

Central Chronicle

Defence Ministry clears Rs 79K cr defence buys

DAC, chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, green-lighted the proposals.

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The defence ministry on Monday approved procurement of long range rockets, missiles, radar systems and military platforms worth Rs 79,000 crore to bolster the military's combat prowess.

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, green-lighted the proposals.

The DAC approved procurement of loiter munition systems for the Army's artillery regiments.

It also cleared acquisition of low level light-weight radars, long-range guided rocket ammunition for Pinaka rocket system and integrated drone detection and interdiction system (Mk-II) for the Indian Army, the defence ministry said. Loiter munition will be used for precision



214 MM Pinaka Multiple Launcher Rocket System during the 75th Republic Day parade celebrations.

HIGHLIGHT

● DAC approved procurement of loiter munition systems for the Army's artillery regiments.

strike of tactical targets, whereas low level light-weight radars will detect and track small size, low flying unmanned aerial

Auto system enhances flight safety.

Rajnath Singh
Defence Minister

systems, it said. It said long range guided rockets are being procured to enhance the range and accuracy of

Pinaka rocket systems for effective engagement of high value targets.

Integrated drone detection and interdiction system (Mk-II) with enhanced range will protect the vital assets of the Indian Army in tactical battle area and hinterland.

For the Indian Navy, approval was accorded

for procurement of high frequency software defined radios (HF SDR) Manpack and for leasing high altitude long range (HALE) remotely piloted aircraft system (RPAS).

The unspecified number of RPAS is being taken on lease for continuous intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance over the Indian Ocean region, the ministry said.

For the Indian Air Force, approval was given for procurement of automatic take-off landing recording system, Astra Mk-II missiles, full mission simulator and SPICE-1000 long range guidance kits, etc, it said.

"Induction of the automatic take-off landing recording system will fill the gaps in the aerospace safety environment by providing high definition all-weather automatic recording of landing and take-off," the ministry said.

People visit Amritsar ahead of New Year



Visitors walk along Heritage Street near the Golden Temple ahead of the New Year, in Amritsar.

Aravalli definition row: SC stays its own order

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday stayed its own order that accepted a new definition for the Aravalli hills and ranges, and said a high-powered expert panel will be set up to resolve "critical ambiguities" and prevent any regulatory gaps that might undermine the ecological integrity of the world's oldest mountain system.

As the uniform definition of Aravallis sparked an outcry among environmentalists, the court kept in abeyance its

November 20 directions, saying there is a need to probe further whether the criteria of 100-metre elevation and the 500-metre gap between hills will strip significant portion of the ranges of ecological protection. At the heart of the raging issue is what exactly constitutes the hills and ranges in the Aravalli region, with environmentalists saying the restrictive 100-metre definition increases the area open to mining and construction. The top court had earlier accepted the

recommendations of a committee of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the definition of the Aravalli hills and ranges to protect the mountain system.

The committee had recommended that "Aravalli Hill" be defined as any landform in designated Aravalli districts with an elevation of 100 metres or more above its local relief, and an "Aravalli Range" will be a collection of two or more such hills within 500 metres of each other.

'Elect a govt to expel infiltrators'

GUWAHATI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday exhorted the people of Assam to elect a government in next year's assembly polls which will work against infiltration and in favour of development of the state. He accused the Congress of encouraging infiltration for the sake of 'vote bank' politics, which led to a threat to the identity of the Assamese people from the illegal migrants.

"It had been like a long bad dream for Assam till 10 years ago. Bandhs, blockades, firings, bomb blasts were rampant. There were numerous insurgent groups, agitations were happening," Shah said after inaugurating a 5,000-seat auditorium here, the largest in the North East region. He claimed that Assam has made progress over the last 10 years of BJP regime in the state, and 11 years of the Narendra Modi government at the Centre.

SC stays Sengar's release, flags grave legal questions

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the Delhi High Court order suspending the life sentence of expelled BJP leader Kuldeep Singh Sengar in the 2017 Unnao rape case and said he shall not be released from custody.

A vacation bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices J K Maheshwari and Augustine George Masih, which was hearing the CBI's plea challenging the high court order, said that substantial questions of law have arisen in the matter that require consideration.

The apex court also issued notice to Sengar seeking his response within four weeks on the CBI's plea. The bench said it was conscious of the



Survivor in the Unnao rape case leaves from Supreme Court, in New Delhi.

'Won't rest until he's hanged'

The Unnao rape case survivor on Monday expressed satisfaction after the Supreme Court stayed a Delhi High Court order suspending the convict Kuldeep Sengar's life sentence and said she has full faith in the justice system.

fact that ordinarily when a convict or an under-trial was released on bail pursuant to an order passed

by a trial court or the high court, such order shall not be stayed by it without hearing such person.

FACTFILE

● SC issued notice to Sengar seeking his response within four weeks on the CBI's plea.

It noted that Sengar was also convicted and sentenced in a separate case and was still in custody in that matter.

"In the peculiar circumstances of the case, we stay the operation of the impugned order dated December 23, 2025, passed by the high court. Consequently, the respondent (Sengar) shall not be released from custody pursuant to the said order," the bench said.

The top court said various substantial questions of law have arisen for its consideration in the matter.

RBI REPORT |

'ATM numbers dip in FY25 as digital payments rise'

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: The number of automated teller machines (ATMs) declined moderately in FY25, with the increase in digitisation, a RBI report said on Monday. The number of bank branches increased by over 2 per cent on the back of network expansion by the public sector banks, the

report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India for FY25 said. The overall number of ATMs declined to 2,51,057 as of March 31, 2025, from 2,53,417 in the year-ago period, driven down further by private-sector banks' strategies, it indicated. Private sector banks' ATM network declined to 77,117 from 79,884 in the last year,



while the public sector banks also had a decline to 1,33,544 from 1,34,694 in the year-ago period, it said, adding that the decline was due to both groups shutting down offsite ATMs. "Increase in

NUMBER

2,51,057

● ATM count dropped to 2,51,057 by March 2025.

digitalisation of payments has reduced the customers' requirement of transacting with ATMs," the report said. The indepen-

dently-run white label ATMs increased to 36,216 from 34,602 in the year-ago period. Public sector banks' ATM distribution was evenly distributed between rural, semi-urban, urban and metropolitan areas, while the private sector banks and foreign banks had a concentration in the urban and metropolitan areas in their ATM networks.

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ED raids 9 locations in Raipur, Mahasamund

A total of seven different ED teams carried out the simultaneous raids in connection with Bharatmala Project.



Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted raids on Monday morning in Raipur and Mahasamund in connection with the Bharat Mala Project compensation scam. The raids targeted the premises of Harmeet Khanooja, his associates, and related officials. A team of ED officers is currently examining documents at the locations. According to reports, raids were conducted at approximately nine locations in Raipur and Mahasamund. A total of seven different ED teams carried out the simultaneous raids early this morning. ED officials are currently examining several important documents and digital devices at the sites.

FACTFILE

● According to sources, ED teams are searching the premises linked to Harmeet Khanooja, his associates and Jasbir Singh Bagga in Mahasamund.

● It is being said that this raid is being conducted as part of an investigation into aspects related to money laundering and corruption.

According to sources, ED teams are searching the premises linked to Harmeet Khanooja, his associates, concerned government officials, and

some landowners. During the operation, documents, digital records, and evidence related to transactions are being examined. It is reported that a raid was conducted at the house of businessman Jasbir Singh Bagga in Basant Colony, Mahasamund. He is the owner of a Honda showroom. The ED team is examining documents at the businessman's residence. The ED officials arrived in two vehicles. Under the Bharat Mala project in Chhattisgarh, a 950 km road is being constructed from Raipur to Visakhapatnam. The project includes a four-lane road from Raipur to Visakhapatnam and a six-lane road from

Durg to Arang. The government acquired land from several farmers for this road construction. Compensation was to be paid to them, but many farmers have still not received their compensation. Leader of the Opposition Charan Das Mahant raised this issue on the second day of the 2025 Assembly budget session, after which an investigation into the matter was ordered. It is being said that this raid is being conducted as part of an investigation into aspects related to money laundering and corruption. The ED's action is currently underway, and further major revelations are expected in this case in the coming days.

One killed, another injured as bus hits a bike

RAIPUR: A horrific road accident occurred in Nava Raipur. A speeding bus hit a motorcycle, killing one person on the spot, while his brother-in-law was seriously injured. The two were on their way to attend an event. The incident took place in the Upparwara Chowki area under the Rakhi police station in Raipur district. According to the information received, Teerath Sonwani, a resident of Charoda village in the Fingeshwar area, was going to Khapri with his brother-in-law Gautam Ratre to attend a family function. They had just reached near Balco Hospital in Nava Raipur when a speeding bus hit their motorcycle. The collision was so severe that both fell off the bike.

The bus ran over Teerath Sonwani, crushing his head, and he died on the spot. Gautam Ratre was seriously injured and was immediately admitted to the hospital for treatment. Upon receiving information about the incident, the police reached the spot, took the body into custody, and sent it for post-mortem. The police conducted the inquest proceedings on Monday, and after the post-mortem, the body was handed over to the family members.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

POLICE RAIDS IN KOTWALI, TELIBANDHA

Four accused nabbed in illicit sale of liquor including history-sheeteer Ravi Sahu

RAIPUR: In view of the upcoming New Year, and to prevent crimes, crack down on criminals, apprehend those selling liquor illegally, and maintain security and peace, under the instructions of Deputy Inspector General of Police and Senior Superintendent of Police Dr. Lal Umed Singh, a 25-member team of the Anti-Crime and Cyber Unit, under the guidance of Additional Superintendent of Police Crime Sandeep Mittal and Deputy Superintendent of Police Crime Sanjay Singh, and led by In-charge Inspector Sachin Singh, conducted foot patrolling and surprise checks in various police station areas of Raipur, including Devaradera and BSUP Colony.

During checking in Gandhi Nagar, Kali Bari under Kotwali police station area, the Anti-Crime and Cyber Unit team arrested Ravi Sahu, son of late Raju Sahu, age 42 years, resident of



Gandhi Nagar, Raipur, a fugitive and history-sheeteer from Kotwali police station, and seized 94 pouches of illegally possessed English liquor worth Rs 12,200/- from him. A case has been registered against the accused under crime number 358/25, Section 34(2) of the Excise Act at Kotwali police station. Accused Ravi Sahu was also absconding in crime number 352/25 under Section 34(2) of the Excise Act and Section 6 of the Chhattisgarh Gambling Prohibition Act 2022; his arrest is also being processed in this case.

GANJA SEIZED FROM COCONUT HUSKS

Ganja worth Rs 6 crore seized from a truck carrying coconut husks, two nabbed

BALRAMPUR: The district police have taken major action against drug trafficking. A truck loaded with ganja worth Rs 6 crore has been intercepted. The accused were transporting the narcotics from Odisha to Rajasthan. Police have arrested three interstate smugglers. The operation was carried out in the Basantpur police station area. According to information, based on a tip-off, truck number RJ 32 GE 0960 was stopped in a border area on the night of December 28. During the search, 40 packets of ganja were recovered from under the coconut husks loaded in the truck.

The total weight of the seized ganja is 1198.460 kilograms, and its estimated value is approximately Rs 5.99 crore. The truck used in the smuggling is valued at approximately Rs 25 lakh. The arrested individuals, Amrish Kumar (23 years old) and Manish Kumar (20 years old), are residents of



Uttar Pradesh. Police have registered a case against the accused under crime number 228/2025, Section 20(b)(ii)(C) of the NDPS Act, and sent them to judicial custody. SP (Superintendent of Police) Vaibhav Banker's statement: Based on a tip-off, an investigation was conducted into the illegal smuggling of Ganja in a truck. Ganja worth approximately Rs 6 crore at market value has been seized, and a thorough investigation will be conducted in this entire case.

BOOK RELEASES

CM Sai releases book 'Gajrath Yatra-2025', honours six forest personnel

DANTEWADA: Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai today released the book "Gajrath Yatra-2025" at his residence, Bagia. This book comprehensively covers the classification of elephant movement areas and sensitive zones in Jashpur district, awareness campaigns being conducted at the school level, the establishment of the Elephant Information and Control Room, technical initiatives for human-elephant conflict management, Animal Tracker app training, and the expansion and achievements of the Gajrath Yatra throughout the district.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister honoured six forest personnel with certificates for their remarkable work



in reducing human-elephant conflict and raising public awareness. These included Forest Guard Umesh Painkra, Forest Ranger Durgesh Nandan Sai, and RRT members Mahattam Ram Soni, Ganesh Ram, and Ravishankar Painkra, and Phool Singh Sidar from the Elephant Friends Group.

FOUNDATION STONE FOR BHORAMDEV TOURISM CORRIDOR

Dy CM Vijay Sharma reviews preparations and gave instructions to the officials

RAIPUR: On January 1st, the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Borhamdev Tourism Corridor, which will give a new direction to the tourism development of Chhattisgarh, is going to be held. This project, being built at a cost of approximately Rs. 146 crore, is being initiated by Deputy Chief Minister Shri Vijay Sharma and the foundation stone will be laid by Union Tourism Minister Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Chief Minister Shri Vishnudev Sai.

To review the preparations for the event, Deputy Chief Minister Shri Vijay Sharma inspected the program venue at the Borhamdev temple complex today. He held a review meeting with public representatives and officials, took detailed information about the preparations, and gave necessary instructions. Deputy Chief Minister Shri Sharma instructed that the main stage and seating arrangements, seating arrangements for the public, security arrangements,



traffic, parking, drinking water, and all other necessary arrangements related to the event should be completed on time. During this time, District Panchayat President Ishwari Sahu, District Panchayat Vice President Kailash Chandravanshi, Chairman Dr. Virendra Sahu, Collector Gopal Verma, ASP Pushpendra Singh Baghel, ADM Vinay Poyam, and other public representatives and officials were present.

History-sheeteer nabbed in Ganja supply network

Central Chronicle News

A history-sheeteer was nabbed with 1 kg 977 grams of cannabis worth Rs 98,850.

RAIPUR: Under the special campaign "Operation Nishchay" being run under the guidance of IG Amresh Mishra and SSP Dr. Lal Umed Singh for effective action against drugs, instructions have been given to prevent drug trafficking and to identify and take action against people involved in their illegal purchase and sale.

In this connection, the Anti-Crime and Cyber Unit team received information that a person on a two-wheeler near the immersion pond in Raipur, under the DD Nagar police station area, was

FACTFILE

● The history-sheeteer nabbed is one against whom approximately two dozen cases have been registered at DD Nagar Police Station.

carrying ganja and was trying to sell it. Upon this, senior officers directed the in-charge of the Anti-Crime and Cyber Unit and the Station House Officer of DD Nagar to locate and apprehend the accused with the ganja. Under the direction of senior officers, a joint team of the Anti-Crime and Cyber Unit and DD Nagar police went to the said location and identified the person matching the description and vehicle given by the informant. When they tried to talk to him, he started running, but he was surrounded and caught.

Offices wear deserted looks, schools remain closed

Central Chronicle News

(CEOF) staged a powerful protest across the state regarding the interests of employees in support of their 11-point demand.

RAIPUR: The Chhattisgarh Employees and Officers Federation (CEOF) staged a powerful protest across the state regarding the interests of employees. There was widespread discontent among employees regarding the state government's "Modi's Guarantee" scheme, resulting in silence in government offices across the state, from Indravati Bhavan to other offices. Most schools remained closed. Employees of urban

| CEOF STRIKE |



FACTFILE

● Similarly the strike was held successfully in Durg, Bilaspur, Bastar region and Surguja division and all the offices remained closed with no work.

local bodies took leave and participated in the impactful protest. Teachers and employees in the state's universities also took leave to support the Federation's movement. Officers and employees in the offices of department heads, corporations,

boards, etc., in Nava Raipur are observing a complete work stoppage in support of the movement. The strike caused difficulties for senior officials in reaching government offices in Nava Raipur.

Under the guidance of Chhattisgarh Employees and Officers Federation's provincial convener Kamal Verma and divisional in-charge Chandrashekhar Tiwari, there was considerable enthusiasm for the work stoppage movement in Raipur.

nities for their principles. He described the selection as a moment of pride and excitement for the entire state.

