹1.99 lakh crore, data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed.

Since the fourth quarter of 2019-20, the AUM for the category has seen a phenomenal rise, due to favourable market movement, along with record



net inflows.

Small-cap funds attracted ₹37,178 in this year (till November). This includes ₹3,699 crore last month and a record fund infusion of ₹4,495 crore in October.

"A few fund houses have limited the inflows in their small-cap funds over the last quarter given the sharp rise in flows and concerns on valuations," Morningstar India had mentioned in its September quarterly report.

Going by the AMFI data, the

# Economy to grow at 7.5-8% in FY24: FICCI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 11:** Industry expects the economy to grow at 7.5 to 8 per cent in the current fiscal and 8 per cent in 2024-25 on the back of strong growth momentum, positive sentiments and rising private investments, Anish Shah, newly-elected president of the Federation Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), said Monday. There will, however, be geopolitical pressure points that may have a bearing on India's growth prospects, he added.

"We have seen great growth numbers so far at 7.8 per cent, 7.6 per cent. I expect that to continue because we have got strong momentum. We are seeing multiple companies investing, adding capacities, something that Mahindra group has done as well. We expect that growth momentum to continue at 7.5 per cent to 8 per cent in the current financial year and for next year, I would expect 8 per cent or higher," said Shah, who is also Group CEO and Managing Director of Mahindra and Mahindra, in an interview to PTI.

On the pressure points on the economy, Shah said, "primary pressure points are outside India. We are seeing stress with regard to Israel and Gaza, added to what is happening in Ukraine. Our hope is that it does not expand or accelerate any further from there. For the sake of everyone, it gets to peace."

The second concern, he added, was the economic problems being faced by the western countries. "We don't think that the problems there have abated as yet. Interest rate there has been at a much higher level than what we have seen here in India. If there is a greater economic impact in the



ECONOMY ROSE 7.8% IN Q1 AND 7.6% IN Q2  
GROWTH RATE IN H1 WORKS OUT TO BE 7.7%

western world, it will impact India. We see those as two major concerns," Shah added.

The government, he said, needs to continue the momentum of growth to tide over the problems emanating from abroad. Moreover, he added, many Indian companies have deleveraged balance sheets and they should be prepared to play a bigger role in case the world witnesses an economic crisis.

As regards Indian companies, Shah said, "the sentiment is positive, investment is picking up and capacity addition is going on...The pace of investment will accelerate further, as demand continues and growth continues in the economy."

The Reserve Bank, it may be mentioned, has not tinkered with the short-term interest rate (repo) since February 8, 2023. It kept the interest rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent for the fifth time in a row at its bi-monthly monetary policy review which was announced earlier in the month.

The focus of the FICCI activities, Shah said, would be on Make in India initiative, women-led development, farm prosperity and sustainability to help the nation propel towards the goal of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

## SINCE C-PACE LAUNCH

# Over 7,700 firms closed India biz

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 11:** More than 7,700 companies have voluntarily closed down their business in the country since the setting up of the Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE) in May this year, and the time taken for voluntary exit has come down to around 110 days, according to the government.

The corporate affairs ministry operationalised the C-PACE May 1, 2023, to facilitate and expedite the applications filed for voluntary exit under the provisions of Section 248 (2) of the Companies Act, 2013.

The applications for voluntary closure under C-PACE are processed in a centralised manner for an efficient and uniform outcome, Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Rao Inderjit Singh said Monday.

# In 2023, bold EV strategies took a punch from reality

High interest rates have pushed many EVs out of reach for middle-income consumers, also lack of charging infra remains a deal-breaker for buyers

REUTERS

**Detroit, Dec 11:** This was the year the auto industry's race toward an all-electric future took a detour.

Heading into 2023, automakers were gearing up to invest \$1.2 trillion by 2030 to move electric vehicles from niche products to mass-market models - many with batteries and software developed in-house, according to a Reuters analysis.

As the year closes, legacy automakers as well as Tesla, Rivian and other EV startups are throttling back investments and reworking product strategies.

Legacy automakers are appealing to policymakers for more help to offset the high costs of the EV transition, on top of billions of dollars already pumped into EV subsidies.

Consumer demand for EVs is growing worldwide. But EV adoption is not happening as fast or as profitably as industry executives anticipated, especially in the United States.

Industry CEOs are amplifying hedges on their goals of shifting to all-electric fleets by the middle of the next decade.

"We'll adjust to where the customer is," General Motors CEO Mary Barra told the Detroit Automotive Press Association earlier this month when asked if GM still aims to be all-electric by 2035.

**THE F-150 LIGHTNING: HIGH HOPES, THEN DISAPPOINTMENT**

Ford's F-150 Lightning electric truck shows how bullish forecasts got corralled.

