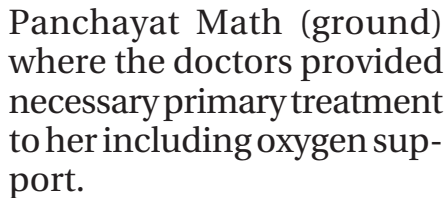


The camps in Falta started yesterday. On the inaugural day, the footfall was 11,452



Expressing gratitude for the timely assistance, the aunt of the youth, who was rushed into the camp in a wheelchair, said, "My sister's son, despite having a pacemaker, loses consciousness



thanked Abhishek and volunteers & doctors of the camp for immediately attending her. She along with her family members is on her way for a holy dip at Gangasagar.

managing committee for providing me with all the support and cooperation all the time. My presentation also focused on the school's initiatives in promoting holistic education, throwing light on the devel-

Sonali Mullick, the SMC member of Serampore Girls' High School, said, "We are very proud of the school's participation at this prestigious national conference and we applaud our HM's tireless efforts to provide the best to our students and her participation has brought laurels to our institution and reinforced our commitment to excellence in education."

her inaugural speech at the national conference remarked that there were a total of 350 entries from school heads from different parts of the country and they had shortlisted a total of 57 case studies and video documentaries depicting exemplary leadership practices by adopting a rigorous and systematic process of selection.

Dr Sarkar said, "The conference has helped disseminate effective teaching methods, curriculum designs, innovative approaches and institutional strategies. It has provided a platform to stay abreast with the latest developments in

education. I have already decided to implement the concept of ATE (any time education) in my school. We have recently inaugurated a common room for our Class XI-XII students to spend time during their off periods. The classroom will have XI-XII tutorial videos from Bangla Shiksha classroom (an initiative of the education department), which will be retained in downloaded video formats so that the students can access them any time and make best and effective use of their free periods. This will help us leverage the resources and capacities to improve educational outcomes."

in a heart-wrenching incident that has left the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur community in shock, a third-year electrical engineering student, Shaon Malik, was found dead in his hostel room on Sunday. The discovery, made by his parents during a visit to the campus, has sparked an outpouring of grief and raised questions about mental health and support systems at one of India's premier institutions.

According to an institute official, a 21-year-old Malik had spoken to his parents over the phone at 11 pm on Saturday, and there were no indications of distress during the conversation. When there was no response to their calls or knocks on his door, his parents, with the assistance of institute personnel, forcibly opened the door to find him hanging.

Shaon's parents, who usually visit their son's hostel almost every Sunday with home-cooked food, drove down to their son's hostel from South Kolkata yesterday too. But, Shaon did not pick up their calls. Around 11.30 a.m., they signed their names at the Azad Hall hostel visitor's register and went up to their son's room, to find it locked from inside.

Expressing grief, IIT-Kharagpur director Amit Patra described Malik as a "topper" and "academically gifted student". "He was also interested in Bengali drama and that he was loved by his professors. He had a bright future ahead. His professors also offered him a good project. We are deeply saddened by this incident and are extending all possible support to the police in their investigation," Patra said.

On Monday, the tiger underwent a health check-up, and the process to release it into the deep forest has begun. A team of veterinarians examined the tiger today. Even at midnight, a significant crowd gathered to catch a glimpse. Forest officials transported the caged tiger, covered with tarpaulin, via boat during the night. On Sunday morning, reports of a tiger entering the Kishorimohanpur area in Kulti, South 24-Parganas, prompted forest officials to begin monitoring. The forest area was surrounded with nets, restricting the tiger's movements within a specific zone. A cage was set up in the enclosed area, using a goat as bait. Attracted by the bait, the tiger entered the cage on Sunday night. According to forest department sources the tiger underwent health examinations on Monday and will soon be released into a deep forest. The South 24-Parganas divisional forest officer (DFO), Nisha Goswami, confirmed that the adult

male tiger is currently healthy.

On Sunday morning, residents of Maipith spotted pugmarks near the Ganga riverbank and informed the forest department. Upon arrival, forest officials examined the paw prints. Locals claimed the tiger had crossed the Thakuran river and roamed the forest adjacent to the locality. That part of the forest was subsequently enclosed with nylon nets. Tiger sightings in Maipith are not new. Over the past week, tigers have entered the Maipith coastal police station area from the Azmalmari forest in the Sundarbans three times.

In Jangalmahal too the fear of tigers has emerged anew. Now, locals claim to have spotted Zeenat's mate in the area. The forest department is working to capture the tiger, but they have yet to trap it in the Belpahari-Purulia region.

In Jhargram another tiger was spotted. "Many teams are now deployed for search operations and for safe capture or rescue of the tiger. All available resources are put at strategic locations to monitor the tiger movement," said Dr S Kulandaivel, Chief Conservator of Forests (Central), late this evening.

No.			online bid	
1	OE types of medical equipment	WBMSC/NIT-031/2025; Dated - 10.01.2025	03.02.2025 up to 09:00 PM	03.02.2025 up to 09:00 PM
B. Procurement of 1 [one] Electro Surgical Unit (APC enabled) for the Department of Gastroenterology at Kolkata Medical College and Hospital :				
Sl No.	Equipment Name	Bid Ref. No.	Last date of submission of online bid	Remarks
1	Electro Surgical Unit (APC Enabled) (02)	WBMSC/NIT-032/2025; Dated - 10.01.2025	03.02.2025 up to 09:00 PM	2 nd call of Bid Ref. No. WBMSC/NIT-1370/2024; dated -21.06.2024
C. Procurement of Neonatal Ventilator with HFO for Pediatric Medicine in Medical College & Hospital, Kolkata:				
Sl No.	Equipment Name	Bid Ref. No.	Last date of submission of online bid	Remarks
1	Neonatal Ventilator with HFO (05)	WBMSC/NIT-033/2025; Dated - 10.01.2025	03.02.2025 up to 09:00 PM	-
Interested Bidders may download the tender document and submit their bids online at the website www.tenders.gov.in The tender document may also be downloaded from the websites www.wbhealth.gov.in and www.wbmhc.gov.in Sd/- General Manager, WBMSC & Joint Secretary, HB&FW Dept. ICA - 78003/2025				

THUMBNAILS

Paralympic athlete Navdeep Singh inaugurates marathon: FTS Yuva, the youth wing of Friends of Tribals Society organised its annual flagship event Ekal Run on Sunday where participants ran for their chosen category of timed run - 21km, 10km, 5km and non-timed /Fun run of 3km at the marathon. The Ekal Run was inaugurated by Navdeep Singh, paralympic athlete and javelin thrower. The event was also attended by actor Rahul Dev Bose, Brig. N Romeo Singh, deputy director general, NCC Directorate West Bengal & Sikkim and many others. Speaking to the media, Gaurav Bagla, president FTS Yuva, Kolkata Chapter said, "We are truly elated to have witnessed the tremendous participation and enthusiasm at the 6th Edition of Ekal Run. The funds raised will go a long way in supporting the education of tribal children across rural India through Ekal Vidyalayas." SNS

5 Bangladeshi infiltrators arrested in Sonarpur

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 13 JANUARY

Five alleged Bangladeshi infiltrators were arrested on Monday from Sonarpur area in South 24-Parganas district.

According to police sources, hiding their identities they were working in a cloth mill in Sonarpur. All the accused are male and have been staying in a rented house at Baikunthapur under the Sonarpur police station for the past one year. The owner of the house has been absconding soon after their arrests.

They had allegedly entered India illegally and arranged their jobs at the mill showing fake documents.

Nowadays, their movements in the area became suspicious at the backdrop against the ongoing violence mainly atrocities on minorities in Bangladesh. Sensing something suspicious in their gestures local police were informed seeking to keep watch on their movements.

Acting on a tip-off, officers from Sonarpur police station started keeping a close watch on the group, who never interacted with their neighbours, before arresting them, sources added.

"These five persons illegally entered India about a year ago. They concealed their identities and were working at a cloth mill. We are talking with their neighbours to find out more about their activities. They will be produced in a local court this afternoon," the police sources requesting anonymity said.

Recently, one Bangladeshi infiltrator was arrested from at Marquez Street in the Park Street area. He had been staying in the Khidderpore area for the last one and a half years using fake documents like passports etc.

Sealdah division to suspend train run in Dum Dum-Dankuni route from 23 January

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 13 JANUARY

Commuters availing local trains in Dum Dum-Dankuni route, might have to tweak their transport options next week. The Sealdah division of the Eastern Railway has decided to suspend trains movements in Dum Dum-Dankuni stretch from early hours of 23-26 January to enable replacement of old steel girders in rail over bridge between Bally Ghat and Bally halt.

According to the divisional railway manager of Sealdah, Deepak Nigam, a 100-hour block is to be taken from 12 a.m. of 23 January to 4 a.m. of 27 January during which the British-era rail over bridge called Bridge 15 CCR would be repaired. The crucial rail bridge was constructed in 1931 and is highly corroded mainly due to ageing. "The steel girders have been corroded beyond

'I declare Gangasagar Mela a national fair'

'BJP's hidden agenda is to first capture West Bengal'

RAJIB CHAKRABORTY
GANGASAGAR, 13 JANUARY

Puri's Shankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Saraswati criticized Prime Minister Narendra Modi over Centre's apathy regarding the issues of erosion in Gangasagar and the construction of a bridge over the Muriganga river during a Press conference at Gangasagar, 1,533 kilometres away from the capital city of Delhi.

He suggested that Modi should adopt a softer approach toward West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, as people not only from Bengal but also from other states visit Gangasagar. He stated, "Whether the government announces it or not, I declare Gangasagar Mela a national fair. I come here every time because of its national significance. BJP's hidden agenda is to first capture West Bengal and then declare Gangasagar as a national fair. However, Gangasagar is a sacred place for Hindus. If political gains



are pursued, the sanctity of such an important place will be lost."

Shankaracharya's comments are expected to bolster the ruling party ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections. While speaking from Gangasagar, the Shankaracharya appeared to praise Mamata Banerjee. He lauded the state government for constructing a bridge over the Muriganga without any central assistance. He also remarked that the importance of Gangasagar is no less

than the Mahakumbh, which costs Rs 30,000 crore.

However, he opposed the modernisation projects that might harm the environment of Gangasagar. Over the years, this once-remote pilgrimage site has seen the expansion of connectivity, along with the construction of hotels, lodges, and picnic spots. Without naming anyone, the Shankaracharya criticised the state government, stating that such activities are not appropriate for a sacred place like

Gangasagar. The Shankaracharya also sharply criticised the central government and the BJP. He said, "Today, Modi inaugurated the Ram Mandir for electoral purposes. Tomorrow, they might inaugurate the Jagannath temple, followed by other temples. This is sheer madness of the ruling party. Religious events are being blatantly used for political purposes."

He also criticized state BJP and certain sadhus associated with declaring Ayodhya-like Ram Mandir construction in West Bengal. Regarding the construction of a temple in Digha modelled after Puri's Jagannath temple, the Shankaracharya of Puri stated he has no objections. However, on the topic of Joshimath, he remarked that development cannot come at the cost of destroying forests, hills, and rivers. A harmonious balance between politics, development, and the environment is essential for creating a prosperous society and ensuring the welfare of people.

Makeover for Namkhana and Kakkdwip stations

KOLKATA, 13 JANUARY

With the country's second largest congregation kicking off, two transit points leading to the Gangasagar venue, including Namkhana and Kakkdwip have got a makeover by Sealdah division.

Kakkdwip and Namkhana stations serve as part of the elaborate arrangements made by the division, a total of 102 additional train services have been announced between Sealdah and Namkhana for the mela days. Designated mela officers are also to camp at Kakkdwip from 12-17 January and ensure proper arrangements at nominated stations and co-ordinate with authorities. To cater to the enormous crowd, the division has given a makeover with vibrant decor and equipped with modern amenities to the two crucial stations enroute the Mela. According to the Eastern Railway, both stations have been adorned with the walls embellished with captivating paintings showcasing the breathtaking beauty of the Sundarbans, a UNESCO World Heritage site, renowned for its diverse ecosystem and the majestic Royal Bengal Tiger. These artistic representations serve as a visual feast for the pilgrims and highlight the region's natural wonders. To ensure a safe and hygienic pilgrimage, Sealdah division has constructed a substantial number of modern toilets and bathrooms, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for both male and female passengers. According to the divisional railway manager of Sealdah, Deepak Nigam, the amenities have been strategically placed throughout the stations. SNS

Holy dip begins amid enhanced facilities, security

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
GANGASAGAR, 13 JANUARY

The holy dip for Makar Sankranti will begin on Tuesday at 6.58 a.m. and continue until Wednesday morning. However, pilgrims have already started gathering at Gangasagar. People from various parts of the country are attending the fair, and many have already taken a dip in the Ganga to avoid the rush on the main day of the Sankranti.

According to the administration, three pilgrims have died so far due to heart attacks. NDRF personnel reportedly recovered a body from the waters of the Sagar this morning near ghat 3 and informed the police. It is believed that the deceased passed away due to illness. Among the deceased are Dev (59) from Haryana and Rajeshwar from Uttar Pradesh. Another pilgrim

from Uttar Pradesh passed away yesterday. Youth affairs and sports minister Aroop Biswas stated that a total of 55 lakh pilgrims have arrived. Guides, known as Sagar Bandhus, have been assigned to every bus for the pilgrims' assistance. To ensure the availability of safe drinking water, sufficient water pouches and 14 mobile treatment units have been arranged. Additionally, QR-coded wristbands are being distributed to elderly and child pilgrims to help locate them if they go missing. Through a digital system, pilgrims can now access all fair-related information via QR codes. This includes details about drinking water, toilets, ATMs, healthcare centres, information centres, buses, launch schedules, parking details, and route directions. To preserve memories of the holy dip at the Sagar Sangam, pilgrims are

receiving free personalized certificates with their photos from "Bandhan" photo booths.

For precise information about the location of buses, launches, and vessels, the district administration is utilising ISRO-developed NavIC technology at the Gangasagar Mela 2025. This system helps guide lost passenger vessels from the mega control room. All vehicles are being monitored using GPS tracking, and the pilgrim transport management system (PTMS) is overseeing transportation around the clock. Passenger buses and launches have been brought under the GPS tracking system to ensure smooth management. Additionally, 853 pilgrims who were reported missing at the fair have been reunited with their families with the help of the administration and volunteers.

Young mother's death: PILs in Cal HC

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 13 JANUARY

The incident of a young mother's death and four other mothers' severe illness after they were allegedly administered with intravenous (IV) fluids of particular brand on Monday reached the Calcutta High Court.

Two public interest litigations (PILs) were filed today separately in the HC by lawyer Phiroze Edulji and lawyer Kaustav Bagchi.

The HC will hear the case filed by the petitioner Mr Edulji on Thursday seeking a CBI probe into the death of the young mother and illness of the four other pregnant women.

Mentioning the matter before a division Bench presided by Chief Justice T S Sivagnanam, the petitioner prayed for the constitution of a special investigation team to probe the alleged use of contaminated or expired intravenous fluid in the MMCH.

Mr Edulji informed the court that the company supplying the intravenous fluid had been red-flagged in March 2024 by the Karnataka government and banned the firm from supplying the product for three years.

Mr Edulji prayed that the investigation be transferred to the CBI to ensure impartiality and transparency. The division Bench, also

comprising Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharyya, said the matter would be taken up for hearing on Thursday.

