



DISCOMFORT IN MANIFESTING

Actor Malaika Arora expresses her fear of mouthing dialogues and says, "I am not dodging it. I am just not sure"

LEISURE P2



COVID NORMS EASED

For the first time in about two years, Beijing relaxes its norms for COVID test requirements after widespread protests

INTERNATIONAL P10



BRAZIL SAIL THROUGH

Neymar returns from injury with a goal as he guides Brazil into World Cup quarterfinals with win over South Korea

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

ICMR website attacked 6K times in a single day

New Delhi: Hackers allegedly tried to breach the website of the apex health research body ICMR but their attempts have been foiled, according to a government official. The official said that hackers apparently from Hong Kong tried to attack the website of the Indian Council of Medical Research around 6000 times in a span of 24 hours November 30. The attacks come close to the heels of the alleged ransomware attack that had paralysed AIIMS online services here. The contents of the ICMR website are safe. The site is hosted at NIC Data Centre, hence the firewall is from NIC which they regularly update. **P7**

WB upgrades India GDP growth forecast to 6.9%

New Delhi: The World Bank Tuesday revised upwards its GDP growth forecast for India to 6.9 per cent for 2022-23, saying the economy was showing higher resilience to global shocks. In October, it had cut India's GDP growth forecast to 6.5 per cent from 7.5 per cent earlier. Now, it has upgraded the projection to 6.9 per cent for 2022-23 (April 2022 - March 2023). In its India Development Update, the World Bank said the revision was due to higher resilience of the Indian economy to global shocks and better-than-expected second quarter numbers. **P11**



KERALA BECKONS: Artistes from Kerala perform the famous 'Kathakali' classical dance during a Partnership Meet organised by Kerala Tourism in Bhubaneswar

China spy ship spotted in Indian Ocean region

The docking of the ship at Hambantota port in August had triggered a diplomatic row between India and Sri Lanka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: Chinese spy ship 'Yuan Wang 5', known to be fitted with various tracking and surveillance devices, has entered the Indian Ocean Region ahead of a plan by India for a likely test firing a long-range ballistic missile in the Bay of Bengal, people familiar with the development said Tuesday. It is learnt that the Indian Navy is keeping an eye on the movement of the Chinese ballistic missile and satellite tracking ship.

The docking of the ship at Hambantota port in August had triggered a diplomatic row between India and Sri Lanka. Open source intelligence expert Damien Symon Monday tweeted that Yuan Wang 5, #China's missile and satellite tracking vessel has entered the #IndianOcean region. There is no official comment on the reports of the presence of the spy ship in the Indian Ocean region.

As per laid down protocol, India recently issued a NOTAM (Notice to Airmen/Notice to Air Missions) about a missile test. It is not clear whether India will go ahead with the plan for the missile test in view of the presence of the Chinese spy ship.



In November this year, the Yuan Wang 6 entered the Indian Ocean region ahead of a missile test slated for 11 November, for which India had issued a NOTAM, marking a significant area of the Bay of Bengal as a no-fly zone

According to experts, the Chinese vessel was last spotted in the Sunda Strait of Indonesia.

The visit of the Chinese ship to the Indian Ocean comes amid increasing concerns over growing forays into the region by Chinese military and research vessels.

India is bolstering defence and security ties in the Indian Ocean with like-minded countries in the backdrop of concerns over China's growing forays into the region, considered the backyard of the Indian Navy.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I guess, Model Code of Conduct has been replaced by Gujarat Model

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	62626.36	↓ 208.24
NIFTY	18642.75	↓ 58.30
DOLLAR	81.38	↑ ₹0.20
EURO	86.54	↑ ₹0.63
GOLD	₹53,808	↑ ₹303
SILVER	₹65,864	↑ ₹678

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	28.7°C	28.4°C
MIN	15.7°C	16.0°C
Humidity	76%	71%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Mainly clear sky	

PARLIAMENT WINTER SESSION STARTS TODAY

BJD demands passage of Women's Reservation Bill

Several other political parties like the TMC, Congress, NCP, TRS and the JD(U) backed the demand

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Dec 6: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Tuesday reiterated its demand for passage of Women's Reservation Bill, which seeks to grant 33 per cent reservation to women in Lok Sabha and state assemblies, during the Winter Session of the Parliament set to start today.

BJD leaders Pinaki Misra and Sasmit Patra raised the demand during an all-party meeting chaired by Defence Minister and Deputy Leader in Lok Sabha Rajnath Singh a day before the commencement of Winter Session and said that the empowerment of women is necessary for overall development of the country.

The BJD leaders were astonished that the Women's Reservation Bill was not listed for this session and requested the government to introduce and pass the legislation in the Winter Session.

Several other political parties, like the TMC, Congress, NCP and the TRS supported the demand



including the JD(U) which had once opposed the move. The demand was also raised in the BAC meeting by TMC and Congress. The DMK, SAD and the JD(U) supported them and demanded that an all-party meeting be convened to build consensus on the issue.

The passage of Women's Reservation Bill is a long-standing demand of the ruling party of Odisha. The BJD MPs in both Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha had raised the issue often in the past during their speeches on various bills.

The Odisha Assembly had passed a resolution in November 2018 demanding 33 per cent reservation for women in the Parliament and state assemblies. After that, as many as 22 BJD delegations were sent out to 22 national and regional

parties by BJD President Naveen Patnaik asking for support for the passage of the bill. The BJD had also nominated women at 33 per cent in the Lok Sabha constituencies in 2019 Parliamentary elections.

Significantly, the Women's Reservation Bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha in 2010. But it could not be passed by the 15th Lok Sabha. The Constitution amendment bill got lapsed as the term of the 15th Lok Sabha ended. The BJD has been requesting the BJP led Union government to introduce and pass the legislation in the Lok Sabha where the saffron party has brute majority.

Besides, reduction of GST on Kendu leaves and expansion of Railways, National Highways and mobile towers in Odisha are among the BJD's demands. **MORE P3**

2 women Red rebels killed in Kandhamal

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Two women cadres of the CPI(Maoist) died in a gunfight with security personnel in Kandhamal district Tuesday, a top police officer said.

Firearms, including an INSAS rifle with 11 rounds of ammunition and one IED, were found lying next to their bodies in Matakupa Reserve Forest, Director General of Police SK Bansal said. Acting on intelligence inputs on the movement of Maoist cadres in the forest, personnel of Odisha's special operation group (SOG) embarked on a search operation in the woods.

A gun battle subsequently ensued between the Maoists and the security personnel inside the forest, leading to the death of two women cadres who were dressed in the banned outfit's uniform. Their bodies have been recovered and the process of identification is underway," the DGP said. Search operation has been intensified with the deployment of additional teams of security personnel in the area, Bansal stated.

The DGP, in a statement, appealed to the Maoists to shun violence and join the mainstream.

The state government has a very beneficial surrender and rehabilitation policy; and all Maoists should avail this, he added. Last month, at least four Maoist cadres were killed in two operations in Bolangir and Koraput districts.



CO-ORDINATION MEET ON LWE

Odisha Police, Border Security Force (BSF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Chhattisgarh officials held a threadbare discussion on Left Wing Extremism (LWE) during an Inter-state and Inter-agency Co-ordination Meeting at the state Intelligence Directorate here Tuesday. The senior officials of security agencies discussed issues relating to the activities of Maoists in the inter-state borders of Odisha and Chhattisgarh, sharing of intelligence, deployment of security forces at strategic locations, inter-state coordination and anti-LWE operations. The officials also examined the progress made in connection with the decisions taken in the last meeting at Raipur in July, 2022 and at IB Headquarters in August, 2022 over the LWE related issues. "It was stressed upon that all concerned agencies will work with more synergy to combat the LWE menace in a more proactive and effective manner," informed the police sources.

If I speak out, the entire scenario in the state will change: Archana

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Archana Nag, the prime accused in the blackmail and extortion racket, Tuesday claimed that she has exclusive evidence against some people which will shake the state.

Nag, who was shifted from Jharpada special jail to the Capital Hospital here for a medical check-up before being taken to Enforcement Directorate (ED) office for interrogation, said she will fully cooperate in the probe instituted against her for amassing huge wealth by blackmailing rich and influential persons along with running a sex racket.

"I was waiting for the ED to take me on remand for questioning. I will fully cooperate with the probe," she said responding to media queries.

"I need sufficient time to speak at least 30 minutes. If I speak, the entire scenario in the state will change. I have been trapped. I will give exclusive evidence and not spare anyone," she said. Nag was arrested by the local police October 6 and is in judicial custody.

She was also vocal against the commissionerate of police over the manner in which she was detained and later arrested.

"I am not a terrorist. The way I was arrested and my family was harassed by the Commissionerate Police - it is all a conspiracy against me," the 26-year-old woman said.

The ED took Nag on a seven-day remission Monday and will produce her in the district and sessions court here December 13.

The central agency is probing the money laundering aspect of the blackmail racket. It has so far grilled nine people. Her husband Jagabandhu Chand, a co-accused in the case, will be produced before the court December 7.

Earlier in the day, the architect of Nag's palatial residence Ranjit Behera appeared before the agency. The building contractor Pabitra Patra had faced interrogation Monday.

Nag has allegedly amassed assets of ₹30 crore, including a three-storey palatial bungalow at Satya Vihar in Bhubaneswar in just about four years from 2018.

Y chromosome is disappearing but rats have an X factor

The sex of human and other mammal babies is decided by a male-determining gene on the Y chromosome. But the human Y chromosome is degenerating and may disappear in a few million years, leading to our extinction unless we evolve a new sex gene.

Most mammals have an X and Y chromosome similar to ours; an X with lots of genes, and a Y with SRY plus a few others. This system comes with problems because of the unequal dosage of X genes in males and females.

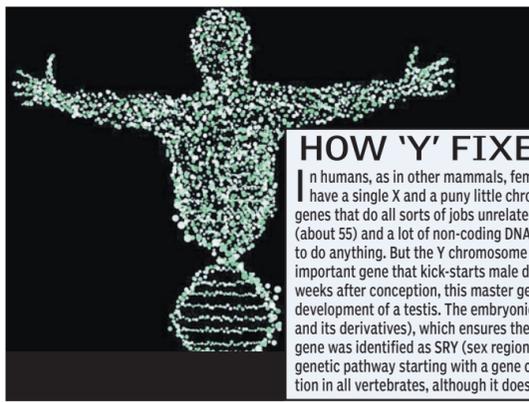
How did such a weird system evolve? The surprising finding is that Australia's platypus has completely different sex chromosomes,

more like those of birds.

In platypus, the XY pair is just an ordinary chromosome, with two equal members. This suggests the mammal X and Y were an ordinary pair of chromosomes not that long ago.

In turn, this must mean the Y chromosome has lost 900-55 active genes over the 166 million years that humans and platypus have been evolving separately. That's a loss of about five genes per million years. At this rate, the last 55 genes will be gone in 11 million years.

Our claim of the imminent demise of the human Y created a furore, and to this day there are claims and counterclaims about the expected lifetime of our Y chro-



HOW 'Y' FIXES HUMAN SEX

In humans, as in other mammals, females have two X chromosomes and males have a single X and a puny little chromosome called Y. The X contains about 900 genes that do all sorts of jobs unrelated to sex. But the Y contains a few genes (about 55) and a lot of non-coding DNA - simple repetitive DNA that doesn't seem to do anything. But the Y chromosome packs a punch because it contains an all-important gene that kick-starts male development in the embryo. At about 12 weeks after conception, this master gene switches on others that regulate the development of a testis. The embryonic testis makes male hormones (testosterone and its derivatives), which ensures the baby develops as a boy. This master sex gene was identified as SRY (sex region on the Y) in 1990. It works by triggering a genetic pathway starting with a gene called SOX9 which is key for male determination in all vertebrates, although it does not lie on sex chromosomes.

somosome - estimates between infinity and a few thousand years.

The good news is we know of two rodent lineages that have already lost their Y chromosome - and are still surviving - the mole voles

of eastern Europe and the spiny rats of Japan. A new paper in Proceedings of the National Academy of Science shows how the spiny rat has evolved a new male-determining gene.

The imminent - evolutionarily speaking - disappearance of the human Y chromosome has elicited speculation about our future.

Some lizards and snakes are female-only species and can make eggs out of their own genes via what's known as parthenogenesis. But this can't happen in humans or other mammals because we have at least 30 crucial "imprinted" genes that work only if they come from the father via sperm. **Continued on P4**

THE CONVERSATION

leisure



KIM GETS RESTRAINING ORDER ISSUED AGAINST HER STALKER

Kim Kardashian gets a five-year order of protection against the man in question, Andre Persaud in LA. Persaud is not allowed contacting Kim or getting within 100 yards of her. He is also barred from having a handgun. Kim said the court that Persaud visited her home thrice in August, claimed to be armed, and claimed the two talked "telepathically."

ROBERT DOWNEY JR. REACTS TO TARANTINO'S MARVEL CRITICISM

Actor Robert Downey Jr. spoke up on the most recent attack at MCU by filmmaker Quentin Tarantino who said, Marvel actors "are not movie stars". "I think our opinions on these matters say a lot about us", Robert said and further stressed that things evolved over time and one must embrace the change.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Now at last you have realised that you have been preoccupied with work at the cost of your family life. Making up to them now is going to take a lot more effort. Ganesh says be ready to open your purse strings for either eating out, going out for a movie or shopping at the best places.

TAURUS
This day has been earmarked for beautification, a makeover, says Ganesh. You are likely to remain preoccupied with ways to enhance your looks and appearance. A new, stylish hair do, face packs and massages, trendy outfits and accessories could be in store.

GEMINI
You will feel lonely and unwanted today. You will feel the need for someone who can calm your troubled mind. Meditation and yoga will help you calm yourself. It is a good day to receive love from that someone special, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will succeed in a new venture and will brim with radiance and energy. Ganesh says this is the best time for get-together and kindle contact with friends and relatives.

LEO
You will look to give your house a new appearance by decorating it or undertaking some renovation projects. You will make the best out of waste and produce some truly marvellous pieces of art for improving the ambience of your nest. You will be able to save up on some money.

VIRGO
You will excel remarkably in whatever work you prefer to engage yourself in today. Ganesh says your aspiration to start a business endeavour in a foreign country will bear fruit. To considerably enhance your self-image, it is necessary to make required improvements in your personal appearance.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that on the work front you may be in the midst of meetings or negotiations, which will work out favorably for you. This will help ease your tension and you will feel mentally free. Today you will feel more vibrant and active too and hence will be able to get more done.

SCORPIO
According to Ganesh, your new business venture is likely to keep you on toes today. You may even neglect your personal life to meet expectations at work. A feeling of disappointment may surround you as things do not go according to planning and your efforts may go in vain. No pains, no gains reminds Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
You are in a dilemma today. You may find yourself standing at crossroads, and your decision power does not seem to help you much, says Ganesh. You are likely to become controversy's favourite child; this may add fuel to the fire. Be wise, and take guidance of experienced people.

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 proved to be lucky for your success, so give him/her the credit he/she deserves, suggests Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
You always see the larger picture, and desire to channelise all your energies towards making things better. Such positive approach makes you an excellent team player, and enables you to bring novel ideas and effective solutions to the table, says Ganesh.

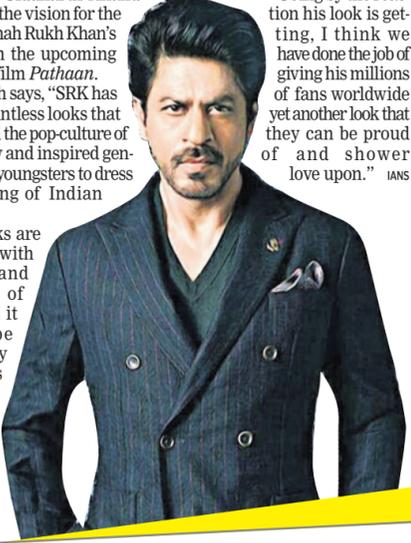
PISCES
This day promises to be filled with much romance, laughter, and fine dining, says Ganesh. You will seem irresistible to the opposite sex. You might also find yourself falling for someone. A breathe of fresh air could waft into old relationships, or new ones could be formed.

'SRK coming with a new persona in Pathaar'

Mumbai: Filmmaker Siddharth Anand talks about the vision for the superstar Shah Rukh Khan's cool look in the upcoming spy action film *Pathaar*.
Siddharth says, "SRK has sported countless looks that have shaped the pop-culture of our country and inspired generations of youngsters to dress like the king of Indian Cinema."
"His looks are associated with moments and memories of people and it won't be wrong to say that he has made India more fashionable through his style in films. So, it

was a task and a big challenge to craft a look that is extremely different for SRK, who is playing a daredevil spy in *Pathaar*!"
He added "We wanted to capture the essence of his character which is inherently cool through what he wears and also his hairstyle. We wanted to make SRK the symbol of alpha and machismo, someone who is effortlessly cool and hot at the same time, through his look."

"Going by the reaction, I think we have done the job of giving his millions of fans worldwide yet another look that they can be proud of and shower love upon." IANS



Janhvi intends to work with Tamil actor

Mumbai: Actress Janhvi Kapoor, the daughter of the late actress Sridevi, is grabbing the attention of Tamil cinema fans through sensational social media pictures. Therefore, fans wish to see the sizzling actress sign a Tamil movie soon. As per a report, the actress has expressed her wish to work in Tamil movies, especially with Vijay Sethupathi. Janhvi revealed that she made a phone call to Vijay and even expressed her wish of working together with the actor in a film.
Janhvi has disclosed her conversation with Vijay

Sethupathi in the latest media interaction, and we might see the popular actress stepping into Tamil film industry soon.

Janhvi Kapoor last delivered the Hindi film *Good Luck Jerry*, the Hindi remake of the Tamil film *Kolamavu Kokila*. Janhvi Kapoor reprised Nayanthara's role in the remake and the direct OTT release received good reviews from the audience. It was a successful remake for Janhvi and the actress always has an eye on South movies. The pretty actress is currently shooting for a couple of her Hindi films *Bawaal* and *Mr. & Mrs. Mahi*.
AGENCIES



Malaika has a fear of mouthing dialogues

Mumbai: Diva Malaika Arora, who is currently seen in her reality show 'Moving In With Malaika' expresses her fear of mouthing dialogues.

In a conversation with her manager Ekta, where she asks if Malaika was dodging a movie script because of her fear of acting, Malaika says, "I am not dodging it. I am just not sure. Honestly, it's not the fear of acting, but more about the discomfort I feel in mouthing dialogues. Standing up in front of people and actually being comfortable about mouthing with dialogues is something I have always been a little apprehensive about. I get a little nervous about it. So that's probably why I shy away from it."

