AT RECEIVING END

Twitter account of actor Kangana Ranaut has been restricted temporarily over Tandav controversy



#### **FARMERS AWAIT CENTRAL AID**

Over 12,000 farmers under Rasulpur block have been deprived of the benefits under Pradhan Mantri Krushak Yojana STATE



#### **CHINA MUM**

China has remained silent on why its top leaders are yet to take vax jab

INTERNATIONAL P10

12 PAGES | ₹4.00

**BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY, JANUARY 21 | 2021** 

**BIDEN PRESIDENCY BEGINS** 

# Farm laws: Govt climbs down

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 290 | www.orissapost.com

**GOVT OFFERS TO PUT ON HOLD THREE FARM LAWS FOR 1-1.5 YEARS TO END IMPASSE** 

New Delhi, Jan 20: Yielding some ground to end the nearly two-monthlong protests by thousands of farmers on the national capital borders, the government Wednesday proposed to suspend the three contentious farm laws for 1-1.5 years and set up a joint committee to find an amicable solution in the interest of the farming community.

During their tenth round of negotiations with three central ministers, the two sides decided to meet again Friday after the union leaders hold their own internal consultations Thursday to decide on the government's new proposal. Briefing media after a nearly five-hour-long meeting that included two breaks, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said the government has proposed to suspend implementation of the three laws for 1-1.5 years, during which period a joint committee of representatives from the government and farmers' sides can continue their talks and those protesting on Delhi borders in extremely cold weather return to their homes.

The three laws have already been stayed by the Supreme Court till further orders and a committee of experts has been formed to resolve the deadlock. The panel has been asked by the apex court to submit its re-

## SC irked over barbs

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court Wednesday expressed strong displeasure over the aspersions cast by some farmers' unions on members of the courtappointed committee to resolve the impasse over new farm laws, saying no adjudicating authority has been given to the experts who would hear grievances and give report only. Meanwhile, the hopes of Delhi Police to get a judicial order to stop the proposed tractor rally by the protesting farmers on the Republic Day in the national capital were dashed as the top court asked the Centre to withdraw the plea.

port within two months after consulting all stakeholders.

tomorrow and deliberate over it.

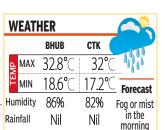


Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar (C) along with Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal (L) and Minister of State Som Prakash addresses media after the 10th round of meeting with farmer leaders at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, Wednesday

Cash. card or

## **MARKET WATCH** SENSEX **49792.12 1** 393.83 **14644.70 1**23.50 EURO

SILVER



## at 4-member panel

The committee held its first meeting Tuesday and will begin its consultations with farmer groups and others from Thursday. After the meeting, Bharatiya Kisan Union (Ugrahan) president Joginder Singh Ugrahan said, "The government proposed to suspend the farm laws for one and a half years. We rejected the proposal but since it has come from the government, we will meet

MA BACK WITH

**ONLINE VIDEO** 

Beijing, Jan 20: China's high-

est-profile entrepreneur, Jack Ma,

appeared Wednesday in an online

video, ending a 2 1/2-months ab-

sence from public view that

prompted speculation about the fu-

ture of the e-commerce billion-

In the 50-second video, Ma con-

gratulated teachers supported by

his foundation and made no mention of his disappearance or offi-

cial efforts to tighten control over Alibaba and other internet com-

panies over the past six months. The video appeared on Chinese business news and other websites.

The normally voluble Ma dis-

appeared from public view after he

irked regulators by criticising

them in an October 24 speech at a

Shanghai conference. Days later,

regulators suspended the planned

multibillion-dollar stock market

debut of Ant Group, a financial plat-

form that grew out of Alibaba's pay-

That prompted speculation on-

line about whether the 56-year-

old Ma, China's biggest global

business celebrity and a symbol of

its tech boom, had been detained

or might face legal trouble. Alibaba

and the government haven't re-

sponded to questions about him.

in a statement Wednesday: "Jack

Ma participated in the online cer-

emony of the annual Rural Teacher

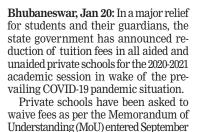
Initiative event January 20."

The Jack Ma Foundation said

ments service, Alipay.

aire and his Alibaba Group.

AGENCIES



POST NEWS NETWORK

10 last year.

59th Presidential Inauguration at the US Capitol in Washington, Wednesday

The School and Mass Education Department in a notification issued Tuesday said that the tuition fee reduction will be made in seven different slabs. While there will be no waiver for schools charging ₹6,000 per annum, those charging between ₹6.001 to ₹12.001 will reduce the tuition fee by 7.5 per cent.

Twelve per cent reduction for tuition fees between ₹12,001 and ₹24,000 annually. 15 per cent for fees between ₹24.001



Joe Biden is sworn in as the 46th President of the United States by Chief Justice John Roberts as Jill Biden holds the bible during the

State cuts school tuition fees

to ₹48,000, 20 per cent for school tuition fees of ₹48,001 to ₹72,000, 25 per cent for ₹72,001 to ₹1 lakh fees and 26 per cent for fees above ₹1 lakh per annum, the notification said.

This apart, schools cannot charge students for food and transport. However. a 30 per cent waiver will be given on hostel fees, the notification said.

The state government action came based on a High Court directive which asked the government to reduce the fees in all aided and unaided private schools

for the 2020-21 academic session in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. 'We hope that the aided and unaided

private schools will abide by the court order," School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash told re-Earlier, several parents' associations

had gone to the High Court after the state government and the schools refused to reduce the fees even as schools remained closed due to the pandemic. Responding to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), the state government had informed the High Court that it had no power to regulate fees fixed by private schools.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had earlier this month announced waiver of examination fees of Class 10 students, who would appear at the board examinations in 2021. The decision would benefit six lakh students. The government would bear ₹27 crore towards the exemption, Patnaik had said in a statement.



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## 'Our challenge is to tackle both China, Pak at same time'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Ahead of assuming charge as the next vice-chief of the Indian Army, Lt General Chandi Prasad Mohanty Wednesday said the force needs modernisation and further augmentation of its capability to simultaneously deal with threats from China and Pakistan.

Lt Gen Mohanty, who is currently the Southern Command chief, will take over from Lt Gen SK Saini after he retires January 31. Attending a function at Sainik School here, Mohanty said, "As of now, the major challenge before the Indian Army is to tackle both China and Pakistan at one time in the borders.

"Therefore, we have to expedite modernisation, achieve technological advancement and keep vigil on both the fronts simultaneously. For that reason, we have to do capability development, infrastructure development, procure better weapon systems and better communications "

Noting that nature of battlefields across the globe is changing fast. Mohanty said. one needs to constantly undertake modernisation



the Indian Army, Indian Navy or the Indian Air-force, are not giving stress on expanding in terms of numbers, but emphasis is being given on infrastructure development and modernisation," he said.

After taking charge as the vice-chief of India Army, Lt General Mohantys prime responsibility will be to carry forward modernisation and capability development of the force, he said.

"China is modernising in a big way and also assisting Pakistan to modernise in a big way. We are also carrying out a lot of modernisation and capability enhancement. What is most important is that we\_ are getting tremendous support from our Prime Minister and Defence Minister," Mohanty said.

Mohanty appealed to Odia vouths to join the defence force and make the

#### WB: 14 of wedding party killed **GOVT RAISES BUS FARES**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: With the steep hike in diesel prices, the state government Wednesday increased the fare of all categories of passenger buses.

As per a notification issued by the State Transport Authority (STA), the fares of ordinary and express buses have been increased by 1 paisa/km while the fare of deluxe and AC deluxe buses went up by 2 paisa per km. However, there will be no hike in the fare of city buses playing in the state.

"Due to increase in diesel price from ₹80.42 as on 07.12.2020 to ₹82.11 as on 20.01.2021, leading to price increased by an amount equal to ₹1.69 in direct and ₹3 in cumulative



(including the carryover), the fare for stage carriages other than town buses plying within Odisha shall be fixed at increased rates,' the STA said.

With the latest rise, the fare of ordinary buses has gone up to 74 paise/km while commuters will have to pay 77 paise per km for traveling on express buses, 109 paise per km for deluxe service buses and 131 paise per km for AC deluxe buses

Jalpaiguri (WB), Jan 20: Fourteen members, including four children, of a marriage party were killed and 10 others injured due to a collision between a stone-laden truck and their three vehicles in West Bengal's Jalpaiguri district, police said Wednesday.

The accident occurred in Jaldhaka area in Dhupguri block on Tuesday night, they said. The cars of the marriage party were going towards Dhupguri on the wrong side of the road and the collision took place due to dense fog, a senior police officer said.

Chief Minister Mamata Baneriee announced an ex gratia of ₹2.5 lakh



each to the next of kin of those who were killed in the accident. The state government will provide ₹50,000 each to those who were seriously injured, she said at a programme in Purulia

Banerjee also said ₹25,000 would be given to those whose injuries are not serious. "The loss cannot be compensated. But we would like

to tell the families that the government is with them. We are providing compensation to the next of kin of the deceased and the injured persons. Our local MLA Souray Chakraborty is already there and state minister Aroop Biswas is rushing to the spot," Banerjee said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was extremely anguished over the road accident and announced an ex gratia of ₹2 lakh each to the next of kin of those who lost their lives in the incident. He also said that ₹50,000 each would be given to those injured, according to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). Ten injured neonle are undergoing treatment in Jalpaiguri Super Speciality Hospital. the police officer said.

# Hassle-free darshan of Trinity from today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Wednesday said from Thursday devotees would not require to furnish the Covid-19 negative reports to enter the temple premises.

SJTA Chief Administrator Krishan Kumar said a few changes would come into effect from Thursday and they include entry to the temple without the mandatory Covid-19 negative certificates. He also assured people that adequate arrangements have been made in the temple city for the pilgrims.

State law minister Pratap Jena claimed from Thursday onwards darshan of the Trinity would be hassle free. "From Thursday onwards, the darshan of the Trinity



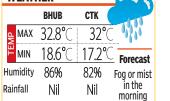
is going to be hassle free as the mandatory requirement of furnishing a Covid-19 negative certificate has been done away with. Arrangements have been made to ensure that a total of 30,000 devotees

can have darshan on a single day." The SJTA on the eve of Thursday said all possible civic amenities have been reviewed and arrangements made accordingly. Kumar said keeping in view clear skies and escalating hot afternoons, arrangements have been made to fa-

cilitate smooth entry of devotees. "We have made adequate arrangements for devotees to have darshan of the Trinity from Thursday. We have arranged adequate drinking water, sanitiser and other amenities. We had a meeting today with the concerned officials to chalk out the action plan. In Badadanda, arrange ments have been made for drinking water for 24 hours on both sides of the road," the SJTA Chief Administrator said.

Kumar also said that the temple administration would keep the temple premises closed for Sunday for sanitisation purpose. He also said that the timing for the darshan has been amended too from Thursday.

"For the residents of Puri, they can have darshan from 6 am to 7 am and for the general public, the gates will open from 7 am. We have arranged two LED screens for better information to the devotees,' he said. Till now, the temples gates used to open from 8 am.







#### **EMMA ON BEING PREGNANT DURING COVID PANDEMIC**

Actress Emma Roberts says her close friends helped her through her pregnancy during the Covid pandemic. "I feel so lucky because literally four of my close girlfriends were pregnant or have had a baby that year," Roberts said.

#### **DONNIE DARKO CHANGED MY LIFE: JAKE GYLLENHAAL**

Hollywood star Jake Gyllenhaal says the cult sci-fi film, Donnie Darko, not only changed his career, but life too. As the film completed 20 years since release, the actor looked back at memories associated with the film in an Instagram post.





Whip up some excitement in your life - put on your walking shoes and go explore some unknown destination, suggests Ganesha, Keep yourself busy, but take care not to overdo anything. Today, you will be the centre of attention in group activities.

**TAURUS** 

You will find yourself at the crossroads and each turn and twist will come with its share of pros and cons, says Ganesha, Your sentiments may have an ill-effect on your health. You may spend quality time with family members and friends, hoping to shed the burder thrust upon your soul.

**GEMINI** 

Today, you will decide to become a bit more conscious about your health. You may or may not join a gym or measure your calories, but you will definitely sit up and take notice of your lifestyle and unhealthy food habits, predicts Ganesha

CANCER

Today, you are likely to experience something life-changing. A small incident, an observation, a tragedy, a disaster, or a simple thought may change the course of your take the changes well

**LEO** 

Your passionate and emotional nature contributes in a big way to your sudden outbursts of emotions, says Ganesha. Today, your anger may erupt abruptly. This makes it very likely for you to get carried away irrespective of your surroundings and cir cumstances, both at work and at home

attention to studies as exams are upcoming, and they will have to learn

**VIRGO** Close members of friends will take up

most of your time

Ganesha says today is a good time to buy property. "Every man has specific natural abilities", said talents will be acknowledged and documented at work. This might

prompt your equals to hold you up

above the rest, and for your seniors

to positively encourage you to scale

today. Students will have to pay more

SCORPIO "It's a dream come true,"

greater heights.

you may utter these words in surprise today, feels Ganesha. Your palatia home is ready or you may just get the keys of your much desired vehicle. You may have an extended celebration by receiving or giving gifts to your closed ones.

SAGITTARIUS

The day is bright and the seas are calm today. For a change, you shall spend time with your life partner and help them in household chores. Even routine jobs like cooking and cleaning will weave an intricate bond between you two.

CAPRICORN

A good day always begins with a good start It will be a good day for you today as you will start the day with a positive attitude to life, says Ganesha. Your unremitting dedication and determination will not only put you ahead of others, but will also help you get an edge over them.

AQUARIUS

You are a polished diamond. Adversities come and go, yet you remain unruffled. Today, you manage to please your boss, and beloved, and that is a feat! It is yet another day

**PISCES** 

Do not let your emotions influence your strategies in any way. Mixing busi

ness with sentiments is only for super spies. Keep a close check on your emotions and do not get carried away. Travel for business purposes is indicated, says Ganesha



INTERNET

**ABLAZE AGAIN** 

Mumbai: Actress and fitness enthusiast

Disha Patani has a special surprise for fans

Wednesday. She has posted a sizzling snapshot

Disha shared the picture on Instagram

in a tiny bikini

curves in a tiny

aqua number,

and posing

with a tree

For the

caption,

dropped a

coconut

In

tree emoji

November,

Disha shared

social media

Prabhudeva.

similar pictures

raising temperature in

Disha will next be seen in

Radhe, co-starring Salman

Khan and Randeep Hooda

The film is directed by

She is also looking for-

the set of Ek Villain 2. The

Mohit on their 2020 film Malang.

actress has earlier collaborated with

The Baaghi actress will also be seen in

"KTina", produced by Ekta Kapoor. The film

also features Akshay Oberoi and Sunny Singh.

ward to reuniting with filmmaker Mohit Suri on

bark.

she

flaunting perfect

**DISHA SETS** 

Kangana's Twitter account restricted

Mumbai: Actress Ranaut Wednesday tweeted that her Twitter account has been temporarily.

This comes after she made controversial remarks about Tandav creators through a post. In the now-deleted tweet, Kangana

had said that it was 'time to take their heads off', for allegedly insulting Hindu gods in the web Now, the actress has

slammed the 'liberal community' who reported her account to Twitter, going on to call Twitter CEO Dorsey Jack 'chacha' "Librus cried to their

chacha @jack and got my account temporarily restricted," she wrote. Tandav has come under fire with several people alleging that it provokes communal disharmony and hurts the sentiments of the

Recreating Lahore in Lucknow is not difficult' Mumbai: Filmmaker Kunal

Kohli has opened up about his upcoming romantic spy thriller Lahore Confidential. He said that recreating Lahore in Lucknow is not difficult as the history of India and Pakistan is similar because they were one country once

"After 1947, the history of the two countries changed path. Till then they have the same path. Geographically, too, it is similar. There is a lot of similarity out there in the streets, and the buildings and architecture of both the countries. Hence it was not that difficult (to recreate Lahore in Lucknow), and our art director has done a wonderful job. We have managed to do so because we have a common history," said Kohli.

Lahore Confidential revolves around an Indian woman who, amidst her mundane routine and love for Urdu literature, finds herself on intelligence duty in Pakistan. Created by crime writer S Hussain Zaidi, it also marks the directorial digital comeback of Kohli. The film features Karishma Tanna, Arunoday Singh and Richa



#### **AJIT'S 21ST FOUNDATION DAY**

# Play E Nabaghanara Ghara staged to remember Ajit Das

Ajit Das was a living legend and he will be remembered for generations through his works, says Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi Secretary Prabodh Rath

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Students of late theatre director and actor Ajit Das Wednesday presented play ENabaghanara Ghara at Rabindra Mandap here to celebrate the 72nd birth anniversary of their beloved 'guru'. The occasion also marked the 21st Foundation Day of Abhinaya Jagruti Institute of Theatre (AJIT), a troupe formed in the name of the actor who succumbed to Covid-19.

Written by Panchanana Patra and directed by Ajit Das, the drama narrated the story of Nabaghana whose home was in shambles as he didn't have a life partner to run the household.

