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NIFTY 50	BSE SENSEX	Bitcoin INR	NIFTY FINANCIAL SERVICES	NIFTY BANK	\$1 (USD)	€1 (EURO)	Gold (24K) 10gm	Silver (1 Kg)	Petrol/L	Diesel/L	LPG/14.2Kg
25,732.30 ▼ -57.95 (-0.22%)	83,627.69 ▼ -250.48 (-0.30%)	8,426,445.72 ▲ +207,642.13 (+0.92%)	27,586.00 ▲ +67.50 (+0.25%)	59,578.80 ▲ +128.30 (+0.22%)	₹90.32 ▼ +0.19 (+0.22%)	₹105.21 ▼ +0.06 (+0.05%)	₹142,634.00 ▲ +602.00 (+0.42%)	₹278,486.00 ▲ +9516.00 (+3.54%)	₹94.77	₹87.67	₹853.00

I&B ministry, PSA mark culmination of 'Inspiring Innovators' programme

New Delhi, Jan 13 (FN Bureau)

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India (PSA) today marked the culmination of Inspiring Innovators, Naye Bharat Ki Nayi Pehchaan, a skilling initiative developed in collaboration with the Netflix Fund for Creative Equity. Implemented in partnership with Graphiti Studios, the initiative brings together India's innovation and creative ecosystems to promote socially relevant innovation through storytelling and hands-on skilling. Addressing the gathering Dr. L. Murugan, Minister of State, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting said that rooted in India's rich tradition of storytelling, our creators today have the opportunity to take Indian stories to global audiences. "This is the right time to create in India and create for the world, with content, creativity and culture emerging as key pillars of the Bharat economy."

As storytelling enters a new era shaped by creators and emerging technologies, initiatives like Inspiring Innovators highlight how creativity can be applied in service of society," he said. Sanjay Jaju, Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, said that India is witnessing remarkable innovation, often driven by social innovators solving everyday challenges through impactful, purpose-led solutions. "As Netflix marks a decade in India, Inspiring Innovators stands out as a powerful example of how storytelling can evolve beyond content creation into a meaningful skilling and empowerment platform, reflecting the confidence and professionalism of young talent across the country," he said. "This is truly the age of creators and storytelling, and as we enter an era shaped by AI-led narratives, it is vital to embrace newer technologies that will enable growth and progress for the next generation. It is encouraging to see India's relevant, purpose-driven stories being taken to audiences far and wide," he added further. In a statement issued by the ministry said that the initiative showcases the contributions of eight Indian start-ups identified by the Office **Cont. to Page-7**

Finance aligned with economic activity can drive inclusive growth: CEA

New Delhi, Jan 13 (FN Representative)

When finance is aligned with real economic activities, it becomes a strong catalyst for growth rather than a mere flow of credit, Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran said on Tuesday, stressing that inclusive finance is essential for raising incomes and building a resilient economy. Nageswaran said finance should be viewed as a

complement to economic growth, supporting productive work and entrepreneurship. He noted that when financial systems are designed to match the rhythm of work, income cycles and business realities, people tend to behave more responsibly. This alignment, he said, improves repayment discipline, strengthens trust in the system and ensures that finance supports value creation. Referring to the challenges at



the grassroots level, the CEA said credit constraints continue to restrict entrepreneurs, particularly small and micro enterprises. However, he cautioned against viewing credit as a standalone solution. "Credit alone cannot produce independence," he said, adding that access to finance must be combined with skills, market access and supportive institutions to create lasting economic

empowerment. Nageswaran underlined the role of inclusive finance institutions as vital intermediaries between capital markets and small entrepreneurs. These institutions help mobilise capital from formal markets and channel it to productive activities at the bottom of the economic pyramid, enabling entrepreneurs who are otherwise excluded from mainstream finance to participate in growth. He also emphasised that financial literacy must be meaningful and contextual.

According to him, a financially literate entrepreneur is not just one who understands loans, but also someone who knows when to expand, when to pause and when not to take financial risks. However, he added that literacy by itself is not enough. "Literacy needs opportunity," he said, noting that people become financially capable only when they are connected to markets that allow them to apply their knowledge. Highlighting structural changes underway in **Cont. to Page-7**

CPI inflation surge will strengthen liquidity support: SBI

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Mayank Nigam)

India's inflation trajectory continued to surprise on the downside in December 2025, reinforcing expectations of sustained policy support for growth and liquidity, even as global geopolitical and financial uncertainties pose fresh risks to commodity prices and capital flows in 2026, according to SBI report released here on Monday. Headline inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose to a three-month high of 1.33 per cent in December 2025, from 0.25 per cent in October, driven primarily by a rise in food and beverage prices. Despite the uptick, inflation remained well below

long-term averages, with calendar year 2025 recording the lowest average CPI inflation of 2.2 per cent under the current base year. Food inflation remained the dominant disinflationary force in the economy.



For the first time in the history of the current CPI series, food inflation stayed in negative territory for seven

consecutive months, while annual food inflation averaged just 0.4 per cent in 2025, far below the 14-year average of 5.8 per cent. SBI Research attributed this trend largely to supply-side factors, particularly in food commodities. An item-wise decomposition of CPI showed that 171 of the 299 CPI items were driven by supply-side factors, including 123 food items, while 99 items were demand-driven and 29 neutral. This confirms that food-related supply dynamics played a decisive role in keeping inflation range-bound through most of 2025 and are likely to continue influencing prices into 2026. Fuel and light inflation moderated to 1.97 per cent in December, while inflation in miscellaneous **Cont. to Page-7**

India unveils BRICS 2026 logo and website as it assumes BRICS Chair

New Delhi, Jan 13 (FN Reporter)

India on Tuesday launched the BRICS official logo and website as it assumed the Chairship of the ten-nation BRICS grouping for 2026. The 18th BRICS Summit will be held in India later this year. Launching the lotus-shaped logo and the website External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar said India approaches its Chairship and logo with 'humanity first and a people-centric approach.' He said India's Chairship of BRICS seeks to bring together the potential of BRICS countries

for greater global welfare." When India prepares to assume BRICS Chairship in 2026, we do so at an important moment in the group's journey." He said that in 2026 BRICS will complete 20 years since its inception during which it has steadily evolved into a "significant platform" for cooperation among emerging markets and developing economies. "Over the years BRICS has expanded its agenda and membership, responding to changing global realities while remaining focused on people-centric developments, fostering dialogue and promoting practical **Cont. to Page-7**

Heritage enthusiasts visit birthplace of Odia lexicon Purnachandra Bhashakosha

Bhubaneswar, Jan 13 (Bureau)

At a time when Odia 'ashmita' or pride is the talk of the town, heritage enthusiasts and members of Puri Heritage Walks (PHW) under its 17th edition, visited Nuagaon which includes Biswanathpur, felt extremely proud, seeing the birthplace of the renowned Odia lexicon Purnachandra Bhashakosha. It is widely believed that its compiler, Gopal Chandra Praharaj, composed the entire dictionary while residing in his farmhouse in his village. During PHW's Satyabadi Tour, the participants visited various "sashana" villages of Satyabadi block and closely observed several ancient

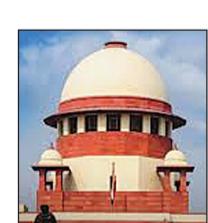
temple complexes. Setting out from Puri in the morning, they first reached Biswanathpur village under Jaipur gram panchayat of Satyabadi and offered prayers to Shri Gopinath Deb. After the original ancient temple had fallen into ruins, the deity is now inside a newly-built temple "Rekha Deul" style. Temple priest Brundaban Dikshit said that the idol worshiped is actually the most ancient Madan Mohan idol of the Puri Srimandir. Earlier, during the Chandan Yatra festival, Madan Mohan used to come to the Chandan Pushkarini (sacred tank) located in this village to participate in the ceremonial "chapa khela". It is believed that during the 16th Century, **Cont. to Page-7**

SC directs Coal India to create a supernumerary post for woman with multiple disabilities

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Bureau)

The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the Chairman of Coal India Limited to create a supernumerary post for a woman who was denied employment despite qualifying for an interview in 2016, solely due to her multiple disabilities. A Bench comprising Justice J.B. Pardiwala and Justice K.V. Viswanathan passed the order in favour of the appellant, Sujata Bora, while clarifying that the decision was made in the peculiar facts of the case and should not be treated as a precedent. The Court noted that the

vacancy advertisement issued by Coal India did not mention multiple disabilities. As a result, Sujata Bora had applied under the visually handicapped category. Although she qualified for the interview and appeared for document verification and medical examination, she was denied an appointment after it was found that she suffered from multiple disabilities. Setting aside the Calcutta High Court's order dated July 3, 2024, the Supreme Court held that the appellant was denied employment through no fault of her own. The Court directed



that she be given a suitable desk job with a separate computer and keyboard, in accordance with universal design standards under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. She is to be posted at North Eastern Coal Fields, Coal India Limited, at Margherita in Tinsukia district of Assam. Reading out the order, Justice Pardiwala referred to international human rights instruments and principles laid down by the International Labour Organisation, emphasising the importance of disability inclusion. The Court observed that inclusion

of persons with disabilities is an essential part of social responsibility and sustainable governance, and that disability inclusion should be seen not merely as a legal obligation but as a strategic advantage. In its operative directions, the Court said the appellant's disability exceeded the benchmark disability requirement and that she was denied employment only because the recruitment notification failed to provide for multiple disabilities. Keeping these circumstances in mind, the Court ordered the creation of a supernumerary post and expressed confidence that the Chairman of Coal India would provide her **Cont. to Page-7**

NSA Ajit Doval, French counterpart Emmanuel Bonne hold 38th India-France Strategic Dialogue

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Agency) National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his French counterpart Emmanuel Bonne co-chaired the 38th India-France Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi today, during which they also reviewed preparations for the forthcoming visit to India of President of France Emmanuel Macron. During the Strategic Dialogue, India and France reiterated their commitment to the strategic partnership. The two countries discussed ongoing bilateral initiatives spanning the domains of security, defence, technology, space, and civil nuclear cooperation. Opportunities were explored for joint development and collaboration in the spirit of Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat. Discussions included the evolving geopolitical situation as well as regional and international issues of common **Cont. to Page-7**

PM extends warm greetings on Lohri, emphasizes spirit of gratitude and harmony

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Representative) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday extended his heartfelt greetings to the nation on the auspicious occasion of Lohri, highlighting the festival's deep-rooted connection with nature and its role in fostering social unity. In a commemorative message shared on handle X, the Prime Minister emphasized that Lohri is more than just a seasonal celebration; it is a profound expression of thankfulness for the bounty of the earth. "Lohri celebrates nature and is about expressing gratitude," the Prime Minister stated. "May this special festival deepen the spirit of joy and optimism in our society." The PM's message, accompanied by traditional imagery of a dhol (drum), sugarcane, and festive sweets, resonated with a call for national togetherness. He **Cont. to Page-7**

LG, CM lay foundation stone for Rs.64 cr project to make Nangloi-Najafgarh road monsoon-proof

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Reporter) Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, Vinai Kumar Saxena, and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Tuesday laid the foundation stone for the strengthening and modernisation of the Nangloi-Najafgarh Road along with comprehensive drainage works, a project aimed at providing long-term relief from waterlogging and traffic congestion in West Delhi. The project includes the construction of new stormwater drains, upgradation of existing drains and proper outfall connections with the Ranholi Drain, Najafgarh (Sahibi River) and Mungeshpur Drain. The road will be strengthened and reconstructed, and RCC crash barriers will be installed along the central verge to ensure safe and effective drainage during the monsoon. The project is being jointly implemented by three Public Works Department **Cont. to Page-7**

Rajnath Singh inaugurates first tri-services medical camp in Lakshadweep

New Delhi, January 13 (Reporter) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday stated that the government is committed to providing quality healthcare to every citizen of the country, especially those living in remote and island territories. Singh was virtually addressing the gathering during the inauguration of week-long Joint Services Multi-Speciality Camp organised by the Indian Navy at the Indira Gandhi Hospital, Kavaratti in Lakshadweep, the first time in the islands. Describing the initiative as a shining example of the Indian Navy's significant role in nation-building and humanitarian assistance beyond maritime security, the defence minister said that through the camp, the Tri-Services team of the Armed Forces Medical Services has brought advanced diagnostic facilities and specialist care **Cont. to Page-7**

Stock market ends lower, Nifty slips below 25,750

New Delhi, Jan 13 (FN Representative) The Indian Stock Market ended lower in another volatile session with the Nifty slipping below 25,750 due to brisk sell-off in auto, consumer durables, pharma and realty stocks. At close, the Sensex crashed by 250.48 points or 0.30 percent to 36,627.69, and the Nifty shed by 57.95 points or 0.22 pc to 25,732.30. The BSE Midcap index slipped 0.16 pc, but the Smallcap index strongly outperformed, rising 0.46 pc. On the sectoral front, IT, media, PSU Bank, metal ended in the green. On the other hand, FMCG, capital goods, consumer durables, pharma, realty fell between 0.3-0.5 pc. On Nifty, Eterna, ICICI Bank, and Tech Mahindra ended as the top gainers while Trent, Larsen and Toubro, and Reliance ended as the top laggards. The rupee settled at 90.19 per US dollar, marginally **Cont. to Page-7**

Utkalika Handicrafts Exhibition Inaugurated at NTPC Darlipali Township

Darlipali, Jan 13 (FN Bureau)

A n exhibition showcasing the rich heritage of Odisha's handloom and handicrafts was inaugurated at NTPC Darlipali Township. The exhibition is being organized by Utkalika – Odisha State Cooperative Handicraft Corporation Ltd., with the objective of



promoting and supporting local weavers and artisans of the state. The exhibition was inaugurated by the Chief Guests, Sh. Ravindra Sharma, GM (O&M), Mrs. Tazeen Jawed, President, Abhilash Ladies Club; Mrs. Kavita Saxena, President, Prema NTPC Darlipali, along with other dignitaries and officials. The

exhibition will remain open to the public from 11th to 20th January 2026, offering a wide range of authentic handloom fabrics, traditional crafts, and artistic products made by skilled artisans from different districts of Odisha.