Buoyed by enthusiastic early



demand for the Lightning, Ford in August added a third work crew at its historic Rouge assembly complex in Dearborn, Michigan, to triple the production rate of the electric pickup truck to 150,000 vehicles a year.

But in October, Ford cancelled the third shift, conceding that demand for electric F-150s was not enough to sustain the planned production pace. About 700 workers were furloughed.

In China, Europe and the United States - the main EV markets - electric-vehicle demand is still growing faster than demand for vehicles overall.

Global EV production is on track to triple by 2030 to 33.4 million vehicles, about a third of total production, according to AutoForecast Solutions. Much of that growth will happen in China, where government subsidies and a price war led by Chinese

EVs are going to be the future of the passenger automobile business. But because of consumer concerns about price and charging, the next three to four years, things are going to be bumpy

JEFF PARENT | COO, AUTONATION

EV market leader BYD and Tesla are making EVs more affordable than combustion vehicles, according to an analysis by JATO Dynamics.

**LOBBYING FOR RELIEF**

Industry executives are lobbying the Biden administration to back away from emissions rules that effectively require EVs to account for two-thirds of US new-vehicle sales by 2032.

Looking ahead, industry executives raise two concerns about the challenge of expanding the EV market beyond adventurous early adopters of technology: Affordability and ac-

cess to charging.

The slow pace of charging infrastructure development forced major legacy automakers to cut deals this year with Tesla to allow buyers of their EVs to use Tesla's Supercharger network - a competitive coup for Tesla.

"The automakers' capitulation to the (Tesla) standard is a clear signal that they are realizing that demand is held back by fears on charging," said Mark Wakefield, co-leader of consultancy AlixPartners' automotive practice.

"Affordability" is industry code for convincing mainstream, middle-income consumers to pay enough for an EV to cover higher production costs and still yield a profit. For most legacy automakers, that has so far proven impossible.

Even Tesla, which makes money on EVs, has been forced to cut prices to keep assembly lines running at full speed in China and the United States.

SHORT TAKES

**Bhati, Kumar shine in Khelo India Para Games**

**New Delhi:** High jumpers Varun Singh Bhati and Nishad Kumar stole the limelight as they won a gold medal each on the opening day of athletics competition at the inaugural Khelo India Para Games here Monday. Rio Paralympics bronze winner Bhati from Greater Noida cleared 1.83m to beat Hangzhou Asian Para Games gold medallist Shailesh Kumar to finish on top of the podium in T42/T63 combined category in a top class high jump duel. The 28-year-old Bhati had won bronze in Rio in 2016 with a jump of 1.86m in T42 category. He had also won a silver in the 2018 Asian Para Games in Indonesia before missing the bus in the Hangzhou edition this year. Shailesh had won T63 gold in Hangzhou with a jump of 1.82m. "When we started, he (Bhati) was a senior player and we were inspired by his success, so I am happy with my silver," said Shailesh, who cleared 1.75m.

**Head, Akter ICC players of month**

**New Delhi:** Australia's left-handed batter Travis Head and Bangladesh all-rounder Nahida Akter have been crowned ICC Players of the Month in men's and women's category for November 2023. Head overcame fellow Australian and World Cup winner Glenn Maxwell and senior Indian fast-bowler Mohammed Shami to claim the award, while Akter wins from two other stars of the same series, compatriot Fargana Hoque and Pakistan's Sadia Iqbal. Head gets the honour after starring with Player of the Match contributions in both the semi-final win over South Africa, and the blockbuster final victory over India in Ahmedabad to help Australia clinch their sixth Men's ODI World Cup title.

**ICC U-19 WC: India to face Bangladesh**

**Dubai:** India will start their campaign in the Under-19 World Cup with a match against Bangladesh January 20 in Bloemfontein, South Africa as per ICC's revised schedule, which was released Monday. The fixture had to be renewed after the tournament was shifted from Sri Lanka to South Africa after the ICC suspended the island nation for political interference in cricketing administration. India have been placed in Group A alongside Bangladesh, Ireland and the USA. After their match against Bangladesh, India will face Ireland January 25 at Bloemfontein and in their last league match January 28, they will be up against the USA at the same venue.

**Swimming record**

**Otopeni:** Irish swimmer Daniel Wiffen set a short course world record in the 800-meter freestyle, beating Grant Hackett's previous mark by almost three seconds. Wiffen finished in 7 minutes, 20.46 seconds taking gold at the European Short Course Swimming Championships in Otopeni, Romania. Australia's Hackett had held the record for 15 years after swimming 7:23.42 at the Victoria Championships July 20, 2008. France's David Aubry was second to Wiffen in 7:30.32, and bronze went to Mykhailo Romanchuk of Ukraine in 7:31.20. Wiffen had already won gold medals in the 400- and 1,500-meter freestyle events at the championships.

