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## Telangana remained a desert in united AP State: Pocharam

Former minister, Speaker and MLA of Banswada constituency Pocharam Srinivas Reddy today said Telangana State became a desert under the united AP rule. **02**



## First two quarters to see good FPI inflows, rupee to appreciate: Bank of Baroda

After a dismal start, foreign portfolio investments (FPI) flow into India picked up pace, cumulatively totaling \$28.7 billion in 2023, said a report by Bank of Baroda. **07**



## Telangana HC reserves orders on RGV's 'Yyuham'

The Telangana High Court on Thursday reserved its orders on release of political thriller 'Yyuham' of well-known filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma. After hearing the arguments. **12**



## Single use plastic to be controlled in daily life: Konda Surekha

Hyderabad, Jan.12 (IANS) : "It is our responsibility to provide better environment for future generations and all should minimise the single use plastic in their daily life as much as

possible," Minister for Forests and Environment Konda Surekha said. The Minister said there are many disadvantages due to single use plastic and the plastic waste which is being used excessively without awareness is getting polluted in the surroundings, air and water. **02**



## TSRTC cancels auction of rooster found on bus

Hyderabad, Jan 12 (IANS): The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) authorities in Karimnagar on Friday cancelled the auction of a rooster found abandoned on a bus and handed it over to an animal protection group. The rooster, which appears to be specially trained one for cockfight, was found abandoned on a bus three days ago when officials **Continued on pg 02**



## Telangana Congress sends sacred 'chadar' to Ajmer Dargah

Hyderabad, Jan 12 (IANS) : In a display of religious harmony, the State government led by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Friday sent a Ghilaf-e-Mubarak (sacred chadar) to the Dargah Ajmer Sharif of Hazrat Khwaja Gharib Nawaz Moinuddin Chisti. The Chief Minister along with former minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir, Hyderabad DCC president Sameer Waliullah, Congress MLAs and other minority leaders of Congress party including Zafar Javeed and

Mohammed Javeed dispatched the chadar. It will be placed at the revered Dargah during the upcoming Urs of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti. Emphasizing the importance of secularism, Revanth Reddy affirmed that Telangana will remain a secular State under the present Congress government. **02**

## Ministers direct completion of Nalgonda Irrigation projects in two years

Hyderabad, Jan 12: Minister for Roads and Buildings Komati reddy Venkat Reddy and Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy have

directed the officials concerned to complete all pending irrigation projects located in Nalgonda district in two years. **Continued on pg 02**



## Security lapse at Tirumala as two devotees found using drone

Tirupati, Jan 12 (IANS) : In a security lapse near Tirumala temple, two devotees were found using a drone to film the hill shrine in violation of the rules.

The devotees, said to be from Assam, were spotted flying a drone to capture visuals of the temple. Some other devotees passing by took pictures of the devotees while they were flying

the drone on Ghat Road at 53rd bend.

Taking a serious note of this, the vigilance wing of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) detained the two devotees and questioning them.

The TTD officials were probing how the devotees managed to bring the drone with them without being detected at the security checkpoint at Alipiri. **02**

## BRS Working President rules out any alliance with BJP

Hyderabad, Jan 12 (IANS) : BRS Working President K. T. Rama Rao on Friday made it clear that there is no question of an alliance of his party with the BJP. Stating that the BRS was never a "B team" of the BJP, he said the party neither had an al-

liance with the BJP nor will it join hands with the BJP in the future. Addressing a meeting of the party leaders from Bhongir parliamentary constituency to review the preparedness for the forthcoming elections. **Continued on pg 02**



## Govt to set up skill development centres, universities in Telangana: Sridhar Babu

Hyderabad, Jan 12 : Minister for IT and Industries D Sridhar Babu has announced that an action plan is being formulated to establish skill centres and universities to impart job skills to the youth. He said the State government will accord top priority to skill development and steps are being taken to fill two lakh government jobs.



## MLA Kaushik Reddy slams Congress govt

Hyderabad, Jan.12 (IANS) : BRS party MLA P. Kaushik Reddy today slammed the Congress-led State government and alleged that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Professor Kodandaram had carried out a false campaigning against their party and former CM KCR on the provision of jobs. Stating that CM Revanth Reddy was boasting that the salaries of the government employees were paid on the fourth day of this month, he said they should be given every month. **02**



## PM Modi says India's mood & style today 'youthful', urges youngsters to dilute dynastic politics

Nashik (Maharashtra), Jan 12 (IANS) : Hailing India as a young nation raring to break boundaries in all spheres, Prime Minister Narendra Modi here on Friday called upon the youth to join politics and serve the country, as their participation could 'dilute dynastic politics'. Opening the 27th National Youth Festival-2024, the PM said that the world has reposed faith in India these days

as India is the Mother of Democracy, and the greater the participation of the youth in democracy, the better will be the future of the nation. While asking the youngsters to join nation-building and dilute dynastic politics, he also urged them to express their opinion through voting, especially the first-time voters who can bring energy and strength to our democracy. **Continued on pg 02**

## Month-long Congress rule in Telangana is good : Kodandaram

Hyderabad, Jan 12 (IANS) : Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) president Prof. Kodandaram said the month-long Congress rule in Telangana is good and employees are very happy that their salaries are coming by the fourth day in the month. Kodandaram alleged that the people have seen restrictions and fear under the rule of previous BRS government. **02**





# TSRTC cancels auction of rooster found on bus

**Continued From pg 01**  
of state-owned TSRTC were carrying out a routine check. It was found concealed in a bag on January 9 during a routine check of the bus at Karimnagar. The bus was heading to Vemulawada via Karimnagar. No passenger came forward to claim it apparently to evade penalty as travelling with an alive animal on TSRTC buses is not permitted. The TSRTC officials seized the rooster and shifted it to TSRTC bus depot-2 in Karimnagar.

# Ministers direct completion of Nalgonda Irrigation projects in two years

**Continued From pg 01**  
A review meeting was held on the status of Nalgonda irrigation projects at the Secretariat here on Friday. Ministers Uttam Kumar Reddy, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Irrigation Secretary Rahul Bojja, ENC Muralidhar Rao, Chief Engineer Ajay Kumar, Deputy ENC General Srinivas and other officials participated in the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Venkat Reddy said that a huge injustice was done to the Nalgonda irrigation projects in the previous BRS government and expressed grief that the SLBC project, where majority of the works were completed, had also been neglected. "Even though I had spoken on several occasions about the pending projects related to the Nalgonda district in the Assembly, then Chief Minister did not respond at all and failed to complete the irrigation projects," he lamented. Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said the Congress government is committed to complete all irrigation projects in Nalgonda and the people of the district are lucky to have Uttam Kumar Reddy from the district as the Minister of Irrigation. Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy directed the officials that along with the Udayasamudram Brahmanavellamula Lift Irrigation scheme that irrigate one lakh acres, the pending SLBC tunnel works should be taken up and completed on a war footing.

# BRS Working President rules out any alliance with BJP

**Continued From pg 01**  
Rama Rao mentioned that in the recent Assembly elections, it was the BRS which defeated three sitting MPs and two MLAs of the BJP. The BRS leader said that in his 45-year-long political career, BRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao never had a direct alliance with the BJP. "If the BRS was the BJP's B team, there would have been no case against MLC Kavitha," he said referring to the questioning of his sister by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in Delhi excise case. He also claimed that if Kavitha was not arrested in the case, it was because of the intervention by the Supreme Court and not because of any ties with the BJP. KTR, as the leader is popularly known, alleged that Congress tried to damage the prospects of the BRS by colluding with the BJP. He said in the previous Parliament elections, both parties together defeated the BRS. He claimed that even in by-elections, the two parties were together. The BRS leader also alleged that because of the secret understanding between Congress and BJP, notifications were issued to separately conduct bye-elections for two MLC seats. He said after Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy met Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the process for MLC bye-elections was altered. Though the BRS approached the High Court over MLC bye-elections, it was disappointed over the order. He alleged that the BJP is misusing religion for politics. "If BJP leaders are political Hindus, KCR is a Hindu who views a religion as only a religion," he said while claiming that the BRS is a truly secular party. KTR also made it clear that BRS policy will not revolve around MLAs but MLAs will have to revolve around the party.

# Telangana remained a desert in united AP State: Pocharam

**Hyderabad, Jan 12 (IANS)**  
: Former minister, Speaker and MLA of Banswada constituency Pocharam Srinivas Reddy today said Telangana State became a desert under the united AP rule.



**FORM NO. 14 [See Regulation 33(2)]**  
**OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - I/II**  
**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL HYDERABAD (DRT 2)**  
1st Floor, Triveni Complex Abids, Hyderabad-500001.

**DEMAND NOTICE**  
**NOTICE UNDER SECTIONS 25 TO 28 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS & BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1993 AND RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961.**  
RC/336/2020 21-12-2023

Canara Bank (e-Syndicate Bank)  
Versus  
Lakshmi Venkateshwara Cut Piece Centre and Others

To  
(CD 1) Lakshmi Venkateshwara Cut Piece Centre, Rep by its Proprietor Sri G. Sundernath, S/o.G. Venkata Ramaiah, Shop No.4-516 B, Municipal complex M.H. School Road Nandyal Kurnool.  
(CD 2) S. Yella Thimmaiah R/o. 11-10, Sunkulamma Street, Nandyal, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh.  
(CD 3) S. Satyanarayamma R/o. 11-10, Sunkulamma Street, Nandyal, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh.  
(CD 4) G. Sashidhar Venkateshwara Cut piece Cloth Centre, MH School Road, Nandyal, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh  
(CD 5) Palluru Chandra Shekar, R/o. Kanala Village Nandyal Mandal, Kurnool Dist, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh  
(CD 6) G. Surendranath Venkateshwara Cut piece Cloth Center, MH School Road, Nandyal, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh  
(CD 7) G. Vijaya Iaxmi Opp: Sirisha Hotel, Adda Road towards Yerraguntla, Kamalapuram, Village, YSR Kadapa Dist, Cuddapah, Andhra Pradesh.  
(CD 8) Neela Veni Opp: Sirisha Hotel, Adda Road, Towards Yerraguntla, Kamalapuram Village, YSR kadapa Dist, Cuddapah, Andhra Pradesh  
(CD 9) Tejaswini Opp: Sirisha Hotel, Adda Road, Towards Yerraguntla, Kamalapuram Village, YSR kadapa Dist, Cuddapah, Andhra Pradesh

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL HYDERABAD (DRT 2) in OA/1356/2017 an amount of Rs 74,02,289.52 (Rupees Seventy Four Lakhs Two Thousand Two Hundred And Eighty Nine and Paise Fifty Two only) along with pendente lite and future interest @ 13% Simple Interest yearly w.e.f. 04-03-2020 till realization and costs of Rs. 1,46,400/- (Rupees One lakh Forty Six Thousand Four Hundred Only) has become due against you (Jointly and Severally) Fully/Limited.)

2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under.

3. You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of your assets on or before the next date of hearing.

4. You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned on 13/02/2024 at 10:30 a.m. for further proceedings.

5. In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay:  
(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate / execution proceedings.  
(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this date: 21-12-2023  
Recovery Officer  
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL HYDERABAD(DRT 2)

**PUNJAB & SIND BANK** E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE  
(A Government of India Undertaking)  
L.B. NAGAR BRANCH, Hyderabad-500074.  
Ph: 040-42007611, E-mail: h1361@psb.co.in

**PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY**  
Sale of immovable secured assets under the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and rules. Offers are invited in electronic mode through <https://www.bankauctions.com> to be submitted latest by 4.00 P.M. on 25.01.2024 for Sale of secured assets mentioned below on "AS IS WHERE IS AND AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of the secured debts of Punjab & Sind Bank, as per notice under section 13(2) of SARFAESI Act dated 03-07-2023 amounting to Rs.27,34,961.17 due inclusive of interest, charges and cost, etc. up to 30-06-2023 plus future interest, cost and charges thereafter from Mr. Jatangi Viswanath & Mrs. Jatangi Mangamma represented as borrowers and guarantor Mr. Pajjuri Ajith pursuant to the symbolic possession of the following property taken by the Authorized Officer under SARFAESI Act, 2002.

Date and time of inspection of mortgaged properties	24.01.2024 From 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM
Last date & time for submission of EMD and documents	25.01.2024 till 4.00 PM
Date and time of e-auction/sale	30.01.2024 from 11.00 AM to 12.00 PM

**DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY**

Description of Properties (as per available details)	Reserve Price	Earnest Money Deposit	Bid Increase Amount
All that the Plot No.7 (West Part), admeasuring 150 Sq.Yds., or its equivalent to 125.41 Sq.Mts, having plinth area of 1198 Sft., of RCC Roofing, in Survey No.66, situated at Munganoor Village, Hayathnagar Revenue Manadal, Ranga Reddy District, under Munganoor Grampanchayath, under registration Sub-District Vanashthalipuram. Bounded by: North: 60ft. Wide Road, South: 25ft. Wide Road, East: Plot No.7 (East Part), West: Plot No.6. [Property in the name of Mr. Jatangi Viswanath as per Sale deed No.3771/2014 dated 11.09.2014]	Rs. 58.30 Lakhs	Rs. 5.83 Lakhs	Rs. 10,000/-

\*NOTE: The measurement of above property, however, be verified by the bidders at site and also from the records of the Revenue Authorities prior to participating in auction.

