

THE INDIAN MAIL

ENGLISH DAILY

THURSDAY, 02 January 2025

VOLUME : 15 ISSUE : 126 PAGES : 12 ₹ 4

PUBLISHED FROM HYDERABAD, VIJAYAWADA



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Vishy Anand congratulates Vaishali for bronze medal at World Blitz Championship

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KCR achieved Telangana by risking his life: KTR

BRS party working president KT Rama Rao today said their party president KCR was a leader who achieved Telangana State by putting his head....

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PM Modi lauds first cabinet decision of 2025, says 'proud of our farmer sisters and brothers'

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday lauded the first cabinet decision of 2025 and said that his government is committed to enhancing the well-being and prosperity of the farming community. PM Modi's admiration follows the Union Cabinet's go-ahead for the extension of a one-time package for DAP procurement. Taking to his social media handle on X, PM Modi wrote, "Ours is a government fully committed to furthering the welfare of farmers. We are proud of all our farmer sisters and brothers who work hard to feed our nation." Continued on pg 02

Drunk man climbs electric pole, lies down on wires in Andhra Pradesh

Amaravati, Jan 1 (IANS) : In a bizarre incident in Andhra Pradesh's Parvathipuram Manyam district, a drunk youth climbed on an electric pole and lied-down on the wires. However, a disaster was averted as alert villagers turned off the transformer in time. The incident occurred in M. Singipuram village in Palakonda Mandal.



India intensifies extradition process of 26/11 Mumbai attacks accused Tahawwur Rana from US

Mumbai/New York, Jan 1 (IANS): Pakistani-Canadian Tahawwur Rana could soon be extradited to India for his role in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks that killed around 175 people, sources in the National Investigation Agency (NIA)

and the Mumbai Police's crime branch confirmed on Wednesday. Continued on pg 02



Arvind Kejriwal writes to RSS chief on BJP's politics, raises questions

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal has written a letter to Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat seeking answers to some questions on the BJP's politics. In the letter, Kejriwal has posed questions like -- Does RSS support whatever wrong BJP has done in the past few days? BJP leaders are openly distributing money, does RSS support vote buying? Dalit.

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Former Andhra minister's wife appears before police in missing rice case

Vijayawada, Jan 1 (IANS) : Senior YSR Congress Party leader and former Andhra Pradesh minister Perni Venkataramaiah alias Perni Nani's wife Jayasudha on Wednesday appeared before police in connection with a case related to rice meant for the public distribution system (PDS) going missing from a warehouse in Machilipatnam.

In response to the notice issued by police, Jayasudha, who is the prime accused in the case, appeared before police at Bandar Taluka Police Station in Krishna district for questioning. The police did not allow Jayasudha's lawyer during the questioning.

Continued on pg 02

People throng temples in Telugu states on first day of 2025

Hyderabad, Jan 1 (IANS) : Temples in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh saw a huge rush of devotees on the first day of the New Year as thousands queued up to seek divine blessings. Temples in Hyderabad and other parts of Telangana and in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.



Metro extension to Shamirpet, Medchal

Hyderabad, Jan.1 (NSS): The dream of a Metro rail for the denizens of North Hyderabad is about to come true. As a New Year gift to them, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has given the green signal for the preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for the Paradise-Medchal (23 kilometers) and JBS-Shamirpet (22 kilometers) Metro corridors. He instructed HAML MD NVS Reddy to prepare the DPRs immediately and send them to the Union government for approval as Metro Rail Phase-2 Part-'B'. The Chief Minister on Wednesday discussed with Principal Secretary Danakishore (Municipal administration) and HAML MD NVS Reddy about preparation of DPRs for these two corridors. The corridor from Paradise Metro Station to Medchal will cover approximately 23 kilometers, passing through Tadband, Bowenpally, Suchitra Circle.



Minister Ponnabhakkar makes surprise visit to Jubilee Bus Station

Hyderabad, Jan 1 : Minister for Transport Ponnabhakkar conducted a surprise inspection at the Jubilee Bus Station (JBS) in Secunderabad on Wednesday. He interacted with passengers and in-

spected the condition of toilets at the bus station. As part of Road Safety Month, it was suggested to talk to drivers and create awareness on the road safety. The Minister spoke to RTC employees in

the canteen and suggested that quality food be provided in the canteen. Later, he inspected the cargo center located on the premises of the Bus Station.



Chandrababu performs puja at Durga temple

Vijayawada, Jan 1 (NSS): AP CM Chandrababu Naidu today visited the Kanaka Durga temple which is located on Indrakiladri in Vijayawada. The temple priests and staff welcomed him with a Poornakumbham. After darshan, the scholars gave him Vedic blessings. They also presented Tirtha Prasad to him. On the occasion of the New Year, a large number of devotees visited temple and performed puja.

CM planning to cut off Rythu Bharosa benefit: Harish Rao

Hyderabad, Jan.1 (NSS):Former BRS minister T Harish Rao has criticized CM Revanth Reddy for reportedly taking steps to cut the monetary benefit under its Rythu Bharosa scheme. Speaking to mediapersons at Sangareddy, he said Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who had demanded Rythu Bandhu for three crops when he was in the Opposition, was now skipped the benefit for the Rabi season and was planning to cut it for the rainy season. "Revanth Reddy, who has already cheated on the farm loan waiver scheme, was preparing for another fraud by making cuts in the Rythu Bharosa scheme," Harish Rao alleged. He said the farmers were being asked to make applications with self-declarations for the sake of the Rythu

Bharosa scheme and insulting the farmers in the name of conditions and declarations. "Why are you so tired of the farmers? Should the farmers turn around offices again and around Congress leaders? During KCR's tenure, the money was deposited in the accounts of the farmers without any twists and turns," he claimed. He said as per the election promises made by the Congress, ₹.15,000 per acre should be given to the farmers. "Revanth Reddy is giving news leaks by stating that only the farmers, who cultivate crops, will get the benefit under the Rythu Bharosa



scheme. He is saying that he will give it only once to the farmers of commercial crops and fruit orchards like cotton. This will harm those farmers. They also have a lot of investment and they are cultivated by those who do not have much irrigation facility," he said. He also said the cultivation of crops in hills was negligible and tribal farmers would suffer if their benefit was cut.

India intensifies extradition process of 26/11 Mumbai attacks accused Tahawwur Rana from US

Continued From pg 01

The extradition process had intensified after a federal appeals court in the US had quashed Rana's appeal in August, last year. The California-based Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals had upheld a lower federal court verdict permitting his extradition and ruled that the 1997 extradition treaty between India and the US covered his alleged offences. A three-panel appeals court bench had heard the habeas corpus petition against the Central California District Court judgement allowing Rana's extradition. Judge Milan Smith, who wrote

the opinion for the bench, said "India provided sufficient competent evidence" to support the initial order of a magistrate judge's "finding of probable cause that Rana committed the charged crimes" to allow the extradition. Rana, a Canadian citizen living in Chicago, was arrested in the US in 2009 for plotting to bomb a Danish newspaper, 'Jyllands-Posten', that published a controversial image of Prophet Mohammed. He faced three main charges in a Chicago federal court relating to his involvement in the Danish case, providing support to Lashkar, and conspiring for the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. He was acquitted of the Mumbai attack charge, but convicted in the other two and sentenced to 14 years.

Arvind Kejriwal writes to RSS chief on BJP's politics, raises questions

Continued From pg 01

and Purvanchali votes (from the voter list) are being cut on a large scale. Does RSS think this is good for democracy? Doesn't RSS feel that the BJP is weakening democracy?" The former Delhi Chief Minister had on December 29 launched a scathing attack on the BJP, accusing the party of attempting to manipulate the voter lists, and also claimed that 'Operation Lotus' has been going on since December 15 in his Assembly constituency. He highlighted voter deletion issues in the Shahdara constituency, where the BJP allegedly submitted applications to remove 11,008 voters. Kejriwal also alleged that "Operation Lotus" began in his own New Delhi constituency on December 15. "In 15 days, they submitted applications to delete 5,000 voters and add 7,500. My constituency has 1,06,000 voters, so they are trying to delete 5 per cent and add 7.5 per cent. If 12 per cent of the votes are manipulated, what's the point

of elections? This is blatant tampering in the name of democracy." This was refuted by the BJP, which claimed that the AAP had included illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingyas in the voter list. "We openly state that you have added 8,000 to 10,000 illegal votes per constituency. In houses where five people live, you've registered up to 50 fake votes. We will remove every single one of these illegal votes," BJP spokesperson Manjinder Singh Sirsa had said in response. The BJP leader further accused AAP of harbouring and supporting infiltrators for political gain. "You've settled infiltrators here,

given them Rs 10,000 per month, free ration, and even shelter in tents...Now, when their votes are being removed, you are in distress. Let me make it clear, no Rohingya or Bangladeshi infiltrator will be allowed to vote in Delhi," Sirsa said. This is not the first time that Kejriwal has written to the RSS chief. He wrote a similar letter in September 2024 asking five questions related to the BJP and its leadership. Expressing concern, Kejriwal said the direction in which the BJP-led Centre was taking the country as well as its politics were harmful to India.

Public Notice For E-Auction For Sale of Immovable Properties

Sale of Immovable property mortgaged to IIFL Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as India Infoline Housing Finance Ltd.) (IIFL-HFL) Corporate Office at Plot No.98, Udyog Vihar, Phase-IV, Gurgaon-122015 (Haryana) and Branch Office at "Door No 4-14-111 A, 1st Floor, Opposite Sivalayam, Anjaneyapat, Amaravati Road, Guntur - 522007" 1st Floor, Ring Road Junction, Opposite Belam Market, Anakapali, Vishakapatnam, Andhra Pradesh-531001/40-5-11A, 11B, Chandramouli Puram, Tikka Road, Near Sweet Meigs Hotel, MG Road Vijayawada-520010 under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter "Act"), Whereas the Authorized Officer ("AO") of IIFL-HFL had taken the possession of the following properties pursuant to the notice issued U/S 13(2) of the Act in the following loan accounts/prospect nos. with a right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS AND WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS" for realization of IIFL-HFL's dues. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the website: www.iiflhome.com

Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Legal Heir	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property Secured Asset	Date of Physical Possession	Reserve Price
1. Mr. Nagella Suneel 2. Mrs. Nagella Usha (Prospect No. 873807)	23-Jan-2024 Rs.18,39,638/- (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Six Hundred and Thirty Eight Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing Flat No. 116, Third Floor, Plot Nos. 5,6,9 and 90 B, S. No. 52/B, Choodamani Enclave, Padmanabha Nagar, Patla No. 1184, Venkatarao Village, Copala palem, Within GVMC Limits, Vishakapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India, 531127. Area Admeasuring (In Sq. Ft.): Property Type: Built Up, Area, Carpet Area, Land Area Property Area: 850.00, 549.00, 345.00. (Area admeasuring 995 Sq. Ft.)	16-Nov-2024 Total Outstanding as On Date 30-Dec-2024 Rs. 22,95,512/- (Rupees Twenty Two Lakh Eighty Five Thousand Five Hundred and Twelve Only)	Rs.28,31,000/- (Rupees Twenty Eight Lakh Thirty One Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 2,83,100/- (Rupees Two Lakh Eighty Three Thousand One Hundred Only)
1. Mr. Nalliboyina Ramachandra Rao 2. Mrs. Anjanamma Nalliboyina 3. Mr. Rudra Mani Nalliboyina (Prospect No. 909098)	18-May-2023 Rs.11,08,958/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Eight Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs.25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing D.No: 79/A, Block No.2 with Door No. 2-40 of Ramachandrapuram village, admeasuring 2178 sq. ft., Ramachandrapuram Village Panchayat area, Mangalagiri mandal, under the District and with in the limits of SRO, Mangalagiri, Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh, India-522501.(Land Area Ad.Measuring: 1809 Sq.ft, Built Up Area Ad.Measuring: 975 Sq.ft.)	29-Nov-2024 Total Outstanding as On Date 05-Dec-2024 Rs. 12,19,947/- (Rupees Twelve Lakh Nineteen Thousand Nine Hundred Forty Seven Only)	Rs. 24,99,000/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 2,49,900/- (Rupees Two Lakh Forty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Only)
1. Mr. Ontipuli Nagababu 2. Mrs. Jhansi Ontipuli (Prospect No. 1L10139629)	29-May-2023 Rs.16,46,841/- (Rupees Sixteen Lakh Forty Six Thousand Eight Hundred Forty One Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs.25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing Sy. No. 338/1, Sub. Division Sy. No.338/1/1, Door No.3-30, New D. No 1-39, Asst No.251, Land area 1870 sq. ft., Carpet area 1052.99 sq. ft., Built up area 1316.24 sq. ft., Kavuluru Village, Laredu, Mandali, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh, India, 521228. (Area Admeasuring 1763 sq. ft.)	26-Nov-2024 Total Outstanding as On Date 05-Dec-2024 Rs.17,64,857/- (Rupees Seventeen Lakh Sixty Four Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Seven Only)	Rs. 23,02,000/- (Rupees Twenty Three Lakh Two Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 2,30,200/- (Rupees Two Lakh Thirty Thousand Two Hundred Only)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-

- For participating in e-auction, intending bidders required to register their details with the Service Provider https://www.iiflhome.com well in advance and has to create the login account, login ID and password. Intending bidders have to submit / send their "Tender FORM" along with the payment details towards EMD, copy of the KYC and PAN card at the above mentioned Branch Office.
- 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 be automatically get extended for 5 minutes.
- The successful bidder should deposit 25% of the bid amount (after adjusting EMD) within 24 hours of the acceptance of bid price by the AO and the balance 75% of the bid amount within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale by the secured creditor. All deposit and payment shall be in the prescribed mode of payment.
- The purchaser has to bear the cess, applicable stamp duty, fees, and any other statutory dues or other dues like municipal tax, electricity charges, land and all other incidental costs, charges including all taxes and rates outgoings relating to the property.
- The purchaser has to pay TDS application to the transaction/payment of sale amount and submit the TDS certificate with IIFL HFL.
- Bidders are advised to go through the website https://www.iiflhome.com and https://www.iifl.com/home-loans/properties-for-auction for detailed terms and conditions of auction sale & auction application form before submitting their Bids for taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings.
- For details, help procedure and online training on e-auction prospective bidders may contact the service provider E mail ID:- care@iiflhome.com, Support Helpline Numbers@1800 2672 499.
- For any query related to Property details, Inspection of Property and Online bid etc. call IIFL HFL toll free no. 1800 2672 499 from 09:30 hrs to 18:00 hrs between Monday to Friday or write to email:- care@iiflhome.com
- Notice is hereby given to above said borrowers to collect the household articles, which were lying in the secured asset at the time of taking physical possession within 7 days, otherwise IIFL-HFL shall not be responsible for any loss of property under the circumstances.
- Further the notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s), that in case they fail to collect the above said articles same shall be sold in accordance with Law. In case of default in payment at any stage by the successful bidder / auction purchaser within the above stipulated time, the sale will be cancelled and the amount already paid will be forfeited (including EMD) and the property will be again put to sale.
- AO reserves the rights to postpone/cancel or vary the terms and condition of tender/auction without assigning any reason thereof. In case of any dispute in tender/auction, the decision of AO of IIFL-HFL will be final.

