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Bank of Baroda posts 5.6 pc rise in Q3 profit, asset quality improves

State-run Bank of Baroda (BoB) on Friday reported a 5.6 per cent year-on-year (YoY) increase in its net profit for the third quarter of the financial year 2024-25 (Q3 FY25)....

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Ruud draws Norway level with Argentina in Davis Cup qualifiers

Davis Cup qualifiers first round tie between Norway and Argentina ended 1-1 after the opening day as Casper Ruud defeated Argentine Mariano Navone 6-3, 6-3, levelling the tie 1-1 after ...

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People's govt focused on education, health sectors : Bhatti

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka has stated that the People's government in the State is placing a significant emphasis on the education and health sectors, indicating its ...

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CM Revanth appeals to Deshpande Foundation to extend its services

Hyderabad, Jan.31 (NSS): Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has appealed to the members of the Deshpande Foundation to adopt the Government Women's Degree College in Mahabubnagar. Members of the Deshpande Foundation called on Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at his residence here on Friday and sought the government's support to expand its services in Telangana.

The foundation has been working to bring a change in the social and economic conditions of people living in the rural areas. It is also



providing English language skills and skill development training to the students of the government schools. On the occasion, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy suggested the foundation to work in Kasturba Girls' Schools in Telangana and also appealed to the foundation to adopt Government Women's Degree College in Mahabubnagar. Responding quickly, the foundation agreed to the CM's suggestion.

KCR breaks silence, vows to 'hit hard' at Congress government

Hyderabad, Jan 31 (IANS) : Breaking his long silence, former Telangana chief minister and Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) President K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) on Friday said he would 'hit hard' at the Congress government. Claiming that the Congress government faces massive public discontent within a year of its rule, the BRS chief announced that a public meeting will be held in February to highlight the government's failures. "I am watching this government seriously and silently. If I hit you, it won't be normal. It's my habit to hit hard," KCR told a meeting of party cadres at his farmhouse in Gajwel. The former chief minister came down heavily on the government for not implementing its poll promises.



SC hears BRS MLAs' defection petition

New Delhi, Jan.31 (NSS): The Supreme Court on Friday took up the case of the disqualification of turncoat BRS party MLAs, who switched to the ruling Congress party in Telangana. A bench of Justices B R Gavai and George Masih was hearing a petition filed by BRS party MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy.

The counsel appearing for Kaushik Reddy told the court that the Telangana High Court had in March last year asked State assembly speaker G. Prasad Kumar to take a decision on the turncoat MLAs within four months, but added that no decision had been taken so far by the assembly Speaker.

KCR indulging in unrealistic fantasies: TPCC chief

Hyderabad, Jan 31 (NSS) : Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) President Mahesh Kumar Goud has remarked that the BRS party's struggle to identify candidates for local bodies has led former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to make exaggerated claims regarding his party. In a press release issued here on Friday, the TPCC President asserted that KCR's statements stem from frustration, as the Congress has made significant progress

during its one year of governance, progress that was unattainable during the BRS's decade in power. He indicated that KCR is deviating from the actual circumstances, noting that KCR's daughter, Kavitha, already implicated in the Delhi liquor scandal.



India will fulfil aim of Viksit Bharat, Budget Session will give new energy, says PM Modi

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : Ahead of the start of the Budget Session on Friday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India will fulfil its aim of Viksit Bharat and this Budget Session will give new energy and hope to the nation.

In his customary address to the media before the beginning of a new session, PM Modi said, "Ahead of the Budget Session, I bow down to Maa Lakshmi, the

goddess of wealth and prosperity.." Reminiscing the Maha Lakshmi mantra, PM Modi said that he prays to the Goddess to have special blessings on the poor and the middle class.

SCR operating six addl Maha Kumbh Mela special trains



Hyderabad, Jan.31 (NSS): In order to clear extra rush of passengers participating in the Maha Kumbh Mela - 2025, SCR is operating six Additional Maha Kumbh Mela special trains between various destinations. Train No 07111 (Bidar - Danapur) will depart from Bidar on February 14, at 11.10 am reaching Danapur at 23.55 (2nd Day). The return

service, train number 07112 Danapur - Charlapalli on February 16 will depart from Danapur at 15.15 pm reaching Charlapalli at 23.45 (second day) February 16, 2025. These special trains will stop at Zahirabad, Vikarabad, Lingampalli, Begumpet, Secunderabad, Charlapalli, Jangaon, Kazipet, Jammikunta, Peddapalli, Ramagundam, Macheriyal.

Sridhar Babu inaugurates DarkMatter Technologies' Global Capability Centre



Hyderabad, Jan.31 (NSS): In a landmark move underscoring Hyderabad's rise as a global technology epicenter, DarkMatter India Technologies, a subsidiary of the Perseus Group under Constellation Software Inc. (CSI), launched its state-of-the-art Global Capability Centre (GCC) in Hyderabad on Friday.

Our govt developed municipalities : KTR

Hyderabad, Jan.31 (NSS): BRS party working president KTR today alleged that in the united State, the municipalities used to be dirty dumps. KTR and senior party leaders participated in the felicitation ceremony of municipal chairpersons held at Telangana Bhavan.

Speaking on the occasion, he said after the formation of the BRS government, KCR directed them to work with a special vision for the development of towns. "That's why we have taken several initiatives to de-

velop the towns that are the economic engines and develop them comprehensively. Efforts by some countries to stop urbanisation have failed. The expansion of the towns cannot be stopped. But governments will have the opportunity to develop them comprehensively."





Services are unforgettable : Collector Sandeep Kumar Jha

AD Survey, Land Records Gourisetty Balachandram retires

Rajanna Siricilla, Jan 31 (TIM Bureau) : Collector Sandeep Kumar Jha praised the services of AD Survey Gourisetty Balachandram as unforgettable. A program was organized on Friday at the district integrated offices complex on the occasion of the retirement of AD Survey Gourisetty Balachandram, and Collector

Sandeep Kumar Jha and Additional Collector Khimya Nayak attended and spoke. "It was explained that AD Survey Gourisetty Balachandram had rendered nearly 32 years of service in the Survey and Land Records Department. Later, they were honored with shawls and praised for their services.

Yoga for easy delivery



Rajanna Siricilla, Jan 31 (TIM Bureau) : Vijaya Telangana. "At the Vemulawada Government Regional Hospital in Rajanna Siricilla district, pregnant women are being taught various types of yoga asanas that help in easy delivery by a yoga instructor from the Ayush department appointed by the government. Yoga instructor Eligeti Krishna has been appointed for this purpose. Hospital supervisor Dr. Penchalaiah has requested that not only pregnant women but also others who come to the hospital should use this facility. Currently, the hospital staff is also undergoing yoga training in phases. Badrasana, Mala Asana, Setu Bandha Asana, Veera Badrasana, Usta Asana.



People's govt focused on education, health sectors : Bhatti

Hyderabad, Jan.31 (NSS): Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka has stated that the People's government in the State is placing a significant emphasis on the education and health sectors, indicating its willingness to allocate any necessary funds for their advancement. The Deputy Chief Minister served as the chief guest at the annual celebration of St. Francis Degree College for Women in Begumpet on Friday. During his address, he remarked that investing in education would contribute to the development of human resources in the State, ultimately positioning Telangana as a global leader. The government is undertaking the construction of Young India Inter-

grated Schools to enhance the education sector and prepare students in Telangana to compete on an international level. Each school will be built on a land area of 20 to 25 acres, with an investment of Rs 200 crore allocated for each institution. He noted that approvals have already been granted for 60 schools, he said. The Deputy Chief Minister further stated that If education is provided to a woman, it will not only benefit her, but also the entire family and the society at large. Family system gives strength to the nation and that power to run the family system lies with the woman in the form of mother, wife and sister, Bhatti Vikramarka said. "Keeping this in mind, the govern-

ment has been extending all kinds of cooperation for the development of women. Funds are being allocated specially for women development and measures are being taken to give women ample opportunities in education and employment," Bhatti Vikramarka said. He said the State government is keen to transform women as entrepreneurs and as part of this objective, an action plan has been put into motion for involving women self help groups in generation of 1,000 MW solar power. Moreover, the State government is extending interest free loans to the tune of Rs 20,000 crore per year and the Finance department will pay the interest on behalf of SHG women, he disclosed.

LOST OF PASSPORT

I, **Bandi Anjaneyulu, S/o. Mallaiah, R/o. H.No. 1-96, Peddabonala, Siricilla(M), Rajanna Siricilla Dist., TG.** have lost my **Passport No. L8982002** while travelling on bike from Siricilla Bus Stand to Peddabonala on **10/01/2025**. If found pls call: **8978213091**

Police officer shoots himself dead in Andhra Pradesh

Amaravati, Jan 31 (IANS) : A police officer shot himself dead in Andhra Pradesh's West Godavari district on Friday.

Sub-Inspector of Police A.G. S. Murthy shot himself with his service revolver at Tanuku Rural Police Station. Murthy was sent

to Vacancy Reserve (VR) by his seniors recently following allegations in connection with a case. However, the SI was asked

to report for duty in view of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's visit to the district on Friday. The police officer came

to the police station on Friday morning. He sat for some time and then went to the washroom where he shot himself in the head with the service weapon.

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL HYDERABAD (DRT-I)
3rd Floor, Triveni Complex Abids, Hyderabad 500001.

O.A. No. 446 OF 2024
BANK OF MAHARASHTRA ...Applicant
AND
M/s. JEEVAN INDUSTRIES AND OTHERS ...Defendant(s)
SUMMONS BY WAY OF PAPER PUBLICATION
To
1. M/s. Jeevan Industries Rep by its Proprietor, Vaddepalli Ram Prasad, O/o. Room.No.7A, Old Area Stores, SCCL, Ramakrishnapur, Mandamari, Mancheril-504301. Also at: M/s. Jeevan Industries Rep by its Proprietor, Vaddepalli Ram Prasad, H.No.64, Block-5, Asian Tower, Hi-Tech City Mancheril-504208, T.S. Also at: M/s. Jeevan Industries Rep by its Proprietor, Vaddepalli Ram Prasad, H.No.13-820/3-44, 13-820/3-45, 13-820/3-46, Shop.No.T-6, T-7, T-8, Third Floor, Mancheril Complex, Metharwada, Mancheril-504208, T.S.
2. **Vaddepalli Ram Prasad, S/o. Neelakantam, Age: 34, Occ. Business, H.No.4-88, Krishna Colony, Naspur, Mancheril-504303, T.S.** ...Defendants
Please take the summons in the above O.A.No. 446 OF 2024 filed by the Applicant for Recovery of money of Rs.1,14,71,924.06Ps against you. The Honble Tribunal ordered summons to you by way of paper publication in "VAARTHA" Telugu Daily, newspaper and posted the matter to 04.03.2025.
In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:
i) To show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted;
ii) To disclose particulars of properties or assets other than properties and assets specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the Original application;
iii) You are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such other pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties;
iv) You shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business any of assets over which security interest in created and/or other assets and properties specified or disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal;
v) You shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realized by sale of secured assets of other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank or financial institutions holding security interest over such assets.
You are hereby required to show cause on 04.03.2025 at 10.30 am at Debts Recovery Tribunal-I, 3rd floor, Triveni complex, Abids, Hyderabad-500001, in person or by an Advocate duly instructed as to why the relief prayed for should not be granted. Take notice that in case of default, the Application will be heard and determined in your absence on 31.01.2025.
(By order of the Court)
Sd/- Assistant Registrar,
Debts Recovery Tribunal-I, Hyderabad

BASHIRBAGH BRANCH:
#3-5-822 and 3-5-822/B, Ground Floor, Bashirbagh, to King Koti Main Road, Opp. PG College of Law, Bashirbagh, Hyderabad- 500063, Tel: 040-23234673, 23237370, 23233508, Email: Bashirbagh.telangana@bankofindia.co.in

APPENDIX-IV [See rule-8(1)]

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)
Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of BANK OF INDIA, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice Dated 04-11-2024 calling upon the Borrowers: 1) Mr. Shankar Telgolu, H.No.1-7-506/6/A, Bakaram Zamistanpur, Hyderabad-500020. 2) Mr. Shankar Telgolu, H.No.114, Cellar, Agra Sweet House Line, Near Balaji Temple, Chikkadpally, Hyderabad-500020. 3) Mrs. Anitha Telugolu, H.No.1-7-506/6/A, Bakaram Zamistanpur, Hyderabad-500020 to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.23,88,620.38 + uncharged interest thereon from 30.09.2024 in Top up Loan total together of Rs. 37,56,788.82 (Rupees Thirty Seven Lakh Fifty Six Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty Eight Paise Eighty Two) + uncharged interest thereon from 30.09.2024 thereon @ 9.35% p.a. (REPO+MARKUP+ BSP/BSID i.e., 9.35%+0.00% (spread)) for home loan and @ 9.85% p.a. (REPO+MARKUP+ BSP/BSID i.e., 9.35%+0.50% (spread)) for Top up loan compounded with Monthly rests and all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank till repayment by the Borrowers/Mortgager, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers/Mortgager had acknowledged the notices on 06-11-2024. The Borrowers/Mortgager having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers/Mortgager and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on 30th day of January 2025. The Borrowers/Mortgager in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India, Bashirbagh Branch for an amount Rs. 37,56,788.82 (Rupees Thirty Seven Lakh Fifty Six Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty Eight Paise Eighty Two)+ uncharged interest thereon from 30.09.2024 thereon @ 9.35% p.a. (REPO+ MARKUP+BSP/BSID i.e., 9.35%+0.00% (spread)) for home loan and @ 9.85% p.a. (REPO+MARKUP+ BSP/BSID i.e., 9.35%+0.50% (spread)) for Top up loan compounded with Monthly rests and all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the bank till payment by borrower/Mortgager. The borrowers/Mortgager's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY: Equitable Mortgage of all that house bearing Municipal No. 1-7-506/1, admeasuring 102.00 Sq.Yards, situated at Bakaram, Zamistanpur, Hyderabad, Telangana State. Bound by: North: H.No. 1-7-506, South: H.No. 1-7-506/2, East: Neighbour House, West: Road. Sale Deed Doc No. 2507/2014 dated 06.08.2014, registered at SRO Chikkadpally, EQM: 07.09.2017, MOD Doc No. 4344/2017 Dated 28.11.2017, SRO Chikkadpally.
Date: 01-02-2025, Place: Hyderabad Sd/- Authorised Officer, Bank of India

We have only one resolution, one goal - Viksit Bharat: President Murmu

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) President Droupadi Murmu said on Friday that the only resolution and goal of the government is Viksit Bharat. She said this during her address to a joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. She said the decade-long tenure of the Modi government has infused new energy into the journey of a 'Viksit Bharat'. "In the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat'... there is the collective strength of public participation, a roadmap for the nation's economic progress, the power of technology in the form of a digital revolution, and the foundation of modern infrastructure," said the President. She said the government is

steering India towards becoming the world's third-largest economy. To ensure that the journey towards 'Viksit Bharat' continues to be guided by the ideals of our Constitution, the government has placed four key principles -- service, good governance, prosperity, and pride -- at the core of its governance, she said, adding that the government is making rapid advances in its commitment to reform, perform, and transform. "The guiding mantra of my gov-



ernment is 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' and its goal is the creation of a 'Viksit Bharat'." The President said in her address that in building a 'Viksit Bharat', the role of research along with the role of farmers, soldiers and science is of im-

portance. "Our goal is to establish India as a global innovation powerhouse. To promote research in educational institutions, the National Research Foundation has been established with an outlay of Rs 50,000 crore," she said.