She adds, "Over the years there have been loads of scripts that I have seen and read but somewhere I've always stayed away. Well, that's another fear of mine. Even in school, I used to hate when I had to mug up something and say it in public."
"I thought it was the most daunting task. I felt there was so much pressure, that it would make me feel very uneasy. I couldn't eat, sleep or do anything if I had to learn something. So this fear of mine has just always been there."
IANS

DID 'GHODEY PE SAWAAR' FOR FUN: ANUSHKA

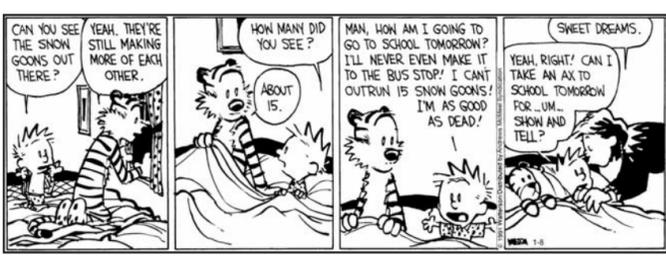
Mumbai: Actress Anushka Sharma made a special appearance in *Qala* with the song 'Ghodey Pe Sawaar'. She says, "I did this song for the fun of it. No other reason whatsoever and I enjoyed myself doing it! I had fun playing a yesteryears actress and I'm really happy to see the reactions from people for my special appearance. I wasn't expecting that people would like it so much but I'm glad that they did and are happy to see me on screen after sometime."
Set in 1930s, *Qala* is about the tumultuous relationship between an aspiring singer and her domineering mother. The film stars Tripti Dimri, Swastika Mukherjee, and Babil Khan

in his film debut.
On the work front, Anushka will be seen essaying the role of the iconic Indian pace bowler Jhulan Goswami in the much talked about film *Chakda Xpress*. The film is inspired by the life and times one of Indian women cricketer's most revered cricketer.
IANS

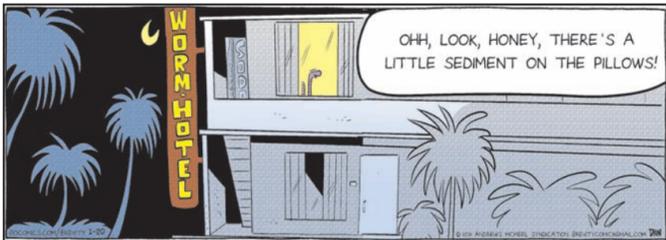
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

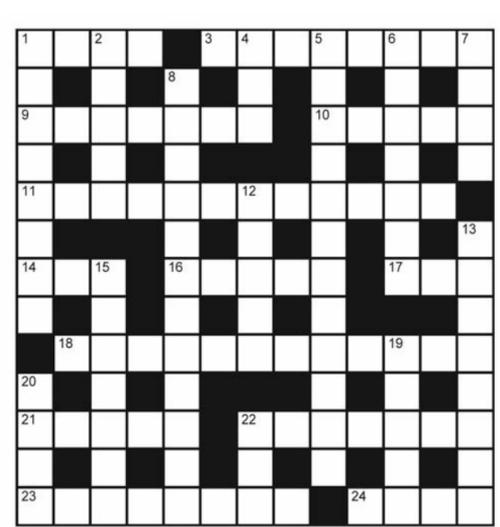


BREVITY



FUN post

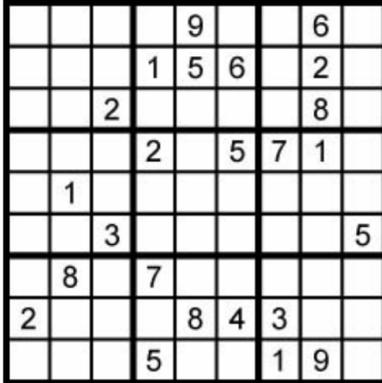
CROSSWORD



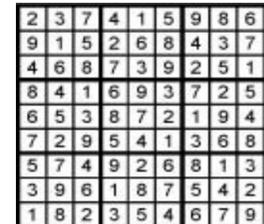
- Across**
1 After-dinner drink
3 Fair-skinned feature, at times
9 Sinus problem
10 Slice
11 Pugilist's wear (6,6)
14 Fellow
16 Pick-me-up
17 Formal vote
18 Gustave (6,6)
- Down**
1 Theatre handout
2 Kick back and take it easy
4 Bit of sunshine
5 Swiss exports (6,6)
6 It's a crime
- 7 Lawn starter (5,2,1,4)**
8 Get stuck
12 Writing style
13 South American rodent
15 Former European cavalryman
19 At a distance from one another
20 Young seal
22 Embargo

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



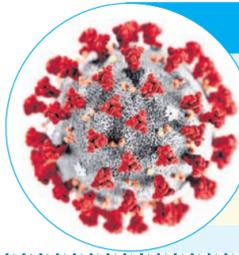
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



CHRISTMAS AHEAD

A roadside vendor in Choudhury Bazar area of Cuttack arranges decorative items as the state gears up for Christmas



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	65,05,86,432	62,74,44,623	66,48,410
India	4,46,73,783	4,41,38,805	5,30,633
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Heavy vehicle runs over man at Palasuni

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: A 44-year-old man died in a road mishap at Palasuni Square here Tuesday evening.

The deceased was identified as Samsheer Khan of Dumduma area under Khandagiri police limits. Sources said Khan working in a mobile company depot in the City.

He was waiting at Palasuni Square for a bus to send a parcel when a large container ran over him. Khan died on the spot.

Locals chased the vehicle and nabbed the driver who was later handed over to police. Mancheswar police started an investigation into the incident. Post-mortem will be conducted Wednesday.

Border row, 'misuse' of agencies to dominate Parl Winter Session

In total, members of opposition parties have detailed around 16 issues to be raised during the Winter Session

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: Border stand-off with China, alleged misuse of government agencies, price rise and unemployment will dominate the proceedings of the Winter Session of Parliament starting Wednesday.

The results of the Assembly elections in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh are also likely to play out during the start of the session. The session begins December 7, a day before the results of Assembly polls are out. The Opposition will seek to corner the government on several issues and a confrontation is likely on the demand for discussions on Chinese "incursions" at the border and alleged misuse of agencies.

Rahul Gandhi and several senior Congress leaders who are walking in the Bharat Jodo Yatra are unlikely to attend the session. Ahead of the session, leaders from more than 30 parties attended a meeting convened by the Union government to discuss the legislative agenda and the issues likely to be taken up during the Winter Session of Parliament.

The meeting, chaired by Union minister and deputy leader of the BJP in Lok Sabha Rajnath Singh, was to seek cooperation from all parties for the smooth functioning of the Winter Session.

Leader of House in Rajya Sabha



Piyush Goyal and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi were also present.

During the meeting, Joshi spelt out the government's legislative agenda for the session and sought opposition's cooperation for the passage of Bills. He concluded the meeting, saying he has taken note of all the issues raised by political parties and the discussions will be held as per the norms and procedures of Parliament.

Issues for discussion will be finalised in the business advisory committee meetings of both houses of Parliament, he said.

During the meeting, Congress and Trinamool Congress raised the issue of alleged misuse of investigating agencies, which was backed by the Aam Aadmi Party, Nationalist Congress Party and several other parties.

"There are so many issues before the country such as unemployment and price rise, and the government owes an answer to people," Congress leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury told reporters after the meeting.

He alleged the government did not "properly" inform the

Opposition about the stand-off at the Sino-India border. "In the House, we will demand a discussion on it and also on the killings of Kashmiri Pandits," he added.

Congress leader Naseer Hussain, who attended the meeting in the absence of chief whip of the party in Rajya Sabha Jairam Ramesh, demanded discussions on the appointment of Election Commissioner in just one day and also on the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) quota.

TMC leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay said he and his party colleague Rajya Sabha MP Derek O'Brien sought discussions on price rise, unemployment, alleged misuse of agencies and alleged economic blockade of states.

While the government plans to bring 16 new Bills during the session, sources said Opposition members questioned the government's intent of getting around 25 bills passed, which include old bills as well, during the short span of 17 sittings.

The government has not allowed a discussion on the border situation with China and has denied charges of "misuse" of agencies.

Action plan key to reduce malnutrition: CS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra Tuesday said that there is a need for a holistic action plan with concerted efforts among various departments to reduce malnutrition and stunting among children.

He said this while addressing a 'National Level Conclave on Childhood Stunting in India' held here Tuesday. The state government is all set to have an aggressive approach to reduce malnutrition and stunting among children which would be achieved in next few years, said the Chief Secretary.

The conclave was jointly organised by International and Food Policy Research Institute, the state government, the World Bank and Unicef. Odisha is the first state to



introduce a separate nutrition budget. The state government is now spending on the social sector targeting health, education, nutrition and sanitation, he said.

Around 96.5 lakh families are covered under food security programme, while 75,000 Anganwadi centres (AWCs) are actively involved in supplementary nutrition and take-home ration programme being executed through women self-help

groups (SHGs), he pointed out.

"Similarly, mid-day meal (MDM) is being served in 55,000 schools with active participation of women SHGs, Aahar centres in urban local bodies, fortified rice and millets being introduced in PDS and supplementary nutrition," said Mahapatra. Further, the household level data collection on malnutrition and stunting is being carried out through a robust and

reliable method with regular check-up at AWC level, he added. With all these steps, Odisha is all set for targeted reduction in stunting and malnutrition.

Stating that the problems of stunting and malnutrition are multi-dimensional, the Chief Secretary said there is a need for a holistic action plan with concerted efforts among various departments to achieve the target.

He assured that the government would provide all financial and administrative support for concrete suggestions that would emerge from the deliberations in this national seminar.

Mahapatra released a study report on 'Covid-19 and nutrition in Odisha - what does the future hold'. The study was conducted by Unicef with support from the state government.

Sean Covey meets CM on school transformation



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Franklin Covey Education president Sean Covey Tuesday

met Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at the latter's residence here and discussed on the school transformation programme.

Sean was accompanied by Franklin Covey Education's vice president William Bill McIntyre, LiveLife Education founder Kannan Gireesh and SAI International Education Group chairperson Silpi Sahoo.

Sean also visited SAI International School and held an interactive session with the educators and students from different schools, including Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan schools, DM School, Kendriya Vidyalaya 1, 2 and 3, JNV Mundali and KV Mundali there.

SAI International School introduced the learning curriculum of 'Leader In Me Program' which has benefitted the students and teachers. The programme incorporates 'the seven habits of highly effective people' as authored by Sean's father Stephen Richards Covey.

Most Asian countries lag in biodiversity protection: Study

Most countries in Asia have failed to achieve a global minimum target of protecting at least 17 per cent of land by 2020, according to a study based on data from 40 countries.

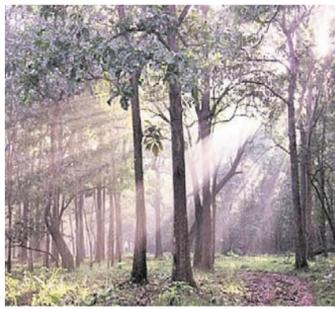
Under current trends, the outlook for achieving the UN Global Biodiversity Framework's 2030 target to protect at least 30 per cent of land is bleak, with Asia set to miss this by an even greater margin, the researchers said.

To counter the global biodiversity crisis, at the 2010 UN Convention on Biological Diversity, almost 200 countries pledged to protect at least 17 per cent of their terrestrial environments by 2020 (known as Aichi Target).

To investigate whether they achieved this, researchers from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in the UK, with collaborators in Asia, analysed data from official reports submitted to the World Database on Protected Areas.

The study, published in the journal Communications Biology, found that only 40 per cent of Asian countries achieved the target of a minimum of 17 per cent coverage for protected areas by 2020. In particular, very few countries in West and Central Asia achieved the target. Overall, Asia was the most underperforming continent, with just 13.2 per cent of land being designated as a terrestrial protected area in 2020 - compared with a global average of 15.2 per cent protection, the researchers said.

Only 40 per cent (16) of Asian countries, mainly in East and South Asia, had met the 17 per cent protection target by 2020. However, 14 out of 19 West and Central Asian countries had not met the target, they said.



AICHI TARGET

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The study, published in the journal Communications Biology, found that only 40% of Asian countries achieved the target of a minimum of 17% coverage for protected areas by 2020

Asian countries also tended to have a slower year-on-year increase in the amount of land protected for conservation, at just 0.4 per cent per year on average, according to the study.

For 241 highly at-risk mammal species across Asia, on average 84 per cent of their ranges fell outside protected areas, the researchers said.

They calculated that almost all Asian countries will fail to meet the 2030 target unless their rate of establishing protected areas increases by up to six times faster. Under the current trajectory, Asia as a whole would only achieve 18 coverage by 2030 - far below the target of 30 per cent protection. The outlook was worst for West and South Asia, projected to achieve 11 per cent and 10 per cent coverage respectively by 2030.

"Asia is a challenging continent for setting targets for protected areas, since areas of high biodiversity typically con-

flict with dense human populations and rapid economic growth," said study lead author Mohammed Farhadinia from the University of Oxford. "While this research demonstrates the need for more investment in protected areas in Asia, it also shows the importance of establishing realistic, achievable goals that take into account socio-geographical restrictions," Farhadinia said.

The findings carry important significance ahead of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15), when the governing body of the Convention of Biological Diversity will convene in Montreal, Canada from December 7-19.

At this meeting, government representatives will review the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and discuss strategies for meeting the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework targets.

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Govt to team up with Australian varsities

As per report, the state government is planning to collaborate with Australian varsities for skill-integrated higher education



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: The Higher Education department Tuesday directed vice chancellors of the state's four public universities to join a meeting December 8 to discuss edu-invest with the Nottingham Trent University (NTU) Global, Australia.

In a letter, the department asked the vice chancellors of Utkal University, Ramadevi Women's

University, Ravenshaw University and Madhusudan Law University to come for a meeting to discuss on Edu-invest and whether NTU Global can partner in edu-invest under the chairmanship of Higher Education Minister Rohit Pujari and Principal Secretary Bishnupada Sethi.

As per report, the state government is planning to collaborate with Australian varsities for skill-integrated higher education. The

department asked the universities to take part in the discussion on how to have research collaborations between state-run universities and those in Australia.

The department has also directed the Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM) president to intimate Mathew Johnston, minister-counsellor (education and research), Australian High Commission, India to attend a meeting on collaboration between state Universities and Australian Universities December 12 under the chairmanship of Higher Education minister.

The Centurion University had earlier given a proposal to the government for the collaboration meeting, which Higher Education Minister Rohit Pujari is scheduled to attend.

"Australian universities have a good reputation in the field of skill development. Collaboration with foreign universities should be taken seriously. We should bring their faculty members to our universities and take their views on teaching and research works" sources said

As per report the state government is also planning to hold Odisha Edu Invest Conclave next year to attract investments in the education sector of the state.



FOCUS ON ANIMAL HEALTH: Dignitaries attending the inaugural function of 31st National Congress of Veterinary Parasitology at OUAT in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

Minor girl assaulted by her employer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Childline officials Tuesday rescued an 11-year-old girl, who was brutally assaulted by her employer and his family. The minor girl has sustained multiple fractures in her hands, legs and other body parts, said sources. The accused Bibhuti Pattanaik was arrested Tuesday from Kaimatia under Info Valley police station.

The accused employer of the girl brought her on a scooter to a

secluded place in Salia Sahi area here Tuesday afternoon and left her there. Some locals spotted her crying and informed the Childline officials.

"Our team rushed to the spot and rescued the girl. The child has multiple fractures - left hand, left leg, left leg thumb joint and right leg thumb joint," said Childline director Benudhar Senapati.

The Childline members rushed the girl to Capital Hospital for treatment. The extremely weak girl was barely able to speak.

"Doctors at Capital Hospital also suspect sexual abuse of the minor as some wound marks were spotted on her chest. She is currently kept at Sakhi centre of the hospital for legal and psychological consultations," added Senapati.

On the complaint of Itishree Das of Child Line, a case of child domestic servitude and brutality on girl child was registered with Ref Nayapalli PS Case No. 752, Tuesday.

Police sources said the victim was working as a housemaid at

the residence of the person in Bharatpur area for the last four months. The victim's mother and her four other children have been staying in Nayapalli area. The girl narrated the inhuman torture meted out to her by her boss, his wife and son for the last few months.

She claimed that the accused family did not offer her proper food and clothes. They used to beat her even at the slightest mistakes. Police launched a manhunt to arrest the accused family by registering a case in this regard.

Continued from P1 Y chromosome...

To reproduce, we need sperm and we need men, meaning that the end of the Y chromosome could herald the extinction of the human race. The new finding supports an alternative possibility - that humans can evolve a new sex determining gene. Phew! However, evolution of a new sex determining gene comes with risks. What if more than one new system evolves in different parts of the world? A "war" of the sex genes could lead to the separation of new species, which is exactly what has happened with mole voles and spiny rats. So, if someone visited Earth in 11 million years, they might find no humans - or several different human species, kept apart by their different sex determination systems. So, if someone visited Earth in 11 million years, they might find no humans - or several different human species, kept apart by their different sex determination systems.

Renovation of Puri station kicks off



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Puri railway station is being redeveloped to have world-class infrastructure with passenger friendly amenities like a food court and shopping areas. The makeover of the station and the Yatri Niwas will take inspiration from Odisha's temple architecture. The camp office for the proposed redevelopment work has been made operational.

Along with renovation of platforms, the other modern facilities being planned include air concourse, platform shelters and areas for relaxation. There will be provision of well-designed drains, signage and dividers. The station will also have facilities of liquid waste management and solid waste management. The new building will have high standard dormitories and retiring rooms apart from the beautified circulating area.

During his visit, general manager of East Coast Railway, Roop Narayan Sunkar, had inspected the station site and had instructed the concerned officials to execute the project.

The project was sanctioned in 2021-22 at a cost of ₹161.5 crore and the target was to complete it within 30 months of starting of work. The design of the station is being done with the future inflow of passengers in mind.

Amin gets 2 years in prison for graft

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: A vigilance court here Tuesday sentenced a retired government revenue official to two years of rigorous imprisonment after finding him guilty in a graft case. The convict, identified as Prafulla Chandra Das, is a resident of Tangi area in Khurda district.

Das was working as an Amin at Jatni Tehsil office when the graft incident took place in 2012.

The court also imposed a fine of ₹1,000 on Das, who is set to undergo additional RI for 2 months if he fails to pay the said amount.



June 8, 2012, Das was arrested by the vigilance sleuths while receiving money from the complainant

In 2010, one Sukdev Baliarsingh submitted an application at the Tehsil office of Jatni requesting demarcation of five homestead landed plots owned by applicant. However, the revenue officials did not take any steps for demarcation of Sukdev's plots despite passing of

two years. Das, who was entrusted with the task of performing the demarcation, deliberately delayed despite repeated requests from Sukdev and his son Srinibas. He finally asked Srinibas to pay ₹5,000 bribe for the work June 2, 2012.

Das demanded bribe from

Srinibas again for demarcation few days later June 7, 2012, which made Srinibas lodge a complaint with the Superintendent of Vigilance, Bhubaneswar on the same day.

Based on the complaint, Vigilance registered a case (34/12) and laid a trap to nab Das red handed. June 8, 2012, Das was arrested by the vigilance sleuths while receiving money from the complainant.

