



STRAIGHT TALK

Actor Triptii Dimri says if her film 'Animal' doesn't suit people's taste, they may abstain from watching it

LEISURE P2



TESLA RECALLS 2MN VEHICLES

Tesla recalls nearly all its vehicles sold in the US, more than 2 million, to update and fix Autopilot related software

BUSINESS P11



CHIRAG-SATWIK PICKED

BFI nominates doubles pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwik Rankireddy for Khel Ratna Award

SPORTS P12

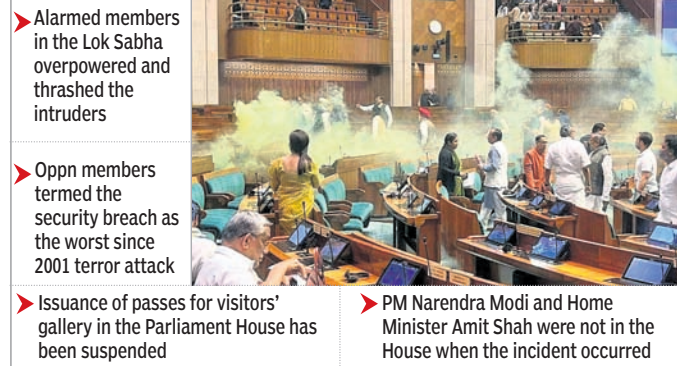


NATURE'S BLANKET: Roadside stalls and vehicles covered with snow after a fresh snowfall lashes Auli in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, Wednesday PTI PHOTO

Security breach on BJP MP's pass

PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 13: An intruder who sneaked past security at the Parliament, aided by a visitor's pass allegedly provided by BJP's Mysuru MP Prathap Simha, created havoc inside the House when he jumped into the Lok Sabha chamber, released yellow gas canister and shouted slogans, before being overpowered by MPs. The incident nevertheless, exposed the chinks in the touted security build-up at the temple of democracy as it came hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to the martyrs of the horrific Parliament attack which took place this day 22 years ago.



Alarmed members in the Lok Sabha overpowered and thrashed the intruders. Oppn members termed the security breach as the worst since 2001 terror attack. Issuance of passes for visitors' gallery in the Parliament House has been suspended. PM Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah were not in the House when the incident occurred.

At COP28, nations agree to end oil age

Dubai: Representatives from nearly 200 countries agreed at the COP28 climate summit Wednesday to begin reducing global consumption of fossil fuels to avert the worst of climate change, a first-of-its-kind deal signaling the eventual end of the oil age. COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber called the deal "historic" but added that its true success would be in its implementation. Several countries cheered the deal for accomplishing something elusive in decades of climate talks. P10

AI to monitor matric exams

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Dec 13: The Board of Secondary Education (BSE) will use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to monitor conduct of the annual High School Certificate (HSC) Examination for Class X that will begin February 20 and conclude March 4, 2024, BSE president Ramashis Hazra said here, Wednesday. Hazra said district education officers, nodal officers and BSE will regulate the conduct of ex-

amination. "CCTV cameras will be installed at exam centres. We are planning for web telecasting with the help of AI as it would help detect any discrepancy," he said. As many as 5,51,611 students will take up the examination at 2,991 centres. At least 313 nodal centres have been created, the BSE president said. As per schedule, test for the first language (Odia) has been scheduled for February 20, second language (English) February

23 and Mathematics February 26. While third language (Hindi) examination will be held February 28, that of the General Science will be held March 2. Likewise, Social Science examination will be held March 4. Moreover, examinations for Open School and Madhayama students will be conducted simultaneously during the period. Vocational practical exam will be conducted at respective schools between January 15 and January 31, Hazra said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



How did they enter? Criminals are allowed inside, but only after getting elected

Pay ₹10 lakh aid for dog bite death: HC to Puri civic body

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: In a significant ruling, the Orissa High Court has directed the Puri Municipality to pay a compensation of ₹10 lakh to the family members of a 4-year-old minor boy who was killed by a pack of stray dogs in Puri district in December 2016.



The court pronounced the order while hearing a plea filed by advocate Bibhuti Charan Mohanty. According to the petition, when Satyabrata Rout, 4, was playing near his house at Jagannath Colony in Puri, stray dogs mauled him to death. The incident took place December 1, 2016.

He was rushed to the nearby hospital where doctors declared him dead. After coming across the incident reported in various newspapers, the petitioner filed a PIL in the High Court, seeking financial compensation for the family. Petitioner's counsel Rajkishore Swain said the municipality au-

thorities in their affidavit claimed that there is no legal provision under the Orissa Municipal Act, 1950 to provide compensation to the family members of a person in case of death due to dog bite. Similarly, the municipality also tried to evade responsibility by saying that they have sterilised 3,600 stray dogs. "The court relying on various judgements delivered by Chhattisgarh & Karnataka high courts and the Supreme Court, noted that the human rights of the victim had been violated in the case. Hence, the court directed the municipality to pay the compensation," Swain said.

BITE FACTS
 ■ Chhattisgarh HC in July this year ordered ₹6.5 lakh compensation to the father of a 7-yr-old girl who died from stray dog bite
 ■ The Punjab & Haryana HC Nov 15, 2023 held that in case of dog bite, the aid will be ₹10,000 per tooth mark
 ■ Last month, Karnataka govt submitted before the HC that it would pay ₹5 lakh assistance to families of people who die due to dog bites, apart from ₹5,000 to those who suffer injuries

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	69584.60 ↑ 33.57
NIFTY	20926.30 ↑ 19.90
DOLLAR	83.46 ↑ ₹0.05
EURO	90.04 ↓ ₹0.11
GOLD	₹61,177 ↑ ₹4
SILVER	₹ 71,357 ↓ ₹505

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	27.7°C	27.0°C
TEMP MIN	15.0°C	14.8°C
Humidity	83%	74%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Mainly clear sky	

Chinese city under water since '59

Despite being under water, the city is well preserved, which is why it is called 'Atlantis of the East'

AGENCIES

Beijing, Dec 13: Believe it or not! There is a city in China that is submerged under water and is a remnant of the country's imperial past. As per reports of the National Geographic, the city of Shicheng in Zhejiang province was intentionally flooded in 1959 to make way for Xin'an hydroelectric dam and remained 'forgotten' for decades. The reports said the city lies 40 metres below the surface of Qiandao Lake. National Geographic said around 3 lakh people were relocated at the time of its flooding. The world's interest in Shicheng arose when it was 'rediscovered' in 2001 when the Chinese government sent an expedition to see what remained of the 600-year-old city.



of the underwater city, which measured about half a square km. These photos and other expeditions revealed that the city had five entrance gates. The wide streets had 265 archways, featuring preserved stonework of lions, dragons, phoenixes and historical inscriptions, some of which date back as far as 1777. Despite being underwater, the city is well preserved, which is why it is also called 'Atlantis of the East'. The water actually protects it from wind, rain and sun erosion. Today, it is possible to visit the hidden world but expeditions are allowed only for those people who have proven experience in diving, especially in deep water. The site hasn't been fully mapped yet and is thus considered unsafe for inexperienced tourists.

MOTHER NATURE SAYS **THANK YOU** WHEN YOU MAKE ENERGY-SAVING CHOICES.

This National Energy Conservation Day, switch to clean and green energy for a sustainable tomorrow.

Scan to check out our latest TVC, showing love to our Planet Earth.

TPCØDL | TPNØDL | TPSØDL | TPWØDL
 (A Joint Venture of Tata Power and Government of Odisha)

leisure



TOM CRUISE'S NEW LOVE 25 YEARS YOUNGER TO HIM

Hollywood star Tom Cruise has been spotted getting close with a new love interest who is 25 years younger to him. The woman in question is socialite **Elsina Khayrova**, 36, the daughter of a Russian MP and ex-wife of a successful diamond trading oligarch, reports *Mirror.co.uk*.

DAKOTA ON HER 1ST PRIORITY IN LIFE

Hollywood actress **Dakota Johnson** said if she gets less than 10 hours of sleep a night she can't function properly. The actress also shared that she can easily sleep for 14 hours straight, reports *People magazine*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You experience a sense of freedom today. And in this mood you feel like doing all the things that you loved to do in your childhood. It is a nice time to take your family on an outing, says Ganesh. Given your mood, you may start planning for the future of your loved ones.

TAURUS
This may be, health wise, a bad day for you. Ganesh urges you to take special care and not to do anything that invites illness or discomfort. The least you can do is to ensure that you do not over exert or get into situations that generate tension and anxiety.

GEMINI
You will receive unprecedented love and affection from all your friends and family members today. It is a good day to conduct important personal or professional meetings. A lot of joy and happiness awaits, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You may donate to a charity organisation, for your mental happiness. On the job front, stick to your routine, rather than taking a new bold step, says Ganesh. A good day on the financial front.

LEO
A fun-filled day awaits you. You will enjoy all the activities that you take up today. At the work-place too a progressive day awaits you. You will be worried about the fruits of your labour, but they are likely to be sweeter than you thought they will be, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You will pen down the things to be done today. However, Ganesh suggests that just making a note of them is not enough; you need to set practical goals according to priority. Moreover, Ganesh warns that items you mark on the top of the list will demand immediate action.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that your day today will be extremely busy and as a result you will be agitated today. Your happy nature will have to bear the brunt of the sad circumstances and situations that life will shower on you but you will be able to face the situation with your inner strength. You will have to be careful about your health today and will need to watch your diet.

SCORPIO
Negative thoughts are likely to surround you today, try to avoid it. You may feel lonely and left-out when the day begins. However, a long list of activities and responsibilities will keep you occupied throughout the day. There are possibilities that you may land up in tricky situations, but you have the knack of handling things gracefully.

SAGITTARIUS
Your ways to deal with your team mates and colleagues will be strict and disciplined. However, your perfect ways at work will leave them awestruck. Your personal equations will be least affected by your stern ways, says Ganesh. Do not let success go to your head.

CAPRICORN
A penny saved is a penny earned. Your strong belief in this will make you scrutinise your requirements and rearrange the priority list, so that you know where and how to utilise the resources. Your choice of friends will represent your approach and outlook towards life. Ganesh advises you to choose your friends wisely.

AQUARIUS
There is nothing like having a good time with your brothers and sisters. Generally, you plan out your routine and activities by yourself, but it is a different day today. Your siblings will make plans for you and you will just go along with the flow, predicts Ganesh.

PISCES
Some unknown fear could haunt you today. You will direct your energies to discovering the source of your worries and eliminate them. Lovers will find some precious time to cozy up with their partners.

SUNIEL SHETTY ON IMPACT OF HIS ACTION MOVIES

'My parents used to take headache pills'

Mumbai: Suniel Shetty, renowned as the action star of the 1990s, made a significant mark with hits such as *Mohra*, *Gopi Kishan*, *Rakshak*, *Bhai*, and more. In a recent revelation, the actor shared that there was a period when even his family refrained from expressing their enjoyment of his films. Despite their reluctance to admit it to his face, they would endure watching his movies and discreetly take a headache pill afterward.

Recalling his family's reception to his action-packed films, Suniel Shetty expressed, "Even though my films were working, when I came back home the films didn't work. After showing my parents the film, my wife and my daughter, they said, 'Very good,' and then they said, 'Ramu Saridon hai toh de do ek (If you have a Saridon, please pass one) and I heard that. That means they developed a headache after watching their son's film."

Suniel also revealed how trolling directed at his son-in-law, cricketer KL Rahul, deeply affects him, while Rahul seems less affected. Despite the negativity, Rahul remains silent and lets his cricket performances speak for him, reflecting the trust invested in him by the public, team captain, and selectors.

In other news, Suniel was recently featured in the web series *Hunter Tootege Nahi Todega*.

AGENCIES



Triptii reacts to controversies

Mumbai: Following its theatrical release on December 1, *Animal* has created quite a stir amongst the fans. While several hailed the performances of all the actors in the movie, the movie seems to act as Triptii Dimri's breakthrough acting during her career span.

Notably, while many have rejoiced in the storyline of *Animal*, a section of movie-watchers termed the film as 'misogynistic' due to certain scenes in it, including that of Ranbir Kapoor's character asking Dimri's character to lick his shoe, igniting controversies. Recently, Triptii shared her views on people's perceptions on the movie and shared that while it's justifiable for everyone to have opinions, if *Animal* doesn't suit one's taste, they should abstain from watching it.

Addressing the controversies, Triptii said, "It depends on person to person. If you're watching an action film, and the goons are beating up the hero, that doesn't mean you go and beat up whoever you hate in life. Or, if someone is talking rudely to his wife or girlfriend, that doesn't give you the license to go home and start talking the same way to your wife, or girlfriend, or whoever."

She also added that 'it's a long discussion' over the mixed views of *Animal* and said that there is a certain section of audience that does get affected due to the content and are entitled to have an opinion as it's their choice.

AGENCIES



WHY KAJOL WON'T DO MOLESTATION SCENES

Mumbai: Actor Kajol has shared why she would not do 'scenes that require (her) to be molested.' Speaking at the Netflix Film Actors' Roundtable 2023, Kajol accepted that she has been part of films where she has had to do such scenes. She added that such scenes are 'very very very uncomfortable and very disturbing.'

Kajol said, "It has always been my take as an actor that I'll not do scenes that require me to be either molested or in any which way show me in a place where I don't want to be because I think as actors when we do a shot, we're feeling it, we're really feeling it. So yes, we are actors up to a point but the camera I feel is one of those things it's like man-made magic and it tends to capture it if you're not being honest in front of it. At times like this, you need to be honest."

She also said, "That's been my personal thing on it that, 'No, I don't want to do this. I don't feel comfortable. I don't feel comfortable when I have to act out a scene where I am being physically abused or molested'... I don't feel I need to do it to prove a point. I can prove my point to be a good actor in 100 different other ways, I don't need this particular experience."

AGENCIES



Wamiqa leaves fans confused

Mumbai: When *Baahubali* released in 2015, it changed the face of Indian cinema and put the Telugu stars featured in it on the world map. Director SS Rajamouli, actors Prabhas, Anushka Shetty, Rana Daggubati and Tamannaah Bhatia became overnight sensations, with Ramya Krishnan also receiving love for her performance. However, Wamiqa Gabbi recently made a statement that left fans of the film confused.

In an out of context clip shared on social media, Wamiqa tells *Filmy Gyan* that she was training for *Baahubali* but the project never took off. "I was doing it (*Baahubali*). Directors kept getting changing. And I was still there training (in sword fight). I kept asking if the director has been finalised. I don't know why they shut down the project, I hope it restarts again," she says.

Given that it's been a while since *Baahubali* hit screens and director SS Rajamouli even went on to helm the successful *RRR*, fans of the film were confused by her statement. The clip was

deleted later on. In reality, Wamiqa was part of the Netflix project *Baahubali: Before the Beginning*, which was based on the novels *The Rise of Sivagami*, *Chaturanga* and *Queen of Mahishmathi*. The series was supposed to serve as a prequel to *Baahubali*, with the focus on Ramya Krishnan's character Sivagami.