**TERMS & CONDITIONS:** 1) The E-Auction is being held on "AS IS WHERE IS" and "AS IS WHAT IS basis". 2) To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorized Officer, there are no encumbrances on the properties. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent enquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of properties/ies put on auction and claims/rights/dues effecting the property, prior to submitting their bid. The Authorized Officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/rights/dues. 3) It shall be the responsibility of the bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the assets and specification before submitting the bid. The inspection of properties put on auction will be permitted to interested bidders at sites on the day and time mentioned above. 4) The intending bidders who have deposited EMD and require assistance in creating Login ID, uploading Data, submitting bid, training on e-bidding process etc, may contact M/s C1 India Pvt Ltd, Contact person - Dharani Krishna-9948182222, helpline e-mail ID: support@bankauctions.com and for any property related query may contact Mr. Suneel Panwar, Chief Manager, PUNJAB & SIND BANK, ARB, Hyderabad, Dealing official Mobile No: 9855227889, E-mail: h1361@psb.co.in, in office hours during the working days. 5) Only buyers holding valid User ID/Password and confirmed payment of EMD in their wallet shall be eligible for participating in the online auction. 6) The interested bidders who have submitted their bids not below the reserve price through online mode before 4.00 P.M. on 25-01-2024 shall be eligible for participating in the e-auction. The e-auction of above properties would be conducted exactly on the scheduled dates & times as mentioned above by way of inter-se bidding amongst the bidders. The bidders shall improve their offer in multiple of amount mentioned under the column "Bid Increase Amount". In case bid is placed in the last 5 minutes of the closing time of the auction, the closing time will automatically get extended for 5 minutes (subject to maximum three extensions of 5 minutes each). The bidder who submits the highest bid (not below the reserve price) on closure of online auction shall be declared as successful bidder and a communication to that effect will be issued through electronic mode which shall be subject to approval by the Authorized Officer/Secured Creditor. 7) The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of the successful bidder shall be retained towards part sale consideration and the EMD of unsuccessful bidders shall be refunded. The Earnest Money Deposit shall not bear any interest. The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale price, adjusting the EMD already paid within 48 hours of acceptance of the bid price by the Authorized Officer through RTGS/NEFT to the account EMD Account No:- 1564110000054, IFSC Code:- PSIB021564, Account Name:- EMD Account Branch:- Punjab & Sind Bank, Bhimavaram Branch and the balance 75% of the sale price on or before 15th day of the sale or within such extended period as agreed upon in writing by and solely at the discretion of the Authorized Officer. In case of default in payment by the successful bidder, the amount already deposited by the Bidder shall be liable to be forfeited and the property shall be put to re-auction and the defaulting bidder shall have no claim/right in respect of property/amount. 8) The prospective qualified bidders may avail online training e-auction from M/s C1 India Pvt Ltd, prior to the date of E-Auction. 9) Neither the Authorized Officer/bank nor M/s C1 India shall be liable for any network problem and the interested bidders to ensure that they are technically well equipped for participating in the e-auction. 10) The purchaser shall bear the applicable stamp duties/additional stamp duty/transfer charges, fees etc. and also all the statutory/non statutory dues, taxes, rates assessments, charges, fees etc. owing to anybody. 11) The authorized Officer is not bound to accept the highest offer and the Authorized Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject any or all offers or adjourn/postpone/cancel the auction without assigning any reason thereof. 12) The bidders are advised to go through the detailed terms and conditions of auction available on the website of <https://www.bankauctions.com> of M/s C1 India Pvt Ltd, before submitting their bids and taking part in the e-auction.

**STATUTORY NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6)/RULE 9(1) OF STATUTORY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES 2002**  
This may also be treated as notice u/r(6) Rule 9(1) of security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to the borrowers and guarantor/s of the said loan about the holding of E-Auction Sale on the above mentioned date.

**STATUTORY NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF THE SARFAESI RULES, 2002**  
The borrower/guarantors are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above on or before 25-01-2024 from the date of publication of notice failing which the Bank shall sell the property as per the provision laid down in the SARFAESI Act, 2002.  
Date: 12-01-2024, Place: Hyderabad Sd/- Authorised Officer, Punjab & Sind Bank.

**Union Bank of India** ASSET RECOVERY BRANCH  
#249/3RT, 1st Floor, Main Road, S.R.Nagar, Hyderabad-500038  
A Government of India Undertaking

**NOTICE TO THE BORROWER INFORMING ABOUT SALE (30 DAYS NOTICE)**

**Rule 6 (2)/8 (6) Of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002**  
Borrower-cum- Mortgagor: Mr. Afzar Shareef, S/o. Mr. Jaffer Shareef, D.No: 11-1-1204/1/55, Afzal Sagar, Nampally Hyderabad - 500001. Mr. Afzar Shareef, S/o. Mr. Jaffer Shareef, D.No: 8-15-33/10/993/1, Plot No. 993/1, Block-B, Sy.No. 134/20, Shastripuram Colony, Meer Sagar, Hamlet of Malairdevally Village, GHMC Rajendranagar Circle, Rangareddy District, Hyderabad, Telangana- 500005  
Co-ApPLICANT: 3) Mrs. Sadiya Begum, W/o Mr. Afzar Shareef, D.No: 11-1-1204/1/55, Afzal Sagar, Nampally Hyderabad - 500001. Sd/-Madam.

Sub: Sale of property belonging to Mr. Afzar Shareef, S/o. Mr. Jaffer Shareef, (owner of the property) for realization of amount due to Bank under the SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002

Union Bank of India, #249/3RT, 1st floor, Main Road, S.R. Nagar, Hyderabad 500038, Telangana the secured creditor, caused a demand notice dated 11.09.2023 under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, calling upon you to pay the dues within the time stipulated therein. Since you failed to comply the said notice within the period stipulated, the Authorized Officer, has taken possession of the immovable secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 8 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on 20.12.2023.

Even after taking possession of the secured asset, you have not paid the amount due to bank. As such, it has become necessary to sell the below mentioned property by holding public e-auction after 30 days from the date of receipt of this notice through online mode. The date and time of e-auction along with the Reserve Price of the property and the details of the service provider, in which the e-auction to be conducted, shall be informed to you separately.

Therefore, if you pay the amount due to the bank along with subsequent interest, costs, charges and expenses incurred by bank before the date of publication of sale notice, no further action shall be taken for sale of the property and you can redeem your property as stipulated in sub. 13 (8) of the Act.

**SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY:** All that the land and residential House at H.No.8-15-33/10/993/1, in Block-B, in survey No. 134/20, admeasuring 125.00 Square yards, equivalent to 104.51 Sq. Meters, with a plinth area of 2250.00 Sq. Feet (R.C.C.), situated at Shastripuram Colony, Meer Sagar, Hamlet of Malairdevally Village, GHMC Rajendranagar Circle, Rangareddy District, Telangana State and bounded as follows: North: Plot No. 993/1 (Part), South: 25'-0" Wide Road, East: Plot No. 993/1 (Part), West: Plot No. 994/2.

Note: As per Sale Deed 7293/2018, dated 04-07-2018 the extent of the land is 125Sq Yds where as after road widening the extent of the land is 118.7Sq. Yds.  
Sd/-Authorized Officer  
Date: 28.12.2023, Place: Hyderabad UNION BANK OF INDIA, ASSET RECOVERY BRANCH

# PM Modi says India's mood & style today 'youthful', urges youngsters to dilute dynastic politics

**Continued From pg 01**  
"Today, the mood and style of the country are youthful. The youth of today don't lag but lead, India has become a leader in technology. The advent of 'Amrit Kaal' is filled with pride for India," said PM Modi, exhorting the youth to take India forward in this Amrit Kaal to make India a 'Viksit Bharat'. "The upcoming 25 years of Amrit Kaal is a period of duty for you. When you keep your duties paramount, the society will progress and the country will also progress." In this context, he reiterated the youth to promote the use of local products, make use of only 'Made in India' products, shun any kind of drugs and addiction, raise their voices against using abusive words in the name of mothers, sisters and daughters and put an end to such evil. Emphasising that the current period of 'Amrit Kaal' is a unique moment for the youth, he recalled the contributions of legends like Mahatma Jyotirao Phule and Savitri Phule, Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad, Batukeshwar Dutt, Major Dhyan Chand, M. Visvesvaraya and others and pointed out that youth have similar responsibilities for which they must work to take the nation to new heights.



# Union Minister flags off extension of three train services in Andhra Pradesh region

**Guntur, Jan.12 (NSS):** G. Kishan Reddy, Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Development of North East Region flagged off extension of three train services in Andhra Pradesh region today from a function held at Guntur Railway station. K. Manohar Naidu, Mayor, Municipal Corporation, Guntur graced the occasion. M. Ramakrishnan, Divisional Railway Manager, Guntur and other Railway officials were present. The extended train services are - Train No. 22701/22702 Visakhapatnam - Guntur - Visakhapatnam Uday Express; Train No. 17225/17226 Narsapur - Hubballi - Narsapur Amravati Express.



# Harish Rao praises KCR

**Medak, Jan.12 (IANS) :** Telangana State came into being due to KCR's relentless "do-or-die" struggle, former minister and Siddipet MLA T Harish Rao said today. Speaking after unveiling statue of Telangana Thalli at Jeedipalli in Manoharabad mandal of Medak district, Harish Rao said, "I am very happy to unveil the statue of Telangana Thalli. There is no Telangana without KCR. No one can separate KCR from Telangana. It is because of Telangana that our share of water came to us and our villages have developed. Aasara pension, Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bhima, Kalyana Lakshmi, Divyang pension.

**SHRIRAM FINANCE LIMITED**  
Registered Office: Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-600032 Administrative office: 6th Floor (level 2), Building No.02, Aurum Q parc, Gen 4/1, TTC, Thane Belapur Road, Ghanoli, Navi Mumbai-400710.

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**  
Where as, the undersigned being the authorised officer of Shriram Finance Limited, (Shriram City Union Finance Limited, amalgamated with Shriram Transport Finance Company Limited, subsequently Shriram Transport Company Limited name Changed as Shriram Finance Limited, by its Incorporation Certificate dt.13-11-2022) a corporate body registered and incorporated as a company under the Indian companies Act 1956, is doing Non-Banking financial activities, having its Registered Office: Sri Towers, Plot No.14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032 and having its administrative office at 6th Floor (level 2), Building No.02, Aurum Q Parc, Gen 4/1, TTC, Thane Belapur Road, Ghanoli, Navi Mumbai-400710, under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (said Act) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (said Rules) issued demand notices to the Borrowers details of which are mentioned in the table below to repay the amount mentioned in the said demand notices. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules, on this 09TH day of January, 2024.

Borrower Name and Address	Amount due as per Demand office
1) Anand Kumar Chintna @ Anand Kumar Chint, S/o: Shyamrao @ Alias Shyamrao, Age 53 Years, Occ: Self Employee, R/O: Address 1: H.No: 3-8-119, Sadasiava Peta, Near Bombay Talkies, Medak-502110, Address 2: H.No: 2-1-83, Ward No: 02, Block No: 182, Sadasiavpet, Medak-502110, B/O: Proprietor Of "Padmavathi Dairy Products-Milk Supply", At # Nh-09, Main Road, Sadasiavpet, Hyderabad, 2) Tangapur Baalraj @ Alias T Balara, S/o: Yadaiah, Age 46 Years, Occ: Self Employee, R/O: H.No: 4-1-72/1, Pathakeri, Ward No: 14, Sadasiavpet, Medak-502110, B/O: "Lakshmi Narsimha Hotels", At # Sadasiavpet, Medak, ....Borrowers/Co-Borrower /Guarantors/Legal Heirs	Rs. 1,63,65,395/- (Rupees One Crore Sixty Three Lakhs Sixty Five Thousand Three Hundred And Ninety Five Only)

**CTFLKDP0000650 - DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY :** Property holder Name is CH ANAND KUMAR, Mortgage deed dated 01.04.2011 Registered as Document No 858/2011 on the file of the office of Sub-Registrar at SADASIVAPET) Item No.1:All That The Piece And Parcel Of Building Bearing No.5-135/2, On Land Bearing Part Of Sy.No.722/C And Admeasuring Ac.0.16 Guntas Of Out. Of Ac.0.32 Guntas Situated At Sadasiavpet Village, Sadasiavpet Mandal, Medak District, And Bounded As Follows: Towards East: 40 Ft Wide Road, Towards West: Land of Vegamandli Lakshmaiah, Towards North: Land Of U.Suresh, Towards South: Remaining Land Of Chandralaiah.

This notice is also hereby to caution the general public at large that the authorized officer of SFL is in the lawful Symbolic Possession of the immovable property mentioned here-in above and the Borrowers or any person shall not after receipt of this notice transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise deal with/ alienate any of the above mentioned secured assets referred to in this notice, without prior written consent of SFL.

Place: SADASIVAPET Date: 11-01-2024 Sd/- Authorised Officer Shriram Finance Limited





## No relief in sight, intense dry cold unabated in J&K

**Srinagar, Jan 12 (IANS) :** With no relief in sight, intense dry cold tightened its grip on Valley as dense fog adversely affected life in Jammu on Friday. MeT department has forecast generally dry weather in J&K till January 26. Minimum temperature was minus 5 degree Celsius in Srinagar and Gulmarg on Wednesday while it was minus 6.3 in Pahalgam.

In Ladakh region, Leh town recorded minus 15.2 and Kargil minus 13.9 as the minimum temperature. Jammu city witnessed 4.8, Katra 5.7, Batote 2.2, Bhaderwah minus 0.2 and Banihal minus 1.4 as the night's lowest temperature. The 40-day long period of harsh winter cold known as the 'Chillai Kalan' started on December 21 and will end on January 30.



## UPSRTC office sealed with 40 employees inside

**Meerut, Jan 12 (IANS) :** In a bizarre incident, officials of the Meerut Municipal Corporation (MMC) reached the office of the regional manager of Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) on January 11 and sealed the building with

around 40 employees inside the premises. The building was sealed for "non-payment of Rs 29 crore property tax". Additional Municipal Commissioner Mamta Malviya said, "District Magistrate of Meerut, Deepak Meena, asked the civic body to remove the

seal and said he would pursue the matter. UPSRTC has an outstanding dues of Rs 29 crore for several years now. The annual rental value comprises house tax (12.5 per cent), water (8 per cent) and sewage (2.5 per cent)."