The court examined statements of eight witnesses and went through other documentary evidences before pronouncing the sentence. Special public prosecutor Hemant Kumar Swain conducted the trial on behalf of the state.

'Digital University will revolutionise education'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: On the sideline of Make in Odisha Conclave 2022, Vedanta Group chairman Anil Agarwal had an interaction with eminent personalities of Odisha where he proposed to build a digital university in the state.

Well-known technocrat Damodar Acharya, Ex-Director IIT and AICTE, while appreciating the contribution of Vedanta and its founder Anil Agarwal in the growth and prosperity of Odisha, said that "Digital University proposed by Agarwal will usher in the future path of education not only in the state but in the country at large.

The university will enable the students to enroll from nook and corner of the state and will give them global exposure. It would also be a platform for exchanges with students from abroad.

The first-of-its-kind university will revolutionise the system of imparting education and will bring in a new normal in the higher education making it more accessible and affordable to the needy."

Aacharya also complimented Agarwal for such a unique contribution. He also extended thanks to Rahul Sharma, CEO-Aluminium Business, Vedanta Limited and TK Chand, President, Vedanta Aluminium for their drive in introducing such meaningful interaction.

CLASSIFIED LOST

B.Tech. Degree Certificate and gradesheets lost. If found contact: Gyanaprakash Panigrahi, Registration No. 1301202155, Mob.-9348547594.

I, Abanindra Mohanty, S/o Jitendranath Mohanty has been lost my sale deed No.9193, Dtd. 26.11.1990 which I was purchased from Indramani Mohanty & others. I have not created any charge, mortgage lien with any Financial Institution. Even after giving my best effort, I couldn't trace out the same. If anyone get this, please contact in my Mob. No.-9437020440.

AFFIDAVIT

I Riti Agrwal, W/o Ankit Agrawal, Milan Vihar, Opp. of Kishori Nursing Home, Ward No.8, Bargarh declare that all educational certificate & relevant document my name recorded as Reeti Agrawal, after marriage I had changed my name from Reeti Agrawal to Riti Agrwal. Both name relates to one and same person.



MARKING THE DAY: Commissioner of Police SK Priyadarshi inspecting the 60th Annual Home Guards Day parade at Reserve Police Ground in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

Common mistakes people make while eating fruit

Fruit is great for weight loss because it is low calorie, high fibre, and water content. Fruit is nature's quick snack and is a great source of vitamins and other elements that help maintain a healthy diet.

Fruit has vitamins and minerals that the body needs in abundance. According to Archana Batra, a dietician and a certified diabetes educator, "Many people consume fruit wrongly, which might cause more harm than benefit if not corrected." She also shares a list of mistakes one makes when eating fruit.

Combining fruit with anything else- Fruit breaks down faster than any other food. When combined with other foods, it can cause

the formation of toxins in the body known as ama. This is due to the fact that food pairing can slow down digestion. Fruit must stay in the stomach for as long as the heaviest food takes to digest, making nutrient absorption difficult. It begins to ferment in the digestive juices, which is usually toxic and may raise the possibility of illness and other health conditions. It is therefore preferable to consume it separately.

Fruit at nighttime- It is best to avoid anything 2-3 hours before going to bed because it interferes with the digestive system. This holds true for fruit as well. Fruit consumption right before bed has a high chance of disrupting sleep because it releases a lot of sugar,



DRINKING WATER AFTER EATING FRUIT CAN CAUSE THE PH LEVEL OF THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM TO BECOME UNBALANCED, ESPECIALLY CONSUMING FRUIT WITH HIGH WATER CONTENT LIKE WATERMELON, MUSKMELON, CUCUMBER, ORANGE, AND STRAWBERRY

which spikes energy levels when the body should be resting. At night, our ability to absorb and assimilate nutrients is significantly reduced. In addition, eating fruits

late at night may cause acidity symptoms. Fruit should be consumed as an evening snack and no later than that.

Drink water immediately- Not

COMBINING FRUIT WITH ANYTHING ELSE- FRUIT BREAKS DOWN FASTER THAN ANY OTHER FOOD. WHEN COMBINED WITH OTHER FOODS, IT CAN CAUSE THE FORMATION OF TOXINS IN THE BODY KNOWN AS AMA

FRUIT CONSUMPTION RIGHT BEFORE BED HAS A HIGH CHANCE OF DISRUPTING SLEEP BECAUSE IT RELEASES A LOT OF SUGAR, WHICH SPIKES ENERGY LEVELS WHEN THE BODY SHOULD BE RESTING

only children but also adults, are frequently observed drinking water immediately after eating fruit. Drinking water after eating fruit can cause the pH level of the di-

gestive system to become unbalanced, especially consuming fruit with high water content like watermelon, muskmelon, cucumber, orange, and strawberry.

This is because fruit with a lot of water in it can change the pH balance by reducing the acidity of your stomach. Experts warn that doing so can result in serious illnesses such as diarrhoea or cholera.

You are not eating the skin- When it comes to vitamins and antioxidants, the peel is frequently the best part. Apple peels, for example, are high in fibre, vitamin C, and A. Eating the skin may even be the key to lowering your risk of obesity and cancer, according to research.

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ANNUAL SPORTS MEET: Students all geared up at the starting line for a race at the 26th annual sports meet of Amarपाली High School under Birmaharajpur block in Subarnapur district, Tuesday

Plans afoot to prevent waterlogging in Aska

2 PROPOSALS SENT TO WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Dec 6: The district administration is mulling on how to get rid of perennial waterlogging problems in Aska town. Since 1990, the town has been witnessing waterlogging during monsoons and the cyclones. District Collector Dibyajyoti Parida has recently sent two proposals to the additional secretary and the chief engineer of Water Resources department, requesting them to approve both.

Aska town is flanked by Rushikulya river and Badanadi. In 1990, a massive flood devastated the town. The entire town virtually went under water for a substantial period of time. During cyclones 'Phailin' in 2013 and 'Titli' in 2018, the town was badly affected due to waterlogging. Normal life in the town was hit for days together.

Keeping in mind this problem, a technical team was formed in 2019 following a directive from the then district collector to look into the problems that caused waterlogging. The team studied the situation and submitted report on



FILE PHOTO

the issue in August 2019. The team advised the superintendent engineer of the Bhanjanagar irrigation division, the executive officer of Aska NAC, tehsildar and the executive engineer of the Berhampur drainage division to take steps at their own level to stop waterlogging.

The Berhampur drainage division then put forth two proposals. It proposed setting up of pump houses, sumps and panel rooms near Baoua creek, Badanadi, Tipisira creek and Sukhanai Haj. It said that the

pumps could be used to drain out water during floods and cyclones. A similar proposal has been sent by the Bhubaneswar drainage circle to the additional chief engineer of the Cuttack division, November 9.

The other proposal is renovation of the Tipisira creek. The Berhampur drainage division has drawn up a blueprint of the project. Once the renovation is completed water from Tipisira creek will drain out into the Badanadi, it was stated.

BeMC planning for proper execution of Jaga Mission

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Dec 6: The Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) has gone into an overdrive to ensure successful execution of 'Jaga Mission' - under which land pattas will be provided to slum dwellers for the plots they have been staying on for many years. The BeMC authorities have been collecting data about the slum dwellers, measuring the plots they have occupied and their eligibility criteria with USHA app. Meanwhile drone survey of the 168 slums under BeMC started November 10 and has now been completed. The BeMC has identified 17,868 families living in slums under its jurisdiction.

Now a team has been formed to collect data and find out all those who are eligible to get land through 'Jaga Mission'. A training programme for the officials who will be collecting data was organised recently at the conference hall of the BeMC here, an official informed Tuesday. The officials were trained how to avoid arguments with slum dwellers during data collection. They were also told to gather information about people who have rented out their houses in slums and are staying elsewhere. Hyderabad-based Gayatri Rural Education Society has been assigned to identify beneficiaries eligible for getting land through 'Jaga Mission'.

It should be stated here that BeMC authorities have provided housing units to people under 'Rajiv Awas Yojana' in 20 slums till date.

7 cyber frauds held



POST NEWS NETWORK

Debagarh, Dec 6: Police arrested Tuesday seven cyber frauds here for duping a college student of ₹2.43 lakh in the name of Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC) lottery.

Police also recovered ₹1.40 lakh from their possession and returned the amount to victim Bismay Behera (19), a student of Debagarh Model Degree College.

Bismay received two messages November 22 that declared him winner of ₹25 lakh prize money through KBC lottery on his WhatsApp. Later, he got a call from an unknown number and the caller introduced himself as a senior official of the organisation.

The man asked the student to share the OTP he received on his mobile and debit card details to get the prize money through online transfer. However, the moment Bismay shared the details he found that ₹2.43 lakh had been withdrawn from his account.

Bismay filed a complaint at the police station here and later contacted the cyber crime department. Police said, the accused were in-

TEACHER DUPED OF ₹2.84 LAKH

Malkangiri: A teacher was duped of ₹2.84 lakh by cyber fraudsters on the pretext of updating his bank account at Kalimela in this district, police said Tuesday. The victim, Samir Kumar Gop, is a teacher. The matter came to the fore after Malkangiri police launched an investigation over a complaint filed by the teacher. He has pleaded fervently before the police to get the amount back to him as he had saved it for his daughter's marriage. Gop said he received a call as well as a link on his mobile where the caller informed him that his bank account had turned defunct and he needs to update it to make it operational. The caller said that he will receive an OTP and asked him to send it to the link he had received on his phone. In good faith, Gop sent the OTP to the link and also his bank account number. Immediately he received a message that ₹2.84 lakh has been withdrawn from his account. In shock, he promptly lodged a complaint at the Malkangiri police station.

involved in several cases of cyber fraud in Debagarh, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sambalpur and Angul districts.

Man gets 20-year in jail for raping minor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Dec 6: A special fast track court here sentenced Tuesday an elderly person to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment after convicting him for rape of a minor under Betanoti police limits in Mayurbhanj district in 2019.

Additional District and Sessions Judge, Durga Charan Mishra also slapped a penalty of ₹10,000 on Dulal Singh, 58, after convicting him for the offence. If he defaults, Singh will have to undergo an additional one year in prison, public prosecutor Manoranjan Pattanaik said.

The judge passed the order after examining the statements of 19 witnesses, medical report and the chargesheet during the trial that went on for three years. The court also directed the family of the victim to return the ₹2 lakh financial assistance provided by the Odisha government as she died during the trial, Pattanaik added.

According to the case diary, Singh, a native of Kachhimbila village under Betanoti police limits called the girl out of her house to a nearby jungle and raped her over there, May 20, 2019.

The girl suffered injuries during the assault and could not return home. Family members searched for her and finally traced her to the jungle following a tip-off. They rescued her and rushed her to the Betanoti hospital first and later shifted her to PRM Medical College and Hospital in Baripada.

Police registered a case under POCSO Act and arrested Singh after the victim's brother lodged a complaint at the police station.

Youth dies in bee attack

Gopabandhanagar: A youth identified as Laxman Tudu, died Tuesday after being attacked by a swarm of bees at Shilaghathi village under this block of Mayurbhanj district, Tuesday. He was storing paddy bundles in the yard when the bees attacked him. He was admitted to the Baripada district headquarters hospital in critical condition and died while undergoing treatment.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender No.: 50-KUR-TRTD-OT-2022-23
Name of Work: PROVISION OF NEW OHE STRUCTURES IN PLACE OF LEANING OHE STRUCTURES IN NORTH SECTION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Advertised Value: ₹ 1,30,60,605.68, EMD: ₹2,15,300/-, Period of Completion: 365 days, Validity of Offer (Days): 60
Bidding Start Date: 14.12.2022, Tender Closing Date & Time: at 1300 hrs. of 28.12.2022
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Complete details & tender documents will be available at website <http://www.irps.gov.in>
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD), PR-780/N/22-23, Khurda Road

SHREE JAGANNATH EXPRESSWAYS PVT LTD PUBLIC NOTICE TO WHOM SO EVER IT MAY CONCERN

The General Public is hereby informed that Shri Jagannath Expressways Pvt Limited (SJEPL) shall be undertaking major maintenance of the section of National Highway number 16 between Baramunda and Chandikhole commencing 07 December, 2022 for the coming few months. Major Maintenance shall involve:-

- Repair of damages to the pavement.
- Re-laying of the entire six lane carriageway.

These activities shall necessarily require diversion of traffic from three lanes to one/two lanes. Shree Jagannath Expressways Pvt Ltd is committed to ensuring adequate safety and well-marked traffic diversions at all times.

Public at large and especially the users of the Project stretch are requested to kindly take a note of the major maintenance activity and extend fullest cooperation by adhering to the following: -

- Adhere to all safety norms.
- Ensure safe speeds as per displayed signages at the construction zone.
- Wearing of safety belts/helmets
- Avoid travelling in the wrong direction since at any time one lane shall be available in the construction zone for passage of traffic.
- Avoid stopping at the construction zone to prevent congestion.

Inconvenience during the construction period is deeply regretted.

In case of emergency, please contact 1033 (National Helpline) or 1800 4208 289 (NH Control Room).

Place : Tangi Toll Plaza
Date : 07 December, 2022

Sd/
Project Head, SJEPL

Enhancing livelihood scope for SHGs, very poor families



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, Dec 6: To enhance the forest ecosystem along with livelihood of local people by improving sustainable management and biodiversity conservation and community development, the Odisha Forest Sector Development Project (Phase-II) is being implemented in 156 Van Surakhya Samities (VSS) in five forest management units (FMU) in Sundargarh district. The places where the projects are being implemented are Ujalpur, Lephripara, Hemgir, Sundargarh and Bargaon.

The project is all set and running successfully with regeneration of degraded forest resources through afforestation, livelihood development through creation of employment generation programmes under the direct supervision of DFO, Sundargarh, Pradeep Mirase

and ACF Mohan Hembram. This project is aimed at socio-economic development of the poorest of the poor (PoP) and forest dependant families by involving self-help groups (SHGs). Business development plans are being developed by the SHGs for employment generation with support from P-NGO (SEWAK) staffs and FMU officials.

To facilitate the plans, an amount of 1.73 crore as loan has been distributed to 339 SHGs, 33 CIGs and 39 PoP families at minimum rate of interest.

In this context, a capacity building training programme on vegetable cultivation, vermin compost, and poultry farming was held successfully at the Rauldega section office premises of Sundargarh FMU. A total of 2,600 members belonging to 86 VSS of the five FMUs participated in the programme. The key facilitators of

these training programmes were Manoj Kumar Jena, senior scientist, KVK, Sundargarh; Uttam Kumar Behera, VAS-Balisankara; Ranjita Rashmi Pradhan, VAS-Sundargarh; Deepak Kumar Bindhani, VAS-Bargaon; Prafulla Kumar Naik, block veterinary officer and retired VAS Tapovan Patel.

Under the leadership of Sundargarh divisional management unit, SMS Gopal Chandra Shukla and Sukant Kumar Pani, DMU Accountant Suryakant Senapati, P-NGO SEWAK staff and FMU coordinators organised the entire programme. The participants expressed their satisfaction that the training will support them to a great extent towards better management of the income-generation activities as well as develop a revolving fund for themselves.

5T school modernised sans blackboards

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dharmasala, Dec 6: The Odisha government has been spending huge amounts under the 5T initiative for upgrading the infrastructure in schools. However, now it seems that modernisation of schools under the scheme has fallen flat

A video has emerged which shows a teacher at Hingula Government High School in Antia village under this block in Jajpur district writing questions on the classroom door. It should be stated here that the school was upgraded under the 5T initiative in November, 2021. People are now questioning the absence of a blackboard in the school even after it has been modernised.

Sources said many of the classes in the school do not have blackboards. They informed that schools have been asked to conduct the half-yearly examinations of students from Classes I to VIII under Samagra

Sikshya Abhiyan. Accordingly, the school authorities had published a notice to conduct the examinations of students from Class-I to Class-VIII from Tuesday.

Students of Hingula HS had come prepared accordingly to appear for the examination Tuesday. However, they were provided with answer sheets and not question papers that did not reach on time. Instead teachers wrote questions on the doors of classrooms for students to answer. This sparked resentment among the students and their guardians.

When the news spread, parents and members of the school man-

agement committee reached the spot. The guardians blamed the headmistress as the question papers did not arrive on time. The headmistress said that the question papers could not be brought to the school due to unavoidable circumstances.

Later, a meeting was held comprising the guardians, teachers and school committee members. A decision was taken to write the questions on the blackboard. It was then discovered that some of the classrooms did not have blackboards for which the questions were written on the backside of doors.

MUTUAL FUND INVESTOR AWARENESS PROGRAM
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Date and Venue:
Friday, 9th December, 2022; 6:30 p.m. onwards.
at Hotel Radhika Regency, Bisra Road, Rourkela - 769 001, Kerala.
For registration, please contact: Ranjini Mallik, Mobile: 99370 88035.
Registration is compulsory.
The registration time will be from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm.
It is mandatory to follow the COVID safety guidelines during the event.
No walk-ins will be allowed.

75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav **75** INDEPENDENCE DAY **75**
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Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002
Phone: 011-23604333, 011-23604508

Adv. No.18/2022
EXTENSION OF LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR, INTER-UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS (IUCAA), PUNE, MAHARASHTRA
UGC had invited online applications for the post of Director, Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune, Maharashtra in the pay level of Rs.2,10,000/- (Fixed) per month with a special allowance of Rs.11,250/- P.M. (plus usual allowances as applicable from time to time), which is equivalent to the Vice-Chancellor of the Central Universities for which the last date for filing up of online applications is 30.11.2022.
This is to inform that the last date has now been extended to 31.12.2022 for filing of online applications. Further details are available on the UGC website www.ugc.ac.in/fojs.
CBC 21205/12/0025/2223 **Secretary, UGC**

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO.III, BHUBANESWAR
bbsrandb03@yahoo.com
No.B-924: 60Estg No.8435, Date:03.12.2022
Government of Odisha "e"-Procurement Notice No.(50) of 2022-23
Bid Identification No: - C.C. (R&B) 03

1 Name of the Work	E.I. Works
2 Total No. of Works	1 No. Work
3 Estimated Cost	Rs.21,63,700.00
4 Class of Contractor	"HT" Class & Above
5 Period of Completion	1 (One) Calendar Month
6 Type of Tender	Single Cover System (Online)
7 Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	From 07.12.2022 at 11.00 hrs. to 16.12.2022 upto 17.30 hrs.
8 Last date & time for receipt of bids in the portal	16.12.2022, upto 17.30 hrs.
9 Name & Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Er.Gayatri Patel, Executive Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No.III, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>.
N.B.:Subsequent corrigendum/addendum if required shall be available in the website as indicated above.
Sd./ Executive Engineer,
OIPR-34089/11/0017/2223 BBSR (R&B) Division No.III,BBSR

Whenever in your life, you meet with a hardship, take it as a boon from the Divine's Grace and it will become so.

