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INSIDE

**WORLD 8**  
TARIFF THREAT SWAYS  
COLOMBIA, BUT RISKS RISE  
WITH CANADA, MEXICO



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## TRUMP THREATENS INDIA WITH TARIFFS



PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The United States will impose tariffs on the countries that "harm" America, President Donald Trump has said, as he named China, India and Brazil as high-tariff countries. "We're going to put tariffs on outside countries and outside people that really mean harm to us. Well, they mean us harm, but they basically want to make their country good," Trump told House Republicans at a Florida retreat on Monday, the first after he became the president for the second term last week. "Look at what others do. China is a tremendous tariff maker, and India and Brazil and so many other countries. So we're not going to let that happen any longer because we're going to put America first," he said.

He said that the US will establish a "very fair system where money is going to come into our coffers and America is going to be very rich again," adding that it will happen "very quickly". Trump underscored that it was time for the US to return to the system that made it "richer and more powerful than ever before." Referring to his inaugural speech last week, Trump said: "Instead of taxing our citizens to enrich foreign nations, we should be taxing and taxing foreign nations to enrich our citizens." "Under the American first economic model, as tariffs on other countries go up, taxes on American workers and businesses will come down and massive numbers of jobs and factories will come home," he said. Earlier, Trump has already

talked about slapping "100 per cent tariffs" on the BRICS grouping, a bloc that includes India as well. During his address, Trump asked companies to come and set up manufacturing units in the US if they wished to avoid tariffs. "If you want to stop paying the taxes or the tariffs, you have to build your plant right here in America. That's what's going to happen at record levels. We're going to have more plants built in the next short period of time than anybody ever envisioned before because the incentive is going to be there because they have no tariff whatsoever," he said. The president said that the US will support companies building plants in America, particularly in industries like pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, and steel. Trump added that his administration would also be placing tariffs on steel, aluminium, copper and other materials required by the US military. "We have to bring production back to our country. There was a time when we made one ship a day, and now we can't build a ship. We don't know what the hell we're doing. It's all gone to other locations and other lands," he said. "To further return production to the United States, we're going to environmentally free up our rare earth minerals. We have some of the best rare earth anywhere in the world, but we're not allowed to use it because the environmentalists got there first," said the president in his address.

## 'Odisha offers boundless opportunities for investors'



### Says PM Modi at Utkarsh Odisha Conclave 2025

NALINI SAHU ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a display of optimism and foresight, Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a powerful inaugural speech at the launch of the Utkarsh Odisha-Make in Odisha Conclave 2025 at the Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday. Modi observed that Odisha, a State rich in history and brimming with potential, is on the verge of becoming a key player in India's future economic growth. "Odisha offers limitless op-

portunities for investors," Modi stated, highlighting the State's increasing prominence in industries such as Information Technology, chemicals, petrochemicals, tourism, textiles, and manufacturing. Reflecting on Odisha's historic maritime trade and manufacturing traditions, he emphasised how this legacy is now driving the State towards a prosperous industrial future. Under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, these global trade connections are being rejuvenated, fortifying Odisha's place on the world business map, the PM noted. Modi expressed confidence that Odisha's growing indus-



trial landscape would soon become a model for development unmatched by any other region in India. Assuring investors of lucrative returns, the PM personally guaranteed success of investments in Odisha. "To all those considering investment in Odisha, I guarantee your investment will bear significant returns. This is Modi ka guarantee," he declared, earning applause from the more than 5,000 investors and business leaders in attendance. Modi also underlined Odisha's strategic importance in India's economic future, referencing his frequent visits to the State, around 30 times since taking office. He high-

lighted how Odisha's industrial growth is crucial to India's goal of becoming the world's third-largest economy. The PM urged the investors to support the growth of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), youth-led startups and innovative initiatives within Odisha, assuring them that the Central Government would offer comprehensive support to nurture a thriving business ecosystem. Present on the occasion were Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Ashwini Vaishnaw. Odisha aims to attract in-

vestments exceeding Rs 5 lakh crore, anticipating the creation of around 3.5 lakh jobs in the coming years. During the two-day Utkarsh Odisha Conclave, the State is set to sign over 100 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with investors. The conclave has drawn more than 7,500 delegates from India and 12 other countries. Prominent business leaders such as Kumar Mangalam Birla (Aditya Birla Group), Anil Agarwal (Vedanta Group), Sajjan Jindal (JSW), Naveen Jindal (Jindal Steel) and TV Narendran (Tata Steel) are in attendance, underscoring global interest in Odisha's economic potential.



Union Ministers Nirmala Sitharaman, Bhupender Yadav, Haryana CM Nayab Saini and other BJP leaders after meeting the Election Commission of India PTI

## Rahul Gandhi attacks INDIA bloc ally



LoP in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with party candidate Anil Choudhary during a rally for the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections, at Patparganj in New Delhi PTI

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

Heating up the election fervour ahead of the Delhi assembly elections, Senior Congress leader and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday launched a scathing attack at his political rivals including AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal and Prime Minister Narendra Modi while hitting out at the ruling party for 'sheeshmahal' and alleged money laundering linked to an excise policy scam. He also took a dig at the media for not highlighting the real issues, instead focusing on 'Ambani wedding' and cricket matches. Addressing a public gathering in Patparganj, Gandhi claimed that while former Chief Minister came with the promise of bringing 'clean politics', he is now known for the biggest liquor scam and sheeshmahal. "On one side there is BJP and on the other there is Kejriwal who says whatever he wishes. He said we will do a new kind of politics. He said we will change Delhi. And when poor needed him, he was no where to be seen. When there was violence in Delhi, he was no where to be seen," he said, while campaigning for Congress' candidate Anil Choudhary. Hitting out the ruling party, Gandhi asserted, "He said that the AAP will bring clean politics. Despite this, he is now known for the biggest liquor scam and resides in sheeshmahal." He added that when PM Modi threw him out of his home, he gave him the keys, stating that he doesn't need their house. Calling the sitting MLA and former Chief Minister Manish Sisodia the 'architect' of liquor

scam, he said, "Manish Sisodia was a candidate before, who is the architect of liquor scam along with Kejriwal. Now he has run away from the seat out of fear." With Gandhi addressing his second public meeting in the national Capital for the upcoming state polls, scores of party supporters gathered to hear him with the atmosphere palpable with enthusiasm. Resident of the area claimed that roads are filled with potholes and the schools, that the AAP claims to have built, were built in former Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit's rule and are merely renovated by the incumbent government. Taking a jibe at the media, he said, "I am saying that they are our friends but they are not. While the nation is grappling with poor infrastructure, unemployment and hunger, they show Ambani wedding and Modi attending it." "This is the game and this game is being played by media. They will show face of Modi, Amitabh Bachan, Ambani wedding, cricket match," he added. Gandhi claimed that while there will be 'Mann ki ba', the media will never show the real problems of the country. He also said that only the public suffers from this. "The entire system is to steal from you and distract you," he added. The senior Congress leader also said that there is an ideological fight between his party and the RSS and BJP. "Our fight is for Ambedkar's constitution. They said they will change the constitution. RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said that the true independence didn't happen on 15 August, 194y but when Modi came. This means they insulted our independence," Gandhi asserted

**Shri Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

**Shri Mohan Charan Majhi**  
Chief Minister, Odisha

Join us on the journey to "Utkarsh Odisha"

Plenary Session on "SUBHADRA to MUDRA"

**Chief Guest**

**Shri Mohan Charan Majhi**  
Chief Minister, Odisha

**Guests of Honour**

**Shri Jual Oram**  
Minister of Tribal Affairs  
Government of India

**Smt. Pravati Parida**  
Deputy Chief Minister, Odisha  
Women & Child Development, Mission Shakti & Tourism Department

• This landmark event will feature thought-provoking panel discussions with Industry Leaders on Enabling Earning Opportunities for Women of Odisha

• Be part of the conversation shaping the future of SUBHADRA enterprises in Odisha

**29 January 2025 | 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM**

**Janata Maidan Bhubaneswar**

Department of Women and Child Development  
Government of Odisha

## Politics boil over 'water terrorism'

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday asked AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal to substantiate with facts his allegations of poisoning of Yamuna River and mass genocide. The poll body has sought a response, a proof from the AAP national convener by 8pm on 29 January. The Commission has asked the AAP led Delhi government to provide evidence of Haryana government 'poisoning' Delhi water supply. This comes after both the BJP and Congress had complained to the poll panel against Kejriwal for levelling allegations of poisoning of Yamuna river. A BJP delegation, comprising Union ministers Nirmala Sitharaman, Bhupender Yadav and Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh met all three members of the EC, and requested them to ask the AAP leader to retract his charge and apologise for creating "panic" among people. BJP leaders also urged the Commission to bar him from campaigning for his allegation that Haryana was poisoning the water of Yamuna. Meanwhile, Congress leader Sandeep Dikshit raised the issue with Delhi Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, demanding action against Kejriwal and Chief Minister Atishi over the issue. In a letter to Kejriwal, the EC said the matter is being examined by the Commission

in the light of provisions of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and relevant provisions of law. "Therefore, you are called upon to furnish your response on the complaints especially on the factual and legal matrix along with evidentiary support thereof by 8 pm hours on 29 th January, 2025 so as to enable the Commission to examine the matter and take action as appropriate." "However, as regards the allegations of poisoning, it is expected that there must be a factual foundation to the allegations especially when the veracity of the statements made by you is contested, then you must be able to back your statements on a factual basis," the EC said. The Commission noted that such allegations have serious ramifications of creating enmity between the regional groups, and residents of the neighbouring states, threat of a law-and-order situation due to actual or perceived shortage or non-availability of water, during this time of the year. Accusing Kejriwal of making a dangerous statement with implications for India's federal structure, the Centre urged the Election Commission to bar him from campaigning for his allegation that Haryana was poisoning the water of Yamuna. Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini asked the AAP convener to apologise or face defamation suit on his statement.



OIPR-3300113/0062/2425



# Odisha to be driving engine of India: CM

Majhi addresses Utkarsh Odisha Conclave

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha is all set to claim its rightful place under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said Chief Minister Mohan Majhi in his address at the Utkarsh Odisha Conclave in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday.

Majhi urged the industry captains to set up their ventures in Odisha as the State has a lot to offer. Odisha has ultimate potential with rich natural resources, impressive roads, air connectivity, ports and other infrastructures along with an industry-friendly policy, he said.

Lauding Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his



will instil a sense of confidence among the investors and business community for Odisha, which is not only the land of opportunities but is soon going to be the driving engine of the country, especially in eastern India," said Majhi.

The CM said things are fast changing in Odisha. The State Government recently signed eight MoUs with Singapore-based industries.

"Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Odisha is ready to claim its rightful place. More than two dozen States are vying to attract investments, which is great for the Indian economy. Districts like Malkangiri, Rayagada and Keonjhar are now emerging as focal points for sectors like steel, renewable energy, food processing and textiles," said Majhi.

Odisha-centric vision, Majhi said it is a matter of pride that Modi inaugurated the Utkarsh Odisha Conclave. In the last seven months, the Prime Minister has visited the

State five times. This shows his commitment towards the State.

"Prime Minister Modi had laid the foundation for Purvodaya and this conclave

## Rising farmer suicide cases

# NHRC seeks ATR in 6 wks from Odisha, Centre

RAJESH BEHERA  
KENDRAPADA

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on January 22 sought Action Taken Report (ATR) within 6 weeks from the Odisha Chief Secretary, State Agriculture Secretary and the Director General, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, on farmer sui-

cide cases and directed to ensure needful actions, including monetary and other reliefs to the victims' families.

Acting on a petition filed by activist and Supreme Court lawyer Radhakant Tripathy, the Commission passed the order.

The complainant, Tripathy brought the matter to the notice of the Commission towards a huge number of suicide and death cases of farm-

ers due to negligence, inaction and failure on the part of the Odisha Government in handling the issues.

From December 25, 2024 till January 4, 2025 around 10 farmers committed suicide due to high interest rates and crop loss owing to the untimely rainfall.

He has alleged that Odisha Relief Code was outdated and its immediate reform is highly required. It has also been al-

leged that delay in assessment of crop loss and payment of compensation are main causes of the farmer suicide. He requested the intervention of the Commission and sought for an independent national level inquiry on the death cases across the country, prompt and effective implementation of the farmer's welfare schemes, MSP like mechanisms, mental health and counselling services etc.

# IIT Bhubaneswar holds Alumni Meet



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

To reunite with the alumni of the institute and recognise them for their success in post-graduation life, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar organised the 3rd Alumni Meet on January 25 and 26.

The programme offered a

platform to the alumni of the students to visit the campus and interact with the faculty members and existing students of the institute and share their valuable feedback for improvement. During the inaugural session, Director Prof Shreepad Karmalkar interacted with the students and highlighted the recent devel-

opments that the institute has undertaken in the fields of academics, research, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Prof Prashant Kumar Sahoo, Dean of Alumni Affairs & International Relations, welcomed the alumni and encouraged them to be connected with the institute. Pratik Pattanaik, president,

Alumni Association, proposed a vote of thanks.

The inaugural session was followed by a panel discussion on 'Building an Institute Alumni Ecosystem'. Prof Shreepad Karmalkar and others shared their views about building a strong network of alumni for the development of the institute.

## Cuttack's mega expansion on cards

102 nearby villages to be merged

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The millennium city of Cuttack is on the brink of a major urban transformation. Plans are underway to extend the city's borders to the State capital Bhubaneswar. The initiative is being led by the Cuttack Development Authority (CDA).

Official sources said the CDA is contemplating bringing urban amenities and integrating 102 nearby villages under its jurisdiction.

Following an extensive survey, CDA officials have submitted a detailed proposal to the State Government.

CDA Vice-Chairman Anam

Charan Patra expressed confidence that government approval for the purpose would be secured soon.

A comprehensive master plan is in place to manage the urbanisation of these rural areas, focusing on infrastructure upgrades. These enhancements include access to clean drinking water, a reliable electricity supply, efficient drainage systems and improved road networks.

This is not the first instance of expansion for the CDA. Previously, 287 villages from the Banki and Cuttack-Sadar Assembly constituencies were integrated into CDA jurisdiction. The current efforts reflect a continued commitment to enhancing connectivity and living standards in the region.

## Another burglary bid near ex-PCC chief's house

1 detained by police

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Two days after a burglary took place at former Pradesh Congress president Niranjan Patnaik's residence at VIP Colony in the Nayapally area, another burglary attempt was made in a house near Patnaik's residence on Monday night.

Two miscreants were caught on camera scaling the wall, conducting a reece and attempting to enter the house through a window around 11.30 pm. They, however, fled after house staffs raised an alarm. One of them was later caught by police.

The house owner told the media that the thieves tried to

open an almirah in the out-house. "Though security has been tightened and patrolling increased in the area since the January 26 burglary, still such attempts are being made leading to panic," she added.

Notably, a masked burglar decamped with gold and cash worth Rs 50 lakh from Niranjan Pantalk's house on Saturday night despite CCTVs, security guards and claims of increased police patrolling on the eve of Republic Day celebration.

Later, Commissioner of Police S Dev Datta Singh said the burglary appeared to have been committed by professionals. "While one person could be seen in the visuals captured by CCTV, others may be involved in the incident," he said.

# DAV, K Nagar holds R-Day with pomp

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The DAV Public School, Kalinga Nagar observed the 76th Republic Day with pomp and grandeur. In the formal meeting organised to mark the occasion, Chairman Madan Mohan Panda rendered the official welcome address and inspired the students to take part in nation building while upholding the dignity and rich tradition of the country.

Attending the programme as the chief guest, Regional Officer, CBSE, Bhubaneswar Region, K Srinivasan hoisted the national flag and advised the students to devote themselves to the service and development of the motherland and to materialise the dreams



of the freedom fighters by giving precedence to the country's interest.

During his interaction, he encouraged the teachers and urged them to do their best to excel in all fields of academic excellence.

On this occasion, a chorus portraying the valour and pa-

triotism of our great freedom fighters was staged by the students. Similarly, the students presented a splendid fusion of yoga and dance portraying glimpses of Gandhiji's struggle for freedom.

The chief guest encouraged the students by giving away the prizes and certifi-

cates to the winners of different intramural competitions and the academic position holders. The entire programme was smoothly conducted under the able guidance of the Principal Balaram Mahapatra and the whole-hearted cooperation of the staff members.

## In Sambalpur

# 2 held for torture of rehab centre inmates

NGO running centre will be blacklisted: DM

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Police have arrested the secretary and a woman caretaker of a rehabilitation centre for mentally-ill persons near Putibandh under the Dhanupali police station in Sambalpur district on the charges of physically torturing the centre's inmates.

Samartha Rehabilitation Centre secretary Harish Chandra Das and caretaker Swagatika Pradhan were ar-

rested and produced in court on Tuesday.

The incident came to light on Monday after a former employee of the centre made some videos of the centre viral. In the multiple videos, she shot the mentally-retarded people, who were kicked with shoes and beaten with water pipes and sticks. The videos also showed how the women inmates were being asked to disrobe themselves openly in front of male inmates.

The ex-employee who left the job recently had worked at the rehabilitation centre

for a fortnight and witnessed the horrible scenes. She sent the videos to Rengali MLA Sudarshan Haripal, who reported the case to the Dhanupali police.

Police raided the centre and found the incident to be true. A team of District Social Security Officials (DSSOs) also visited the centre.

Sambalpur Collector SB Bondar said, "After we watched the videos going viral, shot by one of their former employees, we immediately sent an inquiry team to the centre. The secretary of the centre has been arrested and

forwarded to court. A warden torturing the inmates has also been arrested and forwarded to court. The process to blacklist the NGO running the centre has already started."

DSSO Thabira Mahananda said, "As per the order of Collector, we visited the centre and found from the inmates that they were tortured earlier also. As per that, we initiated action against the secretary."

Currently, 41 inmates are lodged at the rehabilitation centre who would be shifted to the Baijmundra Multipurpose Complex in a week, said the DSSO.

**Shri Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

**Shri Mohan Charan Majhi**  
Chief Minister, Odisha

Join with us in the journey to  
**"Utkarsh Odisha"**

A joint session on  
**'Skilling in Health Sector for Utkarsh Odisha - 2036'**

29 January 2025, 2.30 PM - 4.30 PM

**Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar**

Organised by:  
**Dept. of Health & Family Welfare and  
Dept. of Science & Technology, Govt. of Odisha**

**Speakers**

<b>Prof. Saroj Kanta Mishra</b> Visiting Professor Gangwal School of Medical Science & Technology IIT Kanpur	<b>Prof.(Dr) Arun Kumar Das</b> Principal Gopabandhu Ayurvedic Mahavidyalaya Puri
<b>Dr. Jitendra Sharma</b> Managing Director and Founder CEO Andhra Pradesh Meditech Zone Limited Vishakhapatnam	<b>Dr. Amulya Panda</b> Associate Director Panacea Biotech Ltd., New Delhi

**Moderator**

**Prof. (Dr.) Manash Ranjan Sahoo**  
Vice Chancellor  
Odisha University of Health Science, Bhubaneswar

Science & Technology Department | Health & Family Welfare Department  
Government of Odisha

# JSW, POSCO to set up steel plant in K'jhar

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
The JSW Group on Tuesday announced its plans to establish a steel plant in collaboration with South Korean steelmaker POSCO in Keonjhar.