## Four arrested for conversion in UP

**Rae Bareilly, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Police in Uttar Pradesh's Rae Bareilly have arrested four people for allegedly converting innocent women and children to Christianity by luring them with promises of "good food and English education". Those arrested have been identified as Ram Prakash a.k.a. Daniel, Pradeep Kumar, Deshraj and Manoj Kumar. Police said that one Pushpraj had informed UP 112 that Ram Prakash had organised a prayer on Friday evening to lure innocent women, children to embrace Christianity. Kheeron SO, Devendra Singh said the meeting was held at the residence of Pradeep Kumar Kori.



## Two held for kidnapping, raping 13-year-old in UP's Ballia

**Ballia, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The police have arrested two persons in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia on the charges of raping a 13-year-old girl on January 3 and later making video of the act viral on social media. Police teams are carrying out raids for the arrest of the third accused in this case. Station Office (SO) Maniyar Mantosh Singh said that the girl was raped on January 3 and the accused made the video of act viral on social media on January 6, following which police swung into action. Based on the complaint of the

survivor's mother, an FIR was lodged against Irshad Ansari, Dhruv Singh and Sonu Thakur under Sections 363 (kidnapping), 366A (procurement of minor girl), 376 (rape) of IPC and under POCSO Act. The SO said adding that Irshad and Dhruv have been arrested and sent to jail after being produced before the court. Search operation is underway to nab Sonu. During initial investigation, it came to light that minor girl was kidnapped by Irshad from a village in the Maniyar area on January 3 and taken to an isolated place, where he raped her. Dhruv made a video clip of Irshad's act while Sonu made it viral on social media.

## People are intelligent and do not vote under pressure: Pilot on Cong's Karanpur victory

**Jaipur, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Tonk MLA Sachin Pilot reached Dausa for the first time on Friday after becoming Congress General Secretary and in-charge of Chhattisgarh. Speaking to the media, Pilot said that the BJP violated the code of conduct to win the Karanpur seat and made their candidate a minister but, the public is intelligent and does not vote under pressure. "After the formation of the BJP Government, elections were held on the Karanpur seat. The BJP violated the code of conduct and took unethical decisions, keeping all honour and dignity aside. The BJP candidate was administered the oath of office as minister, but the public is very intelligent. It will not give in to temptation and pressure," Pilot said. He said that when the Congress was campaigning in the area, it seemed that the people were with the grand old party. "The landslide victory of Congress candidate Rupinder Singh Kunnar is a shock for the BJP. The public decided to warn the government. A clear message has been given to fulfill the promises made during the elections," he added. Pilot said, "The time it took to form the government clearly shows that the BJP is not living up to the expectations of the people. But the results of the Karanpur elections show that the people, youth and farmers are with the Congress."



On the question of the Congress not appointing the Leader of Opposition in the Assembly, he said that the party high command will take a decision very soon. Pilot said that Rahul Gandhi is starting his 'Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra' from Manipur from January 14. "This yatra will encourage us and people across the country will get an opportunity to join the Congress. Manipur is an area where violence has been going on for a long time, people are troubled but the Prime Minister and the Central Government are not paying attention to it," he added. He said, "The Congress party has

given me a big responsibility and made me the National General Secretary and in-charge of Chhattisgarh. I will discharge that responsibility fully." Pilot said that the Indian bloc will contest the Lok Sabha elections together and soon the seats will also be distributed. There is panic in the BJP due to the unity of the alliance, he added. During Pilot's visit, a large number of workers including Dausa MLA Murari Lal Meena, former MLA GR Khatana, Sikandra Pradhan Sultan Bairwa, former Pradhan DC Bairwa, Prahlad Dhawan were present.

## Rajasthan assembly television channel to be launched soon: Speaker

**Jaipur, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Rajasthan Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani on Friday said that a help desk will soon be established in the assembly which will provide training to all the MLAs about the paperless process and a separate television channel for the proceedings of legislative assembly will also be launched soon. In a meeting of the information technology officials of the Assembly.



## Congress in no hurry over seat sharing in Bihar : State chief

**Patna, Jan 12 (IANS) :** A day after JD-U leaders K.C. Tyagi and Bijendra Yadav blamed Congress for delay in seat sharing formula in Bihar, Congress state chief Akhilesh Prasad Singh on Friday said that his party is not in hurry to finalise the seat sharing in Bihar. "The JD-U leaders are asking for the seat sharing formula to be finalised. I want to tell them that there is no hurry. When the time comes, seat sharing will be finalised," Singh said. He said that the upcoming general election has not been announced yet.



## Delhi HC to hear DCPCR's petition against alleged freezing of funds

**New Delhi, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The Delhi High Court is set to hear, on Friday, a petition filed by the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) against the alleged freezing of its funds by state authorities. Justice Subramonium Prasad directed the DCPCR's counsel to serve a copy of the plea to the Lt Governor's office and inform them about the scheduled listing. This petition was transferred from the Supreme Court, where on December 15, the apex court had instructed the DCPCR to present its grievances before the Delhi HC after it raised concerns about the freezing of its funds by state authorities. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, representing the DCPCR, argued in the Supreme Court that the funds of the commission should not be frozen, stressing the impact on the services provided to six million children in the state. Last year, Lt Governor V.K. Saxena approved an inquiry.



## Punjab Cabinet sub-committee supports transporters on new hit-and-run law

**Chandigarh, Jan 12 (IANS) :** A Punjab Cabinet sub-committee, comprising Finance Minister Harpal Singh on Friday assured transporters that the government would share their concerns regarding provision contained in the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, prescribing punishment for causing death in hit-and-run cases, with the Centre. At a meeting with representatives of truck and taxi unions here, the sub-committee discussed in detail the provision of punishment under Section 106 (2) of the new Act for causing death due to rash and negligent driving and escaping without reporting

it to a police officer or a magistrate after the incident. The main concern of the representatives of the transport unions was the manhandling of the driver of the commercial vehicle and damaging the vehicle by the mob after the accident. The sub-committee assured the unions that while sharing their concerns with the Centre regarding this law, the Punjab government would put pressure to make necessary arrangements to ensure the safety of the driver in such cases.



OPINIONmail



SUPREME COURT ORDER ON BILKIS RAPE CONVICTS IS A SLAP ON THE FACE OF BJP AND GUJARAT GOVT

The Supreme Court decision declaring remission of 11 rape convicts of Gujarat riots of 2002 by the BJP government of the state with concurrence of the Centre has completely unmasked PM Narendra Modi led BJP, just on the eve of Lok Sabha Election 2024, which would compel them to clean their blackened face before the electorate, and merely their slogan of 'Nari Shakti Vandan' may not work. The facts that the rapes were committed during the Gujarat riots when Narendra Modi was chief minister of the state, rapists were subsequently convicted for life by competent court in Maharashtra because the case was transferred on account of suspicion against the Gujarat government's complicity in the riots, and finally BJP led Gujarat government with the concurrence of the Centre led by PM Narendra Modi passed remission orders after which convicts were released from jail.

After the remission order there were widespread outrage and protests in the country, and the order was challenged in the Supreme Court of India by several citizens, including one who is now an expelled opposition Lok Sabha MP in another case, on August 25, 2022, ten days after, the convicts were allowed to walk free. The freed convicts were even welcomed by some RSS-BJP activists as heroes, who had been serving jail term for rape of a Muslim victim who had survived their assault but had lost seven of her members who were killed during the riots.

Apart from the ethical issue involved in freeing the convicts of rape by the BJP led governments, it had clearly betrayed the worst level of communal mindset in operation among the RSS-BJP leaders, who were supporting Hindu rioters while refusing justice to a minority rape victim. The other issues include usurpation of rights of others by the BJP governments, which is a general allegation of the opposition in other matters too – such as democracy, constitutionalism, federalism and so on.

In this particular case of remission of rape convicts, the division bench of the Supreme Court of India led by Justice BV Nagarathna and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan has held that the State of Gujarat was not the "appropriate government" to decide the issue of remission as the trial was held in the State of Maharashtra. The court has directed the convicts to surrender in prison within two weeks and asked the Gujarat and Central government to submit all records.

The judgement authored by Justice Nagarathna pointed the rights of the victims and the victims' families to justice, while adding, "A woman deserves respect howsoever high or low she may otherwise be considered in society or to whatever faith she may follow or whatever creed she may belong to. Can heinous crimes against women permit remission?" While deciding on competence of the Gujarat government to pass remission orders for freeing the convicts, Justice Nagarathna wrote in her judgement that section 432 of CrPC mandates appropriate government to seek the opinion of the convicting judge while considering application for premature release. She added "this clearly means that the place of occurrence of the incidence or place of imprisonment are not relevant considerations, and they have been excluded from the definition of Section 432 of Code of Criminal Procedure. The intent of the legislature is that the appropriate government is of the state within which a convict was tried and sentenced. The emphasis is on the place of trial and sentence, rather than the place of commission of offence or sentencing. This also takes within its ambit a situation where a trial is transferred from a competent court within the territorial jurisdiction of one state, to one in another state."

She also mentioned how fraud was played on court by one of the convicts adding, "The convict played fraud on this court. The Gujarat High Court's order could not have been challenged in a writ petition, nor could it have been set aside in writ proceedings. Hence the said order is a nullity and non-est in law. Consequently, the May 2022 order is hit by fraud and is a nullity.

(By Dr. Gyan Pathak)

EDITORIAL  
the indian mail



BENGAL CPI(M)'S YOUTH RALLY AT BRIGADE ON SUNDAY WAS A BREAK WITH THE PAST

The CPI(M) in Bengal has managed to stage a picture of resurgence after a long gap.. The CPI(M)'s youth wing, Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) managed to hold a fairly well-attended public meeting in the iconic Brigade Parade ground in Kolkata on Sunday. The public meeting of the Left this time presented a notable break from the past practices. For the perceptive observers, it was the rally of a nationalist party, not that of a hardcore Marxist party as the CPI(M) has been known since its formation in 1964. If nothing, the youth meeting has enthused the left in Ben-

gal before the Lok Sabha polls. Since 2011, the Trinamool Congress, under the political leadership of Mamata Banerjee, the party supremo, had effectively obliterated the Left and Congress in the state.

It is however none too clear how far the gathering is a precursor of some rise in voting for the left. Even earlier, the CPI(M) held massive gatherings in the Brigade ground but the voting results did not reflect it.. Currently, the Left does not have a single elected representative in the state assembly. There is no one in Lok Sabha too. Just imagine, in 2004 Lok Sabha elections, the CPI(M) got 34 seats from Bengal alone and that gave the CPI(M) central leadership enough bargaining power to put pressure on the UPA government led by Dr. Manmohan Singh from outside. The CPI(M) has three members in Lok Sabha now, two from Tamil Nadu on the basis of DMK support and one from Kerala on the basis of its own strength. (IPA Service)

CONGRESS-LEFT SEAT SHARING IN A FEW STATES WILL BE POSITIVE FOR LOK SABHA POLLS

The seat sharing talks between the constituents of INDIA bloc have started in right earnest. Congress high command has finally understood the need for early clinching of the agreements between the INDIA partners taking into the specifics of the political situation in each state. It is a welcome development.

To start with, the Congress and the two Left parties CPI and the CPI(M) have agreed to treat Kerala on a different footing where the Left Front led by the CPI(M) and the United Democratic Front led by the Congress will be fighting among themselves for the 20 Lok Sabha seats. The BJP is not a threat in the state' So whoever wins, will be a win for INDIA bloc.

Then the case of Bengal is there where the Left is in a very weakened position and it has decided to fight both the BJP and the Trinamool Congress in the state. If the Congress takes the decision to ally with Trinamool, the Left will fight alone in the Lok Sabha elections with a small ally ISF.



CONGRESS MUST DECIDE ABOUT PARTICIPATING IN RAM MANDIR INAUGURATION

The Congress is in a dilemma. Hamlet would have escaped the vice (as in grip). But the Congress is stuck – to attend or not to attend the Ram Mandir pran-pratishta on January 22? The Congress has the chance to make it an event to remember as no such

dilemma is wracking the Hindus who have been voting Congress election after election. On the contrary, "Ram toh Sab ka hain" is deeply ingrained in the Indian psyche and only extreme elements of the Hindu right consider "Ram" as exclusive to the Sangh Parivar alone.

Come to think of it, there is a de-

gree of pride in the acknowledgment that comes with a political cost – that if the Congress stands distinct with an inclusive stand on 'Ram', the party's Muslim vote-bank will desert the Congress in droves and regional parties like the Samajwadi Party, which is part of the INDIA bloc, will get all the Muslim votes. Remember the Congress is the only national party which had at one time proudly proclaimed itself a "Muslim party".

Yet, there came a time when Muslims started voting for regional parties. The Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party, Rashtriya Janata Dal. Even the Janata Dal-United of Nitish Kumar and the Janata Dal-Secular of former Prime Minister HD Devegowda. These have been beneficiaries of Muslim votes, much of which had shifted from the Congress to these alternatives. The once mighty mainstay for Muslims had been reduced to a shadow.

Without the Muslims voting for the Congress, the grand old party will remain an outcast. And many

of the INDIA (Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance) bloc parties would wish they had joined the BJP at Lord Ram's pran-pratishta. Sometimes momentous decisions are taken without considering the potentially very damaging political outcomes. This one, the one about the Ram Mandir consecration, will perhaps be the most damaging to the Congress if the party remains unsure of its stand. For, this would be for the first time in 500-plus years that 80 percent of the population has decided that it will not be treated like they were only 15-20 percent of the population. Guess what, it would be like the Maldives situation after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Lakshadweep visit. Maldivians are now begging to be returned to their earlier favourite tourist destination status. That is right, the Congress must decide right here and now.