The court directed the petitioner's lawyer to notify the state Advocate General's office to ensure representation by the government during the hearing.

Finally, the state department decided to stop the existing stock of the RL saline supplied by the Paschim Banga Pharmaceuticals Pvt Ltd in all hospitals. In an urgent notice issued by the Central Medical Stores has directed superintendents of all hospitals in districts saying, "The existing stock, if any, should be withdrawn from wards/hospitals."

Pratap Singh Shami, SDG RDSO visits Braithwaite and Co

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 13 JANUARY



Pratap Singh Shami, special director general (vendor development) of the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO) along with Sanjay Kumar, CMM (G)/ER, Dr Sunil Kumar Sharma, executive director, QA (mechanical), Kolkata and RDSO team, visited Braithwaite & Co. Limited (BCL), a Mini-ratna-1 CPSE, under the ministry of railways in the first week of January.

During his visit, Shami conducted a comprehensive inspection of the facility and observed various stages of wagon manufacturing. He expressed keen interest in the production processes, quality control measures, and innovative practices being

implemented in the workshop. Mr Shami interacted with the workforce and management, gaining insights into the organization's efforts to enhance efficiency and meet the growing demand for high-quality rail wagons.

Dr Sunil Kumar Sharma, executive director, QA (mechanical), also impressed upon the importance of expanding and strengthening the vendor base to make the railway supply chain more resilient and efficient.

Maha Kumbh Mela 2025

Public Notice

Important Information for Assistance & facilities to Rail Passengers / Pilgrims

Passengers are requested to reach the concerned station to board the special trains scheduled towards their destination

Direction	Station
Towards Vindhyachal, Mirzapur, Chunar, Chopan, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn. (Mughalsarai), Buxar, Patna, Gaya, Ranchi, Jasidih, Asansol, Howrah, Puri	Prayagraj Jn., Naini, Prayagraj Chheoki
Towards Shankargarh, Dabhaura, Manikpur, Chitrakut, Mahoba, Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi, Gwalior, Bina, Satna, Maihar, Katni, Jabalpur, Itarsi, Bhopal, Raipur, Bilaspur, Durg, Nagpur, Kalyan, Mumbai	Prayagraj Jn., Naini, Prayagraj Chheoki
Towards Sirathu, Fatehpur, Kanpur, Panki Dham, Etawah, Tundla, Agra, Aligarh, Meerut, Delhi, Chandigarh, Jammu	Prayagraj Jn., Subedarganj
Towards Unchahar, Raebareilly, Lucknow, Hardoi, Bareilly, Saharanpur, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Janghai, Bhadohi, Jaunpur, Pratappgarh, Ayodhya, Gonda, Bahraich	Prayag, Phaphamau Jn.
Towards Gyanpur Road, Varanasi, Mau, Bhatni, Gorakhpur, Ballia, Chhapra	Prayagraj Rambag, Jhansi

Main Bathing Days:

Paush Purnima - 13.01.2025	Basant Panchami - 03.02.2025
Makar Sankranti - 14.01.2025	Maghi Purnima - 12.02.2025
Mauni Amavasya - 29.01.2025	Maha Shivratri - 26.02.2025

Arrangement for Entry and Exit at Prayagraj Jn., Subedarganj, Naini Jn., & Prayagraj Chheoki stations prior to one day and after two days of the main bathing festival

Exit from Prayagraj Jn. - from Civil Lines side only
Entry to Prayagraj Jn. - from City side only through Leader Road
 Passenger enclosures made for different directions at Prayagraj Jn.

Entry Gate No. & Colour	Enclosure No. & Colour	Direction	Platform No.
1 Red Colour	1 Red Colour	Towards Varanasi & Lucknow	7&10
2 Blue Colour	2 Blue Colour	Towards Mirzapur, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn. (Mughalsarai)	4,5
3 Yellow Colour	3 Yellow Colour	Towards Manikpur, Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi, Satna	1
4 Green Colour	4 Green Colour	Towards Kanpur, Agra, Delhi	2,3
5	—	For Reserved Ticket Passengers	From Announced Platform No.

Exit from Naini Jn. - from Maal Godam side only
Entry to Naini Jn. - from Station Road side only
 Passenger enclosures made for different directions at Naini Jn.

Entry Gate No.	Enclosure No. & Colour	Direction	Platform No.
1	1 Green Colour	Towards Kanpur	2
1	2 Blue Colour	Towards Manikpur, Chitrakoot, Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi	3
1	3 Red Colour	Towards Manikpur, Satna, Jabalpur	3
2	—	For Reserved Ticket Passengers	From Announced Platform No.
3,4	4 B,A Yellow Colour	Towards Mirzapur, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn. (Mughalsarai)	1

Exit from Prayagraj Chheoki Station - from GEC Road side only
Entry to Prayagraj Chheoki Station - from COD Road side only
 Passenger enclosures made for different directions at Prayagraj Chheoki station

Entry Gate No.	Enclosure No. & Colour	Direction	Platform No.
1B	1 Green Colour	Towards Mirzapur, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn. (Mughalsarai)	1,2
1A	2 Red Colour	Towards Manikpur, Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi, Satna, Jabalpur	3,4
2	—	For Reserved Ticket Passengers	From Announced Platform No.

Exit from Subedarganj Station - from GT Road side only
Entry to Subedarganj Station - from Jhalwa side only
 Passenger enclosures made for different directions at Subedarganj Station

Entry Gate No.	Enclosure No. & Colour	Direction	Platform No.
1	—	Towards Kanpur, Agra, Delhi	1
3	—	For Reserved Ticket Passengers	From Announced Platform No.

Kumbh Rait Seva App 2025

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GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

WEST BENGAL VALUATION BOARD

Notice relating to Dum Dum Municipality

Public Notice No : 74/WBVB Dated : 14.01.2025

Under provisions of Sub-section (1) of Section 9 of the West Bengal Valuation Board Act, 1978 (West Bengal Act LVII of 1978) the Govt. of West Bengal by Notification No. 185/UDMA-11014(47)/5/2022-ESTT-MA Dated, Kolkata, the 20th July, 2022 has specified that the General Valuation of land and buildings within the **Dum Dum Municipality** area in the district of **North 24 Parganas** shall be taken up by West Bengal Valuation Board. In accordance with the Section 16 of the West Bengal Valuation Board Act, 1978 and the Rules made there under, every owner or occupier of land and building(s) in **Dum Dum Municipality** area is mandatorily required to file a statement (Schedule III) within 90 days from the date of this public notice regarding the particulars of his / her holding for the purpose of determination of annual valuation. The statement is required to be furnished in the Form as specified in Schedule III of the West Bengal Valuation Board (Valuation of Land and Buildings) Rules 1984, which is available free of cost in the Board's office or in the Camp Office of the Board at **Dum Dum Municipality** on any working day (except Saturday and holidays) between 11:00 am and 4:00 pm. All concerned of **Dum Dum Municipality** area are accordingly requested to submit such statement within 90 days of publication of this Notice at the aforementioned camp office of the Board or in this Board's office as a statutory obligation on their part. Failure to provide the information or filling false information regarding the municipal holding (land or building) may lead to penal action as per section 25 of the West Bengal Valuation Board Act, 1978.

Dated : 14/01/2025
 West Bengal Valuation Board
 Poudra Prashasan Bhavan,
 Bidhanagar, Kolkata - 700064

Member Secretary
 West Bengal Valuation Board



repair and need urgent replacement," informed the DRM, Mr Nigam at a Press meet today. "The work would be done in a stretch of about 220 metres involving providing RCC boxes and laying of ballast tracks among other works," he added.

During the mega block period, the divisional railway authorities have decided to suspend train movements between Dum Dum-Dankuni resulting in the cancellation of 22 local EMUs and six pairs of mail/express trains. The list of mail/express trains cancelled during the block period includes

Kolkata-Patna Garibrath, Tebhaga Express, Sealdah-Siuri Express, Dibrugarh-Kolkata Express, Sealdah-Jangipur Road Express and Sealdah-Asansol Intercity Express. Also, Uttarbanga and Sealdah Puri Duronto Express would originate from/terminate at Howrah instead of Sealdah on the block days. "For the cancelled mail express trains, the ticket amount would be refunded to the passengers," informed the DRM. "Following the running of Mail/Express trains via diverted route, the frequency of train operation of Sealdah main and North section would also slightly increase by 1/1.5 minutes during the period," he pointed out.

To handle the train movements strategically during the mega block, the divisional authorities have also announced diversion of 17 pairs of mail/express trains via Dum Dum-Naihati.

THUMBNAILS

MP govt mulling liquor ban in religious cities: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav said on Monday that the BJP state government is seriously contemplating to ban the sale and consumption of liquor in all the religious cities of the state. He told some media persons that the state government is planning to amend its excise policy for religious cities and move towards complete prohibition in such sacred towns. He added that the aim is to maintain the purity and sanctity of such religiously important places. The CM pointed out that several seers, religious heads and also many people have urged the government to take such a step. He said there have been complaints about the religious environment of such cities being spoiled due to the presence of alcohol shops there. The CM said the current budget year is going to end soon and the state government is thinking of amending the excise policy for religious towns from the coming fiscal year. "We are serious and we will take a decision in this regard very soon," he asserted. Dr Yadav's statement came on the day the 'Maha Kumbh' began at Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh today.

PM Modi to dedicate three naval ships to the nation in Mumbai

The commissioning of three major naval combatants marks a significant leap



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Maharashtra on Wednesday to dedicate three frontline naval combatants INS Surat, INS Nilgiri and INS Vaghsheer to the nation on their commissioning at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai. Thereafter, he will inaugurate ISKCON Temple at Kharghar, Navi Mumbai.

The commissioning of three major naval combatants marks a significant leap forward in realizing India's vision of becoming a global leader in defence manufacturing and maritime security. INS Surat, the fourth and final ship of the P15B Guided Missile Destroyer Project, ranks among the largest and most sophisticated destroyers in the world. It has an indigenous content of 75% and is equipped with state-of-the-art weapon-sensor packages

and advanced network-centric capabilities. INS Nilgiri, the first ship of the P17A Stealth Frigate Project, has been designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and incorporates advanced features for enhanced survivability, sea-keeping, and stealth, reflecting the next generation of indigenous frigates. INS Vaghsheer, the sixth and final submarine of the P75 Scorpene Project, represents India's growing expertise in submarine construction and has been constructed in collaboration with the Naval Group of France.

In line with his commitment to boost India's cultural heritage, the PM will inaugurate the Sri Sri Radha Madanmohanji Temple, an ISKCON project in Kharghar, Navi Mumbai. The project, spread over nine acres, includes a temple with several deities, a Vedic education centre, proposed museums and auditorium, healing cen-

ter, among others. It aims to promote universal brotherhood, peace, and harmony through Vedic teachings. On Tuesday, the PM will participate in celebrations of 150th Foundation Day of India Meteorological Department at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. He will also address the gathering on the occasion. He will launch 'Mission Mausam' with the goal of making our country a 'Weather-ready and Climate-smart' nation. The Mission aims to achieve this by developing cutting-edge weather surveillance technologies and systems, implementing high-resolution atmospheric observations, next-generation radars and satellites, and high-performance computers. It will also focus on improving the understanding of weather and climate processes, provide air quality data that will help strategize weather management and intervention in the long run. The PM will also release the IMD Vision-2047 document for weather resilience and climate change adaptation. It includes plans for weather forecasting, weather management, and climate change mitigation.

No troop reduction along LAC during winters: Gen Dwivedi

PARWINDER SANDHU
NEW DELHI, 13 JANUARY

Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi today firmly stated that India will not reduce its troop deployment along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) during the winter months. Traditionally, troop numbers would decrease due to harsh climatic conditions, but he emphasized that India is not considering any such reduction this winter. "During winter deployment, the number of troops came down. At least in the winter strategy, we are not looking forward to any reduction of troops. When it comes to the summer strategy, we'll take a review based on that time, how many negotiations and meetings have taken place," the Army chief said, he said. Speaking at his first press conference since taking over as Army Chief from General Manoj Pande, Gen Dwivedi described the situation along the LAC as sensitive but stable. Despite ongoing standoffs, he assured that India's deployment is balanced, robust, and capable of managing any challenges. "We are focusing on strengthening border infrastructure and enhancing our capabilities," he added, while also authorizing his commanders to resolve smaller issues such as patrolling and grazing at the ground

level. On the rise of terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir, the General reported that 60 per cent of the terrorists eliminated last year were of Pakistani origin. "In the last year, 60 per cent of terrorists eliminated were of Pakistan origin. Eighty per cent of the terrorists active in Jammu and Kashmir are Pakistanis at a time when we are moving towards tourism from terrorism," he said. Stating that the situation in J&K is under control, the chief said the ceasefire, which has been effective since February 2021, remains intact on the Line of Control. "However, terror infrastructure remains intact. The infiltration attempts are also continuing, including from the International Border (IB) sector, along with drone attempts to smuggle warlike stores and narcotics," he added. Acknowledging a rise in terrorist activities in North Kashmir and the Doda-Kishtwar region in recent months, Gen Dwivedi assured that the overall security situation remains "under control." "We witnessed more than five lakh pilgrims during Amamath Yatra this time and the peaceful conduct of elections (Lok Sabha and Assembly) are indicators of a positive change. The theme of terrorism to tourism is gradually taking shape," Gen Dwivedi stated.

Budgam: Kashmir's first upcoming rail city undergoing massive expansions

NISHAT NIZAMI
SRINAGAR, 10 JANUARY

As the Kashmir Valley is set for rail connectivity with the rest parts of the country through the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link project and several new trains, including the New Delhi-Srinagar Vande Bharat, Budgam is being developed by the

railways as a rail city with massive expansions in infrastructure. The mega expansion of Budgam has been started with the extension of the Budgam Car Shed which is spread over an area of 2000 kanals in local parlance or 250 acres. The shed presently has 12 train sets including two MEMU and the rest DEMU

that are maintained at the depot presently. As learnt during a recent Press tour to the car shed, the shed has been extended to accommodate 12-coach rakes as compared to its eight-coach length. "With plans on Vande Bharat trains in the region, the car shed is now being revamped towards Baramulla with further extension to



accommodate 16 coach rakes," informed a Railway official. "The proposal is under ten-

dering and work is expected to be completed in one and a half years," he added. Among the other works being carried out, setting up bio toilets in coaches and making water available in them is one of the crucial tasks going at present. The DEMU coaches at Budgam coach depot lack bio toilets and are said to have very few

toilets but that are yet to be operational. "Once the section gets operational till Karta, the necessity of a toilet among passengers will arise. Considering the fact, the works on a quick watering system at Budgam and Srinagar Station and bio toilets are being provided in coaches. Apart from this, three coach washing

lines are being constructed for cleaning more and more coaches. An inspection line for goods is being developed at the car shed. As elaborated by the official, apart from the ongoing works, there are few additional developmental plans that are in the proposal stage at present. The first one being the automatic coach washing plant

for particularly catering to the DEMU car shed. A tender of the project has been done and a visit of the senior officials has also been done. The project would enable additional cleaning facilities paving way for more electric coaches to be brought from outside the region and kept at the upcoming satellite shed, informed the official.

