

JAI JAGANNATHA

Shree Mandira Parikrama Prakalpa to be inaugurated on
17th January 2024



**SHREEMANDIRA
PARIKRAMA
PRAKALPA**

Pousha Shukla Saptami
17 January 2024





JOHN MAYER WANTS TO GET MARRIED

Singer-songwriter John Mayer's hopes for his love life to be more serious than sexy. "People don't think I want to be married. I absolutely want to be married," the musician said.

NICOLE SCHERZINGER TO MAKE HER BROADWAY DEBUT LATER THIS YEAR

The 45-year-old former *Pussycat Dolls* singer has been appearing in Baron Andrew Lloyd-Webber's West End musical *Sunset Boulevard* as faded star Norma Desmond and now it's been revealed the production will transfer from London to New York City in 2024 giving her the opportunity to showcase her talents on Broadway for the first time.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You may take a holiday today to be with your family, and perhaps go to meet your relatives who live nearby. It will make your kith and kin very happy. It will be surprised and Ganesh gives you the thumbs-up.

TAURUS
The planets are not well disposed towards you today, fears Ganesh. There are strong chances of crossing swords with someone, getting into a serious personality clash. Not good is come out of it. You may simply end in alienating those who are otherwise well disposed towards you. Later in the day the situation will ease out.

GEMINI
You will neglect your daily routine and indulge in fun and frolic with your family members today. Friends and family will probably accompany you to lunch or dinner to your favourite restaurant. You will feel at ease and will feel the stress slipping out of your system.

CANCER
Swiftness of your work will mesmerise people. They will make comparisons with you. Yet they can-not catch up with you. You are not at all greedy, nor do you make any needless demand any time. You will feel greater understanding and proximity with your spouse.

LEO
An auspicious and favourable day awaits you, says Ganesh. You will be able to complete all tasks at work. You will be able to make beneficial changes at home. Financial gains are possible. Youngsters may find love.

VIRGO
An outspoken discussion with a loved one is on the cards today. Work hard to complete the work that you have been procrastinating for a long time, says Ganesh. A holy place is beckoning you. However, Ganesh advises you to evaluate all your options while taking your decisions.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today is a good day for you. The ladies in your life will prove to be beneficial to you. You will be able to progress in your office because of your skills and abilities. You will be closer to your beloved today. You will show more interest in new topics and ideas.

SCORPIO
Your kids are your pride, especially today when they come out with flying colour in their academics. It's a favourable day to invest your money in home or land. In the evening, you may just feel like going to a secluded place and enjoy the twilight.

SAGITTARIUS
Today, your actions are definitely going to be louder than your words, predicts Ganesh. Your focus today would be on personality development and self-improvement, and you success to achieve what you want, to some extent. Good luck!

CAPRICORN
You bring perfection to the table and it impresses your colleagues to a great extent. When the deadlines are tight or situations get complicated, people look up to you for directions, and to nobody's surprise, you live up to their expectations. Your efficiency will not go unnoticed as the bosses will acknowledge and reward your efforts, says Ganesh. You will wind up an exhausting day on a happy note.

AQUARIUS
Mark this date on the calendar, as it may turn out to be the most important day in your life. A windfall is expected make your day brighter, says Ganesh. Good luck will follow you through out the day, as your hard work will be paid off with rewards and awards at work.

PISCES
Today is likely to be an extremely competitive and demanding day for you. You need to be extremely careful in how you go about doing your tasks, so as to not give anyone a chance to pick out mistakes in your work.

Ileana breaks silence on marriage

Mumbai: Ileana D'Cruz welcomed her first child on August 1, 2023, and revealed the name and news to her fans days later. In her first interview since giving birth, the actor, who currently lives in the US with Michael Dolan and their baby, Koa Phoenix Dolan, told the media that 'postpartum depression is very real.' While she has been sharing her thoughts on motherhood on Instagram, she has not said much about her partner. When asked if she tied the knot with Michael Dolan in May 2023, which was claimed by several reports, the *Rustom* actress said, "There's so much speculation. Let's just leave it at that. It is nice to have a tiny bit of mystery, right? Well, honestly, I haven't decided how much I want to talk about this part of my life. It comes from a space where I previously talked about my relationship. I didn't like how some people spoke about it back then. I can handle things said about me, but I am not comfortable with people talking rubbish about my partner or my family." Earlier

rumours stated that Ileana was dating Sebastian Laurent Michel, brother of actor Katrina Kaif. After the two were seen on a holiday in the Maldives with Vicky Kaushal and Katrina Kaif, dating rumours about the pair circulated. AGENCIES



Babil shares his big dream

Mumbai: Basking in the glow of the praise he's been getting for his performance in *The Railway Men*, Babil Khan says his only dream is to win the hearts of every Indian, and he's confident that he will achieve it.

Speaking at an event in Mumbai, Babil also spoke about his upcoming projects, the love he received for *The Railway Men*, and much more.

Talking about the praise for *The Railway Men*, he said, "I have one dream. Characters will come and go, but I have to win the hearts of each and every Indian, and that I will achieve for sure."

On being asked about his late father's many international projects, Babil said, "My father never thought about national and international projects. He used to only connect with the story. If the story was good, he never used to think about whether the film was 'national' or 'international'. I feel these are the labels we audiences have made."

About his upcoming project, Babil said, "I have signed a non-disclosure agreement with my makers, so I cannot disclose anything. I can only share that it is a thriller film." IANS



Manana's state-level theatre festival : Day 4

Artistes of Mirror Theatre of Belpahar performed play *April 27* at Rabindra Mandap, Saturday, on the fourth evening of the state-level theatre festival which is being organised by Manana Natya Sanstha of Bhubaneswar to commemorate what is 45th Foundation Day. Written and directed by Subas Chandra Pradhan, the drama showcased to what extent a man can go to win over his love. Santosh Sahoo, Gitajani Das, Sonia Behera, Trilochan Jandulia, Aman Dora and Chintamani Meher formed the principal cast of the play. Among the luminaries Bhandaripokhari MLA Prafulla Samal, eminent dramatists Nabin Parida and Lala Biren Ray graced the occasion.

Rambha's interview about Rajini sparks controversy

the second female lead in the masala entertainer. In the latest interview, the actress shared her experience working with the *Andha Kanoon* actor.

Rambha revealed a prank by Rajinikanth, and the senior actor hit the actress from the back during a power cut. And the *Jailer* actor asked his teammates about the incident and acted like he didn't do it. However, the actress later came to know that it was Rajinikanth and stated the actor's playfulness at the shooting spot.

Unfortunately, Rambha's casual statement about Rajinikanth turned out to be a debate on social media, while fans started to spread a negative hashtag against the actor. Then, social media turned into a battlefield as supporters and opponents clashed by sharing their views on Rajinikanth's prank on Rambha.

On the work front, Rambha quit acting after her wedding, and she has been settled in Canada with her husband and children. However, she participates in television shows and events as an analyst to review the contestants. AGENCIES



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

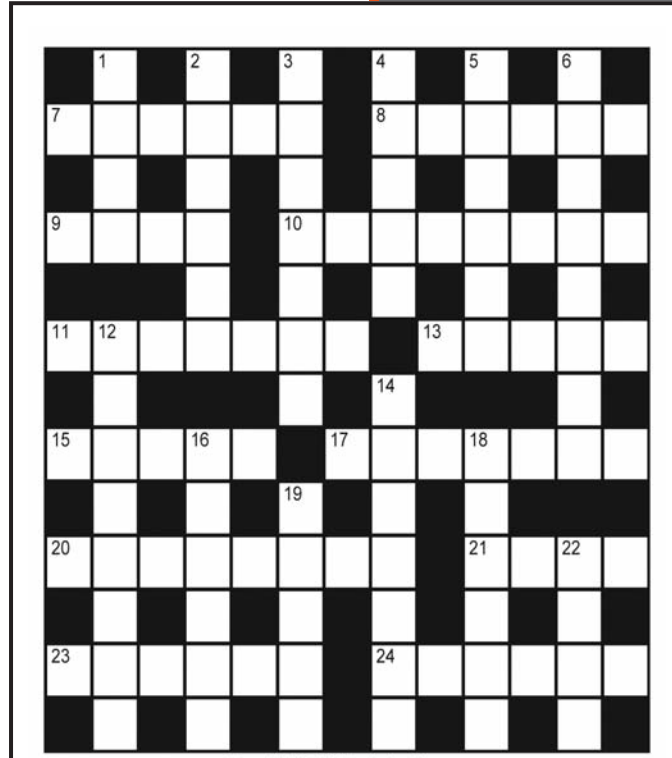


BREVITY



FUN post

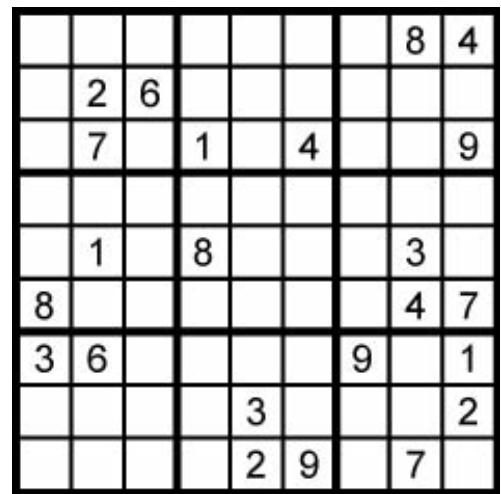
CROSSWORD



- Across**
7 Married woman
8 Famished
9 Genius
10 Infringe
11 Delirious
13 Nobleman
15 Take over
17 Folic acid, e.g.
20 At any time
- Down**
21 Layabout
23 Mar
24 Firearm
- 6 Hardy vegetable of the cabbage family
12 A caring place (4,4)
14 Break up
16 Super model's platform
18 Nearly
19 Off-white
22 Menial

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Show a little love for your country... don't forget, we are the 5th largest economy in the world

Aditya-L1 makes it

ISRO puts country's first solar observatory in final destination

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

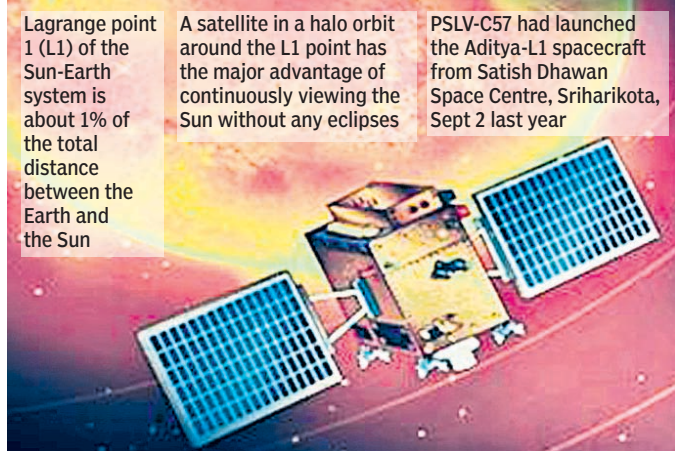
Bangalore, Jan 6: In yet another success for its space programme, India's first solar mission craft Aditya-L1 Saturday reached its destination, the L1 point, about 1.5 million kilometres from Earth from where it will orbit the Sun and study our star's wonders, uninterrupted by eclipses and occultations.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made the announcement on ISRO's latest feat, which comes months after the success of Chandrayaan-3 where the space agency achieved the challenging soft landing of the craft on the lunar surface.

The Lagrange point 1 (L1) of the Sun-Earth system is about one per cent of the total distance between the Earth and the Sun.

A satellite in a halo orbit around the L1 point has the major advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultations or eclipses, ISRO officials said, adding, this will provide a greater advantage in observing solar activities and their effect on space weather in real time.

"India creates yet another landmark. India's first solar observatory Aditya-L1 reaches its destination. It is a testament to the relentless dedication of our scientists in realising among the most complex and intricate space missions. I join the nation in applauding this extraordinary feat. We will continue to pursue new frontiers



Lagrange point 1 (L1) of the Sun-Earth system is about 1% of the total distance between the Earth and the Sun. A satellite in a halo orbit around the L1 point has the major advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any eclipses. PSLV-C57 had launched the Aditya-L1 spacecraft from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, Sept 2 last year.

of science for the benefit of humanity," he said in a post on micro-blogging site 'X'.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh, who among others holds the Space portfolio, said, "From Moon walk to Sun Dance! What a glorious turn of year for Bharat!"

A Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C57) launched the Aditya-L1 spacecraft from the second launch pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota, September 2 last year.

After a flight duration of 63 minutes and 20 seconds, it was successfully injected into an elliptical orbit of 235x19500 km around the Earth then.

It underwent a series of maneuvers thereafter and headed to L1, having escaped the Earth's sphere of influence.

The spacecraft carries seven payloads to observe the photosphere, chromosphere and the outermost layers of the Sun (the corona) using electromagnetic and particle and magnetic field detectors.

"Using the special vantage point L1, four payloads directly view the Sun and the remaining three carry out in-situ studies of particles and fields at the Lagrange point L1, thus providing important scientific studies of the propagatory effect of solar dynamics in the interplanetary medium," according to the space agency.

The suits of Aditya L1 payloads are expected to provide the "most crucial information" to understand the problem of coronal heating, coronal mass ejection, pre-flare and flare activities and their characteristics, dynamics of space weather, and propagation of particles and fields, officials said.

Cong will take in all who left party: Ajoy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 6: Senior Congress leader Ajoy Kumar, who has been given the responsibility of Odisha Congress recently, received a rousing welcome Saturday from the Congress leaders and workers here on his maiden visit to state after the appointment.

In a welcome ceremony at the Congress Bhawan here, Kumar said the Congress party is in a good position in at least 70 Assembly seats and 12-14 Lok Sabha seats in Odisha. The party will welcome back all leaders who have left the party for one reason or other ahead of the 2024 elections. The ticket will be given on the basis of winnability only. Those who left the party and were not in contact with BJP or BJD will be welcomed back to the Congress, he added.

"I have asked the OPCC president to revoke the suspension of party leaders ahead of the polls," said the AICC in-charge.

HI-TECH IDENTITY GOOF-UP

'Dead' man found alive in hosp dies; kin cry foul

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 6: In yet another twist in the Hi-Tech Hospital AC compressor blast and the subsequent major goof-up in identification of the dead bodies, the man who was declared dead four days ago and found to be alive later, succumbed to his burn injuries Saturday, officials of the hospital said.

With the latest casualty toll in the December 29 evening blast in the medical facility in City rose to three. They were Sritam Sahu (29), Dilip Samantaray (34) and Jyoti Ranjan Mallik (34). Only one person injured in the blast is currently undergoing treatment in the hospital.

Samantaray was initially declared dead December 30, but he was found under treatment Friday. The man, however, died

Saturday afternoon, the hospital's CEO Dr Smita Padhi said.

Samantaray's mother alleged that her son was killed by the hospital. On the cremation of the first body, she said, "The doctors gave us a different body. We believed them and cremated it. After the funeral was over, the hospital authorities Friday said Dilip was alive."

"Subsequently, we reached the hospital and requested the doctors to allow me to meet my son. When I called him by his name, he responded by shaking his head," said Dilip's mother.

She said after her daughter-in-law's death by suicide, the family found solace in the news that Samantaray was alive. "But all our hopes were shattered again," she said. Dilip's brother alleged that he died of medical negligence.

B'desh polls today

Dhaka: Bangladesh will go to the polls Sunday in which Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to win a fourth straight term in the absence of the main Opposition BNP which Saturday began a 48-hour nationwide strike against the "illegal government" amidst sporadic violence. The election commission said voting will start at 8am and will end at 5pm. The results are expected to start flowing from early January 8.

Minor hit by min's car critically hurt

Rayagada: A four-year-old boy sustained grievous injuries after state Law Minister Jagannath Saraka's vehicle hit him near Belakana village in Rayagada district, Saturday evening. The injured was identified as Nabina Gunalu, 4, son of Sudhir Gunalu from Bhetaguda village under Bissam Cuttack block in this district. Saraka took the boy to the district headquarters hospital (DHH) in Rayagada town for treatment.

Whisky bottles before SC judges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 6: The Supreme Court witnessed an unusual sight in the legal battle over alleged infringement of trademark of whisky brands as liquor bottles were placed before the judges in the country's highest court.