Utkalika, a Government of Odisha undertaking, plays a vital role in the development, promotion, and marketing of handloom and handicraft products

while ensuring fair wages and sustainable livelihood opportunities for weavers and artisans. Through such exhibitions, Utkalika provides a direct platform for artisans to reach customers and helps preserve Odisha's rich cultural traditions. The exhibition also aims to encourage citizens to support local craftsmanship and actively contribute to the economic empowerment of Odisha's weaver and artisan communities. Through such initiatives, NTPC Darlipali continues to extend its support in popularising Odisha State handicrafts by providing a prominent platform for artisans to showcase and market their products

Bartronics India to acquire 51 pc stake in agritech firm AYOU



Hyderabad, Jan 13 (Agency)

B artronics India Limited on Monday announced it has received board approval to acquire a 51 percent strategic stake in AYOU, the fresh produce brand operated by Shree NagaNarayana Pvt. Ltd. (SNN), marking the company's formal entry into organised agri trade under its Project Avio Agritech initiative. AYOU is a Bengaluru-based fresh produce aggregation and processing company that sources fruits and vegetables directly from farmers, farmer producer organisations (FPOs), mandis and collection centres, the Hyderabad based company said in a release here. The company undertakes grading and processing before supplying to leading quick commerce and modern retail platforms, including Blinkit, Zepto, Swiggy Instamart, BigBasket, Ninjacart and More Retail.

The company operates a 6,000 sq. ft. processing and grading facility in Bengaluru with a capacity of up to 900 tonnes per month, supported by sourcing hubs across multiple agricultural belts. While demand from organised buyers has remained strong, AYOU's growth has been constrained by working capital and scale limitations. Bartronics' investment is expected to support expansion in aggregation volumes, processing capacity, trade cycles and the addition of higher-margin, processing-led categories. As part of the strategic partnership, Bartronics and AYOU are also evaluating export-led opportunities, with Dubai being assessed as a potential base for agri exports, particularly premium fruits and vegetables. The companies are exploring selective imports of dry fruits and exotic produce into India, with Singapore and other international markets under evaluation for the longer term. Commenting on the development, N. Vidhya Sagar Reddy, Managing Director of Bartronics India Limited, said the investment represents an execution-focused step in the company's agritech journey. AYOU's established operating platform and strong off-take relationships across quick commerce and modern retail would allow Bartronics to scale alongside existing demand while building capabilities in aggregation, value addition and agri commerce, he added. With this investment, the company moves from strategy articulation to on-ground execution in organised fresh produce, processing and agri trade.

Direct Tax Collections rise nearly 9pc to Rs 18.37 lakh crore in FY26 so far: Govt data

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Bureau)



I ndia's direct tax collections recorded a robust growth in the current financial year, with net collections rising by 8.82 per cent to Rs 18.37 lakh crore as on January 11, 2026, compared to the corresponding period last year, according to official data released on Monday here. The provisional figures show that gross direct tax collections for FY 2025–26 stood at Rs 21.49 lakh crore, marking a 4.14 per cent increase over Rs 20.64 lakh crore collected during the same period of FY 2024–25. Corporate tax collections continued to form a significant share of the revenue. Gross corporate tax collection increased to Rs 10.46 lakh crore in FY26 (up from Rs 9.72 lakh crore last year), while net corporate tax collections rose to Rs 8.63 lakh crore, reflecting steady profitability in the corporate sector. Non-corporate tax collections which include taxes paid by individuals, Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs), firms, associations of persons, and other entities, also showed healthy growth.

Gross non-corporate tax receipts increased to Rs 10.58 lakh crore, while net collections rose to Rs 9.29 lakh crore, indicating sustained momentum in personal income tax payments. Collections from Securities Transaction Tax (STT)

remained broadly stable at around Rs 44,866 crore, while receipts under other taxes were comparatively marginal. A notable feature of the data is the sharp decline in tax refunds. During FY 2025–26 (up to January 11), total refunds issued stood at Rs 3.11 lakh crore, down 16.92 per cent from Rs 3.75 lakh crore in the corresponding period last year. Lower refunds contributed to the stronger growth in net tax collections. The improvement in direct tax collections is seen as a positive signal for the government's fiscal position ahead of the union Budget. Higher tax buoyancy provides additional headroom for capital expenditure while supporting fiscal consolidation efforts. With nearly three months still remaining in the financial year, officials expect direct tax collections to remain on a firm trajectory, reinforcing confidence in achieving the annual revenue targets.

Venezuela crisis unlikely to impact Indian corporates: Crisil Report

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Reporter)

T he developments in Venezuela are unlikely to have any material impact on India's trade flows or the credit profiles of Indian companies, according to the Crisil report released on Tuesday here. Crisil said India Inc remains largely insulated from the situation given Venezuela's limited role in global crude supply and India's minimal trade exposure to the South American nation. India Inc is a media term for India's formal corporate and government sector, representing its business landscape. Crisil noted that even if the situation in Venezuela escalates and disrupts crude oil production, the impact on global oil prices is expected to remain contained. Venezuela accounts for only about 1.5 per cent of global crude oil supply, making it insufficient to trigger sustained

volatility in international oil markets. Reflecting this, Brent crude prices have remained broadly stable in recent days, hovering just above \$60 per barrel. India's direct trade linkages with Venezuela are marginal. Imports from the country account for less than 0.25 per cent of India's total imports. Crude oil remains the dominant component, with India sourcing around one per cent of its crude oil requirement from Venezuela. In value terms, crude oil and related products formed over 90 per cent of India's total imports from Venezuela, estimated at approximately Rs 14,000 crore in fiscal 2025. While India depends on imports for nearly 85 per cent of its crude



oil needs, Crisil said the current situation does not pose any near-term risk to oil supply or pricing for the country. The rating agency added that Venezuela's vast untapped crude reserves could, in fact, support global oil supply over the medium to long term if investments in production increase, potentially leading to softer crude prices – a positive outcome for Indian corporates. On the exports front, India's exposure is even smaller. Exports to Venezuela stood at under Rs 2,000 crore in fiscal 2025, accounting for less than 0.1 per cent of India's total exports. These exports are diversified across sectors such as pharmaceuticals, ceramics, textiles and two-wheelers. Pharmaceuticals were the largest

export category, valued at around Rs 900 crore last fiscal. However, this represented less than 0.5 per cent of India's overall pharmaceutical exports. Shipments of ceramics, textiles and two-wheelers ranged between Rs 80 crore and Rs 120 crore each and constituted a negligible share of sectoral exports as well as Crisil's rated universe. Given the modest scale of trade exposure, Crisil Ratings said it does not expect any material impact on the credit profiles of Indian companies dealing with Venezuelan customers. However, the agency added that it will continue to closely monitor developments in the region for any potential spillover risks. The assessment follows recent geopolitical developments in Venezuela, including a military operation launched by the United States earlier this month, which has heightened global attention on the country's political and economic stability.

Centre persuades delivery aggregators to take down mandatory 10-minute delivery deadline

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Representative)

C oming as a major relief to the gig workers, union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has persuaded major delivery aggregators to remove the mandatory 10-minute delivery deadline. A meeting was held with leading platforms including Blinkit, Zepto, Zomato and Swiggy among others to address concerns related to delivery timelines. As per the reports, quick commerce firms, such as Blinkit and Zepto, have voluntarily decided to halt 10-minute delivery claims after Minister Mandaviya raised the issue. Blinkit's principal

tagline has been revised from "10,000 plus products delivered in 10 minutes" to "30,000 plus products delivered at your doorstep." The development comes after the delivery workers staged a nationwide strike on New Year's Eve 2025. They protested the physical strain, safety risks and income instability caused by aggressive delivery timelines, and said the race to meet 10-minute targets was pushing them to take risks on the road while also limiting their ability to earn fairly. Reacting on the protests, the Eternal Group CEO Deepinder Goyal had defended the delivery model, saying it does not encourage unsafe driving. He had said the delivery partners are

not shown customer-facing delivery timers on their apps and are not under direct pressure to meet the 10-minute promise. Welcoming Mandaviya's move, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MP Raghav Chadha called it a win for gig workers, saying "Satyamev Jayate. Together, we have won." "This is a much-needed step because when '10 minutes' is printed on a rider's t-shirt/ jacket/ bag and a timer runs on the customer's screen, the pressure is real, constant, and dangerous. This step will help ensure the safety of



the delivery riders and everyone who shares our roads," he said. "This step

have spoken to hundreds of delivery partners. Many are overworked, underpaid and risking their life to fulfil an unrealistic promise. I thank every citizen who stood with us - you stood firmly on the side of human life, safety & dignity. And to every gig worker - you're not alone, we're all with you," he said in a post on social media platform X. Notably, during the Parliament session, Chadha had demanded regulations for quick commerce and app-based delivery and service businesses, emphasising the need for social security benefits for gig

PFRDA sets up expert panel to frame assured payout structure under NPS

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Agency)



T he Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has constituted a high-level expert committee to design a regulatory framework for assured payouts under the National Pension System (NPS), a move aimed at strengthening retirement income security for subscribers, an official statement said on Tuesday. The committee has been tasked with developing guidelines that will enable predictable and assured pension payouts when subscribers move from the accumulation phase to the withdrawal phase. This initiative is seen as a significant

step towards improving post-retirement financial certainty while retaining the core market-linked structure of the NPS. The 15-member panel will be chaired by Dr MS Sahoo, former chairperson of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India, and comprises experts from diverse fields including finance, law, insurance, actuarial science, capital markets and academia. The committee may also invite additional subject-matter specialists as needed to support its work. As part of its mandate, the panel will examine various mechanisms to ensure assured

payouts, including the use of market-based solutions and legal constructs such as novation and settlement. It will also propose operational norms covering lock-in periods, withdrawal options, pricing structures and fee mechanisms applicable under the assured payout model. The committee will review risk management and capital adequacy requirements to safeguard subscriber interests while maintaining financial stability within the pension ecosystem. It will also assess tax implications to ensure that assured payout structures can be implemented without compelling subscribers to exit the NPS framework. Another key focus area will be consumer protection. The panel is expected to recommend standardised disclosure norms to enhance transparency, reduce mis-selling risks and clearly communicate the nature and extent of payout assurances to subscribers. The move comes amid growing policy focus on retirement preparedness as India's subscriber base under NPS continues to expand.

Currently, NPS payouts are largely market-linked, exposing retirees to fluctuations in financial markets. The proposed assured payout framework aims to address this gap by offering greater income predictability in retirement.

workers. The definition of gig workers and platform workers and provisions related to the same have been provided in the Code on Social Security, 2020, coming into force on November 21, 2025. The Code provides for framing of suitable social security measures for gig workers and platform workers on matters relating to life and disability cover, accident insurance, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, etc. Notably, the Ministry of Labour and Employment had also launched the e-Shram portal in 2021 for the creation of a Comprehensive National Database of Unorganised Workers, including platform workers, migrant workers, etc.

National Youth Day Celebrated at Gadibrahma Degree college

Delang, Jan 13 (FN Representative)



A National Youth day program was organized at Gadibrahma Degree college on Monday with the joint efforts of the Red Cross unit and National Service Scheme of College. In this program, The principal of college Dr Saroj Kumar panda presided over the program and challenged the students on how the Youth can contribute towards Nation building from the life of Swami Vivekananda.

Red Cross unit Counselor and lecture Trinath Parida delivered the welcome speech and introduced guests, Sr lecture Prmodini Mahapatra highlighted the significance of National Youth day, emphasizing his ideals and messages for the Youth. Political science lecture Yudhistir Ghatuari advised every youth organization to actively participate in nation building activities. Finally NSS program officer and lecture Dr Bhabani Priyadarshani Mahanty proposed the vote of thanks.

ISA, SELCO Foundation sign MoU to drive people-centric solar solutions

New Delhi, Jan 13 (FN Representative)

The International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the SELCO Foundation on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding in Bengaluru to strengthen South-South collaboration and translate solar energy access into tangible, people-centric development outcomes aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and global climate commitments. Under the partnership, SELCO Foundation will serve as a technical and knowledge partner to ISA, bringing more than two decades of experience in last-mile solar deployment, context-specific energy solutions, and ecosystem building across key development sectors. The Partnership Framework was signed by Ashish Khanna, Director General of ISA, and Dr Harish Hande, CEO of SELCO Foundation, at SELCO Foundation's headquarters in

Bengaluru. The signing took place in the presence of Barakat Ahmed, Regional Programmes Head-Africa, ISA; Karan Mangotra, Partnership and Strategy Specialist, ISA; Dharshan Puttannaiah, MLA from Melukote constituency, Karnataka; Manoj Kumar, CEO and Co-founder of Social Alpha; and Ganesh Neelam, Director, Sustain Plus. The collaboration combines ISA's global convening power and technical expertise with SELCO's deep on-ground experience. Together, the partners aim to co-design scalable, inclusive, and sustainable solar models tailored to local contexts. Key focus areas include programmatic solar deployments aligned with country-specific needs, capacity building for governments, market players and service providers, strengthening local solar value chains, and enhancing knowledge-sharing systems. The partnership will also prioritize gender inclusion, youth skilling, and

community participation, with a strong emphasis on sharing best practices across the Global South. Speaking on the partnership, ISA



Director General Ashish Khanna said, "Today, solar paired with batteries is the least-cost energy option available, and it is also the most effective way to deliver reliable power at scale. This makes solar not just a climate solution, but the smartest economic choice for countries and communities alike." He added, "Partnering with SELCO Foundation allows us to translate this knowledge into grounded, people-centric solutions that respond to real development challenges across

countries." This partnership aims to set a benchmark for inclusive, climate-resilient solar solutions, demonstrating how energy access can catalyse broad-based development in underserved communities worldwide. Drawing on India's experience as a clear blueprint for affordable, reliable, and resilient renewable energy, it also shows how countries across the Global South can leapfrog, ensuring no one is left behind. SELCO Foundation CEO Dr Harish Hande said India's experience in deploying solar energy for development can serve as a global model. "India has emerged as a global leader in deploying solar energy for development, as demonstrated through large-scale, people-centric programmes such as PM KUSUM and PM Surya Ghar. This partnership with ISA strengthens our ability to take such proven, context-sensitive solar solutions to scale globally." "By combining ISA's technical leadership and global reach, with

SELCO's on-ground experience, we aim to deliver sustainable development outcomes that are equitable, resilient, and locally relevant," he said. Launched in 2015 by India and France at COP21 in Paris, the International Solar Alliance is a global initiative working with more than 120 member and signatory countries to improve energy access and security, while promoting solar power as a key driver of the clean energy transition. Founded in 2010, SELCO Foundation is a not-for-profit organization focused on making climate-smart solutions accessible to underserved communities. The Foundation works to strengthen livelihoods and improve access to healthcare and education through decentralized renewable energy. Operating across pillars such as innovation ecosystem building, scaling solutions, and enterprise incubation, SELCO Foundation has positively impacted over 10 million lives in India and beyond.