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Fraught Aspirations

The H-1B visa programme has long symbolised opportunity for skilled professionals worldwide, particularly Indians, who form the majority of its recipients. Yet, this much-coveted gateway to professional advancement in the United States is increasingly mired in uncertainty and political scrutiny, raising questions about its sustainability and the aspirations tied to it. At its core, the H-1B visa programme offers a mutually beneficial exchange: the United States attracts global talent essential for its industries, while foreign professionals, many from India, gain access to higher wages and career growth. For Indian applicants, the appeal is clear. The programme promises not just financial betterment but also the prestige of contributing to cutting-edge industries, particularly in technology. However, the realities of the programme often fall short of its promise, leaving many in a state of flux. One major criticism of the H-1B programme is its vulnerability to misuse. Allegations of fraud and abuse have persisted, with claims that some employers exploit the system to hire cheaper labour, thereby displacing local workers. This has fuelled resentment in America and made the programme a recurring target in the broader immigration debate. The political volatility surrounding H-1B visas, particularly under administrations favouring stricter immigration policies, has further complicated the pathway for aspirants. Higher rejection rates, delays in processing, and an uncertain future under shifting policy landscapes have left many potential applicants apprehensive. Another glaring issue is the limited pathway to permanent residency. While the H-1B is a temporary work visa, it is often seen as a stepping stone to a green card. Yet, the process is riddled with bottlenecks, especially for Indian nationals, who face wait times stretching into decades due to country-based quotas. This prolonged uncertainty forces many skilled professionals into a precarious dependence on their employers, with limited job mobility and heightened vulnerability during economic downturns. Despite these challenges, the demand for H-1B visas remains steadfast. The stark wage disparity between India and the United States, coupled with the aspiration to achieve professional excellence, continues to drive Indian professionals toward this uncertain yet lucrative path. Moreover, the contributions of these professionals to the US economy are undeniable, from bolstering innovation in technology to filling critical skill gaps across sectors. The situation calls for a more pragmatic and collaborative approach. US policymakers must recognise the value skilled immigrants bring while addressing legitimate concerns of misuse. India, on the other hand, should push for a more equitable and transparent system, emphasising the mutual benefits of a fairer, more balanced and secure framework. Simultaneously, prospective applicants must approach their aspirations with pragmatism, diversifying their options and preparing for potential roadblocks. The H-1B visa, while a remarkable opportunity, is far from a guarantee of stability or success. For Indian dreamers, it remains both a beacon of hope and a cautionary tale – a complex interplay of ambition, policy, and resilience in a rapidly changing global landscape. Of course, the challenge for the Indian ecosystem is to ensure skilled individuals stay back, instead of flocking to the US.

LA fires

The devastating wildfires ravaging parts of Los Angeles and surrounding areas serve as an alarming reminder of the vulnerabilities faced by urban and rural communities. These infernos, fuelled by relentless winds and dry conditions, have scorched vast tracts of land, destroyed countless homes, and tragically claimed lives. The fires highlight not just the destructive power of nature but also the systemic shortcomings in disaster preparedness and response that need urgent redress. Climate change has undeniably played a role in exacerbating wildfire intensity and frequency. Rising temperatures, prolonged droughts, and erratic weather patterns have created the perfect conditions for such catastrophes. However, the extent of destruction we are witnessing is also a result of human factors. Inadequate infrastructure maintenance, delayed resource allocation, and strained emergency services have all compounded the impact. Reports of fire hydrants running dry and critical fire-fighting equipment lying idle due to budget cuts are particularly damning. These lapses reflect a broader issue of underfunding essential services, leaving communities ill-equipped to combat crises of this scale. Beyond the immediate response, there are deeper questions about urban planning and land management. The fires have encroached upon exclusive neighbourhoods and cultural landmarks, underscoring how unchecked expansion into fire-prone areas can amplify risks. While affluent communities like Hollywood may attract greater media attention and resources, it is often the less privileged who bear the brunt of such disasters, with fewer means to rebuild their lives. Policymakers must prioritise equitable and sustainable land-use strategies that consider the long-term safety of all residents. The political ramifications of these wildfires are also impossible to ignore. Leaders at various levels of government have faced criticism for their handling of the crisis, from resource shortages to perceived indifference. This highlights the critical need for accountability and transparent governance during emergencies. It is not enough to address the symptoms of the problem; the root causes must be tackled head-on, including systemic inefficiencies and mismanagement. At the same time, communities have demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of adversity. Stories of neighbours banding together, fire-fighters risking their lives, and international assistance pouring in serve as poignant reminders of humanity's ability to unite in times of need. But heroism alone cannot be a substitute for proactive measures. Looking ahead, these wildfires must be a turning point in how we address environmental and disaster-related challenges. Governments, at all levels, need to invest in robust infrastructure, strengthen emergency services, and implement policies that prioritise climate resilience. Public awareness and preparedness must also be elevated to ensure communities are not caught off guard. Ultimately, the on-going fires are a stark warning that the cost of inaction – whether on climate change, infrastructure, or governance – is far greater than the investments required to mitigate future disasters. The time to act decisively is now.

German divide~ II

When Merkel stepped down in 2021, she was hailed for saving the European Union but many hold her responsible for having destabilized Germany and the politics of the continent. Gavin Mortimer points out that Merkel primarily is responsible for the resurgence of right wing and nationalist parties across Europe. 'The AfD – as well as Marine Le Pen, Geert Wilders and Giorgia Meloni – all owe a debt of gratitude to Angela Merkel'



The AfD when founded in 2013 had the reputation of being an old man's club dissatisfied with Angela Merkel's fiscal and foreign policies. Its founding members were those who advocated disengagement from the European Union (EU) in stark contrast to Merkel championing the cause of greater European integration. The AfD protested at the Euro as the EU's sole currency and rejected the bailouts of EU member countries in the aftermath of the euro-zone debt crisis. Sixty0 fellow conservatives of Merkel voted against her proposal to support a bailout for Greece in 2015.

In the elections held that year, the AfD received a little over two million votes and no seats in the Bundestag. Merkel's declaration on 31 August 2015 that 'Germany is a strong country. ...We have achieved so much - we can do it' and throwing open Europe's doors to an unknown number of refugees and migrants was at odds with her admission in 2010 of the failure of multiculturalism.

The priorities of AfD shifted with these new initiatives. With a record number of migrants, more than one million entering Germany from Syria and Afghanistan which Merkel described as a humanitarian emergency, the AfD viewed it as invasion of foreigners. It became explicitly anti-Muslim as most of the migrants from Syria were Muslims.

When Merkel stepped down in 2021, she was hailed for saving the European Union but many hold her responsible for having destabilized Germany and the politics of the continent. Gavin Mortimer points out that Merkel primarily is responsible for the resurgence of right wing and nationalist parties across Europe. "The AfD ~ as well as Marine Le Pen, Geert Wilders and Giorgia Meloni ~ all owe a debt of gratitude to Angela Merkel".

In 2016, the AfD demanded a ban on "Islamic symbols of power" in Germany which included full body veils, public call for worship and minarets. It was criticised as racist and Islamophobic.

In the 2017 federal elections it secured the backing of six million Germans and 94 seats in the Bundestag and emerged as the third largest party, with the strongest support in the east and the south. The conservative alliance between the CDU and CSU lost 65 seats from 2013, the worst showing in seven decades.

By 2024 the AfD began to rival the

mainstream CDU and CSU and SPD with regard to popular support but its power is circumscribed as a result of the refusal of the national parties to form coalitions with it. But the AfD have won their first state election.

The scepticism of a united Europe, Brexit and the rise of Donald Trump have led to serious questioning about Germany's integrative policy that was followed since



the Second World War. The AfD fears that Germany is losing its sovereignty and capacity for independent decision making and wants Germany to seek its rightful place in Europe and in the world. The quest is to carve out a policy pursued exclusively on national interest.

The rise of AfD in Germany and similar ones in other nations of Europe indicate that the broadeners and Euro-sceptics are increasing their presence at the cost of Deepeners. The EU as an economic powerhouse would continue but a United States of Europe is a distant dream.

Prof. Klaus Hurrelmann, a renowned researcher on youth in Germany points out that the young feel the Social Democrats, Greens and Free Democrats have failed and voted for the AfD in Saxony and Thuringia. The young want a government that tackles and solves problems.

Many teenagers and young adults are pessimistic about the future. They are worried about social decline, war, not being able to buy a home, climate, energy, education, unemployment, immigration, prosperity and peace. The decision to do away with nuclear energy is being questioned.

Other than realistic use of coal, the young want rapprochement with Russia for cheaper gas supply. They also want to check

reallocation of industries like Volkswagen not only to streamline infrastructure costs but to reduce soaring energy costs. Hurrelmann also notes the rise of right-wing extremist, nationalist and authoritarian positions among the young.

A noted historian, Christina Morina, stresses the roots to the four decades of the communist rule which provided a counter narrative to national socialism. The communist variant proclaimed an order "to be truer and more representative of real people than democracy in the west. Western democracies are a sham perpetuating class rule protecting primarily the interests of the capitalists".

To counter this imperfect democracy, participatory democracy in the Swiss model is advocated to bring back the people to the centre of political decision making. This is rediscovering an illusory golden past as during Communist rule the entire system was over-centralized practicing a subject participatory culture in which local activities were under total control of a highly centralized and bureaucratic order.

This was one important reason that when Gorbachev simultaneously initiated perestroika and glasnost, the system collapsed like a pack of cards.

What has made this situation more complex is the economic slowdown created by overconfidence and refusal to change its course in a situation when Europe is facing an identity crisis and insecurity with Trump's return in the US and consolidation of right-wing forces in many Western democracies.

It is ironic that the Anglosphere countries have proved to be more adaptable than Germany in moving towards accepting inevitable challenges coming from factors like AI. In this background of an economic crisis leading to stagnation the political cleavage between western and eastern Germany is likely to widen rather than leading to the evolution of a common culture.

However, Musk is exaggerating the importance of this phenomenon as it is still in the fringe and likely to remain confined to a small area of Germany and with a fear of a setback to the traditional stability of the country it is likely to be purely transitory rather than changing the entire political course. But the two cultures of Germany will continue to be a problem and in need of being addressed by accommodating its concerns.

(Concluded)

Treading on dangerous waters

The words of the late President Ramon Magsaysay might well apply to the fisherfolk adversely affected by a Supreme Court ruling that affirmed a lower court's decision to grant commercial fishing companies access to municipal waters that, under the Fisheries Code, is restricted to small-scale fishers.

The preferential access was questioned as "unconstitutional" by the Mercidrar Fishing Corp. before a Malabon Regional Trial Court (RTC) on Oct. 25, 2023. Two months later, on Dec. 11, the court ruled in its favor.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court First Division in a resolution dated Aug. 19, upheld the lower court's ruling, saying that pleadings by the Office of the Solicitor General in the case had been filed "out of time" and without any "legal basis." The Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) also failed to file a timely appeal against the RTC ruling, for which they were deservedly slammed by the Federation of Free Farmers and the Magsasaka party list for "sleeping on the job."

The DA-BFAR has now filed a petition seeking a reversal of the high court ruling, pointing out that allowing commercial fishing within the 15-kilometer municipal water zone would have "far-reaching consequences for sustainable resource management, environmental protection, and the welfare of affected communities." In a similar petition,



several fishers' groups, a local government, civil society representatives, and environmental nongovernment organizations led by international marine protection group Oceana noted that "coupled with climate change impacts, pressures (from commercial fishing fleets) threaten to destabilize an already fragile ecosystem (amid) dire consequences to the population and food security."

Aside from questioning the "breakneck speed" of the judicial proceedings at the lower court, the petitioners accused the court of "haphazard constitutional interpretation that sought to kill the established legislative policy of protecting municipal fisherfolk and empowering (local government units)." The RTC ruling struck down the outright ban on commercial fishing in waters with a depth of less than seven fathoms, or 12.8 meters. It also invalidated Section 16 of the Fisheries Code giving municipal governments the jurisdiction to regulate commercial fishing in municipal waters of up to 15 km from the shoreline.

The ruling would pit small fisherfolk using crude fishing methods against commercial fishers with their bigger vessels and advanced fishing equipment in an unfair competition for limited resources. "Their catch for one day is equivalent to the catch of 300 small boats that spent 14 hours at sea," one fisherman from La Union said of commercial fishing companies.

Such overfishing could impact food security, the petitioners noted, with scientist Dr. Wilfredo Campos of OceanBio Lab at the University of the Philippines citing investigations from the 1980s. "Most of our traditional coastal fishing grounds are overfished," he said. Just as impacted are the fisherfolk in Zambales already marginalized by China's aggression in the West Philippine Sea. Harassed by the China Coast Guard who bar them from Scarborough Shoal, they now rely on municipal waters for a living.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Meta's new approach

SIR, Meta Platforms, the tech behemoth behind Facebook and Instagram, has announced a groundbreaking shift in its content moderation policies within the United States. Central to this overhaul is the termination of its third-party fact-checking program, a move that has long underpinned its fight against misinformation. In its place, Meta is embracing a "Community Notes" model, mirroring the approach pioneered by X (formerly Twitter). This initiative seeks to empower users with a participatory framework for addressing misinformation while ostensibly championing free expression. By decentralising content regulation, Meta aims to strike a delicate balance between curbing harmful content and addressing critiques of over-censorship.

The reimagined strategy introduces a nuanced two-tiered moderation approach. Automated systems will continue to govern content violating major com-

munity standards, ensuring swift action against egregious violations. However, less critical issues, which previously fell under the purview of professional fact-checkers, will now be subjected to community reporting. Complementing this policy is a reinvigoration of political discourse on Meta's platforms, with plans to reintroduce politically charged content into users' feeds. Restrictions on polarising topics, such as immigration and gender identity, are also set to be relaxed, signalling Meta's commitment to fostering unfiltered conversations ~ albeit a contentious undertaking. Unsurprisingly, this tectonic shift has elicited a cacophony of reactions. Critics have expressed fears that Meta's more permissive policies may inadvertently fuel the dissemination of misinformation and hate speech. Advocacy groups worry about the diminished role of experts in countering false narratives, while fact-checking organisations have voiced dismay

over the abrupt discontinuation of their collaborations. Conversely, proponents argue that the move could mitigate accusations of ideological bias, fostering a more inclusive and representative digital public square. Yet, this debate underscores the enduring challenge of moderating content without stifling free expression - a dilemma Meta is determined to navigate.

Adding to the intrigue, Meta is relocating its trust and safety teams to Texas ~ a decision that has sparked speculation about its motives. Some view this move as a calculated effort to address allegations of political bias, particularly in the context of a politically charged environment.

The proximity of these changes to Donald Trump's potential return to the presidency has only heightened scrutiny. Observers are left questioning whether the timing of Meta's policy overhaul is coincidental or a strategic recalibration in anticipation of a shifting political landscape. While these changes are currently confined to the United States, their

SLUGGISH INDIA

SIR, This refers to the edit 'Reigniting growth'. The slowdown in the economy is visible everywhere and even the numbers projected by the government appear to be highly exaggerated. The audited results of the listed companies have shown no growth at all since the past couple of years and this trend in FMCG companies indicates the sluggishness in the economy.