Controlling cybercrimes will be a priority, says Andhra Pradesh's new DGP

Vijayawada, Jan 31 (IANS) : Harish Kumar Gupta on Friday assumed office as Andhra Pradesh's new Director General of Police and declared that controlling cybercrimes and action against organised crime and mafia would be his priorities.

He also said that the police would use technology on a large scale and focus on improving response time to Dial 100 calls.

He was speaking at a police parade organized here to bid farewell to Dwarka Tirumala Rao on his retirement. "We will be strict with those indulging in organized crime. Everybody who is indulging in organized crime will pay a very heavy price," he said.

The new police chief said rowdy sheeters, history sheeters and people with criminal backgrounds would be under continuous surveillance. He also warned that police would deal firmly with those resorting to social media abuse and make sure that they are put behind bars.

The IPS officer said he would serve the citizens of Andhra Pradesh to the best of his capacity and act with fairness to ensure equity



and justice for all. "We will offer the best police services, maintain law and order and uphold the rule of law," he said while thanking Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for reposing faith in him to entrust him with the key responsibility. Stating that Andhra Pradesh is on the path of rapid progress, he said the Chief Minister has given Vision 2047. "Law and order play an important role in this process. We will be part of this journey to make Andhra Pradesh swarnandhra and peaceful," he said.

SPANDANA SPOHORTY FINANCIAL LIMITED
CIN: L65929TG2003PLC040648
Registered Office: Galaxy, Wing B, 16th Floor, Plot No.1, Sy.No.83/1, Hyderabad Knowledge City, TSIIIC, RaidurgPanmaktha, Hyderabad-500081, Telangana. Website: www.spandanaspohorty.com Phone No.: 040-45474750 | E-mail: secretarial@spandanaspohorty.com

POSTAL BALLOT NOTICE AND E-VOTING INFORMATION
In compliance with the provisions of Section 110 of the Companies Act, 2013 (the 'Act') read with Section 108 and other applicable provisions, if any, of the Companies Act, 2013, (Act), read with the Rule 20 and Rule 22 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 (the 'Rules'), Regulation 44 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 and the relaxations and clarifications issued by Ministry of Corporate Affairs ('MCA') for holding general meetings/ conducting postal ballot process through e-Voting vide General Circular Nos. 14/2020 dated April 8, 2020, 17/2020 dated April 13, 2020, 09/2023 dated September 25, 2023 and 09/2024 dated September 19, 2024 (collectively 'MCA Circulars'), we are furnishing the following details:
1) The business to be transacted through voting only by electronic means - for seeking approval of the Members for the following:
1. To approve raising funds by way of qualified institutional placement and/or other permissible mean(s) to eligible investors through issuance of securities of the company, in one or more tranches.
2) Date of completion of dispatch of Postal Ballot Notice to Members through e-mail - Friday, January 31, 2025.
3) The Company has sent an e-mail for the Postal Ballot Notice dated January 31, 2025 to all the Members whose name appeared on the Register of Members/ Record of Depositories received from National Securities Depository Limited/ Central Depository Services (India) Limited (Depositories) as on Friday, January 24, 2025 (cut-off date) and whose e-mail addresses are registered with depository participant(s). A person who is not a member as on the cut-off date should treat this advertisement for information purpose only.
4) The requirements of sending physical Postal Ballot Notice to the Members have been dispensed with vide MCA Circulars.
5) Details of the process and manner of remote e-voting along with the User ID and password are provided over e-mail to all Members who have registered their e-mail addresses. The instructions for voting through electronic means are provided to all Members as part of the Postal Ballot Notice.
6) The Company has engaged KFin Technologies Limited ('KFinTech') for facilitating e-voting in a secure manner.
7) For Members who have not registered their e-mail are requested to register their valid email addresses with the DP with whom their Demat Account is maintained.
8) The date and time of commencement of voting through electronic means - Saturday, February 01, 2025, at 09.00 a.m. (IST).
9) The date and time of end of voting through electronic means - Sunday, March 02, 2025, at 5.00 p.m. (IST).
10) The remote e-voting platform will be disabled at 5:00 p.m. IST on Sunday, March 02, 2025 by KFinTech. Once the vote on resolution is cast by the Members, the Members shall not be allowed to change it subsequently.
11) Website address where Postal Ballot Notice is displayed: Company - www.spandanaspohorty.com and KFinTechhttps://evoting.kfintech.com. Postal Ballot Notice is also submitted to BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited and the same are also available on their websites.
12) Contact details of the person responsible to address the grievances connected with the remote e-voting: Mrs. C Shobha Anand, - Vice President, Contact No. 040-67162222 or toll free no. 1800-303-4001 or email at evoting@kfintech.com.
13) The Company has appointed Mr. Y Ravi Prasada Reddy (Membership No. FCS 5783), Proprietor, RPR & Associates, Practicing Company Secretaries (CP No. 5360), Hyderabad as Scrutinizer for conducting the remote e-voting process thereto in accordance with the provisions of the Act read with the Rules and the MCA Circulars in a fair and transparent manner.
The results of the remote e-voting will be declared on or before Tuesday, March 04, 2025 at the registered office of the Company, the results of the remote e-voting along with the scrutinizer's report will be uploaded on the Company's website www.spandanaspohorty.com and will be communicated to the National Stock Exchange of India Limited at www.nseindia.com and BSE Limited at www.bseindia.com, where the equity shares / securities of the Company are listed.
By the Order of the Board of Directors
For Spandana Spohorty Financial Limited
Sd/-
Vinay Prakash Tripathi
Company Secretary
Place: Hyderabad
Date: January 31, 2025

Delhi polls : Security plans, voter awareness, expenditure monitoring discussed at election meeting

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : Delhi Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), R. Alice Vaz, held a high-level meeting on Friday to review the preparedness for the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections, scheduled for February 5. The meeting's objective was to ensure a smooth and orderly electoral process.

The focus was on key aspects such as law and order, security arrangements, voter awareness, and election expenditure monitoring. Senior officials, including District Election Officers (DOs), Deputy Commissioners (DCs), Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs), Returning Officers (ROs), Police Observers, Expenditure Observers, and General Observers were all present in the meeting.



MP Guv engages with PM Jan Man Yojana beneficiaries

Raisen, Jan 31 (IANS) : Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel interacted with members of the Scheduled Tribe community in the village of Chilwaha in Raisen district on Friday. During this interaction, the Governor discussed with the

beneficiaries of the Prime Minister's Jan Man Yojana and the Prime Minister's Awas Yojana. He also inspected the new houses built under the scheme. Expressing happiness over the successful implementation of these schemes, Governor Mangubhai Patel stated that the

effective execution of these programmes is bringing positive changes in the lives of citizens and improving their standard of living, adding that the Scheduled Tribe community is now becoming part of the mainstream society. "I am very happy to see you all here. I am happy to see your homes.



Misa Bharti appears in court in MCC violation case

Patna, Jan 31 (IANS): Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) National President Lalu Prasad Yadav's elder daughter and Pataliputra MP Misa Bharti physically appeared before the Danapur court in connection with violation of the Model Code of Conduct during the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

An FIR was filed at the Maner police station, alleging that Bharti conducted a roadshow without the necessary permissions during the Lok Sabha

election. On Friday, Misa Bharti appeared in person before the First Class Judicial Magistrate Arbaaz Ansari at the Danapur Sub-Divisional Court, in compliance with a court directive. She recorded her statement and confirmed that she was present to follow the court's orders.

Earlier, she had already been granted bail in the case. Her lawyer, Shivkumar Yadav, filed an appeal to terminate the case, but the Magistrate directed Misa Bharti to appear in person. Further proceedings and decisions



will depend on the court's instructions. "Misa Bharti was directed to appear physically as per the court's order. Following the court's order, she has registered her presence in the court. Earlier, she got bail in this case. Further action and orders will be as per the court's instructions," Yadav said. Yadav also said, "We have appealed in the court to terminate this case.

'Not just infrastructure project, but vision for sustainable future': Meghalaya CM on Tura water supply scheme

Shillong, Jan 31 (IANS) : Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Friday laid the foundation stone for the Greater Tura Urban Water Supply Scheme, saying it is not an infrastructure project but a vision for a sustainable future for the area. "Tura Urban Water Supply

Scheme is not just an infrastructure project but a vision for a better, sustainable future for Tura," said the Chief Minister while addressing a function held at Tura District Auditorium. He added that this project was conceptualised with Late P A Sangma in 2004-2005 where it was envisioned that this project.



Manipur Cong file petitions seeking disqualification of 4 NPP MLAs

Imphal, Jan 31 (IANS) : Opposition Congress in Manipur on Friday filed disqualification petitions before the Speaker's Tribunal of the Assembly against four National People's Party (NPP) MLAs for extending support to the BJP-led government, despite the party withdrawing its support to the saffron party in November last year. Manipur Congress Vice-President Hareshwar Goswami, a retired bureaucrat, filed four different disqualification petitions against the NPP MLAs at the Speaker's Tribunal of the Assembly. Speaking to the media, Goswami's lead counsel, N. Bupenda Meitei, said that his client (the petitioner), filed the

disqualification petitions against four NPP MLAs for extending support to the BJP-led government in the state. "The four MLAs attend a meeting of the ruling MLAs in November. The meeting was convened by Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, despite NPP National President (Conrad K. Sangma) and his party (NPP), had withdrawn support to the BJP government in Manipur," said Meitei, also an advocate in Manipur High Court. Citing the Meghachandra case in the Supreme Court for deciding pending disqualification petitions within three months of the date of filing of the disqualification petitions. He expressed confidence that

the Speaker would dispose of the disqualification petitions expeditiously. The 4 NPP MLAs are Mayanglambam Rameshwar Singh, Thongam Shanti Singh, Irengbam Nalini Devi, and Janghemlung Panmei. 'The NPP, led by Meghalaya Chief Minister Sangma, had on November 17 last year withdrawn support to the BJP-led government in Manipur, claiming that CM Biren Singh-led Manipur government "completely failed to resolve the crisis and restore normalcy" in the violence-ravaged state. The NPP had seven MLAs in the 60-member Manipur Assembly.



Youth needs to stand up, be job givers & not job seekers : Arunachal CM

Itanagar, Jan 31 (IANS) : Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Friday said that government jobs are limited and not all can be accommodated, therefore, youths need to stand up on their own feet and become job givers rather than job seekers. Joining the Hiyom Banggo Uying Giidi festival at Pessing in Siang district, the Chief Minister urged the youths to avail of schemes like the Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP).

SHIRAM FINANCE LIMITED
Registered Office: Sri Towers, Plot No. 14A, South Phase, Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-600032
Administrative Office: 6th Floor (Level-2), Building No. Q2, Arium Q parc, Gen 4/1, TTC, Thane Belapur Road, Ghansoli, Navi Mumbai-400710.

DEMAND NOTICE

Whereas the borrowers/co-borrowers/guarantors mentioned hereunder had availed the financial assistance from **Shriram Finance Limited**, (Formerly known as **Shriram City Union Finance Limited**, amalgamated with **Shriram Transport Finance Company Limited**, subsequently **Shriram Transport Company Limited** name changed as **Shriram Finance Limited**, by its incorporation dt.30-11-2022). We state that despite having availed the financial assistance, the borrowers/guarantors have committed various defaults in repayment of interest and principal amounts as per due dates. The account has been classified as Non Performing Asset in accordance with the directives/guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India, consequent to the Authorized Officer of **SHIRAM FINANCE LTD.** under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 & in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with Rule 3 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices on respective dates mentioned herein below under Section 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 calling upon the following borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors to repay the amount mentioned in the notices together with further interest at the contractual rate on the amount mentioned in the notices and incidental expenses, cost, charges etc until the date of payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of notices.