A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud was hearing a plea by liquor major Pernod Ricard India Pvt Ltd,

which manufactures and sells 'Blenders Pride' and 'Imperial Blue' whisky, against last November's verdict of the Madhya Pradesh HC. The firm had alleged infringement of their trade mark.

It had told the HC that they have registered trade mark in respect of 'Blenders Pride' and 'Imperial Blue' and also have such registered trade mark in respect of Seagram's which is their

house mark and appears on their products sold under various brands. It alleged that JK Enterprises has imitated their trade mark and is manufacturing and selling its whisky under the trade mark 'London Pride'.

The matter came up for hearing Friday before the apex court. During the hearing, senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Pernod Ricard, showed the whisky bottles to the bench.

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5T Chairman reviews projects in Balasore

During his visit, Kartik Pandian reviewed progress of the teaching and cancer hospital being constructed at a cost of ₹369.32 crore at the Fakir Mohan Medical College and Hospital



being constructed at a cost of ₹369.32 crore. He also reviewed the progress of other major projects in the district including the Salandi Main Canal, Bankatira barrage, Bhograī Sanskar Yojana, Mega PWS to Balasore Municipality, Remuna & Nilgiri NAC and Khaira, Balasore Sadar and Remuna blocks, development of Panchalingeswar, Khirachora Gopinatha and Chandaneswar temples and development of major roads and bridges.

Some of these projects started after Pandian's previous visit to the district in 2023. He then attended grievance meetings and took feedback from the locals. Later in the day, Pandian visited the Nilgiri sub-divisional hospital. He visited the Mission Shakti cafe

operating within the campus. Pandian also visited Bahanaga and interacted with the people and thanked them for their humanitarian efforts in saving lives in the tragic train accident in June last year. He also narrated Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's commitment in developing the Bahanaga school under the 5T transformation initiative. He also talked about the development of Bahanaga gram panchayat (GP) as a model GP and 5T transformation of the Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC) in Bahanaga that are being executed at an estimated cost of rupees six crore.

During the day, Pandian also interacted with the people in Balasore, Nilgiri and Soro. He heard their grievances and promised them early solutions.

CM launches sports projects worth ₹120cr

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 6: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched virtually Saturday projects worth more than ₹120 crore which will boost the sports development in Sambalpur district. He inaugurated the Burla Indoor Stadium and laid the foundation stones for the Sambalpur Football Academy and the Sambalpur University Sports Complex, including a hockey stadium.

Aligned with the vision of the Chief Minister, 'Sports for Youth, Youth for Future', these projects have been undertaken under the 5T initiative with the aim to benefit the people, especially the youth of Sambalpur district, an official release said.

Patnaik praised the sports culture in Sambalpur district and hoped that these facilities will further strengthen the sports development. He pointed out that football is quite popular in the



district and that is the main reason for the establishment of the academy. The academy will have top quality coaching staff and local talents can avail of it. The Odisha government will invest ₹17 crore for the academy, the release said.

The Burla Indoor Stadium has four badminton courts with a capacity of 400 spectators. The centralised AC facility also has players' changing rooms, a first-

aid room, a gym and multipurpose halls that can accommodate other indoor games such as carom, chess and fencing. The stadium has been built at a cost of ₹32 crore, the release said. Mahanadi Coalfields Limited has contributed ₹10.35 crore for the stadium, it added.

The upcoming sports complex at Sambalpur University will have a hockey stadium with a Category 1 FIH certified syn-

thetic hockey turf, FIH recommended lighting system and a seating capacity of 3,000 people. There will be arrangements for the differently-abled also, the release said. There will be a separate gym and changing rooms for players, the release added.

The sports complex will also have a 1,000-seater multi-purpose indoor stadium where various sports disciplines like volleyball, basketball, kho kho and table tennis can be played. The stadium will have a fitness centre, a dedicated weightlifting hall, offices, coaching rooms and a medical room. It will be equipped to host regional level competitions. The Odisha government is investing ₹70 crore in this project, the release said.

Kartik Pandian, 5T and Nabin Odisha chairman coordinated the entire programme. Sports and Youth Services Minister Tusharkanti Behera, Rairakhol MLA Rohit Pujari were among the dignitaries present.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 6: Chairman 5T and Nabin Odisha, Kartik Pandian visited Balasore district to review the progress of various developmental work and interact with students and general public to hear their feedbacks. Pandian participated in the Nua-O programme at the Police ground in Balasore town. During his interaction with college students, he informed that the Nua-O programme provides platform for youngsters to showcase their talents and helps them achieve overall personality development in addition to their academic achievements.

Pandian also reviewed the progress of the teaching and cancer hospital at Fakir Mohan Medical College and Hospital

IMT holds seminar on ethical finance



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 6: Interscience Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) organised a seminar on 'ethical finance and responsible investment' in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) here Saturday.

On the occasion, IIMT chairman Srikanta Patnaik introduced the guests and set the stage for a rigorous discussion on ethical finance and responsible investment in government and corporate projects. More than 200 students and professionals from the City and other parts of the country joined the seminar to listen and learn from the guests.

Joining the seminar virtually, National University of La Plata in Argentina director and UNESCO chair professor Francisco Vigliarolo explained that there are huge existing opportunities to get higher returns from ethical and responsible investments in projects operated by private and government agencies.

Massimo Franchi, senior research fellow from the Modena Reggio University of Argentina, said that corporate responsibility and financial investments are both important in the corporate sector to ensure accessibility for the local people.

Participating in the discussion, Sanjib Kumar Jena, HoD of Commerce, said that due to proper investments in developmental activities by the Odisha government in the KBK districts, poverty in the state has been reduced, giving us hope for ethical finance and investment.

Attending the seminar Ramakrishna Vuppulury, chartered accountant and director of Medical Diagnostic Company, Hyderabad said that mandatory rotation of auditing from time to time in corporate hospitals encourages the financial responsibility among stakeholders and leads to proper medical facilities for patients.

Credit to SHGs pre-requisite for strong economy: Naveen

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 6: Credit to agriculture, MSME and Women Self Help Groups (WSHG) is a pre-requisite for building a strong economy, said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here Saturday while giving cash awards to 'Champion Banks' for providing credit to these sectors.

A function was organized at the Convention Centre in Loka Seva Bhawan here to award the best banks providing credit to MSME and Mission Shakti Groups.

Speaking on the occasion, CM said, "I attach utmost priority to the three fundamental pillars of our economy: Agriculture, MSMEs and Mission Shakti Groups. Budgetary provisions for these sectors have been substantially increased and we are also providing interest subvention to reduce the interest burden on the people."

"The government is providing them interest subvention up to ₹5 lakh loan. Through Mission Shakti Scooter Yojana, they are empowered to market their products and expand their business. Bankers need to complement our efforts to help them get transformed to small and medium enterprises," he said.

He urged all banks to come forward for this noble cause and

congratulated all the award winning banks, expressing his hope that these banks will be an inspiration to other banks for enhancement of credit disbursement to these priority sectors.

Speaking on the occasion, Finance Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha said that the state's economy has grown faster than the national economy during the last 10 years.

"Credit to our core sectors is an essential policy direction of our government to spruce up the economy," he said, adding that besides the CM's award, the Finance department will also issue appreciation certificates to 270 bank branches for their good performance under three categories of priority sector lending.

'Champion Banks' from these three core sectors received ₹5 lakh as first prize, ₹3 lakh as second prize and ₹2 lakh as third prize.

For lending to MSME sector, Bank of India, Jayadev Vihar, Khurda received the first prize, PNB, Balasore received the second prize and UCO Bank, Jaypore received the third prize.

For lending to Women SHGs, UCO Bank, Bhogaraī, Balasore received the first prize, SBI, Salepur, Cuttack received the second prize and SBI, Sadheipalli, Sundergarh received the third prize.



Capacity building training at Chilika

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 6: Ministry of Tourism (MoT) in collaboration with Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) launched the fifth training under the Amrit Dharohar capacity building



scheme, Saturday, for local community members, boat owners, and Forest department officials of Chilika Lake.

The training programme kicked off in presence of Sagnik Chowdhury, Regional Director (East), Ministry of Tourism, M Ramesh, Scientist 'E', MoEF&CC, Md Sabir Hussain, Nodal officer and Head, IITM Bhubaneswar, Amlan Naik, DFO Chilika Wildlife Division and Additional CEO, Chilika Development Authority (CDA), and other officials from CDA and Forest department.

Under this initiative, two training programmes of 15 days each

'Working to ensure rail network for 4.5cr people'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 6: Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated Saturday the newly constructed Nuagaon Road - Daspalla section, the Daspalla railway station building and flagged of passenger train services to Daspalla in a function witnessed by a large gathering of about 8,000 people.

Vaishnaw also flagged off four trains that have been extended till Daspalla. These trains are Bhubaneswar-Nayagarh Town Express, Bhubaneswar-Nuagaon Road Passenger Special, Puri-Nuagaon Road Passenger Special and the Bhadrak-Nayagarh Town MEMU.

Vaishnaw speaking at the inaugural function, said Odisha's development is Prime Minister



Narendra Modi's commitment. "PM Modi is continuously working to ensure rail, telecom towers and highway connectivity for 4.5 crore people of the state," he said.

The Nuagaon Road-Daspalla line is part of the Khurda-Bolangir railway project, which Vaishnaw described as historic and said its work was expedited under Modi's leadership.

A gathering of about 500 people felicitated the Railway Minister at Nayagarh town and Mahipur station and thanked him for taking steps to expedite

the long standing Khurda-Bolangir railway track project work.

Claiming that railway line of only 50km was constructed per year during the UPA government, Vaishnaw said it increased to 450km during the BJP-led NDA government.

"While the UPA government was allocating ₹800 crore per year for railway infrastructure development in Odisha, the Modi government has raised it to ₹10,000 crore a year," he said.

Vaishnaw said that he would ask the East Coast Railway (ECOR) to run a special train from Daspalla, Nayagarh and Nuagaon to Puri during Ratha Jatra. He also promised the people of Phulbani that the town would be included in the Gopalpur-Rairakhol corridor.

Two suspended over jumbo death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nilagiri, Jan 6: Forest department authorities suspended two women staff in connection with the death of an elephant in Kuldihā wildlife sanctuary near Saruchua under Nilagiri forest range in Balasore district, sources informed Saturday.

The action came following recovery of a decomposed carcass of an elephant, January 3 (Tuesday), 2024. The suspended forest personnel were identified as Padmabati Behera, forester of Hatikhulia section and guard Pramila Sena.

Meanwhile, authorities have appointed Jayant Kumar Pradhan as forester of Hatikhulia section and Manohar Singh as guard of the same area. In a separate development, Ayushman Panda has been appointed as forest guard of Mangalpur beat.

Similipal field director informed after issuing the suspension order that both Padmabati and Pramila have been punished for not carrying out their responsibilities in a proper manner. He pointed out that the carcass of the elephant had been lying unattended before it was discovered.

Study leaves, withdrawal of salary rules simplified

Bhubaneswar: In a boost to homeopathy doctors for specialisation and super-specialisation studies, the state government has simplified the provisions for sanctioning study leaves. Doctors, serving under the Odisha Homeopathic Service (OHMS) cadre, who go on study leave, can also withdraw their salaries for the period. All the chief district medical & public health officers (CDM&PHOs) have been directed to draw their salaries each month without waiting for sanction of study leave. Secretary Health and Family Welfare department Shalini Pandit while issuing guidelines Saturday clarified that salary of the 'Medical Officers under OHMS cadre pursuing PG or Super specialisation would be drawn by the relieving authority on receipt of absentee statement from the institutions where the medical officer is currently pursuing PG/Super specialisation every month without waiting for sanction of study leave'.



FRESH START: Newly-appointed AICC state in-charge Ajoy Kumar was accorded a grand welcome upon his arrival in the Capital City, Saturday. Kumar proceeded to Congress Bhavan where he interacted with party members and addressed the media.

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SHOWCASING KALINGAN ARCHITECTURE

People of Puri make the dream come true

The Srimandir Heritage Corridor Project (SHCP), which is all set for inauguration January 17, reveals, among other things, the fact that even a stone can speak the glory of the Lord.

Odisha is the land of excellence in temple architecture and its people are the worshippers of art and sculpture which made the construction of the majestic temple for Lord Jagannath in Puri – the Srimandir - possible.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, from the outset, had laid utmost emphasis on Kalingan style of temple architecture to go into the construction of the heritage corridor project, the glimpses of which are truly reflected on every piece of work.

I got this opportunity due to the grace of Lord Jagannath. What I strongly feel is that these idols are deeply immersed in devotion towards the Lord. It is due to Lord Jagannath's blessing that the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa has become a world-class project

BHABANI SHANKAR MISHRA | CHIEF ARCHITECT (BHUBANESWAR)

The visionary leadership and efforts of the Chief Minister have taken the Kalingan style of temple architecture to the next level in the project which, in turn, would add a new chapter to the golden pages of Odisha's history.

Facilities like pedestrian corridor, cloakroom, toilets, staircase, sitting space, pillars and walls reflect the Kalinga style of architecture



dap and open-air theatre.

As many as 60 sculptors from BK College of Arts and Crafts carved the idols for the ambitious project after undergoing training by Bhabani Shankar Mishra, the chief architect of SHCP. The idols installed at Sri Setu, Sri Danda and other places of the heritage corridor rerepresent Odisha's art, culture, architectural splendour and devotion to the Lord.

It is really a dream come true for me. I have never thought of working for Lord Jagannath in Puri dham from far away Bihar. I'm surprised at the speed of the work. This is all possible only because of the blessings of the Lord. Otherwise, how could an ordinary person like me got a chance to work for this world-class project? I feel that Lord Jagannath has given me a place at His lotus feet

SONELAL KUMAR | ARTISAN (BIHAR)

and will leave a permanent imprint in the minds of devotees and the tourists visiting Puri.

Notably, 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian has been inspecting the project works ever since the foundation stone was laid. He is also taking special care to ensure timely completion of the project, and above all, how the project would be an example of world-class architecture.

Significantly, khandolite stone, which is available exclusively in Odisha and a preferred stone for temple constructions, has been used in this project. These stones, which

were brought from different parts of Odisha, were used in reconstruction of idols, pillars, corridor fence, power house, toilets, resting place, man-

I'm fortunate enough to be here from distant Mayurbhanj to offer myself in the service of Lord Jagannath. I'm able to accomplish this task due to the blessings of the Lord. I feel that this work is my worship to the deity

SANTOSH NAYAK | ARTISAN (MAYURBHANJ)



CHARIOTS SET ROLLING

The propagation, conservation and protection of Jagannath culture is being carried out under the aegis of 'Ama Odisha, Nabin Odisha' programme of the state government. Ahead of the Parikrama Prakalpa inauguration January 17, three 'Arpan' chariots set rolling in Ganjam district Saturday which will tour the panchayat samitis in the district till January 14 and collect offerings of raw rice (Arua chaula) and betel nut (Gua) from every household for Lord Jagannath. Various programme related to Jagannath culture will be organised during the tour.

The three chariots collected the rice and betel nuts in the presence of hundreds of Jagannath devotees at Nandika, Kanchuru, Dayapalli and Gobarapalli villages. V Keerti Vasan, executive officer, Zilla Parishad Ganjam launched the programme at

Nandika village.

A divine ordain (Agyanmala) was obtained from the Sundar Madhav temple in Nandika village to launch the march of the chariot in the village. Sankirtan troupes and residents accompanied the chariot during the tour of the village.

The second Arpan Rath toured the Kanchuru village, starting from the Jagannath temple in the village. Block Chairperson Saraswati Sethy, senior member N Raghunath of District Planning Board, Zilla Parishad member (zone no-67) Bai Geetanjali, sarpanch Madan Sethy, PEO Pratap Sahu were present on the occasion.

The third Arpan Rath toured the Dayapalli village, starting from the Balukenshwar temple. Samiti member Ipili Rajarao, PEO Shankar Rao, and other members of the panchayat were present on the on the occasion.