THE MOTHER



Victory, Not Quite

A seemingly off the cuff remark by Iran's Attorney General Mohammad Jafar Montazeri that the Iranian morality police was being "disbanded" is now being interpreted not as a sign of the regime succumbing to pressure exerted by protesters, but as kite flying. Protesters and international communities are not prepared to buy the argument that the orthodox regime has had a change of heart after protests erupted against the killing of a 22-year-old Kurdish woman, Mahsa Amini, by the morality police. Global attention has been drawn to the plight of Iranian women being forced to follow a strict dress code including wearing of hijab. Iran's soccer team brought focus to the issue recently by not singing their national anthem before the opening match of FIFA World Cup at Qatar in solidarity with their protesting countrymen.

Iran's state media was quick to rebut the Attorney General's comment about disbanning the morality police, while the protesters denounced it as a public relations stunt by the regime to break the movement against the authorities' denial of freedom to the people, especially women and the continuing economic crisis.

The Attorney General said during a religious conference late last week that the Iranian morality police had been "disbanded". International media and advocates of freedom for Iranian women hailed the announcement as a victory for Iranians protesting against the government for months. However, the very next day, state media sought to downplay Montazeri's comments, saying that the morality police do not fall under the authority of the judiciary. As such, his comments had no bearing on ground reality. Iran's state television - Al-Alam - decried initial attempts by foreign media to interpret Montazeri's comments as a climbdown on the part of the Islamic Republic from its stance on hijab and religious morality as a result of the protests. "No official of the Islamic Republic of Iran has said that the Guidance Patrol has been shut," Al-Alam said.

It is true the decision to disband the morality police technically lies with the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution, set up in the early 1980s by Iran's first Supreme Leader Ruhollah Khomeini. It is now headed by the orthodox President Ebrahim Raisi.

Montazeri's comments fuelled speculation about the regime relenting in the face of the protests since the pro-reform media outlet Entekhab reported him saying that Iran's parliament and judiciary were reviewing the country's mandatory hijab law put in place in 1983.

The morality police earned notoriety for allegedly terrorizing citizens and implementing Iran's hijab law with an iron hand. Significantly, however, since protesters launched agitation the morality police reportedly disappeared from the streets of Tehran. This further emboldened Iranian women to disobey the dress codes imposed on them.

But, the morality police's absence from the streets is hardly going to assuage the feelings of the agitators who are clamouring for fundamental changes in the regime for getting more liberty and a stronger economy. What is ominous for the regime is that the protesters are now chanting on the streets the slogan - 'the Islamic Republic should go.'

If the Attorney General's remark had the tacit approval of the regime, it would mean the latter simply wants to dissociate itself from the infamy of the instrument of torture that the morality police has become. At the same time, it would continue to maintain its tight control over mandatory hijab. The law official in that case, it appears, is being used as a sounding board to test how far the protesters can go.

The only official statement made at this stage is by Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian who during a visit to Serbia neither confirmed nor denied that the Attorney General's remark was correct. He said, "In Iran, everything is moving forward well in the framework of democracy and freedom." This is of course a diplomatic verbiage.

Women in Iran are now not much bothered about whether there is a hijab or not, as a protester put it. They have been going without it for the past 70 days and they demand nothing short of "a revolution and regime change." They may sound too ambitious despite international backing. As US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the abolition of Iran's morality police could be "a positive thing" and praised the "extraordinary courage of Iranian young people, especially women, who have been leading these protests." For sure, a grim struggle is ahead.

SCRAMBLE FOR THE HELM

FOCUS GUJARAT POLLS

With the second phase of polling for the Gujarat Assembly over December 5, all eyes are now on December 8 when the final results will be declared. Of the two-phase Assembly elections, the voting for the first phase was held December 1 for 89 seats and polling for second phase encompassing 93 seats was held December 5. The average voting for the first phase was around 65% and voting percentage for second phase was about 60%, and average voting on the whole was less relative to 2017. Of the total 182 seats of the Assembly, 98 are rural while 84 are urban. Past electoral performance of the BJP shows that it had bigger sway in urban areas, and in 2017, the BJP had won 63 urban seats but could manage only 36 rural seats.



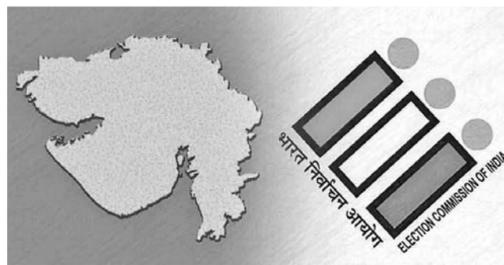
Anil Singh

PAST ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE OF THE BJP SHOWS THAT IT HAD BIGGER SWAY IN URBAN AREAS

BJP's Prospects

Winning Assembly election, albeit for the seventh term, is a prestige issue for the BJP because it is the home turf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Amit Shah and losing grip over power in Gujarat entails potential pan-India implications for the BJP in electoral and prestige terms. In order to keep its hold on power in Gujarat, the BJP at the Centre as well as in the state has pulled all stops. Some observers have drawn attention to some major investment announcements made in the state in the run-up to the elections - a multi-billion dollar semiconductor plant by Vedanta-Foxconn and an aircraft manufacturing project by the Tata group and Airbus. During its first tenure in office at the Centre (2014-2019), the BJP had been engaged in aggressively marketing the development model of Gujarat, showcasing Gujarat's 1,600-km long coastline, well-developed ports, connected highways, industry-friendly policies, and export-led growth across sectors.

The BJP has been ruling Gujarat for 27 years now, including 13 years of Modi as CM, and cooperative dairies making up for approximately 90 constituencies, have played a crucial role during the Assembly polls until the recent past. Nevertheless, with the Patidar agitation done and dusted and the dairy producers witnessing a spike in their incomes in recent times, the BJP is expecting a change in their



The BJP has been witnessing a gradual decline in its seats' tally since 2002 till 2017 while the Congress has been gaining gradually

electoral fortunes this time. However, a consistent fall in the number of seats won by the BJP in each election - from a record 127 seats in 2002 to 99 seats in 2017 - the BJP's claim of winning over 140 seats this time seems to be a tall claim.

Nonetheless, BJP is confronted with multiple dilemmas as well that entail the potential of adversely impacting its electoral fortunes this time. Admittedly, BJP boasts of the so-called double-engine government in BJP-ruled states, and in Gujarat there prevails double anti-incumbency wave against BJP's 27-year-old rule and over eight year rule at the Centre. While pointing to the prevalence of inner dissensions within the Gujarat unit of BJP in the wake of change of three CMs in less than five years, some analysts also draw attention to the prevailing frustration among many state party leaders over the distribution of tickets to candidates and a chunk of them have contested the polls as independent candidates. Some experts have opined that the Gujarat units of RSS and VHP are seemingly unhappy with the BJP leadership for multiple reasons, especially over the allocation of party tickets, and they have reportedly not extended their support for some candidates.

Congress' chances

The Congress in Gujarat has been out of power for over three decades; nevertheless, it has gradually been increasing its electoral tally after every Assembly poll and in 2017 it had managed to garner 77 seats and stopped the BJP at 99. During the election campaign preceding the Assembly election,

Congress maintained a low profile in urban areas and accorded priority to rural areas where it reportedly got overwhelming response. Congress campaign was devoid of high-profile and costly election meetings. Even national Congress leadership refrained from joining the campaign with the exception of former Congress president Rahul Gandhi addressing only two rallies for a day.

Congress campaign was primarily managed by Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot and he was later joined by newly-elected Congress president Malikarjun Kharge. In the absence of the coverage of Congress campaign in national electronic and print media, the ground reports posted by YouTubers are the only sources of information. This author's visit to some districts of Gujarat made it discernible the Congress style of campaigning in small groups visiting rural populace, ascertaining their problems and making the populace aware of its programmes and policies.

As one expert has pointed out, Congress tacitly avoided frequent visits of Rahul to Gujarat to conduct campaign for the party to disallow the electoral discourse to be diverted from Modi versus Kejriwal to Modi versus Rahul. On the other hand, the party focused on basic issues affecting common man. According to experts, Congress' promise of restoring old pension scheme has been received well by government employees.

AAP's gambit

AAP thus far had been not a big player in the Gujarat Assembly election in 2017 but in 2022 it emerged as a force to be reckoned

with by indulging in election blitzkrieg and insertion of advertisements in state newspapers and conducting various rallies and roadshows in the state. The AAP had managed to secure only 28, 418 votes across the 30 seats it contested in 2017; nonetheless, it showed an impressive performance in Gujarat's local body polls where it secured a vote share of 13.28 per cent that showed that it can be a viable alternative to Congress in primary Opposition space, and in the long run, an alternative to BJP. Having given an inclination of 'soft Hindutva', AAP supremo Kejriwal also tried to change the political discourse of electioneering by triggering debate on Gujarat Model versus Delhi Model. AAP's primary offerings have been development-related emphasising better schools, better infrastructure and a grip over rising prices, allowance for women and jobless youth. Some observers feel that there are some takers for AAP's offerings in urban areas, especially in Surat where it performed well in 2021 local body polls.

Way forward

Pre-election surveys, opinion polls and even exit polls after the voting for the second phase, give landslide victory to the BJP and predict less than 50 seats for the Congress and single digit seats for AAP but in a triangular contest where both Congress and AAP are forces to reckon with in many constituencies, these projections by exit polls raise certain doubts in the minds of dispassionate observers and political analysts. The BJP has been witnessing a gradual decline in its seats' tally since 2002 till 2017 while the Congress has been gaining gradually. Presently, in triangular contests, the entry of AAP entails every likelihood of denting the BJP in urban areas and to some extent, denting the Congress in some rural areas. Admittedly, some critics point out that given all the odds facing the BJP may render the party to secure lesser number of seats relative to 2017; nevertheless, the BJP entails the probability of winning a lost battle given the power and resources at its disposal. Let's wait and watch for December 8.

The writer is Executive Editor, India Ahead news channel.

WISDOM CORNER

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time. **THOMAS A. EDISON**

People may hear your words, but they feel your attitude. **JOHN C. MAXWELL**

We do not remember days, we remember moments. **CESARE PAVESE**

WORDSWORTH

Deodand

In 1336, a drunken sailor climbed the mast of his ship at anchor in the Thames by means of a rope, presumably part of the rigging. When he tried to descend the same way he fell and died. A coroner's jury decided that the rope was the cause of death and that it should be forfeited to the Crown. The rope was the inanimate casualty of an already ancient principle called deodand. A deodand was an item of property that, however coincidentally, had caused the death of a human being. Horses, cattle, carts, haystacks, beer vats, boats, stones and trees have at various times been judged to be deodands. Unlettered local juries often made the law up on the spot, for example deciding in the case of a person fatally scalded by boiling water from a pot that the pot was the deodand, not the water. Strictly speaking, a deodand is something that has been forfeited to God, from Latin deo dandum. In practice in medieval England it meant being given up to the Crown to be put to some pious use such as alms. As a stone or haystack was an inconvenient item to deal with in this way, in practice the coroner's jury decided the value of the item and its owner was required to pay that instead. (In the case of the rope, the jury appraised it as worth 10 shillings, a considerable sum at the time, roughly the price of a good horse.) The law of deodand survived into the nineteenth century. What ended it was the industrial revolution. Expensive pieces of machinery involved in accidental deaths were judged as deodands with consequent substantial fines. The rise of the railways meant that coroner's juries in the 1830s and 1840s awarded large deodands against companies whose trains were involved in fatal accidents. As a result, the government of the day passed a law in 1846 abolishing the concept.

Deprecate

It started with an e-mail message from subscriber Pete Jones: "Have you come across deprecated with the sense 'no longer valid or current'?" He pointed me to a website that defined it as "no longer part of the current specification". It took a bit of sleuthing to track this down. The glossary item is referring to HTML, the coding system behind the World Wide Web. The formal specification uses deprecated in sentences like "The following elements are deprecated", and carefully defines what it means by that: "A deprecated element or attribute is one that has been outdated by newer constructs". The writer is saying that some elements in earlier versions are not actually obsolete but are now disapproved of - deprecated - and should be avoided. Though this jargon sense is not in any mainstream dictionary, it is actually quite common in specifications of computer languages.

IN JEST THIS

Teens may survive without smartphones



Melvin Durai

UNFORTUNATELY, MOST TEENS HAVE NOT SIGNED A CELLPHONE USAGE AGREEMENT

Have you ever tried to take a bone from a dog? Trust me, it's a very dangerous thing to do, even if the dog is a beloved member of your family. In fact, when it comes to taking an object away in a typical household, there is only one thing more dangerous: taking a cellphone away from a teenager.

You're likely to endure a combination of S-words: scratching, spitting and swearing.

In most households, the parents are paying for both the cellphones and the cellphone plan. But before they handed the cellphones to the teens (or even pre-teens), they did not get them to sign a cellphone usage agreement. A good cellphone usage agreement goes something like this:

"I, the undersigned teen, being of unsound body and mind, do hereby declare my undying love and affection to my parents for granting me the use of a cellphone. In order to enjoy the privilege of using the cellphone, I agree to the following:

1. The cellphone belongs to my

parents, who retain the right to take it away from me without any notice, even if I'm in the middle of uploading a video to TikTok called "Funny Musical Sounds from My Lower Body Parts."

2. I will not use the cellphone when I have homework to do or an exam to study for, except in dire circumstances, such as when my parents have posted something on social media and need a 'like.'

3. I will not bring the cellphone to the dining table, unless I intend to take photos of my mom's amazing cooking to post on social media.

4. If my parents ask me to share all the messages I've sent and received, I will not laugh in their faces. I will turn to the side and laugh.

5. If my parents take me on vacation, I will not spend the entire trip staring at my cellphone. There is life outside my cellphone and I will attempt to discover it."

Unfortunately, most teens have not signed a cellphone usage agreement. This makes it extremely difficult for a parent to take possession of a cellphone. A desperate parent will occasionally turn to the

internet for help, searching for "Cellphone Removal Service." If they're lucky, they will find a local business that they can call.

Parent: "Please help me. My son is addicted to his cellphone. I tried to take it away, but he's holding it too tightly!"

Business Manager: "Don't worry. I will send Rocky right over. Rocky has never met a cellphone he couldn't remove."

Parent: "I don't want him to hurt my son, just take his phone away."

Manager: "Don't worry. Rocky is very gentle. He will first try to tickle your son. Tickle him until he drops the phone. If that doesn't work, he will hug him until he drops the phone."

Parent: "And if that doesn't work?"

Manager: "Then Rocky will threaten him."

Parent: "Threaten him with violence?"

Manager: "No, threaten to take an embarrassing video and post it on social media. That always seems to work."

Considering such parental strug-

gles, it's remarkable what one American boarding school has managed to do. After students returned from remote learning during the pandemic, administrators at Buxton boarding school in Williamstown, Massachusetts, noticed that the students had forgotten how to interact with each other. "They had spent so much time glued to their smartphones," Peter Beck, the head of Buxton, told the New York Post.

So what did the school do? It banned smartphones, allowing the students to use only simple phones without social media apps or internet browsers.

And guess what? The students somehow survived. "They're spending more time doing academic work, creatively expressing themselves through art, getting to know one another and getting to know themselves," Beck said.

Parents everywhere, take note: If your children won't give you their cellphones, you don't have to call any service.

Just threaten to send them to Buxton.

Much needed intervention

Sir, The recent pronouncement by the Supreme Court regarding forced religious conversions in the guise of charity is a much needed intervention. Now, that SC has taken suo motu cognizance of the serious matter and reiterated clearly that the purpose of charity should not be conversion, the state should form strict laws and put checks and balances in place to checkmate this rampant practice. The right to freedom of religion under Article 25 of our Constitution doesn't include the fundamental right to convert other people to a particular religion and any such deceitful forced conversion tantamounts to violation of fundamental right. Helping someone and doing charity in some way or other is good but doing that in the guise of a malafide intention to exploit the poor reeks of treacherous, heinous and horrendous mentality and need to be subdued with iron fist by the government. Mostly the backward classes of society, the poor and downtrodden are victims as they are vulnerable and trapped due to their ignorance. Apart from strict laws these people should be counselled by the civil society and the local administration about its repercussions in the long run. I am sure after SC intervention we will be more proactive in dealing with the menace and work at prohibiting it. **Debi Prasanna Mohapatra, BHUBANESWAR**

Pandits under threat

Sir, This refers to "Fear among KPs palpable after fresh terror threat," Orissa POST, Dec 6. It is worrisome that Pakistan-headquartered Lashkar-e-Taiba has released a 'hit list' of 56 Kashmiri Pandit employees working in the Valley under the Prime Minister's Rehabilitation Package. The brazenness with which the list has been posted on the outfit's blog suggests absolutely no fear of the law, and the leak of the employees' details points to the involvement of insiders who are collaborating with the terrorists. The Valley has been rocked by targeted killings over the past year or so, Hindu staffers have been demanding their relocation, while promising that they would return to Kashmir when the situation improved. Terror groups are thriving on local support and it's the network of Valley-based spies that keeps the likes of Lashkar-e-Taiba well informed about the activities of Pandits. Such informers not only pose a threat to peace but can also imperil the livelihood of Kashmiris in the tourism sector, which is witnessing a boom this year. Treating the Pandits as their brethren and helping security agencies flush out terrorists and spies should be the way forward for the local community. **N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE**

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, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



Today on the occasion of Mahaparinirvan Diwas of Babasaheb Ambedkar, I would like to appeal to all the people to seek inspiration from the life of Dr Ambedkar. His life was full of struggles and there is a lot for us to learn from it to become better citizens of this country

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

RAHUL'S FLYING KISS

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi began his yatra Tuesday morning on a rather interesting note, giving flying kisses to people who gathered at the BJP Jhalawar office's rooftop to catch a glimpse of the march



of the day quote

Women power has already arrived, but there is a need for change in the mindset. The time has come to avail the change being led by women, as they are increasingly becoming initiators of policies, rather than passive consumers of government initiatives

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

The Congress is not a cadre-based party like the BJP and CPI (M)

JAIRAM RAMESH | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

BJP workers should build direct contact with every home through the 'house to house' campaign so that they are seen as members of the households, standing with them in most difficult times

JP NADDA | BJP NATIONAL PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Melinda Gates meets Sitharaman

New Delhi: Co-chair and Trustee of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Melinda Gates Tuesday called on Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. Both the dignitaries discussed India's successful initiatives in dealing with the pandemic and its aftermath and the country's impressive vaccine coverage, the finance ministry informed through a series of tweets. Gates also discussed the role of digital stack in financial services among other issues with the finance minister. Gates also expressed her support for India's G20 presidency.

Yoginder Alagh passes away

Ahmedabad: Noted economist and former Union minister Yoginder K Alagh passed away here Tuesday after a prolonged illness, his family said. Alagh (83) was an emeritus professor at the Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research (SPIESR) in Ahmedabad. He was not keeping well for some time, his son Munish Alagh said, adding his father breathed his last Tuesday evening. Y K Alagh was born in Chakwal in present-day Pakistan in 1939 and studied at the University of Rajasthan. He had a doctorate in economics from the University of Pennsylvania. He was also a former vice-chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi and taught economics at the University of Rajasthan, IIM Calcutta, the University of Jodhpur, and the University of Pennsylvania.