The notices issued to them on their last known addresses have returned un-served and as such they are hereby informed by way of public notice to the same.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

NAME OF THE BORROWER(S)/ CO-BORROWER(S)/GUARANTORS	NPA DATE
1) M/s. Sri Sai Padma Granites Rep. By Its Managing Partner Sala Padma, R/O. H No.- 6-1-462, C-77/ Phase 1, Opp-SBH, Vanasthalipuram, Hyderabad-500070. 2) Sri Kodide Vankata Rama Krishna , S/o. Aagaiah (Late), R/O. D. No. 5-5-37, Kranthi Hills, Vanasthalipuram, Hyderabad-500 060. 3) Sri Kattaguri Ravi , S/o. Esthari (Late), Age: 49 Years, Occ: Self Employee, Address: R/O: H.No: 11-3-215/1, Flat No: 302, Raj Bhathi Apartments, Road No-7, Venkateshwara Colony, Saroor Nagar, Hyderabad, Address-II # 239, Vanasthalipuram, Sachivalaya Nagar, Ward-11, LB Nagar, Ranga Reddy. 4) Sri Gajam Chandra Sekhar , S/o Dasarath, Age: 48 Years, Occ: Self Employee, Address-I: R/O: H.No: S2 C-72, Sachivalaya Nagar, Vanasthalipuram, Hyderabad-500060, Address-II # S2-C-69, Vanasthalipuram, N.G.O.S Colony, LB Nagar, Ranga Reddy. 5) N. Narasimha Reddy , S/O: Pratap Reddy, Age: 63, Occ: Retired Govt Employee R/O: Hno: 5-4-454, Saheb Nagar Kalan, Ranga Reddy, O/O: Govt School, Worked as a S G T Teacher. 6) P. Yegender Reddy , S/o Ramanuja Reddy, Age: 62 Years, Occ: Retired Govt Employee, Add-I: R/O: Hno:-3-15-M/11/204, Mansoorabad, Sahara Estates, (3-15-1 Nundi 3-15-416/304) Saroor Nagar, Ranga Reddy Add-II # 11-204, Old MLH Or Saraha Estate, Mansoorabad, Hyderabad	14.07.2021 18.10.2024
	OUTSTANDING AMOUNT Rs.1,73,27,908/-
	LOAN AMOUNT Rs.30,00,000/-

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY : CTFKMHMA0002001 - Property Holder Name: **Kattaguri Ravi**, S/o. Esthari (Late) & Gajam Chandra Sekhar, S/O. Dasarath With Document No: 8431/2010. **ITEM NO. I:** (As per register document No. 5224/10, dt. 30.07.2010 in favour of **Kattaguri Ravi**, S/o. Isthari and Gajam Chandrasekar, s/o. Dasarath), Khammam District, Khammam joint Sub-District, Khammam revenue district, Khammam Urban Mandal, Khammam Town Municipal Area, Bhuranapuram Revenue Village accounts, Sy.No. 255,256,257, Plot No.3 and 4 part an extent of 200sq. Yards or 1672.20 sq. mts **bounded on:** the TOWARDS EAST : 30 ft. wide Road (Gollapadu panita kalva), TOWARDS WEST : Plot No. 4 part, TOWARDS NORTH: Land of Alturi Tirumala rao., TOWARDS SOUTH : Plot No.5, and 2 of Gajam Chandrasekar. **ITEM NO. II :** (As per register document No. 5616/10, dt. 28.07.2010 in favour of Gajam. Chandrasekar, S/o. Dasarath), Khammam District, Khammam joint Sub-District, Khammam revenue district, Khammam Urban Mandal, Khammam Town Municipal Area, Bhuranapuram Revenue Village accounts, Sy.No. 255,256,257 and 258, Plot No.5 an extent of 200sq. Yards or 1672.20 sq. mts (Plot Size 122.3 ft. x 147ft..), **bounded on:** the TOWARDS EAST : Plot No. 2 sold to Gajam Chandrasekar., TOWARDS WEST: Site retained by vendor Sala Padma., TOWARDS NORTH : Plot No. 4., TOWARDS SOUTH : Plot No. 6. **ITEM NO. III :** (As per register document No. 5215/10, dt. 13.07.2010 in favour of Kattaguri Ravi s/o. Isthari) Khammam District, Khammam joint Sub-District, Khammam revenue district, Khammam Urban Mandal, Khammam Town Municipal Area, Bhuranapuram Revenue Village accounts, Sy.No. 255,256,257 and 258, Plot No.6 an extent of 200sq. Yards or 1672.20 sq. mts (Plot Size 122.3 ft. x 147ft..), **bounded on:** the TOWARDS EAST: Plot No. 1 sold to Kattaguri Ravi., TOWARDS WEST: Site retained by vendor Sala Padma., TOWARDS NORTH: Plot No.5., TOWARDS SOUTH : Land of Godavarty Krishna Murthy.

In the circumstances as aforesaid, the notice is hereby given to the above borrowers, co-borrowers and/or their guarantors (where ever applicable) to pay the outstanding dues as mentioned above along with future interest and applicable charges within 60 days from the date of the publication of this notice failing which further steps will be taken after the expiry of 60 days of the date of this notice against the secured assets including taking possession of the secured assets of the borrowers and the mortgagors under Section 13(4) of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and the applicable rules there under. Please note that under Section 13 (13) of the said Act, no Borrower shall, transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise any of his secured assets referred to in the notice, without prior written consent of the secured creditor.

Date : 29.01.2025
Place : KHAMMAM
Sd/-Authorized Officer
Shriram Finance Limited

RELIANCE ASSET RECONSTRUCTION COMPANY LTD.
Corporate Office: 11th Floor, North Side, R-Tech Park, Western Express Highway, Goregaon (East), Mumbai-400063.
Asset Reconstruction

NOTICE FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSETS [See Rule 6(2) read with rule 8(6)]

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

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable/movable properties mortgaged/hypothecated to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Secured Creditor. That, Reliance Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd. has vide two separate Assignment Agreement dated 29.03.2019 and 29.03.2022 assigned the financial assets/debts of below mentioned loan accounts along with its right, title and interest together with underlying securities in favour of **Reliance Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd. (RARC 059 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust** and **RARC 080 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust**. By virtue of the said assignment, we have become your secured creditor and lawfully entitled to recover the entire contractual dues.

Therefore, the undersigned Authorized Officer of Reliance Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd., hereby give you notice of 15 days that the below mentioned mortgaged properties shall be sold by the undersigned by way of E-Auction on "As is where is", "As what is", and "Whatever there is" on 25.02.2025, for recovery of amount mentioned in demand notice us 13(2) plus future interest and cost due to Reliance Asset Reconstruction Company Limited as a trustee of **RARC 059 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust** and **RARC 080 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust** Secured Creditor from mentioned borrowers/mortgagors. The reserve price and the earnest money deposit (EMD) are as under:

Lot No.	Borrowers name, Property Details, demand notice and possession date	Reserve Price EMD
1	RARC 059 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust Venkataharachandraravi Kumar Chowdhary Arikatta S/o Ramanaidu And Suneela Arikatta Both R/O #4-4-81A, Chandramoulagar First Line, Guntur, andhra Pradesh-522006, Also A/house No. 5-25-17, Flat No.4, Third Floor, Gandikota Apartments, Ward No.5, Block-25, village Guntur, survey No.610 & 611, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh-522006. Property: All That Piece And Parcel of House No. 5-25-17, Flat No. 4, Third Floor, Apartment Known As Gandikota Apartments, Ward No.5, Block-25, Village Guntur, Survey No.610 & 611, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh-522006 (Admeasuring About 25 Sq Yds.) Bounded By: East: Open Area, West: Open Area, North: Common Corridor, South: Open Area. Demand Notice: Rs. 42,65,268.57/- (Rupees Forty Two Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Eight & Paise Fifty Seven Only) As On 13.05.2018 Plus Future Interest & Costs Constructive/Physical Possession Date: 19-11-2024	Rs.38,70,000/- Rs.3,87,000/-
1	RARC 080 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust Koteswara Rao Morla S/o Vasantha Rao At: Hightech Restaurant At 2/100, Vavvaturu, Bapatwa Main Road, Bhattiprolu Guntur, Andhra Pradesh-522256/ Rajani Morla Both R/O No.42/10, DND 7-79, Bhattiprolu Guntur, Andhra Pradesh-522256. Property: All That Piece And Parcel of Property An Extent of 129 Sq. Yds or 160.53 Sq. Mtr. In Bearing Door No.7-78, Survey No.42/10 Situated At Bhattiprolu Village, Dist. Guntur, Andhra Pradesh-522256. Bounded By: East: Panchayath Bazar, West: Site Marutore Ramarao, North: Property Of Vasiva Aravayysa Kalanmandapam, South: Site of Nallapati Srinannarayana. Demand Notice: Rs. 16,95,519.31/- (Rupees Sixteen Lakh Ninety Five Thousand Five Hundred Nineteen Paise Thirty One Only) As On 22.12.2021 Plus Future Interest & Cost Constructive/Physical Possession Date: 20.11.2024	Rs.22,36,361/- Rs.2,23,636/-
2	Praveen Boddu Sidwib B Chandra Bose At D V I Holidays Flat No GF /1B, Satya Apartment, Mogalrajapuram Vijayawada, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh-520010 And Padmaja Boddu Bath At R/O 3-79, Thea Bazar Nr Govt High School Alkur Guntur, A.P.-522001 Also At Medical Officer Primary Health Center Peddasavupalli Gannavaram,vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh-521241 Both Also At R/S No.1/2, Plot No.32, Flat No.1, Chittineni Residency, Second Floor, Vidya Nagar, Buddavaram, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh Property: All That Piece And Parcel of Item No.1: An Extent of 220-0 Sq Yds Out of 440 Sq Yds Which is in Northern Side of 440 Sq Yds; or 183-94 To Be Constructed Group House In It Situated At R.S. No. 1/2, Davajugudem. Buddavaram Sivara Davajugudem Village, Buddavaram Gram Panchayat Area, Gannavaram Mandal, Krishna District is Being Bounded By: East: Plot No. 32 And Duggirala Raja Babu Site 96-8 F, South: Panchayat Road; 29-0 F, West: Plot No: 31 And Lingapuram Property of R.L. Naidu, Chaitanya Chaitanya Chaitanya Chaitanya Property 29-0 F & Item No.2: An Extent of 220-0 Sq Yds or 183-94 To Be Constructed Group House In The Name And Style of Chittineni Residency, Which Forms Item No.1 And In Which An Extent of 36-0 Sq Yds or 30-09 Sq Mts of Unspecified Joint Rights In Flat No: 1 In Second Floor With 850-0 Sq Ft Plinth Area + 100-0 Sq Ft Common Area + 130-0 Sq Ft Parking Area, Which Forms Item No.2 is Being Bounded By:- East: Common Corridor, South: Open To Sky, West: Open To Sky, North: Stair Case Demand Notice: Rs.29,263.15/- (Rupees Twenty Nine Lakh Forty Three Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Three Paise Fifty Only) as on 17.02.2022 plus future interest & costs. Constructive/Physical Possession Date: 02.08.2024	Rs.22,85,415/- Rs.2,28,541/-

Inspection of Property : 21.02.2025 from 11.00 AM to 02.00 PM.
Last date for bid submission : 24.02.2025 till 5.00 PM
Date of e-auction : 25.02.2025 between 11.00 AM to 1 PM with extension of 5 minutes each

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE :

- The property shall not be sold below the reserve prices and sale is subject to the confirmation by RARC as a secured creditor. 2. E-auction will be conducted ONLINE through M/s. C1 INDIA PVT LTD at Plot No.88 Gurgaon, Hariana pin Code 122003. 3. Before participating in E-auction, the intending bidders should hold a valid e-mail id and register their names at portal www.banksauctions.com and get their User ID and password from M/s. C1 INDIA PVT LTD. 4. Prospective bidders may avail online training on E-Auction from M/s. C1 INDIA PVT LTD., (Contact Person : Mr. Dharami Krishna on Mobile +91 9948182222, Delhi@C1india.com or Support@banksauctions.com (Helpline No 7291981124,25,26). 5. For RARC 059 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust property Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) shall be deposited through RTGS/NEFT fund transfer to Current Account No. 6742577088 Name of the Bank: Indian Bank Branch: Santacruz West Branch Mumbai, 400054. Name of the Beneficiary: RARC 059 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust. IFSC Code: IDIB000S010. Please note that the Cheques/Demand Draft shall not be accepted towards EMD. 6. For RARC 080 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust property Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) shall be deposited through RTGS/NEFT fund transfer to Current Account No. 122505002146 Name of the Bank: ICICI Bank Ltd. Branch: Veera Desai Branch Mumbai, 400058, Name of the Beneficiary: RARC 080 (RHFDFCL HL) Trust. IFSC Code: ICIC0001225. Please note that the Cheques/Demand Draft shall not be accepted towards EMD. 7. The Bids below reserve price and/or without EMD amount shall not be accepted. Bidders may improve their further bid amount in multiple of Rs.5000 per lot. 8. The successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the bid amount/sale price (including EMD) immediately after declaration of successful bidder. The successful bidder will deposit balance 75% of the bid amount/sale price within 15 days from the date of declaration of successful bidder. 9. If successful bidder fails to deposit sale price as stated above, all deposits including EMD will be forfeited. 10. The EMD amount of unsuccessful bidders will be returned without interest, after the closure of the E-auction sale proceedings within Seven days. 11. The particulars given by the Authorized Officer are stated to the best of his knowledge, belief and records. Authorized Officer shall not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission etc. 12. The undersigned Authorized Officer has the absolute right and discretion to accept or reject any bid or adjourn/proceed with the sale or modify any terms and conditions of the sale without any prior notice or assigning any reasons. 13. The bidders should make discreet enquiries as regards to charge/encumbrances/statutory dues on the property and should satisfy themselves about the title, extent, quality of the property before submitting their bid. No claim of whatsoever nature regarding charges, encumbrances over the property and any other matter etc., shall be entertained after submission of the online bid. 14. As per records available, the undersigned have no information about any encumbrance on the properties as on the date of this notice. 15. Any arrears, dues, taxes, VAT, TDS, GST, charges on the property whether statutory or otherwise including stamp duty/registration fees on sale of property shall be borne by the purchaser only. For any other information, please contact at 18001039711 / 1886266411 / 18001099711. may be contacted.

STATUTORY 15 DAYS' NOTICE UNDER RULE 6(2), 8(6) & 9(1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002

The Borrower/Co-Borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above, along with up to date interest and ancillary expenses before E-auction, failing which the E-auction of mortgaged property mentioned above shall take place and balance dues if any shall be recovered with interest/cost. In Case of no bid received in the auction sale on the date fixed for auction, the secured creditor shall be at liberty to sell the property by way of private treaty on or above the reserve price fixed above in any prospective buyer. Borrower/Co-Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors are hereby called upon to **SHIF/TREMOVE/DELETE HOUSEHOLD ARTICLES/ PERSONAL BELONGINGS IF ANY LYING IN THE REPOSSESSED PROPERTY**, as per Panchnama/Inventory report prepared at the time of possession of the mortgaged property, within 7 (seven) days from the date of this notice. On failure to shift household articles/personal belongings within stipulated period of 7 (seven) days from the date of this notice, the company shall be constrained to remove/shift / dispose off the same on "as is where is, as is what is and whatever there is basis" at Borrower/Co-Borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors risk, responsibilities & cost. Company shall not be responsible for any claim raised by any party in this regard.