The Arpan Rath, collecting raw rice (Arua Chaula) and betel nuts as offerings from every household in 268 panchayats of 11 blocks in Puri district, toured 25 panchayats in the district on the first day. The chariot designed on the theme of Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa was welcomed by the residents amid the chanting of Haribol, ululations and to the blowing of conch and Sankirtans by troupes. Women from every household offered fistful of raw rice and betel nuts as the chariots rolled on the village roads. The Rath toured Gopinathpur, Kashi, Hariharpur, Malatipatapur and Talajanga panchayats under the Sadar block, Gadasanapur and Aanlajodi panchayats under Kanas block, Kakatpur panchayat under Kakatpur block, Nuapada panchayat under Krushnaprasad block. The chariot also toured Bhogasalda panchayat of Nimapara block, Chhaitana panchayat of Gop block, Ambapada and Dimirisena panchayats of Brahmagiri block, Panidola, Danda Mukundpur and Teispur panchayats of Pipili block, Alasahi, Alangapur, Nagar, Naiguan and Astaranga panchayats of Astaranga block. Later, it toured Sujapur panchayat of Delang block as well as Sukala and Dugal panchayats of Satyabadi block.



BIZMEN TO GET SHOPS SOON



Works on several mega projects here have been completed or given the final touches as the Pilgrim town is being given a complete facelift for the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa.

The finished mega infra projects include three modern market complexes meant for traders and businessmen who were displaced during the project works.

Officials said the traders will soon be distributed shops in the complexes as per an SOP which has been approved by the state government.

Structures were removed when the state government acquired land within a radius of 75 metres abutting the Srimandir for the project, meant for safety and beautification of the temple and convenience of devotees. The government had promised adequate compensation to business establishments which were displaced. Keeping that in mind, two old market complexes – Mahodadhi and Municipality – were

demolished for reconstruction.

The newly-constructed Mahodadhi market complex at Mochi Sahi Square, built at a cost of ₹41.25 crore under the ABADHA scheme, has 151 shops of 100 and 200 sqft areas. Three floors (4th, 5th and 6th) of the multi-storied structure, built on 10, 556 sqft carpet area, is centrally air conditioned with lift, fire safety measures and all modern amenities. The basement parking

can accommodate 100 cars.

Likewise, the Municipality Market Complex is equipped with all modern facilities. Built at a cost of ₹44.82 crore, the ground plus three floor complex has 500 shops, while its basement can accommodate 100 four-wheelers. The market complex at Jail Road, equipped with multi-storied parking facility boasts of 350 shops.

The SOP for the distribution of the shops to the beneficiaries was prepared taking into consideration the records concerning their displacement dates and number of shops belonging to each of them. The lists of beneficiaries, with specifications, have been pasted at the respective market complexes.

Nevertheless, the general public has wholeheartedly welcomed the government for keeping its promises to the displaced shopkeepers and presenting the city with world-class shopping plazas with ultra modern basic amenities.

"Shops will be distributed to traders and businessmen who were displaced during the first phase of the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa as per the SOP," said Deputy Collector Bhabatarana Sahu.



The historic Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa that was taken up with a view to ensure seamless darshan of the Holy Trinity at the 12th century shrine in Puri is in the final stages of completion.

Taking a step forward the suggestions made by the country's apex court over safety and traditions of Srimandir, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had prepared the blueprint for the ambitious project at a meeting August 16, 2019 what later came to be known as the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa or the Srimandir Heritage Corridor Project (SHCP).

The residents of Puri wholeheartedly contributed their bit towards the realisation of the dream project by keeping their own interest aside. Several personal and commercial properties were within the project area. As many as 663 people having residential and commercial properties were rehabilitated to make way for the project with a total commensurate compensation of ₹403 crore. Leaving the infrastructure of mutts and other religious establishments untouched, the government provided them adequate compensation for commercial properties under their ownership, during acquisition.



Every displaced was given alternative shelter while traders were extended financial support by the state government till their establishments became fully operational. The government footed income tax on the proceeds of their businesses.

A helpdesk was made operational 24X7 for redressal of the problems coming on the way of each displaced person.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik feted the people of Puri whose unflinching support and contribution had resulted in successful completion of the land acquisition process in record time which paved way for expeditious progress of the historic project, the foundation stone for which was laid by the Chief Minister November 24, 2021.



Vested interests, who tried to create hurdles and roadblocks in the project with frivolous petitions with distorted versions of statements made by officials of the Archaeological Survey of India and National Monuments Authority, were strongly reprimanded by the Supreme Court along with heavy penalty.

The ambitious project, under the visionary leadership and guidance of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, is finally going to be dedicated to the people of the world after overcoming many obstacles and adversaries. Crores of Odias are eagerly waiting for the momentous occasion January 17.

FOCUS CONFLICT

INNOCENTS IN WAR



Detailed investigations of specific military actions that Israel has undertaken make it clear that its attacks are going beyond any reasonable belief that the military benefits outweigh the harms to civilians

harms to civilians.

The New York Times investigated one such military operation, an airstrike carried out on October 31 on a residential neighbourhood in Jabaliya, in northern Gaza. The target, Israel said, was Ibrahim Biari, a senior Hamas commander who it said was "central" to the October 7 massacre. Israel claimed that Biari was killed. A British conflict monitor said that 126 civilians were also killed, and other estimates were higher still. The Times quoted Larry Lewis, a former US State Department senior adviser on civilian harm, as saying: "The willingness to accept this level of harm to civilians is far beyond what I have seen in operations in the past."

If Biari was central to the scenes I witnessed in the video, he was capable of extraordinary evil and ought to be brought to justice. But that does not justify killing 126 civilians.

Alongside Israel's willingness to kill many civilians in order to achieve non-essential military goals, we must put its restriction of food, water, and fuel in Gaza. Human Rights Watch has accused Israel of using starvation as a weapon of war, which is a war crime. That makes plausible the startling claim made last month by Jordan's foreign minister, Ayman Safadi, that Israel is engaged in "a systematic effort to empty Gaza of its people," which he said would fall "within the legal definition of genocide."

That is a shocking allegation, especially for a nation-state founded in the aftermath of genocide. Israel's government could refute it by pausing hostilities and allowing into Gaza the essential supplies that its people need.

The writer, Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University, is Founder of the organisation The Life You Can Save.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Last month, I was invited to join other Princeton University academics in viewing a compilation of raw footage from GoPro cameras carried by Hamas gunmen killing civilians in Israel October 7. Additional video and audio material came from dashboard cameras, traffic cameras, phone intercepts, and victims' phones.

The invitation carried a warning that the footage would show horrific violence and murder. I avoid violent movies, so my instinctive response was to decline the invitation. But as someone who often points to the progress that we have made, over millennia, in expanding the circle of moral concern, I decided that I should be willing to see something that would challenge my optimism.

Evil is a word I rarely use, but what I saw was evil in its purest form: men armed with assault rifles going house to house to shoot defenseless and terrified families in their simple kibbutz homes, recording their murders and shouting "God is Great." They kill a father in front of his two young children. They cut off the head of one of their victims, saying they will give it to the crowd to play with. We see panicked young people at a music festival shot dead as they try to hide or flee. I was seeing only a fraction of the 1,200 murders Hamas forces committed on that day, according to official Israeli figures.

Be'eri, a kibbutz near Gaza, was built on socialist principles and, despite Israel's marked swing to the right, retained its left-wing values. Members were opposed to Israel's current right-wing government and believed that peace with the Palestinians was still possible. Kibbutz members had helped transport people from Gaza to and from medical treatment in Israel. But to Hamas, that made no difference. At Be'eri, the gunmen murdered

97 people.

When the Israeli military first showed this footage to journalists, Admiral Daniel Hagari, the chief military spokesperson, said: "We want to understand ourselves why we are in a war and what we are fighting for." At that time, October 23, the death toll in Gaza, according to the Hamas-run health ministry, had just surpassed 5,000.

Seeing the video did help me to understand why Israel is prepared to accept the deaths of so many Palestinians. Watching such callous killings, I found it impossible to resist the feeling that the killers themselves should be killed. To feel this is not in itself wrong: to choose to act on it, however, usually is, for it makes a bad situation worse. By the time I saw the footage, Hamas was saying that Israel's attacks had killed more than 20,000 Gazans, including more than 8,000 children and 6,200 women. No desire for revenge can justify that.

International rules governing the ethical conduct of war

prohibit the direct targeting of civilians, but permit striking military targets even when it is known that the strikes will kill some civilians. The rules derive from what is known as the doctrine of double effect, a line of ethical thought that goes back to the thirteenth-century Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas. According to this view, an act that would otherwise be wrong (such as killing an innocent person) may be permissible if it is an unintended side effect of a permissible act (such as striking a military target, when waging a just war), provided that the benefit gained outweighs the harm.

The vagueness of this last provision - known as the proportionality requirement - makes it possible for Israel to claim that it is acting within the rules of war. But more detailed investigations of specific military actions that Israel has undertaken make it clear that its attacks are going beyond any reasonable belief that the military benefits outweigh the

INTERNATIONAL RULES GOVERNING THE ETHICAL CONDUCT OF WAR PROHIBIT THE DIRECT TARGETING OF CIVILIANS, BUT PERMIT STRIKING MILITARY TARGETS EVEN WHEN IT IS KNOWN THAT THE STRIKES WILL KILL SOME CIVILIANS

Peter Singer

SPECTRUM NATION

Divergent perspectives on unemployment

The recent attack on the Parliament brought the issue of unemployment in the country back into the spotlight, as the accused claimed to be driven by their frustration with joblessness. Government data suggests a decline in urban unemployment rates to multi-quarter lows in the first half of the fiscal year 2023-24. Still, the Centre for Monitoring India's Economy (CMI) data challenges this narrative.

According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), the urban unemployment rate in the first two quarters of FY24 was 6.6 per cent, the lowest since the series began in FY18. This reflects a significant drop from the pre-pandemic period when the urban unemployment rate fluctuated between 7.3 per cent and 9.7 per cent. Experts attribute this decline to robust economic growth, particularly in manufacturing and investment activities during H1 FY24, resulting in a 7.7 per cent GDP growth.

The S&P Global's Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) surveys also indicate increased head-

counts in manufacturing and services firms. However, the tempo of employment growth in the services sector has slowed. The formal sector has witnessed a 3-5 per cent increase in employment, with variations across industries. However, the Information Technology (IT) sector has experienced layoffs despite the overall positive trend.

In contrast, rural unemployment is not captured by the quarterly PLFS bulletins. Still, the annual survey from July 2022 to June 2023 revealed a decline in the rural unemployment rate to a six-year low of 4.4 per cent in 2022-23, down from 7.8 per cent in the previous fiscal year. Data from the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) dashboard indicates a 4.4 per cent increase in household work demand in the current fiscal year, surpassing pre-pandemic levels by 23.9 per cent.

The actual employment scenario might only become apparent with the release of the annual PLFS data for July 2023 to June 2024. Professor Lekha Chakraborty of the National

Institute of Public Finance and Policy emphasises improving self-employment as a coping mechanism for livelihood crises. She calls for more robust government policies to guarantee employment through "employer of last resort" programmes, particularly in urban areas.

The annual PLFS survey for 2022-23 also reveals an overall unemployment rate of 5.1 per cent for both males and females. The CMI data, however, paints a different picture, with an overall unemployment rate averaging 8.1 per cent in the first 11 months of 2023, lower only than the 10.3 per cent recorded in 2020.

Critics, including former Member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council Surjit Bhalla, label the CMI data as unreliable, citing its volatility and month-to-month fluctuations. They argue that the informal sector's inclusion, where employment is often temporary, contributes to this variability.

Economist Madan Sabnavis of the Bank of Baroda describes overall unemployment as "stable" but acknowledges the dif-

iculty discerning trends due to high monthly variations. He points out challenges in gauging rural employment, especially with the possibility of disguised unemployment resulting from reverse migration from urban to rural regions.

The discrepancy in data collection methods is crucial to note. PLFS relies on respondents' job activity over the past seven days, reducing the margin of error. CMI's reference period is just one day, potentially categorising individuals as unemployed if they have not engaged in any activity on the survey day or the previous day.

The complex nature of employment dynamics in India requires a nuanced understanding, considering divergent perspectives from different data sources. The true extent of the employment scenario may only become apparent with the release of comprehensive annual data.

The writer is a former Professor of Economics, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune.

We must march on with the quiet certitude that what has to be done will be done.

THE MOTHER



Vicious Falsehood

Sometimes it is necessary to remind ourselves of the past to understand the present. Four years ago, in March 2020, the evangelical Muslim organisation, Tablighi Jamaat, held a meeting in Delhi from the 10th to 13th. This was scheduled before the onset of COVID-19 and they were congregating at a time when the Modi government was itself dismissive of the threat of the pandemic. A PTI report on 13 March 2020 read that 'COVID-19 is not health emergency, no need to panic: Health Ministry'.

The Tablighi meeting was held before India issued guidelines on public gatherings. But as the cases in India began to rise towards the end of March, the government determined that it would scapegoat the Muslims and enlisted the media to do this, spreading the conspiracy of 'Corona Jihad'.

The Union made much of evacuating the area where the congregation was being held (Modi sent NSA Doval to 'reason' with the organisers, who had been asking for safe evacuation for days). The novelty of the virus and the first deaths reported from it coincided with the Tablighi Jamaat gathering and open season was declared on it.

"The main reason for increased number of cases is that members of the Tablighi Jamaat have travelled across the country," said Lav Agarwal, joint secretary of the health ministry at a press conference. Also on 1 April, the BJP's IT cell head Amit Malviya tweeted that the Tablighi gathering was akin to an 'Islamic insurrection'.

On 4 April, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray suggested that the group's members be shot: "The meeting of Tablighis had taken place at Markaz in Delhi. Such people be killed by firing bullets at them. Why give them treatment? A separate section be created and their treatment be stopped." In Uttar Pradesh, the group's members were jailed and booked under the anti-terror National Security Act. On 5 April, Lav Agarwal said: "The doubling rate in India is 4.1 days, had the congregation at Nizamuddin not happened and additional cases not come, this would have been about 7.14 days." As later events proved, this was nonsense, but it was par for the course for this government. On 18 April, Agarwal made another claim, stating that the group was the dominant single cause of the pandemic. Thus the poisonous lie was spread and its effect began to take place in the citizenry as fast as COVID itself. Hindi daily Amar Ujala reported that members of the Tablighi Jamaat quarantined in a facility in the western Uttar Pradesh town of Saharanpur had 'demanded' non-vegetarian food and were defecating in the open inside the hospital. The Saharanpur police tweeted that no such thing had happened and the story was taken down.

During the months of active persecution, the group's members, including foreigners, were jailed and charged with attempted murder and the provisions of Section 269 ('whoever wilfully or negligently does any act which is likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life'). The theories being promoted were that they were deliberately spreading the virus around India by getting themselves infected, spitting on fruit, refusing to wear masks, running around naked in their wards, harassing nurses and so on. None of this was true.

The world noticed India's malice against Muslims and it was reported: "It was already dangerous to be Muslim in India. Then came the coronavirus" (Time magazine); "Coronavirus: Islamophobia concerns after India mosque outbreak" (BBC); "In India, coronavirus fans religious hatred" (New York Times). Without being convicted and even without any evidence, Jamaat members were 'blacklisted' from receiving visas in the future. In June, the Modi government amended the policy for visa applications to India to introduce a Tablighi-specific clause: "Restriction on engaging in Tabligh activities - Foreign nationals granted any type of visa and OCI cardholders shall not be permitted to engage themselves in Tabligh work. There will be no restriction in visiting religious places and attending normal religious activities like attending religious discourses. However, preaching religious ideologies, making speeches in religious places, distribution of audio or visual display/pamphlets pertaining to religious ideologies, spreading conversion etc. will not be allowed."

This was the first time in India that a particular religious group had been mentioned in the list of visa guidelines. This was purely to fuel the fire that was already raging in the media, blaming the group for the deliberate spread of COVID in India and absolving the government from its responsibility, especially for the fallout of the disastrous and unplanned 2020 lockdown.

