





## THUMBNAILS

**RPF seizes drugs:** The Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Eastern Railway of Malda Division seized narcotics worth 2.3 crores in a 'Operation Narcos' initiative. The operation involved a special operation on train number 22504, resulting in the seizure of 461 grams of heroin valued at Rs 2,30,50,000.

**Record freight:** The South Eastern Railway (SER) saw a 1.63 per cent increase in originating freight in the first nine months of 2024-25, loading 156.86 million tons. The SER also recorded a 2.17 per cent increase in originating freight revenue, with revenue generation reaching Rs 14216.99 crore. Other major commodities loaded during this period included iron ore, pig iron, finished steel, cement, food grains, and fertilizers.

**Checking drive:** The Howrah Division of the Eastern Railway conducted a special magistrate checking drive at Howrah station, booking 631 cases for irregularities like ticketless travel, aiming to reinforce discipline, reduce ticketless travel, and ensure railway regulations compliance.

# Boy with heart ailment to get operated through Sebaashray

Diamond Harbour MP Abhishek Banerjee took up the matter with the authorities of Jagannath Gupta Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital and the surgery will be conducted shortly

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 7 JANUARY

The timely intervention of doctors at Sebaashray camp has saved the life of a nine-year-old boy.

The nine-year-old Altaf Hosen Ghorami had visited one of the Sebaashray camps in Diamond Harbour with his father. The initial medical reports showed some medical complications. Examining the reports, the doctors referred him to the model camp, which has been set at the SDO ground for advanced diagnosis. The doctors detected a hole in his heart and this was causing major problems over the years. Altaf was found suffering from Cyanotic heart disease. The matter was immediately brought to the notice of the local MP, Abhishek Banerjee. Mr Banerjee took up the matter with the authorities of Jagannath Gupta Institute of Medical Sciences and Hospital and the surgery will be conducted shortly.



Mr Banerjee assured that all the medical expenses will be provided to the boy, including the surgery.

Meanwhile, a 70-year-old person Hossain Mollick, who had fainted at one of the medical camps yesterday, is recuperating at a state-run hospital.

Forty one camps have been set up in the area that fall under Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha seat. The football on day four in these camps is

15,785. A total of 8,467 patients have been treated while 8,108 people were given medicines free-of-cost. Around 360 patients have been referred to hospitals.

This is for the first time when such an initiative has been taken up by an MP. The camps will be held in all the Assembly segments and after that five day long follow up camps will be held. There is overwhelming response from the people living in the Dia-



mond Harbour Assembly seat.

At Bagda Taj Club Sebaashray camp, swift response of the doctors and volunteers on-site helped Sadika Sultana, a 9-year-old girl who had met with an accident. She was promptly referred to Diamond Harbour Medical College for urgent treatment.

Ali Hossein Molla, father of the girl, said, "My daughter suffered injuries in an accident. We came to Bagda Taj Club camp from where we were

referred to Diamond Harbour Hospital where we received very good treatment. I also thank the volunteers at Sebaashray camp for assisting us promptly."

Like Sadika, Pritikona Ghosh and Narain Maity also got treatment at the medical camps and expressed their gratitude for the Diamond Harbour MP. Puja Mondal from Mandir Bazaar said, "Abhishek sir has thought a lot for us."

## Centre to initiate tripartite talks with Gorkhas



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SILIGURI, 6 JANUARY

The central government will soon initiate tripartite talks involving the Union government, the West Bengal government, and representatives of the Gorkha community.

Darjeeling MP Raju Bista met with Union home minister Amit Shah in New Delhi today. Following the meeting, Mr Bista stated: "Amit Shah assured me that the central government will initiate tripartite talks with the Bengal government and the Gorkha community representatives at the earliest."

Mr Bista further

added: "The Union home minister reiterated the government's commitment to resolving all issues affecting our region through dialogue, adopting a holistic approach that considers the concerns of all stakeholders."

Preparations for the continuation of these talks are underway by the ministry of home affairs, with meeting dates to be announced soon.

Notably, Darjeeling MLA Neeraj Zimba, recently elected as Secretary General of the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) on a BJP ticket, had earlier written a detailed letter to the Central government regarding this issue.

## Murder of Malda TMC leader: Political angle suspected

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SILIGURI, 6 JANUARY

Several Trinamul Congress (TMC) leaders have alleged a political motive behind the recent murder of senior party leader Dulal Sarkar, alias Babla, in Malda. Minister of state for finance and health Chandrima Bhattacharya visited Sarkar's widow Chaitali Sarkar, today to discuss her concerns about the incident.

Ms Bhattacharya's visit was made on the instructions of chief minister Mamata Banerjee. During the meeting, Ms Sarkar expressed her apprehensions regarding her husband's murder, which occurred in broad daylight, allegedly at the hands of hired assailants.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Ms Bhattacharya



said: "A political motive behind the murder cannot be ruled out. There must be a mastermind. Who hired

professionals to kill him? The police investigation will reveal the truth."

She also questioned why Mr Sarkar's security was withdrawn, stating: "I don't understand why the police removed his security. Who gave such instructions?"

Ms Sarkar, while speaking to the media, said: "It is evident who was behind my husband's murder. His rivals plotted to eliminate him, but I will not disclose further details before speaking to the chief minister. My son and I are waiting for justice. My husband was politically shortlisted for a higher post, which may have been a reason for his murder."

Ms Sarkar plans to meet Mamata Banerjee after completing her husband's post-death rituals.

Malda district TMC president Abdur Rahim Boxi hinted at a political motive, saying: "Dulal Sarkar was not an ordinary leader. He served as party president, vice-chairman of English Bazar Municipality and was a councillor for over 30 years. He was deserving of the chairman's post at the municipality, but that alone may not be the reason for his murder."

"If the police fail to bring the culprits to justice, our party will take necessary steps to ensure punishment," Mr Boxi added.

South Malda MP Isha Khan Choudhury also demanded swift action, stating: "We never expected a ruling party leader to be murdered in broad daylight. The police must identify the culprits without delay."

## Footballer Rabi Hansda excited to get govt job

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BURDWAN, 6 JANUARY

Rabi Hansda, the chief architect behind Bengal's victory in Santosh Trophy after six years was given civic reception by the district administration here today and he was honoured following tribal rituals at his native place in Mongalkote yesterday.

State animal resources minister Swapan Debnath, MLA, Bardhaman (Dakshin), Khokon Das, DM and SP, East Burdwan together honoured Hansda at the civic reception organised by the zilla parishad at the historical Town Hall, this afternoon.

Rabi, a centre forward in Bengal soccer team and a new star in Bengal football hails from Mosharu village in Mongalkote. Chief minister



Mamata Banerjee already has declared Rs 50 lakh cash reward for the winning team, in addition to a government job for each of the team members. A delightful Rabi said: "Form fill up for our government jobs has already been completed and we are instructed to join within a

month." Rabi, as he expected, will be inducted into the West Bengal Police services as a sub-inspector. The SP, East Burdwan, Sayok Das at the reception said that Hansda would be offered a berth with the police services. He said: "We'll forward an appeal before the government to

make Rabi a brand ambassador of the district police."

Rabi said: "I dedicate my achievement in Santosh Trophy after my father who'd passed away a few years ago." He advised the youngsters to give up their addiction to phones and spend more time in sports grounds.

## Stir in Kulti over land acquisition

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KULTI, 6 JANUARY

Kulti MLA Dr Ajoy Poddar had to face 'go back' slogans when he went to the agitation site in Baltaria area regarding land acquisition of eastern dedicated freight corridor project of the Indian Railways.

Since morning today, hundreds of local people gathered at the site protesting against the land acquisition work for the railways dedicated freight corridor project and sought rehabilitation first.

Hearing the news, the local BJP MLA Dr Ajoy Poddar rushed to the site, but the protestors chanted go back slogans and pushed him back.

Member of mayor-in-council (MMIC) of Asansol Municipal Corporation (AMC),

Indrani Mishra said that about 2,000 people live in the railway area for over 50 years. Suddenly, their lands have been acquired. Where will they go now?

She urged the railways to consider their demand of rehabilitation in this winter season on humanitarian grounds.

As the tension escalated, jawans of Railway Protection Force (RPF) rushed to the site and dispersed both the two rival groups.

The Ludhiana to Dankuni dedicated eastern freight corridor construction work is now reaching the Asansol division of Eastern Railway.

So far, no comments from neither the district administration nor the railway authorities have been available on this issue.

## Durgapur nurse found dead in Deoghar, family suspects murder

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
ASANSOL, 6 JANUARY

Beauty Rana, a young nurse of Durgapur in West Burdwan District, who has been working in a private nursing home in Deoghar district of Jharkhand has been found dead. The family members have alleged that she has been murdered.

Since the past three years she was working in the nursing home as head of nursing staff in the ICU. Her sister Mousumi Sinha said that she had left behind her four-year-old daughter.

The victim's father went to Deoghar after failing to contact her for more than a week and found that she was lying dead inside her rented room and all belongings had been looted. Mousumi has claimed that she last visited their home a year ago and told her family that she planned to visit again on vacation in mid January.

Her mother Malati Rana has alleged that no staff of the Tridev nursing home is telling the truth and they fear that she has been murdered. The nursing home told us that she was not coming on duty and claimed that she had taken leave and went home."

"On 21 December, she had last called us and told us that she will visit soon. Her daughter stays with us. But since 22 December her phone had been switched off. Beauty said that she was having a fever and her health was not good. After seven days we sent her father to Deoghar to get information," said her mother Aarti Rana.

The family has urged Asansol Durgapur Police Commissionerate to pursue her case with Deoghar police.

### GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL TENDER NOTICE

Bid reference No. WBMSCL/NIT-002/2025, Dated: 03/01/2025 West Bengal Medical Services Corporation Ltd. is inviting online bids for 'Repair & upgradation work of entire fire fighting system of Debra SSH.' Last date of submission of bid (online) - 21.01.2025 upto 03.00 P.M. or As per available slot of WBtender portal after 21.01.2025 upto 3.00 P.M. The tender document can be downloaded from [www.wbmscl.gov.in](http://www.wbmscl.gov.in) on or after 12.00 P.M. on 07.01.2025. Details of the tender will also be available at [www.wbmscl.gov.in](http://www.wbmscl.gov.in) Clarification requests, if any may be sent to [ecivil@wbmscl.gov.in](mailto:ecivil@wbmscl.gov.in) or [info@wbmscl.gov.in](mailto:info@wbmscl.gov.in) Sd/- Managing Director, WBMSCL ICA-T2843/2025

### GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name of Work : 1. Supply, Fitting, Fixing, Testing and Commissioning of Lead Line Door and Lead Lining Glass at Nandigram Super Speciality Hospital / District Hospital, Purba Medinipur (Bid Ref. No. WBMSCL/NIT/EE(C)-04/001/2024, Dated: 02/01/2025), Last date of submission: 14/01/2025 up to 3:00 p.m. 2. Repair & Restoration of Existing Fire Protection & Detection System of Hatuara Super Speciality Hospital, under Deben Mahata Govt. Medical College, in the District of Purulia (Bid Ref. No. WBMSCL/NIT/EE(C)-04/002/2024, Dated: 02/01/2025), Last date of submission: 21/01/2025 up to 3:00 p.m. The tender documents can be downloaded from [www.wbmscl.gov.in](http://www.wbmscl.gov.in) and [www.wbtenders.gov.in](http://www.wbtenders.gov.in) portal on or after 07/01/2025 @ 10.00 A.M. Clarification requests, if any, please call 033-40340435 or email at [info@wbmscl.gov.in](mailto:info@wbmscl.gov.in) Sd/- General Manager, WBMSCL ICA-T2813/2025

### GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER / QUOTATION NOTICE

EE/BSHD/PW/Roads) Dte. Invites online e-Tender for the work of (i) Nandal Bridge at 53.50 km of STKK Road- Restoration of existing distressed wearing coat under Burdwan South Highway Division in the district of Purba Bardhaman during the year 2024-25. (Non Plan) (3rd Call), (ii) Construction of Car Parking paving area with paver block at Nabadwip Inspection Bungalow under Nabadwip Highway Sub Division of Burdwan South Highway Division, PW(Roads) Dte. during the year 2024-25. (Non Plan) (1st Call), Estimate Amount: Rs. 2579330.00, Rs. 1189900.00, Rs. 1037263.00, e-NIT No. 13 of 2024-25 (SI-1, 2 & 3), Tr. Id. No. 2024, WBPPWD, 794649, 1, 2 & 3. Bid submission Start Date (online): 20.12.2024 at 2.00 P.M. Bid submission closing date (online): 14.01.2025 at 4.00 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of N.I.T and Tender documents may be downloaded from: <http://tender.gov.in> Sd/- EE/BSHD/PW/Roads) Dte. ICA-T3132/2025

### GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL TENDER NOTICE

Online Offers in two lots are invited from bonafide IRDA approved Insurance Companies for following tender: Intending bidders may download the tender document from e-procurement portal [www.wbtenders.gov.in](http://www.wbtenders.gov.in) on & from 03.01.2025 at 5.30 P.M. Pre bid meeting will be held at Registered Office of The West Bengal Co-operative Spinning Mills Ltd., 4/1 Akur Dutta Lane, 2nd Floor, P.S. Muchipara, Kolkata : 700 012 through Zoom Meet (id & Password will be provided in bidding document). Tender No. & Date: e-NIT No: WBSCM/NIT (04) 24/24-25 Dated 03.01.2025. Items : Insurance coverage towards fire, lightning, explosion, riot, strike, flood, inundation, terrorism, malicious damage, storm, burglary etc of buildings, plant and machineries and moveable assets of Spinning Mills. TEND No. & Timing of Pre-bid Meeting: 07.01.2025 at 3.00p.m. Last Date & Timing for bid Submission: 27.01.2025 to 3.00p.m. Sd/- Managing Director, ICA-T2863/2025

### GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL TENDER NOTICE

The Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Working Plans (South)-II Division, Bankura invites Tender vide Tender Notice No. WBFOR/WP(SI)/DFO/NIT/05\_2024-25 in connection with DGPS Survey of Forest Boundary on Cadastral Map of Bankura (North) Division under South Central Circle. Bid submission start date & time from 09/01/2025 at 01:00 P.M. Bid submission end date & time 24/01/2025 at 01:00 P.M. Technical Bid opening date & time 27/01/2025 at 03:00 P.M. Bid submission end date & time 24/01/2025 at 01:00 P.M. Technical Bid opening date & time 27/01/2025 at 03:00 P.M. Financial Bid opening date & time to be notified later. Interested experienced and resourceful contractors are requested to check the Website of Directorate of Forests, e-procurement portal, Government of West Bengal & District Portal, Bankura District, Bankura/ contact the office of the undersigned for details. These advertisements are also given [www.bankuraforest.in](http://www.bankuraforest.in) & [www.westbengalforest.gov.in](http://www.westbengalforest.gov.in) Sd/- Divisional Forest Officer, Working Plans (South)-II Division, Bankura ICA-T3063/2025

### GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL TENDER NOTICE

The Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Working Plans (South)-II Division, Bankura invites Tender vide Tender Notice No. WBFOR/WP(SI)/DFO/NIT/05\_2024-25 in connection with DGPS Survey of Forest Boundary on Cadastral Map of Durgapur Division under South East Circle. Bid submission start date & time from 09/01/2025 at 01:00 P.M. Bid submission end date & time 24/01/2025 at 01:00 P.M. Technical Bid opening date & time 27/01/2025 at 03:00 P.M. Financial Bid opening date & time to be notified later. Interested experienced and resourceful contractors are requested to check the Website of Directorate of Forests, e-procurement portal, Government of West Bengal & District Portal, Bankura District, Bankura/ contact the office of the undersigned for details. These advertisements are also given [www.bankuraforest.in](http://www.bankuraforest.in) & [www.westbengalforest.gov.in](http://www.westbengalforest.gov.in) Sd/- Divisional Forest Officer, Working Plans (South)-II Division, Bankura ICA-T3263/2025

### GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER NOTICE

Tender is hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, PWD, Kolkata IT Division, Main Block, Ground Floor, Writers' Buildings, Kolkata-700001 from the eligible contractors for the following works: 1. 'Comprehensive Annual Maintenance of All in One Computer, Printer, Plotter & UPS for the Office Of The Superintending Engineer, Bridge Implementation Cell (B.I. Cell), P.W.Dte. at Bhabani Bhawan, Annex Building (6th Floor), Alipore, Kolkata-700027 for 01 (One) Year. (Job No: KIT/OW/247 of 24-25)' e-TENDER No: KIT/RW/74 of 24-25, Tender ID: 2024, WBPPWD, 791744, 1. Bid Submission Closing: 08.01.2025 up to 03.00 P.M. 2. 'Urgent Repair and Renovation of LAN and Voice Network and Allied Infrastructure for Audit Branch, Establishment Branch, Pension cell, Medical Cell, Vigilance Cell at Khadya Bhawan [Job No: KIT/RW/74 of 24-25]' e-TENDER No. WBPPWD/EEKIT/E-NIT-236/T/24-25, Tender ID: 2024, WBPPWD, 793061, 1. Bid Submission Closing: 13.01.2025 up to 03.00 P.M. 3. 'Temporary Shifting of Audio-Video System and Allied Infrastructure for the Three Virtual Court Room and Office of the Assistant Public Prosecutor of The City Session Court, Calcutta [Job No: KIT/OW/248 of 24-25]' e-TENDER No. WBPPWD/EEKIT/E-NIT-237/T/24-25, Tender ID: 2024, WBPPWD, 792475, 1. Bid Submission Closing: 09.01.2025 up to 03.00 P.M. 4. 'Urgent Provision of Video Conferencing System for the Office of the Chief Engineer (HQ), PWD, and Chief Engineer (South Zone), PWD [Job No: KIT/OW/249 of 24-25]' e-TENDER No. WBPPWD/EEKIT/E-NIT-236/T/24-25, Tender ID: 2024, WBPPWD, 792429, 1. Bid Submission Closing: 09.01.2025 up to 03.00 P.M. 5. 'Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Centralized Public Address System in PSW, Murshidabad Medical College & Hospital, Berhampore, Murshidabad [Job No: KIT/OW/250 of 24-25]' e-TENDER No. WBPPWD/EEKIT/E-NIT-239/T/24-25, Tender ID: 2024, WBPPWD, 791744, 1. Bid Submission Closing: 08.01.2025 up to 03.00 P.M. Sd/- Executive Engineer, Kolkata IT Division, PWD ICA-T3162/2025

### GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL PWD TENDER NOTICE

Executive Engineer-I, Burdwan Division, P.W. Directorate invites online e-tender for 2 (Two) Nos. works vide N.I.e.T No.: 19 of 2024-25. Bid Submission Start Date (Online) : 08.01.2025 from 2:00 P.M. Bid Submission Closing Date (Online) : 14.01.2025 upto 2:00 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of N.I.e.T and Tender Documents may be downloaded from: <https://wbtdenders.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer-I, Burdwan Division, P.W. Dte. ICA-T2932/2025

### WEST BENGAL AGRO INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LTD. (A Govt. Undertaking)

Registered Office: 23B, Netaji Subhas Road, 3rd Floor Kolkata-700001

**Notice Inviting Tender and Time Extension for Bid submission**

- NieT-229 to 231 / 2024-2025 are invited by the Executive Engineer, on behalf of West Bengal Agro Industries Corpn. Ltd., 23B, Netaji Subhas Road, 3rd Floor, Kolkata-700001 from bona fide and resourceful Agencies for completion of Civil & Electrical works at Malda, Nadia and Hooghly District. Tender document may be downloaded from: <http://wbtdenders.gov.in> Bid submission start date: 07-01-2025 after 9:00 A.M. Bid submission end date: 13-01-2025 and 21-01-2025 up to 3-00 P.M.
- The last date of submission of tenders has been extended by The Executive Engineer, West Bengal Agro Industries Corporation Limited which are as follows: NieT-208 / 24-25 Gr. No. 01 to 5, Tender ID 2024, WBAIC, 785662, 1 to 5 for the District of Jaipeiganj has been extended for bid submission closing to 07-01-2025 up to 3-00 P.M.