Place : ANDHRA PRADESH
Date : 01.02.2025
Justin Sam Prakash - Authorized Officer
Reliance Asset Reconstruction Co. Ltd.

Note: Amount paid if any after issuance of Demand Notice under Section 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002, would be reckoned for ascertaining the dues payable at the time of realization/settlement.

OPINIONmail

DECENT JOB CREATION
CONTINUES TO BE INDECENT
SHOWS EPFO DATA

Decent job creation in India continues to be indecent, if the latest Employment Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) provisional data released on January 20, 2025 is of any indication. The trend of increase in new EPF subscribers remains at very low. A total of 874420 new subscribers joined in November 2024, which was an increase of only 88,244 over the October 2024 figure of 786196. It should be noted that number of new subscribers joining the EPF has been witnessing sharp fluctuation in the current financial year 2024-25, which shows the volatility in the Indian labour market, as far as decent job creation is concerned. The total number of new EPF subscribers in April was 979460, which rose to 1059379 in May, only to rise further to 1086342 in June, and to 1132367 in July. Then there was a sharp fall in August and it came down to 997506. It registered a minor increase in September when new EPF subscribers were 1001308 only to fall sharply to the lowest level to 786196 in October. Number of members exited from EPF shows the really pathetic situation prevailing in the decent job market. Exited members were 849849 in November, 1322899 in October, 1430659 in September, 1446418 in August, 1542493 in July, 1579391 in June, 1613008 in May, and 1637523 in April. Exited subscribers were generally much more than the new EPF subscribers joined. Volatility in the decent job market having social security like EPF is obvious, which meant that labour force is not sure about retaining their jobs. Complexity of the situation has another layer also in which after a troubled time of joblessness, many of the exited employees joined and rejoined again as EPF subscribers. However, Union government has patted its back on the increase of numbers in the net payroll data of EPFO, on account of Number of exited members who joined and resubscribed EPF. In November 2024, a total of 1463089 subscriber in the net payroll data, which included 1438518 exited and rejoined and resubscribed members.

The Union Government's boasting of a net addition of 14.63 lakhs members in November has little meaning, since it does not include the level of distress suffered by the workforce during their exit and rejoining the EPF. Moreover, on an annual basis, it was only a 4.88 per cent rise, which the ministry said it achieved due to uptick in employment opportunities and increase in awareness about employment benefits due to EPFO's "outreach initiatives".

The claim should be seen in the backdrop that EPFO is still not ready with the system to implement the Employment Linked Incentive schemes which were announced in the Union Budget 2024-25, and the government has failed in launching the same. Under the three ELI schemes incentives were to be given to employers and employees for new subscribers. Therefore, almost the entire year 2024-25 has gone wasted on this account. Another area of concern is the data for Establishments remitting first ECR in the month, which shows a declining trend, showing general delay in crediting of EPF contributions to employees' accounts. The number of establishments remitting first ECR in the month were down to 2336 in November, from 5784 in May 2024.

Nevertheless, on the very low base of new EPF subscribers in October, the increase in November was about 16.58 per cent. Compared to November 2023, it was an increase of about 18.80 per cent.

New subscribers joining EPF was dominated by the workers of age group 18-15 years, many of them first time job seekers, in November which stood at 54.97 per cent. In absolute numbers they were over 4.81 lakh. It was an increase of 9.65 per cent from October. On year-on-year basis the increase was 13.99 per cent. As for the net payroll addition of this age group is concerned, it was 5.86 lakh in November, an increase of 7.96 per cent from October.

There was an 11.47 per cent increase in exited EPFO members who rejoined in November compared the October. On year-on-year basis the increase was 34.75 per cent. It was a good trend on part of the employees who did not prefer final settlement of their money deposited with EPFP, but went for transfer of their account with new employers. It shows their hope of finding a decent job, but the percentage is very poor. As for female workforce is concerned, there were 2.4 lakh new EPF women subscribers in November, which was an increase of 14.94 per cent from October. On year-on-year basis it was 23.62 per cent.

The net addition of women workers in EPFO payroll was 3.13 lakh in November which was an increase of 12.16 per cent compared to October, and 11.75 per cent compared to November 2023.

(By Dr. Gyan Pathak)

EDITORIAL
the indian mail



THE FALLING VALUE OF INDIAN RUPEE CAN
BE CONVERTED INTO AN OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

On January 13, 2025, the rupee recorded its sharpest single-day decline in nearly two years, finishing the session 58 paise lower at a historic low of Rs 86.62 against the US dollar. Numerous commentaries are now emerging in popular media, expressing concern that a weakened Rupee could pose challenges for the Indian economy, particularly for Indian industries, as larger

companies tend to borrow in dollars. A weaker Rupee also implies higher import costs, which could lead to a widening current account deficit (CAD). Basic macroeconomic theory suggests that a widening CAD will fuel domestic inflation by raising the price of imported crude oil. This could have secondary effects, including a decline in foreign exchange reserves and foreign institutional investors pulling out of the Indian stock market. Interestingly, the depreciation of

Rupee against the US dollar is not a recent phenomenon. Between 2005 and 2024, the Rupee has, on average, depreciated by around 3.5% annually. An analysis of long-term data suggests that the average annual depreciation of the Rupee was 0.4% between 2000 and 2004. However, the depreciation accelerated significantly after that, with the rupee depreciating on average by 3.4% annually between 2005 and 2014. This trend remained largely unchanged between 2015

and 2025, with the rupee depreciating on average by 3.5% annually. Now what are the reasons for the Rupee to depreciate? First is inflation. If domestic inflation is higher than the US inflation, the Rupee is expected to depreciate against the dollar. Second is the asset market approach, which suggests that the value of the exchange rate depends on the inflow and outflow of capital into and from the domestic economy.



MEXICO KNOWS HOW TO FIGHT
U.S. PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S
EXPANSIONIST POLICIES

Ever since the inauguration on January 20 of Donald Trump as the U.S. President for the second term, the series of announcements made by the far right American President targeted its neighbouring countries Mexico and Canada as a part of Trump's expansionist agenda. Trump re-named the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America and imposed 25 per cent tariff on Mexico and Canada on their exports to the U.S. with effect from February 1 this year.



US MOVE FOR STRATEGIC BITCOIN
RESERVE SIGNIFIES SEISMIC SHIFT IN GLOBAL FINANCE

The Trump administration's exploration of creating a national Strategic Bitcoin Reserve (SBR) may usher in a new era of global financial strategy, one defined by digital assets rather than traditional monetary instruments. This concept marks a potential seismic shift in how nations perceive and secure wealth, akin to the historical role of gold

reserves in fortifying national economies. By anchoring such a reserve in Bitcoin, the United States is not only signalling its readiness to embrace the decentralized financial revolution but also positioning itself at the forefront of a burgeoning 'crypto arms race'.

(IPA Service)

CENTRE STILL REFUSING TO GRANT
SCHEDULED TRIBE STATUS TO LEFT-OUT GORKHA TRIBES

Grant of scheduled tribe status for left-out Gorkha tribes by the Union government remains a far cry and what is worse is that despite unanimity among political outfits in the Darjeeling hills on the ST tag demand, the Union government agencies responsible for a decision never indicate why the demand is pending for years. This, despite the fact, the Darjeeling Lok Sabha seat has been won by the Bharatiya Janata Party since 2009. Darjeeling's current MLA Neeraj Tamang Zimba, who is secretary-general of Gorkha National Liberation Front founded by Subhash Ghising, won the 2021 Assembly election on a

BJP ticket. Zimba's outfit is an ally of BJP. Darjeeling Lok Sabha constituency comprises seven Assembly segments - Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong in the hills and Matigara-Naxalbari, Siliguri, Phansidewa and Chopra in the foothills. Raju Bista of BJP is Lok Sabha member since 2019. The Siliguri corridor is of considerable strategic importance as it shares borders with Nepal and Bangladesh and is in the proximity of Bhutan and China. In supporting the demand for ST status for the left-out Gorkha tribes, political leaders have been highlighting the linkage with heritage and socio-economic security of the Gorkha people, whose contribution in safeguarding the country's borders is always acknowledged by the people. In a recent letter to Prime



Minister Narendra Modi, Zimba reminded him that his words "Gorkha ka sapna, mera sapna" on an occasion "resonate deeply in every heart". The local Gorkha communities of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Terai and Dooars play a key role in maintaining communal harmony and ensuring security in the strategically sensitive areas, the Darjeeling MLA has pointed

out. It is an issue that has to be seen as their urge for dignity, recognition and empowerment, Zimba has argued. There are 11 left-out Gorkha tribes whose demand for ST status is pending. They are: Gurung, Bhujel, Managar, Newar, Jogi, Khas, Rai, Sunwar, Thami, Yakkha and Dhimal.



UN officials express concern over violence in Congo

United Nations, Jan 31 (IANS) : Top UN officials expressed concern about escalating violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). "The situation is deteriorating rapidly," UN Assistant Secretary-General Joyce Msuya told an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council. She said hundreds of civilians have been killed or injured in the last few weeks, and hundreds of thousands have fled their homes or shelters to escape gunfire and shelling. Tensions have been running high due to the recent advances by the M23 rebels in North

Kivu and South Kivu provinces. The rebels took control of Sake, a town considered the last defence for government forces before Goma, the capital of North Kivu and a major regional hub. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, UN undersecretary-general for peace operations, said the United Nations is profoundly concerned with the resumption of hostilities which have led to the loss of a strategic position several kilometres from Goma.

World leaders, survivors gather in Poland to commemorate 80th anniversary of Auschwitz liberation

Warsaw, Jan 31 (IANS) : Auschwitz survivors and global leaders gathered at the site of the Auschwitz concentration camp in southern Poland to commemorate the 80th anniversary of its liberation. The ceremony drew an array of international dignitaries, including German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, King Charles III of the United Kingdom, French President Emmanuel Macron and Polish President Andrzej Duda, along with representatives from approximately 60 countries and international organizations.



22 Nigerian soldiers killed by suspected terrorists: military

Abuja, Jan 31 (IANS) : At least 22 Nigerian soldiers have been killed and several others wounded by suspected terrorists in a remote town in the country's northeastern state of Borno, the military said on Friday. Edward Buba, spokesperson for the military, confirmed the casualties in a statement obtained Monday by Xinhua in Abuja, the Nigerian capital, without revealing where and when the attack took place. He said the suspected terrorists

planned an ambush and deployed improvised explosive devices, such as person-borne explosive devices and vehicle-borne explosive devices, to ward off advancing ground troops during an anti-terror raid. The recent attack on troops followed the thwarting of several terrorist attempts on military bases in Borno, with the military "shooting down the amateur drones used by the terrorists" in some of the attacks, Buba said, recalling that at least 70 suspected terrorists,

including a brigade commander and a special forces commander for an armed group in the north-east region, had been killed earlier. On Sunday, local media outlets reported that another high-ranking commander was also among those killed during the attack on an army base in Borno, Xinhua news agency reported. Armed attacks have been a primary security threat in Nigeria's northern and central regions, leading to deaths and kidnappings in recent months.

Israel reports 439 traffic fatalities in 2024

Tel Aviv, Jan 31 (IANS) : Israel recorded 439 traffic fatalities in 2024, a 21.6 per cent rise compared to the 361 deaths registered in 2023, according to a statement issued by the Israel Bureau of Statistics on Friday. The bureau noted that

the number of fatalities last year was the highest since 2006, when 439 people were killed in traffic accidents in Israel, Xinhua news agency reported. The number of fatal accidents in the country rose by 19.8 per cent year-on-year, from 338 in 2023 to 405 in 2024. The

main causes of traffic accidents resulting in fatalities or serious injuries in 2024 were failure to yield to pedestrians, ignoring traffic lights, lane crossing, and excessive speed, Israel's National Road Safety Authority revealed in a press release in early January.



Israeli flights diverted to Larnaca airport 'for security reasons'

Nicosia, Jan 31 (IANS) : Israeli flights scheduled to land at Paphos airport in western Cyprus have been redirected to Larnaca airport on the island's southern coast, following a directive from Israeli authorities, according to a Cypriot official on Friday. The change in destination, which will last several days, comes after the Israeli government cited "various security reasons" for the decision. Victor Papadopoulos, Director of the Cyprus President's press office, confirmed the alteration in flight routes, stating, "We were informed that the Israelis decided to operate their flights to and from Larnaca airport instead of Paphos." However, Papadopoulos refrained from providing further details on the reasons behind the move. Israeli media first reported the change late on Sunday night, mentioning security concerns as the primary factor. According to Cyprus' state-run Cyprus News Agency, the decision was made by Israel's Shin Bet domestic security agency. The directive is expected to remain in place until further notice.

Lebanon agrees to extend ceasefire with Israel until Feb 18

Beirut, Jan 31 (IANS) : Lebanon's caretaker government announced on Friday that it has agreed to extend the ceasefire agreement with Israel until February 18 as the initial 60-day truce expired. The U.S. which brokered the initial truce, said in a statement that "the ceasefire arrangement between Lebanon and Israel will remain in effect until February 18, 2025," citing Israel's failure to withdraw its forces from southern Lebanon before the deadline under the agreement. The statement added that Lebanon, Israel, and the US will soon begin negotiations on the return of Lebanese detain-

ees held in Israeli prisons since October 7, 2023. Lebanese caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati said the decision to extend the ceasefire was made "after consultations with President Joseph Aoun and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri regarding the latest developments in the south, and after reviewing discussions with the US mediator." Meanwhile, Lebanon's Foreign Ministry accused Israel of failing to uphold its commitments, particularly regarding its withdrawal from Lebanese territory. It also condemned "deliberate Israeli attacks on Lebanese civilians who were attempting to return to their occupied villages." On Sunday, 22

people, including a Lebanese soldier, were killed, and 124 others injured by Israeli gunfire as hundreds of Lebanese civilians attempted to enter southern villages still occupied by Israeli forces, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. The Foreign Ministry called on the international sponsors of the ceasefire and other parties to denounce Israel's attacks on civilians and to "pressure Israel to fulfill its obligations under the agreement."