Ajit's wife and the founder of the oupe Maya Das said, "Most of the dramas directed by him (Ajit Das) were masterpieces. What could have been more appropriate on this occasion than staging this play which was very close

to his heart. Though we are yet to overcome the shock of his exit, I am sure people will love this play in his absence.

Eminent dramatist Ramesh Prasad Panigrahi and Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi Secretary Prabodh Rath were among the guests who graced the occasion. "Ajit Das was a living legend who will be remembered for generations through his works. Needless to say, his distinct touch was felt in every sequence of this play," said Rath. The play was enacted by Bibhuprasad, Pruthiraj, Bijay, Jaganath. Ramakant, Siddhartha, Neel, Himashu, Chandan, Pra nay and Barsha while the music was scored by Kailash.



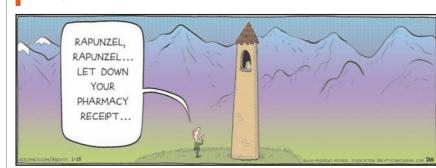
#### **PEANUTS**

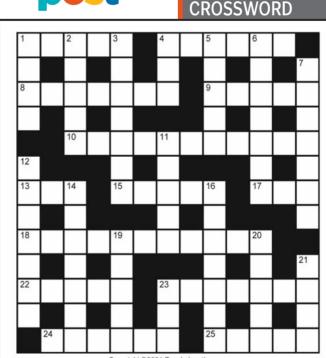


#### CALVIN AND HOBBES



#### BREVITY





Across 1 Hot rock

4 Sharp as a tack

8 Jalousie parts

9 Keyboard instrument

10 Ignominious

13 Golfer's goal

15 Terrific

17 Stage signal

18 Motley assort-

ment (4,3,4)22 Weeper of myth

Down

1 Stubborn sort 2 Wild pumpkin

23 Savage

25 Saltpetre

24 Start

3 Collars

4 Commercials

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

talk about

5 Something to

6 Kind of cop or

jam

14 California tree

16 Dilapidated (3-

19 Sharp narrow

7 Hockey

11 Speedy

12 Name

players

ridge 20 Bloodhound's

clue 21 Eye affliction 23 Wine holder

#### SUDOKU

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

|   |   |   |   | C | 7 |   | 5   |       |   | 3 |   |       |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-------|---|---|---|-------|---|---|
|   | 6 |   | 9 |   | D |   | 4   |       |   | 8 | С |       |   | В |
| 8 | 0 |   |   |   |   |   | С   | D     | Г | 7 | 1 | S - 8 | 9 | 5 |
|   |   |   | Ŷ | 2 |   | 8 | 0   | 26 65 | Α | D |   | (A) S | * | 9 |
|   |   | Α |   |   |   |   | - 0 |       |   | 9 |   | Е     |   |   |
|   |   | 5 |   |   | 2 |   | 8   |       | Г |   | Α |       |   |   |
|   |   | Е |   |   |   |   |     | 7     | Г | 5 | 2 | 1     |   | D |
| С | 1 | 4 |   | 3 |   |   |     |       | Е |   |   | Α     |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   | В   | 5     | Г |   | Г |       | 4 |   |
| 0 | 8 |   | 6 |   |   |   |     |       |   |   |   | 7     |   | 9 |
|   |   |   | 3 |   |   |   |     | 2     | Г | 4 | 6 |       | 8 |   |
|   |   |   |   | 7 | Е | 0 |     | 4     | D |   |   | 9     |   |   |
|   | Г |   |   | 9 |   | Α |     |       | Г |   | 7 |       |   |   |
|   | С |   | D | 1 | Α |   | 7   |       | 9 | 2 | В | 3     |   |   |
| В | Α | 2 | С | 0 |   | 6 |     |       |   |   |   | 4     |   |   |

#### SOLUTIONS

ARTISTBABBLE CROSSWORD HART TSUNA METRE A R Y G R U Y E R E SAFF

SUDOKU

# downtown



#### **VENDORS' RALLY**

Members of small traders and vending zone protection trust take out a rally at Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, to observe the **National Vendors Day** 



1,51,564

# 'Hybrid' Adivasi Mela this year

The fair will be held at Adivasi Exhibition Ground from January 26 and continue till February 9

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: The state government Wednesday launched a Social Media Plan (SMP) for a hybrid model of the Adivasi Mela by converting the challenges of Covid-19 into an opportunity in a bid to take it beyond state and national boundaries.

The mela would be held physically from January 26 to February 9 in the Adivasi Exhibition Ground located here at Unit-1 area and will remain open for public from 11 am till

Launching the SMP, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra said that the ST/SC department has planned the SMP as a positive response to the unprecedented pandemic. "This hybrid model will further widen its popularity by extending it to the persons who are unable to visit it physically," he said.

Mohapatra said, "The virtual mode of the mela will have a marketing platform through which interested people can purchase the tribal products.

He advised the department to develop a permanent digital marketing platform so that people from different parts of the globe can buy

**Actor Rabi Mishra** 

passes away at 64

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Odia

actor Rabi Mishra passed away

while undergoing treatment at a

private hospital here Wednesday.

Family sources said that Mishra

Mishra, a versatile actor, has

performed in positive, negative

and comedy characters and dom-

inated the Odia entertainment in-

Bhijigala Akhi Luhare and Mana

Rahigala Tumari Thare. Mishra

has also acted in more than 100 tel-

evision serials and plays. He is

fondly remembered for his role

in popular television serial 'Gopal

Rahasya'. Several eminent per-

sons including Chief Minister

Naveen Patnaik, Union Minister

for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan, BJP na-

tional vice president Baijayant

Panda and several eminent ac-

tors of Odia film industry con-

Twitter page, the CM wrote, "I

am deeply saddened to learn about

the demise of eminent actor Rabi

Mishra. He would be remembered

for all times to come for the un-

forgettable imprint that he has

left for his flawless role in many

popular Odia films and television

He expressed his deepest con-dolences to the bereaved family

members and prayed for the sal-

vation of the departed soul.

In a condolence message in his

doled his death.

was admitted to the hospital after

he complained of chest pain last

evening

dustry for

more than two

known for his

role in popu-

movies like

Sakal Tirtha.

Ma Pari Kie

Heba, Soubh

Odia |

decades

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର **GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA** THANKS TO TECHNOLOGY

The virtual mode of the fair will have a marketing platform

Dedicated handles on Facebook, Twitter etc have been created to

reach out to more people Various activities will be undertaken

to engage social media followers

the products throughout the year. Speaking on the occasion, Development Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena said, "This endeavour of the department will give global linkage to Odisha's tribal producers and artisans." He ad-

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: If indi-

vidual studies are to be believed,

about one in two women in Odisha

of reproductive age are anemic

owing to deficiency of iron in Odia

diets coupled with lack of aware-

ness, largely among tribal women.

DCOR, under project Reduction in

Anemia through Normative

Innovations (RANI), about 51%

women in the state were observed

as anemic. The study also revealed

that more than 60% women in 11 dis-

Sambalpur found anemic, the dis-

trict topped of the list. Moreover, a

large number of tribal districts

such as Malakangiri, Sundargarh

With about 73% women in

tricts of Odisha are iron deficit.

In a study conducted Delhi-based

POST NEWS NETWORK

The cultural programme will be available on virtual mode

One can also have a virtual visit to Adivasi Museum through the

Online registration facility would be made available from January 23

vised to make the marketing platform a sustainable source of rewarding income for tribal people of

Department secretary Ranjana Chopra said, "It will be a comprehensive plan with multiple com-

1 in 2 women in state anemic

**WORRYING TREND** 

The study revealed that more than

60% women in 11 districts of

Odisha are iron deficit

It was found that iron density in an

Odia diet was 25% lower than the

recommended iron density of

14.2 mg/1000 kcal

and Nabarangpur also had high

prevelance of anemia in women.

son of anemia. The primary out-

comes measured through this study

are change in hemoglobin level

and Iron Folic Acid (IFA) utilization.

In each of the villages, we used a

Hemocue meter that measures

heamoglobin levels. More than

half of Women of Reproductive

"Iron deficiency is the key rea-

ponents. Dedicated handles on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Linkedln and YouTube have been created to reach out to more and more people. The themes have been built around various tribes, their life and culture and their heritage".

The themes have been built around various tribes, their life and culture and their heritage". She added, "Various activities will be undertaken to engage the social media followers and keep them updated on the events of the Odisha Adivasi Mela 2021."

The cultural programme will be available on virtual mode. One can also have a virtual visit to Adivasi Museum through the Mela plat-

All Covid-19 protocols would be followed scrupulously. Online registration facility would be made available from January 23 through the website of the Adivasi Mela-2021 for convenience of the intending visitors.

Interested people may avail this facility and may register online for their smooth entry into the Mela Ground. However, the online registration for visiting the mela is only for the sake of convenience but not mandatory. Chopra clarified

Age (WRA) were found anemic

across state," the study mentioned.

Moreover, prevalence of anemia

was found highest in lactating

women (54.8%). This was followed

by pregnant women (47.6%), and

WRA who are neither breastfeed-

ing nor pregnant (50.3%). It can be

mentioned that experts have sug-

gested that high cause of anemia

in Odisha is largely due to deficit

In another study, it was found that

of iron in primarily in Odia diets.

mean reported iron density (amount

of iron per 1000 kcal) in an Odia

diet was 25% lower than the rec-

ommended adequate dietary iron

density of 14.2 mg/1000 kcal). The re-

ported per capita median daily intake

of iron in Odisha is 14 mg/d, but is

heterogeneous, ranging from 7 to 21 mg per day in different districts.



Artistes stage a street play near PMG Square in Bhubaneswar to create awareness on road safety norms, Wednesday

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: BJP leader

Lekhashri Samantsinghar

Thursday said that the party would

launch an agitation in western

ers and plight of the peasants.

The leader called a press meet

Thursday to announce the same.

"The farmers in the state are strug-

gling to sell their crops and get de-

serving income due to faulty poli-

cies of the government and

government apathy. The millers

are manipulating the whole

She also added, "We have de-

Odisha on the

issue of poor

paddy procure-

ment from farm-

process.

#### **2 FOREST OFFICIALS SHOWN THE DOOR**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Two officials of Forest and Environment department have given compulsory retirement over corruption charges and dereliction of duty. Forest and Environment Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha Wednesday issued an order in this regard.

The two forest officials are assistant conservator of forests of Kuldiha range (Balasore forest division), Laxman Pradhan and forester of Bisra range (Panposh forest division) Bharat Kumar

Pradhan had been placed under suspension following a case filed with the Lokayukta on corruption charges. The General Administration (Vigilance) department had initiated a disciplinary proceeding against him for dereliction of duty and amassing disproportionate assets. While he was in charge of Kuldiha wildlife range, a decomposed carcass of a tusker had been recovered and the two tusks were also missing.

Similarly, many vigilance cases have been registered against Ghadai over corruption charges. The cases

#### BJP threatens stir over farmers' woes POST NEWS NETWORK

are still pending against him.

## NOTICE INVITING TENDER

the land."

**PADDY** 

**PROCUREMENT** 

cided that we will organise protests

in western Odisha where our MPs

and MLAs from the area would

also take part to press our demands

to give justice to the farmers of

threats of agitation and posed a

counter attack on the saffron party.

per cent more paddy from the farm-

ers compared to last year. Finding

fault on this is wrong on part of the

party. Instead of fighting against the

laws framed against farmers, the

BJP is behind finding faults in

paddy procurement issue," BJD

leader Pratap Keshari Deb said.

"We have been able to procure 25

The Biju Janata

Dal (BJD) on the

other hand also re-

sponded to the

BASANTA MISRA EDUCATIONAL & WELFARE TRUST, HIG C-121, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751003 invites tender in a sealed cover under two bid system i.e. Technical Bid & Financial Bid from Manufacturers, Authorized distributors for supply of machineries and equipments for establishment of Common Facility Centre for TELKOI TAMARIND, MANGO AND MAHUA CLUSTER on behalf of OMRUT TRUST (SPV) at: PLOT No. 393, Kaduapada, Dist: Keonihar, Odisha -758019.

Last date and time Date & time Cost of tender Date of commencement of of submission of for opening of 04.02.2021 at 05.02.2021 at Rs.10.000/-20.01.2021 5.00 pm 11.00 am

A complete set of the Bid documents containing the details of the terms and conditions may be downloaded from the website: www.bmewtrust.com or www. iedodisha.nic.in and the same can be submitted along with cost of tender paper in shape of Bank Draft. Any corrigendum/ addendum/ information related to this NIT will only be uploaded in BASANTA MISRA EDUCATIONAL & WELFARE TRUST website which will not be published in Newspapers. The authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof. The authority has the right to increase/ decrease / cancel the quantity without assigning any reason thereof.

CHAIRMAN, Basanta Misra Educational and Welfare Trust

#### Will be happy to fight polls, says Pratibha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Wife of deceased Pipli MLA Pradeep Maharathy Wednesday said that she would be happy to fight elections from Pipili in the by-elections if given a chance.

While reacting to reporters at the sidelines of an event. Pratibha Maharathy said, "I don't want to speak on the issue now. The nomination of the candidate from Pipli will be taken by the party president Naveen Patnaik. I do not want to comment on that. I will be very happy if I get the chance (to fight elections) but it depends on the party chief as election is a different process."

After the demise of the incumbent MLA, speculations are high on who would fight the by-elections to fill the vacant seat of the Odisha Assembly.



Netaji Birthplace Museum in Cuttack ahead of the birth anniversary of the legendary freedom fighter, Wednesday

## HANDLOOM EXPO KICK STARTS AMID FANFARE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Organised by Boyanika, the National Level Handloom Expo 2021 was inaugurated amid much fan fare at Exhibition Ground here Wednesday.

Minsiter Of Handloom, Textiles and Handicrafts Padmini Dian inaugurated the expo in the presence of Minister of Science and Technology, Public Enterprise, Social Security and Empowerment of PwD Ashok Chandra Panda and Bhubaneswar Central MLA Ananta Narayan Jena.

With around 134 stalls, the expo featured nine yard traditional saree along with various handicrafts.

Interacting with Orissa POST, Dian said, "The government is quite concerned about our weavers and that is why we have organised



Handlooms, Textile and Handicrafts minister Padmini Dian, departmental commissioner-cum-secretary Subha Sarma and Science & Technology minister Ashok Chandra Panda visit a stall at the National Handloom Expo 2021

this expo. Weavers have participated in large numbers and I am expecting all the losses incurred

during Covid to be recovered through the fest. Ashok Panda said, "Our handicrafts and handloom are world famous and the state government is ready to make this expo successful as the Covid threat is diminishing due to the vaccination drive. The government is concerned about the weavers' welfare both financially and technically."

Jena said that the popularity of Odissi handloom is sky rocketing. "From foreign buyers to Bollywood stars, all are buying our products. Our technique in making Odia sarees and dress materials have made weavers of other states exchange ideas with us. A healthy financial package for weavers is always the priority of our state government.

The centre of attraction was the theme pavilion which showcased every single type of Odissi saree, from Maniabandha to Sambalpuri

Live sessions on block print and saree making too attracted the visitors. Apart from Odisha, weavers from states like New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bihar, Rajasthan, West Bengal are par-

ticipating in the expo. The expo is open for public from 11.30 am to 9.30 pm. The expo is committed to achieve a profit of Rs 10 crore this year. All precautionary Covid guidelines are being followed

at the expo. Subha Sharma, commissionercum-secretary handlooms, textiles and handicraft department, Jyoti Prakash Das, director, textiles and handloom, Odisha and managing director of Boyanika were also present at the function.

### **NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Ref No: BMEWT/Tender/2021/02 Date: 21.01.2021 BASANTA MISRA EDUCATIONAL & WELFARE TRUST, HIG C-121, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751003 invites tender in a sealed cover under two bid system i.e. Technical Bid & Financial Bid from licenced registered Civil Engineers/ Contractors of class B & above (having minimum three years of experiences in building construction) for establishment of Common Facility Centre for TELKOI TAMARIND, MANGO AND MAHUA CLUSTER on behalf of OMRUT TRUST (SPV) at: PLOT No. 393, Kaduapada, Dist: Keonjhar, Odisha -758019.

| Date of<br>Commencement | Last date of and time of | Date & Time for opening of | Cost of tender paper |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| of tender               | submission of<br>tender  | tender                     |                      |
| 21.01.2021              | 04.02.2021 at            | 05.02.2021 at              | Rs. 10,000/-         |

A complete set of the Bid documents containing the details of the terms and conditions may be downloaded from the website: www.bmewtrust.com or www. iedodisha.nic.in and the same can be submitted along with the cost of tender paper in the shape of Bank Draft. Any corrigendum/ addendum/ information related to this NIT will only be uploaded in BASANTA MISRA EDUCATIONAL & WELFARE TRUST website which will not be published in Newspapers. The authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof. The authority has the right to increase/ decrease / cancel the quantity without assigning any reason thereof.