It was only after it became generally accepted that the virus was an unstoppable global phenomenon which had spread through multiple ways that the 'Tablighi conspiracy' story faded. On 19 May, the foreign members of the Jamaat moved court to be released from institutional quarantine, where they had been held for over a month and a half, despite repeatedly testing negative for COVID. The government told the court that none of the visitors had been 'detained', they were merely 'asked to join the investigation'. But the passports of over 700 Jamaat members had been seized and they were not in fact free. On 6 July, before the chief metropolitan magistrate at Delhi's Saket court, 44 Tablighi Jamaat members refused to pay a fine of between Rs 4,000 to Rs 10,000 in exchange for closing of cases and bravely chose trial. By December, eight months after 11 states had filed 20 FIRs against more than 2,500 Tablighi Jamaat members, nobody was convicted. And courts fiercely criticised the actions of the government. Judges called the cases 'malicious', 'a virtual persecution', 'abuse of process', 'abuse of power', and said the Tablighi Jamaat members were 'scapegoats of a political government' who had acted against the group though having 'not an iota of evidence'.

That such a vicious falsehood was allowed to be spread deliberately should tell us much of what we need to understand about where we are today.



Aakar Patel

It was only after it became generally accepted that the virus was an unstoppable global phenomenon which had spread through multiple ways that the 'Tablighi conspiracy' story faded



SN Tripathy

THE TRUE EXTENT OF THE EMPLOYMENT SCENARIO MAY ONLY BECOME APPARENT WITH THE RELEASE OF COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL DATA

WISDOM CORNER

- You must trust and believe in people or life becomes impossible. **ANTON CHEKHOV**
- Life seems but a quick succession of busy nothings. **JANE AUSTEN**
- Always do what you are afraid to do. **RALPH WALDO EMERSON**

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1610:** Galileo Galilei discovers the Galilean Moons. The Italian astronomer made the earthshaking discoveries that four moons revolve around Jupiter and that the telescope reveals many more stars than are visible to the naked eye. The astronomer spotted the four largest moons of Jupiter that day: Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto.
- 1927:** The first transatlantic telephone service is established. A 3-minute call between New York and London cost about \$45 USD.
- 1968:** Uncrewed US space probe Surveyor 7 was launched and, a few days later, made a soft landing on the Moon.

Stop vandalism

Sir, This refers to "ED officers attacked during raid in Bengal," Orissa POST, Jan 6. The ED officers were assaulted and their vehicles were damaged allegedly by supporters of TMC leader Sajahan, a close aide of state minister Jyotipriyo Mallick, who was arrested in connection with the multi-crore ration scam, when they tried to raid his residence in connection with their probe into the ration scam. The ED has been conducting raids for months in connection with the alleged ration scam. According to the probe agency, nearly 30 per cent of the PDS ration meant for beneficiaries in West Bengal was diverted to the open market. The proceeds generated from the alleged pilferage of ration were shared between the millers and PDS distributors. This operation was a crucial aspect of the agency's ongoing probe into the multi-crore ration distribution scam. The ghastly attack on the investigative agency reflects the worst law and order situation in the state and the attacks couldn't have taken place without the tactical support of the TMC government. The ostrich-like attitude of the police pretending not to see the lawlessness around should go. It's the duty of a civilised government to stop barbarism and vandalism on investigative agencies in a democracy.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Dangerous game

Sir, Ever since the BJP came to power, the grammar of gubernatorial propriety in the country has plummeted to its depth. In the party's policy, governors in the Opposition-ruled states have become as crucial as raids by the ED and CBI, and they began using every opportunity to publicly assail their decisions and portray themselves as anti-government and anti-people. In fact, in southern states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala, governors appear more powerful than the elected governments. In the past too, there have been differences between state governments and governors, but the extent to which this has progressed under the present BJP government is too reprehensible. Using governors as ruling party political war horses to settle scores with the Opposition is a dangerous game, and it amounts to weakening the established traditions and constitutional order for narrow partisan gains.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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Adhir on warpath with TMC

Three-cornered contest between the ruling TMC, the BJP and the Congress-Left Front alliance is a big possibility in Bengal

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Jan 6: Since the beginning of the New Year, there are indications of the unity within the Opposition INDIA Bloc in West Bengal being under threat.

While any kind of understanding between the ruling Trinamool Congress and its arch rival the CPI(M)-led Left Front was always out of question, there was some speculation about a possible Congress-Trinamool Congress concord. However, this too was possible only if the Congress high command overruled the objections of the majority of its state leadership to any alliance with the ruling party in Bengal.

According to the latest information, the Congress high command is keeping the door open for dialogues with both the Left Front and the Trinamool Congress till the very end.

However, during the last 10 days there have been enough indications from top leaders of the Trinamool and the state unit of the Congress that a three-cornered contest between the ruling party, the BJP and the Congress-Left Front alliance is a big possibility.

Significantly, both the Congress and CPI (M) have taken the preliminary decision not to contest from the Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha constituency in South 24 Parganas dis-



trict and allow All-India Secular Front (AISF) representative Naushad Siddique to stand from there.

The move, according to political observers, will undoubtedly put Diamond Harbour's current Lok Sabha member and Trinamool general secretary Abhishek Banerjee in a fix. This is because of the twin factors of a sizeable minority population in that constituency that is enough to determine the fate of the candidates and the skyrocketing popularity of Siddique among Muslim voters, especially among the youth.

Observers say that in case of a triangular contest between the Trinamool, BJP and AISF in Diamond Harbour, the sitting MP from there will to a great extent restrict himself to that constituency rather than concentrating on campaigning for the party in the entire state.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee herself sowed the seeds of discord when she gave a hint that while the INDIA Bloc will prevail at the national level, in the case of Bengal, the Trinamool Congress would take on

the BJP alone. "Let the INDIA Bloc be there nationally, but in West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress will put up the fight. Remember, in West Bengal only Trinamool Congress can teach the BJP a lesson. The Trinamool Congress can show the path to the entire country from West Bengal. No other party is capable of doing that," Mamata Banerjee said.

The Chief Minister's observation was the trigger for state Congress president and five-time Lok Sabha member Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury to reiterate his old logic against any kind of compromise with the Trinamool. Chowdhury said that factionalism and corruption have led the state's ruling party to the final stage of cancer. Thursday evening he virtually closed all the doors on behalf of the West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee (WBPC) for any alliance with the Trinamool by directly challenging Mamata Banerjee to contest against him in the Lok Sabha polls this year.

He also described the Trinamool's

demands for seats in Assam, Meghalaya and Goa, as against just two seats for the grand old party in Bengal as absurd propositions, particularly as the two seats already have sitting Congress MPs.

In no time, the CPI(M)'s central committee member Sujan Chakraborty expressed solidarity with Chowdhury on the issue.

"Although I should not speak about an internal policy matter of the Congress, I still want to say that the kind of political and administrative wrath that the Congress has been subjected to in West Bengal during the current Trinamool Congress regime, such a reaction from the state Congress president is quite natural," Chakraborty said.

Political observers say that although everything is possible in politics, as of now it is quite evident that the concept of INDIA Bloc will be restricted to the Congress-Left Front and not the Congress-Trinamool combine.

Bengal's literary meet to promote young writers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 6: Around 800 Bengali writers will read out their compositions and participate in sessions at a five-day literary meet and little magazine fair here, starting from January 10, officials said Saturday.

The initiative by the state information and cultural affairs department is part of an effort

to promote work of young and seasoned litterateurs of the state. Around 460 little magazines from districts will participate in the literary meet as the state wanted to promote independent publications not having big-time institutional support, the Information and Cultural Affairs department said in a statement.

During this festival at

the Rabindra Sadan-Nandan and Bangla Academy compound, 612 poets and 144 short story writers will recite their verses and read out from their proses. Twelve commemorative awards - named after various Bengali luminaries, including Sakti Chattopadhyay, Lila Roy, will be handed over to talented litterateurs.

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PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

"Notice is hereby given to all users of Railway lines & premises situated on the completed sections of the under noted section of the Chakradharpur Division of South Eastern Railway that the 25,000 volts, 50 Hz, A.C. overhead traction wires will be energized on or after the date specified against the section. On & from the same date the overhead traction line shall be treated AS LIVE at all times and no unauthorized person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said overhead line."

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	From	To	Loc. No.	Km. Ch.				
Railway siding line of TATA JODA (take off from Baspani Station Main Down Line to FAP Joda Rail siding up-to RLS#3)	Track					South Eastern Railway / CKP Division	20/01/2024	
	Take Up From Banspani upto RLS - 3 Through bulb line & JMTC siding Line No - 5	398/24B	398/972.30	397/7SL5/8	397/216.14			1.655
	Line No - 6 Connecting Bulb Line to JMTC Siding	397/TS6/25	397/616.3	397/TS6/12	397/262			0.350
	TFMB Line No - 2	397/TS6/26A	397/674.3	397/FM2/1	397/539.4			0.150
	TFMB Line No - 1	397/TS6/28	397/747	397/FM1/1	397/563.5			0.150
TFMB Line No - 1A	397/TS6/29	397/783.2	397/FM1A/1	397/615.9	0.150			
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ED's lookout circular for TMC's Shahjahan



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 6: A day after a mob assaulted ED officers during a raid at the residence of TMC leader Shahjahan Sheikh in West Bengal, the Central agency Saturday issued a lookout notice for him, an official said.

There are apprehensions that he might flee the country following the incident Friday in which three ED officers were injured and several vehicles damaged by a mob at Sandeshkhali in North 24 Parganas district, which is close to the Bangladesh border.

"We have issued a lookout notice for the TMC leader and necessary instructions have been sent to the Airports Authority of

India," the ED officer told PTI. Shahjahan Sheikh is considered a close aide of state minister Jyotipriyo Mallick, who was arrested last year in connection with the multi-crore ration distribution scam.

The ED officer said that agency has already alerted the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the BSF in this connection.

He claimed that the TMC leader's mobile tower location showed that he was inside his Sandeshkhali home Friday when the agency team reached there.

"Since then, his mobile phone has been switched off and he is not there in Sandeshkhali. Going by some initial probe, it seems that he may be trying to cross the border to Bangladesh," the officer said.

Saturday evening, Shahjahan in a pre-recorded voice message sent to his party workers in Sandeshkhali alleged that the Central probe agencies were hatching a political conspiracy and he was not linked to any criminal activities.

PTI could not independently verify the authenticity of the audio clip.

Oppn's seat-sharing woes give BJP edge

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, Jan 6: The Congress in Assam was successful in uniting 12 parties to form a cohesive opposition to counter the BJP's formidable election machinery in the state, led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, long before the 26 Opposition parties formed the INDIA bloc.

The Left parties - Rajgor Dol, led by Sivasagar MLA Akhil Gogoi; Asom Jatiya Parishad of former All Assam Students Union leader Lurinjyoti Gogoi - and others were present in the unified Opposition forum. However, the All India United Democratic Front, a significant figure in the state's politics, is absent from the joint conference. At first, the Opposition group did not include TMC or AAP. Following the announcement of INDIA, the situation changed to a great extent and both Trinamool and AAP are now constituents of the major Opposition alliance. However, tensions have started mounting among the allies over seat-sharing.

Assam has a total of 14 Lok Sabha seats. In the 2019 general elections, Congress fought for the maximum number of seats. But this time, as they forged a bigger alliance, the allies have started demanding seats. AAP leaders have expressed their desire to contest at least four Lok Sabha seats, while the Trinamool has also insisted on contesting in five seats. Meanwhile, the Left parties are asking to be allocated three seats. Akhil Gogoi has declared categorically that he will run for the Lok Sabha seat in Jorhat.

Congress is not ready to give its allies plenty of seats. The contention over ticket distribution among the allies of the INDIA bloc in Assam might be good news for the BJP.

Rhinos back in sanctuaries after 40 yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Golaghat/Tezpur, Jan 6: Rhinos have returned to Laokhowa and Burachapori wildlife sanctuaries of Assam, 40 years after the population of the pachyderms in the area was wiped out due to poaching, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

These protected areas had also witnessed human encroachment over the years, which was cleared by the authorities last year, a forest official said.

"Happy to share that after 40 years our iconic rhinos have returned to Laokhowa and Burachapori. They have returned within 1 year of our successful anti-encroachment operation in the region," Sarma wrote on X.

A total of 51.7 sq km of forest cover has been retrieved through eviction drives in 2023, he said.

Kaziranga National Park (KNP) Director Sonali Ghosh said two rhinos were not seen spotted in the Laokhowa-Burachapori wildlife sanctuaries, which are part of 'Greater Kaziranga', after almost a gap of 40 years.

She said the Laokhowa-Burachapori forest in Nagaon dis-



trict had a population of 45-50 rhinos till 1983.

"They were poached and after that, there was degradation of grassland habitat due to anthropogenic pressure. Stray rhinos from the north bank (Orang National Park) and eastern side (Kaziranga) were known to enter through the Brahmaputra chapori areas but never stayed for long," she said.

Ghosh said rhinos have been "sighted in the first addition of Burachapori and Laokhowa wildlife sanctuaries since last November."

Both the rhinos have entered probably "through the second addition

of Orang National Park and the recently restored (evicted areas) of Arimari," she said.

Other than rhinos, the protected area also has 10 tigers.

The eviction drive was carried out from February 13 to 15 last year, which led to a clearing of 1,282 hectares of forest land and 817 hectares of unsurveyed government land.

Ghosh said 75 frontline positions, including that of deputy ranger, have been filled up in the area, reaffirming the government's commitment to strengthen the landscape and restore the lost glory of the forest.

SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA

STRESSED ASSETS RECOVERY BRANCH (SARB), Plot No.: 778, 1st Floor, Maharshi College Road, Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007, Ph. No.: 0674-2549663, 2549621, Fax No.: 0674-2549713, E-mail ID: sbi.05174@sbi.co.in

E-Auction Sale Notice

SALE OF IMMOVABLE/MOVABLE ASSETS CHARGED TO BANK UNDER SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002.

The undersigned as Authorized Officer of State Bank of India has taken over Possession of the following property/ies u/s 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act. Public at large is informed that e-auction (under SARFAESI Act, 2002) of the charged property/ies in the below mentioned cases for realisation of Bank's dues will be held on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis on 25.01.2024 and on the terms & conditions specified hereunder.

Date & Time of E-Auction: 25.01.2024 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M. with unlimited extensions of 10 minutes each.