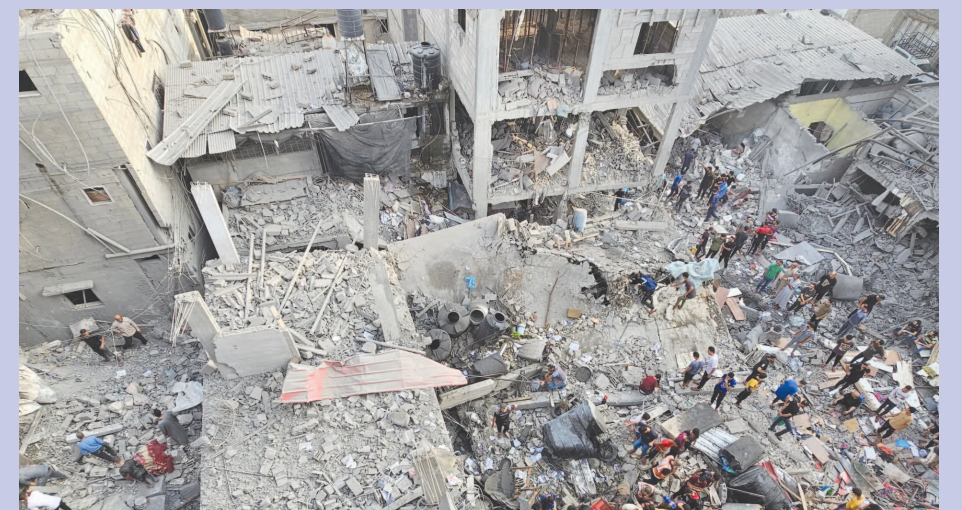
(IPA Service)

LEGENDARY AMERICAN HISTORIAN W.E.B. DUBOIS' BOOK 'THE WORLD AND AFRICA' IS PATHBREAKING

The World and Africa: An Inquiry into the Part Which Africa Has Played in World History by the legendary American communist historian W.E.B. DuBois argues that Africa's great contributions to world civilization have been erased and ignored. DuBois argues that this is because of the transatlantic slave trade, which enslaved millions of Africans.

The slave trade, he argues, served in many ways as the foundation for the emergence of the world capitalist system, as slave labour was used to toil on the sugar, tobacco, and cotton plantations of the American (South America, North America, and Caribbean) colonies. These crops and the wealth they created then fuelled the Industrial Revolution and enriched Western Europe and the future United States of America.

The collective memory of the greatness of the rich history of Africa had to be erased in order to perpetuate the myth that African people or people of African descent were inferior in order to justify the transatlantic slave trade, the industrial capitalist system, and the imperialist colonization of Africa by Western Europe. (IPA Service)



TURKEY TAKES STRONG POSITION AGAINST ISRAEL ON ITS KILLINGS IN GAZA STRIP

On New Year's Day, thousands of Turkish people took to the streets in Istanbul, shouting "Murderer Israel, leave Palestine." This wasn't the first large-scale demonstration in support of Palestine in Turkey since the Israel-Gaza conflict began on October 7. However, the large protest on January 1, 2024, was sparked by provocative statements made by Turkish President Recep

Tayyip Erdogan. Since he first assumed power over two decades ago, Turkey has consistently supported the Palestinian cause, including backing Hamas. However, even by Erdogan's own bold approach, his recent comments were particularly strong. (IPA Service)





## Israel reports new cases of monkeypox, measles

**Jerusalem, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The Israeli Health Ministry has reported the detection of new cases of monkeypox and measles in the country. The Ministry did not specify the exact number of new monkeypox cases, but the Israel Medical Association said on Friday that there were five new cases alongside two suspected cases, Xinhua news agency reported. The Ministry urged anyone who develops a fever and a blistering rash or has been in close contact with a person suspected of having monkeypox to contact a doctor. Last year, only one case of monkeypox was detected in Israel, after 262 cases were reported in the country in 2022. Regarding measles infections,

the Ministry reported two new cases, of a child and an adult, adding that the infection source was not identified, and neither of the two had been abroad recently. Measles has been infrequently reported in Israel over the past few decades, except for an unusual outbreak in March 2018 when more than 4,250 cases were detected. In 2023, the Ministry reported 11 cases, nine of them from an outbreak of the virus in a kindergarten in the coastal city of Tel Aviv in October. Measles, a highly contagious disease characterised by symptoms such as fever and rash, can, in severe instances, result in life-threatening complications.



## Suspicious object found at gate of Japan's Parliament building

**Tokyo, Jan 12 (IANS) :** A suspicious object was found at the main gate of Japan's National Diet (Parliament) Building in Tokyo, but has been confirmed of not being dangerous, local media reported on Friday. A report came in at around 3.30 p.m. (local time) that a suspicious item was found at the main gate of the National Diet Building, while the police dispatched its explosives disposal squad to in-

vestigate, Xinhua news agency quoted the Fuji News Network as saying. Investigators later confirmed that the suspicious item, which looked like a messenger bag with a photo and a letter in it, was not dangerous, the report said. The suspicious object that was thrown in by someone was discovered by the security guard within the Diet, the country's Parliament, it added.



## New left-wing party launched in Germany

**Berlin, Jan 12 (IANS) :** A new left-wing political party, named Alliance Sahra Wagenknecht (BSW), has been launched in Germany, which is set to run in four polls this year, starting with the European Parliament elections in June. As an alternative to the governing and opposition parties, the new party launched on Friday has split off from the Left Party

(Die Linke), reports Xinhua news agency. BSW is co-chaired by Sahra Wagenknecht and Amira Mohamed Ali, and will compete in three state elections in eastern Germany later in the year. Wagenknecht is one of the best-known figures in German politics and the launch represents a significant change to the political landscape.

## Michelle Obama 'terrified' over 2024 presidential elections results

**Washington, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Former US First Lady Michelle Obama admits she's "terrified" about the potential outcome of the 2024 presidential election with ex-President Donald Trump outrunning incumbent Democrat Joe Biden in the polls despite a mountain of legal cases piled up against him, including one to keep him off the ballot. Obama said November's 2024 presidential contest is among her top fears that keeps her awake at night, as per a podcast interview released Friday. "What's going to happen in this next election? I'm terrified about what could possibly happen, because our leaders matter. Who we select, who speaks for us, who holds that bully pulpit, it af-

fects us in ways sometimes I think people take for granted," she told Jay Shetty in his podcast "On Purpose". "The fact that people think that the government -- 'eh, does it really even do anything?' -- and I'm like 'Oh my God, does the government do everything for us, and we cannot take this democracy for granted'. And I worry sometimes that we do. Those are the things that keep me up," she said. Michelle Obama's comments come atop President Joe Biden ramping up his reelection campaign, narrowing in on a message that democracy is on the ballot this year. Still, many Democrats have expressed concern that his message isn't resonating, pointing to polls showing him in a close contest with former President Trump,



media reports said. In the interview, the former first lady listed a number of other items that worry her, including: "Are people going to vote, and why aren't people voting?" "Those are the things that keep me up, because you don't have control over them. And you wonder: 'Where are we in this? Where are our hearts?'" she said. Later, Obama suggested there was a double standard when it came

to Trump's legal entanglements and what might happen if a similar predicament befell a Black man. "The bars are different for people in life. That I've learned," she said. Without naming Trump, she said: "Other people can be indicted a bunch of times and still run for office. Black men can't. You just learn to be good. And in the end, you benefit from that extra resilience."



## Palestinian PM urges Israel to release deductions from tax transfer to PA

**Ramallah, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Ishtaye has urged the Norwegian side and the international community to pressure Israel to release all unlawfully deducted amounts from the tax revenues it had collected for the Palestinian Authority (PA). He made the remarks while receiving in Ramallah the Norwegian government's special representative to the Middle East, Hilde Haraldstad, the Prime Minister's Office said on Friday in a statement. Ishtaye said the deduction of funds allocated to the Gaza Strip from Palestinian tax revenues is "a political decision" aimed at perpetuating attempts to separate the West Bank from Gaza, Xinhua news agency reported.



## New Jersey Township gets its first Indian-American Sikh Mayor

**New York, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Neena Singh has become the first Sikh and Indian-American woman to be sworn in as Mayor of Montgomery Township in the US state of New Jersey. She was administered the oath of office by Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman at the Montgomery Township Reorganisation Meeting. Singh, who has lived in Montgomery for 24 years, was unanimously selected to serve as

Mayor by her fellow Township Committee members. "It's an enormous privilege to be sworn in by trailblazer Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman as the first elected Sikh woman Mayor in New Jersey and the first Indian-American woman Mayor," said Mayor Neena Singh.

## 2 people injured following protest outside Sikh temple in Canada

**Toronto, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Police opened an investigation after a two-week-long protest outside a Sikh temple in Canada turned violent over the weekend, leaving two people injured. Officers were called to the Dashmesh Culture Centre in northeast Calgary evening

after violence broke out during an ongoing protest over the temple's leadership committee, CTV News reported. Police told the news channel that between 50 and 100 people were involved in a fight at 7.45 p.m. at the building, located at 135 Gurdwara Sahib Boulevard. According to Calgary Police Ser-

vice (CPS), two calls for service were received from the Dashmesh Culture Centre, each for different disturbances between the protesters and the building's occupants. "At approximately 1.15 pm, officers were initially dispatched for reports of a disturbance regarding individuals who were believed to be protesting at the location.

Shortly after, a second call came in reporting the protesters had moved inside the building. Officers worked with the involved parties to de-escalate the situation," CPS said in a statement. It added that no weapons were involved in the fight and there were no arrests.

## US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin diagnosed with prostate cancer

**Washington, Jan 12 (IANS) :** US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin was diagnosed with prostate cancer in December and underwent a minimally invasive procedure, Walter Reed National Military Centre officials said in a statement. The latest announcement came on Friday, a day after the White House and the Pentagon both said that they would investigate why President Joe Biden and other high-ranking officials were not informed immediately about the Defence Secretary's hospitalisation and left in the dark for several days. The cancer was discovered after a routine prostate screening, Walter Reed officials said. On December 22, Austin un-

derwent a minimally invasive surgical procedure called prostatectomy to treat and cure prostate cancer. He was under "general anesthesia" during it, Xinhua news agency reported. His prostate cancer was detected early, and his prognosis is excellent, according to the statement. On January 1, 2024, Austin was admitted again to the medical centre with complications from the December 22 procedure, including nausea with severe abdominal, hip and leg pain. Initial evaluation revealed a urinary tract infection. On January 2, he was transferred to an intensive care unit for close monitoring and a higher level of care. "He continues to make progress and we anticipate a full recovery although this can be a slow process," the statement said.



During Austin's stay in the hospital, certain authorities were transferred to Deputy Defence Secretary Kathleen Hicks, but both Hicks and the White House weren't informed of Austin's hospitalisation until January 4. "I think there's an expectation that when a Cabinet official becomes hospitalised ... that will be notified up the chain of command. There is that expectation," John Kirby, the National Security Council (NSC)'s coordinator for

strategic communications, told reporters on Monday. The Pentagon also announced in a memo on Monday night that it would review the way transfer of authority is handled, with a specific focus on the events and decisions related to Austin's hospitalisation. This is to ensure appropriate and timely notification to the President, the White House, the US Congress, and the public in the future.





## Top Army officer reviews Manipur situation, force's operational readiness

**Imphal, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Indian Army's Spear Corps commander, Lt Gen H.S. Sahi commended the performance and contributions of the officers and soldiers of the Red Shield Division during various operations in Manipur, army officials said on Friday. Defence spokesman Lt Col Amit Shukla said that Lt Gen Sahi visited the Red Shield Division and

carried out a comprehensive review of its operational readiness and its role in Manipur, which was devastated by the ethnic rioting for over eight months. He acknowledged the pivotal role of the division for ensuring national security and appreciated the unwavering commitment to operational tasks. During the visit, Lt Gen Sahi inaugurated the newly-constructed Amrit Sarovar, symbolising a new chapter in the Division's contribution towards the national initiative of rejuvenating water bodies. The visit of the GOC emphasised the Division's dedication to adapting to changing security dynamics. The Corps commander's directives on preparedness and training represent a notable milestone in the Division's commitment and role towards sustaining operational excellence and enhancing the nation's security, officials said.

## Ranvir Sena chief murder case: CBI submit case diary, other documents in Arrah court

**Patna, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The CBI, probing the murder of Ranvir Sena chief Brahmeshwar Mukhiya, on Friday submitted the case diary of 168 pages and other related documents, totalling 500 pages, in a special court in Bihar's Arrah.



## Set up ayurveda institute in Bihar, RJD leader urges PM

**Patna, Jan 12 (IANS) :** RJD MLA and former state Agriculture Minister Sudhakar Singh on Friday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to open an ayurveda treatment institute in Bihar. Singh, the son of RJD state President Jagadanand Singh, said that a large number of people from the state go to the AIIMS in Delhi for ayurvedic treatment. "If such a facility is available in Bihar, the people will get the same treatment at home. So, I request the prime minister to open a similar ayurvedic institute in Bihar," he said, citing the history of Bihar and ayurveda.

## Eyewitnesses saw Jagdish Tytler incite mob during 1984 anti-Sikh riots, CBI to Delhi court

**New Delhi, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) submitted before a Delhi court on Friday that there are eyewitness accounts of Congress leader Jagdish Tytler inciting a mob in the Pul Bangash area during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

It urged Special Judge Rakesh Syal to frame charges against Tytler in connection with the case.

The case pertains to a mob setting the Pul Bangash Gurdwara at Azad Market on fire on November 1, 1984, leading to three persons, namely Sardar Thakur Singh, Badal Singh and Gurcharan Singh, being burnt to death. The incident took place a day after then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards.

In its charge sheet filed before the court, the CBI has said that Tytler incited, instigated and provoked the mob that had assembled at the gurdwara, which resulted in the burning down of the shrine and killing of the three persons.