TCS posts 14 pc YoY fall in Q3 FY26 profit after tax at Rs 10,657 cr

Mumbai, Jan 13 (Agency)

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) officially announced a decline in its profit after tax (PAT) for the third quarter of the financial year (Q3 FY26), on Monday, though its revenue rose by 5%. The company has attributed its Q3 FY26 PAT decline to a one-time charge related to the labour code and legal claims, along with restructuring expenses, according to its statement. TCS posted a 13.9% (calculated as 14%) year-on-year (YoY) decline in its consolidated net profit to Rs 10,657 crore as compared to Rs 12,380 crore

for the same period last year. On a sequential basis, PAT was lower by 11.7% from Rs 12,075 crore posted in the previous September quarter of FY26. The decline in Q3 FY26 PAT was despite a marginal growth of almost 5% YoY in the company's topline during the period under review to Rs 67,087 crore from Rs 63,973 crore in Q3FY25. On a sequential basis, TCS has seen a 2% rise, while in constant currency terms, its revenue growth stood at 0.8%.

The company's bottom line was impacted after it provided for certain exceptional items during the quarter, including the provisions for a one-

time charge related to the labour code besides legal claims, along with restructuring expenses. TCS stated



that the statutory impact of new labour codes of Rs 2,128 crore, comprised Rs 1,816 crore towards gratuity and Rs 312 crore towards long-term compensated absences, which primarily arose due to changes in the wage definition under the new labour code. TCS also made a provision

towards a legal claim of Rs 1,010 crore pertaining to a 2019 claim filed by an American company called Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) against TCS, in the US District Court for the Northern District of Texas, Dallas Division, alleging "misappropriation of trade secrets as well as other confidential information" belonging to CSC.

However, the company's net income stood at Rs 13,438 crore, a growth of 8.5% YoY with net margins rising to 20%, a growth of 60 basis points for the year and 40 basis points sequentially. The total contract value (TCV) stood at US \$9.3 billion, but

missed estimates of US \$11 billion which brokerages had pegged for Q3 FY26. TCS announced a bumper payout of Rs 57 per share as a dividend, including a third interim dividend of Rs 11 and a special dividend of Rs 46. "The third interim dividend and the special dividend shall be paid on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, to the equity shareholders of the Company, whose names appear on the Register of Members of the Company or in the records of the Depositories as beneficial owners of the shares as on Saturday, January 17, 2026, which is the Record Date fixed for the purpose," according to the TCS statement.

E2E Rail secures Rs 134.41 cr railway orders post IPO

Bengaluru, Jan 13 (Reporter)



E2E Transportation Infrastructure Limited (E2E Rail), a rail engineering and system integration company listed on the NSE Emerge platform, has disclosed consolidated order inflows worth approximately Rs 134.41 crore received between October 1, 2025, and January 10, 2026, following the filing of its IPO offer documents. The disclosure pertains to orders received during the IPO quiet period and is being made post-listing in the interest of investor transparency. E2E Rail's shares were listed on NSE Emerge on January 2, 2026. The orders, received in the ordinary course of business, primarily relate to railway signalling and telecommunication works, including

automatic signalling systems, electronic interlocking, design, installation, testing, and commissioning.

Contracts have been awarded by various Zonal Railways, including South East Central Railway (Raipur Division), South Western Railway (Mysuru Division), and Southern Railway (Thiruvananthapuram Division), with execution timelines ranging from 12 to 30 months. The company clarified that the orders do not involve any related-party transactions, carry no promoter or promoter group interest, and do not result in any material change to its business model, risk profile, or financial position as disclosed in the IPO offer documents. Incorporated in 2010, E2E Rail is a system integrator providing end-to-end rail engineering solutions across mainline railways, urban transit systems, and private sidings. With over 15 years of industry experience, the company offers comprehensive services including design, consultancy, procurement, installation, testing, commissioning, and operations & maintenance across railway signalling and telecommunication systems, track electrification, and turnkey rail infrastructure projects in India and select international markets.

Uniper-AM Green sign long-term renewable ammonia offtake from India

Hyderabad, Jan. 13 (Representative)

German energy company Uniper and AM Green Ammonia India Pvt. Ltd. on Monday announced the signing of a long-term, binding offtake agreement for up to 500,000 tonnes per year of renewable ammonia from India, marking one of the first large-scale green fuel supply corridors between India and Europe. The agreement was exchanged between Uniper CEO Michael Lewis, CBE, and AM Green Founder and Group Chairman Anil Kumar Chalamalasetty in the presence of German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at an event in Ahmedabad, a release said here on Monday. Under the deal, Uniper will source renewable ammonia certified as a Renewable Fuel of

Non-Biological Origin (RFNBO) from AM Green's projects in India. First deliveries are expected as early as 2028, from AM Green's 1 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) green ammonia plant currently under construction in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, the company said in a release here.



The agreement supports India's ambition to become a leading global exporter of green hydrogen and green ammonia under the National Hydrogen Mission, while helping European industry decarbonise hard-to-abate sectors such as chemicals, fertilisers,

refining and, over time, shipping. Michael Lewis said the deal was a "key building block" in Uniper's strategy to secure reliable access to renewable and low-carbon molecules at scale, adding that green ammonia offers competitive CO2 avoidance costs due to its mature production process and lack of fossil carbon feedstocks. Anil Kumar Chalamalasetty described the partnership as "a milestone for India's role in the global energy transition," noting that AM Green's renewable ammonia is designed to meet stringent European RFNBO standards through firm and dispatchable clean electricity solutions. Both companies said they will continue working with certification bodies to ensure full traceability and high-integrity emissions reporting for European end users.

NIFT Bhubaneswar organized a Masterclass on Sustainability, Craft, and Design

Bhubaneswar, Jan 13 (FN Representative)

The National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Bhubaneswar hosted an inspiring and engaging masterclass by Dr. Rebecca Reubens, World Bamboo Ambassador for the World Bamboo Organization (WBO), designer, academic, and sustainability advocate on 12th January 2026 in the Bhubaneswar campus. An alumna of NIFT Delhi and NID Ahmedabad, Dr. Reubens' return to NIFT marked a significant moment for students and faculty committed to sustainable and future-facing design education. Dr. Reubens completed her PhD at Delft University of Technology, Netherlands and she work at the intersection of these domains through her two design-led studios: Rhizome, focused on sustainable furniture and installations, and Baka, a jewellery

practice grounded in responsibility, material intelligence, and craft traditions. Her work consistently reimagines how contemporary design can be ethical, meaningful, and culturally rooted. Her most recent publication is "The Routledge Handbook of Craft and Sustainability in India."

During the masterclass, the critical role of designers in advancing sustainability was underscored by Dr. Reubens. She focused that design is instrumental in actualizing sustainability. She emphasized that sustainability is integral to design practice, noting that designers influence resource allocation, production methods, distribution systems, and product life cycles, thereby positioning them as key actors in the sustainability movement. She further highlighted the responsibility of academic institutions, stating that institutions such as NIFT

play a pivotal role in operationalizing sustainability through structured and rigorous design education. Referring to bamboo as a strategic material. During the session, Dr. Reubens emphasized design as a key driver of sustainable practices and stressed the need for strong sustainability inputs in design education. She also highlighted bamboo as a strategic material, advocating a context-specific approach to its sustainable utilization rather than replicating global models.

Dr. Binaya Bhushan Jena, Professor, NIFT Bhubaneswar, and moderator of the session, expressed pride in Dr. Reubens' achievements, noting that her work continues to inspire younger generations, particularly at a time when NIFT is strengthening its focus on entrepreneurial education to encourage the development of job creators among its students. He addressed that she has been an inspiration for our younger generations, particularly at a time when NIFT is embedding entrepreneurial education to promote more job creators than job seekers among its students.

Prof. Dr. Vibhavari Kumar, Director of NIFT Bhubaneswar highlighted the transformative potential of bamboo in contemporary design and industry.



Dr. Goutam Bar, CAC, NIFT Bhubaneswar, who expressed gratitude to Dr. Rebecca Reubens for her insightful and thought-provoking session. He also acknowledged the efforts of the organizing team, faculty members, and students for their active participation, which contributed to the success of the masterclass and reinforced NIFT Bhubaneswar's commitment to sustainability-driven design education. The masterclass reinforced NIFT's commitment to sustainability-driven design education and highlighted bamboo as a material of the future - environmentally responsible, culturally embedded, and aligned with the values of emerging generations of designers.

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Umerkote, dated 08.01.2025, I, Gouri Kalar, W/o- Basanil Kalar, Vill-Banuaguda, P.O-Khanda, P.s-Umerkote, Dist-Nabarangpur, Odisha-764073, declare that I have changed my name from Gouri Samarth (old name) to Gouri Kalar (new name). Henceforth, I shall be known as Gouri Kalar for all future purposes.

Gouri Kalar
Deponent

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Anandapur, dated 06-01-2026, I, Sukanti Majhi, W/o-Dukhiram Majhi, Vill/P.o-Gadabandhagoda, P.s-Ramachandrapur, Dist-Keonjhar, Odisha, Pin-758042, Post office lane, Po-Budheswari, P.s-Laxmisagar, Bhubaneswar, Dist - Khordha, Odisha, PIN-751006 declare that I have changed the name of my son from RISHI KUMAR to RISHI YADAV for all purposes.

PAWAN KUMAR
Deponent

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Champua, dt.10.03.2025, I, Jani Munda, W/o-Sri Indra Munda, Vill-Sanahandula, Po-Kashipal, P.s-Jhumpura, Dist-Keonjhar, Pin-758031, declare that I have changed my name from Janaki Munda (old name) to Jani Munda (new name). Henceforth, I shall be known as Jani Munda for all future purposes.

Jani Munda
Deponent

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Bargarh, dt.13.01.2026, I, Ratnakar Sahoo, S/o-Chakradhar Sahoo, Vill-Po-Badasahara, P.s-Fategarh, Dist-Nayagarh, Pin-752063, declare that I have changed the name of my minor son from Sarathi Sahoo (old name) to Partha Sarathi Sahoo (new name). Henceforth, he will be known as Partha Sarathi Sahoo for all future purposes.

Ratnakar Sahoo
Deponent

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an Affidavit no.270 dt.07.2.2025 Sworn before The Notary,Bargarh. I Roshan Behera aged above 30 years. S/o Srikanta Behera R/o. Rangar pada Ward no.13 At/Po/Dist. Bargarh. I Declare that my Name is Rosan Behera in HSC Certificate, but my All other's Certificate my name is maintained Roshan Behera. That Rosan Behera and Roshan Behera is same and one person that I am known as Roshan Behera for all future Purposes.

Roshan Behera
Deponent

EDITORIAL

KISNA Launches its Exclusive Showroom in Chhattisgarh, Bilaspur



KISNA Diamond and Gold Jewellery proudly announced the grand opening of its 3rd exclusive showroom in Chhattisgarh, Bilaspur located at Link Road, Agrasen Chowk. The inauguration was graced by Mr. Ghanshyam Dholakia, Founder & Managing Director, Hari Krishna Group. To mark this launch, KISNA announced exclusive New Year offers, featuring up to ₹1,000 off per gram on making charges of diamond and gold jewellery, along with up to ₹1,500 off per product on selected diamond jewellery, making the celebrations even more rewarding for jewellery lovers. Mr. Ghanshyam Dholakia, Founder & Managing Director, Hari Krishna Group, stated: "Chhattisgarh is a key growth market for us, and Bilaspur holds strong potential as an emerging jewellery destination. As we expand our presence, we remain committed to offering well-crafted diamond and gold jewellery while strengthening our vision of 'Har Ghar KISNA', making diamond jewellery accessible to every Indian woman."

Mr. Parag Shah, CEO, KISNA Diamond & Gold Jewellery, added, "Bilaspur marks an important milestone in KISNA's expanding retail presence. Chhattisgarh's growing market and evolving consumer preferences present strong opportunities and through this showroom, we aim to deliver a consistent luxury retail experience aligned with KISNA's evolving brand ethos."

Mr. Varun Rai & Mr. Rakesh Rai, Exclusive Brand Outlet Partners, KISNA, said: "Our association with KISNA is driven by shared values of trust and quality. Through the Bilaspur showroom, consumers can explore masterfully crafted, diamond jewellery, contemporary collections, and attractive opening offers, all delivered with personalized services." In line with KISNA's commitment to giving back to society, the brand organized a blood donation camp as part of the launch event, along with a food distribution drive for the underprivileged and a tree plantation initiative to promote environmental sustainability. It is noteworthy that recently, under the Swachh Bharat Mission, KISNA organized a marathon simultaneously across 55 cities in the country, achieving a historic milestone by securing a place in the Guinness World Records. About KISNA Diamond & Gold Jewellery Launched in 2005, KISNA is the flagship diamond and gold jewellery brand from the Hari Krishna Group. With a vision of Har Ghar KISNA, the brand has established an extensive reach with over 1,500 shop-in-shop outlets across 28 states in India. KISNA now boasts 125+ exclusive showrooms across the country. With ethical sourcing of diamonds from mines to market, KISNA offers an unmatched portfolio of unique designs. KISNA's wide range of products includes Rings, Earrings, Pendants, Mangalsutras, Necklaces, Bangles, Bracelets, Nose Pins inclusive men's jewellery in 9KT, 14KT, 18KT and 24KT gold, all 100% IGI Certified and BIS Hallmarked. The company also provides 90% Buyback and 95% Exchange on diamond jewellery, including making charges. KISNA Diamond & Gold Jewellery's online platform is a curated space where elegance meets convenience. As your trusted online brand, we offer a seamless shopping experience, featuring latest diamond and gold jewellery designs. Explore timeless sophistication with KISNA, your ultimate destination for authentic and stylish pieces on www.kisna.com

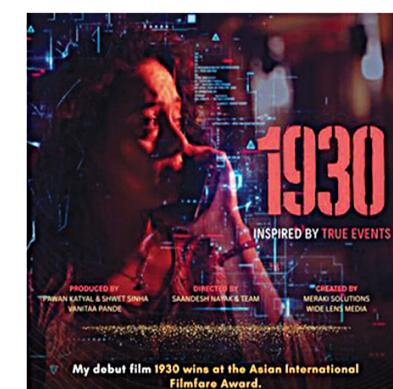
Vanitaa Pande's Cyber-crime Short Film 1930 Wins Multiple Honours Ahead of Hungama OTT Release

Meraki Solutions announces the continued success of its short film 1930, a hard-hitting cyber-crime drama on digital fraud and 'digital arrest' scams, which has been earning strong acclaim on the festival circuit and is now slated to release soon on Hungama OTT, taking its urgent message on cyber safety to a wider audience. Meraki Solutions' short film 1930 produced by Vanitaa Pande garners top international and Indian awards, ahead of its upcoming Hungama OTT release. Watch the teaser here: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DTKh3JgCCLi/> 1930 has won Best Short Film at the Asian International Filmfare Awards 2025 and the Indian Movie Awards, and has also been honoured as a monthly Best Short Film winner at the Great Britain Silver Screen Awards. In addition, the film has been selected

and nominated as Best Short Film at the IKSSF (International Kolkata Short Film Festival) and the Indian Movie Awards, underscoring both its cinematic craft and its social relevance.