AGENCIES



PEANUTS



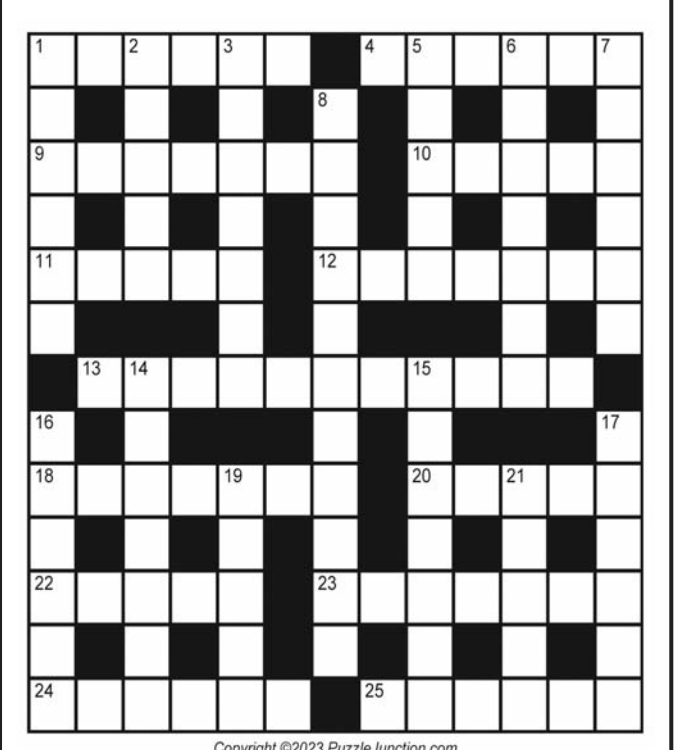
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



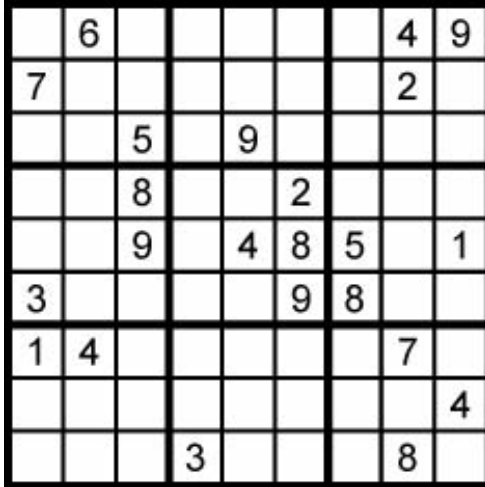
FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Mountainous region in central Italy
 - 4 Jubilant
 - 9 Hunt cry (5-2)
 - 10 Swelter
 - 11 Inhabit
 - 12 Image copier
 - 13 Demoralised
 - 18 Portable grill
 - 20 Sovereign
 - 22 Scrapbook
 - 23 Indigenous
 - 24 Con game
 - 25 Court contest
 - 6 Neophyte
 - 7 Scares off
 - 8 Dry skin aid
 - 14 Drains the cup
 - 15 Condense
 - 16 Knife holder
 - 17 Building blocks
 - 19 Beast of burden
 - 21 Lime's buddy
- Down**
- 1 Slowly
 - 2 Swell
 - 3 Perfect
 - 5 Cocoon contents

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



IGP (Central Range) Ashish Kumar Singh and Puri SP KV Singh review the progress of an AC tunnel in Puri, Wednesday

downtown

House security breach bares protocol chinks

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, Dec 13: The major security breach in Parliament Wednesday brought to the fore shortcomings in the security protocol, driven in part by the shortage of parliamentary staff assigned to enforce it, a point made by some leaders in the all-party meeting convened by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

The two accused, Manoranjan D and Sagar Sharma, who jumped into the Lok Sabha chamber had visitors' passes for 45 minutes but they stayed in the visitors' gallery for close to two hours, in violation of the rules, sources said.

Parliament's security staff used to usher visitors out from the gallery near the deadline of their stay but their deployment has been nearly absent in the galleries of the new building as they have been busy with duties at different places amid changing security needs and requirement of the new place, the sources said.

They said the sanctioned strength of security officials in the hierarchy ranging from Special Director (Security) to Security Assistant Grade-II is around 301 while the actual strength is 176 - a vacancy of 125. Importantly, the biggest chunk of vacancies is among entry-level officials, the nut and bolt of security apparatus, the sources added.

Against a sanctioned strength of 72 in Security Assistant Grade-

II, the actual strength is only nine, they said, adding that the corresponding figure for Security Assistant Grade-I is 24 against a sanctioned strength of 69.

The sources claimed that there has been no fresh recruitment for over 10 years.

Birla assured members of all parties that a thorough review of security arrangements will be made and corrective measures taken following the incident, which came on the anniversary of the 2001 Parliament terror attack. Terming it a serious security breach, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Bhartruhari Mahtab raised questions over the intruders sitting in the House beyond the allotted time. "It's a serious security breach. How the two, with canisters, crossed four security barriers and reached the public gallery in the Lok Sabha? This question will haunt us for years," Mahtab said.

BJD MP Pinaki Misra termed the incident shocking. "It's obviously a major security lapse. It's shocking that somebody can walk in with canisters. That was harmless gas but it could have been sarin gas," Misra said.

Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee sought action against BJP MP Pratap Simha, who issued a pass to the intruders. He also criticised Home Minister Amit Shah for such a huge security and intelligence failure. Home Minister Amit Shah should take the responsibility, Kalyan Banerjee said.

The sanctioned strength of security officials in the hierarchy ranging from Special Director (Security) to Security Assistant Grade-II is around 301, while the actual strength is 176 - a vacancy of 125

There has been no fresh recruitment for over 10 years



HONING SKILLS: A Guide performs rope exercise during a team event on the premises of Bharat Scouts and Guides office in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

Sports science conclave Dec 16

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: Sports Science India (SSI), a multidisciplinary sports medicine and rehabilitation centre, will organise a day-long sports science conclave at Kalinga Stadium here December 16.

The conclave will bring sports and medicine (science) under one roof with an aim to strengthening grassroots-level sports in the country, especially Odisha, said SSI founder Sarthak Patnaik here Wednesday.

The conclave will feature sessions on injury prevention, sports



science, rehabilitation and recovery. Sports science experts, players, coaches and doctors

from Odisha and other parts of India will participate at the meet, he said.

"The agenda is to generate awareness on sports science. Our athletes must know how to reduce chances of injury, which can cut short their career. We wish to make sportspersons and other sports-related professionals aware of the advanced technologies and methodologies adapted in the West for boosting performances on field," Patnaik said.

During the event, the SSI will also host a sports awards ceremony.

EXECUTIVE OVER-REACH, A REALITY

DEBASISH PANIGRAHI, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: The Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill which will determine the appointment and service conditions of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and the Election Commissioners (ECs) was passed in the Rajya Sabha Tuesday amid stiff resistance from the Opposition, notably Congress.

The party demanded sending the Bill to a Select Committee on the ground that the very appointment procedure of the key Constitutional functionaries violated the Constitution. They want a pocket borough, said Randeep Singh Surjewala, Congress general secretary. He likened the Bill to a 'stillborn child' saying it completely negates and subjugates the Election Commission to the authority of the Executive.

What Surjewala was hinting at was the tweaking of the Supreme Court order of March 2, 2003 (on a bunch of PILs filed in 2015 and 2018) that mandated the formation of a high-power committee consisting of the Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and the Chief Justice of India to pick the CEC and ECs.

This is because, as per the provisions in the new Bill, the President would appoint the CEC and ECs based on the recommendation of a Selection Committee, comprising the Prime Minister, a Union cabinet minister and the Leader of Opposition (LoP) or the leader of the largest Opposition party in the Lok Sabha.

Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal dismissed the Opposition charges and maintained that the Bill had been prepared following the direction of the top court and appointments made transparent since those were not guided by any law, so far.

Apparently showing his disdain for judicial interference, House Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said that the

Congress to launch month-long protests for students, farmers

Bhubaneswar: The Congress has announced that the party would hold month-long demonstrations across Odisha over issues related to students and farmers. Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) chief Sarat Pattanayak said the party's student wing activists will stage protests in colleges and universities against setting up of selfie points in the institutes with photographs of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in the background. National Students' Union of India (NSUI) will organise the demonstrations from December 20 to January 20, he said. Similarly, the Pradesh Kisan Congress will organise protests across the state from December 13 to January 13 to press several demands of farmers, including a hike in minimum support price (MSP) to Rs 2,930 per quintal in paddy and waiver of crop loans, the Congress leader said.

MAN ON RUN FOR A YEAR AFTER SETTING WIFE ON FIRE, HELD

DEBADURLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: A man who was evading arrest for more than a year after trying to set his wife ablaze over domestic disputes was nabbed by the Bharatpur police here, Wednesday.

ACP Zone III, Pradeep Kumar Rout said Kulamani Paikray was arrested following a tip off when he visited his family at Nayagarh. Rout said Kulamani frequently changed his job locations, mostly outside Odisha, when he was on the run.

Giving details of the case, Rout said Kulamani met Pravati during early 2022. She was then working as a domestic help at a place where Kulamani was employed as a driver. Over time, they grew closer and finally tied the knot in July that year.

However, in just about two-three months into their marriage, the relationship soured due to the drinking habits of Kulamani. The couple used to fight frequently.

Police said September 22, 2022 Kulamani left the cooking gas cylinder regulator open after taking off its pipe. He then called Parvati into the kitchen, ran out and bolted the door from outside, before throwing a burning match stick into the room.

By the time neighbours rescued her after hearing her screams, Parvati had sustained 70-80 per cent burns. She was rushed to Sum hospital where she received treatment for over one and half months. She finally recovered after undergoing plastic surgery, police added.

Meanwhile, Kulamani kept changing his location in order to avoid detection. When finally the Bharatpur police were tipped off about his impending visit to his parent's place in Nayagarh, a trap was laid in the vicinity. As soon as he was spotted, the waiting police party closed in on and took him into custody, Rout said.

He was booked under Sections 307 (attempting to murder), 498 (dowry harassment) and various other provisions of the IPC and produced in a local court for remand, police said.

Pact for archery, sport climbing HPCs



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: The state government Wednesday signed a MoU with Tata Steel to set up high performance centres (HPCs) in Olympic sports - archery and sport climbing.

The pact was signed in presence of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. This will add to Odisha's bouquet of such centres.

Odisha Tata Archery Academy and Odisha Tata Steel Adventure Foundation Sport

Climbing Academy will be set up here for development of athletes in the disciplines. Regional development centres will also be set up for archery and both the academies will run grassroots programmes, according to the agreement.

Led by experts, these HPCs will identify and nurture exceptional talents, empowering them to compete at national and international levels and provide top-notch infrastructure and training facilities.

These centres will also serve as hubs for aspiring athletes to realise their full potential. The academies will feature players who are scouted from the state sports hostels and state-level and national-level programmes.

The athletes will also have access to facilities of the Sports and Youth Services department for their holistic development, which will include gymnasiums, swimming pools and India's largest sports science centre at

Kalinga Stadium, an official release said.

"We are delighted to collaborate with Tata Steel in this endeavour. Our partnership with Tata Steel for Hockey High Performance Centre has been exemplary and producing encouraging results. We have a huge potential for archery and sports climbing in Odisha and in the country and with this new association, we will be able to collectively contribute towards creating a conducive environment for athletes in these disciplines," Patnaik said.

Stating that the archery is an ancient traditional game of India, Patnaik said, "We will promote the sport in partnership with Tata Steel. There is lot of talent among our tribal children and hopefully many champions will emerge from this HPC."

Sports Secretary Commissioner Vineel Krishna represented the Sports and Youth Services department, while Tata Steel was represented by Chanakya Chaudhary, vice-president, corporate services Tata Steel Ltd. and chairman of Tata Steel Adventure Foundation.

The centres have proven to produce elite athletes in hockey, football, swimming, athletics, gymnastics, sports science, shooting and weightlifting. Now, archery and sport climbing will further benefit from this partnership, he said.

Ex-Guv channelled over ₹6cr grants to Haryana

RTI RESPONSE REVEALS GANESHI LAL ACCORDED 319 GRANTS TO HARYANA-BASED RECIPIENTS FROM DISCRETIONARY FUND BELONGING TO ODISHA TAXPAYERS

SUNIT MISHRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: Former Governor of Odisha Ganeshi Lal had issued 319 grants from his discretionary funds totalling more than Rs 6 crore to Haryana-based recipients between FY 2018-19 and FY 2023-24, according to an RTI response received from the Governor's office.

Notably, Lal, who hails from Haryana's Sirsa district, served as the Governor of Odisha from March 1, 2018 to October 18, 2023. He allocated as many as 319 grants - which totals nearly Rs 6,50,93,000 - to Haryana-based recipients citing various reasons, the response to the RTI query filed by Odia daily

'Dharitri' revealed.

As per the list of his grants, many people from other states, apart from Haryana, were accorded a total amount of Rs 1,11,46,000 in the form of financial and various work-related assistance.

In FY 2022-23, a total of Rs 35,22,369 was allotted to 'Eastern Media Limited' to conduct a debate competition under 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' programme. In the first phase, the former Governor granted Rs 30 lakh to the publishing house, while Rs 5,22,369 was given for the same programme again in the same financial year.

Data from the RTI response suggested that many people from



Haryana had received funds from Lal citing illness of their mothers, fathers or relatives. Later, those individuals took lakhs of rupees from the Governor's fund in the name of 'financial assistance' and, sometimes for setting up 'water tanks'.

For instance, Lal had provided assistance several times to Mandeep Singh from Bhatia Dharamshala in Haryana's Sirsa district. In FY 2021-22, Mandeep was given a grant of Rs 1.5 lakh for installing a cold water supply machine at Shyam Park lo-

cated near Anaj Mandi at Janta Bhawan Road. Later, Mandeep took another grant from Lal to treat his allegedly ailing mother. Subsequently, the former Governor provided an amount of Rs 14,05,000 over a period of time to install eight water tanks.

Another such instance has been cited in the RTI reply in the case of one Dinesh Kumar - a resident of Sirsa's Dhingantia village. Dinesh was provided with a grant of Rs 1.5 lakh to install a water tank in FY 2021-22. Later, in FY2022-23, Rs 50,000 was provided as 'financial assistance', followed by Rs 6.2 lakh for installing water tanks at four different places. In FY2023-24, Dinesh was granted another Rs

25,000 as 'financial assistance'. It's not just Mandeep or Dinesh, many people from Haryana have benefited from Lal's largess worth lakhs of rupees, the RTI response revealed.

"Ganeshi Lal returned to Haryana after providing huge financial assistance to many individuals and institutions that were personally close to him when he was the Governor," a senior Raj Bhavan official said on the condition of anonymity.

It can be mentioned here that these funds are given by the state government which is the money of taxpayers of Odisha. However, the usage of discretionary funds by the Governor is not audited by the state government.



MUSICAL FEST: Artistes perform during annual day celebrations of Padamruta Dance Academy at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OSRTC launches LAXMI QR Code

The QR Code introduces a secure and efficient payment option, reducing transaction time and enhancing passenger safety

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: To make bus travel more convenient, Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC), a state government undertaking, Wednesday introduced digital transactions with the launch of LAXMI QR Code for bus services available under the Location Accessible Multi-modal Initiative' (LAccMI) initiative.

This cashless and convenient payment method was launched by Commerce and Transport principal secretary Usha Padhee, who lauded OSRTC's initiative, highlighting the alignment of the LAXMI QR Code with the 5T initiative of the state government.

Padhee also highlighted the LAXMI QR Code's potential to revolutionize travel experiences.

Expressing pride over this technological achievement, OSRTC CMD Diptesh Pattnayak said that the launch of the LAXMI QR Code is reflective of



the agency's unwavering commitment to customer-centric services, which exemplifies the government's dedication to embracing digital solutions for a seamless travel experience. "This initiative perfectly aligns with the state government's transformative 5T initiative," he said.

Transport Commissioner Amitav Thakur emphasized the collaborative efforts that led to this innovation. "The partnership between OSRTC and HDFC was instrumental in realizing this payment method," he stated.

The LAXMI QR Code introduces a user secure, and efficient payment option, reducing transaction time and enhancing passenger safety.

"This innovative step aligns with OSRTC's commitment to 5T initiative, fostering progress through technological advancements in the transport

sector," an official said. Notably, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had launched LAccMI to make public transport more accessible and affordable in the state. The buses, connecting the remote parts of the state to the respective district headquarters, are expected to give villagers more autonomy and strengthen the infrastructure needed for a growing economy.

"Under this scheme, more than 1,000 buses will be rolled out in the villages across the state. 36 buses have been rolled out today that will provide bus services in 111 panchayats of the Malkangiri district," the CM had said launching the service.

In the first phase, bus services will be provided in rural areas of six districts namely Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Kalahandi and Gajapati.

Peddlers using online delivery for narco trade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: Online parcel delivery services are being used by peddlers in state to send drugs to their customers, a senior police officer said Wednesday.

The modus operandi is being studied by the police and necessary counter strategies will be devised, Bhubaneswar-Cuttack Police Commissioner Saumendra Priyadarshi said.