Rohit Yadav, Secretary of the Public Relations Department, said that all states had submitted their tableau proposals to the Ministry of Defence. After an extensive and rigorous selection process spanning nearly four months, tableaux from 17 states have been finalized, including that of Chhattisgarh.

This tableau is not merely a display, but a symbol of the nation's gratitude and respect for the contribution of tribal society.

Vishnu Deo Sai
CM Ch'garh

ery and the proud tradition of supreme sacrifice upheld by tribal commu-

| STAR ATTRACTION AT KARTAVYA PATH |

Chhattisgarh tableau selected for R-Day Parade

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: Chhattisgarh's tableau will be among the star attractions on New Delhi's Kartavya Path during the upcoming Republic Day celebrations. This year's tableau will present a striking depiction of the nation's first digital museum dedicated to tribal freedom heroes. The Ministry of Defence's expert committee has selected Chhattisgarh's tableau for the Republic Day main cere-



mony. The digital museum was inaugurated in Nava Raipur Atal Nagar by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of the silver jubilee of the formation of Chhattisgarh. Congratulating the

state on the selection of the tableau for the Republic Day celebrations, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said that through Chhattisgarh's tableau, citizens across the country will witness the unflinching patriotism, unparalleled brav-

Raipur News

Deputy CM Sao outlines two-year urban development milestones

Focusing on the second phase of the Prime Minister's Housing Scheme, Sao announced a target of 1.32 lakh new homes under PM Awas Yojana (Urban) 2.0.

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao recently presented a comprehensive progress report on the state's urban administration and development over the past two years, marking a transformative period for Chhattisgarh's cities. Speaking at a press conference at the Chhattisgarh Samvad Auditorium in Nava Raipur, Sao detailed a roadmap aimed at modernizing infrastructure and ensuring that the benefits of central and state schemes reach every urban household.

The centerpiece of this development strategy is the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban 2.0. Sao announced that the state has set an ambitious target of constructing 1.32 lakh houses across various categories, including one lakh units under Beneficiary Led Construction and 27,000 through Affordable Housing in Partnership.

With over 24,000 units already sanctioned and 5,351 currently under construction, the government aims to approve an additional 50,000 houses by March 2026. This initiative is backed by a substantial mother allocation of 129.06 crore rupees.

RMC Zone 9 cracks down on abandoned vehicles

RAIPUR: The Raipur Municipal Corporation (RMC) launched a series of enforcement actions on Monday, targeting traffic obstructions and environmental violations along the Vidhan Sabha route. Acting under the orders of Municipal Commissioner Vishwadeep and the guidance of Zone 9 Commissioner Anshul Sharma Senior, officials focused on clearing public thoroughfares and ensuring compliance with urban construction rules. In a coordinated effort with the traffic police, the Zone 9 Town Investment Department identified and seized two abandoned or “condemned” vehicles that were obstructing the flow of traffic on Vidhan Sabha Road. The operation was supervised on-site by Executive Engineer Sharad Dhruv, Assistant Engineer Syed Zoheb, and Sub-Engineer Atul Bansal.

FINE

Moti Mahal fined over sanitation violations

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: The Raipur Municipal Corporation (RMC) took stern action against sanitation negligence today, imposing a significant fine on the Moti Mahal hotel located along the Shastri Bazar main road. Following a series of public complaints, the RMC headquarters health team joined forces with the Zone 4 health department for a surprise inspection of the premises.

already distributed to
municipal bodies.

Reflecting on the state's rapid urbanization, the Deputy Chief Minister noted that Chhattisgarh's urban

Roadmap for digital cities and green mobility

Innovation in sanitation and digital services also featured prominently in the report. Chhattisgarh continues to lead in national cleanliness rankings, with Belha and Bilaspur securing top honors in the Swachh Survekshan 2024-25. The state is also pioneering the establishment of Bio-CNG plants and regional sanitary landfills to manage solid waste effectively. Furthermore, the expansion of GIS-based property tax portals to 53 urban bodies and the "More Sangwari" doorstep service delivery system represent a significant leap toward a "Digital Chhattisgarh."

Looking ahead, Sao outlined projects for the next three years, including the deployment of 240 electric buses under the PM e-Bus scheme and the completion of 33 “Nalanda Campus” high-tech libraries. Through these integrated efforts, the government aims to create modern, sustainable, and inclusive urban spaces that cater to the needs of the state’s growing population.

UP, Jharkhand archers dominate National Junior Championships

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: The 45th NTPC National Junior Archery Championship is heading toward a grand finale at the Swami Vivekananda Athletic Stadium in Raipur. Running from December 22 to 30, the prestigious event has brought together over 1,000 young archers from across India to compete in Recurve, Compound, and Indian Round categories. Monday marked the opening of the Indian Round, where archers from Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Assam showcased exceptional precision. In the men's 40-meter category, Shubham from Uttar Pradesh took the top spot with an impressive 351 points out of 360, followed by Assam's Shyam Kanu Rabha and UP's Manish. Shubham maintained his dominance in the 30-meter distance, while Ranvijay Yadav of UP and Chan-



dramohan Soren of Jharkhand secured the remaining podium spots.

The women's division saw equally fierce competition. Vedakshi Tomar of Uttar Pradesh led the 40-meter round with 333 points, closely followed by Jharkhand's Baby Kumari and Lakshmi Kumari. In the 30-meter distance, Rajasthan's Pratibha Kandara surged to the top, while Himani Basumatary of Assam and Baby Kumari delivered strong performances to stay in medal contention.

The championship will conclude tomorrow with the highly anticipated mixed team and individual elimination rounds.

ates 193 notified urban bodies, including 14 municipal corporations and 56 municipalities. Sao emphasized that the governance of these bodies is rooted in the 74th Constitutional Amendment, ensuring local self-governance remains transparent and accountable.

Rising Stars shine at 25th Chhattisgarh Tennis Tournament

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: Raipur witnessed a grand showcase of athletic talent as the 25th Chhattisgarh State Ranking Tennis Tournament 2025 drew to a successful close on December 26. Organized under the aegis of the Chhattisgarh State Tennis Association, the week-long event, which began on December 20, brought together the finest players from across the state's various districts for a high-stakes display of skill and sportsmanship.

The concluding day was marked by a prestigious award ceremony attended by notable dignitaries. Guru Narayan Pradhan, DSP at the Police Headquarters in Raipur, graced the occasion as the chief guest, while Mukesh Pillai attended as a special guest. General Secretary Gurucharan Singh Hora highlighted the tournament's success, noting the vital roles played by Chief Referee Nikhil Marathe



FASTFACTS

- The veteran and doubles categories added to the excitement of the final days.

ning the Under 12 Girls title and finishing as runner-up in the Under 14 category, where Janhvi Shaw took the top spot. Ved Thakkar showed similar consistency, winning the Under 12 Boys title and securing the runner-up position in the Under 14 Boys division, which was won by Eklavya Singh Rajput. Other notable winners included Ariz Khan in Under 16 Boys and Tanishka Bhattacharjee in Under 18 Girls.

NEWSLINE


SANITATION

Cleanliness restored near Raj Talkies




RAIPUR: The Raipur Municipal Corporation health department took swift action to resolve sanitation issues near Raj Talkies and Bhagat Sweets following reports of accumulated waste and clogged drains. Responding to a public complaint, the Municipal Health Officer issued immediate directives to the concerned Zone Health Officer to clear the area.

In compliance with these instructions, a specialized cleaning team was deployed to the site. The team conducted a thorough cleaning of the drainage system, ensuring the complete removal of all accumulated silt and debris.



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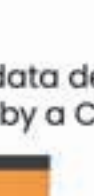
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



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The lifting of paddy from procurement centers has gained momentum,
Abhijeet Singh
(Collector, Durg)

Transparent policies drive record paddy procurement

2,68,901.52 metric tonnes of paddy has been procured with direct online payments exceeding Rs 58,163 lakh disbursed to farmers.



A farmer selling paddy at a procurement centre.

Central Chronicle News

BHILAI: Guided by the state government's farmer-centric policies, the paddy procurement process in Durg district has reached a new milestone. As of December 29, the district has recorded the purchase of nearly 2.69 lakh metric tonnes of paddy, worth over Rs 63,749 lakh.

The transition to a transparent digital system has resulted in more than 50,718 farmers receiving their payments directly into their bank accounts within record time. The process has been signifi-

FASTFACTS

● 25932 farmers surrendered 501.86 hectares of land area.

● Farmers support to prevent illegal paddy recycling by middlemen.

cantly simplified by the "Tuhar Token" mobile app, which is now available 24/7. This removes previous time restrictions, allowing farmers to generate tokens at their convenience. Additionally, the lifting of paddy from procurement centers has gained momentum, with

Digitization removes middlemen

The "Tuhar Token" app is now active 24/7, meaning farmers no longer have to wait for specific "office hours" to secure a sale date. This digital leap has eliminated middlemen from over 25,000 transactions this season alone. Farmer Sadaram of village katro stated that the 'Tuhar Token' app saved him from the long queues. It feels like a new era for farmers.

65,765.98 metric tonnes already moved for milling, creating space for new arrivals. To ensure the integrity of the procurement drive, thousands of small-scale farmers have voluntarily surrendered their registered acreage after selling their yields. This proac-

tive step effectively blocks middlemen from using legitimate farmer credentials to offload illegal stock. With over 3.8 million gunny bags currently available at centers, the district administration has ensured that every farmer can sell their produce without logistical delays.

Eleven suspects detained

BHILAI: In a proactive move to ensure public safety, the Bhilai Nagar Police have intensified surveillance and initiated strict action against suspicious individuals during the ongoing Divya Shri Hanumant Katha. The high-profile event, featuring Pt Dharendra Shastri, began on December 28, 2025, drawing massive crowds to the Sector-6 area. Under the direct guidance of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Vijay Agrawal (IPS), dedicated police teams were deployed to prevent incidents of chain snatching, pickpocketing, and theft. During a security sweep of the pandal and surrounding premises, officers identified several individuals moving suspiciously without valid entry passes or identification documents. Following thorough questioning, 11 suspects – including men and women hailing from Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh – were taken into custody. These individuals failed to provide identity proof (Aadhaar cards) or justify their presence at the venue. The police have registered preventive cases against the suspects, including Aki Ruiya, Rahista Bai, Devariya Singh, Parmal Singh, Alamgir and others from districts like Umaria, Katni, and Nalanda.

BMC commissioner conducts surprise inspection



Central Chronicle News

BHILAI: BhilaiMunicipal Commissioner Rajeev Kumar Pandey of Bhilai Municipal Corporation carried out an intensive inspection of various development works in Zone 1, Nehru Nagar. During the visit, he reviewed newly completed cementing and asphalt road projects, as well as the condition of local ponds, gardens, and playgrounds. He directed officials to ensure quality standards and complete all works within stipulated timelines.

The inspection began at Ward No. 6, Sanjay Nagar, where residents had long demanded improved road connectivity. Responding to public interest, the Corporation recently completed construction of a new asphalt road. While inspecting the site, the Commissioner remarked

that the new road would free residents from dust and mud, ensuring smoother movement. At Sanjay Nagar pond, Pandey observed that several checker tiles (pavers) around the pond had come loose. He instructed the Zone Commissioner to immediately repair and reorganize the tiles, and also emphasized maintenance of the central platform to enhance its appearance.

The Commissioner further visited Gulmohar Garden, where construction of a shed near the community building is underway. He directed engineers to expedite completion of the shed and maintain regular cleanliness inside the garden. Inspecting the nearby badminton court, he ordered reinforcement of the chain link fencing to improve safety.

NEWSLINE

BURGLARY

Notorious thieves arrested



BHILAI: The Old Bhilai Police apprehended two habitual thieves whose father owns "CG Mobile" in Transport Nagar, reported that burglars broke into the shop on the night of July 5, 2025. The suspects made off with multiple mobile phones, earbuds, and cash. Following a tip-off about a suspect attempting to sell keypad phones near Khursipar, police detained Kuldeep Kaushik (23) and Viraj Nirmalkar (18).

During interrogation, the duo confessed to the crime. Police recovered six mobile phones and two earbuds from their possession, while the suspects admitted to spending the stolen cash. On December 29, both individuals were arrested and sent to jail under judicial remand.

ATTEMPTED MURDER

Fugitive nabbed in Nagpur



BHILAI: Police arrested 20-year-old Aman Nishad for the attempted murder of a young woman after he went on the run to Maharashtra. The arrest follows a violent attack that took place in the Jevra Sirsa area. The accused and the victim were previously in a relationship.

Conflict arose after Nishad married another woman, prompting the victim to sever contact. On the night of December 24, Nishad lured the victim outside her home under the pretext of a final conversation. When she refused his proposal to marry him, a heated argument ensued. Nishad allegedly strangled her and attacked her throat multiple times with a blade.

The victim's screams for help forced Nishad to flee the scene. Following a pursuit across state lines, a dedicated police team tracked the suspect to Nagpur, where he was hiding. He was brought back to Durg, charged under Section 109 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and sent to judicial remand.

BIT Durg to host two-day workshop on Hydrogen Energy

Central Chronicle News

BHILAI: Bhilai Institute of Technology (BIT), Durg will organize a two day workshop on Hydrogen Energy from January 8-9, 2026, with a focus on renewable and sustainable energy solutions. The program is sponsored by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi, under the VAANI Scheme, and will be conducted in Hindi and regional languages in technical education.

The workshop is aligned with the National Hydrogen Mission of the Government of India and aims to highlight clean energy transition, green hydrogen technologies, and sustainability. Expert lectures will be delivered by professors from premier institutions includ-



ing IITs and NITs, offering participants insights into cutting edge research and applications in the field.

The initiative is being held under the patronage of Dr. S. K. Jaiswal, Principal of BIT Durg, with academic leadership from Dr. Shubhrata Nagpal, Head of the Mechanical Engineering Department. The program is coordinated by Dr. Santosh Kumar Mishra, with Dr. Anil Kumar serving as Co Coordinator.

Two arrested for burglary

BHILAI: The Jamul Police apprehended two burglars involved in a theft at a locked residence in Shankar Nagar, Chhawani. The police recovered gold and silver ornaments valued at approximately Rs 1,83,500 from the accused. The incident came to light after the complainant, Purendra Kumar Sahu, reported that while he was away in Raipur for his wife's medical treatment between December 4 and 15, thieves broke into his house. Neighbours alerted him to the break-in, and upon returning, he found his jewelry and cash missing. An FIR was subsequently registered at Jamul Police Station under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Following a tip-off, a joint team from Jamul Police and the ACCU detained two suspects: Kuldeep Singh (24) and S Vinay (22), both residents of Khursipar. During interrogation, the duo confessed to the crime.

Devotion to Hanuman brings blessings of Ram and Sita: Shastri

Central Chronicle News

The five-day event concluded with a message of social harmony, inspired by the teachings of Baba Guru Ghasidas.

BHILAI: The five-day "Divya Hanumant Katha," organized by the Seva Samarpan Sanstha at Jayanti Stadium, Bhilai, concluded on Monday with a massive surge of devotees and a profound call for social equality. Addressing the sea of followers on the final day, international storyteller Pandit Dharendra Krishna Shastri described Bhilai-Durg as a "wonderful city" of faith. He explained the verse "Prabhu Charitra Sunibe



Pt Shastri narrating the katha from Vyaspeeth.

FASTFACTS

● Shastri described Bhilai-Durg as a "wonderful city" of faith.

● Thousands placed their petitions (Arjis) at the Bageshwar Peeth.

Ko Rasiya, Ram Lakhan Sita Man Basiya," stating that those who worship Hanuman, the "Sankat Mochan" of Kali Yuga, receive the collective grace of Lord Ram and Mata Sita, as the divine

couple resides eternally in Hanuman's heart.