Best known to audiences for her soulful music videos and devotional renditions, Vanitaa Pande brings her multi-faceted creative journey full circle in 1930—not just as the lead actor, but also as a producer, lending her voice and presence to a story rooted in real incidents of cyber-crime. Inspired by true events, 1930 takes viewers inside the dark, manipulative world of online intimidation, where a single unexpected call spirals into fear, confusion and a terrifying digital trap. The film follows a young woman whose ordinary day turns into a nightmare, exposing how easily anyone can be pushed into psychological submission by scamsters using the language of

authority, urgency and shame. Vanitaa Pande said, "1930 is more than a film



for me; it is a wake-up call. As a citizen, an artist and a woman who lives

online like everyone else, I felt strongly about telling this story with honesty. Digital fraud can happen to anyone—educated, urban, aware—and that is exactly why we wanted to show the emotional and psychological side, not just the crime." A late but determined entrant to cinema, Vanitaa Pande has built a distinct identity as an actor and singer who embraces risk and reinvention, starting her on-screen journey after establishing herself in music and performance. With 1930, she steps into one of her most challenging roles yet—a character who carries the entire arc from disbelief to panic to quiet devastation—while also shouldering the responsibility of producing the film under Meraki Solutions in association with Wide Lens Media Network (@widelensmedianetwork). "I have always believed that art should leave you

thinking," she adds. "If even one viewer hangs up on a suspicious call after watching 1930, or talks to family about cyber safety, we have done our job as storytellers." 1930 has been directed by Saandesh Nayak & Team, written by Aparna Pasalkar, with screenplay and dialogues by Mohinder P Singh, and edited by Nick Shobha Ghosh. The film is produced by Vanitaa Pande, Pawan Katyal and Shweta Sinha, and features an ensemble cast including Preeti Kochhar, Pranay Narayan, Yashodhan Rana, Soubhagy Dutt, Harshit Yadav, Virat Bhardwaj and Nilima Mishra alongside Vanitaa Pande in the lead. For Meraki Solutions, 1930 reflects the company's commitment to socially relevant, contemporary storytelling that blends strong performances with pressing real-world issues like cyber fraud and digital safety. The

growing list of awards and festival recognitions reinforces Meraki's focus on content that both engages and informs audiences. The upcoming Hungama OTT release will further amplify the impact of this cyber-crime drama, bringing its cautionary story and emotional resonance to viewers across geographies. About Meraki Solutions Meraki Solutions is a content and production house focused on impactful, story-driven film and digital projects that combine strong craft with social relevance. Through collaborations with diverse creative talent, Meraki Solutions aims to produce work that not only entertains, but also sparks reflection and conversation on contemporary issues. 1930 exemplifies this vision, bringing the urgent topic of cyber fraud to screens through an intimate, emotionally charged narrative.

Zee Zest Unlimit Awards 2026 Opens Registrations to Celebrate India's Innovators in Food, Travel and Lifestyle

Zee Zest Unlimit Awards, India's premier platform recognising excellence across food, travel and lifestyle, has officially opened registrations for its 2026 edition. Anchored in the theme 'Redefining Excellence', this year's awards aim to spotlight individuals, brands and experiences that are reshaping creativity, quality and cultural influence across India's rapidly evolving food and lifestyle ecosystem. The 2026 edition continues to strengthen the Awards' credibility with a thoughtfully curated set of categories spanning restaurants, cafés, bars, bakeries, spirit brands, breweries, experiential dining, hospitality concepts and content creators. What sets the Zee Zest Unlimit Awards apart is

its expert-led evaluation process, guided by a distinguished jury comprising some of India's most respected voices in the food and hospitality space. The jury includes



veteran food critic Rashmi Uday Singh, restaurateur and hospitality entrepreneur AD Singh, acclaimed chef Rahul Akerkar, celebrated chef and F&B consultant Sneha

Singhi Upadhyay, chefpreneur and television presenter Ajay Chopra, renowned food writer Priya Ganapathy, mixologist Nitin Tewari, luxury hospitality and lifestyle curator Karishma Sakhrani, and respected food writer Rukhsana Kapadia, among others. Their collective expertise ensures a rigorous and credible selection process that balances craft, innovation and cultural relevance. Registrations for the Zee Zest

Unlimit Awards 2026 are now open and will remain live until 21st January 2026. Establishments, brands and individuals from across the country can submit

their nominations across multiple categories via the official awards platform at <https://zeezest.com/zeezestunlimitawards/participation>. Speaking about the upcoming edition, Rahul Rao, Chief Channel Officer, Zee Zest, said, "The Zee Zest Unlimit Awards have consistently recognised those who raise the bar and shape the future of India's food, travel and lifestyle narrative. With the 2026 edition, we are excited to continue celebrating originality, consistency and innovation that truly reflect the spirit of contemporary India." The previous edition of the Zee Zest Unlimit Awards has witnessed a strong industry turnout, bringing together celebrated chefs, restaurateurs, hospitality leaders, creators and media personalities from across the country. It featured presentations by leading culinary figures including Chef Vikas Khanna, Chef Ranveer Brar and

Chef Hemant Oberoi, reinforcing the Awards' stature as a credible and influential platform within the food, hospitality and lifestyle ecosystem. The evening also saw an impressive gathering of cultural and creative voices, with Bollywood actors Nushrratt Bharucha, Adah Sharma and Aparshakti Khurana, alongside Mrunal Thakur, Bobby Deol, Javed Jaffrey, Manoj Bajpayee, Babil Khan, Nimrat Kaur, Chitrangada Singh, Aditi Govitrikar, Sara Afrene, and television personality Sumona Chakravarti, as well as well-known influencers and public figures including Miss Malini, RJ Malishka, and South Korean pop star AOA, among others. As the Zee Zest Unlimit Awards 2026 invites nominations from across India, it offers a unique opportunity for the country's most promising and established names to gain national recognition.

Rathuni Rathuni Song from Karikaada Now Out in Five Languages

The song "Rathuni Rathuni" from the film Karikaada was released on 10 January at 5:10 PM across Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Hindi. The multilingual launch brings together creative contributors from multiple regional film industries. Carried by rhythm and movement, the song presents a musical moment shaped by voice, beat, and visual expression. Composed by Shashank Sheshagiri, Rathuni Rathuni represents a closely coordinated musical effort. The track has been arranged and programmed by Shashank Sheshagiri and Prabhudas, with additional rhythm programming by SAM. Live rhythm sections were performed by George Thomas (SAM), while guitar portions were contributed by Srinivas and Godfrey. A stylised rap vocal segment by Thiraiyan, along with chorus vocals by Prabhu, Chethan, Santosh, and Vihaan, adds layered texture to the composition. The recording process extended across Bengaluru, Kochi, Chennai, and Mumbai, reflecting the collaborative scale of the project. Mixing and mastering were completed by Manjunath Naidu at 432hz Studio, ensuring a consistent sonic quality across all language versions. Commenting on the song's multilingual approach, composer Shashank Sheshagiri said, "While the musical structure of 'Rathuni Rathuni' remains consistent, each language version was approached with care to ensure the lyrics and vocals felt natural to that region. It was important that the song retained its identity while adapting seamlessly across languages." The visual presentation is choreographed by B Dananjaya and features Bigg Boss fame Kriti Verma as the dancer, whose performance adds a strong visual dimension to the song.

Each language version brings its own lyrical voice while retaining the song's core structure. Lyrics for the Kannada version



are by Dr. V Nagendra Prasad, with vocals by Shashank Sheshagiri and Aishwarya Rangarajan. The Tamil version, written by Palani Bharathi, is sung by Tippi and Gayatri Rajiv. In Telugu, lyrics are by V Gopinath, with vocals by Shashank Sheshagiri and Sahiti Chaganti. The Malayalam version features lyrics by Daas, sung by Zia Ul Huq and Gayatri Rajiv, while the Hindi version carries lyrics by Manoj Juloori, with vocals by Nakash Aziz and Saumya Upadhyay. Featured in the film Karikaada, Rathuni Rathuni forms part of the film's soundtrack and is produced under the banner Riddhi Entertainments. Slated for release on 6 February, the film is produced by Deepthi Damodar and directed by K Venkatesh, who has also written the screenplay and dialogues. The cast is led by Kaada Natraj and Niriksha Shetty, supported by a technical team that includes Jeevan Gowda as Director of

Photography and Deepak CS as Editor, with background score composed by Shashank Sheshagiri. With its multilingual release and collaborative creative approach, "Rathuni Rathuni" continues to play a key role in the lead-up to Karikaada's release.

Chess Beyond Competition: How RAI SAHAB COUNCIL FOR SPORTS AND EDUCATION Leverages the Game for Societal Progress

mid growing concerns in India about children glued to screens and struggling with shorter attention spans, an understated yet meaningful movement is emerging through the classic game of chess. The Rai Sahab Council for Sports and Education is gradually shifting the perception of sports, especially in The Council's community efforts stem from a straightforward yet potent conviction: organised thought patterns can cultivate more orderly lives. By bringing chess to the foundational level, particularly for school pupils and disadvantaged groups, the group seeks to offer young individuals an alternative to unchecked digital engagement while fostering mental and emotional maturity. A primary area of

Colleen Hoover shares update on cancer treatment

Author Colleen Hoover, known for 'It Ends With Us', has provided an update on her health following her cancer diagnosis earlier this year. Taking to her Instagram story, Hoover revealed that she is undergoing radiation therapy at Texas Oncology and is approaching her second-to-last session. "Second to last day of radiation. I wish I could blame my hair and facial expressions on Texas Oncology, but they've been great. Hope you never need them, but highly recommend them," she wrote, sharing a photo of herself in a hospital gown. Hoover first disclosed her cancer diagnosis in December 2025 on Facebook, though she did not specify the type of cancer. She had mentioned that she would undergo radiation treatment but would not require chemotherapy. Reflecting on the timing of her diagnosis, Hoover explained that she postponed sharing her health struggles until after completing work on Reminders of Him, the upcoming film adaptation of her book. "I continued to put off until the movie was finished. While it felt huge and scary for a bit, I had to miss out on the Regretting You premiere and other important career and personal moments, but I wasn't ready to share until I knew the outcome," she said. In recent posts, Hoover also addressed missing several professional events due to treatment. "I'm super bummed, but I have an unavoidable surgery and can't travel for a while. I'll live vicariously through you guys. So sad to miss this movie release and premiere, but so grateful to all the actors and the team who put this together," she wrote. Last week, Hoover shared additional details, noting that genetic testing indicated her cancer was not inherited and was unlikely caused by HPV or hormonal factors. "This means it was more than likely environmental or lifestyle-related, such as lack of exercise, poor diet, and stress," she explained.



concentration for the Council is introducing chess early in schools. 'Chess in Schools' program includes collaborating with educational bodies, conducting sessions to raise awareness about chess, introductory workshops, and recurring practice drills. The goal of these activities isn't to instantly produce master players, but rather to instill enduring qualities like perseverance, sound judgment, and strategic foresight—abilities valuable in all aspects of life, not just on the 64 squares. Another vital component of the Council's community outreach is ensuring equitable access. Specific measures are taken to include

youngsters from lower-income backgrounds by providing complimentary or reduced-fee coaching, tournaments open to all, and guidance from seasoned chess tutors. For many involved, this marks their initial encounter with organised contests and supervised instruction. Furthermore, the Council regards chess as a mechanism for developing character and supporting mental health in students suffering from Autism. Consistent play of the game has been shown to enhance concentration, lessen reactive actions, and elevate self-assurance among participants with special needs. Pursing the Council's 'Chess for Autistic People' program, adults involved in these programs, both parents and teachers, have observed favorable changes in behavior, particularly in children who previously faced challenges with focus and self-control.

Crucially, these undertakings are not conducted in isolation. They form part of a wider framework linking community coaching with regional and national events, ensuring ongoing progress and encouragement. Promising players identified through these schemes are directed towards official competitions and rating progression, establishing a link between social growth and competitive avenues. By framing chess as a vehicle for positive social change, the Rai Sahab Council for Sports and Education is building trust through dependable fieldwork. As discussions about youth advancement, digital equilibrium, and valuable athletic involvement gain importance, efforts such as these highlight how mission-driven organisations can generate quantifiable change while reinforcing India's wider sports structure.

growing list of awards and festival recognitions reinforces Meraki's focus on content that both engages and informs audiences. The upcoming Hungama OTT release will further amplify the impact of this cyber-crime drama, bringing its cautionary story and emotional resonance to viewers across geographies. About Meraki Solutions Meraki Solutions is a content and production house focused on impactful, story-driven film and digital projects that combine strong craft with social relevance. Through collaborations with diverse creative talent, Meraki Solutions aims to produce work that not only entertains, but also sparks reflection and conversation on contemporary issues. 1930 exemplifies this vision, bringing the urgent topic of cyber fraud to screens through an intimate, emotionally charged narrative.