"We have noticed that peddlers are using online parcel delivery services in some areas to send drugs. In such cases, the service provider has no right to check what is being sent,"



In the first phase, 15 districts were covered under 'Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhijan' in Odisha, but the programme has now been extended to all the districts

he said on the sidelines of the first meeting of the state-level

'Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhijan' committee.

At the meeting, organised by the Social Security and Empowerment of PwDs Department (SSEPD), it was decided to organise awareness drives to educate youths about the demerits of use of drugs.

Special focus should be given on campaigns through social media, and sports persons, youth icons and civil society organisations should be roped in for the drive, SSEPD principal secretary Bishnupada Sethi said.

In Odisha, 15 districts were covered under the 'Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhijan' in the first phase, and now, it has been extended to all 30 districts, officials said.

UNICEF launches course on behavioural change at FM Univ



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched a one-year course titled 'PG Diploma for Social and Behavioral Change' at the Fakir Mohan University's Nuapadhi campus Wednesday.

In a programme organised on the occasion, vice-chancellor of the university Santosh Kumar Tripathy made formal announcement regarding commencement of the course under the Journalism and Mass Communication department.

UNICEF Odisha CFO William Halon Jr attended the programme virtually along with Sabyasachi Pattnaik, chairman of the PG Council of the university, Sugata Roy, UNICEF expert, Bharatibala Pattnaik, head of journalism and communication department, and former director of SCSTRTI and senior adviser AB Otta.

In the opening address,

Bhartibala Pattnaik present information related to the course and encouraged all the students to enroll. The guests unveiled the brochure with details of the course while noting the importance of communication in social and behavioral change.

"Instead of confining the course to the classroom, the students should use it to address various important and neglected issues in society," said Pattnaik.

The department head informed that a five-day workshop on puppetry intervention for maternal, newborn and child healthcare is being organized by UNICEF in collaboration with the department.

"The workshop is being held from December 11 to 15. There are programmes being organised to demonstrate various types of puppet making and traditional puppet-show, theme-based shows at nearby villages as a part of social awareness campaign," he said.

Odisha vibrant hub for MSMEs: Archan

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: To address the needs of the MSME enterprises, Tally Solutions, one of India's leading business management software providers, Wednesday announced launch of TallyPrime 4.0.

Commenting on the launch here Archan Mukherjee, general manager east zone of Tally Solutions, said, "Odisha is one of the most vibrant states of India and home to over 4.5 lakh MSMEs largely concentrated across industries like manufacturing, electricity, gas and water supply and construction. With growing investments from the state into digitization and formalized process solutions, Bhubaneswar has emerged as one of the most promising zones for MSME/SMEs."

"TallyPrime 4.0 brings intuitive and powerful dashboards, effortless data import facility from excel and whatsapp for business as new features to take the business management system (bms) to the next level," said a press release.

Cold wave grips state, G Udayagiri coldest

Bhubaneswar: Cold wave conditions gripped the state Wednesday with the mercury falling below 10 degrees Celsius in several districts, officials said. G Udayagiri in Kandhamal district was the coldest place in the state at 8.4 degrees Celsius, followed by Kirei in Sundargarh at 9.2 degrees Celsius and Keonjhar at 9.6 degrees Celsius, they said. The twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack recorded a minimum temperature of 15 degrees Celsius, a notch below the normal, they added. Low visibility due to fog was also reported from different parts of the state, the weather office said. There will be no large change in the minimum temperature over the next four days, it said.

ECI team reviews election preparedness before 2024

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: Election Commission of India (ECI) December 12 and 13 reviewed the special summary revision (SSR) of electoral roll and preparedness for the upcoming general elections of 2024 with the participation of all District Election Officers and Collectors of the state.

"Chief Electoral Officer NB Dhal briefed the senior deputy election commissioners (DECs) Dharmendra Sharma and Nitesh Kumar Vyas here on the overall progress of SSR and election general preparedness of state machinery for the election to be held



in 2024," informed an official. The Collectors made a detailed presentation on the status of SSR and election preparedness, senior DECs emphasized on the early disposal of all pending forms for addition, deletion and corrections before the sched-

uled time fixed by ECI.

The ECI team emphasized the need to focus on women, young, elderly, PwD, third gender and PVTG electors to ensure that the electoral roll is inclusive. Political party and stakeholder consultation was emphasized. For the purity of Electoral Roll, careful and diligent field verification for deletions and additions was also emphasized.

All Collectors were sensitized on vulnerability mapping. They were also instructed to identify possible routes of movement of cash, liquor, drugs and put up effective enforcement mechanisms so as to ensure inducement free elections.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I, Mangaraj Das, residing at Vill.: Khosalpur, P.O.: Porgadei, P.S.: Kujang, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur formerly I was known as Manguli Das but now I am known as Mangaraj Das.

LOST

Sale Deed & ROR Lost It is hereby inform that Original Sales deed bearing No. 1095 dt.23.04.2001, Kahata No. 299, Plot No.11, executed by Bichitrananda Kanoongo in favour of Bairibandhu Behera & OLR Case No.1168/2009 has been lost by me on dt.05.12.2023 at 2.30 P.M. on the way while coming Badambadi Bus Stop at Badambadi to my house Plot No.B/1555, Sec.-6, Markatnagar, CDA, Bidanasi, Cuttack- 753014, if found I request to handover me and not to misuse. Pawan Kumar Agarwal, Mob.: 9437010933.

SPCB moved over stone quarry cluster

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: A letter has been written to the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) by social activist Jalendra Mohalik regarding objections to the proposed Khanjamahal and Mahumuhan stone quarry cluster.

The social activist, advocating for climate action and conservation efforts, wrote the letter on behalf of concerned residents of the Soro municipality in Soro block of Balasore district.

In the letter, Mohalik said, "Our collective concern revolves around the proposed establishment of a stone quarry cluster in Khanjamahal and Mahumuhan revenue villages. The primary issues I wish to highlight is that the proximity of villages (within 0.5 and 1.00 km respectively) to the Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary and Elephant reserves, which raises serious concerns about stone quarry activities in a delicate ecosystem."

Mohalik said that the depletion of stone sources in Khanjamahal and Mahumuhan poses a grave threat to the rich flora and fauna that have thrived for millions of years. Preserving this pristine environment is of paramount importance. He also said that the Bagudi Pahara-Khanjamahal-Mahumuhan areas fall within the Mayurbhanj Elephant Reserves according to state government Gazette notifications.

"The boundaries of elephant reserves, as per the Kuldiha ESZ notifications of August 2017, necessitate stringent protection. The existence of 10 stone crusher units within the Elephant corridors raises questions regarding their legality and compliance," he wrote.

The movement of heavy vehicles such as trucks and dumpers near the sites causes significant noise and sound pollution, adversely affecting local temples, hospitals, primary schools.



RUSH HOUR: A motorcyclist and a car driver having a heated exchange during traffic jam near Rasulgarh Square in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

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Mating of Olive Ridleys begins off Odisha coast



PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, Dec 13: Ahead of the annual mass nesting of endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles, pairs of these delicate marine creatures have begun emerging on the swirling sea waters off Odisha coast, officials said Wednesday.

Forest personnel on patrolling duties have sighted pairs of mating turtles. It's a prelude to the mass nesting of turtles which generally occurs between February and March every year. For undisturbed breeding of the aquatic animals, prohibition on sea fishing continues to remain in force in the marine sanctuary, officials said.

As many as 11.49 lakh female turtles had laid millions of eggs along the nesting beaches in Odisha this year.

Gahirmatha beach, off the Bay of Bengal coast, is incidentally acclaimed as the world's largest-known nesting ground of these animals.

Apart from Gahirmatha, these threatened aquatic animals turn up at Rushikulya river mouth and Devi river mouth for mass nesting.

On the serene surface of sea waters, the turtle surveying teams spotted hundreds of mating pairs along the Gahirmatha coast. Fishing prohibition is presently clamped in Gahirmatha zone to ensure disturbance-free mating of the marine animals. After the end of the mating season, most of the male turtles usually return leaving behind the female turtles to lay their eggs, said Gahirmatha forest range officer Manas Dash.

The female turtles virtually invade the nesting beaches usually at the dead of the night for

rine species.

Rise in mortality rate of mating turtles along the coastal water surface led to the clamping of prohibition as the gill nets used by the trawlers prove to be messengers of death for breeding turtles. The mute species, accorded as Schedule-1 animal under Wildlife Protection Act for its highly threatened status, get entangled in the nets for prolonged periods and die of asphyxiation. The turtles also perish in large numbers after getting hit by the fast moving propellers of the fishing trawlers, forest personnel said.

An Olive Ridley usually lays about 120 to 150 eggs from which hatchlings emerge after about 45 to 60 days. But not all eggs remain intact as predators devour it.

Besides, eggs are also washed away by sea waves during high tide. The eggs are incubated in the nest and grow, sans mother, to emerge as hatchlings.

laying eggs, the phenomenon otherwise described as 'arribada'. After laying eggs, the turtles leave the nesting ground and head for the sea.

Hatchlings emerge from these eggs after 45-60 days. It is a rare natural phenomenon where the babies grow without their mother, added the forest officer.

The ban on sea fishing remains in force round the year in Gahirmatha marine sanctuary as the seawater here is the most conducive habitat for these ma-

45 days after ban, Marine Fisheries dept yet to take up patrolling in sea

PARADIP: Even after over one and half months into the state government-imposed fishing ban period for the safe nesting of Olive Ridley turtles, the Marine Fishery department here is yet to take up patrolling in sea owing to lack of patrolling boats. The matter came to the light in the reply to a letter sought under Right to Information (RTI) Act.

Reports said that the state government has imposed restriction on fishing in sea from November 1 to May 31 for the nesting of rare Olive Ridley turtles off the state's coast. As per the restrictions, no fishermen or fishing boat can enter the prohibited zone during this period.

The Fisheries, Forest and Coast Guards personnel have been empowered to take action against the fishermen violating the order.

However, the Marine Fisheries department has not yet started patrolling and it is

still unclear whether it will start patrolling in coming days.

When contacted, marine fisheries officer Bijay Kar said patrolling has not been taken up due to lack of patrolling boats. The only MLC horse boat available with them is lying defunct since 2021, he said.

Moreover, they lack sufficient funds in their budget to take a boat on hire for patrolling. They can only take up patrolling after senior officials sanction them additional funds in budget and gave them approval for patrolling, he said.

Currently, only the coast guard and Rajnagar Forest department personnel are conducting patrolling in the sea, he added.

Notably, the Marine Fisheries department in Paradip had purchased a patrolling boat 'Sea Horse' at a cost of ₹3 crore, September 25, 2007. Six permanent staffers were engaged to manage the boat but it is lying defunct since 2016.



SHOWCASING TRIBAL CULTURE: Artistes perform a tribal dance at the district level 'Lok Mahotsav Mondei' organised by the district administration in Nabarangpur, Wednesday

NHRC seeks ATR from CS on death of Juang tribals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Dec 13: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought for an Action Taken Report (ATR) from the state Chief Secretary on the mysterious deaths of 11 Juang tribals belonging to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) in Keonjhar district.

The apex rights watchdog passed the order after receiving a complaint petition October 29 filed by the Supreme Court advocate and human rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

In his petition, he pointed out that 11 Juang tribals, including a 6-month-old infant, died in Jantari village of Banspal block, Keonjhar district due to apathy, negligence, failure of the state Health and Family Welfare department and state Tribal Welfare department.

These PVTG people are languishing in abject poverty sans basic human rights. Three orphan kids of Sunia Juanga are devoid of bare necessities of life.

He pointed out that the Juang tribals are one of the 13 primitive tribal groups in the state. The nearest primary health centre at Gonasika is 15 km from the village while the nearest community health centre at Banspal is located 40 km away.

Jantari is a village inhabited by 100 Juang families, who are



among the most primitive tribal community in Keonjhar district. Of the 47,095 Juangs in state enumerated in 2011 census, 26,707 reside in Keonjhar district, mostly concentrated in Banspal, Telkoi and Harichandanpur administrative blocks.

The medical team, however, admitted that contamination of water could be an issue as two solar-powered drinking water projects in the village had become defunct. Juang is one of the 13 PVTGs and one of the total 62 tribes found in Odisha.

The auto-asiatic ethnic group is mostly found in and around Gonasika hills of Keonjhar. The victims Sunia Juanga, 35, his wife Rashmi, 30, and their six-month-old daughter Nani were affected by fever and cold and admitted to the district headquarters hospital about 50 km from Jantari village.

After treatment, they recovered and returned home in good health but Nani reportedly died soon after. Ten days after Nani's

death, Sunia died and Rashmi also met the same fate, on the 13th day of her husband's death.

The couple's three children are now left orphaned, Tripathy stated that health services are non-existent as the nearest primary health centre is 15 km in distance while the block headquarters is about 40 km from the village.

None of the deceased tribals was a beneficiary of the state-sponsored Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY). The local administration is oblivious to their problems. All these are happening despite the fact that Keonjhar district has the highest collection of district mineral foundation (DMF) funds.

The money should have been utilised in priority sectors like supply of safe drinking water, healthcare services, education facilities and fulfilling the bare necessities of life and other basic amenities for the local inhabitants considered to be 'Sons of the Soil', Tripathy added.

Man held for raping minor step daughter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Dec 13: Police arrested a man from Barbil area for allegedly raping his 16-year-old step daughter and forwarded him to court Wednesday. The traumatised minor girl was kept at a short stay home for counseling.

The accused father was identified as 32-year-old Md Alam. As per reports, after the death of the girl's father, her mother got married to a Muslim man and had been residing at his home along with her two daughters. However, Alam had been raping one of the girls for months despite her protests.



The girl narrated the incident to her mother seeking help. However, as her mother could not save her, she left her home December 8 and sought police help.

Barbil police then rescued the minor girl and kept her at child line centre and after arrest forwarded Md Alam to court, December 9. "After getting complaint, a case (341/2023) was registered and the accused was forwarded to court after his arrest December 9," said Barbil IIC RK Muduli.



SPLENDID PERFORMANCE: Artistes enacting a scene from a play 'Keda' at the National Theatre Festival Shree Ranga Samagam held at the Biju Patnaik auditorium inside the Sambalpur University premises, Wednesday

Youth gets 20-yr RI for minor's rape

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur Town, Dec 13: The Additional District and Sessions Court Judge Abhijit Palai here convicted a youth for raping a nine-year-old girl and sentenced him to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) Wednesday. The judge also slapped a fine of ₹70,000 on him and in default the convict has to undergo additional 21 months in jail, the judge observed.

As per the case diary, the convict Prakash Mallick aka Tukulu, 23, of Alakunda Nuagaon village committed the crime August 5, 2022. The minor victim was playing with other students in her school. Due to a headache, she came out of her school when Prakash told the girl that her mother had gone to her aunt's



house and took her with him in pretext of going near her mother.

Prakash then took the girl to a pump house on Pritipur road and raped her. After committing the crime, when Prakash took the girl on his cycle to drop her at home, her family members spotted Prakash with the vic-

tim. Prakash after dropping the girl fled from the spot. The girl later told her ordeal before her family members and the mother of the girl lodged a written complaint at Binjharpur police station in this regard. As per her complaint, a case (469/2022) was registered under sections of IPC 376 (A), (B) and under Section 6 of POCSO act and after arrest police forwarded him to court.

The judge Abhijit Palai pronounced the judgement after hearing from 21 witnesses and going through the police investigation report. The judge also ordered the district legal services authority (DLSA) to give away ₹7 lakh compensation to the victim, said special public prosecutor Rajib Mohanty who was pleading the case from the government's side.

3 arrested for Posing as Maoists, bid to extort ₹60L from trader

PNN & AGENCIES

Jajpur, Dec 13: Three persons were arrested in Jajpur district Wednesday for allegedly making lewd comments targeting college-going girls, police said.

Locals caught them and thrashed them, before they were handed over to the police, they said.

These men were harassing girls for quite some time in Dharmasala area asking for their phone numbers. When their advances were rejected, they allegedly also threatened some girls, police said.

Some of the girls told their families about it. On Wednesday, the girls were on the way to their college with their families and some locals following them. As soon as they reached Kanpur Chhak, these three men made some obscene remarks, and they were caught.

The accused were thrashed by locals and the family members of the girls before the police were called.