The taxation of the middle class has left them with no money to buy. As a result there is a breakdown in demand. This needs to be addressed. This lack of consumption can be linked with lack of well paying jobs. This cycle of jobs, demand and consumption has to be kick-started by putting money in the hands of the consumers. All the money to fund the 5 kg free rations and the various schemes and doles of the government comes from the pockets of the salaried middle class. The government on its part is only concerned about winning elections and is doing little that would help in restoring consumption and demand.

Yours, etc., Anthony Henriques, Mumbai, 10 January.

implications are global. Meta's policy revisions will inevitably be scrutinised through the lens of international regulatory frameworks, particularly the European Union's stringent Digital Services Act (DSA). The DSA imposes rigorous requirements on platforms to combat disinformation and harmful content, raising questions about whether Meta's new

approach can align with such standards. As the world watches this audacious experiment unfold, Meta's gamble on community-driven moderation could redefine the boundaries of digital governance, with far-reaching ramifications for the future of social media.

Yours, etc., Amarjeet Kumar, Hazaribagh, 10 January.



American role in targeting India

HARSHA KAKAR

Two recent reports emerging in the American media are intended to lower India's image at a time when there is a government change in the US. The first was an article stating that India was scheming with politicians of Maldives to have the current pro-China President, Mohamad Muizzu, removed from power. The intent was to hit India's standing in the region by highlighting its Big Brother reputation of interfering in internal affairs of neighbouring countries where current governments are not to its liking.

The report was denied by the foreign minister of Maldives, Dr Abdulla Khaleel, during his India visit as also by the MEA. In an interview to an Indian channel, Khaleel mentioned, "The claims are totally untrue, I'm not sure from where they got the evidence to base it on. But it's totally untrue." The MEA spokesperson commented, "Both the newspaper and the reporter in question appear to nurse a compulsive hostility towards India. You can see a pattern in their activities."

Soon after the publication of the report, the Maldivian defence minister also visited India to revive defence ties, frozen after the withdrawal of India's military personnel manning helicopters and aircraft gifted to the Maldives. The meeting was positive.

In its independent analysis, an Indian newspaper, quoting senior Indian intelligence officials, wrote "Rogue, but influential officials in the US State Department, closely associated with those pressure and lobbying groups identified as 'anti-India', were behind the recent report." It added that these officials are unhappy with India's growing assertiveness.

The second was an article published on 31 December, accusing India of conducting targeted assassinations in Pakistan since 2021. The article mentions that India's RAW utilizes services of local criminals in Pakistan or Afghan contractors, and payments are made through Dubai-based intermediaries or through informal banking networks. It claims to have examined six specific incidents. It again had no substantial backing to justify its claims. Pakistani media had a field day in joining the anti-India bandwagon. It gave the Pakistani government another opportunity to blame India.

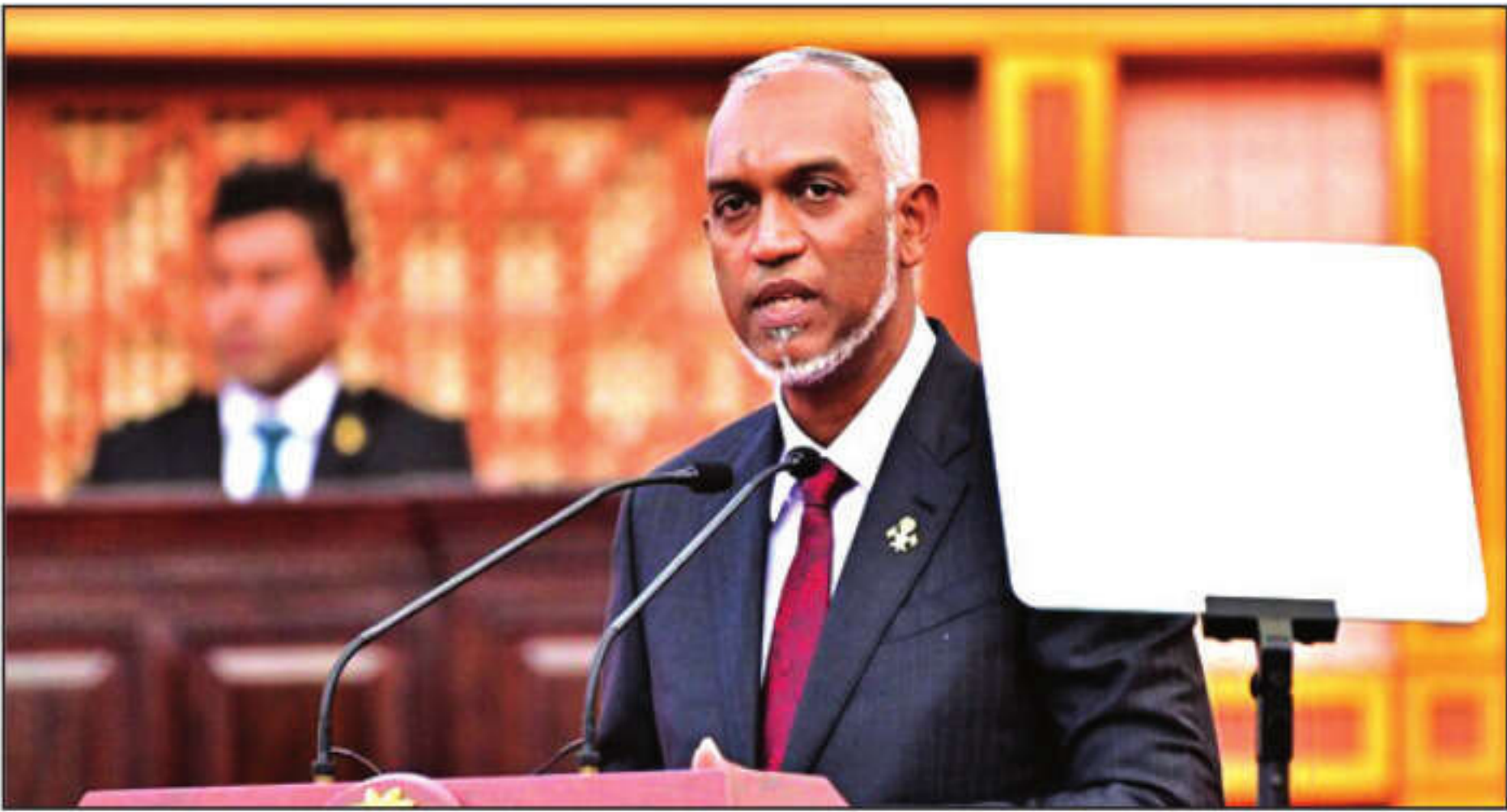
The articles were possibly also aimed at countering the narrative being pushed by Indian media that the US was behind the regime change in Bangladesh, aiming to impact India's ties with Dhaka.

Both the articles were co-authored by a known Indian critic. The timing of both reports, just prior to Donald Trump assuming the presidency, seems calculated to damage India's global standing. This is not the first time US media has been critical of India. Despite India handling Covid 19 better than the US, it came under intense criticism.

Throughout India's elections last year, reputed American media houses, published pieces mentioning that these elections are anti-Muslim and the reelection of PM Modi would mean more violence against minorities.

Some of these anti-India articles were also authored by Indians who despise the BJP. Evidently, the intent was to lower the image of the current ruling dispensation in Delhi as also influence India's election process. However, it failed as Indians were uninfluenced.

Western media networks happily jumped on fake accusations being



thrown towards India by Canada as also the Pannun case in the US. But not a single US media house mentioned the role of the deep state in the change of leadership in Bangladesh, while the world was aware of it.

The US deep state wants to keep India under check while exploiting its growing distance from China as also its economic and military power in the Asia-Pacific. While US and India launch iCet to open doors for technology sharing and the US encourages companies to shift from China to India, it simultaneously, does not want India to be the sole beneficiary of the China Plus 1 policy.

Washington cannot permit New Delhi to become a challenge in the years ahead as China is, while needing India to be more than just an ally. For the US, an India with an independent foreign policy, many times at loggerheads with the views of Washington is unacceptable. In the long term it would prefer a government which it can manipulate at will.

In December, the BJP leadership, displaying independence from the

government, began targeting the US deep state directly. It claimed that opposition parties were basing their accusations on articles funded by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, an organization which is partially funded by the US state department. This led to the US spokesperson commenting negatively on the accusations. This was possibly the first time that the ruling party has targeted the US in this manner.

Anger was building against actions of the US government over a period of time. It was evident when the State Department invited members of Sikhs for Justice, a pro-Khalistan group, to the White House for discussions, coinciding with the visit of PM Modi to the US for the Quad summit. It is also known that the deep state was involved in supporting protests in India, which could have had a damaging impact on the nation's economy and internal security.

The link between the current US leadership and the anti-India lobby in the US gained impetus when George Soros, known to be anti-Modi, was

awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Biden. Many Trump backers also criticized the award, with Elon Musk mentioning, "A travesty that Biden is giving Soros the Medal of Freedom."

The US-based Media Research Centre in a report mentions that Soros funds more than 180 media outlets with ties to dozens more through secondary sources, boards and the like. It adds, "Every month, reporters, writers and bloggers at the many outlets he funds easily reach more than 330 million people around the globe."

Trump has on multiple occasions mentioned his intent to dismantle the deep state. This is easier said than done as the organization is deeply embedded within the US government. While he may not achieve his aim, he would be able to curb its actions to some extent. This implies that the deep state would not function as openly as before. However, the tirade against India would continue.

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

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTES

IT is interesting to note what is being done in Great Britain to deal with the railway situation. The route mileage of the railways of Great Britain is about 20,000, a little more than one half of the route mileage of the railways of India. The London Midland and Scottish Railway has decided to build 225 new locomotives, 2,591 new passenger coaches, and no less than 30,000 new wagons, of which a large number are mineral trucks designed principally for the conveyance of coal. The Great Western has ordered 1,000 wagons to facilitate shipment of coal, and is arranging standing accommodation at Newport for 11,000 wagons. The London and North-Eastern Railway has ordered 12,000 new vehicles, of which 500 are for passenger traffic and the remainder for goods. These figures may well startle an Indian authority accustomed to deal in hundreds where at Home they think in thousands. The intensive traffic to be found at Home does not exist in India, but the persistent nature of the demands made in this country for more wagons indicates that, so far at least, sufficient provision has not been made for the natural growth of trade.

NEWS ITEMS

TYPE OF OXBRIDGE

SHOULD BE GOVERNED BY COST

No special reference is made, says the Committee, in the body of the Bill as regards the type of bridge to be constructed. But it would appear from clause 4 of the Bill, read with clauses 6 and 19, that the Government is empowered to construct a bridge of any description, irrespective of cost. It would further appear from the statement of objects and reasons that the total cost of the scheme is estimated at Rs. 6,34,00,000. It can therefore be safely presumed that it is the intention of the Government to decide in favour of a cantilever bridge.

It is exceedingly important that the type of bridge should be mentioned in the Bill, so that when the Bill becomes an Act it will not be open to the Government to construct a bridge of any description.

"There is no denying the fact that there exists among eminent engineers a marked divergence of opinion as to the type of bridge best suited to the conditions of the banks of the Hooghly and the nature of the subsoil. There is the cantilever bridge proposed by the Committee of Engineers in 1922, the twin-floating bridge proposed by Sir Bradford Leslie in 1918, and an improved bridge of the type of the existing bridge recommended by the Committee of Engineers in 1912. As regards the capital sum which Calcutta can afford to spend, and the extent to which its people and its trade can be taxed to meet the maintenance charges, there is not much difference of opinion among the general public. The Committee find that the opinion of the general public is decidedly in favour of a less expensive bridge than the cantilever type, and they (the Committee) generally agree with the public in general that the type of bridge should be governed by its cost.

SIR S. BRANCKER'S ARRIVAL

IDEAL FLIGHT TO CALCUTTA

AIR Vice-Marshal Sir Sefton Brancker, Director of Civil Aviation, who is surveying the proposed airship route from England to India, piloted by the well-known airman, Mr. Alan. J. Cobham, arrived in Calcutta last evening.

Leaving Allahabad at 10-15 A.M., Sir Sefton was expected to land on the Ellenborough Course on the Maidan about three o'clock where, indeed, his arrival was awaited by His Excellency the Governor, the Countess of Lytton and a party from Government House, including Sir Edwin Lutens.

When the aeroplane was over an hour overdue and shadows lengthened on the Maidan, there was a certain amount of anxiety among the comparatively few people who had gathered early expecting to witness the landing. At five o'clock, however, when hopes of Sir Sefton's arrival before to-day were almost abandoned, the outline of an aeroplane was picked out in the clear atmosphere.

Crossing the river from the direction of Howrah, the machine came over the Ellenborough Course where police were keeping the landing ground clear. By this time a considerable crowd had assembled and the evolutions of the aeroplane over the Maidan were watched with the greatest interest.

MUSSOLINI SAFE

UNFOUNDED RUMOUR OF ASSASSINATION

IT was rumoured here this morning that Signor Mussolini had been assassinated, but it was ascertained that he telephoned personally to one of the Italian representatives at the Allied Finance Conference in the afternoon.

Pakistan's institutions are crumbling

SAEED AHMED

The importance of institutions for economic development and growth has long been recognised — for example, in the writings of Adam Smith and, more recently, exemplified by Douglass North's 1993 Nobel Prize.

Governance quality and perceptions of the political, economic, and policy climate are critical in shaping overall conditions for investment and growth. Given the mobility of international capital, strong institutions play a major role in attracting and retaining investment inflows.

Pakistan's declining growth and investment trends are largely attributable to the continuous decline of its institutions. This is reflected in poor governance assessments in the World Bank's 'Worldwide Governance Indicators'.

When benchmarked against regional counterparts, Pakistan's performance is subpar. For instance, in 'government effectiveness', India's percentile rank was 67.9, while Pakistan lagged at 30.6 in 2023. In 'political stability and absence of violence/terrorism', Pakistan's rank was a mere 6.6. Similarly, in 'regulatory quality', Pakistan's score of 19.8 was well below India's 47.2.

Governance in Pakistan's public institutions has reached a critical point. The political leadership remains oblivious to the fact that their actions, motivated by political ambitions and vested interests, are eroding key state institutions — parliament, judiciary, and executive. Consequently, Pakistan is trapped in a low-

growth, low-investment cycle, facing insurmountable development challenges. To illustrate, the economy grew by just 0.98 per cent in the first quarter, well below the projected 3 per cent for this year.

The current self-styled democratic government, often called a 'hybrid regime', continues to undermine civilian institutions. Parliament, a key state organ, is in a precarious position.

The speedy passage of the 26th Constitutional Amendment and six subsequent bills — such as expanding the Supreme Court bench from 17 to 34 judges and extending the tenure of military chiefs from three to five years — shows blatant disregard for the institution. These bills were rushed through both houses, quickly assented to by the president, and published in the gazette — all within a few hours. This questionable process reflects a complete disrespect for parliament, where members were apparently instructed to vote 'yes' without debate, often unaware of the bills' content or implications.

Like the judiciary, the executive is also crumbling. Key positions are filled by civil servants loyal to the ruling parties, without regard for seniority or relevant expertise. Moreover, serving military officials have been appointed heads of civil institutions.