Sl. No.	Name & Address of Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagor(s)	Property Details & Name of the owner of the property	Outstanding dues for recovery of which property/ies are being sold / Demand Notice date	Reserve Price EMD / Bid Increment
1.	Borrower: M/s Maa Kali Rice Mill, Prop.: Sri Ramahari Swain, S/o- Narayan Swain / Guarantor: Sri Siba Prasad Swain, S/o- Ramahari Swain, Both are At: Allapur, PO: Rabab, Via: Hinjilicut, Dist.: Ganjam, PIN-761102	All that part and parcel of the property consist of Land & Factory Building situated at Dist.: Ganjam, P.S.: Hinjili, Tahasil: Hinjilicut, Mouza: Allapur, Khata No.: 276/185, Shitibani, Plot No.: 757/1850, Area: Ac.0.080dec., Khata No.: 276/194, Shitibani, Plot No.: 757, Area: Ac.0.187dec., Full Plot. Total One Mouza, Two Khatas, Two Plots and Total Area: Ac.0.267dec., Kisanam: Gharabari, in the name of Ramahari Swain.	₹ 48,94,534.00 as on 30.08.2022 with further interest & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc.	₹ 19,75,000/- ₹ 1,97,500/- ₹ 25,000/-
2.	Borrowers: 1) Mrs. Rajeswari Satpathy, W/o- Saroj Kanta Satpathy, 2) Mr. Saroj Kanta Satpathy, S/o- Muralidhar Satpathy, Both are At: Kodapalla, PO: Naindipur, Dist.: Kendrapada, PIN-754153	Uncharged items consist of Two Air Condition with Stabilizer, Two Wooden Bed, Two TV set, One Inverter with Battery, Water Geyser, Wooden Almira, Wooden Dressing Table, etc. and Gold ornaments in Scrap condition at Flat No.: 105, in Sai Lingaraj Avenue, Mahatab Road, Old Town, Bhubaneswar as per list enclosed.	₹ 46,10,376.00 as on 01.09.2022 with further interest & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc.	₹ 1,39,000/- ₹ 13,900/- ₹ 5,000/-

Date & Time of inspection of the properties: 22.01.2024 between 11.00 AM to 04.00 PM

STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE TO BORROWER/GUARANTORS FOR SUBSEQUENT SALE UNDER RULE 8(6) & 9(1) AS PER SARFAESI ACT 2002

For detailed Terms & Conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in the State Bank of India, Secured Creditor Website: www.sbi.co.in, <https://bank.sbi/web/sbi-in-the-news/auction-notices/sarfaesi-and-others>, <https://ibapi.in> and for auction login into: <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp>

For further details and any query please contact : Sri Ashish Kumar Mohanty (Authorised Officer): Mob.: 9437552535, CCO: Sri Bhima Meher, Mob.: 8895333411

Date : 06.01.2024, Place : Bhubaneswar Sd-/Authorised Officer, State Bank of India

Indian Bank

ZONAL OFFICE
Indian Bank Building, B-2 (East), Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE
(See proviso to rule 8(2) & 8(6) Sale Notice for sale of property/ies under SARFAESI Act 2002)

Sale of Immovable property/ies mortgaged to Bank under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (No. 54 of 2002)

Whereas, the Authorized Officer of Indian Bank had taken possession of the following property/ies pursuant to the notice issued under Sec 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 in the following loan accounts with right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS", "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for realization of Bank's dues plus interest as detailed hereunder and whereas consequent upon failure to repay the dues, the undersigned in exercise of power conferred under section 13(4) of the said Act proposes to realize the Bank's dues by sale of the said property. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website <https://www.mstcecommerce.com>

Sl. No.	PARADEEP PORT BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrower/Partners	Description of the Immovable Property	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession Notice / Outstanding dues / Nature of Possession	Reserve Price/ EMD / Bid Increment Amount
1.	A/C: M/s Abha Engineering and Construction- Partnership Firm Borrower: M/s Abha Engineering and Construction- Partnership Firm / Managing Partner: Mr. Abhaya Kumar Malla, S/o.: Mr. Gopabandhu Malla, At: Alligarh, PO.: Balitutha, P.S.: Kujang, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, At Present: Qtr No.: PIV/5, Nuabazar, PO/P.S.: Paradeep, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur / Partners: 1) Mr. Ajaya Kumar Malla, 2) Mr. Akshaya Kumar Malla, Both are S/o.: Mr. Gopabandhu Malla, At: Alligarh, PO.: Balitutha, P.S.: Kujang, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, PIN-754141	All the part and parcel of Land situated at Khata No.: 804/542, Plot No.: 116/2391 of Area: Ac.0.14 Dec, at Mouza: Bagadia, Tahasil: Kujang, SRO: Kujang, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, in the name of Mr. Abhaya Kumar Malla, Bounded by North: Road, South: Kamal Kumar Dalai, East: Oxygen Gas Company, West: Gharoi Road	11.09.2023 / 18.11.2023 / ₹ 39,84,149/- This is inclusive of interest & other charges calculated up to 11.09.2023 Plus further interest @ applicable rates till the date of realization and costs, charges and expenses / Physical	₹ 21,95,000/- ₹ 1,95,000/- ₹ 25,000/-

DATE AND TIME OF E-AUCTION: 21.02.2024 (WEDNESDAY), from 11.00 AM to 5.00 PM

LAST DATE AND TIME FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD AND DOCUMENTS IS ON OR BEFORE 20.02.2024 upto 05.30 PM by online

Date & Time of Inspection of Properties is 12.02.2024 to 17.02.2024 between 10.30 AM to 5.30 PM (with prior appointment from bank) at their expenses

DETAILS OF ENCUMBRANCES KNOWN TO THE SECURED CREDITOR : Not Known

TERMS & CONDITIONS: 1) For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer to the link: <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> and <https://ibapi.in>. prospective bidders may also contact the Authorised Officers / Branch as mentioned in above list. 2) This is a 30 days notice to the Borrower/Partners of the above said loan about holding of this E-Auction Sale on the above mentioned date. 3) All expenses relating to the stamp duty and registration of Sale Certificate/conveyance, if any, shall be borne by the successful bidder. 4) The Authorized Officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien encumbrance, property tax or any other dues to the Government or anybody in respect of the property under sale. 5) The Authorized Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject any bid or adjourn/postpone/cancel the sale without assigning any reason therefor. It may be noted that nothing in this notice constitute or deemed to constitute any commitment or representation on the part of the bank to sell the property.

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002.

Borrower/Partners are hereby notified to pay the total dues along with up to date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of E-Auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/ sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest & cost.

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 06.01.2024 Sd-/Authorised Officer, Indian Bank



Israeli soldiers take part in a drill at the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas



Participants show off their writings in a New Year calligraphy contest at Nippon Budokan in Tokyo, Japan



A flooded road is seen in Thedinghausen, Germany



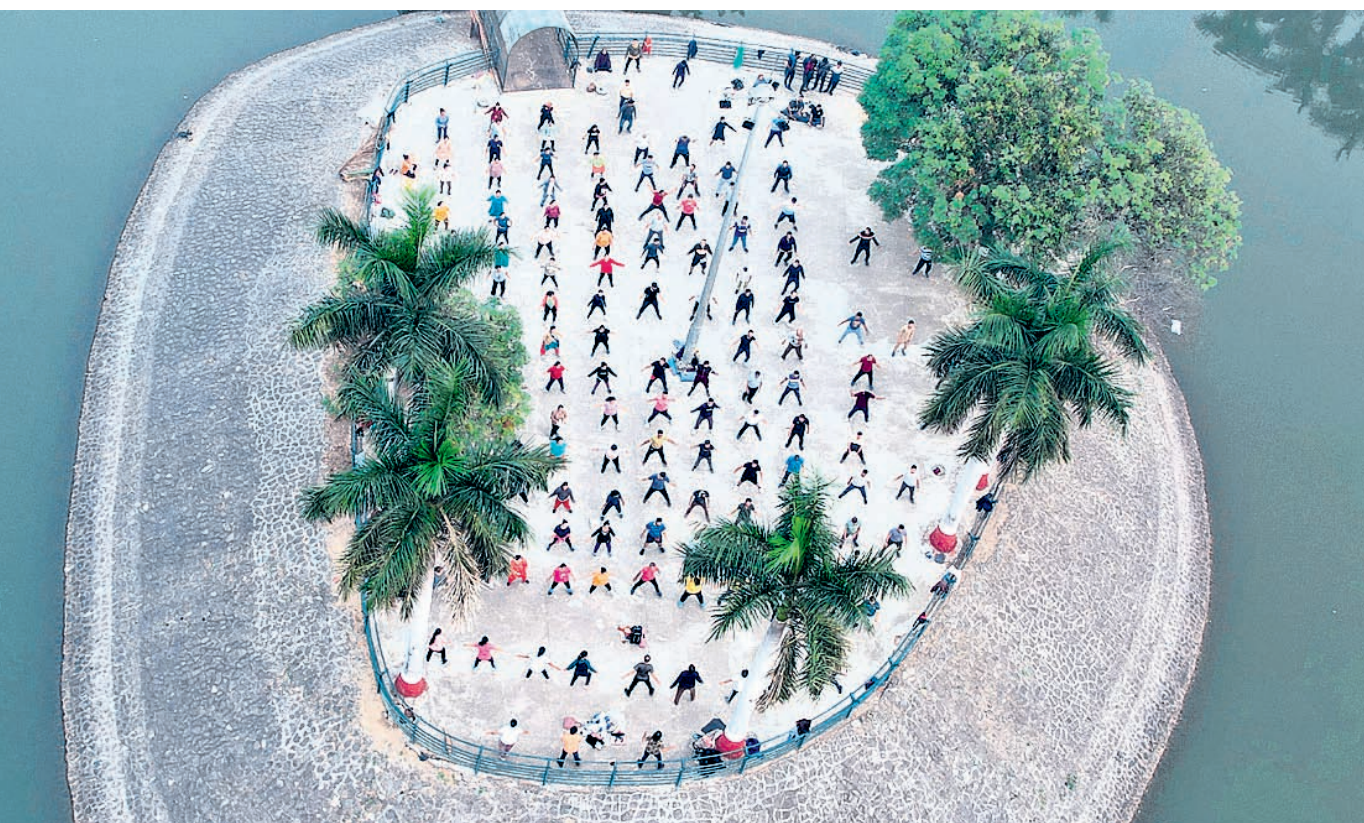
Visitors at the Taj Mahal on a cold morning in Agra



Sashastra Seema Bal's women personnel during rehearsals for the upcoming Republic Day parade on a cold morning in New Delhi



Offerings brought by devotees during a 'Sandesh Yatra' from Nepal's Janakpur, ahead of the consecration ceremony at the Ram temple, in Ayodhya



People do yoga on a cold morning at Lake Garden in Surat



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak meets members of the public during a visit to Altrincham Market in Greater Manchester, England

national

of the day quote

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had an opportunity to send a message against untouchability by getting the consecration at Ayodhya's Ram Mandir done by Dalits and tribals instead of putting himself at the forefront

At a time when J&K is facing a severe power crisis never witnessed before, our hydro electric resources are being outsourced to other states. Yet another decision that will rob people of basic amenities with an intention to collectively punish the inhabitants of J&K

The consecration of Ayodhya Ram temple is a matter of pride and self-respect. On that day (January 22), we will visit the Kalam temple at 6:30 pm where Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar and (social reformer) Sane Gururji had to stage protests. At 7:30 pm, we will hold a maha aarti on the banks of the Godavari river

ASHOK GEHLOT | FORMER RAJASTHAN CM

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP CHIEF

UDDHAV THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

NIA attaches four properties

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Saturday attached four properties owned by members of the Lawrence Bishnoi organised terror-crime syndicate in three states, an official said. This action is another major step towards demolishing the terrorist-gangster-drug smuggler nexus in the country, the spokesperson of the federal agency said. The properties -- three immovable and one movable -- were attached in a coordinated action in Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), the official said.

Congress forms publicity committee

New Delhi: Stepping up its preparations for the Lok Sabha polls, the Congress Saturday set up a publicity committee with AICC treasurer Ajay Maken as its convenor and party general secretaries Jairam Ramesh and K C Venugopal among its members, a statement said. The party also constituted a 'central war room' for the general elections with Vaibhav Walia heading the communications war room and Sasikanth Senthil S chairing the organisational war room, it said. Varun Santhosh, Gokul Butail, Naveen Sharma and Capt. Arvind Kumar would be the vice-chairmen in the organisational war room, according to the Congress statement.

Rajnath lays foundation stone of Patanjali Gurukulam



AGENCIES

Dehradun, Jan 6: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Saturday said Macaulay was sent to India to throttle the country's traditional system of education and enslave Indians mentally. He said the revival of 'gurukul' was necessary to counter the effects of the Macaulay's system of education on Indian minds but advised that these traditional schools should synthesise their education with emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and quantum technology. "Macaulay was sent to India to enslave Indians even mentally by colonising their minds," Singh said, addressing a large gathering of seers and students at the foundation laying ceremony of Patanjali Gurukulam in Haridwar. Talking about Macaulay's attitude of disregard towards India's cultural and literary legacy, the Union minister said the British official had once declared an almirah in a European library as more than all of India's cultural and literary heritage. "He (Macaulay) said this about a country that created the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Geeta," Singh said. "The education system introduced by Macaulay spawned generations of Indians who grew up with a sense of inferiority about their own culture and tra-

ditions," the minister said. He said Mahrashi Dayanand Saraswati and Swami Darshanand established institutions like 'gurukuls' to carry forwards India's traditional system of education and restore its glory. The Union minister praised Yoga Guru Ramdev for his efforts to revive the institution established by Swami Darshanand in the name of Patanjali Gurukulam saying a new India needed new 'gurukulams' which combined traditional education with emerging and cutting edge technologies. He also praised Ramdev for popularising yoga, the ancient Indian discipline of physical and mental wellbeing, not only in the country but also abroad saying it was an exemplary service to humanity. The Union Minister said the journey of Ramdev and Acharya Balkrishna from their humble beginnings to the height of their achievements at present is a source of inspiration to the whole country. Earlier, accompanied by Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, his Madhya Pradesh counterpart Mohan Yadav, Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and Rajya Sabha MP and BJP spokesman Sudhanshu Trivedi, Singh participated in a havan on the Jwalapur Mahavidyalaya ground and laid the foundation stone of Patanjali Gurukulam.

Law panel examines to hold simultaneous polls in 2 phases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 6: The Law Commission, looking into the issue of holding simultaneous elections in the country, may examine the possibility of carrying out the three-tier democratic exercise in two phases in a single year, sources have said. In the first phase, Lok Sabha and Assembly polls can be held and in the second phase, local body polls can be organised, they said, citing one of the formulae the law panel may consider for the simultaneous elections issue. This, the sources said, is a practical approach keeping in mind the varied climatic conditions of the country. In August 2018, the previous Law Commission had endorsed the Narendra Modi government's proposal to hold simultaneous polls to the Lok Sabha

and state assemblies, saying it will prevent the country from being in constant election mode. However, it had sought further public discourse on the issue before arriving at a final decision. The present law panel under Justice (ret'd) Ritu Raj Awasthi is finalising its report on holding Assembly and Lok Sabha polls together. But the high-level committee on 'One Nation, One Election' under former President Ram Nath Kovind has been tasked with recommending how Lok Sabha, Assembly and local body polls (panchayat, municipalities, zila parishad) can be held together. Keeping in mind the terms of reference of the Kovind-led panel, the Law Commission has enhanced the ambit of its study to include holding local body polls along with national and state elections.

The way the ED has mentioned my name in its supplementary chargesheet is completely part of a political conspiracy. The ED, at the behest of its political masters, has been fraudulently arresting people and pressuring them to give statements against me and my associates

BHUPESH BAGHEL | FORMER CHHATTISGARH CM

No hope, better to die in jail: Goyal to court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 6: Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal, an accused in the alleged fraud of ₹538 crore at Canara Bank, Saturday told a special court here with "folded hands" that he had "lost every hope of life" and it will be "better if he dies in jail" than living in his present condition. The septuagenarian, who turned teary-eyed, submitted that he misses his wife Anita very badly and said she is in the advanced stage of cancer, according to court records. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) arrested Goyal on September 1 last year in connection with the alleged bank fraud. He is currently in judicial custody at Arthur Road jail here. Goyal had moved a bail application before special judge M G Deshpande. He was produced before the court Saturday and during the proceedings Goyal requested for a few minutes of personal hearing, which the judge allowed. As per the court's 'roznama' (record of daily hearings), Goyal with folded hands and "continuous tremors in his whole body" submitted that "his health is very bad and precarious". The businessman said that his wife is bedridden and their only daughter too is unwell. The jail staff has their limitations in helping him, said Goyal. "I heard him patiently and also observed him when he made the submissions as such. I found that his whole body was trembling. He needs assistance even to stand," the judge noted. Goyal pointed to his knees and said they were swollen and painful and he was unable to fold his legs. The Jet Airways founder brought to the court's notice that he has severe pain while urinating and sometimes blood is passed through urine, coupled with unsustainable pain. Most of the time, he hasn't been able to get assistance, he said.

774 FRESH COVID CASES IN INDIA

India has recorded a single-day rise of 774 Covid cases while the number of active cases stands at 4,187, the Union health ministry said Saturday



PM does photo shoots but can't visit Manipur: Kharge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 6: The Congress is taking out the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra as the government did not give it a chance to raise people's issues in Parliament and the initiative is aimed at re-establishing the principles of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity enshrined in the Constitution, party chief Mallikarjun Kharge said Saturday. Addressing a press conference during which he unveiled the logo of the Manipur-Mumbai yatra that will be led by Rahul Gandhi, Kharge attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not visiting violence-hit Manipur, saying he has time for photo shoots at beaches and at places where temples are being constructed but does not have time for the sufferings of the northeastern state. He also accused the BJP government of misusing agencies like the ED, the CBI and the Income Tax Department to threaten opposition leaders and said Home Minister Amit Shah is running "a big dry clean factory where every tainted leader comes out clean, pure white" after joining the ruling party. "Unfortunate incidents took place in Manipur but Prime Minister Modi has time for photo shoots of swimming at the beach, in places where temples are being constructed, in Kerala, from everywhere you can see his photo. But why did this 'mahapurush' did not go to Manipur where people are dying, women are being raped, people are dying of cold. Is it not part of the country?" Kharge asked. "You go to Lakshadweep, why can't you go and talk to the people in Manipur. The PM said he is enough for the opposition, but



Kharge slammed the government for bringing new labour laws and criminal laws and said that bringing such legislations were signs of a dictatorship. Asked about electoral benefits, Kharge said the party's task is to get justice for the people and for that it does not need to count seats

then he should go to Manipur...Talk to the people there," the Congress chief said, flanked by party general secretaries Jairam Ramesh and K C Venugopal. So that is why the yatra is aimed at creating public awareness about issues, he said. "We tried to raise issues in Parliament but the government did not allow us to do it. As many as 146 opposition MPs were suspended for the first time in India's history. The issues 28 parties wanted to raise, they were not allowed to do so. The PM did not come to Parliament (to listen to us) and the session got over. We are going to tell the people about the issues," he said. "We will also hear out the problems of the people. This platform is not just to convey our point of view but to listen to people's problems as well," he said. Kharge slammed the government for bringing new labour laws and criminal laws, and said that bringing such legislations were signs of a dictatorship. "This Yatra is aimed at saving and re-establishing the four pillars mentioned in preamble of constitution -- justice, liberty, equality and fraternity," Kharge asserted.