"We have arrested three persons for stalking and harassing girls," said Tapan Nayak, the inspector-in-charge of Dharmasala police station.

Husband hacks woman to death

Bhawanipatna: A man allegedly hacked his wife to death following a family feud at Goipita village under Bhawanipatna Sadar police limits in Kalahandi district, Wednesday morning. The deceased was identified as Mina Bhatti, 47, and the accused husband as Mohan Bhatti, 53, of the village. Sources said the couple used to get into frequent quarrels due to family disturbances. An argument ensued between them Tuesday night after which Mohan lost his cool and hacked his wife with an axe leading to her death on the spot. Other villagers informed the police after they came to know about the incident. Informed, Sadar police reached the spot and sent the body for post-mortem. Police also arrested the accused Mohan from the spot.

While two of the accused are residents of Kalahandi, the two others belong to Rayagada and Jharsuguda districts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Koraput, Dec 13: Four people, including two women, who attempted to extort ₹60 lakh from a trader in Rayagada district posing as Maoists were arrested, a police officer said Wednesday. The four had called up the trader, identifying themselves as Maoists and demanded the money for their organisation earlier this month.

They had also threatened to try him in a kangaroo court and eliminate him if he failed to meet the demand or tried to report the matter to the police.

"As the trader received continuous calls from them and got an extortion letter at his home, he lodged a complaint at Doraguda police station," Rayagada district



Superintendent of Police Vivekananda Sarma said. A special team was formed to investigate the case and the callers were arrested Tuesday, he said.

"During interrogation, it was found that they were not related to any Maoist organisation. They had posed as Maoists as people seldom complain to the police against Maoists," the SP added.

While two of the accused are residents of Kalahandi district, the two others belong to Rayagada and Jharsuguda districts.

The police have appealed to people not to panic if they receive phone calls from so-called Maoists. In such cases, they were advised to approach the nearest police station and file complaints.

GOVT. OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, PATNAGARH
E-mail: eerw_ptng@yahoo.in, Phone No. - 06658-222121
e Procurement Notice
IFB IDENTIFICATION NO. EEPTNG-Online-11/2023-24

No.O-1784:-

1 Name of work	Construction of Sub-Centre Building		
2 Total No. of work	34 (Thirty Four) Nos. Building works		
3 Time for completion	06 (Six) calendar months		
4 Approximate estimated cost	34.29 Lakh to 34.89 Lakh		
5 Mode of submission of tender	Tender should be submitted online in www.tendersorissa.gov.in		
6 Other details are as follow			

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding		Last date and time of seeking tender clarification	Date & time of opening of tender
		From	To		
Executive Engineer, R.W. Divn., Patnagarh	EEPTNG-Online-11/2023-24	18.12.2023 at 11.00 A.M.	01.01.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.	30.12.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.	02.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M.

● Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
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Whoever has courage can give courage to others just as the flame of the candle can light up another.

THE MOTHER



SDRs for Green Finance

The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai is an opportunity to reflect on what these large, costly, and carbon-intensive international summits aim to achieve. Instead of being cynical exercises in pointless pageantry, such gatherings could serve as platforms for advancing the transformative changes required to mitigate the worst effects of today's climate crisis.

But to achieve this, political leaders must stop bickering over the wording of national policy commitments that will take effect only in the distant future, well beyond their own tenures, and shift their focus to concrete actions that could unlock funding for climate-mitigation projects across the developing world.

Given that lower-income countries are still waiting for the relatively small amount of climate funds promised to them more than a decade ago, this may seem like a pipe dream. But even within the global economy's current institutional framework, there are viable, low-cost ways to bolster climate finance. Special drawing rights (SDRs), the International Monetary Fund's reserve asset, are a prime example.

As I have previously argued, SDRs could be used to fund climate adaptation and mitigation efforts in the developing world. The IMF's allocation of \$650 billion in SDRs in August 2021 served as a lifeline for lower-income countries during the COVID-19 pandemic. But these SDRs were distributed according to countries' IMF quotas, which depend heavily on their GDP. Consequently, low- and middle-income economies received just over \$200 billion. Even so, SDRs proved to be a crucial source of foreign exchange.

Rich countries, which did not need the \$400 billion of SDRs allocated to them, should have redirected these resources toward climate funds or regional development banks. Regrettably – and inexplicably – they did not. And even if they had, re-channeling the funds in this way would have increased developing countries' debt burdens.

Given that SDRs are not a currency but rather a potential claim on a currency, they function as accounting units within the IMF and do not involve any issuance costs. When maintained solely as reserve assets, they are not considered IMF loans and thus do not have to be repaid. It is only when countries convert some of their SDR holdings into hard currency that they must pay the annual interest rate, which is based on the interest rates on short-term debt denominated in the five currencies underpinning SDRs: the US dollar, the euro, the yen, the renminbi, and the British pound. At 4.1%, it is significantly lower than the rates that multilateral development banks typically offer to lower-income countries.

Issuing SDRs is a relatively low-cost and practical way to provide highly indebted countries with foreign-exchange reserves. That is why, together with more than 140 other individuals and organisations, I signed a letter urging world leaders at COP28 to recognise the role that both new and existing SDRs could play in helping countries achieve their climate targets and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

A new issuance of SDRs would offer immediate relief to countries facing balance-of-payments constraints, particularly those grappling with both debt and climate challenges. Moreover, regular, periodic SDR issuances, in line with global GDP growth, could provide developing countries with the fiscal and foreign-exchange flexibility they need to invest in development- and climate-related initiatives.

But first, we must change the way SDRs are allocated. Because SDRs are currently based on IMF quotas, they are disproportionately allocated to rich countries that control global reserve currencies. These countries simply do not need SDRs and are unlikely to use them. To establish a more equitable system, the recent report by the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism (of which I was a member) outlines several reforms aimed at ensuring that new issuances are focused on low- and middle-income countries.

One way to achieve this is to allocate poorer countries double or triple their IMF quotas. But while this approach would undoubtedly be more efficient and useful, ensuring that a greater share of international liquidity is used, it does not adequately address each country's specific vulnerabilities and needs.

To this end, the IMF could introduce targeted allocations, with eligibility criteria focusing on exposure to climate change, terms-of-trade shocks, interest-rate fluctuations, capital-flow volatility, and other external forces beyond the control of affected countries. Admittedly, this would require amending the IMF's Articles of Agreement. But that is not an insurmountable obstacle, particularly if the organisation's major shareholders, such as the G7 countries, endorse such a change. Strangely, rich countries have not considered this option, even though it would not cost them anything.

Moreover, if the G7 and other rich countries truly want to regain some degree of moral legitimacy, their first step should be to re-channel their SDRs to lower-income countries. These transfers must be non-conditional and not add to developing countries' debt burdens.

The ineffectiveness of using dedicated funds like the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Trust has also become increasingly apparent. The RST, which was supposed to raise \$50 billion, has raised less than \$30 billion in contributions so far and disbursed a small fraction of that. Additionally, concerns about delays, criteria for selecting recipients, and the conditions attached to the loans have compounded the problem. We could easily develop simpler and more efficient mechanisms for re-channeling SDRs, requiring only the payment of the SDR interest rate.

It is startling that such a simple, painless, and virtually cost-free solution has so few advocates. Instead of engaging in fruitless discussions about "blending" public and private finance – a strategy that has yet to generate the trillions of dollars for climate finance that was promised – the G7 countries must reach the low-hanging fruit of SDR issuance. By doing so, they could advance the fight against climate change and foster a fairer, more sustainable global economy.

The writer is Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

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WISDOM CORNER

Civilization is the progress toward a society of privacy. The savage's whole existence is public, ruled by the laws of his tribe. Civilization is the process of setting man free from men.

AYN RAND

Every particular in nature, a leaf, a drop, a crystal, a moment of time is related to the whole, and partakes of the perfection of the whole.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Tell your heart that the fear of suffering is worse than the suffering itself. And no heart has ever suffered when it goes in search of its dream.

PAULO COELHO



Dhurjati Mukherjee

THERE IS LACK OF POLITICAL COURAGE TO BEND THE EMISSION CURVE BY ENFORCING LAWS AND REGULATIONS



Jayati Ghosh

If the G7 and other rich countries truly want to regain some degree of moral legitimacy, their first step should be to re-channel their SDRs to lower-income countries

SPECTRUM CURRENCY

Lessons from dollarisation of economies



Sourajeet Pradhan

THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DOLLARISATION WERE PROFOUND IN BOTH ZIMBABWE AND ARGENTINA

The dollarisation of an economy, a phenomenon where a foreign currency, typically the US dollar, becomes the official or widely used currency in a country, has been a strategy employed by nations facing economic turmoil. Zimbabwe's economic saga is synonymous with hyperinflation, a condition where the value of a country's currency plummets drastically, leading to skyrocketing prices and economic chaos. The country experienced one of the worst cases of hyperinflation in history during the late 2000s, rendering its currency, the Zimbabwean dollar, virtually worthless.

The roots of Zimbabwe's economic crisis can be traced back to a combination of factors, including political instability, land reforms, and mismanagement of resources. The hyperinflationary spiral reached its zenith in 2008, when prices doubled every 24.7 hours, leading to severe economic and social consequences. In response to the economic meltdown, Zimbabwe adopted a strategy of dollarisation in 2009, abandoning its own currency and embracing a multi-currency system with the dollar as the primary medium of exchange. The move aimed to bring stability to the economy, control hyperinflation, and attract foreign investment. While dollarisation initially provided relief by curbing hyperinflation and stabilising prices, it also presented challenges. The country became highly dependent on

the monetary policies of the US, and the lack of control over its currency hindered Zimbabwe's ability to implement independent monetary policies.

Argentina, on the other hand, has faced recurring economic challenges, marked by periods of hyperinflation, currency devaluations, and sovereign debt crises. The Argentine peso has been subject to frequent fluctuations, eroding the purchasing power of citizens and causing economic uncertainty. In the early 2000s, Argentina grappled with a severe economic crisis that culminated in a default on its sovereign debt. In the aftermath, the country implemented various measures to stabilise its economy, including the pegging of the peso to the dollar.

Argentina's approach to dollarisation differed from Zimbabwe's, as it initially opted for a currency peg rather than outright adoption of the dollar. The peg aimed to maintain a fixed exchange rate between the peso and the dollar, providing a semblance of stability to the economy. However, maintaining a fixed exchange rate proved challenging for Argentina, and the peg eventually collapsed in 2002. Subsequently, the country faced a full-fledged economic crisis, leading to a series of policy changes, economic reforms, and eventually, a return to a floating exchange rate. Dollarisation in Argentina gained momentum in the aftermath of the peg's failure. Citizens, businesses, and the gov-

ernment increasingly turned to the dollar as a safe haven, reflecting a lack of confidence in the stability of the peso. Dollarisation in both Zimbabwe and Argentina brought about certain benefits. It curtailed hyperinflation, restored price stability, and facilitated international trade by providing a trusted and widely accepted medium of exchange. Additionally, dollarisation instilled confidence among foreign investors, as they could conduct business with a familiar and stable currency.

However, reliance on a foreign currency also posed challenges. Both countries experienced a loss of control over monetary policy, as decisions made by the US Federal Reserve directly impacted their economic conditions. Moreover, the inability to print and control their own currency limited their capacity to respond flexibly to domestic economic challenges.

The social implications of dollarisation were profound in both Zimbabwe and Argentina. While it brought a degree of stability to the economies, it also exacerbated income inequality. Dollarisation tends to favour those with access to foreign currency, often leaving marginalised populations struggling to cope with rising prices and limited access to essential goods and services.

In Zimbabwe, the adoption of the dollar led to a scarcity of physical cash, as the country became reliant on digital transactions. This shift had reper-

of a 20C hotter world reveal a bleak future and are a reminder that the scale of mitigation efforts has been grossly inadequate.

Similarly, another more depressing picture emerged from UN Environment Programme which warned that the world is on track to witness a 2.5-2.9-degree Celsius temperature rise above pre-Industrial levels if all current pledges under the Paris Agreement are implemented by 2030. This was not foreseen by experts a few years back as such temperature rise would lead to devastating consequences of climate change in terms of frequent extreme weather events in this century. It needs to be reiterated that decarbonisation must happen in every aspect of our lives from deploying greening solutions for heavy polluters to better monitoring so that environmental regulations are complied with. For decades, India has been dealing with the problem of development versus climate change. However, though carbon intensity may be reduced by 25-30% by 2030, the zero-emission target by 2050 may be difficult or rather impossible to keep.

With the current pressure on reducing dependence on fossil fuels, India, China and many other emerging economies will have to think afresh in evolving their development strategy. India faces a big challenge with huge developmental needs, having such a vast population whose living standards must be improved at a faster pace and thus energy needs would continue to increase. How India and other countries would reduce dependence on fossil fuels remains to be seen.

INFA

FOCUS DECARBONISATION

DIVIDED NATIONS



With the current pressure on reducing dependence on fossil fuels, India, China and many other emerging economies will have to think afresh in evolving their development strategy

the UK, \$24.5m from the US and \$10m from Japan – is a much-needed boost for the agreement.

Pledging money raises hopes but only when it's translated into reality will results be positive. According to OECD, the estimate of climate finance provided and mobilised by developed countries in 2020 was about \$83 billion, whereas Oxfam in its 'Climate finance shadow report' noted that the amount was merely \$21-24.5 billion. Thus there's a need to scale up resources several times through enhanced provision and mobilisation by the developed world, as pointed by Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav at the summit.

Regarding emissions, both the US and China lead the race with 40%, followed by India, the Russian Federation and Japan. But the situation has been changing as developing countries are rapidly moving towards industrialisation as well as urbanisation. Reports indicate that the top emitting countries of future

could come from the developing world – Brazil, India, South Africa and Indonesia. Their challenges are quite serious as they must encounter the twin problems of preserving environment while lifting hundreds of people out of poverty, and these get acute in their quest for industrialisation and urbanisation. Whatever may the targets be, the ability to control global emissions or move towards a net-zero goal in the next two decades appear to be impossible. There is lack of political courage to bend the emission curve by enforcing laws and regulations. Meanwhile, reports say that the world is likely to witness a 4-7-fold increase in heat-related deaths by mid-century. The Lancet's new global projections report last year warned that individuals were, on average, exposed to 86 days of health-threatening high temperature of which 60% were made at least twice as likely to occur because of human caused climate change. The governments are to blame. Projections

BJP's strategy

Sir, This refers to "Bhajan Lal Sharma to be new Raj CM," Orissa Post, Dec 13. The BJP surprised everyone by choosing new chief ministers in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh. Instead of selecting top contenders Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Vasundhara Raje, and Raman Singh, the party opted for Mohan Yadav, Bhajan Lal Sharma, and Vishnu Deo Sai. This decision seems to be a part of the BJP's larger strategy for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, aiming to balance caste equations and prevent the Opposition's use of caste as a weapon. This also marks the end of an era of chief ministers chosen during the time of AB Vajpayee and LK Advani. BJP has given the first tribal chief minister to Chhattisgarh, the country's only Yadav chief minister to Madhya Pradesh, and a Brahmin chief minister in Rajasthan. The message on this caste balancing will travel far and wide ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. It is an answer to the caste census card of the Opposition alliance. Also, all three chief ministers are below 60 years of age, bringing in next-generation leadership and a 'New Team BJP' in important states as majority of voters are young. This is also a message to the second-rung leadership of the party that their future is bright in the party.

N Sadhasya Reddy, BANGALORE

Conserve energy

Sir, Energy can neither be created nor destroyed; it can only be converted from one form to another. Excessive fossil fuel is detrimental to man and environment. That is precisely why the conservation of energy in its different forms is a pressing need for leaders of the globe to take stock. The issue of global warming, and the nations of the world keen to ward off the looming danger of an irretrievable damage caused by the same, has put energy conservation at the top of the agenda of statesmen across the world. There are no two thoughts about "saving energy is akin to saving the earth." It is beautifully said "save today to survive tomorrow." Even if the resources are not present in abundance, prioritisation of energy utilisation can work wonders.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

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, Russagarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Outfits vow to resume stir if Centre tries to bring CAA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Dec 13: As tributes were paid Tuesday to five persons killed during an anti-CAA stir in Assam four years ago, various organisations have resolved to again build up a movement against the law if the government tried to implement it.