South Korea set to post 1st increase in birth rate in nearly decade: Data

Seoul, Jan 31 (IANS) : South Korea's birth rate is projected to have increased in 2024 for the first time in nine years but show significant regional differences, the statistics agency said on Friday. The number of newborns between January and November reached 220,094, up 3 per cent from a year earlier, according to data compiled by Statistics Korea.

Overnight temperature drops to minus 44.4 degrees celsius in western Mongolia

Ulan Bator, Jan 31 (IANS) : Temperatures plunged to minus 44.4 degrees celsius in Otgon soum, an administrative subdivision of Zavkhan province in western Mongolia, during the overnight hours from Saturday to Sunday, the country's National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring said Monday. This is the coldest temperature recorded in Mongolia so far this winter, the weather monitoring agency in a statement. The agency has forecasted that most parts of Mongolia will experience colder temperatures than the long-term average throughout the winter.

With its strongly continental climate, the Asian country endures long and bitterly cold winters when temperatures of minus 25 degrees Celsius are typical. Over the weekend, the weather authorities of the country had warned people to brace for extremely cold weather in the coming days, Xinhua news agency reported. It said that, starting Saturday, cold air from Russia's Siberia will sweep across large parts of Mongolia, bringing overnight temperatures that could exceed minus 40 degrees Celsius. "Last year, the lowest temperature recorded in our country was minus 48.8 degrees Celsius on Janu-

ary 23 in the western province of Zavkhan," the agency said, predicting that similar conditions will affect the western regions during this weekend. Meanwhile, other parts of the country, particularly the national capital Ulan Bator, are expected to experience temperatures 10-15 degrees colder than recent days, with heavy snow anticipated throughout the weekend. The cold wave is expected to cause significant disruptions, and the public, especially nomadic herders, are urged to take precautionary measures to protect themselves and their livestock from the extreme conditions, Xinhua news agency reported.



Several soums (administrative subdivisions) across Mongolian provinces are grappling with extreme winter conditions. Earlier this month, the agency had warned that at least 40 per cent of the country's territory was at high risk of experiencing the extreme wintry weather 'dzud' this winter. The dzud is a Mongolian term to describe a severely cold winter when many livestock die because the ground is frozen or covered in snow. Most areas in the five western provinces, Bayan-Ulgii, Uvs, Khovd, Zavkhan, and Gobi-Altai, were at high or very high risk, the agency had warned.



Pakistan: Six killed, dozens injured as fire engulfs residential colony in Multan

Islamabad, Jan 31 (IANS) : Six people were killed and over 31 others injured when fire engulfed a resident colony in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province in the early hours of Friday, officials said. The incident happened at about 12:25 am local time (GMT 1925 Friday) in the Multan district where a massive explosion caused by a Liquefied Petroleum Gas container leakage rocked the colony, sources from the district's police revealed. The gas leakage triggered the fire, and the force of the blast scattered debris over a wide area, severely impacting the densely populated colony.



Naga body in Manipur to oppose India-Myanmar border fencing

Imphal/Aizawl, Jan 31 (IANS) : The United Naga Council (UNC) on Friday reiterated its opposition to the border fencing along the India-Myanmar border. In Mizoram, an apex student body, Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP), on Friday wrote a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah urging the Central government to reconsider its decision to 'scrap' the Free Movement Regime (FMR) and erection of fencing the India-Myanmar border. UNC President

N.G. Lorho once again issued directives to all its units and subordinate organisations to initiate stringent steps to prevent the border fencing activities at their respective jurisdiction in unison without fear and favour. "No activities in regards to the purported construction of border fencing along the imaginary artificial India-Myanmar border would be allowed in the Naga ancestral homeland.



Tension prevails along India-Bangladesh border after clash between farmers

Agartala, Jan 31 (IANS) : Tension prevailed along the India-Bangladesh border in Tripura's Unakoti district on Friday after a clash between the farmers of two villages on the border of the countries, officials said. The BSF and police officials separately said the villagers of India and Bangladesh clashed among themselves over the issue of farming in cropland in the border village of Hirachhara in Kailashahar Sub-division on Sunday evening. According to the officials, two

Indian farmers and a Bangladeshi cultivator were injured in the clash before the BSF troops intervened in the conflict. Local people said that Indian farmers -- Karim Ali (28) and Zamir Ali (34), both brothers, were severely assaulted with sharp weapons and iron rods by a group of 10-12 Bangladesh nationals. The attack left them critically injured, with Karim sustaining deep wounds on his left hand and back while Zamir suffered head injuries. Both are currently undergoing

medical treatment at the Unakoti District Hospital, where doctors have indicated that Karim's left-hand finger may need an amputation. The incident occurred when the two brothers, who cultivate betel leaves and paddy on their land near the zero line of the border, had gone for farming activities on Sunday and found significant damage to their crops. They informed the matter to the Border Security Force (BSF) personnel posted in the area.

International Space Station shares images of Mahakumbh 2025

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : The International Space Station (ISS) has captured images of Mahakumbh 2025 -- the world's largest religious and human gathering event -- from space, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting said on Friday. The images captured on Friday night showcase the mesmerising view of the mega event, being held in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj, along the banks of the Ganga river glowing brightly with lights. "2025 Maha Kumbh Mela Ganges River pilgrimage from the ISS at night. The largest human gathering in the world is well lit," said NASA astronaut Don Pettit, in a post along with the images on the social media platform X. Pettit, currently in space, at the age of 69, is NASA's oldest active astronaut. "The images show the grandeur of the Mahakumbh mela's lighting and the massive human crowd.

After Kharge, another Cong leader mocks Amit Shah's holy dip at Sangam; calls it photo-op

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : Hours after Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge kicked up a controversy with his jibe at Home Minister Amit Shah's holy bath at the Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj, another Congress leader from Maharashtra sought to throw muck at the latter's dip of faith in the river Ganga, by calling it a photo-op. Husain Dalwai, the Congress leader from Maharashtra found fault with the Home Minister's participation in Maha Kumbh festivities and said that his visit to the holy city was merely a photo-op. He further claimed that Amit Shah's 'Ganga snan' was nothing less than a publicity stunt.



Speaking to IANS, Husain Dalwai remarked, "Did the Home Minister go to Ganga ghat to wash away his sins, that he has committed or went there for a publicity stunt." Further taking a jibe at the Centre, he said, "They don't bother about common people and rather look for opportunities to publicise every work." The controversial statement from the Congress leader comes at a time when he is already under fire from Hindu groups and saints for his offending and distasteful remarks on the Maha Kumbh.

MUDA case: K'taka HC stays ED summons issued to CM's wife, Minister Byrathi Suresh

Bengaluru, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Dharwad Bench of Karnataka High Court, headed by Justice M. Nagaprasanna, on Friday stayed the summons issued by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife, B.M. Parvathi, and Minister for Urban Development, Byrathi Suresh, in connection with the MUDA land scam matter. The Bench questioned the urgency of the ED's actions, asking, "What is the tearing hurry?" while passing the order. CM Siddaramaiah's wife, Parvathi, who has been named as the second accused in the case, was asked to appear before the ED on Tues-

day (January 28). Minister Byrathi Suresh, a close confidant of the CM, was scheduled to appear before ED officers on Friday. Both Parvathi and Suresh had separately approached the court, seeking relief and requesting a stay on the ED summons. The High Court granted a stay on the ED's summons until February 10, pending the next hearing in the case. Sandeep Chowta, counsel for CM Siddaramaiah's wife, argued that the allegations of illegal allotment of 14 sites against Parvathi did not involve monetary gain. He requested a stay on the investigation against her by the ED. Justice Nagaprasanna questioned Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Arvind Kamat, representing the ED, asking why the agency was continuing its inves-



tigation when the matter was already being addressed in court. ASG Kamat submitted that CM Siddaramaiah's wife is the second accused in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scam and is facing charges under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The bench noted that the illegal assets in question were no longer in the possession of the accused. It emphasized that the ED's investigation should not interfere with the proceedings of the court, which has reserved its

judgment in the MUDA case. The court further questioned the ED's urgency, stating: "What is the emergency to probe the matter at this juncture? The case has been reserved for judgment. Why should the investigation by the ED proceed now?" ASG Kamat explained that the ED had only requested the accused to appear and produce documents, and that this would not interfere with the court's proceedings.

Will develop 10 ultra-modern industrial towns : Haryana CM

Chandigarh, Jan 31 (IANS) : Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Friday laid a roadmap for the all-round development of the state to mark the completion of 100 days of the BJP government. The Chief Minister announced the government would develop 10 ultra-modern industrial towns across Haryana, modelled after IMT Kharkhoda, to further strengthen the state's industrial infrastructure.

The Chief Minister told the media here that 25,000 MW of electricity will be generated through renewable energy sources, which will be used to power industrial centres across the state and the NCR. In a bid to address environmental concerns, particularly the discharge of chemical and industrial waste, the government will construct state-of-the-art sewerage treatment plants in Panipat, Faridabad, and Gurugram. In addition, the government will expedite the construction of the

Integrated Multi-Modal Logistics Hub in Narnaul and Mahendragarh to improve connectivity. In collaboration with the central government's PM Mega Integrated Textile Area and Apparel (PM MITRA) scheme, Haryana will establish an integrated textile market in Ambala, the state's largest textile hub. The Chief Minister also highlighted the government's focus on the pharmaceutical sector.



RG Kar case: New Trinamool-affiliated body floated to counter canards against Bengal govt

Kolkata, Jan 31 (IANS) : Progressive Health Association (PHA), the new Trinamool Congress-affiliated association with representations from the different layers of the medical system chain in West Bengal, was officially floated on Friday with the aim of negative propaganda against the state government in relation to the state's health sector, said a senior member of the state cabinet who will be heading the new body as its chairpersons. The proposed joint association will have representatives from junior and senior doctors, nursing staff and health workers. Announcing the floating of the new body on Friday.

West Bengal Budget to be presented on Feb 12

Kolkata, Jan 31 (IANS) : West Bengal Budget for the financial year 2025-26 will be presented in the Assembly on February 12, as per the decision taken at a meeting of the state cabinet at the state secretariat Nabanna on Friday which was presided over by the Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The budget session of the state Assembly will start on February 10 this year. However, on the first day, the session will be adjourned after the mandatory obituary mentions. The budget will be presented

by the West Bengal minister in charge of finance (independent charge) Chandrima Bhattacharya before the crucial state assembly elections in 2026. Next year before the elections there will be only a vote-on-account budget and the full budget next year will be presented only after the polls are over and the results are announced. On February 1, the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will be presenting the Union budget for the financial year 2025-26 on the floor of the Parliament.





Bank of Baroda posts 5.6 pc rise in Q3 profit, asset quality improves

Mumbai, Jan 31 (IANS) : State-run Bank of Baroda (BoB) on Friday reported a 5.6 per cent year-on-year (YoY) increase in its net profit for the third quarter of the financial year 2024-25 (Q3 FY25). The bank's net profit stood at Rs 4,837 crore, up from Rs 4,579 crore in the same quarter last year. The bank's net interest income (NII), which represents the difference between interest earned and interest paid, rose by 2.8 per cent

YoY to Rs 11,417 crore, compared to Rs 11,101 crore in the year-ago period. For the first nine months of the financial year (9MFY25), Bank of Baroda's net profit grew by 12.6 per cent to Rs 14,533 crore. The bank's operating profit in Q3 FY25 stood at Rs 7,664 crore, a 9.3 per cent YoY growth, according to its stock exchange filing. A key driver of this growth was a strong 34.1 per cent rise in non-interest income, which reached Rs

3,769 crore. The bank's asset quality remained strong, with gross non-performing assets (NPA) falling to 2.43 per cent in Q3 FY25, down from 3.08 per cent in the same quarter last year. The net NPA ratio declined by 11 basis points to 0.59 per cent from the year-ago period. The slippage ratio, which indicates fresh bad loans as a percentage of advances, remained under control at 0.90 per cent for the quarter.



L&T's Q3 profit dips despite 53 pc surge in orders, rising costs squeeze margins

Mumbai, Jan 31 (IANS) : Larsen & Toubro (L&T) reported over 1 per cent decline in net profit for the third quarter (Q3) of the financial year 2024-25 at Rs 3,358.84 crore, excluding non-controlling interests, from Rs 3,395.29 crore reported in the previous quarter (Q2 FY25). L&T's revenue rose by 17 per cent at Rs 64,668 crore in Q3FY25, up from Rs 55,128 crore in Q3FY24, according to its stock exchange filing. However, despite this growth, the company fell short of market expectations. Analysts attributed the decline to a contraction in L&T's operating margins. The company's EBITDA margin declined by 70 basis points to 9.7 per cent in Q3FY25 from 10.4 per cent a year ago. This decline was primarily due to a sharp rise in

costs. The cost of raw materials and components surged by 50 per cent, while expenses for construction materials went up by 16 per cent. L&T's infrastructure projects segment had been facing margin pressure for several quarters. The company had secured infrastructure contracts at highly competitive prices following the COVID-19 pandemic and the geopolitical crisis caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2022-23.



India's 2-wheeler market set to hit new peak next year with 8-10 pc growth

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : Following an estimated 12-14 per cent surge this fiscal, the India's two-wheeler industry is set to grow by another 8-10 per cent in the upcoming year, a report said on Friday. The Crisil Ratings report added that it will surpass the previous record of over 24 million units seen in 2019 as the sales volume is expected to reach a new peak. This growth is driven mainly by four key factors -- strong rural demand, rising urban interest in premium motorcycles, better export opportunities, and a diverse range of models, including electric two-wheelers (e2Ws), according to the report. The revenue of two-wheeler manufacturers is expected to increase by 10-12 per cent next fiscal, compared to around 16 per cent this year, the report added.

This growth will be fuelled by higher sales volumes and a shift towards premium models, which generate better profit margins. Moreover, the operating margin of original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) is projected to reach a decade-high level of around 15 per cent this fiscal and remain steady next year. This is an improvement from the average of 14 per cent in the past three years. Higher exports and the premiumisation trend will further boost profitability. Domestic sales make up nearly 85 per cent of the two-wheeler market, while exports account for the rest. "Higher rural incomes and increasing interest in premium internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles and electric two-wheelers will drive this growth," said Anuj Sethi, Senior Director at Crisil Ratings.