GOVT. OF ODISHA No. MM-406
OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, ANGUL DIVISION, ANGUL
e-Procurement Notice, Angul Forest Division
Bid Identification No. 09 of 2023-24
 e-mail ID: dfoangul@gmail.com

- Number of Works : 04 Nos. of SMC Works
- Approximate Estimated Cost : 12.49 Lakhs to 35.21 Lakhs
- Period of Completion : 45 (Forty Five) Calendar Days
- Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal : Dt.08.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M. to 19.01.2024
- Last date/time for receipt of bid in the portal : Dt.19.01.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.
- Date of Opening Bid : Dt.20.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M.
- Name and address of the Office Inviting Bid : Divisional Forest Officer, Angul Division, Angul
- The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer
 Angul Division, Angul
 OIPR-08027/11/0020/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF PANCHAYATIRAJ & DRINKING WATER, OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, BHADRAK
INVITATION OF BIDS (IFB)
Bid Identification No PSB-05/2023-24

No. i-578: Bid documents consisting of work, estimated amount for put to tender, cost of tender paper, time of completion, class of contractor, the set of terms & conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen from the office of Panchayat Samiti, Bhadrak.

- Name of the Work : As per DTCN
- No. of Works : 5 Nos. of Individual Packages
- Estimated cost for put to tender : As per DTCN
- Period of Completion : 6 (Six) Calendar Months each
- Date & time of availability of bid documents : From 05.01.2024 at 10.00 A.M. hrs. to 19.01.2024 at 5.00 P.M. hrs.
- Last date/time for receipt/drop of bids in the office : 19.01.2024 at 5.00 P.M.
- Date of Opening of Bids : 20.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M. hours
- Class of Contractor : "C" & "D" Class
- Name of the Officer Inviting Bids : Block Development Officer, Panchayat Samiti, Bhadrak

Further details can be seen from the Office of Panchayat Samiti, Bhadrak on working hours. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in office of undersigned. The detailed information is also available on district website "bhadrak.nic.in".

Sd./- Block Development Officer
 Panchayat Samiti, Bhadrak
 OIPR-19211/11/0007/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. O-2136
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION-I, NABARANGPUR
 e-mail: eerwngp@rediffmail.com

Letter No. 243
e-Procurement Notice Dtd.: 05.01.2024

Name of the Work : Building Work
 Total No. of Works : 05 (Five) Nos.
 Approx. Estimate Cost : Rs.23.55 lakhs to Rs.38.09 lakhs
 Class of Contractor : "B" & "C" Class Contractor
 Period of Completion : 06 (Six) Calendar Months

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	No. of Works	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding		Date & Time of Opening of Tender Technical
			From	To	
Rural Works Division-I, Nabarangpur	EERWNGP-Online-11/2023-24	05 (Five) Nos.	12.01.2024 at 10.00 A.M.	19.01.2024 Upto 03.00 P.M.	22.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M.

For details can be seen from the Government website www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
 OIPR-25092/11/0011/2324 Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division-I, Nabarangpur

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA E-mail id: eerwraingpur@yahoo.com
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, RAIRANGPUR (MAYURBHANJ)

Letter No. 70
"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works Date: 04.01.2024

No. O-2108
 Bid Identification No. RWDRRP - 19/2023-24

- Name of the Work : Special repair to roads for the year 2023-24
- Estimated Cost : From Rs.6.34 to 16.81 lakhs (Approximately).
- Class of Contractor : "D" & "C" Class or relevant class of works license
- Period of Completion : 02 (Two) Calendar Months
- Tender Paper Cost : As per Annexure

The details are as follows

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding		Last date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/S. S.E.R.W. Division, Rairangpur	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
S.E.R.W. Division, Rairangpur	RWDRRP-19/2023-24	08.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	17.01.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.	12.01.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.	18.01.2024 at 11.30 A.M.	

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
 OIPR-25107/11/0023/2324 Sd./- Er. D. Behera, Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division, Rairangpur

Gyanvapi: Court decision over ASI report Jan 24



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Varanasi (UP), Jan 6: A Varanasi court Saturday fixed January 24 for deciding whether to make public the sealed Archeological Survey of India (ASI) report on the Gyanvapi mosque complex survey and provide copies to the parties. The order to this effect was given by District Judge

A K Vishvesh, Madan Mohan Yadav, counsel for the Hindu side, said. The counsel of the Hindu and Muslim sides and the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) were present in the court. Following a July 21 order of the district court, the ASI carried out the scientific survey of the Gyanvapi premises, located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple here, to determine whether the mosque was constructed over a pre-existing structure of a Hindu temple. The court Saturday said it will decide the issue after the hearing in the matter before the Civil Judge Senior Division Fast Track Court takes place.

Bank of India Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015

POSSESSION NOTICE
 [Rule-8(1) of security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002]

Whereas, the undersigned being the **Authorised Officer of Bank of India** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the Borrowers / Co-Applicants in the loan Accounts given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within **60 days** from the date of the said Notice.

The Borrowers/Co-Applicants having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Co-Applicants and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrowers/Co-Applicants in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the **Bank of India, Bhubaneswar SME Branch** for an amount mentioned below with interest & other expenses thereon, less the amount repaid after the date of the said Notice.

The borrowers/Co-Applicants attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the Secured Assets.

BHUBANESWAR SME BRANCH	Liabilities due as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice/Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Properties
Borrower: Mr Pabitra Jena, S/o: Mr Gangadhar Jena, Co-Applicant/Mortgagor: Mr Gangadhar Jena, S/o: Mr Halu Jena, both are residing At: Belapada (Nimikheta Ranasinghprasad), PO: Belapada, Via: Banapur, Dist: Khurda, Pin- 752030.	Rs.25,29,869.68P + interest, & expenses thereon	30.10.2023 / 05.01.2024	All that piece & parcel of the land & building situated at Khata No. 143/23, Plot No.241, Mouza: Ranasingh Prasad, Tahasil: Chilikpa, P.S: Banapur, Dist: Khurda, SRO: Banpur, KISSAM: Gharabari, Area: 0.043 dec., standing in the name of Mr Gangadhar Jena, S/o: Late Halu Jena Boundary: North- Road, South- Makkadam Das, East- Nityananda Lenka and others, West- Bhaskar Ghatuali.
Borrower/Mortgagor: Mr Sarbajit Maharana, S/o: Mr Kanhu Charan Maharana, Co-Applicant: Mrs Ullash Maharana, W/o: Mr Kanhu Charan Maharana, both are residing at Flat No.102, Block A, Lingaraj Residency, Old Town, Bhubaneswar, Pin- 751002.	Rs.75,34,166/- + interest, & expenses thereon	30.10.2023 / 06.01.2024	Equitable Mortgage of residential flat owned by Mr Sarbajit Maharana at Flat No.102, 1st Floor, Block-A (3BHK) having super builtup area- 1445 Sqft., Plinth Area: 1175 Sqft., the proportionate undivided impartible interest in the land area

Ac.0.024.24 dcml. in named and style of 'Lingaraj Residency', Mouza: Kapila Prasad, Unit No.23, Tahasil/DSRO: Bhubaneswar, P.S: Bhubaneswar, P.S No.66, Dist: Khurda, Boundary: North- Stair Case and Corridor, South- Open Space, East- Flat No.101, West- Open Space.

Place : Bhubaneswar, Date : 06.01.2024 Authorised Officer, Bank of India

PANCHAYAT SAMITI OFFICE, ATHAMALLIK
 ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାରଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ, ଆଠମଲିକ
 E-mail: ori-athamallik@nic.in Dtd.04.01.2024

CORRIGENDUM

No. i-580: The following corrigendums to the Tender Call Notice No. ALKB-02/2023-24 are issued to all concerned

- The heading under the form Annexure-I i.e. "Quotation for supply installation connection of DG set of KIRLOSKAR make in 100 seated ST & SC Girls' Hostel of Painchukul Higher Secondary School, Aida" is to be read as "Tender Call Notice for Establishment of 10MT Capacity Solar Cold Room under MIDH".
- The last date of submission of quotation/tender is extended upto 20.01.2024 and tender will be opened on 22.01.2024 at 12.30 P.M. Those firms who have already submitted their tender/quotations in Annexure-I for Establishment of 10MT Capacity Solar Cold Room need not submit further.
- The cost of tender paper for Rs.6000.00 (Rupees Six thousand) only is to be submitted by the bidder in shape of Demand Draft in favour of Block Development Officer, Athamallik payable at ICICI Bank, Athamallik. Those who have already submitted their bid, they have to deposit the tender paper cost on or before opening of tender.
- EMD @ 1% of tender cost i.e. Rs.15,000.00 (Rupees fifteen thousand) only in shape of TDS of Nationalized Bank/Post Office pledged in favour of Block Development Officer, Athamallik is to be submitted along with bid document. Those who have already submitted the bid document earlier, they have to submit the EMD on or before the date of opening of tender.
- The work will be executed as per the specification/direction of Deputy Director, Horticulture, Angul.

OIPR-19091/11/0002/2324 Sd./- Block Development Officer, Athamallik

international



January 6, 2021, marked a moment where we nearly lost America — lost it all. We all know who Donald Trump is. The question we have to answer is who are we?
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

ABORTION BAN: IDAHO GETS SC NOD

The Supreme Court allowed Idaho to enforce its strict abortion ban, even in medical emergencies, while a legal fight continues. The justices said they would hear arguments in April and put on hold a lower court ruling that had blocked the Idaho law in hospital emergencies, based on a lawsuit filed by the Biden administration



of the day quote

China is using its warships, warplanes and fake news to divide Taiwan. I urge you all with your sacred votes to tell the world that Taiwan will not surrender to an authoritarian regime but will continue to choose democracy and freedom
LAI CHING-TE | VICE PRESIDENT, TAIWAN

We are beginning the process to remove the US-led international military coalition from the country
MOHAMMED SHIA AL-SUDANI | PM, IRAQ

A resolution of 14 senators based on their personal opinions, has no legal or binding force in the constitutional process of holding general elections
BARRISTER GOHAR KHAN | CHIEF, PTI

THREE YEARS OF JAN 6 RIOT

THE SUPREME COURT WILL DECIDE IF FORMER PRESIDENT TRUMP CAN BE KEPT OFF 2024 PRESIDENTIAL BALLOTS, AS TWO US STATES DISQUALIFIED THE LEADING REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE OVER CAPITOL RIOTS



culminated in the January 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol. Arguments will be held in early February. The court will be considering for the first time the meaning and reach of a provision of the 14th Amendment barring some people who "engaged in insurrection" from holding public office. The amendment was adopted in 1868, following the Civil War. It has been so rarely used that the nation's highest court had no previous occasion to interpret it. Colorado's Supreme Court, by a 4-3 vote, ruled last month that Trump should not be on the Republican primary ballot. The decision was the first time the 14th Amendment was used to bar a presidential contender from the ballot.

Trump is separately appealing to state court a ruling by Maine's Democratic secretary of state, Shenna Bellows, that he was ineligible to appear on that state's ballot over his role in the Capitol attack. Both the Colorado Supreme Court and the Maine secretary of state's rulings are on hold until the appeals play out. Three of the nine Supreme Court justices were appointed by Trump, though they have repeatedly ruled against him in 2020 election-related lawsuits, as well as his efforts to keep documents related to January 6 and his tax returns from being turned over to congressional committees. At the same time, Justices Amy Coney Barrett, Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh have been in the majority of con-

servative-driven decisions that overturned the five-decade-old constitutional right to abortion, expanded gun rights and struck down affirmative action in college admissions. Some Democratic lawmakers have called on another conservative justice, Clarence Thomas, to step aside from the case because of his wife's support for Trump's effort to overturn the results of the election, which he lost to Democrat Joe Biden. Thomas is unlikely to agree. He has recused himself from only one other case related to the 2020 election, involving former law clerk John Eastman, and so far the people trying to disqualify Trump haven't asked him to recuse. The 4-3 Colorado decision cites a ruling by Gorsuch when he was a federal judge in that state. That Gorsuch decision upheld Colorado's move to strike a naturalized citizen from the state's presidential ballot because he was born in Guyana and didn't meet the constitutional requirements to run for office. The court found that Trump likewise doesn't meet the qualifications due to his role in the US Capitol attack January 6, 2021. That day, the Republican president had held a rally outside the White House and exhorted his

supporters to "fight like hell" before they walked to the Capitol. The two-sentence provision in Section 3 of the 14th Amendment states that anyone who swore an oath to uphold the constitution and then "engaged in insurrection" against it is no longer eligible for state or federal office. After Congress passed an amnesty for most of the former confederates the measure targeted in 1872, the provision fell into disuse until dozens of suits were filed to keep Trump off the ballot this year. Only the one in Colorado was successful. The issue of whether Trump can be on the ballot is not the only matter related to the former president or January 6 that has reached the high court. The justices last month declined a request from special counsel Jack Smith to swiftly take up and rule on Trump's claims that he is immune from prosecution in a case charging him with plotting to overturn the 2020 presidential election, though the issue could be back before the court soon depending on the ruling of a Washington-based appeals court. And the court has said that it intends to hear an appeal that could upend hundreds of charges stemming from the Capitol riot, including against Trump.

IN A FIRST Russia fires NK missiles at Kyiv

Kyiv, Jan 6: Russia has hit Ukraine with missiles supplied by North Korea for the first time during its invasion, a senior Kyiv official said Friday, corroborating an earlier assertion by the US White House. The statement on social media platform X came after the governor of the northeastern region of Kharkiv said that his region had been struck by missiles fired by Russia that were not Russian-made. "There is no longer any disguise ... as part of its outright genocidal war, the Russian Federation for the first time struck at the territory of Ukraine with missiles received from ... North Korea," the senior Kyiv official, Mykhailo Podolyak, said. He did not provide evidence for the missiles being North Korean. In its statement Thursday, Washington cited declassified intelligence. "(Russia) is attacking Ukrainians with missiles received from a state where citizens are tortured in concentration camps for having an unregistered radio, talking to a tourist, watching TV shows," Podolyak said.

Washington, Jan 6: The Supreme Court said Friday it will decide whether former President Donald Trump can be kept off the ballot because of his efforts to overturn his 2020 election loss, inserting the court squarely in the 2024 presidential campaign. The justices acknowledged the need to reach a decision quickly, as voters will soon begin casting presidential primary ballots across the country. The court agreed to take up a case from Colorado stemming from Trump's role in the events that

US intel confirms IS Afghan branch behind Iran blasts

Washington, Jan 6: Communications intercepts collected by the United States confirmed that Islamic State's (ISIS) Afghanistan-based branch carried out twin bombings in Iran that killed nearly 100 people, two sources familiar with the intelligence told Reuters Friday. "The intelligence is clear-cut and indisputable," a source said. Wednesday's bombings, the deadliest of their kind in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, added to regional tensions over the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza and attacks by Yemen's Tehran-aligned Houthi group on commercial shipping in the Red Sea. ISIS Thursday claimed responsibility for the bombings, saying two operatives wearing explosive suicide belts staged the attack during a memorial service for Qassem Soleimani, a senior military commander assassinated in Iraq in a 2020 US drone strike. The Sunni Muslim militant group, however, did not specify that its Afghanistan-based affiliate, known as ISIS-Khorasan (ISIS-K), was responsible for the bombings in the southeastern Iranian city of Kerman.