Date: 06-01-2025 Sd/- Executive Engineer

### WEST BENGAL STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED (A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise)

Regd. Office: Vidyut Bhawan, Block-DI, Sector-II, Bidhannagar, Kolkata-700 091. CN : 040109W200756C113473, [www.wbsedcl.in](http://www.wbsedcl.in)

**WBSEDCL invites e-Tenders as follows:**

- (1) NIT No.:** ZM/SLG/e-Tender/2024-25/33, **Dt.:** 31.12.2024 of the Zonal Manager, Siliguri Zone, WBSEDCL. **Estimated Cost:** ₹ 10,36,022/- for 'Construction of boundary fencing and a Guard Room-cum-Security Office/Control Room at Siliguri Zonal Store, WBSEDCL.'
- (2) NIT No.:** KD/E-TENDER/MAT/24-25/1794, **Dt.:** 31.12.2024 of the Divisional Manager, Kalkidip Division, WBSEDCL. **Estimated Cost:** ₹ 9,58,800/- for 'Supply & delivery of (i) Raychem make 33 kV O/D HS Ter. Int. For 3X400 sq mm XLPE cable & (ii) Raychem make 33 kV ST THH. HS INT. For 3X400 sq mm XLPE cable to Kalkidip Divisional Store under Kalkidip Division, WBSEDCL.'
- (3) NIT No.:** RM/24PNR/Civil/2024-25/17, **Dt.:** 31.12.2024 of the Regional Manager, North 24 Parganas Region, WBSEDCL. **Estimated Cost:** ₹ 7,70,867.53 for 'Construction of unmanned Sub-Station at Duldah (Hingalgang) under Basinhat Division of North 24 Parganas Region, WBSEDCL.'
- (4) NIT No.:** RM/DR/CIVIL/e-Tender/2024-25/05, **Dt.:** 31.12.2024 of the Regional Manager, Darjeeling Region, WBSEDCL. **Estimated Cost:** ₹ 7,15,470/- for 'Development of bore well and sinking of submersible pump near 'S' Type Quarter at the vicinity of HHQ inside the Power House Complex under Siliguri Town Division, WBSEDCL.'
- (5) NIT No.:** RM/HG/ELECT/TENDER/2024-25/33, **Dt.:** 31.12.2024 of the Regional Manager, Hooghly Region, WBSEDCL. **Estimated Cost:** ₹ 5,82,710/- for 'Supply of materials & electrical concealed wiring work with installation of Distribution Panels, lights, fans, power points, yard lighting, gate lighting etc. at SI Industrial Park Sub-Station, Belmuri under Tarakeswar Division of Hooghly Region, WBSEDCL.'
- (6) NIT No.:** ZM/SLG/e-Tender/2024-25/34, **Dt.:** 31.12.2024 of the Zonal Manager, Siliguri Zone, WBSEDCL. **Estimated Cost:** ₹ 5,20,688/- for 'Renovation & beautification works at Zonal Manager Quarter inside Power House Campuses, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile, Sevoke Road, Siliguri-734001.'
- (7) NIT No.:** RM/24PNR/Civil/2024-25/18, **Dt.:** 31.12.2024 of the Regional Manager, North 24 Parganas Region, WBSEDCL. **Estimated Cost:** ₹ 5,08,308.83 for 'Construction of new bay and other civil works at Dangapara 33/11 kV Sub-Station under Barrackpore Division of North 24 Parganas Region, WBSEDCL.'

For details, visit <https://wbtdenders.gov.in> & [www.wbsedcl.in](http://www.wbsedcl.in)

## Facility to train contract workers at IISCO steel plant

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BURNPUR, 4 JANUARY

The inauguration of Sambhav - Capability and Competency Development Centre (CCDC), first of its kind in Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) at IISCO Steel Plant (ISP) in Burnpur has been launched to upskill the contract workers.

Incidentally, IISCO Steel Plant is all set for the next phase of expansion.

Dedicated hands-on training facility for contractual workforce of ISP, Burnpur named Sambhav: Capability and Competency Development Centre (CCDC) was inaugurated today at the renovated archaic building of IISCO.

The facility houses mechanical and electrical workshops for practical training as fitters, riggers, welding & gas cutting technicians and electricians, with specialisation in maintenance, motor testing and earthing works.

The inauguration was performed by Brijendra Pratap Singh, director in-charge of (Burnpur and Durgapur Steel Plant) and graced by the presence of functional heads, CGMs, and sectional heads.

It aims to foster skill enhancement, safety awareness, and multi-skilling, aligned with our commitment to workforce development and operational excellence.

The electrical workshop has been developed in-house by the ERS dept team and the mechanical workshop by HMM capital repair team.

Town services department renovated the entire premises and overall coordination of setting up and facilities at CCDC was done by HR-L&D Centre team.

"This milestone reflects our collective vision to build a skilled, competent, and future-ready workforce at ISP," said Brijendra Pratap Singh.



# Bengal fishermen talk of torture on return from Bangladesh

The fishermen were reunited with their families at Gangasagar on Monday

RAJIB CHAKRABORTY  
GANGASAGAR, 6 JANUARY

West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee has stated that fishermen from West Bengal were subjected to atrocities while imprisoned by the Bangladesh Navy in Bangladesh.

During her visit to the Gangasagar Mela, she expressed her discontent at the helipad ground regarding the incident. The Sunderbans affairs department had organised a programme on the occasion, "Fishermen's return to their homeland and reunion with their families," where she mentioned that all officials in West Bengal had been trying for several months to rescue these fishermen. After the exchange at the maritime boundary between the two countries on Sunday, chief minister Mamata Banerjee reunited the fishermen with



their families in Gangasagar on Monday. "This is a very unfortunate incident. One of the rescued fishermen even jumped into the water out of fear of being caught. I have handed over Rs 2 lakh to his wife," the chief minister said. She added that many of the fishermen were beaten there from their waist to leg and instructed the chief secretary to arrange for their

treatment. After nearly two-and-a-half months, 95 Indian fishermen, who were kept imprisoned in Bangladesh finally set foot on Indian soil. Around noon on Monday, they were brought to Gangasagar by trawlers. The minister of sundarbans development, Bankim Hazra, and district administrative officials were present. The chief minister provided the fishermen

with white pajamas, shawls, and Rs 10,000 as gifts.

Chief minister Mamata Banerjee arrived at Gangasagar by chopper on Monday to inspect preparations for the fair and met the rescued fishermen. She also interacted with their families. The fishermen were allowed to return to their homes later day. On Sunday, India and Bangladesh exchanged detainees at the international maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. The process was carried out in the presence of coast guard and administrative officials from both countries. Bangladesh handed over 95 Indian fishermen, while India returned 90 Bangladeshi fishermen. Both groups had been accused of crossing international maritime boundaries. Following the arrests, both countries took steps for repatriation. After learning about the arrest of fishermen from Kakkdip and Namkhana in

Bangladesh, the chief minister actively worked to bring them back to India.

The state government also drew the attention of the central government to the issue. From the chief minister's office, Kakdwip MLA Monturam Pakhira was asked to check on the well-being of the fishermen's families. Recently, Bangladesh's ministry of home affairs, through deputy secretary Lutfaun Nahar, issued a notice stating that the interim government had decided to withdraw the cases against these 95 fishermen. It was also decided to return six seized trawlers to India. Similarly, India's ministry of home affairs decided to release 90 Bangladeshi fishermen. The rescued fishermen, who were aboard trawlers named *Jhor 3*, *Abhijit*, *Ma Basanti*, *Narayan 2*, and *Jai Jagannath*, reported that they were subjected to severe physical abuse.

# CM worried over repeated incidents of tiger ingress

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 6 JANUARY

Concerned over repeated incidents of tigers entering Bengal from Odisha, chief minister Mamata Banerjee today asked the government in Odisha to rescue its tigers crossing the Bengal border repeatedly.

According to reports, there was another tiger scare at Maipith, South 24-Parganas, after pug marks were found in the area.

She said the neighbouring state is failing in proper upkeep of its tiger reserves, from where tigers are allegedly straying into the districts of Bengal, leaving the people of the state to live in constant fear.

Referring to the recent capture of the tigress Zeenat, Miss Banerjee, said: "The Odisha government must take proper steps to protect its tigers under its reserves to prevent it from straying into the districts of Bengal



so often. The tigress, which had strayed into the districts of Bengal and walked through five districts at a stretch, leaving the forest officials on edge, was finally captured by our people and forest officers. And after that phones continued to ring from Odisha asking to return the tigress immediately. Our people had rescued it after hard labour, spending many sleepless nights. Why do such things happen almost regularly? From now on, the Odisha

government must take responsibility to rescue the tigers straying out of its reserves by capturing them on their own. From now on our people won't do such hazardous jobs spending sleepless nights any more. Send your people and wildlife experts to capture and rescue them."

Tigress Zeenat, which had strayed out from Odisha's Simlipal Tiger Reserve was finally captured by the state forest officials from Bankura.

## 12th Century statue of Sun god found at Damodar riverbed

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BURDWAN, 6 JANUARY

An ancient basalt stone statue of Surya Dev was recovered from the Damodar riverbed in Raina in East Burdwan and the priceless statue was preserved at the Museum & Art Gallery of the Burdwan University, yesterday.

Apicnic party from Burdwan town detected the statue left covered under sand in the riverbed at Haripur village within Natu panchayat in Raina on 3 January and they brought the matter to the notice of Shyamsundar Bera, the in-charge of the BU museum.

Rajkumar Kundu, a history researcher, was in the team of picnic revellers and he could estimate that the statue was having immense historical value. Kundu said: "I was quite excited about its immediate preservation and suspect it was being trafficking."



The BU authorities then sought assistance from the district police to help its recovery. Bera said, "It's assumed that the statue was created by the sculptors during the reign of Ballal Sen in the 12th century." Ballal Sen ruled Sena dynasty of Bengal during 1160 and 1179 AD.

The 3 ft by 1.5 ft black statue, weighing about 100 kg is set on a single-wheeled chariot. Bera said, "It's the fourth Surya Dev statue preserved in our museum. This will lead to further studies and research work on the ancient sculptors."

## Jewellery brand celebrates New Year with underprivileged children

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 6 JANUARY

Celebrations of the New Year included initiatives to add joy and cheer in the lives of 'the abandoned girl child' at a shelter in Kolkata and destitute boys at 'a home for the homeless' in Agartala and Kolkata.

And the celebration of this New Year, held at 'Gurukul' - a children's refuge, was all about bringing a smile in the faces of hapless 'street children' on the happy occasion of the New Year.

The programme of the day included much song and dance about the joy of childhood and provided a platform for the children to showcase their talent.

Additionally, there was a lot of fun and games for the children to enjoy themselves.

The purpose was to give them an opportunity to rejoice



and celebrate, in the true spirit of the New Year. Gifts for the children included study material and sports-kits, basic nourishment and nutrition supplements, apart from cakes and chocolates. The programme ended with a sit-in lunch.

Swami Girijananda-Ji Maharaj, Ramakrishna Mission, blessed the initiative.

"I bless this very special initiative of Shyam Sundar

Co Jewellers and wish them all the best for other such projects that they surely have in mind for this region in the future," said Swami Girijananda-Ji Maharaj.

"We, at Shyam Sundar Co Jewellers, have always extended the pursuit of excellence beyond the four walls of the jewellery showrooms and extended a helping hand to come to the aid of all that was ailing in society," said

Rupak Saha, director, Shyam Sundar Co Jewellers, adding, "...and central, in this direction, is our contribution towards supporting initiatives to rescue abandoned women and children."

"The smile on the faces of the happy children enjoying themselves at our celebration of the New Year, said it all for them," said Arpita Saha, director, Shyam Sundar Co. Jewellers.

## After CM prod, minister surveys areas with public transport woes

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 6 JANUARY

Following instructions from chief minister Mamata Banerjee to address the woes of the crisis of buses, the state transport minister Snehasis Chakraborty and senior department officials hit the city roads to take stock of the ground situation today.

The action came a few days after Miss Banerjee pulled up the minister and expressed concerns on alleged shortage of buses directing him to conduct ground surveys for identifying pockets that need to be provided with more such vehicles.

Sources in the state transport department informed that the West Bengal Transport Corporation that operates government buses in the city has decided to increase the



trips of the state-run buses. From the earlier 3,300 trips, the department is now operating more than 4,100 trips. Even the fleet has been extended and now the department is to run 640 buses to address the issues of alleged transport woes faced by the commuters.

Mr Chakraborty also took note of the situation at various pockets in the city, particularly the IT hub and similar places.

Based on the observation by the minister, the transport department's secretary, Soumitra Mohan and other senior officials, the department would increase services in the identified pockets. The department is also considering increasing the number of drivers. As learnt from sources, a proposal to recruit 200 more drivers has been sent to the state secretariat for a nod.

## State not responsible for infiltration of terrorist groups: Serampore MP

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
HOOGHLY, 6 JANUARY

Serampore MP Kalyan Banerjee on Saturday evening inaugurated the 33rd Milan Mela at Rishra Moitri Path.

The MP was all praise for the Rishra Municipality and its chairman Vijay Sagar Mishra for organising a grand Milan Mela. The MP said the Milan Mela brings people of different communities together, sending out the message of brotherhood and communal harmony.

The Rishra fair draws people from Uttarpara and Bandel areas.

On the issue of infiltration of terrorist groups in the state, the Serampore MP came down heavily on the central minister Giriraj Singh for blaming the state government for the alleged infiltration of terrorist groups in the state.

The MP said the central minister is unaware of the fact that the CBI is already carrying out an investigation against some businessmen who have allegedly maintained connections with



some anti-national groups.

The Serampore MP added at the press conference that Delhi police have brought into light the fact that terrorist groups are infiltrating the country from northeastern states and that the BSF along the northeastern states have failed to prevent and resist infiltration of terrorist groups in the state and other parts of the country.

Kalyan Banerjee further said Giriraj Singh should be aware of the facts before making comments on such sensitive issues and blame West Bengal.

## Minister inaugurates renovated Chetla High School

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 6 JANUARY

Mayor Firhad Hakim today inaugurated the renovated Chetla Boys' School, where along with Bengali, English medium has also been introduced.

Mr Hakim said along with one's mother tongue it is absolutely necessary to study English which is an international language. Recollecting the past, he said: "There was no English medium when I took admission in school, or else my father could have got me admitted to this school," he said adding: "Students from middle class families will get quality education where the medium of instruction will be English. The English medium schools in the city have been run by various business groups and it is not possible for the parents of middle class families to send their children to such schools."

He said the students here will get the best education as the teachers are sincere and imparting education to the students is their motto.

Bratya Basu, education minister said there was a time



when in Bengal there was a debate whether the medium of instruction should be Bengali or English. After coming to power in 2011, Miss Mamata Banerjee changed the proposition and now it is Bengali along with English. He said the British had introduced English so that it would be easier for them to run the administration. "They left seven decades ago, but English education has introduced us to the whole world," he said. The renovated Chetla Boys' School has e-classrooms and

e-black boards among other facilities.

Mr Hakim also inaugurated a community hall at Harimohan Ghosh College in Kidderpore. He said some people had been staying forcibly at the college. Mr Ranjit Seal took up the matter with them and they had been rehabilitated. Local people had given the construction materials and helped in the construction of the community hall. "My longstanding dream has been fulfilled today," he maintained.

### COMMUNITY LUNCH



Sikh community members participate in preparing bread for langar at Sahid Minar on the occasion of Guru Govind Singh ji's birthday in Kolkata on Monday ■ SNS

## ISKCON camp at Gangasagar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 6 JANUARY

ISKCON Gangasagar Mandir will organise its Annual Tirtha Yatri Seva camp at the Gangasagar Mela grounds from 11-16 January, located on Road 5, near the helipad and K2 bus stand. The initiative is dedicated to serving thousands of pilgrims attending the Mela. Over 600 volunteers will welcome pil-



grims. It will also serve over 1.2 lakh free full meals from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. There will

be vibrant kirtans with ecstatic Vedic dance and spiritual cultural performances by 80 international participants from 21 countries, promoting world peace and sharing Indian Vedic culture. The camp will offer free medical assistance, blankets, and spiritual enrichment through the distribution of the Bhagavad Gita, night shelters on a first-come, first-serve basis (no advance bookings).

TRAFFIC ADVISORY

Notice is hereby given for the information of public that Eastern Flank of MAA Flyover will be closed during night in between 23:00 hrs and 05:00 hrs for repairing of carriageway of MAA Flyover, undertaken by the KMDA. During night closure of MAA Flyover, vehicles availing MAA Flyover will be diverted in the following manner till completion of the work:-

♦ The vehicles, availing A J C Flyover - MAA Flyover for their eastward journey, will be diverted via 7 Point Crossing-Surawardi Avenue-Darga Road-No.4 Bridge-P C Connector-then EM Bypass.

This will come into force from 05/01/2025 to 20/01/2025.

Published in the interest of public by Kolkata Police and Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority.

ICA- N-6 (31)/2025

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# TN Governor Ravi boycotts Assembly, leaves House in a huff

This is the second time that Ravi had boycotted the Assembly in the first session of the year

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHENNAI, 6 JANUARY

Touching a new low in the relationship between the DMK government and the Raj Bhavan, Governor RN Ravi boycotted the Assembly, leaving the House in a huff in protest against the national anthem not being sung at the commencement of the session on Monday morning.

In the Tamil Nadu Assembly, it is customary to sing the Tamil Thai Vazhthu (invocation to Mother Tamil) at the beginning of the session and the National Anthem at the conclusion. On his arrival at the House, Ravi asked that the national anthem be sung at the beginning itself. But, Speaker M Appavu commenced the session with the singing of the invocation to Tamil.

A visibly upset Governor



left the House in a huff within three minutes of his arrival. Earlier, he was given a ceremonial guard of honour and the Speaker received him with a bouquet. It is customary for the Assembly to commence the first session of the year with the Governor's

address, prepared by the government.

This is the second time that Ravi had boycotted the Assembly in the first session of the year. Last year, he skipped certain paragraphs, which eulogized Dr BR Ambedkar and Dravidian

icons Periyar, CN Annadurai and late DMK Patriarch M Karunanidhi. He also spoke extempore, which drew instant condemnation from Chief Minister MK Stalin.

Explaining the reason for the Governor's boycott, the Raj Bhavan in a hard hitting 'X' post said: "The Constitution of Bharat and the National Anthem were once again insulted in the Tamil Nadu Assembly today. Respecting the National anthem is among the first Fundamental Duty as enshrined in our Constitution. It is sung in all the state legislatures at the beginning and the end of the Governor's address."

"Today on the arrival of the Governor to the House, only Tamil Thai Vazhthu was sung. Governor respectfully reminded the House of its Constitutional Duty and fervently appealed to the Hon'ble Chief Minister who is Leader of the House and the Hon'ble

Speaker for singing the National Anthem. However, they cussedly refused. It is a matter of grave concern. Not to be a party to such brazen disrespect to the Constitution and the National Anthem, Governor in deep anguish left the House," said the post, justifying the boycott.

Castigating Governor RN Ravi for walking out of the Assembly without reading the customary 'Governor's Address' at the beginning of the first session of the year, Chief Minister MK Stalin charged him with habitually transgressing the tradition of the legislature.

The Governor's action is 'childish' and unbecoming of the high office he holds, the Chief Minister said in a post on his 'X' handle. "When he is not interested in carrying out his Constitutional duties, why should he cling to the post is the question before everyone," he added.

## Kerala High Court refuses to order CBI probe into death of ADM Naveen Babu

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOCHI, 6 JANUARY

The Kerala High Court on Monday refused to order a CBI probe into the death of former Kannur Additional District Magistrate Naveen Babu.

Dismissing a petition filed by the late ADM's wife Manjusha, a single bench of Justice

Kausar Edagapathy directed the Kannur Deputy Inspector General (DIG) to supervise the ongoing investigation of the Special Investigation Team (SIT). The court said the SIT shall submit periodical reports to the DIG to show the progress of the investigation. The court also directed the SIT to inform the petitioner the progress of the investigation as contem-

plated under section 193(3) (ii) of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

The court also directed the SIT to consider the grievances of the petitioner mentioned in the petition and look into the possibility of homicidal hanging. The court also said the SIT should file the final report only after it is vetted and approved by the DIG.

## ACB serves KTR with fresh notice to appear before it on 9 January

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD, 6 JANUARY

BRS working president KT Rama Rao asked the Anti-Corruption Bureau probing the Formula E race scam to defer his interrogation till the Telangana High Court gives its verdict on his petition to quash the FIR against him.

This followed some high drama at the ACB headquarters after police stopped him from entering the premises with his legal team. However, the ACB has given a fresh notice asking him to appear on 9 January.

Meanwhile, the BRS and Congress alleged and counter-alleged that the firm sponsoring the Formula E race had donated crores in their respective party funds through electoral bonds.

Rao, more popular as KTR, today reached the ACB headquarters around 10 am. However, he was barred entry by the police since he was accompanied by his lawyer. He initially

argued with the police but then handed over his written statement, returned without appearing before the ACB.

He alleged that his rights were being infringed upon. In his letter he requested a deferment, pointing out that the court's judgment was pending.

"Since the matter is finally heard and reserved for order, you may consider deferring the same till the judgment is pronounced in the case and to proceed further in accordance with law subject to the orders of the Hon'ble High Court," read his letter.

He also accused the ACB of being vague. "You are requested to give details of the documents sought from me pertaining to the case to take further necessary action at my end after giving reasonable time for the same. Being a law-abiding citizen, I will cooperate in the matter, subject to constitutional and legal rights as provided by law," Rao stated in his letter.