Charges under Sections 147 (rioting), 109 (abetment) read with 302 (murder) of the IPC, among others, have been invoked against Tytler by the probe agency.

"There is sufficient evidence to frame charges against Tytler. There are eyewitnesses who saw him incite the mob during the 1984 riots," the agency said as it concluded its arguments on the framing of charges.

The matter will come up for hearing next on January 22, following a request from Tytler's counsel for additional time to present arguments in response to the CBI's claims. The CBI had initially filed



a closure report for Tytler, but a subsequent charge sheet has been submitted against him in this ongoing legal saga.

Earlier, Additional Sessions Metropolitan Magistrate Vidhi Gupta Anand had said that the offences against Tytler are exclusively triable by the Sessions Court and had committed the file to the Principal District and Sessions Judge of the Rouse Avenue Court. Anand had noted that record reveals that the charge sheet, among other things, has been filed under Sec-

tions 302 (murder) and 436 (mischief by fire or explosive substance with intent to destroy house) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), and these offences are exclusively triable by the Sessions Court. The court had issued notice with regard to committal of matter to public prosecutor Amit Jindal for the CBI, and had directed Tytler to be present before the Sessions Court on the set date for next hearing.



## Row over Ram temple invite to Akhilesh Yadav

**Lucknow, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has claimed to have invited Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav for the upcoming Pran Pratishtha ceremony at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, but the latter has refused to confirm or deny the same. VHP chief Alok Kumar said: "Invitation has been sent to him. Let us see if Lord Ram calls him."

Akhilesh Yadav retorted: "I don't know him (Alok Kumar). Only people known to each other extend invitations." He also hit out at the

BJP-led government, saying it is against minorities.

"This government is against minorities. Our Gods are PDA - Pichhade, Dalit and Alpasankhayak (Backward, Dalit and Minority)," he said. Earlier, VHP international working president Alok Kumar had said: "Sometime back, I read his (Akhilesh's) statement wherein he was quoted as saying that 'If he gets an invitation for the ceremony, he will go', so we have invited him; then I read another statement saying 'If Bhagwan Ram Ji calls, then I will go'."

## Pressure mounts on Odisha govt to take action against private hospital

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Odisha government is in the line of fire as different organisations continue to stage protests demanding action against Hi-Tech Medical College and Hospital and compensation to the victims who recently died due to the AC compressor blast at the private medical college in Bhubaneswar and subsequent identity mix-up controversy. The members of All Odisha Students' Voice on Friday staged a gherao and hurled tomatoes at the Health Minister, Niranjana Pujari's official residence in Bhubaneswar.

"The government is yet to announce any compensation for victims who died in the blast. We demand ex-gratia of Rs 1 crore each for the relatives of deceased

persons. The government should also cancel the license of the private medical college and the arrest of its owner," said Tirupati Panigrahi, one of the protesters. The workers of Chhatra Congress, the student wing of the opposition Congress party, had also demonstrated before the house of Pujari demanding action against the private medical college and its owner on Friday. They accused the state government of shielding Panigrahi who is a leader of the ruling BJD.

The Congress workers also sought compensation of Rs 50 lakhs each for the three workers who died in the explosion. Meanwhile, BJP has also demanded monetary compensation for the victims' families.



## Drugs, ecological, demographic imbalance have hit Manipuri society : CM

**Imphal, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on Friday said that drug peddling, and ecological and demographic imbalances have largely affecting the state's society and it is time to deliberate on these issues for the survival of all sections of people.

Addressing a function to observe the 190th death anniversary of Maharaj Gambhir Singh at his 'samadhi' at Langthabal (Canchipur), he stressed the need to initiate a war against drugs, campaign against deforestation, and stop illegal entry of immigrants (from Myanmar). Noting that the war against

drugs had to be taken up to save the present and future generations, Biren Singh sought unity among the communities in the present situation as all communities are suffering.

He appealed to all communities to stand unitedly against illegal drug business, and poppy plantations in order to build a strong and united Manipur.

The Chief Minister also said that security forces, including state police commandos, Assam Rifles, and the Border Security Force, are jointly continuing their operations against the militants in Moreh, along the Myanmar border.

## Defections are shaking confidence of people: Goa LoP

**Panaji, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Leader of Opposition in Goa Assembly, Yuri Alemao, on Friday said that the political defections are shaking the confidence of the people in parliamentary democracy. Alemao was speaking on the occasion of Goa Legislator's day at the Assembly Complex in Porvorim.

"Political defections are shaking the confidence of the people in parliamentary democracy. It may give immediate gains to be in power but the long-term losses could be dangerous," Alemao said, expressing unhappiness over incidents of Congress MLAs switching to BJP in the past. He said that legislative assembly speakers have miserably failed to decide on disqualifica-

tion petitions. "There is hardly any burden of litigation on the speaker. It is definitely not a matter of pride or honour for a Constitutional Authority and the Custodian of the apex democratic institution to play with disqualification petitions at leisure and pleasure," stated Alemao.

He also said that the threats to the freedom of choice and expression is consistently emanating from some organisations. "What is worrisome is the failure of the Government to effectively counter these threats. The silence of the Government has bolstered such forces," charged Yuri Alemao.

Referring to his statements, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said that his government is not suppressing voice of anyone.





## FPI inflows of \$ 10.1bn in Dec 2023 are highest ever recorded in a single month

**New Delhi, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Inflows of US\$ 10.1bn in December 2023 are the highest ever monthly inflows recorded in a single month, a research by Bank of Baroda said. The report said that the FPI flows into India witnessed a turnaround in 2023, registering inflows of US\$ 28.7bn compared with outflows of US\$ 17.9bn in 2022. "Inflows in 2023 were the

highest since 2017, when FPIs poured in US\$ 30.8bn in the domestic market. However, true to their nature, FPI flows exhibited a great deal of volatility throughout the year," the report said. The report said that after a dismal start, FPI flow into India picked up pace, cumulatively totaling US\$ 28.7bn in 2023. "While equity segment continued to outperform, encouraging trend was also visible in the debt segment, particularly in the last few months of the year," the report said.



## First two quarters to see good FPI inflows, rupee to appreciate: Bank of Baroda

**Chennai, Jan 12 (IANS) :** After a dismal start, foreign portfolio investments (FPI) flow into India picked up pace, cumulatively totaling \$28.7 billion in 2023, said a report by Bank of Baroda. The report also said the trend will continue and be positive for the Indian rupee which will likely to appreciate. The report said that FPI into India closed at 28.7 billion last calendar year. "While equity segment continued to outperform, encouraging trend was also visible in the debt segment, particularly in the last few months of the year," the report said. It said that the improved corporate profitability, stable domestic macros, range-bound inflation and a stable political environment favour India as a preferred investment destination. "India's inclusion in JP Morgan's bond index in June'24 as well as hopes that India might sub-

sequently be included in other bond indices has been a key driver of FPI inflows in the debt segment," the report said. It said that the trend is likely to persist and gather more pace in the first two quarters of 2024. "This will be positive for the Indian rupee, which is likely to trade with an appreciating bias in 2024," the report said.



## India's forex kitty dips by \$5.9 billion

**Mumbai, Jan 12 (IANS) :** India's foreign exchange reserves fell by \$5.9 billion to \$617.30 billion during the week ended January 5, according to the RBI data released on Friday. This is the first fall in the country's forex which had grown steadily by a total of \$32.9 billion in the preceding seven weeks to scale a 22-month high. A strong foreign exchange kitty helps the RBI to control volatility in the rupee. The central bank intervenes in the spot and forward currency markets by releasing more dollars to prevent the rupee from going into a free fall when it comes under pressure. Apart from the RBI's intervention, the foreign exchange reserves are also affected by the appreciation or depreciation of foreign assets held in the reserves.



## Tatas roll out cars out of acquired Ford India plant in Gujarat

**Chennai, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Tata Passenger Electric Mobility Ltd (TPEM), a subsidiary of Tata Motors Ltd, on Friday said it rolled out the first Tata badged car from its new plant in Gujarat's Sanand. The plant was acquired from Ford India last year. "Witnessing the first car roll out of the new TPEM facility

in Sanand is a proud moment for us. We have successfully retooled the factory in the shortest span of 12 months, taking it to new level to accommodate a wide range of existing products and future new models to come," Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd & TPEM Managing Director Shailesh Chandra said. According to Chandra, the new

facility will have a manufacturing capacity of 300,000 units per annum, scalable to 420,000 units per annum.

The new facility spread across 460 acres, will be Tata Motors' second plant in Gujarat to manufacture internal combustion engine (ICE) and electric vehicle (EV) models. Post acquisition from Ford India, the plant underwent major retool-

ing and upgrades like: new dies for stamping critical skin panels. Modification of all lines with additional robots, new grippers and fixtures have been added in the weld shop while the paint shop saw modifications in handling systems, external robot programming, internal robotic painting and waxing set up.

## Crude oil prices rise after US, UK attack Houthis

**London, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Crude oil prices were up more than 2.5 per cent on Friday after the US and the UK launched joint strikes on Houthi targets in Yemen, media reports said. So far this year, Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, has risen 3.1 per cent. The global economy has been served a series of painful reminders of the importance of disruption in the Red Sea, through which 12 per cent of global trade flows, including 30 per cent of global container traffic, CNN reported. The Houthis attack is forcing

ships to take a far longer route around Africa and can cause insurance costs to rocket. Companies can pass on the increased cost of moving their goods to consumers, raising prices again at a time when governments around the world have struggled to tame post-pandemic inflation.

"There are concerns that the current chaos can last for many months, which will be a huge headache for companies around the world," Susannah Streeter, head of money and markets at investment platform Hargreaves Lansdown, said, CNN reported.



## MakeMyTrip sees 1,806% jump in searches for Ayodhya since inauguration announcement

**New Delhi, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Online travel company MakeMyTrip on Friday said it has seen a 1,806 per cent increase in searches for Ayodhya on the platform since the announcement of the inauguration.

The company shared the data on Instagram, saying that it recorded a 97 per cent growth in searches for spiritual destinations in the last two years.

The company also mentioned that the peak search for Ayodhya was recorded on December 30 last year when the airport inauguration took place.

The top 10 pilgrimage and spiritual destinations which have seen growth in searches include -- Ayodhya (585 per cent), Ujjain (359 per cent), Badrinath (343 per cent), Amarnath (329 per cent), Kedarnath (322 per cent), Mathura (223 per cent), Dwarkadhish (193 per cent), Shirdi (181 per cent), Haridwar (117 per cent).

## Markets at new highs in massive rally driven by IT heavyweights

**New Delhi, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Indian markets soared to new heights in a powerful rally, driven by IT heavyweights, says Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Green shoots of recovery in the IT sector on the back of an improved outlook for BFSI in FY25 positively influenced market sentiments. The robust performance of PSU banking stocks is underscored by the inherent synergy between their loan portfolios and the prevailing business cycle, he said.



## Samsung India launches BP, ECG tracking features on Galaxy Watch6 series

**New Delhi, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Samsung on Friday launched blood pressure (BP) and electrocardiogram (ECG) tracking features for the Galaxy Watch6 series for the first time in India through an OTA (over-the-air) rollout. With the Samsung Health Monitor BP and ECG tracking, users can monitor their health, support

their fitness regimes and enable regular health checkups. Users can download the Samsung Health Monitor App, available on the Galaxy Store, and follow simple instructions to measure their BP and ECG. Both features will also be made available on the Galaxy Watch4 and Watch5 series, the company said. "The BP and ECG tracking features via Samsung Health

Monitor App have received regulatory clearances and certifications from India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation," Samsung said.

The Galaxy Watch6 series is designed to help users build healthier habits every day and through the night. The Galaxy Watch6 series packs health offerings and powerful performance in a refined and sleek design, boasting a slimmer bezel, a larger and more vibrant display and a more interactive user interface. Both Galaxy Watch6 and Galaxy Watch6 Classic models also allow users to access a greater selection of versatile watch faces as well as new trendy strap options that empower them to meet their fitness goals. The new Galaxy Watch6 series provides personalised health guidance, purposeful design upgrades and an enhanced mobile experience for a more informed and healthier self.



## S.Korean Parliament passes bill banning dog meat consumption

Seoul, Jan 12 (IANS) : The South Korean National Assembly, or Parliament, on Friday passed a special bill banning dog meat consumption, paving the way for ending the practice that has fallen out of favor in recent decades. The bill, which bans the breeding, butchering, distributing and selling of dogs for meat, passed through Parliament with 208 votes in favour and two abstentions, reports Yonhap News Agency. The ruling People Power Party (PPP) and main opposition Democratic Party (DP) have jointly pushed for the ban amid growing awareness of animal

rights and an increasing number of pet owners in the country. The bill also calls for providing subsidies to help people in the dog meat industry switch jobs. First Lady Kim Keon Hee has also openly expressed her support for the ban, saying outlawing the practice was one of President Yoon Suk Yeol's presidential campaign promises. Yoon and Kim are known as pet lovers, and live with four dogs and three cats. Law enforcement is slated to begin in 2027, after a three-year grace period, and violators could face a maximum two years of prison sentence or a fine of up to 30 million won (\$22,768).



According to government statistics, there are around 1,150 dog farms, 34 butchering businesses, 219 distributors and approximately 1,600 restaurants that sell food made with dog meat in South Korea. Animal rights groups immediately welcomed the ban.

"We believe this ban marks a significant turning point in South Korea's attitude to animal protection," said Lee Sang-kyung, a spokesperson for the local branch of the Humane Society International, an animal rights group. "(This) is testament to the passion and determination of our animal-loving public and politicians who reached a tipping point to consign this outdated industry to our history books."