Pakistan's tax authority faces acute organisational problems. The current FBR chairman, from the administrative service, was appointed after the prime minister picked him for the lucrative slot, superseding over two dozen senior officers of the Customs and Inland Revenue Service. This led to a cascading effect within the organ-

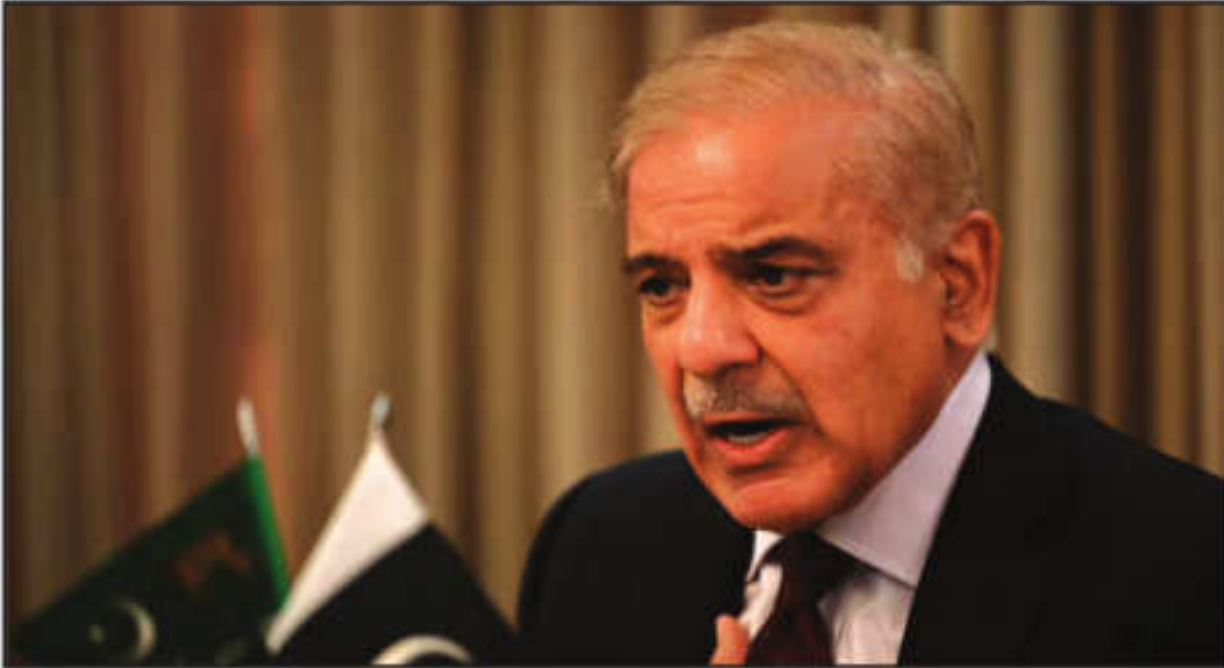
isation, with several junior officials appointed to higher posts, potentially impacting institutional performance.

Since the early 2000s, successive foreign-funded tax reforms and government-appointed commissions aimed at improving the tax-to-GDP ratio have all failed, weakening the FBR's capacity to collect taxes. Furthermore, the government removed 25 senior tax officials, based on intelligence reports, draining morale among tax officials.

The State Bank of Pakistan's institutional capacity is similarly being eroded. For two years, it has operated without a deputy governor for critical monetary policy and economic research functions despite the legal requirement to fill such positions within 30 days of a vacancy. Another deputy governor position for banking has been vacant for two months. Amidst a severe economic crisis, the failure to appoint qualified leadership is inexcusable.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has empowered the security agencies to clear all appointments to public service requiring federal cabinet approval. This effectively allows junior security officials to overrule ministerial and secretarial recommendations, circumventing the authority of the cabinet to approve appointments of seasoned professionals with internationally recognised expertise.

The establishment's interference in political affairs is an old issue, but it has recently taken active charge of the country's economic management, formalised by the creation of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) in June 2023. Initially premised on creating a one-stop facility to



attract foreign investment from Gulf countries, the SIFC has virtually become a supra-cabinet, with the military leadership now overseeing economic matters.

The army chief's meetings with businessmen to discuss economic issues, coupled with assurances of \$100 billion in foreign investment, illustrate the SIFC's growing influence. Coordinated by a military officer and granted the status of a division, the SIFC has created a parallel structure within the government.

Investment is not secured through government MoUs or by mantras. It is the private sector that creates opportunities and negotiates with foreign investors. Investment depends on political and economic stability, policy consistency, investment security, and global competitiveness of businesses. Despite the SIFC's efforts, investment fell to a record low of 13 per cent of GDP in FY24, below the long-term average of

around 15 per cent. Pakistan attracted just \$1.9 billion in FDI, a mere \$275 million increase from FY23, and below the \$1.936bn in FY22.

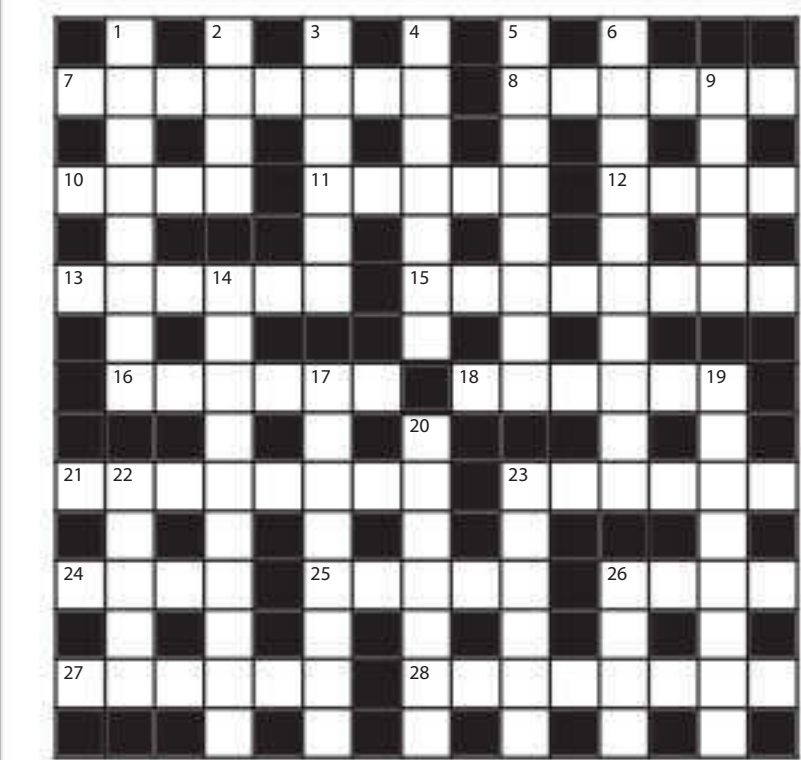
The above instances show that the state is being run in a bizarre fashion. As if globally recognised economic principles and governance standards do not apply to Pakistan, the country has created its own set of governance methods where one institution or group bulldozes the mandate of others.

Without strong institutions, no government plans — such as the recent Uraan Pakistan — will fare any better than previous failed initiatives like "Qarz utaro mulk sanwaro", or the misguided crowd-funding for mega dams. The country cannot progress through political hymns. We need statesmen, not self-serving politicians, to steer the country out of this mess.

Dawn/ANN.

CROSSWORD

NO-293020



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

BEANBURGER MALL
O S O E X S M I
WATFORD PUTTING
I E T L A O S H
EGRESSION RESIT
O N S E E S
BLIPS EVERY INCH
A D W A E T I
CASTIGATE DIGUP
K E R G H
SNOUT TWOSEATER
W B I T I T L C U
INROADS REVEILED
N I N A I E U D
GIST INOPERABLY

ACROSS

- Immediately taking on economy, without any fancy trimmings (8-3)
- Style regarding publication clear: it's always attractive (9,6)
- Trouble? It's brought in a crowd (7)
- Stop limiting church in extra large religious region (7)
- Still activity at sea when the nights are drawing in (9)

- Sorcerer retreated, having kidnapped husband in Surrey town (5)
- Laundry accessory increasingly just not opening (5)
- Yielded, returning personnel before important meeting for major part of body (9)
- Requested change to divine right, ultimately (7)
- Scoundrel's attorney receiving a rap (3-1-3)

- Conservative unfortunately meddled with learning (6,9)
- Regret introducing stupid new article in trial — not fully thought through (11)

- Popular composer presented in edition? There's a surprise (1,5,3)
- Was very much against a horrible death (5)
- Cooked each short Passover meal (9)
- The trendy dealer works with great care (6-9)
- Sign of gratitude after aircraft takes one into curious view of the sky (11)

- Doctor satisfied in there, getting right item used in diagnosis (11)
- Strangled the Duke, suppressing corruption before heartless trial (9)
- Exotic fish goes and swims around right area (3,6)
- Imagine 500 sheets of paper (500) (5)
- Revolutionary skill taking care of excellent item of jewellery (5)

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



Omar heaps praise on PM Modi, seeks J&K statehood's restoration

Omar Abdullah said the PM has fulfilled two of the three promises he made during his visit to Srinagar

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 13 JANUARY

Giving much ammunition to his rivals in Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday heaped praises on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and while crediting him for free and fair Assembly polls, pitched for restoration of J&K's statehood. The PM was seen smiling as the CM praised him for initiating development projects in J&K.

Omar, whose National Conference is part of the INDIA bloc, was speaking after inauguration of the tunnel at Sonamarg. He said the PM has fulfilled two of the three promises he made during his visit to Srinagar on the International Yoga Day. "Two promises—bridging the 'Delhi ki Doori' and holding Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir—have been fulfilled. But the third promise, restoring statehood, remains unfulfilled".

He said that people participated in the elections enthusiastically, and there were no complaints of any rigging or misuse of power anywhere. The CM added that people often question him about this, expressing confidence that PM Modi will fulfil the promise soon. "My heart believes that you will make this happen", he said.

(Modi in his speech later responded by saying that he is known for fulfilling his promises and these will be met at an appropriate time).

Omar said that holding elections has strengthened peoples' trust in Modi. A new government was elected, and the result is, as Chief Minister, I am talking to you here.

He said that the PM inaugurating the strategic tunnel has sent a strong message to detractors of peace and progress in the region. "This is a clear signal to those who oppose the development, peace, and



democracy of J&K—they will not succeed and will face defeat," Omar said.

He also paid tributes to the seven workers, including a doctor, who lost their lives during an attack in Gagangar last October while working on the tunnel project. "They sacrificed their lives for this project and for the nation's progress. For the past 35 years, the people of J&K have made sacrifices for the nation's development. My party has also

borne many sacrifices for this cause," he said.

Mentioning that PM Modi has put in efforts to erase the distance between Delhi and UT, Omar said that it is evident from the work the Centre has undertaken in the region. Kashmir has been linked with the rest of the country with a rail network and roads and tunnels are also being constructed.

"Today, on this occasion, I want to thank you from the

bottom of my heart for coming here in this cold. You have a very old relationship with Jammu and Kashmir, we hope that you come here again and again, stay among us and join our happiness", Omar added.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkar said, "To make India developed, we have to improve the infrastructure of our country. Unless these four things - water, energy, transport and communication - are developed, industry, tourism and trade cannot be promoted. Therefore, the Prime Minister has given us the responsibility of this infrastructural development with the resolve to make Jammu and Kashmir happy, prosperous, rich and developed along with developed India. The mission set by the Prime Minister is that industries and businesses should come here to make Jammu and Kashmir happy, prosperous and rich. With this feeling, we are trying to develop this infrastructure".

Assam coal mine tragedy: Hopes fade for trapped miners



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
GUWAHATI, 13 JANUARY

Rescue operations for the five miners trapped in a water-logged abandoned coal quarry in Umrangso, located in Assam's Dima Hasao district, have entered their eighth day, with hopes of their survival fading rapidly.

The tragedy unfolded on January 6, when nine workers became trapped in the mine, about 250 km from Guwahati.

Despite extensive efforts, only four bodies have, so far, been recovered. The rescue mission has mobilised a combined force of the navy, army, Assam Rifles, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State

Disaster Response Force (SDRF), and the district administration. Specialised dewatering pumps from Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Coal India are being used to remove water from the quarry, but progress remains slow.

Although the water level has significantly dropped, complete dewatering is still days away.

Kaushik Rai, Assam's minister for mines and minerals, stated that the process might conclude by Tuesday, allowing the next phase of rescue efforts to proceed. Underwater Remote Operating Vehicles (ROVs) are being deployed intermittently to capture images and locate the trapped

miners.

An on-site official confirmed the grim outlook: "The chances of survival for the remaining miners are diminishing after eight days of being trapped, but rescue operations will continue."

The mine, abandoned 12 years ago, was previously under the Assam Mineral Development Corporation until it was relinquished three years ago. Illegal mining activities had reportedly resumed at the site, leading to the current tragedy. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma revealed that the leader of the workers involved has been arrested, and a police investigation is underway.

The incident has drawn sharp criticism from Opposition leaders. Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi has demanded a special investigation team (SIT) probe into the tragedy, citing systemic failures in preventing illegal mining operations. "Weak law enforcement and local complicity have allowed illegal mining to continue unchecked," Gogoi stated.

BSF foils smuggling bid in Tripura; 3 Bangladeshis apprehended

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
AGARTALA, 13 JANUARY

The Border Security Force has successfully thwarted smuggling attempts and apprehended three Bangladeshi nationals in Tripura. The BSF's Mahila Praharis (women personnel) at the Border Out Post (BOP) Ashabari in the Sepahijala district intercepted a group of armed smugglers attempting to smuggle contraband across the international border on Sunday. The smugglers, equipped with sharp-edged weapons, posed a significant threat, prompting BSF personnel to fire two rounds from their service

weapons under compelling circumstances. Their swift action not only neutralized the smuggling attempt but also led to the recovery of a substantial quantity of sugar and other contraband items. In a separate incident on January 11, BSF personnel from BOP Gaumagar in the Khowai district detained three Bangladeshi nationals trying to cross into Bangladesh. The detainees, originating from Brahmanbaria district in Bangladesh, provided critical information during questioning, revealing the involvement of Indian and Bangladeshi touts in facilitating illegal border crossings.

Security forces recover arms and ammunition and war-like stores in Manipur

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
IMPHAL, 13 JANUARY

In a series of intelligence-based joint operations, security forces in Manipur recovered 19 weapons, ammunition, and other war-like stores from areas affected by ethnic strife. The operations, carried out by the Assam Rifles in coordination with the Manipur Police, targeted several districts, including Thoubal, Kangpokpi, Churachandpur, and Kakching.

Operations in Irong village (Thoubal district) and Sek-



majin (Kakching district) led to the recovery of a Self-Loading Rifle, a Single Barrel Rifle, an improvised mortar, three 9mm pistols, grenades, ammunition, and other war-like stores.

Security forces seized a 7.62 mm rifle, a 5.56 mm rifle, a .32 mm pistol, a single barrel rifle, two tube launch-

ers, and ammunition during an operation near Saheibung peak, Kangpokpi district.

An operation in Jakurador, Jiribam district, resulted in the recovery of explosives and other war-like materials.

In Old Gelmol village, Churachandpur district, authorities confiscated a 7.62 mm AK-56 rifle, a .303 rifle, a 9mm pistol, multiple single-barrel rifles, and grenades.

Manipur has been embroiled in ethnic violence since May 2023, primarily between the Meitei and

Kuki communities. The conflict has led to widespread displacement, loss of lives, and the proliferation of illegal arms in the region. Security forces have been intensifying operations to restore peace and order, often relying on actionable intelligence to dismantle armed groups and confiscate weapons.