Chairman Basanta Misra Educational & Welfare Trust

# Pari case shifted to Children's Court

Nayagarh, Jan 20: In a new development in the sensational case involving the abduction and murder of a five-year-old girl in Nayagarh, the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) Wednesday shifted the case to the Children's Court for regular hearing as the accused has been found to be between 16 and 18

The transfer of the case from one court to another was facilitated as per the provisions under Section 15 (3) of the Juvenile Justice Act. The case has been listed for hearing at the Children's Court February 5, sources in the court said

Lawyer of the accused Chandra Bijayee Mishra said, "Based on the report of the preliminary assessment of social background and history of the child accused, the JJB has shifted the case to the Children's

#### LATEST TWIST

Based on the birth and matriculation certificates, the POCSO court had pointed out that the accused had not attained the age of 18 when the crime took place

be heard there.'

The transfer of the case from one court to another was facilitated as per the provisions under Section 15 (3) of the Juvenile Justice Act

The Juvenile Justice Board had earlier rejected the SIT application seeking narcoanalysis and brain mapping test of the accused

> will be heard in the Children's Court.

**The Juvenile Justice** 

**Board decided that** 

the Children's Court

take over the cases

involving heinous

seven years of jail

BISHNU PRASAD MOHAPATRA I

offences which

attract at least

is appropriate to

"The Juvenile Justice Board decided that the Children's Court is appropriate to take over the cases involving heinous offences which attract at least seven years of jail term," Mohapatra added.

Earlier in the day, the child accused was brought to Nayagarh from the Juvenile home at Angul and produced before the JJB amid tight security today. January 5, the special POCSO court which was hearing the case had termed the accused as a minor and referred the case to the Juvenile Justice Board.

Based on the birth and matriculation certificates, the POCSO court had pointed out that the accused had not attained the age of 18 when the crime took place. The court had also rejected the SIT plea seeking narco-analysis test on the accused.

The Juvenile Justice Board had also rejected the SIT application seeking brain mapping test of the accused. December 20, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of Odisha Crime Branch led by IPS Officer Arun Bothra had arrested the accused after registering a case under section 376-A, 376-AB, 364, 302, 201 r/w Section 6 of POCSO Act.

## HOUSE PANELS TO MEET **ODIAS IN EIGHT STATES**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Sub-committees of the state Assembly will make field visits to eight states to know about the problems and issues faced by Odia people staying in those states.

The decision was taken during the meeting of House Committees on Linguistic Minorities held under the chairmanship of Assembly Speaker SN Patro, Wednesday.

To know about the real status of Odia people staying in the states like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and West Bengal, seven sub-committees of the House will visit the states and meet the Odia people staying in

During the meeting, the members



To know about the condition of Odia people staying in other states, seven sub-committees of the House will visit them

The decision was taken during the meeting of House Committees on Linquistic Minorities held under the chairmanship of Speaker SN Patro

have raised problems and issues faced by the Odia people in other

states. The Speaker directed to send a questionnaire to the collectors of border sharing districts and ask them to appear before the panel

As per decision taken at the meeting, House sub-committee headed by Pramila Mallick will visit Andhra Pradesh while Debi Mishra and and Amar Prasad Satpathy will lead the panels to Telangana and

Similarly, a panel headed by Minister Susanta Singh will visit Jharkhand, Ananta Das led subcommittee to visit West Bengal. Another sub-committee of the House under the leadership of Deputy Speaker Rajanikanta Singh will visit Gujarat and Maharashtra whereas Minister Arun Sahoo to lead the panel that will visit

Chhattisgarh, respectively.

# More flexibility in vaccination now

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: A registered health care worker can get vaccine in any parts of the state if the concerned person will remain unavailable at the registered session site, Health director Bijay Panigrahy said here Wednesday.

Speaking to reporters here, Panigrahy said, "We have developed a system to facilitate vaccination of registered health worker in any session site of the state."

If a health worker is transferred or moved outside the district where he/she had registered herself/himself to get the vaccine shot, he/she can also avail the benefit at the present place, he said, adding, some people have already got benefit of the new system yesterday.

The director said, "Phase-I vaccination drive is likely to be completed by end of this month. The state government had earlier re-

ceived 21 lakh syringes for the vac-

cination drive while another batch

of 22 lakh syringes reached

Court for hearing. Henceforth, all

petitions pertaining to the case will

Following the transfer of the

case, the minor accused was pro-

duced before the Children's Court.

Meanwhile, SIT counsel Bishnu

Prasad Mohapatra said that the in-

vestigating agencie's application

seeking Lower Voice Analysis (LVA)

test of the accused and other pleas

Asked about report on any adverse effect of the vaccine, Panigrahy said, "We found side effects of the vaccine in three beneficiaries including one from Bargarh and two from Sundergarh district vesterday. They developed some mild symptoms which subsided after a few hours. All are doing fine

The health department has conducted vaccination at only 92 sites Wednesday where 7946 people were inoculated. Districts including Balasore, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Khurda, Mayurbhanj, Nuapada, Rayagada and Sundergarh district have received over 100 per cent of the target while only 32 per cent beneficiaries turned out

#### **HEALTH WORKERS' DEMO**



## Fuel prices put on hold

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Petrol and diesel prices remained unchanged on Wednesday after oil marketing companies went on a pause mode to provide relief to consumers after prices of auto fuels went up con-

sistently for the past few days. Accordingly, petrol continues to be sold at Rs 85.20 a litre in Delhi while diesel prices also remained same at Rs 75.38 a litre. Across the country as well pump prices of petrol and diesel remained unchanged Wednesday.

Petrol and diesel prices had risen sharply by 25 paisa per litre each on Monday and Tuesday before OMCs decided to give relief to consumers from frequent price rise. The pump price of petrol and diesel has increased by Rs 1.49 and Rs 1.51 per litre respectively in January so far with OMCs deciding to break an earlier longer period of pause increasing the retail prices first time this year on

The price had been raised on

last two days of increase in pump prices in petrol and diesel has taken the prices to record levels across the country in all major metro cities and The last time the retail price of

auto fuels were closer to current levels was on October 4, 2018 when crude prices had shot up to \$80 a barrel. The current price rise is largely on account of steep increase in central taxes of petrol and diesel and firm crude prices that had again crossed \$56 a barrel mark.

Petrol price was very close to breaching the all-time high level of Rs 84 a litre (reached on October 4, 2018) when it touched Rs 83.71 a litre on December 7, 2020. But the march had been halted ever since then with no price revision by the OMCs in the month. The price rise started again only

on January 6. Oil companies executives said that petrol and diesel prices may increase further in coming days as retail prices may have to be balanced in line with global developments to prevent OMCs from making loss on sale of auto

# Sishu Sampark Yatra launched in Puri Adulterated sauce, pickle unit busted

Puri, Jan 20: Utkal Balashram, a shelter house for orphans and destitute children in the Holy City here, has been declared as a statelevel orphanage, said Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSCPCR) chairperson, Sandhyabati Pradhan, here Pradhan made this announce-

ment while launching the Sishu Sampark Yatra, a state-level campaign to connect with children amid the pandemic, in the city here. 'Utkal Balashram in Puri has

been upgraded into a state-level orphanage as per the direction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.



THE STORY SO FAR

The decision is likely to benefit children who have been deprived of health, education and other basic facilities," Pradhan said.

Pradhan claimed that the Covid-19 pandemic has taken a toll on the financial condition of a large section of households. Bad financial

condition of families has a direct impact on the welfare of children,

"Sishu Sampark Yatra was launched to study all aspects of children's lives including their protection, nutrition and education. The OSCPCR, in association with

Of the 1,902 fatalities,

accounted for 334

deaths followed by

Sundargarh (171),

Cuttack (140) and

The state has so far

conducted over 74.26 lakh

Ganjam (248),

Khurda alone

launched the programme," Pradhan

The OSCPCR chairperson further revealed that the commission would conduct hearing on various grievances with regard to kids at Delang, Kanas and Pipli in Puri

"The programme has been unched to ensure protection and basic rights to the kids," Pradhan said.

Among others, advisor to Women and Child Development department, Sulata Deo, Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) member Asim Amitabh Das and Puri Zilla Parishad chairman Jyotirmaya Dalei were present at the event.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Intensifying its crackdown on food adulteration units in the state, a joint squad of the Odisha Police and Food Safety officials Wednesday busted an adulterated sauce and pickle-manufacturing unit at Pahal here.

Acting on a tipoff, the team raided the unit and seized a huge quantity of adulterated sauce and pickles. The officials also seized packaging machines, chemicals, artificial colour, essence and raw materials intended to make the edible com-

'The unit was found manufacturing substandard food products under unhygienic conditions. The

unit was using harmful chemicals and colours which are beyond the permissible level. The process of procurement and preparation of the food items are being probed," said an official.

The food safety licence of the unit is being examined. Samples of the adulterated food products have been sent to a lab for testing, a senior police official said. adding that they were also investigating into its supply chain. The twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar are slowly, but surely becoming the hotbed for units manufacturing substandard products, risking lives.

A joint team of the Quick Action Team (QAT) and Airfield police

had busted a fake ghee-manufacturing unit at Trilochan Vihar in Sundarpada area here January 12. The team seized a huge quantity of adulterated ghee packets from the spot. Earlier January 15, Cuttack Sadar police busted an adulterated tobacco-making unit at Sasol village under the police limits in the Millennium City and seized substandard tobacco products worth Rs 22 lakh besides arresting the unit's owner. The unit was using sawdust and cancercausing chemicals to manufacture the tobacco products.

Notably, 26 persons had been arrested by police during its drive against adulterated food items in the Silver City

# State's virus tally at 3,33,723

Sundargarh recorded the

highest of 30 new cases

followed by Puri (20)

and Sambalpur (18)

Dhenkanal, Deogarh,

Malkangiri and

case since Tuesday

Odisha's positivity rate is 4.49%

Nayagarh did not

register any new positive

Kendrapara, Keonjhar,

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Odisha's Covid-19 tally Wednesday surged to 3.33,723 after 157 more people tested positive for the viral infection, a senior Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department official said. The coronavirus death toll re-

mained at 1,902, as no new fatality due to the infection was reported since Tuesday, the official said.

The 157 new Covid-19 cases were detected in 24 of the state's 30 districts, 93 were reported from different quarantine centres while the remaining 64 were contact cases

Sundargarh district recorded the highest of 30 new cases followed by Puri (20) and Sambalpur (18). Six districts— Dhenkanal, Deogarh, Kendrapara, Keonjhar, Malkangiri and Nayagarh— did not register any new positive case since Tuesday, said the official. Apart from 1,902 coronavirus fa-

19 positive patients have also died due to comorbidities.

Of the 1,902 fatalities, Khurda alone accounted for 334 deaths fol-

talities reported so far, 53 Covid-

lowed by Ganjam (248), Sundargarh (171), Cuttack (140) and Puri (117). As many as 25 other districts

registered coronavirus fatalities

below 100, said the official.

sample tests for Covid-19

including 23,553 Tuesday

Odisha currently has 1,717 Covid-19 active cases, while 3,30,051 patients

have so far recovered from the disease. The state has so far conducted over 74.26 lakh sample tests for Covid-19 including 23,553 Tuesday. Odisha's positivity rate is 4.49

#### Curtains down on Rajarani music fest POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: The concluding evening of Rajarani music fest witnessed scintillating performance on Odissi percussion instruments led by eminent Mardala player Guru Satchidananda Das & Group and Hindustani Vocal by internationally acclaimed Hindustani vocalist Pandit M. Venkatesh Kumar.

The first performance of the evening was Brunda Mardala Badana by Guru Satchidananda Das and his disciples who played Aditala of 16 beats producing different layakaris punctuated with bols or Ukutas with special use of traditional musical phases like khandi, gadi, arasa, mana, bhaunri mana, chhaka mana, jamana with different layakaris and chaturgati ragada and chhanda prakarana which produced special striking

structures typical to Odissi Music. In the second phase, Guru Shri Das presented Trital of 16-beats



punctuated with typical musical renderings using uthana, elaboration of Dharana, Jati, Chakradar, Biram, Abiram, Lagana mana, Bira mana, Kaida, Sabdaswar pata, Rela etc having different layas and chhandas. The rhythm and the beats perfectly synchronized with the bols (rhythmic syllables) in conformity with different notations produced a melody that delighted the music lovers which filled the hearts of the audience with new excite-

Guru Shri Das was assisted by Budhanath Swain, Dibakar Parida, Ramachandra Behera, Anup Das, Muralidhara Swain on Mardala, Guru Kulamani on Harmonium and Shri Srinibas Satapathy on Flute.

The evening's second programme was Hindustani Vocal by Pandit M. Venkatesh Kumar who presented Rag Kalyan Bilambit followed by Rag Durga Madhyalaya and lastly some remarkable Bhajans. His programme was

marked with step-by-step elaboration in Bilambita and Drutalaya giving scope for vocal embellishments, simpler and softer movement from one note to other.

While executing intricate tans and sargams, their wide ranging mellifluous voice, combined with masterly command over the technique, translated their highest flight of imagination into sublime music. He was accompanied on Tabla by Keshab Joshi and on harmonium

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# Rasulpur farmers await Central aid

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rasulpur, Jan 20: The Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme launched by the state government has proved an impediment to the farmers under the block in Jajpur district in receiving financial assistance under the Centresponsored Pradhan Mantri Krushak Yojana, a report said.

The matter came to fore after over 12,000 farmers under the block, who have not received the second installment under KALIA scheme. were learnt to have been denied of any benefit under the Centre sponsored schemes.

The block officials have not made any formal announcement in this regard but reliable sources claimed these farmers will not be able to receive any financial assistance under Central schemes. This has happened as a list of the farmers eligible for the financial assistance is yet to be submitted before the Centre, sources in the Rasulpur block office said.

Reports said that both the Centre and the state government launched these two schemes ahead of the 2019 elections with an aim to provide financial assistance to the small and marginal farmers. The Union government launched the Pradhan Mantri Kishan Yojana December 1, 2018 with an aim to provide financial assistance of Rs 6,000 to a farmer's family in three periodic installments in an agricultural vear

Twenty days later, the state government launched the KALIA scheme aimed at welfare of the farmers December 21, 2018. Thousands of farmers registered their names under the KALIA scheme including 54.000 farmers' families under Rasulpur block just before the election.

The state government later submitted a list of the registered farmers to the Union government. As a result, the farmers' families started receiving the financial assistance in their bank accounts under both the schemes. The Centre sponsored Jan Dhan accounts opened by the farmers became helpful in receiving the financial assistance.

The state government later realised that many bogus and ineligible

a survey to weed out the bogus and ineligible beneficiaries towards the end of 2019. The state government issued red and green coloured forms for enlistment and delisting of the farmers' families in every panchayats during the survey.

During the survey, it was found out that not a single all the 28 panchayats under block

plied in

red

form.

However:

Agriculture

department

farmers has been send to the state government soon realised that which in turn should send it many service holders, into the Centre. Moreover, come tax pavee, retired governmany new beneficiaries are ment officials, agri-entrepreneurs registering their names daily and affluent persons have managed which will soon be sent to the to grab the benefits under the KALIA scheme. It was found out that 241 ben-

BHAGYADHAR SAHU | ASSISTANT AGRICULTURE OFFICER, RASULPUR BLOCK

**FILE PHOTOS** 

the benefits of KALIA scheme as the selection of beneficiaries had been conducted in a hurried manner. It came to knowledge that members of a family had registered under the scheme claiming themselves as sep-

The state government launched

This apart, members of farmers' families claiming to be eligible for the benefits are applying online everyday for registration of their names under the scheme. It is estimated that over 12,000 beneficiaries have newly registered themselves under the scheme.

Recently, the farmers received Rs2,000 in their accounts towards the final installment of Pradhan Mantri Krushak Yojana in this current agricultural year. Till today, around 20.656 families have received the money for the second installment under the KALIA scheme. The list has been dispatched to the Centre following which many farmers have been able to receive financial assistance under Pradhan Mantri Krushak Yojana.

However, over 12,000 beneficiaries including old and newly registered farmers have been deprived of the benefits under the scheme as the state government is yet to send the list to the Union government.

They are regularly making rounds of the Janseva Kendra and the agriculture office. They are searching for their names online by typing their Aadhaar card number to realise their names are yet to be sent to the Union government. Many eligible farmers have not been able to register their names as they do not have a smartphone.

As a result, hundreds of real farmers have been deprived of receiving the benefits both from the Centre and state government.

## WODC Chief reviews projects, encourages agro-enterprise



Delegates at Bargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Chief Adviser to the Chief Minister and Chairman Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) Asit Tripathy visited Bargarh and reviewed the progress of developmental works in the district Wednesday.

Reviewing the progress made so far, Tripathy directed the district administration to focus on development of agro-enterprises promising scope for development of agro-enterprise in the sectors of vegetable cultivation, horticulture, agriculture produce processing, inland fishing, mushroom and sweet corn cultivation in the district. These enterprises, while attracting the youth will also create new employment opportunities and will enhance per capita income in the district.

Further, Tripathy directed concerned district-level officers to identify the critical gaps in infra-

the sectors of vegetable agriculture produce processing, inland fishing, mushroom and sweet corn

cultivation in the district ASIT TRIPATHY | CHAIRMAN, WODC

structure laying and service delivery. They were asked to formulate the essential projects as per the identified gaps and put those to government for financing under WODC funds.

The review meeting was held at Bargarh Circuit House wherein Collector Jyoti Ranjan Pradhan outlined the issues and presented the updates for discussion. Superintendent of Police Padmini Sahoo, Chief Executive Officer of WODC Saroj Kumar Patel along with district-level officers of various departments participated in the discussions.