Jindal also provided updates on the progress of a 12-million-tonne-capacity steel plant in Paradip, where work is actively underway. Furthermore, Jindal also revealed plans for expansion of the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) facility in Jharsuguda. This move aligns with the broader growth strategy of JSW in Odisha.

The JSW Group has committed to a substantial total investment of 1 lakh crore rupees in Odisha over the next five years.

"POSCO is interested in setting up a plant in Keonjhar and we are in discussion with them. Around Rs 30,000-40,000 crore will be invested in the proposed plant," Jindal added.

# In Ganjam Woman held for kidnapping of 4 persons

**PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR**  
Total arrests rise to 2 in case



A woman was arrested on Tuesday in connection with the kidnapping of four persons for a Rs two-crore ransom in Ganjam district where the accused used a cobra to threaten the victims.

With this, the total number of arrests in the sensational case rose to two. The woman, identified as Sunita Behera, was arrested a day after Pruthibiraj Sahu (24) from Bholasingi village was apprehended by the K Nuagaon police on Monday.

The arrest was made after police rescued four persons, including a man working for a finance company in Delhi, from a forest area at Chikiti in Ganjam district where they were kept hostage after allegedly being kidnapped.

Both the accused have been forwarded to court. During their investigation, police discovered a surprising find at Sunita Behera's residence: a large area behind her house where ganja plants were cultivated. Police, in collaboration with the Excise Department, have since destroyed over an acre of marijuana plants found there.

The case dates back to the kidnapping and extortion of four individuals, who were abducted and held hostage in the

Kerandimal Jungle near Chikiti. Using a cobra, the accused threatened and assaulted the victims, demanding a ransom of Rs two crore. On January 26, one of the captives managed to escape and sought help at the Chikiti Tehsil office.

The K Nuagaon police rescued the remaining three captives. During the rescue operation, authorities discovered three snakes that had been used by the accused to intimidate the victims.

Further investigation was ongoing into the case.

# Vedanta inks Rs 1L-cr MoU with State

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
The Vedanta Limited on Tuesday signed an MoU worth Rs 1 lakh crore with the Government of Odisha at the Utkarsh Odisha Conclave here in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Vedanta chairman Anil Agarwal.



The commitment aims to establish world-class aluminium production facilities in the State. The collaboration includes development of a 3-MTPA aluminium plant and an aluminium park. Together, the initiatives will generate 2 lakh employment opportunities and foster MSME growth across sectors like automotive, power, construction and logistics.

Anil Agarwal remarked, "This MoU represents a significant step toward driving large-scale industrialisation and socioeconomic development in the State."

Vedanta's current investments have led to the creation of the world's largest single-location aluminium smelter at

Jharsuguda in addition to a world-class alumina refinery at Lanjigarh, which have helped make Odisha the aluminium hub of India. The company also operates FACOR, a leading producer of ferrochrome, at Bhadrak, in addition to a growing mines portfolio across the State.

# JSPL has invested Rs 1L cr in Odisha

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
Rs 70,000-cr more investment on cards



Jindal Steel and Power Limited (JSPL) chairman Naveen Jindal on Tuesday said his company is making a lot of investments in Odisha as there is a very favourable environment for investment in the State.

On the sidelines of the 'Utkarsh Odisha-Make in Odisha Conclave 2025', Jindal said, "Jindal Steel and Power has invested close to Rs one lakh crore in Odisha. A steel plant with a capacity of six million tonnes is already operational in the State. We will double its capacity to 12 MT within a year. And within the next six years, we will try to

double the capacity of this steel plant again by making it 25 MT turning it as the world's largest single-location steel plant with an investment of Rs 70,000 crore."

He said, "We will also try to make green steel. The coal gasification plant should be operated well. We are developing the Western Dock Port in Paradip."

"There is a lot of growth in Odisha's mining sector and I think that the State's financial condition is the strongest compared to any State, in which mining and industry have a huge role to play," said Jindal.

The JSPL's Angul steel plant is a 6-MTPA integrated facility boasting India's largest blast furnace (4.25 MTPA). The plant produces special-grade and nuclear application plates for diverse industries.

The JSPL and the Jindal Renewable Power Private (JRPL) signed MoU for green hydrogen production in Angul. The first phase has a target of 4,500 tonnes per annum by December 2025 to be used in their DRI units for steelmaking. It was touted as India's largest green hydrogen investment by a steelmaker.

## IN BRIEF

### DAVians celebrate Republic Day

Bhubaneswar: DAVians of Chandrasekharapur, Bhubaneswar celebrated the 76th Republic Day amidst a series of activities in the school premises on Sunday. Chairman of the school Santosh Kumar Satapathy joined as chief guest and unfurled the Tricolour in the presence of Principal Dr Sujata Sahu and others. Satapathy in his address appealed to uphold the spirit and glory of democracy with greater commitment and dedication. A spectacular march past by civil defence students, prize distribution to meritorious students and patriotic presentation registered the importance of the memorable occasion.



### Jindal Steel & Power celebrates Republic Day at Angul

Angul: The Jindal Steel & Power (JSP) celebrated the 76th Republic Day on Sunday at the newly-built sports complex in Jindal Nagar here. JSP Chairman and three-time Member of Parliament Naveen Jindal unfurled the National Flag in the presence of senior officials of the company and the local community members. He spoke about the company's focus on green steel production and its ambitious goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2047.



### GPCDA holds blood donation camp in B'pur

Brahmapur: On the occasion of commemoration of 75th birthday of the president of AIOCD and MSCDA Jagannath Shinde, the Ganjam and Phulbani Chemists and Druggists Association (GPCDA) organised a mega blood donation camp at Rotary Club of Brahmapur. A large number of volunteers donated their blood which started from 9 am to 6 pm. GPCDA president Bishnu Prasad Panda, UCDA president P Satyanarayana and a large number of working scribes were present.



### Dabur Chyawanprash boosts immunity among kids

Bhubaneswar: Dabur Chyawanprash is an around 3,000-year-old well-known Ayurvedic formulation that is used for boosting immunity and helps provide protection against common day-to-day infections like cough and cold. Dabur Chyawanprash contains many 'Rasayana' herbs which help in prevention of variety of infections through its immune modulatory effects. Dabur Chyawanprash has now announced the launch of a mega awareness initiative aimed at securing the health of underprivileged kids across the country. It will conduct immunity awareness sessions to educate children about the need to build a stronger immune system to fight against illnesses due to changing season, common bacteria and viruses.



DSPL-366

**UTKARSH ODISHA**  
MAKE IN ODISHA CONCLAVE '25  
BHUBANESWAR | 28<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> JAN | 2025

**ODISHA**  
NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Confederation of Indian Industry

**Shri Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

**Shri Mohan Charan Majhi**  
Chief Minister, Odisha

**Odisha Film Development Corporation**  
invites for **Sectoral Session** on  
**"FILM & MEDIA"**  
29 January 2025 | 02:30 PM - 04:30 PM  
Hall No. - 4, Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar

**Empowering Odia Cinema : Creating an Ecosystem of Talent, Technology & Trade**

**Inaugural Session & Panel Discussion**

**Sri Sampad Chandra Swain**  
Minister  
Industries Department  
Govt. of Odisha

**Sri Akash Das Nayak**  
MLA, Korei  
& Reputed Odia Film  
Personality

**Sri Pramod Arora**  
CEO  
PVR Cinema's Ltd.

**Sri Shibasish Sarkar**  
Group CEO, Reliance Entertainment  
President, Producer Guild of India

**Sri Amitava Guha Thakurta**  
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Schedule a Meeting | Investment Intention Form

# Government school enrolment back to pre pandemic levels

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) released on Tuesday has indicated an increase in government school enrolment seen during the COVID-19 pandemic seems to have reversed, with the proportion of children aged 6-14 years enrolled in government schools nearly back to the 2018 levels.

The report also noted that not only there has been a full recovery from the pandemic-induced learning loss, the learning levels in the primary grades are higher than past levels in some cases. The crucial report found that more than 82 per cent children in the 14-16 age group know how to use a smartphone but only 57 per cent of them use it for educational purposes.

"The increase in government school enrolment seen during the COVID-19 years seems to have reversed. Private school enrolment has been steadily rising since 2006 in rural India. The proportion of 6-14-year-olds enrolled in private schools rose from 18.7 per cent in 2006 to 30.8 per cent in 2014 and stayed at that level in 2018. "During the pandemic years, there was a big jump in gov-



ernment school enrolment with the proportion of 6-14-year-old children enrolled in government schools rising from 65.6 per cent in 2018 to 72.9 per cent in 2022. This number is back to 66.8 per cent in 2024. This almost complete reversal back to 2018 levels is seen across grades as well as gender, and is not particularly surprising given that the economy has recovered in other sectors as well," the report noted. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024

is a nationwide rural household survey that reached 6,49,491 children in 17,997 villages across 605 rural districts in India. Facilitated by an NGO, "Pratham", in each surveyed district, a local organisation or institution conducted the survey. "At the all-India level, the proportion of children in Class 3, who are able to read at Class 2 level, rose slowly from 23.6 per cent in 2014 to 27.3 per cent in 2018 and then fell drastically to 20.5 per cent in 2022. Two

years later, we have a full recovery with the proportion of Class-3 children reading fully at 27.1 per cent. "We see a similar picture in Class 4, with the proportion of Class-5 children who can read a Class-2 level text rising from 48 per cent in 2014 to 50.5 per cent in 2018, then falling to 42.8 per cent in 2022 and finally recovering to 48.8 per cent in 2024," the report said. Some states have done very well and surpassed their pre-pandemic learning levels, while

others are yet to recover fully. Nevertheless, almost all states have shown improvements as compared to 2022. "In fact, the low-performing states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have made a remarkable recovery," the report noted.

For the first time, the nationwide household survey had a section on digital literacy, which applied to older children in the 14-16 age group. It included self-reported questions on access, ownership and use of smartphones, as well as a one-on-one assessment of some basic digital skills.

The report said "82.2 per cent of all children in the 14-16 age group reported knowing how to use a smartphone. Of these, 57 per cent reported using it for an educational activity in the preceding week, while 76 per cent said that they had used it for social media during the same period".

The report found that the proportion of "underage" children (aged five years or below) in Class 1 is decreasing over time. "In 2018, this figure was 25.6 per cent, in 2022 it stood at 22.7 per cent and in 2024, nationally, the percentage of underage children in Class-1 was at its lowest ever at 16.7," it said.

# Five Indian fishermen injured by Sri Lankan Navy in firing incident



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Five Indian fishermen sustained injuries, including two seriously, in an incident of firing by the Sri Lankan Navy in the proximity of Delft Island early Tuesday, triggering a strong reaction by India.

The acting high commissioner of the island nation in New Delhi was summoned to Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and a strong protest was lodged with the top diplomat.

In its reaction, India said use of force is not "acceptable" under any circumstances whatsoever. "An incident of firing by the Sri Lankan Navy during the apprehension of 13 Indian fishermen

in the proximity of Delft Island was reported in the early hours of this morning," it said.

"Out of the 13 fishermen who were on board the fishing vessel, two have sustained serious injuries and are currently receiving treatment at the Jaffna Teaching hospital," it said. Three other fishermen received minor injuries and have been treated for the same, it added.

Indian Consulate officials in Jaffna have visited the injured fishermen at the hospital to seek their welfare and are extending all possible assistance to the fishermen and their families.

"The Sri Lankan acting high commissioner in New Delhi was called in today morning to

the Ministry of External Affairs and a strong protest was lodged over the incident," the MEA said.

The Indian high commission in Colombo has also raised the matter with the Sri Lankan foreign ministry.

"The government of India has always emphasised the need to treat issues pertaining to fishermen in a humane and humanitarian manner, keeping in mind livelihood concerns," the Indian readout noted.

"The use of force is not acceptable under any circumstances whatsoever. Existing understandings between the two governments in this regard must be strictly observed," the MEA said.

# SC asks Centre's stand after woman wants to be governed by succession law

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday asked for the Centre's stand on a Muslim woman's plea seeking to be governed by the Indian succession law instead of Shariat. The plea of Safiya P M, general secretary of "Ex-Muslims of Kerala", and hailing from Alappuzha, came up before a bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justices Sanjay Kumar and K V Viswanathan.



Safiya's plea, filed through advocate Prashant Padmnabhan, said Muslim women were entitled to one-third share in the property under the Shariat laws. The lawyer said the declaration that the petitioner was not governed by the Muslim personal law had to come from the court, or else her father would not be able to give more than one-third of the property. The top court had permitted Safiya to amend the petition suitably to challenge the Indian succession law and other provisions for excluding Muslims. "Fundamental right to religion under Article 25 of the Constitution must include the right to believe or not to believe, as per the judgment of this in Indian Young Lawyers Association v. State of Kerala (Sabarimala case)... To have meaning for that right, the person who leaves her faith should not incur any disability or a disqualification in matters of inheritance or other important civil rights," the plea said. Pointing out wide ramifications across the country, the plea urged the bench for an intervention. It said the pending case in the Supreme Court was for all Muslim women but the present plea was for those who were born Muslim and wanted to

leave the religion. "As per Sharia law, the person who leaves her faith in Islam, will be ousted from her community and thereafter she is not entitled for any inheritance right in her parental property," the plea argued.

The petitioner expressed apprehension over the application of the law in the case of her lineal descendant, her only daughter, if she officially left her religion. Seeking a declaration that the Muslim personal law shouldn't govern her for any of the matters listed in Section 2 or 3 of the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, she said, "But there is no provision either in the Act or in the rules wherein she can obtain such a certificate."

The plea said there was a "clear vacuum" in the statute which could be plugged by judicial interpretation. "As of now, the petitioner will not be governed by the secular laws of the country, viz, the Indian Succession Act even if she officially gets a no-religion, no-caste certificate from any authority," said the plea. The precious fundamental rights under Article 25 to practice or not to practice religion were made meaningless by the absence of such a protection from the state, it added.

# BJP is richest party with ₹7,113.80 crore in funds

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP, which claims itself as the biggest political party in the world, has a whopping cash and bank balance of ₹7,113.80 crore against the principal opposition Congress party's ₹857.15 crore as on March 31, 2024.

According to figures provided to the Election Commission, the BJP spent as much as ₹1,754.06 crore during 2023-24 when Lok Sabha elections were announced, a whopping 60 per cent rise than ₹1,092 crore spent in 2022-23.

In comparison, the Congress spent as much as ₹619.67 crore during 2023-24, against ₹192.56 crore in 2022-23. The Lok Sabha elections were announced on March 16, 2024. According to the figures provided to the EC in their annu-



al audit reports, the BJP has received voluntary contributions through the now banned electoral bonds of ₹1,685.69 crore during 2023-24, against ₹1294.15 crore in the previous year. The ruling party has also shown having received other contributions to the tune of

₹2,042.75 crore during the year, against ₹648.42 crore in the previous year 2022-23. In its audit report to the EC, the Congress has shown having received total contributions of ₹1,225.11 crore during 2023-24, including ₹1129.67 crore through grants, dona-

tions and contributions. This also includes ₹828.36 crore received through electronic bonds during the year ended March 31, 2024, which have now been banned by the Supreme Court.

During the year, the BJP spent ₹591 crore in advertisements, including ₹434.84 crore in the electronic media and ₹115.62 crore in printed material. The ruling party also spent ₹174 crore during 2023-24 on aircraft/helicopters, against ₹78.23 crore in 2022-23 and gave financial assistance of ₹191.06 crore to its candidates during the year in question, against ₹75.05 crore in the previous year.

The BJP spent ₹84.32 crore in meeting expenses during 2024 and ₹75.14 crore in organising morchas, rallies, andolan and call centre expenses during

2023-24. The Congress, on the other hand, spent as much as ₹207.94 crore on the electronic media and ₹43.73 crore on printed material during 2023-24.

The opposition party also spent ₹62.65 crore on aircraft/helicopters during 2023-24 and gave financial aid of ₹238.55 crore to its candidates. It also spent ₹28.03 crore on publicity expenses and ₹79.78 crore on social media expenses during the year ended March 31, 2024.

The party also stated in its audit report that it spent ₹49.63 crore on the Bharat Jodo Yatra 2, led by former party chief Rahul Gandhi during 2023-24, against ₹71.84 crore spent on Bharat Jodo Yatra undertaken by him from Kanyakumari to Kashmir during 2022-23.

# India, Indonesia Coast Guards sign MoU to boost maritime relations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant step towards furthering India-Indonesia comprehensive bilateral relations, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and the Indonesia Coast Guard (Badan Keamanan Laut Republik Indonesia - BAKAMLA) renewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Maritime Safety and Security Cooperation for a period of three years, defence ministry said here on Tuesday.

Giving details, officials said the MoU was signed between both the organisation in July 2020 which marked a significant milestone underscoring the vision of Indian government towards a safer, secure and resilient Indo-pacific region.



Under the umbrella of the MoU provisions, eight member BAKAMLA delegation led by Vice Admiral Irvansyah, S.H, Chief of Indonesia Coast Guard is visiting India from January 24-28 which also included conduct of the second high level meeting between ICG and BAKAMLA on Monday, it said.

The high level meeting was led by Director General Paramesh Sivamani from the Indian

Coast Guard side. The meeting focused on augmenting operational level interaction and capacity building in areas of Maritime Search and Rescue, Pollution Response and Maritime Law Enforcement. The meeting was significant in providing added impetus to the existing professional relationship between the two Coast Guards.

Relations between the two Coast Guards go back a long way ICG ships first visited Indonesia on December 2002 towards professional interaction and exchanges. This meeting and visit is in continuation of the efforts by the Governments of the two countries to enhance cooperation between the Coast Guards in the field of maritime safety and security.

# Police can't serve accused notice via electronic means: SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has said police cannot serve notices to accused persons through WhatsApp or other electronic modes under the Criminal Procedure Code or Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023. A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and Rajesh Bindal directed all states and union territories (UT) to issue appropriate directions to police for issuing notices under Section 41A of CrPC, 1973 or Section 35 of BNS, 2023 only through the mode of service permitted under the law.