Border dispute between Maha, K'taka escalates

THE PROTESTS BY KANNADA ACTIVISTS TOOK A VIOLENT TURN AFTER TRUCKS BEARING MAHARASHTRA REGISTRATION NUMBER PLATES WERE ATTACKED BY AN ANGRY MOB

AGENCIES

Bangalore/Mumbai, Dec 6: The border dispute between Karnataka and Maharashtra over claims for Belagavi in the southern state intensified Tuesday, with vehicles from either sides being targeted, leaders from both states weighing in and pro-Kannada and Marathi activists being detained by police amid a tense atmosphere in the border district.

Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar termed the situation in the border areas of the two states as "worrisome", and said the time has come to take a stand after seeing what is happening there.

"Maharashtra has taken a stand of observing patience and it is still ready to do that. But even that has a limit. In 24 hours, if the attacks on vehicles are not stopped then this patience will take a different path and the responsibility will be completely on the Karnataka Chief Minister and the Karnataka government," Pawar told reporters in Mumbai.

Karnataka CM Basavaraj Bommai asserted his government's commitment to protect the borders and ensure Kannadigas' welfare and denied the issue had any-

thing to do with the 2023 Assembly polls in the state, where the ruling BJP is fancying a successive term.

In Bangalore, Bommai denied the issue had anything to do with the 2023 Assembly polls in the state. "There is no relationship with upcoming assembly elections and Karnataka's stand on the border issue. For many years now, it is Maharashtra that has been raking up the issue," he said. Maharashtra has raised the dispute and there is reaction from Karnataka, he added.

Speaking to reporters, he maintained there is harmony between people of both states and it should not be disturbed. "The case is before the Supreme Court, our stand is both legal and constitutional, so we are confident that we will win the legal battle. So there is no question of us wanting to create an issue out of it for the sake of elections. We are committed to protect the state's borders and our people, and also the interests of Kannadigas living in Maharashtra, Telangana and Kerala," he added.

A Maharashtra ministerial delegation that was supposed to visit Belagavi and hold discussions with a pro-Marathi group postponed its schedule while Kannada organi-



sations staged a protest in the district in a show of strength.

In Pune, activists of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena faction sprayed black and orange paints on at least three Karnataka state transport buses in Swargate area. They also wrote "Jai Maharashtra" on these buses.

In a show of strength, pro-Kannada organisations staged demonstration in Belagavi, against the proposed visit of the ministerial delegation from the neighbouring state. The Karnataka Rakshana Vedithe, which led the agitation also announced statewide protests from Wednesday.

The leaders of the Kannada organisations protested against Maharashtra Ministers Chandrakant Patil and Shambhuraj Desai's proposed visit which was postponed later.

The activists held placards, banners, posters, Kannada flag and raised slogans against Maharashtra for raking up the issue. The ac-

tivists reportedly blackened the number plate of few trucks with Maharashtra registration. In view of the protests, police made elaborate security arrangements in the city to avoid any untoward incidents. To prevent the situation before turning into violent, police took the protestors under preventive custody.

Meanwhile, Maharashtra Deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnis took up with Bommai, reported stone-pelting incidents on vehicles entering Karnataka from his state.

A video surfaced on social media showing some people throwing stones at vehicles entering Karnataka from Maharashtra near a toll booth at Hirebaugwadi in

as it has a sizable Marathi-speaking population

It also laid claim to 814 Marathi-speaking villages which are currently part of Karnataka

Karnataka maintains the demarcation done on linguistic lines as per the States Reorganisation

Act and the 1967 Mahajan Commission Report as final

And, as an assertion that Belagavi is an integral part of the state, Karnataka has built the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha, modelled on the Vidhana Soudha, the seat of legislature in Bangalore, and a legislature session is held there annually

Belagavi, prompting Fadnis to dial Bommai and extract an assurance on protection of vehicles.

Sources close to Fadnis said he "made a phone call to Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and expressed his disappointment over the Hirebaugwadi incident."

Belagavi district administration Monday issued orders barring entry of the two Maharashtra Ministers and leaders to the city. Deputy Commissioner and district magistrate Nitesh Patil had issued prohibitory orders under section 144 of CrPC, barring their entry, besides that of a MP, who are members of the Maharashtra High Power Committee on the Border Dispute.

UPSC declares results of Civil Services (Main) Examination 2022

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: The results of Civil Services (Main) Examination 2022 were declared Tuesday by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), according to an official statement.

The civil services examination is conducted annually in three stages - preliminary, main and interview - to select officers of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) among others.

The main examination was held from September 16 to September 25. The UPSC has put up on its website (www.Upsc.Gov.In) a list of roll numbers of the successful candidates.

Dates of personality tests (interviews) of the successful candidates will be notified in due course, which will be held in the office of the Union Public Service Commission at Dholpur House, Shahjahan Road, New Delhi. The candidates will be required to produce the original certificates in support of their eligibility/reservation claims viz.

Age, educational qualifications, community, economically weaker section, Person with Benchmark Disability (PwBD) and other documents such as travelling allowance form etc.

At the time of their personality test (interview), it said, they are, therefore, advised to keep the said documents ready with them, the statement said.

Vivek Agnihotri apologises to Delhi High Court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: Filmmaker Vivek Agnihotri tendered a written apology in the Delhi High Court Tuesday in a criminal contempt case for his remarks against a judge, who he had accused of bias in granting relief to activist Gautam Navlakha, but the court directed him to appear before it on and "show remorse in person".

A bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Talwant Singh asked if Agnihotri, whose film *The Kashmir Files* is hogging the lime-light again over Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid's remarks against it, has any difficulty in appearing before the court in person. "We are asking him (Agnihotri) to remain present because he is the alleged contemnor. Does he have any difficulty to appear before this court? He has to be present and show remorse in person."

"Does he have any difficulty if he has to express remorse in person? The remorse cannot always be expressed by way of an affidavit," the bench told Agnihotri's lawyer. His lawyer submitted the filmmaker has tendered an unconditional apology in an affidavit in which he has also stated that he deleted his tweets against the judge himself. However, the court was informed by the amicus curiae that the submission was wrong and it was Twitter which deleted his tweets.

Protest against Vizhinjam sea port called off for now

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The calling off of the agitation was announced by Vicar General Eugene Pereira, who has been seen at the forefront of the protests

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 6: The over 130-day-long protest by fisherfolk against the under-construction Vizhinjam sea port was Tuesday called off for now after discussions between the leaders of the agitation and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

"For now we are calling it off. Protests do not always come to an end only after achieving their objectives. Each protest has several phases. One such phase of the protest has ended in a consensus," Pereira told reporters after meeting the Chief Minister.

He, however, said the protest was not being called off because they were satisfied with the steps taken or promises made by the state government. "We have not arrived at this decision because we are satisfied," he said and added that if required, they will take up the agitation again. A source in the Chief Minister's Office told PTI that several rounds of dis-



cussions were held during the day before the protest was called off.

Initially, the protestors' representatives held discussions with a cabinet sub-committee after which the latter held a meeting with the CM, the source said.

Thereafter, the CM and the sub-committee met with representatives of the protestors, the source also said. Meanwhile, a source in Adani Group, which is carrying out the port construction, told PTI that the company will commence work only after receiving an official communication from the state government.

He also said that while the government, at every discussion, said that a representative of the protestors would be included in the committee studying the coastal erosion in the area, no steps have been taken till now in that regard. He further said that while the

protest was being called off for now, the protestors were still sticking to their claims regarding the impact of the project on the lives and livelihood of the fisherfolk of the area. Therefore, they were going to carry out an independent study of their own regarding the project's impact on the area and the extent or severity of the same and would inform the general public about their findings.

On the issue of the state government providing them the money for rented accommodation, for those displaced from their homes due to coastal erosion or natural disasters, Pereira said the administration has increased the amount to ₹8,000 from the earlier ₹5,500.

However, they decided they only wanted ₹5,500 as the remaining amount of ₹2,500 was going to come from the CSR fund of Adani Group, he said.

HANUMAN CHALISA ROW

Hindu Mahasabha leader held, 40 across Mathura detained

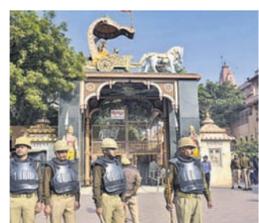
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mathura, Dec 6: An Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha leader was arrested Tuesday while allegedly going to recite Hanuman Chalisa at the Shahi Masjid Idgah in the Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi complex while 40 activists of Hindutva organisations were taken into custody as a preventive measure, officials said. They said seven-eight other leaders of the organisation were also detained in their houses under different police stations of the city.

"Not a single member of the organisation could reach near Idgah as per their programme. As a preventive measure about 40 persons were taken into custody. They would be released on personal bond after completing the formality," Senior Superintendent of Police Shallesh Pandey said.

Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Martandey Singh said police arrested the Mahasabha's Agra region in-charge Saurabh Sharma when he was making an attempt to go towards the Idgah mosque in the complex.

He said the Mahasabha's president Rajshri Chaudhary and treasurer Dinesh Sharma were not among those confined at their homes, and police had no information about the duo. Chaudhary claimed that she was



in Mathura Tuesday and a picture of her standing at gate number 1 of the Janmabhoomi complex was shared by the Mahasabha.

However, Singh disputed the claim saying, "This is an old picture which is being used for making false claims". National Vice-President of the Mahasabha, Anil Tripathi, told PTI over phone that he has been kept under house arrest at his residence in Delhi.

The officer said in view of the situation in Mathura, prohibitory orders were imposed by the district administration and those who tried to disturb peace were being interrogated after being taken into custody. Seven of these people belong to the Hindu Mahasabha, who are currently kept at the city police station, he said. Singh said security had been beefed up in view of the right wing organisation's declaration of reciting Hanuman Chalisa at the Idgah Tuesday.

ICMR faces 6K hacking attempts in a day: Official

AFTER INDIA'S TWO PREMIER HEALTH INSTITUTES - ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES AND SAFDARJUNG HOSPITAL, THE TOP HEALTH RESEARCH INSTITUTE INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH HAS FACED THE CYBER ATTACK AND HACKING ATTEMPTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: Hackers allegedly tried to breach the website of the apex health research body ICMR but their attempts were foiled, government officials said Tuesday.

The attempted attack on the ICMR website was prevented by the firewall/security measures of NIC, they said, adding further steps are being taken to enhance cyber security. The hacking attempts come close on the heels of the al-



The attack has been prevented successfully by the firewall/security measures of NIC," the official said.

In the wake of the hacking attempts, the Secretary of the Department of Health Research (DHR) and Director General of ICMR, Dr Rajiv Bahl, reviewed cyber infrastructure and security practices at ICMR December 2, an official source said. "It was

customized open-source firewall (PFsense). Further, inbound and outbound internet traffic is strictly controlled and regularly monitored for any suspicious activity on all the active interfaces," the source said.

The Secretary, DHR directed that in light of the recent attack on AIIMS and other medical institutions, cyber-infrastructure security, particularly web portals and data, needs to be enhanced at ICMR.

It was decided that following best practices, the critical web and data portals will be migrated to Government Community Cloud (GCC). A request for proposal (RFP) for procuring GCC is already being prepared and is in the final stages, the source stated. A proposal for developing an ICMR Data Centre (Delhi and Chennai) and a Disaster-Recovery site (Bangalore) is being developed on a turnkey basis. A network security audit of ICMR and various locations will be executed on an urgent basis, the source said.



Police personnel use water cannons to disperse Congress MLA Shafi Parambil and other Youth Congress activists during their protest against the alleged back-door appointments made by the CPM-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) government in local bodies across the state in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

Close race: Independents get feelers from parties in Himachal

Exit polls indicated that the Congress and the ruling BJP might struggle to make it to the half-way mark when the results are declared December 8

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Dec 6: With exit polls pointing at the possibility of a hung assembly in Himachal Pradesh, some independent candidates claim they have started getting feelers from the two main parties for their support.

A party needs the support of at least 35 candidates to form the government in Himachal Pradesh. But exit polls Monday indicated that the Congress and the ruling BJP might struggle to make it to this half-way mark when the results are declared December 8.

The surveys projected a range of 24-41 seats for the BJP and 20-40 seats for the Congress.

If the contest turns out to be this close, the role of independents could be crucial — and some of them claimed Monday that the two parties have been in touch with them.

When contacted BJP rebels K L Thakur and Manohar Dhiman, who fought the election as independents after being denied the party ticket, said they have been “approached” by both the parties.

But they would keep their cards close to the chest till the results are officially declared, they told PTI. Another independent, Ram Singh, said he is not a rebel but the people's candidate and would decide whom to support after December 8.

Altogether, there are 91 independents in the fray including about two dozen rebels who may cut



into the votes that would have normally gone to the official party candidates, and spoil their prospects. The political parties, however, are focused on independents who have a bigger chance of winning. Both the BJP and the Congress are chalking out strategies to rope them in, in case they themselves fall short of majority.

The independents with better chances of winning include K L Thakur (Nalagarh), Manohar Dhiman (Indora), Ram Singh (Kullu), Raju (Arki), Hoshiyar Singh (Dehra), Indu Verma (Theog) and Sanjay Prasher (Jaswan-Pragpur).

For the record, both sides say they are set to score a clear victory. “We will get a clear mandate and form the government. Independents are welcome if they are willing to associate with the government, and remaining in touch with independent candidates is a normal process,” Chief Minister Jai

Ram Thakur told PTI.

Leader of the Opposition Mukesh Agnihotri also claimed that Congress was all set to win majority and said party leaders are in contact with the independents.

In some elections in the past, Independents have played a significant role in the state, which has a record of alternating between the two main parties every assembly election.

In 1982, the Congress won 31 out of 68 seats in 1982 and formed the government with the help of independents. The BJP and Janata Party won 29 and two seats, respectively, and independents bagged six seats in that election.

BJP leader Shanta Kumar went to Raj Bhavan to stake his claim to form the government after two Janata Party members assured their support. But both of them failed to turn up there. Instead, four independents extended support to the Congress.

The last holdouts of Kuno

Ever since the release of cheetahs brought from Namibia into the park September 17, the state forest department has been taking steps to relocate Bagcha, which falls under the park area, and Jahangarh, which lies in the buffer zone

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Sheopur, Dec 6: “We were born in the forest, and we would like to die here,” say the Sahariya tribal people of two villages in Sheopur district that are in the process of resettlement due to the much-talked-about cheetah project in Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park.

Ever since the release of cheetahs brought from Namibia into the park September 17, the state forest department has been taking steps to relocate both Bagcha, which falls under the park area, and Jahangarh, which lies in the buffer zone. Outside the buffer zone, a further 557 sq km has been newly demarcated as an eco-sensitive zone where people may continue to live but with restrictions on industries and land use.

As many as 216 families in Bagcha will be shifted to Rampura, located around 50 km away, where compensatory agricultural lands measuring not more than five acres each and places to build houses have been identified. However, things are bleak for the 70 families in Jahangarh as there is no provision to provide land for land while resettling people in the buffer zone. They will instead get a com-



penation of ₹15 lakh, specifically for land purchase.

The forest department will facilitate their relocation by identifying suitable plots in other villages and will directly pay from the compensation amount to land sellers. In case a balance amount is available, it will be given in installments to the beneficiary family to enhance their livelihood options.

Confirming that the officials have visited Jahangarh multiple times to convince them, Shyamabai Janmed, a Sahariya woman, says the forest department first told them that they could shift to Raghunathpur. “But when we checked out the place, the residents there said they were not willing to part with their agricultural lands. So where will we go?”

Later, the authorities directed the villagers to Chanipura, but the fact remains that Chanipura gram sabha is yet to give its consent, which is mandatory to buy land there.

Incidentally, this is not the first time that tribal people have resisted the move to drive them out of their forest. October 12, 2018, the area under Kuno National Park was increased from 344.69 sq km to 748.76 sq km, with many villages

added to the national park's operative area.

In the 1990s, when preparations were on to introduce lions to the area, 24 villages of Palpur range falling under the park area were shifted out. At that time, Bagcha and Jahangarh, which fall under Oochapura range and are home to the Sahariya, Bhil and Mongia tribes, were left out due to their stiff resistance.

This time around, the Bhils and Mongias are willing to move out provided they get compensation. However, the Sahariyas who constitute 65% of the total population of both villages have not changed their position. They say they should be resettled in another forest, if at all they need to, as they cannot live outside of it.

The tribal population also conserves the region's biodiversity as they rely on local crops, wild fruits, seeds, tubers and roots to meet their nutrition needs. “The tribals are equally important for the forest as much as the forest is necessary for the tribals,” says Harimohan of Mahatma Gandhi Seva Ashram, Sheopur.

“I can predict the weather by looking at the cloud cover and wind speed. However, our future seems difficult to predict. I do not know

when the officials will come to throw us out,” laments Gulubai Ganpat of Jahangarh.

The tribal community sells shatavari, gudmar leaves, nagarmotha, honey, salai, khair, gum, kakoda (spiny gourd) and amla in Oochapura and Vijapur. Most families in Jahangarh have two to five bighas of land on which they grow paddy, sesame, millet and maize.

However, not all tribal communities are averse to shifting out. Mogias and Bhils have agreed to take the compensation to leave the forest. Incidentally, both communities are not on good terms with the Sahariyas, who consider them as outsiders.

“What can we do if the government has decided to remove us from our land? We feel it is better to take the money that we are offered and settle down elsewhere,” the members of the Mongia and Bhil communities say in unison.

Restrictions are on the rise after the arrival of cheetahs in Kuno National Park. Camera traps have been set up and the forest department is continuously making announcements to prevent villagers from entering the buffer zone. Residents have also started receiving notices for relocation.

BJP may use Hindutva card ahead of 2023 polls in MP



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Dec 6: ‘Hindutva’ has undoubtedly been a key tool of polarisation in the politics of the BJP, but it had very little impact in Madhya Pradesh, be it pre-demolition or post-demolition Babri Masjid. However, the relentless attempts at polarisation indicate that the moderate system of governance would be a thing of the past now, and the Hindutva card would come to the fore in the assembly elections in 2023.

When the Babri Masjid was demolished in Uttar Pradesh, the Bharatiya Janata Party was in power in Madhya Pradesh. After a short interval of President's rule, elections were held in 1993 and the Sundarlal Patwa-led BJP government was voted out of power. The Digvijaya Singh-led Congress ruled the state for the next 10 years, following the rules of moderate governance.

More importantly, present Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who is a member of the right-wing Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), did not allow communalism to flourish in Madhya Pradesh and ruled the state with a moderate governance system. His governance gave him the image of the ‘moderate face of RSS’, and his liberal governance system not only ensured the longest rule of the BJP in the state but also strengthened the party.