## Bolivia reinstates school mask mandate amid rising Covid cases

La Paz, Jan 12 (IANS) : The Bolivian government announced the reinstatement of strict health measures, including mandatory school mask use, in response to rising Covid-19 cases. The protocol includes the mandatory use of masks among students, the availability of disinfectants like alcohol in schools, and adequate conditions for handwashing, said Health Minister Maria Renee Castro. Bolivian authorities declared an end to the Covid-19 health emergency in August last year, reports Xinhua news agency. However, the nation is currently facing a new outbreak, notably the JN.1 variant in the eastern region. Renee Castro said that during the initial epidemiological week of 2024, infections witnessed an 80 percent surge compared to the final week of 2023. Since the pandemic erupted in early 2020, Bolivia has reported a total of 1,211,716 Covid cases, with 22,407 deaths.



## Ecuadorian President decrees state of emergency amid security crisis

Quito, Jan 12 (IANS) : Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa has decreed a state of emergency, imposing a curfew for 60 days throughout the country, including in prisons, due to the "serious internal commotion" in several prisons. The President said the measure is based on the "factual situation" of violence and criminality which is affecting the country, including the prison system, where serious disruptions of the order are occurring, reports Xinhua news agency. The decree came a day after reports emerged on Friday of

the alleged escape of Jose Adolfo Macias Villamar, alias "Fito", the country's main drug trafficker and leader of the organized crime group "Los Choneros", from the Penitenciaría del Litoral in Guayaquil, capital of Guayas province. Noboa, who assumed power on November 23, 2023, said that he had given clear instructions to military and police commanders to regain control of prisons, which had been "lost in recent years". "Narcoterrorist groups seek to intimidate us and believe that we will yield to their demands," he said, pledging that "we will not

negotiate with terrorists, nor will we rest until we restore peace to all Ecuadorians". The security crisis in the country is evidence that things must change and that existing laws are not sufficient for Ecuadorians to live in peace, the President added. Over the last few years, Ecuador has seen a spike in violent crime. Ecuador, a country of approximately 17.5 million people, recorded nearly 3,568 violent deaths from the beginning of 2023 until July, which was an increase of 75 percent over the same period the year prior.

## Bhutan votes in final round of parliamentary polls

Thimphu, Jan 12 (IANS) : Voting is currently underway for Bhutan's final round of parliamentary elections, with people queuing up outside polling stations across the Himalayan country on Friday. At one polling station in the quiet town of Damphu, capital of Tsirang District, many vehicles and voters were seen arriving from different parts of the country for the polling day, Xinhua news agency quoted national newspaper Kuensel as saying in a report. Two political parties, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the Bhutan Tendrel Party (BTP), are contesting Tuesday's vote across all 47 constituencies in the Himalayan kingdom. A party has to win at least 24 constituencies to form a government. A preliminary round in November 2023 narrowed the race down to two parties, with PDP securing 42.53 percent of total votes and BTP 19.58 percent, results from the Election Commission of Bhutan (ECB) showed. Both the previous government's lawmakers and their former opposition were knocked out in the preliminary polls. The ECB has deployed over 6,000 officials, including security personnel, to 812 polling stations across the country.



## 4 Israeli soldiers killed in Gaza fighting, total reaches 180

Tel Aviv, Jan 12 (IANS) : The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) on Friday announced the death of four more soldiers in the war against Hamas in Gaza, taking the total number of troops killed in the ground offensive to 180. The deceased soldiers have been identified as Sgt. Roi Tal (19) from Kfir Brigade's 94th Duchifat Battalion; Sgt. First Class (res.) David Schwartz (26) and Sgt. First Class (res.) Yakir Hexter (26) both from the Combat Engineering Corp's 8219th Battalion; and Sgt. First Class (res.) Gavriel Bloom (27), a combat engineer in the 36th Division. While Yehoshua, Schwartz and Hexter were killed in southern Gaza, Bloom died in central Gaza, the IDF said.

The military further said that in the battle in which Schwartz and Hexter were killed, another soldier from the Combat Engineering Corp's 8219th Battalion was seriously wounded. An officer and two other reserve combat engineers from the 36th Division were seriously hurt in the fighting that claimed Bloom's life, the IDF added. Additionally, two officers from the 646th Reserve Paratroopers Brigade were also seriously injured in central Gaza.



## Senior Hezbollah commander killed in Israeli airstrike

Tel Aviv, Jan 12 (IANS) : The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has said that it has killed a senior commander of Hezbollah responsible for several drone attacks on Israel. The IDF spokesman Daniel Hagari in a press statement confirmed that the Hezbollah commander Ali Hussein Barji was killed by an Israeli air strike on Friday evening. Israel also said that the slain commander was in charge of the drone unit of Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

## UK govt promises relief to wrongly accused post office managers

London, Jan 12 (IANS) : Hundreds of post office managers across the UK in, wrongly accused of theft and fraud because of a computer hiccup, were thrown a lifeline by the government. This incident, described as one of the most significant miscarriages of justice in British history, involved over 700 sub-postmasters and sub-postmistresses who faced prosecution by the Post Office between 1999 and 2015, reports Xinhua news agency. Many of them have spent years asserting their innocence, citing issues with a new accounting and stocktaking software program known as Horizon, developed by a Japanese company. Some of the managers served

prison sentences after being convicted of false accounting and theft. Many of them were financially ruined, and some killed themselves. So far 93 convictions have been overturned by judges, but hundreds more are waiting to be cleared. In an urgent House of Commons debate on Monday night about the scandal, Business and Trade Minister Kevin Hollinrake told lawmakers: "This scandal was one of greatest miscarriages of justice in the nation's history." He said options have been devised to dealing with the outstanding con-



victions against the postmasters and postmistresses. "All of us on these benches and across the house are united in our desire to see justice done. I hope the government will be able to announce these proposals to the house very shortly." The issue has been propelled into the public limelight after a television drama focused on the impact of people wrongly accused of crime. A public inquiry into the scandal is currently underway, and recently London's Metropolitan Police have also opened a new investigation into the Post Office over potential fraud offences.

## ICRC urges protection for medical facilities, staff in Gaza

Gaza, Jan 12 (IANS) : The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has urged protection for medical facilities and workers in the Gaza Strip, as they were facing a severe lack of security amid persistent Israeli attacks. The ICRC emphasised on Friday in a statement that the whole medical system in Gaza has been affected by the

Israeli attacks, with medical professionals even being killed and detained, Xinhua news agency reported. In the statement, William Schomburg, head of the ICRC sub-delegation in Gaza, highlighted that the shortage of equipment and essential supplies due to the ongoing Israeli hostilities has led to the complete shutdown of most hospitals in the enclave.







### 'Land of knowledge': Rahul Gandhi can benefit from Bihar if he remains humble, says Giriraj Singh

Patna, Jan 12 (IANS) : Union Minister Giriraj Singh on Friday said that Bihar is land of knowledge and former Congress president Rahul Gandhi can benefit from this land if he remains humble during his Bharat Nyay Yatra which will pass through the state. "I am saying right from the beginning that this is not a Bharat Nyay Yatra but it is a Gyan (knowledge) yatra of Rahul Gandhi. Bihar is a land of knowledge. Rahul Gandhi can benefit from this land if he remains humble and polite," Giriraj Singh told media persons. Congress has scheduled the Bharat Nyay Yatra from January 14 which will be led by Rahul Gandhi and starts from turmoil-hit Manipur. Reacting on the delay in seat sharing in INDIA bloc, Giriraj Singh said that alliance has always been an alliance of "self-

ish" parties. "There is a conflict among the INDI alliance. SP in Uttar Pradesh, JD-U in Bihar, TMC in West Bengal, AAP in Delhi and Punjab are against the Congress. Congress will not get more than 10 per cent seats in Lok Sabha election from these states," he said. He also slammed RJD and JD-U leaders for criticising Pran Pratistha of Ram Lala in Ayodhya temple. "Pran Pratistha is a kind of Yagya under Hindu religious tradition and hence distributions of Akshat are taking place across the country. Still, the highly knowledgeable persons of RJD and JD-U are making statements against it. Abusing Hindu is easier as we have liberal religion. Can they abuse Muslim community," Singh asked.

### Judge in MP shocked at receiving poisonous powder in envelope

Bhopal, Jan 12 (IANS) : In a bizarre incident, a judge in a district court in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam received a letter warning of the sender's plan to commit suicide and enclosing a poisonous powder. The person, who sent the letter through post, said that if justice is not done with him sooner, he will consume the poisonous powder (sulphas) to end his life. Judge Mugdha Kumar of Ratlam district court, during proceedings, received the envelope from a staff member, and when she opened it, she felt uneasy at the smell from the powder it contained. She questioned the staff member who received the letter and the district judge was also informed. The matter was also reported to the local police and the person who sent that letter was arrested on Friday. As per the police, the person has been identified as Dasher Sharma, a resident of village Ringaniya in the district.



### Tripura govt to ask CBSE to allow tribal students to write in Roman script for 'Kokborok' exams

Agartala, Jan 12 (IANS) : Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Friday told the Assembly that the state government would write to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) urging them to allow tribal students to write their answers in the 'Kokborok' subject examination in both Bengali and Roman script. The 'Kokborok' language, which is the second official language of Tripura after Bengali, is the mother tongue of the majority of the tribals, who constitute one third of Tripura's little over four million population. Opposition Tipra Motha Party

(TMP) and the CPI-M members, raising the issue in the ongoing Assembly session, had been seeking the provision of allowing students to write in both Bengali and Roman script in the upcoming examinations ensuring the academic future of around 5,000 tribal students is not compromised. On the third day of the Winter Session on Tuesday, TMP's Animesh Debbarma again raised the issue concerning students appearing for the Kokborok subject in CBSE-affiliated schools in Tripura and sought students must have the choice to write their answers either in Bengali or Roman script, similar to examinations conducted

by the Tripura Board of Secondary Education. Approximately 5,000 tribal students from various schools are set to appear for the Kokborok language subject. However, they currently have no option but to write in Bengali, a language that many of them may not be comfortable with. Supporting Debbarma's stance, former minister and CPI-M legislature party leader Jitendra Chowdhury pointed out that in the state's education system, there is already an option to write answers for Kokborok subjects in both Roman and Bengali, from primary-level classes to university levels.



### Adopt two-pronged approach to rejuvenate Nuh: Haryana Chief Secretary

Chandigarh, Jan 12 (IANS) : Haryana Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal on Friday emphasised the importance of adopting a two-pronged approach to rejuvenate Nuh district. The initiative aims to position Nuh as a leading horticultural hub for onions and tomatoes by forming Farmers' Producer Organisations (FPOs), an official statement said.

### Man held from Mumbai for kidnapping minor girl in Goa

Panaji, Jan 12 (IANS) : A 21-year-old man has been arrested from Mumbai for allegedly kidnapping a minor girl from Goa, police said. Deputy Superintendent of Police Jivba Dalvi said that on Friday, the warden of Girls hostel had lodged a complaint with Mapusa police in this regard. "She had stated that a girl inmate, aged 14 years, had left for shopping in Mapusa Market in the afternoon, but didn't return.



### Madras HC asks TN govt to consider 1% 'horizontal' reservation for trans people in education, jobs

Chennai, Jan 12 (IANS) : The Madras High Court on Friday asked the Tamil Nadu government to consider the possibility of providing 1 per cent horizontal reservation to transgender people in education as also in employment in all public sectors. The first bench of the Madras High Court comprising of Chief Justice Sanjay V. Gangapurwala and Justice D. Bharatha Chakravarthy was responding to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by transgender activist Grace Banu Ganeshan for the reservation of transgender community. The division bench said that it agreed with the petitioners counsel Jayna Kothari



that the reservation policy for the transgender community in the state was complicated. The court however said that the state has however done several things for the upliftment of the community. The division bench of the Madras High Court granted time till March 4, 2024 for the Advocate General R. Shanmugasundaram to take information from government officials regarding the same. This was after the AG said that the

reservation for transgender community was a policy decision. The petitioner said that the transgender persons who declare themselves as women gets reservation provided for women across all caste categories. Those who however declare as men or as third gender are considered only under their respective castes or under Most Backward Class (MBC) category.

### BJP creating hype over Ram Temple inauguration only to gain electorally in LS polls: Mamata Banerjee

Kolkata, Jan 12 (IANS) : West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday slammed the BJP over the Ram Temple inauguration, saying that they are creating deliberate hype over the event just to gain electorally in the upcoming Lok Sabha election. "Some people have been questioning me about my stand on the event. I can only say that I have other important things to do. Religion is his or her own but the festival is for all. I believe in festivals since festivals speak of unity. "Let them (BJP) do whatever they want to do like to create hype over the event. But you surely cannot ignore people from other religions," the Chief Minister said while addressing an administrative review meeting at Jaynagar in South 24 Parganas district.



