



POIGNANT RADHIKA

Actor Radhika Madan says she feels her *Angrezi Medium* co-star late Irrfan Khan's presence everyday in her life

LEISURE P2



NATH SLAMS CENTRE

MP Cong chief Kamal Nath alleges that the Centre wants to privatise the farm sector with its new agri laws

TWO STATES P7



AUSTRALIA IN CONTROL

Marnus Labuschagne and Will Pucovski put Australia in a commanding position against India in Sydney Test

SPORTS P12

US Capitol turns warzone

Ten hours that shook America

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Jan 7: In an unprecedented attack on democracy, thousands of angry supporters of outgoing President Donald Trump stormed the US Capitol and clashed with police, resulting in multiple injuries and forcing a delay in the constitutional process to affirm Joe Biden's victory in the November presidential election.

The police, outnumbered by the protesters, had a tough time in managing the crowd, as hundreds of protesters made their way into the US Capitol, where members of the US Congress were going through the process of counting and certifying the Electoral College votes. Both the House and Senate and the entire Capitol were placed under a lockdown.

Members of the US Congress were asked to get hold of the gas masks under their seats as the police resorted to tear gas to disperse protestors. Multiple officers have been injured with at least one transported to the hospital, CNN reported, citing multiple sources. Four protesters, including a woman, were killed in police firing.

President Trump has called for his supporters to "remain peaceful".

"I am asking for everyone at the US Capitol to remain peaceful. No violence! Remember, WE are the Party of Law & Order - respect the Law and our great men and women in Blue. Thank you!" Trump said in a tweet. "Please support our Capitol Police and Law Enforcement. They are truly on the side of our Country. Stay peaceful!" Trump said in another tweet.

President-elect Biden said he was shocked and sad to see the US "come to such a dark moment". "At this hour, our democracy's under unprecedented assault. Unlike anything we've seen in modern times. An assault on the citadel of liberty, the Capitol itself. An assault on the people's representatives and the Capitol Hill police, sworn to protect them. And the public servants who work at the heart of our Republic..." Biden said in an address to the nation.

"Let me be very clear: The scenes of chaos at the Capitol do not reflect a true America. Do not represent who we are. What we're seeing are a small number of extremists dedicated to lawlessness. This is not dissent. It's disorder. It's chaos. It borders on sedition. And it must end now," Biden said. He also urged Trump to address the nation to end the standoff.



CHAOS, VIOLENCE, FOUR DEAD, AS PRO-TRUMP MOB OCCUPIES US CAPITOL; THREE WHITE HOUSE AIDES QUIT

Biden's win confirmed, Trump concedes defeat

Trump released a statement pledging an 'orderly transition' but suggested he would remain in frontline politics

WASHINGTON: Congress formally certified Joe Biden as the next US president Thursday, dealing a hammer blow to Donald Trump. Lawmakers in the Senate and House of Representatives successfully beat back Republican efforts to deny Biden the electoral votes needed to win, prompting loud cheers when the certification was announced.

The affirmation of Biden's 306-232 victory over Trump in November essentially closes the door on the unparalleled and deeply controversial effort by Trump and his loyalists to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

The President immediately released a statement pledging an "orderly transition" but suggesting he would remain in frontline politics, amid speculation that he may run again in 2024.

"Even though I totally disagree with the outcome of the election, and the facts bear me out, nevertheless there will be an orderly transition on January 20th," he said.

"I have always said we would continue our fight to ensure that only legal votes were counted. While this represents the end of the greatest first term in presidential history, it's only the beginning of our fight to Make America Great Again!"



'Beautiful sight': China mocks

BEIJING: China's Internet erupted in mirth at America's troubled democracy after supporters of President Donald Trump broke into the US Capitol, with Beijing criticising the "sharp contrast" between Washington's response to the chaos and the 2019 Hong Kong anti-government protests.

On Thursday morning, state media tabloid Global Times tweeted side-by-side photo comparisons of Hong Kong protesters occupying the city's Legislative Council Complex



in July 2019 with Wednesday's Washington riots.

"@SpeakerPelosi once referred to the Hong Kong riots as 'a beautiful sight to behold'," the *Global Times* said in the tweet, referring to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's June 2019 comment about Hong Kong's mass pro-democracy demonstrations, which at that time were mostly peaceful.

"It remains yet to be seen whether she will say the same about the recent developments in Capitol Hill." China's Communist Youth League also described the unrest as a "beautiful sight" on the Twitter-like Weibo platform. Beijing's Foreign Ministry echoed those sentiments, saying "the reaction of some people in the US, including that of some media outlets, is completely different."

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Nalco's ₹30K cr expansion plan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: Union minister Pralhad Joshi Thursday said state-run National Aluminium Company Ltd (NALCO) will invest around ₹30,000 crore for its ambitious expansion and diversification projects in the next six to seven years, which will help achieve the Centre's goal of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

Addressing the 41st foundation day function of the Navaratna PSU here, the coal and mines minister said the growth plans of the company are in line with the country's objective to become self-sufficient in production of the metal.

"NALCO has made ambitious business growth plans for which the company will be investing around ₹30,000 crore in the next six to seven years (by 2027-28)," the minister said.

He said ₹22,000 crore will be spent on the expansion of the company's aluminium smelter unit and construction of a 1400-MW feeder captive power plant (CPP) in Angul.

Over ₹7,000 crore will be used for the fifth stream refinery, development of Pottangi bauxite mine and Utkal D&E coal blocks.

Joshi said the Centre is keen to utilise natural resources optimally for the welfare and development of Odisha and is extending full support to the mineral-rich state so that the production of strategic raw materials continues without any interruption.

"To expedite mineral production in the state, we have approved the proposals to allot two iron ore blocks to Odisha Mineral Corporation and one mine to Odisha Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd on the request of the state," he said.



Petrol price breaches all-time high level

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 7: Petrol prices have breached all-time high levels in the new year as rising global oil prices pushed fuel marketing companies to raise the pump price of auto fuels for the second time this year Thursday.

Accordingly, petrol prices in Delhi increased by 23 paise a litre Thursday, the second successive day of fuel price rise, to ₹84.20 a litre from ₹83.97 on the previous day. This is the highest level of retail price of petrol in the national capital after October 4, 2018 when its price had risen to ₹84 a litre.

PRICES IN BHUB
Petrol - ₹84.88/LTR (+₹0.27)
Diesel - ₹81.02/LTR (+₹0.28)

In other metros, though the price of petrol has not yet breached the all-time high levels, it has reached very close to that level and may cross it this week if fuel price increases further in coming days.

In Mumbai, petrol price increased to ₹90.83 a litre Thursday just 51 paise short of all-time high level of ₹91.34 reached October 4, 2018. In Chennai, the petrol price currently is ₹86.96 a litre.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



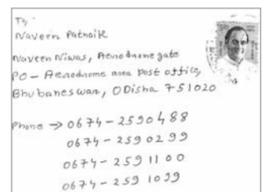
Couldn't Trump wait for 6 months, promise Cabinet berths to couple of Electoral College members and become President again

Anonymous letter claims threat to CM Naveen's life

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: An anonymous letter mentioning about a conspiracy to kill Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has been received by Naveen Niwas here. Subsequently, the Home department has asked the police to take steps to tighten the security of the Chief Minister.

The letter stated that some contract killers have been hired to murder the Chief Minister and they have been equipped with latest weapons like AK-47 rifles and semi-automatic pistols. It further said that these contract killers are professional criminals and they can kill the Chief Minister at any time. "These criminals can attack you any time. I want to warn you that you can be killed at any time. So please be aware that these contract killers are following you continuously. Their mastermind lives in Nagpur," read the handwritten letter. "The weapons which will be used to kill you have been brought



to Odisha," it said. The letter mentioned about a vehicle number registered with Maharashtra.

The anonymous letter listed 17 cars with registration numbers of Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Punjab, Odisha, Delhi, Haryana, Sikkim and Maharashtra. Meanwhile, the state functionaries have been put on high alert after the letter was received at the CM's residence.

Home department special secretary Santosh Bala directed the DGP, Intelligence Director and the Bhubaneswar-Cuttack Police Commissioner to probe into the matter thoroughly and take appropriate actions as deemed necessary.

R-Day rehearsal: Farmers take out tractor march

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: Ahead of talks with the government, thousands of farmers Thursday took out tractor-march from protest sites of Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur borders and Haryana's Rewasan against the three agriculture laws amid heavy police deployment.

According to the protesting farm unions, this is just a "rehearsal" for their proposed January 26 tractor parade that will be moved into the national capital from different parts of Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

Bharati Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan) chief Joginder Singh Ugrahan said that farmers participated in the march with over 3,500 tractors and trolleys.

Ugrahan, whose union is one of the largest farmer organisations in Punjab, said that they will not accept anything less than the repeal



of the three farm laws.

The eighth round of talks between protesting unions and the central government is scheduled to be held Friday.

The last meeting remained inconclusive Monday as farmer groups stuck to their demand for the repeal of the three laws, while the government listed out various benefits of the new acts for the growth of the country's agriculture sector.

On Thursday, farmers started the tractor march around 11 am

and moved towards Kundli-Manesar-Palwal Expressway amid heavy deployment of Delhi Police personnel and their counterparts from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Perched on their tractors, protesting farmers moved slowly through the protest sites, with speakers on their vehicles belting out music keeping their spirits high. Other protestors lined the path providing fellow farmers with all kinds of supplies, including peanuts, fritters, tea, and newspapers.

Woman gangraped in Sambalpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur/Kuchinda, Jan 7: A woman was allegedly gangraped by two persons in a jungle under Kuchinda police limits in Sambalpur district while returning home alone, police said Thursday.

She lay unconscious for five hours following the act before she could regain her sense and manage to reach home with much difficulty. She narrated her ordeal before her family members following which the latter lodged a complaint with the police Wednesday.

Police rushed to the spot with a forensic team and started an investigation. Two persons have been arrested in this connection and medical examination of the victim and the accused was also conducted.

Reports said that the woman was returning home from her maternal uncle's house at around 10 am January 4. She decided to take a short-cut through the jungle route for home when two youths known to be her acquaintances accosted her and dragged her to an isolated place and raped her.



ZETA JONES IN SECOND SEASON OF PRODIGAL SON

Hollywood star Catherine Zeta-Jones has joined the second season of the series *Prodigal Son*. She will play the character of Dr. Vivian Capshaw. "An extraordinary talent, Catherine Zeta-Jones is the perfect foil for the brilliant Michael Sheen," said Fox Entertainment president Michael Thorn, reports *hollywoodreporter.com*.

GWEN STEFANI TALKS ABOUT HER 'ICONIC' 90'S OUTFITS

Singer Gwen Stefani says back in the nineties, her iconic outfits were created by one girl who would knock-off looks for her. The star, known for her bold hair colours, cool chains, big prints and signature red lipstick in the nineties, didn't have a stylist during her touring days, reports *contactmusic.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today, you will crave total freedom in whatever you are doing, says Ganesha. And sheer entertainment is on the cards for teenyboppers, like mall-hopping or going for a film. The kids will demand a Jumbo Berry ice cone.

TAURUS
You will wake up feeling determined and decisive today, says Ganesha. Be careful as your rigid views may make you seem stubborn. You may not be willing to come half way during a conflict and will make a habit of articulating your viewpoint.

GEMINI
The day promises sensitivity and compassion for you, predicts Ganesha. You may plan a trip with your family members. You may also invest your money in various financial companies, as securing the future of your family will be foremost on your mind. Moreover, you will also save some hefty amount to meet future needs.

CANCER
It is high time that you dedicated yourself to your work. If you are looking to try new things, today may not be a very good day to do so. Stick to doing things the way you have been doing them so far, advises Ganesha. All you need is a little attitude adjustment.

LEO
You might be the man of the house, but to make that house a home, you need a family. So keep that in mind, says Ganesha, and remember that your family is the foundation of your success. Make every possible effort to make your family's roots stronger.

VIRGO
Today might just bring those emotions to the fore that have been lying in the closet of your heart since long. You will even develop a bonding – a sentimental attachment – with your belongings. But, if and when you don't find the surroundings to your liking, you shall be like a fish out of the water.

LIBRA
Unleash the artist in you today! Don't be surprised if you happen to discover a love for the fine arts. The stars bestow on you refined aesthetic sense. As a result, your penchant for interior decoration is sure to get a boost.

SCORPIO
Family matters have been screaming for long for your attention now. Your estranged spouse may deal the final blow to sever all ties, foretells Ganesha. But keep calm, and hold that tongue, advises Ganesha. Your priority should be to secure your family's peace.

SAGITTARIUS
Expect a call to late-night revelry and a chance to binge. But you don't seem to be in the mood to let your hair loose and party, says Ganesha. However tempting it may be, your serious side will take over and you shall deny the offer. No wonder they like that sensible head on your shoulders.

CAPRICORN
God helps those who help themselves, likewise, your sincere efforts will be paid off well, today. If you're dealing with shares and stocks, it may be your day, today. Your life partner will prove to be lucky for your success, so give him/her the credit he/she deserves, suggests Ganesha.

AQUARIUS
A productive day, as you will receive unrestrained support from your bosses and colleagues. Your creativity will reach its zenith and the resulting work will augment your reputation.

PISCES
Happiness shared is double the joy; sorrows shared are half the burden. Your family is the foundation of your success, and it is to them you will turn in times of failure as well. With their support, getting back to the top of the game will take no time, says Ganesha.

When Malaika was a 'rock star' Radhika feels Irrfan's presence everyday

Mumbai: Malaika Arora Thursday posted a monochrome image from the days when she could rock the bang look. In the picture posted on Instagram, Malaika poses with a mic, acing the bang hairstyle.

"The days when I could rock my bangs in my head think am a rock star.... #throwback-thursday #fakemike pic @far-rokhchothia," Malaika wrote with the picture.9178117056

Earlier this month, Malaika made her relationship with actor Arjun Kapoor official on Instagram with a loved-up picture. She started the New Year with a picture with Arjun.

"It's a new dawn, it's a new day, it's a new year..... 2021 #eternallygrateful," she captioned the image on Instagram.

In the image, Malaika has her arm on Arjun's shoulder. She is seen in a shimmering pantsuit while Arjun is seen in a vibrant shirt with brown pants.

While Arjun and Malaika have not denied their relationship, they don't post many photos together on the Internet.



Mumbai: Actress Radhika Madan got a chance to play the late Irrfan Khan's on-screen daughter in what turned out to be his last released film, *Angrezi Medium*. On the occasion of Irrfan's 54th birth anniversary Thursday Radhika took to social media to remember the time she had worked with him.

The actress shared a video on Instagram where she beautifully expressed how Irrfan's

presence will always be felt. "I was sitting on my couch and spotted a light on Irrfan sir's picture. When I went closer I saw it was a reflection of a lighted Diya. It's his birthday today but the presence he has in all our hearts is felt everyday. Happy Birthday, sir," She captioned the video. Irrfan battled neuroendocrine tumor for a year and was getting treated in the UK. He came back to India in February 2020 and passed away on April 29, 2020, leaving Indian entertainment industry in a state of shock. IANS



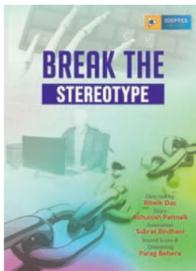
KOLKATA INTERNATIONAL ONLINE FILM FESTIVAL

Odia animation filmmaker bags award

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Machines were created to make life easier but humans have ended up heavily depending upon artificial intelligence in their daily lives.

Based on this concept, Odia animation filmmaker Ritwik Das made a short film *Break The Stereotype* which bagged the Best Experimental Movie Award at Kolkata International Film Festival (KIOFF) Wednesday. Speaking to Orissa POST,



the young filmmaker said, "I believe, in a fast-paced world we live in, short animation films having strong messages affect our psyche

more than that of the regular feature films. This movie has won Best Experimental Movie award at KIOFF and Best Animation Movie Award at Sprouting Seed International Film Festival, Maharashtra. These honours will certainly inspire me to present better films to the viewers in future."

The animation of the movie was done by Subrat Bindhani while the script was developed by Ashutosh Patnaik. The sound was scored by Parag Behera.

Social media influencers make their way to acting

AGENCIES

They were already famous, having creating a fiercely loyal fan base over the years with their prowess as social media influencers. This year, many of them will cash in on their digital fame to try and carve a career in acting.

Here is a list of social media influencers whose acting debuts deserve attention:

CarryMinati
Ajey Nagar, popular as CarryMinati on social media, is all set to enter Hindi film industry with a role in the Amitabh Bachchan-Ajay Devgn starrer, *MayDay*. He will play a social media sensation. "In the past I've got offered film roles but I agreed to be a part of this



project because I had the opportunity to play myself and bring my alias, Carry Minati alive on the 70 mm screen," CarryMinati said.

Prajakta Koli
The Indian YouTube sensation will walk into the Tinsel Town with the film *Jug Jug Jiya*, which stars Neetu Kapoor, Anil Kapoor,

Kiara Advani, and Varun Dhawan. The film is directed by Raj Mehta. "The bar has been set high and I'm keeping my fingers crossed to meet the expectations of everyone around me as best as I can," said Prajakta, widely known for her



YouTube alter-ego MostlySane. **Sahil Khattar**



After hosting several gigs, he will be making his debut in Ranveer Singh-starrer '83. Sahil will be seen in the role of 'wicket-keeper Syed Kirmani in the film, which also stars Saqib Saleem, Pankaj Tripathi, Boman Irani, Harry Sandhu, Ammy Virk, Jiiva, Chirag Patil and Adinath Kothare in key roles, along with Deepika Padukone

as Kapil's wife Romi Dev. **Shirley Setia**
Shirley, who is a social media sensation and singer, will make her debut in *Nikamma*, which also stars Abhimanyu Dassani. Another highlight of *Nikamma* is that the film marks Shilpa Shetty's comeback on the big screen after a hiatus of 13 years. It is directed by Sabbir Khan.