## T'gana CM urges PM to sanction Regional Ring Rail for Hyderabad

AGENCIES  
HYDERABAD, 6 JANUARY

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to sanction a Regional Ring Road, like the Regional Ring Road, for the state.

The Chief Minister made the request in his speech during the virtual inauguration of the new railway terminal at Charlapally in Hyderabad by the Prime Minister.

Stating that a 370-km long Regional Ring Road is proposed around Hyderabad, he said the Centre has already called tenders for a 170 km corridor.

He requested the Prime Minister to sanction the remaining work of the Regional Ring Road and Regional Ring Rail.

He said these two projects would turn 60 per cent of Telangana into urban areas, thereby attracting more investments.

Asserting that Railways

play a crucial role in the country's progress, he said a landlocked state like Telangana relies heavily on the development of railways.

The Chief Minister also sought a dedicated green-field highway and dedicated rail connectivity to Bandar Port in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. He pointed out that Bandar Port is the nearest port to Telangana and the dedicated road and rail connectivity can boost industrial development, especially in sectors like automobiles and pharma.

He mentioned that Telangana accounts for 35 per cent of bulk drugs manufactured in India. He also requested the Centre for support to develop Telangana into a one trillion dollar economy.

"We are determined to transform Telangana into a one-trillion-dollar GDP economy. This will contribute to India's goal of becoming a five-trillion-dollar economy," he said.

## Classified

### CHANGE OF NAME

**I, PRADIP** Chakrabarty, S/o. Nihar Gopal Chakrabarty, residing at 5, Bipin Pal Road, Kolkata-700026, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Pradeep Chakrabarty as declared before First Class Judicial Magistrate Alipore Court, vide Affidavit No.: 23662 dated 25-11-2024, Pradip Chakrabarty and Pradeep Chakrabarty both are the same and one identical person.

### I, SAHADAT

Hossain Dewan, S/o. Late Abul Hossain Dewan, residing at Vill.: Jotsadi, Bantir, Hijauna, Purba Bardhaman, Pin-713101 shall henceforth be known as Sahadat Hossain as declared before Notary Public, at Sealdah Court, vide Affidavit No.-18459 dated 06-01-2025 Sahadat Hossain Dewan and Sahadat Hossain both are same and identical person.

### I, AMRITA

Kumar Chakrabarty, S/o. Narendra Chakrabarty, R/o. 18, A.P.C. Avenue, South Dum Dum (M), North 24 Parganas, Pin-700030 shall henceforth be known as Amrita Kumar Chakravarti, vide Affidavit No. 15 dated 03-01-2025 before Notary Rajesh Kumar Bajpai, J.M. Court, Kolkata. Amrita Kumar Chakrabarty and Amrita Kumar Chakravarti both are same and identical person.

### I, APARA

Roy Chowdhury, R/o. 253/9, N.S.C. Bose Road, P.S.: Netajinagar, Kol-47, mentioning my parent name

### CHANGE OF NAME

Kanchan Roychowdhury & Chandana Roychowdhury respectively, but both of them using their name & title in all documents Kanchan Roychowdhury & Chandana Roychowdhury, both are same and one identical person, vide an Affidavit No. 272, before the 1st Class Judicial Magistrate at Alipore on 02-01-2025.

### I, ANIRBAN

Sinha, son of Sribas Chandra, residing at 95/4, Narkeldanga Main Road, Baladiitya Apartment, Flat 3A, Kolkata-700054, the name of my spouse has been inadvertently recorded as Debarati Chakrabarty Sinha in my Passport. The actual name of my spouse is Debarati Chakrabarty, vide affidavit (No. 94 AB 981146) before the First Class Judicial Magistrate Court Kolkata dated 24th December, 2024. Debarati Chakrabarty and Debarati Chakrabarty Sinha both are same and one identical person.

### I, BIKAS

Biswas, S/o. Late Karuna Biswas @ Karuna Kumar Biswas, residing Shibananda Dham, Missionpara, Rahara-700118, Aadhaar No. 3915 1900 4910, declare that Bikas Biswas, Bikash Biswas, Dr. Bikas Biswas as recorded in academic and office documents are one and same identical person, vide affidavit before Judicial Magistrate 1st Class, Barrackpore, North 24 Pgs. dt. 04-01-2025.

### CHANGE OF NAME

**I, TAPATI** Biswas, D/o. Late Kalachand Pramanik, W/o. Bikas Biswas, residing Shibananda Dham, Missionpara, Rahara-700118, Aadhaar No. 3941 5972 7945 declare that I got married to Bikas Biswas on 18-01-1993. Before marriage my maiden name was Tapati Pramanik. After marriage I write my name as Tapati Biswas and Tapati Biswas(Pramanik). Tapati Pramanik, Tapati Biswas(Pramanik) and Tapati Biswas are one and same identical person and I intend to use my name Tapati Biswas for all future purposes, vide affidavit before Judicial Magistrate 1st Class, Barrackpore, North 24 Pgs. dt. 04-01-2025.

### I, SYED

Arefin Islam swearing affidavit before the Ld. J.M. 2nd Court at Barasat, 24 Pgs (N), declared on 31-12-24 that my father Syed Tarekul Islam, Syed Tarek Ul Islam & Tarek Ul Islam Syed who is the same and one identical person in the eye of law. In some of my documents name of my father inadvertently recorded as above noted.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

**Power of Attorney Notice**  
I am Estia Dey (Ghosh) W/o. Tusharkanti Ghosh, Biswajit Das, S/o. Minakanti Das, Prasanta Mallick, S/o. Ajit Kumar Mallick, Indrajit Banerjee, S/o. Arun Banerjee, Subhajit Roy, S/o. Chittaranjan Roy, Abhijit De, S/o. Subhas Chandra De, Prabir Kundu, S/o. Bansi Bandyopadhyay, Soumen Goswami, S/o. Dharendra Nath Goswami, dated 23/50 3/6/2010 (D.S.R. Bankura) No. Kobalapatra Deed in original of which Annoktar No. IV 381/2010. (A.D.S.R. Rayapuram), IV-94/2009 (ADSR Bankura) Mouja Jagannathbati, JL No-237 Hal Dag No. 1410, 1097, Khatian No. 320, 321, 170, 387 Donors, Pradeep Kumar Sharaf, S/o. Ramabhadrag Sharaf, Shashidevi Sharaf, Husband Pradeep Kumar Sharaf, Manik Kapri, S/o. Monohar Kapri, Gopal Das Banerjee, S/o. Satya Kinkar Banerjee, Annoktar Ramakrishna Adhikari, S/o. Parimal Adhikari, Bhajanan Mandal, S/o. Prem Mandal have applied for Nampattan (Case No.) after purchasing land amounting to 158 satak, if there is any objection of the donors in the said matter, within one month from the publication of the notification, the concerned B.L. & L.R.O. Bankura II Objections can be raised in clause 2 otherwise the rules will be enforced.  
Estia Dey (Ghosh)  
Mobile No. 9434108403  
email: subha37.roy@gmail.com

### PUBLIC NOTICE

**NOTICE**  
THE ANNUAL General Meeting of the Bengal Tuberculosis Association (BTA) will be held on **Saturday, February 8, 2025 at 4-00 P.M.** in the Secretary Room of the Association. This is for the information of Life and Ordinary Members of BTA.

The Statesman

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### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Sudeshna Mondal**, Father's Name-Surajit Mondal of Balbhadrachak, PS-Moyna, Purba Medinipur, who has been missing since 10.12.2024 at about 11:00 hrs, from Residence under Moyna PS, Description of this missing person is: **Age-17 Years, Complexion-Normal, Height-5 Feet 0 Inch, Language-Bengali**. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-2450-6120.  
**ICA-D34(3)/2025**

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Papiya Gayen**, Father's/Husband's Name-Biswanath Gayen of Vill-Tangtola, PO-Bamangachi, PS-Baruipur, South 24 Parganas, who has been missing since 18.12.2024 from Residence under Maheshtala PS, Description of this missing person is: **Age-16 Years, Complexion-Shallow, Height-4 Feet 10 Inch, Wearing-Gray Colour Churidar, Language-Bengali**. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-2450-6120.  
**ICA-D33(3)/2025**

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Raisha Ali**, Father's/Husband's Name-Ashraf Ali of Vill-Nayabasti, PO-Brace Brize, PS-Maheshtala, South 24 Parganas, who has been missing since 22.12.2024 at about 13:00 hrs. from Residence under Maheshtala PS, Description of this missing person is: **Age-17 Years, Complexion-Fair, Height-4 Feet 6 Inch, Wearing-Chocolate Colour Churidar, Language-Bengali, Identification Mark-Cut Mark on Forehead**. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-2450-6120.  
**ICA-D32(3)/2025**

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Sk Rafik @ Rafik**, Father's/Husband's Name-Sk Aminuddin of Vill-Dhapa, PO-Munshirhat, PS-Jagatballavpur, Dist. Howrah, who has been missing since 16.12.2024 from Residence under Jagatballavpur PS, Description of this missing person is: **Age-45 Years, Complexion-Dark, Height-5 Feet 8 Inch, Wearing-gary Colour Shirt and Pant, Language-Bengali**. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-2450-6120.  
**ICA-D31(3)/2025**

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Jiarul Sk**, Father's/Husband's Name-Moyajam Hossain of Bagitpur Chandapara, PO-Purapa, PS-Suti, Murshidabad, who has been missing since 11.06.2016 under Katwa PS, Description of this missing person is: **Age-35 Years, Complexion-Dark, Height-5 Feet 2 Inch, Wearing-White Blue Check Shirt, Blue Narrow Jeans Full Pant, Language-Bengali**. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-2450-6120.  
**ICA-D30(3)/2025**

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Unknown Male Dead Body**, found on 17.12.2024 under Bishnupur PS area, Description of this Deadbody is: **Age-65 Years approx, Sex: Male, Complexion-Shallow, Height-5 Feet 7 Inch, Build-Medium, Hair-Black & White, Wearing-White Full Shirt, Gray Colour Sweater, Red T-Shirt, Blue Check Lungi**. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-2450-6120.  
**ICA-D29(3)/2025**

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Unknown Male Dead Body**, found on 30.10.2024 under Kamarkundu GRPS area, Description of this Deadbody is: **Age-45 Years approx, Sex: Male, Complexion-Shyama, Height-5 Feet 6 Inch, Build-Medium, Hair-Black and White, Wearing-White Black and Green Stripe Full Shirt and Ash Colour Full Pant**. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-2450-6120.  
**ICA-D28(3)/2025**

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of **Monalisha Sultana**, Husband's Name-Ajibar Rahaman of Vill-Joyaria, PO-Parulla PS-Deganga, North 24 Parganas, who has been missing since 30.11.2024 from Residence under Deganga PS, Description of this missing person is: **Age-18 Years 2 Months, Complexion-Shallow, Wearing-Gray Colour Churidar, Language-Bengali**. Please Contact Officer in Charge, Missing Persons Bureau, C.I.D., West Bengal, Bhabani Bhaban, Kolkata-700027, Ph. No.-033-2450-6120.  
**ICA-D27(3)/2025**

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of missing person **Mid Rahmullah**, Son of Lt. Md Cash Mohammed of Vill - Talpur, PO - Dilawarpur, PS - Bahari, Dist-Darbhanga, Bihar, who has been missing since 16.12.2024 from 6/3, Canel West Road, Kolkata - 700009. Description of this missing person is: **Age - 37 Years, Height - 5'6", Complexion - Shyama, Built - Normal, Wearing - Green Colour Shirt and Blue Jeans Pant**, please inform whereabouts of the missing person, contact to the O.C., Missing Persons Squad, Detective Department, Kolkata Police, Kolkata - 700001. (Telephone No. 033 - 2214 - 1835, 9874902710). ICA-D39(3)/2025

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of missing person **Mid Krishna Paul** of 21/4, Sanligarh Colony, Kolkata - 700040, who has been missing since 27.12.2024 from inside Alipore Zoo. Description of this missing person is: **Age - 58 Years, Height - 4'2", Complexion - Fair, Built - Slim, Wearing - Pink Colour Sweater and White Long Shirt, Peculiarity if any - Mentally Disbalance**, please inform whereabouts of the missing person, contact to the O.C., Missing Persons Squad, Detective Department, Kolkata Police, Lalbazar, Kolkata - 700001. (Telephone No. 033 - 2214 - 1835, 9874902710). ICA-D40(3)/2025

### INFORMATION WANTED

This is the photograph of missing person **Mid Hamid**, Son of Md. Siraj of 4A, Toppia 2<sup>nd</sup> Lane, Kolkata - 700039, who has been missing since 16.12.2024 from his residence. Description of this missing person is: **Age - 39 Years, Height - 5'6", Complexion - Shyama, Built - Thin, Wearing - Blue Colour Full Shirt and Lungi**, please inform whereabouts of the missing person, contact to the O.C., Missing Persons Squad, Detective Department, Kolkata Police, Lalbazar, Kolkata - 700001. (Telephone No. 033 - 2214 - 1835, 9874902710). ICA-D38(3)/2025

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### পিতা-মাতা/অভিভাবকের অনুস্থানের জন্য বিজ্ঞপ্তি

#### দুই ভাইয়ের বিবরণ

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বর্তমান অবস্থান: চাইল্ড হোম নীচ ইনস্টিটিউট (সিনি সি.সি.আই. বয়েজ), ৩৭, প্যারিচ রোড, কলকাতা-৭০০০২৫

এক ও তিন বছর জি.ডি.ই. নম্বর: ১৩৬৩; তারিখ: ২৮.১০.২০২৪

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আইসিএ-ডি ৩৭(৩)/২০২৫

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# HC gives 6 weeks to MP govt for Bhopal Gas tragedy waste disposal

High Court asks government to clear all doubts, take public into confidence

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHOPAL, 6 JANUARY

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Monday granted six weeks time to the state government to dispose of the Bhopal gas tragedy waste at Pithampur near Indore after clearing all doubts of the public and taking people into confidence.

During hearing on the matter at Jabalpur, Chief Justice SK Kait and Justice Vivek Jain allowed six weeks to the state government to act on the waste disposal ensuring all safety guidelines.

State Advocate General Prashant Singh told the court that the state government



wants to take into confidence the public of Pithampur and to clear all doubts and fears from the minds of the people before incinerating the waste.

The state government also submitted in the court that

various misleading and false rumours were in circulation regarding the waste and that was creating unwanted unrest and tension at Pithampur.

Following that, the High Court restrained the print,

audio and visual media from carrying any incorrect news on the matter.

The High Court set the next date of hearing for 18 February.

Later in the day, MP Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav said that the waste was transferred from Bhopal on the directives of the Supreme Court and the High Court. The CM pointed out that Pithampur is the only facility equipped to handle the disposal of such chemical waste.

"I am thankful to the High Court for accepting the state government's submission and allowing us time of six weeks for the waste disposal," the CM said.

"I want to assure everyone

that our government will give top priority to the well being of the people. I also want to appeal to people not to get influenced by any rumours or fake news about the waste and its disposal," the CM said.

He said the state government would take all further necessary steps only in accordance with the court's directives and by ensuring all safety protocols.

Earlier, the 358 metric tons of the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy waste, lying abandoned for 40 years inside the closed Union Carbide factory at Bhopal, was finally removed and transferred to Pithampur for incineration, by 12 container trucks on 2 January.

## Protesting farmers to meet SC-appointed Committee's chairperson Justice Nawab Singh

PARMOD KUMAR  
NEW DELHI, 6 JANUARY

The Supreme Court on Monday was informed by the Punjab government that the farmers agitating for their demands including legally guaranteed Minimum Support Price for their agricultural produce would be meeting Justice Nawab Singh - the Chairperson of the High-Powered Committee that was constituted by the top court to negotiate with the protesting farmers.

After being informed that the Punjab government has persuaded the leaders of the agitating farmers to meet Justice (Retd.) Nawab Singh, a bench comprising Justices Surya Kant and N K Singh adjourned the hearing to Friday (10 January). The hearing today was in continuation of earlier hearings focused on providing medical aid to



and hospitalisation of farmers' leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, who is on a fast-unto-death since 26 November in support of their demands, including legally guaranteed MSP for agricultural crops.

At the outset of the hearing, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing the Punjab government, told the bench that the meeting was taking place at 3 p.m. today, and hoped that a breakthrough would happen.

"Somehow, we have been able to persuade the protesting

people to meet Justice Nawab Singh, who heads the Committee, at 3 p.m. today. We are hopeful that there would be a breakthrough," Sibal said, requesting the court to adjourn the hearing.

"We hope better sense prevails. List this on Friday," said Justice Kant.

The top court was hearing a contempt petition against the Punjab Chief Secretary and Director General of Police of Punjab for not complying with its 20 December 2024, order of providing medical aid to and hospitalisation of Dallewal.

Dallewal, the convener of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political), has been on a fast-unto-death at the Khanauri border to press the Centre to accept the farmers' demands, including a legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP) for crops.

## CJI Sanjiv Khanna recuses himself from petitions relating to adoption of IOA, AIFF constitution



NEW DELHI, 6 JANUARY

Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna on Monday recused himself from hearing a clutch of petitions regarding the adoption of the draft constitution of the All-India Football Federation (AIFF) and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

At the outset, CJI Khanna informed that he had earlier adjudicated on the dispute as a judge of the Delhi High Court and directed that the matter should be heard by a different Bench. The CJI Khanna-led Bench ordered the clutch of petitions to be listed before a Bench comprising Justice PS Narasimha.

Earlier, the Supreme Court had appointed former SC judge Justice L. Nageswara Rao to prepare electoral rolls, conduct elections, and amend the constitution of the IOA, saying that since the matter involved not only legal points but also sports policy, it would be prudent to let Justice Rao finalise the draft constitution.

It had passed a slew of directions regarding the adoption of the draft constitution and polling for the executive committee of the IOA. Justice Rao was also given the task of finalising the draft constitution of the AIFF, scrutinising objections and suggestions from stakeholders.

"We are of the considered view that a similar exercise was carried out under the orders of this court in relation to the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) by Justice L. Nageswara Rao. It would be appropriate to entrust the task of finalising the constitution to the former judge of this court," the apex court had ordered.

The Supreme Court had stayed the Delhi High Court order, directing the Committee of Administrators (CoA) to take control of the IOA governance. In its verdict, the Delhi HC said in order to improve the 'ecosystem' of sports bodies and structurally reform them, put the affairs of the IOA in the hands of a CoA. It had also directed the Centre not to grant recognition or any facility to the Indian Olympic Association or any National Sports Federations (NSFs) if they refuse to comply with the Sports Code.

"Compliance with the Sports Code is non-negotiable," said a division bench of Justices Nijmi Waziri and Manmohan of the high court, adding that "the legal regime apropos sports administration in India has to be implemented fully and effectively".

## Prashant Kishor's arrest ignites protests against Bihar govt, supporters vow to intensify stir

AGENCIES  
PATNA, 6 JANUARY

The arrest of Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor, during his hunger strike at city's Gandhi Maidan on Monday morning has sparked widespread protests and criticism of Bihar police's alleged excesses.

Kishor was sitting on an indefinite hunger strike, demanding cancellation of 70th BPSC examination over alleged irregularities and paper leak reports. The BPSC aspirants and candidates have been on the streets for more than a fortnight now, urging Nitish Kumar government to cancel BPSC exams and re-conduct the same.

Following Kishor's detention by Bihar police, his supporters gathered in large numbers at the Jan Suraj Party office in Sheikhpura, alleging police brutality.

"The police lathi-charged



us and even slapped Prashant Kishor. This is unjustified. Nitish Kumar government has committed atrocities and the movement will only intensify," said one of Kishor's supporters.

Meanwhile, videos have surfaced on social media showing some police personnel slapping and dragging protesters on the road while taking Prashant Kishor into custody.

Supporters claim they have been denied any information about Kishor's whereabouts. They accused the police of roughing up Kishor

and his supporters at the protest site and claimed that the Jan Suraj founder was mistreated during his arrest.

Patna District Magistrate Chandrashekhar Singh countered the charges of overreach, saying: "Prashant Kishor and others were staging an illegal sit-in at the restricted area in Gandhi Maidan. Despite notices and repeated requests to shift the protest to Gardanibagh, they refused to comply. An FIR was lodged and he was arrested on January 6 along with some supporters."

"Kishor is in good health and will be presented before the court following due procedure," he told the newsmen.

Kishor's arrest has also created a flutter in Bihar's political circles with ruling party leaders justifying police action while some others expressing reservations over it.

## Will stay in NDA, removed those suggesting changing alliance, says CM Nitish Kumar

AGENCIES  
PATNA, 6 JANUARY

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has reiterated that he will remain in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) dismissing any possibility of aligning with other political groups.