The concluding day witnessed an outpouring of faith, with thousands carrying red cloths and coconuts to place their petitions (Arjis) at the BageshwarPeeth. The event was graced by high-profile leaders, including State BJP President Kiran Deo Singh, Cabinet Minister Tank Ram Verma, Rajesh Agrawal, Khushwant Saheb, and MLAs Amar Agrawal and Doman Lal

Korsewada. Promoting the message of social harmony, Pt. Shastri invoked the philosophy of Baba Guru Ghasidas, "MankheMankhe Ek Samaan" (All humans are equal). He drew parallels to how Lord Hanuman united all beings in the service of Lord Ram. He urged the youth to renounce addiction, rise above caste discrimination, and commit to serving the needy and the nation. The ceremony ended on a spiritual high with the recitation of the Hanuman Chalisa and the Guru Ghasidas Aarti, leaving an indelible mark on the twin cities. BJP National Vice-President Saroj Pandey, along with the convener of the Hanumant Katha, Rakesh Pandey, and several other prominent dignitaries were present on the occasion.

WORKPLACE SAFETY CULTURE |

BSP Blast Furnace Department observes Safety Week

Central Chronicle News

BHILAI: Emphasising workplace safety culture, the Blast Furnace Department of SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP) organised a Departmental Safety Week in its Blast Furnace area last week.

The programme was inaugurated by S.K. Agrawal, CGM (In-Charge-Safety), in the presence of Gujju Srinivas, GM (Blast Furnace), Shantanu Mitra, N. Madhu, A.K. Paswan, R. Praveen, senior offi-

cers and employees. The inaugural session was conducted by Abhishek Singh, Departmental Safety Officer.

The concluding ceremony was graced by Tapas Dasgupta, CGM I/c (Iron), as Chief Guest. He stressed that at Bhilai Steel Plant, safety is as important as productivity. He highlighted hazard identification, risk assessment, and audio-visual tools as effective means of communicating safety messages, especially to frontline workers.



He urged employees to ensure mandatory use of safety gear.

On the first day, a

Safety Quiz and Special Safety Quiz for Women Employees were held, with 60 women partic-

ipating. The women's session was chaired by Dr. Usha, Medical Officer, NOHSC, with Philomena

Ekka, Vasla, and Inderjit Kaur present. It was coordinated by Laxmi Devangan and the women's team.

Day two featured an Extempore Speech Competition with 15 participants, chaired by S.K. Dukania, GM, and judged by Sunil Shukla, DSO. A Tool Box Talk Competition was also held with 15 teams, chaired by Sameer Dobhal, AGM, and judged by Nimesh Gupta, DSO.

On the third day, a Safety Poster Com-

petition drew over 70 entries, judged by Pushpa Ambrose and Anurag Pathak. Safety Slogan, Poem, and Skit competitions followed, with over 100 employees in poetry and seven teams in skits.

The Safety Week was organised under the guidance of Manoj Kumar, CGM. The valedictory programme was conducted by Hemant Kumar Verma, AGM, with a vote of thanks by Vikas Nashine, GM (Safety-BF).

Yearender

2025 &

WE INDIANS STAY INDEBTED TO THEM

‘Gratitude is the key’, they say and nearing to wrap off 2025 on a cherished note, we ought to pay our gratitude to the select people and brands who are steadily transforming India. Here stands a list who owes us much and many.

Specialist are never on the top of the country, it is the genre of ‘Generalist’ who are oaring the nation. Salutes to their spirits.

Millets & moringa introduced by

Long before the green revolution transformed indigenous diets in India, the tribes of Chhattisgarh cultivated and consumed foods that are now globally recognized as super foods. Kuddos to these tribes of Chhattisgarh that India is slowly navigating towards millets and moringa, all high on the nutritional

quotient. Yet is more to be discovered as India is soon to devour alookanda, paich – a nutritious drink made by soaking rice or millet and kandul lentils, which once cultivated, they are dried, packed up in sihadi leaves, stitched together with sihadi ropes and can last up to two years!

Wildlife legacy and leadership

Kaziranga National Park’s landscape demands courage, from guards who patrol in floods to officers who must protect rhinos and tigers through crises. As Field Director, Dr Sonali Ghosh has become one of its strongest anchors. In 2025, she became the first Indian to win the IUCN Kenton Miller Award for innovation in protected-area management. Her leadership blends science, community partnership, and steady crisis response. Whether

preparing for monsoon floods, strengthening anti-poaching measures, or supporting front-line forest staff, she leads with uncommon empathy and clarity. Her work reinforces a truth India is only beginning to honour: conservation thrives when people and nature are protected together.

The real Commander

Ajit Doval, India’s National Security Advisor, is widely regarded as a spymaster of exceptional intelligence and strategic acumen. His career, spanning over five decades, is characterized by a blend of patient observation, meticulous planning, psychological insight, and decisive action. Doval is considered an architect of India’s modern security doctrine, known for an “aggressive defense” posture. The real shadow commander Doval is pivotal in India’s safety grid.

The Unified Command the powerful India

The central government notified new rules for unified command across the three services - Army, Navy and Air Force to bolster effective command, control, and efficient functioning of Inter-Services Organisations (ISOs) under Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh, General Upendra Dwivedi Army Chief, Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi Navy Chief.. The rules, which came into effect on May 27, have been notified amid the ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan. The rules were notified under Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control & Discipline) Act 2023 will enable greater jointness and Command efficiency in Armed Forces. Every Indian is truly indebted to the Forces, when chaos is inevitable at a time of coups and treasons.

Red Brigade wiped off

In essence, Chhattisgarh is on the brink of ending the Naxal insurgency, with strong government action and high Maoist defections indicating the twilight of the movement. With over 2,000 Naxalites surrendered in 2024-2025, including senior leaders, drawn by new rehabilitation policies offering financial aid, land, and skill training showing a major shift from insurgency to development focus. Peace to Shabri’s land and power to the Forces beckoning Naxalism.

Laugh India loud with Kapil’s Show

No one can make Indians laugh as the great Kapil Sharma Show. Enriched with celebrity arrivals, movie empowerment, the show transforms India to a laughter club, snatching away stress and misery for a while. Making millions laugh effortlessly the show’s great watch are Sunil Grover (Daffi/various), Krushna Abhishek (Mona/Chote Bhaiya), Kiku Sharda (Chef Dhaniya/Bade Bhaiya), and Archana Puran Singh. Is there anyone who hates the show? Nay never!

India Ka biscuit – Parle G

Are there haters for Parle G, India’s sole biscuit? There can’t be. Do you know lately Belgium’s Lotus Bakeries brought its iconic Biscoff cookie to India in late 2025 through a major partnership with Mondelez (Cadbury’s parent company), transitioning it from a premium import to an accessible, locally-manufactured snack, available for as low as 10, making it a mass-market competitor to other Indian biscuits with its signature spiced caramel flavour. But to the surprise of the market they could not outnumber Parle G in sales. Chai and Parle G are inseparables for Indians. Pure Gratitude.

Saare Jahan Se Accha...

2025 and patriotism saw all borders cross, when more than a half dozen movies were released on real life war encounters. Movies like 120 Bahadur, Sky Force, Sarzameen, Ground Zero, Saare Jahan Se Accha, Tehran and the upcoming movie Ikkis are the select few. India stands in immense gratitude, to its makers producers actors distributors and viewers alike.

Sharavan Singh Indian’s adore you

In May, when fear and uncertainty hung heavy along the India-Pakistan border during Operation Sindoor, Shравan Singh was just a school-going child. Yet, in the moment of danger, he showed immense courage and kindness and chose to help soldiers stationed nearby, in whatever way he can. That act of bravery has earned the 10-year-old the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar.

Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust

Snow Leopards, unlike the other big cats like tigers, lions and common leopards, cannot roar. Despite its large distributional range, the population of snow leopards across the world is dwindling, making it one of the most endangered cats in the world. The global population of snow leopard is estimated between 3500 and 7000 individuals. There are about 500 individuals in the higher reaches of Indian Himalaya. The Snow Leopard Conservancy India Trust; here is playing a pivotal role in saving the Big Cat, a remarkable member of the Himalayan ecosystem. Fauna matters much.

PM Surya Ghar Yojna

As the world walks towards sustainability and zero emissions, the PM Surya Ghar Yojna is lighting free of cost thousands of houses across India, thereby also pledging towards the Green Planet crusade. Many Indian households in rural and semi urban region are today getting free power and also fighting post independence power scramble. An ambitious plan it is all set to play a crucial role in India’s sustainable development.

BJP is the national party which unites party workers and Atal Bihari Vajpayee became its first President.

Shyam Bihari Jaiswal
Health Minister- Ch'garh



Chhattisgarh

BJP govt conspiring to change name of MNREGA: Sahu

Congress workers staged a protest in Mainpur and raised slogans against the central and state governments.



Central Chronicle News

MAINPUR: Former President of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Congress Committee, Dhanendra Sahu, arrived in Mainpur on Sunday. Local Congress workers gave him a warm welcome. MLA Janak Dhruv was also specially present on this occasion. Later, on the occasion of the 141st Foundation Day of the Congress, Dhanendra Sahu hoisted the Congress flag and a program was organized.

FACTFILE

● Senior Congress leaders were honored on the occasion of Congress Foundation Day.

During this, senior Congress workers were honored with shawls and coconuts.

Following this, a protest meeting was organized against the central BJP government's move to repeal the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee

Act (MNREGA). During this, former minister and former state president of Congress, Dhanendra Sahu, alleged that the BJP and the Modi government are continuously attacking the name of Mahatma Gandhi. He said that the UPA government had enacted the MNREGA law to fulfill Mahatma Gandhi's dreams of Ram Rajya and village self-employment, which was successful in providing employment to the poor and labourers.

Sahu termed the changes in MNREGA by the BJP government as a well-planned conspiracy to erase the legacy of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. He said that the Modi government has snatched away the rights of the poor and laborers by changing the basic concept of MNREGA. This government wants to implement the contract system by amending MNREGA against the labourers at the behest of capitalists.

KVMY has increased farmers' income: DFO

MUNGELI: The Kisan Vriksha Mitra Yojana (KVMY) operating under the Mungeli Forest Division has emerged as a powerful means of environmental protection as well as the economic upliftment of farmers. Under the scheme, a total of more than 98,800 saplings have been planted so far, directly benefiting 93 farmers. According to information provided by the Forest Divisional Officer's office, Mungeli, this scheme has increased farmers' income and has also made a significant contribution to maintaining environmental balance.

BJP leaders pay tribute to Sahibzadas on Veer Bal Diwas

MUNGELI : On the occasion of Veer Bal Diwas, MLA Punnulal Mohle visited the Gurudwara and offered floral tributes to the photographs of Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh. On this occasion, he said that the Sahibzadas of Guru Gobind Singh Ji sacrificed their lives for the country at such a young age. They dedicated their lives for the country, religion, and truth. We salute the sacrifice of Guru Gobind Singh's family.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

VAJPAYEE'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

Atal Smriti seminar conference concludes in a dignified atmosphere



MCB: As per the instructions of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) District Organization, the "Atal Smriti Seminar Conference," organized on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna, the revered Atal Bihari Vajpayee, concluded in a dignified atmosphere at the Community Hall in Khadgawan, under the Manendragarh assembly constituency.

The chief speaker of the pro-

gram, Chhattisgarh Health Minister Shyam Bihari Jaiswal, said in his powerful address that the upliftment of India, the country, and its farmers were always a priority for the revered Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He said that Atal Smriti seminars are being organized across the country today, which reflects the widespread acceptance of his ideas.

VEER BAL DIWAS

Veer Bal Diwas celebrated at the new Govt Girls' College

MUNGELI: Veer Bal Diwas (Valiant Children's Day) was celebrated at the new Government Girls' College. The sole objective was to honour the children and preserve their indomitable courage. The chief guest of the program was Principal Dr. Prachi Singh, and the program was presided over by Senior Professor Madan Lal Kashyap.

The program began with a prayer to Goddess Saraswati. The main speaker, Dr. Prachi Singh, addressed everyone, saying that Veer Bal Diwas is celebrated every year on December 26th. This day is dedicated to remembering the martyrdom and bravery of Guru Gobind Singh's younger sons, Baba Zorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh. Kashyap said that both children sacrificed their lives for religion and truth, which is a symbol of their valour, courage, and sacrifice. The program coordinator, Jitendra Kumar Sharma, said that today is a very auspicious day, which has become a symbol of the courage and values of these martyred children. This day not only reminds us of a historical event but also provides an opportunity for today's children to connect with the values of fearlessness and integrity, and to dedicate themselves to the nation with determination.

POOR NETWORK

Public troubled by the poor condition of Airtel and Jio networks

MUNGELI: The condition of Airtel and Jio mobile networks is continuously deteriorating in many areas of the district. In the city and dozens of villages in the area, the network is so weak that ordinary citizens are facing immense difficulties in making mobile calls, using the internet, and availing online services. Despite this, Airtel and Jio companies are charging consumers the full recharge fee every month, which has caused deep resentment among the people. Local people say that due to the poor network condition, neither calls connect properly nor is the internet speed satisfactory. Many times calls get disconnected midway, while internet services are so slow that it becomes difficult to even open simple messages or government websites. Villagers allege that Airtel and Jio companies claim excellent network and fast internet in their advertisements, but the reality is completely opposite. Consumers say that despite paying the full monthly recharge, we are not even getting basic network facilities. This is a direct deception of the consumers. This network problem is not limited to private conversations only, but it is directly affecting students' online studies, farmers' digital services, traders' online payments, and government work for ordinary citizens.

| FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATIONS |

Congress displays its strength on occasion of Foundation Day

Central Chronicle News

MANENDRAGARH: On the occasion of the Congress Party's Foundation Day, a dignified meeting was organized by the District Congress Committee. The meeting included detailed discussions on organizational strengthening, party ideology, and issues of public interest. The birthday of Block Congress Committee President Rajesh Sharma and a felicitation ceremony for the newly appointed Women's Congress Urban District President Roma Chatterjee were also celebrated.

On this occasion, District Congress President Ashok Srivastava said in his address, "The Congress Party has been the greatest guardian of democracy, the constitution, and social justice from the country's inde-



pendence to the present day. Foundation Day reminds us that we must intensify our struggle by becoming the voice of the common people."

Former MLA Gulab Kamro said, "Congress is not just a political party, but an ideology that has always fought for the rights of the poor, farmers, laborers, and the underprivileged. Today, there is a need to further strengthen the organization at the grassroots level."

Senior Congress leader Ramesh Singh said, "Congress Foundation Day

reminds us of the core principles of sacrifice, struggle, and service. In today's times, it is the responsibility of all of us to convey these values to every citizen."

NSUI State President Neeraj Pandey, while addressing the youth, said, "The future of the country is in the hands of the youth. Only the ideology of Congress can provide the youth with the right direction, equal opportunities, and justice. By connecting the youth power with the organization, we will win the battle for change."

FACTFILE

● Block President Rajesh Sharma's birthday celebrated, new energy infused into the organization with the welcome of Women's District President Roma Chatterjee.

District Congress Committee (DCC) spokesperson Saurav Mishra said, "On Congress Foundation Day, we resolve to fight against the anti-people policies of the BJP on every front and to strongly raise the problems of the common people from the streets to the parliament."

During the meeting, the birthday of Block Congress (BCC) President Rajesh Sharma was celebrated with great enthusiasm.

Bhatgaon Panthi party wins first prize in Youth Festival

MUNGELI : The team from Mungeli district brought glory to the district by receiving the first prize from Governor Raman Deka and Union Minister Tokhan Sahu at the state-level youth festival dance competition. Earlier, the Bhatgaon Panthi Party had also brought glory to Mungeli district several times. This is their 5th state-level award. The State Youth Festival 2025-26 was organized from December 23 to 25 at Bahtarai Stadium, Bilaspur. A state-level youth festival and competition was organized, featuring 14 disciplines including folk dances such as Panthi dance, Karma dance, Raut Nacha, Sua dance, Gedi dance, as well as debate, story writing, poetry writing, and painting. Participants from all districts of the state took part in the competition.

| JJM SCHEME IN DOLDRUMS |

Construction of water tanks progressing at a snail's pace!