Harsh Beniwal
Harsh, who is a YouTube sensation, made his debut with *Student*

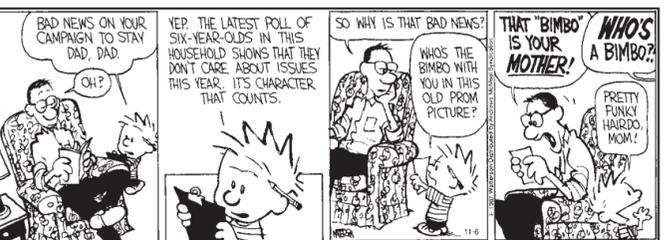


Of The Year 2. He shot to fame with his videos on Dubsmash that went viral in 2015. Later, he started creating comedy vines and garnered a huge social media following. He was also seen in a web show *Who's Your Daddy?*

PEANUTS



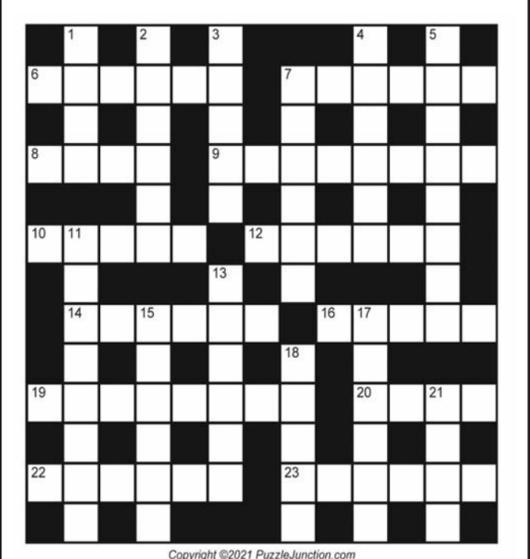
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



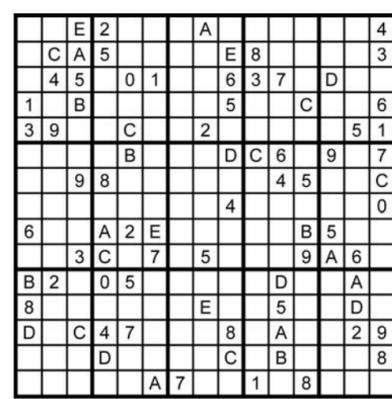
FUN post CROSSWORD



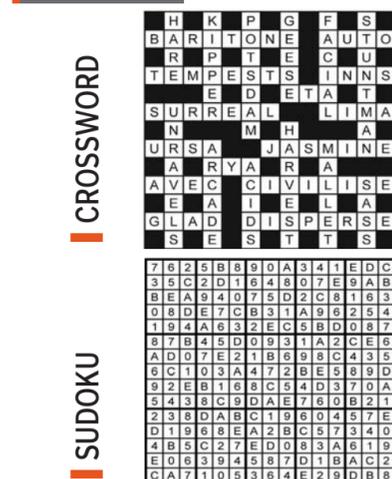
- Across**
- 6 Takes a break
 - 7 Mason's material
 - 8 New Zealand bird
 - 9 Took in, as food
 - 10 Ham it up
 - 12 Wine bottle measures
 - 14 Baby's toy
 - 16 Looks after (4,4)
 - 19 Tiny aquarium
 - 20 Mah-jongg piece
 - 22 Prickly plant
 - 23 City in Veneto
 - Down**
 - 1 Island east of Java
 - 2 Lend a hand
 - 3 Old Roman port
 - 4 Desk item
 - 5 Stroked
 - 7 Noisy bird
 - 11 Almond paste confection
 - 13 Knockabouts
 - 15 Papeete locale
 - 17 Bistro
 - 18 Drink garnish
 - 21 Camera part

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



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EMPANELLED HOSPITALS UNDER BSKY

ODISHA							
DISTRICT	NAME OF THE HOSPITAL	DISTRICT	NAME OF THE HOSPITAL	DISTRICT	NAME OF THE HOSPITAL	DISTRICT	NAME OF THE HOSPITAL
ANUGUL	KRISHNA HOSPITAL KRISHNA CLINIC & NURSING-HOME LIONS BHOO MIKA EYE HOSPITAL SAMAL CARE PVT LTD SOROJINI HEALTH CARE SURENDRA HOSPITAL	CUTTACK	SAHARA NURSING HOME SAI AROGYAM NURSING HOME SAI JEEVAN HOSPITAL PVT LTD SAI SANJIBANI HOSPITAL SANJEEBANI NURSING HOME SHAKTI SAI HOSPITAL SHRADA CLINIC AND NURSING HOME	JAJPUR	ANIMA NURSING HOME BHOO MIKA HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE LAXMI HOSPITAL SARMISTHA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL SRIMA NURSING HOME TATA MEDICA HOSPITAL, KALINGA NAGAR	KHORDHA	BLUE WHEEL HOSPITAL ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCE, BHUBANESWAR UTKAL HOSPITAL IMS & SUM HOSPITAL VISION CARE EYE HOSPITAL VIVEKANANDA HOSPITAL VIKASH HOSPITAL HEMALATA HOSPITALS LIMITED PANDA NURSINGHOME SUM ULTIMATE APOLLO HOSPITAL AMRI HOSPITAL CARE HOSPITAL
	BALESWAR		AROGYAM HEALTH CARE BASANTI DURGA JYOTI HOSPITAL MAA NURSING HOME MAA TARINI NURSING HOME SRIRAM HOSPITAL		JHARSUGUDA		MOTILAL YADAV MEMORIAL SAMALESWARI HOSPITAL
BARAGARH	VIKASH MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL BEHERA NURSING HOME KISHORI NURSING HOME SAI KRUPA NURSING HOME SAI MULTISPECIALTY HOSPITAL	DHENKANAL	AROGYA NURSING HOME DISHA HOSPITAL GKMM EYE HOSPITAL KALINGA EYE HOSPITAL PANDA NURSING HOME SHREE JAGANNATH HOSPITAL	KALAHANDI	VEDANTA HOSPITAL	NABARANGPUR	CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL
BHADRAK	BHOO MIKA HOSPITAL CHIRAG HOSPITAL OM SAI HOSPITAL PADHI HEALTH CARE PANIGRAHI HEALTH CARE SAI BHARADWAJ HOSPITAL SAI HOSPITAL SRI RAM HOSPITAL SUBHAM HEALTH CARE UMASHANKAR HEALTH CARE	GAJAPATI	DR. RABI NURSING HOME LAXMI NURSING HOME V.V.L. NURSING HOME	KENDRAPARA	BHAGAWATI HOSPITAL BHUMIKA HOSPITAL HEALTH CARE NURSING HOME M.B. NURSING HOME	NAYAGARH	DIVYA JYOTI HOSPITAL KUMAR HOSPITAL OMM NURSING HOME SAHOO BHIKARI SEVASADAN
	BOLANGIR		ERBHS NETRANIKETAN EYE SUPREEME TASK GENERAL HOSPITAL NEW APOLLO HOSPITAL SCD EYE HOSPITAL		GANJAM		AASTHA HOSPITAL AISHRAT HOSPITAL AMIT HOSPITAL ASUTOSH HOSPITAL AYUSH HOSPITAL DEVINE HOSPITAL ECOS EYE HOSPITAL MODERN EYE CARE CENTRE & HOSPITAL NEW NEELACHAL HOSPITAL RADHA SWAMI SEVA SEDAN SANKARA EYE HOSPITAL SRI RAM HOSPITAL SRI SATYASAI HOSPITAL
CUTTACK	AGARWAL EYE CLINIC AND HOSPITAL CHITTARANJAN SEVA SADAN AND HOSPITAL CUTTACK LAPAROSCOPIC HOSPITAL GEEETA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL GOPABANDHU INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCE & RESEARCH HCG PANDA CURIE CANCER HOSPITAL HEALTH CARE NURSING HOME KHADIJA NURSING HOME MELVIN JONES EYE HOSPITAL MOON HOSPITAL ROTARY CLUB CUTTACK EYE HOSPITAL	JAGATSINGHPUR	CARE WELL HOSPITAL KHAN NURSINGHOME L & P HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE LIFE LINE NURSING HOME MAA SARALA NURSINGHOME SUN HOSPITAL SWASTIK NURSING HOME TRILOCHAN NETRALAYA	KHORDHA	ADVANCE EYECARE HOSPITAL AROGYA HOSPITAL AURO CARE NURSING HOME BAIDYANATH MEMORIAL HOSPITAL CHATRUBHUJA JENAMANI MEMORIAL HOSPITAL HI-TECH MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL JEEVAN JYOTI HOSPITAL KALINGA HOSPITAL KALINGA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCE AND HOSPITAL L V PRASAD EYE INSTITUTE MAA TARINI NURSING HOME MODERN HEALTH CARE HOSPITAL NANDA TREATMENT CENTRE NEELACHALA HOSPITAL PARKLAND HOSPITAL ROTARY EYE HOSPITAL SAHAJOG HOSPITAL SANJEEBANI MEDICARE HOSPITAL SASWAT HOSPITAL SOUTH CITY HOSPITAL SPARSH MULTI SPECIALITY HOSPITAL SUBHA NURSING HOME SWASTIK CLINIC & HOSP	PURI	ANANDA POLYCLINIC & HOSPITAL EMERGENCY 24 HOSPITAL PVT. LTD. RAGHUNATH CHARITABLE TRUST HOSPITAL SARADHA NURSING HOME SEVA NURSING HOME SIVANANDA NURSING HOME SRI KRISHNA HEALTH CARE & REPRODUCTIVE RESEARCH CENTRE USHA MEMORIAL CLINIC USHARANI NURSING HOME
	SAMBALPUR		ARUNASHAKTI NURSING HOME GOURISHANKAR NURSING HOME SAMALESWARI NURSING HOME SUSHRUTA NURSING HOME TRILOCHAN NETRALAYA		SONEPUR	LEPRA MAHANADI EYE HOSPITAL	SUNDARGARH

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NEW

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- Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery
- Medical Oncology
- Surgical Oncology
- Intervention Radiology

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HEALTHY ODISHA, HAPPY ODISHA

3 iron ore mines reserved for state PSUs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The Centre has reserved three iron ore blocks in favour of two state PSUs—Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) and Odisha Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd (OMECL).

Union Coal and Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi informed this through his Twitter handle after meeting Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Niwas here, Thursday.

Proposals to allot two iron ore mining blocks to OMC and one block to OMECL have been approved. It will expedite iron ore production in Odisha, boost economy and employment opportunities in the state, Joshi said.

"In my meeting today with CM of Odisha, Shri @Naveen_Odisha ji, discussed about auction issues of various minerals in the State and also deliberated on facilitating forest clearances, operationalisation of closed mines & other issues to ensure smooth mining activities in Odisha," the Union Minister further said.

According to sources, Jilling-Langlotta and Guali iron ore blocks in Keonjhar district have been reserved for OMC.

Covid toll mounts to 1,888 in state

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: With 230 more people testing positive for the infection, state's Covid-19 tally Thursday mounted to 3,31,151, while one more fatality pushed Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 1,888, a senior Health and Family (H&FW) department official said.

The new cases were detected in 23 of the coastal state's 30 districts with 134 reported from different quarantine centres and 96 from local contacts.

Sundargarh district recorded the highest of 30 new cases, followed by Angul (24) and Bolangir (18). The H&FW department said that one Covid-19 positive patient in Khurda succumbed to the infection Wednesday. Apart from 1,888 fatalities reported so far, 53 other Covid-19 patients also died due to comorbidities. Of the total 1,888 fatalities, Khurda district of which the state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, alone accounted for 327 deaths followed by Ganjam (247), Sundargarh (167), Cuttack (140) and Puri (117).

Twenty-five other districts reported less than 100 fatalities, said the official. Odisha has so far conducted over 70.86 lakh sample tests for Covid-19, including 21,652 Wednesday. The state's positivity rate now stands at 4.67 per cent, the data released by the H&FW department said.

Second vaccine dry run today

The state government is all set to conduct its second dry run for Covid-19 vaccine Friday. Health and Family Welfare department has issued instructions to all the Collectors to ensure smooth administration of the vaccine to the selected health workers. The vaccination drive has been planned between 10 am to 12 pm at medical colleges, District Headquarter Hospitals and other setups.

Min reviews preparedness as schools reopen today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Thursday visited several schools in the state and reviewed the situation there as the institutions are set to reopen for Classes X and XII Friday.

The schools had remained closed for around 10 months due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The minister took stock of the arrangements that include sanitisation of classrooms, offices and toilets, availability of hand wash and sanitisers in classrooms and bathrooms, temperature record equipment, sitting arrangement in classrooms and others.

As per guidelines issued by Health and Family Welfare department, hands of the children must be sanitised before entering the schools. A distance of 5 feet between the students would be maintained while sitting in classrooms. Parents will submit written consent for sending their wards to schools. If the child feels unwell, s/he won't be asked to attend classes physically.

There will also be an isolation room in the school to meet emergency situations.

Dash said, "After the review of schools, we are assured that schools are ready with all safety measures for the students. Students must follow the guidelines and wear masks. If any student or teacher feels sick, he/she should avoid coming to the school."

He added that he had discussed



S&ME Minister Samir Ranjan Dash reviews arrangements at Laxmisagar High School in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

POINTS TO REMEMBER

Hands of the children must be sanitised before entering the schools

A distance of 5 feet between the students would be maintained while sitting in classrooms

with Health and Family Welfare department which would make weekly review of the situation at all the schools.

Headmistress of Capital High School Sonamika Ray said, "Sanitisation of classrooms and bathrooms is in full swing and we will make sure that all the students wear masks and have sanitisers with them. We will also comply

Parents will submit written consent for sending their wards to schools

If the child feels unwell, s/he won't be asked to attend classes physically

with safety guidelines and make sure that no classroom has more than 20 students for maintaining social distance."

The students of Class X and XII will be taught for 100 days including Saturdays and Sundays. Classes will be held for Class X students from January 8 to April 26 while Class XII students will attend their classes from January 8 to April 28.

Helpline launched to rein in cybercrime

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The Commissionerate Police Thursday launched a dedicated 'Sahayata' help desk and helpline number in an attempt to rein in the spiraling cybercrime cases in Capital city.

"A help desk with Mobile No 7440006709 has been established for citizens of Bhubaneswar by @dcpbbsr to provide assistance in cybercrime: please report to the helpdesk or dial 100," said the official Twitter handle of Commissionerate Police.

Addressing the media about the initiative, Commissioner of Police Sudhashu Sarangi Thursday said, "The first one hour of the occurrence of crime is most crucial in cybercrime related incidents. So, please contact our officials through Sahayata helpline number: The officers in charge of the Sahayata desk will immediately help the victim." He said that cops would block the phone number and bank account used by fraudsters if the victims inform the helpdesk about the cybercrime within the first hour of the occurrence of the crime. Sarangi stated that the cyber criminals have been getting away with the crime due to lack of proper coordination between victim and the police.

They have been duping several persons using a single sim card. The officers in charge of police stations have also been asked to seek

Citizens of Bhubaneswar can now dial 7440006709 to report cases of cybercrime

the help of the help desk on the receipt of any cybercrime related case as there is a dearth of trained police staffers at all the police stations here.

He also urged the citizens to inform the police about any suspicious URL address while searching for some helpline numbers of banks, financial institutions on popular search engine 'Google'.

Upon receipt of information, the desk will try to 'block the fraud cell number, track the involved money trail and freeze the last destination account. Make arrangements to block or delete fake cell number and URL from the search engine."

He also said that women and children were often being harassed due to repeated phone calls from unknown numbers. He urged the victims to report the numbers so that police can block and deactivate the SIM card.

The desk comprising an official and seven assistants will function under the special squad of Commissionerate Police till the commencement of proposed cyber police station in the city.

Odisha first to constitute Food Commission: Merkap

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: State Food Commissioner PK Merkap Thursday briefed the media about the initiatives taken by the department to ensure monitoring of food security system in the state.

Merkap said that Odisha was the first state in the country to constitute a Food Commission after the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 came into force.

He said that Odisha State Food Commission was constituted March 15, 2016. "The Odisha State Food

Commission is mandated to monitor and evaluate implementation of three major schemes under NFSA in the state," he added.

Merkap said that efforts have been initiated at various levels by the Commission to make wide publication of rules which are available in official websites of Food Commission and in all district offices.

"In regular monthly meetings with district officials, it has been advised to strictly comply with the provisions of the rules for benefit of the people," he added.

Guidelines issued for PG spot admission

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The Higher Education department Thursday issued guidelines and timeline for spot admissions into postgraduate (PG) courses for 2020-21 academic session.

The candidates are advised to go through vacant seat positions and cut-off mark details at SAMS website

In a letter to the PG council chairpersons and controllers of examinations of all public universities and principals to all degree colleges, officer-in-charge, Performance Tracking Cell, Mihir Kumar Das, said that the dates for document verification, payment of fees and the admission of selected candidates are January 21 and 22.

As per the guidelines, the candidates who had enrolled themselves in PG courses after their selection in the merit lists can participate in spot admissions if they want to change their streams and institutions.

Those who were unable to get themselves enrolled even after their selection in the merit lists can also participate in the spot admissions. Besides, candidates who had appeared for the Common PG Entrance Test (CPET-2020) but could not find a place in the 1st, 2nd & 3rd selection lists are also eligible for spot admissions. The candidates are advised to go through the university/college-wise vacant seat positions and cut-off mark details at SAMS website and give their options for spot admissions.

Panel formed for quota in MBBS, engg courses

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: In pursuant to a Cabinet decision, the state government Thursday constituted a high power committee for making necessary recommendations on reservation of seats for the students of government high schools in engineering and medical courses.

The committee will be headed by retired judge of Orissa High Court AK Mishra while Skill Development and Technical Education joint secretary AK Nayak has been appointed as member convener of the panel.

Other members of the Committee are—former vice chancellor of Utkal University Ashok Kumar Das, DMET CBK Mohanty, Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) chairman BS Poonia and director of technical education and training G Reghu.