**Fall helps Odisha FC script history**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 11:** Odisha FC beat Bangladesh's Basundhara Kings 1-0 riding on Mourtada Fall's 61st strike to qualify for the AFC Cup knockout for the first time while two-time inter-zonal semifinalists Mohun Bagan went down to Maziya Sports & Recreation of Maldives to exit from the group league stage. Odisha FC, after finishing on top in the group stage, have qualified for the zonal play-off semi-final, winning which will make them play in the zonal final. In the 61st minute, Mourtada secured the crucial lead for the Kalinga Warriors with a decisive header. Earlier in Male, the Juan

**Fate of new India hanging**

With only 5 games left ahead of T20 World Cup, auditioning youngsters running out of time



AGENCIES

**Gqeberha, Dec 11:** After a washout in the series-opener robbed the auditioning Indian youngsters of valuable game time, the think tank will be hoping for clear weather in the second T20I against South Africa here Tuesday. Even the toss could not be held in Durban on Sunday and there is a rain forecast even for the second game of the three-match series. Now only five games are left in the build up to the T20 World Cup in June and the management has a very small window to try out players. In the current scenario, form in the IPL will carry a lot of

weight for selection in the Indian team bound for USA and Caribbean. The selectors announced a 17-man squad for the series and it is highly unlikely that all of them would get an opportunity in the remaining two games. Shubman Gill, who was not part of the T20 series against Australia held right after the World Cup, Suryakumar Yadav and Rinku Singh seem to be the only certainties in the batting order for the ICC event six months later. Both Yashasvi Jaiswal and Ruturaj Gaikwad have got runs under their belt but if Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma make themselves available for the World Cup, the two fringe play-

ers would need a sensational effort in the IPL to make the cut. The only other series India play before the World Cup is against Afghanistan at home next month. The selectors will be forced to consider only IPL performance for World Cup selection, raising questions over the scheduling of India's T20 commitments before the World Cup. Like Rinku, Jitesh Sharma is also being seen as the finisher for India in the shortest format. After showing promise against Australia, Jitesh will be hoping for game time against the Proteas. The extra bounce on South Africa pitches will pose a stiff test for the young batting line-up. In the bowling department, multiple spots are up for grabs

**BCCI net worth 28X over Cricket Australia**

THE NET WORTH OF RICHEST BOARD IN CRICKET WAS LISTED AT APPROXIMATELY ₹18,700CR



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE



**New Delhi, Dec 11:** The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is widely recognized as the wealthiest cricket board worldwide. A recent media report has unveiled the exact figures of its current net worth, showcasing that the Indian board earn as much as 28 times more than its Australian counterpart. Last month the BCCI's net worth was listed at \$2.25-billion (approximately 18,700 crore), exponentially, the richest board in the game. Cricket Australia (CA) are the second-most well-off, but their \$79-million makes them more than 28 times poorer than India, according to a report from Cricbuzz. In many countries, the term "sport" encompasses a variety of games. However, in India, it means cricket, the favored game for over 90% of those who watch sports on a screen.

The report further states that, Cricket South Africa (CSA), which is playing hosts to Team India for a full-fledged, all-format series weigh in sixth place with the net worth of \$47-million which is 2.09% of the BCCI's worth. BCCI, in fact, accounts for 85.88% of the combined net worth of the top 10 boards, as per the report. The report further highlighted how big a boost CSA's revenues will get from the upcoming tour of India, which started December 10. The span of 30 days of cricket against India is expected to pump up to \$68.7-million into CSA's coffers. That's \$8.6-million per match, or \$2.29-million a day. It is expected to wipe out the losses of \$6.3-million, \$10.5-million and \$11.7-million CSA have declared in each of the past three financial years, the report said.

**Girona humble Barca in La Liga**

In La Liga for only the fourth season in their history, Girona, the underdog Spanish side secured a historic 4-2 win over their illustrious neighbours, marking their first-ever triumph in the top flight

REUTERS

**Washington, Dec 11:** High-flying Girona reclaimed top spot in LaLiga after beating champions Barcelona 4-2 away Sunday, condemning Xavi Hernandez's side to their second league defeat of the season. Artem Dovbyk put Girona in front in the 12th minute with a shot that bounced in off the bottom of the post before Robert Lewandowski equalised for the hosts seven minutes later, heading home following a corner. Girona, who remain unbeaten away from home in LaLiga this season, top the standings with 41 points from 16 games, having leapfrogged Real Madrid on 39 points after Carlo Ancelotti's side were held to a 1-1 draw by Real Betis Saturday. Barcelona, whose only previous defeat this season was to Madrid at the end of October, are fourth on 34 points, level with third-placed Atletico Madrid who have a game in hand. "Girona have a lot of merit in what they are doing. They are in the lead, even more so today. They've got seven points more than us and that's well deserved," Xavi said. "It was an even game. If Barca



**This Girona side have a soul and believe they can hurt their opponents. We knew that [Barca] were going to press hard but if we were able to make the first two passes, we would stand a chance**

MICHEL | COACH, GIRONA

won, we would also say it's fair. I think we shot 31 times. Maybe the errors in defence have taken their toll on us." Barcelona had 31 attempts in the game, 11 of them on target, but Girona keeper Paulo Gazzaniga pulled off a string of saves while at the other end they scored with four out of their seven shots on target. Dovbyk put Girona in front in the 12th minute with a shot that bounced in off the bottom of the post for his eighth goal in his debut LaLiga season.