The recoveries highlight the ongoing challenges faced by authorities in mitigating violence and addressing the security concerns arising from the availability of arms and ammunition.

BPSC protest: 'Go back' slogans greet Nitish Kumar

IMRAN MOJIB
PATNA, 13 JANUARY

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's ongoing Pragati Yatra was disrupted on Monday as a group of students protesting over alleged paper leak and irregularities in the 70th Combined Competitive Exams (Preliminary) conducted by the BPSC tried to stop the chief minister's cavalcade in Samastipur.

As Nitish Kumar reached Samastipur Collectorate as part of his state-wide journey, several BPSC candidates and students associated with various student organisations

started raising slogans of 'Nitish Kumar Go Back'.

The students repeated their demands for cancellation of the preliminary examination conducted by the BPSC on 13 December. They also demanded action against Patna DM who slapped the students. The protest and sloganeering continued till the police used force to disperse the protesters and detained some of the leaders.

The students' protest got momentum as Bihar Governor Arif Mohammed Khan met a delegation of BPSC aspirants who apprised him about their demands.

TENDER

WEST BENGAL AGRO INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LTD.
(A Govt. Undertaking)
Registered Office: 23B, Netaji Subhas Road, 3rd Floor
Kolkata-700001

NleT-242 to 245 / 2024-2025, Dated: 13-01-2025

e-Tenders 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 Bankura, Howrah and Murshidabad District. Tender document may be downloaded from <http://wbenders.gov.in> Bid submission start date: 14-01-2025 after 9-00 A.M. Bid submission end date: 21-01-2025 and 27-01-2025 up to 3-00 P.M.

Date: 13-01-2025 Sd/- Executive Engineer

KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION e-TENDERS

ABRIDGED NIT

The Director General (Mech.)/Roads, KMC invites e-tender online in two bid system for the following work:--
NIT No.: KMC/DG(M)/ASP/GG/M-47/2024-25
Name of the Work: Urgent Repairing of Exhaust Chimney of Batch Mix Plant and Allied Works at Asphaltum Goragacha. Estimated Amount: Quotation. Earnest Money: ₹ 12,000.00. Period of Completion: 3 Days. Last date and time of submission of Bid: 22.01.2025, 1.00 p.m. Bid opening date for Technical Proposal: 24.01.2025, 1.00 p.m. The bid forms and other details are available on and from 14.01.2025, 6.00 p.m. from the website <https://wbenders.gov.in>

The Director General (S&D), KMC invites e-tender online percentage rate two bid system for the following work:--
NIT No.: S.D/S-/IXV/27/R/139/24-25
Name of the Work: Repairing of Damaged Manhole's, Gullypits along Santoshpur Mazarpara, Talbagan, Bidhangarh, Kalinagar and Kalinagar Road Adjacent to Br.-XV. Estimated Cost (Incl. GST & CESS): ₹ 8,76,503.77. Earnest Money: ₹ 18,000.00. Period of Completion: 60 Days. Last date and time of submission of Bid (Online): 22.01.2025 up to 2.00 p.m. Bid submission start (online): 14.01.2025 at 2.00 p.m. The bid documents and other details will be available on and from 14.01.2025 at 2.00 p.m. from the website <https://etender.wb.nic.in>

The Director General (BS), KMC invites e-tender online percentage rate two bid system for the following works:--
1. NIT No.: KMC/DG(BS)/Br-VII/064/036/2024-25/BUSTEE Name of the Work: Improvement of Bustee Passage at 100/H/3, Dilkusha Str. to 31/1, Tiljala Road in Ward No. 64. Estimated Cost (Incl. GST & CESS): ₹ 7,70,050.06. Earnest Money: ₹ 15,500.00. Period of Completion: 45 Days.
2. NIT No.: KMC/DG(BS)/Br-VII/058/075/2024-25/BUSTEE Name of the Work: Improvement of Bustee Sewer Line at 7, Miajan Lane and its Surrounding areas in Ward No. 58. Estimated Cost (Incl. GST & CESS): ₹ 5,22,195.49. Earnest Money: ₹ 10,500.00. Period of Completion: 45 Days. Last date and time of submission of Bid: 25.01.2025 - 2.30 p.m. (for Sl. No. 1 & 2). Tender will be opened on: 28.01.2025 - 2.30 p.m. (for Sl. No. 1 & 2). The bid forms and other details are available on and from 15.01.2025 (2.30 p.m.) (for Sl. No. 1 & 2). The website <https://etender.wb.nic.in> (for Sl. No. 1 & 2).

1218/24-25

कार्यालय नगर विकास न्यास, अलवर
क्रमांक: -/लेखा/2025/9992-601 दिनांक: 10.01.2025

NOTICE INVITING NIT - 25/2024-25

नगरी निर्माण कार्य, इन्फ्रा संरचना, सैन्य रक्षेत्र में सैन्यीकरण हेतु सामान खरीद का कार्य, विज्ञान संकाय में लेब का निर्माण कार्य, सिमिटिंग एवं कार्पेटिंग का कार्य, धनीप्रादिक पेट का कार्य, बी.टी. सबक निर्माण कार्य, पेशा निर्माण द्वारा जमराकरण का कार्य, पेशाकरण का कार्य इन्टरलोकिंग टाइल का कार्य हेतु invited from interest bidders from 14-01-25 to 05-02-25 2.00 PM and Technical bid open 05-02-25 4.00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eprcs.rajaasthan.gov.in>; <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state and www.sitalwar.in the approximate Value of the procurement is Rs. 1546.73 lakhs.

UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00315	UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00323
UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00316	UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00324
UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00317	UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00325
UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00318	UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00326
UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00319	UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00327
UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00320	UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00328
UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00321	UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00329
UBN NO.	UAL2425WSOB00322		

Raj.Samwad/C/24/19250 Executive Engineer, UIT, Alwar

Office of Civil Surgeon, Pakur
Tender Ref. No. 13/DMFT Date: 12.01.2025

VERY URGENT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Civil Surgeon, Pakur Jharkhand invites tender from eligible bidders under two bid system for entering into rate contract for Supply of Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLINs Mosquito). Blank tender paper with detailed terms and conditions can be obtained through website www.pakur.nic.in and hard Copies of Technical and Financial Bid should be submitted to the department on or before declared due date.

Sl. No.	Particulars	Details
1	Name of Work	Rate Contract for the Supply of Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLINs Mosquito)
2	Time of Completion	21 Days
3	Date of Publication of Tender on website	13.01.2025
4	Last Date / time for submission of bids	22.01.2025 upto 3.00 p.m.
5	Date of Technical Bid opening	22.01.2025 at 4.00 p.m.
6	Application fee (Non-refundable)	1,000
7	EMD	50,000
8	Contact Details	cs.pakur@gmail.com
9	Bid Submission Place	Civil Surgeons Office, Sonajori, Pakur.
10	Bid Opening Place	Civil Surgeons Office, Sonajori, Pakur.

Note: The above dates may change due to declaration of holidays or any other unforeseen circumstances. The same shall be informed through web-portal as and when required.

Civil Surgeon
PR 344192 Health Med Edu and Family Welfare(24-25)#D Pakur

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA
Public Works Department, P.W. Division, Panvel
Telephone No.: 022-27452778

E-Tender Notice No. 81 (Open ONLINE) Year-2024-25 (4th Call)
E-mail address: panvel.ee@mahapwd.gov.in
Fax Number: 022-27467440

Executive Engineer, P.W. Division Panvel, invite B-1 Tender from registered contractor with Govt. of Maharashtra. Detail Tender Notice available on www.mahapwd.gov.in and www.mahatenders.gov.in portal.

Note: Total 2 work include in Tender Notice.

Online Tender Download & Bid Preparation Period Date: 13-01-2025 at 10-00 A.M. to 27-01-2025, 18-00 hrs.

Online tender bid preparation last date: 27-01-2025 at 18-00 hrs.

E-Tender/O.No./P.W./PNL Executive Engineer
Office of the Executive Engineer P.W. Division
Public Work Division, Panvel Panvel
Dist.: Raigad
Date: DGIPR/ROC-5610/24-25

GOVERNMENT OF JHARKHAND
WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MINOR DISTRIBUTION DIVISION NUMBER-08, JAMSHEDPUR
Email-cecmd8.chandil@gmail.com

Expression of Interest (EOI)
Very short e-Tender inviting Notice No.- WRD/MDD/JSR - 04/2024-25
Date- 11/01/25

1. Name of Work	Annual Maintenance Work for Cleaning, Sweeping, Sanitation work (Cleaning of Main Long Drain, Small Drains, Inspection Chamber), Plumbing work including pipe line and Water Tank, Repair of Electrical appliances and Electrical wire and Servicing and Refilling work of Transformer at Officers Colony C.H. Area, Jamshedpur for 1 (one) year under Executive Engineer, Minor Distribution Division No.08, JAMSHEDPUR Under Water Resources Department, Jharkhand.
2. Cost of bid document (Rs)	10,000.00/- (Ten thousand only) Non refundable Online mode
3. Earnest Money Deposit (Rs)	1,00,000.00/- (Rupees one lakhs only) Online mode
4. Tender Category	Services
5. Mode of Submission of Tender	Online through http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in
6. Pre-Bid meeting	Date- 24/01/25 - 03:00 PM Office of the Chief Engineer, Chandil Complex, Adityapur Water Resources Department,
7. Date of publication of tender on website	Date- 16/01/25 Time- 02:00 PM
8. Last date/time for Submission of tender on Website	Date- 27/01/25 Time- 03:00 PM
9. Technical Bid Opening Date	Date- 28/01/25 Time- 04:00PM
10. Officer Inviting Bids	Office of the EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MINOR DISTRIBUTION DIVISION NO-08, JAMSHEDPUR, Minor Distribution Division Number -08, Jamshedpur.
11. Contact No. of Procurement Officer	7903042327, 9431366084

Note:-
1. The bidder should be fully acquainted with site before the tender.
2. Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tender(s) received or to allot the work to one or more contractor(s) without assigning any reason thereof.
3. Tender Fee and Earnest Money should be deposited through online mode only as per WRD, Jharkhand letter no-907 dated-04.10.2023 and I.T. & e-Governance Dept. Jharkhand Letter no-120 dated-03.10.2023

PR 344221 Water Sd/- Executive Engineer
Resource (24-25) D Minor Distribution Division Number -08, Jsr.

झारखण्ड सरकार
कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय,
ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल, साहेबगंज
विकास भवन, साहेबगंज।
ई- अत्यकालीन पुर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
ई०-अत्यकालीन पुर्निविदा संख्या-07 / 2024-2025 / EE/RWD/SAHIBGANJ दिनांक:-11.01.2025
कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल साहेबगंज द्वारा निम्न विवरण के अनुसार e-procurement पद्धति से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र० सं०	आईडेंटिफिकेशन संख्या	प्रखण्ड	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (रु० में)		कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि	टेन्डर कोल सं०
				अंक में	अक्षर में		
1	RWD/SAHIBGANJ/19/2024-25	राजमहल	दाहदोला आराई03ओ रोड से बानुग्राम तक पथ निर्माण कार्य। (ल०-2.70 कि०मी०)	311.632	तीन करोड़ ग्यारह लाख तिरसठ हजार दो सौ	15 माह	द्वितीय
			कुल-	311.632	तीन करोड़ ग्यारह लाख तिरसठ हजार दो सौ		

2. वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि :- 17.01.2025
3. ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय :- 29.01.2025 अपराह्न 05.00 बजे तक।
4. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रपंक्ति की राशि Jharkhandtenders.gov.in के माध्यम से ऑनलाईन मोड में स्वीकार की जाएगी।
5. निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय :- 30.01.2025 अपराह्न 11.00 बजे।
6. निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता :- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्यप्रमंडल, साहेबगंज, पिन-816109
7. ई-निविदा प्रक्राई का मोबाइल न०- 8292371115
8. विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाइट-<https://www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in> में देखा जा सकता है।
ह०/-
कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल, साहेबगंज।

PR.NO.344156 Rural Work Department(24-25):D

MORE TENDER ADS ON PAGE 9 & PAGE 2

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
E-NIT NO:- 09/SBILL/24-25
Memo & Date: 03/SBILL/2024;
Dated- 08/01/2025
Sealed tender are hereby invited by the Undersigned from bonafide and experienced contractors. Details T&C are available at office, office notice board & wbenders.gov.in
Sd/-
The Prodan
Sanderbill Gram Panchayat Hingaljan; North 24 Pgs

ABRIDGED E-TENDER NOTICE
Tender are hereby invited vide Tender Reference e-NIT- No. DHUPGURI/EO/NIT-005/2024-25 & DHUPGURI/EO/NIT-006/2024-25 from the undersigned. Details of works and tender conditions are available in the office of the undersigned in any working day during office hours.
visit www.wbetenders.gov.in & www.wbpr.nic.in and Office Notice Board for further details.
Executive Officer
Dhupuri Panchayat Samiti

LA wildfire death toll surges to 24 as weather calms a bit

Firefighters battling the wildfire brace for more rough weather in the days to come

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LOS ANGELES, 13 JANUARY

After a weekend spent blocking the explosive growth of fires that destroyed thousands of homes and killed at least 24 people in the Los Angeles area, firefighters got a slight break with calmer weather but cast a wary eye on a forecast for yet more wind.

Should that happen, already burned homes and valleys could flare anew, sending embers to unburned territory miles downwind. New fires could add to the complication.

The death toll surged late Sunday with an update from the Los Angeles County medical examiner. At least 16 people were missing, a number authorities said was also

likely to rise.

The relative calm Sunday allowed some people to return to previously evacuated areas, however.

The National Weather Service issued red flag warnings for severe fire conditions through Wednesday, with sustained winds of 50 mph (80 kph) and gusts in the mountains reaching 70 mph (113 kph). The most dangerous day will be Tuesday, warned fire behavior analyst Dennis Burns at a community meeting Sunday night.

"It will kind of ebb and flow over the next couple days," Burns said. "Tomorrow night, it will really ramp up."

Spotting - new fires caused by blowing embers - could happen as much as 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) or more downwind of areas that have already burned,



Burns said.

Despite their recent losses, stress, and uncertainty, the crowd in a Pasadena City College gym was mostly respectful, in contrast with harsh criticism elsewhere for Los Angeles and California leaders. Applause followed each of the experts, police, firefighters and community leaders who spoke.

Los Angeles County Fire

Chief Anthony C. Marrone said 70 additional water trucks arrived to help firefighters fend off flames spread by renewed gusts. "We are prepared for the upcoming wind event," Marrone said.

Fire retardant dropped by aircraft will act as a barrier along hillsides, officials said.

Fierce Santa Ana winds have been largely blamed for turning the wildfires

sparked last week into infernos that leveled entire neighborhoods around the city where there has been no significant rainfall in more than eight months.

Twelve people were missing within the Eaton Fire zone and four were missing from the Palisades Fire, Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna said. Investigators were reconciling whether some of the missing might be among the dead but so far no children were among those reported missing, he said.

Progress made in talks over Israel-Hamas ceasefire and hostage release, officials say

AGENCIES
CAIRO, 13 JANUARY

U.S. and Arab mediators made significant progress overnight toward brokering a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war and the release of scores of hostages held in the Gaza Strip, but a deal hasn't been reached yet, officials said Monday.