Central Chronicle News

MUNGELI: The central government's ambitious Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) scheme appears to be far from achieving its goals. The central government launched the Jal Jeevan Mission scheme to provide clean drinking water to people by ensuring tap water in every household. Under the scheme, the government planned to provide pure drinking water to every household

by 2024, but with only a few days left in 2025, the question arises whether the central government's claim of providing pure drinking water to every household by 2024 will be fulfilled, as the scheme seems to be failing in this region. The promise was to deliver pure drinking water to every home through taps, but people are now tying their cattle to these very taps. Even today, the construction of water tanks is progress-



ing at a snail's pace in most places. Under the scheme, pipelines have been laid in villages and taps have been installed

Department has become so inactive that even after receiving reports of broken handpumps in rural areas. Villagers

in every house. However, not a single drop of water has come out of these taps to date. Some villagers say, "so what if we

don't get water? At least they are useful for tying our cattle." Even after almost 4 years, these taps stand like dry poles. When the villagers heard the announcement of installing government taps in every house under the tap water scheme, a wave of happiness spread among them, but the negligence of the contractors, the village panchayat head, and the indifference of the higher officials have made a mockery of this scheme.



MUNGELI: Ration has been stopped in December for 1 lakh people in the district due to non-completion of e-KYC. This is big news for cardholders; families whose e-KYC is not updated are not receiving ration in December. The Food Department has appealed that it is mandatory to get it registered in the ration card by the last date, December 31st. E-KYC has to be done for every member.

There are a total of 400 ration shops in the district, with 2,55,143 ration cards. In the urban area of Mungeli, there are a total of 10,346 cards, in Patharia 2,172, and in Lormi 5,065 cards. Lormi block has 93,946, Mungeli 82,597, and Patharia 58,341 ration cards. The total number of members in all the ration cards in the district is 8,31,892. 1 lakh members who have not completed KYC are being affected.

The Food Department has clarified that families whose e-KYC process for the members registered in their ration cards is not complete will not receive ration benefits from December 2025. Cardholders are now starting to get worried due to not receiving ration. The state government has set a deadline of December 31st for updating e-KYC. The Food Department has appealed that every member registered in the ration card must get their KYC done. If the KYC of even one member of the family remains pending, the ration share of that member may be cut, or the benefits received on the entire card may be interrupted.

This is to identify fake ration cards and ineligible beneficiaries. Aadhaar linking ensures that ration is given only to genuine beneficiaries.

Business



“Ministry of Civil Aviation has established a permanent, 24×7 Passenger Assistance Control Room to ensure a smooth mechanism for passengers.”

Ram Mohan Naidu
Civil Aviation Minister

Infrastructure push & export growth propel India's textile

The year 2025 marked a defining phase for India's textile sector, with the Ministry of Textiles accelerating reforms, infrastructure development and export promotion.

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The year 2025 marked a defining phase for India's textile sector, with the Ministry of Textiles accelerating reforms, infrastructure development and export promotion to strengthen India's global competitiveness while ensuring inclusive growth across the value chain—from farmers and artisans to large manufacturers.

Significant progress was recorded under the PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) scheme, with seven parks approved across Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra. Infrastructure works worth over Rs 2,590 crore were initiated by state governments, while environment clearances were secured for all sites. Investment MoUs with an expected potential exceeding Rs 27,400 crore were signed, and 100 per cent land acquisition was completed. The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the PM MITRA Park at Dhar, Madhya Pradesh, in September, while DPRs worth over Rs 7,000 crore were approved for four



NUMBER

7,000

● DPRs worth over Rs 7,000 crore were approved for four parks, making world-class textile manufacturing hubs.

● Significant progress was recorded under the PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) scheme.

parks, marking a major step towards world-class textile manufacturing hubs. The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for textiles began delivering measurable results in 2025. Of the 74 selected applicants, 40 companies reported

investments, 30 commenced production, and provisional incentives were disbursed to eligible firms. The scheme is expected to generate investments of nearly Rs 28,700 crore, with technical textiles accounting for over half of participating companies.

India's textile and apparel exports registered growth in 2025, reaching USD 37.8 billion and reinforcing the country's position as the world's sixth-largest exporter. Traditional markets such as the US, EU and UK remained dominant, while emerging destinations contributed a growing share. The ministry reiterated its Vision 2030 target of USD 100 billion in textile exports, driven by market diversification, sustainability and inno-

vation across more than 500 exporting districts nationwide. Under the National Technical Textiles Mission, 168 R&D projects were approved, alongside support for startups, educational institutions and quality control orders covering key products. The mission continued to strengthen India's capabilities in specialty fibres and strategic applications.

The SAMARTH scheme further expanded the skilled workforce, with over 5.4 lakh persons trained so far—88 per cent of them women—and a placement rate of 75 per cent, reinforcing the sector's role in inclusive employment generation. Major reforms were undertaken in the cotton sector, including MSP procurement of 100

lakh bales, digitisation through the Kapas Kisan app, and the launch of the Kasturi Cotton Bharat programme to enhance traceability and branding. A five-year Cotton Productivity Mission was announced to boost yields and sustainability. The silk sector recorded strong growth, with raw silk production rising by over 55 per cent since 2013-14 and bivoltine silk output nearly quadrupling. India retained its position as the world's second-largest silk producer. The wool and jute sectors also saw targeted interventions, including GI registration for Ladakh Pashmina, R&D projects for coarse wool, mandatory jute packaging norms, MSP procurement and technology-driven monitoring systems.

BizBriefs
BEST OF THE REST

INDIAN MARKET

Sensex, Nifty extend losses for fourth session due to selling pressure in IT, realty, pharma & auto stocks



MUMBAI: Indian equity markets extended their losing streak for the fourth consecutive session on Monday, weighed down by sustained selling pressure in information technology, realty, pharma and auto stocks. The benchmark Sensex closed at 84,695.54, down 345.91 points, or 0.41 per cent. The Nifty also ended lower at 25,942.10, declining 100.20 points, or 0.38 per cent, as weakness persisted across key sectors. Market analysts said the Nifty slipped below the psychological 26,000 mark as well as its 20-day exponential moving average (EMA), extending losses by nearly 100 points amid heightened volatility ahead of the monthly derivatives expiry. “The index formed bearish candlestick patterns, indicating near-term selling pressure, though it continues to hover around key short-term moving averages,” analysts noted. Experts added that a sustained break below the 25,900 level could open the door for further downside towards the 25,800-25,700 zone. On the Sensex,

Power Grid, Trent, HCL Technologies and Bharat Electronics were among the major laggards, dragging the index lower. However, selective buying was witnessed in a few stocks, with Tata Steel, Asian Paints, Hindustan Unilever, Eternal, NTPC and Axis Bank ending the session in positive territory.

The broader market also remained under pressure. The Nifty Midcap 100 index declined 0.52 per cent, while the Nifty Smallcap 100 fell 0.72 per cent. Sectorally, IT, realty and auto stocks bore the brunt of the selling. The Nifty IT index slipped 0.75 per cent, while the Realty and Auto indices declined 0.67 per cent and 0.53 per cent, respectively. In contrast, some defensive pockets showed resilience. The Nifty Media index gained 0.93 per cent, while PSU Bank and FMCG indices edged up 0.05 per cent and 0.11 per cent, respectively. Analysts said market sentiment remained cautious, with investors continuing to pare positions amid sector-specific selling and the absence of strong positive triggers.

FLIGHTS

Indigo cancels 118 flights due to operational reasons

MUMBAI: IndiGo on Monday cancelled 118 flights across its network due to bad weather and operational reasons, according to its website. Of these, six flight services were axed due to operational reasons, while the rest were cancelled due to bad weather conditions at various airports. Flight services were cancelled at Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Cochin, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Amritsar, Chandigarh, Jaipur, Dehradun, Indore, Patna and Bhopal, among others, as per the IndiGo website. The airline, in a travel advisory at 11.20 am, said, “Foggy conditions remain in place across Delhi and several airports in northern India, with visibility yet to improve fully. As a result, the earlier impact on flight movements is likely to extend into the noon hours, and some delays may continue.” In the advisory posted on X, however, IndiGo did not say it had cancelled 80 flights on Monday. “We assure you that flight departures and arrivals are being sequenced to ensure steady and orderly movement, while keeping your journey and comfort in mind,” the airline added in the advisory. IndiGo, which cancelled thousands of flights, including 1,600 on a particular day, early this month due to the court-mandated stricter flight duty.

SOLAR

Waaree Energies launches two solar inverter facilities



NEW DELHI: Waaree Energies on Monday announced the commencement of commercial operations at two state-of-the-art solar inverter line manufacturing facilities, boasting a combined annual capacity exceeding 3 GW. The facilities, established through its wholly-owned subsidiary Waaree Power, are located at the company's Sarodhi-Valsad factory in Gujarat, each with an annual capacity of 1.525 GW. Operations officially began on December 29, 2025, at 10 am, marking a significant milestone in the company's expansion plans. The inauguration of these facilities enhances Waaree Energies' Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM)-approved capacity to 20.17 GW, including 3.73 GW from Indosolar. The ALMM initiative, introduced by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), is designed to support India's “Make in India” vision by promoting domestic manufacturing of high-quality solar modules.

SEBI CLEARANCE

Knack Packaging, Shivalaya Construction among 4 Companies get SEBI clearance for IPOs

NEW DELHI: As many as four companies, including Knack Packaging and Shivalaya Construction, have secured SEBI's approval to collectively raise over Rs 1,400 crore through initial public offerings (IPOs), data available with the markets regulator showed on Monday. The other companies that received regulatory nod are tiles and bathroom maker Varmora Granito and Behari Lal Engineering. These firms had filed their draft papers between August and September and received Sebi's observations during Dec 15-26. In regulatory parlance, receipt of observations allows companies to proceed with their public issues. All four IPOs will comprise a mix of fresh issue of shares and an offer for sale (OFS) by existing shareholders. Meanwhile, Infifresh Foods, which had filed its draft papers in August through the confidential route, has withdrawn its prospectus, the

update showed. The approvals come at a time when the primary market has seen record activity in 2025. During the year, companies raised nearly Rs 1.76 lakh cr., supported by strong domestic liquidity, steady investor demand and a supportive macroeconomic environment.

FTA with India means exports, more jobs : New Zealand PM

Press Trust Of India

FTA with India will add more jobs, exports, and raise incomes, said New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon.

NEW DELHI: A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with India will add more employment, exports, and raise incomes, said New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon.

He said this as India and New Zealand concluded a comprehensive and long-awaited FTA, marking a major economic and strategic milestone. “We said we'd secure a Free Trade Agreement with India in our first term, and we've delivered,” Luxon said in a post on social media platform X.

“This landmark deal means more jobs, higher incomes, and more

FACTFILE

● The FTA eliminates duty on 100 pc of Indian exports, along with a \$20 billion investment.

exports by opening the door to 1.4 billion Indian consumers,” he added. “Fixing the Basics. Building the Future,” Luxon said, while welcoming the deal that was concluded in nine months. Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had hailed the India-New Zealand FTA as a historic milestone.

“An important moment for India-New Zealand relations, with a strong push to bilateral trade and investment! My friend PM Christopher Luxon and I had a very good conversation a short while ago following the conclusion of the landmark India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement,” he wrote on X.

Silver surges Rs 3,650 to hit record Rs 2.4 Lakh per kg

Press Trust Of India

Silver prices extended the record-setting rally, jumping Rs 3,650 to Rs 2,40,000 per kg.



per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). It had climbed Rs 1,500 to hit a fresh record of Rs 1,42,300 per 10 grams in the previous market session. Gold traded weak on Monday as traders booked profit after the yellow metal in the international markets slipped nearly USD 70 to USD 4,463 per ounce amid high volatility, Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said. In the overseas markets, spot gold was trading lower by USD 69.67, or 1.54 per cent, at USD 4,462.96 per ounce. Spot silver retreated from lifetime highs to trade lower by USD 4.06, or 5.13 per cent, to USD 75.09 per ounce, pressured by prof-

NEW DELHI: Silver prices extended the record-setting rally for the fifth straight day on Monday, jumping Rs 3,650 to Rs 2,40,000 per kg in the national capital due to persistent buying by traders, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The white precious metal had closed at Rs 2,36,350 per kilogram on Friday. So far this year, silver prices have delivered remarkable returns, surging 167.55 per cent, or Rs 1,50,300, from Rs 89,700 per kg recorded on December 31, 2024. Meanwhile, gold of 99.9 per cent purity retreated from its record levels by declining Rs 500 to Rs 1,41,800

FACTFILE

● Silver prices have delivered remarkable returns, surging 167.55 per cent in its price so far.

it-taking after an end-of-year rally that notched a fresh record of USD 83.97 per ounce.

“The broader trend remains volatile as markets reassess positions after the recent sharp rally. This week, the Federal Reserve's meeting minutes will be a key trigger, while the US holiday period could keep trading volumes relatively thin,” Trivedi said. Hareesh V, Head of Commodity Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said, “In 2025, gold, and silver reached record highs, driven by a potent blend of macro-economic shifts, industrial demand, and structural supply tightness.”

DEFENCE MANUFACTURING |

Adani to put Rs 1.8 lakh cr to boost defence sector

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Adani Group plans to invest Rs 1.8 lakh crore next year in defence manufacturing, with a focus on strengthening capabilities in unmanned and autonomous systems as well as advanced guided weapons as it looks to play a stealth anchor role in India's future warfare capabilities,



ties, sources said. Adani Defence & Aerospace in 2025 transitioned from extended planning cycles

to rapid deployment with some of its military hardware being used in Operation Sindoor.

Next year, it will invest in unmanned and autonomous systems, advanced guided weapons, sensors and electronics, AI-enabled multi-domain operations, and scaled-up maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) and training infrastructure, company sources said. Autonomous systems across air, sea and land domains are unmanned

platforms that use sensors, software and secure networks to operate with minimal human intervention, expanding military reach while reducing risk to personnel. In the air, they include UAVs that conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, communications relay and precision-support missions with long endurance.

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QUOTE FROM THE QUOTABLE

“Confidence and hard work is the best medicine to kill the disease called failure”

[Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam]

| OUR VIEW |

A Dive into India’s Depths of Self Reliance

When President Droupadi Murmu descended beneath the waves aboard INS Vaghsheer on December 28, she did more than undertake a symbolic naval sortie. She reaffirmed India’s growing confidence in its indigenous defence capabilities and the silent strength of its submarine arm. Only once before has a President of India ventured into the claustrophobic, high pressure world of a submarine–APJ Abdul Kalam in 2006. Murmu’s dive thus carries both historic resonance and contemporary significance. INS Vaghsheer, a Kalvari class submarine built under Project 75, represents India’s steady march towards self reliance in defence manufacturing. Powered by stealth, endurance, and precision, it is a reminder that maritime security is not a luxury but a necessity for a nation with vast coastlines and strategic ambitions. The President’s presence onboard was not ceremonial alone; it was a message to the world that India’s leadership stands shoulder to shoulder with its armed forces, even in the most demanding operational environments. The sortie also underscores the Navy’s evolving role in safeguarding India’s interests in the Indian Ocean Region. With rising geopolitical tensions, piracy threats, and the shadow of great power competition, submarines are the unseen guardians of sovereignty. Murmu’s dive symbolically bridges the civilian leadership and the military establishment, reinforcing democratic oversight while celebrating professional excellence. Yet, beyond the optics, the event invites reflection. Defence self reliance must not remain confined to submarines or symbolic gestures. It requires sustained investment in research, innovation, and indigenous industry. It demands transparency in procurement and accountability in execution. The President’s sortie should inspire policymakers to deepen reforms and citizens to appreciate the sacrifices of those who serve beneath the waves, unseen but indispensable. In saluting the Navy, Murmu saluted India’s future. Her dive was not into darkness, but into the depths of national resolve. It was a reminder that true strength lies not in rhetoric, but in readiness. It was also a call to nurture innovation across sectors, ensuring India’s resilience in every frontier. In the depths of the ocean, India glimpsed the depths of its own determination.

| GUEST VIEW |

Strategic Port, Seismic Risk: Burning the Future in Nicobar

The Great Nicobar project is being sold as strategic foresight. In reality, it is state-sanctioned ecological vandalism. To build a transshipment port, airport, and township, the government plans to clear close to a million trees on one of India’s most biodiverse islands. These forests are not surplus land. They are living systems that sustain endemic species, protect coastlines, regulate fragile ecosystems, and support coral reefs and turtle nesting sites like Galathea Bay. Once destroyed, they cannot be “mitigated.” The project moves ahead despite Great Nicobar’s location in a highly seismic zone, scarred by the 2004 tsunami. Risk is acknowledged only to be ignored. Environmental clearances have been fast-tracked, impact assessments diluted, and scientific warnings sidelined, reducing accountability and transparency.