"All the States/UTs must issue a standing order to their respective police machinery to issue notices under Section 41-A of

CrPC, 1973/Section 35 of BNS, 2023 only through the mode of service as prescribed under the CrPC, 1973/BNS, 2023," the bench said on January 21.

The top court went on, "It is made amply clear that service of notice through WhatsApp or other electronic modes cannot be considered or recognised as an alternative or substitute to the mode of service recognised and prescribed under the CrPC, 1973/BNS, 2023."

The direction came when the court accepted a suggestion by senior advocate Sidharth Luthra, appointed amicus curiae in the matter. Luthra flagged instances where a notice under Section 41-A of CrPC, 1973 was sent through WhatsApp, but the accused did not appear before the investigating officer.

# Our suggestions accepted by Waqf committee: JD(U)

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Janata Dal (United) said on Tuesday that the changes suggested by it have been accepted by the Joint Parliamentary Committee scrutinising the Waqf (Amendment) Bill and accused the opposition of politicising the issue.

The BJP's allies like the Telugu Desam Party, JD(U) and the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) had come around to endorsing the bill with some amendments in the committee's meeting on Monday. All the three parties had refrained from wholeheartedly endorsing the bill when it was introduced in Parliament during the Monsoon Session last year and had pushed for a wider consultation to allay concerns of the Muslim community.

JD(U) spokesperson Rajeev Ranjan Prasad said, "Whatever the JD(U) suggested in the bill, it was all accepted. The amendments will have our suggestions. We don't have any complaints regarding the



functioning of the JPC. The opposition has a habit to politicise every issue." JD(U) MP Dileshwar Kamait had moved the amendment to the bill's clause which had made it mandatory for Waqf properties to be listed with details on the portal within six months of the new law coming into force.

Kamait's proposal that 'mutawalli' (caretaker) of the property be allowed to seek an extension if the reasons cited by him satisfies the Waqf tribunal. He had co-sponsored the amendment with BJP's Aparajita Sarangi, and it was endorsed by the panel with a majority vote, sources said. Four amendments moved by

TDP MP Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu along BJP's Brij Lal were also accepted. These amendments do away with vesting any inquiry into disputes over a government property with the district collector concerned as mentioned in the bill, the sources said. These amendments allow the state government to des-

ignate an officer above the rank of collector to carry out an inquiry. Several Muslim bodies had objected to the authority given to the collector, noting that he was also the head of revenue records, and any inquiry by him might not be impartial as he would go by his own office's claim.

The sources said the BJP had been nudging its allies to put up a united face over the proposed law, which has been decried by opposition parties as "unconstitutional" due to its alleged interference into the religious affairs of Muslims. The ruling BJP has insisted that the proposed law will make the functioning of Waqf boards more transparent and efficient, arguing that an elite group running the boards had benefitted at the expense of the community's interests under the existing framework. The committee headed by BJP MP Jagdambika Pal, is set to meet on Wednesday to adopt its draft report, which is expected to be tabled in Parliament in the Budget Session beginning Friday.

# Kejriwal writes to PM highlighting disparity in allocation of public funds

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the Delhi Assembly Apolls, AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal launched an attack on the BJP-led Central government on Tuesday for waiving loans of its "billionaire friends" and demanded a halt to the practice, adding that such a move could transform the country's economic landscape. Instead, he has urged the government to redirect these resources toward easing the financial burden on common citizens, farmers and middle-class families.

In a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, AAP chief highlights a stark disparity in the allocation of public funds, cornering the BJP led Central government of prioritising the financial interests of a select few billionaires over the needs of ordinary taxpayers. Showing a letter at a press conference, Kejriwal said, "Today I wrote a letter to the prime minister on a very important issue. In the letter, I have told the prime minister that the BJP-led



Central government is spending money from the government treasury on the country's billionaires. Whichever billionaire friend they want to be kind to, they give him money from the government and waive off that loan in two or three years. In the last five years, the central government has waived loans of 400-500 such billion-aires worth ₹10 lakh crore." Presenting an alternative vision, the AAP chief outlined how stopping these corporate loan waivers could transform the country's economic landscape. He proposed halving income tax and GST rates, doubling the taxable income limit, and abol-

ishing GST on essential food items—steps that would directly benefit millions of households.

"Common people are paying half their salaries in taxes, while the loans of the rich are being waived. Why doesn't the Central government waive home loans, car loans, or other financial burdens of ordinary citizens?" Kejriwal asked.

Having earlier served as a joint commissioner in the Income Tax Department, Kejriwal went to closely examine the tax burden on the common man. He said, "A middle-class individual who earns ₹12 lakh annually is burdened with so many taxes imposed by the central government. They pay income tax, GST, service tax, property tax, education cess, capital gains tax, road tax, and more. When all these taxes are combined, a person earning ₹12 lakh ends up paying at least ₹6 lakh in taxes—half of their income—to the government. And what do they get in return? Nothing. Absolutely nothing."

## Prayagraj residents facing unwanted guest

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ PRAYAGRAJ**

As millions flock to the Maha Kumbh 2025, the residents of Prayagraj find themselves grappling with the influx of relatives suddenly eager to reconnect—some after years of silence. While hosting family for the spiritual event is considered a blessing, the strain on personal spaces, relationships, and resources is beginning to show.

Kusum Srinet, a resident of Tellianganj, has been at the center of this chaotic hospitality. “We are hosting 15 people in our two-bedroom house,” she said with a weary smile. “The kitchen has not had a break in days, and I have been answering questions like, ‘Is there hot water?’ and ‘Do you have room for my cousin’s neighbor’s friend?’ I have stopped saying no because it does not work.”

In addition to managing the logistics of hosting, Kusum is also dealing with a sudden surge in phone calls from long-lost relatives. “I got a call from my aunt in Gorakhpur whom I have not spoken to in a decade,” she said. “She wanted to know if I could ‘arrange something’ for her son and his in-laws. I did not even know her son was married!”

The phenomenon is not limited to Kusum. Alpona Sen, originally from Kolkata but now a resident of Daraganj, said she is suddenly popular with



Devotees arrive for a holy dip at Sangam, on the eve of the 'Mauni Amavasya' or new moon day during the Mahakumbh festival in Prayagraj, UP

relatives who never cared to stay in touch. “People who forgot I existed are now calling,” she quipped. “One cousin rang up from Kolkata and started with, ‘Didi, how is your health?’—as if they were planning to visit me in the hospital! But of course, they just wanted to know if I could host their son-in-law’s family.”

She shared a humorous yet exasperating incident. “My relatives initially said they were ready to move to a hotel,” she said, rolling her eyes. “But then they added, ‘When we have a great sister-

in-law like you, why should we stay there?’ Now, I am stuck hosting a mini-family reunion in my house!”

Even the humor does not fully mask the challenges. Rajendra Tiwari, a retired schoolteacher in Allapur, said, “I have relatives showing up with bags and a plan to ‘stay for a few days.’ A few days have now turned into a week, and they are making full use of the free Wi-Fi. One even asked me if we had Netflix!”

For some, the stay is brief and pleasant. “There are considerate relatives who



## Free meals for millions at community kitchens

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR**

At the heart of the Mahakumbh lies a unique tradition of selfless service—community kitchens, or bhandaras, feeding millions of pilgrims daily. These kitchens, run by religious organizations, ashrams, and private groups, ensure no visitor goes hungry, offering everything from tea at dawn to wholesome meals at night—all free of cost. The hospitality is unmatched. Volunteers lovingly invite passersby to sit and eat, creating an atmosphere of camaraderie and devotion. In every corner of Kumbh City, at least one bhandara is always open, ensuring constant access to food.

“I came here with just enough money for travel, but these

kitchens made sure I did not have to worry about food,” said Gopal Das, a pilgrim from Madhya Pradesh. “The meals are simple but so tasty, and the love with which they’re served makes it even more special.”

Organizations like Anand Bhawan Seva Samiti from Gujarat serve up to 10,000 people on regular days and over 15,000 on special occasions like the Amrit Snan. “Feeding pilgrims is part of our devotion. It feels like we are serving God Himself through them,” said Rajendra Thakur, a volunteer with the Samiti. The meals, which typically include lentils, rice, vegetables, and khichdi, are prepared in spotless kitchens where hygiene is paramount. “We ensure all ingredients are stored securely,

## Pari Akhara’s fight for separate Amrit Snan for women saints reaches Allahabad High Court

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ PRAYAGRAJ**

The long-standing demand for a separate Amrit Snan (royal bath) for women saints at the Maha Kumbh has taken a legal turn, with Pari Akhara filing a petition in the Allahabad High Court. The petition challenges the lack of representation for women in the traditional system of akharas (religious orders), questioning why there are 13 recognized akharas exclusively for men but none dedicated to women.

Pari Akhara, which was founded in 2013 by female saint Trikal Bhavta, has been advocating for gender-specific arrangements in the Kumbh Mela. Despite receiving government support in previous Kumbhs in Haridwar, Nashik, and Ujjain, they were not granted permission for a separate Amrit Snan. This year, the Pari Akhara has renewed its efforts for inclusion in Prayagraj Maha Kumbh.

In the ongoing Maha Kumbh, women saints associated with Pari

Akhara have been vocal about their demand. Recently, they held discussions with senior figures, including the head of Niranjani Akhara, Acharya Mahamandaleswar Swami Kailashanand Giri, and the Chief Patron of Juna Akhara, Swami Hari Giri. However, these talks failed to yield a resolution.

Faced with opposition from the established 13 akharas, Pari Akhara turned to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, but their plea resulted in mere assurances. Left with no other option, the group filed a petition in the Allahabad High Court on January 2, urging the court to mandate separate royal bathing arrangements for women saints. The petition has created ripples within the religious community, sparking debates about gender inclusivity in the age-old tradition of Kumbh Mela.

The 13 recognized akharas in India are divided into three sects: Shaiv Sanyasi (seven akharas), Vairagi



(three akharas), and Udasi (three akharas). These akharas hold immense sway over Kumbh Mela rituals and receive special government facilities. Pari Akhara, despite its efforts, has not been officially recognized by the Akhara Parishad, the apex council formed in 1954 to oversee the functioning of these orders.

Speaking on the issue, Akhara Parishad President Ravindra Puri reiterated that only the 13 established akharas are recognized. He stated, “Women saints are respected in all akharas, and many of them, including Mahamandaleshwars, are part of the existing akharas. No new akhara can be granted recognition.”

Saint Trikal Bhavta, founder of Pari Akhara, emphasized that the fight for separate Amrit Snan is symbolic of the struggle for gender equality within religious traditions. “Thousands of women saints from India and abroad are associated with Pari Akhara and aspire to

participate in a separate royal bath during the Prayagraj Maha Kumbh. We have faith in the court to deliver justice,” she said.

Acharya Mahamandaleswar Jagriti Chetna Giri of Pari Akhara added, “This is a fight for the very existence of women saints in religious traditions. We are raising our voices at every level and have received assurances of support from several senior saints. We hope for an expedited hearing so women saints can achieve their rightful place in the Prayagraj Maha Kumbh.”

The issue has ignited a larger debate about inclusivity and equality in religious practices. As the Allahabad High Court deliberates on the petition, the demand for a separate Amrit Snan for women saints has already stirred the traditional structures of the Kumbh Mela.

The court’s decision could mark a significant shift in the centuries-old customs of the world’s largest spiritual gathering.

## UP government deploys over 1,000 medical personnel for devotees’ safety



## Devotees express discontent over limited darshan time

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ VARANASI**

The Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple witnessed an unprecedented footfall of over 1.1 million devotees on Monday, as the Maha Kumbh reverse flow drove massive crowds to seek blessings.

While the temple administration celebrated the record-breaking turnout, many pilgrims expressed disappointment over being rushed during their darshan. Devotees who had waited for up to eight hours in serpentine queues were granted only a fleeting glimpse of Lord Shiva. “I stood in line for nearly eight hours, but when my turn came, I was pushed forward within seconds. I couldn’t even complete my prayers,” said 65-year-old Ram Bhajan Singh, who had traveled from Prayagraj.

Another devotee, Suman Devi from Kanpur, echoed similar frustrations. “We come with so much devotion, but we barely get a moment to pray or offer our puja properly. It felt rushed,” she said.

In response to the massive

crowds, the temple remained open until 1 a.m. on Monday and reopened at 2:15 a.m. on Tuesday, offering darshan for 22 hours straight. Divisional Commissioner Kaushal Raj Sharma said, “The extended hours were necessary to accommodate the surge of devotees. Our priority is to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to seek blessings.”

The Mangala Aarti commenced at 2:45 a.m. on Tuesday, followed by regular darshan, which continued late into the night. Residents Struggle Amid Road Closures

The massive influx of pilgrims led to significant disruptions in Varanasi’s daily life. For the first time, the route from Dashashwamedh Ghat to Godowlia was completely shut down on Monday afternoon to manage the crowd. However, the closure inconvenienced residents.

“It was chaotic. Roads were completely closed, and it became impossible to commute. We understand the devotion of the pilgrims, but the administration must ensure better planning,” said Nikhil Mishra, a shopkeeper in the Godowlia area.

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ MAHAKUMBH NAGAR**

For the auspicious occasion of Mauni Amavasya to be held on Wednesday, the Uttar Pradesh government has deployed over 1,000 medical personnel at the Mahakumbh Mela to ensure devotees’ safety and health. Under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath’s direction, modern

medical facilities, including provisions for minor to major surgeries, have been established in every sector of the fair, ranging from minor surgeries to major operations. In addition, 300 specialist doctors have been stationed at a super-specialty hospital in Mahakumbh Nagar, ready to handle any emergency situations. Over 2 lakh patients have already benefited from the OPD services at central and other hospitals, and more than 2.5 lakh pathology tests have been conducted so far. Dr. Gaurav Dubey, the Nodal Medical Officer for the Mahakumbh Mela, highlighted that devotees from across the country and

## People pelt stones at special train for Prayagraj



**BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW**

Harpalpur, Uttar Pradesh: A special train traveling from Jhansi to Prayagraj for the Mahakumbh came under attack when agitated passengers at Harpalpur station pelted it with stones. The incident caused widespread panic among passengers as windows were shattered, and the train was damaged.

Videos circulating on social media show passengers screaming in fear as stones were thrown at the train. In one video, a passenger recounts, “The train left Jhansi for Prayagraj around 8 pm. When it reached Harpalpur, it was attacked. The windows were broken, and stones were hurled inside, endangering the lives of passengers, including women and children.”

The train, part of a special service organized to ferry devotees to the Mahakumbh in Prayagraj, drew large crowds. Many passengers at Harpalpur, about two hours from Jhansi, were waiting to board the train but found the compartment doors locked. Their frustration reportedly escalated into violence, with the crowd throwing stones and shattering

windows. Pushpak Sharma, in-charge of Harpalpur police station, confirmed the attack. “The train reached Harpalpur station around 2 am, and some individuals in the crowd started throwing stones at it,” he said. Railway spokesperson Manoj Singh explained that a large number of passengers had gathered on the platform, eager to board the train. “When they found the compartment doors locked, they became agitated and created an uproar. The situation escalated into stone-pelting,” he said.

Railway police intervened quickly, dispersing the crowd and calming the situation. The train resumed its journey after a brief halt. “We appeal to passengers to remain patient and cooperate for a smooth journey to Prayagraj,” Singh added. “Special trains are being operated to accommodate the large number of visitors for the Mahakumbh, and such incidents disrupt services and jeopardize safety.”

Authorities are investigating the incident and have assured enhanced security measures at railway stations along the route to prevent a recurrence of such events.

## Seven dead and over 50 injured as platform collapses during religious event

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ BAGHPAT**

Tragedy struck the Jain community in Baraut, Baghpat, during their annual ‘Laddoo Mahotsav’ on Monday when a bamboo platform erected at a temple collapsed under the weight of hundreds of devotees. The incident claimed six lives and left over 50 injured.

According to the police, the platform was built for devotees to offer laddoos as part of the religious observance commemorating the nirvana of Jain deity Adinatha. As the priests and devotees gathered on the structure, it gave way, leading to chaos.

Baghpat police chief Arpit



undergoing treatment,” he said. District Magistrate Asmita Lal confirmed the annual nature of the festival, which has been observed by the local Jain community for three decades. “The wooden structure collapsed, leaving about 40 people injured. Twenty have already been treated and sent home, and others remain under medical care,” she said.

Eyewitness Rakesh Jain, a devotee present at the event, described the harrowing scene. “The platform is set up every year for the priests and devotees to offer laddoos. This time, it couldn’t bear the weight of the crowd, and it collapsed suddenly,” he said.

Vijayvargiya stated that police and ambulances reached the spot promptly after the collapse. “The injured were rushed to nearby hospitals. Those with minor wounds received first aid and were discharged, while those with serious injuries are



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Recalibrating US-India ties

India-US relations face a shift as India tackles trade, immigration, amid Trump's 'America First' policy

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump engage in dialogue to strengthen bilateral relations, the future of US-India ties appears poised at a critical juncture. Modi's commitment to global peace, prosperity and security, paired with Trump's vision of 'America First,' highlights a partnership that must balance shared strategic goals with diverging domestic priorities. India and the US have cultivated a robust Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership over the years, encompassing key areas like defence, technology, energy and counterterrorism. President Trump's emphasis on India increasing its procurement of American-made security equipment underscores Washington's aim to deepen defence collaboration. With Modi's planned visit to the White House and continued diplomatic exchanges, both nations are set to expand their cooperation in these critical domains. However, this partnership extends beyond bilateral gains. Modi and Trump's discussions on global challenges, including tensions in West Asia and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, highlight their shared interest in playing pivotal roles on the global stage.



Trade remains a contentious issue, with Trump's protectionist policies, including potential tariff hikes, posing a challenge to India. The US President's focus on achieving a 'fair bilateral trading relationship' reflects his administration's concerns about trade imbalances. India, on the other hand, seeks to protect its economic interests while fostering a mutually beneficial partnership. Negotiating these trade tensions will require careful diplomacy, as both nations aim to preserve the benefits of their economic ties. The potential for increased investment, innovation and job creation through collaboration in sectors like renewable energy and space exploration offers a promising path forward. Immigration has emerged as yet another critical point of discussion. Trump's crackdown on illegal migrants and emphasis on tighter border controls have direct implications for India, one of the largest sources of irregular immigration outside Latin America. The US has identified approximately 18,000 Indian nationals for deportation, a figure India has cautiously addressed while advocating for a systematic verification process. Moreover, visa delays for Indian nationals have raised concerns, particularly as India is a significant contributor to the US tech workforce. Balancing Trump's domestic priorities with the need for a skilled global workforce will be essential to sustaining the mutually beneficial flow of talent and innovation. The relationship between India and the US is at once ripe with potential and fraught with challenges. While Trump's 'Make America Great Again' agenda and Modi's vision for a self-reliant India may occasionally clash, their shared goals of security, economic growth, and technological advancement offer ample ground for collaboration. As the world's largest democracies, India and the U.S. have a unique opportunity to lead by example in addressing global challenges.

increased investment, innovation and job creation through collaboration in sectors like renewable energy and space exploration offers a promising path forward. Immigration has emerged as yet another critical point of discussion. Trump's crackdown on illegal migrants and emphasis on tighter border controls have direct implications for India, one of the largest sources of irregular immigration outside Latin America. The US has identified approximately 18,000 Indian nationals for deportation, a figure India has cautiously addressed while advocating for a systematic verification process. Moreover, visa delays for Indian nationals have raised concerns, particularly as India is a significant contributor to the US tech workforce. Balancing Trump's domestic priorities with the need for a skilled global workforce will be essential to sustaining the mutually beneficial flow of talent and innovation. The relationship between India and the US is at once ripe with potential and fraught with challenges. While Trump's 'Make America Great Again' agenda and Modi's vision for a self-reliant India may occasionally clash, their shared goals of security, economic growth, and technological advancement offer ample ground for collaboration. As the world's largest democracies, India and the U.S. have a unique opportunity to lead by example in addressing global challenges.