### Drugs valued at Rs 100 crore seized in Assam, four arrested

Guwahati, Jan 12 (IANS) : In one of the biggest drug seizures in Assam, the Special Task Force (STF) of the state police recovered narcotic substances valued at Rs 100 crore in Karimganj district, officials said. Police have arrested four people, including three natives of Mizoram, including a woman, on the charges of drug peddling. On Friday afternoon, an STF team led by DIG Parthasarathi Mahanta began an operation in the Suprakandi area under the Nilam Bazar Police Station in the district based on specific information. During the raid, police found four huge cartons of international cigarettes, 64,000 Yaba pills,

and 5.1 kg of heroin in a vehicle that was traveling from Mizoram. "This is a cross-border attempt to smuggle drugs and the consignment was coming from Champhai district of Mizoram which shares a border with Myanmar," the DIG said. The arrested persons were identified as Lalchamlia, Zosangliana, Ramngheaka, and Nur Ahmed. Ahmed, the driver of the car carrying the consignment, is a resident of the Karimganj district, according to the police. According to police, they were all arrested in accordance with various provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 and are being questioned, and their cell phones have been taken for investigative purposes. "We are trying to find the source,



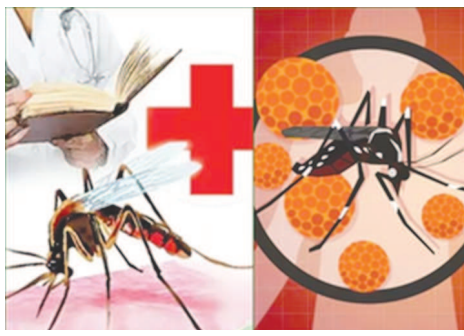
from there the consignment was coming and where they were heading to," Mahanta said. As per available data, this is the largest heroin seizure in Assam to date, according to Karimganj's Superintendent of Police Partha Pratim Das. "The market value of these narcotic products have increased in terms of money, this is the largest seizure of drugs in Assam till date and one of the biggest seizures ever in northeastern states," Das told IANS. The police said that the drug dealers attempted to circumvent major roadways by using village

roads as an alternative route to reach Mizoram and Assam. "The driver, a Karimganj local, was aware of how to evade police checkpoints and main thoroughfares. However, our intelligence was able to obtain the data, and we apprehended them without delay," an investigating officer stated. Senior Assam Police officers claim that Mizoram is the source of the majority of these consignments, and during questioning, drug dealers admitted that Myanmar was their source of supply.



## Hooda promises metro from Gurgaon to Faridabad

**Faridabad, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Former Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Hooda said Friday said the Congress government, which linked Bahadurgarh, Gurugram and Ballabhgarh with a metro network, will connect Gurgaon with Faridabad with metro, if the party returns to power. Besides, the metro will be expanded to Palwal, Rohtak and Sonipat towns. Congress leader Hooda was addressing party activists in Faridabad. On the occasion, state party President Udai Bhan and Rajya Sabha MP Deepender Singh Hooda were also present. In his address, Hooda said the Congress is going to form the government in the state. "The party workers should reach out to the public under the party's new program 'Ghar-Ghar Congress' and convince them what work the Congress government in the state will do. Along with metro expansion, the Congress will have special emphasis on employment generation as the present government has made Haryana number one in unemployment. "Instead of filling two lakh posts in government departments, the BJP-JJP government wants to send youth abroad through a skill corporation. Educated youth are being exploited in the name of temporary contract jobs."



## TN health dept warns of more dengue, influenza cases

**Chennai, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Tamil Nadu Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine has cautioned people of the state to watch out for Dengue and Influenza cases for two more weeks. Dr T.S. Selvavinayagam, Director of the department, said that the Dengue and Influenza cases would rise for another two weeks due to the monsoon spilling over to January. However, he said that Dengue is almost under control but asked people to be cautious and added that there was nothing to panic about. The Directorate of Public Health data revealed that the state reported 9,121 dengue cases and 10 deaths in 2023 and 461 dengue cases this year till Friday. The data mentioned that around 10 influenza cases were being reported daily. Dr. Rajani Menon, Preventive department head of a private medical college in Salem while speaking to IANS said that Typhoid and Viral fever cases were on the rise in many parts of Tamil Nadu. She said that there are dengue and diarrhea cases and added that respiratory and pneumonia cases are also on the rise.



## Disqualification of Shiv Sena MLAs: Maha awaits a 'make or break' verdict by Speaker

**Mumbai, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Maharashtra awaits with bated breath for the much-anticipated verdict in the disqualification case of Shiv Sena MLAs, including Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. The "make or break" ruling, is expected to be delivered by Speaker Rahul Narwekar amid a cloud over his Friday lunch meeting with Shinde that has attracted howls protests from the Maha Vikas Aghadi allies Congress-Shiv Sena-UBT-Nationalist Congress Party-SP). Narwekar, who came under fire on multiple occasions for the al-

leged delays in delivering the verdict, is likely to finally pronounce it around 4 pm on Wednesday, the extended deadline given by the Supreme Court. Despite showing a brave face, many in the ruling Shinde-led Shiv Sena are apprehensive over the outcome, while the ex-CM Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena-UBT is already planning its next move in case the verdict goes against it. The Speaker completed the hearings in the 34 petitions two weeks ago, filed by the Shinde and Thackeray factions, along with

voluminous supporting material running into over 2.50 lakh documents. In the hearings, the Speaker categorised and examined the pleas on various parameters like anti-party activities, defection, election of Speaker, violation of Whips, etc. to arrive at his final conclusion on disqualification. Anticipating the worst, SS-UBT leader Anil Parab said on Tuesday that if the ruling goes against them, then his party would challenge the verdict in the Supreme Court and expressed hopes that the Speaker would not act like a party functionary.

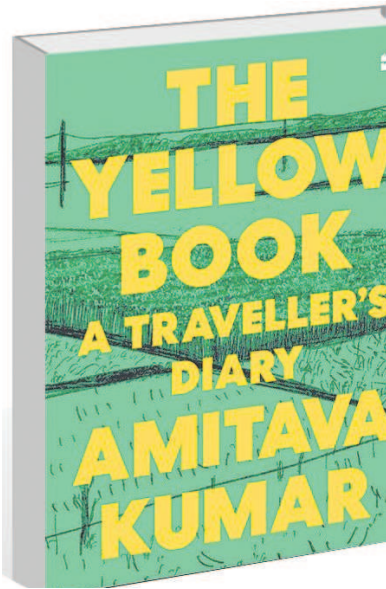


## Amitava Kumar and the curious case of 'The Yellow Book'

**New Delhi, Jan 12 (IANS) :** He calls it a happy accident. Author Amitava Kumar had already finished work on 'The Blue Book: A Writer's Journal', but had not stopped drawing or keeping a journal. One day, his colleague at Vassar College in the US asked him to visit his class on creativity. The colleague had given his students two journals joined together with a thick rubber band: one was blue and it was meant for writing down one's thoughts, while the other, which was yellow, was for writing other people's words. "He gave me the same bound journals as a gift too. I immediately told the class that I had found the title I would give to the sequel," says Kumar, whose latest 'The Yellow Book:

A Traveller's Diary', published by HarperCollins India recently hit the stands. In his latest, the author allows the reader to see how a writer observes the world. There are entries --- the death of the legendary writer and journalist Joan Didion, the rituals he wants his students on a study tour to follow in London, like taking a picture of the first coffee, going for a run...artist Krishen Khanna's painting on Gandhi's death...notes from his visit to his hometown (Motihari) in India. Again, the book is a journal. allowing all the multiple possibilities in its reading. From the attack on Rushdie to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the writer, with his words and artwork, continues making notes, stressing the need to mark memories and to keep believing.

He says the practice of keeping a journal has been hugely important for his work and that he uses his old ones as material all the time. "I always like to quote a friend who has written that if journalism is the first rough draft of history, then perhaps a journal is the first rough draft of literature," Kumar says. Like many writers, Kumar has always stressed on the need to write every day. He however stresses the need to walk meditatively for ten minutes each day, imagining that with every step they take they are planting lotuses with their feet. "I learned this from a lecture given by the Buddhist teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh. It



is a way of cultivating mindfulness. It is also a way of exercising, of course, and of freeing the mind to come up with new ideas," he says. The author feels that to travel is to leave behind what is familiar or comforting or stale, taking one out of himself and forcing him to encounter the world. "It doesn't mean that you abandon your interiority or your private thoughts: it's just that you see yourself against a new background," he adds.

## Govt tightening rules to check misleading ads, fake claims by coaching centres



**New Delhi, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The Central Consumer Protection Authority's (CCPA) committee held its first meeting on Friday to discuss the draft guidelines to prevent misleading advertisements and false claims regarding success rates in coaching institutions. Consumer Affairs Secretary & CCPA Chief Commissioner Rohit Kumar Singh highlighted the need for clarity, specifically in addressing certain aspects related to advertisements in the coaching sector. He further stated that CCPA firmly believes in safeguarding the rights of consumers and en-

suring no false or misleading advertisement is made of any goods or services which contravenes the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. The guidelines shall be applicable to all the coaching institutes whether online or physical and cover all forms of advertisement regardless of form, format, or medium. The guidelines also prescribes Do's and Dont's that need to be observed before coming up with advertisements: The coaching institute shall mention requisite information with successful candidate photo, including the rank secured by successful candidate.

## PFI activist Sawad, prime accused in Kerala hand chopping case arrested after 13 years

**Kochi, Jan 12 (IANS) :** NIA, which had come out with an offer of 10 lakh Rupees to anyone who gives information about Sawad, a key accused in the now infamous Kerala hand chopping case, on Friday took him into custody from Kannur. Sawad was on the run for the past 13 years, from the day he committed the crime. Meanwhile, as NIA officials are tight-lipped about how and when the arrest happened, Sawad will be produced before an NIA court here later in the day. Sawad is a resident of Ernakulam district and was the one who chopped Professor T.J. Joseph's right hand in July 2010, with the help of others.

## Spirit of 'Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai' should be rebuilt : Farooq Abdullah

**Jammu, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Former J&K chief minister and patron of National Conference (NC), Dr. Farooq Abdullah said on Friday that the spirit of 'Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai' has to be rebuilt if India and China want to live in peace. Speaking to reporters here, Dr. Abdullah said that India has been trying to resolve the border issue with China through talks, but unless China comes forward nothing can be achieved. "The spirit of Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai has to be rebuilt if the two countries have to live in peace," he said. He said that China has increased its influence in our neighbourhood like Nepal. "China already has its influence in Pakistan and it is increasing it in Bangladesh. China has encircled us and there are no two opinions about this. "India and China were friends when 'Panchsheel' was formed during Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's period. But there was a wedge after the 1962 war," he added.



Asked about the recent developments regarding the relationship with Maldives, he said, "I have never been to Maldives, so I don't know much about it. "But India has always helped Maldives. I don't know the reason behind this controversy. Is this controversy a result of the Hindu-Muslim divide being created in India? "I believe our foreign ministry will be able to explain this controversy. India has come to the rescue of Maldives at difficult times. "India has always supported Maldives. When some rogues invaded it, the Indian Army went to that country, removed the rogues and saved the country.

## Goa will win Mhadei battle against Karnataka : CM Sawant

**Panaji, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Rejecting allegations that his government is doing nothing to save Mhadei river, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has expressed hope that the state will win the legal battle in the Supreme Court against Karnataka. "Mhadei water issue is in the hearts of everyone. We are fighting this case in Supreme Court. We will not lose, but will win this case. Day-to-day basis I am taking a follow-up of the case," Sawant said on Friday, during a government program here. Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemo, who was also present on the occasion, had criticised the BJP government while addressing the event. "Threat to our lifeline Mhadei is still unresolved and appears to be more critical in 2024. Insecurity is mounting. None is sure of the outcome. Assurances from the govern-



ment seem to be mechanical. They fail to boost the confidence of the people," Alemo said. Last month after Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reportedly seeking environmental clearance for the Mhadei project, Alemo had asked the BJP government to make its political stand clear on the matter. "Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah gets an appointment and meets Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding environmental clearance for the Mhadei project.



## World Bank sees global growth slowing for 3rd straight year in 2024

**Washington, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The World Bank has forecast a bleak outlook for the global economy with growth expected to slow down for a third year in a row in 2024, according to its Global Economic Prospects report released on Friday. The report projects the world economic growth to come down further to 2.4 per cent in 2024, before edging up to 2.7 per cent in 2025 -- well below the 3.1 percent average growth seen in the 2010s. After 6.2 per cent in 2021 which is attributed to a low base due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the World Bank estimates global growth cooled to 3 per cent in 2022 and then to 2.6 per cent in 2023. Hamstrung by the Covid-19 pandemic, then the war in Ukraine and ensuing spikes in inflation and interest rates around the world, the first half of the 2020s now looks like it will be the worst half-decade performance in 30 years, the report states.



## Trump all set for Iowa caucus, but rivals DeSantis, Haley seek to close ranks and spring surprise

**Washington, Jan 12 (IANS) :** With less a week to go for the Iowa caucus and New Hampshire to follow to decide the GOP nomination for the 2024 presidential election, former President Donald Trump is brimming with confidence while rivals Ron DeSantis and Nikki Haley are betting their odds to at least close the distance with Trump so that they have an outside chance with voters to get past him. Poll predictions are that

even if Trump closed with high leads in Iowa and New Hampshire, voters would do a double take if both Nikki and DeSantis coming very close to Trump and think if the latter are better than Trump who carries a huge legal burden with him into 2024, media reports said. Ted Cruz from Texas upped New Yorker Trump in Iowa in 2016 though Trump was ahead of him in polls and points. There's less than a week until the GOP Iowa Caucus next Monday night, and Trump is the one to beat, media reports said. He is

dominating polls with a 20-30 point lead and it now looks like a battle for the 2nd place, with DeSantis and Haley are positioning themselves as the best Republican Trump alternative. Trump didn't win the Iowa caucuses back in 2016. But this time, his campaign in the Red state is very well organised. Though Haley and DeSantis have begun attacking Trump directly for the chaos he creates with his errant rhetoric without going into the merits of the legal cases against him, they end up ultimately going at each other's throats. Businessman Vivek Ramaswamy has crossed every county in the state -- twice -- but is still struggling to overcome the rest of his opponents. Former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, meanwhile, isn't even putting energy into Iowa, and is instead focusing on New Hampshire's contest later this month (January 23).

## Egyptian FM reiterates rejection of attempts to displace Palestinians

**Cairo, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry has reiterated his country's rejection of any attempt to displace Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. In a televised press conference that was also attended by visiting German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock in the Egyptian capital Cairo, Shoukry said on Friday that they had discussed the situation in Gaza, Israel's ongoing military campaign in the coastal enclave and its devastating humanitarian repercussions. The two officials also discussed the delivery of relief aid to the besieged Gaza Strip, means to maintain the unity of Gaza and the West Bank, and efforts to restore "political perspectives" related to the two-state solution, according to the Egyptian Foreign Minister. In addition, the two sides talked about achieving a ceasefire in Gaza, regional developments and the security of Red Sea navigation, Xinhua news agency reported. Baerbock added that while both countries should cooperate to bring about peace, there are not enough humanitarian supplies to meet the needs of the about two million Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, coordinated action is needed to avoid obstructing the flow of relief to those in need.