The CM was in Vaishali on Monday during his ongoing Pragati Yatra. While talking about his past decisions to switch alliances, he stated that such suggestions came from individuals who were subsequently removed.

"The mistake was made twice, but now I will remain in NDA. Those who suggested changing alliances were removed," Kumar said.

Reflecting on his longstanding ties with the NDA, he acknowledged the support of late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, highlighting collaborative efforts during



their tenure.

Earlier on 2 January, RJD Chief Lalu Prasad Yadav said that his door was open for Nitish Kumar.

Lalu earlier said: "My door is always open. Nitish Kumar should also keep his door open." On whether he would forgive Nitish Kumar if he returned, Lalu stated: "Forgiving has been my job. If he comes back, I will forgive him without any problem.

Everyone will work together."

During the Pragati Yatra in Vaishali, Kumar announced development schemes worth crores of rupees, underscoring the government's focus on grassroots development.

CM Nitish Kumar highlighted the success of the Jeevika initiative, which empowers women through self-help groups. CM Kumar

took pride in coining the name 'Jeevika', a model later adopted nationally as 'Ajeevika'.

He also said that such self-help groups under Jeevika are now in urban areas as well. It has been empowering women, leading to improved financial independence and confidence.

"Earlier, women did not speak much; now they are confident and financially stable. Such groups were rare in Bihar before we expanded the programme," Kumar said.

CM Nitish Kumar recalled his contributions to introducing self-help groups during his tenure at the Centre, emphasizing their role in empowering communities. He reaffirmed his government's commitment to promoting women's development through Jeevika and similar initiatives.

### SOCIAL AWARENESS



A teacher of the Gurukul School Of Art, Lalbaug makes painting on human metapneumovirus (HMPV) outbreak in China, in Mumbai on Monday. ■ ANI

## SC to hear on 25 March pleas against Koli's acquittal in Nithari killings

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 6 JANUARY

The Supreme Court on Monday posted for hearing on 25 March a batch of appeals against the Allahabad High Court order acquitting Surendra Koli - a death row convict - in 12 cases of rape and murder that took place in Nithari village, Noida bordering Delhi in 2005/2006.

A bench of Justice BR Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih directed the top court Registry to summon the trial court records in other connected matters expeditiously and supply its copies to the advocates appearing in the matter.

On 8 July 2024, the top court had issued notice on a



plea by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) challenging the Allahabad High Court's acquitting Surendra Koli. While issuing notice, the court had tagged the CBI's plea along with other pending matters relating to the cases.

The Uttar Pradesh government and Pappu Lal, father of one of the victim girls too have approached the apex court challenging the state High Court's order of acquit-

ting businessman Moninder Singh Pandher and Koli in the 2005/2006 killings. Koli was the domestic help of the businessman Maninder Singh Pandher and stayed at his house where the alleged killings took place.

In the course of the 8 July 2024, hearing, the Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the CBI argued that Koli was a serial killer who used to lure young girls and kill them. The SG had said that the killings were "gruesome" and there were accusations of cannibalism and the trial court had awarded the death penalty to Koli, but the same had been reversed by the Allahabad High Court.

The Allahabad High Court in October 2023, had acquitted

Pandher and his domestic help Surendra Koli in some of the cases concerning the Nithari killings and overturned the death penalty imposed on them by the trial court. It had acquitted Koli in 12 cases and Pandher in 2 cases, where they were earlier held guilty for murder and awarded the death penalty by the trial court in these cases.

The CBI had registered 16 cases against Koli and Pandher over rape and killing of girls that had shocked the nation. The case came to public attention in December 2006 when skeletons were discovered in a drain near a house in Nithari village, Noida. Pandher was the owner of the house and Koli was his domestic help.

## Kashmir's rail link with rest of the country will stimulate region's economy, tourism: Leaders

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, 6 JANUARY

Jammu and Kashmir leaders say that Kashmir's rail link with the rest of the country will stimulate economic growth and tourism as a separate railway division at Jammu was virtually inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday.

They said that the valley getting a rail link with other parts of the country in the next few days will be a game changer in transforming the connectivity and economy of not only the valley but also the far-flung areas of the Jammu region through which the train will pass.

Among those present at the Jammu railway station were Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and top brass of the railways and local administration.

Speaking on the occasion, L-G Manoj Sinha said that he was grateful to Prime Minister Modi for making Jammu



Railway Division a reality. New division is very important from a strategic point of view.

It will also stimulate economic growth, employment generation, infrastructure development and creation of new tourist circuits, he added.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said: "Today, on this momentous occasion, as the long-awaited wish of Jammu and Kashmir is being fulfilled, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the people of Jammu and Kashmir."

"We got good news that a trial train was being run from Srinagar to Katra. It is hoped that it will start functioning soon. It will help the people of J&K. It will help trade and tourism. We struggle a lot

with air travel in winters where the people are forced to buy a ticket of Rs 5,000 for Rs 25,000."

"It will also help the trade and industry. Cargo transfer will be facilitated. The main thing is that with the medium of rail, the coordination and control will not be from Firozpur, but from Jammu. It will also help in recruitment. Parts of Punjab, Himachal have also been connected."

Union Minister Singh described it as a historical moment and said: "The first train had arrived at the Jammu Railway Station but for as long as 50 years after that, there was no further progress and we had to wait for over half a century Narendra Modi to take over as the Prime Minister and resume the rail extension work in J&K."

"Establishment of this railway division is not merely a logistical milestone but a reaffirmation of our commitment to integrate Jammu and Kashmir with India's economic growth trajectory."



### Austrian divisions

Austria is at a critical juncture as political uncertainty looms following the resignation of Chancellor Karl Nehammer. The collapse of coalition talks has underscored the deep divisions within Austria's political spectrum, leaving the nation to grapple with its democratic principles and its future direction. The challenge now lies in balancing the rising influence of the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ) with the stability of a centrist governance model. The FPÖ's victory in the September elections, coupled with its increasing popularity, marks a significant shift in Austria's political landscape. Its hardline positions, particularly on immigration and its eurosceptic stance, resonate with a growing section of the electorate. This momentum reflects not only discontent with mainstream politics but also a broader European trend where far-right parties are capitalising on economic and social anxieties. However, the prospect of an FPÖ-led government poses critical questions about Austria's commitment to democratic values and its position in the European Union. The People's Party (ÖVP), traditionally a pillar of Austrian politics, finds itself in an unenviable position. Partnering with the FPÖ would mean conceding the role of junior partner ~ a scenario unthinkable in the ÖVP's storied history. Yet, refusing to engage with the FPÖ could lead to a prolonged period of instability or snap elections, further bolstering the FPÖ's dominance. This dilemma highlights a broader issue facing centrist parties across Europe: the difficulty of reconciling ideological purity with the pragmatic need for governance. President Alexander Van der Bellen's role becomes pivotal in this context. His decision to either task FPÖ leader Herbert Kickl with forming a government or call for new elections will shape Austria's immediate future. Both options carry risks. A snap election could deepen existing divisions, while an FPÖ-led government might challenge Austria's democratic norms, particularly given concerns over Mr Kickl's controversial rhetoric and positions.

Despite these challenges, Austria's democratic institutions have historically shown resilience. The political crisis offers an opportunity for introspection and renewal. Centrist parties must address the underlying issues driving voters toward the far-right, such as economic insecurity and cultural alienation. Failure to do so risks further polarising the electorate and eroding trust in democratic governance. This political impasse is a wake-up call for Austria's leaders to prioritise meaningful reforms that address citizens' concerns, fostering trust in democratic institutions and countering the appeal of populist rhetoric. Austria's path forward must prioritise stability, inclusivity, and adherence to democratic principles. While the FPÖ's rise cannot be ignored, its potential role in government should be carefully scrutinised to ensure it aligns with Austria's constitutional values and international commitments. This is not merely a test of Austria's political leadership but a reflection of broader European challenges in navigating the complexities of populism and democracy in the 21st century. Ultimately, Austria's choices will serve as a barometer for how democracies can adapt and thrive amid ideological shifts. The outcome will not only shape Austria's trajectory but also offer lessons for other nations facing similar challenges.

### GOP fault lines

The narrow re-election of U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson highlights a fundamental tension within the Republican Party. While the razor-thin majority secured Mr Johnson's victory, the drama surrounding the vote underscores persistent divisions among House Republicans, even under the shadow of President-elect Donald Trump's enduring influence. Mr Johnson's path to re-election offers a revealing case study of the party's internal dynamics. Initially lacking the votes needed to retain his position, he managed to persuade key holdouts, including Representative Keith Self, through protracted negotiations and a personal nudge from Mr Trump. This intervention demonstrates Mr Trump's continued clout in shaping the Republican agenda, but it also exposes cracks in the party's unity. Representative Thomas Massie's defiance and the initial hesitation of other members are stark reminders of the ideological diversity ~ and discord ~ within Republican ranks. Mr Johnson's victory speech, emphasising plans to extend Mr Trump's 2017 tax cuts and drastically reduce the size of government, signals a clear alignment with the incoming President's priorities. However, implementing these ambitious goals will require more than rhetoric. The Republicans' slim majority leaves little room for error, especially as Mr Johnson contends with high-stakes issues like the \$36 trillion national debt. The coming months will test whether the GOP can reconcile its competing factions to govern effectively. One of the most striking aspects of Mr Johnson's tenure has been his reliance on Democratic support to pass critical legislation, such as funding bills to prevent government shutdowns. This pragmatic approach, while necessary, has irked hardline conservatives who view bipartisan compromises as betrayals of party principles. These tensions were evident in the lead-up to Mr Johnson's re-election, where internal dissent nearly cost him the speakership. The upcoming special elections to replace Republicans nominated for positions in Mr Trump's administration may temporarily shrink the GOP's majority, further complicating Mr Johnson's task. While these seats are unlikely to flip, the reduced margin will exacerbate the challenges of maintaining party discipline. Mr Trump's role in Mr Johnson's re-election underscores the President-elect's dominance over the party's direction. Yet, this influence comes at a cost. The need for Mr Trump's intervention to secure votes reveals a party struggling to coalesce around a unified vision. As Mr Trump's administration prepares to take office, the balancing act between advancing his agenda and managing internal discord will be a defining challenge for House Republicans. Mr Johnson's re-election is more than a political victory ~ it is a litmus test for the Republican Party's ability to govern cohesively. Whether Mr Johnson can navigate the minefield of ideological divisions and legislative priorities will determine not only his legacy but also the party's trajectory in the Trump era. In this high-stakes environment, the GOP's greatest adversary may not be the Democrats but itself.

# Reset in Ties ~ I

**Bangladesh's fall from grace since 2020 has been precipitous. Foreign exchange reserves dropped from \$48 bn. in 2021 to around \$20 bn. or less than three months imports, foreign debt doubled since 2016 to \$100 bn. with debt servicing that will hit \$3.56 bn. Crony capitalism, rampant corruption and a huge capital flight led to the banking sector being left in disarray with non-performing loans constituting 10.11 per cent of the total, and a liquidity crisis led to halting of bank transactions on several occasions**



After winning four successive elections in 2008, 2014, 2018 and 2024 in Bangladesh, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was forced by mass protests to resign and flee to India on 5 August 2024. She had alienated both students and the military, traditionally a toxic combination in Bangladesh that leads to the downfall of governments.

This would have come as no surprise to any interested observer; Indian visitors had been warned by local well-wishers since 2021 that India's reputation was being progressively besmirched by Hasina's corruption and autocratic behaviour. Many Indian observers, including former diplomats, had warned in print that India's influence was in jeopardy after Hasina's departure.

Once hailed as a pro-democracy leader, Hasina in 2011 annulled the law that provided for free and fair elections under a caretaker government, opposing advice from a commission that the practice should continue for some time.

Each of her three victories after 2008 were regarded as sham with either the opposition absent or intimidated by thousands of arrests. The USA and EU made their displeasure public, and in 2021 Washington sanctioned the Rapid Action Battalion for human rights violations.

Nevertheless, Hasina and her party the Awami League was robustly supported by New Delhi because Bangladesh's geography makes it intrinsic to India's security with 4,156 km of common border and its northern and eastern frontiers contiguous with India's sensitive Northeast states.

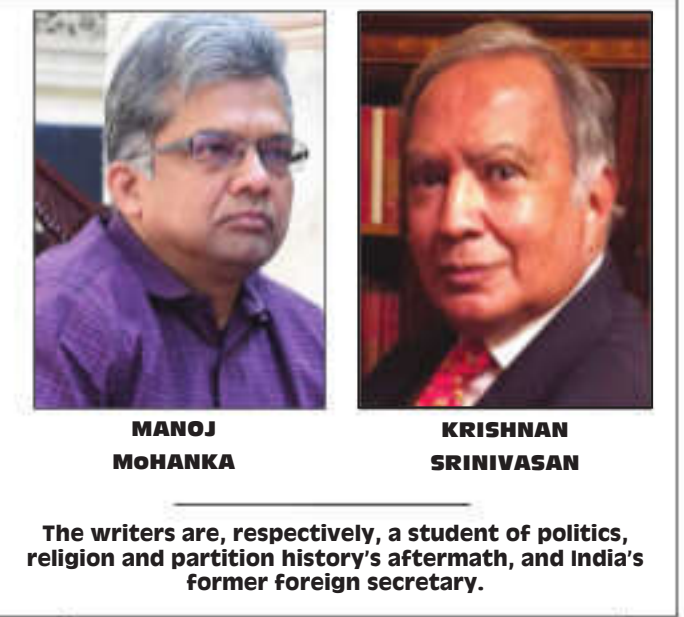
Hasina was accommodative to India's security concerns which overrode other considerations, but it would be interesting to speculate on what advice, if any, New Delhi rendered to Hasina during the recent past about the gathering storm. If any advice was given, it was likely to have been ignored, since the former prime minister is a self-righteous personality, impervious to reasoned argument.

Hasina's attraction for Indian support is plausible; refusal to allow Bangladesh to be used against India by state or non-state actors; apprehensions about the main opposition BNP/Jamaat's tilt to political Islam, that she was conscious about India's fears about Bangladesh ties with China, that Bangladesh would never forget India's role in the liberation struggle of 1971 against Pakistan, USA and China, and that China was only a development partner and not a strategic one.

Bangladesh's fall from grace since 2020 has been precipitous. A country of 170 million (with minority Hindus, Christians and Buddhists numbering about 13 million), it was one of the fastest-growing economies in the region, its per capita income had tripled over the last decade, and the World

Bank estimated that 25 million people were lifted out of poverty in two decades.

With Chinese assistance, Hasina had undertaken huge infrastructure projects, including the flagship \$2.9 bn. Padma bridge. After the Covid pandemic, there was less absolute poverty but also less economic equality, fewer foreign remittances and job losses in the informal sector. More than 32 million Bangladeshis received social benefits



or stipends to support school children.

Foreign exchange reserves dropped from \$48 bn. in 2021 to around \$20 bn. or less than three months imports, foreign debt doubled since 2016 to \$100 bn. with debt servicing that will hit \$3.56 bn. Bangladesh is the world's second-largest garment exporter and shipped more than \$45 bn. worth to Europe and USA but reliance on garments exports made it vulnerable to external shocks.

Crony capitalism, rampant corruption and a huge capital flight led to the banking sector being left in disarray with non-performing loans constituting 10.11 per cent of the total, and a liquidity crisis led to halting of bank transactions on several occasions. Inflation is over 9 per cent, while the market indicates a far higher rate and there is a cost-of-living crisis. The Bangladeshi Taka depreciated about 28 per cent over the past year, and Dhaka asked for a loan of \$4.7 bn. from IMF to avert a balance of payment crisis in return for greater austerity.

On the domestic scene, in the absence of free media and an independent judiciary, the human rights situation caused concern. With violence and misuse of the state apparatus, a staggering number of arrests and convictions, indiscriminate approach to detain thousands of opposition workers, and thousands of cases of enforced disappearances, blindings and extra-judicial killings since 2009, Hasina's support eroded.

Public protests in 2024 erupted, triggered by reservations for descendants of freedom fighters, which were widely interpreted as corrupt favouritism. The police

were instructed to open fire and 90 persons were killed in a single day.

Transparency International ranked Bangladesh the 12th most corrupt country of 180 and V-Dem 154th out of 202 in the liberal democracy index. The judicial system was weaponized to attack journalists, human rights activists, NGOs and civil society leaders. Mohammed Yunus, winner of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for his pioneering work in microcredit and village uplift, and Mahfuz Anam, the editor of the popular *Daily Star*, were persecuted with dozens of trumped-up charges.

For more than a decade, Awami League's youth wing the Chhatra League ruled campuses with an iron grip while Chhatra Dal, the BNP counterpart maintained a precarious presence and Jamaat's Chhatra Shibir was forced underground. Chhatra League has now been banned for forcing opponents out of campuses, torturing and murdering opposition students.

After Hasina's self-exile, the interim government under Mohamed Yunus has promised to redress past wrongs but Bangladesh is facing great challenges. While Yunus has announced his intention of elections by early 2026, he faces pressure from Students against Discrimination and Jatitya Nagorik Committee's demand for urgent reforms and a new constitution.

Reform Commissions have been established with a long agenda to report within three months, but it will take time, perhaps till the next elected government, to pronounce on justice, equality and accountability. The task in Dhaka is to prioritise the exigencies, facilitate dialogue across society and provide stability.

The heads of security forces have apologized and transfers effected, but issues of responsibility and accountability still need to be addressed. The main public gain in the short run is seen as freedom of expression without fear.

An overthrow of constituted authority is commonplace among SAARC members. Apart from India and Bhutan, every country has suffered this upheaval. Irrespective of the many warning signals, New Delhi appeared taken aback at Hasina's overthrow and arrival in India, where she remains in a 'secure location' and delivers the occasional statement, inter alia, accusing Yunus of being illegitimate and involved in genocide.

Her son's Facebook's posts from outside Bangladesh also aggravate the relationship between New Delhi and Dhaka. Hasina is as unlikely to return home in the near future as Assad to Syria or al-Alimi to Yemen, and although politics, quoting Bismarck, is the art of the possible, it is highly improbable that Hasina, now 77, will have any future leadership role.

(To Be Concluded)

### ASIAN VOICES

## Overcoming adversity in 2025

Filipinos have consistently met the coming of a new year with hope and excitement, as it represents a fresh start, looking forward to better days ahead, and a chance to begin again after reflecting on the year that was.

However, the events of 2024 ~ from geopolitical upheavals to local political skirmishes on top of lingering issues with inflation and interest rates ~ have proven to be so challenging that even Filipinos' vaunted ability to look at life as a glass half-full has been shaken.

As a result, only 90 percent of the people expect 2025 to be a good year, down 6 percentage points from 96 percent last year. This was the lowest level of optimism since 2009, according to the survey released last week by the Social Weather Stations (SWS).

At the same time, those entering 2025 with "fear" rose to 10 percent from only 3 percent in last year's survey. It was also the highest level since the 11 percent recorded in 2009, according to the SWS. These sobering results are consistent with the Business Expectations Survey conducted by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which showed a sharp decline in optimism among members of the Filipino business community in the first three months of 2025.

The index fell to 40.3 percent from 56.8 percent in the previous quarter's survey, with concerns about slowing



consumer demand because of high inflation and interest rates, tempering their hopes for a better 2025. Business sentiment was also less optimistic for the next 12 months, with the overall confidence index decreasing to 56.4 percent from the previous quarter's survey result of 58 percent.

The reasons behind the downbeat outlook for this year include grave concerns over weaker demand for local products and services, stiff competition here and abroad, adverse impact on their business of escalating geopolitical tensions, and the possibility that inflation may pick up again after settling within the government's target range of 2 to 4 percent.

Indeed, inflation has been the most nagging concern for a few years running. A separate survey by Ipsos revealed that as high as 80 percent of Filipinos expect inflation to rise next year.

"While economists point out that inflation ~ and interest rates ~ have fallen in many countries, you might assume that consumers should be feeling more positive by now about their own financial situation and more optimistic about where their country's economy is headed in 2025," Ipsos chief executive officer Ben Page said.

"In fact, they are the opposite. The legacy of high inflation over the past few years is that an expectation of price rises is now hard-wired into the public consciousness," he added.

The Ipsos report in fact said that for most Filipinos, inflation or the rate of increase in the prices of basic goods and services has yet to normalize with 28 percent even expecting inflation to never return to normal.

"While inflation rates are going down, people are not feeling it in the way policymakers and central banks would have hoped," Ipsos said. "People expect price rises across all areas of spending, from utilities to food." No wonder then that the prospect of greeting the new year with renewed hope and excitement has palled for many Filipinos.

Filipinos have been no less clear on what they want their government to do: control inflation, bring down prices, especially of rice, and that optimism should rise in step with lower prices.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

## Growing ties

SIR, Recent bilateral conversations between Indian and American diplomats during the final days of the administration transition underscore the growing strategic alignment between the two nations.