Apple now has installed base of 2.35 billion active devices globally

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : The installed base of Apple devices has reached an all-time high across all products and geographic segments and is now over 2.35 billion active devices. According to Apple CEO Tim Cook, the company achieved an all-time revenue record in Services for the period ending December 31, 2024.

"In the past year, we've seen nearly \$100 billion in revenue from our services business. I'm also pleased to announce that we reached a new record for our install base with over 2.35 billion active devices. In October, we released the first set of Apple Intelligence features in US," Cook told analysts. The December quarter revenue stood at \$124.3 billion, up 4 per cent year over year. Services revenue reached an all-time record of \$26.3 billion in the December quarter, up 14 per cent year over year. The company grew in every geographic segment.



Samsung's Q4 net profit rises over 20 pc despite waning chip demand

Seoul, Jan 31 (IANS) : Samsung Electronics said on Friday its fourth-quarter net income rose more than 20 per cent from a year earlier despite the waning global demand for memory chips, beating market expectations. Its net income totalled 7.75 trillion won (\$5.4 billion) for the October-December period, up 22.2 per cent from 6.34 trillion won a year earlier, the company said in a regulatory filing. Operating profit soared 129.9 per cent on-year to 6.49 trillion won, while sales rose 11.8 per cent to 75.78 trillion won.

The earnings exceeded market expectations. The average estimate of net profit by analysts stood at 5.69 trillion won, according to a survey by Yonhap Infomax, the financial data firm of Yonhap News Agency. However, its operating profit missed the market's estimate by 15.7 per cent due to sluggish sales of traditional memory chips for personal computers and IT devices, as well as lower-than-expected performance of artificial intelligence (AI) products, such as high bandwidth memory (HBM).

Indian automotive sector likely to see 70 pc workforce expansion in H2 FY25

Bengaluru, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Indian automotive sector, which contributes approximately 7 per cent to the country's GDP, is likely to see 70 per cent workforce expansion in the second half of FY25, a report showed on Friday. The automotive sector is experiencing a net employment change of 8.5 per cent, with hiring momentum fuelled by growing consumer interest in electric vehicles (EVs), premium models, and high-tech, connected automobiles, said the report by TeamLease Services, India's premier staffing solutions company.



Cipla's Q3 net profit rises 49 pc to Rs 1,575 crore, revenue up 7 pc

Mumbai, Jan 31 (IANS) : Pharmaceutical major Cipla on Friday reported a 49 per cent year-on-year (YoY) increase in its consolidated net profit for the December quarter (Q3 FY25) at Rs 1,574.6 crore, from Rs 1,068.5 crore in the same quarter last year (Q2 FY25). The company's revenue from operations grew by 7 per cent YoY to Rs 7,073 crore, compared to Rs 6,604 crore in Q3 FY24, according to its exchange filing. However, it remained nearly flat on a quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) basis, with revenue

standing at Rs 7,051 crore in Q2 FY25. Revenue from its India business grew by 10 per cent YoY to Rs 3,146 crore, with its branded prescription business outperforming market growth in key therapies.

Cipla's EBITDA for the quarter rose by 15.7 per cent YoY to Rs 1,989 crore, while the EBITDA margin improved by 184 basis points to 28.1 per cent.



Tata Motors' Q3 profit drops 22 pc, EV sales up 19 pc

Mumbai, Jan 31 (IANS) : Tata Motors on Friday reported a 22 per cent decline in its net profit for the third quarter (Q3) of FY25 at Rs 5,451 crore, down from Rs 7,025 crore in the same period last fiscal. The drop in earnings was primarily due to higher discounts offered to boost sales and weaker margins, despite a slight improvement in overall revenue.

Revenue from operations rose by 2.7 per cent year-on-year to Rs 1,13,575 crore, supported by a modest increase in sales, according to its filing. However, the company's earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) margins declined by 60 basis points to 13.7 per cent. Earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) stood at Rs 10,000 crore which is a slight improvement of 60 basis points compared to the

previous year. Automotive free cash flow stood at Rs 4,700 crore, supported by improved sales, while finance costs shrank by Rs 760 crore to Rs 1,725 crore. Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), Tata Motors' luxury vehicle subsidiary, reported record quarterly revenue of 7.5 billion pounds up by 1.5 per cent increase from last year. The segment's EBIT margin stood at 9 per cent.



Madras HC expresses concerns about security lapses within its premises

Chennai, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Madras High Court has voiced serious concerns about security lapses within its premises after the Additional Advocate General (AAG), P. Kumaresan, presented a status report on allegations that country-made bombs were brought into the court and handed to accused individuals involved in the murder of State Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) President, K. Armstrong. The AAG submitted CCTV footage showing individuals carrying bombs concealed in lunch bags. Six advocates impli-

cated in the incident have been suspended by the Bar Council. A division bench comprising Justices S.M. Subramaniam and N. Jothiraman was hearing a batch of petitions seeking to quash the invocation of the Goonda Act against the accused in Armstrong's murder case. During the proceedings, the bench expressed concern over the potential consequences of the incident. Justice Subramaniam remarked, "What if the bombs had exploded in the court? How many lives would we have lost? What if the blast damaged the statue of

B.R. Ambedkar?" The court invited opinions from stakeholders, including advocate associations, the police, and the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), to strengthen security measures on the court campus. It also advised advocates to cooperate with security checks, emphasising the need for sensitivity and vigilance. The counsel for the petitioners, however, objected to the allegations, arguing that the investigation had not provided concrete evidence to substantiate the claims.

Gurugram MLA directs officials to expedite infrastructure development projects, uplift civic amenities

Gurugram, Jan 31 (IANS) : Mukesh Sharma, the BJP MLA from the Gurugram constituency, on Friday, directed concerned officials to expedite infrastructure development projects and uplift civic amenities.

The MLA chaired a meeting with senior officials of the Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA). Various ongoing and upcoming projects being undertaken by the GMDA were discussed and key action points to uplift the city's infrastructure.



Prayagraj railway division gears up with special arrangements for Mauni Amavasya festival

Mahakumbh Nagar, Jan 31 (IANS) : The grand Mahakumbh festival at Prayagraj's Sangam has drawn over 13 crore devotees so far. Now, preparations are in full swing for the Amrit Snan on Mauni Amavasya, January 29, 2025, when an expected 10 crore pilgrims are expected to take a holy dip at Triveni Sangam on the auspicious occasion. Anticipating a huge influx of

devotees, the Prayagraj Railway Division has made elaborate special arrangements for the smooth arrival and departure of passengers across all stations in the city. Around 10 crore people are expected to arrive in Prayagraj for the Amrit Snan of Mauni Amavasya. As per estimates, approximately 1 crore passengers have been arriving daily in the city for the Maha Kumbh.

Waqf JPC: Opposition MPs protest haste, call panel chief 'autocrat'

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : Eleven Opposition MPs in the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on the Waqf Amendment Bill 2024 on Friday hit out at the 'autocratic' behaviour of Chairman Jagdambika Pal and his haste in accepting the 14 amendments proposed by the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) members. The MPs, anguished by the alleged lack of transparency and discussion in the Committee, likened the Chairman to a painter who enabled the Union government to give 'saffron colour to this secular nation by using its brutal ma-

jority in Parliament'. In a joint statement, the Opposition MPs said, "As the committee has arrived at its closure part of the deliberation, we the members of the opposition registered our protest then and there both in conducting the proceedings of the JWC by the chairman as well the gross and serious deviations from the rules and procedures contemplated thereon." Citing several instances of being denied the time to study documents, the MPs said they want to highlight a few wilful and wanton 'disregards by the Chairman in sharing the details of deliberations of the Committee. Objecting to the haste in the panel's proceedings on Monday,



the MPs slammed the Chairman for going ahead with clause-by-clause considerations without documents/depositions. "Ignoring our claims, the chairman himself called the names of the mover of the amendments (given by us) and he himself moved the amendments on our behalf and conducted the head counts on his own desire. And he announced the rejection of our amendments.



DJB refutes Kejriwal's 'poison in water' allegation; explains seasonal ammonia fluctuations in Yamuna

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has responded to claims made by former Delhi Chief Minister and convener of the Aam Aadmi Party, Arvind Kejriwal who accused the Haryana government of releasing "poison" into the raw water flowing into the national capital. He also referred to the issue as a case of "water terrorism" in a letter to the Election Commission of India (ECI). DJB has categorically dismissed these allegations, stating, "These statements are factually incorrect, without any basis and misleading." DJB stated that it regularly monitors the quality of incoming water and adjusts the supplies based on various water quality parameters. According to

the Board, ammonia levels in the Yamuna River naturally rise during the winter season, particularly between October and February. The DJB clarified that its Water Treatment Plants are designed to treat ammonia levels up to 1 ppm (parts per million), and they can also manage ammonia concentrations between 2 and 2.5 ppm through a process of dilution using water from the Carrier Line Channel (CLC) and Delhi Sub Branch (DSB). The rise in ammonia levels, according to the DJB, is primarily caused by the mixing of untreated sewage or industrial waste upstream of the Wazirabad Barrage, compounded by lower water flow during the winter months, especially after the monsoon season.

Rajasthan Police arrest four, seize five country-made pistols

Bharatpur, Jan 31 (IANS) : Intensifying their efforts against the illegal arms trade, Rajasthan Police on Friday seized five country-made pistols and five live cartridges while arresting four more individuals and detained a minor. This brings the total arrests in the case to eight, with a cumulative recovery of eight pistols, and 45 cartridges. Superintendent of Police (SP) Mridul Kachhawa stated that the operation is part of an ongoing campaign against illegal weapons under his direction. The operation was carried out under the supervision of Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Satish Yadav and Circle Officer (CO) City Pankaj Yadav (IPS). On Friday, a team led by Station House Officer (SHO) Madanlal, with the support of ASI Radhakishan and other officers from Mathuragate Police Station.



Gopal Rai hits back at BJP over criticism on AAP's full manifesto launch

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : Hours after Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal unveiled the party's full manifesto, titled Kejriwal Ki Guarantee, BJP leaders swiftly attacked the party over unfulfilled promises from its previous terms. Responding to BJP's criticism, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai affirmed that the AAP would indeed form gov-

ernment again in Delhi and outlined the party's commitment to its 15 new guarantees. Speaking to IANS, Gopal Rai emphasised, "The BJP believes that the AAP government is being formed in Delhi. Today, we presented all our guarantees in one place to make it easier for the public to understand our plan for the future.



BJP to scrutinise candidates for bypolls in Surat

Surat, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Gujarat, on Friday, began scrutinising at its Udhna office in Surat to evaluate prospective candidates for the byelection to the vacant Ward No 18. The vacancy arose following the death of BJP Corporator Gemar Desai. A team of two observers, including BJP MLA from Gandevi Assembly constituency Naresh Patel, has arrived in Surat to assess the candidates vying for the position.

Life sentence for Himachal IG, seven cops for custodial death in gangrape-murder case

Chandigarh, Jan 31 (IANS) : A CBI court here on Friday awarded life imprisonment to Himachal Pradesh Inspector General of Police Z.H. Zaidi and seven other police personnel for custodial death of an accused in the gangrape-murder of a schoolgirl in Shimla's Kotkhai in 2017 that triggered violent protests. The other convicted police officials include then DSP Manoj Joshi, Sub-Inspector Rajinder Singh, Assistant Sub-Inspector Deep Chand Sharma, Head Constables Mohan Lal, Surat Singh and Rafee Mohammad and Constable Raneet Sateta. Counsels for the convicts prayed for leniency on the basis of the age, family commitments and good service records of convicts. However,

the court acquitted former Superintendent of Police D.W. Negi. The court convicted them on January 18 and the quantum of the sentence was pronounced on Monday. The Supreme Court in 2019 transferred the case from Shimla to Chandigarh on a plea filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for expeditious disposal of the case. The girl had gone missing in Kotkhai and her body was found in a forest near Kotkhai town in Shimla district on July 6, 2017, two days after her disappearance. The crime had led to arson by a mob demanding justice for the girl. After the crime, police had claimed that the schoolgirl was offered a lift in a vehicle by one of the accused while she was returning home from school in Kotkhai town, 56 km from Shimla. On the way, the accused and his accomplices gang-raped



and murdered her in a nearby forest. Her naked body with injury marks was found. Later, the Himachal Pradesh government agreed to recommend a CBI probe. After the CBI took over, nine police personnel, including Inspector General of Police Zaidi and former Shimla Superintendent of Police D.W. Negi, were arrested on the charge of custodial death of accused Suraj.

Los Angeles schools struggle to rebuild after devastating wildfires

California, Jan 31 (IANS) : The devastating wildfires that began sweeping through Southern California on January 7 have left the region's education system reeling, with over a dozen schools severely damaged or destroyed. As school officials begin the daunting task of rebuilding, they face an estimated cost of hundreds of millions of US dollars, with recovery ex-

pected to take years, reports Xinhua news agency. At least 12 schools in Los Angeles County have suffered significant damage, with five campuses destroyed, according to CalMatters, a nonprofit news organisation focusing on local agendas in California. Los Angeles Unified School District, the nation's second-largest school system, lost two elementary schools in Pacific Palisades, while Palisades Charter High School was heavily damaged. In Pasadena and Altadena, three additional elementary schools were destroyed. The financial toll is overwhelming. Rebuilding could cost hundreds of millions of dollars. "Rebuilding these schools could take years," said Debra Duardo, Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools. One source of relief is California's Proposition 2, a 10-

-billion-dollar school construction bond passed in November to fund repairs and rebuild efforts, including damage from disasters like wildfires. However, the fund is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, and there is already a significant backlog of schools waiting for assistance. Priority will likely go to schools damaged by fires, raising concerns for districts with other urgent needs.

billions of dollars. Rebuilding these schools could take years," said Debra Duardo, Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools. One source of relief is California's Proposition 2, a 10-



Iraq urges unified efforts to support regional stability

Baghdad, Jan 31 (IANS) : Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani called for unified efforts among regional countries to support stability in the Middle East. Al-Sudani made the remarks on Friday during a meeting with visiting Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan. According to a statement by al-Sudani's media office, the two discussed bilateral relations and the latest developments in Syria, Gaza and Lebanon, emphasizing the importance of adhering to the ceasefire agreements. Al-Sudani reiterated "Iraq's readi-

ness to coordinate with neighboring countries, especially Türkiye, regarding ongoing regional developments," it said. For his part, Fidan reaffirmed his country's desire to maintain close coordination with Iraq on regional developments, stressing Turkey's commitment to the strategic Development Road project and cooperation based on the memorandums of understanding signed between the two countries in areas such as energy, education, trade, banking, and other sectors, Xinhua news agency reported.