## Australian govt puts republic plans on hold

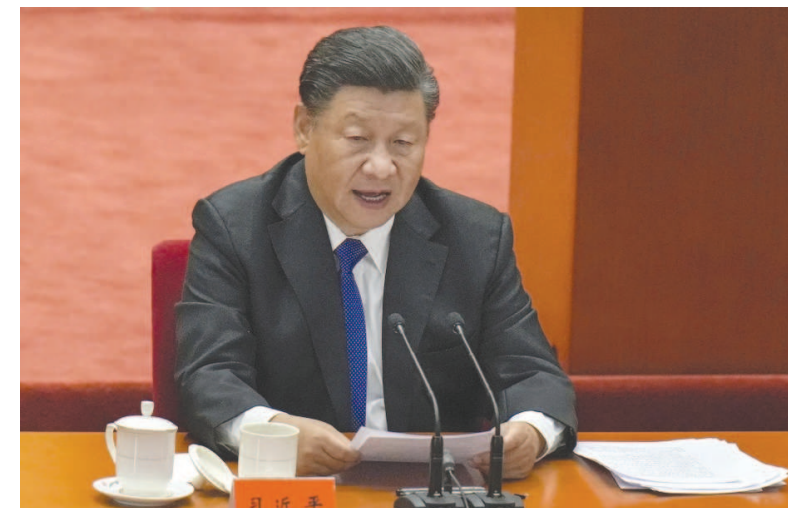
**Canberra, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The Australian government has put on hold its plans to cut ties with the British monarchy by becoming a republic. Matt Thistlethwaite, Assistant Minister for the republic, said that holding a referendum on becoming a republic was not

currently a priority for the governing Labor Party, reports Xinhua news agency. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in June 2022 committed to holding a referendum - a vote of the Australian people on a proposed change to the country's constitution -- on splitting from the monarchy if he wins a second term in power in 2025.



## Xi Jinping intensifies crackdown on industries

**Hong Kong, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Chinese leader Xi Jinping has vowed to go after those who are responsible for the corruption and has launched a campaign which will target industries such as finance, energy and infrastructure, media reports said. China will tackle "hidden risks" and increase the punishment for people who offer bribes, Xi was quoted as saying at a meeting of the Communist Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI), its top anti-graft body, state media reported. "While there had been an overwhelming victory in the decade-long anti-corruption push, the situation remains complex," Xi said. "In the face of such [a] complex situation, there can be no stopping, slacking or compromising on anti-corruption," CNN reported. We will deepen the rectification of corruption in power-concentrated, capital-intensive and resource-rich sectors, he said. He said that the party will punish the 'corruption of flies and ants' to give the masses a greater sense of gain. Since Xi assumed power in 2012, he has been going after both "tigers," high ranking officials, as well as



"flies," lower level cadres. The reference to flies and ants refers to corruption by small players or smaller-scale corruption that is easier to conceal, CNN reported. The campaign, which is Xi's signature project, has swept across the ruling Communist Party, the government, the military and state-owned companies in waves. Now its focus will be on

state-owned enterprises, including the pharmaceutical sector. Alfred Wu, an associate professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, says the message is that the crackdown won't be ending anytime soon, CNN reported.

## Mumbai-born Minita Sanghvi announces candidacy for NY state senate seat

**New York, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Mumbai-born Minita Sanghvi, a Democrat, has announced her candidacy for the 44th State Senate District in New York's Capital Region, currently held by Republican Jim Tedisco. If elected, Sanghvi will be the first gay woman and first Indian-American to represent the District, which includes Saratoga County, Niskayuna, and the city of Schenectady. A Commissioner of Finances in the Saratoga Springs city council, Sanghvi was re-elected last November and began her second two-year term in the position, beginning this year. "After careful consideration and lots of conversations I've decided to run for State Senate. I believe we have a leadership gap and we need someone who puts the needs of our community first," she

posted on X. "I'm running for State Senate because we deserve better," Sanghvi said in a press release on Friday. "We need a leader who will prioritise the needs of our community over partisan politics in Albany. I'm not a career politician; I'm a parent, a business educator, and a dedicated public servant committed to fiscal responsibility. My track record reflects my ability to listen to the people and collaborate with others to deliver tangible results," she added. Her priorities include securing infrastructure dollars for bridges and roads, getting more state aid to counties and cities, bringing green and high-tech jobs to communities, and establishing "an innovation corridor" linking Schenectady and Saratoga. "I believe in protecting rights and freedoms for all residents, no matter where they live or what political party they belong to," Sanghvi



said in a statement. "I'll protect women's access to health care, defend LGBTQ rights, and ensure everyone has an equal shot at the same American Dream this country has given to me," she said in a statement. According to the state Board of Elections, there are approximately 226,000 active registered voters in the 44th State Senate District. Born in Mumbai into a family of entrepreneurs, Sanghvi moved to the US in 2001 and became a citizen in 2010. In 2014, she moved to Saratoga Springs to teach at Skidmore College in the Management and Business Department.

## Israel intensifies military operations against Hamas, Hezbollah

**Jerusalem, Jan 12 (IANS) :** The exchange of fire between Israeli forces and Hezbollah escalated on the Israel-Lebanon border, with Israel claiming the killing of the Lebanese militant group's two senior commanders. Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Spokesman Daniel Hagari admitted that Israel was behind the assassination of Ali Hussein Barji, a Hezbollah commander, in Lebanon earlier on Friday, a day after it killed the senior commander of Hezbollah's elite Radwan forces, Wissam Hassan Tawil. At a press briefing, Hagari said Barji, who was killed in an airstrike, had been identified as the southern Lebanese commander of Hezbollah's Aerial Unit.



## India reiterates 'zero tolerance' for terrorism; says 'large-scale civilian deaths' in Gaza conflict unacceptable

**United Nations, Jan 12 (IANS) :** Reiterating its zero tolerance for terrorism, India has said that the widespread deaths of civilians caught in the Hamas-Israel conflict is "clearly unacceptable" and called for dialogue and diplomacy to resolve it. "There can be no justification for terrorism and hostage-taking," India's Permanent Representative Ruchira Kamboj told the UN General Assembly on Friday. "India has a zero-tolerance approach to terrorism," she said. "Our thoughts are with those who have been taken as hostage and we demand their immediate and unconditional release," she added. Kamboj was speaking on Friday at a meeting of the UN General Assembly called under its resolution that requires permanent members, who use their vetoes in the Security Council to explain their action. Unlike other delegates, she did not take the podium for her address and instead spoke from India's seat in the chamber away from the spotlight.





## Telangana HC reserves orders on RGV's 'Vyuham'

The Telangana High Court on Thursday reserved its orders on release of political thriller 'Vyuham' of well-known filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma. After hearing the arguments from both sides Justice Surepalli Nanda reserved orders on the petition by producer Dasari Kiran Kumar, who pleaded for vacating the interim order suspending release of the movie in theatres.

The producer's counsel A. Venkatesh submitted to the court that if it believes that the film may influence the forthcoming elections in Andhra Pradesh, it may give permission for the release in Telangana. However, the counsel of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) general secretary Nara Lokesh raised an objection. The film, which is allegedly defamatory towards former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and TDP president N. Chandrababu Naidu, was

scheduled to release on December 29. Naidu's son Nara Lokesh had approached the High Court, challenging the censor certificate for the movie. On December 28, Justice Surepalli Nanda had suspended the release on the ground that the Revising Committee failed to state reasons for granting a Certificate of Exhibition when initially the application had been rejected noting a series of irregularities. The court that no major deletions or the changes were made, the Revising Committee granted the certificate. The court directed the Central Board of Film Certification, Revising Committee, and producer of the movie to place all records pertaining to the movie before the Court on the next date of hearing.

## Nawazuddin fell off a moving boat while filming 'Saindhav' in Sri Lanka

Acclaimed actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui, who is making his debut in the South film industry with 'Saindhav' starring Venkatesh Daggubati, during a pivotal sequence shot amidst the scenic backdrop of Sri Lanka experienced an unexpected tumble off the boat.

However, the actor emerged unhurt after the incident. Recounting the moment, Nawazuddin shared: "We were shooting in Sri Lanka and I almost fell off a boat. A massive wave came our way and almost toppled me...I flew off the boat. I was lucky to land on the boat again instead of the ocean."

The filmmakers decided to incorporate this unplanned yet thrilling moment into the final cut as they got it all on camera. "They kept the shot in the film. I bet the audience will love it!" 'Saindhav' is a Telugu-language action thriller film directed by Sailesh Kolanu. It also stars Arya, Andrea Jeremiah, Shraddha Srinath, Baby Sara and Ruhani Sharma in pivotal roles.



## Suriya wraps up 'Kanguva', shares new still from the film

Tamil superstar Suriya, who stole the show in the last scene of 'Vikram' with his stint as 'Rolex Bhai', has wrapped up his part for the upcoming film 'Kanguva'. The actor took to his X, and shared the update with his fans as he shared a new still from the film. The image shared by Suriya features him in the character of a warrior and the film travels in two different time periods, ancient and modern era. He wrote in the caption: "My last shot done for kanguva! An entire unit filled with positivity! It's a finishing of one and beginning of many..! Thank you dearest @directorsiva and team for all the memories! #Kanguva is huge."

## Akshay, Tiger all set for 'Bade Miyan Chote Miyan' release on Eid

Action heroes Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff are all set for the release of their upcoming film 'Bade Miyan Chote Miyan' and have given a countdown till Eid. Akshay and Tiger took to their respective Instagram accounts, where they shared a new picture posing in army green T-shirts paired with camouflage pants posing in front of a chopper.



## I also want to go to Ram temple and have darshan, says Abhishek Bachchan

Jaipur Pink Panthers team owner and actor Abhishek Bachchan was in Jaipur on Thursday and expressed his willingness to visit the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya and have 'darshan' there.

Speaking to the media here, Abhishek said: "I also want to go to Ram temple and have darshan."

"Papa (Amitabh Bachchan) does not come to the stadium and watch Pro Kabaddi League matches. He feels that the day I come to watch the match, our team loses," he added.



## Prabhas: I always share my plans and what's on my mind with Rajamouli

Actor Prabhas, who has been getting a lot of good response to his recently released theatrical extravaganza 'Salaar: Part 1 - Ceasefire', has shared that he always shares his plans with the 'Baahubali' director S. S. Rajamouli.

The two forged a bond during the making of the film 'Chatrapathi', which was released in 2005. Since then, the actor and the director have been inseparable having doled out one of the biggest pan-India hits, the 'Baahubali' franchise. Talking about the same, Prabhas said: "So, it's been 18 years since the film 'Chatrapathi' and we have developed a friendship. He has taught me a lot. When Prashanth or anyone else comes around, we engage in general discussions. Rajamouli doesn't dictate terms like, 'You should do it like this', or 'You should do that'. We converse as friends, much like one would with friends. I informed Rajamouli about my desire to work with Prashanth and our discussions." The actor further mentioned: "I always share my plans and what's on my mind, and we have a casual chat where he also updates me about his projects. Our interactions are akin to friendly discussions. Rajamouli is also enthusiastic about my collaboration with Prashanth Neel. That's



the nature of our friendship—a blend of personal life discussions and film-related talks. Both my friends and family are thrilled about me working with Prashanth and are even more eager for 'Salaar Part 2' to be released." The actor also said that for him a good story matters the most, and that he would like to work again with all the directors whom he has worked with so far.

## Prasanth Varma: There is no mention of religion in 'HanuMan'

Director Prasanth Varma, who is gearing up for the release of his upcoming superhero film 'HanuMan', has revealed that there is no mention of religion in his movie, and that it is culturally rooted.

From its inception, the director envisioned a superhero film rooted in Indian culture rather than following the Marvel or DC template. The director attributed the fervour to the revered Lord Hanuman, as he said: "The buzz around the film is 99 per cent Hanuman ji and one per cent my content." Having recently visited a

Hanuman ji temple in Delhi, Varma shares the overwhelming experience, emphasising the cultural depth that sets 'HanuMan' apart.

He further mentioned: "I didn't want it to be a Marvel or DC-like superhero film but something indigenous and culturally rooted. The first thought that came to mind was Hanuman ji, and I wrote the story." The film is set in modern times with ancient elements, and stars Teja Sajja, Amritha Aiyer, Varalaxmi Sarathkumar, Raj Deepak Shetty, and Vinay Rai. Prasanth believes the cultural richness and universal appeal make 'HanuMan' a movie for



all ages and backgrounds. He further mentioned: "There is no mention of religion in this movie. 'HanuMan' is going to appeal to all ages, and there is not a single element that'll make you uncomfortable in this film. You can go with your entire family, have fun, and get blessed." "If this film works, I want to introduce new direc-

tors for the subsequent superhero projects. There is a lot of scope to tell other stories from our history and culture.

That's why I want this film to work," he added. 'HanuMan' releases in cinemas on January 12.

## Kareena Kapoor: I don't seek validation from social media at all

Kareena Kapoor Khan has been in the Hindi film industry for over two decades and enjoys a massive fan following for the work she has done over the years. In 2020, the diva made her debut on social media which she enjoys using, and through which she connects with her fans, however, she said that she doesn't seek validation from it. Kareena currently enjoys

a fan following of 11.4 million on Instagram and often shares glimpses of her day-to-day life and updates about her work. Asked how much importance does social media validation hold for her, Kareena told IANS: "I enjoy using social media but for me, it is a way to connect with my fans and give them a glimpse into my life."