These discussions highlight



an emerging partnership, not only based on economic and trade ties but also on shared geopolitical concerns and values.

The alignment between India and the U.S. has been evident across multiple areas, particularly in defense, trade, and regional security.

As both countries navigate the evolving global order, they increasingly find common ground, especially in countering China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific region. Joint military exercises, defense technology cooperation, and a shared interest in free and open international trade reflect the deepening strategic congruence.

Furthermore, India's role in global issues, such as climate change and multilateral diplomacy, continues to resonate with U.S. priorities. These factors signal a maturing relationship that transcends administration transitions and is likely to strengthen in the years ahead.

As global challenges become more interconnected, the growing partnership between India and the U.S. holds significant promise for addressing security, economic stability, and climate resilience.

The final days of the transition period have underscored the continuity and potential of this relationship, offering a strong foundation for future collaboration.

Yours, etc., Sanjay Chopra, Mohali, 6 January.

### KEEP IT SIMPLE

SIR, The GST issue has to be seriously reviewed. It is being used now as the prime revenue earner for the government and in that avatar ending up as the principal whipping instrument on the backs of the Indian poor and middle class.

The revenue garnered from GST was being published monthly but lately the release of figures has been erratic. The government wants to suppress this highway robbery that they are indulging in for fear of being criticised.

GST has been exorbitant and all pervasive, being levied on almost all transactions without exception. It is just not the levy of the tax on life insurance and mediclaim that is being widely talked about as unfair, but the fact that GST is imposed on

almost everything without giving any grace or exemption or concession.

When the government and the Finance Minister pick on items like popcorn and turn it into a tamasha, it is almost as if they are making fun of the people. Taxation is a necessary evil which all of us understand but in its application it should be simple and not overly harsh. What is happening now with the government is that in its glee at having a tax measure that is bringing in revenue, it is neglecting other revenue measures like Income Tax. Thus there is an imbalance in the emphasis on tax measures which is not a healthy sign as all revenue instruments should be administered effectively.

Yours, etc., S Kamat, Mysore, 2 January.





# The Taliban fiasco a lesson for Pakistan

HARSHA KAKAR

The Centre for Research and Security Studies states that in 2024 Pakistan had a total of 1,166 terrorist attacks and counter-terrorism operations which resulted in 2,546 fatalities and 2,267 injuries. Among them 685 fatalities were of military personnel. According to Pakistan's DG Inter Services Public Relations "383 officers and soldiers died while neutralising 925 terrorists through nearly 60,000 intelligence-based operations."

This was the deadliest year for security forces and the country in terms of terrorist incidents. Attacks on Pakistan's security forces have been rising since the emergence of the Taliban government in Kabul. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan alone accounted for 94 per cent of fatalities and 89 per cent of incidents.

There were also a number of attacks on Chinese workers employed in the CPEC, which is also guarded by two corps of the Pakistan army, leading to anger from the Chinese leadership. It was frustration at being unable to stem these attacks that compelled Pakistan to launch its airstrikes on Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) training camps situated in the border regions of Afghanistan.

Pakistan has repeatedly been accusing the Taliban of providing sanctuaries to the TTP. The Kabul leadership, on the other hand, has been claiming that either the TTP does not exist on its soil, or that Pakistan can negotiate with it. Recently the Taliban Information Minister, Khairullah Khairkhwa, mentioned that Kabul would continue providing shelter to the TTP as they are its 'guests.' This varying stand has been

the bone of contention between Islamabad and Kabul.

As per the Taliban, Pakistan's air strikes killed almost 50 civilians in Patika, all Pashtun refugees from Pakistan and mostly women and children. Pakistan later admitted to the air strikes, claiming it targeted TTP camps only while Shehbaz Sharief again sought improved ties with Kabul. He said, "We have conveyed to the Afghan government that we desire good ties with them but TTP should be stopped from killing our innocent people."

Pakistan claims these strikes were aimed at protecting its citizens from attacks emanating from across the border. However, for the Taliban it was a violation and an attack on their soil, to which they were compelled to respond. In response, the Taliban moved its forces and attacked Pakistan troops and its posts along the Durand Line. While Pakistani media admitted to few casualties, the Taliban claimed many more. The truth would be somewhere in between.

The Taliban has repeatedly threatened Pakistan that any attempt to militarily engage it would be catastrophic. It cites failures of Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the US in suppressing it. Recently Pakistan has begun threatening to capture the Wakhan Corridor, linking Afghanistan to China. This corridor is Afghanistan's Chicken's neck. This would give Pakistan direct border access with Tajikistan, thereby enabling it to give a boost to anti-Taliban groups, currently operating from Tajikistan.

Pakistan has repeatedly closed its borders with Afghanistan attempting to apply pressure of trade on it. However, with India and Iran opening the Chabahar port there has been little impact. It even raised Kabul's support

to the TTP in the UNSC to little effect.

Pakistan is aware that in the current circumstances it would face little international criticism for cross-border strikes. The major reason is that Israel has been doing the same in recent times. Further, these actions would convince the Chinese that it is acting against groups which target them and the CPEC. It also internally covers their failure in curbing terrorism by projecting support from an external entity. As a perpetual excuse, every terrorist group acting against the Pakistani state is being billed as being supported by India. Attacks in Afghanistan indicate a possible change to this theory.

Pakistan has been able to take aerial action with impunity because Afghanistan lacks resources to defend its airspace. Pakistan hesitates to attempt a ground invasion aware that it would be countered fiercely by the Taliban. It has also not attempted to capture parts of Afghanistan for the same purpose. The targeting of Pashtuns on the Afghan side will anger Pakistani Pashtuns adding to support for the TTP.

A major lesson which emerges for Pakistan is that supporting terrorist groups does not pay. It backed the Taliban for decades in its fight against the US and NATO forces. It hoped that the Kabul regime would play second fiddle to it and could also be exploited to enhance terrorism in Kashmir. Islamabad had hoped that Afghans would be grateful to Pakistan, but the reverse happened. It is the most hated nation in Afghanistan, while India is the most loved. In fact, Kabul is closer to New Delhi than Islamabad.

India fought for the freedom of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971. It supported the state in its formative years. It has over decades backed the



country financially and diplomatically and resolved all territorial disputes with it. Post the recent coup, resulting in the overthrow of the Sheikh Hasina regime, the scenario has reversed. India is no longer considered as the architect of its freedom. The anti-India wave is far higher than ever before. Dacca is now closer to Islamabad than New Delhi.

While Pakistan may launch limited strikes in Afghanistan, it will continue to engage them, hoping the leadership will see the light. Its economic threats by closing the border and other means of coercion are being offset by other nations opening doors.

India too continues to engage diplomatically and economically with Dhaka, including providing it food-grains at discounted rates, hoping it is able to stem the anti-India tide and keep relations on an even keel. If anti-India groups are provided bases in

Bangladesh at some time, India may run out of patience and be compelled to act. The recent visit of the Indian Foreign Secretary, Vikram Misri, was aimed at conveying this message.

This is happening because both Afghanistan and Bangladesh are dominated by Islamists, who tend to ignore global norms. While Dhaka has still not opened doors for anti-India terrorist groups on its soil, the possibility of it happening looms large. While the Taliban appear to have forgotten Pakistan's backing and support, Bangladesh was thus far grateful to India only because it was ruled by descendants of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, the founder of the country. With the end of the Sheikh Hasina regime everything has changed.

(The writer is a retired Major-General of the Indian Army.)

## 100 YEARS AGO

### OCCASIONAL NOTES

UNTIL yesterday the best joke of the Christmas season was commonly supposed to be the Bengalee's suggestion that His Excellency the Governor would not show such a lack of "statesmanship" as not to release for the afternoon the two M. L. C.'s arrested under the Ordinance in order that they might attend the Council on Wednesday to vote against the measure. This, however, has been entirely eclipsed by the news that these two members have now been formally summoned to attend the Council meeting, and that the High Court has been hastily invoked in order to secure that the Council shall not meet till these two members are permitted to attend. Pour le comble, as the French say, which being freely translated means "to put the lid on," one of them has a number of amendments on the order paper. This is a complete answer to the saying that East and West shall never meet, for anything more like the joyous politics of Ireland it is difficult to imagine. It is indeed a master stroke in reconciliation. Solventur risu tabulae.

## NEWS ITEMS

### BRITAIN'S ATTITUDE FRANCO-AMERICAN NEGOTIATIONS

(BRITISH OFFICIAL WIRELESS.)

WITH regard to various newspaper reports in reference to the British attitude towards any negotiations between France and the United States in relation to the French debt to America, it may be recalled that the general policy of the British Government was outlined by Mr. Winston Churchill, Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the House of Commons on January 10.

Mr. Churchill said: "Speaking generally, I would venture to say that we do not wish to hinder any arrangement for mutual benefit which may be entered into between two friendly nations allied or associated with us in the Great War. We consider it essential, however, that any payments made by our debtors in Europe to their creditor in the United States should be accompanied simultaneously by proportionate payments to Great Britain."

It may be added that in authoritative quarters it is declared that the British Government regards itself as bound by the British settlement with the United States and that it does not propose to ask for most favoured nation terms in regard to the British Debt. The question is a moral one, however, and if such terms were offered they would obviously be accepted. Moreover, while as Mr. Churchill stated, America may make such terms as she likes with France without Britain offering objections, the British Government would naturally consider itself free to make any arrangement with France independently of terms obtained by France from America.

### PRISON CONGRESS GROWING SUPPORT FOR GREAT CRUSADE

("TIMES" SPECIAL SERVICE.)

LONDON, JAN. 6.

IN an article dealing with the forthcoming meeting in London of the International Prison Congress, The Times says that this year the Congress will be more fully representative of the civilized nations of the world, for besides India, New Zealand, South Africa and Japan such newcomers as Siam and the leading States of South America have shown cordial sympathy with the movement.

It is to be hoped, adds The Times, that, Canada, Australia, Newfoundland, Rhodesia and the Crown Colonies will contribute towards the importance of the jubilee of the Congress by joining the Mother country and the other British Dominions in this great world crusade against bad criminal law and bad prisons.

### FIND IN MONASTERY TREASURES HIDDEN FROM THE BOLSHEVIKS

("TIMES" SPECIAL SERVICE.)

LONDON, JAN. 6.

THE Soviet Press reports that the authorities have discovered in a Kieff monastery about a hundredweight of gold, two tons of silver, and great quantities of old silver coins, gold vessels, crucifixes and precious stones hidden from the Bolsheviks in 1921-22.

Certain counter-revolutionary correspondence was also discovered, and the Soviet Press foreshadows an important trial of ecclesiastics.

### BENGAL COUNCIL NO ADMISSION TO VISITORS

THE following communication has been received from the Secretary to the Bengal Legislative Council:—

The President of the Bengal Legislative Council regrets to be obliged to disappoint those visitors to whom tickets of admission have been issued for to-day's meeting of the Council: but he finds himself under the necessity of keeping all the public galleries cleared. No persons other than members of the Council and holders of Press tickets will be admitted.

These orders will remain in force until further notice.

# S Korea must confront hard truths

LEE BYUNG-JONG

This New Year dawns under a shadow in South Korea, absent the usual joy and optimism. Instead, the country is beset by a series of crises that weigh heavily on its spirit. The impeachment of President Yoon Suk Yeol and the ensuing political instability is just one facet of the turmoil. Economically, stagnant exports are reeling under pressure, with further damage anticipated from the protectionist policies of the incoming Trump administration. Adding to the collective grief, the tragic plane crash in Muan has shaken the nation to its core. For many, this period represents Korea's "darkest hour" in decades.

As a former foreign journalist who covered South Korea's turbulent times in the 1990s, I can't help but draw parallels between then and now. The late 1990s were marked by political paralysis, violent street demonstrations and labour unrest. Presidents were jailed on corruption and insurrection charges, and the economy teetered on the brink of collapse, necessitating a humiliating bailout by the International Monetary Fund. Tragic incidents like the Sampoong Department Store collapse further compounded the nation's anguish. The similarities with today's challenges are striking.

This raises an uncomfortable but necessary question: What went wrong with Korea? How did a nation celebrated for its dynamic democracy and vibrant economy reach this point? Once hailed as a shining example of political and economic transformation,

South Korea now faces a reckoning that demands serious introspection.

One potential answer lies in a recurring pattern of complacency. In the 1990s, Koreans grappled with the same realization - they had perhaps celebrated their achievements prematurely. They perhaps opened their champagne too early. The hard-earned victories in democracy and economic growth led to a collective stagnation, with society failing to set new goals or embrace necessary reforms. Unfortunately, today's crisis seems to echo this same complacency.

The democracy Koreans fought so valiantly to achieve has struggled to evolve. The 1987 Constitution, born out of mass democratic protests, no longer aligns with contemporary needs. Proposals to replace the one-term presidency with a two-term system for greater political stability have stalled due to partisan infighting. Similarly, calls to curb the risks of an imperial presidency and modernize political institutions have gone unheeded.

Korea's single-member constituency system in the National Assembly has also fuelled divisive, polarized politics. Its winner-takes-all approach exacerbates regional rivalries and entrenches political stagnation. Efforts to introduce a more inclusive multi-member constituency system have been repeatedly blocked by vested interests clinging to the status quo. The highly divided legislature often clashes head on with the administration, resulting in gridlock and an inability to pass meaningful reforms.

Economically, South Korea appears trapped in an out-dated

model. The bold reforms of the late 1990s have given way to inertia, leaving the economy overly reliant on a handful of conglomerates and export-heavy industries like semiconductors and automobiles. When these sectors falter, the entire economy suffers. Recent declines in the won and the local stock market eerily echo the financial crisis of the 1990s, sparking alarm both domestically and internationally.

The corporate over-leverage that triggered the 1997-1998 financial crisis has largely been addressed, but a new economic challenge looms - household debt. South Korea's household debt ranks among the highest in the world relative to GDP, with many families heavily reliant on borrowing for essential expenses like housing and education. This growing debt burden significantly hampers consumer spending, which is critical for offsetting declines in export performance. Consequently, South Korea's economy remains alarmingly susceptible to external shocks, much as it was two decades ago.

Perhaps the most troubling signs lie in the country's fraying social fabric. Increasing inequality, a wide gender gap, generational divides and regional disparities are fast straining social cohesion. Hyper-competitive schools and workplaces are taking a toll on mental health, particularly among the youth, resulting in one of the highest suicide rates in the world. Many young Koreans are abandoning hopes of marriage and family, leading to the lowest birth rate among OECD nations.

This demographic crisis, coupled with one of the world's fastest-aging



populations, threatens to place unsustainable financial burdens on future generations. Also, many elderly Koreans live in poverty due to inadequate pensions. Yet critical reforms to the national pension system and social safety nets remain mired in political deadlock.

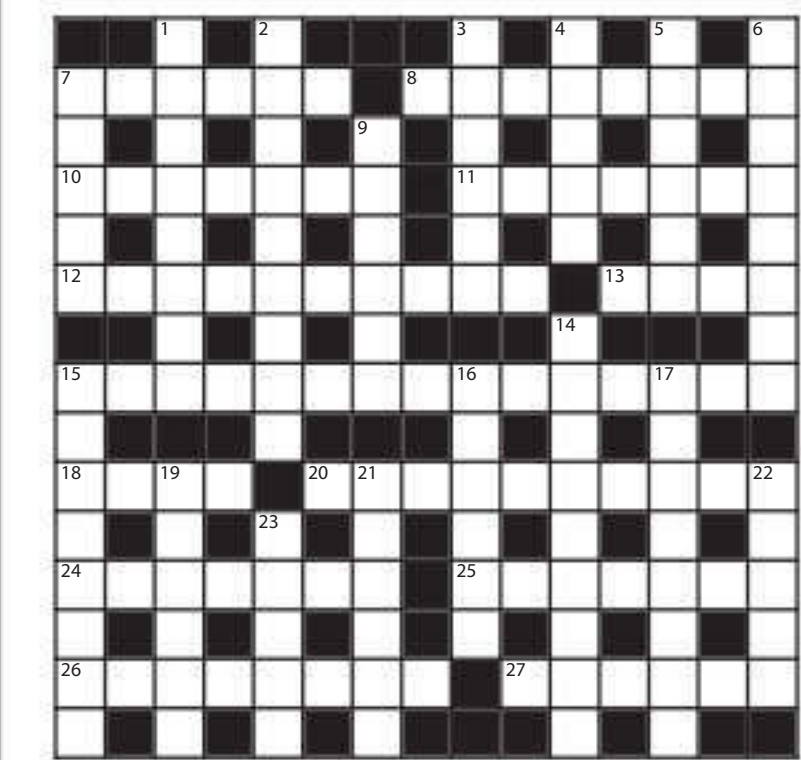
The persistence of devastating human-induced disasters further underscores systemic failings. Incidents like the Sewol Ferry sinking, the Itaewon crowd tragedy, and the recent Muan plane crash highlight a lingering disregard for public safety, despite past lessons from tragedies like the Sampoong Department Store collapse.

Yet, as Winston Churchill famously said during World War II, "The darkest hour is just before dawn." These words, spoken during Britain's gravest moment with threats of a Nazi German invasion, were a rallying cry for resilience and renewal, not despair and disappointment. Koreans have weathered crises before with courage and determination, and they can do so again. While this New Year may feel like the gloomiest in recent memory, it also offers an opportunity - a chance to confront hard truths, embrace change, and forge a brighter future.

The Korea Herald/ANN.

## CROSSWORD

NO-293013



### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

MUESLI SWEETPEA  
O C A H N R L  
R E S H U F F L E G R I L L  
A T G O F E R M U  
L E A T H E R L E O T A R D  
T I T T C S L E  
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T C O N A E R V  
G M I T P L H  
A C E T A T E I N C E N S E  
D A N L N U F M  
G E N U S L E G I S L A T E  
E I E E H L N  
T H E S A U R I E Y E L E T

### ACROSS

- 7 This is in every way sacred for audience (6)  
8 Cyclist, say, cycling before and behind (8)  
10 Maybe ecology sees Crocodile in landscape catching cold (7)  
11 An ancient royal pub joins a row over hotel (7)  
12 I heard a common pet's expensive in Paris for anybody who's striking (10)  
13 Fruit and veg recipe (4)

- 15 Mainland/North Iona steamship's working and we're all connected (2,3,2,2,6)  
18 Adolescent initially needs support earlier on (4)  
20 Instrument held in one area? Unusual (10)  
24 Tree in WWI battle swathed in gas (7)  
25 Give up the burden (7)  
26 Brings up return of routine work, ends in more stress (8)  
27 A cereal crop, except on pastureland (6)

### DOWN

- 1 Stadium music featuring ELO post-break-up, making comeback (8)  
2 A soldier in the pampas? That's bananas (9)  
3 Folk hero regularly seen to split apple with head shot (6)  
4 In our Airbnb we have this climbing wild rose (5)  
5 Rat seen in a river several years running (6)

- 6 Edward holds that place is linked with a painter (8)  
7 Refuse to break sweat (5)  
9 Crimes of these receivers? (6)  
14 15A refuted (4,2,3)  
15 Regarding request for plain cake? (8)  
16 Character's new, not initially fully developed (6)  
17 A fury flies up with consort high above the

- ground (8)  
19 Formerly fortified wine and strong beer (6)  
21 I'll stay in festival for short time - it's more relaxed (6)  
22 Bread - a way to get Japanese sort to rise (5)  
23 A film for everyone in the round is a wonderful thing (5)

NOTE: Solution for Sunday's cryptic crossword will be carried next Sunday

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)



# 8 security personnel, driver killed in Maoist attack

The security team was returning from a joint anti-Maoist operation when their vehicle was targeted

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
RAIPUR, 8 JANUARY

**E**ight District Reserve Guard (DRG) personnel and the driver of their vehicle were killed in a Maoist ambush on the Kutru-Bedre road in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on Monday.

"The attack, which took place near Amboli village around 2:15 pm, involved a powerful IED blast followed by gunfire. The security team was returning from a joint anti-Maoist operation when their vehicle was targeted," Bastar Range IG P Sundarraj said.

According to reports, five other personnel were injured in the attack, with three reported to be in critical condition. The insurgents detonated the IED on a bridge, destroying the police vehicle and causing significant casualties.

Sources revealed that the Maoists fired on the security personnel following the explosion.

The DRG team, which has played a crucial role in count-



er-insurgency operations in the Bastar region, was returning after a high-risk mission. This attack is believed to be an attempt by the Maoists

to retaliate against the increasing pressure from intensified security operations.

The injured were airlifted for medical treatment, while

a combing operation has been launched in the area to track the attackers.