JUNIOR HOCKEY WC

**INDIA FACE TOUGH NETHERLANDS TEST**



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kuala Lumpur, Dec 11:** Two-time champions India will need to raise their game by a few notches while curbing complacency during their quarter-final encounter against a formidable Netherlands in the men's Junior World Cup hockey tournament here Tuesday. India won the tournament twice in 2001 in Hobart, Australia and at home in Lucknow in 2016. Besides they were runners-up once way back in 1997 in Milton Keynes, England, losing 2-3 against Australia in the final. The Indians started the tournament on a bright note, beating Korea 4-1 and then suffered a 1-4 defeat at the hands of Spain before getting their acts together to thrash Canada 10-1 in their final pool match. India sealed their quarterfinal place as the second-placed team from Pool C with two wins out of three games behind Spain, who had an all-win record. The Netherlands, on the other hand, finished atop Pool D with two wins and a draw. Having started off on a positive note, the Indians were taken to the cleaners by Spain, who relied on crisp, short passes to create spaces in the Indian defence

**The players are in a good space and are ready to take on whatever is thrown at them. We'll continue to take this tournament one match at a time. Yes, the quarterfinal is a big match but it's nothing the boys aren't prepared for**

CR KUMAR | COACH, INDIA

which worked perfectly for them. So, the Indian team will have to be on its toes against a clinical side like the Netherlands, which is capable of breaching any defence with its structured hockey. The Indians will also have to do away of their habit of conceding unnecessary penalty corners when put under pressure. A big win against Canada should act as a confidence booster for India going into Tuesday's match, a fact which skipper Uttam Singh agreed. "We have played some good hockey in this World Cup. Coming off a big 10-1 win certainly boosts our confidence going into the knockout stages. We'll look to put our best foot forward and play to the best of our ability like we always do," he said. The semifinals and final will be held Thursday and Saturday.

**Bajrang, Sakshi meet Sports Min**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 11:** Olympic medallists Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik Monday requested Sports Minister Anurag Thakur to ensure that Sanjay Singh does not contest for the post of WFI President since he is a close associate of Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who has been accused of sexual harassing women wrestlers. The much-awaited Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) elections are scheduled to be held December 21 and the results will be declared the same day. Bajrang, Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi had spearheaded the protest against Brij Bhushan, accusing the BJP MP of sexual harassment of several women wrestlers, including juniors. A Delhi court is hearing the matter. Tokyo Games bronze medallist Bajrang said they withdrew their protest after the government assured that no one related to Brij Bhushan will contest the polls. Two candidates - Brij Bhushan loyalist Sanjay Singh and 2010 Commonwealth Games gold medallist Anita Sheoran are in the running for the WFI president's post. "Yes, we met with the sports minister today and reminded him of his promise that no one related to Brij Bhushan should contest the WFI elections," Bajrang told PTT. "Sanjay Singh is his close associate and he should withdraw from the elections or otherwise we will decide our future course of action soon. We told that to the minister," said Bajrang. Sanjay, who is a Brij Bhushan loyalist, was part of the WFI's last executive council. He was also the national federation's joint secretary since 2019.

**ICC to start stop clock trials**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dubai, Dec 11:** The stop clock trial, which will restrict the amount of time taken between overs, will get underway during the white-ball series between West Indies and England, the sport's governing body ICC said Monday. The trial will start with the first T20 between the West Indies and England Tuesday in



Barbados.

The stop clock will restrict the amount of time taken between overs, meaning that the bowling team will need to be ready to bowl the first ball of their next over within 60 seconds of the previous over being completed, the ICC said in a statement. Failure to do so for the third time in an innings (following

two warnings) will result in a five-run penalty being imposed against the fielding team. "We are continually looking at ways to speed up the pace of play across international cricket. The stop clock trial in white ball international cricket follows the introduction of a successful new playing condition in 2022, which resulted in the fielding team only being allowed four fielders outside of the inner circle if they were not in a position to bowl the first ball of their final over in the stipulated time. The outcomes of the stop clock trial will be assessed at the end of the trial period," Wasim Khan, ICC General Manager - Cricket, said.