Born in Jajpur in 1958, justice Mishra completed his MA in political science from Utkal University and LLB, LLM from Madhusudan Law College, Cuttack. He has done his Ph D in 2002 on "Right to Speedy Trial". He has earlier been Director Odisha Judicial Academy, special judge CBI and Registrar General Orissa High Court.

December 28 last, the Cabinet had taken the decision to constitute a committee for reservation of seats for the students of government-run high schools in engineering and medical colleges in the state.

Act against squatters in govt quarters: NHRC to Chief Secy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Thursday directed the state government to take appropriate action against the government officials who have been in illegal possession of government quarters despite retiring from services for long.

The commission while hearing a plea filed by rights activist Akhand directed the Chief Secretary to take

appropriate action within eight weeks since the receipt of its order.

The complainant has alleged that several government quarters have been illegally occupied by 308 retired government officers and other employees in different grades since 2009. The activist quoting data from the department of General Administration alleged that rent for the quarters to the tune of Rs 4, 28, 71,771 has been pending against the officials.

Bird flu scare: Govt forms teams, opens control room

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The state government has formed special supervisory teams and rapid response teams for active surveillance and monitoring of birds for any sign of suspected avian influenza.

The Fisheries and Animal Resources Development (F&ARD) department has formed nine special supervisory teams at state-level to immediately proceed to any suspected location of bird flu in the state. Further, all chief district veterinary officers (CDVOs) have been directed to constitute 10 to 15 Rapid Response Teams (RRT) at the district level for prompt response to any reports of suspected case of the disease, an official said here Thursday.

Similarly, a state-level control room headed by the joint director, disease control (telephone no 0671 2414310) has started functioning at the directorate of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services, Cuttack. People can consume chicken meat, eggs and other poultry products produced in the state with proper cooking, he said.

Migratory birds are the carriers of the influenza and it spreads



Dead birds at Begunia in Khurda district

through faecal droppings, shared feed and drinking water of the birds. The state government is vigilant and is continuously observing any unnatural deaths and behavior of birds at the places where there is concentration of migratory birds, said Bibhu Ranjan Das from directorate of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services. Animal Disease Research Institute (ADRI) at State level, Clinical Investigation Laboratory (CIL) and State Veterinary Laboratory (SVL) at regional level and District Diagnostic Laboratory (DDL) at district level has been geared up with full strength for collection and testing of the samples, he said.

The samples are also sent to the Regional Disease Diagnostic

Laboratory (RDDL) at Kolkata. Until now around 11,000 samples have been collected and tested during the current migratory season. So far all samples have been tested negative for avian influenza.

Asked about reports on death of birds in Govindpur village in Begunia block of Khurda district, the official said, "We have visited the place and found that around 120 poultry birds have been dead. Five of the dead birds have been taken to ADRI for laboratory investigation. All five samples have been tested negative for Avian Influenza virus."

The birds died due to some other reason. The birds have not been provided food and water for last two days. That might be the reason, Das said.

NGT bans constructions on forest land in City

Most establishments operated on the forest land without necessary environment clearance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered halting of new construction work by the 41 erring government and non-government institutions which started their operations on forest lands in Jaydev Vihar Mouza here.

The tribunal in its latest order cited constructions on forest land without the nod of the Ministry of Environment and Forest. In its written order, the NGT said that the forest land was indeed encroached, while ordering blanket ban on new construction activities.

"In view of the acknowledged encroachment of forest land and, diversion of forest land having been



THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA FOUND THREE ESTABLISHMENTS OPERATING FROM THE FOREST LAND CLASSIFIED UNDER JUNGLE II KISAM WITHOUT ADEQUATE APPROVALS WAY BACK IN 2012

undertaken without obtaining the mandatory clearance under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, we are of the firm view that no further

ENCROACHMENT IN JAYDEV VIHAR

The NGT, in its latest order, cited constructions on forest land without the nod of the Ministry of Environment and Forest

The forest land in Jaydev Vihar Mouza was indeed encroached, said the green tribunal

activity shall be taken up without complying with the requirements of law," the order said.

"If there are infractions on the

part of the state machinery in permitting violation of the stringent provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, the ministry shall be at liberty to take appropriate action under... the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 read with Rule 9 of the Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2003 against those responsible for permitting such infractions," it added.

This comes nine years after a report from the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) found three establishments operating from the forest land classified under Jungle II Kisam land without adequate approvals way back in 2012. This was an alleged gross violation of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

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High-level SAIL panel to probe gas leak

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



THREE OFFICIALS SUSPENDED
SAIL authorities have termed the deaths of four contractual workers inside RSP premises as 'unfortunate'. Six persons are still undergoing treatment after inhaling the toxic gas which leaked from the coal chemical division

Department and Nabendu Das of CCD Mechanical Department – have been suspended over the mishap.

A three member team appointed by the RSP has taken charge of investigation while a team from Factories and Boilers department launched a probe into the mishap. Stringent action will be taken against persons found guilty for the mishap, RSP deputy director Bibhu Prasad said. Notably, at least four workers died while undergoing treatment at hospital and six others got severely intoxicated following a gas leakage at coal chemical department of the Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP). The unfortunate incident occurred at around 9.45 am, Wednesday.

The four deceased were identified as Ganesh Pailo, Abhimanyu Saha, Babu Panda and Rabi Sahu of a construction company on the RSP premises.

claimed four lives at the plant Wednesday.

The suspended employee was identified as Assistant Manager (safety) Smruti Ranjan Sahu. RSP

CEO Dipak Chattaraj released the suspension order against Sahu, Thursday. Meanwhile, two Deputy General Manager (DGM) rank officials -Gopabandhu Barik of EMD

Devp fast-tracked in Swabhiman Anchal

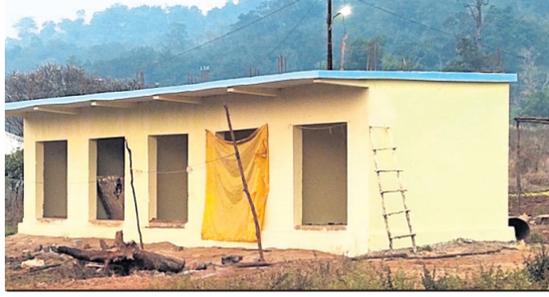
Bird census starts in Hirakud reservoir

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chittrakonda, Jan 7: The district administration has gone on an overdrive to fast-track development in various panchayats of Swabhiman Anchal of Malkangiri district since the Gurupriya bridge was commissioned in the area which was once cut off by the reservoir.

Reports said, life for thousands of people living in 26 village of Dhuliput panchayat under Chittrakonda block in Swabhiman Anchal had been miserable as they were confined to the cut-off area all through the year. Basic development was a dream for them. Constant fear from Maoists added to their miseries.

The government was unable to carry on development in the inaccessible area on the Odisha-Andhra Borders in the absence of communication link. The area, marked with



rocky terrains, hills, creeks and rivers, was once a hotbed of Maoists, who held their sway through violence. It was known as Red Corridor. Many former Collectors like Balwant Singh and R Vineel Krishna had made good pioneering efforts to usher in development here, but connectivity through the reservoir was the biggest stumbling block.

In 2011, former Collector R Vineel Krishna was holding a public contact programme at Badapada to know the grievances of people when Maoists had kidnapped him. Since then, the pace of development had completely slowed down for fear of Maoists. Years later, the administration resumed efforts to push development expeditiously in

Life for thousands of people living in 26 villages of Dhuliput panchayat under Chittrakonda block in Swabhiman Anchal had been miserable as they were confined to the cut-off area all through the year

Since 2011 when former Collector R Vineel Krishna was kidnapped and later released by Maoists, the pace of development had completely slowed down for fear of Left wing extremism

buildings are being constructed at a fast rate. The administration is also putting in place projects like safe drinking water, panchayat office, Anganwadi buildings, a market complex and a panchayat godown.

Maliguda river has still been a roadblock for communication for people in 26 villages of Dhuliguda panchayat and several other villages in Ralegada panchayat.

Significantly, a bridge is being constructed across the river. Once completed, their commuting woes will be over, they added.

People were reeling from darkness since independence. The darkness has gone now as electricity has been supplied. Street lights have been installed in these six villages. Moreover, 84 people in the panchayat have been provided ration cards.

Importantly, a new road of 3-km stretch has been laid from Badapada Maliguda to Dhuliguda via Luharam.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Jan 7: The mid-winter waterfowl census started in Hirakud reservoir; Thursday morning. The head counting of the migratory birds started 6 am and will continue till 1 pm, official sources said.

In the bird census, 21 teams comprising forest staff of Sambalpur, Hirakud and Jharsuguda divisions have been engaged in the exercise.

Jitendra Kumar Behera, assistant conservator of forest (ACF), Hirakud Wildlife Division informed, "The Hirakud reservoir has been divided into 18 sectors while the power channel has been divided into three sectors. 14 non-motorised boats, six motorised boats and one other vehicle have been deployed for the movement of the census team."

Staff with designations like guards, ACFs, range officers, veterinary surgeons, ornithologists, wildlife enthusiasts and local bird club members are engaged in the census.

Students from Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology in Bhubaneswar have also been roped in for the drive. Behera said, "The teams have been provided with GPS, route charts, maps, binoculars and sophisticated cameras for counting the migratory birds at the reservoir."

As per forest authorities, avian species started flocking to



Hirakud Dam towards mid-November 2020. The forest department made elaborate arrangements to protect the winged guests with regular patrolling on boats.

"Bird protection teams have been deployed at several places including Zero Point, Barakhandia, Parbatitong and Gobindpur around the reservoir to curb bird poaching," informed the ACF.

In 2019, the wildlife teams spotted a total of 92 bird species and around 1,45,946 avian guests in Hirakud (WL) Division and forest divisions of Sambalpur & Jharsuguda during the annual census drive.

The birds mostly arrived from Caspian Sea, Aral Sea, Mongolia besides Central and South East Asia. Meanwhile in 2018, a total of 82 bird species and 1,36,835 migratory birds had been spotted in Hirakud reservoir. In comparison, the recently conducted census showed a marginal increase in the head count of avian species during the winter season.

Keonjhar Baldevjew temple to get facelift

Swift police action foils robbery bid

Funeral procession for bull like human

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 7: The famous Lord Baldevjew temple in this district will get a facelift, informed District Collector Ashish Thakare. Informing about the development, Thakare said the beautification work will be completed by the end of 2021.

He also said the state government has sanctioned ₹1 crore to carry out the beautification drive.

Sources said, in the first phase, Bhajan Mandap, Snana Mandap, Bhoga Mandap will be renovated and in the second phase, a toilet complex and hand and feet washing zone will come up. Other maintenance works will be carried out.

The temple located in Old Town area in Keonjhar district is situated on 1.96 acres. Lord Baldev Jew and his siblings Lord Jagannath and Devi Subhadra are worshipped here. That apart, there are temples on the temple premises dedicated to other gods and goddesses.

As Keonjhar is blessed with a number of tourist spots and religious places like Sanaghagara waterfall, Badaghagara waterfall,



Gundichaghagi waterfall, Kanjhari dam, Ghatagaon Maa Tarini temple, Sitabinj and Gonasika, visitors through this district all the year and a tour is not complete without a visit to Baldev Jew temple.

With the announcement of renovation work, people of the district hope the temple will definitely attract more visitors.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kalahandi, Jan 7: Swift action by the Kegaon police in Kalahandi district foiled a dacoity bid in the locality Wednesday night. Five members of the gang were arrested as well.

While four of the five arrested persons have been identified as Prasanta Machhakund, Nirakar Tandil, Kapilas Meher and Dharma Patel, the fifth one is yet to be identified.

During the last few weeks, cases of snatching, loot and dacoit have been reported time and again from different locations in the district.

Kegaon police were tipped off Wednesday that a gang of dacoits were preparing a blueprint to rob a house or loot passersbys. The police taking the tip-off seriously swung into action and a team of Kegaon police station conducted a raid at a secluded place at Kegaon village under the same Kegaon tehsil Wednesday night. The five were arrested from the spot.

The cops also seized a car, one gas cutter, one toy pistol, three iron rods, red chili powder packet and five mobile phones from their possession. A detailed probe is underway, it was learnt.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Marshaghai, Jan 7: Bahakandia village under Marshaghai block in Kendrapara district was witness to a rare funeral procession Wednesday.

The procession was taken out in the honour of a bull with all the villagers mourning the death of the animal.

The bull was roaming around in the locality. It suddenly fell ill three months ago, restricting its movement. The female folks of the village came forward to treat the sick bull. They offered it food and medicines too.

Despite their three-month long efforts, they could not save the animal. It breathed its last Wednesday. The grief-stricken villagers then decided to give the animal a decent farewell.

They decided to accord a grand procession to it. Its body was placed on an open trailer of a tractor. Treating its body like that of a human being, the women weeping all the while applied 'gular' or 'abhir' on its body, draped a piece of white cloth on it and then decorated the trailer with flowers and garlands.

The bedecked tractor was then taken out in a procession through the village amidst chanting of 'Hari



Bo'. Then the animal was cremated at the village cremation ground with the villagers giving a tearful adieu to the animal.

The village committee is learnt to be going to host a feast in memory of the bull inviting all the villagers of Bahakandia village and the ones of neighbouring villages.

The village committee decided to build a tomb on cremation ground within 21 days of the animal's death.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEM
Tender Notice No. PCMM/EP/2020-21/30, Dt. 04.01.2021
The following tenders have been uploaded on website www.reps.gov.in
SI.No.01 Tender No. 04202252B, Short Description of item : LEAD ACID BATTERIES, Quantity : As per T.S.
SI.No.02 Tender No. 04205172, Short Description of item : LT OUTDOOR FEEDER PILLAR PANEL, Quantity : 27 Nos.
SI.No.03 Tender No. 03203794A, Short Description of item : AXLE BOX PIVOT BUSH, Quantity : 475 Nos.
Tender Opening Date : 18.01.2021 for SI.No. 01, 19.01.2021 for SI.No. 02 & 01.02.2021 for SI.No. 03.
Regarding detailed notice, EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website www.reps.gov.in and www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in.
Principal Chief Materials Manager, Bhubaneswar
PR-475/L/20-21

Government of Odisha
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, KANTABANJI (R&B) DIVISION
e-mail ID: eerbkbj@rediffmail.com, Tel./Fax No.: 06657-220216
Bid Identification No. 07/KBJ/2020-2021
No. B-612: The Executive Engineer, Kantabanji (R&B) Division, Kantabanji on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids in **Single Cover System** to be received in Online mode only for Road Works.
1. No. of Work : 02 Nos.
2. Nature of Work : Road Work
3. Class of Contractor : C & B
4. Approximate Value of Work : Between Rs.36.80 lakh to Rs.36.92 lakh
5. Tender Cost : Rs.6000/-
6. Available of Bid documents : From 11.00 hours of Dt.08.01.2021 in Online to 17.00 hours of Dt.18.01.2021
7. Date of opening of bid in : 11.30 hours on Dt.19.01.2021 Online
8. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the e-procurement portal "https://tendersorissa.gov.in".
9. Any Corrigendum/Addendum will be displayed in the e-procurement portal.
Sd./- Executive Engineer
Kantabanji (R&B) Division
OIPR-34099/11/0011/2021

32 yrs on, MCIP project yet to be completed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Jan 7: Even as 32 years have passed since work started on the Mahanadi-Chitropala Island Irrigation Project (MCIP), the project is halfway through.

Work on the project had started in 1988-89 under the state plan and ₹45.81 crore was spent till 1995-96. The MCIP project was launched with an aim to providing irrigation facilities to over 19,542 hectares of farmland in Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur districts.

The project had stirred hope among farmers of getting irrigation facilities in Garadpur, Marshaghai, Mahakalapara blocks of Kendrapara district and in Tirtol block of Jagatsinghpur.

The plan outlay was only ₹39.94 crore in 1989 which rose to ₹395.46 crore in 2012. The project work has stopped after the term of the lending



The plan outlay was only ₹39.94 crore in 1989 which rose to ₹395.46 crore in 2012. The project work has stopped after the term of the lending firm Asian Development Bank expired in 2019

firm Asian Development Bank expired in 2019. Farmers and residents claimed lack of political will has delayed the project.

Sribatsha Samal, a farmer of Marshaghai alleged that the construction of the canal to the left of the Paika river has stopped near Batira while the construction of the canal to the right of Chitropala river has stopped near Kalabuda. Irrigation for farm lands can happen only after construction of branch and sub-canal, he added.
Ganesh Chandra Samal, a

Zilla Parishad member, said the then Patkura MLA Bijaya Mohapatra had decided to provide irrigation facilities to their farmlands through construction of canals in 1989. The state government sanctioned ₹39.94 crore for the project the same year. The project work received a boost after Mohapatra became the irrigation minister. Construction of siphon and bridges was constructed till Krishnandapur in Tirtol at an expenditure of ₹45.81 crore during the period. Later, the project stopped.