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8 (6) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

The Borrower are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with upto dated interest and ancillary expenses before the date of Tender/Auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost

Place: Andhra Pradesh Date: 02-Jan-2025 Sd/- Authorised Officer, IIFL Home Finance Limited

Public Notice For E-Auction For Sale of Immovable Properties (Appendix - IV A) (Rule 8(6))

Sale of Immovable property mortgaged to IIFL Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as India Infoline Housing Finance Ltd.) (IIFL-HFL) Corporate Office at Plot No.98, Udyog Vihar, Phase-IV, Gurgaon-122015 (Haryana) and Branch Office at "416-14-298/1, First Floor, Behind Narayana Concept School, Mini Bypass Road, Srihari Nagar, Nellore - 524004, A.P."/ D.No: 2126-127, Opp. Reliance Trends, Above RP Residence, Puttur Road, Kongareddyapalli, Chittoor, A.P. Pin: 517001/D.No-4-14-111 A, 1st Floor, Opp.Sivalayam Temple, Anjaneyapa Pet, Amaravati Road, Guntur- 522007/ No-110-4-211, Bess Indian Oil Pump, Myx Complex, Srinivasa Colony, Mahabubnagar, Telangana-509001/ H. No. 2-5-614, KK Complex, 2nd Floor, Above the overpass Bank, D.M. Road, Hanamkonda-Warangal, Telangana-506001 under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter "Act"), Whereas the Authorized Officer ("AO") of IIFL-HFL had taken the possession of the following properties pursuant to the notice issued U/S 13(2) of the Act in the following loan accounts/prospect nos. with a right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS AND WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS" for realization of IIFL-HFL's dues. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the website: www.iiflhome.com

Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Legal Heir	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property Secured Asset	Date of Physical Possession	Reserve Price
1. Mrs. Yamini Thiruvayipathi 2. Mr. Sai Krishna Thiruvayipathi (Prospect No. 966374)	16-Jan-2023 Rs.11,21,024/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Twenty One Thousand Four Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs. 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand Only)	All that part & parcel of the property bearing Property Situated in Survey No 531/B, With Land Area Ad Measuring 852 Sq.ft., Carpet Area Ad Measuring 415 Sq.ft. And Built Up Area Ad Measuring 517 Sq.ft., Katabudi, Palani Village, Assessment No. 8733, Buchi Reddy Palem, Buchireddyapalli, Nellore, 524305, Andhra Pradesh, India .	29-Dec-2023 Total Outstanding as On Date 05-Dec-2024 Rs. 15,30,305/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakh Thirty Thousand Three Hundred & Five Only)	Rs. 8,64,000/- (Rupees Eight Lakh Sixty Four Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 86,400/- (Rupees Eighty Six Thousand Four Hundred Only)
1. Mr. Raja N S 2. Mrs. Ambika M R 3. Rupa Power Looms (Prospect No. 946395)	29-Nov-2021 Rs.11,73,485/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Seventy Three Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Five Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs.25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property Door No. 6- 6-97, Asst No. 1118004079, In Survey No. 2/1, Situated at Vinayapuram Village, Nagari Industrial, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh, India, 517590, admeasuring 1422sq.ft. (Carpet area 331.2 sq. ft., Built up area 414 sq. ft.)	13-Jun-2024 Total Outstanding as On Date 05-Dec-2024 Rs.14,99,479/- (Rupees Fourteen Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Four Hundred and Seventy Nine Only)	Rs.11,49,000/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Forty Nine Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 1,14,900/- (Rupees One Lakh Fourteen Thousand Nine Hundred Only)
1. Mr. Eerapogu Seayanna 2. Mrs. Eerapogu Gopalamma 3. Sri Ganapathi Vastirayam (Prospect No. 1L1029927)	20-Sep-2023 Rs. 11,29,652/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Twenty Nine Thousand Six Hundred and Fifty Two Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs.25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property Hno 1-48, Assessment No. 48 , Janampeta Village Srinagar Mandal, Mahabubnagar, Telangana India, 509104 Area Admeasuring (In Sq. Ft.):Property Type:Land Area , Built Up Area, Carpet Area Property Area: 3479.00, 705.00, 560.00	03-May-2024 Total Outstanding as On Date 05-Dec-2024 Rs. 16,12,193/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakh Twelve Thousand One Hundred and Ninety Three Only)	Rs.13,36,000/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakh Thirty Six Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs.1,33,600/- (Rupees One Lakh Thirty Three Thousand Six Hundred Only)
1. Mrs. Santha Thota 2. Mr. Kiran Kumar Thota 3. Shiva Mini Dairy 4. Coovasi Floor Mill (Prospect No. 1L1014887)	16-Feb-2022 Rs.15,21,575/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakh Twenty One Thousand Five Hundred Seventy Five Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs.25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing H. No. 9-58, (as per site 9-58/2), admeasuring 217.5 Sq. mtrs., Akulathanda, Tel Narsampet, Tel Warangal, Telangana, India, 506132. (Built Up Area admeasuring 650 sq. ft.)	20-May-2024 Total Outstanding as On Date 05-Dec-2024 Rs. 16,82,989/- (Rupees Sixteen Lakh Eighty Two Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty Nine Only)	Rs.17,68,000/- (Rupees Seventeen Lakh Sixty Eight Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 1,76,800/- (Rupees One Lakh Seventy Six Thousand Eight Hundred Only)
1. Mr. Anil Kumar Kakumanu 2. Mrs. Kakumanu Soudaryna 3. Soudaryna Textiles And Tailoring (Prospect No. 1L10135140)	24-May-2022 Rs. 12,01,348/- (Rupees Twelve Lakh One Thousand Three Hundred and Forty Eight Only) Bid Increase Amount Rs.20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing Dno 106/A,Area Admeasuring 3158 Sq.Ft, Govindapuram Sivaru , Kammavapalem Grama Panchayat Area Govindapuram Village, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India, 522611	23-Aug-2022 Total Outstanding as On Date 05-Dec-2024 Rs. 13,21,889/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakh Twenty One Thousand Eight Hundred And Eighty Nine Only)	Rs. 9,82,000/- (Rupees Nine Lakh Eighty Two Thousand Only) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 98,200/- (Rupees Ninety Eight Thousand Two Hundred Only)

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- The purchaser has to pay TDS application to the transaction/payment of sale amount and submit the TDS certificate with IIFL HFL.
- Bidders are advised to go through the website https://www.iiflhome.com and https://www.iifl.com/home-loans/properties-for-auction for detailed terms and conditions of auction sale & auction application form before submitting their Bids for taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings.
- For details, help procedure and online training on e-auction prospective bidders may contact the service provider E mail ID:- care@iiflhome.com, Support Helpline Numbers@1800 2672 499.
- For any query related to Property details, Inspection of Property and Online bid etc. call IIFL HFL toll free no. 1800 2672 499 from 09:30 hrs to 18:00 hrs between Monday to Friday or write to email:- care@iiflhome.com
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- Further the notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s), that in case they fail to collect the above said articles same shall be sold in accordance with Law. In case of default in payment at any stage by the successful bidder / auction purchaser within the above stipulated time, the sale will be cancelled and the amount already paid will be forfeited (including EMD) and the property will be again put to sale.
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Place: Andhra Pradesh & Telangana Date: 02-Jan-2025 Sd/- Authorised Officer, IIFL Home Finance Limited

Former Andhra minister's wife appears before police in missing rice case

Continued From pg 01

Circle Inspector Yesubabu was questioning her. Jayasudha reached the police station in the car of Machilipatnam Mayor Venkateswaramma, who belongs to the YSR Congress Party. Jayasudha was granted anticipatory bail by a Machilipatnam court on Monday. However, the judge had directed her to cooperate in the investigation.

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Tuesday directed police not to arrest Perni Nani until the next hearing on January 6. The Machilipatnam police listed Nani as the sixth accused (A-6) in the case, which relates to 378 metric tonnes of PDS rice going missing from a warehouse owned by Jayasudha at Potlapalem in Bandar mandal (block). The warehouse was leased to the state Civil Supplies department, whose officials during a recent inspection found 7,577 bags of PDS rice stored in the warehouse missing.

The police had booked the case under Sections 316 (3) (criminal breach of trust by a warehouse keeper), 316 (5) (criminal breach of trust by a public servant), 61 (2) r/w 3 (5) (criminal conspiracy) of Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita (BNS), 2023. Four accused in the case were arrested and sent to judicial custody for 12 days.



Uttam celebrates New Year with UT prisoners and students away from families

Hyderabad, Jan 1 (NSS): In a rare and heartfelt gesture, Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy ushered in the New Year by celebrating with those often overlooked - under-trial prisoners and students far from home. On New Year 2025, the minister visited Huzurnagar Sub-Jail, greeting the inmates with warm wishes and encouraging words. Uttam Kumar Reddy engaged with the prisoners, listening to their concerns and offering words of encouragement and hope for a better future. During his visit, he shared breakfast with the undertrial prisoners and assured them that he would bring their grievances to the attention of the concerned authorities. In response to the inmates' request for a television set, he announced that he would personally donate a TV for their use in the sub-jail. The inmates were reportedly touched by his compassionate approach, with his words resonating deeply and making the occasion a significant and uplifting start to the year. Later, the minister, accompanied by Kodad MLA N Padmavathi, visited the Minorities Residential School and Junior College for Girls in Kodad. The duo shared a meal with the students and spent time engaging with them about their aspirations and challenges.



KCR achieved Telangana by risking his life : KTR

Hyderabad, Jan 1 (NSS): BRS party working president KT Rama Rao today said their party president KCR was a leader who achieved Telangana State by putting his head in the mouth of death. Speaking on the occasion of the unveiling of the BRS party calendar at

Telangana Bhavan, KTR said "I am happy to visit Telangana Bhavan on the first day of the English New Year and unveil the BRS party calendar with the entire BRS leadership here. There is only one thing that we all aspire for as our inspiration. Our aspiration is that KCR, the leader, who achieved Telangana by putting his head in the death knell, should become the chief minister of the State again. I wish that under the leadership of KCR, our party should register more victories, get back the blessings of the people to the fullest, give us the strength to face the obstacles we face, and be happy with your families.

PM Modi lauds first cabinet decision of 2025, says 'proud of our farmer sisters and brothers'

Continued From pg 01

"The first cabinet of 2025 is dedicated to enhancing prosperity for our farmers. I am glad that key decisions have been taken in this regard," he added. The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Modi, this morning, approved the extension of a one-time special package on procurement of Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) beyond the NBS subsidy, to ensure sustainable availability at affordable prices for farmers. Under the special package, farmers will continue to get DAP at Rs 1,350/- per bag for 50 kg and the extra burden will be borne by the government. "The decision will ensure greater availability of DAP to farmers at subsidised, affordable and reasonable prices," said the government in a statement. The cabinet okayed the one-time special package of Rs 3,850 crore for DAP procurement. The additional subsidy will offset a hike in international prices which will benefit eventually farmers. Many farmers from Haryana welcomed the move, soon after the announcement. A couple of them said that this move was highly beneficial for the farming community and it would buffer them from soaring prices. Notably, the global market prices of DAP remain volatile because of fluctuations in geo-political dynamics.

Bank of Baroda
ROSAR BRANCH#: 3-5-822/5, 1st Floor, Hyderabad Main Road, Hyderabad, Hyderabad-500029, Tel: + 91 40 23421835, E-mail: ykhyd@bankofbaroda.co.in

NOTICE BEFORE SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 6 (2) & 8 (6) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002 ("PRE-SALE NOTICE")

Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagees: 1) Mrs. Usha Rani Gajjala, #18-20/1, Sai Hanuman Nilayam, Gopal Nagar, Malkajgiri, Hyderabad-47. 2) Mrs. Usha Rani Gajjala, Block No:103, Floatilla Apartments, Nakanampur(Village), Rajendranagar Mandal, R.R Dist., Hyderabad-89. 3) Mr. Mallenkonda Anirodh, #16-20/1, Sai Hanuman Nilayam, Gopal Nagar, Malkajgiri, Hyderabad-47. 4) Mr. Mallenkonda Anirodh, Block No:103, Floatilla Apartment, Nakanampur(Village), Rajendranagar Mandal, R.R Dist., Hyderabad-89..

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Notice under Rule 6(2) and/or Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act, 2002).

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Bank of Baroda u/s 13(2) of the above said SARFAESI Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 issued a Demand Notice on 31.10.2023 calling upon the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) Mrs. Usha Rani Gajjala & Mr. Mallenkonda Anirodh to repay the amount in terms of the said notice within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

And whereas the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Corporate Guarantor(s) having failed to repay the amount and hence, the undersigned, in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 4 and/or Rule 5 of the Rules has taken over the symbolic possession of the property/properties (hereinafter referred as the said properties) more particularly described herein below on 20.01.2024.

And whereas the undersigned in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 13(4) (a) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 proposes to realize the bank's dues by Sale of the said properties. Please take notice that the sale of secured assets mortgaged/charged to the bank more fully described hereunder will be Sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis through E-auction at any date after expiry of 30 days period from the date of this notice. Separate public e-auction notice will be sent to you, when the bank decides to auction the property/s through e-auction.

You may please note that the amount due from the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) to the bank as on 22.12.2024 is Rs.99,75,641.63 (Rupees Ninety nine lacs Seventy five thousand Six hundred Forty one and paisa Fifty three only) plus interest from 23.12.2024 plus charges, which has to be realized by the sale of the said properties. You are requested to make payment of the amounts mentioned in the notice in terms of the security/financial/Guarantee agreement executed by you.