Noopur Baruah, Tezpur

Most damning is the treatment of the island’s people. The Shompen and Nicobarese tribes, among the most vulnerable in the country, face displacement through procedural consent and hollow consultations. Laws meant to protect forests and Indigenous rights are bent to suit timelines, not justice. A state that silences forests, erases communities, and gags voices to build infrastructure is not securing the future—it is burning it.

Comment

The Turbulence of Efficiency: IndiGo’s HR Failed the FDTL Litmus Test

Indian aviation sector, known for its rapid growth and low, cost features, faced a steep drop that was pertinently related to human capital and not engine physics. In the first week of December 2025, IndiGo, the largest airline in India, went through a systemic operational meltdown and had to cancel more than 1600 flights. The airline, however, blamed the cancellations on “unforeseen operational challenges”, but the truth was very different. The new FDTL norm was the cause of the crisis. It was not just an operational malfunction; the failure to respond to a regulation change that has been known for almost two years is a disastrous defiance of strategic HR and risk management.

This lean obsession has had a very high cost, which is now very clear from the data. It was reckoned by the industry analysts that to fully comply with the new norms, which require forty-eight hours of rest per week, and limited night landings, airlines needed to increase their pilot staff by twenty to twenty-five percent just to be able to keep

the same flight schedules. The case of IndiGo turned out quite the opposite. In the middle of the December crisis, the airline’s On Time Performance (OTP) dropped to an unbelievable thirty-five percent, a record low for a carrier that is usually at the forefront of the industry with a ninety percent level.

The crisis stems from a fundamental misunderstanding of human resources (HR) policies and regulations. Before the deadline, IndiGo kept up a strict ‘hiring freeze’ and at the same time used non-poaching agreements and six month notice periods in a rather controversial way to secure the existing staff. In effect, by treating pilots as a cost that can be cut, HR management turned pilots into a buffer against regulations and so created a shortage of their own making. Their plan did not work because it was very difficult to change restrictive notice periods when the shortage turned out to be so serious and therefore the talent tap could not be opened fast enough. “Just in time” hiring is good for spare parts but not for pilots



Siddharth, Indian Institute of Management Raipur



Dr. Sanjeev Prashar, Indian Institute of Management Raipur



Dr. Archana Parashar, Indian Institute of Management Raipur

who need months for type, rating and training before they can be used.

The IndiGo meltdown serves as a vital case study for why the HR function must move beyond administrative workforce planning and into the heart of Corporate Risk Management. Predictive Workforce Modelling: Human resources should no longer rely on traditional spreadsheets. Present day workforce management entails utilizing different scenarios in modelling, which also considers changes in regulations. In case a law is passed that mandates a twenty-five percent increase in the time of rest, HR department will have to start a recruitment campaign one year ahead.

Regulatory Risk Integration: HR leaders need to be constantly present at the “Risk Table”. It is a Talent Acquisition task, when the DGCA informs about a change in duty hours. By involving HR in the different stages of compliance with regulations, companies are in a position to prevent the “show, cause” letters that are a result of the management of IndiGo, are presently being

received by the top management of IndiGo.

Abandoning the “Capture” Model: The heavy dependence on non-poaching agreements and long notice periods reflects a control mentality that is no longer compatible with the fast, paced world of work. In a market characterized by rapid growth, the free movement of talent can be considered as a kind of security. Rather than blocking exits, HR should be encouraged to look at the problem from the perspective of creating strong talent pipelines.

The IndiGo crisis of 2025 is a powerful reminder that in the air transport industry, the crew remains the most important safety equipment. When a company’s human resources department is only concerned with cutting costs and neglects to keep up with regulations, it is like the whole organization is flying without a parachute. If India is to be the third largest aviation market in the world, our airlines need to stop treating pilots as expendable “line items” and start seeing workforce planning as an essential part of safety in the air.

The Drip of Disease - How Spitting Affects Us All

There is something else that gets very little or no emphasis — avoiding spitting in public



Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit, Freelance journalist, writer and cartoonist



Symbolic

Spitting in public is a bad habit, whether you are spitting due to any problem or just out of habit. Spitting in a public place indicates both lack of civic sense and poor awareness on hygiene practices. Virus can be passed on from person to person via respiratory droplets. There is something else that gets very little or no emphasis – avoiding spitting in public. Like cough, spitting too, according to doctors and public health officials, can lead to spread of infections. There are many who use chewing tobacco and spit also posing specific dangers to themselves and hose around them. The tainted saliva can also send cancer agents into the lining of the stomach,

oesophagus and bladder. Saliva hosts a variety of diseases and infections. Droplets of mucus and saliva are often carriers of many viruses.

Spitting in public is a revolting habit that’s not only unhygienic but also poses significant health risks. When people spit, they release a cocktail of bacteria, viruses, and other pathogens into the environment, contaminating surfaces, water, and air. This can lead to the spread of diseases like tuberculosis, pneumonia, and even COVID-19. Moreover, spitting can also spread infections like hepatitis A and E, and gastrointestinal diseases. Spitting in places of public work or use and public service

vehicles, mandates display of boards pinpointing that both are offences, and are punishable with fine. People should be made to feel that spitting does not reflect good on them. This coincided with greater awareness of the transmission of contagious diseases that could be spread by spitting. It is a filthy habit that can spread germs and cause health issues. Unfortunately, spitting is a means of showing off in today’s so called civilised society. Ulcers, cancers and the spreading of disease are major considerations when talking about the dangers of spitting. Mental issues, such as self image problems, can also become a contributing factor in developing a

spitting habit. The habit is particularly problematic in densely populated areas where people are in close proximity, making it easier for diseases to spread. It’s not just the person spitting who’s at risk; everyone around them is vulnerable. Plus, it creates an unpleasant environment, reflecting poorly on community hygiene and personal responsibility.

Governments and health organizations worldwide are working to curb this habit through awareness campaigns and fines, emphasizing the importance of maintaining public hygiene. Simple actions like using spittoons or tissues can make a big difference. Let’s break this nasty habit and promote a

healthier, cleaner environment for all. From a health perspective, spitting can spread infectious agents to others. Other diseases that are spread through saliva include TB, hepatitis, viral meningitis, cytomegalovirus - a common virus similar to the herpes virus - and the Epstein-Barr virus, which is a common herpes virus that causes many diseases such as glandular fever. Spit that carries such infections must penetrate the body somehow and reach the bloodstream such as via an open sore, mouth or even an eye, in order to become deadly. It is observed that most people find spitting a wholly obnoxious, filthy habit which can spread germs and causes health issues.

YOUR LETTERS

LynchistaanVs Bangladesh

Kudos to Mehbooba Mufti for calling a spade a spade when it comes to the “Great Indian Hypocrisy.” The “mainstream” remains scandalously silent on the barbaric, murderous assaults unleashed upon fellow Indians of Bengali, Muslim, and North-Eastern origin like Juyel Sheikh and Anjel Chakma, yet grows zealously vocal against “atrocities on minorities” in Bangladesh. How can “New India,” fast degrading into “Lynchistaan” (as aptly termed by Mehbooba), dare to point fingers at Bangladesh instead of cleaning its own backyard first?

Kajal Chatterjee, Kolkata

Accountability Key in Raigarh Mine Stir Clashes

The probe ordered into the Raigarh mine stir violence must be thorough, impartial, and transparent. Workers’ grievances over safety and rights cannot be brushed aside, nor can the excesses that led to clashes be ignored. Accountability is essential to restore trust between communities, industry, and administration. Justice must prevail, ensuring both dignity of labour and rule of law. Only then can Raigarh move forward without repeating such tragic unrest.

Aparna Verma, Raigarh

Send your articles (600-650 words) and letters (70-8 0 words) for this page on: editorialccc007@gmail.com The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity.

Nation



“SHANTI Bill is one of the biggest science reforms of Modi govt. India’s nuclear power capacity has doubled from about 4.4 Giga Watt in 2014 to nearly 8.7 Giga Watt today.”
Dr Jitendra Singh
Union Minister

India’s defence gains strength in tech & manufacturing

India’s defence sector transformed policy vision into manufacturing power, technological confidence and expanding global exports in 2025.

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The year 2025 will be remembered as a defining chapter in India’s defence journey, when long-term policy intent translated decisively into manufacturing strength and technological confidence. From record-breaking production figures and surging exports to deeper private sector participation and rapid advances in defence technology, India’s push for Atmanirbharta in defence gathered unprecedented momentum during the year.

One of the most striking markers of 2025 was the all-time high defence production of around Rs 1.51 lakh crore in FY 2024-25, reflecting an 18 per cent jump over the previous year. This surge underscored the

growing depth of India’s defence industrial base, built steadily over the past decade through procurement reforms, indigenisation mandates and sustained budgetary support. Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) continued to anchor production, contributing about 77 per cent of the output, but the real story of the year was the rapid rise of private industry.

The private sector’s share climbed to 23 per cent, with growth outpacing that of the public sector, signaling a more balanced and competitive ecosystem. MSMEs, startups and large private players increasingly became integral to supply chains across platforms, electronics, weapons and subsystems. 2025 also marked a turning point in India’s

HIGHLIGHT

- **Defence production hits Rs 1.51 lakh crore; private sector share rises, indigenous ecosystem.**
- **Defence exports surge to Rs 23,622 crore, reaching 100 countries, cementing India’s credibility.**

defence exports. Shipments touched a record Rs 23,622 crore, more than 12 per cent higher than the previous year and nearly 34 times the level seen a decade ago. Indian defence products – from radars, torpedoes and electronic warfare systems to patrol boats, helicopters and missile components – found buyers in over 100 countries. The United States, France

and Armenia emerged among the top destinations, reinforcing India’s growing credibility as a reliable defence supplier. Simplified licensing, digital export authorizations and Open General Export Licences played a key role in helping Indian companies access global markets with greater ease. Much of the progress in 2025 was rooted in policy continuity. The Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020, with its priority for “Buy (Indian-IDDM)” categories, continued to steer major procurements towards indigenous platforms. Complementing this, streamlined procedures under updated procurement manuals improved transparency and reduced timelines, benefiting both large manufacturers and MSMEs.

CM Dhama assures justice

DEHRADUN: Amidst the outrage over the murder of a Tripura student in Dehradun, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama spoke to his father on phone on Monday and assured him of strict punishment for the accused, officials said.

Dhama, in a phone conversation with Angel Chakma’s father Tarun Prasad Chakma, expressed grief over murder of his son and said he is personally saddened by the incident and can understand the pain of his family, they said. The chief minister said that children from India and abroad come to Uttarakhand to study, and such an environment has never existed here before.

He said, “Therefore, this incident is sad for all of us also.” Dhama said that the government will take strict action in this matter. He told Tarun Prasad Chakma that five accused have been arrested in connection with the incident, while another accused is suspected to have fled to Nepal, and efforts are being made to arrest him by declaring a reward.

7 railway staff felicitated for exemplary service



BHUBANESWAR : In recognition of exemplary dedication, alertness and commitment to operational safety, the Divisional Railway Manager of Khurda Road Railway Division, Alok Tripathi, felicitated seven Railway employees for their outstanding performance while discharging their duties. The employees honoured include Nabin Kumar Palai, Loco Pilot, Kendujhargarh; A.K. Bali-

arsingh, Loco Pilot, Khurda Road; Manoj Kumar Hansdah, Track Maintainer-III, Rahama; Gorakh Behera, Track Maintainer-II, Angul; Prakash Chandra Biswal, Track Maintainer-IV, Angul; Pradeep Kumar Sahoo, Track Maintainer-IV, Rajatgarh and Niranjan Rana, Track Maintainer-IV, Rajatgarh. These employees demonstrated exceptional presence of mind and vigilance during the course of their routine duties and took timely and effective actions that significantly contributed to the safe, secure and smooth operation.

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IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

Petition for Special Leave to Appeal (Civil) No. 26429 OF 2023

WITH PRAYER FOR INTERIM RELIEF

CHHATTISGARH STATE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD. ...Petitioner(s)
VERSUS
M/S RADIUS WATER LIMITED AND ANOTHER ...Respondent(s)

1. M/S RADIUS WATER LIMITED, THROUGH ITS MANAGING DIRECTOR VARDHMAN NAGAR GE ROAD RAJNANDGAON, DISTRICT- RAJNANDGAON, CHHATTISGARH - 491441. PID: 293913/2025 FOR R[1] IN SL[P]C] NO.26429/2023 (SEC IV-C)

WHEREAS the Petition for SPECIAL LEAVE PETITION (CIVIL) to Appeal with Prayer for interim relief along with application for EXEMPTION FROM FILING C/C OF THE IMPUGNED JUDGMENT, EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T., CONDONATION OF DELAY IN REFILEING / CURING THE DEFECTS, PERMISSION TO FILE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS/FACTS/ANNEXURES above mentioned (copy enclosed) filed in the Registry by Mr. ASHUTOSH GHADÉ, Advocate on behalf of the Petitioner above named was listed for hearing before this Court on 28th November, 2023, when the Court was pleased to pass the following order:-

“Applications for exemption from filing c/c of the impugned judgment and official translation are allowed.

Delay condoned.

Issue notice returnable in the Miscellaneous week prior to the winter recess.

Dasti as well.”

AND WHEREAS the Petition above mentioned was listed for hearing before this Court on 11th November, 2025, when the Court was pleased to pass the following order:-

“1. As per the service report, service on Respondent No.1 is not complete. The learned counsel for the petitioner prays for opportunity to serve the said respondent by substituted mode of service i.e. publication.

2. The learned counsel for the petitioner is granted liberty to serve the first respondent through publication.

3. Let the notice be published in two local newspapers having wide circulation in District Durg and Rajnandgaon (Chattisgarh).

4. Steps in that regard be taken within four weeks. Affidavit of service may be filed two weeks thereafter.

5. List this matter in the 2nd week of January, 2026.”

NOW, THEREFORE, TAKE NOTICE that the above petition will be posted for hearing before this Court on 12th January, 2026 at 10.30 O’ Clock in the forenoon or so soon thereafter as may be convenient to the Court when you may appear before the court either in person or through Counsel and show cause to the Court as to why Special Leave and interim relief as prayed for be not granted and the resultant appeal be not allowed.

You may file your affidavit in opposition to the petition as provided under Rule 14(1) of Order XXI, S.C.R.2013 within 30 days from the date of Publication of notice or not later than 2 weeks before the date appointed for hearing, whichever be earlier, but shall do so only by setting out the grounds in opposition to the questions of law or grounds set out in the SLPs and may produce such pleadings and documents filed before the Court/Tribunal against whose order the SLP is filed and shall also set out the grounds for not granting interim order or for vacating interim order if already granted.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that if you fail to enter appearance as aforesaid, no further notice shall be given to you even after the grant of special leave for hearing of the resultant appeal and the matter above mentioned shall be disposed of in your absence.

Dated: 05th December, 2025

ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

Copy to:-

1. Mr. Ashutosh Ghade (adv.) house No. 12A, Block P, Third Floor, Jangpura Extension, New Delhi 110014.

2. Mr. Pramod Dayal (adv.) 305, New Lawyers Chambers, Supreme Court Of India New Delhi, Delhi.

ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

Important Notice
LEGAL AID

(1) Legal Services of an advocate is provided by the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee and the Supreme Court Middle Income Group Legal Aid Society to eligible litigants.

For further information, please contact the Secretary, Supreme Court Legal Services Committee or the Member Secretary, Supreme Court Middle Income Group Legal Aid Society, 107-108, Lawyers’ Chambers, R.K. Jain Block - Near Post Office, Supreme Court Compound, Tilak Marg, New Delhi-110001 (Tel Nos. 011-23116353, 23116354 (Additional Building Complex) and 011-23381257 (Front Office))

MEDIATION

(2) The facility of amicable settlement of disputes by trained mediators in cases pending in the Supreme Court is now available in the Supreme Court.