Senior journalist N. K. Singh, who has been a close observer of Madhya Pradesh's politics for around four decades, said the state had been the stronghold of the right wing for the last several decades, but the BJP became stronger under the leadership of Chief Minister Chouhan.

“See, besides the RSS, many other right wing groups were flourishing in MP for the last several years, and their efforts for long years strengthened the BJP in the state.

Till 2014, Dec 6 wasn't used as a polarising tool in MP

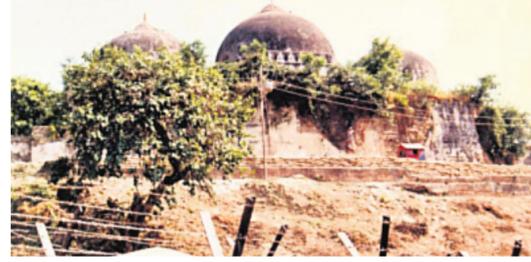
Since 2014, the situation has changed as power of state leadership has been minimised and the entire decision is being made from the Centre

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Dec 6: Notwithstanding the rapid growth of communalism in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh after the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute and despite being a stronghold of Right-Wing Bajrang Dal and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Madhya Pradesh managed to keep communalism out of frame till 2014, thanks to the strong political leadership irrespective of the party in power.

According to people monitoring the state's politics for the past four decades, the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid issue did not have a major impact on Madhya Pradesh's politics. It only saw the rise of the fire-brand of Hindutva - Uma Bharti, who assumed the chief ministership for one year in 2003. Although the issue was used as a tool of polarisation, especially by the saffron party, and benefited individuals like Bharti and Bhopal MP Pragna Singh Thakur, it was not a mass polarisation.

On why despite being a stronghold of Right-Wing and RSS, the issue could not make much of an impact here like in UP and Gujarat, political observers cited presence of strong leadership in both the BJP and the



Congress. The state leadership in both the BJP and the Congress had always refrained from promoting politics of hatred in Madhya Pradesh, till a few years back.

Babri Masjid was demolished in December 1992 and after one year, Congress stormed back into power in Madhya Pradesh. “During 10 years as Chief Minister, Digvijaya Singh (1993-2003) did not allow politics of communalism in Madhya Pradesh, and those who tried to make it a political tool, were sidelined. Even BJP leaders like Kailash Joshi and Sundarlal Patwa (both were CM from Janata Party) had liberal politics. Digvijaya Singh followed that liberalism,” said a senior journalist Law Kumar Mishra. In 2003, almost a decade after Babri Masjid was demolished in Ayodhya

(Uttar Pradesh), this issue gave rise to Uma Bharti as fire-brand of Hindutva, considered as the major impact of Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid issue. Bharti rose to national prominence when she became one of the major faces of the Ram Janmabhoomi moment along with L. K. Advani and others.

Bharti was made the main face for CM in assembly elections in 2003 and her reputation as a Hindutva fire-brand resulted in sweeping victory. “Bharti's tenure as CM ended within one year and Babulal Gaur replaced her. During his tenure, Gaur also followed the politics of liberalism. CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan also did not believe in ‘hate’ politics. During his long tenure as CM, he never promoted those using communalism for their political benefit.

40% of inmates lodged in HP jails arrested in NDPS cases



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Dec 6: Drug abuse has become a major challenge in the hill state of Himachal Pradesh and over 40 per cent of the total inmates lodged in 14 prisons in the state have been booked in connection with drugs under NDPS Act.

The prisons in Himachal are overcrowded as 2,909 inmates are lodged against the capacity of 2,437

of which 68 per cent are under trial and 32 per cent are convicted. Out of the total 2,909 inmates 1,189 (40.8 per cent) were arrested in drug-related cases, officials said.

A total of 7,942 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) cases were pending in the courts as on November 18, out of which 688 were pending for less than three months, 664 for three to six months, 935 for six months to

one year, 953 for 12 months to 18 months, 1,110 for 18 months to two years and 3,601 were pending for more than two years. Over 40 per cent of the total inmates lodged in 14 prisons in the state have been booked in connection with drugs under NDPS Act, the officials said. As speedy trials would also help in decongesting the jails in the state, the Himachal Pradesh Police have implemented a ‘Robust Trial Management’ mechanism under which deposition by police officials and independent witnesses in the courts is being reviewed every week to ensure speedy trials in the NDPS cases. Himachal police are the first in the country to start robust trial management and the police officers have been directed to deposit on time to reduce the pendency of the NDPS cases. As many as 8,734 police personnel have been

deposed from March 29, 2021, till November 18, 2022, Himachal DGP Sanjay Kundu told the PTI.

Our initiative has started yielding results and 346 cases have been decided in the first ten months of 2022 till October 31 as compared to 202 in 2020 and 126 persons have been convicted in NDPS cases in the current year in comparison to 64 in 2020, he said.

The weekly and cumulative record of the number of Police Officers and witnesses deposed in the courts under the NDPS Act, pending deposition, processes served to witnesses and the number of cases in which charge sheet has been submitted by the police for trial is being maintained, to expedite trials.

There are 2,307 drug trafficking operators (drug peddlers) in the state out of which 80 per cent (1,836) are from Himachal, 18 per cent

(422) are from other states and two per cent (49) are foreigners, according to the data procured from the police department.

About 60 per cent of the drug peddlers in Himachal have taken to Chitta (adulterated heroin) smuggling for pecuniary gains, adding a new dimension to the drug menace in the state and Chitta consumption has surpassed all other drugs. On average, over 1,500 NDPS cases are registered in the state every year with over 2,000 arrests.

As many as 1,732 persons were arrested in 1,195 NDPS cases in the first ten months of 2022 till October end and the police have seized 274 kgs charas, 31 kgs opium, 306 kgs poppy husk, 164 kgs Ganja, smack and cocaine, 7.9 kgs of heroin (chitta) and 30,152 capsules and tablets and destroyed 70,602 poppy plants and 47,737 cannabis plants, officials added.



The BJP wants to run democracy through the police. You will run democracy with the help of the police and threaten opposition parties. People have to stand up for the strength of democracy

RLYS INCREASES MAX SPEED OF TRAINS

The Indian Railways has decided to enhance the maximum permissible speed of trains to 75 km per hour from the present 60 km per hour to combat delays during the foggy winter months. The national transporter has also asked to keep adequate supply of detonators -- appliances fixed on rails that explode with a loud report when an engine passes so as to attract the driver's attention



of the day quote

Besides the withdrawal of three laws, farmers were promised about some other pressing issues, which are matters of life and death for them. But nothing has been done on those demands so far. Farmers have been left with no option, but to stage a protest December 9 in New Delhi as the Central government has so far not taken any confidence building initiative

SUKHPAL SINGH KHAIRA | ALL INDIA KISAN CONG PRESIDENT

Legends create history, but Babasaheb changed the history by instilling self-respect among those who were living disrespectful lives

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHA CM

This government has failed to protect Kashmiri Pandits. It is only exploiting the pain and suffering of the community for its own benefits. It is not serious about their problems

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP CHIEF

SC: Govt needs to ensure foodgrains reach everyone

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: It is our culture to ensure nobody goes to sleep empty stomach, the Supreme Court said Tuesday and asked the central government to see to it that foodgrains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) reaches the last man.

A bench of Justices M R Shah and Hima Kohli directed the Centre to submit a fresh chart with the number of migrant and unorganised sector workers registered on eShram portal.

"It is the duty of the central government to ensure foodgrains under NFSA are reaching the last man. We are not saying that Centre is not doing anything, the Union of India has ensured foodgrains to people during Covid. At the same time, we have to see it continues. It is our culture (to ensure) that nobody goes to sleep empty stomach," the bench said. It was hearing on its own a public interest matter related to the plight of migrant workers during the Covid pandemic and the resultant lockdowns.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for three social activists Anjali Bharadwaj, Harsh Mander and Jagdeep Chhokar, said the country's population has increased after the 2011 census and so has the number of beneficiaries covered under the NFSA.

Bhushan said the government is claiming the per capita income of people has increased in recent years, but added India has slipped



In July, the top court had said migrant workers play a very vital role in building the nation and their rights cannot be ignored at all, and asked the Centre to devise a mechanism so they receive foodgrains even without possessing ration cards

It had observed that citizens are dying due to hunger despite development and that modalities should be set out to ensure the maximum number of migrant workers are given rations

rapidly in global hunger index. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, submitted there are 81.35 crore beneficiaries under NFSA, a very large number even in the Indian context.

The ASG said the 2011 census has not stopped the government from adding more people to the list of beneficiaries which is growing. Bhushan interjected to say 14 states have filed affidavit stating their quota of foodgrains has been exhausted.

The matter is posted for resumed hearing December 8. The top court had earlier asked the Centre to ensure the benefits of the NFSA are not limited by the 2011 census figures and more needy people should

be covered under the Act, terming the "Right to Food" a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution.

The per capita income in India has increased in real terms by 33.4 per cent since the enactment of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) in 2013, the Centre had earlier told the apex court, insisting a large number of households have transitioned to the higher income group.

The government notified the National Food Security Act, 2013 September 10, 2013 with the objective of providing for food and nutritional security by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity.

Jilted lover kills dental student for refusal to patch up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amravati, Dec 6: A software professional allegedly killed his girlfriend in Guntur district after she started avoiding him following differences and also tried to end his life, police said Tuesday.

The 20 year-old victim, identified as Tapaswi, a dental student came in contact with the accused Ganeswar on social media two years ago.

Their friendship blossomed into love but, over the past few months, differences had cropped up between them. Ever since, she had been avoiding him even as he tried to patch.

A couple of months ago, the girl lodged a complaint with the police in Vijayawada against him, following which he was "counselled" not to harass her. The student was staying with her friend at Takkellapadu near Guntur for over a week now. Knowing her whereabouts, Ganeswar went to Takkellapadu Monday night and tried talking to her."

Following a heated argument, he took out a surgical knife and slit Tapaswi's throat even as a frightened friend ran out of the house to alert the neighbours.

Ganeswar dragged a bleeding Tapaswi into an adjoining room and locked it up before the locals came and broke open the doors. He cut his arm on seeing the locals before he was overpowered.

They handed him over to the police. Meanwhile, the bleeding girl was taken to a private hospital in Guntur, where she succumbed.

LAKHIMPUR KHERI VIOLENCE Charges framed against Ashish Mishra, 12 others

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lakhimpur Kheri (UP), Dec 6: A court here Tuesday framed charges against Union minister Ajay Kumar Mishra's son Ashish and 12 others for murder, criminal conspiracy and related offences in the case of mowing down of protesting farmers in October 2021 in Lakhimpur Kheri, paving the way for the start of the trial.

Additional District Judge Sunil Kumar Verma has now fixed the next hearing December 16, District Government Counsel (Criminal) Arvind Tripathi told PTI.

Tripathi said that 13 accused, including Ashish Mishra, have been charged under IPC sections 147 and 148 related to rioting, 149 (unlawful assembly), 302 (murder), 307 (attempt to murder), 326 (voluntarily causing grievous hurt by dangerous weapons or means), 427 (mischief) and 120B (punishment for criminal conspiracy), and section 177 of Motor Vehicle Act.

Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Kumar Mishra, is the main accused in the case.

The other 12 accused are Ankit Das, Nandan Singh Bisht, Latif Kale, Satyam alias Satya Prakash Tripathi, Shekhar Bharti, Sumit Jaiswal, Ashish Pandey, Lavkush Rana, Shishu Pal, Ullas Kumar alias Mohit Trivedi, Rinku Rana and Dharmendra Banjara. All of them are in jail. The 14th accused,



Eight people were killed October 3, 2021 in Tikunia in Lakhimpur Kheri during violence that erupted when farmers were protesting against Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya's visit to the area

Four farmers were mowed down by an SUV, in which Ashish Mishra was seated

Following the incident, the driver and two BJP workers were allegedly lynched by angry farmers

Virendra Shukla, who is out on bail, has been charged under section 201 of IPC which is related to causing the disappearance of evidence of an offence or giving false information to screen the offender.

The primary object of framing of charge is to tell the accused person precisely about what the prosecution intends to prove against him. Charges under various sections of the Arms Act were also framed against Ashish Mishra, Ankit Das, Nandan Singh Bisht, Satyam alias Satya Prakash Tripathi, Latif Kale and Sumit Jaiswal, Tripathi said.

SHORT TAKES

CBI to question K Kavitha Dec 11

New Delhi: The CBI has issued a fresh notice to TRS MLC K Kavitha for questioning December 11 at her Hyderabad residence in connection with Delhi Excise Policy scam case, officials said Tuesday. The agency is understood to have agreed to the request of Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababhu Naidu's daughter to postpone her questioning from Tuesday to any date between December 11-15. In response to the first notice issued December 2, Kavitha had said she went through the contents of the FIR copy as well as the complaint available on the website in connection with the case and her name did not figure anywhere in any manner whatsoever.

Drone, heroin recovered

Chandigarh: Border Security Force troops have recovered a drone and over two kilograms of heroin from a village near the India-Pakistan border in Punjab's Tarn Taran district, the fourth such recovery in as many days, officials said Tuesday. At 8:56 pm Monday, the troop heard the sound of a drone from the Pakistan side when it was hovering over Kalia village. The personnel fired in that direction, and during the search, they recovered 2.47 kg heroin wrapped in a yellow polythene, the officials said.

YouTuber held

Gurugram: A Delhi-based woman YouTuber has been arrested for allegedly extorting over ₹80 lakh from a Gurugram-based 21-year-old businessman after honey-trapping him and threatening to implicate him in a false rape case, police said Tuesday. According to the police, Namra Qadir (22) had allegedly honey-trapped Dinesh Yadav (21), and threatened to implicate him in a false rape case. The police are conducting raids to nab her husband and co-accused, Manish alias Virat Beniwal, who is still absconding.

Dalit woman raped

Ballaia (UP): A 23-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly raped by her neighbour in a village in Nagra area here, police said Tuesday. The accused Dharendra Singh has been arrested. Singh forcibly entered the woman's house and raped her December 4, Deputy Superintendent of Police Shiv Narain Vais said.

Police bust sex racket, rescue over 14K victims



INDO-ASIAN NEW SERVICE

Hyderabad, Dec 6: The Cyberabad Police Tuesday claimed to have busted a major sex racket with the arrest of 17 persons, and rescued over 14,000 victims, including some from foreign countries.

Cyberabad Police Commissioner Stephen Ravindra said the racket was being operated online from Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad.

The accused were procuring women from different places across India, posting ads on websites, contacting the customers through call centres and WhatsApp, facilitating the customers to reach the victims in different hotels, Oyo rooms,

and collecting money for this organised prostitution racket.

A total of 14,190 victims were involved in prostitution. Fifty per cent of the victims were from West Bengal, 20 per cent from Karnataka, and 15 per cent from Maharashtra. Three per cent victims were from countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Russia. 'Locanto', 'Skokka', 'Hyderabadescorts', 'Callgirls in Hyderabad', 'Luxuryresortservices', 'myheavenmodels.com', and 'natasharoyin' were some of the websites which were being used for running the racket.

The call centres were operated from Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad, and the main mode of communication was WhatsApp groups.

The accused have been booked under Section 370 (buying or disposing of any person as a slave) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act at four police stations in Cyberabad.



Naga tribesmen from Pochury tribe perform during the sixth day of Hornbill festival at Kisama near Kohima, Nagaland

PTI PHOTO

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

Majority of rich nations working off plans to meet 1.5° Celsius warming limit: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: The majority of developed countries are still a long way off their plans to limit global warming to the UN-agreed 1.5 degrees Celsius despite raising ambition in the past 18 months, according to an updated version of the peer-reviewed Paris Equity Check.

The Paris-Equity-Check.Org assesses Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) or national plans of countries to help achieve the global goal of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius as compared to the pre-industrial average. Countries hope that limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius will avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

The COP27 Sharm El-Sheikh Implementation Plan released in November underscored the need to meet the 1.5-degree Celsius limit and deliver loss and damage finance, a key prerequisite to accelerate collaboration for more ambitious emission cuts globally.



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

The Earth's global surface temperature has already increased by around 1.1 degrees Celsius as compared to the pre-industrial (1850-1900) average and this warming is considered the reason behind record droughts, wildfires and floods worldwide

In particular, the US, Canada, Australia, the EU, Germany and Spain are working off plans that are in line with a range of 2.1-3.4 degrees Celsius warming, according to the assessment

China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Vietnam and Iran are among the countries who still have climate plans associated with 5 degrees Celsius global warming

The majority of the world's poorest countries are on course to meet the 1.5-degree Celsius

limit. But without adequate levels of financial support, they may pursue carbon-intensive devel-

Guj Police detain Gokhale over tweet on Modi's visit

AGENCIES

Ahmedabad, Dec 6: The Gujarat Police have detained Trinamool Congress's national spokesperson Saket Gokhale over a tweet endorsing an alleged fake news about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Morbi after a bridge collapse incident there, an official said Tuesday.

Gokhale was apprehended from Jaipur in Rajasthan during the early hours by officials of the Ahmedabad Cyber Crime Cell, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Cyber Crime, Jitendra Yadav said. "Based on a complaint we received from a citizen, an FIR has been lodged against Gokhale for spreading fake news about the PM's visit to Morbi. We detained him from Jaipur today morning and he is being brought here for further legal process," Yadav said, adding a formal arrest will be made after a Covid-19 test.

The FIR was registered under Indian Penal Code Sections 465, 469, 471 (all pertaining to forgery) and 501 (printing or engraving matter known to be defamatory), police said. Gokhale, 35, the spokesperson of the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC, underwent a heart surgery recently and was on a private visit to Jaipur, sources said. He recently



Saket Gokhale recently tweeted a news clip which apparently appeared to have been published in a leading Gujarati newspaper

The news clipping claimed a query under the RTI revealed the Gujarat government had spent ₹30 crore on PM's visit to Morbi after a bridge collapsed there in October

tweeted a news clipping which apparently appeared to have been published in a leading Gujarati newspaper. The news clipping claimed a query under the Right to Information (RTI) revealed the Gujarat government had spent ₹30 crore on PM Modi's visit to Morbi after a bridge collapsed there in October. The bridge tragedy had claimed 135 lives. Citing the news clipping which he attached in his tweet, Gokhale said, "RTI reveals that Modi's visit to Morbi for a few hours cost ₹30 crore...Just Modi's event management and PR costs more than the lives of 135 innocent people."

international



We have initiated discussions with our bilateral creditors. Had very successful talks with India, and will also begin talks with China
RANIL WICKREMESINGHE | SRI LANKA PRESIDENT

XI TO VISIT SAUDI ARABIA

Chinese President Xi Jinping will make a three-day visit to Saudi Arabia this week, meeting the king and de facto ruler of the world's biggest oil exporter, Saudi state media reported Tuesday



of the day quote

Ukraine's power system is functioning and remains intact despite Russia's latest missile attacks on the energy facilities
DENYS SHMYHAL | UKRAINIAN PM

The Swedish government deported a PKK terrorist and sent him to Turkey. If you ask what it means in terms of this process, we see it as a start in terms of showing sincerity and goodwill. I hope it continues with the same sincerity
BEKIR BOZDAG | TURKISH JUSTICE MINISTER

Flights will be operational between Jaffna and Chennai. There are still some improvements to the runway that are needed
NIMAL SIRIPALA DE SILVA | SRI LANKA'S AVIATION MINISTER

Indonesia passes criminal code banning sex outside marriage

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jakarta, Dec 6: Indonesia's Parliament unanimously passed a long-awaited revision of the country's penal code on Tuesday that criminalises sex outside of marriage for citizens as well as foreigners, prohibits promotion of contraception and bans defamation of the president and state institutions.