New Zealand relaxes visitor visa rules to allow tourists' 'workcation'

Wellington, Jan 31 (IANS) : The New Zealand government is relaxing visitor visa rules to allow tourists to work remotely for their foreign employers while visiting New Zealand in the latest effort to boost tourism and economic growth. The government is making the country more attractive to "digital nomads," people who work remotely, while travelling, such as IT specialists, which will boost New Zealand's attractiveness as a destination, Economic Growth Minister Nicola Willis said on Friday, as reported by Xinhua news agency. Tourism is New Zealand's sec-

ond-largest export earner, generating revenue of almost 11 billion NZ dollars (6.26 billion US dollars) and creating nearly 200,000 jobs, Willis said. "The change will enable many visitors to extend their stays, which will lead to more money being spent in the country," said Immigration Minister Erica Stanford. Visitor visas will allow people to work remotely for a foreign employer from Monday while they are holidaying in New Zealand, she said, adding that anyone who intends to work remotely for more than 90 days should look at possible tax implications. Tourism Minister Louise Upston



said many countries offer digital nomad visas, and New Zealand aims to be an attractive destination for people who want to "workcation" abroad, as ways of working become increasingly more digitised and flexible. "Compared to other kinds of visitors, international remote workers have the potential to spend more time and money in New Zealand,

including during the shoulder season," Upston said. However, visitors whose employment requires them to be in New Zealand, such as sales representatives of overseas companies, performers and people coming to work for New Zealand employers, must still obtain visas relevant to their circumstances, according to the government.

Israel arrests two reserve soldiers on suspicion of spying for Iran

Jerusalem, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Israel Police said in a statement on Friday that it had arrested two 21-year-old Israeli reserve soldiers on suspicion of security offenses related to Iran, in collaboration with the Israel Security Agency. According to the police, the two, Yuri Eliasfov and Georgi Andreyev from northern Israel, are suspected of transferring classified information about the Israeli Iron Dome air defence system to Iran.



Duped and trafficked, 67 Indians rescued from cyber-scam centres in Laos

Vientiane, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Embassy of India in Laos announced on Friday that it has successfully rescued 67 Indian youth who had been duped and trafficked into cyber-scam centres operating in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone (GTSEZ) in Bokeo Province of the Southeast Asian country. These youths were forced to work there under intimidation and abuse by criminal syndicates operating in GTSEZ. "Immediately upon receiving their requests for help, Embassy officials responded to all of them

promptly and extended all necessary assistance. A team of Embassy officials travelled to GTSEZ at once and worked closely with concerned Lao authorities to achieve required procedures and paperwork to enable them to leave GTSEZ and travel to the Embassy in Vientiane. Their transport from Bokeo to Vientiane was also facilitated. Arrangements for their accommodation and food have been made by the Embassy, as needed," stated the Embassy of India in Laos. Prashant Agrawal, Ambassador of India to Laos, met with the res-

cued Indians, discussing the challenges faced by them while assuring full safety and Embassy's full support "as a matter of highest priority" for their safe return to India. He also advised them about further course of action, including the need for them to lodge complaints against the agents who had duped them. The Embassy officials in Vientiane are currently working closely with concerned Laos authorities for completion of rescued Indian's exit formalities, following which all of them would be able to travel back home shortly.



Singapore calls for proposals to pilot autonomous public buses

Singapore, Jan 31 (IANS) : Singapore's Land Transport Authority (LTA) has invited industry players to submit proposals for a pilot programme to test autonomous public buses, the authority announced Friday.

The call for proposals, which closes by the second quarter of 2025, aims to kick-start a three-year trial of smaller autonomous buses on two selected routes beginning in mid-2026.

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, direct India-China flights to resume soon: MEA

Beijing, Jan 31 (IANS) : India and China have decided to resume the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra in the summer of 2025, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced following Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Beijing, on Friday. The meeting, held under the Foreign Secretary-Vice Foreign Minister mechanism, reviewed the state of India-China bilateral relations comprehensively and agreed to take certain people-centric

steps to stabilize and rebuild ties, as agreed between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping during their meeting in Kazan in October. According to the MEA, the relevant mechanism will discuss further the modalities for Yatra as per the existing agreements. Both sides also agreed, in principle, to resume direct air services between the two countries with the relevant technical authorities on the two sides to negotiate an updated framework for the purpose at an early date. "They also agreed to hold an early



meeting of the India-China Expert Level Mechanism to discuss resumption of provision of hydrological data and other cooperation pertaining to trans-border rivers," read a statement issued by the MEA. With 2025 being the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and China, it was decided by

both sides to "redouble" public diplomacy efforts to create better awareness about each other and restore mutual trust and confidence among the public. Taking stock of the extant mechanisms for functional exchanges, both sides will also conduct a number of commemorative activities to mark the anniversary. "It was agreed to resume these dialogues step by step and to utilise them to address each other's priority areas of interest and concern.



Japanese PM Ishiba's cabinet approval at 35.7 per cent

Tokyo, Jan 31 (IANS) : Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's Cabinet approval rating remains at 35.7 per cent, slightly down from 36.5 per cent last month, while disapproval rose to 49.2 per cent, according to a Kyodo News survey. Economic concerns dominated, with 84.3 per cent of respondents expressing worry over the potential impact of US President Donald Trump's planned tariffs on Japan's economy, particularly its auto industry.



Africa loses 18 billion USD annually due to conflict : African Union

Nairobi, Jan 31 (IANS) : Kenyan President William Ruto, who is also the champion of the African Union (AU) institutional reforms, said on Friday that conflict continues to deny Africa of its potential, costing the continent an estimated 18 billion US dollars annually and displacing millions of people. Ruto said Africa currently hosts 35 million internally displaced persons, 8.9 million refugees, 1.1 million asylum seekers, and one million stateless persons. "Between April and June 2024 alone, a total of 1,000 terrorism incidents were recorded across Africa, resulting in 4,818 deaths," he said during the high-level Ex-

tended Bureau Retreat on AU Institutional Reforms held in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi. The day-long event brought together presidents from Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia, Ghana, and the Comoros, as well as Moussa Faki, Chairperson of the AU Commission, to accelerate reforms of the 55-member continental organisation. Ruto noted that the AU security architecture in its current configuration is incapable of addressing the continent's complex dynamics and challenges, and there is an urgent need for immediate revitalization of the peace and security architecture.

South Korea: Preliminary report of Jeju Air crash shows Black Box stopped recording 2 km before runway

Seoul, Jan 31 (IANS) : South Korean authorities investigating the tragic Jeju Air crash last month released a preliminary accident report on Friday, revealing that the aircraft's Black Box stopped recording approximately 2 kms before the plane approached the runway. It is the first report as part of the ongoing investigation into the deadly crash at Muan International Airport on December 29, which claimed the lives of 179 of the 181 people aboard the Boeing 737-800. Only two people survived. The preliminary findings will be submitted to the International Civil Aviation

Organisation (ICAO), as well as aviation authorities in the United States, France and Thailand, according to the transportation ministry. The ICAO, a United Nations agency, mandates that investigators produce a preliminary report within 30 days of an aviation accident. It also encourages the release of a final report within 12 months. The investigation committee under the transport ministry disclosed the approximate location where the Black Box, comprising the Flight Data Recorder (FDR) and Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR), stopped functioning. According to the report, the Black Box stopped recording at 8:58:50



a.m. on December 29, four minutes and seven seconds before the aircraft struck a localiser near the runway after it had hit a flock of birds. The ministry noted it would take several months to analyze the FDR and the CVR for further verification, Yonhap news agency reported. The report further stated that the exact timing of the bird strike, the number of birds involved and whether other bird species were present have yet to be determined. The ministry briefed bereaved families on the preliminary findings during a meeting on Saturday. Earlier on January 25, Yonhap

news agency reported that the ill-fated Jeju Air plane involved in last month's deadly crash had received a warning from Air Traffic Control about bird activity just one minute before its Black Box recording stopped, the transport ministry said. The ministry had revealed the preliminary findings to the bereaved families following its probe into the fatal crash of the low-cost carrier plane from Bangkok. The government had planned to release the preliminary report by Monday, the ministry said. The investigation committee under the ministry had stated that surveillance footage from the time of the accident at Muan International Airport had confirmed that the plane had attempted a go-around when it had hit a flock of birds.

PM Vishwakarma scheme shines at Maha Kumbh; empowering artisans with skills, support



New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : A special centre for the 'PM Vishwakarma Scheme' has been set up at the ongoing Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, where people are provided with information regarding the scheme and given assistance to avail its benefits. This initiative has attracted a steady stream of visitors who come to learn about the scheme and other government welfare programs. Deepak Kumar Bind, a beneficiary of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme, shared

his experience and the benefits he has received. He hails from the Hadiya Tehsil in Prayagraj district and emphasised how beneficial the scheme has been for people seeking employment. "The government has launched this wonderful scheme, which supports people in securing livelihoods. The scheme includes 18 different components, and the government provides financial assistance to help us start small businesses, even if we cannot afford a large-scale enterprise," he said. Deepak learned about the scheme through an intermediary and applied online to become a part of it, specifically aiming to start carpentry work. The application process is divided into three stages, of which two have been completed, and he is awaiting the final stage to avail the benefits of the scheme. Deepak explained the scheme process in detail, saying, "Our verification is done in three steps. Once completed, we are invited for a five-day training program, for which we receive Rs 500 daily. After the training, the government provides us with a tool kit worth Rs 15,000. Additionally, the government offers a loan of Rs 1 lakh to help us start our business."

Islamic Jihad demands releasing 30 Palestinians in exchange for Israeli female hostage

Gaza, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Palestinian Islamic Jihad Movement demanded that the Israeli government release 30 Palestinians in exchange for Israeli female hostage Arbel Yehud. Mohammed al-Hindi, deputy secretary-general of the movement, told Xinhua that the movement has informed international mediators that Yehud was still alive. The movement agreed to the conditions that would be

reached through mediators, including the release of Yehud before next Saturday in exchange for the release of 30 Palestinian prisoners, said al-Hindi.



Assam Police foil infiltration bid, two Bangladeshi nationals pushed back

Guwahati, Jan 31 (IANS) : Assam Police have thwarted an attempt by the Bangladeshi infiltration along the international border and pushed back two citizens of the neighbouring country following their arrest here on Friday, said Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. Sarma said in X post, "Maintaining strict vigil along the international border, @assampolice apprehended two illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators near the border and promptly pushed them back."



Congo pulls diplomats from Rwanda amid imminent rebellion advances

Kinshasa, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has announced the recall of its embassy staff in Rwanda amid advances by the March 23 Movement (M23) rebellion, which fueled diplomatic tensions between Kinshasa and Kigali. The DRC foreign ministry said in a statement released over the weekend that it had decided to withdraw its diplomats from Rwanda in a letter to the

Rwandan Embassy in the DRC, while asking the Rwandan embassy to cease all diplomatic and consular activities within 48 hours. The DRC has accused Rwanda of backing the M23 rebels, as Kigali, while denying all allegations, has also accused the Congolese army of supporting the remnants of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda.



Colombia buckles: Trump shows how tariff threats will work if nations shun illegal migrants' deportation

New York, Jan 31 (IANS) : As the US has intensified its campaign of rounding up illegal migrants and deporting them on military planes, it overcame opposition from Colombia with threats of tariffs in a preview of how President Donald Trump will enforce his campaign promise. After Colombia refused to let two aircraft carrying its nationals apprehended in the US as illegal migrants land, Trump announced on Truth Social on Sunday afternoon a 25 per cent tariff on imports from that country, which, he threatened, would double in a week. However, by Sunday night, Colombia's resistance crumbled, and the White House said it had agreed to "unrestricted acceptance of all illegal aliens from Colombia" including those coming on military planes. In a show of force on Sunday, federal agents fanned out across the US rounding up criminal illegal migrants. Trump had promised mass deportations in his Day 1 agenda.



Heavy snow pounds South Korea, alert issued

Seoul, Jan 31 (IANS) : Heavy snow and rain affected many parts of South Korea on Friday during the extended Lunar New Year holiday, prompting authorities to raise the weather alert and brace for possible disruptions. This year's Lunar New Year holiday, known as Seol, was extended to six days, lasting until Thursday, after the government designated Monday as a temporary national holiday.

Greece : Thousands protest in Athens over 2023 train tragedy

Athens, Jan 31 (IANS) : Roughly 30,000 people gathered outside the Greek parliament on Friday, demanding justice for the 2023 train collision in Tempi, central Greece, which claimed 57 lives. The demonstration, organised by an association of victims' families, was supported by opposition parties and labour unions, reports Xinhua news agency. The families accused the government of mishandling the investigation, alleging a "cover-up" of key details. There were claims that victims died from asphyxiation caused by an explosion rather than injuries from the collision, suggesting the explosion may have been triggered by flammable materials allegedly carried illegally on the freight train involved in the accident. Protesters held banners declaring, "It was not



an accident, but a crime," and painted the victims' names in red on the pavement near the parliament. The slogan "I have no oxygen," reportedly spoken by a victim during the incident, echoed at rallies held in Athens. Similar protests were reported in around 100

Greek cities and a dozen other European locations. The protest turned violent when groups of hooded youths threw rocks and petrol bombs at police, prompting officers to respond with tear gas.