Political drama grips B'desh

Bangladesh to hold general elections Sunday; PM Hasina poised to win 4th consecutive term as Oppn boycotts elections

Dhaka, Jan 6: Bangladesh will go to the polls Sunday in which Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to win a fourth straight term in the absence of the main Opposition BNP which Saturday began a 48-hour nationwide strike against the "illegal government" amidst sporadic violence. Polling booths were set ablaze in Bangladesh on the eve of Sunday's general elections, while four people, including two children, were killed in a train fire that the government described as arson targeting democratic values. A total of 119.6 million registered voters are eligible to vote at Sunday's polls in more than 42,000 polling stations, according to the country's Election Commission. More than 1,500 candidates from 27 political parties are contesting in the election besides 436 independent candidates. Over 100 foreign observers, including three from India, will monitor the 12th general election, which is being held under tight security.



Dhaka police Saturday arrested eight people, including a prominent leader of the opposition BNP, for planning and financing Friday's arson attack on a train in the heart of Dhaka that left at least four people dead. The party demands UN probe

Bangladesh's Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal said that the voting set for Sunday's general election lacked completeness since a major opposition party was not participating but his office has taken all steps to continue the constitutional continuity. The opposition party BNP led by former prime minister Khalida Zia is boycotting the January 7 election amid violence and has called for a 48-hour nationwide strike against the "illegal government". The BNP is demanding an interim non-party neutral government to hold the election.

3 MONTHS INTO ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

Gaza 'uninhabitable'



United Nations, Jan 6: The UN Humanitarian chief described Gaza Friday as "uninhabitable" three months into Israel's war with Hamas, warning that famine was looming and a public health disaster unfolding. In a grim assessment of the devastating impact of Israel's military response to the horrific Hamas attacks October 7, Martin Griffiths said that Gaza's 2.3 million people face "daily threats to their very existence" while the world just watches. He said tens of thousands of people, mostly women and children, have been killed or injured, families are sleeping in the open as temperatures plummet, and areas where Palestinians were told to relocate have been bombed. "People are facing the highest levels of food insecurity ever recorded (and) famine is around the corner," Griffiths said. The few partially functioning hospitals are overwhelmed and critically short of supplies, medical facilities are under relentless attack, infectious diseases are spreading, and amidst the chaos some 180 Palestinian women are giving birth every day. "Gaza has simply become uninhabitable," the UN Undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs said.

SHORT TAKES

Russia's drone aim

Moscow: Russia plans to produce more than 32,000 drones each year by 2030 and for domestic producers to account for 70% of the market, the TASS news agency cited First Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Belousov as saying Saturday. Drones have been widely used by Moscow and Kyiv since Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine and both sides are sharply increasing military production as the war drags on. "The annual production volume of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) - excluding educational UAVs - is planned at 32,500 units," Belousov told TASS. "This is almost three times higher than current production volumes," he added.

84 inmates on trial

Dubai: The United Arab Emirates Saturday acknowledged it is conducting a mass trial of 84 inmates previously reported by dissidents as it hosted the United Nations COP28 climate talks last month. The trial likely includes a prominent activist lauded by rights group abroad. The state-run WAM news agency quoted the country's attorney general, Hamad al-Shamsi, as saying the 84 defendants face charges of "establishing another secret organisation for the purpose of committing acts of violence and terrorism on state territory".

PM Sunak faces byelection test

London: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was Friday hit with a byelection challenge as a former energy minister resigned as Conservative Party MP over new oil and gas production related legislation coming up in Parliament next week. Chris Skidmore, who was a minister for energy under former prime minister Boris Johnson, said he was resigning as Tory MP for Kingswood in Gloucestershire, south-west England, because the constituents deserved a new member of Parliament after his "personal decision" not to continue in the Commons.

Biggest-ever cocaine bust

La Paz: Bolivia announced a record cocaine seizure from the country's western Oruro department, officials said on Friday, giving the drugs a local street value of \$224 million but nearly double that in Europe where the illicit cargo was likely headed. Bolivian President Luis Arce described the roughly 8.8 metric ton bust as the largest ever recorded in the South American country in a post on social media.

Message to China in US aid flow to Ukraine

BY CONTINUING TO HELP UKRAINE RESIST RUSSIAN AGGRESSION, THE US CAN SEND A POWERFUL SIGNAL TO A BROADER RANGE OF RIVALS: UNPROVOKED AGGRESSION WILL NOT GO UNPUNISHED

Deterrence is a key argument in favour of providing military assistance to Ukraine. Supporters of Western aid argue that it is necessary to demonstrate determination. The argument goes that the US and its allies must show the world—and Chinese President Xi Jinping in particular—that they are prepared to commit force and financial resources to counteracting unrestrained aggression. However, an increasing number of people contend that supporting Ukraine indefinitely is distracting from the actual threat, which is a Chinese invasion of Taiwan. They contend that all of this help is exhausting vital resources that are required to prevent a takeover attempt and beat China in the event of war. Framing the debate this way obscures a fundamental but uncomfortable truth: prioritising one form of credibility can undermine the other. One camp privileges the "would" part of the deterrence equation—does China, or any adversary for that matter, believe that the US would



respond militarily to aggression? The other camp prioritises the "could" part—does China believe that the US could respond militarily if necessary to aggression? Both are invoking credibility, but they are talking about different things. These distinctions matter because of opportunity costs. Doing more to demonstrate resolve in Ukraine today might undermine the US' physical capacity to respond to crises tomorrow, even if it wanted to. Alternatively, husbanding resources in the present to preserve capabilities might increase the US' physical capacity to respond to future crises but reduce the perception by rivals that it actually would. In short, deterrence can fail in two discrete ways: rivals believe that Washington would respond but can't or that it could but won't. The first step in wrestling with potential tradeoffs between bolstering resolve and bolstering capabilities is to identify them. Given the limited resources available, decision-makers will need to decide what to allot, where to

put it, and how long to use it. Although they would be loath to admit it, those in the resolve camp are essentially arguing that the US can do it all. The basic logic is that Washington can continue supporting Ukraine with military assistance while also preparing for potential conflict in Asia. The reality, however, is more complicated. As a Center for a New American Security report has noted, although there are important differences between the kinds of weapons that the US is providing to Ukraine and the types of weapons that would be needed to stymie a Chinese invasion of Taiwan, there is certainly some overlap. There is even more overlap once one considers the types of weapons Taiwan would need to continue on the fight following a successful Chinese landing. Although the kinds of weapons the US would need to defend an initial air and sea assault are relatively distinct from those now being sent to Ukraine, it's a different story when it comes to the weapons the Taiwanese would use to counter Chinese forces on the island itself. These weapons include a variety of missiles and missile systems, such as AT-ACMS, Javelins, Patriots, and Stingers. Thanks in part to Ukrainian demand, their supplies are increasingly limited. There are already signs of competition between Taiwan and Ukraine over certain assets. Increasingly, the arms Washington and its allies are sending to Ukraine are the very ones Taiwan wants most: not just HIMARS but also Abrams tanks, F16 fighter jets, and ATACMS. No matter what policymakers decide about Ukraine, there will be tradeoffs. The central question, then, is which of two options is preferable. Should the US keep aiding Ukraine, at least for the time being, both to help resist Russian advances and to bolster resolve, even if it comes at some cost to preparedness in Asia? Or would it be better to safeguard resources for Taiwan, even if the US takes a hit to its reputation for resolve? There are no perfect answers, but there are good reasons why policymakers should opt for the former course. First, it is at least possible to devote additional resources to shore up the US' defence industrial base, whose deficiencies are largely responsible for prospective shortfalls in weapons platforms and munitions of various kinds. To compensate further, Washington can enlist partners and allies. What no amount of money can buy is resolve. Another reason why policymakers should prioritise resolve is that the US has global commitments and reputational stakes beyond China. Prematurely abandoning Ukraine to preserve resources for Taiwan could embolden other adversaries. It might, for example, signal to Iran and North Korea that the US does not have the appetite to support the victims of aggression once a conflict becomes protracted, or at the very least that it cannot defend more than one country in one region at a time. All this could encourage further adventurism. By continuing to help Ukraine resist Russian aggression, the US can send a powerful signal to a broader range of rivals: unprovoked aggression will not go unpunished.

of the day quote

As India rides on the generative AI (GenAI) bandwagon which will touch every aspect of the IT and tech industry, the country needs to focus on creating short-term courses in fundamental of AI to skill 100 million people and prepare them for the jobs of the future

CP GURNANI | FORMER CEO, TECH MAHINDRA

We appeal to the FM to consider our pleas favourably to mitigate the unforeseen crisis plaguing the spinning sector, prevent job losses to several lakh people, sustain the market share, and achieve the envisaged export targets

RAKESH MEHRA | CHAIRMAN, CITI

We want to have a differentiated gaming experience and part of that is giving game creators the ability to think about building games purely from the perspective of player enjoyment and not having to worry about other forms of monetization, whether it be ads or in-game payment

GREG PETERS | CO-CEO, NETFLIX

SHORT TAKES

Unicommerce files for IPO

New Delhi: E-commerce enablement SaaS platform Unicommerce has filed its draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) with the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for an initial public offering (IPO). The SoftBank-backed company, which is under AceVector Group which also has Snapdeal and Stellar Brands, has filed DRHP for a secondary sale of 29.8 million shares and does not include fresh issues. AceVector Limited is selling up to 1,14,59,840 equity shares while B2 Capital Partners and SB Investment Holdings (SoftBank) are offloading up to 2,210,406 and 16,170,240 equity shares. This is the third SoftBank-funded company that has filed DRHP in a fortnight, besides Ola Electric and FirstCry.

Uber expands flexible pricing

New Delhi: Ride-hailing major Uber is now testing its flexible pricing service in several tier 2 and 3 cities in India to expand its user base, allowing commuters to bid a particular fare for their ride. Caller Uber Flex, the flexible pricing service was tested for the first time in India in October last year. According to TechCrunch, the service has now been expanded to cities like Aurangabad, Ajmer, Bareilly, Chandigarh, Coimbatore, Dehradun, Gwalior, Indore, Jodhpur and Surat, among other cities.

E-comm platforms can't become haven for counterfeiters: Delhi HC

The court's observations came while dealing with a lawsuit by sportswear brand Puma SE which alleged that e-commerce platform Indiamart was being used by various sellers to peddle its counterfeit goods

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 6: An e-commerce platform cannot become a haven for infringers of intellectual property and have such a system which provides an avenue to counterfeiters, the Delhi High Court has said.

The court observed that e-commerce websites are commercial ventures and are inherently profit oriented, which is not objectionable, but they have to protect intellectual property rights of others.

RED SEA CRISIS

Shipping bill may surge

The situation around the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a crucial shipping route connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean, has escalated due to recent attacks by Yemen-based Houthi militants

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 6: The increasing Red Sea crisis may impact trade as it is expected to push shipping costs by up to 60 per cent and insurance premium by 20 per cent, a report by economic think tank GTRI said Saturday.

This conflict could also result in increased shipping costs (40-60 per cent) and delays due to rerouting (up to 20 days more), higher insurance premiums (15-20 per cent), and potential cargo loss from piracy and attacks.

The situation around the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a crucial shipping route connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean, has escalated due to recent attacks by Yemen-based Houthi militants.

Due to these attacks, the shippers are taking consignments through the Cape of Good Hope, resulting in delays of about 20 days.

The Houthi conflict's disruption of the Red Sea shipping lanes significantly impacts Indian trade, especially with the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said.

It said that India, heavily re-



India must brace for an extended period of shipping disruptions in the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait. This requires a strategic blend of diplomatic, economic, and humanitarian measures to safeguard its interests

AJAY SRIVASTAVA | CO-FOUNDER, GTRI

In future, more products will be brought under the QCO. I believe we will be covering 2,000-2,500 products. Our commitment to the quality will be so strong that every product/service available in India will be of higher quality

PIYUSH GOYAL | CONSUMER AFFAIRS MINISTER

BOEING 737-8 JETS UNDER RADAR

Aviation regulator DGCA Saturday directed domestic airlines to immediately carry out inspection of emergency exits of all Boeing 737-8 Max planes in their fleet. The directive comes in the wake of the Alaska Airlines incident involving Boeing 737-9 Max aircraft. On Friday, the Alaska Airlines plane's outer section, including a window, fell off mid-air



Bulge bracket FPIs dominate equities



THE TOTAL FPI FLOWS FOR 2023 STOOD AT ₹1,71,106 CRORE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Jan 6: Bulge bracket FPIs have returned to Indian equity markets with aggressive buying in the last month of 2023 taking benchmark indices to dizzying stratospheric levels.

The sharp up-move in the market in December coincided with the surge in FPI inflows during the month which stood at ₹58,372 crore, including the investment through the primary market and others the December FPI inflows which stood at ₹66,134 crores.

VK Vijayakumar, the chief investment strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said: "The last two months of 2023 has witnessed big investment by

FPIs thanks to the sharp decline in US bond yields and declining dollar. FPI inflows which were negative in the three months before December have sharply turned positive in December."

The total FPI flows for 2023 stood at ₹1,71,106 crore.

In December, FPIs were big buyers in financial services and also in IT.

FPIs also bought in sectors like autos, capital goods, oil and gas and telecom.

Since 2024 is expected to witness further declines in US interest rates, FPIs are likely to increase their purchases in the year as well, particularly in the early months of 2024 in the run up to the general elections.

FPI inflows into debt will also see acceleration in 2024.

"FPI inflows can help accelerate the uptrend in the main bench mark indices since bulk of the FPI flows will be into large-caps," he added.

BIZ BUZZ

Khimji wins big at Retail Jeweller MD & CEO Awards

MUMBAI: The jewel of Odisha's business community, legacy jewellery brand Khimji Jewellers has been awarded the prestigious 'Regional Retail Chain of the Year (East)' award by the Retail Jeweller, MD & CEO Awards 2024 for outstanding work in the jewellery industry from the Eastern region of India. The prestigious award was accepted by Mitesh Khimji, Director, Khimji Jewellers by the hands of celebrated Bollywood actress Sanya Malhotra and Miss India International 2021 winner and actress Zoya Afroz. Khimji Jewellers currently has nine stores in Odisha and is the largest retail chain jeweller in the state. Delighted with the win, Mitesh Khimji said, "We are honoured to have been recognised by such an elite gathering of the jewellery industry. Being recognised amongst our peers is a testament to our commitment towards our values, our hard work, our sincerity, our products and our customer friendly policies. These values and actions separate us from everyone else in the market and the entire credit goes to our team of over 1100 people!" The brand is geared up to achieve more milestones in this New Year and potential expansion deeper into Odisha. The official knowledge partner and auditor for the event was consulting firm Deloitte adding an increased sense of recognition, victory as well as responsibility for Khimji Jewellers to carry on with larger gumption and continue to be the flagbearer of business success for the brand in East India.



CSR activity by Canara Bank

BHUBANESWAR: As a part of its CSR initiatives, Canara Bank, Circle Office, Bhubaneswar has extended its helping hands by making arrangements for drinking water for lakhs of devotees visiting the renowned temple of Baba Balakapileswar, adjacent to Narendra Pokhari at Puri. The bank has made arrangements for a water cooler along with aquaguard and water tank. It also made provision for washing feet at temple's entrance. Jagdish Chander, General Manager and Circle Head handed over the amenities to the temple trust for the benefit of the devotees.



VinFast, TN ink pact for \$2bn EV plant

This move indicates a significant step in VinFast's expansion into the world's third-largest vehicle market, which is also waiting for Elon Musk-run Tesla to enter the country

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 6: Vietnam's leading electric vehicle (EV) manufacturer VinFast and the Tamil Nadu state government Saturday announced a partnership to build a \$2 billion EV facility in the country, with an intended commitment of \$500 million for the first phase of the project, spanning five years from the commencement date.

The establishment of VinFast's integrated EV facility in Tamil Nadu is anticipated to generate



approximately 3,000-3,500 employment opportunities locally. In addition to creating jobs and improving the skills of the local workforce, VinFast said in the statement that it remains dedicated to fostering gender equality and offering career advancement opportunities for the community.

Situated in Thoothukudi, the VinFast Tamil Nadu project aims to evolve into a first-class electric vehicle production hub in the region, with an annual capacity of up to 150,000 units.