DETAILS OF SECURED ASSETS/MORTGAGED PROPERTY

Description of the Immovable Property(s): All that the Residential Building bearing Municipal No:18-20/1 Part (Old No:18-20/4 Part), comprising Ground and Two Upper Floors, consisting of 1800 Sq.ft. of built-up area (each floor 600 Sq.ft.) admeasuring 92.90 Sq.Yds or 77.66 Sq.Mtrs. constructed on part of Plot No.109, in survey No:860, 861 & 862, situated at Gopal Nagar within the limits of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, under Malkajgiri Circle and Mandal, Ranga Reddy District, and bounded by: North: H.No:18-20/2 (Old No:18-20/4 Part), South: 25'-0" Wide Road, East: Lane 5-0' wide of H.No:18-20/2 & H.No:18-21/2, West: Part of H.No:18-20/1 on part of Plot No.109.

Date: 26-12-2024 Sd/- Authorized Officer & Chief Manager
Place: Hyderabad Bank of Baroda



Indian Railways completes 6,450 km track renewal, raises speed to 130 kmph on key sections

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : Indian Railways achieved 6,450 km of complete track renewal, 8,550 turnout renewals and raised speeds to 130 kmph over 2,000 km in 2024, according to the Railway Ministry's year-end review released on Wednesday. It also electrified 3,210 route km of tracks in 2024, extending the electrified broad gauge (BG) network to 97 per cent with renewable energy capacity reaching 2,014 MW. A record 136 Vande Bharat trains and the first Namo Bharat Rapid Rail were introduced during the year, alongside 21,513 special train trips during peak seasons, the review highlighted. As many as 10,000 locos are being equipped with Kavach safety technology and bids have been invited for 15,000 route km as part

of the modernisation drive to improve safety on the railway network, the review highlighted. The railways also loaded 1,473 million tonnes of freight in 2024, achieving a 3.86 per cent growth to increase earnings, with Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) and Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) facilitating over 72,000 train runs. Besides, work started on the redevelopment of 1,198 stations out of 1,337 stations under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. The other stations are at different stages of tendering and planning. Redevelopment of Railway Stations across the country will have a multiplier effect on the economy with increased job creation and improved economic growth, according to the review.

Delhi voters don't want AAP's 'half government': Vijender Gupta

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal's claim that the elected government in Delhi is just a "half government" – with the other half being under the Central government – is nothing but a canard, said Vijender Gupta, Leader of the Opposition in Delhi Assembly, on Wednesday. In a video message, the BJP

leader said each Delhi voter casts a full one vote so the city government cannot be a "half government". "Delhi voters do not want to elect a 'half government' under the AAP but a 'full government' under the BJP," he said. "If Kejriwal and the AAP are finding it difficult to run the elected government, they should step aside as the BJP, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is ready to respect every single vote and give a full government to voters," Gupta said. "The BJP government will make Delhi the best Capital in the world," he said. Gupta said Kejriwal and his partymen are staring at defeat in the upcoming Assembly elections and due to this the AAP convenor has started levelling baseless



charges against rivals in the New Delhi seat. "The voters of New Delhi Assembly seat are not with Kejriwal. Surveys have shown that his vote share has dropped and his state of panic is a clear indication that the AAP's ship is sinking," he said.



Passengers to board flights at Navi Mumbai International Airport from May 2025: Officials

Navi Mumbai, Jan 1 (IANS) : After the successful trial of the first commercial flight at Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA), airport officials called it a historic moment and said commercial operations will begin at the airport in May 2025. Speaking to IANS, Adani Airport Holding CEO, Arun Bansal said that landing a commercial flight at Navi Mumbai International Airport is historic. "Now we have moved one step further to-

wards starting the airport. We will inaugurate the first terminal of the airport around April 17, 2025, and commercial operations will start on it in May. The capacity of the first terminal will be around 2 crore passengers per year." He further said that India's aviation market will grow 5X from here. Now, it is necessary to have such greenfield airports in the country. This will create thousands of job opportunities. According to Bansal, after the completion of all phases, NMIA's capacity will be 9 crore passengers

per year. Along with this, the capacity to handle 30 lakh tonnes of cargo per year is also being developed in the airport. Out of this, 8 lakh tonnes of capacity will be started in the first phase. CIDCO, MD, Vijay Singhal said that the NMIA is well-connected. It is connected to South Mumbai via Atal Setu. Apart from this, it is also connected to other Metro lines, due to which the entire Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) will get access to the airport.



Seventh arrest in Bengal fake passport racket case, helped illegal Bangladeshi nationals

Kolkata, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Kolkata Police, on Wednesday, arrested a man in connection with a racket operating out of West Bengal which was engaged in arranging fake Indian identity documents, including passports, for illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators entering India through the porous borders of the state. This is the seventh arrest from the state made in the case. The arrested agent has been identified as Manoj Gupta. He had been arrested from his rented accommodation in the Chandpara area under the Gaighata Police station in North 24 Parganas district.

Former Haryana CM Hooda seeks crop damage relief

Chandigarh, Jan 1 (IANS) : Former Haryana Chief Minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda on Wednesday demanded compensation from the government for the damage caused to standing wheat and other crops due to hailstorms in various parts of the state.



Four more Bengal workers apprehended in Manipur for flouting Inner Line Permit rule

Imphal, Jan 1 (IANS) : Four more workers from West Bengal have been apprehended for flouting the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system in Manipur, taking the total number of violations from other states to 33 this month. A police official in Imphal said that four workers from West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur (also known as North Dinajpur) were apprehended

from Yairipok Bishnunaha water reservoir construction site in Thoubal district on Wednesday and they would soon be deported from Manipur to their home state after completing the formalities. Legal action has been initiated against the four detainees identified as Afsar Ali (22), Md. Sanfaraj (20), Md. Rahamtullah (23) and Sahabaj Alam (20) as per the provisions of the ILP system.

Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh in a post on social media platform X said: "I appeal to all employers, contractors, and residents to cooperate with the authorities in implementing the ILP system effectively." Earlier this month, police detected 29 persons in Imphal West district for flouting ILP guidelines and they have been deported and sent to their home states – West Ben-

gal and Assam. The 29 individuals were working in a bakery in the Mayang Imphal Bengoon area under the Labour Category ILPs. "Their Labour Category ILPs were cancelled and the apprehended 29 individuals have been deported and sent to their respective home states," the official said. Manipur Home Department earlier issued instructions to the District Administration

concerned and the Deputy Labour Commissioner to conduct a detailed inquiry into such lapses and initiate stern action against the involved government officials. The Chief Minister had earlier said that the state government has constituted a committee at the state level to review the overall implementation of ILP in the state with the Commissioner (Home) as Chairman



and representatives of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), Chief Electoral Officer, Land Resource Department, DCs and Senior Superintendent of Police of districts are members.

Rajasthan: Bhajan Lal Sharma govt annuls 9 districts, 3 divisions formed in Gehlot regime

Jaipur, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Bhajan Lal Sharma-led Rajasthan government on Wednesday annulled the creation of nine districts and three divisions formed in the state during the previous Ashok Gehlot administration. This decision was finalised during a Cabinet meeting held on Saturday. Rajasthan will now have 41 districts and 7 divisions. The three divisions which were annulled include Pali, Sikar and Banswara, while the creation of nine out of the 17 new districts formed during the regime of former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's rule which have now been cancelled dur-

ing the Cabinet meeting, include Dudu, Kekri, Shahpura, Neemkathana, Gangapur City, Jaipur Rural, Jodhpur Rural, Anupgarh and Sanchore. Meanwhile, those districts which have been retained include Balotra, Beawar, Deeg, Didwana-Kuchaman, Kotputli-Behror, Khairthal-Tijara, Phalodi and Salumbar. According to Rajasthan minister Jogaram Patel, these districts and divisions were established prior to the elections without proper consideration of practicality. Key factors such as financial resources and population were overlooked. Several districts did not even include 6-7 tehsils, raising



questions about their necessity. Patel noted that no new administrative posts or office buildings were created for these areas, and attempts to establish 18 departmental posts in each district proved burdensome for the state. A review committee concluded that these districts were not viable. Meanwhile, no decision was taken in the meeting regarding Sub Inspector (SI) recruitment. Jogaram Patel, the Law Minister, said: "The matter of SI recruitment was not on today's agenda, the matter is sub judice in the court. Additionally, the Cabinet decided to extend the validity of the Common Eligibility Test (CET) score from one year to three years."



Zeenat gets close to Bengal's tourist destination, foresters on tenterhooks

Kolkata, Jan 1 (IANS) : Foresters claimed that they have managed to isolate Zeenat – the three-year-old tigress from Odisha's Simlipal National Park – in a wooded area near Bangopalpur Reserve Forest in West Bengal's Bankura district. Zeenat, one of the two tigresses relocated from the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra to Simlipal.

Only BJP capable of paying financial assistance to Delhi women : Sachdeva

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : Reiterating BJP's commitment to respect women and offer them monthly financial assistance, Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva on Wednesday accused AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal of spreading lies, making false promises and not giving the promised financial assistance to Punjab women.



OPINIONmail



RSS CHIEF MOHAN BHAGWAT SPEAKS ONCE AGAIN WITH A FORKED TONGUE

What is one to make of RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat's speech regarding the raking up of new temple/mosque disputes? In his speech in Pune on December 19, Bhagwat disapproved of the raking up of new temple/mosque disputes. He said that Ram temple was a matter of faith for Hindus. Construction of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya should not lead to further actions: "Every day, a new matter (dispute) is being raked up. How can this be allowed? This cannot continue". This speech has led to varying interpretations. Some have seen it as an important change of stance of the RSS towards historical wrongs committed in the past of temples being demolished to build mosques in its place. Others have been more skeptical and think Mohan Bhagwat is trying to mislead by covering up the actual position of the Sangh in raising such disputes. It would be naïve to view this speech of Bhagwat as an about-turn in the stated position of the RSS. For clues as to what Bhagwat actually meant, one should go back to an earlier speech made by him in June 2022. This one to RSS cadres in a training camp in Nagpur, Bhagwat had decried the need to find a 'Shivling' in every mosque and start a new dispute every day. He explained that the RSS had joined the Ram Janmabhoomi agitation in a specific situation and due to some historical reasons. "We completed that work and now we do not want to pursue any more agitations", he said before dwelling on the Gyanvapi mosque-Kashi Vishwanath temple dispute, where he stated everyone involved should sit together and find a way with mutual consent or the decision of the court should be accepted by all considering the justice system as supreme. Bhagwat set the Gyanvapi mosque controversy in the historical context when Islam came to India with invaders and lots of temples were destroyed by the invaders.

The BJP-RSS position has been that the temple/mosque disputes in Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura should be resolved in favour of the Hindus. If this is done, then other disputes need not be taken up. What Bhagwat meant was that the Ram temple agitation was unique with the RSS actively participating in the movement leading to the demolition of the Babri Masjid. The Gyanvapi mosque dispute is also relevant, but there should be no agitation. It should be resolved by mutual consent between Hindus and Muslims or by a court decision. The same would apply to the Idgah-Krishna temple in Mathura. The latest speech of Bhagwat is within the framework of that 2022 speech. He talks of the Ram temple movement as a one-off. Now that the construction of the temple at Ayodhya is done, there should be no agitations for other temple disputes. There are legal proceedings going on with regard to the disputes in Varanasi and Mathura. Beyond that, the RSS chief does not want new temple/mosque controversies to be raised and agitated upon. But there is an obvious gulf between what Bhagwat proffers and what is being actually done on the ground. After his 2022 speech asking that no 'Shivling' be looked for in every mosque, a number of legal disputes have been opened up in different states with suits being filed regarding the religious character of various mosques. Altogether there are seventeen such litigations going on, including the latest ones in Sambhal regarding the Shahi Jama Masjid and the Ajmer Sharif Dargah in Rajasthan. Bhagwat, in his Pune speech, has said that no one will become a "leader of Hindus" by fanning a communal divide. By this Bhagwat is warning fringe elements outside the RSS ambit not to take precipitate action. Bhagwat knows that sections of the judiciary are now conniving and allowing litigation on disputes on religious places contrary to the law on the matter, which is the Places of Worship Act 1991. He expects that the disputes in Kashi and Mathura can be resolved in favour of the Hindus through the judicial process. His faith in the judicial process is not misplaced knowing how the then Chief Justice of India Justice DY Chandrachud, had allowed the survey of the Gyanvapi mosque to proceed. Mohan Bhagwat does not want unplanned and maverick actions in temple-mosque disputes all over the country, which can lead to violence and disorder as it happened in Sambhal.

(By P. Sudhir)

EDITORIAL
the indian mail

BIHAR SET FOR POLITICAL CHANGE AFTER ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN'S ENTRY

The National Democratic Alliance meet of Wednesday had convoluted implications. It was meant to evolve a mechanism to counter opposition narratives, primarily to work out a to protect BJP strongman Amit Shah from Congress from attacks on his insinuations targeting Dr B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution of India. The other important agenda was to show leaders like Nitish Kumar their place. With this in view, the issue of creating



a Margdarshak Mandal for the NDA on the lines of BJP also surfaced. Convening a meeting had become imperative for most of the NDA leaders. Also to a section of BJP leaders who were unwilling to subscribe to the lies being spread by the BJP IT cell and people close to Amit Shah. After his remarks against Ambedkar on the floor of the Rajya Sabha some NDA allies had expressed their anger and exasperation. Top RSS leaders had also criticised Shah for his erratic and irresponsible statements. As a first step to salvage the situ-

ation, the BJP leadership convened the meeting of the NDA. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had already advised Amit Shah to win over Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. Of all the NDA leaders, Nitish Kumar was the most aggressive, though initially Chirag Paswan and Jitan Ram Manjhi were also quite cut up. After Pashupati Paras left the NDA had already made them nervous.

(IPA Service)

SHYAM BENEGAL, A FILMMAKER WITH THE COMMON MAN'S TAKE ON LIFE

Even at the risk of uttering a cliché, filmmaker Shyam Benegal was in a class of his own. A path-breaker, he took his audience to places where they had never been before. And this is no sweetener to enhance the reputation of a man who is no more. Who else but Benegal could crowd-fund a film like 'Manthan', themed on the milk cooperative movement in Gujarat, and make a film like 'Mandi' based on the trials and tribulations of the inmates of a house of ill-fame?