Memorial meetings were organised in different parts of the state, including Guwahati, by political parties as well as student and civil society organisations.

The state had witnessed widespread violent protests after the Citizenship (Amendment) Act or CAA was passed in Parliament in December 2019.

The All Assam Students' Union (AASU), which had been at the forefront of the anti-CAA movement, organised a memorial at Hatigaon Higher Secondary School field here.

Local residents also joined them in paying tributes to the five slain persons, including local teenager Sam Stafford, killed during the protests four years ago in different parts of the state.

Similar memorial prayers were organised by the AASU across the state.

The memorial prayers were held Tuesday as Stafford, the first person to be killed in the stir, died December 12, 2019.

AASU said it will continue stir against the CAA, and its partner organisations have also been staging protests against the Act in other northeastern states as well.

Independent legislator Akhil Gogoi, one of the prominent leaders of the anti-CAA agitation who was jailed for a prolonged period for his role as a Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) leader in 2019, said the agitators were ready to take to the streets again if the government tried to implement the Act.

"KMSS has resolved once again today that we will resume our agitation if the government attempts to implement CAA. We will start taking the matter to the public once again and take to the streets again, if needed," he asserted.

Gogoi, who now heads Rajjor Dal, a political party formed after



The anti-CAA movement, paid tributes at a programme organised by KMSS.

He also maintained that the anti-CAA agitation will go down the annals of history as one of the biggest movements and will serve as an inspiration for posterity.

Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP), another political outfit born post-anti CAA movement, also organised a memorial meeting at Panitola in Tinsukia district.

Party president Lurinjiyoti Gogoi, who was the AASU general secretary in 2019, said the sacrifices made by the people during the anti-CAA movement will always be remembered.

"We will continue to resist any attempt to implement the CAA," he said.

The Nagarikatta Sangshudhani Ain Birudhi Samannai Samiti, a civil society forum against the CAA, also organised a memorial meet in Guwahati.

Eminent litterateur Hiren Gohain, CPI(M) leader Hemen Das and Assam Trinamool Congress president Ripun Bora, among others, attended the meeting.

Later, talking to reporters, Gohain said the next course of action by the forum will be chalked out soon.

"Our Constitution does not base citizenship on religion. We will resist all attempts to deviate from its basic tenets. We will soon get to

gether and determine the next course of action to take forward the movement against the CAA," he said.

The CAA seeks to provide Indian citizenship to Hindus, Jains, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis entering India on or before December 31, 2014 from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan after five years of residence here.

It was passed by both Houses of Parliament and given the Presidential assent in December 2019, though the rules are yet to be notified.

Assam witnessed widespread anti-CAA agitation led by students and other organisations in early 2019 before the Lok Sabha polls, but it subsided after the 2016 format of the Bill lapsed in June 2019 when the term of then Lok Sabha ended as it could not be tabled and passed in Rajya Sabha.

When the Bill of the present CAA was passed in both Houses of Parliament in December 2019, the state witnessed one of the most violent protests for several days as agitators engaged in batch battles with police and administration in almost every major city or town, leading to the death of five persons.

This led to a crackdown by the state government, including arrests of leaders of the agitation, snapping of internet connectivity and imposition of curfew.

Do not interfere in Manipur's internal affairs, says Biren

AGENCIES

Imphal, Dec 13: Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh has asked his Mizoram counterpart Lalduhoma not to interfere in the internal affairs of the state. Singh said while neighbouring states can extend their support to resolve the ethnic strife in Manipur, he requested the Mizoram Chief Minister to refrain from commenting on the internal matters of another state.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of a programme here Tuesday, Singh said, "I have seen one comment from the newly appointed CM of Mizoram that the state police should not harass his people at Moreh. I think it is little beyond his constitutional rights. It is an internal matter of Manipur government. Moreh is a border town located on the India-Myanmar border in Tengnoupal district of Manipur."

Singh asserted, "I am mentioning all this because there is no disagreement or tussle between Manipur and Mizoram. There are Meiteis in Mizoram and Mizos in Manipur. There are more than a lakh Meiteis in Assam and Tripura too. In the Northeast, we all live together."

RECOGNITION TO SIKH MARRIAGE RITUALS

Anand Marriage Act implemented in J&K

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Dec 13: Detailed rules were framed by the Jammu and Kashmir administration for registration of marriages under Anand Marriage Act, which provides statutory recognition to marriage rituals of Sikhs, fulfilling their long-standing demand to not have to solemnise their marriages under the Hindu Marriage Act.

'Jammu and Kashmir Anand Marriage Registration Rules, 2023' has been framed for the registration of "Anand marriages", under which tehsildars concerned shall be the registrar of such marriages within their respective territorial jurisdiction, as per a government notification issued.

Sikh couples can apply for registration within a period of three months after solemnising their marriage



but face late fee if formalities are completed after the expiry of the deadline, reads the notification issued by a department of law, justice and parliamentary affairs, November 30.

"This has been a long pending demand and we are thankful to the Lt Governor for keeping his promise," Vice President of District Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee, Jammu Balvinder told PTI.

He said the implementation of the Anand Marriage

Act has made the community happy as they "were facing an identity crisis due to the non-availability of a separate Sikh marriage act".

The emergence of the Anand Marriage Act dates back to 1909 when the British Imperial Legislative Council passed a legislation for the recognition of the Sikh wedding ceremony Anand Karaj. The Act aimed to acknowledge and respect the customs and practices of the community.

Meghalaya exports 20 MT Khasi mandarins to Dubai

Shillong: Meghalaya has exported 20 metric tons of Khasi Mandarin to Dubai, officials said Wednesday. State Agriculture Minister Ampareen Lyngdoh said that at one point of time, the state would, only on a trial, internationally export 1.5 MT to 2 MT of mandarin and "today we are talking of 20 MT". "This step will instill a sense of security with our farmers telling them that we will grow together, we will benefit together," she said adding that the farmers are going to be dictating our economy.

In a significant stride towards sustainable market linkage, the Agriculture Marketing Board entered a MoU with the Lulu Group November 3. This strategic partnership aims to foster mutual growth and promote Meghalaya's agricultural products in the GCC countries, expanding global reach.

Expert panel to study sudden water surge in hot springs of Leh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Leh/Jammu, Dec 13: There has been an alarming rise in the water levels of hot springs in the Chumathang area of Leh district's Nyoma sub-division recently and a mechanism will be put in place to monitor it, officials said Wednesday.

The Geological Survey of India (GSI), the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology and other expert teams will formulate a white paper on the rise in the water levels and share the same with all stakeholders, especially the Ladakh administration, they said.



The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Secretary of the Union Territory of Ladakh Amit Sharma, the officials said, adding that senior teams of the National Disaster Management Agency, Geological Survey of India, Central Ground Water Board, National Institute of Hydrology, Western Himalayan Regional Centre and the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology attended it.

The formulation of the white paper will be followed by an advisory on 'dos and don'ts' for locals and the setting up of a regular hot springs water-level monitoring mechanism at Chumathang-Nyoma, Sharma said.

A threadbare brainstorming was held on the issue of the sudden surge of 2-3 metres in the water levels of Chumathang-Nyoma hot springs in the last 10 days of November, the officials said. The Chumathang hot springs are located in a small hamlet along the Indus river about 138 kilometres from Leh.

Tripura Cong asks ASI to study mosque site

Claiming that the area belongs to an old Jagannath temple, an RSS-backed outfit asked Muslims not to offer 'namaz' at the mosque recently

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Agartala, Dec 13: Tripura Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) Wednesday demanded an in-depth study by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to end the alleged land row over a mosque in South Tripura's Dimatali.

Recently, the Hindu Surksha Manch, an RSS-backed organisation backed by the ruling BJP, allegedly asked Muslims not to offer 'namaz' at the mosque claiming that the area belongs to an old Jagannath temple.

"We strongly condemn the development as Muslims have been offering namaz at Dimatali

mosque since 1993. The party wants the government to ask the ASI to undertake an in-depth study to resolve the dispute," TPCC president Asish Kumar Saha told reporters at Congress Bhavan here.

He alleged that the BJP and their associates have been trying to destabilise social harmony ever since it came to power in the northeastern state in 2018.

"Another RSS-backed body, the Janajati Suraksha Manch (JSM), has decided to organise a rally December 25 demanding removal of ST status of those tribals who converted to Christianity. I urge the government not to grant

permission to organise such a programme as it may trigger a communal flare up," he said.

The CPI(M) has also voiced concern over the alleged denial to Muslims to offer namaz at Dimatali mosque by a ruling party-backed organisation.

This is a ploy to destabilise communal harmony and I hope the government will not tolerate such an act, CPI(M) state secretary Jitendra Choudhury had told a press conference Tuesday.

Belonia sub-division SDPO Abhijit Das ruled out any communal tension at Dimatali. "A three-day Milan Mela, which was inaugurated by Chief Minister Manik Saha at Dimatali December 10, ended peacefully. We heard some people claim there was a Jagannath temple at the mosque site," he said.

Srinagar experiences coldest night

SRINAGAR: Srinagar experienced the coldest night of the season as Kashmir continued to reel under cold wave-like conditions with the mercury staying several degrees below the freezing point across the valley last night, officials said Wednesday. The city recorded a minimum temperature of minus 5.3 degrees Celsius -- down from the previous night's minus 1.5 degrees Celsius, officials said. They said last night was the coldest night of the season so far in Srinagar -- the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir -- lower than the previous low of minus 4.8 degrees Celsius recorded Sunday night. The meteorological office said the weather would remain mainly dry till December 15 but mild precipitation is expected over the weekend. The 40-day-long period of harsh winter cold, known locally as the 'Chillai Kalan', begins each year December 21 and ends January 30.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. O-1791
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, BARIPADA
 Tel. No. 06792-254029, Fax No. 06792-259464
 E-Mail: eerwss_bpd@rediffmail.com, eerwss_bpd@ori.nic.in
 No. 4302 Dt. 12.12.2023
1st Corrigendum Notice to Bid Identification No. 23 of 2023-24, Date: 05.12.2023
 1. Due to non publication of the Tender Call Notice in One Local English daily & Two Local Odia dailies Newspaper for one day on or before 11.12.2023, tender documents could not be uploaded in the website of <https://tendersorissa.gov.in> in time. Hence date & time of availability of bid documents in portal may be treated as from 17.00 hours of Dt. 14.12.2023 to Dt. 21.12.2023 upto 17.00 hours and opening of tender on Dt. 22.12.2023 at 11.00 A.M.
 All other terms & conditions remain unaltered.
 Sd./- Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Baripada
 OIPR-25014/11/0016/2324

No.MM-365
FOREST DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER
BARIPADA FOREST DIVISION
 e-mail - dfo.baripada@odisha.gov.in
Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. - DFO-BPD-PRO-EXP-05/2023-24 Dt. 12.12.2023
 1. Number of works - 2 (Two numbers of work)
 2. Approximate estimated cost:- 25.25 lakh to 46.70 lakh
 3. Period of completion:- 3 months.
 4. Date & Time of availability of bid documents in the portal:- Dt.17.12.2023 to 31.12.2023
 5. Last Date / Time of receipt of bid in the portal:- Dt.31.12.2023 upto 5.00 PM
 6. Date of opening of bid:- Dt.01.01.2024 at 11.00 AM
 7. Name & address of the Office inviting bid:- O/o the Divisional Forest Officer, Baripada Forest Division, Baripada, Mayurbhanj.
 Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>
 Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer
 Baripada Forest Division
 OIPR-08065/11/0010/2324

No.L-193
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE PROJECT DIRECTOR,
WATERSHEDS, RAYAGADA
 e-mail: pdws.rayagada@gmail.com
 Notice No. 01 Dt.12.12.2023
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Identification No. 01 / PDWS-RGDA / 2023-24 Dt.12.12.2023
 1 Nos. of work : 02 (two) nos.
 2 Tended amount in Rs. : Rs.12,51,262.22/- each
 3 Period of completion : 120 days
 4 Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal : From 10.00 Hrs. of 18.12.2023 to 17.30 Hrs. of 26.12.2023
 5 Last date /time of receipt of original documents in the tender box at the office of the undersigned. : Before 17.30 Hrs. of 29.12.2023
 6 Date & Time of opening of bids : 11.00 Hrs. of 30.12.2023 onwards
 7 Name and Address of the officer inviting bid : Project Director, Watersheds, Near Govt. Girls High School, Rayagada - 765001
 Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
 Sd./- Project Director
 Watersheds, Rayagada
 OIPR-08166/11/0002/2324

No.C-2082:-
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
P.H. DIVISION, SAMBALPUR
 Phone No.: (0663)-2412135, Email ID: eephdsbp@gmail.com
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH
e-Procurement
Bid Identification No. SEPHSBP-09/2023-24 Dt.11.12.2023
 01 Name of the work : 1 No. work
 02 Type of bid : Single Bid System
 03 Estimated cost : Rs. 33.05 lakh
 04 Period of completion : 3 (Three) calendar months
 05 Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal : From 11.00 A.M. of Dt. 18.12.2023 to 5.00 P.M. of 29.12.2023
 06 Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal : 5.00 P.M. of 29.12.2023
 07 Date & time of opening of technical bids : At 11.30 A.M. of 30.12.2023
 08 Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Executive Engineer, P.H. Division, Sambalpur, Brooks' Hill, Near Stadium, At/P.O. - Motijharan, Dist. - Sambalpur - 768001
 Further details can be seen from the website <http://tenders.ori.nic.in> or www.tendersorissa.gov.in
 Sd./- Executive Engineer
 P.H. Division, Sambalpur
 OIPR-13026/11/0017/2324

No. O-1794
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA email id: eerwgunupur@gmail.com
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, GUNUPUR
e-Procurement Notice for Buildings Works
 (Tender SERWGNP - Online - 05/2023-24) Dated: 12.12.2023
 Lr. No. 4176
 1. Name of the Work : Building Works
 2. Total No. of Works : 03 Nos. (Percentage rate tender)
 3. Estimated cost : As mentioned in Col. 3 of TCN Annexure
 4. Class of Contractor : As mentioned in Col. 5 of TCN Annexure
 5. Period of Completion : As mentioned in Col. 4 of TCN Annexure
 6. EMD : As mentioned in Col. 6 of TCN Annexure
 7. Paper Cost : As mentioned in Col. 7 of TCN Annexure
 8. Other details :
 Procurement Officer : Bid Identification No. : Availability of Tender Online for Bidding : Date & Time of Opening of Tender
 From : To :
 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5
 Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Gunupur : SERWGNP Online : 16.12.2023 : 26.12.2023 : 27.12.2023 :
 : 05/2023-24 : at 10.00 A.M. : upto 5.00 P.M. : at 11.00 A.M.
 9. The amount put to tender is exclusive of 18% GST. The intending bidder should offer their rates which shall be exclusive of GST applicable as per norms. GST as applicable on works contract shall be paid over the bill amount at the time of payment of bill. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents, which is available in website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in. Any subsequent addendum or corrigendum will be made available in the above website.
 OIPR-25170/11/0008/2324 Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Gunupur

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
BALASORE (ROADS & BUILDINGS) DIVISION - I
 No. B-1444 At/P.O.: Padhuanpada, Balasore
 Contact No.: 06782262045, E-Mail ID: ee_blsrb@yahoo.co.in
BID INVITATION NO. SE (R and B) BLS-Divn.-I-70/2023-24
Letter No. 12347 Date: 13.12.2023
 1 The Superintending Engineer, Balasore (R&B) Division-I, Balasore on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate Bids to be received in ONLINE MODE only for road and Building Works
 2 No. of Work : 1 No.
 3 Nature of Work : Building work of Balasore (R&B) Division - I
 4 Class of Contractor : "B" Class Contractor
 5 Approx. value of work : Rs.78.27 lakh
 6 Tender Cost : Rs.10,000/-
 7 Availability of Bid Documents in the website : From 10.00 hours of Dt.16.12.2023 to 16.00 hours of Dt.29.12.2023
 8 Date of Opening of Bid : Dt.30.12.2023 at 10.00 hours
 9 Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website: <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>
 Sd./- Superintending Engineer
 Balasore (R&B) Division-I
 OIPR-34157/11/0023/2324