## Prof Sanjiv Mittal is new Sambalpur University VC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Professor Sanjiv Mittal was Wednesday appointed as the Vice-Chancellor (VC) of Sambalpur University by the state government. In exercise of powers conferred

by Sub Section(1) with Sub Section(7) of Section 6 of Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act 2020. Odisha Governor and Chancellor of Universities Professor Ganeshi Lal appointed Professor Mittal as the VC of Sambalpur University for a period of four years with effect from the date he takes over. Dr Mittal is presently



working as the University School of Management Studies at Guru Gobind Singh University, Delhi.

Prof Mittal has 29 years of teaching experience including 13 years as Professor in management studies. He has authored eight books in his career. Also many of his articles have been published in national and international magazines and journals. He has conducted many workshops on entrepreneurship development.

## Former block chief shot dead in Ganjam

eficiaries are ineligible for the ben-

efits for which the state Agriculture

department issued notices to them

However, not a single ineligible

beneficiary heeded to the notice to

pay back the money received under

the KALIA scheme. Around, 10,495

eligible beneficiaries from various

panchayats under the block applied

for pay back of money.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Jan 20: In a shocking development, a former block chairperson Debaraj Sahoo of Beguniapada in Ganjam district was shot dead by some unidentified miscreants Wednesday morning.

According to an evewitness, five miscreants riding on two bikes opened fire at Sahoo near Sumandal bus stand while he was having tea at a roadside shop. Sahoo succumbed to the bullet injuries on the spot. The miscreants fled from the spot soon after committing crime.

Sahoo was shot from point-blank range, the eyewitness added.

On being informed, local police immediately rushed to the crime spot. Police have also launched a

probe in this connection. Body of the deceased was recovered and sent for post-mortem.

On the other hand, some local villagers alleged that it appears to be a planned political murder which might have been hatched to elimi-

Sahoo, ahead of the upcoming panchayat elections.

Notably, local BJP leader Kulamani Baral in Cuttack district and his associate Dibyasingh Baral were murdered January 2.

Steel Limited, At: Phuljhar, Banspal Block, Dist.- Keonjhar Odisha has accorded Environmental Clearance from Ministry of Environment Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC), New Delh for Proposed Expansion of Pellet Plant (0.60 MTPA to 0.69 MTPA), At: Phuljhar, Banspal Block, Dist.- Keonjhar, Odisha. A copy of the said clearance letter No. J-11011/112/2013-IA II(I), Date: 13th February, 2020 is available with the website of the MoEF&CC at https://parivesh.nic.in/.

**Ardent Steel Limited** 

# Ganjam getting purged off child marriage evil

1.172 VILLAGES AND **URBAN WARDS IN THE DISTRICT HAVE BEEN DECLARED CHILD MARRIAGE FREE** 

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Jan 20: The district administration in Ganjam has declared as many as 1.172 villages and urban wards in the district as child marriage-free, a report said Wednesday. Among them, 1,032 are villages and

140 are urban wards in the district. The matter came to fore after the district social welfare officer forwarded a letter to the state Women and Child Development and Mission Shakti department apprischild marriage-free.

Similarly, 13 wards in Rambha NAC, 11 in Ganjam NAC, six in Khallikote NAC, 17 in Polsara NAC, 20 in Kabisuryanagar NAC, 2 in Hinjili Municipality, nine in Berhampur Municipal Corporation, 16 in Gopalpur NAC, one in Digapahandi NAC, two in Chikiti NAC, four in Bhanjanagar NAC, four in Buguda NAC, 15 in Aska NAC, nine in Purusottampur NAC and 11 in Sorada NAC have also been declared child marriage-free.

The figures were obtained following verification conducted twice by the local BDOs, child marriage prohibition officer and village and ward-level task force.

The villages were declared child marriage free by the district administration January 19. Not a single child marriage was performed in the villages and wards. Many incidents of child marriages



THE FIGURES WERE OBTAINED FOLLOWING VERIFICATION CONDUCTED TWICE BY THE LOCAL **BDOs, CHILD MARRIAGE PROHIBITION** OFFICER AND VILLAGE AND WARD-LEVEL TASK FORCE

THE VILLAGES WERE DECLARED CHILD MARRIAGE FREE BY THE DISTRICT **ADMINISTRATION JANUARY 19** 

MANY INCIDENTS OF CHILD MARRIAGES AND THE SAME GETTING FOILED BY CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEE AND CHILDLINE HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN SEVERAL VILLAGES OF GANJAM DISTRICT IN THE PAST

ing of the development.

As many as 111 villages of Chhatrapur block, 82 of Ganjam, 40 in Khallikote, 52 of Beguniapada, 71 of Polsara, 14 in Purusottampur, 75 in Kabisuryanagar, 12 in Hinjili, 70 in Rangeilunda, 72 in Kukudakhandi, 13 in Digapahandi, 47 in Sanakhemundi, 16 in Chikiti, 37 in Patrapur, 50 in Bhanjanagar, 20 in Belguntha, 35 in Jagannathprasad, nine in Aska, 27 in Dharakote, 75 in Sorada and 83 in Shergad blocks have been declared

and the same getting foiled by Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and Childline were reported in several villages of Ganjam district in the past.

The district Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange had earlier announced a reward of Rs 5,000 for those informing the district administration about child marriages. Anganwadi workers and child development project officers were directed to keep a close watch on cases of child marriage in the areas.

#### GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION RAIRANGPUR (MAYURBHANJ)

Name of the Work Estimated Cost Class of Contractor

E-mail ID: eerwrairangpur@yahoo.com
"e" Procurement Notice for ROAD Works Bid Identification No. RWDRRP-14/2020-21 As per Annexure From Rs.17.85 lakhs to 18.12 lakhs (approximately)

'D' & 'C' Class (of Odisha P.W.D.) or relevant Class of works licence Period of Completion Tender Paper Cost As per Annexure

Date & time of Opening of tender in O/o. E.E.R.W. Last date & time

of seeking tende Division, Rairangpur Technical Bid & Financial Bid clarification 04.02.2021 E.E.R.W. Division. RWDRRP-25.01.2021 03.02.2021 08.02.2021 At 11.00 A.M. upto 5.00 P.M. 14/2020-21 upto 1.00 P.M Rairangpur Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersOdisha.gov.in.
DIPR-25107/11/0014/2021 Sd./- Er. D. Behera, Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Rairangpu

#### OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, DHARAMGARH Dist.- KALAHANDI

E-mail: nacdharmagarh@gmail.com Dated:18.01.21

No.39/DMH **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST** 

The Executive Officer, NAC, Dharamgarh on behalf of NAC, Dharamgarh invites "Expression of Interest" from Comptroller & Auditor General Empanelled audit firms for auditing of annual accounts for the year 2014-15 to 2019-20 of NAC, Dharamgarh, Dist. Kalahandi. The Expression of Interest should indicate the audit fees, taxes, T.A./D.A. and accommodation charges, if any, separately with detail boidata of the firm and it should reach in the above mentioned address in sealed envelopes on or before 28.01.21 by 12.00 Noon. The tender documents will be received through Regd. Post/Speed Post only. The minimum fee of audit and criterion for selection is given hereunder. The EOI will be opened in the same day at 3.30 P.M. The interested party on their authorized

The authority reserves all the right to accept/reject any or all the "EOI" without assigning any reason thereof.

| TECHNICAL CRITERIA FOR SELECTION            |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| CRITERIA                                    | MARKS                                  |  |  |  |  |
| Nos. of CA in the firm                      | Upto 10 Nos 10 marks                   |  |  |  |  |
| A POST OF CO. Mary Mary States Co. 1 (C. 1) | 11 to 20 Nos 20 marks                  |  |  |  |  |
| Nos. of years of establishments of firm     | Upto 15 years - 10 marks               |  |  |  |  |
|   | 15-25 years - 15 marks                 |  |  |  |  |
|   | 25-35 years - 20 marks                 |  |  |  |  |
|   | above 35 years - 25 marks              |  |  |  |  |
| Turnover per annum                          | Upto 20 lakhs- 10 marks                |  |  |  |  |
| 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1       | 21 to 40 lakhs- 15 marks               |  |  |  |  |
|   | above 40 lakhs- 20 marks               |  |  |  |  |
| Audit experience maximum 30 marks           | Govt. audit each organizaton- 5 marks  |  |  |  |  |
| 4,000,000                                   | PSU, Audit each organization - 5 marks |  |  |  |  |
| HEAD Office in Odisha                       | 5 marks                                |  |  |  |  |

SCOPE OF WORKS

representative may attend the same.

Preparation of financial statements i.e. income & expenditure account, balance sheet, all schedules to income and expenditure and balance sheet, receipt payment account and trial balance etc. and Bank reconciliation statement audited from 2014-15 to 2019-20 (Year wise). **Term & conditions** 

1. Audit fees per year - Rs.30,000/- (Rupees Thirty Thousand) 2. Necessary documents such as GSTN/PAN/Registration of firm/CAG empanelled

certificate or documents should be attached. 3. All documents should be attached as indicated in the criteria for selection. Sd./- Executive Officer, NAC, Dharamgarh

#### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, SAMBALPUR (R&B) DIVISION NO. II, SAMBALPUR E-mail – eesbprnbdivision2@gmail.com, Phone -0663-2410104 BID IDENTIFICATION No. EE / R and B / SBP II /11(online)/2020-21 E-procurement notice

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA** 

No. B-658:- The Executive Engineer, Sambalpur (R&B) Division No.II, Sambalpur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate bids in single cover System in ONLINE MODE.

- 03 (three) nos Fire fighting work 01 (One)no Electrical work 2. Tender Cost

:- Rs.4000/- &Rs.6000/-(Online per Class of Contractor

OEM / Specialized agency / Registered firm for Fire related

work / "HT" Electrical Contractor 4. Availability of bid document 10.00 Hours of 22.01.2021 to 17.00 Hours of 03 02 2021 in the website. Date of Opening of Tenders - 11.30 Hours on dt.04.02.2021

The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further detail can be seen from the Website www.tendersodisha.gov.in only. Any Corrigendum / Addendum/cancellation of tender will be displayed in the

OIPR-34136/11/0012/2021

**Executive Engineer** Sambalpur (R&B) Division No.II

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that Sri Dillip Kumar Swain, Jagatpur, Cuttack has sworn an affidavit on 19.01.2021 before the Notary Public, Cuttack and has reported to IIC, Jagatpur Police Station regarding loss of (1) Original ROR No. 772/2604, (2) Original Regd. Sale Deed No. 10431303600 Dtd.06.08.2013 executed by Kanhu Charan Behera in favour of Niranjan Parida. Sri Dillip Kumar Swain of the above address has applied for a housing loan to the LIC Housing Finance Ltd., Cuttack by offering mortgage of the said property document.

All concerned therefore having any claim over the property

purchased under the said document i.e. (1) Original ROR No. 772/2604, (2) Original Regd. Sale Deed No. 10431303600 Dtd.06.08.2013 executed by Kanhu Charan Behera in favour of Niranjan Parida are required to file their claim with the undersigned within 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be presumed that the property having link with the said document is free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as a mortgager and the company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 (Fifteen) days of publication of this notice. Place : Cuttack

Date: 19.01.2021

Sd./- (U.K. Mishra) Advocate LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Cuttack Area Office, Link Road, Cuttack

#### GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. A-491 DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER KANDHAMAL MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, PHULBANI

e-Procurement Notice BID IDENTIFICATION No. PIb-MI-E-06/2020-21

Letter No. 77

No. of Works

Renovation of M.I.P. Projects under maintenance of Critical Grant for the year 04 (Four) Nos.

Tender Paper Cost Period of Completion Availability of Bid

documents Time of receipt of bid

through Online Date of opening of bid documents Digital Signature

dowrorissa.gov.in.

Varies from Rs.12.50 lakh to Rs.5.35 lakh approximately Rs.4000.00 to Rs.6000.00 (Non-refundable)

30 (Thirty days) only. From 10.00 A.M. of 22.01.2021 to 16.00 hrs of 01.02.2021 in website (www tendersodisha.gov.in)

From 10.00 A.M. of 22.01.2021 to 16.00 hrs. of 01.02.2021 through online At 11.00 hrs. of 02.02.2021 in the O/o. E.E. K.M.I. Division, Phulbani

The bidder must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class II or The detail tender call notice can also be seen in the DOWR website http/

Name and address of the OIT: Executive Engineer, K.M.I. Division, Phulbani, Ph. No. 06842-253634, Fax: 06842-253816, E-mail: kmidplb@gmail.com

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement market place, http/ www.tendersodisha.gov.in. (Er. Jaminikanta Das)

Executive Engineer Kandhamal M.I. Division, Phulbani OIPR-32040/11/0004/2021



What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows: the rest is appearance, prejudice

**SRI AUROBINDO** 



Maneka Gandhi

You, who cower in

fear of Covid - this

is also a viral flu

disease: avian

influenza

## Protect yourself

By the time you read this lakhs of chickens will have died of avian flu. Some will have died naturally. Others will have been beaten to death or strangled. How many do you think will be buried or burnt? Very few. Most of them will land on your plate, sold at reduced prices by the poultries. So what, you say. The newspapers have repeatedly told you that bird flu makes no difference to the quality of chicken you eat and, as long as you cook it, you will come to no harm.

This is utter rubbish and it is being doled out by two interested parties: the poultry industry themselves, so that they do not go completely bankrupt and you continue to buy the diseased dead birds. The second is the government itself: the Animal Husbandry Ministry, which is solely invented to see that India has more poultries, more slaughterhouses. The more animals are eaten, the more successful the Ministry is. Their mandate is NOT sick people. Their mandate is to see that people keep buying chickens, diseased or not. The mandate for looking after sick people belongs to the Ministry of Health. And never the twain shall meet. Every article will tell you that no humans have ever had avian flu. And that it can't spread from bird to human. This is not true.

If a vian flu was not zoonotic why are the birds being killed under the Infectious and Contagious Diseases Prevention Act 2009. The word zoonotic means a

disease that can be transmitted to a human by an animal. Do you think any government cares when a bird suffers. The only time they wake up is when they know that the disease of the bird can be transmitted to a human. It was first detected in 18 humans in 1997 working in a live bird market in Hong Kong (again Chinese). The strain was identified as H5N1- the same strain that is in India now - with a high mortality rate. Six of the 18 humans died.

Bird flu has spread across the country. Every single state has it and lakhs are being killed from Himachal Pradesh to Kerala. You, who cower in fear of Covid - this is also a viral flu disease: avian influenza. The Influenza Type A virus has several strains. When it first came to India it was H1N1. Fourteen years later this massive outbreak is from the mutated virus now called H5N1 and H8N1

Just as syphilis, in every language, means the disease of foreigners, every government believes that avian flu comes from migratory birds from a different country, who spread it as their faeces drop from the air and straight

into the poultries. That country may never have had bird flu, but their birds have developed it as they fly towards India?

I find it far more likely that the poultries give it to the migratory birds, who have no resistance and so they die. According to the US Centre of Disease Control and Prevention, six countries are considered the permanent centres for H5N1 virus in poultry. We top the list followed by China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Indonesia and Egypt. In each of these countries you have to see the horrific conditions that chickens are normally kept in to understand why they fall prey so quickly to avian flu. In India the poultries are like hells on earth. The chickens are kept in filthy small cages unable to move, with sliced off beaks and toes to prevent them from picking each other's feathers. They are full of sores. Most of them have had rounds of other common diseases: Encephalomyelitis, Chicken Anaemia Virus Infection, Chlamydiosis, Infectious Bronchitis, Infectious Bursal Disease, Infectious Coryza, Infectious Laryngotracheitis, tick fever or Spirochaetosis, Avian Leucosis.

They have permanent diarrhoea, some have bloody diarrhoea from a parasite called coccidia. Most of them cannot walk without extreme difficulty and many have rickets. They have warts and a thick discharge from their eyes, they have pus filled abscesses on their necks and feet. Many of them have diabetes, and a large number have tuberculosis and they can hardly breathe in the damp poisonous air that pervades the poultry. They inhale their own dried faeces. They have a deficiency of Vitamin A and manganese, which makes them lame with swollen eyes. They cough and sneeze. They have round worms and tape worms, lice and fleas, ticks and mites. They live on a diet of antibiotics and dried food with sawdust in it. They die often of heart attacks.

Every now and then they are wiped out by the contagious fowl pox, fowl cholera or Ranikhet disease. How could you think that these diseased unhappy creatures would not get avian flu? How does it spread to humans? From those people who work in poultries – which is how Covid started. And those who eat poultry products. The WHO started by saying that there is no evidence that the virus can spread through food - provided it is cooked at more than 60 degree Celsius. What they have neglected to say is that the chicken is handled by you long before it is cooked. You buy the raw chicken from an open street vendor, touch it with your hands, put it into your fridge, put it in various utensils, which are not washed at boiling temperatures but with ordinary tap water. You cut it and splice it and then cook it. By then the virus is in a hundred places and you could have become a carrier. Even WHO has now diluted its own message and warns that these new mutant viruses could turn into another pandemic. H5N1 has already proven to be very dangerous to humans.