### PICTALK



Folk artists take part in a procession on the eve of the unveiling of 'Bhuvaneshwari Devi' statue, in Bengaluru

# Trump's America: A reality check for the Desis



BHOPINDER SINGH

In Trump's transactional world no group, not even the perceived 'model minority,' is immune from the fallout of his unpredictable policies

It's not Elon Musk's early frustrations with President Donald Trump handing over the crucial project to build America's AI (Artificial Intelligence) infrastructure to rival Sam Altman-led 'Stargate,' that ought to worry us, but the fate of fellow Trumpeteer, Vivek Ramaswamy, that rings closer home. During the campaign trail, the racist Trump was busy mocking minority ethnicities and religions, the Indian-American Desis, seemed smug in assuming that somehow, they were a cut above the other minorities. The purported personal equation between Trump and the Indian Prime Minister was bandied as proof of the special treatment, that awaited India and Indians.

Names of a few Indian-Americans in the new Trump administration (especially of Vivek Ramaswamy in the Department of Government Efficiency or DOGE) were showcased as proofs of Trump's affection for the world's largest democracy. The lazy and simplistic assumption was that he'd be tough on the likes of China and Pakistan, hence pro-India. But the cold reality of dealing with the unpredictable politics of Trump hit much earlier than even anticipated by commentators who had been warning of Trump's ascendancy, despite many shortcomings of the Democrats under Joe Biden. For starters, Chinese President Xi Jinping got an invite to attend the swearing-in of President Trump, but the Indian Prime Minister didn't.

Soon thereafter Trump kept peppering his Make-America-Great-Again (MAGA) spiel with threats of tariff spikes against traditional allies like Canada, Denmark, Mexico etc., (including naming India) but recently suggested that he'd 'rather not' impose tariffs against China - this after promising up to 60% tariffs against China during the campaign! He flipped. Soon thereafter, the Indian-American community was hit the hardest of all immigrant communities by the direct implications of the executive order ending birthright citizenship. Chances for many Indians working under H-1B (work), H-4



(dependent), L (intra-company transfer) and F (student) got jeopardized, as amongst the largest and fastest-growing immigrant groups in the US. With all assumed equations besetting Washington DC and Delhi, it seems fait accompli with little scope for Delhi to counter-influence a policy measure, that impacts it, more than anyone else. Such radical disruptions were certainly not the norm in the Biden era. The supposed leverage of a voluble Vivek Ramaswamy with a Trump also seems to have come a cropper, given the mystery surrounding Vivek's sudden decision to leave DOGE. Having invested a lot of personal stake, content, and pride, in supporting the Trump ascendancy to power (clearly prematurely?), Vivek is at pains to deny that his ouster has anything to do with him having defended the immigration position after calling some, 'lazy Americans'.

To add insult to injury of being forced into grandstanding, a journalist has just released a video of Vivek's text confirming his departure from Trump, due to the same. The ostensible bid for Ohio Governorship (if true?) is an afterthought and wasn't the intention, even a week earlier. That for a Trump, anyone is completely dispensable once a purpose has been served, be it



IT IS A LESSON THAT VIVEK RAMASWAMY OR EVEN ELON MUSK WILL WAKE UP TO, AS IN THE INDIFFERENT AND TRANSACTIONAL WORLDVIEW OF A TRUMP, TOPICAL RELEVANCE IS ALL THAT MATTERS TO THE AUTHOR OF THE 'ART OF DEAL'

an individual, cause, country, or even a supportive Indian-American like Vivek, seems true. Anyone can be thrown under the bus, irrespective of their ethnicity or personal chemistry. A telling tweet by Vivek on 26th Dec 2024 captures his nuanced position on the contentious immigration issue (as wishfully believed by many Indian-Americans to be the first amongst the equals within minorities, owing to our unique culture and work ethics). He had commented, "The reason top tech companies often hire foreign-born & first-generation engineers over 'native' Americans isn't because of an innate American IQ deficit (a lazy & wrong explanation). A key part of it comes down to the c-word: culture".

The underlying suggestion is that Indians do not suffer from the supposed 'Wokeism' of the Democrats as Indians do not have "a culture that celebrates the prom queen over the math olympiad champ, or the jock over the valedictorian", hence would escape the prying eyes of a Trump targeting immigrants. While it is true that Trump has spoken about the logic of 'meritocracy' in extending citizenship - it is equally true that in applying his power of potential misuse, he hasn't spared or protected the interests of the Indian-

American community which did tick most of the qualifying boxes defined by Trump. The hard truth is that Trump has no special affinity or even intention of any preferential treatment to Indian Americans or India if his conduct in the initial few days of his Presidency is anything to go by. The fact is, the one-time star of the TV series 'Apprentice' is more famous for his heartless line "You're fired" than for any historical demonstration of empathetic leadership. Ultimately, it is a lesson that Vivek Ramaswamy or even Elon Musk will wake up to, as in the indifferent and transactional worldview of a Trump, topical relevance is all that matters to the author of the 'Art of Deal' (that too, ghostwritten). Those eagerly waiting for a decisive and assertive POTUSA in Trump who would do wonders for India, need to brace for some discomforting reality check. Biden had limitations and undeniable failings, but he wasn't a bull in a China shop or necessarily anti-India, ever. With Trump, you never know, as Indians or India don't seem anything special, at least for now.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### India-China border talks



The visit to Beijing by the foreign secretary, Vikram Misri and a series of high-level meetings between the officials of India and China meant to bring some normalcy back to their ties after years of heightened tensions. While these hectic parleys demonstrate intent on both sides to try to build on the momentum from the border pullback, the recent crises in their relationship have deepened mutu-

al distrust that will not go away with a few meetings. The past few months have seen India raise concerns about a new Chinese plan to build the world's largest dam in Tibet on the upstream part of what India calls the Brahmaputra. New Delhi fears that the dam could allow Beijing to weaponise water, either by denying India adequate water or by unleashing floods. The Quad grouping, which met in Washington on the margins of the swearing-in ceremony of Donald Trump, issued a statement that was more overtly critical of China and its territorial ambitions in the Indo-Pacific than has been the norm. No one expects New Delhi and Beijing to be best friends. But they do not need to be enemies either.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

the field of digital security. The Department of Telecommunications has developed an innovative and indigenous system that identifies and blocks the misuse of Indian mobile numbers. The primary aim of this initiative is to free users from cyber fraud and safeguard their financial interests. This new system has achieved the remarkable feat of reducing fraudulent international calls by 90 per cent within just 24 hours. Additionally, by blocking more than 20 foreign service providers, the government has sent a clear message that there is no place for such activities. This effort is not only a stringent step toward preventing fraudsters but also a symbol of securing the digital lives of Indian citizens. It is a critical move toward realising the vision of Digital India. The initiative not only curbs cybercrimes but also enhances the sense of trust and security among citizens. It brings greater transparency to the telecom sector and helps users feel safer in their digital activities. This initiative truly marks a new chapter in the

realm of digital security.

R K Jain | Barwani

#### SMRITI MANDHANA WINS ICC AWARD

Madam - India's star batter Smriti Mandhana was adjudged as the ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2024, the global body announcement. Mandhana had a memorable outing with the bat in 2024. She smashed 747 runs this year with the help of four centuries and three fifties in 13 games. She set new batting standards in ODIs, scoring more runs than she ever had before in a calendar year. She also tested herself with the ball in hand and ended up taking a wicket as well. The 28-year-old now has equalled New Zealand batter Suzie Bates' record of winning the ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year on multiple occasions. Mandhana won her ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year award in 2018.

Jayanthi Subramanian | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

#### CHINA TAKES ON AI

Madam - Less than a week after his swearing-in ceremony, US President Trump said that the private sector would invest \$500 billion in AI technology, making the US the most advanced country in the world and creating jobs for millions. Just a week after this statement, the US stock market crashed on Monday, January 27. The reason behind this was the DeepSeek app launched by China last week, which became the most downloaded free app in the US, beating rivals including ChatGPT. DeepSeek was reportedly developed at a fraction of the cost of its competitors, raising questions about the future of America's AI dominance and the scale of investment planned by US firms. AI leader Nvidia's share price sank 17 per cent, and it lost about \$593 billion in stock market value, according to market experts, the biggest one-day loss ever for a company on Wall Street. I was wondering if Mr. Trump, who has just given a 75-day extension to China's app TikTok, will be able to show his displeasure with China and announce a 100 percent import duty on it instead of 60 percent. But it doesn't seem that Trump will be able to deal with China the way he deals with Mexico and Colombia. That's why he has refrained from imposing the previously announced 60 percent import duty. On the contrary, he is advising his American tech companies that 'this is a wake-up call for you guys.' Despite limited access to advanced hardware, DeepSeek's ability to compete with American models shows that software simplicity and data efficiency can compensate for hardware constraints, and underestimating China in any field can be a cause of embarrassment for anyone.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

#### CRACKDOWN ON FRAUD CALLS

Madam - The Indian government's steps to curb fraudulent international calls are a significant and commendable effort in

## Simulation-based learning: Transforming emergency medical training

By replicating real-world medical emergencies, this innovative training method bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical expertise

Simulation refers to the imitation of real-world processes or systems for training, education, or evaluation purposes. In emergency medical training, simulation creates realistic scenarios that replicate medical emergencies, allowing healthcare providers to practice and refine their skills in a safe, controlled environment. The implementation of Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME) by the National Medical Council (NMC) has shown that simulation significantly enhances clinical competence for both undergraduate and postgraduate medical students. One of the most significant advantages of simulation is that it enables learners to practice handling critical and high-stakes situations without risking patient safety. This is particularly important in emergencies, where errors can have severe consequences. By engaging in simulated scenarios, participants can repeatedly practice emergency protocols, improve technical skills such as intubation and defibrillation, and gain confidence in their abilities.



Simulations replicate the high-pressure environment of real emergencies, helping individuals develop the ability to make rapid, informed decisions under stress. They also provide a risk-free setting to identify and correct mistakes, enabling participants to learn how to prevent such errors in real-life situations. Additionally, exposure to diverse scenarios prepares learners to adapt to unexpected complications effectively. Teamwork plays a critical role in emergency medical training, and simulation emphasises the importance of collaboration and communication. Learners develop skills in articulating observations, providing updates, and conveying instructions clearly, which are essential in high-pressure situations. Simulation allows team members to define roles, such as team leader or airway manager and practice seamless coordination. Through repeated practice, team-based simulations equip medical students with both confidence and competence. The future of medical education lies in recognising the importance of practical skills alongside theoretical knowledge, making simulation a cornerstone of training programmes.

leaders to hone their abilities while fostering supportive and adaptive team dynamics. The benefits of simulation extend to faster and more efficient responses in real emergencies, reduced stress and burnout for healthcare providers and improved patient care outcomes. Familiarity with high-stakes scenarios enables teams to act cohesively and manage stress more effectively, ensuring better results in critical situations. Simulation learning is an essential tool for building individual competence and strengthening medical teams. In a field where zero-error tolerance is crucial, particularly in emergency departments, simulation-based learning equips medical students with both confidence and competence. The future of medical education lies in recognising the importance of practical skills alongside theoretical knowledge, making simulation a cornerstone of training programmes.



SARBARI SWAIKA

(The writer is professor & HOD, Dr. D Y Patil Medical College, Hospital & Research Centre, Pimpri, Pune; views are personal)



## FIRST COLUMN

### THE PATH TO BEING TRULY SPECIAL

We all want to feel special, but often our desires and decisions lead us astray



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

We all want to be special. There is nothing wrong with such thinking, but most of us do not desire properly or decide sensibly. In this article, I will shed some light on how to do both of these wisely. What should we desire? This must be in sync with our circumstances and capabilities. Imagine desiring to become very rich while doing a small business. Similarly, desiring to become famous anytime soon while being a club-level sportsperson is not wise.

We will be disappointed only. Persons not blessed with good looks should accept their limitations and focus on what capabilities they have been blessed with. There was a dark and not-so-good-looking actress in the USA; she only got small roles. But she acted so well that she became a household name. A social worker in India decided to help tribals. He moved in with them. He became very famous and very special. However, something awaits all of us; which is not so difficult either. This is simply to become a devotee of God, and He will make us special.

I will write more about it in this article. The same wisdom should



be used in decision-making. When there is a choice between being good and not so good, what should we choose? The same logic applies to following dharma and staying within 'maryada' (limits). We know what these are, but are very causal about controlling ourselves. Succumbing to negative emotions like anger, lust, greed, hate, etc. is so easy. What it does is to make us very ordinary. We have been taught to be disciplined in eating, sleeping, entertainment and what we do and how much. Are we prepared to do that? If we are keen on becoming special, we have to.

A similar yardstick is required in choosing goals. Are they good in the long term? Or, the short-term is easy? What will you choose? Regarding usefulness to others, we should be very sincere. If we wish to be special in the eyes of others, this is the 'mantra'. Lastly, if we really and truly wish to be special, be dutiful; do all duties as best as possible. This will be the starting point in pleasing God, who is everything. After the efforts of many births, a yogi in the end becomes wise and he takes My shelter. A great soul, who considers Lord Vasudeva thus as everything is very rare. (The Bhagavad-Geeta verse #7.19) What will happen then? You will be rewarded like you cannot imagine. Because God is the controller of what happens to us. Begin doing some easy spiritual practices, which suit your nature.

I have a large photo of Lord Krishna, which I have hung on the right side of my bed. I spend a lot of time looking at the Lord, while I gently chant Krishna, Krishna, Krishna.....What has happened? I have become special. God guides me when I pray for His guidance and help. Isn't God omniscient? He knows what will work. God helps us as only He can, being the controller. I am beginning to feel secure. Fears and anxieties are reducing.

There is more peace. I can tolerate better what I must. Physical health is improving. There is steady progress, which is very satisfying. I feel that I have become special. This is possible for one and all. Nothing mentioned in this article is very difficult. One just has to be determined. Then, one can enjoy the status of being special.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

# Budget 2025: Prioritise health education for a stronger India



RAHUL MEHRA

With over 40 per cent of India's population under 25, empowering youth with physical and mental is a vital investment in the nation's future



As the Union Budget for 2025 approaches, expectations run high across various sectors. Among these, education - specifically health education - deserves special attention. To ensure the holistic development of our youth, the government must consider allocating funds for the integration of health education into school curricula. Such an initiative will not only address immediate concerns but also align with the aspirational vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, where a healthy population becomes the cornerstone of a developed nation. With the Union Budget 2025 at the stage of finalisation, it is time to prioritise health education.

Allocating funds to this cause is not merely an educational reform; it is an investment in India's future. It is stated time and again, including in the National Education Policy, that it is critical to allocate public investment in education from the current over 4.5 per cent to about 6 per cent of total budgetary allocation. Besides this, the Government must consider designing schemes that ensure health education is imparted to children at an early stage to be able to build a healthy society. Development is not merely economic or technological - it is also social, cultural and, above all, human.

A nation's progress depends on the health of its people, and with over 40 per cent of India's population under 25, ensuring the health and wellbeing of its youth is critical. This cannot be achieved without systematically integrating health education into our school curricula. Our goal is to improve student's health knowledge and more importantly, their health behavior. The urgency for such an intervention is rooted in troubling realities. Studies indicate that 30-40 per cent of Indian students face serious mental health challenges. A Global School



A NATION'S PROGRESS DEPENDS ON THE HEALTH OF ITS PEOPLE, AND WITH OVER 40 PER CENT OF INDIA'S POPULATION UNDER 25, ENSURING THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF ITS YOUTH IS CRITICAL

Health Survey (GSHS) conducted as far back as 2007 revealed that more than 25 per cent of students aged 13-17 experienced periods of deep sadness or hopelessness, often disrupting their daily activities. These numbers have only worsened in the years since, as highlighted by small-scale studies and the alarming rise in student suicides. Ignoring the mental and physical health of students today will lead to grave consequences for the nation tomorrow.

The contrast between India and nations that give primacy to health education is stark. In the United States, the Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS) collects data every two years on the health behaviours of high school students. This data informs evidence-based interventions and policies that address mental health, substance abuse, nutrition, and other critical issues. Many US states mandate health education, covering mental, physical, and social health literacy. Similarly, countries like the United Kingdom and Canada have integrated health education into their school curricula, starting at the primary level.

India, however, lacks a comprehensive approach. While physical education is emphasised in schools, the broader concept of health education, encompassing mental and social wellbeing, is largely absent. The much-lauded National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 only touches upon physical health, failing to address the critical need for a holistic health education framework. Why does this matter? Because healthy individuals contribute to a healthier economy. Poor health not only

reduces productivity but also pushes families into financial crises due to high medical expenses.

India's average life expectancy in 'full health' is a mere 60 years, significantly lower than that of many Asian countries, including Japan (74 years) and China (69 years). A healthy lifestyle, ingrained early, can change this trajectory. Countries like Japan provide valuable lessons. Their emphasis on hygiene, nutrition and physical activity is embedded in their cultural fabric. Children grow up practising these habits, resulting in a population that enjoys a higher quality of life and longer years of productive health.

India, with its rich traditions of yoga and Ayurveda, has the cultural foundations to promote such a shift. However, without institutionalising health education, these remain underutilised. Introducing health education as a mandatory subject in schools can address this gap.

A comprehensive curriculum must include modules on physical fitness, mental health resilience, nutrition, social interaction and technology use. For instance, students could learn the importance of balanced diets, strategies to cope with academic pressure, and the benefits of physical activities and mindfulness practices.