The ambush highlights the persistent challenge posed

**According to reports, five other personnel were injured in the attack, with three reported to be in critical condition. The insurgents detonated the IED on a bridge, destroying the police vehicle and causing multiple casualties.**

by Maoist insurgents in southern Chhattisgarh, despite ongoing efforts by security forces to eliminate extremism.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has repeatedly emphasised the government's commitment to eradicating Maoist influence from the region by 2026. However, this attack underscores the rebels' capacity to strike back, utilising guerrilla tactics and the dense terrain to their advantage.

Security forces have launched combing operations in the area to track down the perpetrators, vowing a strong response to this attack.

## Bijapur journalist murder: Mastermind Suresh Chandrakaar arrested in Hyderabad

SHISHIR ROY CHOWDHURY  
RAIPUR, 6 JANUARY

In a significant breakthrough, Chhattisgarh Police's Special Investigation Team (SIT) has arrested Suresh Chandrakaar, a contractor and Congress worker, accused of masterminding the gruesome murder of journalist Mukesh Chandrakaar. The arrest, carried out late on 5 January in Hyderabad, was confirmed by the Bastar IG P Sundarraj, who shed light on the case that has sparked nationwide outrage and raised serious concerns about the safety of journalists in conflict zones.

Mukesh Chandrakaar, 33, a journalist from Bijapur, was known for his fearless reporting on left wing insurgency and corruption in government projects. On 1 January, 2025, he went missing. His mutilated body was discovered two days later in a sealed septic tank on Suresh Chandrakaar's property in Chhatanpara locality.

The post-mortem report detailed the sheer brutality of the attack-Mukesh's liver was torn into four pieces, five ribs were broken, his skull had 15 fractures, his heart was ruptured, and his neck was snapped. The doc-



tor conducting the autopsy described it as one of the most gruesome murders they had encountered.

Mukesh's investigative work on corruption in Public Works Department (PWD) projects exposed irregularities in road construction contracts awarded to Suresh Chandrakaar. Sources reveal that the project costs were inflated from Rs 56 crore to Rs 112 crore, and payments were allegedly made for incomplete work. This expose is believed to have angered Suresh, who then plotted the journalist's murder.

Primary investigation suggests that on the night of the murder, an argument broke out during dinner. Suresh's brother, Ritesh, and supervisor, Mahendra, attacked Mukesh with iron rods, inflicting fatal injuries. His body was dumped in a

septic tank and sealed with cement, while another accomplice, Dinesh, stood guard. The attackers also destroyed Mukesh's phone and the murder weapon.

After the murder, Suresh fled Chhattisgarh, evading law enforcement agencies. The SIT, formed to probe the case, tracked his movements using over 200 CCTV footages and 300 mobile numbers. He was finally apprehended in Hyderabad. Authorities have frozen four of Suresh's bank accounts and demolished several illegal constructions linked to him.

Despite the arrest, questions are being raised about the police investigation. Senior journalist Alok Kumar Putul, speaking to The Statesman, highlighted concerns about procedural lapses. "There are reports that the crime scene was not sealed, and no forensic team was called to examine it. While it's possible the police are maintaining confidentiality, presenting concrete evidence and reliable witnesses in court will be their biggest challenge," he said. These gaps in investigation have fueled skepticism over whether justice will prevail or if the case will falter due to weak prosecution.

## TENDER

**West Bengal Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes & Other Backward Classes Development & Finance Corporation**  
(A Government of West Bengal Undertaking)  
CF-217/A/1 Sector-I, Salt Lake, Kolkata - 700064

**Expression of Interest**

Eol is invited for procurement of up to 1 lakh bicycles (Boys & Girls) under Sabooj Sathi scheme from local manufacturers of West Bengal. Eol document is already available in [wbsaboojsathi.gov.in](http://wbsaboojsathi.gov.in), [wbcbdev.gov.in](http://wbcbdev.gov.in) and [anagraswarkalyan.gov.in](http://anagraswarkalyan.gov.in) from 06-01-2025. Last date and time for submission of Eol - 3.00 PM of 21-01-2025. Pre - Bid Meeting on 10-01-2025 at 4.00 PM. For details, Contact - 033 40261500/1506 or mail your queries to [dm.scstdfc@gmail.com](mailto:dm.scstdfc@gmail.com).

Managing Director

**S. E. RAILWAY - TENDER**

**e-Tender Notice No. E-CPM-GSU-ADRA-01-2025 Dated : 03.01.2025.**  
Chief Project Manager/GSU/S.E. Railway/Adra invites 01 (One) no. e-tender for the following work:

**Description of Work:** Chandl-Purulia Jn. Replacement of 50 K gallon Overhead RCC tank at Purulia & Chandl station.  
**Tender Value :** ₹ 4,67,94,149.44. The closing date and time of e-tenders is on 29.01.2025 at 15.00 hrs. Details of above e-tender may please be seen at website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) (PR-984)

**REVISED E-AUCTION PROGRAMME FOR SALE OF RAILWAY SCRAP MATERIAL**

E-Auction programme for sale of railway scrap materials under jurisdiction of Lumding for the month of January, 2025 has been fixed as under.

SN	Months	Dated Fixed
1	January/2025	07-01-2025, 17-01-2025, 23-01-2025 & 31-01-2025

Interested bidders can participate in E-Auction programme through IREPS website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Sr. Divisional Material Manager, Lumding Division  
**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers With A Smile

**উত্তরাঙ্গা কশেট্রিয়া গ্রামীন ব্যাংক**  
উত্তরাঙ্গা কশেট্রিয়া গ্রামীন ব্যাংক

Invitation of offer for Interior, Furnishing, Counter Work & Electrical & Data Cabling of Amguri, Hasimara, Jaldhaka HP & Kuchilbari Branch

Uttaranga Kshetriya Gramin Bank invites RFP for Interior Furnishing, Counter Work & Electrical & Data Cabling Work at Amguri, Hasimara, Jaldhaka HP & Kuchilbari Branch of Uttaranga Kshetriya Gramin Bank. Kindly download the formats / terms and conditions from the web site <http://www.ubkqb.org>. The last date of submission of bid proposal is 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 up to 3:00 PM.

Sd/-  
General Manager  
Uttaranga Kshetriya Gramin Bank

**HOWRAH MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
4, MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD, HOWRAH-711101  
☎ 033 2638 3211 / 12 / 13 ☎ Fax: 933 2641 0830 [www.hmcc.in](http://www.hmcc.in)

WB / HMC / TN / SE / 023 / 24-25 Dated: 04-01-2025

**e-Tender Notice**

e-Tender in prescribed form are being invited by Superintending Engineer, HMC for Improvement of Road by mastic asphalt at Mahendra Bhattacharjee Road from Vidyasagar statue to Santiraganchi More under Ward No. 25, 43 & 44 of HMC area from reputed, resourceful & bona fide contractors having sufficient experience in similar nature of work. Related information in detail will be available from the e-Tender Notice & the Department of SE <https://wbtdenders.gov.in> Bid submission (online) closing date: 31-01-2025 up to 5:00 P.M. HMC Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any application without any reason.

133(3)/24-25, 06-01-25

Secretary, Howrah Municipal Corporation

**EASTERN RAILWAY**

**Tender Notice No. : EL/HWH/25/21(Notice)633, dated 03.01.2025.**  
Divisional Railway Manager, Eastern Railway, Howrah, DRM Building near Railway station, Howrah-711101 invites open e-tenders for the under-mentioned electrical work : **Tender No. : EL-HWH-25-21-3300. Name of Work:** Installation of Pump-motor set in connection with the work for Provision of deep tube well (200 mm x 150 mm) Kamnara, Khetia, Chamaridighi, Karjaya Gram, Amarun including Chlorination Plant with standby boring at KAN and SKG stations under AEN/BWN. **Tender Value:** Rs. 24,88,991/-. **Bid Security (Earnest Money Deposit):** Rs. 49,800/-. **Completion period :** 120 days. **Closing date and time of tender :** 24.01.2025 at 15.00 hrs. In case the date of closing mentioned in the Notice Inviting Tender is declared a holiday/bandh/strike on any account, the date of closing tender online will not be changed as the application in the website of IREPS does not permit submission of any offer after closing date and time of the tender. However, opening of tenders online will be done on any convenient day after closing date and time of the tender. The details of tender are available at website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). Tenderers are requested to submit their offer online on the above website. (HWH-525/2024-25)

Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.easternrailways.gov.in](http://www.easternrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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**EASTERN RAILWAY**

Following e-tender is invited online by the Sr. DEN/2, Eastern Railway, Howrah, DRM Building near Railway station, Howrah-711101 from tenderers having experience of similar nature of work and required financial capabilities: Including those registered with Irrigation/CPWD/SEB/MES or any public sector undertaking for the following work : **Sr. DEN/2/HWH. 307-2024-25, dtd. 03.01.2025. Description of work:** Widening of Road at LC No. 12, 21, 40, 44 at GRAE and 53, 56, 68, 44 at SKG and 50 & 59 in chord line in the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN/2/HWH. **Approx. Cost:** Rs. 1,79,88,147.26. **Earnest Money:** Rs. 2,40,000/-. **Completion period :** 12 months. **Cost of tender form :** Nil. **Closing date & time of tender:** 27.01.2025 at 14.00 hrs. In case the date of closing mentioned in the Notice Inviting Tender is declared a holiday/bandh/strike on any account, the date of closing tender online will not be changed as the application in the website of IREPS does not permit submission of any offer after closing date and time of the tender. However, opening of tenders online will be done next working day. The details of tender are available at website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). Tenderers are requested to submit their offer online on the above website. No manual offer will be accepted. (HWH-524/2024-25)

Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.easternrailways.gov.in](http://www.easternrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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**EASTERN RAILWAY**

**e-Tender Notice No. : ELS/SDAH/OT/24-015 dtd. 02.01.2025.** E-tender is invited by the Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/EMU/Sealdah, Eastern Railway, 1st Floor, Control Building, Kolkata : 700014 for the following work: **Tender No. : ELS/SDAH/OT/24-015. Name of the Work :** Upgradation of Esmon Speedometer and AC-DC MCB test benches. **Tender Value:** Rs. 5,36,800/-. **Earnest Money :** Rs. 10,700/-. **Cost of tender document:** Nil. **Completion period :** 6 months. **Date of Closing :** 04.02.2025 at 14.00 hrs. Details of tender notice and corrigendum issued from time to time are available at website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) (SDAH-303/2024-25)

Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.easternrailways.gov.in](http://www.easternrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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**EASTERN RAILWAY**

**E-Tender Notice No. O-AC-T-186-24-25 (Open), dated 02.01.2025.** E-tenders (Open) are invited by the Divisional Railway Manager, Eastern Railway, Asansol, Station Road, Pin-713301 for the following work : **Case No. : O-AC-T-186-24-25. Name of the Work :** Open tender for Repair and maintenance of track in the section of SSE/ P.Way/DGHR under AEN/JSMSE. **Tender value:** Rs. 75,48,630.15. **Earnest Money :** Rs. 1,51,000/-. **Completion period for the work :** 12 months. **Date and time of closing :** 30.01.2025 at 12.00 hrs. Complete details can be seen in the Railways website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) (ASN-291/2024-25)

Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.easternrailways.gov.in](http://www.easternrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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**E-tender for Private Security Agency.** For details please visit <https://wbtdenders.gov.in> (Tender Id : 2025\_DHE\_795459\_1)

Officer in charge  
Gorubathan Government College  
PO : Fagu Dist : Darjeeling

**S. E. RAILWAY - TENDER**

Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer/ Chakradharpur acting for & on behalf of The President of India invites e-Tenders against Tender No. mentioned below due to open on 24.01.2025 at 15.00 hrs. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Sl. No., Tender Notice No. & Name of work** are as follows : 1. ST-CKP-OT-24-25-109. S&T work in connection with Proposal for one Loop lines each in both UP & DN Grid and one sick siding of 70M length at Manikuli Station. **Tender Value :** ₹ 2,51,00,946.92. **Earnest Money :** ₹ 2,75,500/-. 2. ST-CKP-OT-24-25-110. Provision of LED based Coach indication Display & Train indication Boards (IPIS) and PA systems & GPS Clocks at Jharsuguda. **Tender Value :** ₹ 1,21,63,911.63. **Earnest Money :** ₹ 2,10,800/-. **Completion period :** 12 months for Sl. No. 1 and 06 months for Sl. No. 2. The tender details can be viewed at website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. The tender/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/bidders can participate in e-Tendering. e-Tender forms shall be issued free of cost. (PR-982)

**e-TENDER NOTICE**

**OFFICE OF THE BDO BANARHAT BLOCK JALPAIGURI**

Notice inviting e-Tender by the undersigned for different works vide NIT No. e-NIT No.07 : BANARHAT / EO / NIT-007 / 2024-25. Last date of online bid submission: 14-01-2025 at 06-00 P.M. respectively. For further details you may visit <https://wbtdenders.gov.in>

Sd/- BDO, Banarhat Block

**EASTERN RAILWAY**

**Abridged Tender Notice No. KPA-ERS-ST-02-24-25, dated 02.01.2025.** Tender Notice for E-tender is invited by the Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer, Eastern Railway Workshop, Kanchrapara, North 24 Parganas, P.O. - Kanchrapara, Pin-743145 (WB) for the following work: **Description :** Rehabilitation & overhauling of LUR/Vases installed in Knorr-Bremse make CCB Air Brake System of three phase locomotives. **Tender Value:** Rs. 2,38,42,457/-. **Date & time of opening of tender:** 24.01.2025 at 15.00 hrs. **Contract Period :** 24 months. The tender document and other details can be obtained from the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). The bidding for the tender is to be submitted through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any manual offer if received shall not be accepted and will be summarily rejected. (MSC-299/2024-25)

Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.easternrailways.gov.in](http://www.easternrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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**EASTERN RAILWAY**

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway, Asansol Division, Station Road, Asansol, Pin - 713301 invites open e-tender through IREPS portal vide website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for awarding the contract, details of which are as under : **Category of Auction :** Leasing of Parcel space (SLR). **e-Auction Catalogue No. :** C-3-PARCASN1601. **Date of Auction start:** 16.01.2025 at 11.00 hrs. **Train no. & SLR :** (i) 22465 (MDP-ANVT) FSLR-1. (ii) 12376 (JSMSE-TBM) FSLR-1. (iii) 22306 (JSMSE-MVB) FSLR-1. (iv) 17322 (JSMSE-VSG) FSLR-1. (v) 22459 (MDP-ANVT) FSLR-1. (vi) 13509 (ASN-GD) FSLR-1. (vii) 13507 (ASN-GKP) FSLR-1. (viii) 13509 (ASN-GD) FSLR-2. (ix) 13507 (ASN-GKP) FSLR-2. (x) 12235 (MDP-ANVT) FSLR-1. (xi) 12942 (ASN-BVC) FSLR-1. (xii) 11428 (JSMSE-PUNE) FSLR-1. All prospective bidders are advised to visit the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for full details and to participate against the above mentioned e-Auction as per schedule. (ASN-292/2024-25)

Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.easternrailways.gov.in](http://www.easternrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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**A-823 Government of Odisha Office of the Additional Chief Engineer Salapada Irrigation Circle, Salapada, Keonjhar E-mail : [acesisalapada@gmail.com](mailto:acesisalapada@gmail.com)**

**'e' Procurement Notice No- ACESIC-02 /2024-25**

1	Nature of the works	Rate & Lining Work
2	No. of works	22 (Twenty-two)
3	Value of works (Excluding GST)	Rs. 212.81 to 254.21 Lakh
4	Period of completion	6 (Six) Calendar Months
5	Class of contractors	"B" & "A"
6	Procurement Officer	Additional Chief Engineer, Salapada Irrigation Circle, Salapada, Keonjhar-758020
7	Availability of tender for On-line bidding	From 11.00 hrs of 07.01.2025 to 21.01.2025 up to 15.00 hrs
8	Last date and time of seeking tender clarification	18.01.2025 up to 15.00hrs
9	Pre-Bid Meeting	On Dated 20.01.2025 at 11.30 Hrs in the O/o the Additional Chief Engineer, Salapada Irrigation Circle, Salapada, Keonjhar-758020
10	Date and time of opening of Technical Bid	22.01.2025 at 11.00 hrs.

Further detail conditions can be seen from the Govt. web site [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)

Sd/-  
Additional Chief Engineer, Salapada Irrigation Circle, Salapada, Keonjhar- 758020

OIPR-32468/11/0002/2425

**DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER**  
**Mangrove Division, North – Konkan**  
**Ph.N.: 022 6930 9286**  
E-mail: [dfommcu@gmail.com](mailto:dfommcu@gmail.com)

**TENDER NOTICE**  
(Supply of Manpower in Mangrove Forest Offices for implementation of Office / Field work)

**Tender Notice No. DFO / MDNK / 29 / 2024-25**

Online tenders are hereby invited in the prescribed form by Divisional Forest Officer, Mangrove Division, North – Konkan from registered / licensed manpower supplier (labour contractor) for supply of Manpower for implementation for various manpower services on contract basis for the period of February 2025 to January 2026. The details of Manpower required is mentioned in Annexure A and Annexure B.

Prescribed tender form, list of manpower required and terms and conditions for supply of Manpower will be available on website: <http://www.mahatenders.gov.in> from 03-01-2025 @ 11-00 hrs. The tender schedule is enclosed here for information. Pre-bid Meeting on 16-01-2025 @ 11-00 hrs. at Thane Office. The Tender Document sale & acceptance process carried out as per tender schedule on e-tendering website: <http://www.mahatenders.gov.in>

Online submission on e-tendering website  
<http://www.mahatenders.gov.in>

Technical & Financial Bid will be opened on dated 24-01-2025 at 11.00 hrs. in the Office of The Divisional Forest Officer, Mangrove Division – North Konkan, Thane in the presence of tenderers or their authorized representatives who wish to be present. The award of contract will be subject to the fulfilment of terms and conditions given in the detailed tender.

**Note:**

- Tenderers are hereby informed that a non-refundable fee of Rs. 5,000 (Rupees five thousand) only must be paid, along with an Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of Rs. 1,20,000 (Rupees one lakh twenty thousand) only. Payment should be made through the process specified on the website: <http://www.mahatenders.gov.in>
- The tenderer should submit Technical Bid & Financial Bid in separate folder on or before dated 24-01-2025 @ 11-00 hrs.
- The undersigned reserves the right to accept, reject, modify, or cancel any or all tenders, either partially or entirely, without providing any reason.

D. P. Khade  
Divisional Forest Officer  
Mangrove Division – North Konkan

DGIPR/ROC-5472/2425

**EASTERN RAILWAY**

**CORRIGENDUM**

**No. 1 To E-Tender Nos. : 295-2024-25 & 296-2024-25 (Open Tender)** under the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN/1/HWH. In E-Tender No. 295-2024-25, Period of completion should be read as 6 months instead of 12 months. In E-Tender No. 296-2024-25, Advertised value should be read as Rs. 2,99,33,539.45 instead of Rs. 2,99,33,539.37 and Period of completion should be read as 6 months instead of 12 months. All other terms and conditions of the said tender notice will remain unchanged. (HWH-527/2024-25)

Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.easternrailways.gov.in](http://www.easternrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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**EASTERN RAILWAY**

**Open Tender Notice No. MC-60-0-DRMLS-HABD-24, dated 02.01.2025.** Sealed tenders are invited by the Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (Carriage & Wagon), Eastern Railway, Howrah, DRM Building near Railway station, Howrah-711101 for the following work : **Name of the work :** Supply, installation and commissioning of Hot Axle Box Detection System across Howrah Division, Eastern Railway. **Tender value:** Rs. 60,09,559.93. **Earnest Money to be deposited :** Rs. 1,20,200/-. **Period of contract :** 3 months from the date of commencement of work. **Website particulars for submission of tender online :** [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) **Bid closing date & time :** 24.01.2025 upto 14.00 hrs. (HWH-526/2024-25)

Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.easternrailways.gov.in](http://www.easternrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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**EASTERN RAILWAY**

**Open Tender Notice No. MC-60-0-DRMLS-HABD-24, dated 02.01.2025.** Sealed tenders are invited by the Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (Carriage & Wagon), Eastern Railway, Howrah, DRM Building near Railway station, Howrah-711101 for the following work : **Name of the work :** Supply, installation and commissioning of Hot Axle Box Detection System across Howrah Division, Eastern Railway. **Tender value:** Rs. 60,09,559.93. **Earnest Money to be deposited :** Rs. 1,20,200/-. **Period of contract :** 3 months from the date of commencement of work. **Website particulars for submission of tender online :** [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) **Bid closing date & time :** 24.01.2025 upto 14.00 hrs. (HWH-526/2024-25)

Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.easternrailways.gov.in](http://www.easternrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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**Rail Wheel Plant/Bela**  
(Distt. - Saran), Bihar - 841221

E-Open Tender Notice No. : SR/WPI/2024-25/25 dated: 03.01.2025. Principal Chief Materials Manager/Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of the President of India invites online "e-Open Tender", through Indian Railways E-Procurement Website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in), for supply of following Stores Item at RWPI/Bela. The closing time of all tenders is 14.00 hrs. (1) Tender No. 01.24.1028, Short Description of Item: SLUGO MANAGANESE. Quantity: 296006 KGS. Date of Tender Closing/Opening: 03.02.2025 AT 14.00 Hrs. (1) Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). (2) The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with the above website for updates including Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation with respect to the above tender. However, this information will also be invariably published in the all concerned newspapers. For PCMM/RWPI/Bela RWP/ICPRO/ADVT/2024-25/85

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**E-AUCTION NOTICE**

Auction of one Government Ferry Ghat for three years settlement from the District Land and Land Reforms Officer, Murshidabad is invited. Intending eligible bidders may visit online at [www.dlirmsd.gov.in](http://www.dlirmsd.gov.in) / [www.murshidabad.gov.in](http://www.murshidabad.gov.in) / <https://eauction.gov.in> for details and may submit their bids through e-Auction process.