When the disease spreads to humans, it affects the respiratory tract illness, and its symptoms include Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome, similar to one caused by Covid-19. You will start with fever, cough and a sore throat. You can have abdominal pain and diarrhoea. All these symptoms are similar to Covid. There have been no tests for it in India. The government labs are now rolling out a test to see whether you have Covid or avian flu. There is no vaccine or treatment. Protect yourself. Don't eat chicken or eggs. Close down the illegal street vendors. I have done that in my constituency.

To join the animal welfare movement contact gandhim@nic.in, www.peopleforanimalsindia.org

#### WISDOM CORNER

Without knowing what I am and why I am here, life is impossible.

LEO TOLSTOY Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the

**DESMOND TUTU** 

Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to

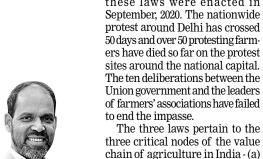
#### WORDS**WORTH**

#### ■ Yarely

Ifred Tennyson, poet laureate during much of Queen Victoria's reign, Apreferred words of native English origin over those from French and Latin. He's credited with bringing many old words back into the language. However, his son Hallam wrote a memoir in which he recalled his father regretting that he had never employed yarely. If he had, his readers would have been as baffled by it as they were with some of his other reintroductions, because by the nineteenth century varely had fallen out of the standard language, though surviving in some dialects. A rare notable earlier usage that century was in a work by another resurrector of antique words: "Yarely! yarely! pull away, my hearts," said the latter, and the boat bearing the unlucky young man soon carried him on board the frigate --Waverley, by Sir Walter Scott, 1814. From this, we may guess, correctly, that it means briskly, promptly or quickly. Its source is the Old English gearolice, related to gearu, ready or prepared.

#### FOCUS FARM LAWS

# **NATURAL VS ARTIFICIAL**



Production: The Farmers

(Empowerment & Protection)

Agreement on Price Assurance

and Farm Services Act, 2020, (b)

Procurement: The Farmers'

Produce Trade and Commerce

(Promotion & Facilitation) Act.

2020, and (c) Storage and Marketing

by market intermediaries: The

The first of three laws refer to

'contract farming'. Such a law was

introduced by the British gov-

ernment in India over 180 years ago

- the Bengal Indigo Contract Act,

1836. Contract farming even in

Independent India has not favoured

farmers fear losing their last resort

of getting minimum support price

on the last 6 per cent of their agri-

cultural produce; as 94 per cent of

their produce is already under

free market; a system that has not

worked for the farmers. With the

current high institutional defi-

ciencies and imperfect market

competition in agriculture markets,

wishing that smallholder farm-

The third law with some caveats;

removes the bar for hoarding of

food items (including essential

items) by market intermediaries.

The farmers fear that this law is

a potential threat to price rise in

food items. It is the biggest concern

for the labour class and low-in-

come and middle-income groups.

It is also a matter of concern for

most farmer families who having

gradually been induced to mono-

cropping are inadvertently forced

to procure a large part of their

ers will gain is illogical.

Through the second law, the

the smallholder farmers.

(Amendment) Act, 2020.

Commodities

Amar KJR Nayak

THE EASIEST **AND WISEST WAY FORWARD IS TO FIRST** LISTEN TO THE **VOICE OF THE SMALLHOLDER FARMERS WHO HAVE BEEN CLOSEST TO THE NATURE BY VIRTUE OF BEING IN AGRICULTURE** 



The farmers' protest in India is a manifestation of the tensions between artificial designs of industrial production and market economy for capital growth and the laws of Nature

food items from the open market. In the above context, the protesting farmers question whether these laws are for the good of the farmers and the people of India as argued by some or a systematic alignment to global trade and business to benefit a few big businesses, irrespective of their country of origin. It has been observed that multinational companies are stateless organisations.

Since the industrial revolution business enterprises have followed the strategies of economies of scale, specialisation, hierarchical corporate governance structure, capital intensive, technology intensive, high incentive intensity to top management and key stakeholders to operate their engine of growth Governments across the world have gradually been roped into this model of development. Through the global institutions such as World Bank, IMF, and WTO, developing nations have gradually been induced to reform their state policies for privatisation, globalisation, and international trade. Accordingly, agriculture, the primary sector of developing countries, is gradually being aligned to WTO to ensure capital formation for the so called 'engines of growth' (multinational corporations). In other words, our artificial designs, strategies, policies, and individual expectations have gradually and systematically ripped the basic fabric of natural relationships of lives and matter

Technically, the three farm laws

are in line with artificial industrial production designs under competitive market economy primarily for efficiency of capital employed by large enterprises. 'Economies of scale' as in industrial production or mono-cropping in agricultural production is the technique being enforced to ensure artificial efficiency. Over the years, the economic theories, policies, and institutions have made farmers and agriculture over-dependent on external resources and competences in terms of seeds, soil health, water, farm machinery, value addition, credit, and marketing. 'Economies of scale' has also been signaled by the government of India in agricultural production through its statement of 'one district one product' focus in its 2020 National Policy Guidelines for 10,000 Farmer Producer

Organisations. Caring for others around is the core ecological principle of Nature. The age-old family wisdom, various religions of the world, Ubuntu philosophy, moral philosophy, jurisprudence, constitutional values of various countries including that of India, Gandhi's Talisman, game theoretic analysis, evolutionary biology, sustainable agricultural systems, agroecology, and systems science reflect this very principle of Nature: that all life and matter are interconnected, interdependent and are in dynamic interactions in Nature. It implies that self-interest of any individual indeed lies in the interest of others in one's ecosystem; a notion that

was best experienced by humans during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The already over-burdened farmers fearing the loss of their land ownership, livelihood, and even their right to life seem to be determined to reverse the three farm laws or die. The others who were either helplessly watching the unidirectional growth or the middleincome groups who were hoping to profit from the gains of capital formation through artificial designs have begun to realise the power of solidarity shown by the farmers and farming communities and have begun to join the farmers on their march to Delhi. The growing farmers' protest clearly is a manifestation of decades of tensions between the artificial designs of industrial production and market economy for capital growth and the laws of Nature. The tension between artificial human designs with guile and natural laws seem to have been amplified when applied to the primary sector.

The tensions can be resolved if human thinking, practices, theories, and policies could be realigned to the ecological principles and laws of Nature rather than be path dependent to the errors of the past understanding of individual interest, theories of efficiency, business strategies, and state policies to carry forward an agenda that is against the laws of Nature. Indeed, Nature can heal us all. In a planet that is deeply interconnected, interdependent and dynamically interacting, conscious interactions keeping the weak at the center of our theories, policies and practices is the best way forward. The easiest and wisest way forward is to first listen to the voice of the small holder farmers who have been closest to the Nature by virtue of being in agriculture for generations. Second, adopt a bottom-up constructivist approach for planning and execution to build flourishing ecological systems and habitats.

> The writer is Professor of Strategic Management and Chairperson, Centre for Sustainable Ecological Systems, XIMB, Xavier University, Bhubaneswar.

#### SPECTRUM GLOBAL ACTION

**FOR** 

**GENERATIONS** 

# Tackling vulnerable countries' triple crisis

Manish Bapna & Muhammad Musa

THE WORLD CAN **EMERGE STRONGER FROM THE** INTERCONNECTED HEALTH, **ECONOMIC, AND CLIMATE CRISES, BUT SUCCESS WILL** REQUIRE BOLD, **URGENT, AND FAR-SIGHTED ACTION** 

thing. The world now faces interconnected health, economic, and climate crises that have no historical parallel. These converging threats affect everyone, but are especially devastating for vulnerable developing countries.

The tragedy is that these countries receive relatively little direct public support to build resilience to climate change, and development assistance is being cut rather than expanded. As United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres noted at the recent UN Climate Ambition Summit, developed countries are not on track to meet their commitment to provide \$100 billion per year to support developing countries' climate efforts.

The international community must now show solidarity and help vulnerable countries withstand the multiple threats they face. Doing so is in everyone's interest, because the effects of climate change, the Covid-19 pandemic, and economic shocks know no borders.

In 2020 alone, more than 50 million people were affected by climate-driven disasters while also facing the pandemic and economic crisis. From typhoons and cyclones battering Southeast Asian cities

he year 2020 changed every- to severe droughts devastating mated \$140-300 billion per year by nitude, hit Bangladesh in May 2020, African farmers, the consequences were severe. By the end of 2021. the pandemic could drive an additional 150 million people globally into extreme poverty.

Research by the Global Commission on Adaptation shows that every dollar invested in resilience generates up to \$10 in net economic benefits. Such spending can give vulnerable countries an urgent economic boost during the Covid crisis. Many of these states, from Bangladesh to Fiji, are already building resilience to climate threats – but they need more international support to meet the challenge. World leaders must therefore step up by investing more, investing early, and investing locally.

Although policymakers have so far mobilised \$13 trillion for economic recovery, only a very small share of this amount has been spent by low-income developing countries. These economies have been able to allocate just 2 per cent of their GDP to Covid response and recovery measures, while wealthier economies have spent 8.8 per cent of GDP, on average.

Meanwhile, the cost of helping developing countries adapt to climate change will reach an esti2030. This is not the time for rich countries to be stingy. History has shown that when crises hit, governments can provide more resources without fueling inflation. After the 2008 financial crisis, for example, countries that intentionally ran large budget deficits, such as the US and China, fared better than those that cut spending. Many studies confirm this positive economic effect. Moreover, the sooner the inter-

national community acts, the better off we will be. As the pandemic has made crystal clear, it's better and less expensive to invest in preparation today than to wait for the next crisis to erupt. Investments in resilience can mitigate future losses from storms, floods, and droughts, while also creating economic opportunities and boosting social welfare.

Bangladesh has seen the benefits of such early action firsthand. The country invested heavily in improved early-warning systems and disaster response in the decades following Cyclone Bhola, which killed 300,000 people in 1970. Although every death resulting from a natural disaster is a tragedy, when Cyclone Amphan, a storm of similar mag-

the death toll was in the dozens.

Finally when implementing these investments, governments must ensure that funding gets to the local level. Local communities are on the frontlines of both Covid and climate crises, but rarely have a voice in the interventions that most affect them. Direct funding to local and national actors accounted for just 2.1 per cent of total international humanitarian assistance in 2019.

Like other resilience measures. investing in local communities delivers multiple benefits beyond just addressing climate risks. In Kenya, a government programme aimed at empowering local governments and communities to strengthen climate resilience has given households greater access to water, higher incomes, and improved food security.

The world can emerge stronger from the interconnected health, economic, and climate crises, but success will require bold, urgent, and far-sighted action.

> Bapna is Executive VP and MD of the World Resources Institute. Musa is Executive Director of BRAC International.

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

rissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

#### Extraordinary feat

Sir, Team India deserves accolades for pulling off a miracle in the final Test against Australia at the Gabba, Brisbane. It was heartening to see the rookies throw their weight around as the team pulled off a record chase to seal the series 2-1. India found its heroes in young guns, Shubman Gill, Rishabh Pant, Mohammed Siraj, Washington Sundar, Shardul Thakur and T Natarajan even as India's 'Rock of Gibraltar', Cheteshwar Pujara stood firm. Captain Ajinkya Rahane and his heroic bunch have done the country proud with this extraordinary feat.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

#### Tesla & India

Sir, Tesla coming to India is a welcome step. But the cost of the vehicles is the real concern. Most electric vehicles are too expensive for the Indian consumer. The government and the motor industry must reduce the cost of the vehicles. The government must use these vehicles in all its day-to-day works. The people are ready to use electric vehicles but the government should ensure their availability at subsidized prices.

Sunil Pradhan. KHARIAR (NUAPADA)

#### Digital payments & Indian households

Sir, According to a study conducted by the People Research on India's Consumer Economy with the National Payments Corporation of India, digital payment methods are well accepted by Indian households. The survey was aimed at understanding the awareness, adoption and use behaviour of households with respect to digital payments. This study covered 5.314 households across 25 states with a sample design to represent states and households across the income spectrum. According to the survey, there is a suppressed demand among people who say they desire to use digital payment methods but need someone to show them how, and a smaller group who used such methods earlier has discontinued them. If this ready demand is enabled through effective training and education, then half of Indian households will become digital payment users. The report also revealed a very high level of awareness of UPI and payment apps and that households which are using UPI as a platform may not be completely aware about interoperability of the platform. There is a potential to create the awareness that any banks or payment apps can be used to make UPI ID.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, PANIKOILI (JAJPUR)

# Didi-Suvendu face-off communally divides Nandigram

THE SCENE OF ONE OF THE BLOODIEST AND MOST TRAUMATIC MASS MOVEMENTS AGAINST LAND ACQUISITION BY A GOVERNMENT FOR INDUSTRIALISATION, NANDIGRAM OF TODAY STANDS POLARISED ALONG COMMUNAL LINES

who participated in the anti-land

village in Nandigram blamed the

TMC government for the

overboard with its policy of

(Muslim) appeasement and that

pitted one community against the

Mondal is also angry over the

lack of development in the area

after the anti-land acquisition move-

ment. "Hindus and Muslims fought

hand in hand but what did we get?

Except for a few new roads and to

some extent the benefits of the 100

days of work a year, we got nothing.

Only a handful of leaders and mem-

bers of a particular community

got all the benefits. Now the people

are angry and will teach TMC a

A TMC panchayat samiti mem-

ber, who did not want to be named.

alleged Muslims were getting pref-

erence even in student scholar-

ships. "The CPI-M never discrim-

inated between people on the basis

of religion. Tell me why Hindus

should not go with the BJP. We cau-

tioned the party leadership against

this discrimination but nothing

Sheikh Sufiyan, a BUPC veteran

and East Midnapore Zilla Parishad

chairman, however, insisted such

claims were part of the BJP's "dis-

Local leaders of both the TMC

and the BJP maintain the shoots of

came of it," he said.

information campaign"

communal divide.

other," Mondal said.

lesson," he said.

Bamdev Mondal of Gokulpur

"The TMC government went

acquisition movement, told PTI.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nandigram (WB), Jan 20: A bloodsoaked Nandigram made Mamata Banerjee what she is today and underpins the hopes of the combustible West Bengal leader of clinching a third straight term in

Nandigram was the springboard that catapulted her to power in politically volatile and often violent West Bengal a decade back, and there she is, invoking a battle she led and won against an iron-fisted Communist regime.

This time, however, she is up against her former Nandigram general--the formidable Suvendu Adhikari-- who has joined the rival BJP, and declared he will quit politics if he fails to defeat Banerjee on his home turf.

It was a strife that had propelled the little known agrarian agglomeration, where characteristics of rural and urban West Bengal merged seamlessly, into national limelight. It's a looming strife again that threatens to break its fragile peace as assembly elections ap-

It has come a long way since the turbulent 2000s when the slogan Nandigram, Nandigram" (vour name, my name, Nandigram, Nandigram!) suffused the agitated air, reflecting a rare social and political convergence of public opinion against "forcible" land acquisition by the then Left Front government for setting up a Special Economic Zone.

Today, the slogan "Jai Shri Ram" is etched firmly as graffiti on the walls of Nandigram alongside the fading "Tomar naam amar naam, Nandigram, Nandigram".

And the most important reason behind the heightened communal polarisation is Adhikari's decision to join the BJP and Banerjee's surprise announcement that she will contest the seat.

Adhikari's father Sisir, currently a TMC Lok Sabha member, was the convenor of the Bhumi Uchhed Pratirodh Committee (BUPC), which comprised people from disparate po-



A West Bengal police vehicle stands parked on the Tekhali bridge as additional security is deployed in Nandigram, Wednesday.

litical ideologies. The TMC, Congress, RSS and even disgruntled members of the Left parties--all waged a united struggle against the government.

With the Left and the Congress pushed to the margins of West Bengal politics, a bitter and bloody political battle looms over Nandigram between Banerjee's TMC and the BJP.

Political rallies of rival parties are being attacked and people injured almost every day.

With no industries having come up since the BUPC uprising that left an unspecified number of people dead, including 14 in a police firing, Nandigram's primarily agricultural economy supplies rice, vegetables and fresh fish to adjoining areas, skirted as it is by the Ganga and Haldi rivers.

Though the peace of Nandigram was shattered by the protracted violence during 2007-11, leaving many dead in clashes between BUPC and CPI-M supporters, the area was never before polarised along religious and communal lines, and the tussle was purely political.

"Nandigram has changed a lot in the last six-seven years. Earlier, all communities used to live in peace together. There were differences and violence, but all that was because of politics not religion. Now it all (conflict) stems from religion with majority Hindus on one side and Muslim minority on another. We never saw such a situation in the past," Rasool Kazi, a local resident,

MAMATA BANERJEE'S ANNOUNCEMENT HAS LEFT THE

ON THE EDGE

ENTIRE EAST MIDNAPORE DISTRICT AND ADJOINING **AREAS** 

BOTH BANERJEE AND ADHIKARI WERE HEROES OF THE NANDIGRAM MOVEMENT. THE FEISTY TMC BOSS WAS ITS GUIDING SPIRIT, WHILE ADHIKARI WAS HER GENERAL ON THE GROUND. ORGANISING MASS PROTESTS AGAINST THE SEZ WHERE INDONESIA'S SALIM GROUP INTENDED TO SET UP A CHEMICAL HUB

NANDIGRAM ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCY HAS AROUND 70 PER CENT HINDUS, WHILE MUSLIMS ACCOUNT FOR THE REST, AND THEIR NAMES GIVE AWAY THEIR POLITICAL PREFERENCES



ble after the 2013 panchayat polls when elected Muslim members were given prominent roles in Zilla Parishads and the ruling party's district unit. The rift widened further after the 2018 panchayat elec-

The disaffection prompted the Hindu right to assert itself with a massive Ram Navami rally in Nandigram in 2016. Locals said many TMC workers and leaders actively participated in it.