The curriculum should also emphasise practical life skills, such as decision-making, interpersonal communication, and self-advocacy, to prepare students for real-world challenges. A structured approach is essential. First, the government must design a standardised health education curriculum with clear performance

benchmarks. Students' progress should be evaluated at key stages, such as the end of classes 6, 8, and 10. Second, teachers need specialised training to effectively deliver this curriculum. Public-private partnerships can play a crucial role in addressing resource gaps and providing innovative solutions.

Importantly, this initiative aligns seamlessly with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Viksit Bharat 2047. A healthy India is a productive India. By equipping the younger generation with the knowledge and skills to prioritise their wellbeing, we are not only improving individual lives but also strengthening the nation's human capital, driving economic growth, and enhancing societal happiness.

Beyond the classroom, the ripple effects of mandatory health education can be transformative. A population that understands the value of preventive care will reduce the burden on India's healthcare system. Families will adopt healthier lifestyles, and communities will benefit from reduced rates of lifestyle-related diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart ailments.

The road to Viksit Bharat 2047 is paved with initiatives that prioritise people over policies, and action over aspirations. Health education is not just a subject; it is a foundation for a stronger, healthier, and more prosperous India.

(The writer is UNESCO Chair for Global Health & Education and Chairman of, Tarang Health Alliance. Views expressed are personal)

# How restoring forests can combat climate change and empower communities

Reforestation stands as both a climate action imperative and a cornerstone for building sustainable future

Amid escalating climate changes, reforestation has come to be one of the most effective, nature-driven methods to combat environmental degradation and enhance climate resilience. Beyond absorbing carbon dioxide, forests support livelihoods, stabilise ecosystems, and foster sustainable communities. Forests have a great role in countering global warming and providing essential resources that not only support communities but also manufacturing and trade.

However, as research indicates, India in the past two decades has lost nearly 414-kilo hectares of humid primary forest which made up 18 per cent of its total tree loss. This highlights an urgent need to prioritise reforestation, not



SHWETA RAWAT

just as a climate action tool but also as a cornerstone for community development.

**Reforestation's Dual Role:** Climate Action and Community Resilience Forests have an immense capacity to capture and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, thus reducing the greenhouse effect.

The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, established in 1988 estimates that reforestation and afforestation could account for up to 30 per cent of the carbon reduction required to limit global warming. Additionally, forests regulate microclimates, mitigating the urban heat island effect and stabilising local weather patterns crucial for agriculture. Reforestation plays a crucial role in combating desertification, which poses a significant threat to food security, water availability and livelihoods. Forests help anchor the soil, replenish organic matter, and improve water retention, thereby enhancing agricultural productivity and water access, particularly in ecologically fragile regions. According to

the India State of Forest Report 2021 (ISFR), tribal and rural communities living in these areas face high vulnerability but also exhibit remarkable climate resilience.

For these communities, reforestation is a game-changer as it can help prevent and even undo desertification by stabilising the soil using tree roots, which reduces wind and water erosion. Furthermore, forests help replenish organic material in the soil, leading to improved water retention and increased fertility which can lead to environmental regeneration and socio-economic stability.

**Community-driven Reforestation:** A Proven Model Even with rapid urbanisation, India's conservation ethos has a rich legacy of pro-



tecting nature. Be it the collective Chipko movement of the 1970s or the inspirational restoration of more than 1300 acres of Brahmaputra's Forest by Jadav Payeng, the Forest Man of India, the success of any reforestation effort hinges on community and local participation.

With the input of individuals and stakeholders from communities, any conservation project remains culturally relevant, ecologically sound and

economically beneficial. Take Aravalli Hills Afforestation Project as an example for instance. By involving Village Forest Protection Committees, the project rejuvenated over 151,390 hectares of degraded land and built nearly 200 water storage dams to support wildlife, boosting biodiversity and tiger populations in Sariska Sanctuary. With an impressive 87 per cent tree survival rate, the initiative balanced environmental restoration with tangible social benefits such as job creation and improved livelihoods.

This model demonstrates that sustainable reforestation thrives on collaboration, community empowerment, and measurable impact. Partnerships for a Greener Future To scale reforestation

efforts, collaboration is key. Governments, philanthropies, non-profits and businesses must unite to amplify impact. For instance, non-profits can mobilise grassroots participation and bring cultural insights. Corporations can leverage resources for large-scale projects while fulfilling sustainability commitments.

Local governments can ensure policy alignment and provide regulatory support. Together, these stakeholders can create integrated strategies that combine ecological restoration with community upliftment. Initiatives like the National Afforestation Programme and the Green India Mission lay a solid foundation, but partnerships can catalyse progress. Reforesting for Generations to Come

Reforestation offers a rare synergy—mitigating climate change while addressing critical challenges like water scarcity, food insecurity and rural poverty. It is not merely an environmental solution but a pathway to holistic development. By fostering meaningful partnerships with non-profits, businesses, and communities, and aligning efforts with governmental initiatives.

The time to act is now. With a shared vision and commitment, we can restore forests not just as carbon sinks but as vibrant ecosystems that sustain life and empower generations. A greener, more resilient future is within our reach—if we plant the seeds today.

(The writer is chairperson and founder, The Hans Foundation; views are personal)

# Trump signs order paving way for transgender troop ban

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Monday directing Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth to revise the Pentagon's policy on transgender troops, likely setting in motion a future ban on their military service. He also ordered troops to be reinstated who had left voluntarily or been booted for refusing COVID-19 vaccines, outlined new rollbacks in diversity programmes and provided for the deployment of a space-based missile defence shield for the US — all on Hegseth's first day. Trump and Hegseth had described parts of the anticipated orders throughout the day, but the exact language did not drop until late Monday. A transgender ban had been widely expected, and Trump's order largely sets the stage for a future ban — but directs Hegseth to come up with how that

would be implemented in policy. In his order, Trump claimed that service by troops who identify as a gender other than their biological one "conflicts with a soldier's commitment to an honourable, truthful, and disciplined lifestyle, even in one's personal life" and is harmful to military readiness, requiring a revised policy to address the matter. Trump had tried to ban transgender troops during his first term, but it was tangled up in the courts for years before being overturned by then-President Joe Biden shortly after he took office. Two groups, Lambda Legal and Human Rights Campaign, which represent transgender troops the first time, vowed to fight again. "We have been here before and seven years ago were able to successfully block the earlier administration's effort," Lambda Legal attorney Sasha Buchert said. "Not only is such a move

cruel, it compromises the safety and security of our country and is particularly dangerous and wrong. As we promised then, so do we now: we will sue." During his first presidency, Trump established US Space Command and the US Space Force, which just marked its fifth birthday. Space continues to be a priority for the president, who has now directed the Pentagon to begin to develop the capability to shoot down missiles from space. For years, the US has cautioned that China, Russia and others were weaponising space. It has at times declassified information about both countries' efforts to create offensive weapons to disable critical US satellites, including the capability to move satellites from orbit, temporarily blind them or potentially even destroy them. The Space Force is building a low-orbit ring of redundant

satellites that can more quickly track and detect potential missile launches. But establishing a way to shoot missiles down from space is something the US has not pursued since President Ronald Reagan announced the Strategic Defence Initiative — "Star Wars" as it was commonly known — in the 1980s. The system was never developed due to cost and technological limitations. In his order called "an Iron Dome for America", Trump called for a multilayer missile defence system capable of countering an array of threats to the US, to include development and deployment of space-based interceptors. At least 8,200 troops were forced out of the military in 2021 for refusing to obey a lawful order when they declined to get the vaccine. Notices advising them they could return were sent out in 2023, but just 113 have reenlisted.

# Tariff threat sways Colombia, but risks rise with Canada, Mexico

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Having already forced Colombia to accept deportees by threatening a 25 per cent tariff, President Donald Trump is readying the same move against Canada and Mexico as soon as Saturday. But this time, the stakes are higher and many economists surveying the possible damage doubt Trump would be comfortable with what they say would be self-inflicted wounds from the tariffs. "The potential for such sizable economic impacts ought to act as enough of a deterrent that Trump will not end up implementing these higher tariffs," said Matthew Martin, senior US economist at the consultancy Oxford Economics. Trump has repeatedly insisted that tariffs are coming on Canada and Mexico, despite both countries seeking to address his stated concerns about illegal border crossings and the smuggling of fentanyl. But the Republican president is also motivated by the idea that tariffs would force other countries to "respect" the United States. "We're going to immediately install massive tariffs," Trump said in a Monday speech, adding, "Colombia is traditionally a very, very strong-willed country," but it backed down rather than face import taxes. Multiple economic analyses show

that universal tariffs against Canada and Mexico risk more inflation and an economic slowdown. It's a much larger play than Trump's moves against Colombia, which accounts for roughly 0.5 per cent of US imports. By contrast, nearly 30 per cent of all US imports hail from Canada and Mexico, amplifying the risk that tariffs could fuel inflation and undermine Trump's campaign promises to get prices under control. Trump's director of the White House National Economic Council, Kevin Hassett, dismissed these concerns. He said the sceptical analyses of tariffs don't look at the totality of Trump's promises. "When the people who are trying to cause panic over President Trump's trade policy simulate what it's going to do, they don't account for all the other policies," Hassett said in a Monday interview on the Fox Business Network. "So President Trump is drill, baby, drill, and deregulate and tax cuts and reduce spending." After Trump's initial threat of 25 per cent tariffs in November, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum suggested Mexico could retaliate with tariffs of its own. Since then, she has been more measured, choosing to emphasize the strong bilateral relationship and willingness to engage in dialogue as the number of detentions at the US-Mexico border has plunged.

Sheinbaum pointed out in November that drugs were a US problem, but in December the Mexican military seized more than a ton of fentanyl pills in two raids, calling it the biggest catch of synthetic opioids in Mexico's history. On Monday, Sheinbaum applauded the agreement reached by the Trump administration and Colombia. "I believe the important thing, as I said on the first day, is to always act with a cool head, defending each country's sovereignty and the respect among nations and peoples," she said. Top Canadian ministers said last week that Canada was prepared to retaliate if Trump imposed import taxes, even as Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said they "will continue to work on preventing tariffs". The working theory in Canada appears to involve being ready for anything that the US president might do. On Monday, the economics division of the insurance company Nationwide estimated that Trump's proposed tariffs on Canada and Mexico would increase inflation by as much as 0.5 percentage points and pull down growth by 0.7 percentage points. The analysis noted it did not "account for potential retaliatory tariffs from Canada or Mexico, which could amplify the deleterious impact on inflation and GDP growth".

# Serbia's PM resigns as anti-corruption protests grow

PTI ■ BELGRADE

Serbia's populist Prime Minister Milos Vucovic resigned Tuesday in an attempt to calm political tensions and pressure roiled by weeks of massive anti-corruption protests over the deadly collapse of a concrete canopy. The canopy collapse in November, which killed 15 people in the northern city of Novi Sad, has become a flashpoint reflecting wider discontent with the increasingly autocratic rule of Serbia's populist President Aleksandar Vucic. He has faced accusations of curbing democratic freedoms in Serbia despite formally seeking European Union membership for the troubled Balkan nation. "It is my appeal for everyone to calm down the passions and return to dialogue," Vucovic told a news conference announcing his resignation. Novi Sad Mayor Milan Djuric also stepped down on Tuesday. Vucovic's resignation could lead to an early parliamentary election. The resignation must be confirmed by Serbia's parliament, which has 30 days to choose a new government or



call a snap election. Pro-government media said President Vucic will attend a Cabinet session on Tuesday evening to decide whether a new prime minister-designate will be appointed or an early election called. Opposition parties have said they would insist on a transitional government that would create conditions for a free and fair election. Vucic's populists have faced accusations of irregularities during past elections. Vucovic became the prime minister in April 2024, after the Serbian Progressive Party won most votes in an election

marred by tensions. "They (ruling party) have been in a free fall since the Novi Sad tragedy," journalist Slobodan Georgiev said on N1 television, adding that Vucic was seeking a "buffer" with the prime minister's resignation. Vucic in the past had managed to cushion the impact of anti-government street protests, but the current student movement has garnered widespread support from all walks of life, including actors, farmers, lawyers and judges. The students' call for justice has resonated in a country where corruption is widespread and few feel that the state institutions work in the interests of citizens. Branimir Jovancevic, professor at the Faculty of Chemistry in Belgrade, expressed hope that Vucovic's resignation is a first step toward further political changes in Serbia, where power is concentrated in the hands of the president although his constitutional role is largely ceremonial. "If the president thinks that by replacing one, essentially, unimportant figure... will solve the problem... he is deeply mistaken," said Jovancevic. "This

must lead to total political changes because autocracy and dictatorship in Serbia, in the heart of Europe, must be stopped." On Monday, tens of thousands of people joined striking university students in a 24-hour blockade of a key traffic intersection in the Serbian capital. Serbia's students are demanding accountability for the canopy collapse that critics have blamed on rampant government corruption. Classes at Serbia's universities and dozens of schools have been blocked for two months with students camping inside their faculty buildings. In another attempt to defuse tensions, Vucic, Vucovic and Parliament Speaker Ana Brnabic on Monday evening urged dialogue with the students, who have so far rebuffed such invitations. They say Vucic shouldn't be the one holding talks with them but that government institutions such as police and the judiciary should do their job. Vucovic said the immediate cause for his quitting was an attack on a female student in Novi Sad early Tuesday by assailants allegedly from the

ruling Serbian Progressive Party. Vucovic said that "whenever it seems there is hope to return to social dialogue, to talk... it's like an invisible hand creates a new incident and tensions mount again." But the outgoing prime minister also said that the street protests "undoubtedly" have been organized from abroad "with an aim to directly jeopardize Serbia as a state." Vucovic offered no evidence for his claims that echoed earlier similar statements by Vucic. "I can never justify or understand any of these protests, blockades of lives, of roads and the freedom of movement of other citizens," he said. Students in Novi Sad said they were horrified by the assault they said was carried out by thugs with baseball bats. They attacked two groups of students and chased them in their car, the students said. Prosecutors later said that four people have been detained. "We are horrified over the state of our society where such a situation is possible," the students said in an Instagram post. "We have had enough of blood." The students called a big rally

in Novi Sad later Tuesday in response to the attack. Serbia's prosecutors have filed charges against 13 people, including a government minister and several state officials for the November canopy collapse. But the former Construction Minister Goran Vesic, who had resigned shortly after the canopy crash, has been released from detention, fuelling doubts over the investigation's independence. The main railway station in Novi Sad was renovated and inaugurated twice in recent years as part of a wider infrastructure deal with Chinese state companies and a fast railway link with neighbouring Hungary. Several incidents have marred the street demonstrations in the past weeks, including drivers ramming in to the crowds on two occasions, when two young women were injured. Students and others have been holding daily 15-minute traffic blockades throughout Serbia at 11:52 am, the exact same time the concrete canopy crashed down on Nov 1. The blockades honour the 15 victims, including two children. The blockades were also held on Tuesday.

# Russian govt delegation makes first official visit to Syria since Assad's fall

PTI ■ DAMASCUS

A delegation of Russian officials arrived in Damascus on Tuesday, Russian state news agency RIA Novosti reported. It is the first such delegation to visit Syria since the fall of former President Bashar Assad, an ally of Moscow, in December in a lightning rebel offensive. Assad took refuge in Russia after his ouster. The report said the delegation included Russian deputy foreign minister Mikhail Bogdanov and the Russian president's special envoy for Syria, Alexander Lavrentyev. RIA Novosti didn't offer any other details of the visit. There was no official comment from Syria's interim government, but the semi-official Al Watan newspaper reported that the Russian delegation would meet with the country's de facto leader, Ahmad al-Sharaa, and with its foreign minister.

Moscow's scorched-earth intervention in support of Assad once turned the tide of Syria's civil war. Syria's new authorities have not cut off relations with Moscow or forced a complete exit of Russian military forces from bases in Syria, but earlier this month, Al Watan reported that a contract with a Russian company to manage the port in Tartous had been cancelled. Following Assad's downfall, Russia relocated its troops and assets from all over Syria to its main hub at the Hmeimim air base near Latakia. There has been no indication that Moscow was preparing to evacuate the Hmeimim base or the naval facility in Tartous altogether. The termination of a contract for a Russian company to modernise the Tartous commercial port did not directly impact the Russian naval facility, which was leased under a separate deal.



A boy lights incense inside Dongyue Temple ahead of Lunar New Year in Beijing on Tuesday.

# Protesters attack embassies in Congo's capital

PTI ■ GOMA

Dozens of demonstrators attacked several foreign embassies, including those of Rwanda, France and Belgium, on Tuesday demanding that they oppose the advance of Rwanda-backed M23 rebels into a major city in the country's conflict-battered east. Police fired teargas at the protesters as they marched to the embassies in Kinshasa, looting and setting fires to parts of the buildings. The embassies of Kenya and Uganda were also attacked, according to Associated Press journalists at the scene. Congo's security forces were attempting to slow the rebels, who advanced into Goma, a key eastern city, in a major escalation of the decades-long conflict. The M23 rebels are one of about 100 armed groups vying for a foothold in the mineral-rich region in the conflict, one of Africa's

largest. The protesters demanded that the international community pressure Rwanda over the rebel advance. "We denounce the hypocrisy of the international community," said Timothée Tshishimbi, one of the protesters. "They must tell Rwanda to stop this adventure." Residents reported gunfire overnight in Goma, a city of 2 million people which the rebels claimed to have captured on Monday. Explosions and gunfire were heard near the now-shut Goma airport. Goma is a regional trade and humanitarian hub holding hundreds of thousands of the more than 6 million people displaced by eastern Congo's prolonged conflict over ethnic tensions that have resulted in one of the world's largest humanitarian crises. The M23 rebels temporarily took over Goma in 2012 before being forced to pull out under international pres-

sure, and resurfaced in late 2021 with increasing support from Rwanda, according to Congo's government and United Nations experts. Rwanda has denied such support. It was unclear how much of Goma is controlled by the rebels, who marched into the city early Monday to both fear and cheers among several residents. It was the culmination of weeks of fighting during which the rebels captured several towns in a shocking advance. "Since morning we have heard bomb explosions and crackling bullets," said Sam Luwawa, a resident of Goma. "So far we cannot say who really controls the city." Three South African peacekeepers were killed on Monday when the rebels launched a mortar bomb toward the Goma airport which landed on the nearby South African National Defence Force, while a fourth soldier succumbed to injuries

sustained in fighting days ago, the South African Department of Defence said Tuesday. That makes 17 peacekeepers and foreign soldiers who have been killed in the fighting, according to UN and army officials. The humanitarian situation in Goma "is extremely, extremely worrying, with a new threshold of violence and suffering reached today," Bruno Lemarquis, the United Nations humanitarian coordinator for Congo, told reporters in a video news conference on Monday. He said hundreds of thousands of people were attempting to flee the violence. There were active combat zones in all areas of the city, with civilians taking cover and heavy artillery fire directed at the city centre on Monday, Lemarquis said. He said several shells struck the Charité Maternelle Hospital in central Goma, "killing and injuring civilians, including newborns

and pregnant women." "What is unfolding in Goma is coming on top of what is already one of the most protracted, complex, serious humanitarian crises on Earth, with close to 6.5 million displaced people in the country, including close to 3 million displaced people in North Kivu," Lemarquis said. Aid groups are reporting they are unable to reach displaced people who rely on them for food and other necessities. "Key roads surrounding Goma are blocked, and the city's airport can no longer be used for evacuation and humanitarian efforts. Power and water have reportedly been cut to many areas of the city," said David Munkley, head of operations in eastern Congo for the Christian aid group World Vision. In addition to the UN, several countries including the United States, United Kingdom and France have condemned Rwanda for the rebel advance.