Construction of the plant is anticipated to begin in 2024. The project will also pave the way for green transportation development, targeting 30 per cent of newly registered private cars to be electric.

"We are delighted that VinFast has chosen to invest in Tamil Nadu to establish its integrated EV facility. Possessing robust capabilities and unwavering commitment to a sustainable fu-

We believe that investing in Tamil Nadu will not only bring considerable economic benefits to both parties, but will also help accelerate the green energy transition in India and the region

TRAN HAI HOA | DEPUTY CEO (SALES AND MARKETING), VINFAST GLOBAL

ture, I believe that VinFast will emerge as a reliable economic partner and substantial contributor to Tamil Nadu's long-term development," said

Thalikkotai Raju Balu Rajaa, State Minister of Industries.

In addition to building the manufacturing facilities in Tamil Nadu, VinFast also has intentions to inaugurate a nationwide dealership

network. Established in 2017, VinFast owns a state-of-the-art automotive manufacturing complex with globally leading scalability that boasts up to 90 per cent automation in Hai Phong, Vietnam.

SEBI tightens short selling rules

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Jan 6: Institutional investors will have to disclose upfront at the time of placement of an order whether the transaction is a short sale, according to a new circular issued by markets regulator SEBI.

However, retail investors would be permitted to make a similar disclosure by the end of the trading hours on the transaction day, the order said.

"The brokers shall be man-



dated to collect the details on scrip-wise short sell positions, collate the data and upload it to the stock exchanges before the commencement of trading on the following trading day. The stock exchanges shall then consolidate such information and disseminate the same on their websites for the information of the public every week. The frequency

of such disclosure may be reviewed from time to time with the approval of SEB," it added.

While SEBI has allowed all classes of investors like retail and institutional investors to short sell, it has imposed certain conditions to curb foul play.

The decision comes close on the heels of the Supreme Court's judgement on petitions seeking a court-monitored investigation into alleged manipulation in Adani Group stocks, following the Hindenburg report.

E-way bill generation without B2B e-invoice details to be blocked

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 6: Businesses with turnover above ₹5 crore will not be able to generate e-way bill without including e-invoice details for all B2B transaction from March 1.

Under the goods and services tax regime, e-way bills are required for inter-state transportation of goods valued over ₹50,000.

The National Informatics Centre (NIC) said on analysis it was found that some of the taxpayers, who are eligible for e-invoicing, are generating e-way bills without linking with e-invoice for B2B (business to business) and B2E (business to exports) transactions.

In some of these cases, the invoice details entered separately under e-way bill and e-invoice are not matching with respect to the certain parameters. This is leading in mismatch in the e-way bill and e-invoice statements.

"... to avoid such situations, e-way bill generation will not be allowed without e-invoice details from 1st March 2024. This is applicable for e-invoice enabled tax payers and for the transactions related to supplies under B2B and exports," the NIC informed GST taxpayers.

However, e-way bills for other transactions such as B2C and non-supplies will function as usual without any change, the NIC said.



not, with a view to further their financial gains, put in place a protocol by which infringers and counterfeiters are provided an avenue to infringe and counterfeit. Any such protocol has to meet with firm judicial disapproval," the judge stated.

The court's observations came while dealing with a lawsuit by sportswear brand Puma SE which alleged that e-commerce platform Indiamart was being used by various sellers to peddle

its counterfeit goods.

The platform submitted that it was not the originator of the information relating to the goods put up for sale on its website as it was merely a space-provider and would be willing to take down any listing put up by a counterfeiter when it is brought to its notice.

In its interim order, the court observed that counterfeiting is a well-known commercial evil, even in the virtual world, and e-

commerce platforms are statutorily required to make reasonable efforts to ensure that infringing content is not posted on its website and the platform is not used for selling counterfeit goods.

It said that prima facie, the e-commerce platform in the instant case aided the commission of the unlawful act of counterfeiting and infringement and it cannot claim the benefit of "safe harbour" from liability under the Information Technology Act.

"There is nothing inherently illegal in IIL (IndiaMART IndiaMESH Ltd) providing a drop down menu from which prospective sellers, on the Indiamart platform, can select the brand which they intend to sell. If, however, there are not, in place, sufficient checks and balances to prevent counterfeiters from misrepresenting themselves as genuine sellers, the

protocol cannot withstand judicial scrutiny," the court stated.

The court directed taking down of all infringing listings in relation to Puma on Indiamart while also asking the platform to not provide any of the registered Puma trademarks in respect of any goods as search options in the drop down menu presented to prospective sellers at the time of their registration.

"IIL can well seek modification, or even vacation, of the order, if it can demonstrate to the Court that it has put, in place, sufficient regulatory and protective measures to render impossible abuse of the Indiamart platform by counterfeiters. Till then, however, the present position, in which there is rampant counterfeiting or even the possibility of it on the Indiamart platform, cannot be allowed to continue," the court said.

ADIOS DAVE

Warner leads Australia to victory in his final Test as the Kangaroos complete a 3-0 whitewash over Pakistan

WARNER'S WORDS

Over the years, I haven't been everyone's cup of tea but for me, I've played the game as hard as I can and trying to do my best for the team. If I had my time again and I knew that, I probably would show a little bit more patience with myself and I'd bite my tongue a little bit more

From when I first started, I was that chirpy little fella that was out there. That was my role in the team... To go out there and get under the batter's skin and the opposition's skin and yeah, it did boost me a little bit because they came at me when I batted. But they saw it early days, and I think your first impression, you don't get a second chance at that and you know, I've tried to rebuild that trust and faith

I went two years where I was being called the 'Reverend', I stopped drinking for two and a half years and really enjoyed that time. I think people wanted the old bull back, but for me, it was going out there and playing with pride and passion, and there's other ways to go about it. I've toned it down a hell of a lot and that's the real person that I am

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sydney, Jan 6: David Warner scored 57 runs (75b, 7x4) to lead Australia to a comprehensive eight-wicket victory over Pakistan Saturday in his final Test match, ending a 112-Test career as a winner on his home ground.

With Australia needing only 11 runs to claim their third consecutive victory in the three-Test series, Warner was out lbw off the bowling of Sajid Khan. He walked off the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) to loud applause as he waved to the crowd.

The only other wicket to fall in Australia's second innings was when opener Usman Khawaja was also adjudged lbw off Khan's bowling for a six-ball duck.

Pakistan scored 313 and 115 and Australia responded with 299 and 130/2. Marnus Labuschagne scored an unbeaten 62 (73b, 9x4) and

was at the crease with Steve Smith (4 n o) when the match ended.

Australia quickly took Pakistan's three remaining wickets on Saturday morning to set a 130-run victory target with almost two full days remaining.

After Josh Hazlewood (4/16) ran through Pakistan on Day 3, the visitors offered little resistance before they were all out.

Mohammad Rizwan (28) and Aamir Jamal (18) put on 42 for the eighth wicket, but Pakistan folded quickly once Nathan Lyon had Rizwan caught at leg slip. Lyon also bowled Hasan Ali to



end the innings, finishing with figures of 3/36.

Warner had earlier led the team onto the field to start the day, while "Thanks Dave" with his trademark leap also painted on the ground in front of the Members Stand. Australia had won the first Test in Perth by 360 runs and the second by 79 runs at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

BRIEF SCORES
Pakistan 313 & 115 (Nathan Lyon 3/36) lost to Australia 299 & 130/2 (Marnus Labuschagne 62 n o, David Warner 57; Sajid Khan 2/49) by 8 wickets.

NUMBERS' GAME

17 Australia's winning streak against Pakistan at home in Tests. The second-longest streak is nine, also for Australia at home against West Indies in 2000-09

7 Test series of three or more matches where Australia have clean-swept Pakistan. Six of those series wins came in Australia, including five since 1999. No other team have clean-swept an opponent more often. England have clean-swept New Zealand five times and India four times, while Australia have whitewashed England on four occasions

115 Pakistan's second-innings score is the lowest in Sydney for any team since South Africa's 113 in 1998

I WOULD LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED AS EXCITING, ENTERTAINING, AND I HOPE I PUT A SMILE ON EVERYONE'S FACE WITH THE WAY THAT I PLAYED AND HOPEFULLY THE YOUNG KIDS OUT THERE CAN FOLLOW IN MY FOOTSTEPS. WHITE-BALL CRICKET TO TEST CRICKET. IT'S THE PINNACLE OF OUR SPORT. SO KEEP WORKING HARD TO PLAY THE RED-BALL GAME BECAUSE IT'S ENTERTAINING AS WELL

DAVID WARNER

WARNER'S TEST NUMBERS
Matches: 112; Innings: 205; Runs: 8786; 100s: 26; 50s: 37; Highest score: 335*; Average: 44.59; Strike-rate: 70.19

AIFF assesses possibility of implementing 'AVRS'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

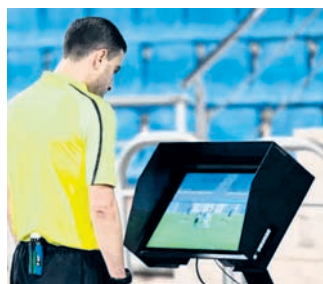
New Delhi, Jan 6: The AIFF has written to the International Football Association Board, the body that determines the laws of the game, to explore the possibility of India participating in the trial of the 'Additional Video Review System' (AVRS).

The VAR technology, which was first used in FIFA events in 2016-17, supports the decision-making process of the referee in four game-changing situations: goals and offences leading up to a goal, penalty decisions and offences leading up to a penalty, direct red card incidents, and mistaken identity.

"Our prime objective here is to reduce the margin of error by empowering match officials with the technology to assist in their decision-making," All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Kalyan Chaubey said in a media release.

"While we will continue to work to implement VAR, I feel that, to begin with, AVRS can be a great option for a country like India. AVRS would help us study the impact of the technology, train our match officials with the new concept, and assess its adaptation by players, coaches, and clubs alike," he added.

The President's recommendation aims to consider the extension of the existing technical



infrastructure to accommodate an 'on-demand' video review requested from the referees through a multi-angle, multi-camera broadcast feed.

Several countries across the globe use VAR in their domestic club competitions after it was first introduced in Australia and the United States. However, its mass adoption is limited due to financial and infrastructure requirements set out in FIFA's Implementation Assistance and Approval Programme (IAAP).

The President has suggested the AIFF Referee Department undertake the study to seek FIFA's suggestions and approval. Throughout a match, the VAR team constantly checks for clear and obvious errors related to four match-changing situations.

The VAR team communicates with the on-field referee only for clear and obvious mistakes or serious missed incidents. But it is ultimately the on-field referee who will take a call whether he needs help from the VAR.

Odisha Juggernauts reach UKK semis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, Jan 6: Defending champions Odisha Juggernauts became the third side to enter the semifinals of the Ultimate Kho Kho (UKK), edging past Gujarat Giants 30-27 here Saturday.

Rohan Singade was the star performer for the Juggernauts, frustrating the Giants' attackers in the final turn to make a difference. The Giants opted to defend after winning the toss, and their first batch consisting of Suyash Gargate, Faizankha Pathan and Abhijit Patil earned a dream run point.

The subsequent batch of K Ram Mohan, V Subramani and Rajvardhan Patil secured another dream run point for the Giants. But the Juggernauts managed to hold a 14-2 advantage at Turn 1.

The Juggernauts began the Turn 2 with an impressive defensive display. Their first batch of Gowtham MK, Vishal and Dilip Khandavi remained on the pitch for five minutes and 13 seconds and managed five dream run points. Manoj Patil remained unconquered in the second batch, while the Juggernauts entered the second innings with a 19-14 advantage.

In Turn 3, the first batch of the Giants, which comprised Akshay Bhangare, Deepak Madhav and



Shubham Thorat, earned two dream run points, followed by good work by their second batch.

Both Suyash Gargate and Abhijit Patil stayed unconquered and gained a dream run point, leaving the Juggernauts with only a ten-point lead to defend in the final turn.

The Juggernauts' first batch of Dipesh More, Nikhil B and Omkar Sonawane collected a dream run point, which left the Giants with five points to obtain in a little over three minutes.

However, Singade had other ideas, as he ensured that his team qualified for the semis with a narrow win.

The other match on the day saw Chennai Quick Guns grab the final spot of the last four stage by decimating Mumbai Khiladis 41-18.

Mumbai Khiladis won the toss and chose to defend but the performance of their defenders in Turn 1 did not vindicate their decision. They did not manage even a single dream run point as

Chennai Quick Guns raced to a 16-0 lead.

Chennai Quick Guns consolidated their position with a brilliant defensive display in Turn 2. Their first batch of Ramji Kashyap, Madan and Vijay Shinde managed to last five minutes and 34 seconds on the mat, scoring six dream run points.

Two members of their second batch remained unconquered as Chennai Quick Guns carried a massive 22-8 lead into the second innings.

Odisha's struggle continues in Ranji Trophy vs Baroda

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 6: Odisha had a splendid start Friday to their Ranji Trophy 2024 campaign, but that lasted close to just two sessions. Since then, Baroda have taken complete control of the Elite Group D match in Vadodra as the home team already had 216-run lead by the time umpires called of the second day's play, Saturday.

Resuming the day's play on 322/6, Baroda added only 29 runs losing the remaining wickets in 8.5 overs. Overnight batter Mitesh Patel (116, 151b, 14x4, 2x6) scored 22 out of 29 runs for the home team, completing a well-deserved century in the process.

After Suryakant Pradhan (2/86) getting the wicket of Atit Sheth (57), Rajesh Mohanty (4/74) bagged the remaining three wickets, including the one of Mitesh, to restrict Baroda to 351.

In response, Odisha could manage only 178 in their first essay, conceding a massive 173-run first innings lead. The visitors lost wickets at regular intervals to be reduced to 110/7.

However, seasoned duo of Govind Poddar (68, 121b, 9x4) and Suryakant (27) helped Odisha go past 160-run barrier. The pair stitched 57 runs for the eighth wicket, only to delay the inevitable before Baroda wrapped up the innings. Skipper and opener Shantanu Mishra (45, 106b, 6x4) was the only other batter to have reached double figures for Odisha.

Atit was the star with the ball taking 3/50. He was ably supported by others as well, especially by Ninad Rathva (2/21) and Bhargav Bhatt (2/28).

Baroda had to deal with an early yet again and coincidentally, just like the first innings, Kinit Patel (1) was dismissed on the fifth delivery of the second over by a Pradhan - Debabrata this time. Suryakant was accounted for Kinit in the first essay.

However, Jyotsnil Singh (28 batting) and Shashwat Rawat (14 batting) ensured Baroda of no further hiccups on the day taking the team to 43/1 at stumps having a 216-run lead.

Sabalenka to face Rybakina for title

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brisbane (Australia), Jan 6: Aryna Sabalenka overpowered two-time champion Victoria Azarenka in a 6-2, 6-4 win Saturday that earned her a spot in the Brisbane International final against Elena Rybakina, a rematch of last year's Australian Open championship decider.

The win extended top-seeded Sabalenka's streak to 15 on Australian soil, including a title run in Adelaide to start 2023 before her Grand Slam breakthrough at Melbourne Park and has given her momentum for the year's first major.

Her 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 win last January in the Australian Open final was the highlight of Sabalenka's five



ARYNA SABALENKA

wins over Rybakina in their seven career meetings. Sabalenka fired 10 aces and hit 35 winners against Azarenka, who won back-to-back Australian Open titles in 2012 and '13 and is also a two-time champion in Brisbane. She broke her 34-year-old compatriot's serve three



ELENA RYBAKINA

times and saved all three break points she faced. Azarenka appeared to hurt her right knee in her last service game but continued the match.

Sunday's final will be the first to feature the top two seeds in Brisbane since 2015 when No.1 Maria Sharapova held off No.2

Ana Ivanovic in three sets.

Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion, had 26 winners and committed just 10 unforced errors as she advanced 6-3, 6-2 over 19-year-old Linda Noskova. She has conceded just 12 games across four straight-set wins and spent less than four hours on the court in the key tune-up event for the Australian Open, which starts January 14.

The men's final could also feature the top two seeds. No.1 Holger Rune advanced with a 6-4, 7-6 (0) win over Roman Safiullin. The No.8-ranked Rune will be aiming for a fifth title on the ATP tour when he faces either second-seeded Grigor Dimitrov or Jordan Thompson Sunday.