The results were quick for all to see. The BJP, with hardly any support base in the area dominated by the TMC, bagged over 1.96 lakh votes in the 2016 by elections to Tamluk Lok Sabha seat and finished third. In the 2019 Lok Sabha election, the BJP further consolidated it position, with its candidate cinching over 5.34 lakh votes.

Dibyendu Adhikari, a younger brother of Suvendu Adhikari won both the elections. Dibvendu and the Adhikari family patriarch, Sisir Adhikari, are both TMC Lok Sabha members but had given Mamata

"Nandigram is sitting on a tinderbox and only the TMC's appeasement politics is responsible for it. If you deny the majority community its rights, you will have to face the consequences," Tamluk district BJP general secretary Gour Hari Maity told a visiting PTI re-

A local former leader of the Congress Sabuj Pradhan, who recently joined the BJP, said sporadic communal clashes are taking place in the region for the last few weeks and things could get worse as the elections approach.

TMC's Akhil Giri, a known detractor of Suvendu Adhikari who now calls the shots in the area for the TMC, is confident that Nandigram will not lose its secular character and rally behind

"Suvendu and his coterie of leaders say there are around 2.12 lakh Hindu and 70,000 Muslim voters in Nandigram assembly seat. But we will defeat their communal designs. Nandigram is the epitome of secularism and will always be,'

# Can Cong's 5-party grand alliance take on BJP in Assam

The 126-member Assam Assembly is likely to go to polls in April-May along with West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, Jan 20: The opposition Congress has announced a five-party 'Mahagathbandhan' to take on the ruling BJP-led coalition in Assam in the upcoming Assembly elections expected to be held in April-May.

Announcing Mahagathbandhan (grand alliance), Assam Congress president Ripun Bora said that his party would contest the elections in alliance with the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF), the three Left parties - Communist Party of India-Marxist, Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) - and the Anchalik Gana Morcha (AGM).

He said that regional parties are welcome to join the Mahagathbandhan to oust the Bharatiya Janata Party from power in the state.

"The Congress is always keen to oust all communal forces for the best interest of the country. People are ready to vote out the BJP as its misgovernance caused a lot of distress to the people, who have become fed up with the BJP," he said.

**AIUDF** General Secretary Aminul Islam said the Mahagathbandhan is good for Assam as it would fulfil the expectations of the people of the state and throw the BJP out of power.

AGM President Ajit Kumar Bhuyan, also a Rajya Sabha member, termed the formation of the grand alliance as a historic moment. He sounded optimistic that the grand alliance would defeat the BJP in the forthcoming elec-

Besides the AIUDF, a Muslimdominated party in Assam, and leaders had held several meetings in the past few months with the 'like-minded parties'.

AIUDF president and Lok Sabha member Maulana Badruddin Ajmal has been stating that the two parties (Congress and AIUDF) have decided to contest the Assembly polls together since their tie-up for the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) polls held last month.

Recently, interim Congress president Sonia Gandhi had appointed three central leaders -- Bhupesh Baghel (Chhattisgarh Chief Minister), Mukul Wasnik (AICC General Secretary) and Shakeel Ahmed Khan (Bihar MLA) -- to oversee the election campaign in Assam in close coordination with the AICC general secretaries and the party in-charge for the state.

Baghel and other central leaders held meetings with the state party leaders in Guwahati before Assam Congress chief announced the Mahagathbandhan.

The Congress had suffered a setback in the recent elections to the BTC and the Tiwa Autonomous Council. Two of its MLAs - Ajanta Neog and Rajdeep Goala - had joined the BJP last month, delivering another blow to the party.

In the 2016 Assam assembly elections, the Congress had contested on its own without an electoral alliance with any party, securing 24

After the last Assembly polls, the BJP formed the government in Assam for the first time after winning 60 seats following the formation of an alliance with the Bodoland People's Front (BPF) and the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), which won 14 and 12 seats, respectively. The ruling alliance also has the support of an Independent

## Those voters excluded from NRC can vote in Assam polls: CEC



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, Jan 20: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sunil Arora Wednesday said those excluded from Assam's updated National Register of Citizens (NRC), if their names are on the final electoral rolls, can vote in the assembly polls likely to be held in April-May.

rect supervision of the Supreme Court was released August 31, 2019, excluding the names of 19,06,657 persons. A total of 3,11,21,004 names were included out of 3,30,27,661 applicants. The CEC cited a Union Home

The updated NRC under the di-

Ministry notification of August 29, 2019 that clarified that the exclusion of a person's name from the NRC does not amount to his or her declaration as a foreigner. "Since the people, excluded in the NRC, have their names in the final voters' list, they can exercise their franchise in the elections," he told the media.

Those voters who were excluded from the NRC in Assam also cast their votes in the last Lok Sabha elections in 2019.

Meanwhile, the final electoral list in Assam on the basis of January 1 as the qualifying age, was published on Monday. Assembly polls are to be held on the basis of the final electoral rolls, which have enlisted a total of 2, 29, 92, 505 voters including 1,12,34,579 women. Compared to the final photo electoral roll of last year, the state has registered an increase of 2.46 per cent voters in this

#### Polls to be held keeping in mind Bihu festival, CBSE exam

Guwahati: Chief Election Commissioner

Sunil Arora Wednesday said the Assam assembly polls will be held keeping in mind the Rongali Bihu festival and the process will be finished before the CBSE Board exams beginning on May four. The Commission is sensitive towards festivals held in the various states "and we have already taken into consideration this before coming here for the review meetings", the CEC told reporters here. The political parties during interaction with the full bench of the poll panel had made a plea to keep in view the Bihu festival while deciding the poll schedule to encourage more voter turnout and also to ensure that the monsoon, which usually arrives early in the state, is avoided.

year's final voters' list.

Arora, accompanied by Election Commissioners Sushil Chandra and Rajiv Kumar and senior officials, arrived in Guwahati on Monday and during the three days held a series of meetings with the political parties, police nodal officers, election related regulatory agencies, district deputy commissioners and police officers, state home secretary and other senior central and state officials to review the poll preparedness.

The EC also held meetings with Assam Chief Secretary Jishnu Baruah, Director General of Police Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta, and Chief Electoral Officer Nitin Khade.

# 1,000 vax doses found 'frozen'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati/Silchar, Jan 20: Authorities in Assam are probing 19 vaccine Covishield were found "frozen" in the vaccine store of the Silchar Medical College and

Hospital (SMCH), officials said. Cachar Deputy Commissioner Keerthi Jalli and state National Health Mission Director Lakshmanan S. have separately ordered probes to identify the reason for the 100 vials of Covishield, containing 1,000 doses, being "frozen".

Health officials in Guwahati, however, are not labelling the 100 vials or the 1,000 doses a "waste" yet as they would get them tested in a laboratory to test the efficacy of the vaccine. According to SMCH officials, the development was noticed Saturday, the first day of the nationwide vaccination drive. According to the guidelines of the Pune-based Serum Institute of India, producer of Covishield in India, the vaccine needs to be kept at a temperature between 2-8 degrees



#### **PROBE ORDERED**

The authorities National Health to find out how Lakshmanan, 1,000 doses of said that show COVID-19 cause notices vaccine got have been frozen and issued to those wasted due to responsible for their storage in storing and sub-zero supplying the

temperature vaccine

A SENIOR DOCTOR OF SILCHAR MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL SAID THAT THE VACCINES WERE SUPPOSED TO BE STORED AT A **TEMPERATURE OF 2-8 DEGREE CELSIUS** 

Under Assam's cold-chain system, the vaccines are being transported and kept stored in Ice-Lined Refrigerators (ILRs) as specified by the Universal Immunisation Programme for transporting and storing any vac-

"Probe is now on, where the shortcoming and lapses had taken place. There are chances of the vaccine getting frozen while being carried to the hospital or while kept stored in the hospital," an official said on condition of anonymity. He also said that the ILR automatic monitoring system was also not functioning properly. Assam got both Covishield and Covaxin. Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech is manufacturer of India's first indigenous vaccine Covaxin while Covishield was developed by Oxford University and pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca and manufactured by the Pune-based Serum Institute of India

## **Another TMC MLA jumps ship to BJP**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Jan 20: West Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress legislator from the Shantipur Assembly constituency in Nadia district, Arindam Bhattacharya, joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Wednesday

He joined the saffron brigade at the party's headquarters in Delhi after holding a meeting with BJP national General Secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya.

Our dream is to create 'Aatmanirbhar' West Bengal and 'Aatmanirbhar' India, which is also

the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. I have joined the BJP responding to the call of Prime Minister Modi," Bhattacharya said.

He added that the young generation in Bengal is not happy, as there are no job opportunities in the state. "The youth got assurance from the Trinamool Congress government, but they didn't get anything. There is no vision, no future planning, no industrialisation drive in Bengal. The Trinamool government came to power with big expectations, but see the current situation. Nothing is happening in the state," he said.

# TMC seeks release of defence ministry book on INA



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 20: Days before India celebrates the 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the TMC Wednesday demanded that a book chronicling the history of Azad Hind Fauj (INA) - compiled by the history division of the defence ministry decades ago -- be made public.

TMC MP Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, during a press meet here, said the book, edited by historian PC Gupta, is still awaiting release, as both the UPA and the NDA governments at the Centre did not take any initiative to get it published.

He claimed that the Prime Minister's Office and the defence ministry have several files on Netaji and his exploits lying

with them, all under wraps. "I have raised the issue many times in the Rajya Sabha," he said.

Roy also pointed out that Bengal Chief Minister "Mamata Banerjee, however, released all Netaji-related files available with the state government".

Talking about the defence ministry manuscript on INA, he said Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) of India, responding to an RTI filed by some Chandrachur Ghosh of Haryana in 2009, had ordered its

release.
"...But the then UPA government said more details will be added to the book before its release, a proposal turned down by a single bench of the High Court. The court ordered the book cannot be edited further

and had to be released in its original form.

"Subsequently, the government moved the division bench and the case is still pending," the

Rajya Sabha MP explained. He claimed that pages from 186 to 191 of the book had said Netaji did not die in a plane crash, a conclusion also arrived at by the Mukheriee Commission -- which was formed by the then Congress government to inquire into the freedom fighter's mysterious

disappearance. "Both the Congress and the BJP are indifferent to the legacy of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, who had formed the Indian National Army (INA). As many as 26,000 soldiers of that forcehad laid down their lives," he added

# national



You (Stalin) should come without a paper slip to debate. You must not read out from a note prepared by someone else. List out your claims of corruption and I will answer

EDAPPADI K. PALANISWAMI | CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU

#### NCB ARRESTS DAWOOD'S AIDE

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Wednesday arrested gangster Parvez Khan alias Chinku Pathan, a henchman of fugitive Underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, in connection with a drugs case from neighbouring Navi Mumbai, an official said, adding some drugs were also seized





opening of the logistics hub in Nanga Chaudhary village, for the first time, multinational

companies will come in southern

**DUSHYANT CHAUTALA** HARYANA DEPUTY

Natural partners for greener. prosperous world: Foreign Secretary @harshvshringla met Ambassadors

of EU countries today & discussed India-EU strategic cooperation in context of India-EU+27 Leaders' Summit in May; focus on Trade, Investments, Climate Change & Indo-Pacific

ANURAG SRIVASTAVA | MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SPOKESPERSON



against incredible odds, has

brought glory to India, and shone the internationa spotlight on the superb quality of Team India's players

SONIA GANDHI CONGRESS PRESIDENT

#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### 36 injured in bus mishap

Lalitpur (UP): At least 36 passengers were injured when a stationary bus was hit by another one in Uttar Pradesh's Lalitpur district Wednesday, police said. The incident took place around 5.30 pm near Nehru College on a national highway. The from Indore stopped near the Nehru College when another bus came from Jhansi side **Assistant Superintendent of** Police Girijesh Kumar said.

#### Mata Prasad passes away

Arunachal Pradesh, Mata Prasad, passed away here in the wee hours of Wednesday. He was 96 years old. He had been admitted to the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS) Tuesday evening with diagnosis of multi-organ failure, requiring life-saving supportive therapies.

#### Indian jailed

New Delhi/Singapore: A 26year-old Indian painter in Singapore was sentenced to nine months in prison Wednesday for molesting a pregnant woman after following her to a lift lobby, according to a media report. Kota Durga Prasad molested the three-month pregnant woman who was visiting her husband in Singapore on the night of September 5 last year, reported the Channel News Asia. Kota thought that the victim "looked pretty" and decided to follow her on seeing her crossing a traffic junction in the Jurong West residential area.

#### Tiger triggers panic in UP village

Shahjahanpur (UP): The presence of a tiger in a village here was confirmed on Wednesday after the big cat and its cubs were seen in CCTV camera footage from the area, triggering a panic among locals.

#### Student shot dead

Ambala: A 19-year-old student was shot dead in Ambala city by some unknown assailants, police said Wednesday. The deceased was identified as Ayan, a resident of Ranjit Nagar area of Ambala City.

# **Leaking classified** info act of 'treason': **Cong on Arnab chat**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 20: Upping the ante against the government over iournalist Arnab Goswami's purported social media chat leak, the Congress on Wednesday described it as an act of "treason" and demanded an immediate inquiry into the leak of such classified information about the Balakot air strike. It said that the party will raise the issue during Parliament's Budget Session.

The Congress brought out several senior leaders to corner the government over the issue including former Defence Minister A.K. Antony, former Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde, former Law Minister Salman Khurshid, Congress Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad and party spokesperson Pawan

Addressing a press conference here at the party headquarters Antony said, "The contents of the leaked chats between Goswami of Republic TV and the former CEO of BARC is a serious issue for the entire nation.

Antony said that for a very patriotic Indian, it is a shock and a serious matter of concern because it affects national security. The Congress leader said that it affects the security of the armed forces, and especially in this case the security of the brave air warriors. "And also in the way they (Goswami and BARC CEO) mentioned the martyrdom of 40 CRPF men is all a serious concern for us," Antony said.

He said the people of the country and the political parties might have differences on several issues but are united when it comes to national security cutting across religious and party lines to protect the country.

"But now it is very clear that classified documents that too considering the national security and also considering the most sensitive secret air strikes were available with the people who were not expected to know it, and were not authorised to get these documents," Antony said.



the leaked chats between Goswami of Republic TV and the former CEO of BARC is a serious issue for the entire A.K. ANTONY

He said "I am very sad and shocked" over the leaked chats between Goswami and former BARC CEO Partho Dasgupta and the language they used while mentioning the martyrdom of 40 CRPF

Firing a salvo at the government, the Congress leader said, "Three days before the Balakot air strikes, how did one journalist come to know of the details of it? It would have affected the operation and its effectiveness.

Only very few people are expected to be in the know of such secret information, to know the details of the military operations "Even all the Cabinet ministers are not expected to get that as only a handful of people and a few military people are informed about such operations," he said.

"These documents were leaked to the media, but not the entire media but to only one journalist by the people who were in top positions in the government," he alleged.

"Leaking official secrets about the military operation, national security matters, sensitive military operations especially air force strike is treason and anti-national activity," he said.

Referring to the alleged chats of Goswami with Dasgupta, Khurshid said, "It raises questions that if the talks of such kind were going on, then was there any influence on the judiciary?" "And did any wrong decision be taken due to such pressures. They also discussed a meeting with Law Minister," he said.

## Top court rejects pleas seeking review of 2018 Aadhaar verdict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 20: The Supreme Court has dismissed a batch of pleas seeking review of its 2018 verdict which had upheld the Centre's flagship Aadhaar scheme as constitutionally valid but struck down some of its provisions, including its linking with bank accounts, mobile phones and school

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar, by a majority of 4:1, rejected the review pleas against the apex court's September 26, 2018 verdict.

Justice DY Chandrachud, one of the five-judges of the bench, dissented with the majority verdict and said that the review petitions be kept pending until a larger bench decides the question related to certification of a bill as a money bill.

The Aadhaar Bill was certified as a money bill which enabled the government to get it cleared without getting the assent of a majority in the Rajva Sabha.

"The present review petitions have been filed against the final judgment and order dated September 26, 2018. We have perused the review petitions as well as the grounds in support thereof. In our opinion, no case for review of judgment and order dated

भारत सरकार would not be mandatory to link September 26, 2018 is made out," the

majority order of January 11 said.

"We hasten to add that change in the law or subsequent decision/judgment of a coordinate or larger bench by itself cannot be regarded as a ground for review. The review petitions are accordingly dismissed," said the bench, also comprising Justices Ashok Bhushan, S Abdul Nazeer and B R Gavai

The review pleas were taken up for consideration in-chamber by the bench.