It took off after a voluntary outfit Jana Surakshya Manch launched an agitation for completion of the project in 2012. The plan outlay was raised to ₹395.46 crore and it was decided to finish it anyway by 2014. However, that was not to be as the work was shelved again. It restarted in 2016-17 but is yet to be completed.
Pramod Kumar Swain, a social activist, said the soil in Kendrapara district is conducive for all types of crops but lack of irrigation facilities has come up as an

impediment. The canal bed is getting silted due to lack of water flow. When contacted, ADM Basant Kumar Rout said a meeting was convened in December 2020 and it was decided to finish the project very soon.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. O-861
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION-II, CUTTACK
E-mail ID: cuttackrw2nd@yahoo.co.in
Telephone / Fax No. (0671) 2445119
e-Procurement Notice for ROAD WORKS
Bid Identification No. EEECT-II-09 of 2020-21 Dt.04.01.2021
1. Number of the Work : 01 (One) Number Road
2. Estimated Cost (Approx) : Rs.84.81 lakh
3. Period of Completion : 02 (Two) Calendar months road works
4. Date & time of sale & receipt of bid document online : From 15.01.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 29.01.2021 at 4.00 P.M.
5. Date & time of opening of bids : 30.01.2021 at 11.30 A.M.
6. Name and address of Inviting Officer : Executive Engineer, R.W. Division-II, Cuttack, Nayabazar, Cuttack - 753004
Further details can be seen from the State Govt. portal https://tendersorissa.gov.in.
Sd./- (P.K. Bhol)
Executive Engineer
R.W. Division - II, Cuttack
OIPR-25095/11/0011/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, MECHANICAL CIRCLE (MEDIUM IRRIGATION PROJECT), HIRAKUD-768016, DIST. SAMBALPUR
Email Address: semech-eicwr.od@nic.in
e-Procurement Notice-Bid Identification No.: SEMC/MDHKD/02/2020-21 dated- 04.01.2021
1. Name of the Work : Mechanical Gate Works
2. No. of Works : 03(Three)
3. Category of executors : SSI Units registered under DIC/ NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters / Hydro Mechanical Gates.
4. Bid Identification No. : SEMC/MDHKD/02/2020-21 Dt.04.01.2021
5. Estimated Cost : Rs. 10,65,918/-, Rs. 10,79,200/- & 14,45,203/- (Excluding GST)
6. Period of Completion of work : Two calendar months.
7. Date & time of availability of Bid documents in the Portal : From dt.11.01.2021 (10.00 A.M.) to Dt.22.01.2021 (5.30 P.M.)
8. Last date/ time for receipt of : Dt.22.01.2021 (upto 5.30 P.M.)
9. Bid in the Portal : Dt.25.01.2021 (11.00 A.M. onwards) in the O/o the undersigned
10. Date and Place of opening of Bid : Dt.25.01.2021 (11.00 A.M. onwards) in the O/o the undersigned
11. Name of the Officer inviting The Bid : Superintending Engineer, Mechanical Circle (Med.I.P.), Hirakud
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in.
Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Mechanical Circle (Med.I.P.), Hirakud
OIPR-32403/11/0003/2021

FOCUS POLITICS

CHINA REUNITING US ALLIES



China's headstrong ways motivate the world's democracies to band together against it. Yet its growing geopolitical heft and the allure of Chinese trade and investment also tempt many countries to curry favour with its government. Accordingly, Biden should launch early in his presidency a concerted effort to forge a united democratic front on China guided by the following three principles

standing up for human rights. Resolute condemnation of China's unwillingness to grant basic freedoms to its citizens will put China's leadership on the defensive in the court of international opinion. And it will help repair the erosion of American's moral authority under Trump.

Democratic leaders can further raise the costs to China's rulers by imposing sanctions on those responsible for oppressing the Uighur minority in Xinjiang and cracking down on Hong Kong. When China resorts to economic coercion to punish countries for criticizing its human rights record, as it is doing with Australia, the world's democracies should respond in kind.

Working to build a consensus around these three principles would not only signal the depth of the Biden administration's commitment to work with its partners. It would also play to America's strongest suit when it comes to handling China: its alliances.

China has only one ally - North Korea - while the US has loyal partners worldwide. China's economy will be the world's largest by the end of the decade, but its GDP will remain roughly one-third the collective size of the world's major democracies. As long as they stand together and aggregate their geopolitical and economic heft, the main democracies will outclass China for the foreseeable future.

Biden will need to summon all of his persuasive skills to forge a coordinated approach toward China. But his task is made easier by the fact that even as they eye the benefits of more commerce with China, democracies in Europe and Asia are anxious about China's intentions. They will welcome a US president who respects allies and appreciates the need for teamwork to deal with China.

Charles Kupchan, a member of the National Security Council under President Bill Clinton and President Barack Obama, is Professor of International Affairs at Georgetown University, Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

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Charles A. Kupchan & Peter Trubowitz

AMERICA'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH ITS CORE DEMOCRATIC PARTNERS ARE SET TO REBOUND DRAMATICALLY AFTER PRESIDENT-ELECT JOE BIDEN TAKES OFFICE

America's relationships with its core democratic partners are set to rebound dramatically after President-elect Joe Biden takes office. Allies in Europe and Asia relish the prospect of an American President committed to adhere to democratic traditions at home, honour strategic commitments abroad, and be a team player.

Solidarity among the world's democracies is especially important when it comes to standing up to China. But the European Union's decision last week to sign an investment accord with that country underscores the potential for serious discord. Even though the Biden camp cautioned the EU against moving ahead with the agreement, it nonetheless sealed the deal (pending ratification).

To be sure, China's headstrong ways motivate the world's democracies to band together against it. Yet its growing geopolitical heft and the allure of Chinese trade and investment also tempt many countries, democracies included, to curry favour with its government. Accordingly, Biden should launch early in his presidency a concerted effort to forge a united democratic front on China guided by the following three principles.

First, the United States should dial down the rhetoric and treat China as a formidable competitor, not an implacable foe. A US strategy of rigid containment or aggressive rollback would find few adherents in either Europe or Asia, implying that it would backfire strategically.

Democrats and Republicans may be seeking to outdo each other when it comes to calls for getting tough with China. But if foreign partners see Biden as spoiling for a fight, the US will do more to divide than unite the world's major democracies. China already has significant geopolitical and economic clout in Asia and beyond - especially through the Belt and Road Initiative, its massive investment program in global infrastructure and commercial development. The genie cannot be put back in the bottle.

Pragmatic realism, not bombast, should guide US strategy toward China. Of course, the US should make clear its red lines,

especially when it comes to Taiwan's autonomy and freedom of navigation in the Asia-Pacific. But the US and China should aim for shared leadership in the region - a strategic objective that would enjoy ample support among US allies already fearful of the escalating Sino-American rivalry.

Second, the US and its key allies need to link arms to confront China on trade and investment. Economic decoupling is not in the offing; China is far too integrated into the global economy. Nonetheless, import competition from China and its unfair trade practices have cost the developed democracies millions of jobs over the past two decades. Pressing China to level the playing field can work to their economic advantage.

required to push back against China's harmful trade practices, including state subsidies and intellectual property theft. Though full-scale decoupling is not in the cards, the US should join with its democratic allies to pull back from China when it comes to sensitive technologies, such as semiconductors and artificial intelligence. The same holds for imposing new export controls, scrutinizing and regulating Chinese investment abroad, steering clear of Huawei when it comes to building 5G networks, and repatriating high-end production.

These steps would align well with the domestic measures that the Biden administration and the governments of many other democracies are poised to take to generate more jobs and better pay for blue-collar workers. The goal must be to ensure that economic growth and gains from trade are more inclusive. Spending on infrastructure, education and retraining, research and development, and renewable energy can help the major democracies maintain their competitive edge over China.

Finally, the US and its democratic partners should speak with a single voice when it comes to

SPECTRUM ENVIRONMENT

How to make climate pledges stick

China's pledge in September to pursue carbon neutrality by 2060 was followed by a similar pledge from Japan a month later. With these commitments being made at a time when the US has withdrawn from the Paris climate accord, it is easy to interpret them as part of the ongoing geopolitical competition for global leadership. But managing climate change is not a zero-sum game. Here, national competition to strengthen ambitions and policies benefits everyone.

To bridge the gap between pledges and tangible results, we will need to lock in these recent commitments and create incentives for other countries to increase their own climate targets. While Covid-19 lockdowns have reduced global carbon dioxide emissions this year, intensive pre-pandemic emissions are likely to return with a vengeance in 2021.

How can we start truly reducing emissions in a timely, efficient, and fair manner? Over the next ten years, Americans need to reduce their per capita carbon consumption from about 200% to about 80% above the current Chinese level (from about 18 metric tons of carbon per person per year to ten).

Similarly, Germany needs to cut its per capita carbon consumption from about 80% above the current Chinese level to below the current Chinese level (from about ten to six metric tons per person per year). And the Chinese need to cap their per capita emissions before the end of the decade, while also moving toward carbon neutrality.

To those accustomed to hearing that China is the world's largest greenhouse-gas (GHG) emitter, these recommendations may come as a surprise. In terms of annual contributions to atmospheric GHGs, China is indeed the world leader, followed by the United States. But in terms of individual annual contributions, an average German leads a life that is about 80% more carbon intensive than the average Chinese; and the average American's footprint is about 200% larger than the average Chinese.

These differences are shown in the figure below, which traces per capita consumption versus production of GHG emissions in the US, Germany, and China from 1995-2015.

It is no less important to bear in mind that climate change is caused by the entire stock of atmospheric

GHGs, not just the emissions from a given year. Because GHGs dissipate slowly, the cumulative emissions from the Industrial Revolution onward - especially those since 1900 - do more damage than the emissions in, say, 2018-20. From this cumulative point of view, the US and Europe are responsible for an overwhelming majority of atmospheric GHGs, dwarfing the contributions of all other countries combined.

And yet, not all advanced-economy citizens feel this responsibility for at least three reasons. First, we hear constantly from politicians and the media that China is the "largest emitter," which, though true, is not the whole truth. Second, Europe and the US are doing a much better job than China (and most other developing countries) at controlling more visible forms of particle pollution, which is not necessarily the same thing as limiting planet-warming GHGs.

To go beyond the currently deficient commitments under the Paris climate agreement - and to make up for the time lost under outgoing US President Donald Trump - we need both new pledges and new sticks and carrots. For

starters, all rich countries should aim to achieve carbon neutrality on the consumption side, not just on the production side, no later than 2050. Those that can reach this target sooner should of course do so.

Moreover, all of today's middle-income countries should aim to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060. Because the carbon intensity of developing countries' exports is often higher than that of their imports, a net-zero emissions pledge is a taller order on the production side than it is on the consumption side. The international community needs to provide technical and financial assistance to low- and lower-middle-income countries, conditioned on their efforts to achieve near-carbon neutrality by 2075.

We can do better than relying just on national pledges and voluntary compliance.

The writer, a former chief economist at the Asian Development Bank, is Professor of Finance and Economics at Columbia Business School and Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

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Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Covaxin controversy

Sir, Covaxin and Covishield have both been authorized in India for restricted use in emergency situations. The Covishield vaccine is said to be the equivalent to the vaccine made by the Oxford University and the British-Swedish company Astra Zeneca. Its efficacy is said to be around 70%. AstraZeneca had assigned the task of manufacturing this vaccine to Serum Institute of India, which is the largest serum manufacturing company in the world. So, this vaccine will be made in India. The second one is the Covaxin, which will be manufactured by the Indian pharmaceutical company Bharat Biotech. Now, scientists are raising questions about the approval of emergency use of Covaxin in India. According to some scientists, phase 1 and phase 2 of Covaxin trials are encouraging, but the phase 3 trial started in November and data regarding its results is not yet available. This raises questions about the efficacy of the vaccine. Members of the national Covid-19 task force have clarified that the clinical use of Covaxin will be on trial mode. Due to similar reasons, AIDAN or All India Drug Action Network, which is an independent network of several NGOs, has appealed to the government to reconsider the approval to this vaccine. The director of AIIMS, Dr Guleria said that vaccination with Covishield of the Serum Institute will begin soon. But Covaxin of Bharat Biotech will only be used under special circumstances. We may need this vaccine in case Covid cases start to increase suddenly. He said that when they consider a vaccine, the safety issue is of utmost importance. That is why the vaccine undergoes testing in various stages. Hence, it would be prudent to roll out Covaxin only after the results of its phase 3 trials are found satisfactory.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Deaths at RSP plant

Sir, This refers to news on front page of Orissa POST of January 7. The deaths at the steel plant occurred due to carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide primarily causes adverse effects by combining with hemoglobin to form carboxyhemoglobin (HbCO) preventing the blood from carrying oxygen. Prevention of such deaths is not difficult. Before issuing safety permit to work on tanks where this hazardous gas may be present, testing of the atmosphere of tank is done. Proper exhaustion and fresh air injection is required to be done. Contractor workers are trained to safety work in such industries. The problem is contractors frequently change the workers with untrained or poorly-trained workers. This is a case of safety lapse.

Gopal Mittal, BHUBANESWAR

THE MOTHER
In silence, the consciousness grows. It aspires to know You more and more perfectly.



Reboot economy

The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs (CCPA) has recommended that the budget session of Parliament commence from January 29 and the Union Budget is presented February 1. Unlike in the past, the coming Budget will test the nerves of the Central government. With negative economic growth and the Covid-19 playing havoc with people and their livelihood, the stakes are extraordinarily high for the government. There are too many challenges facing Union Finance Minister: With the coronavirus yet to be tamed, unemployment has come up as a huge challenge. Resources have fast thinned out. Jobs are gone. There is a drastic fall in public consumption. Demand is tepid. In this backdrop, expectations of people from the finance minister are sky high. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has already dropped hints that the coming Budget will be the most unusual Budget in the nation's history. The biggest challenge for the FM and her team of policy makers will be how to pull the economy out of the deep abyss it has found itself in and put it back on the growth trajectory. This would call for extraordinary efforts and resources. It would mean enhancing investment in infrastructure projects that generate employment and will have a domino effect on the economy. Health sector will be a big guzzler of resources given the vaccination drive and the allied expenses and the need to strengthen the health infrastructure in the country. Agriculture infrastructure including building up of scientific storage and cold-chain infrastructure will be another priority area for the government more so due to the ongoing farmer unrest. At any cost, the government will try to do whatever possible to redeem its image as farmer-friendly. The three new farm laws have come up as a thorn. Similarly, the allocations to rural job scheme such as MGN-REGA are also likely to be higher this time given massive unemployment scenario in rural India exacerbated by the Covid-19.

But where will the government find the resources to allow such big spend? Even a moderate increase in the expenditure will mean government has to think out of box to raise revenues. With growth getting deeper into negative territories, revenues have dried up. The current boom in the stock markets might push the government to sell stakes in PSUs. The proposed sale of Air India and other PSUs like Shipping Corporation and BPCL was thwarted this year due to coronavirus-related difficulties. The government may go in for aggressive disinvestment of some loss-making and a few profit-making PSUs such as Neelachal Ispat Nigam and Concor. The time may also be opportune to find good valuations for government assets. But this is not going to be an all end all option. Offloading government stake in PSUs has always faced with opposition and this time around this is not going to be different. Moreover, any attempt to offload stake in cash cows like LIC will not be easy. Another option for the government could be raising import duty in order to encourage domestic production. This will also not be a very prudent step as protections of domestic markets will kill efficiency. Further, public should not be deprived of the freedom of choice on what to buy and avail value for money. The pandemic must have already pushed the country's fiscal deficit beyond 7 per cent. And any rash decision on this score will further push the economic health to the brink. The FM must ensure that India's debt levels do not become unmanageable, failing which international rating agencies will further downgrade the ratings. Indian banks are not in the pink of health. The Covid-19 moratorium and the lending cut would have definitely dealt a blow to the books of banks whose NPA levels would have become unimaginable. While recapitalization of banks would be a challenge, a bigger challenge for the government will be finding private players to buy into these while elephants. The great dream of India achieving a 5 trillion dollar economy is contingent on the health and performance of its banks. Vaccination has come up as a massive challenge for the government. The government needs funds somewhere between ₹40,000 crore and ₹60,000 crore to vaccinate the world's second populous country. We will wait to see how Sitharaman is beating these challenges to reboot the economy.

WISDOM CORNER

- The secret of getting ahead is getting started. MARK TWAIN
- I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed. MICHAEL JORDAN
- It's hard to beat a person who never gives up. BABE RUTH

WORDSWORTH

Break-out space
A current management fashion involves at least partly reinventing the office. In such environments, workers no longer have their own desks and workspaces. Instead, in a technique called hot-desking, they are allocated a location each day according to their needs, storing working materials and personal belongings in portable lockers overnight. This vastly increases flexibility for the employer, who no longer needs to keep expensive office space available for workers who may only be there part of the time, but it causes problems of rootlessness for staff whose territorial sense is well developed. Several jargon terms have been created for aspects of this new system; it is too soon to determine whether they will enter the lexicon. One such is lagoon, describing a group of workers all engaged on a common task. Another is break-out space, which is a quiet area away from the bustle of the workplace where informal meetings can be held (a common technique is to make participants stand up to stop sessions extending beyond need). The process is called breaking out.

Briar pipe
This is a classic case of folk etymology, in which English people have heard an unfamiliar word from another language, in this case French, and turned it into one that sounded more sensible to their ears. The wood from which briar (or brier) pipes are made is actually a type of heather, the white heath, which grows in the south of France as well as in other parts of the Mediterranean coast. The pipes are carved from the root. In French, this plant is called bruyère, which is from bruyère, heath. When the wood was introduced into Britain in the 1860s, its French name was quickly changed because people confused it with the native word that referred either to the bramble or the wild rose.

LOL

Ground for divorce
A judge was interviewing a woman regarding her pending divorce, and asked, "What are the grounds for your divorce?" She replied, "About four acres and a nice little home in the middle of the property with a stream running by." "No," he said, "I mean what is the foundation of this case?" "It is made of concrete, brick and mortar," she responded. "I mean," he continued, "What are your relations like?" "I have an aunt and uncle living here in town, and so do my husband's parents." He said, "Do you have a real grudge?" "No," she replied, "We have a two-car carport and have never really needed one." "Please," he tried again, "is there any infidelity in your marriage?" "Yes, both my son and daughter have stereo sets. We don't necessarily like the music, but the answer to your questions is yes." "Ma'am, does your husband ever beat you up?" "Yes," she responded, "about twice a week he gets up earlier than I do." Finally, in frustration, the judge asked, "Lady, why do you want a divorce?" "Oh, I don't want a divorce," she replied. "I've never wanted a divorce. My husband does. He said he can't communicate with me!"



'Govt wants to privatise farm sector'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Jan 7: Madhya Pradesh Congress president Kamal Nath Thursday alleged that the Centre wants to privatise the farm sector with its three new agri-marketing laws, which are being opposed by thousands of cultivators.

Talking to reporters here while announcing the launch of his party's protest against the government and an awakening drive for farmers which will continue till January 23, Nath claimed the "RSS and the Bharatiya Jana Sangh were votaries of privatisation since the beginning."

"They (the two organisations) also opposed the nationalisation of banks carried out by former prime minister Indira Gandhi," the former state chief minister claimed.