Afghanistan kicks off polio vaccination campaign in 16 provinces

Kabul, Jan 31 (IANS) : Afghanistan initiated its first vaccination campaign in 2025, targeting over six million children under the age of five from poliovirus, the Ministry of Public Health reported. Scheduled from Monday through Wednesday, the campaign will deliver anti-polio drops to children in 16 out of the country's 34 provinces, the state-run National Radio and Television quoted the ministry as reporting. In his message, Noor Jalal Jalali, acting minister of public health, urged tribal elders, religious scholars and parents to support polio workers. Social support plays an essential role in preventing polio, he

said. Afghanistan and neighbouring Pakistan are countries where polio cases are reported every year, Xinhua news agency reported. According to the World Health Organization, Poliomyelitis, commonly known as polio, is a highly contagious viral illness that predominantly impacts children under the age of five. The transmission of the virus occurs primarily through direct person-to-person contact, mainly via the faecal-oral route, although it can also spread through contaminated food or water. Once ingested, the virus multiplies in the intestines and has the potential to invade the nervous system, leading to paralysis. In 1988, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution aimed at

the global eradication of polio, which initiated the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. This initiative is led by national governments in collaboration with organisations such as the WHO, Rotary International, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), UNICEF, and later supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. Since the launch of this initiative, the incidence of wild poliovirus has plummeted by over 99 per cent, decreasing from an estimated 350,000 cases across more than 125 endemic nations in 1988 to just six reported cases in 2021.



Sectarian violence to staggering economy: Syria's new administration faces several major challenges

Damascus, Jan 31 (IANS) : Since the sudden downfall of Bashar al-Assad's government 50 days ago, Syria's transitional administration has been grappling with multiple challenges -- from surging violence to staggering economic instability. The Britain-based war monitor Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported a worrisome rise in assassination and reprisal crimes since the start of 2025. Some 190 people have been killed in at least 91 violent incidents out of political or sectarian mo-

tives. Provinces like Homs, Hama and Latakia -- traditional strongholds of the Shiite and Alawite minorities -- have seen some of the worst incidents. SOHR Director Rami Abdul Rahman warned that "undisciplined groups" who joined the new military operations administration are behind most of this violence, conducting what he described as acts of "revenge, not true justice". Officials in Homs, including Governor Abed al-Rahman al-Ama and police chief Ubada Arnaout, have pledged to restore order, but surging sectarian killings show that national

unity remains fragile. Another flashpoint lies in northern and eastern Syria. Following Assad's downfall, heightening tension between the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and Turkey-backed rebels has prompted both sides to vie for territorial gains, according to the SOHR and reports emerging from that part of the country. Key areas like Manbij in the countryside of Aleppo province have become battlefields, while civilians, caught in the crossfire, face displacement and an uncertain future. In a recent report, the UN Eco-



Immediate ceasefire urged in Congo as rebels claim control of strategic city

Goma, Jan 31 (IANS) : The March 23 Movement (M23), a rebel group fighting against the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) army, said on Friday that it has taken control of Goma, the capital of North Kivu Province and the largest city in eastern DRC. In a statement released early on Monday, the M23 announced the "liberation of the city has been completed" and that "the situation is under control" following a 48-hour ultimatum issued to Congolese troops. On Saturday, the group demanded the surrender of the DRC armed forces and their allies. The M23 held Goma for 10 days in 2012 before retreating under international pressure. By Sunday night, the rebels

ordered government forces to disarm. According to local sources, several Congolese soldiers reportedly handed over their weapons to UN peacekeepers stationed in Goma. The DRC government has not yet commented on the situation in Goma but announced that a high-level security meeting was held Sunday night, chaired by President Felix Tshisekedi. At least 10 people were killed and about 4,400 inmates escaped from Munzenze Prison in Goma amid the ongoing conflict, according to local media reports. Radio Okapi, a UN-supported outlet, reported that prisoners set part of the facility on fire during clashes between the DRC army and M23 rebels. Gunfire has been heard across

Goma since Sunday evening, and fighting intensified Monday morning in various parts of the city, including areas near the Rwandan border. UN sources said that the border with Rwanda was closed Monday morning, and panic has gripped Goma residents fleeing to Gisenyi, a Rwandan border city. During a Sunday press conference at the United Nations headquarters in New York, DRC Foreign Minister Therese Kayikwamba Wagner described the M23's actions as "an onslaught on Goma." The humanitarian crisis in eastern DRC continues to worsen. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said Friday that more than 400,000 people have been displaced since January 2025.



nomie and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) highlighted the extent of Syria's economic collapse: its GDP has contracted by an estimated 64 per cent due to prolonged conflict, sanctions and infrastructure destruction. Millions remain displaced while skyrocketing inflation deals a crippling blow to people's living standards. ESCWA outlined three scenarios for Syria's future. A "stabilized transition" promises

inclusive governance, robust reconstruction and comprehensive support from the international community. The alternative scenarios -- "prolonged instability" or "war and fragmentation" -- paint a far grimmer picture, involving sustained poverty, escalating humanitarian crisis and the possibility of renewed violence. The new leadership has vowed to rebuild schools, hospitals and energy facilities. However, whether it can secure the necessary investments and negotiate sanctions relief remains uncertain, partly due to Western sanctions originally aimed at Assad.



Thousands of displaced Palestinians return to Gaza

Gaza, Jan 31 (IANS) : Tens of thousands of Palestinians began returning to their homes in Gaza City and the northern parts of the coastal enclave on Friday after 15 months of forced displacement. The return follows an announcement by Qatar on Sunday evening that Hamas and Israel had reached an agreement to release Israeli hostage Arbel Yehud and two others by Friday.

Sweden seizes ship suspected of damaging Baltic undersea cable

Helsinki, Jan 31 (IANS) : The Swedish Prosecution Authority has confiscated a ship suspected of damaging an underwater fiber optic cable linking Latvia and the Swedish island of Gotland, it said in a press release. A criminal investigation into suspected serious sabotage has been launched, the authority said, though it did not disclose the ship's name nor national-

ity, Xinhua news agency reported. According to Swedish newspaper Expressen, the vessel is the oil tanker Vezhen, registered in Malta and sailing from Russia. The ship is currently anchored off Karlskrona in southeastern Sweden, maritime analytics provider Marine Traffic confirmed. An underwater fiber optic cable connecting Latvia and the Swedish island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea

was damaged early on Sunday, the cable's owner, SJSC Latvian State Radio and Television Center (LVRTC), informed. The cable's owner, SJSC Latvian State Radio and Television Center (LVRTC), said they detected disruptions in data transmission early Sunday and suggested that the cable was likely seriously damaged by external force.



Battle against paramilitary forces about to end: Sudanese army chief

Khartoum, Jan 31 (IANS) : Chairman of Sudan's Transitional Sovereign Council, Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, on Friday said that the battle against the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) is nearing its end and that the rebellion would be eradicated. Al-Burhan, also the commander of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), made the remarks while visiting the SAF's General Command

headquarters in capital Khartoum, which had recently been freed from a 21-month siege imposed by the RSF, according to a sovereign council statement, Xinhua news agency said. "The battle is coming to its end and the rebellion will be eradicated. Our pledge to the Sudanese people is that we will fight these criminals until we defeat them," Al-Burhan told a crowd of soldiers. "The armed forces are capable and resilient. They will not be defeated, and

their history speaks for itself," he said. On Friday, the Sudanese army announced it had broken the siege of its General Command headquarters, which had been in place since the outbreak of war in April 2023. The General Command, located in the heart of Khartoum, comprises five main buildings, including the Army Headquarters, Navy Command, Air Force Headquarters.



Aussie allrounder Marsh ruled out of Champions Trophy with lower back injury

Melbourne, Jan 31 (IANS) Australian allrounder Mitchell Marsh has been ruled out of the ICC Champions Trophy in Pakistan and the UAE, starting from February 19, due to ongoing lower "back pain and dysfunction". "The National Selection Panel and Australian men's medical team ruled Marsh out of the tournament with the injury which has not responded sufficiently to rehabilitation," Cricket Australia said on Friday. His lower back pain flared in recent weeks leading the NSP to make the longer term decision for Marsh to complete a more extended period of rehabilitation. CA said Marsh will now undergo a period of further rest and rehabilitation as part of his return to play plan. The NSP will meet to decide on a replacement for Marsh in due course. Marsh, who lost his place in Australia's Test line-up before the final match of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy campaign against India, has not played since a solitary BBL appearance for Perth Scorchers earlier this month. The deadline for the final squads for the ICC Men's Champion's Trophy is prior to February 12.



4th T20I: Nayar wants India to win

'easy-breezy' but expects tough fight from England

Pune, Jan 31 (IANS) : India assistant coach Abhishek Nayar wants Suryakumar Yadav-led side to seal the five-match T20I series with an "easy" win against England but the veteran expects a tough fight from the visiting side in the fourth T20I here on Friday. Currently, India are leading the series 2-1 after winning the first two games in Kolkata and Chennai before England bounced back in the last game with a 26-run win in Rajkot. In the contest so far, the Indian batting and bowling department has been spot on. On the other hand, England's all-round show in the third T20I brought them back in the series. Ahead of the fourth T20I at Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium on Friday, Nayar shared his thoughts on the series in a video posted by the BCCI on X. "So we are in Pune, the land of the Pneries. You expect a good competitive game. You know it's been a high voltage, a lot of shots being played. We have seen conditions which have challenged players differently and overall where the series stands so far which is 2-1, it's the correct way to interpret the series so far, its staged perfectly," Nayar said.

Pacer Jacob Duffy added to NZ squad for tri-series in Pakistan

Auckland, Jan 31 (IANS) : Pacer Jacob Duffy has been added to the New Zealand squad for the upcoming ODI tri-series against Pakistan and South Africa, beginning in Lahore on February 8. The 30-year-old was a star in the recent white-ball series against Sri Lanka. He claimed 12 wickets across the five white-ball matches he played and was named Player of the T20I series. Duffy, who has played 10 ODIs and taken 18 wickets at an average of 25.94 and an economy of 6.25, will depart to Pakistan with the Black-caps ODI squad on Monday evening. Coach Gary Stead said Duffy would add depth to the pace-bowling department and was specific cover for Lockie Ferguson, who is currently playing in the ILT20. New Zealand will face Pakistan in the opening game of the ODI tri-series at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on February 8, before playing South Africa at the same venue on February 10, followed by a potential final in Karachi on February 14.



Ruud draws Norway level with Argentina in Davis Cup qualifiers

Oslo, Jan 31 (IANS): Davis Cup qualifiers first round tie between Norway and Argentina ended 1-1 after the opening day as Casper Ruud defeated Argentine Mariano Navone 6-3, 6-3, levelling the tie 1-1 after Tomas Martin Etcheverry gave Argentina an early lead with a win over Nicolai Budkov Kjaer. Ruud displayed clinical form on his way to securing his 28th Davis Cup match win. He won 71 per cent (35/49) of first-serve points and saved six of seven break points he faced in the 70-minute encounter. Earlier, Etcheverry escaped Norway's 18-year-old Budkov Kjaer 7-5, 2-6, 7-6(5) after a three-hour, 49-minute battle. Etcheverry trailed 2-4 in the final set, but refused to go down.



U19 WC: South Africa beat Australia by five-wicket to qualify for final

Kuala Lumpur, Jan 31 (IANS) : South Africa have qualified for their first ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup 2025 final after an impressive five-wicket triumph over Australia in the first semifinal at the Bayuemas Oval on Friday. The Proteas women excelled with the ball on the back of Ashleigh van Wyk's four-wicket haul and were on song in the field as they restricted Australia to just 105/8 and cruised past that target with 11 deliveries remaining courtesy of some excellent batting from Jemma Botha (34) and Kayla Reyneke (26). The win saw South Africa maintaining their unbeaten status at the tournament, advancing to Sunday's final against the winner of the second semifinal between defending champions India and England. The Proteas held on to a trio of difficult chances in the field, with some late hitting from Ella Briscoe (27 not out) helping the Aussies reach three figures after they won the toss and elected to bat first at Bayuemas Oval, ICC

reports. Nthabiseng Nini set the ball rolling for South Africa by dismissing the dangerous Ines Mckeeon with the opening ball of the match, with van Wyk (4-17) getting in on the act at the death courtesy of some help in the field. Seshnie Naidu held on to a tough return catch to dismiss Eleanor Larosa for just seven, before Luyanda Nzuzza produced a similar feat in the field to send Hasrat Gill packing as the Aussies crawled to 62/5 with a little more than five overs remaining.

Man United, Tottenham seal Europa League round of 16 spots

London, Jan 31 (IANS) : Manchester United are through to the last 16 of the UEFA Europa League, following a 2-0 win away to FCSB on the eighth and final matchday of the competition's league phase. Two goals in the space of eight second-half minutes were enough to earn the victory, with Diogo Dalot opening the scoring at Romania's National Arena on the hour mark. Having assisted that strike, Kobbie Mainoo was on hand to double the lead shortly after, as the Reds made a controlled performance count in front of our travelling fans in Bucharest. The result saw Ruben Amorim's side finish third in the table, as one of the top-eight teams that will skip February's knockout round play-offs and go straight into March's round of 16. On the other hand, Tottenham Hotspur sealed a place in round of 16 thanks to Thursday night's victory over Elfsborg. Three second-half goals ensured a top-eight finish for Ange

Postecoglou's side. Dane Scarlett came off the bench to nod the hosts in front before setting up 19-year-old Oyindamola Ajayi for a goal on his Spurs debut to double their advantage. Mikey Moore, 17, wrapped up the victory with a superb individual effort (his first for the club), setting off on a mazy run and executing a low shot in added time. With a 3-0 win over the Swedish side, Spurs finished the group with 17 points, which has seen them finish in 4th place and progress automatically through to the last



16. The draw for the round of 16 will take place on February 21. The round of 16 matches will be two-legged clashes, with the first leg taking place on March 6 and the second leg on March 13. All eight sides confirmed in round of 16 are Athletic Club, Eintracht Frankfurt, Lazio, Lyon, Manchester United, Olympiacos, Rangers, Tottenham Teams who will play in knockout phase play-offs are Ajax, Anderlecht.

Afghanistan pacer Shapoor Zadran retires from international cricket

New Delhi, Jan 31 (IANS) : Afghanistan pacer Shapoor Zadran has announced his retirement from international cricket following a distinguished career that spanned for more than 10 years. "ACB thank Shapoor Zadran for his contributions to the rise of Afghanistan cricket and wish him the best of luck for the future."