For further information, please contact the Coordinator, Supreme Court Mediation Centre, 109, Lawyers’ Chambers, R.K. Jain Block Near Post Office, Supreme Court Compound, Tilak Marg, New Delhi-110001 (Tel No. 011-23071432)

S-46381/1

Punjab government calls special Assembly session

Press Trust Of India

CHANDIGARH: The Punjab government has called a one-day special session of the assembly on December 30 against the Centre’s Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, which replaces the 20-year-old MGNREGA.

The VB-G RAM G Bill was passed in Parliament during the recently concluded Winter Session of Parliament amid vociferous protests by the opposition. The new act has a provision for 125 days of wage employment for rural workers. The Punjab Government is against the VB-G-RAM-G Act, for would harm the interest of the farmers, and BPL families said the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. .

Punjab Cabinet Minister Tarunpreet Singh Sond claimed that the new rural employment

law will severely impact below-poverty-line (BPL) families, Scheduled Caste communities, and rural labourers who depend on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) for survival.

However, Punjab BJP chief Sunil Jakhar slammed the AAP government for convening a special assembly session to oppose the VB-G RAM G Act, saying the Bhagwant Mann dispensation was “acting like an event management company” instead of focusing on development works.

Intensifying his attack, the BJP leader alleged that the AAP government was preparing for yet another “propaganda exercise”. In a statement here on Sunday, BJP leader Jakhar said the Mann government has “failed” on every front and has no achievements to count.

Student’s killing result of intolerance in society: Akhilesh

Press Trust Of India

LUCKNOW: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Monday said the killing of the Tripura student in Uttarakhand’s Dehradun was an outcome of the “extremely hateful and deplorable mindset” of divisive elements.

Reacting sharply to the incident, the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said the murder reflected the dangerous consequences of growing intolerance in the society. A 24-year-old MBA student, Anjel Chakma from Nandannagar in West Tripura district, was attacked by a group of six people in Dehradun on December 9, when he objected to their racial slurs. He succumbed to his injuries during treatment on December 26.

In a statement issued from the Samajwadi Party headquarters, Yadav said, “A divisive mindset is tak-



ing lives every day and such elements, enjoying political patronage, are flourishing like poisonous weeds.” He claimed that such negative forces posed a serious threat to the country, its unity and integrity. Yadav said it was imperative for peace-loving and harmony-driven citizens to unite, identify such anti-social elements within the society and socially boycott them, warning that otherwise anyone could become a victim of such violence in future. He appealed to the Supreme Court to take suo motu cognisance of the incident and ensure justice.

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DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13 (2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of HDFC Bank Limited (erstwhile HDFC Limited having amalgamated with HDFC Bank Limited by virtue of a Scheme of Amalgamation approved by Hon’ble NCLT Mumbai vide order dated 17th March 2023) (HDFC) under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued Demand Notices under Section 13 (2) of the said Act, calling upon the Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) listed hereunder, to pay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notices, within 60 days from the date of the respective Notices, as per details given below. The undersigned have, caused these Notices to be pasted on the premises of the last known respective addresses of the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s). Copies of the said Notices are available with the undersigned, and the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s), may, if they so desire, collect the respective copy from the undersigned on any working day during normal office hours.

In connection with the above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) to pay to HDFC, within 60 days from the date of publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herewith in their respective names, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notices from the respective dates mentioned below in column-(c) till the date of payment and / or realization, read with the loan agreement and other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following Secured Asset(s) have been mortgaged to HDFC by the said Borrower (s) respectively. Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

| Sr. No. | Name of Borrower(s) / Legal Representative(s)/Guarantor | Total Amount Outstanding (Rupees) | Date of Demand Notice | Description of Secured Asset(s) / Immovable Property (ies) |
|---------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 01. | Mrs. Supriya Biswas , Wife of Mr. Biswas Subrat (Borrower) [Since Deceased], Successors and Assigns of Mr. Biswas Subrat [Since Deceased], Unit-B-228-Sector-1, Kaushalya Mata Vihar (Kamal Vihar), S.No. Nagavikas Yojna No.4, Raipur, Chhattisgarh 492015. Mrs. Supriya Biswas , Wife of Mr. Biswas Subrat (Borrower) [Since Deceased], Successors and Assigns of Mr. Biswas Subrat [Since Deceased], Block-Makdi, Bh SBI, Makdi - Kondagaon, Chhattisgarh, 494226. Miss. Jasmine Biswas , Daughter of Mr. Biswas Subrat (Borrower) [Since Deceased], Natural Guardian (Mother) Mrs. Supriya Biswas, Successors and Assigns of Mr. Biswas Subrat [Since Deceased], Unit-B-228-Sector-1, Kaushalya Mata Vihar (Kamal Vihar), S.No., Nagavikas Yojna No. 4, Raipur Chhattisgarh 492015. Miss. Jasmine Biswas , Daughter of Mr. Biswas Subrat (Borrower) [Since Deceased], Natural Guardian (Mother) Mrs. Supriya Biswas, Successors and Assigns of Mr. Biswas Subrat [Since Deceased], Block-Makdi, Bh SBI, Makdi - Kondagaon, Chhattisgarh, 494226. Mrs. Bela Biswas , Mother of Mr. Biswas Subrat (Borrower) [Since Deceased], Successors and Assigns of Mr. Biswas Subrat [Since Deceased], 248/249, I.G. Park (1) Block B, Opp Water Tank Vadodara, Manipur Gural 390011. Mrs. Bela Biswas , Mother of Mr. Biswas Subrat (Borrower) [Since Deceased], Successors and Assigns of Mr. Biswas Subrat [Since Deceased], Unit-B-228-Sector-1, Kaushalya Mata Vihar (Kamal Vihar), S.No., Nagavikas Yojna No. 4, Raipur Chhattisgarh 492015. | ₹ 13,63,006/- as on 30-NOV-2025 | 18-DEC-2025 | All that Piece and Parcel of Freehold Unit No. B-228, Sector-1, Kharsa No. 6734(P), RDA, Vias Yojna No-04 Kaushalya Mata Vihar (Kamal Vihar), P.H.No.-114145, S.No. Nagavikas Yojna No. 4, Ravindranath Tagore Ward No. 51, Gram-Tikarpura RIC- Raipur Teh. and Dist-Raipur C.G. |
| 02. | Mr. Meghani Deepak (Borrower) , S/o. Mr. Meghani Omprakash, Layout No. 09, Plot 35/13, Kharsa 559/2(K/59, Old No. 559/2(K/1) (P), P.H.No. 17/25, House Sheet No. 25, Mouza Khantara, Bilaspur Chhattisgarh, 495001. Mr. Meghani Deepak (Borrower) , S/o. Mr. Meghani Omprakash, Gali No. 03, Kashyap Colony, Near Sindi Dharamshala, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, 495001. Mr. Meghani Deepak (Borrower) , S/o. Mr. Meghani Omprakash, M/s. Gurukripa Mobile Point, Shop No. AG-13, Bus Stand, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh 495001. Mrs. Meghani Sangeeta (Co-Borrower) W/o. Mr. Meghani Omprakash, Layout No. 09, Plot 35/13, Kharsa 559/2(K/59, Old No. 559/2(K/1) (P), P.H.No. 17/25, House Sheet No. 25, Mouza Khantara, Bilaspur Chhattisgarh, 495001. Mrs. Meghani Sangeeta (Co-Borrower) , W/o. Mr. Meghani Omprakash, Gali No. 03, Kashyap Colony, Near Sindi Dharamshala, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, 495001. | ₹ 28,57,708/- as on 30-NOV-2025 | 18-DEC-2025 | All that Piece and Parcel of Diverted House of Plot No. 35/13, Layout No. 09, Kharsa 559/2(K/59, Old No. 559/2(K/1) (P), P.H.No. 17/25, House Sheet No. 25, RIC-Koni Vikashand-Biha, Mouza Khantara, The. and Dist-Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh. |
| 03. | Mr. Gafoor Abdul , Flat-A-305, Floor-3rd, Sai Simran, Block A, P.H.No. 40, Shankar Nagar, Raipur Chhattisgarh, 492004. Mr. Gafoor Abdul , Bennett Coleman and Company Limited, 1st Floor, Sri Water Front Complex, G.E. Road, Infront of Talibandha Talab, Raipur Chhattisgarh 492001. Mrs. Jahan Mumtaz , W/o. Abdul Gafoor, 1st Floor, Raja Raja Talab, Opp. Koti Manzil, Near Adarsh Chowk, Raipur- Chhattisgarh, 492001. Mrs. Jahan Mumtaz , Flat-A-305, Floor-3rd, Sai Simran, Block A, P.H.No. 40, Shankar Nagar, Raipur Chhattisgarh, 492004. | ₹ 16,56,454/- as on 30-NOV-2025 | 22-DEC-2025 | All that Piece and Parcel of Flat-A-305, Floor-3rd, Sai Simran, Block A, M/s. Ram Builders and Developers, Ward No. 28, Mahanishi Velmiki 'Shavina Nagar', S.No., Kh.No. 720/157, 1317/117, 720/156/8, 1317/11, 720/149, 1317/138, 720/184, 720/152, 1317/161, 720/163, 1317/164, P.H.No. 40, Shankar Nagar, Raipur Chhattisgarh. |
| 04. | Mr. Jain Prafull Kumar , Plot No. 48/2, House No. 48/2, Site 48/2, Nazul Sheet No. 48 D, Ganj Line Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh 491441. Mr. Jain Prafull Kumar , Ward Number 24, Ramadhin Marg, Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh, 491441. Mr. Jain Prafull Kumar , M/s. Erope Enterprises, Ward No. 24, Ramadhin Marg, Rajnandgaon Chhattisgarh 491441. Mrs. Jain Prema , House Number 109/1, Ward Number 24, Ganj Line Tiranga Chowk, Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh, 491441. Mrs. Jain Prema , Plot No. 48/2, House No. 48/2, Site 48/2, Nazul Sheet No. 48D, Ganj Line Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh 491441. | ₹ 77,84,270/- as on 30-NOV-2025 | 22-DEC-2025 | All that Piece and Parcel of Nazul Plot No.48/2, House No. 48/2, Site 48/2, Nazul Sheet No. 48D, Ganj Line, Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh. |
| 05. | Mr. Jibkar Kishor Kumar , House No. Ch/98, Kharsa No. 583, Mouza Housing Board Dhacha, Bhawan, Khurud, Ward No. 16, Durg Chhattisgarh, 490023. Mr. Jibkar Kishor Kumar , House No. 14/19, Ramnagar, 9 Kholi Ke Pass, Ward No. 12, Supela - Bihai, Chhattisgarh, 490023. Mr. Jibkar Kishor Kumar , Patila Trailer Service, 38/13, Transport Nagar, Hathkhohi, Bihai Industrial Estate, Bihai Chhattisgarh 490026. Mr. Jibkar Saimulal , House No. 14/19, Ramnagar, 9 Kholi Ke Pass, Ward No. 12, Supela, Bihai - Chhattisgarh-490023. Mr. Jibkar Saimulal , House No. Ch/98, Kharsa No. 583, Mouza Housing Board Dhacha, Bhawan Khurud Ward No. 16, Durg Chhattisgarh, 490023. Mrs. Jibkar Uma Bai , House No. 14/19, Ramnagar, 9 Kholi Ke Pass, Ward No. 12, Supela, Bihai - Chhattisgarh-490023. Mrs. Jibkar Uma Bai , House No. Ch/98, Kharsa No. 583, Mouza Housing Board Dhacha, Bhawan Khurud Ward No. 16, Durg Chhattisgarh, 490023. | ₹ 11,50,142/- as on 30-NOV-2025 | 22-DEC-2025 | All that Piece and Parcel of Freehold Plot House No. Ch-98, Kharsa No. 583, Mouza Housing Board Dhacha Bhawan, Khurud Ward No. 16, Teh. and Dist-Durg, Bihai, Chhattisgarh |
| 06. | Mr. Sahu Hitesh Kumar , Flat-LIG 605, Floor-6th, Pradhamantri Awas Yojna, Block-A, S.No., Sector 4, Kamal Vihar, Town Development Scheme 04, Raipur Chhattisgarh 492004. Mr. Sahu Hitesh Kumar , 290/Kh, Ambedkar Nagar, Ward No. 21, Camp 1, Bihai Supela, Durg, Chhattisgarh, 490023. Mr. Sahu Hitesh Kumar , Industrial Technical Consultant, O-10, Sector-8, Avasi Vihar, Raipur, Chhattisgarh 492001. Mrs. Bai Kumar , 290/Kh, Ambedkar Nagar, Ward No. 21, Camp 1, Bihai Supela, Durg, C.G., 490023. Mrs. Bai Kumar , Flat-LIG 605, Floor-6th, Pradhamantri Awas Yojna, Block -A, S.No., Sector 4, Kamal Vihar, Town Development Scheme 04, Raipur Chhattisgarh 492004. | ₹ 5,66,077/- as on 30-NOV-2025 | 22-DEC-2025 | All that Piece and Parcel of Flat-LIG 605, Floor-6th, Pradhamantri Awas Yojna, Block-A, S.No. Sector 4, in Kamal Vihar Yojna, Town Development Scheme 04, Raipur, Chhattisgarh |
| 07. | Mrs. Soni Varsha , Kharsa No. 252/82, Old Kh.No.252/12 (P), P.H.No. 23/40, Plot No. 380/3, House Sheet No. 12, Mouza Titha, Yadunandan Nagar Palika, Titha, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh 495001. Mrs. Soni Varsha , Tel Para, Nandu Garage, Gali No. 3, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, 495001. Mrs. Soni Varsha , M/s. Shreya Jewellers, Golabazar, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh-495001. Mr. Soni Shresh Kumar , Ward No. 06, Near Haridam Mandir, Shyam Parishar, Titha, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, 495001. Mr. Soni Shresh Kumar , Kharsa No. 252/82, Old Kh.No.252/12 (P), P.H.No. 23/40, Plot No. 380/3, House Sheet No.12, Mouza Titha, Yadunandan, Nagar Palika, Titha, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh 495001. | ₹ 23,21,114/- as on 30-NOV-2025 | 22-DEC-2025 | All that Piece and Parcel of Plot No.380/3, Kharsa No. 252/82, Old Kh.No. 252/12 (P), P.H.No. 23/40, House Sheet No.12, Mouza Titha, Ward No. 1, Mahanasa Pratap Ward, Yadunandan Nagar Palika, Titha, RIC-Bilaspur Teh. and Dist -Bilaspur Chhattisgarh. |

*with further interest as applicable, incidental expenses, costs, charges etc incurred till the date of payment and / or realization.

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to HDFC as aforesaid, then HDFC shall proceed against the above Secured Asset(s) / Immovable Property (ies) under Section 13 (4) of the said Act and the applicable Rules entirely at the risk of the said Borrower(s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrower (s) / Legal Heir(s) / Legal Representative(s) are prohibited under the said Act to transfer the aforesaid Secured Asset(s) / Immovable Property (ies), whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of HDFC. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the Act or Rules made thereunder shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

PLACE : BILASPUR, RAIPUR, KONDAGAON, RAJNANDGAON, DURG, BIHAI
DATE : 30-12-2025

For HDFC Bank Limited
Sd/-
Authorized Officer



Excursion

TRAVELOGUE

Canadian streets inspired by Bollywood icons

Travel surprises you when cities reveal unexpected stories in their quiet corners.



Two Canadian streets dedicated to popular names from Bollywood



Bollywood’s influence is often measured through box-office records, chart-topping music, or global fan followings. But in Canada, that cultural impact has taken a far more permanent and unexpected form it appears on street signs. Two streets in the country are named after legendary Indian artists: Raj Kapoor Crescent and A.R. Rahman Street. Their presence highlights how deeply Indian cinema and music have travelled across borders and settled into everyday life



abroad. Canada is home to nearly 2.9 million people of Indian origin, making it one of the largest Indian Diasporas in the world. Over decades, Bollywood films and soundtracks have played a key role in preserving cultural roots while also introducing Indian stories to global audiences. These street names quietly reflect that shared cultural journey.