# 1975 was International Women's year; 50 years on, the fight continues

PTI ■ SYDNEY

In December 1972, the same month the Whitlam government was first elected, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year (IWY). This set in train a series of world-changing events, in which Australia was to play a significant part. The aim of IWY was to end discrimination against women and enable them to participate fully in economic, social and political life. Fifty years later, such participation has become an indicator of development and good governance. But the full promise of International Women's year has yet to be fulfilled, hampered by pushback

and the scourge of gender-based violence. "The greatest consciousness-raising event in history" Dubbed "the greatest consciousness-raising event in history", the UN's first World Conference on Women took place in Mexico City in June 1975. Consciousness-raising had been part of the repertoire of women's liberation. Now it was taken up by government and intergovernmental bodies. The Mexico City conference was agenda-setting in many ways. The Australian government delegation, led by Elizabeth Reid, helped introduce the world of multilateral diplomacy to the language of the women's movement. As Reid said: "We argued that, whenever the words "racism",

"colonialism" and "neo-colonialism" occurred in documents of the conference, so too should "sexism", a term that had not to that date appeared in United Nations documents or debates." Reid held the position of women's adviser to the prime minister. In this pioneering role, she had been able to obtain government commitment and funding for Australia's own national consciousness-raising exercise during IWY. A wide range of small grants promoted attitudinal change — "the revolution in our heads" — whether in traditional women's organisations, churches and unions, or through providing help such as Gestetner machines to the new women's centres.

grants explicitly did not include the new women's services, including refuges, women's health centres and rape crisis centres. Their funding was now regarded as an ongoing responsibility for government, rather than suitable for one-off grants. IWY began in Australia with a televised conversation on New Year's Day between Reid and Governor-General John Kerr on hopes and aspirations for the year. On International Women's Day (March 8), Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's speech emphasised the need for attitudinal change: Both men and women must be made aware of our habitual patterns of prejudice which we often do not see as such but whose existence manifests itself

in our language and our behaviour. The Australian postal service celebrated the day by releasing a stamp featuring the IWY symbol, showing the spirit of women breaking free of their traditional bonds. At Reid's suggestion, IWY materials, including the symbol, were printed in the purple, green and white first adopted by Emmeline Pankhurst in 1908 and now known as the suffragette colours. Inside government, Reid had introduced the idea that all Cabinet submissions needed to be analysed for gender impact. After the Mexico City conference, this idea became part of new international norms of governance. Following the adoption at the

conference of the World Plan of Action, the idea that governments needed specialised policy machinery to promote gender equality was disseminated around the world. Given the amount of ground to be covered, IWY was expanded to a UN Decade for Women (1976–85). By the end of it, 127 countries had established some form of government machinery to advance the status of women. Each of the successive UN world conferences (Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1985, Beijing 1995) generated new plans of action and strengthened systems of reporting by governments. The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing was a high point. Its "platform for action" provided further impe-

tus for what was now called "gender mainstreaming". By 2018, every country recognised by the UN except North Korea had established government machinery for this purpose. The global diffusion of this policy innovation was unprecedented in its rapidity. At the same time, Australia took the lead in another best-practice innovation. In 1984, the Commonwealth government pioneered what became known as "gender budgeting". This required departments to disaggregate the ways particular budgetary decisions affected men and women. As feminist economists pointed out, when the economic and social division of labour was taken into account, no bud-

getary decision could be assumed to be gender-neutral. Governments had emphasised special programs for women, a relatively small part of annual budgets, rather than the more substantial impact on women of macro-economic policy. Standard-setting bodies such as the OECD helped promote gender budgeting as the best way to ensure such decisions did not inadvertently increase rather than reduce gender gaps. By 2022, gender budgeting had been taken up around the world, including in 61 per cent of OECD countries. Now that it had become an international marker of good governance, Australian governments were also reintroducing it after a period of abeyance.



# Imran's party skips talks with govt negotiators

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The dialogue process between the government and opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf ran aground on Tuesday after jailed former premier Imran Khan's party refused to join a scheduled huddle aiming to defuse the prevailing political tension in the country. National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, who had fixed the meeting at the request of government negotiators, waited at the Parliament House with the government team for the PTI leaders to join, but they failed to turn up as already party founder Imran Khan had instructed to shun talks if the government failed to form probe commissions as demanded by him. The talks began last month and three rounds have been held. The PTI handed over a list of demands at the last sitting on

January 17. It had also given a seven-day deadline to form two judicial bodies to probe the protests of May 9, 2023 and Nov 26, 2024. The government announced that it had reservations about the demands and prepared its response to present to the PTI team during the fourth round, which failed to materialize. Speaker Sadiq told the media that the government committee waited for the opposition members for 45 minutes, but they did

not come. He added that in the last meeting of the government negotiations with PTI, it was decided that a meeting would be called on January 28 after seven working days. He said that PTI members were contacted by telephone before the meeting and none of the members said that he would not attend, message was sent to the opposition leader Omer Ayub Khan to join the meeting, but the response was that he might not be able to come.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
My client, Urmil W/o Late Gulshan Lal R/o C-10/141, Yamuna Vihar, Delhi-110053 states that I am the co-owner after the death of her husband Gulshan Lal having certificate No. MCDOLIR3120004937581 dated 24/11/2020 along with two sons namely Mohit Sharma, Rajeev Sharma are the legal heirs of Late Gulshan Lal executed relinquishment deed vide registration No. 2025/121/245 volume no. 6160 book no. 1 onpages 163-174 dated 15/11/2025 before the office of Sub-Registrar-IV, Seelam Pur, Delhi in respect of property bearing No. C-10/141, Yamuna Vihar, Delhi, if any other legal heirs of Late Gulshan Lal would be claimed within 15 days after publication of the said information.  
**RAJ KUMAR JAIN (Advocate), Ch. No. 735-K, Court Western Wings, Tis Hazari Courts Delhi-54.**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
I, NAVNEET ANAND S/O SHRI. JIENDRA KUMAR MALIK R/O A-17, DEFENCE COLONY, SOUTH DELHI, DELHI - 110024 THROUGH SPA HOLDER KAVINDER, lost my Original allotment letter dated: - 10.07.1989 & payments receipts totaling of rupees 42,000/- in respect of property/farm land bearing no. C-37, of Ansaal Aravali Retreat project located at raisena village, sohna, Gurgaon, Haryana, developed by M/s Ansaal Housing Ltd. (formerly known as M/s Ansaal Housing & Construction Ltd.). The abovesaid documents are lost at my above residence. If found, Please contact: 98121-32053

**Format C-1**  
(for candidate to publish in Newspapers, TV)

**Declaration about criminal cases:** (As per the judgment dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

**Name and address of candidate:** Anil Bhardwaj R/o. C-4/160-B, Keshav Puram, Delhi-110035

**Name of political party:** Indian National Congress (Independent candidates should write "Independent" here)

**Name of Election:** Legislative Assembly of Delhi-2025

**\*Name of Constituency:** AC-19, Sadar Bazar

**I Anil Bhardwaj, a candidate for the abovementioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:**

A. Pending Criminal Cases				
Sl. No.	Name of Court	Case No. and dated	Status of case(s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1.	Sh. Deepak Vats, ACJM, North-West District, Rohini Court, Delhi	540628/2016 Dated 05.05.2025	Prosecution Evidence	Section 3 of Delhi Prevention of Defacement Property Act 2009

**B. Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences**

Sl. No.	Name of Court & dates(s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed	Maximum punishment imposed
1.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

**\*In the case of election to Council of States or election to Legislative Council by MLAs, mention the election concerned in place of name of constituency.**

**Note:**

- a. The particulars regarding criminal cases pending against the candidate shall be in bold letters.
- b. The matter in newspapers shall be published in font size of at least 12.
- c. Details should be given separately for each case in separate rows.
- d. If a candidate is contesting an election on the ticket of a particular party, he/she is required to inform the party about the criminal cases pending against him/her.
- e. The candidate shall report about publishing of declaration regarding criminal cases immediately after such publication to the Returning Officer. In addition, he shall submit a report about publishing of the declaration regarding cases in Format C-4 along with the account of election expenses within 30 days of declaration of result of election. (a) In case of elections to the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assemblies, this shall be submitted to District Election Officer concerned, (b) In case of elections to the Rajya Sabha and the State Legislative Council, this shall be submitted to the Returning Officer concerned.

This may be published in Newspapers and TV from the day following the last date for withdrawal of candidature and upto two days before the date of poll.

**Format C-1**  
**DECLARATION ABOUT CRIMINAL CASES**

(As per the judgement dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No.536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

**Name and Address of Candidate:** RAGINI NAYAK W/O ASHOK BASOYA, IA-10C, ASHOK VIHAR, PHASE-I, DELHI-110052

**Name of Political Party:** Indian National Congress

**Name of Election:** DELHI ASSEMBLY ELECTION-2025

**Name of Constituency:** WAZIRPUR-AC-17

**I, RAGINI NAYAK, a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:**

A) PENDING CRIMINAL CASES				
Sl. No.	Name of Court	Case No. and Dated	Status of case (s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1.	JMFC-02, Central District, Tis Hazari Courts	119/M/2009 289901/2016 21/12/2024	Pending	U/S 147/148/427/186/332 IPC
2.	JMFC-07, PHC/ND	16471/2018 05/09/2024	Pending	U/S 186/188/353/332/34 IPC

B) DETAILS ABOUT CASES OF CONVICTION FOR CRIMINAL OFFENCES			
Sl. No.	Name of Court & date(s) of Order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed	Maximum punishment Imposed
1.	NA	NA	NA

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is to inform to the public at large that Mrs. Neetu who is the owner of Plot Land measuring 150.25 Sq. Yards, Khevat no.16 Khatia no.184, Mu no.86, village Ismipur, Faridabad, Haryana who became owner of 69 Sq. Yds., vide Sale Deed dated 03.06.2008 (Document No.5441) & 81.25 Sq. Yds. vide Sale Deed dated 24.12.2014 (Document No.14186) both executed by Mr. Asha Ram and same to be financed by Cholamandalam Investment & Finance Company Ltd. That, (1) Original GPA dated 22.09.2006 executed by Mr. Jag Narayan Pandey in favour of Mr. Asha Ram, (2) Original ATS executed by Mr. Jag Narayan Pandey in favour of Mr. Asha Ram, (3) Original WILL executed by Mr. Asha Ram has been lost. If any Person having any type of claim/right/title/interest over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc. Lucam Legal LLP B-303, Second Floor, Opp. SBI Bank Sector 2, Noida, UP-201301 Contact No: 90-4268372

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given on behalf of Smt. Anita who is purchasing the Plot Land Measuring 64 sq. yds., Khet No.107, Situated at Village Surajpur, Pargana Dadri, Gautam Buddha Nagar, U.P. from Smt. Rajwati who became owner vide Sale Deed dated 25.08.2023 (Document No. 22063) executed by Smt. Sangeta and same to be financed & mortgaged by India Shelter Finance Corporation Ltd. That, Original Sale Deed dated 26.02.2015 (Document No. 4325) executed by Sh. Yogesh Kumar in favour of Smt. Sangeta has lost and FIR lodged on dated 25.01.2025 vide LR No. 2527409/2025, Delhi Police. If any Person found the same or having any type of claim/right/title/interest over the said property may inform in writing at the address mentioned below, about his objections within 07 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien, Charge, disputes etc. Lucam Legal LLP B-303, Second Floor, Opp. SBI Bank Sector 2, Noida, UP-201301 Contact No: 90-4268372

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform to the general public at large my client Zulfiqar, his wife Warisa, R/o-H No.303, Khasra No.53/7, 1st Floor, Gali No.6, Babu Nagar, Delhi-110094, has severed relations with his son Akhlaque and daughter-in-law Ikshita due to their misbehavior and has evicted him from his movable and immovable property. My client shall not be responsible with any of their work/disputes, they themselves will be responsible for it.  
**Yogendra Mohan Harsh (Advocate)**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**AMC OF ELEVATOR AT CENTRAL HOSPITAL, MALIGAON**  
Tender Notice No. Dy.CEE/PS/MLG/37/24-25R; Date: 22-01-2025. E-tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work.  
**Tender No. DYCEE-PS-MLG-HQ-37-24-25R; Name of Work: At Maligaon (HQ): AMC of Omega make 20 person Capacity Elevator for 3 (Three) years at Central Hospital, Maligaon. Advertised Value: ₹7,00,155/-; Earnest Money: ₹14,000/- E-tender will be closed at 15.00 hrs. on 13-02-2025. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)**  
Dy.CEE/PS/Maligaon/HQ  
**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers With A Smile

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
I, Tanmay Arora, am going to surrender SEBI-RA registration no. INH000017967 and BSE enlistment no. 6338 and any grievances can be lodged at: scores.sebi.gov.in

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
I, Subhash Chander Sharma R/O Block A5 House No.175A, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110063, have lost Original Possession letter, Possession slip and Demand Letter etc. of above said DDA Property, if found, Plz contact at **8010212120 / 9871634612.**

**Form No. INC-26**  
(Pursuant to rule 30 the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014)  
**BEFORE THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, NORTHERN REGION, DELHI**

**IN THE MATTER OF SUB-SECTION (4) OF SECTION 13 OF COMPANIES ACT, 2013 AND CLAUSE (A) OF SUB-RULE (5) OF RULE 30 OF THE COMPANIES (INCORPORATION) RULES, 2014 AND**  
**IN THE MATTER OF XPRESS MINDS EDUTAINMENT PRIVATE LIMITED HAVING ITS REGISTERED OFFICE AT C-208 YAMUNA APARTMENTS, ALAKNANDA, DELHI, INDIA, 110019, PETITIONER**

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra ordinary General Meeting held on October 3rd, 2024 to enable the Company to change its Registered Office from "National Capital Territory Delhi" to "State of Maharashtra". Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal ([www.mca.gov.in](http://www.mca.gov.in)) by filing investor complaint form or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director at the address 4th Floor, IFCI Tower, 61, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019 within fourteen days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company with a copy of the applicant company at its registered office at the address mentioned below:  
C-208 Yamuna Apartments, Alaknanda, Delhi, India, 110019  
**FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE APPLICANT XPRESS MINDS EDUTAINMENT PRIVATE LIMITED**  
**KUNAL SAVARKAR, DIRECTOR**  
DIN: 01070409  
**DATE: 29 January 2025 | PLACE: Delhi**

**HARYANA SHEHRI VIKAS PRADHIKARAN**  
Estate Office, Sec-12, HSVP Complex, Karnal-132001

**OUSTEES SCHEME**

HSVP invites Oustees online applications from the land owners whose land has been acquired for Sector-6, Karnal. The scheme will start w.e.f 29.01.2025 and close on 28.03.2025 at 05:00 PM. The applicants should apply through online portal of HSVP website i.e. [www.hsvphry.org.in](http://www.hsvphry.org.in). The applicants are requested to apply alone with application money Rs. 50,000/- The claim of the oustee shall be decided in terms of policy dated 04.12.2015, 11.08.2016 and 08.05.2018. The allotment shall be made on current reserve price and in case finalization of allotment take time for any reason in that eventuality bank rate of interest be charged till the date of allotment on the rate mentioned in the advertisement. For detailed terms and conditions, terms of payment, policy guidelines and sectors wise & category wise details of the plots are available on the HSVP website i.e. ([www.hsvphry.org.in](http://www.hsvphry.org.in)).  
**Estate Officer HSVP Karnal**  
1083/11/191/2025/32091/C/27/7 Dt. 28/01/2025

**SRIFLEX**  
Building a Better Tomorrow

License No./Year :133 of 2023 dated 26.06.2023  
HRERA Registration No. RC/REP/HARERA/GGM/814/546/2024/41 dated 15.04.2024.

**First Online E-Draw of De-Mortgaged units For Allotment**

It is informed that 'the First E-Draw of De-Mortgaged units' for applications received for 270 Flats under 'the Affordable Group Housing Colony' with Project ID '199' located at Sector 4, Sohna, District Gurugram, Haryana, known as 'Sriflex City' (License No. 133 of 2023 dated 26.06.2023, being developed by Sriflex Projects Private Limited), will be conducted on 30.01.2025 at 4:00 p.m. The draw will take place at 'Emaar Club Beryl', Emaar Emerald Hills, Golf Course Extension Road, Sector 65, Gurugram, Haryana 122018 in the presence of government officials.

All applicants are invited to participate in the draw OR watch the live stream online using the link provided below.

**YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/@SRIFLEXCITY>**

**SRIFLEX PROJECTS PRIVATE LIMITED**  
TF-03, Ninex City Mart, Sohna Road, Sector 49, Gurugram, Haryana  
Call:- 97178-32424 | Visit:- [WWW.SRIFLEX.COM](http://WWW.SRIFLEX.COM)

**verka**  
Har Din Da, Har Din Da

**THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD.**  
SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022, EPABX No. 0172-5041812,66  
Notice Inviting Tender [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop)

e-Tender is hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items:-

Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
For Verka Head Office, Chandigarh Freezer on Wheel 200 Ltr. and above	Annual/ 60 Units

**NOTE:**  
1. For complete details regarding above tender (NT), please visit our website i.e. [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop) & e Tendering portal i.e. [eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in).  
2. Contingendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

**Dy. General Manager (Purchase)**  
NA/12/27760/2023/41176

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This public notice is in reference for the unit D-1303 booked in the name of Saurabh Aggarwal area 2005 Sq.ft allotted to you in JKG Palm court project. As we have offered Possession of D Tower in May, 2021 and allottee were required make the payment against Unit No D-1303 but till date allottee failed to make payment as per demands. Promoter have shared many demands with reminders on dated: 28th August, 2024, 09th Sept, 2024. When allottee have not been replied any demands then we shared cancellation intimation/Notices on dated: 10th Oct, 2024 and 10th January, 2025. After the many reminders and notices allottee have not taken possession of your flat so, we have refunded the amount of Rs. 5,00,000/- in your ICICI bank account on 17th January, 2024 and remaining amount also has been transferred to you in your same account. As per UP RERA order we have already done delay payment of this unit in Hon'ble UPRERA.