Benegal focussed his lens, a critical one on power structures in the rural landscape. His films were on the lives of marginalised people, which mainstream Hindi films did not dare touch. Shyam Benegal was a storyteller whose script was enlivened by a touch of social realism. And it so happened, many of his celebrated films and documentaries were game-changers. His directorial style brought out an advertising man's gift of being economical, yet impactful. The audience's reception to 'Ankur' in 1974, depicting the sexual exploitation of a lower-caste woman, is a case in point. Released a year before 'Zanjeer', giving Amitabh Bachchan his first hit, was not at all in competition with 'Ankur'. The audience most of whom had little idea about the distinction between a commercial and an art-house film.



TRUMP IS BENT ON BEATING PUTIN IN EXPANSIONISM, COME 2025

From the early indications so far available, the New Year—2025— is all set to be tumultuous for all nations. India must be wary and take every possible caution and steps to navigate the forthcoming year of uncertainty. The USA, with its sheer size and weight in the world economy and power equation, matters for all. The president-elect's esoteric doctrines, which can be pieced together from his constant verbal output, is about to introduce a new world order and system. The Trump Doctrine does not have any respect for the rule of law in international affairs and it is another version of the Putin Doctrine, which wants the Russian Imperial Order and the Xi Jinping Doctrine of China's supremacy and a Chinese shaped world. With these three competing Doctrinal views of the world, one cannot but be certain or complete disorder and the disdain for the values of others, as far as they exist by sufferance. Donald Trump has aired his latest views about the new American work-order in which the Panama Canal—a key waterway for international trade—should be brought back under the control of

America. Along with Canada as the US' 51st state, and across the ocean, Greenland, which Donald Trump thinks should essentially belong to the USA for the sake of world peace and survival of the free world. Such blatant expansionism of the reputedly strongest power on earth almost legitimises the expansionism of others who have already heaped strife and suffering across the world. As if it was the best gift from the next American president, Vladimir Putin, has launched a blitzkrieg in Europe to drum up support for his move to snatch away vast parts of Ukraine as Russian territory in a formalised agreement to conclude his frustrated Ukraine invasion of the last two years.

(IPA Service)

THE SPECTRE OF ANTI-COMMUNISM IS ONCE AGAIN HAUNTING NORTH AMERICA

The United States Congress has recently passed a horrific piece of legislation calling for the infusion into the nation's public school system of a curriculum that teaches middle and high school students about the alleged evils of communism, including the absurd claim that communists have killed 100 million people. The curriculum is to be provided by the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, a collection of well-funded extreme right operatives who have never supported the fight for democracy or the rights of workers. Among the foundation's more outstanding scandals was the building of a memorial to the "victims" of communism in Canada recently that included the names of more than 300

fascists engraved onto it. In the Communism Memorial Foundation's "curriculum" is the absurd claim that the total of people allegedly "murdered" by communists around the world numbers in the many millions. They include in their totals the hordes of fascist and Nazi soldiers who died in Europe during World War II at the hands of the Soviets and countless other freedom fighters, so many of whom were not communists. It is no accident, of course, that this legislation, like the McCarthyite witch-hunts during the middle of the last century, comes at a time of enhanced struggle for workers' rights, including the right to unionize and, this time when large numbers of young people are telling pollsters that they either oppose capitalism or support socialism or both. Virginia Foxx, the Republican congressional rep on the Workforce Committee, renamed by Republicans to take out the word "labour," says unions themselves are unconstitutional and admits that her support for the bill is motivated by a desire to reverse the "dangerous rise in support of communism and socialism ideas...by so many of our young people."

GOVERNANCE IN DELHI BEING SABOTAGED BEFORE ELECTION BY OFFICIALS THEMSELVES

A Joint Director of the Department of Woman and Child Development and the Special Secretary of the Health and Family Welfare Department of the National Capital Territory of Delhi placed public notices in newspapers on December 25, 2024, stating that two state government schemes of their respective departments were "fraudulent". This is the latest example of sabotaging governance in the state by those who are expected to facilitate the government schemes, and should not have been part of politicking. They had the Centre's protection umbrella against the elected ruling establishment of Delhi. The public notice relating to Mahila Samman Yojna read, "... a political party is claiming to disburse Rs 2,100 per month under the Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojna... no such scheme has been notified in Delhi... If and when such a scheme is notified, the Department of Women and Child Development will launch a digital portal for eligible individuals to submit applications

Russia warns of 'decisive response' to US missile threats: Sergei Lavrov

Seoul, Jan 1 (IANS) : The United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will face a "decisive response," including military-technical countermeasures, should they make new missile threats against Russia, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Wednesday. "We are prepared for any scenario. If new missile threats are established, our adversaries will face a decisive response in the form of military-techni-



cal countermeasures. At the same time, hypothetical steps to create acceptable conditions for equitable dialogue will be considered," Lavrov said in an interview with RIA Novosti.

Australian PM announces disaster payments for communities affected by major bushfire

Seoul, Jan 1 (IANS) : Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has announced emergency disaster payments for people affected by a major bushfire in the country's southeast.

Albanese on Wednesday assessed the damage caused by the ongoing bushfire in the Grampians National Park, approximately 230 km west of Melbourne, along with the Premier of the state of Victoria, Jacinta Allan, reports Xinhua news agency. Albanese told reporters that fed-

eral and state government disaster recovery payments will be available from Monday for workers and sole traders directly affected by the fire, providing up to 13 weeks' worth of income support.

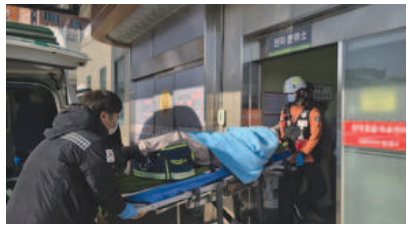
"This has been a devastating fire event," he said. "We live in a country that's got harsh conditions; the truth is they are becoming more frequent and more intense."

The bushfire was ignited by a lightning strike on December 6 and has burnt through over 70,000 hectares of farmland, national park and private prop-



erty. No injuries have been reported, but significant livestock was lost is reported. Additionally, earlier on Saturday, three homes have been lost in the town of Moyston, while 11 out-buildings have been destroyed by the fire across Moyston and Pomonal. Several towns and

communities in and around the park were ordered to evacuate in the lead-up to Christmas Day, but most residents had been allowed to return home as of Sunday as conditions eased. However, authorities have warned that they expect the fire to continue burning for several weeks.



176 passengers confirmed dead in South Korea's plane crash

Seoul, Jan 1 (IANS) : A passenger jet carrying 181 people belly-landed and exploded at an airport in South Korea's southwestern county of Muan on Wednesday, leaving 176 people dead and three others missing, authorities said. Two crew members survived.

It marked yet another deadliest aviation disaster in the country's history and the worst involving a local airline since the deadly 1997 Korean Air plane crash in Guam that killed 228.

Syria's interim authorities deploy helicopters against 'former regime remnants' in coastal regions

Damascus, Jan 1 (IANS) : Military forces of Syria's interim administration have begun deploying attack helicopters against what it described as "remnants of the former regime" in the country's coastal regions, media reported. The helicopters are taking off from Istmo Airfield in rural Latakia, targeting armed elements still active in the coastal countryside, media channels cited a statement by the administration, which did not elaborate on the number of helicopters in use or the scope of the operation. The deployment came as part of a series of security initiatives nationwide, aimed at consolidating the new leadership's authority, Xinhua news agency reported. On Wednesday, Syria's newly-appointed intelligence chief Anas Khattab pledged in an official statement to restructure the country's security apparatus "in a manner befitting our people's sacrifices and long heritage". All existing security branches in Syria will be dissolved and reorganised, Khattab said, without outlining a timeline or providing specific details for the overhaul. Khattab's announcement came as Syria navigates a sensitive political transition following the

downfall of the previous government on December 8. A military coalition led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham waged a major military operation from northern Syria on November 27. It swept southwards, captured the capital Damascus, and overthrew former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government within 12 days. The Syrian Information Ministry declared a ban on what it described as "the circulation or publication of any media content or news with a sectarian tone aimed at spreading division" among Syrians. The Syrian civil war took on sectarian dimensions as Assad drew on Shia militias from across the Middle East, mobilised by his ally Iran, to battle the insurgency dominated



by members of the Sunni Muslim majority, many of them Islamist. Dissent has also surfaced in the city of Homs, 150 km (90 miles) north of Damascus.

State media reported that police imposed an overnight curfew on Wednesday night, following unrest linked to demonstrations that residents said were led by members of the Alawite and Shia religious communities. Footage posted on social media on Wednesday from Homs showed a

crowd of people scattering, and some of them running, as gunfire was heard.

Assad's long-time Shia regional ally, Iran, has criticised the course of events in Syria in recent days.

On Sunday, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on Syrian youth to "stand with firm determination against those who have orchestrated and brought about this insecurity".

Japan's average temperature in 2024 set to hit record high

Tokyo, Jan 1 (IANS) : Japan's average temperature in 2024 is likely to hit a record high for the second consecutive year, local media reported. Preliminary figures released by the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) showed the average temperature through November was 1.64 degrees Celsius warmer than the annual average for the 30-year period until 2020, hitting the highest level since the country's weather agency started releasing data in 1898, Xinhua news agency reported quoting Kyodo News.

"It can be said that temperatures were abnormally high," a JMA official said. The high temperatures were due to warm air being brought in by westerlies that traveled further north than usual in addition to the effects of global warming, according to the agency.

Japan's temperatures have kept rising in recent years, with the five years between 2019 and 2023 dominating the top five hottest years, the report said.



Man, woman drown at Australian beach

Sydney, Jan 1 (IANS) : Two people have drowned at a notorious dangerous beach on Australia's southwest coast, police in Western Australia (WA) said on Wednesday. Three people were swimming at Conspicuous Cliff beach, 355 km south of the state capital of Perth, on Saturday when they became caught in a dangerous current at about 2:40 p.m. local time, Xinhua

news agency reported. The trio were pulled unconscious from the water by members of the public before police officers arrived at the scene and commenced CPR. A 44-year-old man and a 40-year-old woman could not be revived and were declared dead at the scene. A 42-year-old man was resuscitated and taken to a nearby hospital.



Slovakia threatens to stop electricity supplies to Ukraine

Bratislava, Jan 1 (IANS) : Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico said that his government may stop electricity supplies to Ukraine following the anticipated end of Russian gas transit through Ukraine on January 1, 2025.

"If necessary, we will stop the supply of electricity, which

Ukraine desperately needs during grid outages. Or we will agree on another course of action," Fico said in a video post on social media.

Fico's remarks come after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky expressed opposition to the continued transit of Russian gas through Ukraine to Slovakia

once the current contract expires at the beginning of next year.

Fico added that according to estimates, the termination of Russian gas transit through Ukraine and Slovakia could cost the European Union 120 billion euros over the next two years. Slovakia, he said, would lose up to 500 million euros annually in transit fees.

Fico also indicated Slovakia's readiness to host peace talks on Ukraine. "If someone wants to organise peace talks in Slovakia, we will be ready and hospitable," Fico said. Fico met with Russian President Vladimir Putin on December 22 in Moscow, discussing issues including the transit of Russian gas, Xinhua news agency reported. On October 3, Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico called for a quick end to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

US sees surging worker strikes in 2024

Seoul, Jan 1 (IANS) : The United States experienced surging labour strikes in 2024, with workers across various sectors staging protests over issues ranging from wages to working conditions. The nation witnessed 334 labour actions across 515 locations as of Wednesday, continuing an upward trend in strike activity in recent years, according to the Cornell University School of Industrial

and Labor Relations's Labor Action Tracker, a database of strike and labour protest activity.

One of the year's most notable strikes occurred at Starbucks, where at least 5,000 workers from over 300 stores across 45 states walked off their jobs on Christmas Eve, according to their union, Starbucks Workers United, reports Xinhua news agency. The strike, the largest ever at the coffee chain, involved workers

from 12 major cities, including New York, Los Angeles, Boston, and Seattle. Workers demanded higher wages and fair scheduling while criticising the company's executive compensation practices, particularly CEO Brian Niccol's \$113 million compensation package.

Just days before the Starbucks walkout, Amazon faced what the striking workers called the largest-ever strike during the peak Christmas shopping season.



2024: From heartbreaking losses to unbelievable crimes - a year that stunned India

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : The year 2024 was marked by various events that had a profound impact on the nation. Several of these incidents sparked widespread discussions, leaving both the government and the public in a state of shock. Here's a look at some of the key events that created a stir across the country.

Kolkata rape and murder case
On 9 August, a 31-year-old female postgraduate trainee doctor at R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, West Bengal, was raped and murdered in the college building. Her body was found in a seminar room on campus. On August 10, a 33-year-old

male civic volunteer was arrested under suspicion of committing the crime.

Three days later, the Calcutta High Court transferred the investigation to the CBI. The junior doctors in West Bengal undertook a strike action for 42 days, demanding a thorough probe of the incident and adequate security at hospitals.

Wayanad landslide:
On the night of 30 July, a devastating landslide struck Wayanad district in Kerala. The massive disaster caused widespread destruction over several kilometers. The death toll from the landslide was confirmed to be over 231, with reports suggesting that more than 420 people may have lost their lives. Following the tragedy,

rescue operations were launched in several affected areas.

The scene of devastation was heart-wrenching, and the disaster resulted in an estimated loss of Rs 1,200 crore. Gruesome murder in Bengaluru: The whole country was horrified by the murder of Mahalakshmi in Bengaluru, the capital of Karnataka. The accused murdered his girlfriend Mahalakshmi, cut her body into 59 pieces and kept them in the refrigerator. The killer had written in his suicide note that he had committed this brutal crime because he was fed up with Mahalakshmi's behaviour and had murdered her on September 3.

Tirupati laddu controversy:
A controversy erupted regarding

the use of animal fat in the prasadam (sacred offering) of the Tirupati Temple.

The issue came to light on September 18 when Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and TDP leader N. Chandrababu Naidu alleged that animal fat was being mixed into the sacred laddus.

This accusation placed the Tirupati temple administration under scrutiny and sparked a major debate about the purity of temple offerings.

Reasi terrorist attack:
On June 9, terrorists attacked a bus in the Pouni area of Reasi district, Jammu and Kashmir. The bus was travelling from Shiv Khori to Katra when the attackers opened fire. Following the attack,

the bus fell into a gorge, resulting in the deaths of 9 people, including a child.

The incident highlighted the ongoing security challenges in the region.

Hathras stampede incident:
On July 2, a tragic stampede occurred in Hathras, Uttar Pradesh, after a religious satsang (spiritual gathering), resulting in the death of 123 people.