No. CAD-3250
INTEGRATED TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, RAYAGADA
 E-mail: itdarayagada@gmail.com, Contact No. 06856-235165, PIN Code - 765001
 No. 4555/2023 Dated: 12 December 2023
 VII-52/23
e-Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. ITDA RGDA - 07/2023-24
 1. The Project Administrator, ITDA, Rayagada on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate Bids through Online mode in Double Cover System for the type of works given in the table, from the eligible contractors of Class ("B" Class) or of equivalent range registered with the State Government and Central Government/MES/Railways for execution of Building work. The proof of registration from the appropriate authority shall be enclosed along with the Bid. The successful bidder who has not registered under State Government has to register under the State PWD in appropriate class of eligibility before signing of the agreement. The bid should be submitted only online on the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
 Type of Works : Construction of Buildings
 No. of Works : 01 No. (One)
 Amount put to tender : As laid down in the DTCN
 Tender Paper Cost : As laid down in the DTCN
 E.M.D. amount required : As laid down in the DTCN
 Period of Completion : As laid down in the DTCN for each work
 Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal : From 10.00 A.M. of 15.12.2023 to 29.12.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.
 Last date/time for receipt of bid in the portal : From 10.00 A.M. of 15.12.2023 to 29.12.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.
 Last date/time for submission of paper cost & other documents : From 10.00 A.M. of 16.12.2023 to 29.12.2023 upto 5.00 P.M. (During office hours in working days) through Registered Post
 Date of opening of Tender : 30.12.2023 (at 11.00 A.M.)
 Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in
 Sd./- Project Administrator, ITDA, Rayagada
 OIPR-26020/11/0010/2324



A man surfs the waves on the Eisbach River, one day after heavy snowfall hit Bavaria and its capital Munich, Germany



Native American artists perform the Fancy Shawl dance outside Victoria Memorial in Kolkata, West Bengal



Fog engulfs the Taj Mahal on a cold winter morning in Agra, Uttar Pradesh



Statues protected by tarpaulins are seen in the choir of the Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral, which was ravaged by a fire in 2019 that sent its spire crumbling down, as restoration works continue a year before its reopening to the public in Paris, France



Marine Commandos of the Indian Navy during a simulated hostage rescue operation, as part of the rehearsals for Navy Day celebrations in Mumbai, Maharashtra



Devotees take part in a procession to mark the 2nd anniversary of the Kashi Vishwanath Dham in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh



Members of the pro-Ukrainian Russian ethnic Siberian Battalion practice at a military training close to Kyiv, Ukraine. Ukraine's military has formed a battalion of soldiers made up entirely of Russian citizens who want to fight against Russian invasion



Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) President Sukhbir Singh Badal performs 'sewa' at the Golden Temple on the eve of the party's 103rd foundation day in Amritsar, Punjab

national

of the day quote

All remaining junior engineers, additi Subsequent to the collapse in Silkyara Tunnel on NH-134, an expert committee has been constituted by the government for investigation of the reasons for collapse of the tunnel and for recommendations in respect of SOPs to be followed in case of tunnel collapse/tunnel construction

The real-time data of RTIS helps in tracking the location and speed of locomotives and trains. The RTIS is linked with the National Train Enquiry System and Control Office Application system

We decided to fulfill the housing requirements of our people with money from the state exchequer. So, we launched Abua Awas Yojana with a target to provide houses to 8 lakh people. The way people are applying for the scheme, the number of applications would cross 10 lakh

SHORT TAKES

Bhajan Lal Sharma to be sworn in Dec 15

Jaipur: The swearing-in ceremony of Bhajan Lal Sharma, the Chief Minister-designate in Rajasthan, and his deputies Diya Kumari and Prem Chand Bairwa will be held December 15. Governor Kalraj Mishra will administer the oath. According to a Raj Bhavan statement, the swearing-in ceremony will be held Friday outside Albert Hall in Ram Niwas Bagh. The statement said Mishra congratulated Sharma and approved the swearing-in ceremony programme proposed by him.

Gangster injured in police firing

Chandigarh: A dreaded gangster involved in several murder cases was injured in police firing when he tried to flee from custody in Punjab's Mohali district, officials said Wednesday. Karanjit Singh alias Jassa Happa, the main shooter of gangster Rajesh Kumar alias Sonu Khatri, who is based abroad, and terrorist Harvinder Rinda, was involved in six murder cases, said Sandeep Goel, Assistant Inspector General, Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF).

Leopard cub found dead

New Delhi: A leopard cub was found dead on National Highway 44 near the Khatuashyam temple in outer-north Delhi's Alipur in the early hours of Wednesday, police said. Police received a call about it around 4 am, they said. A police team reached the spot and found the animal's body, an official said, adding that it appeared to be a case of a road accident. The forest department was informed for further necessary action, he added.

Man detained on espionage charges

Mumbai: A man working at the Naval Dockyard here was arrested by the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Maharashtra police Wednesday for allegedly providing information about naval installations to Pakistani intelligence operatives, officials said. The accused, who is in his early 20s, was working as a civil apprentice at the dockyard, said an ATS release.

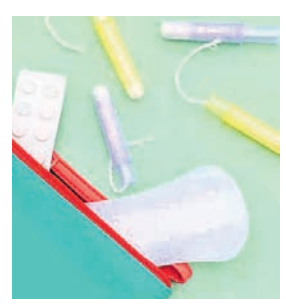


India still remembers the attack on our Parliament in 2001. Today's security breach is an agonizing echo of that dark day, reopening wounds on its anniversary

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CM

HEALTH MIN FORMULATES DRAFT MENSTRUAL HYGIENE POLICY

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has formulated a draft menstrual hygiene policy in consultation with stakeholders, Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani informed the Rajya Sabha Wednesday. The Centre already implements a scheme for the promotion of menstrual hygiene among girls in the 10-19 age group, she told the House



SECURITY BREACH IN LS

Oppn raises security concerns

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 13: The home ministry was Wednesday asked to launch a security review of Parliament as members of opposition at an all-party meeting demanded a through probe into the incident of two persons jumping into the Lok Sabha chamber and also sought action against BJP MP Prathap Simha who facilitated their passes.

The communication from Lok Sabha Secretary General to Special Secretary (Home) came as Speaker Om Birla convened the all-party meeting in which members from different parties flagged a variety of issues and raised security concerns in Parliament's new building, more so as the security breach happened on the anniversary of the 2001 terror attack on the institution. Trinamool Congress members Sudip Bandhopadhyay and Kalyan Banerjee cited the expulsion of party member Mahua Moitra for letting outsiders use her log-in credentials as they pressed for action against Simha. Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury demanded a thor-



Police personnel detain a woman protesting outside the Parliament building

ough investigation into the incident, noting that the day marks the anniversary of the 2001 Parliament attack. Government sources, however, played down the chances of any serious action against Simha, saying it is a routine practice for MPs to write for passes for people and they cannot be blamed for their conduct. Birla assured the members that all steps will be taken to step up security and rule out such a breach in future. Some members noted that the distance between galleries and the

chamber is much less in the new building of Parliament, and suggested that glass barricade should be raised to avoid any repeat of such an incident. Some pressed for deployment of full-body scanners on the lines of airports, while a few others flagged the crowded lobbies outside chambers. RSP member N K Premachandran wondered if there was a Khalistani angle to the incident as the smoke from canister used by one of the accused was yellow, a colour associated with separatists.

Khalistani activist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun has been issuing threats against India. Speaking to reporters, Banerjee also faulted the architecture of Parliament's new building and hit out at Home Minister Amit Shah for the security failure. "He must resign," the TMC MP said. Birla had convened the meeting to discuss the incident in Lok Sabha when Zero Hour submissions were being made by members. Official sources said Birla has taken stock of existing security measures. A decision has been taken to suspend issuing visitors' passes.

Meanwhile, the Lok Sabha Secretariat reminded MPs to get their 'smart cards' prepared for accessing the new building. It also reminded them that access to the Parliament House is also facilitated at building gates, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha lobbies, and certain other places with the help of the Facial Recognition System. In a bulletin, the secretariat said while several members have smart cards, those who have not registered for the Visitors' Management System should do so.

Parliament clears Bill to repeal 76 outdated laws

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: Parliament Wednesday passed a bill to repeal 76 redundant and obsolete laws with the government saying the move is part of its continuing efforts to improve the ease of living and doing business.

In December last year, the government introduced the Repealing and Amending Bill to cull 65 old laws. But the bill could not come up for discussion in subsequent sessions. The government later moved an amendment to add 11 more laws to the list, bringing the total to 76 laws. The bill proposes to repeal outdated laws like the Land Acquisition (Mines) Act, 1885 and the Telegraph Wires (Unlawful Possession) Act, 1950. The bill also seeks to repeal certain Appropriation Acts passed by Parliament in the recent past. Replying to the debate, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said the Modi government since coming to power in 2014 has repealed 1,486 defunct laws in order to improve ease of living for common man. With the 76 more

- The Repealing and Amending Bill, 2023 was cleared in the Rajya Sabha with a voice vote
- Lok Sabha had cleared the legislation July 27 this year

added, the list now stands at 1,562 such laws, he added. "Modi Ji has a principle of minimum government maximum governance, we are moving swiftly in this direction. It will improve ease of doing business and living," Meghwal said. He noted that no such initiative was undertaken by the previous government. During the UPA rule between 2004-2014, not a single law was repealed, Meghwal said. He also said that a sunset clause is under consideration of the government. The law minister was responding to DMK member P Wilson who had stated that as far as repealing bills are concerned there should be a sunset clause in all the bills. GVL Narasimha Rao of the BJP termed the repealing of the obsolete laws as a "massive clean-up" exercise taken by the Modi government.

BITCOIN SCAM SC TRANSFERS FIRS TO CBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: In a significant development, the Supreme Court Wednesday ordered transfer of over 40 FIRs related to the Bitcoin cryptocurrency scam to the CBI for further investigation and shifted the trial to a Delhi court.

Observing that the accused, who are on anticipatory bail, cannot be allowed to "stultify" the ongoing probe, the top court vacated its August 30, 2019 order granting them the relief of pre-arrest bail.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said now the accused, if not granted regular bail by other courts, will have to seek the relief from the Delhi High Court.

It said the trial of cases wherein the FIRs have been registered will now be conducted at a special CBI court at Rouse Avenue in New Delhi. The FIRs were lodged by several agencies, including the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate, besides the local police of Maharashtra, West Bengal, Delhi, Chandigarh, Punjab, Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir. Dismissing as many as 32 petitions filed by the accused, the bench said, "We are of the view that allegations levelled in the FIRs merit investigation."

Article 32 of the Constitution allows Indian citizens to seek constitutional remedy directly from the Supreme Court if they are deprived of their fundamental rights. While taking back the relief of anticipatory bail granted earlier, the bench said, "We cannot allow you to stultify the investigation by not cooperating with the probe agency."



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chhattisgarh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and others during the oath ceremony of Chief Minister-designate Vishnu Deo Sai in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. Newly sworn-in Deputy Chief Ministers Arun Sao and Vijay Sharma are also seen

3 dead as water tank collapses at railway station

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Dec 13: Three persons were killed and over 30 sustained injuries after a portion of an over a century-old overhead water tank collapsed onto the platform shed in West Bengal's Bardhaman station, crushing passengers beneath it Wednesday, officials said.

The incident prompted the railways to establish a three-member inquiry committee, while West Bengal GRP filed an FIR in connection with the incident.

A statement by the Eastern Railway said, "About 12:08 pm, a portion of the side wall of the water tank placed above platform No. 2 & 3 of Bardhaman station broke and fell on the platform. Train movement was suspended through line 1, 2 & 3 of Bardhaman as a safety measure. Railway officials and rescue



teams rushed to the site." Earlier in the day, the Eastern Railway had said a large metal water-filled tank fell on waiting passengers on the combined platforms 2 and 3 at Bardhaman station. The tragedy ignited a verbal clash between the ruling TMC in Bengal and the opposition BJP, in power at the Centre, as the TMC accused the railways of "in-

sufficient maintenance." The railways has, however, denied allegations of lack of maintenance as baseless. A portion of the 133-year-old metal water tank, constructed in 1890, fell onto waiting passengers on the combined platforms 2 and 3 at Bardhaman station, as confirmed by an Eastern Railway (ER) official. All injured individuals were

transported to Burdwan Medical College and Hospital, where two were declared dead, and the third succumbed a few hours later, as reported by a Purba Bardhaman district official.

The deceased were identified as Sonaram Tudu, Kanti Bahadur, and Mafeza Khatun. An ER spokesperson said, "We have formed a three-member inquiry committee to probe into the matter. We are looking into the incident."

The railways announced compensation of Rs 5 lakh each to the kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 and Rs 5,000 to those with serious and mild injuries, respectively, according to an ER official. A senior officer of West Bengal GRP noted that an FIR is being lodged in connection with the incident, and investigations will commence soon.

CROP RESIDUE BURNING MUST STOP: SC

has been choking Delhi-NCR during winter year after year.

The bench noted several meetings of the committee chaired by the Union cabinet secretary were held and it has prepared action plan for states, including Punjab and Haryana, to deal with the issue.

It said the states concerned have to implement the action plans and submit progress reports before the court within two months.

"We direct the state governments to take steps in respect of the aforesaid and submit a progress report to this court within two months from today," the bench said, adding other authorities will also duly implement the action plans and submit reports in the court. "...possibly, this matter needs continuous monitoring. What happens is when the problem arises, we suddenly take it up," Justice Kaul observed, adding,



"The court must monitor it for some time". The counsel for Punjab said the state has filed an affidavit dated December 6 which also contains details about recovery of environmental compensation from those responsible for crop residue burning. The counsel had told the court at the last hearing on November 21 that environmental compensation totalling Rs 2 crore has been imposed on the offenders. "The recovered amount is still

only about 53 per cent (of the penalty imposed). Recoveries must be speeded up," the bench said. On claims that farm fire incidents between September 15 and November 30, 2023 have been fewer than before, the court said, "The point is, still farm fires are significant and this must stop."

The bench noted Attorney General R Venkataramani has submitted a note on Centre's behalf on the steps to be taken to check farm fires and also placed

the minutes of meetings of the committee chaired by the cabinet secretary.

"There is something to be done by Punjab, something to be done by Haryana, something to be done by Delhi and something to be done by different ministries," the court said.

The bench also took up some other related matters like the one related to open waste burning in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh.

One of the advocates raised the issue of vehicular pollution and said the air quality index (AQI) in the national capital was 376 this morning. "It is not going below 300," Justice Kaul responded.

AQI values above 100 are considered unhealthy.

The lawyer drew the court's attention to a report published a couple of weeks ago which said vehicular pollution contributed significantly to the overall pollution in Delhi and one of the rea-

sons for it was the quality of fuel available in the national Capital.

The bench said it cannot go into the aspect of quality of fuel unless there was some basis for that as the court cannot go by pre-suppositions.

When the lawyer flagged the issue of colour-coded stickers for vehicles indicating the kind of fuel being used, the bench said it was the duty of all states to ensure laws were implemented without any caveat.

On e-waste burning, senior advocate Aparajita Singh, assisting the court as an amicus curiae in the pollution matter, said both Delhi and Uttar Pradesh have filed affidavits indicating the steps they have taken to stop it. Singh said the apex court may direct the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to submit a report on the status of e-waste burning, measures that are in place to tackle it and what more can be done.

international



Everything has its appointed time, but the time for Ukraine's membership in the European Union has not yet come
VIKTOR ORBÁN | PM, HUNGARY

KENYA TO BECOME VISA-FREE

Visitors to Kenya from across the world will no longer require a visa from January, President William Ruto said Tuesday. Ruto said his government had developed a digital platform to ensure all visitors would receive an electronic travel authorisation in advance, instead of needing to apply for a visa



of the day quote

The sending of North Korean workers to Russia would be a clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions



KIM YUNG HO | UNIFICATION MINISTER, SOUTH KOREA

The US should immediately correct its wrong actions and stop containing and suppressing Chinese enterprises. China will also take necessary measures to resolutely safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises



MAO NING | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

In terms of the relationship between the US and India, you know, with obvious focus on the Department of Defence, I think it has been a very good year. I think we've made great progress in terms of further bolstering our relationship and cooperation



PAT RYDER | PRESS SECRETARY, PENTAGON

SHORT TAKES

New Poland gov't sworn in

Warsaw: New Prime Minister Donald Tusk's government was sworn in by Poland's president Wednesday, the final step in a transfer of power that marks a huge change after eight years of nationalist rule. Following years of disputes between Warsaw and Brussels under the previous government, led by the Law and Justice (PiS) party, Tusk's appointment has raised hopes of smoother relations with the rest of the European Union.