The amended code also expands an existing blasphemy law and maintains a five-year prison term for deviations from the central tenets of Indonesia's six recog-

nised religions: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism.

Citizens can face a 10-year prison term for associating with organisations that follow Marxist-Leninist ideology and a four-year sentence for spreading communism. The code maintains the previous criminalisation of abortion but adds exceptions for women with life-threatening medical conditions and for rape, provided that the fetus is less than 12 weeks old, in line with what is already provided in a 2004 Medical Practice Law.



People hold up signs during a protest as Indonesia is set to pass a new criminal code that will ban sex outside marriage outside the Indonesian Parliament buildings in Jakarta, Indonesia

Rights groups criticised some of the revisions as overly broad or vague and warned that adding them to the code could penalise normal activities and threaten freedom of expression and privacy rights. However, some advocates hailed the passage as a victory for the country's LGBTQ community.

During fierce deliberation, lawmakers eventually agreed to remove an article proposed by Islamic groups that would have made gay sex illegal. The revised code also preserves the death penalty within the criminal justice system despite calls from the National Commission on

Human Rights and other groups to abolish capital punishment, as dozens of other countries have done.

But under the new code, the death penalty has a probationary period. If within a period of 10 years the convict behaves well, then the death penalty will be changed to life imprisonment or 20 years' imprisonment. Under Indonesian regulations, legislation passed by Parliament becomes law after being signed by the president. But even without the president's signature, it automatically takes effect after 30 days unless the president issues a regulation to cancel it.

Beijing relaxes Covid test norms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Dec 6: For the first time in about two years, China's capital city Beijing relaxed its norms for coronavirus test requirements Tuesday after unprecedented public protests against President Xi Jinping's stringent zero-Covid policy rocked the country.

As per the new announcement, negative nucleic acid test results are no longer required to enter shopping malls, supermarkets, commercial buildings and residential compounds.

However, Beijing residents will still require a negative Covid-19 test taken within 48 hours to enter restaurants, schools, bars, internet cafes, indoor gaming stadiums, nursing homes, welfare facilities, hospitals and medical institutions.

The announcement was made ahead of the memorial meeting held here by the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) for former President of the country Jiang Zemin who passed away on November 30.

Beijing continues to report a high number of Covid-19 cases. On Monday, the city reported 2,260 Covid infections.

As per the new announcement, negative nucleic acid test results are no longer required to enter shopping malls, supermarkets, commercial buildings and residential compounds

Last week, China said it will take steps to "minimise" the impact of its draconian coronavirus lockdowns, amidst the public protests against the zero-Covid policy that evoked strong support from the UN, the US and other nations

The Chinese mainland on Monday reported 4,988 locally transmitted confirmed Covid-19 cases and 22,859 local asymptomatic infections, China's National Health Commission said on Tuesday. Many Chinese cities, including Beijing and Shanghai, witnessed public protests against the government's zero-Covid policy leading to periodic lockdowns of the cities and the apartment complexes, confining people indoors for days on end.

Last week, China said it will take steps to "minimise" the impact of its draconian coronavirus lockdowns, amidst the public protests against the zero-Covid policy that evoked strong support from the UN, the US and other nations.



A Chinese flag flies at half mast in front of the Lujiazui financial district, on the day of the memorial service for former Chinese President Jiang Zemin, in Shanghai, China

SHORT TAKES

3 dead, 4 hurt in train bombing

Bangkok: Three Thai railway workers were killed and four others wounded Tuesday when a bomb exploded as they were clearing the wreckage of an earlier attack over the weekend in the country's south, police said. The workers were repairing tracks near Khlong Ngae station, not far from the Malaysian border, when the bomb exploded at about 6:30 am, according to authorities.

ECP moves to de-seat Imran

Islamabad: Pakistan's Election Commission Tuesday initiated the process to remove Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan from his post following his disqualification in the Toshakhana case. A notice has been issued to the former prime minister and the case has been fixed for hearing on December 13, the Dawn newspaper reported, quoting a top ECP official. Khan, 70, is in the crosshairs for buying gifts, including an expensive Graff wristwatch he had received as the premier at a discounted price from the state depository called Toshakhana and selling them for profit.

Bar shooting claims five

Mexico City: Five men were gunned down Monday in a bar in Mexico's Pacific coast resort of Acapulco. Prosecutors said one possible suspect had been detained the attack. Three of the men died inside the bar, and two outside or at a hospital. Also Monday they confirmed that three other people were shot to death at another point in Acapulco in an unrelated attack.

DRONE STRIKES HIT RUSSIA AGAIN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, Dec 6: In a new display of defiance from Kyiv, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy traveled to an eastern city near the front line Tuesday, while Russia reported that strategic sites inside the country were hit by drone attacks for a second day.

A fire broke out at an airport in Russia's southern Kursk region that borders Ukraine after a drone hit the facility, the region's governor said Tuesday.

In a second incident, an industrial plant 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the Ukrainian border was also targeted by drones, Russian independent media reported, apparently missing a fuel depot at the site.



A fire broke out at an airport in Russia's southern Kursk region that borders Ukraine after a drone hit the facility, the region's governor said Tuesday

Federal authorities did not immediately blame Ukraine. But Tuesday's reported strikes were carried out a day after Moscow blamed Kyiv for unprecedented, similar attacks on two air bases deep inside Russia.

The attacks on the Engels base in the Saratov region on the Volga

River and the Dyagilevo base in the Ryazan region in western Russia were some of the most brazen inside Russia during the war.

In the aftermath, Russian troops carried out another wave of missile strikes on Ukrainian territory struck homes and buildings and killed civilians.

Marking Ukraine's armed forces day, Zelenskyy traveled to the eastern Donetsk region Tuesday and vowed to push Russian forces out of all of Ukraine's territory. "Everyone sees your strength and your skill. ... I'm grateful to your parents. They raised real heroes," Zelenskyy said in a video address to Ukrainian forces from the city of the Sloviansk, a key Ukrainian stronghold in the east.

Ukrainian officials have not formally confirmed carrying out the drone attacks, maintaining their apparent policy of deliberate ambiguity as they have done in the past when it comes to high-profile attacks on Russian targets.

But presidential adviser Mikhail Podolyak taunted Moscow in comments on Twitter.

Shooter of Lady Gaga's dog walker gets 21 yrs in prison

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Los Angeles, Dec 6: The man who shot and wounded Lady Gaga's dog walker and stole her French bulldogs last year took a plea deal and was sentenced to 21 years in prison, officials said.

The Lady Gaga connection was a coincidence, authorities have said. The motive was the value of the French bulldogs, a breed that can run into thousands of dollars, and detectives do not believe the

thieves knew the dogs belonged to the musician.

James Howard Jackson, one of three men and two accomplices who participated in the violent robbery and its aftermath, pleaded no contest to one count of attempted murder, according to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office. It was not immediately clear which attorney represented Howard on Monday.

Jackson and two others drove around Hollywood, the city of West



Hollywood and the San Fernando Valley on Feb. 24, 2021 "looking for French bulldogs," prosecutors said

previously. They found Lady Gaga's dog walker, Ryan Fischer, with the pop star's three pets.

Jackson shot Fischer during the robbery near the famed Sunset Boulevard, during which two of the dogs were taken. A nearby doorbell camera recorded the dog walker screaming "Oh, my God! I've been shot!" and "Help me!" and "I'm bleeding out from my chest!"

Fischer later called the violence a "very close call with death" in social media posts. The dogs, named

Koji and Gustav, were returned several days later by Jennifer McBride, who was also charged in the crime.

The pop star had offered a USD 500,000 reward — "no questions asked" — to be reunited with the dogs at the time. Jackson also admitted the allegation of inflicting great bodily injury and to a prior strike, the DA's office said Monday. The prosecutor's office did not immediately say what the prior strike was.

NK fires artillery again over South's drills

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Seoul, Dec 6: North Korea Tuesday fired a barrage of artillery rounds into waters near rival South Korea for the second consecutive day in a tit-for-tat for ongoing U.S.-South Korea live-fire drills in an inland



border region.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it detected North Korea firing around 90 artillery rounds from the eastern coastal town of Kosong around 10 am and another 10 rounds from the nearby town of Kumkang around 6 pm.

It said the shells landed in the northern side of a maritime buffer zone the Koreans established in 2018 to reduce border tensions. The South said it communicated verbal warnings to North Korea and urged it to abide by the military agreement.

The South Korean assessments were slightly different from details announced by North Korea's military, which said it fired 82 shells from multiple rocket launchers.

Workplace violence, harassment widespread: Global survey

Psychological violence and harassment was the most common form, reported by both men and women, with 179 per cent of workers experiencing it at some point during their employment, the report said

ASSOCIATED PRESS

United Nations, Dec 6: The first attempt to survey the extent of violence and harassment at work around the globe has found that workplace abuse is widespread, and particularly pronounced among young people, migrants, and wage earners, especially women.

More than 22 per cent of the nearly 75,000 workers in 121 countries surveyed last year reported having experienced at least one type of violence or harassment, according to the report released

Monday by the UN International Labor Organisation, the Lloyd's Register Foundation and Gallup.

"Violence and harassment in the world of work is a pervasive and harmful phenomenon, with profound and costly effects ranging from severe physical and mental health consequences to lost earnings and destroyed career paths to economic losses for workplaces and societies," the three organisations said in the 56-page report.

According to the findings, one-third of the people who experienced violence or harassment at



FILE REPRESENTATIONAL PHOTO

work said they had experienced more than one form -- and 6.3 per cent said they had faced all three forms: physical, psychological, and sexual violence and harassment during their working life.

Psychological violence and harassment was the most common

form, reported by both men and women, with 17.9 per cent of workers experiencing it at some point during their employment, the report said.

Some 8.5 per cent of those surveyed said they experienced physical violence and harassment at

work, with men more likely than women, the report said, and some 6.3 per cent experienced sexual violence and harassment, 8.2 per cent of them women and 5 per cent of them men.

More than 60 per cent of the victims of violence and harassment at work "said it has happened to them multiple times, and for the majority of them, the last incident took place within the last five years," according to the report.

The research also found that people who experienced discrimination at some point in their life based on gender, disability status, nationality, ethnicity, skin colour or religion were more likely to experience violence or harassment at work than those who didn't face such discrimination.

The three organisations said

"statistics on violence and harassment in the world of work are sporadic and scarce" so the ILO joined forces with Lloyd's and Gallup to carry out "the first global exploratory exercise to measure people's own experiences." The survey used data from the 2021 Lloyd's Register Foundation World Risk Poll, which was part of the Gallup World Poll.

The results pave the way for further research, the organisations said. "Ultimately, stronger evidence will help forge more effective legislation, policies and practices that promote prevention measures, tackle specific risk factors and root causes, and ensure that victims are not left alone in handling these unacceptable occurrences," the ILO, Lloyd's and Gallup said.

of the day quote

We at Pluckk are delighted to be the 1st F&V brand to be certified as 'Plastic Neutral'. With this move, we aim to recycle much more plastic than we consume for our daily packaging

I am very happy to see CapitalLand invest in Telangana. Today, Hyderabad is one of the fastest growing data centre markets in India and CapitalLand's investment adds to the pace we look to keep up

Tribeca's business association with the Trump Organization dates back 10 years and has grown stronger over the years. Our 10-year celebration wouldn't have been complete without Donald Trump Jr and I'm delighted he will be joining us

SHORT TAKES

₹ dives to over 1-month low

Mumbai: The rupee declined by 65 paise to close at over one-month low of 82.50 against the US dollar Tuesday due to heavy selling pressure in domestic equities and rising crude prices in the overseas markets. In addition, investors remained concerned over continued foreign capital outflows ahead of the RBI's policy announcement Wednesday, forex dealers said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened weak at 81.94, then slipped further to end at 82.50, registering a fall of 65 paise.

India's palm oil imports rise 29%

Mumbai: India's palm oil imports jumped 29% in November from a month ago, as a steep discount to rival soybean and sunoil made buying of the tropical oil lucrative for local refiners, five dealers said. Higher imports by India, the world's biggest palm oil buyer, would help top producer Indonesia cut its inventories and support benchmark Malaysian palm oil prices, which have nearly halved from this year's record highs. India's palm oil imports reached 1.14 million tonnes last month, the average estimate from five dealers with trading firms showed. In November 2021, India had imported 539,639 tonnes of palm oil.

Thermal power generation rises

New Delhi: India's thermal power generation registered a growth of 16.28 per cent at 87,687 MU (million units) in November this year as compared to 75,412 MU generated in the corresponding month of previous fiscal. The overall generation of power in the country also increased by 14.63 per cent from 1,02,968 MU to 1,18,029 MU in the reporting month year-on-year. Power utilities' despatch went up by 3.55 per cent to 62.34 million tonnes (MT) during November this year as compared to 60.20 MT in the year-ago month.

Apple moving iPad making to India

Washington: As Apple plans to shift more iPhone production away from China to India, it is now reportedly looking to also move the production of some iPads to India to keep its supply chain healthy amid Covid-related disruptions. Apple is planning to shift iPad manufacturing to India as the company looks to move up to 30 per cent of its manufacturing outside of China.

VALUATIONS ERODE AMID GLOBAL TURMOIL

Unicorn count drops to 85 from over 100 in India

The decline in unicorns come as the funding winter hit the startup ecosystem which has only gone worse with thousands of employees being asked to go

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 6: The number of unicorns (with the \$1 billion valuation and above) in India has dropped to 85 from more than 100 just a couple of months ago, as most startups have shed a significant share of their valuations while investors stay back amid the prevailing global economic turmoil.

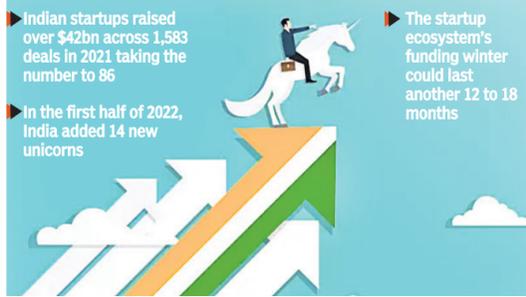
According to data compiled by Finbold, the US has the highest number of unicorns at 704 while China comes a distant second

with 243 unicorns (as of November this year).

Despite the general market conditions, several regions are leading in the number of unicorns or private companies valued at least \$1 billion.

"The United Kingdom ranks fourth with 56, while Germany ranks fifth with 36 unicorns. Indeed, the US has at least double the number of unicorns compared to both China and India combined," according to the report.

In May this year, India welcomed



its 100th unicorn, which was Bengaluru-based neobank platform Open that raised fresh funds as part of its Series D round, taking its valuation to \$1 billion.

Only two startups in India, Shiprocket and OneCard, attained unicorn status (valuation \$1 billion and above) in the July-September period, mirroring a

global trend in decline in the number of new unicorns, a PwC India report showed.

According to the Finbold report, Elon Musk's space company SpaceX ranks top in the US with a valuation of \$127 billion, while payment firm Stripe ranks second at \$95 billion. Instacart ranks third, valued at \$39 billion, followed by Databrick's \$38 billion valuation. Meanwhile, gaming company Epic Games ranks fifth at \$31.5 billion.

"The US dominance over China can be linked to the Asian country's stringent laws on the private sector. With a robust private sector led by the tech industry, the government moved to curtail the powers of such entities. In this case, there is a widespread fear of com-

panies accelerating their growth, with venture capitalists remaining sceptical," the report mentioned. Notably, with the \$1 billion valuation, most companies still depend on external funding while attempting to work out a profitable model. Critics have, for instance, stated that attaining unicorn status without profitability might be considered a fad.

"It is worth noting that unicorns are now prime candidates for Initial Public Offering (IPO). However, the possibility of launching an IPO will likely depend on the state of the economy. Notably, the stock market remains depressed, with most companies losing a big chunk of their valuations," the report said.

'REMARKABLY RESILIENT'

INDIA, LIKE ITS GLOBAL PEERS, HAS BEEN PLAGUED BY HIGHER COMMODITY PRICES AND INTEREST RATES BY CENTRAL BANKS WORLDWIDE. HOWEVER, THE WORLD BANK WAS CONFIDENT THE GLOBAL SLOWDOWN WOULD HAVE A MUCH LOWER IMPACT ON INDIA COMPARED TO OTHER EMERGING ECONOMIES

REUTERS

New Delhi, Dec 6: India is better placed than many other emerging economies to weather the impact of global headwinds, the World Bank said Tuesday, revising up its growth forecast for the country to 6.9% for fiscal 2022 from an earlier estimate of 6.5%.

The estimate was within the government's own recent guidance. Asia's third-largest economy, which expanded 6.3% in the July-September quarter, is estimated to grow 6.8-7% in the current 2022/23 fiscal year ending March, it said last week.

The report titled 'Navigating the Storm', said while the deteriorating external environment will weigh on India's growth prospects, the economy is relatively well positioned to weather global spillovers compared to most other emerging markets.

Like many developing economies, India is confronting inflation following a surge in global food and fuel prices after Russia's invasion of Ukraine earlier this year. That has prompted the central bank to raise policy interest rates while warning about the impact of an international economic slowdown.

"India's economy has been remarkably resilient to the deteriorating external environment," said Auguste Tano Kouame, World Bank's country director, while re-

Govt to okay foreign funds to own over 51% in IDBI Bank

REUTERS

Mumbai, Dec 6: The Indian government will allow a consortium of foreign funds and investment firms to own more than 51% in IDBI Bank Ltd, according to a government clarification today.

The current guidelines of the Reserve Bank of India restrict foreign ownership in new private banks. The central bank's residency criteria for promoters applies only for newly set up banks and would not apply to an existing entity like IDBI Bank, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management said in a response to interested bidders' queries.

"The residency criteria would not apply to a consortium consisting of funds investment vehicle incorporated outside India," it said.

The Indian government and the RBI would also consider relaxing the five-year lock-in period for shares if a non-banking financial company is merged into IDBI Bank, it said.

The clarifications come ahead of a Dec 16 deadline to submit expressions of interest for a majority stake in IDBI Bank, one of the few lenders that the government is trying to offload its stake in.

The government and Life Insurance Corporation of India together hold 94.71% in IDBI Bank and are looking to sell 60.72%.