This is to inform you that as per the order of UP RERA, we have paid the delay penalty and deposit amount in respect of the above allotted flat to you by the promoter as per the terms and conditions of the signed allotment letter. Since the booking in your favor has been cancelled, the allotment stands cancelled and you have no claim on the residential unit.  
**For M/s JKG Construction Pvt Ltd**  
Add- GH-01/D, Sector-16C, Greater Noida (West) G.B.Nagar(U.P.)

**THE PIONEERS CLASSIFIED**  
CHANGE OF NAME

**I, Shubham karadia S/O Vinod Kumar R/o E-501, Madipur, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi -110063, have changed my name to Shubham Singh Rajput.**  
**PD(1338)C**  
**I, Furqan Ahmad S/O Sultan Ahmad R/o C-98/48, S/F Gali No. 14/1, Chauhan Banger Seelampur, Delhi -110053 have changed my name to Furqan Ahmed permanently.**  
**PD(1339)C**  
**I, Jai Karan S/o Mr. Ramesh Singh R/o R-1, Third Floor, East Vinod Nagar, Delhi-110091, hereby declare that my son name has been mentioned in his school record as Sidharth insted of actual and correct name Sidharth Kushwaha. Henceforth he shall be known as Sidharth Kushwaha for all future purposes.**  
**PD(1340)C**  
**I, Shahaja Ram, Father of- No.10136742X Nk Surendar Singh, R/o- VPO- Arya Nagar, Teh & Dist- Charkhi Dabri, Haryana- 127308, have changed my name from Shahaja Ram to Sahaj Ram, vide affidavit dated 28/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.**  
**PD(1342)C**  
**I, Shakuntla Devi, Mother of- No.10136742X Nk Surendar Singh, R/o- VPO- Arya Nagar, Teh & Dist- Charkhi Dabri, Haryana- 127308, have changed my name from Shakuntla Devi to Shakuntla, vide affidavit dated 28/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.**  
**PD(1343)C**

**I, Bhiva Father of No. 14678783K Hav Pagar Pravin Bhiva, R/o- Vill & Post- Utrane, Teh- Baglan, Dist- Nashik, Maharashtra, have changed my name from Bhiva to Bhiva Baliram Pagar, vide affidavit dated 28/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.**  
**PD(1344)C**  
**I, Pagar Kalpna Bhiva, Mother of- No.14678783K Hav Pagar Pravin Bhiva, R/o- Vill & Post- Utrane, Teh- Baglan, Dist- Nashik, Maharashtra, have changed my name from Pagar Kalpna Bhiva to Kalpana Bhiva Pagar, vide affidavit dated 28/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.**  
**PD(1345)C**  
**I, Jay Krishna Prasad Yadav, Father of No.14843072P Hav/Mt Jyotesh Kumar, R/o- Vill- Banauli, P.O.- Rajadih, P.S.- Haveli Kharagpur, Dist- Munger, Bihar-811213, have changed my name from Jay Krishna Prasad Yadav to Jai Krishna Yadav, vide affidavit dated 28/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.**  
**PD(1346)C**  
**I, Umavati Devi, Mother of No.14843072P Hav/Mt Jyotesh Kumar, R/o- Vill- Banauli, P.O.- Rajadih, P.S.- Haveli Kharagpur, Dist- Munger, Bihar-811213, have changed my name from Umavati Devi to Umavati Devi, vide affidavit dated 28/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.**  
**PD(1347)C**  
**I, No.15773730M RHM (OFC) Vijay Kumar, R/o- Vill & PO- Danapur Cantt, Teh- Danapur Cantt, Dist- Patna, Bihar- 801506, have changed my son's name from Nischal Kumar Jha to Devesh Kumar Jha, vide affidavit dated 28/01/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.**  
**PD(1348)C**

**Format C-1**  
(for candidate to publish in Newspapers, TV)

**Declaration about criminal cases**

(As per the judgment dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

**Name and address of candidate:** ABHISHEK DUTT S/O LATE KAMAL K DUTT, House No. D-18, Third Floor, South Extension Part 2, New Delhi -110049

**Name of political party:** INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

(Independent candidates should write "Independent" here)

**Name of Election:** ELECTION OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NCT 2025

**\*Name of Constituency:** AC-42-KASTRUBA NAGAR CONSTITUENCY

**I ABHISHEK DUT** (name of candidate), a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

**(A) Pending criminal cases**

Sl. No.	Name of Court	Case No. and dated	Status of case(s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1.	COURT OF SH KARTIK TAPARIA JMFC-03/SED/SAKET ii	4995/2021	CASE IN INVESTIGATION PHASE & CHARGES NOT FRAMED	-IT IS THE CASE OF PROSECUTION THAT ON 15.07.2021, AT AROUND 3.00 PM TO 5.00 PM ACCUSED PERSONS WERE FOUND VIOLATING COVID-19 NORMS BY NOT WEARING MASK AND FOLLOWING SOCIAL DISTANCING.THEY WERE ALSO FOUND TO BE GOING IN A LARGE GROUP AND TAKING OUT A POLITICAL RALLY.

**(B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences - NOT APPLICABLE**

Sl. No.	Name of Court & date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed	Maximum Punishment Imposed
	NOT APPLICABLE	NOT APPLICABLE	NOT APPLICABLE

**\*In the case of election to Council of States or election to Legislative Council by MLAs, mention the election concerned in place of the name of the constituency.**

# Banking stocks rises after RBI's liquidity boost

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Banking stocks were in the limelight on Tuesday, with Axis Bank and HDFC Bank climbing three per cent after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced measures to inject liquidity of ₹1.5 lakh crore into the banking system. According to market experts, these measures are anticipated to ease liquidity conditions and increase the likelihood of an interest rate cut at the upcoming RBI policy meeting in February, offering relief to the banking sector amid concerns over high liquidity deficits. The scrip of Axis Bank rose 3.20 per cent to trade at ₹978.20 apiece, HDFC Bank shares advanced 3.09 per cent to ₹1,680, ICICI Bank by 2.15 per cent to ₹1,254.40 and IndusInd Bank went up 1.98 per cent to ₹944.25 per piece on the BSE. Bank of Baroda stock went up by 0.64 per cent to ₹221 apiece, State Bank of India appreciated by 0.28 per cent to ₹751.30 and Kotak Mahindra Bank increased 0.13 per cent to ₹1,883.05 apiece on the bourse. However, Federal Bank scrip plunged 4.97 per cent to ₹181.70 per piece, Yes Bank fell 1.51 per cent to ₹118.22 and Canara Bank decreased



1.20 per cent to ₹90.75 per piece. Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and IndusInd Bank were among the top gainers in the 30-share Sensex pack. Led by the gains in these stocks, the BSE bankex index climbed 905.14 points or 1.65 per cent to 55,608.43. Meanwhile, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 595.57 points or 0.79 per cent to quote at 75,961.74 in the morning trade. On Monday, the Reserve Bank of India

conditions, the central bank also announced a USD/INR Buy/Sell Swap auction of USD five billion for a tenor of six months to be held on January 31, 2025. To inject liquidity, RBI said open market operations (OMO) purchase auctions of Government of India securities for an aggregate amount of ₹60,000 crore in three tranches of ₹20,000 crore each will be held on January 30, February 13, and February 20. Besides, a 56-day Variable Rate Repo (VRR) auction for a notified amount of ₹50,000 crore will be held on February 7. "The Reserve Bank will continue to monitor evolving liquidity and market conditions and take measures as appropriate to ensure orderly liquidity conditions," the RBI said on Monday. According to Geojit Financial Services' Chief Investment Strategist V K Vijayakumar, the RBI's announcement of measures to boost the liquidity in the banking system by around ₹1.5 trillion is positive for the market. This raises the prospects of an interest rate cut by the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) in the February policy meeting, Vijayakumar said.

# Hyundai faces 19 per cent plunge in Q3 profits, amid geopolitical factors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hyundai Motor India on Tuesday said its consolidated profit after tax declined 19 per cent to ₹1,161 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2024, hit by subdued demand and geo-political factors. The auto major had reported a Profit After Tax (PAT) of ₹1,425 crore in the October-December period of last fiscal. Total revenue from operations declined to ₹16,648 crore in the third quarter as against ₹16,875 crore in the year-ago period. The decline in margins was mainly due to subdued demand and geo-political factors, the company said. "While the challenges persist in the overall market due to global factors, our business fundamentals remain strong, and we remain confident in our ability to leverage our strengths and actively explore potential opportunities to improve our volumes and profitability," Hyundai Motor India Managing Director Unsoo Kim said. The company said it sold a total of 1,86,408 units of passenger vehicles during the third quarter, a dip of two per cent as compared with



1,90,979 units in the same period of last fiscal. The sales in the third quarter of this fiscal include 1,46,022 units in the domestic market with a strong contribution from the SUV segment, it added. Hyundai said it has achieved its highest-ever CNG penetration during the quarter, reaching 15 per cent which was 12 per cent in the third quarter of the previous year. During the quarter, the automaker said it has demonstrated robust growth in rural penetration reaching 21.2 per cent compared to 19.7 per cent in the same

# SEBI cracks down on Front Running: Bans two from securities trading

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Tuesday restrained two persons from the securities market for six months and directed them to disgorge ₹34.26 lakh "wrongful gains" made by them through their involvement in front-running activities. Additionally, the regulator has imposed a penalty of Rs

five lakh each on the two persons - Mandar Uhas Bhatkar and Vikrant Bhimrao Kadam. Front-running refers to an illegal practice in the stock market where an entity trades based on advanced information from a broker or analyst before the information has been made available to its clients. The findings came after the SEBI conducted an investigation into the trading activities of Bhatkar and

certain other entities related to him, during the period November 2020 to September 2021. The investigation was carried out in order to ascertain as to whether there was any possible violation of the provisions of the PFUTP (Prohibition of Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practices) rules. In its investigation, SEBI found suspected front running of trades of SVI Consolidated Pvt Ltd (Big Client) in the cash market

# TVS Credit records 40 per cent rise in Q3 PAT

PTI ■ CHENNAI

TVS Credit Services Ltd, a leading non-banking financial company, has registered a 40 per cent growth in its profit after tax for the October-December 2024 period at ₹240 crore following healthy growth in consumer loans and vehicle financing segments, the company said on Tuesday. The company registered a profit after tax of ₹172 crore during the corresponding quarter of the last financial year. For the nine months ending December 31, 2024, the profit after tax grew by 28 per cent to ₹541 crore, from ₹424 crore registered in the same period, a year ago. "In Q3 FY25, credit demand increased, driven by festive fervour, increased consumption and attractive consumer offers. TVS Credit witnessed healthy growth during this period, particularly in consumer loans and vehicle finance with an improvement in market share," a company statement said here. The total income during the

# Bosch reports 12 per cent decline in Q3 net profit

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Auto components maker Bosch on Tuesday said its consolidated net profit declined by 12 per cent to ₹458 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2024. The company had reported a net profit of ₹518 crore in the October-December period of the last fiscal. Its revenue from operations rose to ₹4,466 crore for the third quarter compared to ₹4,205 crore in the year-ago period, Bosch said in a regulatory filing. "This quarter, Bosch generated growth through the development of advanced automotive components and customer-focused solutions. Increased service income from major OEMs testifies to their continued trust in us and our expertise," Bosch Ltd MD Guruprasad Mudlapur said. The performance further reinstates the company's strategic ability to stay cognizant of market needs and deliver successfully, he added. As part of the realignment of its Building Technologies division globally, the company said it will be carving out and transferring the Video, Access and Intrusion, and Communication systems business to Keenfinity India, a subsidiary of Bosch Security Systems BV Nederland. The company's board, based on the recommendations of the audit committee, have approved the transfer of the business at a value of not less than ₹595 crore, it added. Shares of Bosch on Tuesday ended 0.13 per cent up at ₹29,753 apiece on BSE.

# Stock markets snap two-day falling streak

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Snapping the two-day decline, benchmark stock indices and Nifty rebounded on Tuesday following intense buying in banking and rate-sensitive stocks as the RBI decided to inject liquidity into the financial system. The 30-share Sensex climbed 535.24 points or 0.71 per cent to settle at 75,901.41. During the day, the benchmark surged 1,146.79 points or 1.52 per cent to hit a high of 76,512.96. The broader 50-share NSE Nifty appreciated by 128.10 points or 0.56 per cent to close at 22,957.25. In the intraday session, the 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 308.8 points or 1.35 per cent to 23,137.95. "The national benchmark indices demonstrated optimism today, primarily driven by gains in the banking sector following the RBI's announcement of open market interventions to address liquidity concerns. "Large-cap stocks outperformed, as their valuations have now reached fair levels and are further supported by expectations that the market correction is nearing its bottom," Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Financial Services, said. Among the Sensex shares, Bajaj Finance, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, HDFC Bank, Tata Motors, Tata Steel, ICICI Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, Zomato, IndusInd Bank, Maruti Suzuki India and Bharti Airtel were the major gainers. Sun Pharmaceutical, Larsen & Toubro, ITC, HCL Technologies, NTPC, Power Grid, Nestle India, Tata Consultancy Services, and

Asian Paints were among the laggards. "Markets witnessed a relief rally after the recent weakness, but undertone remained bearish as most of the sectors ended in red which pulled down benchmark indices from the day's high levels," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said. Investors remain cautious due to growing global uncertainty and disappointing domestic economic indicators. However, optimism in banking, auto and realty aided sentiment even as worries over Trump's trade policies and fading chances of any rate cut in next month's credit policy weighed, Tapse added. Among the sectoral indices, Bankex climbed the most by 1.49 per cent, Financial Services by 1.45 per cent, Realty by 1.27 per cent, Auto by 1.16 per cent, and Consumer Discretionary rose by 0.23 per cent. Healthcare, Industrials, Utilities, Capital Goods, Power, Oil and Gas, Energy,

# Cipla Q3 net profit rises 49 per cent to ₹1,571 Crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Drug major Cipla on Tuesday said its consolidated net profit increased by 48.73 per cent to Rs 1,570.51 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2024, riding on the back of growth across markets. The company had reported a net profit of Rs 1,055.9 crore in the October-December period of last fiscal. Revenue from operations rose to Rs 7,072.97 crore as against Rs 6,603.81 crore in the year-ago period. "In Q3FY25, we delivered growth across all our various geographies, despite a supply challenge in the US," Cipla MD and Global CEO Umang Vohra said. The company recorded a revenue growth of 8 per cent

# Rupee falls 25 paise to close at 86.56 against USD

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated 25 paise to close at 86.56 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, as global risk sentiments were dampened amid tariff threats by the US President Donald Trump. Forex traders said the rupee continued to face pressure due to sustained foreign fund outflows and the strength of the American currency in the overseas market amid unabated dollar demand from oil importers and weak risk appetite. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened on a weak note at 86.53, and during the day touched a high of 86.50 and a low of 86.57 against the American

currency. The local unit settled for the day at 86.56 (provisional), registering a fall of 25 paise over its previous close. On Monday, the rupee depreciated nine paise to close at 86.31 against the US dollar. "The Indian rupee declined as global risk sentiments were dampened amid tariff threats by the US President Donald Trump. This impacted the Chinese Yuan, which also led to strengthening of the US dollar," said Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan. Choudhary further said a surge in US treasury yields and Foreign Institutional Investors (FII) outflows also

# TVS Credit records 40 per cent rise in Q3 PAT

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# Rupee falls 25 paise to close at 86.56 against USD

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pressurised the rupee. However, a decline in crude oil prices cushioned the downside. "We expect the rupee to trade with negative bias on a strong US dollar and persistent foreign fund outflows. Importer demand for dollars and uncertainty over tariffs by the US administration may further weigh on the rupee," Choudhary said. The United States will impose tariffs on the countries that "harm" America, President Trump has said, as he named China, India and Brazil as high-tariff countries. "We're going to put tariffs on outside countries and outside people that really mean harm to us. Well, they mean us harm, but they basically want to make their country good," Trump told House of Representatives at a Florida retreat on Monday, the first after he became the president for the second term last week. However, overall weakness in crude oil prices and central bank intervention may support the rupee. Investors may remain cautious ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting outcome this week. The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) announcement of the Open Market Operations (OMO) may also support the rupee at lower levels. The RBI on Monday said it will purchase government securities worth ₹60,000 crore in three tranches and announced several other steps to inject liquidity into the banking system. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.52 per cent higher at 107.89. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.52 per cent to USD 77.48 per barrel in futures trade. In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 535.24 points, or 0.71 per cent, up at 75,901.41 points, while the Nifty rose 128.10 points, or 0.56 per cent, to close at 22,957.25 points. FII offloaded equities worth Rs 5,015.46 crore in the capital markets on a net basis on Monday, according to exchange data.