Thai lawmaker jailed for 6 yrs

Bangkok: A court in Thailand convicted and sentenced Wednesday a recently elected lawmaker to six years in prison for defaming the monarchy under a controversial law that guards the royal institution. Rukchanok Srinork arrived at the court building in the capital, Bangkok, while her fellow lawmakers were convening in Parliament. "I submitted a request to postpone (the hearing) because today the new parliament convenes for its first session, but the court refused. So I came to hear the verdict," she told reporters, standing next to her party leader who was there to lend support.

53 injured in Russian strikes

Kyiv: Russia's second missile assault on Kyiv this week injured at least 53 people, damaging homes and a children's hospital, Ukrainian officials said Wednesday, as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy pleaded in Washington for more help for his country. The windows of residential apartment blocks were blown out and frightened residents streamed out onto the street to assess the damage.

Khan, aide indicted

Islamabad: A special court in Pakistan Wednesday indicted former prime minister Imran Khan and his close aide former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in the cipher case for allegedly leaking state secrets and violating the laws of the country. Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqernain conducted the proceedings of the case in the Adiala Jail Rawalpindi where the two leaders have been incarcerated in the case. The judge read out the charges against the two leaders, who were present inside the courtroom, but both of them pleaded not guilty. This was the second time that they were indicted. Earlier, they were indicted October 23 but the process was nullified by the Islamabad High Court.

COP28 Nations strike deal to end oil age

In a major development, UN climate negotiators declared the world must transition away from oil, gas and coal, a significant decision by nearly 200 countries in nearly 30 years of climate talks

AGENCIES

Dubai, Dec 13: Representatives from nearly 200 countries agreed at the COP28 climate summit Wednesday to begin reducing global consumption of fossil fuels to avert the worst of climate change, a first of its kind deal signaling the eventual end of the oil age.

The deal struck in Dubai after two weeks of hard-fought negotiations was meant to send a powerful signal to investors and policy-makers that the world is united in its desire to break with fossil fuels, something scientists say is the last best hope to stave off climate catastrophe.

COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber called the deal "historic" but added that its true success would be in its implementation. "We are what we do, not what we say," he told the crowded plenary at the summit. "We must take the steps necessary to turn this agreement into tangible actions."

Adopted after nearly two weeks of hectic negotiations, it urges countries to accelerate ef-



- COP28 reaches deal to reduce fossil fuels consumption
- Summit President Sultan Al Jaber calls accord 'historic'
- Small island states say deal does not do enough
- OPEC wanted focus on emissions not fuels

IT IS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE WORLD UNITES AROUND SUCH A CLEAR TEXT ON THE NEED TO TRANSITION AWAY FROM FOSSIL FUELS

ESPEN BARTH EIDE | MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, NORWAY

orts toward the phase-down of unabated coal power, which is a climb down after India and China strongly resisted the singling out of coal.

Several countries cheered the deal for accomplishing something elusive in decades of climate talks.

More than 100 countries had

a full day into overtime Wednesday, and had some observers worried the negotiations would end at an impasse.

Members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries control nearly 80% of the world's proven oil reserves along with about a third of global oil output, and their governments rely heavily on those revenues.

Small climate-vulnerable island states, meanwhile, were among the most vocal supporters of language to phase out fossil fuels and had the backing of huge oil and gas producers such as the United States, Canada and Norway, along with the EU bloc and scores of other governments.

"This is a moment where multilateralism has actually come together and people have taken individual interests and attempted to define the common good," US climate envoy John Kerry said after the deal was adopted.

The lead negotiator for the Alliance of Small Island States, Anne Rasmussen, criticised the deal as unambitious.

"We have made an incremental advancement over business as usual, when what we really need is an exponential step change in our actions," she said. But she did not formally object to the pact, and her speech drew a standing ovation.

EMISSIONS REDUCTION
The deal calls for "transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner... so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science."

It also calls for a tripling of renewable energy capacity globally by 2030, speeding up efforts to reduce coal use, and accelerating technologies such as carbon capture and storage that can clean up hard-to-decarbonize industries.

A representative for Saudi Arabia welcomed the deal, saying it would help the world limit global warming to the targeted 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) over pre-industrial times set in the 2015 Paris deal, but repeated the oil producer's stance that tackling climate change was about reducing emissions.

INDIA MATTERS

EXTRA LEVEL OF DETERRENCE: TRUDEAU ON MAKING ALLEGATIONS ON INDIA PUBLICLY

OTTAWA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said that his decision to make allegations in public about a possible Indian government link and the killing of a pro-Khalistan separatist was intended to "put a chill" on them from repeating a similar action. The ties between India and Canada came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations September 18 of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020. In a year-end interview with The Canadian Press news agency, Trudeau said he decided to make the announcement September 18 because he expected that information would be eventually leaked through the media. The prime minister said the message he delivered in the House of Commons that day was intended as an "extra level of deterrence" to keep Canadians safer. Trudeau said his public statement came after weeks of "quiet diplomacy" that included raising the allegations with India at the highest levels. In the interview, Trudeau said Canada intends to reveal evidence very much in the fashion the US did when "we reach those points in the investigation."

CHINA REJECTS INDIA SC VERDICT ON LADAKH

BEIJING: China Wednesday said the Indian Supreme Court's verdict on Article 370 upholding the centre's decision to carve out the union territory of Ladakh from the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir does not have any bearing on its claim on the western section of the China-India border. India's Supreme Court Monday unanimously upheld the central government's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 bestowing special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. Asked about the court verdict upholding the validity of the decision of the Indian government to carve out the union territory of Ladakh, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here that "China has never recognised the so-called union territory of Ladakh set up unilaterally and illegally by India". "India's domestic judicial verdict does not change the fact that the western section of the China-India border has always belonged to China," Mao said in response to a question by a state media outlet.

RWANDA SAFETY BILL

UK PM Sunak defiant after crunch vote win

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Dec 13: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak presented a defiant front in Parliament Wednesday after winning a crunch vote on the controversial Rwanda Safety Bill, even as the Opposition accused his government of being in "meltdown".

Addressing the last Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) session in the House of Commons before Christmas recess, Sunak claimed that while the Conservatives remained focussed on cracking down on illegal migration the Labour Party was distracted by political "tittle tattle", alluding to reports of divisions within the Tory ranks.

"The British people should decide who gets to come to this country - not criminal gangs or foreign courts. That's what this bill delivers. We will now work to make it law so that we can get flights going to Rwanda and stop the boats," said Sunak. Labour Leader Keir Starmer accused the British Indian leader of "kicking the can down the road" after his Rwanda bill passed 313 to 269, with a majority of 44 votes. Tuesday night in its first parliamentary stage.

GAZA DEATHS MOUNT

Israel faces growing isolation

- Worst Israeli combat losses in more than a month
- Heavy fighting in north and south simultaneously

REUTERS

Cairo, Dec 13: Israel faced growing diplomatic isolation in its war in Gaza as the United Nations demanded an immediate humanitarian ceasefire and US President Joe Biden said "indiscriminate" bombing of civilians was costing international support.

In his most blunt remarks since the October 7 attack on Israel by Hamas, which provoked the current conflict, Biden said that Netanyahu needed to "change" his stance on a two-state solution for the Palestinians. Biden added that Netanyahu had a "tough decision to make" regarding his hard-right government.

"He's a good friend, but I think he has to change, and, with this government, this government in Israel is making it very difficult for him to move. They don't



want a two-state solution," he said, describing it as the "most conservative government in Israel's history."

Netanyahu meanwhile said there was "disagreement" with Biden over how a post-conflict Gaza would be governed, reflecting a rare rift after weeks in which the US leader has strongly backed Israel.

With intense fighting now being waged simultaneously in the north and south of the en-

Israel had most of the world supporting it. But they're starting to lose that support by the indiscriminate bombing that takes place

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

THE AMERICAN WAY OF ECONOMIC WAR

Most of the world's fiber-optic cables, which carry data and messages around the planet, travel through the US. And where these cables make US landfall, Washington can and does monitor their traffic—basically making a record of every data packet that allows the National Security Agency to see the data

they do, Washington will have the power to monitor the exchange and, if desired, stop it in its tracks—to stop, in other words, the Peruvian company and the Malaysian company from doing business with each other. In fact, the US could prevent many Peruvian and Malaysian companies from trading goods in general, largely cutting the countries off from the international economy.

Part of what undergirds this power is well known: much of the world's trade is conducted in dollars. The dollar is one of the few currencies that almost all major banks will accept, and certainly the most widely used one. As a result, the dollar is the currency that many companies must use if they want to do international business. There is no real market in which the Peruvian company could exchange Peruvian soles for Malaysian ringgit, so local banks facilitating that trade will normally use soles to buy US dollars and then use dollars to buy ringgit. To do so, however, the banks must have access to the US financial system and must follow rules laid out by Washington. But there is another, lesser-known reason why the US commands overwhelming economic power: Most of the world's fiber-



optic cables, which carry data and messages around the planet, travel through the US. And where these cables make US landfall, Washington can and does monitor their traffic—basically making a record of every data packet that allows the National Security Agency to see the data. The US can therefore easily spy on what almost every business, and every other country, is doing.

Washington's spying and sanctioning is the subject of Underground Empire: How America Weaponized the World Economy, by Henry Farrell and Abraham Newman. This revelatory book explains how Washington came to command

such awesome power and the many ways it deploys this authority. Farrell and Newman detail how 9/11 pushed the US to begin using its empire and how its many constituent parts have come together to constrain both China and Russia. They show that although other states may not like Washington's networks, escaping them is extremely difficult.

The authors also demonstrate how, in the name of security, the US has created a system that is often abused. "To protect America, Washington has slowly but surely turned thriving economic networks into tools of domination," Farrell and Newman write. And as their

book makes clear, the US' efforts to dominate can cause tremendous damage. Experts must therefore think about how to best constrain—if not quite contain—the US' empire.

The US' centrality in global finance and data transmission is not entirely unprecedented. The world's leading power has always had outside control over the world's economy and communication networks. At the beginning of the twentieth century, for example, the British pound played a key role in many international transactions, and a plurality of all global submarine telegraph cables passed through London.

But 2023 is not 1901. Today's era is defined by what some economists call "hyperglobalization." The world is far more intertwined than it was a century ago. It is not just that global trade now makes up a larger share of economic activity than in the past; it is also that the complexity of international transactions is far greater than ever before. And the fact that so many of these transactions pass through banks and cables that the US controls gives Washington powers that no government in history has possessed.

Farrell and Newman do not

propose policies that could mitigate these risks, other than suggesting that the underground empire deserves the same kind of sophisticated thinking once devoted to nuclear rivalries. Still, by highlighting how the nature of global power has changed, the book makes an enormous contribution to the way analysts think about influence. And policymakers and researchers should begin formulating plans for fixing these problems.

One possible resolution would be to create international rules for the exploitation of economic chokepoints, along the lines of the rules that have constrained tariffs and other protectionist measures since the creation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, in 1947. As every trade economist knows, the GATT (and the World Trade Organization that grew out of it) does more than just protect nations from each other. It protects them from their own bad instincts.

It will be hard to do something similar with newer forms of economic power. But to keep the world safe, experts should try to come up with regulations that have the same moderating effect. The stakes are too high to let these challenges go unaddressed.

AGENCIES

business

of the day quote

The (Indian) government should focus on reducing the compliance burden on startups and businesses



VENKATESH SHUKLA | FORMER PRESIDENT, TIE SILICON VALLEY

Allocation of 5G spectrum under the 6 GHz band for mobile services will be beneficial for India as several countries are pushing for allocating telecom spectrum in the same range



MATS GRANRYD | DIRECTOR GENERAL, GSMA

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KC JHANWAR | MD, ULTRATECH CEMENT

SHORT TAKES

No plan to take over VIL: Govt

New Delhi: The government is not considering any proposal to take over Vodafone Idea (VIL), Parliament was informed Wednesday. This was stated by Minister of State for Communications Devesinh Chauhan in a written reply in Lok Sabha. To a question on whether the government has any plan to take over Vodafone Idea, Chauhan said, "No such proposal is under consideration in the Department".

Benz to hike prices

New Delhi: German luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz Wednesday said it will hike prices of select models in India by up to 2 per cent from January 1 next year to partially offset rising input, commodity and logistics costs. The price hike will range from Rs 60,000 for the C-Class to Rs 2.6 lakh for a GLS SUV and up to Rs 3.4 lakh for the top-end imported Mercedes-Maybach S 680. Most of the passenger vehicle makers Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai Motor India, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Honda, Volkswagen, A koda Auto, Audi and BMW, have announced plans to increase the prices of their vehicles in January to offset the adverse impact of rising input and material costs.

DOMS IPO shines

Mumbai: The initial public offer (IPO) of pencil maker DOMS Industries got fully subscribed within hours of opening for bidding Wednesday and finally ended the day with 5.71 times subscription. The Rs 1,200-crore IPO received bids for 5,04,55,458 shares against 88,37,407 shares on offer, translating into 5.71 times subscription, according to data available with the NSE.

GPAI unanimously adopts New Delhi declaration

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: The Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, an alliance of 29 members, has unanimously adopted the New Delhi declaration, affirming commitment to a collaborative approach on applications that benefit people and drive a global governance framework for safe and trusted AI.

The declaration also seeks to ensure that AI and its benefits are inclusive and available to all the countries of the world, including the Global South, Minister of State for IT and Electronics Rajeev Chandrasekhar said at a briefing during the ongoing Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) Summit 2023. "We had a 4.5 hour ministerial council meeting where 29 partner countries of GPAI participated and have unanimously adopted the New Delhi declaration, which promises to position GPAI at the front and centre of shaping the future of AI in terms of innovation, and for collaborative AI between partner nations to create applications of AI in healthcare, agriculture and many other areas that concern all of our countries and people," he said.

Chandrasekhar said the member nations agreed that GPAI will play a central role in shaping the future of AI governance and lead conversations on safe and trusted AI.

"We have also agreed that GPAI, in keeping with the values of our partner countries, will be an inclusive partnership, which will focus on including countries from Global South and making available the benefits of AI and AI platforms, and solutions to all the people of the world, including people of global south," he noted.

"We have also agreed that GPAI, in keeping with the values of our partner countries, will be an inclusive partnership, which will focus on including countries from Global South and making available the benefits of AI and AI platforms, and solutions to all the people of the world, including people of global south," he noted.

No plan for EV imports subsidy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: The government Wednesday said it is not considering any proposal to provide duty concessions and exemption from local value addition for import of electric vehicles into the country.

Responding to a question whether there is any proposal to exempt Tesla and other multinational car companies from local value addition of cost in heavy batteries, semiconductors and magnetic parts; and subsidy on the import duty on the import of Electric Vehicles (EVs) in India, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Som Parkash said a production-linked incentive scheme for automobile and auto component industry with a budgetary outlay of Rs 25,938 crore was announced by the government.

The move was aimed at providing financial incentives to boost domestic manufacturing of advance automotive technologies products including EVs and their components, he said. "Presently, there is no pro-

AUTOPILOT DEFECT

Tesla recalls nearly all cars sold in US

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Detroit, Dec 13: Tesla is recalling nearly all vehicles sold in the US, more than 2 million, to update software and fix a defective system that's supposed to ensure drivers are paying attention when using Autopilot.

Documents posted Wednesday by US safety regulators say the update will increase warnings and alerts to drivers and even limit the areas where basic versions of Autopilot can operate.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says its investigation found Autopilot's method of making sure that drivers are paying attention can be inadequate and can lead to "foreseeable misuse of the system."

The added controls and alerts will "further encourage the driver to adhere to their continuous driving responsibility," the documents said.