"The (present) government wants to privatise the farm sector with the three agri-marketing laws," he alleged.

The farmers of Madhya Pradesh are simple and the three new laws are against their interests, he



TUSSLE GOES ON

Enacted in September, the three farm laws have been projected by the Centre as major reforms in the agriculture sector

However, the protesting farmers have expressed apprehension that the new laws would pave the way for eliminating the safety cushion of the MSP

RSS and the Bharatiya Jana Sangh were votaries of privatisation since the beginning. They also opposed the nationalisation of banks carried out by former prime minister Indira Gandhi

KAMAL NATH | PRESIDENT, MP CONGRESS

claimed.

Thousands of have been camping at several Delhi border points for over 40 days, demanding repeal of the new farm laws and a legal guarantee on minimum support price (MSP) for their crops, besides other

issues.

"Our protest (against the government) for the farmers' cause at various levels including blocks and districts across the state - will continue till January 23," Nath said.

On January 15, a two-hour-long

"chakka jam" (road blockades) will be held from noon across the state, he said.

The Congress would also hold a massive "kisan mahapanchayat" (farmers' meet) on January 20 in the state's Morena district, he said.

'No problem with renaming airport'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aurangabad, Jan 7: AIMIM MP Thursday said they have no problem if the airport here in Maharashtra is renamed after Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, but the city's name should not be changed.

Jaleel's comments came a day after Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray urged the Centre to issue a notification at the earliest for renaming the Aurangabad Airport after Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj.

The Maharashtra cabinet in March 2020 decided to rename the Aurangabad Airport, situated in Chikhalthana area here, after Sambhaji Maharaj.

The Shiv Sena, which shares power with the NCP and the Congress in Maharashtra, has been demanding for the past couple of decades that Aurangabad be renamed as Sambhajanagar.

Earlier, on Tuesday, BJP Rajya Sabha member Dr Bhagwat Karad also urged Civil Aviation Minister Puri to rename the airport

The Maharashtra cabinet in March 2020 decided to rename the Aurangabad Airport, situated in Chikhalthana area here, after Sambhaji Maharaj

The Shiv Sena, which shares power with the NCP and the Congress in Maharashtra, has been demanding for the past couple of decades that Aurangabad be renamed as Sambhajanagar

Earlier, BJP RS member Dr Bhagwat Karad also urged Civil Aviation Minister Puri to rename the airport

Chhatrapati Sambhaji, why not we rename our new industrial city after him. We also have a world class Samruddhi Expressway (between Mumbai and Nagpur) which can be renamed after him," the Lok Sabha member said.

Earlier, on Tuesday, BJP Rajya Sabha member Dr Bhagwat Karad also urged Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri to rename the airport here after Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, saying the latter is the symbol of Maharashtra's self-respect.

Karad also demanded financial aid for development of areas surrounding some of the heritage sites in Aurangabad.

Stone-pelters may face life term: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, Jan 7: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan reiterated that a stringent law with a provision of life imprisonment will be enacted to curb the incidents of stone pelting in the state.

He said this during a public meeting here. We are enacting a strong law against the stone-pelters. (Under the proposed law) They will be sentenced to life imprisonment. They will not be allowed to be released from jail before that, he said.

Stone pelters throw stones everywhere. They try to spread terror in public, the chief minister said.

His statement comes in the wake of recent incidents of violence and stone pelting during right wing organisations recent rallies in western Madhya Pradesh to raise awareness about the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Chouhan further said, I will not tolerate 'love jihad' or any such



work in Madhya Pradesh at any cost, in which our naive daughters are allured and their lives are spoilt. We have enacted strong laws to prevent such incidents.

People who play with the lives of sisters and daughters should think that now (from the court) they will not get only a small punishment. They will be sentenced to life imprisonment, he said.

He was referring to the he

BMC LODGES COMPLAINT AGAINST SONU

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Jan 7: The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has lodged a complaint against Bollywood actor Sonu Sood, alleging that he has converted a residential building in Juhu into a hotel without permission, a police official said Thursday.

The K-West ward of the BMC filed the complaint at Juhu Police Station on Monday.

Vishwas Mote, assistant municipal commissioner of K-West ward, confirmed that the complaint has been filed against Sood for alleged violation of the provisions of the Maharashtra Regional and Town Planning (MRTP) Act.

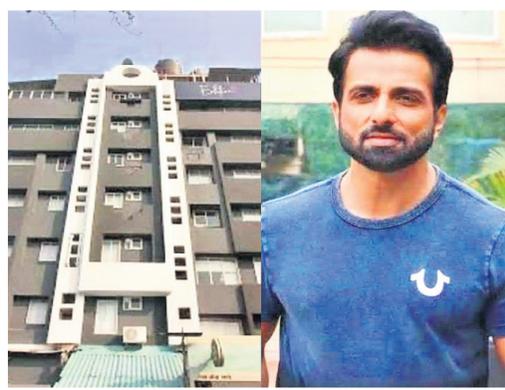
In the two-page complaint letter, the BMC alleged that the actor did not take any permission from the authorities before carrying out the structural changes in Shakti Sagar, a residential building on

Juhu's AB Nair Road.

"It was found that accused Mr Sonu Sood and Mrs Sonali Sood have instituted/completed/undertaken/carried out development or changed the user of land as detailed below: Unauthorised addition/alteration beyond approved plans and unauthorised change of user from residential to residential hotel building without taking technical sanction from competent authority," the BMC said in its complaint.

As per the complaint, the BMC had issued a notice to Sood in October last year in this connection.

"The land was one again inspected on Monday and it was found that the accused had not complied with the requisitions and was continuing to carry out unauthorised development even after the notice was served to him," the BMC said in the complaint.



Sources in the Juhu police station said that no FIR has been registered against the actor so far.

"We are waiting for the BMC officials to tell us in detail about the unauthorised structural changes

Guv okays regulating inter-faith marriages



AGENCIES

Bhopal, Jan 7: Governor Anandiben Patel Thursday signed an ordinance for its promulgation to regulate inter-faith marriages in Madhya Pradesh.

The ordinance provides for two to 10-year imprisonment and a fine up to Rs50,000 for anyone found guilty of "forcing women, minors, and people from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to undergo religious conversion".

According to the ordinance, re-conversion to embrace one's "ancestral religion" will not be considered a crime, as per the official.

An official said Patel has signed the drafts of all the 12 ordinances that the state cabinet approved and sent for her consent and promulgation on December 29. The ordinances were issued as the state assembly's winter session was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They include the one that provides for life imprisonment for those found guilty of adulteration of food and drugs.

The Madhya Pradesh Dharmik Swatantrata (Freedom of Religion) Ordinance defines ancestral religion as that of a person's father at the time of birth. It replaces the 1968 Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act and prohibits conversion and attempts on conversion done through "misrepresentation, allurement, threat, force, undue influence, coercion marriage, and any fraudulent means". "Conspiracy and abetment to religious conversion have been pro-

hibited too..." says the ordinance. It provides for annulment of inter-faith marriages solemnised by "misrepresentation, allurement, threat, coercion, undue influence, and fraud". The ordinance seeks to provide parental property rights to children born out of such marriages and maintenance to the woman and children.

The cases registered under the ordinance are cognisable and non-bailable and sessions courts are authorised to hear them. The ordinance has a provision for punishing organisations, which organise such conversions. A person embracing another religion voluntarily and the priest getting it done will have to inform the district magistrate at least 60 days prior to the scheduled date of conversion.

Over two dozen Muslim men have been arrested in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh since a similar ordinance was enacted there last month. Other Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled states like Haryana, Karnataka and Assam are planning to bring in similar anti-conversion laws that critics say are vague and being used to target inter-faith couples.

reach their homes during the lockdown. The complaint by BMC was lodged on January 4 at Juhu police station, as per a report. In the complaint, BMC stated that Sood converted the Shakti Sagar Building on AB Nair Road into a hotel without permission.

"It has been found that Sonu Sood has made a change in the use of land by himself. Apart from this, the residential building has been converted into a residential hotel building by making additional construction out of the fixed plan. For this, they have not even obtained the necessary technical approval from the authority," Livehindustan reported the BMC as saying.

Reacting to the matter, the actor said that he had already taken permission from BMC and is now waiting for approval from Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority.

World's largest floating solar plant to come up in MP

AGENCIES

Bhopal, Jan 7: The world's largest floating solar energy plant has been proposed to be built on the Omkareshwar Dam reservoir in Madhya Pradesh.

At 600 MW - the world's largest floating solar energy plant has been proposed to be constructed on the Omkareshwar Dam reservoir on the Narmada river in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh.

The project, as per a statement by state new and renewable energy minister Hardeep Singh Dang will begin power generation by the year 2022-23.

The estimated investment in this project stands at ₹3,000 crore. And the International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank and the Power Grid have granted in-principle consent for providing aid for the said project development.

The primary feasibility study of the project has been completed in collaboration with the World Bank. The project is likely to begin power

GREEN POWER

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We will execute 1776-MW floating solar plants in the four dams of Maithon, Tilaya, Konar and Panchet. The project will be executed in three phases and the first will be of 50 MW

PRABIR KUMAR MUKHOPADHYAY | MEMBER SECRETARY, DVC

the project, he said. It is estimated that in 2 years, the project will start providing cheap and good quality power.

In September, it was announced that state-owned thermal power major Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) will focus only on solar projects to add new capacity to its portfolio.

According to a top company official, the firm had already mooted 1776 MW of floating solar projects in four of its dams in West Bengal and Jharkhand, the two states that jointly own the corporation along with the Union government.

"We will execute 1776-MW floating solar plants in the four dams of Maithon, Tilaya, Konar and Panchet. The project will be executed in three phases and the first will be of 50 MW," DVC member secretary Prabir Kumar Mukhopadhyay had said.

DRUGS CASE

Shwetha gets judicial custody

Actor Shwetha Kumari was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) from a hotel in Mira Bhayander area of Thane district

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 7: South Indian actor Shwetha Kumari, arrested in connection with a drug seizure case, was remanded in judicial custody by a court here on Thursday. Kumari was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) from a hotel in Mira Bhayander area of neighbouring Thane district on Monday following the seizure 400 grams of mephedrone (MD).

As her NCB custody ended on Thursday, she was produced before a magistrate court here, which remanded her in 14-day judicial custody because the probe agency did not press for her further remand.

As part of its crackdown against drug supply in Maharashtra and Goa, the probe agency had seized



400grams of MD on January 2. The investigation into the seizure led to the search of the hotel in Mira Bhayandar, following which Kumari was arrested.

The NCB has been probing a drug related angle into the Sushant Singh Rajput death case. Actor Rhea Chakraborty, her brother Showik and suspected drug peddlers were arrested in the case. The siblings are currently out on bail.



The Congress will not be fighting in Tamil Nadu on its own, it is going to be part of the alliance being put together by the DMK
MANI SHANKAR AIYAR | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

ARNAB FAILS TO APPEAR BEFORE COURT

TV journalist Arnab Goswami, an accused in an abetment of suicide case, failed to appear before a court in Raigad district of Maharashtra on Thursday, prompting the prosecution to seek a warrant against him



of the day quote

NEP touches upon the interdisciplinary studies and integrated course curriculum in higher education for wider learning opportunities, with an aim to provide value-based holistic education, development of scientific temper and imparting skill training to the youth of India

RAMESH POKHRIYAL | UNION EDUCATION MINISTER

The mahayagya to modernise the country's infrastructure is now picking pace

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has started development in Jammu & Kashmir by ridding it of terrorism and separatism

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

Centre writes to 4 states on new Covid-19 strain

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 7: Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan has written to Maharashtra, Kerala, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, urging them to take steps to curb the spike in coronavirus cases.

These states are reporting an upsurge in the number of daily new cases in the recent days, and comprise 59 per cent of the total active cases in the country. About 28.61 per cent cases are in Kerala, followed by 22.79 per cent in Maharashtra, 3.99 per cent in Chhattisgarh and 3.89 per cent in West Bengal.

These states have been advised to maintain strict vigil and to take steps to keep a check on the rising cases, especially in view of the new coronavirus strain observed in certain countries, which has also been reported in a few states in India.

The Health Secretary has drawn the attention of the states to their low and declining testing rates, stating that any laxity at this crucial juncture may squander the results of collective actions in containing the transmission.

They have been advised to analyze the surge at the district and sub-district levels to understand the reasons for this rise and plan adequate measures proactively to curb the same. Aggressively implementation of the 'Test-Track-Treat' strategy adopted by the country has been strongly advised now



more than ever by the Union Health Secretary. The health authorities in the states have also been advised to proactively promote wearing of mask and other Covid appropriate behaviors even while the vaccination drive is about to begin.

It is important to ensure that there is no complacency in the collective efforts in containment and management of Covid-19, the Health Secretary has strongly reiterated.

The states have been assured of all necessary support of the Health Ministry required to manage the pandemic. In view of the above, a high-level central team led by Dr S.K. Singh, Director, National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), has been rushed by the Central government to Kerala. The team will review the public health interventions in management of Covid-19 by the state government and support these measures. Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Thursday sought keen oversight

and personal indulgence of health ministers, principal secretaries and additional chief secretaries of states and union territories to lead the second nationwide mock drill on the COVID-19 vaccination scheduled to be held on January 8.

The drill will be held at three session sites of 736 districts across 33 states and union territories, the health ministry said in a statement.

Vardhan interacted with the health ministers and principal secretaries and additional chief secretaries through video conference to review the preparedness for the mock drill.

"The objective of the mock drill on COVID-19 vaccination is to simulate the actual vaccine administration event," the ministry said.

The entire planning of the vaccination drive including beneficiary registration, microplanning and vaccination at the planned session site will be tested under the leadership of district collector or district magistrate.

38 tribal women kidnapped from Raj by MP villagers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kota, Jan 7: In a brazen case of mass kidnapping, a group of over 100 people belonging to a Madhya Pradesh village allegedly abducted 38 tribal women and children from Rajasthan on suspicion that their men were involved in stealing their bikes, police said on Thursday.

The Rajasthan police, however, managed to secure the release of the kidnapped women and children from Madhya Pradesh within hours of the offence and arrested six of the alleged kidnappers and seized their arms and ammunition and the car used for the abduction on Wednesday afternoon.

The brazen offence of interstate kidnapping of tribal women was committed in Unhel police station area of Jhalwar district in Rajasthan by the people of Kalasiya village under Alot police station of Ratlam district in Madhya Pradesh, Unhel police station's SHO Bhanwar Singh said.

Singh said several families of 'Kanjar' tribe community live in makeshift tents at the interstate border under his police station area.

These tribal people are often suspected to be involved in various crimes in the area by locals, he added.

The provocation for this daring offence of mass kidnapping was the theft of a motorbike of someone belonging to Kalasiya village in the neighbouring Ratlam district, he added.

Sonia slams govt over fuel price, farmer stir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Thursday attacked the Modi government over the ongoing farmer agitation and the hike in fuel prices, and said the country is today standing at the crossroads for the first time since Independence. On the hike in fuel prices, she accused the government of profiteering and said it is turning a disaster into an opportunity to fill its coffers.

She also alleged that the government is breaking the back of the poor, the farmers, and the middle class due to its "insensitivity".

"Demand from the government that the rates of excise duty on petrol and diesel be made similar to that during the UPA regime and provide immediate relief to the affected people. I once again appeal to the government to repeal the three farm laws immediately and fulfil all the demands of farmers," she said in a statement.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also accused the government of "looting" the people by imposing heavy taxes on fuel and alleged that this is the reason it is not bringing them under the purview of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

"There has been unprecedented 'development' in prices of petrol and diesel. The Modi government is looting the public by charging heavy taxes on fuel. This is the reason why the government is not willing to bring petrol-diesel under GST," he said in a tweet in Hindi. Sonia Gandhi said in the midst



of a collapsing economy due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Modi government is trying to turn the disaster as an opportunity to fill its coffers. She said while the price of crude oil is USD 50.96 per barrel - just Rs 23.43 per litre internationally - diesel is being sold for Rs 74.38 and petrol at Rs 84.20 per litre in the national capital.

This is the highest in the last 73 years, she alleged.

"The country is standing at the crossroads today for the first time in the history of independent India. On one hand, the country's annadata is standing on the borders of Delhi for the last 44 days in support of their legitimate demands, while the country's autocratic, insensitive and ruthless BJP government is busy breaking the back of the poor, farmers and middle class," she said in a statement.

The Congress chief said despite lower international prices, the government has broken all records of profiteering by exorbitantly raising excise duty instead of passing on the benefits to common people.

In the last six-and-a-half years, the Modi government has increased excise duty to recover about Rs 19,00,000 crore from the pockets of common people, she said.

SHORT TAKES

Ticket refund: Rlys extends time

New Delhi: The Ministry of Railways has extended the time limit for cancellation of counter tickets for train journeys between March 21 and June 30, 2020 from the present six months to nine months in view of the coronavirus crisis. "Ministry of Railways has decided to extend the time limit beyond six months and up to nine months from the date of journey for cancellation of PRS counter tickets and refund of fare across reservation counters for the journey period March 21, 2020 to June 7, 2020. It is applicable only for regular time tabled trains cancelled by Railways," the ministry said in a statement.

Cops to file FIR against Chhabria

Mumbai: Mumbai Police are in the process of filing a case of misappropriation and cheating against car designer Dilip Chhabria over a complaint lodged against him by comedian Kapil Sharma a few months back for allegedly duping him to the tune of Rs 5.30 crore, which he had paid for manufacturing a vanity bus, an official said. Chhabria was arrested last week, after the Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) of Mumbai police unearthed a major DC Avanti car financing and forgery scam. "Comedian Kapil Sharma on Thursday visited Mumbai Police Commissioner's Office in South Mumbai and lodged his complaint against Dilip Chhabria Designs Pvt Ltd," the official said.

Man stabbed to death in TN

Karur (TN): A 28-year old man was allegedly stabbed to death by the kin of a teenage girl for 'harassing' her to accept his love and five people, including her father, have been arrested in connection with the killing, police said here Thursday.