Raj Kapoor Crescent, located in Brampton, Ontario, honours Raj Kapoor, one of the most influential figures in Indian cinema. Known as the “showman of Bollywood,” Kapoor was admired

HIGHLIGHT

● In Canada, two understated streets have become subtle talking points for curious travellers.

for films such as Awara, Shree 420, and Mera Naam Joker. His storytelling, filled with emotion, social commentary, and unforgettable music, resonated with viewers far beyond India, earning him a loyal international following.

A.R. Rahman Street celebrates a more contemporary icon. The Oscar-winning com-



poser revolutionised Indian music with his unique blend of classical sounds, modern beats, and global influences. From Bollywood hits to Hollywood projects, Rahman’s work connects cultures and generations, making his name instantly recognisable worldwide.

WindowView

AROUND THE GREAT WATERFALLS



China's Shimmering Mineral Wonder

Huangguoshu Waterfall in China is a majestic cascade that occasionally shimmers in unusual

hues due to minerals dissolved in its waters. Rain and sunlight interacting with iron, copper, and other natural elements can create subtle green, blue, or reddish tints along its cliffs. As one of China's largest waterfalls, it attracts travellers seeking not only its immense size but also the dynamic colours that appear seasonally. Visiting Huangguoshu combines natural beauty, cultural significance, and the surreal sight of flowing water that seems to transform with every glance.



Turquoise Treasure among Redrocks

Havasu Creek is famous for its turquoise waters, tumbling into waterfalls surrounded

by red canyon walls. Rich in calcium carbonate and magnesium, the water reflects sunlight to create vivid blue-green shades that change throughout the day. The combination of red rocks, lush greenery, and shifting water hues makes Havasu Falls a visual masterpiece. Hikers and photographers flock here to capture the magical interplay of light and mineral-rich waters. The dynamic colours make each visit unique, ensuring travellers a constantly changing natural spectacle unlike any other in North America.



Iceland's Mighty Glacial Waterfall Spectacle

Dettifoss, Iceland's most powerful waterfall, occasionally displays subtle colour shifts from grey to brown depending on volcanic sediment

and glacial meltwater. The mineral-rich glacial waters carry volcanic ash, creating earthy tones in the torrent. Surrounded by Iceland's rugged landscape, this dramatic waterfall mesmerizes travellers with both sheer power and ever-changing hues. Misty sprays catch the light, occasionally producing rainbows that add more colour to the scene. Hiking along the trails offers different perspectives, allowing visitors to witness Dettifoss in its dynamic, almost theatrical natural setting.



Rainbow Magic Across Two Nations

Iguazu Falls straddles the border of Argentina and Brazil and boasts hundreds of cascading drops. Seasonal

rains can alter water colour from muddy brown to clear green, influenced by sediments and minerals carried downstream. Sunlight and mist create dazzling rainbow effects that change throughout the day. The lush rainforest surrounding the falls amplifies the effect, adding deep greens and earthy tones to the vibrant spectacle. Viewing platforms allow tourists to witness the falls from multiple angles, each revealing unique colours and moods, making Iguazu a natural masterpiece that constantly evolves.



Lava Streams Turning Vibrant Blue-Green

Hraunfossar is a series of gentle waterfalls flowing through lava fields in western Iceland.

The water appears in a stunning turquoise or blue-green shade as it emerges from beneath black volcanic rocks. Seasonal variations, sunlight, and water flow intensity create shifting colours along the cascading streams. The surrounding moss-covered lava adds contrast, making the waterfalls appear even more vibrant. Visitors can explore the pathways and viewing spots, appreciating how this unique geological formation turns simple flowing water into a dynamic visual experience. Hraunfossar offers a rare, tranquil spectacle of nature's ever-changing palette.

| TOURISM TRAVEL |

Experience wizarding at Harry Potter themed hotel stay

Central Chronicle News

Europe is about to get a magical addition for travellers and Harry Potter fans alike. The world’s first fully Harry Potter-themed hotel is set to open inside LEGOLAND Deutschland Resort in Günzburg, Germany, offering an immersive Wizarding World experience without crossing the Atlantic. Located in Bavaria, roughly halfway between Munich and Stuttgart, it’s easily accessible for European travellers and just a few hours from Luxembourg. While an official opening date hasn’t been announced, excitement is already building. The hotel promises rooms inspired by the four Hogwarts houses, with signature colours, crests, and playful décor to transport guests straight into the world of wizards and witches. From whimsical furniture to themed



The first ever Harry Potter-themed hotel is coming to life.

HIGHLIGHT

● The hotel features Hogwarts house-themed rooms and enchanting wizarding experiences for visitors.

beds reminiscent of beloved characters, every detail aims to create a fully immersive





Gill has talent, but lazy shots and leadership burden show he is not ready for all-format captaincy yet at present.

Monty Panesar
Former England spinner

India women eye clean sweep, Lanka seek pride

India will chase a 5-0 whitewash while Sri Lanka fight for pride and confidence in the fifth women's T20I at Thiruvananthapuram on Tuesday evening match.



Press Trust Of India

India's aggressive rebuild ahead of the T20 World Cup shows promising results, despite recurring concerns over sharpness in fielding.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: India will look to round off a dominant home campaign by completing a 5-0 series whitewash against Sri Lanka in the fifth and final women's T20 International here on Tuesday. The ongoing five-match series has been

a crucial component of India's rebuilding phase following their disappointing group-stage exit in the 2024 T20 World Cup. With the next global event scheduled in England in June-July, the hosts have consciously adopted a more aggressive template, one that has already delivered two series victories this year. Captain Harmanpreet Kaur has repeatedly stressed the need for higher standards and fearless intent in the shortest format, a philosophy that has been evident throughout the

series. India's bowlers laid the foundation in the early matches, keeping Sri Lanka on a tight leash and allowing the batters minimal pressure during chases. Among the standout performers has been explosive opener Shafali Verma, who has tormented the Sri Lankan attack with three half-centuries in four outings at a strike rate exceeding 185. Her return to peak form has been timely, especially with the World Cup looming. Another significant boost has been the resur-

gence of vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, who shrugged off a lean run with a fluent 80 in the fourth T20I. Her opening partnership with Shafali – a blistering 162-run stand – rewrote India's record books for the highest opening stand in women's T20Is. India's bowling unit has also impressed. Pacer Renuka Singh Thakur has returned strongly after a year-long absence, while Deepti Sharma continues to be the side's most dependable all-rounder. Young left-arm spinner

Vaishnavi Sharma has made an instant impact, emerging as joint-highest wicket-taker with four scalps at an impressive economy rate. However, fielding remains India's only major concern, with dropped catches and missed stumpings creeping into otherwise dominant performances. Sri Lanka, meanwhile, will draw encouragement from their batting revival in the fourth T20I, where they chased India's massive 221 with unexpected confidence.

Shan Masood scores fastest first-class 200

KARACHI: Test captain Shan Masood has scored the fastest double century by a Pakistani in first-class cricket in 177 balls, breaking batting great Inzamam Ul Haq's three-decade old record. Masood set the mark while playing for Sui Northern Gas against Sahar Associates on the first day of the President's Cup departmental tournament. Previously, the record was held by former skipper Inzamam, who had scored a double hundred from 188 balls in a tour match in England in 1992. Masood was unbeaten on 212 from 185 balls at close on day one of the match on Sunday. The record for the fastest double hundred by a visiting batsman is still held by India's Virender Sehwag who scored a double century from 182 balls in the Lahore Test in 2006.

| BLACKCAPS STALWART |

NZ all-rounder Doug Bracewell retires at 35

Press Trust Of India

DURBAN: Former New Zealand all-rounder Doug Bracewell has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket at the age of 35, bringing the curtain down on a career marked by grit, versatility and memorable moments for the Blackcaps.

Playing for New Zealand and Central Districts was a privilege, and I remain grateful for every opportunity cricket gave me."

Doug Bracewell
Former New Zealand all-rounder



Bracewell represented New Zealand in 28 Tests, 21 One-Day Internationals and 20 T20 Internationals between 2011 and 2023. Across formats, he claimed 120 international wickets and scored 915 runs, establishing himself as a reliable seam-bowling all-rounder whenever called upon. His best years came in Test cricket, where he picked

up 74 wickets and contributed 568 runs. His most iconic performance came against Australia in Hobart in 2011, when he produced career-best figures of 6 for 40 in the second innings to inspire a dramatic seven-run victory. That match remains New Zealand's last Test win over Australia and a defining highlight of Bracewell's career.

| EXHIBITION SPECTACLE |

Kyrgios beats Sabalenka in latest 'Battle of the Sexes' in tennis

Press Trust Of India

Nick Kyrgios outplayed Aryna Sabalenka in a light-hearted exhibition in Dubai.

DUBAI: Nick Kyrgios emerged victorious in the latest edition of tennis' much-hyped "Battle of the Sexes," defeating world number one Aryna Sabalenka 6-3, 6-3 in an exhibition match that leaned more toward showmanship than social statement. Played at Dubai's 17,000-capacity Coca-Cola Arena, the contest was designed as entertainment, with laughter, banter and theatrics taking centre stage. Under-arm serves, exaggerated grunts and even a brief dance routine from Saba-



lenka during a timeout kept the crowd engaged, especially as premium tickets reportedly neared \$800. Kyrgios, the former Wimbledon runner-up Nick Kyrgios, has struggled with injuries in recent years and has played only a handful

of competitive matches since 2022. In Dubai, he appeared to pace himself, while also dealing with adjusted rules aimed at balancing the contest. Sabalenka's side of the court was marginally smaller, and players were limited to a single serve per point.

FACTFILE

- Exhibition prioritised entertainment over equality debate, featuring modified rules, humour and crowd engagement throughout.
- Sabalenka views match as preparation, promising tactical improvement and revenge in future meeting.

Despite the relaxed atmosphere, Kyrgios admitted to feeling nervous before sealing the match on his third match point, drenched in sweat by the end. "I had to strap in," he said, calling the event a positive stepping stone for tennis as an entertainment-driven sport.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

PLAYOFF BOUND

Abu Dhabi Knight Riders storm into ILT20 playoffs with authority



DUBAI: Abu Dhabi Knight Riders booked their ILT20 Playoffs berth with a convincing 32-run victory over Gulf Giants in the final league match here. A dominant 131-run opening stand between Michael Pepper and Phil Salt powered the Knight Riders to a formidable 179 for 1. Pepper struck a fluent 83 off 51 balls, while Salt anchored the innings with an unbeaten 72. Defending the

target, Jason Holder struck early to derail the Giants' chase, while Sunil Narine and Andre Russell delivered decisive blows in the middle and death overs. Moeen Ali fought valiantly with 79, but lacked support as the Giants finished on 147 for 9. The Knight Riders will face Dubai Capitals in the Eliminator on January 1. Meanwhile, Desert Vipers meet MI Emirates in Qualifier 1. **PTI**

ASHES TEST

England's Atkinson ruled out of final Ashes test with hamstring injury



SYDNEY: England pace bowler Gus Atkinson has joined the tourists' mounting injury toll after being ruled out for the fifth and final Ashes cricket test in Sydney with a hamstring injury. Atkinson pulled up lame during the second morning of the Boxing Day test and was officially ruled-out after scans on

Monday confirmed the injury in his left leg. England have already lost star speedsters Mark Wood (knee) and Jofra Archer (side strain) during the series, with 27-year-old Matthew Potts expected to come into the team for the fifth test starting on Jan. 4 and join Brydon Carse and Josh Tongue in the attack. **PTI**

GOALS AND GRIT

Calvert-Lewin goal streak boosts England hopes, Spurs find relief



LONDON: Dominic Calvert-Lewin continued his career-best scoring run, netting for a sixth successive game to earn Leeds United a 1-1 draw at Sunderland. The striker's 47th-minute equaliser – a trademark close-range finish from Brenden Aaronson's cross – took his league tally to eight, the highest among English players, strengthening his case for an

England recall ahead of the 2026 World Cup. Leeds extended their unbeaten run to five matches and moved further clear of relegation trouble, despite Simon Adingra's opener for Sunderland. Elsewhere, Tottenham Hotspur edged Crystal Palace 1-0 away, with Archie Gray heading home before halftime to ease pressure on Spurs boss Thomas Frank. **PTI**

AMERICAN MOMENTUM

Pulisic Ends 2025 Strong, Eyes Home World Cup Brilliance Ahead



MILAN: Christian Pulisic capped an outstanding 2025 by scoring the opening goal in AC Milan's emphatic 3-0 Serie A win over Hellas Verona, continuing what is shaping up as the best season of his career. Pulisic's close-range finish in first-half stoppage time took his tally to 10 goals and two assists in just 15 matches

across competitions, underlining his growing influence for the Rossoneri. Milan's win kept them within one point of leaders Inter Milan, ensuring strong momentum heading into the new year. Since joining Milan in 2023, Pulisic has been involved in 50 goals, second only to Inter striker Lautaro Martínez. **PTI**

Sports News

Skipper Shardul Thakur ‘Lords’ over Chhattisgarh

Shardul Thakur ticked all the boxes, from winning the toss to blowing away Chhattisgarh’s top order, as Mumbai cruised to a nine-wicket victory to complete a group-stage hat-trick.

Press Trust Of India

Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Siddhesh Lad complete chase with unbeaten 102-run partnership.

JAIPUR: Skipper Shardul Thakur produced a match-winning performance with the new ball after a sharp decision at the toss as Mumbai registered a commanding nine-wicket win over Chhattisgarh in the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on Monday.

At the Jaipuria Vidyalya ground, Shardul elected to field first and immediately exploited the early morning movement to devastating effect. Chhattisgarh were rocked inside the first five overs, slipping to 10 for four as Mumbai’s slip cordon stayed alert and the ball did enough to trouble the batters.

Shardul struck with the second ball of the innings, inducing a thick edge from right-handed opener Ayush Tiwary, comfortably taken by Sarfaraz Khan at slips. Off the final delivery of the opening over, one-drop Mayank Verma was clean bowled, further denting Chhattisgarh’s



hopes. Sarfaraz then added two more regulation slip catches off

Shardul’s probing away deliveries as the collapse deepened.

While the Mumbai skipper did the early damage, it was left-arm

spinner Shams Mulani who ensured there was no escape route later. Bowling a tight stump-to-stump line, Mulani claimed 5 for 31 as the last six Chhattisgarh wickets fell for just 27 runs. Chhattisgarh were eventually bowled out for 142 in 38.1 overs.

Skipper Amandeep Khare (63) and all-rounder Ajay Mandal (46) showed commendable fight with a 105-run stand for the fifth wicket, briefly steadying the innings. However, once Mandal was dismissed, the resistance ended swiftly.

Chasing a modest target, Mumbai faced little difficulty. Young Angkrish Raghuvanshi, batting with a bandaged neck following an on-field injury in the previous match, looked fluent in his unbeaten 68 off 66 balls, striking six fours and two sixes. Veteran Siddhesh Lad complemented him perfectly with a composed 48 not out, as the duo added an unbroken 102 runs for the second wicket to finish the chase in just 24 overs.

With this emphatic win, Mumbai moved to 12 points, consolidating their position at the top of Group C and underlining their title credentials.

Fifties by Priyansh, Tejasvi carry Delhi to 3-wicket win over Saurashtra



Press Trust Of India

Priyansh Arya and Tejasvi Dahiya powered Delhi past Saurashtra despite Pant’s poor outing and Kohli missing.

BENGALURU: Opener Priyansh Arya and Tejasvi Dahiya made aggressive fifties as Delhi rose above skipper Rishabh Pant’s ordinary outing to beat Saurashtra by three wickets in a Group D match of the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on Monday.

Chasing 321, Arya (78, 45 balls) and Tejasvi (53, 51b) did the heavy lifting for a Virat Kohli-less Delhi as they romped home in 48.5 overs losing seven wickets at Alur 2 grounds.

Saurashtra made a challenging 320 for seven in 50 overs, courtesy a 115 (104b) by opener

Vishvarajsinh Jadeja and an unbeaten 65-ball 95 by Ruchit Ahir.