Barabati Dance Festival 2026: "AHE Nilashaila" Dance Enthusiasts

Cuttack, Jan 13 (FN Bureau)

Barabati Dance Festival 2026, which has been organized by the dance organization "Odishi Nritya Mandal" Cuttack for the past 26 years, has come to an end with a grand celebration in the city of art and culture. In this festival, the most talented and senior dancers of



the organization beautifully displayed the emotions of the devotee poet Salabega in the dance "Ahe Nilashaila". Under the original coordination of Guru Ashish Kumar Das, nationally and internationally

Ajit Pawar rules out merger amid NCP alliances speculation

Pune, Jan 13 (Agency)



Amid alliances between the Nationalist Congress Party (Ajit Pawar faction) and the Nationalist Congress Party led by Sharadchandra Pawar in some municipal corporation elections across Maharashtra, speculation has intensified about a broader coming together or even a merger of the two parties. Clarifying the matter, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar said on Tuesday that an appropriate decision would be taken at the right time, adding, "There are currently no discussions on reunification or merger." Speaking to reporters, Pawar noted that following the municipal elections, elections to district councils and panchayat samitis are due. As seen in some municipal bodies, there is political curiosity over whether the two NCP factions will come together for these elections as well. He said, "Preliminary discussions have taken place with MP Supriya Sule and Shashikant Shinde, the state president of the Sharadchandra Pawar-led party, and the response has been positive. However, no concrete decision has been taken yet." Responding to allegations of corruption levelled by him against local BJP leaders in the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation, Pawar hit back at BJP leaders who revived allegations against him related to the alleged Rs 75,000 crore irrigation scam during the municipal election campaign. Pawar said he has discussed the matter in detail with senior leaders at both the state and central levels and does not feel the need to respond to anyone else on the issue. Ajit Pawar asserted that despite being part of the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance and the state government, he has not abandoned the principles of secularism and the ideology of Shivaji, Shahu, Phule, and Ambedkar. He added, "The Constitution guarantees freedom to every citizen," but emphasized the need for a law providing capital punishment for those involved in anti-national activities.

renowned dancers and dancers holding various positions including life insurance, such as Kajal Mohapatra, Branch Manager of Life Insurance Corporation of India, Gitanjali Tripathi, Advocate of the Supreme Court of India, Madhusmita Panda, professional Forex trader, Anasuya Barik, Dance Instructor of LR DAV School, Life Insurance Officer and renowned painter Purabi Priyadarshini Mallick, Senior Managing Director of Inson Technology, Er. Rutuparna Nayak Samal, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Odia Language and Literature and International Odissi Dancer Dr. Chittaranjan Sahani, inspired by dance Guru Ashish Kumar Das, have been promoting Odissi dance in their own dance institutions along with dance education and professional education. The dance artist was felicitated by renowned Odissi dancer Sujata Mohapatra, while the director of the institution, Sasmita Panda, conducted the event.

Chandigarh, Jan 13 (Representative)

Punjab Congress MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira has written to Governor Gulab Chand Kataria expressing serious concern over recent amendments made to the Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA) by the Bhagwant Mann-led AAP government, warning that the changes could have damaging ecological and governance consequences. In his letter, Khaira said the amendments pose a threat to Punjab's fragile environment, particularly the Kandi belt and eco-sensitive zones around Chandigarh. He noted that the PLPA was originally enacted to protect forests, prevent soil erosion, conserve groundwater, and maintain the state's ecological balance. Any dilution of restrictions on land use and non-agricultural construction, he argued, defeats the very purpose of the law and risks irreversible environmental damage, he added. The Congress legislator voiced apprehension that the amended provisions could facilitate the unchecked construction of farmhouses and commercial projects under the pretext of development. He alleged that individuals with prior knowledge of policy changes, including those linked to the ruling establishment, could benefit disproportionately. Khaira also flagged concerns about an emerging land mafia potentially exploiting the amendments to acquire large land holdings at

low prices, leading to long-term ecological harm.

Khaira questioned the manner in which the amendments were introduced, pointing to the absence of transparent public consultation, credible environmental impact assessments, and broad legislative



consensus. He said Punjab is already under severe environmental stress due to groundwater depletion, deforestation, and climate vulnerability, and cannot afford

what he described as a reckless weakening of protective laws. Urging the Governor to intervene, Khaira requested a thorough examination of the constitutional, legal, and environmental implications of the amendments. He appealed for steps to ensure a transparent and accountable review process, continued statutory protection for ecologically sensitive areas under the PLPA, and safeguards against misuse of policy changes for speculative land grabbing or profiteering. The MLA stressed that Punjab's land and natural resources are a shared legacy for future generations and said policy decisions affecting them must be guided by long-term public interest rather than short-term political or commercial considerations.



From left, BJP leaders Indranil Khan, Phalguni Patra, Locket Chatterjee, Shashi Agnihotri and Shishir Bajoria leave after a meeting of the party's delegation with West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose, in Kolkata. | Photo: PTI/Manvender Vashist Lav

GMR Aero Cargo launches India's first airside reefer truck at Hyderabad Airport

Hyderabad, Jan 13 (Bureau) GMR Aero Cargo & Logistics on Tuesday launched India's first airside reefer truck at Hyderabad Airport, marking a major upgrade in temperature-controlled cargo handling. The specialised truck is designed to maintain cold-chain integrity during airside movement of sensitive consignments between the cargo terminal and aircraft, reducing temperature exposure during ramp transfers. It supports a temperature range of 2°C to 25°C and can carry pharmaceuticals, seafood, dairy, meat, flowers, fruits, vegetables and other perishables. Built on a Tata chassis with a 10-tonne payload, the reefer truck can accommodate two lower-deck ULDs, improving operational efficiency and cutting multiple trips during aircraft loading. GHIAL CEO Pradeep Panicker said the initiative would set new standards in perishable and pharma logistics and strengthen Hyderabad's position among global cargo hubs.

Nashik shaken! SIT ordered into looting of container carrying Rs 400 crore in demonetized banknotes

Nashik, Jan 13 (FN Bureau)

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) has been constituted to investigate the alleged looting and kidnapping case involving 400 crore rupees in demonetised banknotes that occurred in the Ghoti-Wadivar area. The police have initiated a technical investigation to uncover the financial irregularities and identify



the suspects in this case. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) has been appointed under the leadership of the District Superintendent of Police to investigate the alleged crimes of kidnapping, death threats, extortion, and the looting of a container carrying a staggering 400 crore rupees in demonetised banknotes, which occurred in the Ghoti-Wadivar area in October 2025.

The investigation will be conducted under the guidance of Superintendent of Police Balasaheb Patil, and supervised by Additional Superintendent of Police Aditya Mirakhelkar and Sub-Divisional Police Officer Harish Khedkar. This decision was taken after swift action by the police and administration following a report published by the

'Sakal' newspaper in its Sunday (Jan 11) edition. According to the complaint filed by Sandeep Datta Patil (resident of Nashik Road), the suspects Jayesh Kadam, Vishal Naidu, Sunil Dhumal, Virat Gandhi, and Janardan Dhaygude (Mumbai) allegedly kidnapped him, threatened him and his family with death at gunpoint, and four of the aforementioned individuals are accused by Sandeep Patil of looting the container containing 400 crore rupees in banknotes.

The mention of a financial scam involving 400 crore rupees in demonetized currency in the complaint is extremely shocking. The investigation is now focused on determining the source of the 400 crore rupees in banknotes and where they were being transported. The police administration has clarified that due to the extremely serious, sensitive, and high-value nature of this case, and considering the possibility of involvement of politically and socially influential individuals, a SIT has been appointed for an impartial and independent investigation. The committee includes experienced and senior officers, and the Economic Offences Wing, cyber experts, and technical analysts have also been included in the investigation.

Kharge's development plea adds fuel to Siddaramaiah-Shivakumar fracs

Kalaburagi, Jan 13 (Reporter)

urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar to prioritise northern Karnataka. "We do not want Kalaburagi to become London or Singapore. We want development similar to Mysuru and your constituencies," he said, while emphasizing equitable allocation of resources. Observers say Kharge's remarks carry a subtle political undertone amid ongoing debates within the state Congress over leadership roles and

the distribution of influence between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar.



Recent media reports have chronicled a continuing tussle between the

two senior leaders, with exchanges over administrative control and the implementation of agreed power-sharing arrangements fuelling perceptions of friction. Reports have noted past disagreements, such as a bureaucratic transfer dispute involving Shivakumar's department and tensions over rotational leadership expectations, that have kept the spotlight on internal dynamics. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has repeatedly denied any rift with his deputy, asserting

there is no conflict and dismissing rumours as media speculation, while Shivakumar too has insisted on party unity and denied any personal differences, calling reports of discord "creations of the media." DCM Shivakumar, who was present at the event, noted that Rs 1,000 crore had been released for Jevargi, acknowledging the region's electoral support to Congress. Analysts say Kharge's public appeal, coupled with Shivakumar's response, underscores growing scrutiny within the party on governance and leadership priorities in Karnataka.

'Jana Nayagan' censor row: Rahul jumps to Vijay's defence, blames Modi govt for attempting to block movie

Chennai, Jan 13 (Representative)

After senior AICC leaders and MPs, Congress icon and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday has come to the aid of a beleaguered actor-politician and Tamiliga Vettai Kazhagam (TVK) Founder Vijay, whose swansong movie 'Jana Nayagan' is in the crosshairs of securing censor certification, charging the Prime Minister Narendra Modi government with attempting to block the film which is an attack on Tamil culture. "Mr Modi, you will never succeed in suppressing the voice of the Tamil people," Gandhi said in a terse but acerbic post on his 'X' handle. The former Congress President further said, "The I&B Ministry's attempt to

block 'Jana Nayagan' is an attack on Tamil culture." Ahead of landing in Tamil Nadu for a private school event at Gudalur in the hilly Nilgiris district, he had posted it. During his Bharat Jodo Yatra, the Gandhi family scion had stayed at the school and assured to visit the institution later. And, his support could not have come at a better time for a beleaguered Vijay, who was grilled by the CBI yesterday in New Delhi for six hours in the horrendous Karur stampede which claimed 41 lives during his rally last September. The actor, heading the fledgling TVK will be questioned again on January 19, after the Pongal festival. Within hours the 'X' post has gone viral with the fans of the iconic actor and TVK supporters profusely thanking him besides retweeting it by tagging with pictures of Vijay and



Chakravarty as well as local MPS, Manickam Tagore and Jothimani have sprung in support of Vijay when the Censor Board delayed the certification for 'Jana Nayagan' which was earlier scheduled to have hit the screens for Pongal festival season on January 9. However, the First Bench of the Madras High Court stayed the Single Judge Ms Asha's order directing the CBFC to give U/A certification for the film. The Bench also posted the case after Pongal festival holidays to January 21 and till that date the film could not be screened. Meanwhile, the producers of the film have moved the Supreme Court seeking relief and the matter was yet to be taken up for hearing. Vijay has identified the BJP as the TVK's ideological enemy and thus far remains wedded to secularism, which has not gone down

well with the BJP. Meanwhile talking to reporters at the airport on arrival from Delhi along with Vijay, TVK Joint General Secretary C T Nirmal Kumar, while welcoming the support extended by Rahul Gandhi for the film, said there was no change in TVK's already decided stand, effectively dousing speculations of possible alliance with the National party, which has been demanding share in power from the DMK, heading the alliance in Tamil Nadu. Vijay had already assured that his party was ready for alliance and was also ready for power sharing if his party wins the elections and forms the next government. "Vijay is a spoiler," was the reaction of union Minister Piyush Goyal, Tamil Nadu in-charge of the BJP. This is a clear indication of the BJP realising that Vijay is out to split the anti-DMK votes.

China rejects India's claim over Shaksgam Valley

Beijing, Jan 13 (Representative)

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning on Monday rejected India's claim over the Shaksgam Valley in Jammu and Kashmir. "The territory you mentioned belongs to China. It's fully justified for China to conduct infrastructure construction on its own territory," Mao said when asked about border issues and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The spokesperson further said, "China and Pakistan in the 1960s signed a boundary agreement and delimited the boundary between

the two countries, which is the right of China and Pakistan as sovereign countries. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as an economic cooperation initiative, aims at promoting local socio-economic development and improving people's livelihood. The China-Pakistan boundary agreement and CPEC do not affect China's position on the Kashmir issue and the position remains unchanged." India strongly rejected "Chinese infrastructure projects" in the Shaksgam Valley, asserting that the region is an integral part of its territory and condemning any attempts to alter the ground reality. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) emphasised

that projects under the CPEC passing



through this area are "illegal" and "invalid", reiterating India's consistent

stance on "sovereignty and territorial integrity". MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said: "Chinese infrastructure buildup via CPEC in the Shaksgam Valley, which is Indian territory. We have never recognised the so-called China-Pakistan boundary agreement of 1963. We have consistently maintained that the agreement is illegal and invalid." He added, "We do not recognise the so-called China-Pakistan Economic Corridor either, which passes through Indian territory, currently under forcible and illegal occupation by Pakistan." He stressed, "The entire union Territories of J&K and Ladakh are an integral and inalienable part of

India. "This has been clearly conveyed to the Chinese and Pakistani authorities" several times. "We have consistently protested with the Chinese side for its attempts to alter the ground reality in the Shaksgam Valley. We further reserve the right to take necessary measures to safeguard our interests," MEA said in a statement. The latest tensions come amid reports that China has constructed a road across the Aghil Pass, at an altitude of 4,805 meters, reaching the lower Shaksgam Valley. India has repeatedly conveyed its objections to both Chinese and Pakistani authorities and reserves the right to take all necessary measures to safeguard its interests.

UK govt to criminalise creation of nude deepfakes



London, Jan 13 (Agency) The UK government will launch criminal prosecutions for the creation of intimate images online without the user's consent, UK Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology Liz Kendall said. On Monday, British media regulator Ofcom launched an investigation into xAI and Elon Musk's chatbot Grok, which were used to generate pornographic images using artificial intelligence. If a violation is found, Ofcom could impose a fine equal to 10 percent of the company's global revenue. "Under the Online Safety Act 2023, sharing or threatening to share intimate images without someone's consent, including images of people in their underwear, is a criminal offence for both individuals and platforms. The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 made it a criminal offence to create or request the creation of non-consensual intimate images, and today I can announce to the House that this offence will be brought into force this week," Kendall said in the UK parliament on Monday. The minister also criticized X's recent decision to restrict access to the Grok image-creation feature to paid subscribers, claiming that this is only "monetising abuse." On January 3, Musk said on X that "anyone using Grok to make illegal content will suffer the same consequences as if they upload illegal content." The UK's Online Safety Act 2023 grants Ofcom wide-ranging powers to enforce consumer protection legislation on television, radio, and the internet. It restricts access to content deemed harmful to children, including pornography, content promoting self-harm, eating disorders, and suicide. Violations can result in heavy fines and prison terms for platform operators.