Several Goa Cong leaders booked

Panaji: Goa Police on Thursday filed cases against several local Congress leaders and social activists a day after violence broke out in the state's Sattari tehsil over the proposed Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) campus at the nearby Shel-Melauli village, an official said. The protest against the proposed IIT campus had taken a violent turn on Wednesday with the local protesters hurling stones and the police responding with lathicharge.

Delhi records season's highest power demand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: Delhi's peak power demand clocked 5,265 MW Thursday, the highest so far this winter, due to the continuing chilly weather, discom officials said.

The peak power demand of the city has increased by over four per cent since January 1. It registered an increase of over 50 per cent since December 1 and by 67 per cent since November 1, 2020, they said.

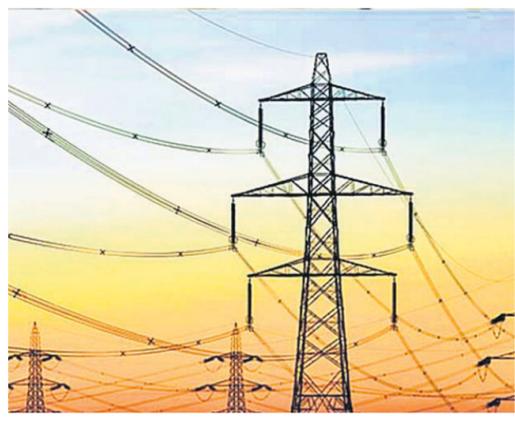
"Delhi's peak power demand continues to increase due to the city's chilly weather. Today, the peak power demand clocked 5,265 MW, the season's highest of this winter, pipping this season's previous high of 5,021 MW recorded on January 1," said a spokesperson of BSES.

BSES discoms -- BRPL and

BYPL - successfully met the power demand of 2,187 MW and 1,093 MW in their respective areas. Delhi's peak power demand had crossed the 5,000 MW for the first time this winter January 1, he said. On December 1, 2020, Delhi's peak power demand was 3,504 MW. Since then, the city's peak power demand has increased by over 50 per cent.

Delhi's peak power demand this winter can go up to 5,480 MW, surpassing last year's winter demand, projected the discom officials. Last year, it had risen to 5,343 MW. The peak winter power demand in BRPL and BYPL areas had reached 2,020 MW and 1,165 MW respectively during last winter.

This year, it is expected to reach 2,200 MW and 1,270 MW for BRPL and BYPL respectively, said the BSES spokesperson.



Farmers rest inside their makeshift tents at Delhi-UP Ghaziabad border, during their protest against new farm laws, in Ghaziabad

JEE-Advanced test for IITs July 3

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: The JEE-Advanced test for admission to Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will be conducted July 3 and the eligibility criteria of 75 per cent marks in class 12 has been relaxed, Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" announced Thursday.

For admissions to IITs, apart from qualifying the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)-Advanced, the candidates are required to secure either minimum 75 per cent marks in class 12 board exams or rank among



the top 20 percentile in their qualifying examinations. While JEE-Mains is conducted for admission to engineering colleges across the country, it is considered as a qualifying test for JEE-Advanced.

"JEE-Advanced will be conducted by IIT Kharagpur on July 3.

The relaxation in admission requirement of 75 per cent marks in class 12 which was announced last year in view of COVID-19 pandemic will be offered this year as well," Nishank said.

The Ministry of Education had last month announced that JEE-Mains for admission to engineering colleges will be held four times a year starting 2021 to offer flexibility to students and a chance to improve their scores.

The first edition of the Joint Entrance Examination-Mains (JEE-Mains) will be held from February 23 to 26, followed by rounds in March, April and May.

Man marries both his girlfriends at same mandap

AGENCIES

Raipur, Jan 7: Well they say 'love bug' can bite any time. However for Chandu Maurya it is a case of the 'love bug' biting him twice. What is all the more significant is that Chandu has married both the women he loves. He tied the nuptial knot with the two in the same ceremony in front of his family and friends. The family of one of the girls was present; the other's skipped the function. Meet Sundari Kashyap and Haseena Baghel the two wives of Chandu Maurya who are perfectly okay sleeping under the same roof.

Chandu got married to Sundari and Haseena January 5.

The marriages were attended by over 500 people.

'Love' first entered Chandu's life when he was on work. He is a farmer-labourer and stays in a remote village in the Maoist-affected Bastar district of Chhattisgarh. Chandu had gone to the Tokapal locality to set up electric poles when he met Sundari. It was love at first sight and there was no looking back. They kept in touch over the phone murmuring sweet nothings to one another as love blossomed.

There was more to come though. The 20-year-old Haseena came to Chandu's village, Tikralohnga to attend a marriage function. Chandu could not resist the temptation of



Image courtesy twitter

falling in love again. Chandu confessed to Haseena that he was already in a relationship. However, that did not matter to the already 'smitten' Haseena. She insisted that they keep in touch over the phone.

"Both Haseena and Sundari were aware about each other and still agreed to have a relationship with me. We were in touch over the phone but one day Haseena landed at my home to live with me. When Sundari came to know that Haseena is here, she also came to me. And since then, we started living in the same house like a family," Chandu, who lives with his parents and two siblings was quoted as saying by the 'Hindustan

Times'. However, in spite of everything going on peacefully, villagers started questioning Chandu's live-in relationship with two women. Fed up with their constant questioning, Chandu decided to marry both.

"I decided to marry both of them because they both loved me. I can't betray them. They agreed they both will live with me forever," said Chandu. The family members of Haseena came to attend the marriage ceremony but Sundari's family skipped the function, said Chandu. Both the wives have said that 'very happy' after marrying Chandu. Marry, Bastar; Two women, Chandu Maurya, Love.



The Centre has decided to lift the ban and restart UK flights. In view of the extremely serious COVID-19 situation in the UK, I would urge the Centre to extend the ban till January 31
ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

SCHOOL SHUT AFTER PRINCIPAL TESTS nCoV+VE

A government high school in Bihar's Gaya district has suspended all its classes for an indefinite period as a precautionary measure after the headmaster of the institution tested positive for coronavirus, an official said Thursday



of the day quote

There is no case of bird flu in Delhi yet and asked officials to keep a close watch on poultry birds coming in from neighbouring states to prevent any infection

MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

A common effluent treatment plant (CETP) would be established over 26 acres of land in Erode for the benefit of the people

K PALANISWAMI | TAMIL NADU CHIEF MINISTER

Manoj Tiwari had promised that there will be no scarcity of money in the MCD because the BJP will directly bring money or funds from the Central government. Tiwari misled the people of Delhi by making false promises and did not bring a single penny from the Centre. He should resign from the post of MP

SAURABH BHARDWAJ | AAP CHIEF SPOKESPERSON

SC expresses concern over gatherings amid pandemic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: The Supreme Court Thursday asked the Centre whether the farmers protesting against the new farm laws at Delhi borders are "protected" against the spread of COVID-19 and said that the guidelines to contain the virus should be followed.

The apex court was hearing a plea seeking various reliefs including CBI probe into the matter related to assembly of people at Anand Vihar Bus Terminal and the Tablighi Jamaat congregation at Nizamuddin Markaz in the national capital after the nationwide lockdown was announced last year to contain the pandemic.

"You must tell us what is happening. The same problem is going to arise in farmers' agitation. I do not know if farmers are protected from COVID. So, the same problem is going to arise. It is not that everything is over," said Chief Justice S A Bobde, who was heading the bench which also comprised Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian.

The top court asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, whether protesting farmers are protected from COVID-19. Mehta replied, "Certainly not". Mehta said that he will file a report within two weeks on what has been done and what needs to be done.

The plea, filed by advocate Supriya Pandita, has alleged that Delhi police had failed to control the gathering of people at Anand Vihar Bus Terminal last year during the lockdown. Advocate Om Prakash Parihar, appearing for the peti-



tioner, Thursday told the bench that the police has not said anything about the whereabouts of Nizamuddin Markaz chief Maulana Saad. The bench told Parihar, "Why are you interested in one person? We are on the issue of COVID. Why do you want controversy? We are interested that COVID guidelines should be followed".

The apex court said it is trying to ensure that COVID-19 does not spread and the guidelines are followed.

"Issue notice. In the meantime, respondents shall file their reply affidavit, if any," the bench said in its order. The Centre had June 5 last year told the top court that probe into assembly of people at Anand Vihar Bus Terminal in east Delhi during nationwide lockdown and the Tablighi Jamaat event is being conducted on a day-to-day basis by Delhi Police and there was no need for CBI investigation.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had earlier given the details of steps taken by Delhi Police which is making all efforts to complete the investigation within the time frame to submit the charge sheet in the trial court. It had told the top court that due to fake media reports and circulation of certain misinformation in the areas of Delhi, thousands of migrants gathered at Anand Vihar Bus terminal and Ghazipur border areas here March 28, last year.

On the steps taken by Delhi Police, the MHA in its affidavit had said that probe in Markaz matter is being conducted on a day-to-day basis, in accordance with the mandate of law and all efforts are being made to finalize investigation and submit a report under section 173 CrPC (charge sheet) before the trial court in a time bound manner.

The MHA had alleged that Maulana Saad and others had allowed a huge gathering to assemble inside a closed premise, over a protracted period of time, without any semblance of social distances or provision of masks and sanitizers and have caused a situation where a highly infectious disease such as COVID-19 may spread and threaten the lives of inmates.

J&K L-G announces new industrial development scheme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Jan 7: The Jammu and Kashmir administration Thursday announced a new industrial developmental scheme (IDS) with a total outlay of Rs 28,400 crore to encourage new investment and to take industrial development to the block level.

"In a major decision of far-reaching consequence, Government of India has approved a new Industrial Developmental Scheme for Jammu and Kashmir," Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha announced at a press conference here. "The scheme will go a long way in ushering an era of socio-economic development of the region and for catering to the aspirations of people," he said.

Sinha said that this scheme is from the period of date of notification up to the year 2037 with a total outlay of Rs 28,400 crore. He said that it is for the first time any industrial incentive scheme is taking development to the block level and added that it will promote far-flung areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The scheme will encourage new investment, substantial expansion and also nurture the existing industries in the Union territory. It will also provide employment to 4.5 lakh people besides leading to equitable, balanced and sustainable socio-economic development of the region," the LG said. He said that manufacturing and service sector units in the union territory will benefit and noted that the scheme visualises a larger role of Jammu and Kashmir in the Indian economy. "The scheme will optimise utilisation of the local strengths of Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

NCW team visits Badaun gangrape victim's family



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Badaun (UP), Jan 7: A two-member team of the National Commission for Women (NCW) Thursday met the family of the 50-year-old woman who was allegedly gang-raped and murdered in Badaun district January 3. The NCW team also visited the crime site.

Chandramukhi Devi, one of the members of the team, said that she was not satisfied with the role of the police in the incident. "If the police would have shown swiftness in the matter, perhaps they could have saved the victim," she said after her visit.

Before paying a visit to the victim's family, the team also had a meeting with the SSP of the area and went through the details of the incident.

Interestingly, even as the NCW team was at the house of the victim, the wife and daughter of one of the accused in the crime tried

to meet the visiting delegation.

The wife and daughter of the accused, Jashpal, demanded justice for themselves and claimed that he was innocent. "My husband got a call that there is a patient and went to do his job. He came to know about the case later," said Jaspal's wife, claiming that he is being framed. According to police, the 50-year-old woman, who was an Anganwadi worker, was gang-raped and murdered in the Ughaiti area of Badaun district when she had gone to a temple Sunday evening.

The post-mortem report of the deceased confirmed rape, injury in her private parts, and fracture in her legs.

An FIR was registered against three accused, including a priest, at the Ughaiti police station under Sections 376 (d) and 302 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Two of the accused persons have been arrested while the priest is still absconding.

SHORT TAKES

UP may get a 'new' political party

Lucknow: The anti-CAA and NRC protesters in Uttar Pradesh are now planning to form a political party that will raise their issues. The proposed political party will be named Rashtriya Justice Party and efforts are on to bring protesters from every district on one platform.

Srinagar-Jammu highway shut

Srinagar: The Srinagar-Jammu National Highway was shut for traffic for the fifth consecutive day Thursday in the wake of heavy snowfall over the past four days, even as the minimum temperature across the valley stayed below the freezing point, officials said. The 260 kilometre-long highway, the only all-weather road connecting Kashmir with the rest of the country, was blocked by the accumulation of snow and landslides Sunday.

Woman killed in fire in Maha

Nagpur: A 45-year-old woman was killed in a fire that erupted due to short circuit at a car parts shop in Maharashtra's Nagpur city Thursday, police said. The blaze broke out at the shop on ground floor of a residential building in Chaoni area in the morning hours, a fire official said.

PLFI member arrested

Lohardaga: Police has arrested a Naxalite from Jharkhand's Lohardaga district, a senior police officer said. Superintendent of Police Priyanka Meena said based on secret information a police team arrested Sanjay Bhagat alias Sanjay Kujur, a member of the banned Peoples Liberation Front of India (PLFI) Wednesday.

Yogi meets PM

New Delhi: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath met Prime Minister Narendra Modi here on Thursday and had a discussion on the political situation and development projects in the state. Prime Minister Modi assured all possible help from the Centre for the development of the country's largest state.

Woman gives up assets worth ₹1.5 cr for love

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Jan 7: A woman in Bhopal has given up her property worth Rs 1.5 crore to be with the love of her life.

The romance that began at the workplace between a 44-year-old man and his 54-year-old woman colleague, soon turned serious after she expressed her wish to stay with him. It was, however, not easy as the man was already married with two daughters -- one aged 16. His wife soon got a whiff about the presence of another woman in her husband's life following which fights took place. The matter eventually reached the court. According to Sarita Rajani, a court counsellor, the man's wife put a condition before leaving her husband. Rajani said the man's girlfriend agreed to his wife's condition and transferred her approximately Rs 1.5 crore-worth property in her name. Finally, both the husband and wife decided to part ways.

DAILY NEEDS



People purchasing dried vegetables from a vendor after a heavy snowfall in Srinagar

UNI PHOTO

All Guj villages to get day-time agri power supply by 2022-end

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Jan 7: Farmers of all 18,000-odd villages in Gujarat will get power supply during the day time for agriculture purposes by the end of the year 2022, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced Thursday.

The BJP government in the state has allocated Rs 3,500 crore

to create the necessary infrastructure for this ambitious Kisan Suryodaya Yojna' (KSY), Rupani said addressing a gathering Tilakwada town in Narmada while launching the project for 39 villages of the district.

In October last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the scheme, aimed at providing electricity during the day time



to farmers for irrigation and farming purposes, for the entire state, and villages of different districts

are being covered in a phase-wise manner, Rupani said.

"Farmers have been demanding that they be given agricultural power supply during the day, as going to fields in the night to irrigate the crop is dangerous. That is why we have approved this scheme having a budget of Rs 3,500 crore," the Chief Minister said in his address.

'Air pollution linked to increased risk of pregnancy loss in India'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 7: Pregnant women in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, who are exposed to poor air quality, may be at higher risk of stillbirths and miscarriages, according to a modelling study published in The Lancet Planetary Health journal.

Researchers found that an estimated 349,681 pregnancy losses per year in south Asia were associated with exposure to PM2.5 concentrations that exceeded India's air quality standard of 40 microgrammes per cubic metre (µg/m3) of small particulate matter (PM2.5). These account for 7 per cent of annual pregnancy loss in the re-

gion from 2000-2016, they said. For air pollution above WHO air quality guideline of 10 µg/m3, exposure may have contributed to 29 per cent of pregnancy losses, according to the study.

"South Asia has the highest burden of pregnancy loss globally and is one of the most PM2.5 polluted regions in the world," said study lead author Tao Xue, from Peking University, China.

"Our findings suggest that poor air quality could be responsible for a considerable burden of pregnancy loss in the region, providing further justification for urgent action to tackle dangerous levels of pollution," Xue said. Tianjia Guan,



Representative image

from the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences said that losing

a pregnancy can have knock-on mental, physical and economic effects on women.

These, Guan said, include increased risk of postnatal depressive disorders, infant mortality during subsequent pregnancy, and increase the costs related to pregnancy, such as loss of labour. "Therefore, reducing pregnancy loss may also lead to knock-on improvements in gender equality," Guan, one of the authors of the study said.

The researchers noted that pregnancy loss associated with air pollution was more common in the Northern plains region in India and Pakistan. Although the total bur-

den of pregnancy loss was predominantly borne by rural women aged under 30 years old in recent years, the burden attributable to PM2.5 also affected older mothers, aged 30 years or over, in rural areas because of their high susceptibility to the adverse effects of pollution, they said.

The team combined data from household surveys on health from 1998-2016 and estimated exposure to PM2.5 during pregnancy through combining satellite with atmospheric modelling outputs. They created a model to calculate the risk of pregnancy loss for each 10 µg/m3 increase in PM2.5 after adjusting for maternal age, temperature and hu-

midity, seasonal variation, and long-term trends in pregnancy loss.

The researchers calculated the number of pregnancy losses that may have been caused by PM2.5 in the whole region for the period 2000-16 and looked at how many pregnancy losses might have been prevented under India's and WHO's air quality standard.

In the study, they included 34,197 women who had lost a pregnancy, including 27,480 miscarriages and 6,717 stillbirths, which were compared to livebirth controls. Of the pregnancy loss cases, 77 per cent were from India, 12 per cent from Pakistan, and 11 per cent from Bangladesh.



FILE PHOTO

Covid 'alert' on Jallikattu

Jallikattu is typically celebrated in the southern state of Tamil Nadu as part of the Pongal celebrations, on the Mattu Pongal day, which occurs annually during this month

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Jan 7: Over 50 doctors and people for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India appealed to the Tamil Nadu government to immediately withdraw the permission for the annual bull taming event - Jallikattu.