The incident happened when thousands of people gathered for the satsang, and due to a lack of adequate security arrangements by the police and administration, a massive stampede ensued, causing many to be crushed to death. Following the tragedy, the spiritual leader of the gathering, Bhole



Baba (Narayan Sakar Hari), re-located to Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.

The hottest year in history: 2024 has been declared the hottest year on record. Due to climate change, temperatures worldwide saw a record increase. India was no exception, experiencing extreme heat in July and August that significantly impacted people's daily lives. The intense heat waves raised concerns about the growing effects of climate change across the globe.



BJP trying to manipulate voter list in Delhi, says Kejriwal

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : AAP national convenor and former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched a scathing attack on the BJP on Wednesday, accusing the party of attempting to manipulate the voter lists, and also claimed that 'Operation Lotus' has been going on since December 15 in his Assembly constituency.

Kejriwal alleged that the BJP lacks a Chief Ministerial candidate, vision, or credible plans and is resorting to dishonest tactics to secure a win, jeopardising Indian democracy.

"They don't have a CM face, no vision and no credible candidates. They only want to win the elections by any dishonest means, putting Indian democracy at stake. But the people of Delhi won't let this happen," said Kejriwal.

He highlighted voter deletion issues in the Shahdara constituency, where the BJP allegedly submit-

ted applications to remove 11,008 voters. "We won from that constituency. If those votes were cut, it would have caused significant problems for us. Thanks to the Chief Election Commissioner for intervening and preventing this," he said.

Kejriwal also alleged that "Operation Lotus" began in his own New Delhi constituency on December 15. "In 15 days, they submitted applications to delete 5,000 voters and add 7,500. My constituency has 1,06,000 voters, so they are trying to delete 5 per cent and add 7.5 per cent. If 12 per cent of the votes are manipulated, what's the point of elections? This is blatant tampering in the name of democracy." The Election Commission conducted a summary revision of the voter list from August 20 to October 20, releasing an updated list on October 29.

Ayushman Bharat gave me new lease on life : Beneficiary thanks PM Modi

Neemuch (Madhya Pradesh), Jan 1 (IANS) : During the challenging financial period amid the Covid epidemic, Banshilal Mali, a farmer and flower trader from Nayagaon in Neemuch district, Madhya Pradesh, faced a severe crisis when he suddenly suffered a heart attack. The incident brought immense distress to his family, already struggling with the economic repercussions of the pandemic.

In such difficult times, the Ayushman Bharat Yojana, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 23, 2018, in Ranchi, Jharkhand, proved to be a lifeline.

The scheme aims to provide free treatment to economically weaker families in lead-

ing government and private hospitals, ensuring access to quality healthcare for millions of Indians. Under the scheme, families are entitled to free treatment worth up to Rs 5 lakhs annually in empanelled hospitals. Beneficiaries like Banshilal Mali have experienced the transformative impact of the scheme.

Sharing his story with IANS, Banshilal said, "In November 2020, during the Covid epidemic, I suffered a heart attack. My family rushed me to the nearest hospital, where I was diagnosed with a blockage in one of my heart's veins. The doctors advised immediate surgery, with the cost estimated at Rs 2.5-3 lakhs. It was an amount we could not afford."

Banshilal mentioned that he was admitted to a hospital in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, where he received free treatment using my

Ayushman card. "My seven-day hospital stay, surgery, and medicines were all covered under the scheme. I am deeply grateful to the government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi for this initiative, which gave me a new lease on life," he added.

His daughter, Payal Mali, recounted the family's relief, saying, "When my father was diagnosed, we were extremely worried as we did not have the money for private hospital treatment. Thanks to the Ayushman Bharat Yojana, he received free and effec-



tive treatment. Today, my father is healthy and back to taking care of the family. We are profoundly thankful to the Prime Minister."

Echoing the gratitude, Banshilal's brother, Jagdish Mali, added, "When my brother experienced sudden chest pain, we rushed him to the hospital. The estimated treatment cost was beyond our means. Then, we learned about the Ayushman Bharat Yojana. After making the Ayushman card, we got him treated in a hospital in Ahmedabad. Today, he is healthy, and it is all thanks to this scheme. We are immensely grateful to PM Modi."

BSF arrests smuggler with 8.5 kg silver ornaments along Indo-Bangladesh border

Kolkata, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Border Security Force (BSF) claims to have arrested a cross-border smuggler in the North 24-Parganas district of West Bengal on Wednesday with silver ornaments weighing 8.5 kg. He was planning to smuggle the ornaments, valued at nearly Rs 6,17,004, to Bangladesh.

"Troops of the 143 Battalion BSF, posted at Tarali-1 Border Outpost, were carrying out checks at the Hakimpur checkpoint when they came across a motorcyclist moving towards the Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB). The jawans stopped the man and carried out a thorough search. The ornaments were found inside the air filter and tail light

cavities of the motorcycle," said N K Pandey, DIG and spokesperson, BSF, South Bengal Frontier. The man, along with the motorcycle, was taken to the Tarali-1 BOP, where he was interrogated. He claimed to be a resident of the Swarupdaha village in the Swarup Nagar police station area of North 24-Parganas. "He also claimed that an unknown person from Bithari Bazaar had given him the motorcycle and informed him of the silver ornaments inside. He was supposed to cross the BSF domination line through the Hakimpur checkpoint and hand over the vehicle, along with the silver, to another person close to the IBB.



Assam govt violating state mourning of Manmohan Singh : LoP Debabrata Saikia

Guwahati, Jan 1 (IANS) : Leader of Opposition in Assam Assembly Debabrata Saikia on Wednesday alleged that the state government has violated the seven-day state mourning in honour of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Saikia also shot off a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and sought his intervention in the matter.

"Late Dr. Manmohan Singh was not just the former Prime Minister of India but was also a coveted Member of the Rajya Sabha from Assam. He had represented the state of Assam from 1991 to 2019 i.e. for more than 28 years. Yet, the Government having declared a 7(seven) day of state mourning from 26.12.2024 to 01.01.2025; was found violating its own decision in complete disregard and disrepute to

the legacy of the Late Dr. Manmohan Singh. This was also a violation of the Union Cabinet decision to not hold any state function during the period of state mourning," the senior Congress leader continued. "The Government of Assam, including its officials were found to be organising and celebrating scheme launches and programmes at the same time when Late Manmohan Singh's funeral was being done and you were attending the funeral.



Tibetan monk's school scripts tales of transforming lives of slum children

Dharamsala, Jan 1 (IANS) : Nestled in the serene folds of this Himachal Pradesh hill station, where prayer flags flutter in the mountain breeze and chants echo against the majestic Dhauladhar ranges, a quiet revolution has been unfolding for the last two decades.

Inspired by the secular ethics of the Dalai Lama, Tong-Len, a humble charity founded by Tibetan monk Jamyang, draped in red robes, has been scripting tales of the transformation of the underprivileged -- one child at a time.

What began as an audacious dream to pull local slum children out of despair has now blossomed into a success story of empowerment. The legacy of Tong-Len isn't just etched in its classrooms or

clinics; it lives on in its students. One of its earliest graduates now manages the charity's affairs, while others have stepped into society as a doctor, a nurse, and a journalist -- carrying the torch of hope lit by their mentor.

As Tong-Len celebrates its 20-year milestone, the founder envisions a future where its legacy isn't confined to brick and mortar but thrives in the hearts and actions of the very children it once sheltered. This is the story of a journey that began in the shadows of poverty and now shines brightly.

From its humble beginning in 2004, Tong-Len has grown into a beacon of hope for more than 23,200 people of underprivileged, particularly those who live in the slums.

Adani Enterprises to raise over \$2 billion after exiting from Adani Wilmar JV

Ahmedabad, Jan 1 (IANS) : Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) on Wednesday announced that it will exit Adani Wilmar Ltd (AWL) by divesting its entire 44 per cent stake in the joint venture to raise over \$2 billion. Adani Enterprises will divest 13 per cent of its shares in Adani Wilmar to achieve compliance

with minimum public shareholding requirements via an offer for sale. In addition, Wilmar International Ltd. has agreed to acquire the 31 per cent stake held by the Adani flagship in the edible oil maker. Adani Wilmar had a market capitalisation of Rs 42,785 crore (\$5.0 billion) as on December 27.

According to a company statement, Adani Enterprises, subsidiary Adani Commodities LLP, and Lence Pte Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Wilmar International, entered into an agreement through which Lence will acquire shares of Adani Wilmar held by ACL as of the date of exercise of the call option or put option, as



the case may be, in respect of a maximum of 31.06 per cent of the existing paid-up equity share capital of AWL. AEL's board of directors has adopted a resolution, noting the resignation of ACL's nominee directors from the board of Adani Wilmar. The parties have agreed to take further steps for the change of name of 'Adani Wilmar Ltd', the stock exchange filing read. The shares will be sold to Lence at a price that is mutually agreed upon by the parties.



POCO X7 Series set to arrive on January 9 with unmatched performance and innovation

Bengaluru, Jan 1 (IANS) : POCO, one of India's leading consumer technology brands, is set to unveil its latest smartphone marvels -- the POCO X7 5G and POCO X7 Pro 5G -- next month. Engineered to exceed user expectations, these devices boast Industry-First innovations in durability, performance and power. While X7 Pro exceeds all limits with segment-leading performance, cutting-edge AI and advanced battery technology, X7 exceeds limits with a stunning curved display and unparalleled durability.

Govt rolling out Rs 15,000 crore roadmap to help steel industry cut carbon emissions

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : The government is preparing the 'Green Steel Mission' with an estimated cost of Rs 15,000 crore for helping the steel industry to reduce carbon emissions and progress towards the Net Zero Target, according to the year-end review released by the Ministry of Steel on Wednesday. The mission includes a PLI Scheme for Green Steel, incentives for the use of renewable energy and mandates for government agencies to buy Green Steel to enhance the industry's environmental sustainability. The National Green Hydrogen Mission, spearheaded by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, integrates the steel sector into the

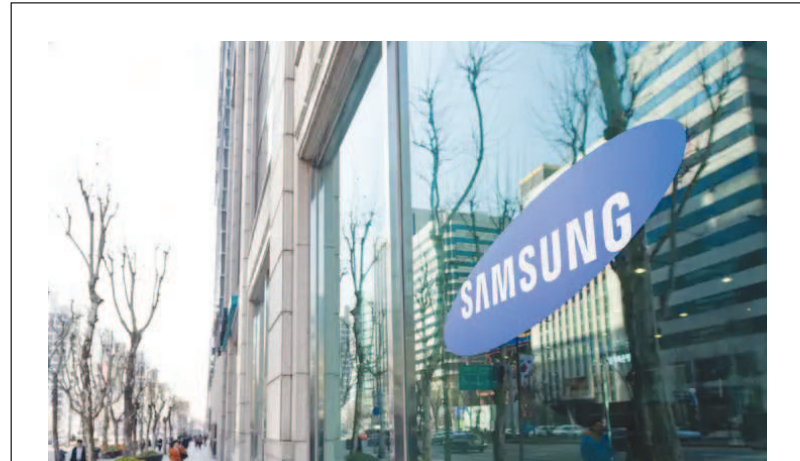
broader goal of producing and using green hydrogen, contributing to the decarbonisation of steel production. A report on 'Greening the Steel Sector in India on the basis of the recommendations of 14 Task Forces constituted by the Ministry of Steel on various key levers of decarbonisation of the steel sector, was released in September this year. This was followed by the release of the Taxonomy of Green Steel for India earlier this month which defines the star rating for green steel. The Steel Scrap Recycling Policy further complements these efforts by increasing the availability of domestically generated scrap, thus promoting resource efficiency, the review states. The Ministry released the Taxonomy for Green Steel on December 12 to provide standards for

defining and categorising the low emission steel, facilitating the green transition of the steel industry. It provides a framework for the production of green steel, the creation of a market for green steel, and seeking financial support. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has launched the National Green Hydrogen Mission for green hydrogen production and usage. The steel sector is also a stakeholder in the Mission and has been allocated budgetary support of Rs 455 crore for the implementation of pilot projects in the iron & steel sector under the Mission up to the Financial Year 2029-30. Under this mission, the Ministry of Steel has awarded two Pilot Projects to produce Direct Reduced Iron (DRI) using 100 per cent Hydrogen in the vertical shaft



and one Pilot Project to use hydrogen in the existing Blast Furnace to reduce coal/ coke consumption in September this year. Pilot projects for the injection of Green Hydrogen in existing vertical shaft-based DRI-making units to partially substitute the natural gas are also being explored. The government has also launched a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme as a key initiative to attract more investment to boost the domestic manufacturing of 'Specialty Steel', and reduce imports. Participating companies

have committed to an investment of Rs 27,106 crore, direct employment of 14,760 and estimated production of 7.90 million tonnes of 'Specialty Steel' identified in the scheme. As of October 2024, companies have already invested Rs 17,581 crore and generated over 8,660 in employment. The review further highlights that the government is formulating a comprehensive global strategy to position India as a leader in the steel industry.



Samsung to become largest shareholder in South Korean robotics startup

Seoul, Jan 1 (IANS) : Samsung Electronics said on Wednesday it will become the largest shareholder in a South Korean robotics startup, Rainbow Robotics, as part of its push for advancing robotics technologies including humanoid robots. The tech giant increased its stake in Rainbow Robotics to 35 per cent by exercising a call option on its initial 14.7 per cent holding, the company said. Samsung Electronics had invested 86.8 billion won (\$59 million) in the startup in 2023, reports Yonhap news agency. With this increase, Samsung

Electronics holds the largest stake in the startup, which will be incorporated as a subsidiary under its consolidated financial statements, the company added. Rainbow Robotics, founded in 2011 by researchers from the Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology, specialises in humanoid robotics technologies. The founders have developed Hubo, South Korea's first two-legged walking robot. Samsung Electronics said it will combine its artificial intelligence and software capabilities.

10 years of 'Make in India' initiative hit new peaks in 2024

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : A decade after its launch, 'Make in India' has broken several records and in 2024, the mission further cemented its success as one of the most impactful economic initiatives in the country. With Rs 1.46 lakh crore investments by August 2024, the initiative has generated Rs 12.50 lakh crore in production, Rs 4 lakh crore in exports, and 9.5 lakh jobs. Between April 2014 and March 2024, India attracted \$667.41 billion in FDI, representing nearly 67 per cent of the total FDI received over the last 24 years. Exports have also seen a substantial uptick, surpassing Rs 4 lakh crore, driven by key sectors such as electronics.