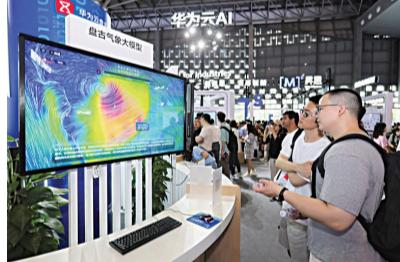
A view shows part of Havana as U.S.-Cuba tensions rise after U.S. President Donald Trump vowed to stop Venezuelan oil and money from reaching Cuba and suggested the communist-run island to strike a deal with Washington, in Havana, Cuba

China unveils first AI model to gauge weather's impact on stock market

Beijing, Jan 13 (Bureau)

China has revealed its first artificial intelligence (AI) model designed to analyze the impact of weather patterns on financial markets, marking a novel step in climate-aware risk management, the China Meteorological Administration (CMA) has said. The model, Shangji, or Stock, was jointly developed by the Shanghai-based Fudan University and the National Meteorological Information Centre. Its core function is to assess how meteorological factors influence asset pricing, offering a new tool for investment decisions and financial risk assessment, the CMA was quoted as saying by Science and Technology Daily on Tuesday. Zhao Yanxia, a lead developer of the model and director of the

CMA's key open laboratory for financial meteorology, said the model, utilizing global reanalyzed meteorological data and historical stock trading data, is able to forecast short-term returns for the majority of stocks on China's A-share market. Validation tests indicate that the model is capable of accurately



identifying industries highly sensitive to weather conditions, such as wind and solar power, traditional petrochemicals, construction and agriculture, thereby aligning with

international standards. Back-testing of investment strategies based on the model's predictions has shown "sustained and stable positive returns" over various historical periods, suggesting practical potential, Zhao explained. The model holds broad application prospects in the financial sector, said Li Hao, a professor at the Artificial Intelligence Innovation and Incubation Institute of Fudan University and one of the model's creators. Companies in weather-sensitive industries can use it for climate risk management, while banks and insurers can apply it to control risks in businesses, like equity pledges, and explore climate-related financing. Li noted that the model is useful for investors as an aid in quantitative investing, and that academics can employ its output to test and refine asset pricing theories.

Iran to evacuate its diplomatic mission personnel in UK

Tehran, Jan 13 (Agency) Iran will be forced to consider evacuating its diplomatic mission personnel in London if the United Kingdom fails to ensure their safety, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said. "In a phone conversation with the UK Foreign Secretary this evening, I made clear that the UK is, by international legal obligations, duty-bound to ensure the safety and security of Iran's London Consulate and Embassy. If the UK cannot uphold its duty to protect diplomatic missions, Iran would be left with no choice but to consider evacuating our personnel," Araghchi said on X on Monday. "I also urged the UK to avoid interfering in Iran's internal affairs, including by continuing to refrain from taking action against Israeli-backed terrorists posing as news organizations. Ofcom has clear rules and regulations about the incitement of violence and glorification of terrorism. The UK Government must take action to ensure that its own domestic laws are upheld," he added.

US Congressman introduces bill for "Annexation and Statehood" of Greenland

Washington, Jan 13 (Reporter)

US Congressman Randy Fine has introduced a bill to make Greenland the 51st state of the United States, giving further momentum to President Trump's long-standing push to acquire the Danish territory. The "Greenland Annexation and Statehood Act" was introduced Monday by the Florida Republican, according to a statement from his office. The bill's stated goals include enabling "the annexation and subsequent admission to statehood of

Greenland." In a post on X, Fine said, "Today, I am proud to introduce the Greenland Annexation and Statehood Act, a bill that allows the President to find the means necessary to bring Greenland into the Union." "Let me be clear: our adversaries are trying to establish a foothold in the Arctic, and we can't let that happen," Fine added. "By acquiring Greenland, we would prevent our adversaries from controlling the Arctic region and secure our northern flank from Russia and China." "Greenland is not a distant outpost we can afford to ignore, it is a vital national security asset," Fine said

in the press release. "Whoever controls Greenland controls key Arctic shipping lanes and the security architecture protecting the United States." "America cannot leave that future in the hands of regimes that despise our values and seek to undermine our security," he added.

The bill states that President Trump "is authorized to take such steps as may be necessary, including by seeking to enter into negotiations with the Kingdom of Denmark, to annex or otherwise acquire Greenland as a territory of the United States." After the US acquires Greenland, the bill would require Trump to submit a report to Congress outlining possible federal law changes "as the President may determine necessary to admit the newly acquired territory as a State." White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said Monday that there is no specific timeline for the US to take over Greenland. "President Trump has not set a timeline, but it's definitely a priority for him," Leavitt told reporters. "I think the president was very clear last night," she continued. "He said that he wants to see the United States acquire Greenland because he feels that if we do not, it will eventually be acquired, or even perhaps taken over hostilely, by either China or Russia."

US imposes 25 percent tariffs on countries trading with Iran

Washington, Jan 13 (Representative)

United States President Donald Trump on Monday announced the imposition of 25 percent tariffs on countries that continue to do business with Iran, as anti-government protests persist across the country. In a post on Truth Social, Trump reiterated that the decision would take effect "immediately" and emphasised that the "order is final and conclusive." "Effective immediately, any country doing business with the Islamic Republic of Iran will pay a Tariff of 25% on any and all business being done

with the United States of America. This Order is final and conclusive," Trump said in his post. Trump has repeatedly warned that the US could be forced to take action against Iran as nationwide protests continue, even as he disclosed that Tehran has reached out to Washington to seek negotiations. Speaking to reporters aboard Air Force One, Trump said Iranian leaders had contacted Washington to discuss diplomatic engagement. Asked if Iran was seeking negotiations, Trump said it was, adding, "They do. They called. Iran called to negotiate yesterday. The leaders of Iran called. They want to negotiate. I think they're

tired of being beat up by the United States. Iran wants to negotiate." The US president added that while a meeting was in the process of being arranged, developments on the ground could force Washington to act before talks take place. Meanwhile, Republican Senator Lindsey Graham praised Trump's decision to impose the 25 percent tariffs, calling the move to economically isolate Iran's leadership "most impressive." Sharing a post on X, Graham wrote, "Mr President: your decisive

leadership in isolating this regime economically through your actions today are most impressive. Your promise to have the protesters back and put the regime on notice that you will not tolerate the killing has led to the largest outpouring of demonstrators against this fanatical regime since its founding. Mr President: I believe the Iranian regime has crossed red lines. They are killing their people in large numbers and mocking your leadership. It is now time to take decisive military action — no boots on the ground — going after those who do the killing." Trump's decision could have significant implications

15,000 nurses go on strike at major New York City hospitals

New York, Jan 13 (Agency)

A strike by nearly 15,000 nurses at several major New York City hospitals entered its first day on Monday after talks over a new contract collapsed, triggering concern among patients and their families about ongoing care, CBS News reported. The strike began at 6 am EST on Monday at five privately run hospitals, including Mount Sinai, Mount Sinai Morningside, Mount Sinai West and New York-Presbyterian facilities in Manhattan. Patients' families said the absence of regular nursing staff has raised concerns about continuity and quality of care. Charlie Bravo, whose sister is currently admitted at Mount Sinai West, said the situation has made him uneasy. "They definitely need the nurses. They need to wrap this up quick," he said. "The city cannot have the nurses out here any longer than today," as reported by CBS News.

Questions have also been raised about who is replacing the striking nurses. The Greater New York Hospital Association said hospitals have hired contract nurses, adjusted staff schedules, accelerated patient discharges, and rescheduled some planned procedures to manage operations during the strike.

New York Governor Kathy Hochul signed executive orders last week to ensure the state Department of Health deployed staff at the affected hospitals. However, striking nurses and some patients argue that patient care involves more than basic competence. Lin Geronimo, a nurse participating in the strike, said replacement nurses are unfamiliar with hospital-specific systems and routines. Negotiations between hospital management and the New York State Nurses Association failed to produce an agreement by Monday's deadline, despite talks continuing through the weekend. The union accused hospitals such as Montefiore, Mount Sinai, and New York-Presbyterian of prioritising profits over safe patient care, citing disputes over health coverage, wages, staffing levels, pensions, and workplace protections. Hospital officials described the strike as "reckless" in a joint statement. Some hospitals, including Northwell Health facilities in Nassau County, reached agreements with the union, while others withdrew strike notices.

New York-Presbyterian officials said they had offered wage increases, improved benefits, and enhanced workplace safety, adding that "good faith bargaining requires compromise from both sides."

for India, which maintains substantial trade ties with Iran through both exports and imports. India already faces a 50 pc tariff on its exports to the United States, 25 percent of which Washington attributes to India's purchase of Russian oil, an activity the US says helps fund Moscow's war in Ukraine. India and Iran are key trade partners, with India ranking among Iran's five largest trading partners in recent years. The announcement comes as the death toll from Iran's nationwide protests has climbed to at least 646 people, according to activists US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency.

India eye series seal as NZ seek revival in Rajkot ODI

Rajkot, Jan 13 (FN Bureau)

There is something faintly familiar about the script as India and New Zealand assemble for the second one-day international at the Niranjan Shah Stadium here on Wednesday. India, efficient and unruffled, have taken a 1-0 lead in the three-match series, while New Zealand, gallant but short of the final touch, are once again searching for answers on Indian soil. The opening ODI followed a pattern that has come to define contests between these sides in recent years. New Zealand fought hard, batted with purpose and posted a competitive 300, yet India, powered by experience and composure, absorbed the pressure and chased the target down with four wickets to spare. Virat Kohli's 93 was not a blaze of strokes but a lesson in timing, judgement and restraint — a reminder that in limited-overs cricket, calm is often the most destructive weapon. India's batting depth continues

to be their greatest assurance. Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer provided solidity around Kohli, while KL Rahul once again played the role of the quiet finisher. Yet, beneath the victory lie questions India would prefer to answer sooner rather than later. Their bowlers, impressive in patches, allowed New Zealand to score freely in the final overs, conceding 88 runs in the last 10 — a generosity that could prove costly on flatter tracks. The venue adds an intriguing layer to the contest. Rajkot has never been entirely hospitable to India in ODIs, with the hosts losing three of the four matches played here. The pitch, red-soil and true, promises runs in abundance, as reflected in an average first-innings score exceeding 320. History suggests batting first is not merely an advantage here but almost a necessity, and the toss could once again tilt the balance before a ball is bowled. New Zealand arrive at this match nursing familiar



frustrations. Their top order laid a solid foundation in the first ODI, Devon Conway and Henry Nicholls batting with discipline and intent. Daryl Mitchell's authoritative 84 placement. For New Zealand to level the series, they will need collective discipline, sharper catching and a middle order willing to turn starts into statements. The weather is expected to stay out of the narrative — clear skies, warm temperatures and little wind — leaving the contest to be decided by skill and temperament alone. India, buoyed by form and familiarity, start as favourites, with an 83 per cent win probability reflecting both recent results and depth. New Zealand, written off before but rarely resigned, will look to challenge that arithmetic. Whether this match becomes a mere formality or a genuine contest depends on how long New Zealand can resist India's calm efficiency. For India, victory would seal the series at 2-0. For New Zealand, it is another examination of resolve — and an opportunity to prove that resistance, if sustained long enough, can still rewrite expectation.

gave substance to the innings, while a late flourish ensured a round 300. What followed, however, was a story the Kiwis know too well — moments of control slipping away under sustained pressure. Kyle Jamieson stood tall with the ball, his 4 for 41 a reminder of his knack for unsettling Indian batters. But one bowler, however incisive, cannot carry an attack on a surface that rewards patience and

Sports Ministry directs NSFs to form panels to boost global sports ties

New Delhi, Jan 13 (FN Representative)

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has notified all National Sports Federations (NSFs) recognised by the central government to constitute a dedicated "Committee on International Relations" within their organisations to strengthen India's engagement with the global sporting ecosystem. In an advisory issued on Tuesday, the Department of Sports said the move aligns with the recently notified Khelo Bharat Niti-2025, which outlines sports as an important instrument of international diplomacy and cooperation. The policy emphasises a multi-stakeholder approach to sports development, with greater coordination between domestic institutions and international sporting bodies. According to the ministry, the proposed committee will serve as an institutional mechanism to monitor developments within international and continental federations, including changes in competition rules, governance structures, elections and athlete-focused programmes. NSFs have also been encouraged to formulate medium-term international cooperation plans covering bilateral and multilateral agreements, joint training camps, exchange programmes, knowledge-sharing initiatives, and the hosting of international competitions in India. The advisory underlined that all international engagements must remain consistent with Government of India policies, the Olympic Charter or relevant international federation statutes, and principles of good governance, anti-doping and athlete safeguarding. Collaboration with foreign national federations, as well as international sports research and academic institutions, has been highlighted as a key area to improve access to advanced training and sports science support for Indian athletes. NSFs have also been asked to



prepare periodic briefs for submission to the ministry, detailing proposed or ongoing collaborations with international counterparts. These briefs are expected to focus on initiatives that enhance performance pathways, including exposure to elite competitions and overseas training opportunities. In addition, federations have been directed to coordinate closely with international bodies for timely participation in bidding processes and to inform the ministry in advance of any intent to bid for hosting international events in India, as per existing guidelines. The ministry stated that the committee should comprise senior federation members, former international athletes, coaches and subject experts with experience in global sports administration and diplomacy. Details of the committee's composition and terms of reference are to be submitted to the ministry within 30 days of the advisory.