But safety experts said while the recall is a good step, it still



makes the driver responsible and doesn't fix the underlying problem that Tesla's automated systems have trouble spotting and stopping for obstacles in their path. The recall covers

models Y, S, 3 and X produced between October 5, 2012, and December 7 of this year. The update was to be sent to certain affected vehicles Tuesday, with the rest getting it later.

Autopilot includes features called Autosteer and Traffic Aware Cruise Control, with Autosteer intended for use on limited access freeways when it's not operating with a more sophisticated feature called Autosteer on City Streets.

The software update will limit

where Autosteer can be used. "If the driver attempts to engage Autosteer when conditions are not met for engagement, the feature will alert the driver it is unavailable through visual and audible alerts, and Autosteer will not engage," the recall documents said.

Auto safety advocates for years have been calling for stronger regulation of the driver monitoring system, which mainly detects whether a driver's hands are on the steering wheel.

₹ revisits nadir

Rupee falls 3 paise to revisit all-time low of 83.40 against US dollar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 13: The rupee depreciated 3 paise to revisit all-time closing low of 83.40 against the US dollar Wednesday amid a strong American currency overseas.

Forex traders said a steep fall in crude oil prices from \$76 per barrel to the below \$73 level provided support, but a muted trend in equity markets triggered negative bias against the local unit.

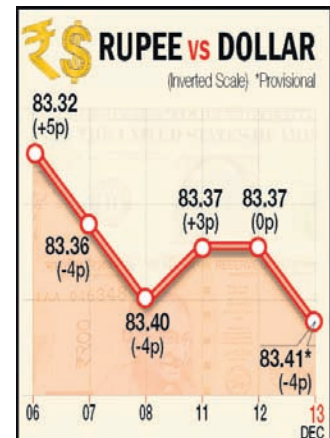
At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.39 against the greenback and traded in a tight range of 83.38-83.42.

After dropping to its all-time intra-day low of 83.42, the rupee finally settled at 83.40, a fall of 3 paise from the previous close.

On Tuesday, the domestic currency settled at 83.37 against the dollar.

The rupee had earlier recorded its lowest closing level of 83.40 November 24 this year.

"Rupee closed marginally lower amid high volatility in the dollar index that plunged again due to gains in the euro and the Japanese Yen. A fall in crude oil prices also failed to provide



any support to the rupee. We expect the rupee to remain volatile and trade in the range of 83.20-83.70," according to Rahul Kalantri, VP Commodities, Mehta Equities Ltd.

The government data released Tuesday showed India's retail inflation rose to a three-month high of 5.55 per cent in November, though it remained within the RBI's comfort zone of less than 6 per cent.

Industrial production growth, however, accelerated to a 16-month high of 11.7 per cent in October, mainly due to double-

We expect the rupee to remain volatile and trade in the range of 83.20-83.70

RAHUL KALANTRI | VP COMMODITIES, MEHTA EQUITIES

digit growth in manufacturing, power and mining sectors' output, according to the official data.

Forex traders are awaiting the US Federal Reserve's monetary policy decision to be announced Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.38 per cent higher at 103.55 Wednesday.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.38 per cent to \$72.96 per barrel.

In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 33.57 points or 0.05 per cent higher at 69,584.60 points. The broader NSE Nifty inched up 19.95 points or 0.01 per cent at 20,926.35 points.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital market on Wednesday as they bought shares worth Rs 4,710.86 crore, according to exchange data.

LOWER TICKET SIZE TO PUSH INFLOW

MFs' SIP mop-up soars to ₹1.66L-cr in 2023

Currently, mutual funds have about 744cr SIP accounts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: Investors are placing significant bets on systematic investment plans, or SIPs, with inflows rising to Rs 1.66 lakh crore in the first 11 months of 2023, while Sebi's decision to lower the ticket size to Rs 250 will further boost investment.

The total invested in the first 11 months this year is way higher than Rs 1.5 lakh crore through the route in the entire 2022, Rs 1.14 lakh crore in 2021, Rs 97,000 crore in 2020, as per data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI).

Going ahead, Akhil Chaturvedi, Chief Business Officer of Motilal Oswal AMC, anticipated a sustained and healthy year-on-year growth in overall SIP participation.

According to the data, inflow in mutual fund schemes through SIPs was at Rs 1.66 lakh crore in this year (till November).

The SIP book has grown con-



sistently from Rs 11,305 crore in December last year to an all-time high of Rs 17,073 crore in November this year. Before that, monthly contributions from SIP touched over Rs 16,000 crore in September and October.

The growing SIP numbers indicate a growing trust in the equity markets. Further, SIPs' Assets Under Management (AUM) jumped 38 per cent to Rs 9.31 lakh crore at the end of November 2023 from Rs 6.75 lakh crore at the end of December 2022.

The 42-player mutual fund industry mainly depends on SIPs for inflows, with equity mutual funds attracting Rs 1.44 lakh crore in this year (till November).

The consistent monthly increase in SIP flows have helped the industry to grow its AUM to Rs 49 lakh crore in November-end from Rs 40 lakh crore in the end of December 2022.

BIZ BUZZ

Truefitt & Hill extends legacy to Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar: Embarking on a new chapter, Truefitt & Hill, the world's oldest barbershop, proudly announces the grand opening of its newest outlet in Bhubaneswar. The store was inaugurated by Siddhanta Mahapatra, a Oriya movie actor and politician, along with Prannay Dokkania, Managing Director & COO, Lloyds Luxuries Ltd, Ajay Kumar Khatore, Founder - Naaraayani Minerals Pvt Ltd & MD - Khatore IT Solutions Private Limited and franchise owner, Truefitt & Hill, Bhubaneswar. The city has long yearned for exclusive male grooming establishments, rendering it a prime market to promote Truefitt & Hill's luxurious approach. The new store echoes the brand's dedication to providing top-notch grooming services to the patrons of the state. Keeping up with the brand's legacy, the ambience of the Bhubaneswar franchisee store is just like all the previous existing stores - elegant and noble. The spacious and sprawling 1400 ft store has a royal suite, private room with a barber station among other amenities.



SLBC organises 173rd meet

Bhubaneswar: The 173rd State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) meeting of Odisha convened December 12 at the State Convention Centre, Lok Seva Bhawan. The Convenor SLBC Goutam Patra welcomed all the guests. The Executive Director of UCO Bank cum Chairman SLBC Odisha, Vijaykumar N Kamble in his inaugural address congratulated all banks for achieving an impressive CD Ratio of 81.75 % surpassing that of many other major states. He also expressed happiness over achieving 56.07% of target under Annual Credit Plan. Sarada Prasan Mohanty, Regional Director of RBI highlighted the current economic scenario and the action taken by RBI for financial literacy. The CGM NABARD Sudhansu KK Mishra requested all banks to focus on Ghar Ghar KCC Abhiyan and saturate all PM Kisan beneficiaries. The principal secretary of Finance Department, Govt of Odisha Vishal Kumar Dev expressed happiness over achieving Rs 89,873.44 crore under ACP against target of Rs. 1,60,280.22 crore in the first half year. He also advised banks to open more brick-and-mortar branches and ATMs and to achieve targets under all social security schemes.



'Gujarat poised to become manufacturing powerhouse'

GUJARAT FIRST AMONG STATES FOR INVESTMENT IN MANUFACTURING SECTOR FOLLOWED BY MAHARASHTRA, TAMIL NADU, SAYS COLLIERS INDIA

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 13: Gujarat has been ranked first among all states for investment in the manufacturing sector because of the availability of cheaper land and labour to set up industries, along with incentives offered by the government, according to property consultant Colliers India.

Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu are ranked second and third, the consultant said in a statement Wednesday.

"Gujarat is poised to become India's foremost manufacturing powerhouse. Gujarat ranks first, followed by Maharashtra and

then Tamil Nadu as the top regions to invest in India," Colliers India said.

Gujarat has been ranked first because of easy labour availability and at a cheaper cost, along with the government supporting policies for the labour force.

The state has cheaper land rates for industrial developments, Colliers said.

Gujarat has great last-mile connectivity with presence of major ports, roadways, railways. The state government also provides water, electricity and renewable energy resources at a cheaper rate compared to other



states. The state government also provides financial assistance to developers setting up their business, it said.

Maharashtra has been ranked second because of the policies, subsidies, and incentives offered

by the state government. The state has the highest FDI inflow, industry GDP share, lower unemployment rate, higher number of healthcare and educational facilities, which all combine to make a better general

Colliers said Indian manufacturing market has the potential to reach \$1tn by 2025-26 with all policy incentives and various initiatives by the Centre and state govts

economic scenario of the state, the consultant said.

Maharashtra always offers a great deal of support infrastructure in terms of roadways, waterways and railways.

Tamil Nadu has been ranked

third as the state has great availability of labour with cheaper rates and favourable labour policies. The state also has good policies, subsidies, and incentives for the industrial sector and has a fair presence of support infrastructure with many industrial companies having their footprint in the state, Colliers said.

Various states in India, including Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh, have strategically implemented a range of incentives to attract and support manufacturing plants within their borders, the consultant added.

SERVICES EXPORTS HIT \$192BN SO FAR THIS FISCAL: SEPC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: The country's services exports have touched \$192 billion so far this fiscal and are expected to reach \$400 billion by the end of 2023-24, SEPC said Wednesday.

Services Export Promotion Council (SEPC) said that key sectors which are recording healthy growth rates include telecom, computer, information, and transport and travel.

The council is also engaged in formulating strategies to propel the sector's growth, it said.

"As of the latest report, the services sector has demonstrated progress, with over \$191.97 billion already accomplished out of the targeted \$400 billion," the council added.

It added that sectors like tourism, hospitality, and medical value tourism which suffered due to Covid-19 are now showing revival signs. In addition to this, sectors like legal, auditing, higher education, accounting, and logistics are showing good growth.

"At SEPC, our mission is clear, to guide the services sector in India's pursuit of achieving \$400 billion by 2024 and \$1 trillion in services export by 2030," Karan Rathore, Chairman at SEPC, said.

Services Export Promotion Council, set up by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, has been mandated to facilitate global business opportunities for India's services sector.



SHORT TAKES

Indian players shine

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Dec 13: Top Indian shuttlers continued their good show by scripting facile victories over their respective opponents in the Odisha Masters 2023 Super 100 badminton tournament, here Wednesday at the JN Indoor Stadium.

The second day of the tournament saw ace players like Ashwini Ponnappa, Tanisha Crasto, Unnati Hooda and Kiran George among several others in action.

In women's doubles the Indian pair of Ashwini and Tanisha cruised past UAE's Aleena Qathun and Nayonika Rajesh 21-7, 21-14. Except for once in the second game, when the UAE duo caught up at 8-8, the Indians were always in command reeling off points in a row.

In another women's doubles match, Odisha's own Rutuparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda defeated Ashwini Bhat and Sikha Gautam 21-19, 17-21, 21-17.

In the mixed doubles segment, Ashwini and Rohan Kapoor defeated the Malaysian duo of Ting Shih Wee Owen and Gan Jing Err



DEADLY DUO: Tanisha Castro (R) and Ashwini Ponnappa in action at the JN Indoor Stadium in Cuttack

21-19, 21-15.

In men's singles top seeded Wen Chi Hsu of Chinese Taipei trounced Wiktorija Dabczynska of Poland 21-14, 21-14 while Unnati hammered Uganda's Husina Kobugabe 21-10, 21-8. She will next meet compatriot Ashmita Chaliha who beat

Shamika Rafi 21-14, 21-6.

In men's singles, World junior champion Ayush Shetty and defending champion Kiran George entered the pre-quarters, but top seed Priyanshu Rajawat suffered a shock defeat. Second seed Kiran, fought off Satish Kumar 21-12,

10-21, 21-12 while Shetty held his nerves to beat Reza Al Fajri of Indonesia 19-21, 21-9, 22-20. Rajawat however, went down to Indonesia's Alwi Farhan 11-21, 22-20, 12-21. Fifth seed Mithun Manjunatha won 21-12, 21-18 against his Sri Lankan opponent, Dumindu Abeywickrama.

Shuttlers Chirag, Satwik nominated for Khel Ratna

BCCI PROPOSES SHAMI'S NAME FOR ARJUNA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: Pacer Mohammed Shami, one of the architects of India's near successful World Cup campaign, has been nominated for this year's 'Arjuna Award', while men's doubles badminton pair of Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty was selected for the 'Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award'.

Shami, 33, had a spectacular run in the ODI World Cup and took 24 wickets in seven matches as India finished second best. Incidentally Shami sat out the first four games. Had it not been for the injury to Hardik Pandya, the pacer wouldn't have probably found a place in the playing XI. However, when Shami got the chance, he grabbed it with both hands. In the semifinals, Shami single-handedly demolished New Zealand with seven wickets.

As per sources here Wednesday, a special request

was made by the BCCI to the Sports Ministry to include Shami's name as originally he didn't feature in the list of the country's second-highest sporting honour. The list was submitted before the ODI WC.

Besides Shami, 16 other sportspersons have been nominated for the 'Arjuna Award'. They include men's hockey players Krishan Bahadur Pathak and Sushila Chanu, archers Ojas Pravin Deotale and Aditi Gopichand Swami, boxer Mohammad Hussamuddin, chess player R Vaishali, wrestler Antim Panghal and paddler Ayhika Mukherjee.

There are five nominations for the 'Dronacharya Award'. They are Ganesh Prabhakaran (Mallakhamb), Mahavir Saini (Para-Athletics), Lalit Kumar (Wrestling), RB Ramesh (Chess) and Shivendra Singh (Hockey). Kavita (Kabaddi), Manjusha Kanwar (Badminton) and Vineet Kumar Sharma (Hockey) are the nominees for the 'Dhyan Chand Lifetime Award'.

Fans 'motivating' Rohit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: Rohit Sharma had no clue if he would ever get over the disappointment of the World Cup final defeat but the love and understanding of fans has now 'motivated' him to take an earnest shot at 'ultimate glory'. It is clear he is hinting at the T20 World Cup at the end of the year.

Rohit had gone to England for a break to get relief from the pain of losing the final. "I had no idea how to come back from this (loss) for the first few days. It was my family, friends that kept me going. It wasn't easy to digest but life moves on," said Rohit, on his Instagram fan page Wednesday. This was the first time he was airing his senti-

ments since November 19, when the team lost to Australia.

However, what Rohit loved was the appreciation and understanding of the fans of the team's brilliant show in the ODI World Cup. Their kind words were part of his healing process.

"For me to see, people coming up to me, telling me that they were proud of the team, made me feel good. Along with them, I was healing as well. I felt, 'okay these are the kind of things you want to hear'," Rohit said.

While he must have felt for some time that there is nothing more left to achieve, the 36-year-old Indian skipper dropped enough hints that he is now ready for one final date with history with the backing of fans.



Arshdeep Singh will have to come good in the third game

AGENCIES

Johannesburg, Dec 13: The Indian bowlers will come under sharp scrutiny when the Men in Blue take on South Africa here Thursday for the third T20I

match of the three-game series. India lost the second game Tuesday by five wickets to the hosts. The bowlers will really have to deliver if India are to hold on to their record of not losing a bilateral T20 series against

INDIA LOOK TO LEVEL SERIES

South Africa since 2015.

The second T20I against the Proteas was a microcosm of the struggles this next line of Indian bowlers have gone through more often than not over the last three weeks. Even though skipper Suryakumar Yadav did not blame the bowlers for the loss in the rain-affected match, it can easily be said that Arshdeep Singh and company failed to deliver the goods in the second game.

Suryakumar meanwhile is hoping for a rain-free game and banking on the batters to put South Africa under pressure. It just goes to show his lack of confidence for the bowlers, even though the skipper has skillfully avoided the topic. Suryakumar asserted Tuesday that the Indian batters

should use the power play more effectively.

"The message was loud and clear. They (SA openers) batted beautifully in the first five-six overs and we did not losing two early wickets. That's the brand of cricket we were talking about. We are really looking forward to the third T20I and we are sure that we will overcome this problem," Suryakumar said after the game Tuesday.

Arshdeep went for 15.50 runs per over and Mukesh Kumar at 11.33 runs per over as South African opener Reeza Hendricks carted them all around the park. These two will certainly have to come good, if India are to level the three-match series with the first being washed out at Durban.

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