DSPL-363



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# MAKE IT **SAMRUDDHA**

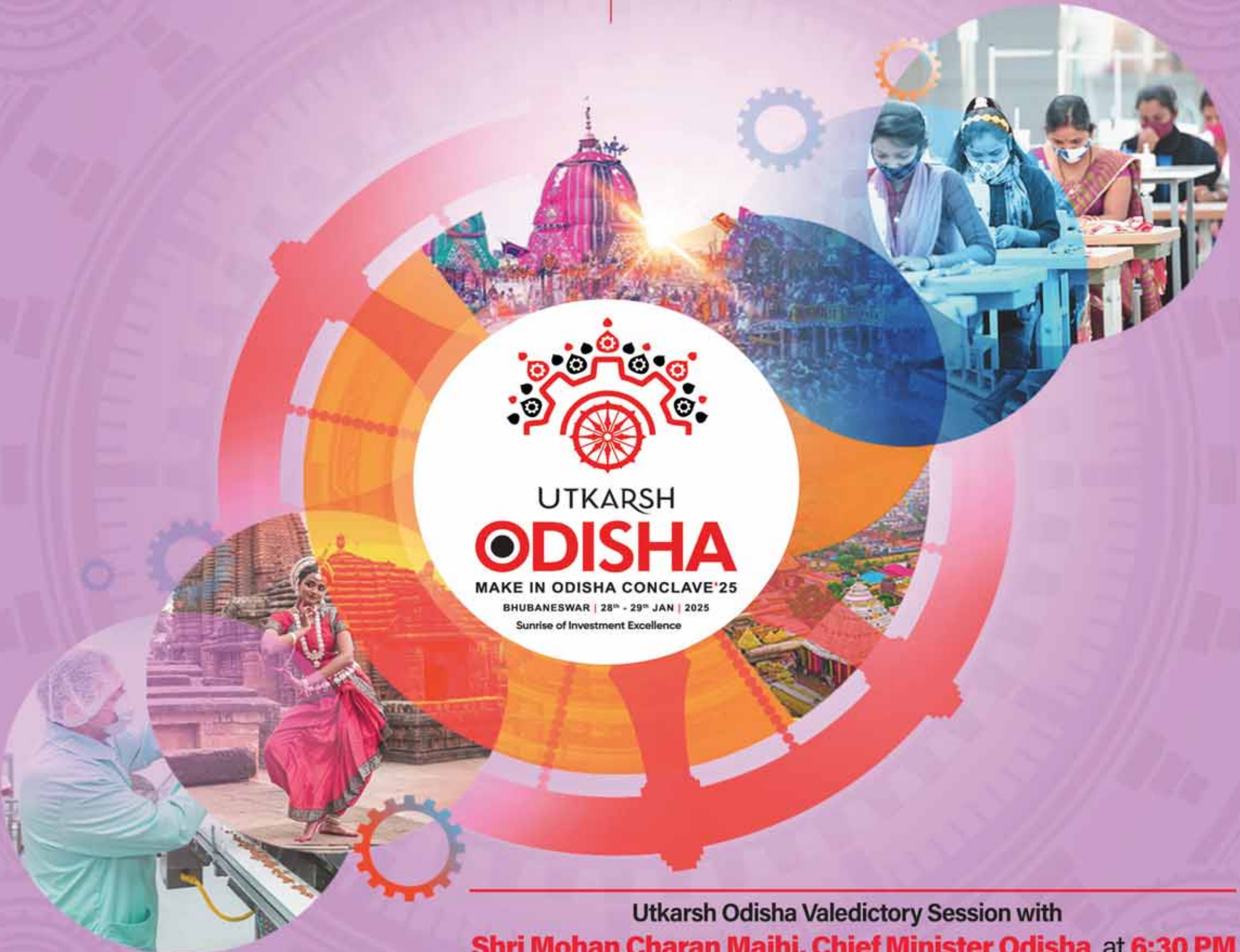
The Utkarsh Odisha – Make in Odisha Conclave 2025 concludes today with a momentous ceremony led by the Hon'ble Chief Minister. As he felicitates 60 exceptional entrepreneurs under the age of 40, recognizing their potential as the next generation of Odia industry leaders, this event heralds the dawn of a new era in industrial development.



**Shri Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

**Shri Mohan Charan Majhi**  
Chief Minister, Odisha

“ Odisha is poised to take-off on a path of rapid industrial development with the help of responsive governance, progressive policies, and world class infrastructure. **Yahi Samay Hai. Sahi Samay Hai.** ”



**UTKARSH**  
**ODISHA**  
MAKE IN ODISHA CONCLAVE '25  
BHUBANESWAR | 28<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> JAN | 2025  
Sunrise of Investment Excellence

Utkarsh Odisha Valedictory Session with

**Shri Mohan Charan Majhi, Chief Minister Odisha at 6:30 PM**

- |                                 |                                |                                     |                  |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Skilled in Odisha               | IT/ITeS, Data Centres and ESDM | Textiles and Apparel                | Circular Economy |
| Agri Industry & Food Processing | Tourism Development            | Healthcare, Pharma & Biotechnology  | Film & Media     |
| Editors Roundtable              | Industrial Infrastructure      | Women Business Leaders' Round Table | Valedictory      |

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**January 2025** **29**

**VENUE: Janata Maidan Bhubaneswar**

BECOME A PART OF THE "SAMRUDH ODISHA 2036" JOURNEY

**INVEST IN ODISHA, INVEST IN FUTURE**

# Bumrah named ICC men's Cricketer of the Year

**PTI ■ DUBAI**  
India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah on Tuesday won the prestigious Sir Garfield Sobers Award for ICC men's Cricketer of the Year after delivering "a master-class in skill, precision, and relentless consistency" across formats in a record-shattering 2024. The 31-year-old was adjudged the ICC's Test Cricketer of the Year on Monday and was also named in the Test Team of the Year last week. "Jasprit Bumrah has been honoured with the prestigious Sir Garfield Sobers Award for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year at the ICC Awards, recognising his extraordinary 2024, in which he dominated opponents in the longest as well as the shortest format of the game," the ICC said. Bumrah played a key role across formats for India as he became the fifth winner of the award from the country after Rahul Dravid (2004), Sachin Tendulkar (2010), Ravichandran Ashwin (2016) and Virat Kohli (2017, 2018). "The pacer's brilliance was reflected in his ICC Test Bowling Rankings, where he crossed the elusive 900-point mark, ending the year with a record-breaking 907 points — the highest for



any Indian bowler in history," the governing body stated in its tribute. "Across formats, Bumrah's 2024 exploits were a masterclass in skill, precision, and relentless consistency, as he shattered record after record and cemented his place as the world's premier fast bowler," it added. Bumrah had a stellar year 2024 in which he played a decisive role for India with 15 wickets in their title-winning campaign in the T20 World Cup in the Americas and also became the fastest Indian pacer to reach 200 Test wickets with a bowling average of

sub-20, which is also the best in history. "I'm very happy with the honour, but I don't let myself get too high. My feet are on the ground and I'm really happy with the accolades that I get," the amiable bowler from Gujarat said in a video statement. At the T20 World Cup, his 15 wickets came at an astonishing average of 8.26 and an economy of just 4.17, making him the Player of the Tournament. He also garnered 900 points in ICC Test bowling rankings and ended the year with 907 points, which is the highest for any Indian bowler in history. In Tests, Bumrah finished the year with 71 wickets in only 13 matches at an average of 14.92, which was also the second best among fast bowlers to former India captain Kapil Dev's 100 wickets in 1983. The right-arm pacer was at the peak of his performance in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy Down Under towards the end of 2024, snaffling 32 wickets in five Tests. Overall, Bumrah claimed 77 wickets in the World Test Championship points table for India but the two-time finalists failed to make a third appearance in the summit clash for the 2023-25 cycle.



## Paarl Royals defeats Durban's Super Giants

**PTI ■ PAARL**  
Paarl Royals registered a thrilling six-wicket victory over Durban's Super Giants to complete a historic five-game 100 per cent home record at Boland Park in the SA20 here. It is the first time any team has gone unbeaten at home throughout the league phase of the competition with the previous best being Joburg Super Kings' four victories and one washout at the Wanderers in the maiden season. Durban's Super Giants have now been eliminated as last season's runners-up can now no longer qualify for the playoffs. The cream of South Africa's young talent Luhan-dre Pretorius and Kwen Maphaka played a major role in the Royals maintaining their stranglehold on top of the Betway SA20 table. The Royals moved to 28 points. The teenage duo did the double act with Maphaka delivering his best performance of the competition thus far with fine figures of 2/22 to restrict DSG to 143/7 before Pretorius clubbed 43 off 29 balls (5x4s, 1x6) in the successful run-chase. Pretorius reclaimed the top run-scorer position from his opening partner Joe Root, who was trapped LBW off the first ball of the innings on Monday evening, by becoming the first batter to pass the 300-run mark in the ongoing season. Royals have certainly unearthed new young batters this season and Rubin Hermann also continued his dream debut SA20 season with a superb 59 off 51 balls (4x4s, 2x6s) to set up the chase. Hermann showed great innovation, particularly against the spinners as he swept and reverse-swept with confidence. But it was left to all-rounder Dayyaan Galiem to smash the winning six with just two balls remaining to take the Royals over the line. Maphaka delivered his best performance of the competition thus far with the teenager striking upfront and at the death. He sent down a peach that burst through Brandon King's defence upfront before flummoxing Heinrich Klaasen with a slower ball. Super Giants will be ruing a season where luck has deserted them with Keshav Maharaj's team not finding form when they needed it most. Australian T20 World Cup winner Marcus Stoinis tried his best to make an impact with his maiden SA20 half-century off just 35 balls (4x4s, 2x6s). He finished unbeaten on 55 and partnered with Kane Williamson (45 off 36 balls) in a 53-run partnership to lift DSG to 143/7. Stoinis was particularly severe on Root taking 24 runs off 11 deliveries sent down by the off spinner, including two maximums in the 18th over. Royals' only concern will be the fitness of captain David Miller, who left the field during DSG's innings and did not come out to bat in the run chase.



## Trisha scores first ever century in women's U19 T20 World Cup

**PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR**  
Opener Trisha Gongadi etched her name in the record books by scoring the first ever century in women's U-19 T20 World Cup that powered India into the semifinals with a 150-run victory over Scotland here on Tuesday. Trisha, who was deservedly adjudged player of the match, slammed 110 not out off just 59 balls with the help of 13 boundaries and four maximums after India were sent in to bat by Scotland at toss. The Indians will next face England in the first semifinal on January 31. She was ably supported by fellow opener and wicketkeeper Kamalini G (51 off 42 balls) and Sanika Chalke, who remained unbeaten on 29 off 20 balls as India scored 208 for 1 in 20 overs. In reply, Scotland cut a sorry figure as they were bowled out for 58 in 14 overs. For Scotland, openers Pippa Kelly (12) and Emma Walsingham (12) were joint top-scorers. Left-arm orthodox spinner Ayushi Shukla was the star for India with the ball returning with figures of 4 for 8, while left-armed Vaishnavi Sharma (3/5) and Trisha (3/6), after her exploits with the bat, also performed with the ball in hand.

## Hobart Hurricanes wins Big Bash

**PTI ■ HOBART**  
Mitchell Owen hit the fastest century in Big Bash League history as he rushed the Hobart Hurricanes to their first Australian Twenty20 domestic title. Owen's 39-ball ton on Monday tied Craig Simmons' century on balls from 2014. He had a chance to break it but a boundary fell just short of the rope. After a shift up the order to opener, the 23-year-old Owen has become one of the brightest Australian prospects in short-form cricket. He raised his bat for a half-century in just the fourth over, powering on with 11 sixes — a BBL final record — and six fours. "That was next-level hitting that made it pretty easy for us at the end," teammate Matthew Wade said. The sellout crowd of 15,706 at Bellerive Oval chanted Owen's name as the run-rate required ticked down.



"That was super special," Owen said. "The most special thing is hearing everyone in the crowd enjoying it. And I'm so grateful, I'm so proud that we could bring this trophy to Tassie (Tasmania)." Midway through his innings, Owen became the BBL's leading run-scorer for the season, overtaking David Warner. Owen was out for 108 off 44 balls in the 11th over at 139-3. Chasing 183 to win against the Sydney Thunder, Hobart reached 185-3 with 35 balls to spare and won by seven wickets. Hobart's success in the 14th BBL left the Melbourne Stars as the only side yet to win the title.

## French club Lyon to hire Paulo Fonseca as its new coach

**PTI ■ LYON (FRANCE)**  
Lyon will hire Paulo Fonseca as its new coach, a person with direct knowledge of the deal has told The Associated Press. The person requested anonymity because the deal has yet to be announced officially. Fonseca will replace Pierre Sage, who was fired despite leading the French league club out of a crisis last season and having the team within reach of a Champions League place in this campaign. Sage's dismissal on Tuesday followed a 1-1 draw with Nantes in Ligue 1 over the weekend and left many observers baffled. Sage had rapidly become a fans' favorite after guiding Lyon from the bottom of the standings to a sixth-place finish last season. And after 19 matches this season, Lyon is sixth in the



league — just four points off a Champions League spot — and in a good position to qualify for the knockout stage of the Europa League. Lyon, however, said the decision to part ways with Sage was a "sporting choice." Lyon is owned by American businessman John Textor, who visited the club in person this week. Textor, a 59-year-old digital media and entertainment entrepreneur, owns several teams, including in Belgium (RWD Molenbeek), and Brazil (Botafogo) as part of his multi-club model that is becoming more common in soccer. Textor had been in regular contact with Fonseca in recent years and previously tried to hire him. The former Lille coach has been out of a job since he was fired by AC Milan on December 30.

## Mumbai announce 16-member squad for clash against Meghalaya

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
Defending champions Mumbai announced their 16-member squad sans India stars Rohit Sharma, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shreyas Iyer to take on Meghalaya in their must-win Ranji Trophy Elite Group A clash starting here on Thursday. Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Suryansh Shedge and Atharva Ankolekar have been called back. Mumbai, who are coming off a five-wicket defeat against

Jammu and Kashmir last week, will be without the India stars Jaiswal, Iyer and Rohit, who all have joined the Indian team for the upcoming ODI series against England starting on February 6. These three players had featured in the sixth round game here at the BKC Ground, with Rohit and Jaiswal following the BCCI diktat to play domestic cricket regularly. Iyer, on the other hand, has been a vital cog in Mumbai side for domestic competitions across formats this year. The trio is also part of the Indian squad for the Champions Trophy next month. Karsh Kothari, who also featured in Mumbai's playing XI against Jammu and Kashmir, was not picked. The defeat against Jammu and Kashmir has dented Mumbai's title defence as the Ajinkya Rahane-led side will now be required to record a big victory — with a bonus point — against Meghalaya and hope that Baroda beat the table-toppers Jammu and Kashmir in their backyard.

## Virat Kohli checks in at Kotla for training with Delhi team

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
At exactly 9am when his jet black Porsche zoomed in through the Feroz Shah Kotla ground's 'Virender Sehwag Gate', it was homecoming for Delhi's very own Virat Kohli, who checked in for a training stint with his first-class team after more than 12 years. Save for pacer Navdeep Saini, all other 18 members of Delhi's squad had only seen him on TV and grown up listening to the tales of how 'Cheeku', the cherubic talent, became the 'King' of Indian cricket. In the last 15 years, Delhi's 'Cheeku' became a hazy memory as he turned into the most commercially viable brand in global cricket, the face that ICC sold in its Olympic bid presentation. On Monday, he was at his home ground for around three hours and had everyone in his vicinity hypnotised. Whether the young impressionable players, or seasoned head coach Sarandeep Singh or batting coach Bantu Singh — all of them evidently wanted to be close to him. Though courteous with all, the former India skipper seemed more comfortable with his former U-19 coach Mahesh Bhati, who is also the administrative manager of this team. "Woh badlaa nahi hain. Usko chhole-poori pasand aur humne mangaake rakha tha. Usne bola chole puri nahi khawoonga (He loves chhole poori, we made arrangements for him but he said he didn't want it)," a senior DDCA (Delhi and Districts Cricket Association) official told PTI. What he did seek out after practice ahead of his first Ranji appearance in 12 years from January 30 was also an old favourite. "Practice ke baad purane time ki tarah kadhi chawal khaya saath saath (He had kadhi chawal with everyone)," revealed the official. Everyone



shadowed the icon like it was an event. Ranji Trophy matches are covered by a select bunch of domestic cricket faithfuls but on Monday, the numbers trebled. Every move by the 'King' was followed. The two coaches -- Sarandeep and Bantu -- were by his side throughout and it would be difficult for photographers or videographers to edit them from the frame. "I remember it was Ajit Chaudhary, the erstwhile manager of the Delhi Ranji team, who nicknamed him 'Cheeku' back in 2006-07," DDCA secretary Ashok Sharma, fondly called 'Mama', recollected as if it was yesterday. He has seen Kohli since he first came here for U-15 trials. **The Training**

It was an occasion to remember for the Sanat Sangwans, Arpit Ranans and Siddhant Sharmas but for Kohli it was business as usual. It seemed he had left the star outside the ground and had turned up as their very own 'Virat Bhaiya'. The 35 minute warm-up before an inconsequential final game against the Railways was the longest that the senior team has spent to loosen up prior to net session. There was a 15-minute game of football and he had some sprints down the field right, also enjoying a laugh or two. But once the net session started, the game face was on. He quietly walked to the nets where skipper Ayush Badoni was waiting. Seeing Kohli walk towards the nets, Badoni was visibly conscious before Kohli told him: 'Ayush tu batting karle, phir dono switch karke karenge (Ayush you keep batting. After sometime, we will take turns to bat.)'

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER  
MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, SUNDARGARH.  
Procurement Notice  
Bid Reference No. SE MID SNG 11/2024-25

Bid documents consisting name of Works, Estimated cost, Cost of tender paper, EMD, time of completion, Class of Contractor, the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.

1	Name of the works: -	Civil construction work.
2	No of Works: -	05 (Five) Nos.
3	Estimated cost: -	Varies from Rs. 10.34 lakh to Rs. 30.08 lakh (Approximately)
4	Period of completion	03 (Three) Calendar months
5	Date and Time of availability of bid documents in the portal: -	From dt.29.01.2025 at 10.00 AM to dt.07.02.2025 up to 5.30 PM.
6	Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal: -	Dt.07.02.2025 up to 5.30 PM
7	Date of opening of Bid: -	Dt.10.02.2025 at 11.00 AM onwards
8	Name and address of the OIT: -	Superintending Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Sundargarh.

\*\* Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement market place <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>

OIPR-32124/11/0018/2425

Superintending Engineer  
M.I.Division, Sundargarh

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
RURAL WORKS DIVISION: RAYAGADA

Letter No. 366 Date: 27.01.2025  
1st Corrigendum

In continuation to this office Bid Identification No. EERWRGD-Online-06/2024-25 invited vide this office letter No. 255 dated 10.01.2025 partial modification of TCN has been made as follows:

Sl No.	Item	Time Schedule as per Original TCN	Time Schedule as per Corrigendum Notice
1	Availability of tender online for bidding	17.01.2025 at 11.00 AM to 28.01.2025 upto 5.00 PM	31.01.2025 at 11.00 AM to 12.02.2025 upto 5.00 PM
2	Date & Time of Opening Tender	28.01.2025 at 5.30 PM	12.02.2025 at 5.30 PM

Sl no.	Sl no. work	Estimated cost as per original TCN (Rs.in Lakh)	Revised Estimated cost as per corrigendum notice (Rs.in Lakh)	EMD cost as per Original TCN	Required EMD cost as per corrigendum Notice
1	1	47.71	40.73	Rs. 47,710/-	Rs. 40,730/-
2	2	47.75	40.76	Rs. 47,750/-	Rs. 40,760/-
3	3	47.51	40.56	Rs. 47,510/-	Rs. 40,560/-
4	4	47.54	40.63	Rs. 47,540/-	Rs. 40,630/-
5	5	47.12	40.21	Rs. 47,120/-	Rs. 40,210/-
6	6	47.24	40.32	Rs. 47,240/-	Rs. 40,320/-
7	7	24.14	15.62	Rs. 24,140/-	Rs. 15,620/-
8	8	25.21	16.95	Rs. 25,210/-	Rs. 16,950/-

Sl. No. of work 7 & 8 the required class of contractor "D" or "C" in stead of "C" or "B"

All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

Your faithfully  
Executive Engineer  
Rural Works Division  
OIPR-25072/11/0014/2425