■ Vidarbha crush Delhi to enter Vijay Hazare Trophy SFs

Bengaluru, Jan 13 (Representative) Vidarbha's emerging star Yash Rathod led from the front as the team secured a commanding 76-run victory over Delhi in the 4th Quarter-Final of the Vijay Hazare Trophy Elite 2025-26 at the BCCI Centre of Excellence Ground 2 here on Tuesday. Opting to bat first, Vidarbha posted a formidable total of 300 for 9 in 50 overs, powered by Rathod's brilliant 86 off 73 balls, which included eight boundaries and two sixes. Atharva Taide provided solid support with 62 runs, while Dhruv Shorey added 49 to keep the scoreboard ticking. Ravikumar Samarth chipped in with 23 runs, and Yash Kadam contributed 19. Delhi's pace duo of Ishant Sharma (2/47) and Navdeep Saini (2/68), along with Prince Yadav (2/59), shared the wickets, but could not contain Vidarbha's aggressive batting. Vidarbha's bowlers then executed a disciplined and strategic plan. Medium-pacer Nachiket Bhute (4/51) exploited Delhi's middle-order weaknesses, while spinner Harsh Dubey (3/36) and fast Praful Hinge (2/54) applied consistent pressure. Yash Kadam picked up a crucial wicket as well. Delhi struggled to build substantial partnerships, with only Anuj Rawat (66 off 98 balls) and Harsh Tyagi (27) making notable contributions. The visitors were eventually bowled out for 224 in 45.1 overs, handing Vidarbha a comprehensive victory. The match highlighted Vidarbha's leadership and teamwork, with Rathod not only anchoring the innings but also setting the tone for the bowlers. The team's performance showcased a perfect blend of calculated aggression and tactical execution, crucial in knockout matches. With this win, Vidarbha advanced to the semifinals of the Vijay Hazare Trophy Elite 2025-26, emphasising the impact of leadership on-field and strategic execution in high-pressure matches, while Delhi's campaign ended at the quarterfinal stage.

■ West Indies begin T20WC build-up with Afghanistan series

Barbados, Jan 13 (Reporter) Cricket West Indies (CWI) has unveiled its 16-member squad for the upcoming three-match T20 International series against Afghanistan, to be played at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium in the United Arab Emirates from January 19. With regular T20I captain Shai Hope unavailable due to commitments in the ongoing SA20 tournament, Brandon King has been appointed stand-in captain. King brings prior leadership experience, having led West Indies in T20 internationals, including the home series against South Africa in early 2024. According to the ICC, a notable inclusion is Quentin Sampson, the Breakout Player of the 2025 Caribbean Premier League, who has earned his maiden international call-up. He replaces Royman Powell, who, along with Jason Holder and Romario Shepherd, has been rested for the series as part of the team's workload management plan. Evin Lewis and Shamar Joseph also return to the side after clearing their return-to-play protocols for injuries sustained in previous assignments. Fast bowler Alzarri Joseph, sidelined with injury towards the end of 2025, has not been selected at this stage, his progress will be monitored as part of considerations for West Indies' T20 World Cup squad. Head Coach Darren Sammy emphasised the importance of competitive cricket in subcontinental conditions as West Indies finalise their combinations and assess returning players ahead of the global showpiece. "This series presents a valuable platform to fine-tune our preparations and build confidence ahead of a competitive T20 World Cup," Sammy said.

■ Union Minister Kishan Reddy inaugurates Swami Vivekananda Challenge Cup

Hyderabad, Jan 13 (FN Representative) Union Coal and Mines Minister G Kishan Reddy on Tuesday inaugurated the Swami Vivekananda Challenge Cup tournament held at Pendyal village in Maheshwaram mandal, Ranagareddy district. Addressing the gathering, Kishan Reddy recalled that National Youth Day was celebrated across the country on Monday on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary. He said the celebrations were held in a grand manner nationwide, with several programmes organised under the auspices of the Central government, inspired by Swami Vivekananda's ideals. Highlighting the role of youth in national progress, the union minister said there is no shortage of youth power in India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been working to channelise this energy across all sectors to drive the country on the path of development. He said the Modi government has been giving special focus to the development of sports and is encouraging young athletes and talented sportspersons, particularly from rural areas. Kishan Reddy further said efforts are underway to bring major international sporting events such as the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games to India in the coming years. Recalling his earlier visit to the village, the union minister said he had participated in a Kabaddi competition in Pendyal village around 25 years ago and expressed happiness at returning to the same place after a long gap.

Continued from Page-1

I&B ministry, PSA mark...

of the PSA for their work in driving social-impact innovation. These start-ups are featured through eight short animated films created by students from eight universities across India, including the National Institute of Design, Chitkara University, Satyajit Ray Institute of Film and Television and several others. The voiceovers for the films were recorded by participants from the Voicebox, a skilling initiative by Netflix in collaboration with the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC). Designed as a storytelling-and-skilling-led programme under the Netflix Fund for Creative Equity, the initiative provided hands-on creative experience to a cohort of 26 students from diverse parts of India. 50 per cent of the participants were women, with several students coming from Tier-2 cities. The students were mentored by experts from the National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad, and Graphiti Studios, gaining practical, real-world exposure to industry processes.

Finance aligned with...

the economy, the CEA pointed to the surge in digital adoption, describing it as a crucial bridge from informality to formality. Digital platforms, he said, are enabling small entrepreneurs to access payments, credit and markets more easily, thereby integrating them into the formal economic system. Nageswaran also made a strong case for embedding inclusive finance within healthcare and social security frameworks, arguing that financial vulnerability often arises from health shocks and lack of social protection. Integrating finance with these sectors can help stabilise incomes and improve long-term productivity. Importantly, he stressed that the most powerful inclusive finance tool is not loans but timely payments to micro-entrepreneurs. Ensuring prompt payment for goods and services, he said, strengthens cash flows, reduces dependence on debt and allows small businesses to function with dignity and stability.

CPI inflation surge will...

items rose, led by personal care and effects due to surging precious metal prices. Gold inflation stood at 68.6 per cent in December, up from 58.6 per cent in November, while silver inflation rose sharply to 97.1 per cent from 65.6 per cent. SBI Research noted that the surge in precious metals reflects strong demand from jewellers, industrial use and portfolio diversification amid rising global uncertainty and scepticism over dollar dominance. The report highlighted that the December CPI data marked the final release under the 2012 base year, with a new base year of 2024 and an updated consumption basket set to be introduced with the January 2026 data. Under the revised base, inflation is expected to rise modestly to around 2.4-2.5 per cent by March 2026, reflecting statistical changes rather than a sharp shift in underlying price pressures. On the global front, SBI Research cautioned that geopolitics has decisively shifted toward geo-economics, with conflicts and policy uncertainty across multiple regions likely to introduce volatility in energy and commodity prices. Rising US Treasury yields, uncertainty surrounding the US Federal Reserve's leadership, and increasing fragmentation in global capital flows could create disorderly price movements, particularly for key imports. Looking ahead, SBI Research said global developments will be a key determinant of inflation trends in 2026. While weak crude prices are expected to keep fuel inflation contained in the near term, volatility in commodities, capital flows and exchange rates could test price stability. In this environment, sustained liquidity support and careful policy calibration are likely to remain central to maintaining financial stability and keeping bond yields in check.

NSA Ajit Doval, French...

concern. The two sides also reviewed preparations for the forthcoming visit to India of Emmanuel Macron, the President of France. Both sides underscored the importance of closer cooperation to address challenges in the global security environment, with the aim of advancing peace and stability, a statement said. Bonne also met the External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. During his meeting with Jaishankar, the two sides assessed the evolving Strategic Partnership and discussed contemporary global developments of mutual interest. EAM Jaishankar said in a post on X: "A pleasure meeting Amb Emmanuel Bonne, Diplomatic Advisor to the President of France. Exchanged views on further strengthening the India-France strategic partnership. Also discussed key takeaways from my recent visit to Paris and his engagements in Delhi."

Heritage enthusiasts...

during "Chandan Yatra", the idol of Mahaprabhu was once lost in a tank here and was later recovered. Since then, the deity has been worshipped here in the form of Shri Gopinath. According to the historical accounts narrated by villager Soumyaranjan Mishra "the Swadeshi Movement was initiated from the "Swarajya Pushkarin" of this village under the leadership of Krupasindhu Hota. In commemoration of this event, Swarajya Day is observed here every year on Jyestha Shukla Dwitiya. After visiting the temples of Shri Nilakantha Mahadev and Maa Jayadurga and

viewing the five beautiful and pristine tanks of the village, the members moved on to the next village. History reveals that the village deity, Lord Biswanath Mahadev, was established by Biswanath Ray, the brother of the then king Narasingha Deva. The village derived its name Biswanathpur from the name of this deity. Within the Mahadev temple compound, there is also a shrine housing an ancient idol of Maa Harachandi. The main festival of the village, "Chandan Yatra", is celebrated for twenty-one days, and another festival known as "Ahihara" is observed on Magha Purnima. Reaching Athaisha Gram, a group of 28 villages established by Gajapati Kapilendra Dev, the participants visited the temple of Lord Siddha Bala Ram Deb and studied several ancient idols, including those of Gajapati Kapilendra Deva, located within the temple premises. Subsequently, they proceeded towards Biragobindupur village. After offering prayers at the ancient Durga Madhava Temple situated in Biragobindupur Shasana—established in the seventeenth century by Govinda Vidyaiah, minister of Gajapati Prataparudra Deva—they visited Lord Biswanath Mahadev at the end of the village. The heritage walk was successfully conducted under the guidance of heritage researcher and advisor of the walk Debi Prasanna Nanda, with Sanjay Kumar Baral as the convener, Dr. Kumar Aurojyoti, Ashoka Manjari Nayak and pandit Sidharth Acharya as the co-coordinators, and with the cooperation of around 15 members, including Jyotsna Mohapatra, Priyankar Maharan, Biswamohan Sahoo, Taranisen Pattaik, and Soumendra Mishra.

PM extends warm greetings...

expressed hope that the traditional warmth associated with the bonfire festival would transcend into the hearts of citizens. "May the warmth of Lohri inspire renewed hope and harmony all around us," he added. Lohri is a popular winter folk festival celebrated primarily in Northern India, marking the end of the winter solstice and the arrival of longer days. It is traditionally linked to the harvest of rabi crops, particularly sugarcane. The Bonfire: Symbolizing the sun god (Surya) and the return of warmth. Community: Families and neighbors gather to sing folk songs and dance the Gidda or Bhangra. Traditional Foods: Offerings of til (sesame), gajak, gur (jaggery), and peanuts are made to the fire as a gesture of thanks for a successful harvest. The Prime Minister's greeting comes at a time when the nation prepares for a series of harvest festivals, including Makar Sankranti, Pongal, and Magh Bihu, reflecting the diverse yet unified cultural fabric of India.

India unveils BRICS...

cooperation," he said. He said the current global environment presents complex and inter-linked challenges, geo-political uncertainties, complicated economic landscapes, climate-related risks, technological changes and persistent development gaps which continue to affect countries across regions. In this context BRICS remains an important forum that encourages dialogue and cooperation and practical responses taking into account nations' priorities at different stages of development. Dr Jaishankar said the logo combines elements of tradition and modernity, and the petals incorporate the colours of all BRICS member countries, representing unity and diversity and a strong sense of shared purpose. The logo conveys the idea that BRICS draws strength from the collective contributions of its members while respecting their distinct identities, he said. India took over the rotating presidency from Brazil. Although details were not immediately available, India plans to emphasize on Global South cooperation, inclusive governance and innovation. After having successfully hosted the G20 Summit, India intends to host the presidency on a large scale, showcasing its emergence as a major global power. Ahead of the Summit, India plans to host more than 100 meetings in 60 cities throughout the year. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has suggested redefining BRICS as an acronym for "Building Resilience and Innovation for Cooperation and Sustainability". Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said earlier that "reform of institutions of global governance has been on the BRICS agenda since its inception." He also has clarified that BRICS was never meant to be against anyone or anti-western, and that it is only non-western. At the Rio BRICS Summit in July 2025, Modi announced India would give a "new form" to BRICS during its presidency in 2026. He has already proposed redefining BRICS as "Building Resilience and Innovation for Cooperation and Sustainability" and emphasized a people-centric approach. The financial architecture of BRICS constitutes the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA). The founding members of BRICS including Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa initially contributed 10 billion USD each to bring the total to 50 billion USD. On January 1, 2024, four new members—Egypt, Iran, the United Arab Emirates and Ethiopia—officially entered BRICS. At the 2024 BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, it was decided to establish a category of BRICS partner countries. The first countries to become partners were Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Malaysia, Thailand, Uganda and Uzbekistan. The expanded BRICS generates 36 percent of global GDP and comprises more than 25 percent of the global economy and nearly half the world's population. As of early 2026, Saudi Arabia is frequently listed in "BRICS Plus" contexts and invited to member events. But it

has not fully formalized its membership, continuing to balance its ties between the bloc and Western allies. The bloc now consists of the following full members: Original Five: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. 2024 Additions: Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates. 2025 Addition: Indonesia. Saudi Arabia remains in a transitional or "pending formalization" status despite participating in bloc activities.

LG, CM lay foundation stone...

divisions — WR-1, WR-2 and SWR-2 — with coordination among agencies including the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Delhi Development Authority, Irrigation and Flood Control Department, Delhi Jal Board, power and gas utilities, and the Traffic Police to ensure effective and sustainable execution. Rs. 44.04 crore project is expected to directly benefit lakhs of residents who have for decades faced severe difficulties during the monsoon due to overflowing drains, damaged roads, potholes and chronic traffic bottlenecks. CM Rekha Gupta said that while the work had remained stalled for over 11 years, her government had initiated it within 11 months of assuming office. Gupta said the Delhi Government was focusing on permanent solutions to waterlogging through a city-wide overhaul of the drainage and stormwater management system, including the construction of new trunk drains and regular cleaning of existing drains. She said several major projects were underway, including the Kirari-Mundka Halt Supplementary Drain project, which would address waterlogging across nearly 1,500 acres, the M.B. Road stormwater drain project in South Delhi and the Kirari-Rithala trunk drain project in North-West Delhi. She added that sewage treatment plant projects were also being implemented to ensure that only treated water flows into the Yamuna. Public Works Department Minister Pravesh Verma said roads in the Nangloi-Najafgarh area had been in a severely dilapidated condition for many years despite heavy daily traffic. He said the tendering process had been completed and construction work had begun. "A five-year guarantee has been ensured for each road, and contractors will be held fully accountable if the quality deteriorates within this period," he added.

Rajnath Singh inaugurates...

directly to the people's doorsteps, including services such as planned surgeries and cataract operations. Noting that a comprehensive screening, early diagnosis, timely medical advice, medical interventions, and free distribution of medicines would contribute to long-term health benefits for the island community, Singh said, "We're working with the resolve of a Swasth Bharat. We have not only promoted physical infrastructure in the health sector but have also taken care of the people's well-being through initiatives like Ayushman Bharat and Jan Aushadhi Kendras." The medical camp was inaugurated by the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi. Dedicated surgical teams have also been deployed at Agatti and Minicoy to manage operative and procedural requirements. Nearly 50 sight-restoring surgeries within just two days is a major highlight of the camp, delivering world-class ophthalmic care to the island residents by the specialists from Army Hospital (Research & Referral), with many more to follow in the next few days.