In its 2018 verdict, a five-judge Constitution bench headed by then Chief Justice Dipak Misra had held that while Aadhaar would remain mandatory for filing of Income Tax Return and allotment of permanent account number (PAN), it Aadhaar number to bank accounts and telecom service providers cannot seek its linking for mobile con-In its 4:1 verdict that had also

quashed some contentious provisions of the Aadhaar Act, the top court, however, had held Aadhaar would be needed for availing facilities of welfare schemes and government subsidies. Ruling that seeding of Aadhaar

would not be required for opening bank accounts, availing mobile services, by CBSE, NEET, JEE, UGC and for admissions in schools and free education for children, the top court had observed that Aadhaar had also become a household name and that its use has

#### **FARMERS' TRACTOR** RALLY 'REHEARSAL' **HELD IN GURUGRAM**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gurugram, Jan 20: The Sanyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) in Gurugram conducted a tractor rally 'rehearsal' in Gurugram on Wednesday ahead of Republic Day, in support of the farmers' protests against the three farm SKM president Chaudhary

Santokh Singh, farmers and other members of the Morcha participated in the event. Singh said hundreds of tractors

and other vehicles which had affixed the national flag on their vehicles started their journey at 12 noon and covered major stretches of the city.

"The tractor rally rehearsal started from the Bajghera flyover and later moved towards Palam Vihar Road, Sheetla Mata Road, Atul Kataria Chowk and Maharana Pratap Chowk.

The rally covered around 12 kms in the city," Singh said. However, when the tractor rally cavalcade reached the Maharana Pratap Chowk the police personnel stationed at the chowk stopped the tractor rally by erecting barricades at the location as the farmers wanted to go on the Delhi-Jaipur expressway.

The protesters later ended their tractor rally rehearsal at Maharana Pratap Chowk.

## GALWAN BRAVEHEARTS HONOU

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 20: The names of 20 Indian Army personnel, who were killed while valiantly fighting Chinese troops in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh in June last year, were inscribed on the National War Memorial ahead of the Republic Day, official sources said.

Col B Santosh Babu, the commanding officer of the 16 Bihar regiment, was among the Indian soldiers who laid down their lives in the fierce hand-to-hand combat June 15, an incident that marked one of the most serious military conflicts between the two sides in decades.

China is yet to disclose the num ber of its soldiers killed and injured in the clash though it officially admitted to having suffered casualties. According to an

The war memorial was built in the memory of those who were killed in action after India's

Independence. In the 'Galwan clash' of June 15, 2020, 20 Indian soldiers died even as the Chinese never made their casualties public

American intelligence report, the number of casualties on the Chinese side was 35 The Galwan Valley clash had escalated the border row in eastern Ladakh and resulted in a large deployment of troops and heavy weaponry by both the armies at the friction points.

Some of these soldiers are also likely to be honoured with gallantry awards on the Republic Day. The Chinese soldiers used stones.

nail-studded sticks, iron rods and clubs in carrying out brutal attacks on Indian soldiers after they protested the erection of a surveillance post by China around patrolling point 14 in Galwan Valley. The Indian Army has already

built a memorial for the 'Gallants of Galwan' at Post 120 in eastern Ladakh. The memorial mentioned their heroics under operation 'Snow Leopard' and the way they evicted the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops from the area while inflicting "heavy casualties" on them. During a visit to Lukung forward post in eastern Ladakh on July 17 last year. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had personally conveyed his appreciation and compliments to the troops from the Bihar regiment for displaying exemplary grit and courage in fighting the Chinese troops. India and China are locked in a bitter military standoff in eastern Ladakh for over eight months

Nearly 50,000 troops of the Indian Army are currently deployed in a high state of combat readiness in the mountainous region in subzero temperatures as multiple rounds of talks between the two sides have not yielded concrete outcome to resolve the standoff. China has also deployed an equal number of troops, according to officials.

Last month, India and China had held another round of diplomatic talks under the framework of Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on India-China border af-

# **STRICT VIGIL**

A CISF officer gives instructions to his fellows for tight security arrangements at Taj Mahal ahead of the Republic Day,

## Loss of smell most relevant sign of Covid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 20: Loss of smell may be the best predictor of COVID-19 among patients with symptoms of respiratory diseases, according to new research.

The findings of two new international studies, published in the journal Chemical Senses, show that there is frequent loss of smell in COVID-19 patients which often lasts for a long time. Over 4,500 COVID-19 patients from a total of 23 nationalities responded to the researchers' questionnaire.

The studies found that the average loss of the sense of smell was 79.7 on a scale from 0-100, indicating a large to complete sensory loss. "This emphasises how important it is to be aware of this symptom, as it may be the



only symptom of the disease," said Alexander Wieck Fjaeldstad from Aarhus University in Denmark.

The research found that only around half of patients with a loss of smell got their sense of smell back after forty days. "This differs from the picture we see with other viral infections and causes long-term discomfort for patients,

both in relation to food and social contact, while at the same time causing them worry," Fjaeldstad The researchers also found

that the sense of taste was also significantly reduced, to 69.0 on a scale from 0-100, adding the remaining sense of feeling in the mouth was also reduced to 37.3 on a scale from 0-100. The study is of interest both

to patients suffering sensory loss as well as clinicians and researchers who work with diagnostics and following-up on COVID-19, the researchers said

Previously, researchers have based the correlation between COVID-19 and the loss of the chemical senses on smaller studies.. The new studies collected large amounts of data from countries all over the world

# After vaccine diplomacy, India rises to supply rice to the world

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 20: India is rapidly turning out to be the most crucial supplier of rice in the world. Supply of the staple cereal from other major rice exporting economies including Thailand and Vietnam fell sharply in 2020, due to reduced production after floods and droughts ravaged those countries. Besides, compared to the Indian rice, the price of the grain supplied by Thailand and Vietnam is almost \$100 to \$150 higher per tonne.

A stronger Thai Baht has also become a cause for concern for many rice exporters in the southeast Asian country.

Not just Thailand, according to Worldstopexports, a data collation portal, Vietnam's rice exports declined by 48.6 per cent, Pakistan's 36.9 per cent.

India has started supplying broken rice to several new markets including China, Vietnam, Malaysia besides Bangladesh besides increasing the quantum to its existing markets. The price sensitive African countries have also increased their rice orders from India, as its role in maintaining global food security becomes more pronounced.

India has already exported about 7 million tonnes of non-basmati rice in the April-November period. a jump of 123 per cent. According to the All India Rice Exporters Association (AIREA) the total exports of broken rice could touch 10 million tonne in 2020-21. The export of basmati rice, which is pri-



marily directed towards Europe, US and the middle-eastern countries, witnessed a jump of 71 per cent.

"We expect the year 2021 to be very good for the rice exporters of the country with higher production and competitive pricing," Vinod Kaul, executive director, All India

Rice Exporters' Association told IndiaNarrative.com

Kaul added that with increased rice production, India has sufficient stocks to meet domestic demands including the quantum required for the public distribution system (PDS) and expand its shipment to all other importing coun-

According to Bangkok Post, rice exports in 2021 "are expected to slightly recover from an expected 5.8 million tonnes in 2020, which was the lowest in 20 years." Typically rice from Thailand is priced at about \$400-\$450 per tonne while India exports the grain at about \$300 per tonne.

"Rice exports remain gloomy this year, as consumers worldwide are likely to opt to save their money and buy rice at cheaper prices," the newspaper quoted Chookiat Ophaswongse, honorary president of the Thai Rice Exporters Association, as saving,

Sources said that Indian rice exporters are ready to meet additional demand which may arise as many countries have resorted to increased imports of the grain as uncertainty related to the Coronavirus pandemic remains despite the ongoing vaccination drive. India's rice reaches China.

Despite political tensions between India and China, Beijing, which imports about 4 million tonnes of rice every year, has placed an import order for 100,000 tonnes at around \$300 per tonne. The dragon has traditionally imported rice from Thailand. Vietnam, Malaysia, Pakistan among other countries but avoided shipment from India.

A CNBC report said that for twothirds of people living in China, rice is the staple food. "The country is running out of rice, and they arelooking at India to meet this demand," it said.

# national



governments in both the state and Centre have been executing several developmental works in Goa. Few projects will be completed in the next few days

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CHIEF MINISTER

#### **NEXT WET SPELL LIKELY IN** J&K, LADAKH FROM FRIDAY

Minimum temperatures remained several notches below the freezing point in the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh on Wednesday as the weather office forecast another wet spell beginning January 22





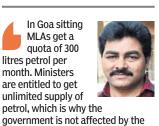
is the Chief Minister for the last 16 years. He is also in charge of

Department, but is unable to prevent crimes in Bihar CHIRAG PASWAN LOK JANSHAKTI PARTY

Distressed to

learn about the loss of lives in a tragic road accident in Dhupguri, West Bengal. In this hour of grief, my thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved families. I wish speedy recovery for the injured

RAM NATH KOVIND PRESIDENT



KIRAN KANDOLKAR | WORKING PRESIDENT OF

#### SHORT TAKES

#### 30 kg IED recovered

Dantewada: A powerful 30 kg improvised Explosive device (IED) planted by Naxals was recovered in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district on Wednesday, police said. A team from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) unearthed the explosive, which was packed in a big plastic container, on the under-construction Aranpur-Nilawaya Road in Aranpur police station area, an official said. This is the same route where three policemen and a Doordarshan cameraman were killed in a Naxal ambush in 2018.

#### **Sex racket busted** in Mumbai

Mumbai: Police have busted a high-profile flesh trade racket at a plush hotel in Mumbai and rescued eight models from there, an official said Wednesday Acting on a specific information, the police's Crime Intelligence Unit conducted a raid on the hotel located near the Juhu heach in western suburbs Tuesday, he said. During the raid, the police rescued eight models who were being forced into prostitution, the official said. The police also arrested three persons for allegedly pushing the models into flesh trade, he said.

#### Rape victim critical

Bhopal: A 17-year-old victim of rape, a case in which the accused is an elderly newspaper owner, allegedly took an overdose of sleeping pills at a shelter home here and has been admitted to hospital where her condition is very critical, said a senior police official Wednesday. The girl has been admitted to Government Hamidia Hospital here and her condition is very critical, said Bhopal Police range Inspector General (IG) Upendra Jain.

#### BSF on alert

Jammu: The BSF is fully alert to thwart any misadventure by Pakistan along the borders of the country, the force's Special Director General, Western Command, Surender Panwar said Wednesday. He was speaking at a civil action programme organised by the BSF at Makwal village near the International Border here as part of the force's efforts to assist the border population and foster a close bond with them.

# **India starts COVID** vaccine shipments to its neighbours



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 20: Bhutan and Maldives Wednesday became the first two countries to receive COVID-19 vaccines sent by India in sync with its 'neighbourhood first' policy.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar shared on Twitter photos of the consignments reaching the two countries. On Tuesday, India had said it would send COVID-19 vaccines under grant assistance to Bhutan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Seychelles from Wednesday.

The supplies to Sri Lanka. Afghanistan and Mauritius will commence after confirmation of necessary regulatory clearances. It is learnt that 1,50,000 doses of Covisheild vaccine, manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII), were sent to Bhutan and 1,00,000 doses reached Maldives as part of India's grant assistance. "Indian vaccines reach Maldives, reflects our special friendship,' Jaishankar tweeted along with a photograph of the consignments. '#VaccineMaitri begins. Consignment arrives in Bhutan. example #NeighbourhoodFirst," he said in another tweet. India is one of the world's biggest drugmakers, and

#### **Healthcare worker dies** hours after getting jab

Hyderabad: A healthcare worker in Telangana, who was vaccinated for Covid-19 Tuesday, died Wednesday but authorities said the death seems unrelated to the vaccine. Director of Public Health and Family Welfare, Dr G. Srinivas Rao, said that the healthcare worker was given the jab of Covid vaccine Tuesday at around 11.30 a.m. at Kuntala Primary Health Centre. This is the first death to be reported in Telangana since the countrywide vaccination programme for public healthcare workers began January 16.

an increasing number of countries have already approached it for procuring coronavirus vaccines. The Ministry of External Affairs had said on Tuesday that India would supply COVID-19 vaccines to partner countries over the coming weeks and months in a phased manner, keeping in view the domestic requirements. India has already rolled out a massive coronavirus vaccination drive under which two vaccines. Covishield and Covaxin, are being administered to frontline health workers across the country. While Oxford-AstraZeneca's Covishield is being manufactured by the Serum Institute, Covaxin is being produced by Bharat Biotech.

The MEA said it will be ensured that domestic manufacturers have adequate stocks to meet the country's requirements while supply-

New Delhi, Jan 20 :India and Singapore signed a strategic partnership agreement Monday, under which both the countries' navies will support and cooperate with each other for submarine rescue

It is one of the major steps taken by the Indian government to strengthen ties with South East/Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries.

The decision was taken during a defence ministerial dialogue in the national capital. Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh co-chaired the fifth India-Singapore Defence Ministers' Dialogue along with Ng Eng Hen, Minister for Defence. Singapore. During their virtual interaction, both ministers expressed satisfaction at the progress of the



India, S'pore ink submarine rescue pact

ongoing defence cooperation engagements between the two countries despite limitations imposed by

the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Defence and security engage ments between India and Singapore have broadened significantly in scale and scope across all three services of the armed forces as well as in the areas of defence technology and industry. Both countries have also found common ground on multilateral for a and engagements.

The ministers witnessed the signing of the Implementing Agreement on Submarine Rescue Support and Cooperation between the Indian Navy and the Singapore Navy.

They also conveyed their full support towards the early conclusion of agreements to facilitate the conduct of live firings and to establish reciprocal arrangements for the cross-attendance of military courses. Singh conveyed his compliments on the effectiveness of

pandemic mitigation measures implemented in Singapore and the contribution of Singapore's armed forces in restricting the spread of Covid-19. He also highlighted the role of the Indian armed forces in combating Covid-19 and various missions undertaken to assist in repatriation of Indians stranded overseas. Hen reciprocated the compliments and exchanged views on the role of the armed forces in the whole of government's approach towards controlling the pandemic.

Both ministers also expressed satisfaction at the growing defence ties between the two countries. Both sides reviewed the progress of various bilateral defence cooperation initiatives being pursued over the last year and expressed commitment to further elevate the scale of engagement in areas of defence technology and industry.

#### **HIDDEN TALENT**



A Nihang shows his skills during ongoing farmers' protest against at Ghazipur border in New Delhi



## Scenes snipped from Tandav, but trouble continues with more FIRs

Mumbai. Jan 20: At least two scenes were removed from the controversial web series "Tandav", which found itself in more trouble Wednesday with an FIR against its makers, this time in Madhya Pradesh, and threats of another in Maharashtra

A scene of a play and a conversation between two key characters were snipped from the first episode "Tanashah", a day after the cast and crew of the nine-part starry political saga on Amazon Prime Video once again apologised and said they had decided to implement changes to address the concerns raised. At the centre of the row over the show, which has hit the national headlines with calls for boycotts, FIRs and protests over its alleged depiction of Hindu deities, was a scene with Zeeshan Ayyub in the role of college student Shiva playing the Hindu god Mahadeva (another name for Lord Shiva) in a play. A conversation between Lord



Shiva and Narad Muni in the the-

atre production raised hackles. That scene has gone. Viewers now see Zeeshan's entry on stage as Mahadev amid cheers from the audience and the scene then abruptly shifts to police entering the campus to arrest a student.

Also gone is a conversation depicting prime minister Devki Nandan Singh, played by Tigmanshu Dhulia, insulting Dalit leader Kailash Kumar, enacted by Anup Soni. There have been other changes in the series as well. A dialogue referencing caste between Soni's character and

Sandhya Mridul's Sandhya has been shortened. Notwithstanding the cuts, the show, directed by Ali Abbas Zafar and starring Bollywood Alisters Saif Ali Khan, Dimple Kapadia and Mohd Zeeshan Ayyub,

sank into more trouble Mumbai Police registered an FIR against the makers and cast based on a complaint lodged by BJP MLA Ram Kadam. It named the actors, including Saif and Zeeshan, as well as the director, producer, writer. Amazon's Purohit and Amazon India head Amit Agarwal,

#### **BUNDELKHAND FARMERS OPT** FOR NON-CONVENTIONAL CROPS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Jan 20: After the success story of strawberry cultivation in Bundelkhand region, more and more farmers in this region are opting for non-conventional

crops, mainly fruits. Farmers, with the

help of agricultural experts going in for fruits, that have a lot of medicinal value and can be grown in the prevailing climatic conditions Bundelkhand.

Ginger, turmeric, kundru (Coccinia grandis), pointed gourd and aloe vera are some of the varieties which have a good yield, besides have considerable medicinal properties. "With the Corona pandemic, the food habits of people are changing. More and more people are opting for healthy food and spices that have me-

dicinal advantages too. In such a situation, cultivation of such items is bound to be economically feasible too," said Dhanrai Patel, a farmer in Banda dis-

fruit crops including bel, falsa, Indian gooseberry, Buchanania lanzan (chironji), custard apple and fig.