\*Terms and conditions apply.

Additional District Magistrate and District Land & Land Reforms Officer, Murshidabad

**EASTERN RAILWAY**

**Tender Notice No. 222-S/1/W-11, dated 02.01.2025.** Following e-tenders are invited online by the Divisional Railway Manager, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, DRM Building, Kaizer Street, Kolkata-700014 for the following works : **Sl.No.1, Tender No. : TN-222-24-25. Name of the Work :** At Dum Dum Junction-Naihati Junction Gauge; Provision of standard height gauge as per RDSO at Level Crossing Gate Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9A, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 (Total 13 nos) with all ancillary works under Senior Section Engineer [Works]/Barrackpore. **Tender Value :** Rs. 1,78,09,374.46. **EMD:** Rs. 2,39,100/-. **Sl.No.2, Tender No. : TN-221-24-25. Name of the Work :** Renewal of bridge sleeper by H-beam steel sleeper in the jurisdiction of Senior Divisional Engineer/1/Sealdah. **Tender Value :** Rs. 13,10,16,933.48. **EMD:** Rs. 8,05,100/-. **Sl.No.3, Tender No. : TN-222-24-25. Name of the Work :** At Belghoria Track Depot: Proposed construction of new shed, new wharf, boundary wall, repairing of floor, dismantling of old building and other ancillary works. **Tender Value:** Rs. 1,38,35,319.30. **EMD:** Rs. 2,19,200/-. **Sl.No.4, Tender No. : TN-223-24-25. Name of the Work :** Cess repair work in the jurisdiction of Senior Divisional Engineer/1/Sealdah. **Tender Value :** Rs. 1,53,10,312.95. **EMD:** Rs. 2,26,600/-. **Completion period for the work :** 12 months for each. **Date & time of closing of tenders :** 27.01.2025 at 15.00 hrs. **Date & time of opening of tenders:** 27.01.2025 at 15.30 hrs. The tender document and other details are at [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). The bidding for the tender is to be submitted through e-tendering on



# Congress is ready to certify Trump's election win, but his 6 January legacy hangs over the day

No violence, protests or even procedural objections in Congress are expected this time. Republicans from the highest levels of power who challenged the 2020 election results when Trump lost to Democrat Joe Biden have no qualms this year after he defeated Vice President Kamala Harris

**AGENCIES**  
WASHINGTON, 6 JANUARY

As Congress convenes during a winter storm to certify President-elect Donald Trump's election, the legacy of 6 January hangs over the proceedings with an extraordinary fact: The candidate who tried to overturn the previous election won this time and is legitimately returning to power. Lawmakers will gather noontime Monday under the tightest national security level possible. Layers of tall black fencing flank the US Capitol complex in a stark reminder of what happened four years ago, when a defeated Trump sent his mob to "fight like hell" in what

became the most gruesome attack on the seat of American democracy in 200 years.

No violence, protests or even procedural objections in Congress are expected this time. Republicans from the highest levels of power who challenged the 2020 election results when Trump lost to Democrat Joe Biden have no qualms this year after he defeated Vice President Kamala Harris.

And Democrats frustrated by Trump's 312-226 Electoral College victory nevertheless accept the choice of the American voters. Even the snowstorm barreling down on the region wasn't expected to interfere with 6 January, the day set by law to certify the vote.

"Whether we're in a bliz-

zard or not, we are going to be in that chamber making sure this is done," House Speaker Mike Johnson, a Republican who helped lead Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election, said Sunday on Fox News Channel.

The day's return to a US tradition that launches the peaceful transfer of presidential power comes with an asterisk as Trump prepares to take office in two weeks with a revived sense of authority. He denies that he lost four years ago, muses about staying beyond the Constitution's two-term White House limit and promises to pardon some of the more than 1,250 people who have pleaded guilty or were convicted of crimes for the Capitol siege.



What's unclear is if 6 January 2021, was the anomaly, the year Americans violently attacked their own govern-

ment, or if this year's expected calm becomes the outlier. The US is struggling to cope with its political and cultural differences at a time when democracy worldwide is threatened. Trump calls 6 January 2021, a "day of love."

"We should not be lulled into complacency," said Ian Bassin, executive director of the cross-ideological non-profit Protect Democracy.

He and others have warned that it is historically unprecedented for US voters to do what they did in November, reelecting Trump after he publicly refused to step aside last time. Returning to power an emboldened leader who has demonstrated his unwillingness to give it up "is an unprecedentedly dangerous move for a free

country to voluntarily take," Bassin said.

Biden, speaking Sunday at events at the White House, called 6 January 2021, "one of the toughest days in American history."

"We've got to get back to the basic, normal transfer of power," the president said. What Trump did last time, Biden said, "was a genuine threat to democracy. I'm hopeful we're beyond that now."

Still, American democracy has proven to be resilient, and Congress, the branch of government closest to the people, will come together to affirm the choice of Americans.

With pomp and tradition, the day is expected to unfold as it has countless times

before, with the arrival of ceremonial mahogany boxes filled with the electoral certificates from the states — boxes that staff were frantically grabbing and protecting as Trump's mob stormed the building last time.

Senators will walk across the Capitol — which four years ago had filled with roaming rioters, some defecating and menacingly calling out for leaders, others engaging in hand-to-hand combat with police — to the House to begin certifying the vote.

Harris will preside over the counting, as is the requirement for the vice president, and certify her own defeat — much the way Democrat Al Gore did in 2001 and Republican Richard Nixon in 1961.

# Shooting attack on a bus carrying Israelis in the occupied West Bank kills 3

**AGENCIES**  
TEL AVIV, 6 JANUARY

Gunmen opened fire on a bus carrying Israelis in the occupied West Bank on Monday, killing at least three people and wounding seven others. Violence has surged in the territory since Hamas' 7 October 2023, attack out of Gaza ignited the ongoing war there.

The attack occurred in the Palestinian village of Al-Funduq, on one of the main east-west roads crossing the territory. Israel's Magen David



Adom rescue service said two women in their 60s and a man in his 40s were killed, and the military said it was

looking for the attackers.

Palestinians have carried out scores of shooting, stabbing and car-ramming attacks against Israelis in recent years. Israel has launched near-nightly military raids across the territory that frequently trigger gunbattles with militants. There has also been a sharp rise in attacks on Palestinians by Israeli settlers, leading the United States to impose sanctions.

The Palestinian Health Ministry says at least 838 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire in the West

Bank since the start of the war in Gaza. Most appear to have been militants killed in battles with Israeli troops, but the dead also include participants in violent protests and civilian bystanders.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to "reach the despicable murderers" behind Monday's attack and "settle accounts with them and with everyone who assisted them. No one will be spared."

Hamas praised the attack in a statement but did not claim responsibility for it.

# The Brutalist and Emilia Perez triumph at Golden Globes

**AGENCIES**  
WASHINGTON, 6 JANUARY

Two wildly audacious films — Brady Corbet's 215-minute postwar epic *The Brutalist* and Jacques Audiard's Spanish language, genre-shifting trans musical *Emilia Perez* — won top honours at the 82nd Golden Globes on Sunday.

The Globes, which are still finding their footing after years of scandal and makeover, scattered awards around to a number of films. But the awards group put its strongest support behind a pair of movies that sought to be unlike anything else.

*The Brutalist* was crowned best film, drama, putting one of 2024's most ambitious films on course to be a major contender at the Academy Awards. The film, shot in VistaVision and released with



an intermission, also won best director for Corbet and best actor for Adrien Brody. *Emilia Perez* won best film, comedy or musical, elevating the Oscar chances of

Netflix's top Oscar contender. It also won best supporting actress for Zoe Saldana, best song (*El Mal*) and best non-English language film.

The night's big actor winners included some surprises. One was Moore's win for best actress in a comedy or musical. Her comeback performance in *The Substance*, about a Hollywood star who resorts to an experimental process to regain her youth, landed the 62-year-old Moore her first Globe — a victory that came over the heavily favoured Mikey Madison of *Anora*. Best actress in a drama film, was a surprise, too. The Brazilian actress Fernanda Torres won for her performance in *I'm Still Here*, a based-on-a-true-story drama about a family living through the disappearance of political dissident Rubens Paiva in 1970s Rio de Janeiro.

**S Korean anti-corruption agency and police debate tougher measures to detain impeached president:** South Korea's anti-corruption agency and police debated on Monday more forceful measures to detain impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol after their previous attempt was blocked by the presidential security service last week. **AGENCIES**

**Conversion of UTS Counter into UTS-cum-PRS Counter at Pagla Chandi Station**

For the better convenience of passengers, following UTS counter at Pagla Chandi Station will be converted into UTS-cum-PRS counter in the morning shift to issue Reserved and Unreserved tickets simultaneously from the existing counter with the following working time schedule for Passenger Reservation System. • **Location/Station Name:** Pagla Chandi (PCX) under Sealdah Division, Eastern Railway. • **Working Time Schedule of PRS Counter (only for PRS transaction):** From 10:00 hrs. to 14:00 hrs. • **Days of working (PRS):** Monday to Saturday. • **Closed :** Sundays and National Holidays. • **Date of Commencing :** From 11.01.2025. **Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Sealdah Eastern Railway**

Follow us at : @EasternRailway @easternrailwayheadquarter

Form No. 3  
[See Regulation-15 (1)(a)] / 16(3)  
**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, KOLKATA (DRT 3)**  
8th Floor, Jeevan Sudha Building, 42-C,  
Jawahar Lal Nehru Road, Kolkata-700071

Case No.: OA/62/2023  
Summons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993. Exh. No.: 4986

**FEDERAL BANK VS CHANDRIMA MOULIK**

To,  
(1) CHANDRIMA MOULIK  
DW/S/O- NA  
Sonartari Apartment, 122, Kalikapur Road,  
P.S-Jadavpur, Kolkata,  
South Twenty Four Parganas,  
WEST BENGAL - 700059

**SUMMONS**

WHEREAS, OA/62/2023 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar on 09/09/2024.

WHEREAS this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/ notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of Rs. 2178539.50/- (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed).

In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:-

(i) to show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted;

(ii) to disclose particulars of properties or assets other than properties and assets specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the original application;

(iii) you are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such other assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application, pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties;

(iv) you shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business any of the assets over which security interest is created and/or other assets and properties specified or disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal;

(v) you shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realised by sale of secured assets or other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank or financial institutions holding security interest over such assets.

You are also directed to file the written statement with a copy thereof furnished to the applicant and to appear before Registrar on 22/01/2025 at 10.30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this date: 03/10/2024.

Sd/-  
Registrar-In-Charge  
Debts Recovery Tribunal-3, Kolkata

**सी डेक CDAC**

**ADMISSION NOTIFICATION**  
C-DAC ADVANCED LEVEL DIPLOMA COURSE ON  
HIGH PERFORMANCE COMPUTING AND ITS APPLICATION  
FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS BELONGING TO SC & ST CATEGORY

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Duration: 6 Months
- Mode: Offline (Physical)
- No Registration Fee
- Course Fee: Rs. 10,000/-

**BENEFITS**

- Industry expert guidance
- Mentoring by C-DAC experts
- 10,000 monthly stipend OR boarding and lodging will be provided
- Hands-on training session on latest technology

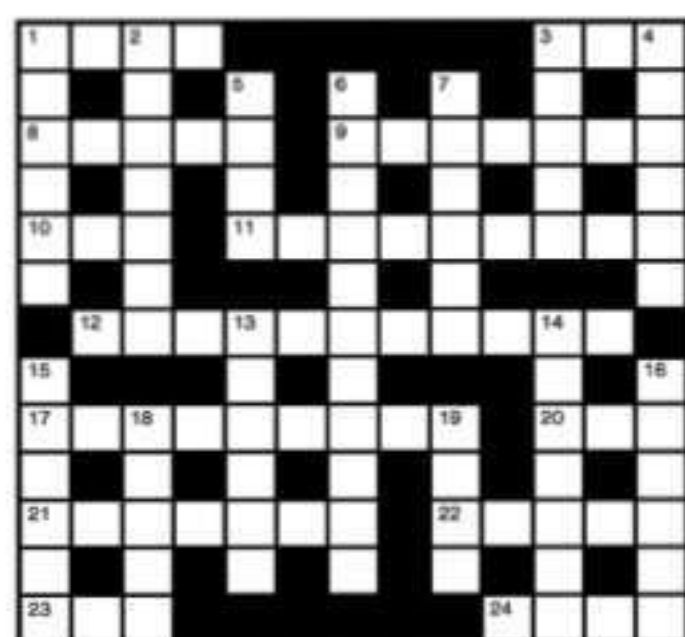
**Last date to Apply January 31, 2025**

c-huk@cdac.in https://c-huk.cdac.in

CBC 06140/12/0005/2425

## LEISURE

### 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Praise (4)
  - Meadow (3)
  - Dirty (5)
  - Medieval weapon (7)
  - Anger (3)
  - Of course (9)
  - Drilling tool (5,3,3)
  - Aimless (9)
  - Colliery (3)
  - Hunting cry (5-2)
  - Cooker (5)
  - Broad flat fish (3)
  - Solution broadly (4)
- DOWN**
- Transparent (6)
  - Ambiguous (7)
  - Defame (5)
  - Every time (6)
  - Song of praise (4)
  - Plusive speech sound (7,4)
  - Innate (6)
  - Tail bone (6)
  - Make better (7)
  - Dairy product (6)
  - Waterway (6)
  - Young female horse (5)
  - Twilight (4)

- SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD**
- ACROSS**
- Job
  - Logs (Joe)
  - Biogass
  - Age
  - Casual
  - Edge
  - Teenager
  - Watered down
  - Partisan
  - Bung
  - Stereo
  - Eylet
  - Say
  - Donkey
  - Nunery
  - Blame
  - Slope
  - Gestapo
  - Mentor
  - Fate
  - Tutoried

By arrangement with The Independent  
Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

### BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



### RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



### DADDY DAZE/John Kovalski



### NEED TO KNOW

**Ambulance**  
FD Block Association (Amb)  
9830405236, 9830181286  
Happy Calcuttans 24400160  
City Point Nurses Centre  
2567-4113, 9831142623  
People's Relief Committee  
2280-4943/9444

**24 hrs Medical Oxygen Delivery**  
BOC India Ltd. 9831277777

**Blood Banks**  
Ashok Laboratory 24720333  
Central Blood Bank 23510619

**Life Care 2284-6940**  
Peoples Blood Bank  
2455-5164/5557  
RK Mission Seva Pratishthan  
2475-3636/39

**Police/Fire**  
Lalbazar (Police Control Room) 22143230  
S. P. (North 24-Pgrs) 25423005  
S.P. (South 24-Pgrs) 2479-3333/1311  
Bhawanee Bhawan 24791761/9, 24791933  
Fire Service Station Salt Lake: 2357-5293;

**Howrah 2666-8111; Behala 2497-6285**

**Civic Services**  
Kolkata Municipal Corporation: 2286-1000  
Water: 2543-1602

**Calcutta Telephones**  
Changed Number Announcement  
1951,1952,1953

**Taxi Refusal**  
SMS 575756: Complaint and registration

**Police Toll Free No. 1073**  
Transport Deptt. No. 6451-6718

**CESC Fault Reporting**  
1912 and 4403-1912

**Trains**  
Howrah Station Old Complex 1331/1332 (Auto Telephone Numbers), 1310, 2638-7412/3542/2581 (manual). Sealdah: 2350-3535/3537  
Shalimar Station: 2668-1121, Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway: 139.

**SCRABBLE® (GRAMS)**

PAR SCORE 155-165 by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

**SCRABBLE®**

VETERAN'S EDITION BY JAZZ

Instructions: Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Letter worth 4 points (dark grey) have no point value. All valid words are in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (Merriam-Webster) and OGIW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). Judd's solution key begins on page 10-26-11.

Tablet and Scrabble Tiles are registered trademarks. All rights in the game are owned in the U.S.A. by Hasbro Inc. in Canada by Hasbro Canada Inc., and elsewhere by J.W. Spear & Sons Limited, a subsidiary of Mattel, Inc.

**SUDOKU**  
Concepts Sudoku By Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★★

Answer to previous puzzle

Sudoku is a number placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that no row, no column and no 3x3 box contains the same number. The difficulty level increases through the week.



THUMBNAILS



**UCO Bank's 83rd foundation day celebrated:** On the occasion of 83rd Foundation Day of UCO Bank, the function was organised on 6th January 2025 at Zonal Office, New Delhi. Sumit Khandelwal, General Manager & Zonal Head garlanded the portrait of the founder of the bank Ghanashyam Das Birla and lit the lamp. Sumit Khandelwal inaugurated the blood donation camp and free health checkup camp organised at Parliament retail Branch. The 83rd Foundation Day of the Bank was celebrated with joy and a number of events were organised by all the branches of the Zone located in Delhi- NCR region. Under CSR initiative, Bank has distributed the Almirah and Stationary kits amongst the students of MCD Primary School Neeti Bagh. The Pusa Road branch has also organised a drawing competition in Govt. Boys Sr. Sec. School IARI Pusa and Sports kits were donated to the school on this occasion.

**Driverless trainset:** Tita-garh Rail Systems Ltd. today officially handed over its first driverless Made in India trainset to the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation's (BMRCL) Yellow Line. The stainless steel, automated trainset is the first Made-in-India passenger rolling stock set to run on the key 18-km stretch, linking the Electronics City technology and business hub to the rest of the city.

**New acquisition:** Crystal Crop Protection Limited announced the global acquisition of the active ingredient Ethoxysulfuron from Bayer AG for sales in certain Asian countries. This acquisition mark Crysta's 13th strategic transaction and second acquisition from Bayer after the acquisition of Indian Cotton, Pearl Millet & Mustard seed portfolio in 2021.

## Skoda's newest venture into the mass market with 'Kylaq'

**MOHUL BHATTACHARYA**  
KOLKATA, 6 JANUARY

Skoda unveiled their newest modern, bold and muscular SUV, Kylaq, on Sunday, in South City Mall, Kolkata. The SUV has been valued at 7.89 lakhs as the starting price, with a carbon steel body. The car will be available at the end of January, 2025. When asked why consumers should choose Kylaq, the Sales Manager of Skoda Mr Ronik Acharya said, "This is the first time Skoda is venturing into the mass market in this price range, with the same immaculate quality that the company assures for its users." There are high hopes

for this car with a lot of peeking eyes present at the unveiling. One such observer said: "I already have two cars but I'm Interested in buying this SUV because it is cheap compared to its competitors with the same feature range." The car has adjustable ambient interior lighting, a 25.6Skoda Infotainment system, a boot space of 446 litres for long journeys, and adjustable rear A/C vents with type-C charger ports. The car comes with an Electric-Sunroof with anti-pinch technology. For safety it also has 6 airbags. There are 7 colours to choose from in the prestige model (top model) of the car including Olive Gold for the



feminine palette, Lava blue, and Deep Black. Skoda assures: "The cabin is designed to be easy, yet tough which is enhanced further by ambient lights. Aldo additional features like Multi-collision brake, roll-over protection, Motor slip regulation, Electronic differential lock, and anti-lock brakes make the ride very safe and amicable. There are

at 3.995 metres. There are four classes as divided by Skoda ranging from the Classic to the Prestige. A Skoda representative said: "We have received an overwhelming response in pre-bookings of the SUV and hope to deliver the quality product to the car lovers." The 7-seater SUV looks sleek and does not feel cumbersome compared to regular SUVs providing a chic appearance. Kylaq produces, the ARAI (Automotive Research Association of India) claims, a mileage of 20km/pl. However, user-reported mileage suggests a range of 17.75 kmpl to 17.83 kmpl for both manual and automatic transmissions.