Stock market ends lower...

weaker than its close at 90,1625 in the previous session. Over 220 stocks hit 52-week low on the BSE. This included Dixon Technologies, Cohance Life, Trent, Godrej Properties, BASF, Whirlpool, ITC, Happiest Minds, IRCTC, Cera Sanitaryware, SignatureGlobal India among others. Among the auto stocks, Maruti Suzuki, Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) and TVS Motor Company shares fell over 1 pc each. Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles and Hero MotoCorp shares also fell nearly 1 pc. Notably, the Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) have sold off Indian stocks worth over Rs 15,000 crore so far in January.

SC directs Coal India...

a position suited to her abilities. The Bench clarified that the order was passed keeping in view Articles 14, 21, and 41 of the Constitution, and also in exercise of the Supreme Court's powers under Article 142. The Court also appreciated the assistance of Advocate Vivek Narayan Sharma, appearing for Coal India Limited, for helping resolve the matter, and thanked the doctors who examined the appellant. After pronouncing the judgment, Justice Pardiwala wished Sujata Bora well and encouraged her to make the country proud. The case arose after Sujata Bora applied for the post of Management Trainee (Personnel and HR) as a reserved candidate in the visually handicapped category. Though she cleared the interview stage, medical examination revealed that she had 60 percent low vision in both eyes along with residual partial hemiparesis. She was denied relief by the Calcutta High Court, following which she approached the Supreme Court. During the proceedings, Coal India argued that the appellant did not meet the benchmark disability requirement under the RPW Act.

SC hears Abu Salem's plea for premature release

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Representative)

The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought an explanation from 1993 Mumbai serial blasts convict Abu Salem on his claim that he has already completed 25 years of imprisonment, while hearing his plea seeking premature release. A bench comprising Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta asked Salem to justify the computation of his jail term and directed him to place on record the relevant Maharashtra state rules to ascertain whether remission is permissible for a convict sentenced under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA). Questioning the claim, the bench asked Salem's counsel, "How do you calculate 25 years from 2005?" after it was submitted that Salem had completed the maximum period of

incarceration as per the assurances given during his extradition from Portugal. Abu Salem was extradited from Portugal on November 11, 2005, following a prolonged legal process, after India assured Portuguese authorities that he would neither be awarded the death penalty nor be imprisoned beyond 25 years, in line with Portugal's domestic law and international obligations. Salem was subsequently convicted in June 2017 and sentenced to life imprisonment by a special TADA court in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case. Earlier, Salem had approached the Bombay High Court seeking premature release under the extradition assurances, while clarifying that he had not yet completed the 25 years stipulated by the Supreme Court in accordance

with international commitments. In its landmark judgment in *Abu Salem v. State of Maharashtra* (2022), the Supreme Court held that Salem's incarceration shall not exceed 25 years, to be counted from the date of

to release Salem upon completion of 25 years in custody to honour the assurance given to Portugal.

The court had further directed that the Central government should advise the President of India to exercise powers under Article 72 of the Constitution upon completion of the said period. The 2022 ruling came in a plea filed by Salem challenging the life sentence awarded to him on the grounds that his imprisonment could not extend beyond 25 years due to the assurances furnished during extradition. Advocate Rishi Malhotra, appearing for Salem, had argued that under Portuguese law, life imprisonment or incarceration beyond 25 years is unconstitutional, and therefore the assurance given by India was binding. Salem was arrested in

Portugal on September 18, 2002, along with actor Monika Bedi. Extradition was granted in relation to the Pradeep Jain murder case, the 1993 Bombay bomb blasts case, and the Ajit Diwani murder case. Upon his arrival in India on November 11, 2005, Salem was arrested by the CBI in the bomb blasts case and later taken into custody by the Mumbai Anti-Terrorist Squad in the Pradeep Jain murder. In June 2017, a Special TADA Court found Abu Salem and five others guilty of conspiring in and executing a series of bomb blasts across Mumbai in 1993 that claimed 257 lives. Salem was convicted under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code, TADA, the Arms Act, the Explosive Substances Act, and the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act. The matter remains under consideration before the Supreme Court.

RBI DG calls for agile, risk-based regulation in digital era

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Bureau)



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor, Shirish Chandra Murmu, highlighted the rapid transformation of the financial ecosystem driven by digitalisation, and said regulators must adopt agile, forward-looking, and risk-based approaches to safeguard financial stability while enabling innovation. Delivering a special address at the third Annual Global Conference of the College of Supervisors in Mumbai, Murmu noted that while digitalisation has improved efficiency, transparency, competition, and access to financial services, it has also introduced new and complex risks that can spread rapidly across interconnected systems. He cautioned

that machine-speed transactions, automated decision-making, and always-on digital services have compressed response times for regulators, increasing the potential for operational failures, cyber incidents, fraud, and sudden loss of confidence. According to him, traditional regulatory frameworks built around periodic reporting and post-facto action must evolve towards proactive detection and timely intervention without compromising regulatory judgement.

RBI DG pointed out that digital finance has blurred regulatory boundaries, with financial services increasingly being delivered through non-financial platforms involving both regulated and unregulated entities. This fragmentation, he said, often leaves no single authority

with a complete view of risks across the activity chain, increasing the scope for regulatory arbitrage domestically and across borders. On the nature of regulation, the Deputy Governor observed that overly prescriptive rules risk becoming obsolete as technology evolves, while purely principle-based regulation can lead to uneven application if governance is weak. He advocated a balanced approach combining clarity with flexibility, supported by strong supervision and enforcement. Addressing financial stability concerns,

Murmu flagged emerging systemic risks from increased reliance on cloud services, algorithms, and third-party technology providers. He stressed that accountability for technological outcomes must remain firmly with regulated entities, even when operations are outsourced or automated. He also highlighted cyber threats, data integrity issues, and the rapid spread of misinformation as growing challenges in the digital age, underscoring the need for strong operational resilience and clear regulatory communication to maintain public trust. At the same time,

the RBI DG said digitalisation offers regulators powerful tools to enhance supervision. He cited RBI initiatives such as MuleHunter.ai for detecting mule accounts, the PRAVAAH portal for digital regulatory services, and DAKSH, an end-to-end supervisory workflow system, as examples of how technology can improve risk monitoring while reducing compliance burden.

Artificial Intelligence an asset to media but not a substitute

New Delhi, January 13 (Bureau)



The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan inspecting the Guard of Honour during the visit of NCC Republic Day Camp 2026, in New Delhi on January 13, 2026.

At the ongoing World Book Fair 2026 in New Delhi, the Abu Dhabi-based Muslim Elders Council organised a panel discussion on "AI for Humanity: Religious Perspectives on Ethical AI", chaired by former ambassador Dr. Zikrur Rehman, former Indian Ambassador to the Palestinian Authority and Consul General in Riyadh. Sanjay Kapoor, veteran journalist and president of the Editors Guild of India, said that reporting is a profession with far greater power than Artificial Intelligence (AI). However, he cautioned, most news organisations today are now spending less on reporting and becoming increasingly dependent on the internet. Quoting Elon Musk, Kapoor noted that in the future, jobs like plumbing may be safe, but journalism, especially roles limited to questioning, could be at risk. Kapoor added that, in fact, by doing so, the reporter is inadvertently strengthening AI. Kapoor also warned about the dangers of AI and said that the media community in India is not fully aware of the dangers of AI. For example, ChatGPT, despite being two years old, can write better than a regular journalist. He cautioned that if journalism fails to preserve emotional depth, on-the-ground reporting, and human experience, AI could replace journalists without the public even realising it when and how it happened. Kapoor stressed that there exists a dire need for regulation and oversight to control AI and unless developers and institutions take ethics and journalistic values seriously, misinformation will continue to spread. Dr. Mudassar Qamar, Assistant Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, discussed AI's evolving role in academics, calling it both a significant achievement and a cause for concern. Today, there are AI tools that do everything from reference lists, literature reviews, and grammar checking, etc. Some students have become completely dependent on AI, which makes research dehumanised and uncreative, but it also offers positive aspects, such as supporting students with language difficulties. Dr. Qamar emphasised that both teachers and students need to strike a balance between caution and responsible use of AI.

Delhi Police nabs hundreds of criminals in 48-hr "Operation Gang Bust"



New Delhi, Jan 13 (Bureau)

Delhi Police apprehended hundreds of criminals linked to multiple crime networks across the national capital. The two-day "Operation Gang Bust" was carried out across various districts of Delhi, aimed at dismantling active criminal networks and gangs involved in multiple illegal activities, as well as curbing incidents that endangered the public due to the presence of such gangs. Teams from different units of the law enforcement agency of the national capital conducted searches and raids as well as closely monitored by the senior officials. During the operation, several proclaimed offenders and wanted criminals were apprehended, and their hideouts were raided. The exercise not only led to arrests of criminals but also uncovered important information about the linkages between criminals and their networks. Special units of the Delhi Police were also involved to ensure a significant impact on organised crime syndicates. The operation also made it very clear that the Delhi Police maintains zero tolerance against crimes, emphasising on crimes against women, children and various other serious offences, also including narcotics and others.

In a 48-hour operation targeting gangsters and organised criminals, the

Atishi video FIR: Speaker gives Punjab cops 3 days to reply, rejects extension

New Delhi, Jan 13 (FN Bureau)

The Delhi Assembly Secretariat on Tuesday directed Punjab Police to submit its response by January 15 in connection with an FIR registered in Jalandhar about a video clip allegedly involving Atishi, leader of Opposition in the Assembly. Speaker Vijender

Gupta said the events began on January 6, when the leader of Opposition did not attend the House, leading to repeated disruptions and the Assembly being unable to function for three consecutive days. He said the disputed video was sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) for examination on January 8, while an FIR was registered by the Punjab Police in a dramatic manner on January 9. The Speaker alleged that the Punjab Police attempted to influence the Assembly's ongoing inquiry and intervened under political pressure even before the Privileges Committee could arrive at any decision, creating confusion in the process. He said a notice was subsequently issued to the Punjab Police. Gupta expressed surprise that while the Punjab Police completed



the FSL examination and registered an FIR within hours, it later sought an extension of 10 days to submit its reply, raising questions over the impartiality of the police.

He said considering the circumstances, the Assembly found the request for 10 days inappropriate and granted only three days' time, directing the Punjab Police to submit a factual report by January 15 to enable further action. According to an

official communication issued by the Delhi Assembly Secretariat on January 12, the matter relates to an FIR registered under the Jalandhar Police Commissionerate concerning a video clip of Atishi. The Secretariat stated that a request from the Punjab Police seeking additional time to submit its reply was placed before the Speaker of the Delhi Assembly. The letter, addressed to the Special Director General of Police, State Cyber Crime, Punjab, Mohali, said that considering the seriousness of the issue, the Speaker has directed that the reply must be submitted on or before January 15. Earlier, the Office of the Director General of Police, Punjab, in a communication dated January 12, sought an extension of 10 days to apprise the Speaker of the Delhi Assembly about the factual position of the case. The Punjab Police stated that the additional time was required in the interest of justice.

SC delivers split verdict on Section 17A of prevention of corruption Act

New Delhi, Jan 13 (Representative)

The Supreme Court on Tuesday delivered a split verdict on the constitutional validity of Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, which requires prior government approval before starting an investigation against a public servant for decisions taken in official duty. A two-judge Bench comprising Justice B.V. Nagarathna and Justice K.V. Viswanathan differed in their views on the provision, which was inserted through the 2018 amendment to the Act. Due to the difference of opinion, the matter has been referred to the Chief Justice of India for constituting an appropriate Bench to finally decide the issue. Justice Nagarathna held that

Section 17A is unconstitutional and should be struck down. She observed that the provision tends to shield corrupt officials instead of protecting honest officers. According to her, the requirement of prior approval blocks inquiry at the very beginning and goes against the purpose of the anti-corruption law. She noted that similar protections had earlier been struck down by the Supreme Court in the Vineet Narain and Subramanian Swamy cases, and Section 17A was an attempt to revive those invalid provisions. On the other hand, Justice K.V. Viswanathan upheld the validity of Section 17A but gave it a limited interpretation. He ruled that the decision on granting sanction should not rest with the government or the executive, but must be taken by an

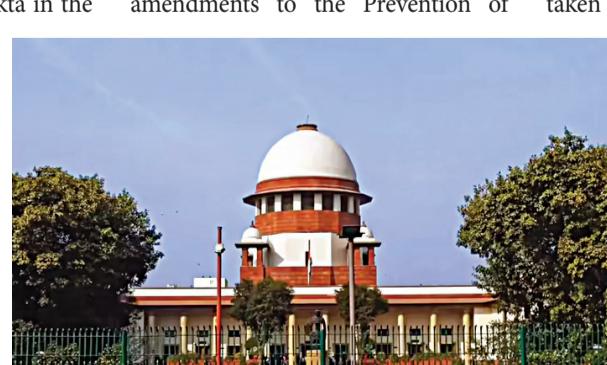
independent body such as the Lokpal at the Centre or the Lokayukta in the States. To this extent, he "read down" the provision.

Justice Viswanathan observed that striking down the law entirely could expose honest public servants to frivolous and malicious complaints, leading to policy paralysis. He said a balance must be maintained between protecting honest decision-making and ensuring accountability in public office. He added that the possibility of misuse is not, by itself, a valid reason to invalidate a law. The judgment arose from a writ petition filed by the Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL), which challenged

the constitutional validity of the 2018 amendments to the Prevention of

against a public servant for actions taken in discharge of official duties without prior approval from the competent authority of the Central or State Government. An exception is made in cases where a public servant is caught red-handed while accepting a bribe. The provision also requires the authority to decide on approval within three months, extendable by one more month with reasons. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the petitioner, argued that the provision reintroduced executive control over investigations, which had already been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in earlier

rulings. He contended that allowing the executive to decide whether an investigation should begin creates a clear conflict of interest, especially when ministers themselves may be involved in the decisions under scrutiny. Representing the union government, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta defended the provision, stating that earlier judgments did not prohibit all forms of prior approval. He argued that Section 17A is narrowly framed to protect bona fide official decisions and prevent harassment of honest officers through baseless complaints. He maintained that safeguards are necessary to ensure fearless and effective governance. With the split verdict, the final word on the validity of Section 17A will now be decided by a larger Bench of the Supreme Court.



Corruption Act, particularly Section 17A. The judgment had been reserved on August 6, 2025. Section 17A bars any police officer from initiating an enquiry, inquiry, or investigation