Three officials acknowledged that progress has been made and said the coming days would be critical for ending more than 15 months of fighting that has destabilized the Middle East. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to discuss the talks.

One of the three officials

and a Hamas official said that there were still a number of hurdles to clear. On several occasions over the past year, U.S. officials have said that they were on the verge of reaching a deal, only to have the talks stall.

One person familiar with the talks said there had been a breakthrough overnight and that there was a proposed deal on the table. Israeli and Hamas negotiators will now take it back to their leaders for final approval, the person said.

The person said that mediators from the Gulf country of Qatar had put renewed pressure on Hamas to accept the agreement, while U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's envoy, Steve

Witkoff, was pressing the Israelis. Witkoff recently joined the negotiations and has been in the region in recent days.

The person said that the mediators had handed off the draft deal to each side and that the next 24 hours would be pivotal.

An Egyptian official said that there had been good progress overnight, but that it would likely take a few more days, and that the sides were aiming for a deal before Trump's inauguration on Jan. 20. A third official said that the talks were in a good place, but hadn't been wrapped up. That official also assessed that a deal was possible before the inauguration.

Croatia's President Milanović wins another term after defeating ruling party candidate in runoff

AGENCIES
ZAGREB, 13 JANUARY

Croatia's opposition-backed President Zoran Milanović, a critic of the European Union and NATO, overwhelmingly won reelection for another five-year term on Sunday, defeating a candidate from the ruling conservative party in a runoff vote, official results showed.

Milanović won more than 74% of the vote compared to his challenger Dragan Primorac, who received nearly 26%, according to the results released by Croatia's state election authorities after more than 99% of the ballots were counted.

The result presents a major boost for Milanović, who is a critic of Western military support for Ukraine in its war against Russia. Milanović is



also a fierce opponent of Croatia's conservative Prime Minister Andrej Plenković and his government.

In a speech after the results were released, Milanović said his victory was a sign of approval and trust from the voters but also presented a message "about the state of affairs in the country for those

who need to hear it." "I am asking them (the government) to hear it," said Milanović. "That is what the citizens wanted to say. This is not just support for me."

Milanović, 58, is the most popular politician in Croatia, and is sometimes compared to U.S. President-elect Donald Trump for his combative style

of communication with political opponents. His triumph sets the stage for a continued political confrontation with PM Plenković, with whom he sparred during his first term.

Milanović also won comfortably in the first round of voting on Dec. 29, leaving Primorac, a forensic scientist who had unsuccessfully run for president previously, and six other candidates far behind.

The runoff between the top two contenders was necessary because Milanović fell short of securing 50% of the vote by just 5,000 votes, while Primorac trailed far behind with 19%.

The election was held as Croatia, which has a population of 3.8 million, struggles with biting inflation, corruption scandals and a labor shortage.

TENDER

Government of West Bengal

OFFICE OF THE PASCHIM MEDINIPUR ZILLA PARISHAD

ABRIDGED NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Notice Inviting Tender is hereby called from resourceful and eligible Contractors for above NITs. Intending bidders may download tender documents of NIT- PMD-N-264, 265/2024-25, 161, 166, 168, 194, 215, 217, 218/2024-25 (2nd call) from e-procurement portal from 14.01.2025 at 10:00 hours to 27.01.2025 upto 18:00 hours & NIT- PMD-N- N-219, 220, 221, 211, 159/2024-25 (2nd call) from e-procurement portal from 14.01.2025 at 10:00 hours to 26.01.2025 upto 18:00 hours. For details visit e-procurement portal of Govt. website www.wbtenders.gov.in

Sd/-Executive Engineer
Paschim Medinipur Zilla Parishad
Main Bldg - P.O. Chhatra, H.O. Paschim Medinipur Dist. 73.10.2025

बिहार सरकार

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय,
लघु सिंचाई प्रमंडल, बांका
(संत जोसेफ स्कूल के निकट, जगतपुर, बांका-813102)
E-Mail ID-ee.mi.ban-bih@gov.in, Mob No-7782917633

शुद्धि पत्र

कार्यपालक अभियंता, लघु सिंचाई प्रमंडल, बांका के पत्रांक-2569 दिनांक-30.12.2024 द्वारा आमंत्रित निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या-07 / 2024-25 जिसका P.R. No 016218 (MWRD) 2024-25 एवं पत्रांक-22 दिनांक-08.01.2025 है, के निविदा युप संख्या-17 को अपरिहार्य कारणवश रद्द किया जाता है।

शेष सभी युप तथा नियम एवं शर्त यथावत् रहेगा।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
लघु सिंचाई प्रमंडल, बांका
PR. No.16861 (MWRD) 2024-25

नरो से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार।

APPENDIX IV-A
Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Property

E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) and Rule 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to Sammaan Capital Limited (formerly known as Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd.) [CIN : L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor"), the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 31.01.2025 from 04.00 P.M. to 05.00 P.M., for recovery of Rs. 72,96,260/- (Rupees Seventy Two Lakh Ninety Six Thousand Two Hundred Sixty only) pending towards Loan Account No. HHLKOK06388055, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 09.01.2025 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. 10.01.2025 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from ANOOP SAXENA and PREETI SAXENA.

The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be Rs. 37,00,000/- (Rupees Thirty Seven Lakh only) and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be Rs. 3,70,000/- (Rupees Three Lakh Seventy Thousand only) i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

ALL THAT FLAT BEARING NO. 28 - 1, MEASURING ABOUT 1108 SQUARE FEET ON SECOND FLOOR OF THE COMPLEX KNOWN AS "SHREE SHYAM KUNJ", BLOCK - A, PREMISES NO. 34/35/2, SRI AUROBINDO ROAD, SALKIA, WARD NO. 05, P. S. MALPANCHHORA, HOWRAH - 711106, WEST BENGAL AND WHICH IS BOUNDED AS FOLLOWS:-

EAST BY : COMMON SPACE NORTH BY : FLAT NO. B-2
WEST BY : BUILDING COMMON PASSAGE SOUTH BY : FLAT NO. 2A

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.sammaancapital.com. Contact No : 0124-6910910, +91 7065451024; E-mail id : auctionhelpline@sammaancapital.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in.

s/-
AUTHORISED OFFICER
SAMMAAN CAPITAL LIMITED
(Formerly known as INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LTD.)

Date : 09.01.2025
Place : HOWRAH

वरिय पुलिस अधीक्षक का कार्यालय, राँची

सर्वसाधारण के लिए सूचना

नाम-मंजू देवी उम्र-20 वर्ष, रंग-सौंयला, ऊँचाई-4 फीट 3 ईंच
पहनावा-लाल रंग का साड़ी पहनी हुई है।
उपरोक्त लापता महिला मंजू देवी उम्र-20 वर्ष, पति-वैतन्य बेदिया, साधु-जसदीह टोला, हजारी टॉड, बाम-अनगढ़ा, जिला-राँची जो दिनांक-09.11.2024 को अपने घर से बगैर बताए कहीं चली गई जो आज तक अपने घर वापस नहीं आई है। जिसके संबंध में अनगढ़ा बामा सन्हा संख्या-11 / 2024, दिनांक-21.12.2024 दर्ज कर खोजबीन की जा रही है। उपरोक्त सूचना को सार्वजनिक किया जाना आवश्यक है।
अतः सभी जनसाधारण से अनुरोध है कि यदि उपरोक्त लापता महिला कहीं मिलती / दिखती है तो इसके संबंध में वरिय पुलिस अधीक्षक के कार्यालय में या निम्नांकित फोन नम्बर पर संपर्क कर इसकी सूचना दें।
Email ID (mc-dcb@jhpolice.gov.in)
पुलिस उपअधीक्षक, सिल्ली, राँची - 9431770066
बामा प्रमोरी अनगढ़ा, राँची - 9431706180

वरिय पुलिस अधीक्षक, राँची
PR 344248 Police (24-25)_D

Office of the Municipal Councillors of Bankura

Memo No - 4208/BM/24-25 Date - 13.01.2025

Applications are invited from the eligible woman candidates for filling up vacant posts(No.02) of the HHWs under Bankura Municipality. Interested candidates can apply within 28th January, 2025. For details visit www.bankuramunicipality.org/ Office Notice Board.

Sd/
Chairperson
Bankura Municipality

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PATNA

Recruitment Notice for the Post of Registrar

For details, please browse the website: <https://iitp.ac.in> (Opening Date: 06-01-2025, Closing Date: 27-01-2025).

Advt. No.: IITP/ADMIN/RECT/NT/2025/001
CBC 21366/12/0004/2425 Dean Administration

DR. HARISINGH GOUR VISHWAVIDYALAYA SAGAR (M.P.), INDIA
(A Central University)

Website: www.dhsgsu.edu.in Tele: + 91-7582-265228

Advt. No.: R/NT/2025/01 Dated: 11-01-2025

RECRUITMENT NOTICE

Doctor Harish Singh Gour Vishwavidyalaya invites online applications in the prescribed format from Indian nationals for appointment by Direct / Deputation on following posts:

Sl. No.	Posts	Pay Level	No. of post & Category (UR)
01.	Registrar* (Direct / Deputation)	14	01
02.	Internal Audit Officer** (On Deputation)	12	01
03.	Curator (On Contract)	On Fixed Remuneration of Rs. 30,000	01

* On five years tenure.
** Initially for a period of three years.

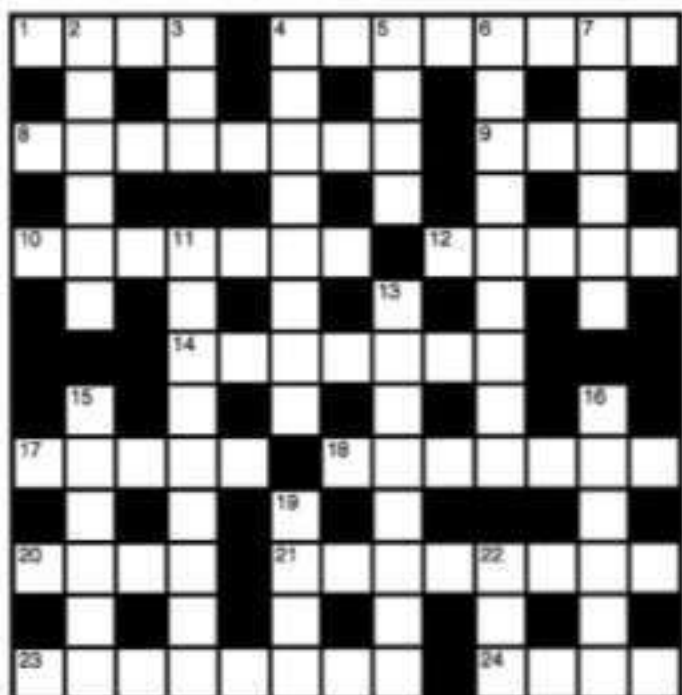
For recruitment rules and other terms and conditions and updates please visit the Vishwavidyalaya website: www.dhsgsu.edu.in

- Link for submission of online application form: <https://dhsgsunt.samarth.edu.in> will be available from 14-01-2025.
- Last date of online submission of application form 12-02-2025.
- Last date of submission of self-attested hard copy of the online application form 20-02-2025.

CBC 21273/12/0008/2425 **REGISTRAR (Offg.)**

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Haystack (4)
 - Billboard (8)
 - Marsupial (8)
 - Nimble (4)
 - Educator (7)
 - Deadly (5)
 - Dependent (7)
 - Sorcery (5)
 - Widespread (7)
 - Prima donna (4)
 - Angelic (8)
 - Famished (8)
 - Prying (4)
- DOWN**
- Pictures (6)
 - Small barrel (3)
 - Large insect (8)
 - Solemnly affirm (4)
 - Take apart (9)
 - Usual (6)
 - Bodily tissue (9)
 - Negligent (8)
 - Spittle (6)
 - Forearm bone (6)
 - Resound (4)
 - Vase (3)

- SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD**
- | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|
| ACROSS | 11 Seen, | DOWN | 7 Sure, |
| 1 Fission, | 13 Fountain pen, | 3 Folk, | 12 Energised, |
| 5 Ships (Fish and chips), | 15 Asks, | 2 Strenuous, | 16 Sheen, |
| 8 Larva, | 17 Twinge, | 4 National, | 18 Apex, |
| 9 Truckee, | 22 Onset, | Trust, | 19 Style, |
| 10 Indigo, | 23 Xenon, | 5 Spuds, | 21 Run, |
| | | 6 Ill, | |
- By arrangement with The Independent Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

BEEBLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovalski



NEED TO KNOW

- Ambulance**
FD Block Association (Amb) 9830452536, 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 2465-5164/5557
RK Mission Seva Pratishthan 2475-3636/39
- Police/Fire**
Lalbazar (Police Control Room) 22143230
S. P. (North 24-Pgns) 25423005
S. P. (South 24-Pgns) 2479-3333/1311
Bhawani 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® (G|R|A|M|S)

BRAND

Y O P G N E R
E L R F W A E
V L E R N E A
Y O S T E H R

PAR SCORE 130-140
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

STRONG
CARGO
PUBLIC
BLURTER

PAR SCORE 65-75
by JUDY

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

STRONG
CARGO
PUBLIC
BLURTER

PAR SCORE 65-75
by JUDY

Instructions: Make a 7 to 10 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. letter words get 50 point bonus. "Blank" used as any letter ignore its point value. All Judd's words are in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary and OGD Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). Judd's solution template: 10-25-12

SUDOKU Concepts Sudoku By Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★★

			9					
		8		7				
	3				2			
	9	4		6				
	8	1			7	5		
4	2	6		1		3	9	8
	7				5			
	5	8	4		3	1	2	
2	3			5			8	7

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.