Over 50 doctors have signed a letter to the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Edappadi Palaniswami and Health Minister C. Vijayabaskar urging them to immediately withdraw the permission, which the doctors warn poses a grave risk to the general public because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

The appeal is in response to the Tamil Nadu government's recent order allowing the conduct of Jallikattu events with hundreds of people present, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India has also asked the state government to stop Jallikattu

events. The letter signed by 50 doctors, states, "To prevent the rapid spread of Covid-19 and to protect public health, as well as to ease the pressure on the healthcare professionals, non-essential activities such as Jallikattu events, which lead to unnecessary gatherings of people, must not be allowed."

The letter also states, "Since the Tamil Nadu government legalised Jallikattu in 2017, at least 22 bulls and 57 humans have reportedly died, while 3,632 humans were injured in events organised throughout the state."

PETA India Research Associate Dr. Ankita Pandey further cautions that more people are expected to die this year, not only because of Jallikattu itself but also because of Covid-19.

"If Jallikattu events are not stopped, if huge crowds gather to torment bulls, society will be tormented, too," she urges the TN government.

MADNESS UNLEASHED

“As you know, madness is like gravity...all it takes is a little push,” this is what the Joker famously says in the 2008-movie ‘The Dark Knight’; this got manifested by Trump who told the mob, “You will never take back our country with weakness,” and the show began!



VIOLENT MEANS: Supporters of President Trump clash with police officers outside of the US Capitol Building in Washington, January 6



NOT JULY 4 FIREWORKS: An explosion caused by a police munition at the Capitol Building, January 6

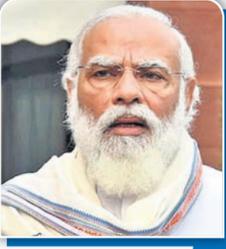


THE CLIMB: Supporters of President Trump climb a wall at the Capitol Building



Disgraceful scenes in U.S. Congress. The United States stands for democracy around the world and it is now vital that there should be a peaceful and orderly transfer of power

BORIS JOHNSON
PM, UNITED KINGDOM



Distressed to see news about rioting and violence in Washington DC. Orderly and peaceful transfer of power must continue. The democratic process cannot be allowed to be subverted through unlawful protests

NARENDRA MODI
PM, INDIA

THE 25TH AMENDMENT

Can Trump be declared unfit for office?

AGENCIES

Washington, Jan 7: Democratic Congress members are telling Vice President Pence that Trump cannot remain for full term as the latter is not ‘mentally sound’.

Calls are growing in the United States for President Donald Trump to be removed from office after he failed to condemn his supporters for storming the US Capitol Building as members met to certify Joe Biden as the country’s next president.

Broadcast network ABC News, citing multiple sources with direct knowledge of the move, reported that some members of Trump’s cabinet were discussing an unprecedented move to invoke Section 4 of the 25th Amendment of the constitution, as several Democratic members of Congress urged Vice President Mike Pence to lead the charge in declaring Trump as “unfit” to remain as president.

“President Trump revealed that he is not mentally sound and is still unable to process and accept the results of the 2020 election,” they wrote in a letter that was signed by all Democratic members of the House Judiciary Committee. “President Trump has shown time and again that he is unwilling to protect our Democracy and carry out the duties of the office.”

The Washington Post newspaper’s editorial board also called for Trump’s removal, saying, “every second he retains the vast powers of the presidency is a threat to public order and national security”. It was a view echoed by The Miami Herald newspaper: “His comments were no mere dog whistle to his marauding posse. This was a full-throated war cry,” the paper said in an editorial. “With his un-American words and his anti-democratic acts, Trump led this insurrection every bit as much as if he were storming the Capitol himself.”



WHAT DOES SEC 4 OF THE AMENDMENT SAY?

Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President. Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

A social media reckoning

FACEBOOK AND TWITTER INDEFINITELY BAR TRUMP

NEW YORK: All it took for social-media giants Twitter and Facebook to even temporarily bar President Donald Trump from addressing their vast audiences was a violent insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, fueled by years of false statements, conspiracy theories and violent rhetoric from the President.

Wednesday, in an unprecedented step, the two companies temporarily suspended Trump from posting to their platforms after a mob of his supporters stormed the house of Congress. It was the most aggressive action either company has yet taken against Trump, who more than a decade ago embraced the immediacy and scale of Twitter to rally loyalists, castigate enemies and spread false rumors.

Twitter locked Trump out of his account for 12 hours and said that future violations could result in a permanent suspension. The company required the removal of three of Trump’s tweets, including a short video in which he urged those supporters to “go home” while also repeating falsehoods about the integrity of the presidential election. Trump’s account deleted those posts, Twitter said; had they remained, Twitter had threatened to extend his suspension.

Facebook and Instagram, which Facebook owns, followed up in the evening, announcing that Trump wouldn’t be able to post for 24 hours following two violations of its policies. The White House did not immediately offer a response to the actions.

While some cheered the platforms’ actions, experts noted that the companies’ actions follow years of hemming and hawing on Trump and his supporters spreading dangerous misinformation and encouraging violence that have contributed to Wednesday’s violence.



Capitol has seen violence, but not like this

NEW YORK: In more than 220 years, the U.S. Capitol had seen nothing like it: a rolling mob, forcing its way past its majestic marble columns, disrupting the passage of power, desecrating the seat of the world’s greatest democracy.

But this was far from the first time the Capitol has been

scarred by violence. Over the centuries, events have made a mockery of the inscription on the rostrum of the House chamber — “Union, Justice, Tolerance, Liberty, Peace.” The building has been bombed several times. There have been shootings. One legislator has even been killed another.

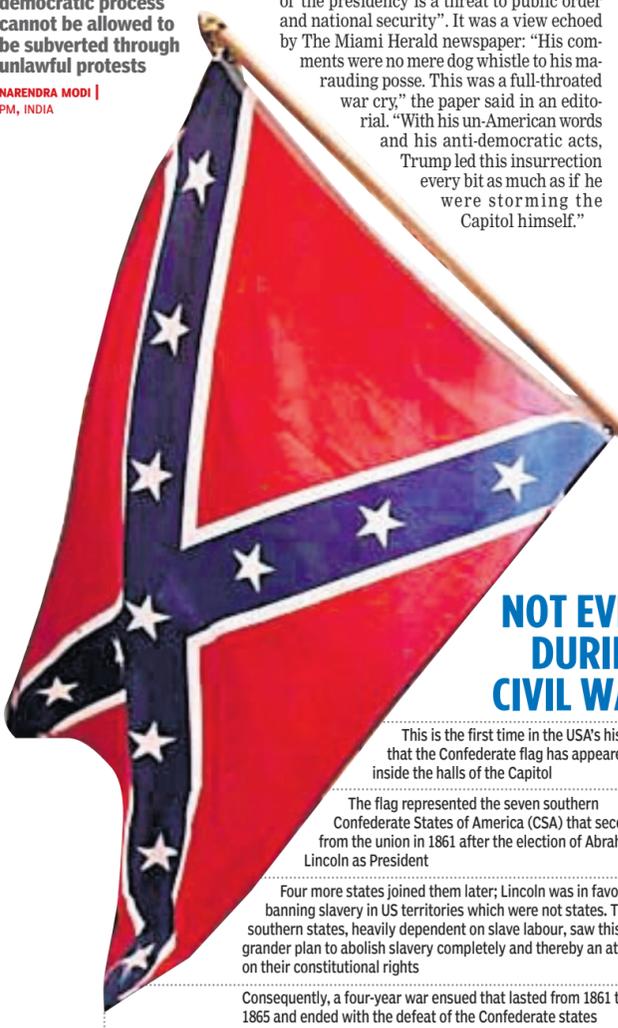
The most deadly attack on the Capitol occurred in



1998, when a mentally ill man fired at a checkpoint and killed two Capitol Police officers. One of the dying officers managed to wound the gunman, who was arrested and later institutionalised. A nearby statue of Vice President John C. Calhoun still bears a bullet mark from the incident.

- In 1814, just 14 years after the building opened, British forces in the War of 1812 tried to burn it down
- In 1856, Rep. Preston Brooks attacked abolitionist Senator Charles Sumner with his cane on the floor of the Senate after the Senator gave a speech criticising slavery
- The most famous episode occurred in 1954, when four Puerto Rican nationalists unfurled the island’s flag, shouting ‘Freedom for Puerto Rico’
- In 1915, a German man planted three sticks of dynamite in the Senate reception room

THE MOST DEADLY ATTACK ON THE CAPITOL OCCURRED IN 1998, WHEN A MENTALLY ILL MAN FIRED AT A CHECKPOINT AND KILLED TWO CAPITOL POLICE OFFICERS



NOT EVEN DURING CIVIL WAR

This is the first time in the USA’s history that the Confederate flag has appeared inside the halls of the Capitol

The flag represented the seven southern Confederate States of America (CSA) that seceded from the union in 1861 after the election of Abraham Lincoln as President

Four more states joined them later; Lincoln was in favour of banning slavery in US territories which were not states. The southern states, heavily dependent on slave labour, saw this as a grander plan to abolish slavery completely and thereby an attack on their constitutional rights

Consequently, a four-year war ensued that lasted from 1861 to 1865 and ended with the defeat of the Confederate states

The Civil War is known to have been the costliest and the deadliest war in America, leading to the death of approximately 6,20,000 soldiers, and leaving millions more injured, with large parts of the South in ruins

A Trump supporter carries a Confederate battle flag on the 2nd floor of the Capitol Building, January 6

TRICOLOUR AT THE WRONG PLACE

What grabbed the attention of many on the social media was the presence of the Indian flag in the pool of protesters. A video which has been doing rounds on social media showed a person holding the Tricolour amid Trump supporters who were holding banners and waving the American flag. The person’s identity or political affiliations is not known so far



business



With the continued addition of new startups, booming unicorns and increased adoption of deep-tech, the ecosystem shows an even more promising future
DEBJANI GHOSH | PRESIDENT, NASSCOM

MUSK OVERTAKES BEZOS

Tesla Inc chief and billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk surpassed Amazon's Jeff Bezos to become the world's richest man, Thursday. Including Thursday's gains in Tesla shares, Musk had a net worth of more than \$188.5 billion, \$1.5 billion more than Bezos, according to the report



of the day quote

We may see continuation in ongoing outperformance of banking sector in coming days. Also, we continue to maintain our bullish stance in insurance space and advise traders to use buy on dips strategy on the same

JAY PUROHIT
TECHNICAL & DERIVATIVES ANALYST, MOPSL

Some issues are easier to fix and some others (ties with Qatar) will take a longer time

ANWAR GARGASH
MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, UAE

It's a very bad policy and there's enough money in Asia, lots and getting bigger, that one shouldn't force these companies out of America

THOMAS CALDWELL | CHAIRMAN, CALDWELL INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Employment scenario worsens in December

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 7: The employment scenario in the country, which improved post the lifting of the lockdown, has worsened in December, according to data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE).

The unemployment rate in the country increased sharply to 9.1 per cent in December from 6.5 per cent in November, as per the data. The numbers indicate that the stress in the economy is far from over and the road to normalcy would be longer.

According to CMIE's MD and CEO Mahesh Vyas, the December number is the highest unemployment rate since the beginning of India's recovery from the lockdown in June. He noted that the rise in unemployment comes along with high inflation, which has been in the vicinity of 7 per cent in recent

The unemployment rate in the country increased sharply to 9.1% in December from 6.5% in November, according to data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy

months, and has made the situation worse. He also raised concerns that the sharp increase in unemployment strengthens worries regarding the recovery process.

As per the think tank, the rise in unemployment in December is the result of a partial recovery of the labour participation rate (LPR). The LPR had fallen to 40 per cent in November from 40.7 per cent in the preceding two months.

RISING JOBLESSNESS



LPR is a measure of an economy's active workforce. It is calculated by dividing the labour force by the total working-age population.

In December, the LPR recovered partly, to 40.6 per cent. The influx of people looking for work swelled

and the labour force increased from an estimated 421 million in November to 427 million in December. But, labour markets were not ready for this six-million surge in labour, leaving them largely unemployed, Vyas said.

CMIE noted that the primary reason of the rise in unemployment in December was the failure of the farm sector to absorb the influx of labour. Farming is the last resort of many who are rendered jobless, but December is not the suitable month for absorption of labour, it said.

This is the month when farming sheds jobs. In each of the past five years since 2016, labour employed in farming in December has shrunk compared to November. In December 2019, the job loss from farming was 10 million. In December 2020, this sector shed an estimated 9.8 million jobs, showed the CMIE data.

As of December end, India had around 38.7 million unemployed people compared to 27.4 million in November, registering a massive increase of 11.3 million. This huge increase places the unemployed higher than it was before the lockdown.

Tata Power takes over power distribution in Odisha

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 7: Tata Power Thursday announced that it has taken over the management and operations of Odisha's power distribution utilities WESCO and SOUTHCO upon completion of the sale process.

With this, WESCO and SOUTHCO will operate under the company name as TP Western Odisha Distribution Ltd (TPWODL) and TP Southern Odisha Distribution Ltd (TPSODL) respectively.

As per order issued by the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC), Tata Power holds 51 per cent of equity with management control and the state-owned GRIDCO will have the remaining 49 per cent equity stake in the company.

WESCO, SOUTHCO

TPWODL is responsible for the distribution and retail supply of electricity in five circles of WESCO covering 2 million consumers with annual input energy of 7,520 MUs in Rourkela, Burla, Bhanjanipatna, Bolangir, and Bargarh areas, while TPSODL will be responsible for the distribution covering 2.3 million consumers with average energy input of 3,470 MUs and retail supply of electricity in six circles of SOUTHCO in areas of Ganjam city, Berhampur, Aska, Bhanjanagar, Jeypore and Rayagada.

With this takeover, the company's distribution circles will expand to the western (TPWODL) and southern part (TPSODL) of Odisha with geographical spread of more than 47,000 sq km each. It will manage a network of more than 100,000 CKT kms each for a license period of 25 years.

LIC begins campaign to revive customers' lapsed policies

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: To encourage continuation of risk cover amid the Covid-19 pandemic, LIC launched a special revival campaign from January 7 to March 6 for its customers in order to revive their individual lapsed policies. It has also authorised 1,526 satellite offices to revive policies where special medical tests are not required.

Under this Special Revival Campaign, policies of specific eligible plans can be revived within five years from date of the First Unpaid Premium subject to terms & conditions. Certain concession in health requirements are also being offered, subject to eligibility. Most policies can be revived only on the basis of a Declaration of Good Health and a Covid-19 questionnaire to be submitted by the proposer/life assurer.

The campaign is launched to benefit those policy holders who were not able to pay premiums amid the pandemic; resulting in their policies getting lapsed.

LIC values its policyholders and their desire to continue their 'insurance cover'. This campaign is a good opportunity for the policyholders to revive their policies and restore life cover to ensure financial security for their family. LIC currently offers services to almost 30 crore policy holders across the nation.

'Covid-hit GDP expected to contract 7.7% in FY21'

INDIA'S ECONOMY IS SET FOR ITS BIGGEST ANNUAL CONTRACTION SINCE 1952

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 7: India's First Advance Estimate of national income Thursday showed a contraction of 7.7 per cent in real GDP for FY21. On a year-on-year basis, Asia's third largest economy had grown by 4.2 per cent in 2019-20.

"Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices (2011-12) in the year 2020-21 is likely to attain a level of ₹134.40 lakh crore, as against the provisional estimate of GDP for the year 2019-20 of ₹145.66 lakh crore, released May 31, 2020," the First Advance Estimates of National Income for financial year 2020-21 said.

"The growth in real GDP during 2020-21 is estimated at -7.7 per cent as compared to the growth rate of 4.2 per cent in 2019-20," it added.

As per the estimate, real GVA at basic prices is estimated at ₹123.39 lakh crore in 2020-21, as against ₹133.01 lakh crore in 2019-20, showing a contraction of 7.2 per cent.

"With a view to contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, certain restrictions were imposed

THE CONTRACTING NUMBERS



Real GDP or GDP at Constant Prices (2011-12) in the year 2020-21 is likely to attain a level of ₹134.40 lakh crore

The growth in real GDP during 2020-21 is estimated at -7.7% as compared to the growth rate of 4.2% in 2019-20

THE GROWTH IN THE AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING; MINING AND QUARRYING; MANUFACTURING AND CONSTRUCTION IS ESTIMATED TO BE 3.4%, (-) 12.4%, (-) 9.4% AND (-) 12.6%, RESPECTIVELY

from March 25, 2020. Though the restrictions have been gradually lifted, there has been an impact on the economic activities as well as on the data collection mechanisms," the National Statistical Office (NSO) said.

In terms of sectors, the estimates showed that GVA at basic prices by economic activity at 2011-12 prices showed a contraction in trade, hotels, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting; financial, real estate and professional services; and public administration, defence and other services at (-)21.4 per cent, (-)0.8 per cent and (-)3.7 per cent, respectively.

The growth in the agriculture, forestry and fishing; mining and quarrying; manufacturing and construction is estimated to be 3.4 per cent, (-)12.4 per cent, (-)9.4 per cent and (-)12.6 per cent, respectively.

The GVA at basic prices for 2019-20 from electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services sector is expected to grow by 2.7 per cent.

Revised mining policy likely to come up by Feb: Union Min

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: There will be some changes in policies and laws in mining sector to reform the sector in a significant way, said Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister of Coal and Mines.

Addressing the press meet, Joshi said, "We are changing some policies to bring reforms in the mining sector. With this, good numbers of mines will be brought for the auction in the country. The revised policy is expected to come up by February, 2021. We have also asked state to make changes in their policy as well."

The minister said that several suggestions have been taken from Odisha government and those will

be considered during reformation.

The central government has considered some relaxation in norms to expedite the auctioning of mineral blocks in Odisha. The Minister has requested Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik to expedite auction in the state.

"The state government has promised to speed up the auction and also said that they will bring about 11-12 mines for auction immediately," he said.

Joshi also mentioned that Coal India is also investing on numerous projects in Odisha. He believed that the reform will bring major changes in economy activity in the state. When asked about state's request on royalty of mines, he said.