Kohli had played a stellar role in Delhi’s win in the first two matches, scoring a hundred and fifty. The star batter is set to rejoin the team on January 6 for the match against Railways at the BCCI Centre of Excellence.

Pant could not make a heavy contribution, getting out for a 26-ball 22. The left-hander gave a catch to Jay Gohil off Chirag Jani.

But his teammates more than made-up for Pant’s lapse and their talisman Kohli’s absence. Arya was involved in a 66-run alliance for the second wicket with Ayush Doseja before falling to Chetan Sakarya.

Delhi was 115 for two then in 13.2 overs and despite losing wickets at regular intervals they did

FASTFACTS

● Harsh Tyagi, Navdeep Saini finish job as Delhi top Group D standings.

not allow the asking rate to spiral out of control.

Tejasvi was involved in two crucial stands after Delhi found themselves at 160 for four -- 48 for the fifth wicket with Pant and 40 for the next wicket with Harsh Tyagi.

When Tejasvi was consumed by Ankur Pawar, Delhi still needed 73 runs in 12 overs with four wickets in hand.

But Tyagi (49, 45b) and Navdeep Saini (34 not out) knocked off those runs during their doughty seventh wicket alliance to give Delhi valuable four points from the game.

They are now leading Group D with 12 points from three games.

| VIJAY MERCHANT MULTI DAY TROPHY |

Chhattisgarh show grit against Punjab U16

Central chronicle News

Chhattisgarh displayed resilience after a shaky start on opening day.

GWALIOR: Asked to bat first after losing the toss, Chhattisgarh fought back to post 110 for nine at stumps against Punjab on Day One of their Men’s Under-16 Vijay Merchant Multi Day Trophy match here on Sunday.

Chhattisgarh found the going tough on a responsive pitch as Punjab’s bowlers maintained tight lines and lengths, picking up wickets at regular inter-



Chandransh Yadav - 40 Runs not out

vals to keep the scoring in check. Despite the pressure, the batting side showed character, refusing to fold cheaply

and ensuring the innings lasted 39 overs.

The standout performance came from Chandransh Yadav, who held the innings together with an unbeaten 40, showing maturity beyond his years. He was ably supported by Anshuman Thakur, who contributed 20 valuable runs, while Aniket Kujur added 15 to lift the total past the 100-run mark.

For Punjab Under-16, Shivam Matri and Jaivin led the bowling effort with three wickets each, setting up an intriguing contest heading into Day Two.

Delhi boy Jagreet Misra wins FIDE Rapid Rating event

NEW DELHI: Delhi chess prodigy Jagreet Misra racked up an impressive 8.5 points in nine rounds to win the inaugural ChessVeda FIDE Rapid Rating Tournament in Greater Noida. The 13-year-old’s performance earned him 90 rating points, highlighting his tactical sharpness and competitive maturity as he remained unbeaten in the tournament. The Mount Carmel School student received a cash prize of Rs 25,000 for the win. The tournament saw participation from 592 Indian and foreign players, including International Masters, FIDE Masters, and Candidate Masters.

Neeru Dhanda takes women’s trap gold in National Shooting

Press Trust Of India

Neeru Dhanda conquered pressure and cold to clinch women’s trap gold.

NEW DELHI: Asian Championships gold medallist Neeru Dhanda delivered a composed and confident display to clinch the women’s trap title at the National Shooting Championship at the Karni Singh Shooting Range here on Monday.

Braving chilly conditions, the 25-year-old shooter showed remarkable control and consistency in the final to finish on top with 41 hits,



reaffirming her strong form on the domestic circuit. Delhi’s Kirti Gupta mounted a stiff challenge and stayed in close contention throughout before settling for the silver medal with 40 hits. Madhya Pradesh’s Pragati Dubey secured the

bronze with a total of 32. Earlier in the qualification round, Pragati topped the field with an impressive score of 117, followed by Neeru with 114 and Rajeshwari Kumari with 113, highlighting the depth of competition.

HIGHLIGHT

● Neeru Dhanda holds nerve to beat strong Delhi challenge in women’s trap final.

● Madhya Pradesh shooters dominate team events, underlining depth and consistency nationally.

In the junior men’s trap event, Aryavansh Tyagi claimed gold with 42 hits, while Madhya Pradesh further stamped its authority by dominating the women’s trap team event, rounding off a successful championship campaign.

| RELENTLESS RONALDO |

Ronaldo targets historic 1,000 career goals milestone

Press Trust of India

Cristiano Ronaldo remains relentless, setting sights firmly on an unprecedented scoring landmark.

DUBAI: Cristiano Ronaldo has expressed his determination to score 1,000 goals by the end of his career. And the 40-year-old Portugal superstar is in no doubt he’ll get there.

“I will reach that number for sure, if no injuries,” Ronaldo said late Sunday at the Globe Soccer Awards in Dubai, where he was named as the best player in the Middle East.

Ronaldo moved onto 956 career goals by scoring twice for Al-Nassr



in the Saudi Pro League on Saturday. His tally

HIGHLIGHT

● Ronaldo confident injuries won’t stop historic 1,000-goal career landmark pursuit.

● Portugal captain eyes World Cup glory alongside personal scoring milestones.

includes men’s international record of 143 goals for Portugal, which Ronaldo is set to lead into next year’s World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

By the time the World Cup begins, Ronaldo – a five-time world player of the year – will be aged 41.

“I am still very motivated to carry on,” the

former Real Madrid, Manchester United and Juventus striker said on stage after receiving his award. “It doesn’t matter (where) I play – Middle East, in Europe – I always enjoy to play football, to win trophies, to score goals and I want to carry on.

“You know what my goal is: I want to win more trophies and I want to reach the number that you will all know.”

The World Cup is one of the few trophies missing from Ronaldo’s collection. He won the European Championship with Portugal in 2016, defying age and expectation, the chase for 1,000 goals now stands as the final, defining chapter of an extraordinary career.

| PITCH CONTROVERSY |

ICC slams MCG pitch after chaotic Ashes Test

Press Trust of India

World cricket body flags excessive bowler dominance in Melbourne Test assessment.

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council has rated the Melbourne pitch unsatisfactory after match imbalance. The International Cricket Council on Monday rated the pitch used for the fourth Ashes Test between Australia and England at the Melbourne Cricket Ground as “unsatisfactory”, handing the venue one demerit point under its

Pitch and Outfield Monitoring Process.

The decision followed a dramatic match that ended inside two days, with England clinching a four-wicket win after a staggering 36 wickets fell in just 142 overs. As many as 20 wickets tumbled on the opening day alone, with no batter from either side managing to register a half-century during the Test.

Match referee Jeff Crowe, in his assessment report, said the surface was excessively bowler-friendly and failed to offer a fair contest between bat and ball. “With 20 wickets falling on day one and

HIGHLIGHT

● ICC hands MCG one demerit point after extreme bowler dominance in Test.

● Thirty-six wickets fall, no half-centuries in match decided within two days.

16 on day two, the pitch was too much in favour of the bowlers and therefore deemed unsatisfactory,” Crowe stated.

Under ICC regulations, the accumulation of six demerit points can result in a 12-month suspension of international matches at the venue.

Tourists at Dubai’s Museum of The Future



Dubai: Tourists visit the market outside the 'Museum of The Future', in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Sunday, December, 28, 2025. (PTI Photo)

Interoceanic train derails in Mexico, killing 13 people

A derailment near Nizanda resulted in at least 13 deaths and 98 injuries, with five passengers currently in serious condition.

Press Trust Of India

MEXICO CITY: Officials said a train accident in southern Mexico killed at least 13 people and injured dozens, halting traffic along a rail line connecting the Pacific Ocean with the Gulf of Mexico.

The Interoceanic Train linking the states of Oaxaca and Veracruz went off the rails Sunday as it passed a curve near the town of Nizanda.

“The Mexican Navy has informed me that, tragically, 13 people died in the Interoceanic Train accident,” Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum posted on X, adding that 98 people are injured, five of them seriously. She said she instructed the secretary of the navy and the undersecretary of human rights of the Ministry of the Interior to travel to the site and personally assist the families.

HIGHLIGHT

- The accident occurred on a curve in the Tehuantepec isthmus, halting traffic on the strategic rail line connecting the Pacific and Gulf coasts.

In a message on X Sunday, Oaxaca state Gov. Salomon Jara said several government agencies had reached the site of the accident to assist

the injured. Officials said that 241 passengers and nine crew members were on the train when the accident occurred.

The Interoceanic Train was inaugurated in 2023 by then President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. The rail service is part of a broader push to boost train travel in southern Mexico, and develop infrastructure along the isthmus of Tehuantepec, a narrow stretch of land between

the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. The Mexican government plans to turn the isthmus into a strategic corridor for international trade, with ports and rail lines that can connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

The Interoceanic train currently runs from the port of Salina Cruz on the Pacific Ocean to Coatzacoalcos, covering a distance of approximately 180 miles (290 kilometers).

BNP’s Tarique Rahman’s nomination papers filed

DHAKA: Bangladesh Nationalist Party acting chairman Tarique Rahman submitted his nomination papers on Monday for the upcoming elections. The papers were filed around 12:00 pm on Monday at the office of the Dhaka Divisional Commissioner in Segunbagicha, the Daily Star reported. Abdus Salam, BNP chairperson’s adviser, accompanied by Professor Dr Farhad Halim Donar, chief adviser of the Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB), submitted the nomination on Rahman’s behalf. Rahman will contest the February 12 election from the Dhaka-17 constituency. Today is the final day for the submission of nomination papers for the 13th National Parliamentary Election. Speaking at a briefing, Salam expressed gratitude to all, saying city residents warmly welcomed Rahman after 17 years in exile.

Chinese military stages drills around Taiwan to warn ‘external forces’

Press Trust Of India

China’s military deployed air, navy, and rocket forces for a two-day joint exercise around Taiwan, framing it as a “stern warning” against separatist movements and “external interference.”

HONG KONG: China’s military on Monday dispatched air, navy and rocket troops to conduct joint military drills around the island of Taiwan, a move Beijing called a “stern warning” against separatist and “external interference” forces. Taiwan said it was placing its forces on alert and called the Chinese government “the biggest destroyer of peace.” Later in the day, Taiwan’s aviation



Chinese President Xi Jinping poses with newly promoted generals Yang Zhibin and Han Shengyan in Beijing. (Photo: AP)

authority said more than 100,000 international air travellers would be affected by flight cancellations or diversions because of the drills. The first of two days of drills came after Beijing expressed anger at US arms sales to the territory and a

statement by Japan’s prime minister, Sanae Takaichi, saying its military could get involved if China were to take action against Taiwan, the self-governing island that the world’s second-biggest economy says must come under its

FAST FACTS

- The drills were triggered by recent US arms sales to Taiwan and comments from Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi suggesting potential Japanese military involvement in the region.
- Beyond the military alert, the exercises caused immediate global disruption, with Taiwan’s aviation authority reporting that over 100,000 international travelers were affected by flight cancellations and diversions.

rule. The Chinese military did not mention the United States and Japan in its statement on Monday morning.

| INDONESIA FIRE |

Fire at Indonesian retirement home kills 16 older residents

Press Trust Of India

MANADO: A fire at an Indonesian retirement home killed 16 older people on Sunday evening, police said. The fire in the single-story house in Manado, Indonesia’s North Sulawesi Province, started while the residents were asleep, police said Monday. “The team on the ground has confirmed that the death toll currently is 16,” North Sulawesi police



spokesperson Alamsyah Hasibuan said. “Fifteen of them were burned to death, while one victim’s

body remains intact.” There were 15 survivors who were treated at two hospitals in Manado, Hasibuan said.

The bodies of victims were taken to a hospital for identification

with the assistance of families, officials said. Firefighters with six trucks needed more than two hours to extinguish the blaze after nearby residents reported the fire to emergency services, officials said. Television reports Sunday showed bright flames casting an orange glow and filling the night air with smoke. Body bags were lined up outside the retirement home.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

CHINA-NEPAL BRIDE BUYING

Nepal crackdown against cross-border bride matchmaking by Chinese brokers



BEIJING: Nepalese authorities have intensified a crackdown against illegal cross-border matchmaking following revelations that brokers and online intermediaries marketed Nepali women as potential brides for Chinese nationals, a Chinese media report said. The crackdown against “bride buying” intensified after Nepal’s immigration officials last month found several young Nepali women living in rented apartments with Chinese nationals in the capital, Kathmandu.

The Chinese men admitted to filming the women and sending the videos to friends in China and sharing them on social media, though they did not explicitly state the purpose of the recordings, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported. Authorities deported four Chinese

nationals for visa violations, saying there was insufficient evidence to file criminal charges over allegations that the women were being coerced into marriages in China.

The Chinese Embassy in Nepal also issued a New Year’s travel advisory cautioning its citizens against what it described as “bride buying” in the country, urging them not to trust matchmaking agencies and brokers blindly and stressing that deceptive or profit-driven cross-border matchmaking is illegal under Chinese law.

“Fully understand the legal, cultural, property division and child custody risks involved in cross-border marriages,” the notice said. “Do not easily believe in cross-border matchmaking ... stay away from illegal marriage brokers.”

CHINA SOMALILAND

China opposes Israel’s recognition of Somaliland

BEIJING: China on Monday said it firmly opposes Israel’s formal recognition of Somaliland as an “independent sovereign state” and its agreement to “establish diplomatic relations” with it. Israel on Friday became the first country to recognise Somaliland, which declared independence from Somalia in 1991 amid a descent into conflict. Beijing firmly supports Somalia’s sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, and opposes any moves that undermine Somali territorial integrity, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a media briefing here. Lin said the Somaliland issue is entirely an internal affair of Somalia and should be resolved by the Somali people in a manner consistent with their national conditions and constitution. Countries outside the region should cease inappropriate interference, and no country should incite or support separatist forces within another nation for its own selfish interests, he said.

UK LALIT MODI

‘Misconstrued’: Lalit Modi apologises for ‘biggest fugitives’ remark

LONDON: IPL founder Lalit Modi on Monday apologised for calling himself and Vijay Mallya the “two biggest fugitives” of India in a video posted on social media and said that his statement was “misconstrued”. In the now-deleted video from Mallya’s 70th birthday celebrations in London, Lalit Modi joked about the pair’s status as the “two biggest fugitives” of India.

Issuing an apology, Lalit Modi said in an X post, “I apologise if I have hurt anyone feelings, especially the Indian Government, whom I have the highest respect and regard for.” “The statement was misconstrued and was never intended to be as played out,” the founding commissioner of the Indian Premier League (IPL) added. He concluded the post by offering “deepest” apologies. The apology came days after India said it is committed to bringing back from abroad economic fugitives including Lalit Modi and Mallya to face the law in the country. Both Lalit Modi and Mallya face legal challenges in India around allegations of financial impropriety, which they both have denied.

IRAN RIAL PROTESTS

Iranian traders and shopkeepers protest as currency hits record low



TEHRAN: Iranian traders and shopkeepers staged a second day of protests on Monday after the country’s currency plummeted to a new record low against the US dollar. Videos on social media showed hundreds taking part in rallies in Saadi Street in downtown Tehran as well as in the Shush neighbourhood near Tehran’s main Grand Bazaar, which played a crucial role in the 1979 Islamic Revolution that ousted the monarchy and brought Islamists to power. Witnesses told The Associated Press that traders shut their shops and asked others to do the same. The semi-official ILNA news agency said many businesses and merchants stopped trading even though some kept their shops open. There were no reports of police raids, though security was tight at the protests, according to witnesses. On Sunday, protest gatherings were

limited to two major mobile markets in downtown Tehran, where the demonstrators chanted anti-government slogans. Iran’s rial on Sunday plunged to 1.42 million to the dollar. On Monday, it traded at 1.38 million rials to the dollar. The rapid depreciation is compounding inflationary pressure, pushing up prices of food and other daily necessities and further straining household budgets, a trend that could worsen with a gasoline price change introduced in recent days. According to the state statistics centre, the inflation rate in December rose to 42.2 per cent from the same period last year, and is 1.8 per cent higher than in November. Food prices rose 72 per cent and health and medical items were up 50 per cent from December last year, according to the statistics centre. Many critics see the rate as a sign of an approaching hyperinflation.