Sublime Barcelona crush arch-rivals Real Madrid to win Spanish Supercup

Catalans outclass reigning European champions 5-2 in battle of Spanish giants to earn domestic bragging rights

AGENCIES
JEDDAH, 13 JANUARY

FC Barcelona produced a stunning first-half display to beat Real Madrid 5-2 in the final of the Spanish Supercup. Hansi Flick's side led 4-1 at the break and despite seeing goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny sent off for bringing down Kylian Mbappe early in the second half, they were able to hold on with relative ease against the Madrid attack on Monday (Indian time). Things looked to be going Madrid's way when goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois pulled off two stunning saves in the opening minutes from Lamine Yamal and Raphinha before Mbappe put Madrid ahead in the fifth minute. A Barca attack broke down with Vinicius feeding the ball to the Frenchman, who produced a powerful run from deep, held off the defender and scored with his right foot. Barca continued to create chances, with Raphinha shooting across the face of the goal before Yamal equalized in the 22nd minute. Robert Lewandowski dropped deep and pulled Antonio Rudiger out of position to create space for the young winger to run onto his pass. Yamal then turned inside and wrong-footed



Courtois with an angled shot. Barca suffered an injury setback when Inigo Martinez had to be replaced by Ronald Araujo, but they took the lead after 36 minutes when Eduardo Camavinga's rash challenge on Gavi gifted Barca a penalty, which Lewandowski dispatched into the corner. Three minutes later, it was 3-1 as Real Madrid's defense gave Jules Kounde space to angle a cross for Raphinha to head home after the Brazilian stole in completely unmarked past Lucas Vazquez.

action of the first half, Madrid made a horrible mess of a short corner, allowing Yamal to steal possession. He slid the ball to the onrushing Raphinha, who in turn passed to Alejandro Balde to beat Courtois with a low shot. With his side 4-1 down, Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti brought on midfielder Dani Ceballos for Camavinga. Real Madrid went close in the 47th minute when Rodrygo saw his volley hit the post. But it was Barcelona's night and that was clear one minute later when Raphinha made it 5-1 with a calm finish. With a four-goal lead, Barca lost some concentration as Mbappe ran onto a through ball only to be brought down by Szczesny outside his penalty area. After a VAR check, referee Gil Manzano had no option but to send the goalkeeper off and leave Barca with half an hour to play with 10 men. When Rodrygo smashed the resulting freekick into the back of the net to make it 5-2, some may have been thinking of another epic Real Madrid fightback, but Barca dropped deeper, defended narrowly and was able to take the sting out of the game with far more ease than expected. There were nine minutes of injury time and in the last

Amorim hails Man United after dramatic triumph in FA Cup

AGENCIES
LONDON, 13 JANUARY

Manchester United manager Ruben Amorim believes his team is beginning to turn a corner after their nerve-wracking FA Cup third-round penalty shootout victory over Arsenal on Sunday. Following a challenging start to his tenure at Old Trafford, Amorim sees the win as evidence of steady progress and a brighter future for the Red Devils. United fans have endured years of frustration and unfulfilled promises, with previous managers Erik ten Hag and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer failing to deliver sustained success despite glimpses of improvement. When Amorim took over, the challenge of revitalising the squad seemed daunting, especially after his promising three-game unbeaten start was followed by a series of disappointing results. A surprise victory against Manchester City provided a glimmer of hope, but inconsistency remained an issue. However, back-to-back performances—an impressive display against Liverpool and Sunday's victory over Arsenal—suggest that Amorim's philosophy is beginning to resonate with the players. Reflecting on the win, Amorim highlighted his team's progress since their 2-0 league defeat to Arsenal last month, a game where United struggled defensively, particularly against set pieces. "I think we played, especially in the first half, better than in the first game," Amorim told reporters. "We were better in set pieces today, more aggressive. We showed a different spirit, even with 10 men, we are improving on that aspect." The Portuguese manager praised the team's resilience, particularly after they were reduced to 10 men during the match. Despite the numerical disadvantage, United showed determination and organization to take the game to penalties. Two players who had faced recent criticism, goalkeeper Altay Bayindir and forward Joshua Zirkzee, emerged as the heroes of the night. Bayindir, who was blamed for United's League Cup exit against Tottenham Hotspur, delivered a standout performance, making crucial saves throughout the game and during the penalty shootout. His display silenced critics and reminded fans of his capabilities. Meanwhile, Zirkzee, who was booed off the pitch during a loss to Newcastle United just weeks earlier, proved his worth by stepping up to take the decisive penalty, securing United's place in the next round. Amorim used their stories as examples of football's unpredictability and the importance of perseverance. "Your life as a footballer has cycles and moments, and sometimes in one week, your life can change," Amorim said. "Altay—against Tottenham, everybody was pointing the finger at him, and today he was our hero."

Aus Open: Jannik Sinner survives early scare to begin title defence

AGENCIES
MELBOURNE, 13 JANUARY

World No. 1 Jannik Sinner emerged victorious 7-6(2), 7-6(5), 6-1 against Chile's Nicolas Jarry at Rod Laver Arena to book his place in the second round of the Australian Open on Monday. The Italian, back at the site of his maiden Grand Slam triumph, admitted the match could have gone either way in the early stages. "I think today was a very close one because the first sets, they can go both ways," Sinner said. "In the third set, when I broke him the first time, that gave me a little bit of room to breathe. He is an incredible player, huge potential, so I'm happy how I handled the very tough situation in the first couple of sets and happy to be in the next round." Jarry, ranked No. 36 in the ATP Rankings, was a formidable first-round opponent. Buoyed by a lively contingent of Chilean supporters, he pressed Sinner early, generating two break points in the opening set. However, Sinner's composure in high-pressure moments defined the match. He dominated the first-set tie-break 7-2 with precise and controlled play, quelling Jarry's aggressive shot-making. The second set followed a similar script. Jarry remained a threat, dictating play with 40 winners throughout the match, but Sinner's consistency and mental fortitude shone. Despite missing two set points on serve in the second-set tie-break, Sinner held his nerve to claim the set, baiting an error from Jarry with a steady return game to clinch the tie-break 7-5. With the momentum firmly on his side, Sinner elevated his game in the third set. A break in the opening game set the tone, and he quickly raced to a 2-0 lead. From there, he was untouchable, converting his fourth break point of the match to leave Jarry with no route back. Sinner closed out the match in style, completing the set 6-1 and advancing to the second round. Reflecting on his return to Melbourne Park, Sinner expressed gratitude for the home-like atmosphere provided by the crowd. "The crowd and the fans, they give me so much support, and it's very nice to be back here,"



he said. "Obviously, I also like the hard courts here. But let's see, every year is different, every day is different... We'll try to improve obviously, I have a couple of things that I can surely do better, but first official match of the year for me, so I'm very happy." Despite the high stakes of defending 2,000 ATP Rankings points as the reigning champion, Sinner's position at No. 1 is secure for now. He maintains a 2,995-point lead over No. 2 Alexander Zverev, who also advanced to the second round. Sinner will face either Japan's Taro Daniel or Australian wild card Tristan Schoolkate in the second round. Meanwhile, record 10-time champion Novak Djokovic rallied past American wildcard Nishesh Basavareddy 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 to seal his second-round spot at the Australian Open for the 18th consecutive year. This was Djokovic's first win under the watchful eye of newly appointed coach Andy Murray. At times, the Serb frequently glanced at the lively Murray in his coaching box, seeking an additional boost of energy. In November last year, the Serbian, who was previously guided by Grand Slam champions Boris Becker and Goran Ivanisevic, announced three-time Grand Slam winner and long-time rival and friend Murray as his coach. "It's all business now for us, I'm thrilled to have him

ISL: FC Goa face NEUFC, target second spot

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
GUWAHATI, 13 JANUARY

The second spot on the Indian Super League (ISL) points table beckons FC Goa as they prepare to lock horns with NorthEast United FC at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium in Guwahati on Tuesday. Currently, the Gaurs are

fourth in the table with 26 points from 14 matches, securing seven victories and five draws. The Highlanders follow them in fifth place, having clinched 23 points from 15 encounters, securing six wins and five draws. If they manage to win on Tuesday evening, Goa will jump two places to replace

former champions Bengaluru FC at the second spot, behind defunct champions and league leaders Mohun Bagan Super Giant. Bengaluru are currently on 27 points from 15 matches. FC Goa will aim to extend their unbeaten away record in the league, while NorthEast United FC will look to maintain their strong home form

against the Gaurs. NorthEast United FC have been in fine run, going unbeaten in their last four league games, scoring nine goals while conceding just three during this stretch. Meanwhile, FC Goa are on a seven-game unbeaten run away from home, matching their longest such streak in the competition's history.

TENDER

WESTERN RAILWAY
Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of TMS (Train Management System) and CTC (Centralized Train Control System)
Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer (Works), Mumbai Division, Western Railway invites Tender No: EPC/MMCT_SnT_05 Dated 09.01.2025
Work and location: Design, supply, installation, testing and commissioning of TMS (train management system) and CTC (Centralized train control system) system in Churchgate-Virar-Surat section of Mumbai division in connection with work of provision of Centralized Traffic Control/TMS,CCG to Surat (267 km) of Mumbai Division of Western Railway. Approx. Cost of Work: ₹1,75,95,94,627.07/- Earnest Money Deposit: ₹87,98,000/- Particular office where E-tender open: Dy. CSTE/Works (S&T), 2nd Floor, Divisional Railway Manager's Office, Mumbai Central, Mumbai-400 008. Tender Closing Date/Time: till 03.03.2025, 15.00 hrs. For further details please visit our website www.irops.gov.in. 0958
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EASTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No.: W.LL.H.05-2024-25_R1, date : 08.01.2025.
Tender (Open tender) is invited online by the Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer/Elect, C&W Workshop, Eastern Railway, Liluah, Howrah, Pin-711204 from tenderers having technical capabilities for the following work: **Name of the work:** Improvement of illumination at the railway quarter's entrance gate and staircase at Liluah Railway Colony. **Approx cost of the work:** ₹ 4,98,550. **Earnest money:** ₹ 10,000. **Tender Closing Date & time:** 30.01.2025 at 14.00 hrs. **Website where complete details of tender is available:** www.irops.gov.in. (MISC-302/2024-25)
Tender Notices are also available at website: www.er.indianrailways.gov.in/www.irops.gov.in
Follow us at: [@EasternRailway](https://www.facebook.com/EasternRailway) [easternrailwayheadquarter](https://www.facebook.com/easternrailwayheadquarter)

EASTERN RAILWAY
Tender No.: SDSTE-ETN-eDAS-HQ-24-25, dated : 09.01.2025.
Divisional Railway Manager, Eastern Railway, Howrah, DRM Building, near Railway Station, Howrah-711101 invites open E-Tender in single packet system for the following work: **Name of the work:** Provision of e-Drawing Approval System and Up gradation of S&T Drawing Office at Eastern Railway HQ. **Advertised Value:** ₹ 75,56,736.11. **Earnest Money/Bid Security:** ₹ 1,51,100. **Tender Document Cost:** ₹ 0. **Tender Closing Date and time:** 31.01.2025 at 15.00 hrs. **Bidding Start Date :** 17.01.2025. **Date and time of uploading tender:** 09.01.2025 at 19.43 hrs. **Validity of Offer:** 60 Days. **Period of Completion :** 04 months. Website particulars from where tender paper can be downloaded: www.irops.gov.in. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. (HWH-542/2024-25)
Tender Notices are also available at website: www.er.indianrailways.gov.in/www.irops.gov.in
Follow us at: [@EasternRailway](https://www.facebook.com/EasternRailway) [easternrailwayheadquarter](https://www.facebook.com/easternrailwayheadquarter)

EASTERN RAILWAY
Abridged Tender Notice No.: KPA-ERS-OT-35-24-25, Dated: 10.01.2025.
E-Tender is invited by the Dy. Chief Elect. Engineer, Kanchrapara Workshop, Eastern Railway, Kanchrapara, Pin-743145, 24-North Parganas, West Bengal for the following work: **Tender No.: KPA-ERS-OT-35-24-25.** **Description:** Rehabilitation of CAB AC of 3-Phase EMU coaches and MEMU coaches, Qty. 30 nos. **Tender Value:** ₹ 4,95,423 only inclusive of GST & all other charges. **Date & Time of opening of tender:** 31.01.2025 at 15.00 hrs. **Period of Completion:** 24 months. The tender document and other details can be obtained from the website: www.irops.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. (MISC-301/2024-25)
Tender Notices are also available at website: www.er.indianrailways.gov.in/www.irops.gov.in
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MORE TENDER ADS ON PAGE 2 & 8

**HIGH COURT OF SIKKIM
GANGTOK**
Memo No. 477/COMP/HCS **Date: 13-01-2025**
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
The High Court of Sikkim invites sealed quotations from authorized and experienced Distributors / Dealers / Suppliers of reputed brand for **Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning and Maintenance of high-performance Servers and other networking items to be installed at High Court of Sikkim.**
The last date of receipt of quotation is 3rd February, 2025 by 4-00 p.m.
For details visit the home page of the official website of the High Court of Sikkim at www.hcs.gov.in
By Order
Benoy Sharma (SSJ/S)
CENTRAL PROJECT COORDINATOR
Ref. No. 173/HCS/COMP/477 dated 13-01-2025 **e-Courts Project**

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER
Divisional Railway Manager/Engg., Chakradharpur acting for & On behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders against Open Tender. 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. CKP-CENTRAL-24-25-42.** Hiring of 1 Ton Truck Road Vehicle (Four Wheelers) Non-AC for the use of SSE/Works/DMF, JE/Works/BXF, SSE/P.WAY/BUF and SSE/P.WAY/DMF with Fuel and Driver round the clock for three years each. **Tender Value :** ₹ 66,24,000. **EMD :** ₹ 1,32,500/- **2. CKP-CENTRAL-24-25-45.** Cleanliness and Tidiness of Track Ballast Profiling under the jurisdiction of ADEN/WEST/Chakradharpur. **Tender Value :** ₹ 2,71,79,124.82. **EMD :** ₹ 2,85,900/- **3. CKP-CENTRAL-24-25-46.** Cleanliness and Tidiness of Track in the jurisdiction of ADEN/SETT/Chakradharpur. **Tender Value :** ₹ 1,64,20,273.69. **EMD :** ₹ 2,32,100/- **4. CKP-CENTRAL-24-25-47.** Cleanliness and Tidiness of Track in the jurisdiction of ADEN/Bondamunda. **Tender Value :** ₹ 2,38,90,829.20. **EMD :** ₹ 2,69,500/- **Cost of Tender form :** ₹ 0 for each. **Date of opening :** 29.01.2025 for Sl. No. 1 & 2 each and 04.02.2025 for Sl. No. 3 & 4 each. The tender can be viewed at Website <http://www.irops.gov.in>. The tenderer/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered under on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can participate on e-tendering. All relevant paper must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-tendering. **Note :** e-Tender Forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. (Authority-Rly. Bd.'s letter No. 2020/CE-I/CT/3E/GCC/Policy dtd. 16.07.2020). (PR-1003)

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER
cancellation OF E-TENDER NOTICE
e-Tender No. ST-CKP-OT-24-25-109, Dtd. 03.01.2025 which was published earlier in this newspaper by Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, S.E. Railway, Chakradharpur may be treated as cancelled. (PR-1008/C)

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER
Tender Notice No. ST-OT-ARC-VHF-2024-25, Date 11.01.2025. For and on behalf of President of India, the Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer (Co)/Kharagpur-721301 invites e-tender for the following works before 12:00 hrs on the date mentioned against items and will be opened at 12:30 hrs. **Description of works :** Annual Repairing and condemnation Contract of hand held 5W VHF (Walkie-Talkie) sets, 25 watt Base Station VHF Sets including PTT for a period of 02 years in Kharagpur Division of South Eastern Railway. **Tender Value:** ₹ 22,50,619/- **EMD :** ₹ 45,000/- **Cost of tender document :** Nil. **Date of Opening:** 06.02.2025. **Completion Period:** 730 days. **Date of Submission:** up to 12:00 hrs. of 06.02.2025. Interested Tenderers may visit website www.irops.gov.in for full details description specification of the tender and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these works will be accepted. (PR-1007)

**WESTERN RAILWAY
MATERIAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
VARIOUS MATERIALS SUPPLY**
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No. S/03/2025 Date 10.01.2025

Sr. No.	Short Description of Item	Quantity	T.O.D.
21	Surface Traverser 80 Ton (2 Track) on replacement account including Civil/Engg. and Electrical work	2 Nos	03-Feb-25
22	Set of Suspension springs.	30 Set	08-Feb-25
23	Horizontal Boring & Milling Machine	2 Nos	10-Feb-25
24	Set of protective relays	80 Set	10-Feb-25
25	Coupler body with shank wears plate.	250 Nos	21-Feb-25

Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website www.irops.gov.in and www.wrir.indianrailways.gov.in 0957
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