Inox Leisure gears up to welcome back audience

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 7: As the state government allowed the opening of cinema halls across the state, Inox Thursday announced that it is all set to welcome back movie lovers from today, by following all precautions directed by the government. Over and above the standard SOPs, it will also be introducing a slew of measures which would make cinema viewing safe, secure and comfortable.

Regional Director at Inox (East) Amitava Guha Thakurta said, "There will be a lot of focus on the digital way of life. Inox will discontinue the use of papers tickets



Inox will resume its operations at DN Regalia Mall and Symphony Mall, today

and only e-Tickets will be issued. The walk-in guests can also make the booking by scanning the QR codes placed near the Box Office.

Inox has also developed a fully loaded all-in-one booking confirmation SMS. This SMS comes with four different links, one which al-

lows you to check in with your QR code, second, which shows the auditorium's seat chart and the location of your seat on the seat chart, so that you don't have to enquire with anyone. The third link provides you access to the F&B menu to place the order while the fourth link allows you to download the complete e-ticket with all the details. Food ordering can be done by scanning the QR codes placed at the food counters."

Inox will offer private screenings for smaller groups of friends and families, wherein we pamper the guests with our signature hospitality while screening a movie of their choice.

'Businesses aim to tap consumers directly in 2021'

The payment gateways and e-commerce platforms have on-boarded more than 2 lakh small businesses from tier-II and tier-III cities during lockdown

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Jan 7: As businesses prepare lean and flexible models that operate in an online-offline mix in the post-pandemic world, the focus for digital platforms in India will be on selling directly to the consumers in 2021, a new report said Thursday.

"Small businesses in India are today evolving themselves as per the consumer and industry requirements.

"They are hungry for growth and much more resilient than we could've imagined. Merchants have come to understand the diverse nature of consumers and that inno-



vation is the key differentiator," said Akash Gehani COO & Co-founder, Instamojo.

The payment gateway and e-commerce platform has on-boarded

more than 2 lakh small businesses from tier-II and tier-III cities during the lockdown period.

"More than 70 per cent of these

entrepreneurs had no prior online presence. Small businesses owners are making necessary changes to their brands, to the way they operate, and also the way they deal with their customers online in order to survive in the growing e-commerce space," Gehani explained. The company has launched a re-

port on the e-commerce outlook for 2021 which draws the experiences of more than a million small businesses across the country, including Instamojo's merchants like LegalWiz, Syrow, Profitbooks and MSMEX.

According to the findings, entrepreneurs today understand the power of online presence and digital operations. "There has been a 3 times growth in unique businesses creating online stores," the report mentioned. MojoVersity, Instamojo's e-learning platform for entrepreneurs, saw a 9 times growth in enrollments and 11 times growth in the number of merchants getting digitally certified in 2020.

"As more entrepreneurs emerge from smaller towns and cities in India, accelerators and incubators are also expanding their services into markets to help nurture the upcoming businesses. Industry reports indicate that 40 per cent of investors will come from Tier II and Tier III cities," said the report.

As a large number of businesses went online in 2020, they also recognised the importance of a wide social media presence.

The number of businesses updating their social media handles on their Instamojo online store went up an average of 30 per cent (Q-o-Q).

MG launches new SUV Hector

New Delhi: MG Motor India Thursday launched the seven-seater version of its popular SUV Hector priced between ₹13.35 lakh and ₹18.33 lakh (ex-showroom), as it enhances its product portfolio with an eye on selling a total of 50,000 vehicles in the country this year. The company, which also launched the 2021 version of its SUV Hector range priced between ₹12.89 lakh and ₹19.13 lakh, also plans to launch a smaller SUV later this year.

DEBUTANT PUCOVSKI, LABUSCHAGNE PUT THE HOSTS ON DRIVER'S SEAT AS KANGAROOS FINISH THE RAIN-HIT OPENING DAY AT 166/2

Aussies in command

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Jan 7: In signs ominous for India and encouraging for Australia, the beleaguered Steve Smith looked dangerous and his understudy Marnus Labuschagne struck an unbeaten half century as the hosts reached 166 for two on a rain-marred opening day of the third Test here.

At stumps, Labuschagne was unbeaten on 67 and Smith, after his uncharacteristic run of low scores so far, seemed out of the woods with 31 confident runs, which included five authoritative boundaries. Labuschagne found the fence eight times.

This was after debutant Will Pucovski, riding on some luck, made 62 on debut to break the shackles for the under-fire side. Smith looked positive from the word go and was determined to not let the Indian bowlers dictate terms to him.

Having entered the match after registering scores of 1, 0 and 8 in his last three innings, Smith's first confident shot came against India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who was nicely driven through the mid-on for his first boundary of the series.

His confidence up after dismissing Pucovski for his first Test wicket, debutant pacer Navdeep Saini got carried away and was guilty of bowling too full to Smith, who latched on to them with a couple of fours.

With Smith looking in fine fettle,

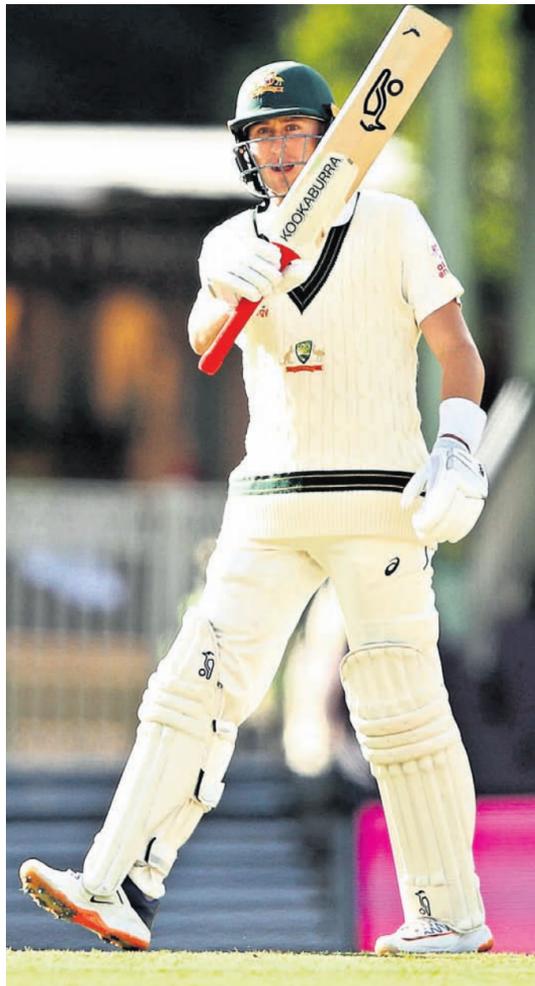
A 4-HOUR RAIN INTERRUPTION

SYDNEY: Play was resumed after the sun shone brightly following a four-hour rain interruption on the opening day of the third Test between India and Australia here Thursday. Groundsmen at the Sydney Cricket Ground worked relentlessly, including using a blower to go with the super-soppor, to get the surface ready for resumption at 3pm local time. Scheduled close of play was extended to 6.30pm with extra 30 minutes permitted to ensure minimum overs. The home team batted only 7.1 overs when play was interrupted at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

the early signs were ominous for India and skipper Ajinkya Rahane brought back his nemesis Ravichandran Ashwin into the attack, but the Australian was equal to the task on this occasion.

A tossed up delivery was whipped off pads through mid-wicket and then Smith danced down the track to loft Ashwin on the outside for another boundary.

Meanwhile, Labuschagne was in his element after he had settled in and played a few pleasing drives on both sides of the wicket, hav-



ON A ROLL: Marnus Labuschagne reacts after reaching half century

ing drawn confidence from the pull shot he played against Bumrah at the beginning of his innings.

The two added 60 runs for the third wicket after a 100-run association between Labuschagne and Pucovski, who was trapped in front of the wicket by Saini but not before starting his Test career with a solid knock.

Pucovski also had luck on his side as wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant dropped the opener twice before tea. Pucovski was on 54 and Marnus Labuschagne on 34 at the tea break after four hours of play were lost due to rain.

In between three reprieves, Pucovski played some impressive shots and also looked solid in defence after Mohammed Siraj had sent back the returning David Warner early.

Introduced into the attack after 13 overs in India's first bowling change, senior off-spinner Ashwin tempted Pucovski into a drive and the batsman only managed an edge after losing his balance, but Pant failed to hang on to the offering despite getting his gloves to it in the 22nd over.

Pant spilled one more chance and on that occasion the unlucky bowler was Siraj, whose fast and short delivery touched the batsman's gloves on his way to the keeper, who could not complete the task. Pant managed to take it on the second attempt, but the ball had hit the ground by then.

With luck on his side, Pucovski got to his fifty when he pulled another debutant, Navdeep Saini, through the wide mid-on region for a boundary.

POST DAY 1 PLAY REACTIONS

Will Pucovski

ON DEBUT: It was a pretty incredible experience. It's meant everything to be honest, that I am putting in a lot of hard yards on and off the field, hopeful that this day would come and it was a very special day.

ON ASHWIN: Playing your first game, I would say Ashwin, probably, is the one who is the most unique in a way. Obviously (Jasprit) Bumrah has his unique action but Ashwin just with his different variations and how he uses the same to sort of bowl. But yes his little-different variations, was something that I hadn't really experienced before, so that was quite challenging.

PARTNERSHIP WITH LABUSCHAGNE: He has been amazing the last couple of years, so just feeding off his experience a little bit. I was honestly telling him how much I was loving it to be honest, he was a great support out in the middle, so it was awesome to bat with such a good player and start to learn a bit about Test cricket.

Mohammed Siraj

ON PITCH: It is very a flat wicket. Our plan was to build pressure and not try too much as it is a very easy wicket for the batsman. Even the bouncers are not carrying as well it was in the earlier games. But Test cricket it is all about patience and we must keep that in mind.

ON HIS TEARY EYES: Just remembered my father at that time (when the Indian national anthem was played out before the start of the game, Siraj got teary-eyed). I was really emotional. He wanted me to see playing Test cricket. Wish he could see me playing for India.

ON SAINI: Saini and I have played a lot of matches together for India A, so we bond really well. I was just telling him to do what we did in domestic cricket and India A.

ON DROP CHANCES: It is part of the game and you do get upset as a bowler when it happens. But it is something we can't do much about. It becomes



WONDERFUL DEBUT: Will Pucovski plays during his maiden Test innings, Thursday

important to move on and focus on the next over.

Steve Smith

ON HIS STRATEGY: (It was) nice to spend a bit of time out there, nice to stitch in a partnership with Marnus. I wanted to put him (Ashwin) under a little bit of pressure which I haven't done this series.

CHANGE IN TECHNIQUE: I was just trying to hold the grip a bit tighter, I've been struggling, so I was getting into good positions today. I was good to get a couple of boundaries early.

SCORECARD

Australia 1st innings

Will Pucovski lbw b Saini 62, David Warner c Pujara b Siraj 5, Marnus Labuschagne batting 67, Steve Smith batting 31;

Extras: 1 (nb-1);

Total: 166/2 (55 overs).

Fall: 1/6 (Warner), 2/106 (Pucovski).

Bowling: Jasprit Bumrah 14-3-30-0, Mohammed Siraj 14-3-46-1, Ravichandran Ashwin 17-1-56-0, Navdeep Saini 7-0-32-1, Ravindra Jadeja 3-2-2-0.

Earlier, young pacer Siraj dismissed Warner to leave Australia at 21/1 before the inclement weather stopped play barely seven overs into the first day's action. The home team had batted for only 7.1 overs when play was interrupted.

Siraj sent back Warner (5) when he had the seasoned opener caught behind by Cheteshwar Pujara at first slip in the fourth over, giving India their first breakthrough before the heavens opened up.



POOR GLOVE-WORK: Rishabh Pant drops a catch, his second in the day



MAKING A MARK
Navdeep Saini is ecstatic after getting his first Test wicket on debut

Ganguly discharged

KOLKATA: Former Indian skipper and the BCCI president Sourav Ganguly was discharged from Woodlands Hospital Thursday morning, following six days of hospitalisation. "I am absolutely fine now. I thank all the doctors and nurses at the hospital for the treatment and care," Ganguly said after getting discharged from the hospital. He, however, refused to answer any question from the media. The 48-year-old had suffered a sudden blackout following mild chest pain during a workout session at his Behala residence January 2. He was moved to the Woodlands Hospital that day itself where he underwent angioplasty.

City lights too bright for United

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Jan 7: Another English League Cup final for Manchester City. Another painful semifinal loss for Manchester United.

City beat fierce rival United 2-0 at Old Trafford Wednesday thanks to second-half goals by John Stones and Fernandinho, setting up a meeting with Tottenham in the League Cup final at Wembley Stadium, April 25.

For City manager Pep Guardiola, that means another head-to-head with long-time coaching adversary Jose Mourinho, who is looking to end Tottenham's 13-year trophy drought.



John Stones reacts after putting Man City ahead against Man United

An open, end-to-end match, which started with three goals getting disallowed for offside in the opening 24 minutes, was settled by goals from set-pieces.

Stones bundled the ball into the net off his waist from an inswinging free-kick by Phil Foden in the 50th minute to put City ahead inside an empty stadium.

Fernandinho, the 35-year-old Brazilian starting ahead of Rodri in central midfield, secured the win with a volley from the edge of the area that crept inside the post following a weak headed clearance by United right back Aaron Wan-Bissaka.

Messi, Pedri help Barca down Bilbao

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Barcelona, Jan 7: Lionel Messi scored two goals to lead Barcelona to a 3-2 win at Athletic Bilbao in the Spanish league, while Atletico Madrid was ousted from the Copa del Rey by a third-tier side.

Teenager Pedri cancelled out Inaki Williams' opener for Bilbao before Messi added two goals to secure an away win for Barcelona that lifted them into third place.

Atletico leads the league but lost 1-0 at third-tier Cornella in the Copa del Rey's round of 32 — a result that means Diego Simeone's side can focus even more on the La Liga title race.

It's the second year in a row that Atletico lost to a third-tier team in the cup competition, after a 1-2 defeat to Cultural Leonesa.

In the La Liga contest, Williams gave Marcelino Garcia Toral a perfect start to his debut match as Bilbao's new coach in the third

minute. The forward broke free down the left flank, cut back inside Clement Lenglet, and drilled a low shot under goalkeeper Marc Andre ter Stegen.

But once Messi and Pedri started to click, Barcelona dominated the game except for a lone goal by Iker Munian in the 90th minute after a poor pass by Messi.

Pedri equalised in the 14th when he headed in a ball knocked back by Frenkie de Jong after Messi had met his long run into the area with a precise lob from distance.

The 18-year-old Pedri then turned playmaker when he used a no-look pass by rolling the ball backwards to set up Messi in the 38th. Messi made it 3-1 in the 62nd by firing a pass from Antoine Griezmann off the underside of the bar and into the net.

Messi, who also hit the woodwork twice, tarnished his otherwise brilliant game when his poor pass was picked off by Bilbao near the area, allowing Munian to score.



Lionel Messi (R) and Pedri celebrate after the Argentine's first goal against Athletic Bilbao, Wednesday

Juventus end AC Milan's 27-game unbeaten run

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Milan, Jan 7: AC Milan's 27-game unbeaten run in Serie A ended with a 1-3 loss to Juventus that gives the defending champion renewed hope of a 10th straight title.

Federico Chiesa scored twice for Juventus with American Weston McKennie adding the third goal as Milan lost in the league for the first time since March, a streak dating back to last season.

Daide Calabria had equalised shortly before halftime for Milan, which had been the last unbeaten team in any of Europe's top five leagues.

Milan still maintained their league lead, a point above city rival Inter Milan, who lost 1-2 at Sampdoria. Juventus moved into fourth, seven points behind Milan with a game in hand.

Both Milan and Juventus had players ruled out with the coronavirus while the home side was also missing several through injury, including key forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

Chiesa hit the post before opening the scoring in the 18th minute, stroking Paulo Dybala's back-heeled flick into the bottom left corner following a swift one-two with the Argentine.

Milan levelled four minutes before the break with a rapid counterattack that ended with Rafael Leao rolling the ball across for Calabria to place into the top right corner.

Chiesa restored Juve's lead in the 62nd minute but went off seconds later with an injury. His replacement, McKennie, scored in the 76th from close range after good work from Dejan Kulusevski down the right flank.

Mauricio brace hands OFC first win

POST NEWS NETWORK

Goa, Jan 7: Odisha FC got the monkey off their back as they cruised to their first win of the season, courtesy a brace by Diego Mauricio, with a 4-2 victory over Kerala Blasters in the Indian Super League (ISL) at the GMC Stadium here, Thursday.

Kerala drew first blood through Jordan Murray (seventh minute) but Odisha took the lead in the first half itself through an own goal from Jeakson Singh (22nd) and a strike from Steven Taylor (42nd).

Mauricio's second-half brace (50th & 60th) then settled the tie in favor of Odisha. Gary Hooper (79th) scored a consolation for Kerala, but it proved to be not enough to spark a comeback.

It was Odisha who started better, enforcing a corner in the third minute but Kerala scored the opener much against the run of play. KP Rahul headed Facundo Pereyra's free-kick at goal and a diving Arshdeep Singh



Diego Mauricio is pumped up after scoring against Kerala Blasters

could only parry it straight into Murray's path. The latter made no

mistake from a tight angle. Odisha struck back 15 minutes

later in somewhat fortuitous fashion. Jerry Mawihmingthanga found Mauricio on the right and his shot took a heavy deflection off Jeakson before trickling past a wrong-footed Albino Gomes.

Then Taylor took advantage of some poor defending to give Odisha the lead just before halftime. Jerry's cross found Taylor unmarked at the far post and the English defender calmly slotted in.

After the break, Mauricio scored Odisha's third after Jerry's lob found him clear on goal. Ten minutes later, he scored a spectacular goal to put the result beyond doubt. The Brazilian received the ball from Nandhakumar Sekhar and beat a defender before curling it past the keeper from outside the box.

Kerala would have a glimmer of hope in the 79th minute when Gary Hooper netted their second. Jordan Murray did well to put the ball in the box and found Hooper, who slashed at goal. His shot took a deflection off Taylor before going in.