Strong tax collections, forex reserves and available policy space, along with prudent macroeconomic management, helped make India's economy resilient to deal with a financial crisis

AUGUSTE TANO KOUAME | COUNTRY DIRECTOR, WORLD BANK

leasing the India Development Update Report. "However, continued vigilance is required as adverse global developments persist," he said, warning that a deteriorating global environment would impact India's growth prospects.

The central government is on track to meet its fiscal deficit target of 6.4 per cent of the GDP for 2022-23 on the back of strong growth in revenue collections, the report noted.

The World Bank trimmed its growth forecast for India to 6.6% from 7% earlier for fiscal 2023/24, which will begin in April.

"We have no concerns about India's debt sustainability at this stage," World Bank economist Dhruv Sharma said, adding that public debt had declined.

For other emerging economies, the impact of eroded growth in the United States, euro zone countries and China was at least 1.5 times greater compared to India, the report said, noting that a one-percentage-point fall in US growth could lower Indian growth by 0.4 percentage point.

The report saw average retail inflation at 7.1% in the current fi-

World Bank sees India's growth forecast to 6.9% for FY23

Economy grew at 6.3% in Sept quarter 2022-23 as compared to 13.5% in the preceding June quarter

The report saw average retail inflation at 7.1% in the current financial year

Government on track to meet its fiscal deficit target of 6.4% of the GDP

financial year; adding that the fall in commodity prices could dampen inflationary pressures.

India's annual retail inflation eased to a three-month low of 6.77% in October, but some economists believe it could take up to two years before the rate eases to 4% — the middle level of the Reserve Bank of India's target.

'H2 growth to more than halve to 4-4.5%'

The many rising headwinds, both domestic as well as external, will more than halve the GDP growth to 4-4.5 per cent in the second half of FY2023, shaving off the better numbers in the first half, says a report. In the first half of the current fiscal, the economy has grown at 9.7 per cent -- 6.3 per cent in the September quarter and 13.5 per cent in the previous three months, and forecasts for the full year vary from a low of 6.6 per cent to 7 per cent. According to India Ratings, the economic recovery in H1FY23 was resilient and encouraging, but challenges such as high inflation and weak demand (both domestic as well as external) are expected to pull down the economic growth to 4-4.5 per cent in H2FY23 from 9.7 per cent in the first half of the fiscal.

Fitch retains India's growth outlook

Fitch Ratings has retained the economic growth forecast for India at 7 per cent for the current fiscal in its global economic outlook. The rating agency Tuesday observed that India is likely to emerge as among the fastest growing emerging markets in the current fiscal. At the same time though, the agency has slashed the growth projections for the next two fiscals, observing that while the Indian economy is insulated from global shocks, it is not immune to global developments. In its December edition of the Global Economic Outlook, Fitch projected India's GDP to grow at 7 per cent in the current fiscal but added that it could slow down to 6.2 per cent in 2023-24 and 6.9 per cent in 2024-25.

SHG outreach camp by Indian Bank

Bhubaneswar: A Mega SHG outreach camp was organised at Rail Auditorium, Chandrasekharpur, Bhubaneswar December 6 by Indian Bank in the presence of MD & CEO, Shantilal Jain, Pragyanmita Sahu, Director, Department of Financial Institutions, Govt of Odisha, FGM Bhubaneswar Manoj Das and Binod Kumar Jena, Joint Secretary, Mission Shakti. Similar camps are also organised at various locations in Odisha. Sahu while addressing the gathering advised that, "SHGs are the backbone of rural population. Timely financing to SHGs empowers the women and make them financially independent. Bank should provide need based timely assistance to SHGs". Jain in his key note address observed that the Indian Bank is a pioneer in Self Help Group financing. Bank has launched various schemes like SHG Shakti to sanction loans above ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh without any collateral security, SHG Nirmal for Water & Sanitation, SHG Grihalakshmi for Housing to SHG members. In the programme, bank has sanctioned ₹126 crore to 2,910 SHGs in Odisha.



Nexus Esplanade hosted trophy display of FIH ODISHA HOCKEY MENS WORLD CUP 2023 Bhubaneswar - Rourkela. It was the first trophy reveal for the public

3 Indian billionaires on Forbes Asia Heroes of Philanthropy list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, Dec 6: Indian billionaires Gautam Adani, Shiv Nadar, and Ashok Soota, as well as Malaysian-Indian businessman Brahmam Vasudevan and his lawyer wife Shanthi Kandiah, were named in the 16th edition of Forbes Asia's Heroes of Philanthropy list released Tuesday.

The unranked list highlights leading altruists in the Asia-Pacific region who demonstrated a strong personal commitment to philanthropic causes, Forbes said in a press release.

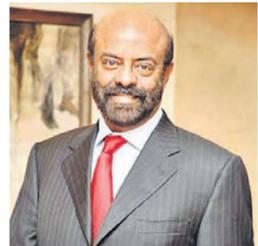
Adani was listed for having pledged ₹60,000 crore (\$7.7 billion) when he turned 60 in June this year. The pledge makes him one of India's most generous philanthropists, the press release said.

The money will address health-care, education, and skill development and will be channelled



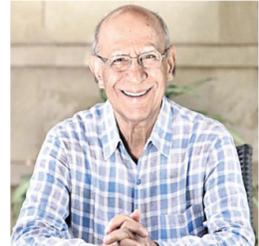
through the family's Adani Foundation, which was founded in 1996. Each year, the foundation helps nearly 3.7 million people across India.

Self-made billionaire and philanthropist Shiv Nadar counts among the top donors in India, having channelled close to \$1 billion of his wealth over a few decades to various social causes through the eponymous Shiv Nadar Foundation. This year he donated ₹11,600



GAUTAM ADANI PLEDGED RS 60,000 CRORE
SHIV NADAR DONATED RS 11,600 CRORE
ASHOK SOOTA PLEDGED RS 600 CRORE

crore (\$142 million) to the foundation he established in 1994, intending to create an equitable, merit-based society by empowering individuals through education.



Nadar, who cofounded HCL Technologies has helped set up educational institutions such as schools and universities via the foundation, which also promotes art and culture. He stepped down from executive roles at the IT services company in 2021.

Tech tycoon Ashok Soota has pledged ₹600 crore (\$75 million) to the medical research trust he founded in April 2021 for the study of ageing and neurological ill-

nesses. He started SKAN—Scientific Knowledge for Ageing and Neurological ailments—with a ₹200 crore outlay, which he has since tripled. "There are only two kinds of people doing [medical] research in India," Forbes Asia quoted Soota as saying. "One is the people doing drug discovery, and the other is the people doing research in national and state-level institutions, which are starved for funds."

Malaysian-Indian Brahmam Vasudevan, founder and CEO of Kuala Lumpur-based private equity firm Creator, and his lawyer wife, Shanthi Kandiah, support local communities in Malaysia and India through the Creator Foundation, a non-profit they co-founded in 2018.

In May this year, they pledged to donate \$50 million Malaysian Ringgit (\$11 million) to help build a teaching hospital at the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Kampar campus in Perak state.



MEMORABLE NIGHT: Morocco goalie Yassine Bounou saves a shot during penalty shootout; (inset) Achraf Hakimi reacts after scoring the winning penalty

MOROCCO STUN SPAIN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Al Rayyan (Qatar), Dec 6: Morocco became the first Arab nation to advance to the World Cup quarterfinals, beating Spain 3-0 in a penalty shootout Tuesday.

Pablo Sarabia, Carlos Soler and Sergio Busquets missed their penalties for Spain, with Sarabia hitting the post and Morocco goalkeeper Yassine Bounou stopping the other two. The teams drew 0-0 in regulation and extra-time.

Morocco have been the biggest surprise of the tournament and will next face either Portugal or Switzerland. Morocco are also the only team from outside Europe or South America to



Spanish players look disappointed after Carlos Soler's (No.19) attempt was saved during the penalty shootout

make it to the last eight. The team made the round of 16 once before, at the 1986 World Cup in Mexico. Spain were eliminated by

Russia in a penalty shootout at the 2018 WC, and by Italy in the semifinals of last year's European Championship. It was the fifth straight time

MOROCCO REACH THE QUARTERFINALS OF THE FIFA WORLD CUP FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THEIR HISTORY

Spain played extra-time in a knockout round of a major tournament. The team played 120 minutes against Russia and in all three of its knockout games at Euro 2020. Moroccan fans significantly outnumbered — and were louder — than the Spaniards at Education City Stadium. Morocco and Spain are close neighbors with a complex geopolitical relationship.

Neymar leads Brazil into last 8

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Doha, Dec 6: It was the same old Neymar out there, looking fit and scoring a goal to move closer to Pelé's all-time record and lead Brazil into the World Cup quarterfinals.

Neymar returned from injury and converted a first-half penalty in Brazil's 4-1 win over South Korea in the round of 16 Monday. He reached 76 goals with the national team, one shy of the mark set by Pelé, who said he would watch the match from his hospital bed in Sao Paulo.

The 82-year-old Pelé is recovering from a respiratory infection that was aggravated by COVID-19, leaving fans in Brazil and in Qatar worried about his condition. Neymar carried a banner with the football great's image and "Pelé" written on it after the match, and the entire team then posed behind it near midfield.

South Korea were trying to advance past the round of 16 for the first time since their historic run to the semifinals as a co-host in 2002.

Neymar damaged ligaments in his right ankle in the team's opening match against Serbia and at the time there were doubts if he would play again at the World Cup. He was clearly back, and there were no signs of the injury as he led Brazil to a comfortable victory and a spot in the World Cup quarterfinals for the eighth straight time. Brazil will next play Croatia Friday.

Neymar scored his first goal of this year's World Cup after kissing the ball and calmly sending a low shot from the spot after waiting the goalkeeper to choose a side in the 13th minute. He danced as his teammates huddled around him, then did dance moves along with Vinicius Junior and other teammates before raising his arms to the sky and smiling broadly.

after the match. He had been substituted in the 81st.

Vinicius scored the first goal from inside the area after a cross by Raphinha in the seventh minute, Richarlison added to the lead from close range after a nice exchange of passes by the Brazilians in the 29th, and Lucas Paqueta scored the fourth before halftime after an assist by Vinicius.

They celebrated each goal by dancing, and even Brazil coach Tite participated in Richarlison's traditional "pigeon" celebration.

Paik Seung-ho scored South Korea's goal in the 76th minute. South Korea coach Paulo Bento said after the match he was quitting.

STADIUM DISMANTLED

It was the last World Cup match at Stadium 974, which is expected to be fully dismantled. The port-side structure that seats more than 40,000 fans was partially built from recycled shipping containers and could be shipped to other countries that need the infrastructure.



(From R) Neymar, Lucas Paqueta, Vinicius Junior and Raphinha dance in celebration for a goal against South Korea

Odisha Police, ECoR, Odisha FC script big wins over opponents

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 6: Odisha Police, East Coast Railway (ECoR) and Odisha FC registered 5-0 victories over their respective opponents in their Odisha Women's League (OWL) football tournament here, Tuesday.

Odisha Police rout OGP Club at the 7th Battalion ground, courtesy braces by skipper Jabamani Soren (41st & 83rd minutes) and Eva Panna (44th & 63rd). Jasmani Samad scored the other goal for the winners in the 45th minute.

ECoR thrashed Rising Student Club at the Capital Ground, thanks to a wonderful hat-trick by Yumnam Kamala Devi. Yumnam struck in the 20th, 57th and 75th minutes to complete her hat-trick. Pinky Purty and Tara Khatoon got their names on the scoresheet in the 14th and 18th minutes, respectively.

Karthika Angamuthu continued her rich vein of form scoring a brace (35th & 44th) for Odisha FC in the team's dominating win over Sports Odisha at the Kalinga Stadium. Pyari Xaxa also struck twice (33rd & 78th), while Jasoda Munda completed the scoresheet.

BCCI transfers Powar to NCA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: With only two months left for the Women's T20 World Cup, the BCCI Tuesday shunted head coach Ramesh Powar to the National Cricket Academy as a part of its "restructuring module".

While no head coach was named, former India batter Hrishikesh Kanitkar, who has been a part of Indian men's pathway teams (A and U-19), has been appointed as the new batting coach ahead of the home series against Australia, starting December 9 in Mumbai.

"Ramesh Powar, former Head Coach of the senior women's team will join VVS Laxman, Head Cricket, National Cricket Academy and will switch to men's cricket as part of the restructuring module of the BCCI," the BCCI stated in a release.

"The BCCI Monday (Tuesday) announced the appointment of Hrishikesh Kanitkar as the Batting Coach of the Senior Women's cricket team. Mr. Kanitkar will join the team from the upcoming five-match T20I series against



Australia starting 9th December in Mumbai," it further stated.

Powar was appointed for his second stint in May 2021 and the Indian team didn't have too many noteworthy performances under his tutelage save the silver at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. India couldn't make it to the semifinal of the 50 over

World Cup in New Zealand earlier this year. Commenting on his appointment, Kanitkar said: "I see tremendous prospects in this team and we have a good mix of youth and experience. I believe this team is ready for the challenge ahead. We have a few marquee events coming up and it is going to be excit-

ing for the team and myself as batting coach."

Powar will be the spin bowling coach at the NCA. "With Powar coming on-board (as a spin bowling coach), we are sure he will bring his expertise and experience to the NCA. Having worked in domestic, age-group cricket and the international circuit, I am sure he will play an active role in the betterment of the game. I look forward to working with him in his new role at the NCA," NCA head Laxman said.

Powar termed his experience coaching women's team as "enriching". "Over the years I have worked closely with some of the stalwarts of the game and upcoming talents of the country. With my new role at the NCA, I will be looking to take forward my experience over the years to help build talent for the future. I look forward to working in tandem with Laxman for the further development of the game and bench strength."

With the BCCI naming the new Cricket Advisory Committee earlier this month, it remains to be seen if the head coach will be appointed anytime soon.

Female umpires to break new ground

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: Clear communication with the players and not getting intimidated by aggressive appeals will be the key when the trio of female umpires — Vrinda Rathi, Janani Narayanan and Gayathri Venugopalan — break new ground and officiate in the Ranji Trophy, a BCCI official said Tuesday.

It will be a first for Indian cricket when female umpires will be asked to officiate in the men's cricket matches even as Gayathri has served as a reserve (fourth) umpire in Ranji Trophy in the past.

With Ranji Trophy, beginning December 13, coinciding with Indian women's cricket team home series against Australia, the three female officials will only get to do select matches in the men's first-class competition.

Chennai-based Narayanan and Mumbai-based Rathi are seasoned umpires and were included in International Cricket Council's panel of development umpires back in 2018. Delhi-based Gayathri, who could not make it as a player, is among the three registered umpires in the BCCI panel besides Janani and Vrinda.

A BCCI official said dealing with the male players will be a big challenge for the female trio. Stakes are high in Ranji Trophy and tempers can flare in the middle.

"As umpires you can't be too soft in the middle. Otherwise the players would try to intimidate them. You have to be tough and implementation of the rules has to be perfect. The communication with the players is key. But all these three are doing well and should do well," a BCCI official, who did not wish to be named, told PTI.

The 32-year-old Rathi has risen from the maidens of Mumbai while 36-year-old Narayan left her cushy job as a software engineer to pursue umpiring. Venugopalan, 43, started umpiring in 2019 after clearing the BCCI exam.

The BCCI still has a lot of catching up to do with female umpires already officiating in men's cricket in Australia and England. Out of 150 registered umpires with the BCCI, only three are women.

"We can't plan their games in Ranji Trophy but we will give them opportunities as per their availability. Australian team is coming to India and will be followed by New Zealand A side and then you also have domestic women's cricket. We need their services there as well," the official said.

"All three are very promising umpires and as per BCCI's vision, we want to promote more female umpires in men's cricket. We will ensure that more women give exams in future but we have not set a limit."

PAK BLIND CRICKET TEAM DENIED INDIA VISA FOR WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: The Pakistan blind cricket team has been denied visa to travel to India for the ongoing Blind Cricket World Cup. In a statement issued Tuesday, the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) claimed that the team could not get clearance from the Ministry of External Affairs in India.

"This unfortunate incident has left the Pakistan blind cricket team in the lurch," the PBCC said in a statement. "It was highly likely that Pakistan and India would have locked horns in the final of ongoing World Cup and considering the current form of Green Shirts, Pakistan had high chances to win the World Cup," the statement added.

The tournament is scheduled in India from December 5-17. The PBCC said "it strongly condemns this discriminating act of India as sports should be above regional politics".

"Our counterpart Blind Cricket Association in India pleaded with their government for Pakistan's clearance but nothing was heard," the PBCC said. "This discriminating act will have serious consequences on global blind cricket as we at World Blind Cricket will

Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI) confirmed the development and said it will release an updated tournament schedule as Pakistan team is not participating

take stern action against them and may not allow India to host future International events."

Pakistan finished second in the last T20 World Cup for the Blind. Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI) confirmed the development and said it will release an updated tournament schedule as Pakistan team is not participating.

"Pakistan blind cricket team will not be able to participate in the ongoing third T20 World Cup for the Blind being held in India despite CABI taking all the required steps to process their visa application," a statement from CABI said.

India, Bangladesh, Australia, Sri Lanka, Nepal and South Africa are left in the 12-day event. Matches will be played in Faridabad, Delhi, Mumbai, Indore and Bengaluru where the final will be held.

Para-shuttler Manisha bags BWF award



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: Young Indian shuttler Manisha Ramadass has claimed the BWF Female Para-Badminton Player of the Year award for her stellar run this season.

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) Monday named Manisha as the winner after the 17-year-old won the gold in the World Championships in the SU5 section. Overall, she claimed 11 gold and five bronze medals in 2022.

Other contenders in this section were India's Nithya Sre

Sumathy and Manasi Joshi, Sarina Satomi, Giuliana Poveda Flores, and Pilar Jauregui. Paralympic champion Pramod Bhagat and Thomas Cup winner HS Prannoy, however, missed out on the prestigious award.

Bhagat, who claimed his fourth World Championships singles gold this year, was among those short-listed for the BWF Male Para-Badminton Player of the Year but the award went to WH2 world champion and reigning Paralympic champion Daiki Kajiwara, winner of 10 gold and four bronze

medals overall.

The Japanese earned the nod ahead of Cheah Liek Hou, Lucas Mazur, Chu Man Kai, and Choi Jungman besides Bhagat.

In the award for able-bodied shuttlers, Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen and Zheng Si Wei/Huang Ya Qiong's extraordinary dominance this season was honoured as they won the BWF Player of the Year Awards in their respective categories.

Axelsen won BWF Male Player of the Year for sweeping nearly everything in his path during the eligibility period from November 1, 2021, to October 31, 2022.

Axelsen won nine titles, including his second World Championships crown, which was achieved on the back of three consecutive World Tour titles, the BWF said in a report on its official website.

The BWF Female Player of the Year was won by Japan's Akane Yamaguchi, who achieved the rare honour of winning back-to-back World Championships titles within a nine-month period.

She also won two other titles — the All-England Open and the Japan Open. The other contenders were An Se Young and Tai Tzu Ying.



(From L): Janani Narayanan, Gayathri Venugopalan and Vrinda Rathi