Tata Group chief Chandrasekaran to join NIT Trichy's Global Alumni Meet on Jan 4

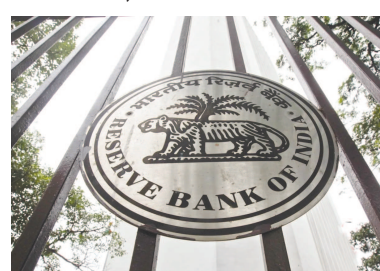
New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : Tata Group Chairperson N. Chandrasekaran will address the NIT Trichy's Global Alumni Meet (GAM) 2025 scheduled to take place in Chennai on January 4, 2025, said Director G. Aghila on Wednesday. Spearheaded by RECAL, the institute's official alumni association, the event will unite National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli, alumni from across the globe to celebrate the institute's legacy. Boasting a dynamic network of over 48,000 alumni, including

930-plus CEOs and 1,300-plus founders, NIT Trichy stands out as a powerhouse of talent and innovation. The previous edition of GAM was held in 2020. GAM 2025 will feature a stellar lineup of distinguished alumni, including Dr Palanivel Thiagarajan, Minister for Information Technology & Digital Services, Tamil Nadu; MGopi Kallayil, Chief Business Strategist for AI at Google; Dr P. Veeramuthuvel, Project Director of Chandrayaan 3 and T.V. Narendran, Managing Director, CEO, Tata Steels.

These leaders, alongside numerous other notable alumni, will celebrate shared achievements, inspire collaborations, and forge impactful connections, the director said. NIT Trichy will unveil its vision for a 20-acre Research and Innovation Hub at GAM 2025, marking a significant step in its mission to foster entrepreneurship and interdisciplinary research. The facility will focus on emerging domains such as AgriTech, FinTech, SpaceTech, GreenTech, Quantum Computing, and AI/ML.

RBI directs banks to let remitters verify account name before RTGS, NEFT transfers

Mumbai, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday directed all banks to put in place a facility to enable a remitter to verify the beneficiary bank account name before initiating a transaction using the RTGS or NEFT system. "All banks who are direct members or sub-members of RTGS and NEFT are advised to offer this facility no later than April 1, 2025," the RBI circular states. With the in-



roduction of this facility, remitters can input the account number and the branch IFSC code of the beneficiary.

Indian share market opens lower, prepares to move into New Year with caution

Mumbai, Jan 1 (IANS) : The domestic benchmark indices opened lower on Wednesday as selling was seen in IT, realty, auto, financial service, FMCG, media and private bank sectors

on Nifty. At around 9:25 am, Sensex was trading at 77,813.49 after declining 434.64 points or 0.56 per cent, while the Nifty was trading at 23,536 after declining 108.90 points or 0.46 per cent.



Netherlands plans to provide 6 billion euros in additional military aid to Ukraine

Kiev, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Netherlands is planning to provide an additional 6 billion euros (some \$6.24 billion) in military aid to Ukraine, Dutch Ambassador to Ukraine Alle Dorhout has said. Over the past three years, the Netherlands has delivered 3.8 billion euros (about \$3.96 billion) in defence support for Ukraine, including F-16 fighter jets, Patriot air defence systems, armoured vehicles and artillery, Dorhout said, Xinhua news agency reported quoting the Ukrinform news agency. In addition to military aid, the Netherlands has provided Ukraine with humanitarian, reconstruction, and economic support, Dorhout said. The ambassador emphasised that the energy sector is among

the priorities for future assistance. Earlier on October 6, the Netherlands provided 400 million euros (about \$440 million) to help Ukraine develop drones, the Dutch Ministry of Defence announced. The Netherlands and Ukraine "collaborated to develop advanced drones and accelerate the production of successful prototypes," the ministry said in a statement. "Nearly half of this production took place in the Netherlands." Dutch Defense Minister Ruben

Brekelmans made the announcement during a visit to the city of Charkov in north-eastern Ukraine. "We invested 400 million euros in an action plan for drones, which focused on various types of advanced drones designed for reconnaissance, defence, and attack missions," Brekelmans was quoted in the statement. "These drones were used primarily in the air, but also on land and at sea."



German President dissolves parliament, snap elections due in Feb

Berlin, Jan 1 (IANS) : German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier on Wednesday dissolved the Bundestag, the lower house of parliament, paving the way for early federal elections. Steinmeier announced in Berlin that the snap elections will be held on February 23, as previously agreed by major political parties. On Wednesday, Steinmeier stressed that a ca-

pable government with a reliable parliamentary majority is needed during these challenging times. He said that new elections are the appropriate course of action for the country's benefit, Xinhua news agency reported. On December 16, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz lost in a vote of confidence in the Bundestag. The move dissolved Scholz's minority coalition government and triggered a process that led to early

federal elections. The confidence vote saw 207 parliament members expressing confidence in Scholz, with 394 voting against him, and 116 abstaining. Such a vote had not taken place in Germany for almost two decades. Scholz had requested the confidence vote the previous week, invoking Article 68 of the Basic Law, as the only viable way to trigger early elections.

Dengue cases surpass 20,000 in Laos, 11 fatalities

Vientiane, Jan 1 (IANS) : The number of dengue cases in Laos has surpassed 20,000, with 11 deaths reported so far this year,

according to the Lao Ministry of Health on Wednesday. According to a report of the ministry's Center of Information,



Whooping cough higher than usual in Canada

Ottawa, Jan 1 (IANS) : Cases of whooping cough, also known as pertussis or the 100-day cough, are increasing in several provinces and territories in Canada, local media reported. Canadian health officials have reported 19,000 cases of pertussis so far this year and the country typically sees 1,000 to 3,000 cases a year, CTV News reported. Whooping cough was mentioned by Dr. Theresa Tam, Canada's chief public health officer, on her biggest health concerns heading into 2025. Tam said that whooping cough was controlled by vaccination for years and that one of the reasons it may be coming back is the pandemic's disruption on routine childhood vaccinations, Xinhua news agency reported. Whooping cough is considered a 'nationally notifiable disease'

in Canada and it's monitored through the Canadian Notifiable Disease Surveillance System, which has been set up to keep track of transmission of infectious diseases, CTV News reported. Whooping cough is a highly contagious respiratory tract infection. In many people, it's marked by a severe hacking cough followed by a high-pitched intake of breath that sounds like 'whoop.' Before the vaccine was developed, whooping cough was considered a childhood disease. Now whooping cough primarily affects children too young to have completed the full course of vaccinations and teenagers and adults whose immunity has faded.



S.Korea to devise demographic policy for 'super-aged' society

Seoul, Jan 1 (IANS) : A presidential committee on ageing society and population on Wednesday said the government will come up with a demographic policy blueprint in the near future, as South Korea has formally become a "super-aged" society. The remark came after the government data showed the number of South Koreans aged 65 or older stood at 10.24 million, accounting for 20 per cent of the country's total population of 51.22 million, Yonhap news agency reported. The United Nations classifies countries where more than 7 per cent of the population is 65 or older as an aging society, those with over 14 per cent as an aged society, and those with more than 20 per cent as a super-aged society.



Arab League slams Israeli far-right minister's storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque

Cairo, Jan 1 (IANS) : Arab League (AL) Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul-Gheit strongly condemned Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir's storming of East Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, accompanied by a group of hardline settlers, as "a blatant provocation." "The incursion is a blatant provocation aimed at inflaming emotions and escalating the situation," Aboul-Gheit was quoted in a statement by the pan-Arab, Cairo-based organisation as saying. Ben-Gvir's entry into the holy site under the protection of the Israeli "occupying police" reveals the nature of the Israeli government's hostility to peaceful coexistence, according to the AL chief, Xinhua news agency reported. He said the incident is part of the Israeli government's continued violations of the historical status quo at Al-Aqsa Mosque. Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third-holiest site in Islam, is administered by the Jerusalem Awqaf Department, an Islamic

religious trust affiliated with Jordan. Jews revere the site as the Temple Mount. This sacred site has long been a flashpoint for deadly violence between Jews and Muslims. "Israel, through these rejected and condemned policies, is deliberately destroying all possibilities for peaceful coexistence among religions in the region," Aboul-Gheit added. Earlier in the day, Ben-Gvir said that he visited the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound and "said a prayer," which breached the long-standing status quo at the site, under which non-Muslims are permitted only to visit the hilltop compound but not allowed to pray there. The Al-Aqsa compound in the Old City of Jerusalem is Islam's holiest site after the mosques in Makkah and Madinah and is a symbol of Palestinian national identity.

Mexico : Eight killed after a bus collides with trailer truck

Washington, Jan 1 (IANS) : At least eight people were killed and 27 others injured after a passenger bus collided with a semi-trailer truck in eastern Mexico, local authorities said. The collision occurred early on Wednesday on the Perote-Xalapa highway near Los Molinos in the eastern state of Veracruz, killing three men, four women and one minor, the Veracruz State Attorney General's Office said.

Tunisia dismantles drug trafficking network, arrests three

Tunis, Jan 1 (IANS) : Tunisian security forces have dismantled a drug trafficking network active in the northwestern province of Siliana, arresting three individuals, the Tunisian National Guard said on its Facebook page. The arrestees include a woman, it said on Wednesday, without mentioning the timing of the operation or the identities of the suspects. National Guard units targeted the criminal network in the town of Rouhia in Siliana, and a quantity of narcotic pills, sharp tools, and a sum

of money were seized during the operation. Upon reviewing the case, the public prosecution authorised their detention pending investigations, Xinhua news agency reported. Earlier on December 26, security forces dismantled a drug trafficking network active in the capital Tunis, seizing 3.5 kg of cocaine. National Guard units targeted the

criminal network operating in the neighbourhood of Ain Zaghuan, the Tunisian National Guard said, without elaborating on the details of the operation or the number of arrests. The operation followed investigations that resulted in the seizure of an unregistered car parked outside a residence in Tunis. Inside the vehicle, authorities seized 3.5



kg of cocaine. Earlier in the month, in a similar operation, security units dismantled a drug trafficking network active in the Grand Tunis area, the largest metropolitan area in Tunisia, seizing 3 kg of cocaine.

MP govt to set up cell to monitor Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act implementation

Bhopal, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Madhya Pradesh government is planning to set up a special cell to monitor the schemes under the provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act. The upcoming unit (cell) will function under the state's Tribal Affairs Department, which will be tasked to monitor the effective implementation of the PESA Act. The Act was implemented in

Madhya Pradesh in November 2022. During a review meeting on Wednesday, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav instructed officials to ensure that the issues related with the PESA Act should be resolved on priority basis and a special cell should be formed to monitor the execution on ground. During the meeting, district administrations have been asked to prepare for a detail presentation

of works under the PESA Act in the upcoming Collector-Commissioner Conference, according to a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office on Saturday. CM Yadav also highlighted that improvement in the living standards of tribal people and conservation of forest areas should be given top priority. He also asserted that the participation of local residents should be

ensured in the conservation and management of community forest resources. Along with this, activities should be expanded by involving social organisations. "Madhya Pradesh is a big producer of tendu leaves, but it is used commercially in other states. A strategy should be prepared to encourage tendu leaf collectors and various businesses related to it in the state itself and to provide



its benefits to tribal brothers and sisters," the statement read. Notably, after the implementation of the PESA Act, the state government is giving an extra push for the execution of the wide range of plans for the transformation of the tribals in the state.

Tripura Civil Service officers play pivotal role in executing govt plans, schemes : CM Saha

Agartala, Jan 1 (IANS) : Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Wednesday emphasised the crucial role played by Tripura Civil Service (TCS) officers in implementing government initiatives, plans and schemes aimed at addressing public issues and development. Addressing a winter clothes distribution program, the Chief Minister said that the TCS officers play a pivotal role in ensuring that the benefits of various welfare schemes, both from the Central and state governments, reach the most marginalised sections of society. They also act as a bridge between the government and the people, he stated. The winter clothes distribution programme was organised by the TCS officers association here. Winter clothes were distributed to around 400 families affected by the recent floods in Agartala. The Chief Minister highlighted that the TCS officers association regularly engages in social activities. "Previously, the association distributed winter clothes to 700 sanitation workers of Agartala Municipal Corporation. Such social service initiatives are indeed praise-worthy. TCS officers' efforts have also been instrumental in successfully managing various disasters.



1,752 trainees receive certificates under Bihar Laghu Udyami Yojana to start businesses

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : Under the Bihar Laghu Udyami Yojana, 1,752 individuals were awarded training certificates at the District Industry Center premises after completing courses in 61 different trades. Along with the certificates, each trainee received the first instalment of Rs 50,000 to kickstart their ventures. Notably, the programme witnessed significant participation from young women, highlighting their growing entrepreneurial aspirations. Vivek Kumar Sharma, General Manager of the District Industry Center, explained that the scheme targets economically weaker sections with an annual income of less than Rs 72,000. Out of 2,038 selected candidates from the district, 1,752 were trained in diverse trades such as beauty services, spice production, flour milling, mosquito net manufacturing, fish farming, and more.

Narcotics valued at Rs 15 crore seized from Assam, two arrested

Guwahati, Jan 1 (IANS) : Assam Police foiled an interstate drug peddling attempt and seized narcotics worth Rs 15 crore, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Wednesday.

The operation was carried out in the Cachar district which is neighbouring two states - Manipur and Mizoram. The seized narcotics items were Yaba tablets and the consignment was being smuggled from a neighbouring state. Meanwhile, two persons were arrested on the charges of drug peddling.

Taking to social media platform X, CM Sarma wrote, "Narcotics worth ₹15cr seized. Based on credible inputs, @cacharpolice conducted a special operation at Ghoongur Bypass and intercepted a vehicle coming from a neighbouring State. Upon search, 50,000 YABA tablets concealed in 5 packets were recovered."

"Two have been apprehended and the vehicle has been seized," he added.

To recall, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, while



addressing the 72nd plenary session of the North Eastern Council (NEC) in Agartala, said the accusations against the northeastern states about drugs-related activities should be removed. "Much endeavours were made to curb the drug menaces, but much more efforts must be undertaken by the Chief Ministers and all people concerned," he said. He said that the Centre has undertaken nationwide all-out efforts to achieve a "Nasha Mukta Bharat" (drugs-free India) and the northeastern states must make the region drug-free.