The final India Services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for December 2024 rose to 59.3 points, an increase from 58.4 points recorded in November. According to the HSBC Final India Services PMI, compiled by S&P Global, India's manufacturing PMI for December 2024 slipped to a 12-month low at 56.4. The drop was attributed to softer rates of expansion in production and fresh business orders. The lowest man-

## India's services PMI indicates strong growth, hits 59.3 points in December

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, 6 JANUARY

ufacturing PMI in 2024 earlier had been observed in November and January 2024, at 56.5. The slight dip in services PMI was observed in November, when the PMI fell to 58.4 from 58.5 in October, but it did not deter the sector's overall momentum. The HSBC Final India PMI, also reflected positive trends during this period, highlighting growth in both hiring and sales. Ines Lam, economist at HSBC said that India's services companies expressed strong optimism in December as business activity growth

surged to a four-month high. Forward-looking indicators such as new business and future activity suggested that the strong performance will likely continue in the near future. Among sectors, Finance & Insurance registered by far the strongest increases in both new orders and business activity. On the employment front, the survey noted that the combination of new business growth, upbeat forecasts and rising capacity pressures supported another round of job creation across the service economy.

## Institutional investments in Indian realty touch \$ 6.5 bn, up 22 pc from last year

**RITWIK MUKHERJEE**  
KOLKATA, 06 JANUARY

Investors' appetite for Indian real estate is going stronger by the day. And it's palpable. Institutional investments in Indian real estate has touched a record \$6.5 billion inflows in 2024, marking a substantial 22 per cent increase from the previous year's \$5.4 billion. This surge not only reflects strong investor appetite for Indian real estate, but also marks an annual high for both domestic and foreign investments since 2020. When it comes to Industrial & warehousing segment, in particular, during 2024, institutional investments in Industrial & warehousing segment

rose and were almost thrice the inflows in 2023. The segment attracted \$2.5 billion investments, accounting for 39 per cent of the total inflows, closely followed by the office segment at 36 per cent share. Rising investments in the Industrial & warehousing segment is a testament to healthy domestic activity, enhancements in logistics efficiency, and India's improving capabilities as a global manufacturing hub. Foreign investments drove over 80 per cent of the total inflows in the segment during the year. In fact, going by Colliers India statistics, in 2024, the Industrial & warehousing segment accounted for the highest share in overall real

estate investment volumes at 39 per cent, surpassing the office segment. Manufacturing and industrial growth in the country was robust throughout 2024 and was reflected in the performance of macro-economic indicators such as Manufacturing Purchasing Manager's Index (PMI) and Index of Industrial Production (IIP). At \$1.1 billion, residential segment too witnessed substantial growth, rising 46 per cent compared to 2023 levels. Overall, at \$4.3 billion, foreign inflows continued to drive annual real estate investments at 66 per cent share, while domestic investments too witnessed a steady rise, surging 27 per cent YoY during the



year. Interestingly, the fourth quarter of 2024 was particularly robust, with investments totaling \$1.9 billion—2.3X times compared to the same period in 2023. This end-year

momentum contributed significantly to higher investment volumes for 2024. Interestingly, domestic investments were significant in Q4 2024 and accounted for 43 per cent of

the inflows during the final quarter. This underscores the growing confidence of India-based institutional investors alongside sustained interest from international counterparts. It is also pertinent to mention here that subdued activity in the first few quarters of 2024 notwithstanding, investments in the office segment picked up pace in the second half of the year. With \$2.3 billion inflows, the segment accounted for a 36 per cent share during 2024, and closely followed industrial & warehousing segment. Foreign investments accounted for about 77 per cent of the inflows in office segment during the year. Additionally,

residential assets too witnessed a notable growth during the year at \$1.1 billion, witnessing a substantial 46 per cent surge on an annual basis driven by sustained interest from domestic players. Experts are of the view that rising demand for superior quality Grade A developments and evolving supply-chain models will continue to incentivise investors in consolidating industrial & warehousing assets in the country. Furthermore, manufacturing scale-up and healthy consumption levels are likely to attract domestic and global investments in both ready-to-use as well as developmental industrial assets, going ahead.

Sector analysts feel that the private equity investments in 2024 were buoyed by robust domestic growth and sustained investor confidence. Interestingly, APAC investors drove almost one-third of the foreign inflows in the country's real estate during the year. Looking ahead, Tier-I cities are expected to continue to attract majority of the capital, amidst government impetus on infrastructure development and 'Make in India' initiative. While global investors' confidence is likely to remain upbeat, 2025 is likely to see increased capital deployment from domestic players across office, residential and industrial assets.





# Premier League: Spirited Manchester United snatch late draw at Liverpool

Amad Diallo scored an 80th minute equaliser as former European champions earned a point against current league leaders

AGENCIES  
LIVERPOOL, 6 JANUARY

Amad Diallo came back to haunt Liverpool with a late equalizer that secured a 2-2 draw for Manchester United against Premier League leaders Liverpool.

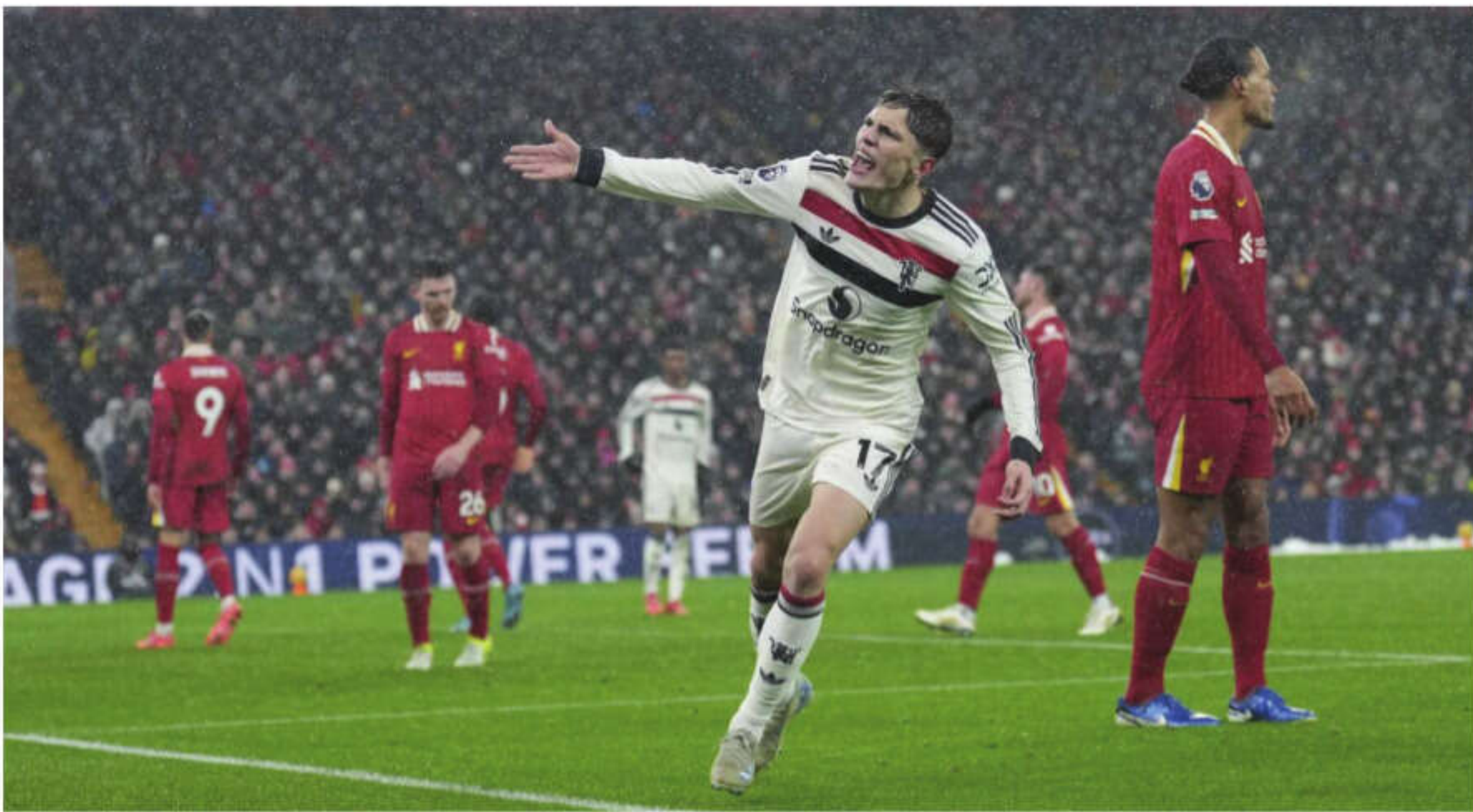
The forward turned home Alejandro Garnacho's cross in the 80th minute at Anfield after Mohamed Salah's penalty had looked like giving Liverpool the win.

Diallo struck at the end of extra time as United beat Liverpool 4-3 in a dramatic FA Cup clash last season and hit a 90th-minute winner against Manchester City last month. His goal on Sunday was only worth a point on this occasion, but it halted United's four-game losing run and prevented fierce rivals Liverpool from opening up an eight-point lead at the top of the standings.

United head coach Ruben Amorim, however, was still unhappy. "It's a point, a deserved point, but it's just one point, and we should get mad. Today we should be really disappointed," he said.

United led through Lisandro Martinez's strike in the 52nd, but Cody Gakpo leveled seven minutes later. Salah fired Liverpool ahead from the spot in the 70th after Matthijs de Ligt handled in the box. The draw saw United move up to 13th in the standings. Liverpool missed the chance to open up an eight-point lead on second-place Arsenal, who drew 1-1 with Brighton on Saturday. They are still six points clear at the top with a game in hand.

"Over the whole game we created more chances than



them; a point feels like it's something to take, but when I watch the game back I would hope for more," Liverpool head coach Arne Slot said.

United are without a win at Anfield since 2016—a run that spans nine games in all competitions. But it was a first point for Ruben Amorim's team since the 2-1 win against Manchester City on 15 December.

It could have been better for United, with Harry Maguire firing over from close range deep into added time.

Liverpool had their chances to win as well, with Virgil van Dijk firing a header straight at United goalkeeper Andre

Onana late on.

With 39 top-flight titles between them, this was the latest meeting between English football's two greatest teams. Liverpool have the chance to equal United's record total of 20 league crowns this season and could have taken a firmer hold on the title race with a win in front of their home fans.

But United produced a performance that confounded their recent form, which has even had Amorim admitting his team could face a relegation fight.

"We've been fairly criticized because the position in the table says it all," United captain

Bruno Fernandes said. "I think it's a fair result, both teams played really good football. But we can't be satisfied. I'm really upset because if we can show this against Liverpool, why can't we do this every week?"

Diallo and Rasmus Hojlund had chances in the first half before Martinez lashed a left-footed shot into the roof of the net from a narrow angle.

Alexis Mac Allister had seen Liverpool's best effort in the first half saved by Onana, but the 'keeper could do nothing to stop Gakpo's powerful shot after cutting onto his right foot in the box.

AVAR review led to referee

Michael Oliver awarding Liverpool a penalty after the ball struck De Ligt's arm and Salah fired low to score his 21st goal of the season. He has scored 13 goals against United—more than any other player in Premier League history.

But it wasn't enough to earn Liverpool the win after substitute Garnacho cut the ball back for Diallo to convert.

"The way we conceded the two goals was unacceptable, lazy and careless," Van Dijk said. "It shouldn't happen."

Raul Jimenez scored a penalty in the first minute of second-half stoppage time to salvage a 2-2 draw for Fulham against Ipswich.

It was Jimenez's second penalty of the match as Fulham twice came from a goal down at Craven Cottage.

Relegation-fighting Ipswich went ahead through Sam Szmodics in the 38th and Jimenez leveled from the spot in the 69th.

Ipswich went in front again through Liam Delap's penalty in the 71st and looked like climbing out of the relegation zone. But when Jimenez was brought down by Leif Davis in the box, referee Darren Bond pointed to the spot again.

Jimenez made no mistake and fired into the top corner to share the points.

## Man Utd coach Amorim upset despite stalemate at Anfield



AGENCIES  
LIVERPOOL, 6 JANUARY

Manchester United entered their clash against Liverpool in dire form, having suffered four consecutive defeats to close out 2024, failing to score in three of those games. Concerns were rife that another humbling performance awaited them at Anfield.

However, under Ruben Amorim's leadership, United showed impressive resilience on Merseyside, securing a hard-fought 2-2 draw in a thrilling encounter. The Red Devils even had opportunities to snatch all three points, displaying flashes of the fighting spirit that had eluded them in recent weeks. Their last victory came in a memorable derby triumph over Manchester City at the Etihad Stadium, leaving fans and pundits puzzled by the team's erratic form. "I get more mad because of the other games. It's even harder to understand some things. This is not about the system, the technique, it's about something else. I am upset today, really upset. I am pleased with the performance but everyone today is going to say that the team did a good job. Today I am allowed to be the only guy

upset with the team -- but today we were a team," Amorim told Sky Sports.

"We had some good games during this last month but then we dropped again. It's something that we need to be really consistent. We had this talk after Manchester City, it was the same. I want to see my team play so much better but I think the most important thing to address today is the mentality and that is the key for everything. Today we were a different team not because of the system, not because of a technical or tactical aspect. We faced the competition in the way we are supposed to face every day. Training and match, it doesn't match the place, the opponent, we need to face every day like that," he said.

United captain Bruno Fernandes echoed his manager's frustration, calling for greater consistency across all matches, not just high-profile encounters. The Portuguese playmaker admitted, "Obviously, we've been criticised, and fairly, because the position in the table says it all. We've lost too many points. Even today, we can't be happy with the draw, because we need points more than they need."

## Bugatha, Nirmaben to defend titles at Mumbai Marathon

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, 6 JANUARY

Srinu Bugatha and Thakor Nirmaben Bharatjee, the defending men's and women's champions respectively, will headline a star-studded Indian Elite field for the 20th edition of the Mumbai Marathon 2025 to be held on 19 January.

Reigning Asian marathon champion Man Singh, Olympian Gopi T, a two-time winner and three-time runner-up, and the experienced Kalidas Hirve, who finished fourth in the 2024 edition, are among the leading contenders in the men's race.

Gopi won the 2024 New Delhi Marathon in 2:14.40, pipping second-placed fellow Armyman Bugatha by one second.

Meanwhile, Maharashtra's Hirve, who finished third in the 2023 edition, underlined his current form by winning the recent Vasai-Virar Mayor's Marathon.

The World Athletics Gold Label race will also see Kartik



Kumar, the 2023 Asian Games 10,000m silver medallist, making his debut over the classic distance in Mumbai. Kartik's best marathon time is 2:22:50, which he recorded at the Bengaluru Marathon in October last year. Also in the mix is young Harshad Mahtre, who finished fifth

in the last edition.

Challenging Nirmaben, runner-up at the 2024 New Delhi Marathon and placed fourth at the World 25K Kolkata 2024. For the top honours in the women's race will be Sonika Parmar and Reenu, winner and runner-up, respectively, at the 2024

Coal India Ranchi Marathon. In the fray is also Arati Patil, who finished second in the 2023 edition.

The top three finishers in the Indian Elite men's and women's categories will receive prize money of Rs 5 lakh, Rs 4 lakh and Rs 3 lakh, respectively, from the total

prize fund of USD 390,238.

An incentive reward of Rs 2 lakh is up for grabs for setting a new mark in the event, which is currently held by Nitendra Singh Rawat in the Men's 2016 edition (2:15:48) and Sudha Singh in the women's 2019 edition (2:34:56).

## Wrestler Sangram Singh leads the way at mega cycling event

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 6 JANUARY

The chill in the air couldn't deter the spirit of fitness as over 300 cycling enthusiasts gathered at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium on Sunday morning. The nationwide Fit India Sundays on Cycle campaign continued in full swing in the first Sunday of the new year 2025, with a renewed vigour of promoting a healthier and greener India.

Leading the pack at the national capital was renowned wrestler, former Bigg Boss contestant and MMA Champion Sangram Singh. The cyclists, which included jawans from the Indian Army, jointly promoted awareness around the need to stay fit, to take up cycling as a solution to Delhi's pollution and to say no to drugs.

Sangram, also a Fit India Icon, joined forces with a contingent of Indian Army jawans



to inspire the crowd. "I've been closely associated with the Fit India movement since 2021," he said. "When I learned that the Army jawans would be participating, I knew I had to be a part of this incredible show of unity and fitness. It is a great honour for me to ride along with them."

Speaking about the initiative launched by Union Sports

Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya last month, Sangram added, "This is a great initiative by the government to imbibe a culture of fitness in the country because only fit citizens can build a strong country. I have always believed that health is the only wealth and we must all spend least half an hour every day in fitness activities."

## Star pugilist Lovlina Borgohain aiming for Los Angeles Olympics

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
GUWAHATI, 6 JANUARY

Lovlina Borgohain is eyeing a third straight summer Olympics but will take one step at a time from here on. Lovlina, who won a bronze at Tokyo Olympics but returned empty-handed from Paris 2024, said Los Angeles 2028 was very much in her plans.

"Tokyo was during COVID times. Paris was a real learning curve. I did my best and have no regrets that I could not win a medal. For every athlete, there are lessons to be learnt and I want to be wiser leading into LA," Lovlina said during an interaction on the sidelines of the ASMITA Women's Under-17 football final at the SAI campus in Guwahati.

Assam's 'own daughter' will be touching 31 when Los Angeles arrives but the middleweight (75 kg) boxer is confident that she will be "stronger and more experienced" if she can convert her Paris learnings into action.



"But I am not going to rush my preparations. LA is a long way off and proper weight and injury management will be part of my core plans. Right now, I am not looking beyond the upcoming National Games in Uttarakhand and to do well for Assam is uppermost in my mind," said Lovlina.

With at least three medals, including a gold in the 2023 world championship, Lovlina said 2025 would be a challenging year with the world championships on the cards. "It will be a target to play the World Boxing Cup Final in India later in 2025," she added. Lovlina is now part of the

Athletes Commission of the newly formed Asian unit of World Boxing. "It's a huge privilege to be on this committee as India will now have a voice in decision making," said Lovlina, pointing out that boxing's technicalities, "especially scoring and judging" needed closer and impartial

introspection.

"Till now, India was just an ordinary member with very little chance to raise a protest or point out a flaw in the system. That is going to change now since we will have seven positions in the Asian body. That's a big plus for athletes who want to per-

form their best and win an Olympic medal," said Lovlina, adding that "all the right moves must be made to keep boxing in the LA 2028 programme."

**EASTERN RAILWAY**  
e-Tender Notice No. : ELS/SDAH/OT/24-012 dtd. 02.01.2025. E-tender is invited by the Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/EMU/Sealdah, Eastern Railway, 1st Floor, Control Building, Kolkata - 700014 for the following work:  
**Tender No.:** ELS/SDAH/OT/24-012.  
**Name of the Work:** Repairing of air-conditioning systems in driving CABS of 3-Phase EMU/MEMU rakes under Sealdah Division. **Tender Value:** Rs. 16,07,467.37. **Earnest Money:** Rs. 32,200/-. **Cost of tender document:** Nil. **Completion period:** 24 months. **Date of Closing:** 04.02.2025 at 14.00 hrs. Details of tender notice and corrigendum issued from time to time are available at website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) (SDAH-301/2024-25)  
Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.er.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.er.indianrailways.gov.in) / [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)  
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**TENDER**  
**Metro Railway, Kolkata**  
Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway, Kolkata for and on behalf of President of India for the following work : **Name of work :** "Renovation, Repair and Interior works of 120 DPS Road (Annex of RPF Barrack), Tollygunge of Metro Railway, Kolkata". **Approx. Cost of Work :** ₹ 7,29,33,099.10. **Earnest Money :** ₹ 5,14,700/-. **Completion Period :** Six (06) Months. **Date and Time of Closing:** 28.01.2025 at 12.00 Hrs. The Tender Document and other details can be obtained from the website: [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) Amendments/Corrigendum, if any, would be uploaded only on the website.  
**Abridged e-Tender Notice No. : Civil-2484-2024(Open)**  
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**EASTERN RAILWAY**  
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway, Asansol Division, Station Road, Asansol, Pin - 713301 invites open e-auction through IREPS portal vide website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for awarding the contract, details of which are as under :  
**Category of Auction :** Pay & Use Toilet (Normal). **e-Auction Catalogue No. :** C5-ASN-PnU-0225. **Date of Auction start:** 17.01.2025 at 12.00 hrs. **Name of station/location :** (i) Newly built toilet complex Ground floor & 1st floor on existing old Pay & Use toilet at Jasidih (Phase-II) Railway station new circulating area near pond. (ii) 2nd class waiting hall, PF no. 4 & 5 at Howrah & Kalka end, PF no. 2 & 3 at Howrah end and PF no. 1 at Kalka end at Durgapur Railway station. All prospective bidders are advised to visit the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) for full details and to participate against the above mentioned e-Auction on 17.01.2025 at 12.00 hrs. (ASN-290/2024-25)  
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