The Union Home Minister also urged the Chief Ministers to prioritise the effective implementation of the three new criminal laws -- the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Contractor's suicide: Karnataka BJP demands Minister Priyank Kharge's resignation

Bengaluru, Jan 1 (IANS) : Leader of the Opposition in the Karnataka Legislative Council, Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, accused Kalaburagi district in-charge minister Priyank Kharge of abusing his power and demanded his resignation in connection with the suicide of a contractor, Sachin. He also alleged that the Kharge family is running a republic in their native Kalaburagi.

Speaking to the media on Wednesday, Narayanaswamy further criticised the situation in Kalaburagi, stating, "It has become the Republic of Kalaburagi. The administrative system in Karnataka and Kalaburagi are entirely different. In Kalaburagi, police function as if they are acting under the sole instructions of Priyank Kharge." Priyank Kharge is the son of AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge.



The BJP leader alleged that the Kharge family wields significant dominance in the region. "No one else is allowed to voice their opinions. Especially Dalit communities, if they speak against the Kharges, they face consequences. Police camp outside the homes of those who criticise them," he charged.



AAP facilitated registration of Bangladeshis, Rohingyas in voter list : BJP counters Kejriwal

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : In a fiery counter to Arvind Kejriwal's voter manipulation charge, BJP spokesperson Manjinder Singh Sirsa, on Wednesday, accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of enabling illegal voting practices by Bangladeshi and Rohingya infiltrators.

"We will ensure that no infiltrator casts a vote in Delhi under any circumstances," Sirsa declared. Refuting Kejriwal's claims of voter list tampering, Sirsa alleged that AAP had deliberately facilitated the registration of illegal voters.



Kashmir snowfall : Highways, flights shut, locals help stranded tourists

Srinagar, Jan 1 (IANS) : Life remained disrupted for the second day on Wednesday due to heavy snowfall across Kashmir although swift administrative effort restored electricity in most parts of the Valley. Srinagar-Mughal Road, Srinagar-Leh highway and all roads through mountain passes remained closed for the second day. Flights to Srinagar International Airport were cancelled

on Saturday, and the airport officials said the situation was being reviewed for restoration of flights. Locals have risen everywhere to the challenges faced by stranded tourists on highways. Locals in the Jammu national highway, Mughal Road, Srinagar-Leh districts opened their homes and mosques to tourists. Food and heating arrangements were made by Kashmiris for the tourists wherever they remained stranded.

Nitish Kumar a mere figurehead, decisions being made by others : Tejashwi Yadav

Patna, Jan 1 (IANS) : Tejashwi Yadav, the Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly, has sharply criticised Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's leadership, raising questions about governance and decision-making in the state. The RJD leader accused Nitish Kumar of being a mere figurehead, with actual decisions being made by retired bureaucrats and a few leaders based in Patna and Delhi. This allegation implies that the CM is not in full control of the government, which could have



serious implications for governance and public trust. Tejashwi Yadav slammed Nitish Kumar who went for Yatra (journey) in Bihar but did not interact with the public or media.

Worker registrations on e-Shram cross 30 crore, NCS portal mobilises 3.89 crore vacancies

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : Worker registrations on the e-Shram portal crossed 30 crores this year showcasing its rapid and widespread adoption among the unorganised workers, the government said on Wednesday. The eShram portal was launched on October 21 this year for unorganised labour to have access to various social sector schemes. The number of registrations

has been growing at a rapid rate and averaged 60,000 a day during October. So far, 12 social security/welfare schemes have been integrated and mapped with eShram. These includes One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC), Indra Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS), Indra Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

(MGNREGA), among others. "This is an ongoing process, where other schemes will also be integrated with eShram in phase

wise manner. The platform also enables agencies to use eShram data to verify workers' eligibility.





Maha CM asks CID to seize properties of accused involved in Beed Sarpanch murder case

Mumbai, Jan 1 (IANS) : After an all-party protest against the brutal murder of Massajog Sarpanch Santosh Deshmukh, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has cracked the whip directing the CID to seize properties of the accused involved in the ghastly incident. The Crime Investigation Department (CID) has already taken over the investigation into the killing of Deshmukh, and the directives to seize the properties of the accused were given late Tuesday night. CM Fadnavis has ordered to immediately start

the process of confiscating the properties of the accused and also to cancel the licenses of those whose photos with the revolvers have gone viral on social media. He has given these directions to CID's Additional Director General Prashant Burde. The CM has also asked the CID to review the revolver licenses that have been issued so far and cancel them. CM Fadnavis' directives come at a time when three accused involved in a broad-daylight murder of Santosh Deshmukh are still absconding. Political parties, especially, the ruling BJP and various organisations have been strongly demanding the immediate arrest of these three absconding accused and the mastermind in the killing of Santosh Deshmukh.

Three held in Gurugram for demanding Rs 50 lakh ransom from businessman

Gurugram, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Gurugram police have arrested three criminals for allegedly demanding a ransom of Rs 50 lakh from a businessman, police said. The accused have been identified as Ravi of Gurugram, Mohit Kumar, and Amit, a resident of Uttar Pradesh.

According to the police, they received a complaint on December 25.

The complainant told the police that on the intervening night of December 16 and 17, a WhatsApp caller had demanded Rs 50 lakh and threatened him and his family with dire consequences if the complainant failed to meet his demand. Out of fear, the complainant gave them Rs 5 lakh.



UN chief condemns escalation between Yemen's Houthis, Israel

United Nations, Jan 1 (IANS) : UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has condemned the escalation of the fight between Yemen's Houthis and Israel, and called for a ceasefire, his spokesperson said in a statement. "Israeli airstrikes on Sanaa International Airport, the Red Sea ports and power stations in Yemen are especially alarming," the spokesperson said in a statement on Wednesday. The airstrikes reportedly resulted in numerous casualties, including an injury to a UN Humanitarian Air Service crew member. According to the statement, a high-level UN delegation, headed by World Health Organisation Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

This govt is helping farmers the way a father helps son: Samba farmer on growing exotic vegetable

Samba, Jan 1 (IANS) : Farmers in Samba district of Jammu & Kashmir are moving past traditional crops and opting for exotic vegetables for better returns. Arjun Singh, a farmer of Ramgarh, border tehsil of Samba district, is an example of this change. He has started cultivating zucchini, a European-origin exotic vegetable, and is happy with the returns the crop is fetching him. First-time zucchini cultivator Arjun Singh told IANS that the government has been of great help in this pursuit. "It has been very beneficial for me to grow

this vegetable," he said. Another farmer Karan Singh came to visit Arjun Singh's farm. "I had heard that he had got these new seeds and I came to talk to him about it. He said that this crop requires less effort and the output is more," he said, speaking to IANS. "We used to grow wheat and paddy. We do not get proper re-



turns for that and expenses are mounting. So, if the government supports, I will take advice from him [Arjun Singh] and farm this vegetable which will fetch more profits," he said.



Five members of Bhagwanpuria, Bathth gangs held in Punjab

Chandigarh, Jan 1 (IANS) : Punjab Police has thwarted possible target killings with the arrest of five members of the Jaggu Bhagwanpuria and Amritpal Bathth gangs, leading to the recovery of a significant cache of arms and ammunition from their possession, Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said here on Wednesday. Those arrested have been identified as Gurmeet Singh, Harpal Singh, Lovepreet Singh, Shamsher Singh, and Sandeep Singh. The police have recovered four weapons -- a sophisticated US-made 9MM Glock pistol, two .32 bore pistols, and one country-made pistol -- along with 15 cartridges and three magazines, besides impounding their Hyundai Creta car without a number used in the crime. DGP Yadav said during questioning, the accused confessed that the seized weapons were supplied by Bhagwanpuria through his associate and they were planning to execute target killings on the instance of gangster Bathth. The arrested individuals are linked to multiple criminal cases, including attempted murder, illegal arms possession, and gang-related violence, he added. The DGP said important information has been

revealed about the shooter involved in a recent targeted murder by the gang in the Tarn Taran area. Further investigations are ongoing to trace their backward and forward linkages, he added. Senior Superintendent of Police Abhimanyu Rana said following an input about suspects travelling in a Hyundai Creta car, a police team led by in-charge CIA staff Amandeep Singh laid a checkpoint at Jandiala and managed to stop the vehicle, resulting in the arrest of Gurmeet Singh, Lovepreet Singh, and Harpal Singh. Further, after the interrogation of the accused, two more gang members Shamsher Singh and Sandeep Singh were also arrested, he added.

Punjab Police bust ISI-backed terror module

Chandigarh, Jan 1 (IANS) : In a major breakthrough, Punjab Police has busted another Pakistan's ISI-backed terror module being operated by Babbar Khalsa International (BKI). The module was helmed by foreign-based Harpreet Singh, alias Happy Passia, and Shamsher, alias Honey, with the arrest of its five members, including mastermind Abhijot Singh, involved in lobbying hand-grenade at two police establishments, said Di-



rector General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav here on Sunday. "By successfully busting this module, Punjab Police has

solved all incidents of attacks on police establishments in the state," said the DGP. Other arrested four people have been identified as Kuljit Singh, Rohit, alias Ghessi, Shubham and Gurjinder Singh alias Raja, all residents of Qila Lal Singh in Batala. Police teams have also recovered two pistols, including one sophisticated 9MM Glock pistol, from their possession.

UAE condemns burning of Gaza hospital by Israeli forces

Abu Dhabi, Jan 1 (IANS) : The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has strongly condemned the burning of Kamal Adwan Hospital in the northern Gaza Strip by Israeli troops, which forced patients and medical staff to evacuate. In a statement released by its Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday, the UAE expressed its rejection of the act, describing it as a "heinous violation" of international humanitarian law and part of a "systematic assault" on Gaza's already fragile healthcare system. The Ministry called for an immediate cessation of violence, stressing the importance of protecting civilians and civilian institutions.



South Korea: Acting President Choi Sang-mok vows to prioritise stabilising state affairs

Seoul, Jan 1 (IANS) : South Korea's Acting President Choi Sang-mok said on Wednesday the government will do its utmost to focus on stabilising state affairs amid ongoing political turbulence stemming from the short-lived imposition of martial law earlier this month. Choi, who also serves as Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs and Finance Minister, stepped into the interim leadership role following the suspension of acting President Han Duck-soo's duties by the National Assembly earlier in the day. Han was impeached less than two weeks after he took over for President Yoon Suk Yeol on December 14, who was impeached for his mishan-

dling of martial law. In a written statement addressed to the nation, Choi emphasised the importance of minimising the confusion in state affairs, Yonhap news agency reported. "The government will do its best to ensure national stability," Choi said. Choi also offered an apology as a member of the Cabinet for contributing to the current chaos. He has faced pressure over his attendance at a Cabinet meeting held shortly before Yoon declared martial law on December 3. Separately, the new acting President reaffirmed the strong alliance between South Korea and the United States during a phone call with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, according to the Finance Ministry. Choi urged the military to remain on high alert,

citing the possibility of provocations from North Korea. "Readiness posture should be maintained to prevent North Korea from making any rash moves and uphold a firm security stance based on the strong South Korea-US alliance," he ordered. Choi also instructed Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul to maintain close communication channels with partner countries. He also emphasised the importance of reassuring other countries that South Korea's foreign policy will remain unchanged, and that international exchanges and trade will not be disrupted. Additionally, Choi urged the acting Minister of the Interior and Safety to ensure public order while strengthening disaster re-

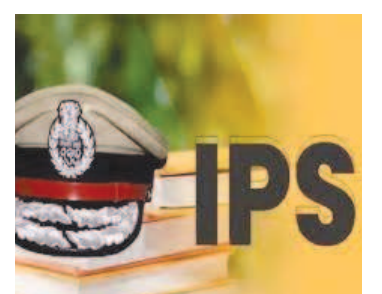


sponse systems. Choi also ordered Health Minister Cho Kyoo-hong to prioritise emergency medical plans for winter, ensuring that emergency medical systems operate smoothly. Later in the day, Choi also convened the National Security Council, his office said. Choi's tenure as acting President is expected to face challenges from the opposition-controlled National Assembly. The main opposition Democratic Party has urged Choi to promptly appoint three Constitutional Court justice nominees to deliberate on Yoon's impeachment trial.

Major reshuffle in Bihar Police; 62 IPS officers transferred

Patna, Jan 1 (IANS) : In a major reshuffle in the Bihar Police department, a total of 62 Indian Police Service (IPS) officers have been transferred and re-posted to various positions, an official said on Wednesday. According to a notification by the Bihar Home Department, Avkash Kumar has been appointed as the new Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) of Patna. Jayant Kant was transferred from Bettiah to Patna to the post of deputy inspector general. Rajiv Mishra, the former SSP of Patna, is now designated as Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) of the Anti-

Terrorism Squad. Kundan Krishnan, the Additional Director General of Police (ADG) Headquarters, has been given additional charge of the Special Task Force (STF). Amit Kumar Jain has been assigned as Additional Director General of Police (Weaker Sections), Crime Investigation Department, Patna.



Turkey neutralises five PKK, YPG members in Syria, Iraq

Istanbul, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Turkish army has 'neutralised' five members of the outlawed Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) and Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in Syria and Iraq, the Defence Ministry announced on Wednesday. In a statement on X, the ministry reported that three 'terrorists' from PKK and YPG were 'neutralised' in the Euphrates Shield region of northern Syria. Turkey considers the YPG group as the Syrian branch of the PKK. Additionally, two other PKK members were 'neutralised' in

the Claw-Lock Operation area in northern Iraq, according to the ministry. "We will continue our fight against terrorism with the same determination and resolve, without compromise, as we have until now," the ministry stated.

Turkish authorities often use the term 'neutralise' in their statements to imply the alleged terrorists have either surrendered, been killed, or been captured, Xinhua news agency reported.



China vows to smash 'Taiwan independence' moves

Beijing, Jan 1 (IANS) : A Chinese military spokesperson on Wednesday condemned US arms sales to Taiwan and vowed to smash any "Taiwan independence" separatist plots and foreign interference. Zhang Xiaogang, a spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defence, made the remarks at a press conference when asked to comment on reports of the arrival of a new type of battle tanks purchased by Taiwan from the United States. "We urge the US side to abide by the one-China principle and the three China-US joint communiqués, earnestly honour its commitment not to support

'Taiwan independence,' immediately stop arming Taiwan, and cease its dangerous moves that undermine peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait," Zhang said. Seeking independence by soliciting US support is doomed to failure, and resorting to force to resist reunification leads nowhere, he added, Xinhua news agency reported. "Several pieces of US weaponry won't be the 'magic straw' that can save a drowning man; they are nothing but easy targets on the battlefield," Zhang said. "The People's Liberation Army will comprehensively improve its combat readiness, enhance its capability to fight and win, and



firmly smash any 'Taiwan independence' separatist plots and foreign interference," he added. On Wednesday, China had denounced the "negative Taiwan-related content" included in the recent US National Defence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025. Chen Binhua, a spokesperson for the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, made the remarks at a press conference, adding that the inclusion of such content was an attempt by the United States to further arm Taiwan and stir up trouble in the Taiwan Strait.

Pakistan reports two more polio cases

Islamabad, Jan 1 (IANS) : Pakistan reported two more polio cases, increasing the total number of cases in the country so far this year to 67, the National Institute of Health (NIH) said on Wednesday. The two cases were confirmed from the northwest district of Tank and the southern district of Kashmore, the NIH said. The NIH added that it was the fourth polio case from Tank and the second case from Kashmore this year. The data

revealed that out of the total cases, 27 were reported from the southwest Balochistan province, 19 from the northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, 19 from the southern Sindh province, and one from the eastern Punjab province and the capital Islamabad each. The Pakistan Polio Programme conducted multiple mass vaccinations in 2024, Xinhua news agency reported. The latest large-scale vaccination campaign was conducted earlier this month in 143 districts with a

target to vaccinate over 44 million children under five. The second phase of the campaign was due on December 30. On December 3, Pakistan had confirmed three more polio cases, bringing the total number of cases in the country in 2024 to 59. According to a statement, the Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the NIH had verified the detection of the Wild Poliovirus Type 1 (WPV1) in three children from different areas of the country, NIH reported.



The NIH added that one case had been reported from Dera Ismail Khan district, while the other two cases were confirmed in the southern port city of Karachi and the southern district of Kashmore, respectively. Pakistan had been responding to an intense resurgence of WPV1 by utilising all-out efforts, said the NIH. Of the confirmed cases, 26 were from Balochistan province.



Saudi Arabia allocates 500 million USD to support Yemeni government

Aden (Yemen), Jan 1 (IANS) : Saudi Arabia has allocated 500 million to the Yemeni government to cover state employees' salaries and other expenses, Yemeni Prime Minister Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak said.

In a post on social media platform X, Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak expressed "profound gratitude and appreciation" to Saudi Arabia for its "continuous and generous support." "The launch of the fourth batch of support, amounting to \$200 million for the general budget, alongside a \$300 million deposit for the Central Bank of Yemen, demonstrates the kingdom's steadfast solidarity with the Yemeni people," Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak added. The Yemeni prime minister emphasised that the aid will allow the government to pay state employees' salaries, enhance citizens' living conditions.

South Korea: Prosecutors seize ex-defence minister's phone in martial law probe

Seoul, Jan 1 (IANS) : South Korea's prosecutors have seized former Defence Minister Kim Yong-hyun's mobile phone to try to access phone calls he held during President Yoon Suk Yeol's brief imposition of martial law, legal sources said on Wednesday. Kim was indicted on Thursday on charges of playing a key role in an insurrection amid allegations he proposed declaring martial law to Yoon and ordered military officials to send troops to seal off the National Assembly on December 3. The prosecution's special investigation headquarters handling the martial law case seized the phone on Thursday with a court-issued warrant and notified Kim's side to attend a forensic survey of the phone scheduled for next Monday, according to the sources.

Prosecutors earlier secured the phone when Kim voluntarily appeared for questioning on December 8, but Kim's side

protested against what they said was illegal collection of evidence, Yonhap news agency reported. Instead of returning the phone, prosecutors filed for a warrant and succeeded in securing the phone again. Kim's lawyer, however, submitted an appeal before a court on Friday to overturn the seizure. Earlier on December 27, South Korea's prosecutors indicted former Defence Minister Kim Yong-hyun under detention on charges of insurrection over his alleged role in the short-lived imposition of martial law this month. The prosecution's special investigation team indicted Kim on charges of abuse of power and playing an "integral" role in an insurrection, marking the first indictment in the case on President Yoon Suk Yeol's botched declaration of martial law.



19 Pakistani soldiers, 3 Afghan civilians killed in clashes between Afghan-Pak border forces

Kabul, Jan 1 (IANS) : Heavy clashes erupted between Afghan and Pakistani border forces at border crossing points, killing 19 Pakistani soldiers and three Afghan civilians, local media reported on Wednesday. The fierce clashes are ongoing in eastern Afghanistan's Khost and Paktia provinces bordering Pakistan, TOLONews reported, quoting a source from the Ministry of National Defense, as per Xinhua news agency. Afghan border forces have set on fire several Pakistani military posts in the Ali Shir district of Khost province and captured two Pakistani posts in the Dand-e-Patan district of Paktia province, it said.

Indonesia provides emergency assistance to earthquake-hit Vanuatu

Jakarta, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Indonesian government has provided emergency assistance to quake-stricken Vanuatu to help the nation carry out emergency relief efforts following the 7.3-magnitude quake on December 17 that killed a dozen people and wounded hundreds of others. A plane carrying a medical team and 50.5 tonnes of logistics and food departed from Halim Perdanakusuma Air Force base in East Jakarta on Wednesday afternoon. Health Minister Budi Sadikin expressed his expectation that the medical team would begin aiding the victims of the catastrophe upon their arrival in the country. According to him, the team is scheduled to conduct the humanitarian mission for 14 days.



AU expresses concern over post-election violence in Mozambique

Addis Ababa, Jan 1 (IANS) : African Union (AU) Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat expressed concern over the post-election violence in Mozambique. In a statement, the AU chief called for a peaceful resolution of the escalating post-election violence in Mozambique, particularly following the recent pronouncement of the final election results by the country's constitutional council, which resulted in scores of people losing their lives, Xinhua news agency reported.

Expressing condolences to the bereaved, he appealed on Wednesday for calm and urged the country's security services to exercise restraints amid the violence and maintain law and order.

The chairperson of the 55-member continental organisation also called on Mozambique's government and all national political and social actors to seek a peaceful solution to the current crisis to avoid further loss of life and destruction of property.



Sudan starts to resume train operation after hiatus due to war

Khartoum, Jan 1 (IANS) : Sudan has resumed the operation of the train linking Port Sudan in the eastern Red Sea State with Atbara in the northern River Nile State, following a hiatus due to the ongoing civil conflict, Sudanese authorities said. The train set off from Port Sudan on Wednesday evening and arrived

in Atbara on Friday, marking the first railway line in Sudan to resume operation since the onset of the conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces in mid-April 2023. Sudan's Transport Minister Abu Bakr Abu Al-Qasim Abdalla said the work would continue to resume the operation on other railway lines. "This is just the beginning, and we are working to resume train operation services on all railway lines that connect different cities," the Minister said.



Yuva Kabaddi Series: UP Falcons top Division 2, to play Chandigarh Chargers in final

Coimbatore, Jan 1 (IANS) : The Division 2 of the Yuva Kabaddi Series is heading toward a conclusion as UP Falcons solidified their position at the top and secured a spot in the final against Chandigarh Chargers. Day 9 of Division 2, hosted at the Karpagam Academy of Higher Education in Coimbatore, featured intense clashes as teams battled to end on a high note. The opening match saw UP Falcons defeat Delhi Dhurandhars 48-38 in a high-scoring encounter. This victory not only propelled the Falcons to the top

of the table but also confirmed their place in the final. Substitute Rachit Yadav turned the game around with a brilliant Super 10, while Navneet Nagar and Ayush Kumar earned High 5s. Delhi's Shubham Bhiduri impressed with 11 points, and Vinod Pal contributed a high-5 off the bench, but the overall team effort fell short against the in-form Falcons. In the second game, Hampi Heroes defeated Panchala Pride 46-21, consigning the Pride to a winless Division 2 campaign. Raiders Chetan Jangama and Krupasagar D were unstoppable, securing 11 raid points each, while Darshan R added to Hampi's dominance with a high-5.



LeBron becomes first NBA player to compete as a teenager and over 40

Los Angeles, Jan 1 (IANS) : LeBron James became the first player in NBA history to play both as a teenager and past the age of 40 as Los Angeles Lakers lost to the Cleveland Cavaliers 110-122 at the Crypto.com Arena on Wednesday. Despite the loss, the legendary forward contributed 23 points in the game, showcasing his continued brilliance in his 22nd season. His longevity and consistency have cemented his legacy as one of the greatest players the sport has ever seen. James, a four-time NBA champion and MVP, also holds the record as the NBA's all-time leading scorer. While the Lakers celebrated James' milestone, it was Cleveland who emerged victorious.

ISL: Hyderabad aim to end five-game winless streak against table-toppers Mohun Bagan SG

Kolkata, Jan 1 : Mohun Bagan Super Giant will host Hyderabad FC in the Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25 on Thursday at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan. Mohun Bagan Super Giant are leading in the points table with 29 points from 13 games, while Hyderabad FC are struggling in the 12th place.



Australia executed their disciplined plan of dismissing Kohli: Clarke

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : Former Australia captain Michael Clarke has lauded the Pat Cummins-led side for executing their "disciplined plans" of dismissing the talismanic Virat Kohli in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy series. Despite making an unbeaten century in the second innings during India's 295-run win in Perth, Kohli hasn't done anything substantial, as seen from his scores of 7, 11, 3, 36 and 5 in the next five innings in Adelaide, Brisbane and Melbourne. What's been more worrying is, all six of Kohli's dismissals in the current series have been to chasing balls outside the off stump.

McGrath backs Starc to be match-ready for Sydney Test

Sydney, Jan 1 (IANS) : Australian legend Glenn McGrath believes that Mitchell Starc would leave no stone unturned to be match-fit for the crucial New Year's Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG), starting on January 3. Starc suffered rib and back soreness during the Boxing Day Test. The 34-year-old, a crucial cog in Australia's pace attack.



Vishy Anand congratulates Vaishali for bronze medal at World Blitz Championship

New Delhi, Jan 1 (IANS) : Indian chess prodigy R Vaishali scripted a memorable finish to 2024, clinching a bronze medal in the women's section of the World Blitz Championship on Wednesday. Vaishali's journey in the tournament included a quarterfinal triumph over China's Zhu Jiner and a hard-fought semifinal loss to Ju Wenjun, the even-

tual champion. Vaishali showcased strategic brilliance throughout the championship. In the quarterfinals, she outmanoeuvred Zhu Jiner in a tense 2.5-1.5 victory, securing her place among the world's elite. However, her campaign for the gold ended in the semifinals, where she faced the formidable Ju Wenjun of China. Despite her best efforts, Vaishali was outplayed 0.5-2.5 by Ju, who

later claimed the world title with a thrilling 3.5-2.5 win over compatriot Lei Tingjie in the final. Vaishali's achievement drew high praise from Indian chess legend and five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand. Currently serving as the Vice President of the International Chess Federation (FIDE). "Congratulations to Vaishali for taking bronze. Her qualification



was truly a power-packed performance. Our Waca Chess mentee (WestBridge Anand Chess Academy) has done us proud. We are so happy to be supporting her and her chess," Anand posted on X. He also lauded Koneru Humpy for her title-winning performance in the rapid event. "What a way to wrap up 2024. In 2021, we thought we would get stronger chess players but here we have it: a World Champion (Humpy), and a Bronze medallist (Vaishali)!" Anand added.



Bumrah surpasses Ashwin to become highest-ranked Indian bowler in Test ranking history

Dubai, Jan 1 (IANS) : Jasprit Bumrah's scintillating performance in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia has elevated him to the highest rating points ever achieved by an Indian bowler in Test cricket as he consolidated his lead as the No. 1 bowler in the recent rankings update. With rating points of 907, Bumrah moved past Ravichandran Ashwin's 904 rating points, achieved in December 2016, and makes him the highest-ever ranked Indian Test bowler in ICC rankings history. The 907 points placed the pacer as joint-17th in the all-time list – with Derek Underwood of England. Australian skipper Pat Cummins also benefited from his Boxing Day heroics and jumped 15 rating points and went up by a place to sit at No. 3 in the bowling rankings. Cummins also secures a third place in the Test All-Rounder Rankings, on the back of the above bowling exploits and 90 crucial runs during Australia's stellar win in Melbourne.



Brisbane International : Kyrgios-Djokovic lose in doubles, Dimitrov books QF spot

Brisbane, Jan 1 (IANS) : Nick Kyrgios and Novak Djokovic's doubles run at the Brisbane International came to an end in dramatic fashion as the pair fell to top seeds Nikola Pietrangeli and Michael Venus in a tense tiebreak on Wednesday. Having rallied from a set down, Djokovic and Kyrgios looked headed for the semifinals before the former World No. 1 pushed for too much on his second serve at 8/6, the beginning of a four-point winning streak by the top seeds to close out the match 6-2 3-6, 10-8. The loss brought down the curtain on Kyrgios' comeback tournament, which had been eagerly anticipated following an 18-month hiatus due to injury. Kyrgios' doubles exit followed a first-round

singles defeat to France's Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard on Tuesday night. Playing his first match since September 2023 wrist surgery, the 29-year-old moved freely and showed few signs of rust. But he did play with heavy taping on his wrist and called the physio to court. Meanwhile, Djokovic's first singles outing of the new season at the Brisbane International has lived up to the Serbian's lofty expectations as he eased past home favourite Rinky Hijikata on Tuesday in his first tour-level singles match since October. Djokovic will play his second-round singles match against Gael Monfils on Thursday as he looks to extend his ATP Head-2-Head record against the Frenchman to 20-0.

United Cup: Rybakina puts Kazakhstan on brink of semis; Machac takes Czechia closer to QFs

Perth, Jan 1 (IANS) : Elena Rybakina put Kazakhstan one win away from the 2025 United Cup semifinals with a commanding 6-3, 6-1 victory over Germany's Laura Siegemund in the first match of the tournament's knockout stages. Group C winners Kazakhstan are now 6-1 in matches this week, with World No. 6 Rybakina adding to that impressive record via her 65-minute win over 80th-ranked Siegemund here at RAC Arena on New Year's Day. Siegemund, known for her all-court game, faltered with a misfired drop shot, giving Rybakina the only break of the first set at 4-2. Rybakina seized the opportunity, quickly closing out the set without facing a break point. In the second set, Rybakina surged ahead with an early break to lead 2-1, then saved two break points in the next game to hold serve. The 2022 Wimbledon champion maintained control from there, securing the win and extending her head-to-head advantage over Siegemund to 6-1.