Chief minister Yogi Adityanath, while inaugurating the recent strawberry festival. assured the farmers that the government would take quick re-

medial measures regarding irrigation and to solve the stray cattle problem for which projects

have already been rolled down. According to agriculture experts, the soil of Bundelkhand region is free from pesticides which makes it more appropriate for growing medicinal plants.

cine if you have been infected with

COVID-19 but if it has happened

recently say like 7-10 days then one

should wait and take the jab after

also gave a powerpoint presenta-

tion on the topic "Infectious Diseases:

Emergencies and Challenges Ahead"

and said "bio-terrorism" is an up-

coming challenge. He said densely

populated countries like India "pro-

vide an opportunity" for the out-

break of infectious disease emer-

gencies as it is coupled with the

Before replying to queries, Guleria

may be 4-6 weeks," he said.

## **CORRUPTION CASE**

#### **CBI** arrests its own DSP, Inspector

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 20: The CBI has arrested its own DSP RK Rishi, Inspector Kapil Dhankad and advocate Manohar Malik in connection with a corruption case, an official said Wednesday.

A Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) source related to the development told IANS: 'The agency arrested Rishi, Dhankad and Malik Tuesday.

The source said that the CBI follows a policy of zero-tolerance towards corruption.

Earlier in the day, the CBI carried out searches at two places in Uttar Pradesh's Roorkee and Saharanpur that are linked to Deputy Superintendent of Police

The source said that multiple CBI teams searched the residential premises of Rishi in Roorkee and Saharanpur's Deoband.

The CBI has also registered a corruption case against four of its officials and a few private per-

In the FIR, the CBI alleged that the four officials booked for corruption had received bribes to extend favours to at least two pri-

vate companies under probe for

#### **TRP SCAM**

#### **NO BAIL FOR DASGUPTA**



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 20: A sessions court in Mumbai Wednesday rejected the bail application of former CEO of ratings agency BARC, Partho Dasgupta, an accused in the alleged fake Television Ratings Point (TRP) case.

Dasgupta was arrested by the Mumbai crime branch from Pune district last month. A magistrate court had earlier rejected his bail plea, observing that he played a vital role in the scam.

Opposing Dasgupta's bail application in the sessions court, special public prosecutor Shishir Hiray submitted that although the charge-sheet in the case has been filed, there still are multiple things which need to be investigated. He argued that Dasgupta is a key person and holds sizeable control over the entire system, hence his release will amount to tampering with the prosecution witnesses, who work under him. The special public prosecutor

also drew the court's attention towards the purported WhatsApp chat between Dasgupta and Republic TV's Arnab Goswami. "We have shown to the court the WhatsApp chat regarding the TRPs in which Dasgupta promised to take down some other channels and put Arnab's channel on the higher position," he said.

#### **FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19**

# Nasal vaccine will be easy to give to kids: AIIMS director

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 20: A nasal COVID-19 vaccine will be easy to give to school-going children who bear a "very mild" load of the disease but they are infectious, AIIMS Director Randeep Guleria said Wednesday.

The noted pulmonologist, who was interacting with the personnel of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) during their 16th Raising Day celebrations here, also said that people who have contracted coronavirus should also get the jab about 4-6 weeks after recovery. "It (coronavirus infection) is very mild in children but they are infectious. They can spread

The vaccines that have come are not approved for children because there have been no studies conducted on children but this (vaccination) is a very important step

and trials are being done," he said. Once children start going to the school regularly and they contract the COVID-19 infection, they will not have much problem but if they bring it home they can spread it to their parents or grandparents, the chief of the premier Delhi-based All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) said.

Vaccines for children may come later. Bharat Biotech is trying to get approved a nasal vaccine. Such a vaccine will be very easy to be given to children as it is a spray and not a jab and hence compliance is more." "In half-an-hour you can vaccinate an entire class. So, if that (nasal vaccine) is approved it will be even easier to give the vaccine (for COVID-19)," Guleria said in reply to a question.

He was also asked by the NDRF personnel if a person who has recovered from COVID-19 should get



vaccinated with India commissioning two vaccines last week. "A vaccine jab is essential for them (recovered from coronavirus) due

"One is you are not sure how strong is your post COVID-19 immunity and it has been seen quite a few times that those who had a mild to moderate infection their anti-body response has been less and we also don't know how long will it be," he said. A vaccine will be 'beneficial" for such an individual as it will act as a "booster" and if antibodies are depleting, with the vaccine it will be back to a high level. he said. "So, you should get the vac-

phenomenon of crowding and urbanisation.

World Health Organisation (WHO) chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan also addressed the personnel of the central force through an online link and said a good digital surveillance system should be in place to better deal with public health emergencies.

# international



We've had the greatest moment of liberation leaving the EU, which I have campaigned for over 25 years. We rebuild now, aim to do things on our own and stand up for ourselves and have a really strong **Global Britain position out there** PRITI PATEL | HOME SECRETARY, UK

#### **GREEK PARL SET TO EXTEND WESTERN COASTAL WATERS**

Lawmakers in Greece are set to approve legislation to extend the country's territorial waters along its western coastline from six to 12 nautical miles. Opposition parties say they will vote with the center-right government or abstain in the vote



A higher-thanusual number of possible were reported with a specific lot of administered at one community vaccination clinic. Fewer than 10 individuals required medical

ERICA PAN STATE EPIDEMIOLOGIST,

Our thinking that Covid-19 is more of respiratory disease is not necessarily true. Once it infects the brain it can affect anything because the brain is controlling your lungs, the heart,

MUKESH KUMAR ASST PROFESSOR GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY, US

everything

China is clearly ou important strategic said, we need to work with allies. We

also need to strengthen our own economy so that we can compete

#### SHORT TAKES

#### Six suspected militants killed

Moscow: Chechnya's Kremlin-backed leader said Wednesday that his forces have killed six suspected militants, including a warlord accused of organizing a 2011 suicide attack at a Moscow airport. Ramzan Kadyrov, the regional leader of Chechnya, said that troops under his command had tracked down the suspects in the village of Katar-Yurt and killed all of them on the spot. Kadyrov claimed that the raid marked the elimination of the last group of militants that remained in the region.

#### Italy ponders suing Pfizer

Rome: Italy's virus czar is pressing ahead with plans to take legal action against Pfizer after the US pharmaceutical company announced delays in delivering pre-ordered Covid-19 vaccines to Europe. Domenico Arcuri said he had secured unanimous backing from Italy's regional governors to take civil or criminal action, where possible. In a statement late Tuesday, he said: "It was unanimously decided that such action will be taken in the coming days.

#### Zimbabwe's FM dies of Covid-19

Harare: Zimbabwe's Foreign Minister Sibusiso Moyo, who gained prominence in 2017 as the military general who announced the coup against then-president Robert Mugabe on television, has died from COVID-19, the government announced Wednesday. He was 61. Moyo, previously little known to the public, became the face of the coup when he announced that the military had placed Mugabe under house arrest as the military's armoured vehicles rolled into the capital, Harare.

#### **Conte works to** cement majority

Rome: Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte worked to solidify his majority in parliament Wednesday after narrowly winning a Senate confidence vote after a junior coalition ally yanked his support over Conte's handling of the coronavirus pandemic. Conte was expected to brief President Sergio Mattarella on his prospects to keep governing, though the timing was uncertain.

# FROM THE CAPITOL



President-elect Joe Biden bumps fists with former President



Lady Gaga sings the National Anthem



Joe Biden being sworn in as the 46th President of the United States on the West Front of the Capitol



Biden and Kamala Harris during the inauguration ceremony



Jennifer Lopez sings to Vice President Kamala Harris



Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner (R) at the departure ceremony of outgoing President Donald Trump, at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland

# In historic rite, Biden, Harris sworn-in to lead United States

New York, Jan 20: Joe Biden was sworn-in as President and Kamala Harris as Vice President in a historic ceremony to take the leadership of a nation ravaged by the Covid-19 pandemic and riven by deep political hostility.

The daughter of Sh Gopalan became the first Indian American, the first woman, and the first African American to be sworn in as the Vice President, putting her a heartbeat away from the presidency.

Biden declared after being swearing in, "Democracy has prevailed." Before Biden, Harris took the

oath of office on two Bibles held by her husband Doug Emhoff, one of them that belonged to Regina Helton, whom she has called her "second mother" and another belonged to Thurgood Marshall, the first African American Supreme Court Justice. She was sworn-in by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the first Latina to serve on the court

Next, Biden swore on a hefty family bible that his wife Jill Biden held. Chief Justice John Roberts gave him the oath of office. At the stroke of noon, they assume the Presidency and Vice Presidency

as mandated by the Constitution. Donald Trump, who boycotted the ceremony, had already left Washington for his new home in



Biden swore on a hefty family bible that his wife Jill Biden held, while Harris took the oath of office on two bibles held by her husband **Doug Emhoff** 

Florida. Two weeks after a mob of Trump supporters had attacked the Capitol, they stood on its west frontage to be sworn-in.

The 25,000 National Guard called in to protect them ceremony outnumbered the guests. Unlike in the past, people were kept away because of the Covid-19 crisis and security considerations.

In Biden's speech that lasted for 21 minutes, he praised Americans for rising to the challenge and reclaiming democracy. He mentioned the attempt to undo it at that exact location two weeks ago, and renewed his campaign goals of overcoming the pandemic, bringing racial justice and fighting climate

Biden also criticised those who have stoked anger and division, and asked those who opposed him to "hear me out." He called out those who lie for political power and profit. "There is truth, and there are lies," he added.

In a message to the international community, Biden said that he would rebuild the alliances frayed over the past four years. "We can make America once again the leading force of good in the world."

Meanwhile, "ready to serve," Kamala Harris said soon after she was sworn-in as America's first woman Vice President. Harris, the daughter of an Indian immigrant from Chennai, scripted history by becoming the first-ever woman Vice President of the United States. She is also the first female, first Black and first South Asian American vice president.

In 2003, Harris won her first race for San Francisco district attorney, becoming the first Black woman to hold such an office in California. In 2010, she became the first Black woman elected as California attorney general, and in 2016, she became only the second Black woman ever elected as a

#### **Trump pardons former Google engineer who** stole trade secrets

AGENCIES

San Francisco, Jan 20: Outgoing US President Donald Trump Wednesday granted a full pardon to former Google engineer Anthony Levandowski, who was convicted of stealing trade secrets.

Levandowski worked for Google's self-driving car unit which is now called Waymo. He later founded a self-driving truck company called Otto that was acquired by Uber.

The engineer was among 73 individuals who were granted pardon by Trump, who also commuted the sentences of an additional 70 individuals.

"My family and I are grateful for the opportunity to move forward, and thankful to the President and others who supported and advocated on my behalf," Levandowski said in a tweet Wednesday.

In August last year, Levandowski was sentenced to 18 months in prison for stealing trade secrets.

US District Judge in San Francisco, William Alsup, said that home confinement would "(give) a green light to everv future brilliant engineer to steal trade secrets. Prison time is the answer to that", according to a report in TechCrunch Levandowski also agreed to

pay \$756,499.22 in restitution to Google's self-driving car unit Waymo and a fine of \$95,000, said

## Experts critical of WH after record Covid-19 deaths

*Never before in the recent* century has an American President witnessed such a tragic loss of lives. The number is fast approaching the 4,05,000 US fatalities during World War II and the pandemic

is among the deadliest

events in the country

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washinton, Jan 20: The Trump administration's incompetence in handling Covid-19 has drawn harsh criticism from the academia as the country's death toll from the disease topped another chilling mark of 4,00,000 on Tuesday.

Never before in the recent century has an American President witnessed such a tragic loss of lives. The number is fast anproaching the 4,05,000 US fatalities during World War II and the pandemic is among the deadliest events in the country. The 1918 flu pandemic killed 6,75,000 Americans and at least 50 million worldwide, the Xinhua news agency reported.

'What's so troubling about this



loss of life is it was preventable," but "we did not mount a response to wage war against this virus," said Steven Woolf, director emeritus of the Center on Society and Health at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Thomas Whalen, an associate professor at Boston University and an expert on the American presidency, launched a more scathing attack on the President, saying Donald Trump repeatedly downplayed the public severity of the pathogen.

"He knew this was a threat and really did not do what was necessary to respond to it in a thoughtful and resourceful way," Whalen said of Trump.

Surging infections in the North American country still show no sign of abating, averaging more than 2,30,000 new confirmed cases and 3,000 deaths per day in

# China silent on why its top leaders are yet to take a jab

#### Dozens of new cases recorded

BEIJING: China's capital Beijing recorded another seven coronavirus cases on Wednesday amid a lingering outbreak in the country's north. Another 46 were recorded in Jilin province, 16 in Heilongjiang on the border with Russia and 19 in Hebei, the province surrounding Beijing. China has now recorded a total of 88,557 cases since the virus was first detected in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019, with 4,635 deaths. China is hoping to vaccinate 50 million people against the virus by mid-February and is also releasing schools early and telling citizens to stay put during the Lunar New Year travel rush that begins in coming days. A panel of experts commissioned by the World Health Organisation criticised China and other countries this week for not moving to stem the initial outbreak of the coronavirus earlier, prompting Beijing to concede it could have done better but also to defend its response

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Jan 20: China Wednesday boasted that several world leaders have taken its Covid-19 vaccines, but remained silent on why the top Chinese leaders are yet to take the shot.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying in her daily media briefing here named leaders of several countries who have taken one of the two Covid-19 vaccines made in China, publicly reposing their faith in them.

Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Seychelles President Wavel Ramkalawan. leaders of the UAE, Bahrain,



Egypt and Indonesia have been publicly inoculated with Chinese vaccines, she said.

"China has started the inoculation of the vaccines in key groups. We will also carry out

vaccination for all Chinese citizens for free. All people that meet the conditions should be vaccinated in an orderly manner." she said.

Responding to a query

whether top Chinese leaders including President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Keqiang and others have taken the jabs, she said: "As for the specific question you asked, I have no answer at this moment.

'Vaccine is our silver bullet for epidemic prevention and for our ultimate victory against the virus," she said.

China has launched massive vaccine diplomacy even as it approved only one of its four vaccines, Sinopharm for emergency use. Its other vaccines ike Sinovac and CoronaVac have made their way abroad and are being used while they are

undergoing the trial process. Back home, China has launched the free vaccination drive for all its 1.4 billion people starting with key groups. Over 10 million people have been inoculated in the country. The ruling Communist Party leadership and the party cadre are yet to get vaccinated.

Asked whether the World Health Organisation (WHO) has granted emergency approval for its vaccines and will it distribute them through COVAX, the international vaccine alliance, Hua said, "as I understand the relevant companies are in communication with the WHO."

"They are also discussing concrete cooperation for being included in the emergency list of

the WHO," she said.

# business



**Technology plays a key** role in the sector's growth. The logistics division has created a platform for the electronic exchange of documents and messages and we are in the process of using it on a pilot basis before we roll out on an all India basis PAWAN AGARWAL | SPECIAL SECRETARY (LOGISTICS)

#### **NETFLIX SURPASSES** 200MN PAID USERS

Paid subscribers for Netflix surpassed the 200 million mark in 2020 as Covid-19 restrictions helped it to gain viewership, the streaming giant has said. The numbers were revealed Tuesday as Netflix reported its O4 results which saw an addition of over 8.5mn paid subscribers to the platform





The NHAI's financial status is in a good shape, and the country's toll revenue, which is ₹34.000 crore per

NITIN GADKARI UNION MINISTER

We formally launched Snowflake on Amazon Web Services in Mumbai in May 2020 and that

was a big milestone for us where we were able to offer Snowflake locally, which means customers, could now enjoy our services while data residing in India

VIMAL VENKATRAM | COUNTRY MANAGER, SNOWFLAKE INDIA



industry. For the steel industry like ours where there is a dominance of blast furnaces, the only way to substantially reduce associated CO2 emissions is to transit towards CCS and CCU

RASIKA CHAUBE | ADDITIONAL SECY (STEEL)

#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### Mohanty becomes new MD of LIC

Bhubaneswar: In a matter of pride for Odisha, Siddhartha Mohanty has been appointed as the MD of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC). He will be resuming duty from February 1, 2021. Mohanty, who is currently serving as the CEO of LIC Housing Finance, will replace TC Suseel Kumar as the MD of LIC. Suseel is set to retire, January 31. The government of India has released a notification in this regard.

#### Naver to acquire **Wattpad for \$600mn**

New Delhi: South Korea's Naver will buy Toronto-based storytelling platform Wattpad (around ₹4,377 crore). The Board of Directors of Wattpad - which has 90 million users globally including in India Wednesday announced its unanimous approval of a definitive agreement to be acquired by Naver. "Naver is expected to acquire Wattpad in a cash and stock transaction valued at more than an estimated \$600 million, subject to customary adjustments and other terms," a statement said.

#### **CCI** approves **Axis-Max Life deal**

.....

New Delhi: Fair trade regulator Competition Commission of India (CCI) Wednesday said it has approved the stake acquisition in Max Life Insurance Company by Axis Bank, Axis Capital and Axis Securities. As per the combination notice filed with CCI, the shareholding of Axis Bank in Max Life will increase to approximately 9.9 per cent. Currently, the bank holds about 1% stake in Max Life.

#### 'Build consensus on farm laws'

**Hyderabad:** The NDA government which is facing the heat from a section of farmers over new Agri laws, needs to build a consensus among people through discussions, former deputy chairman of erstwhile Planning Commission Montek Singh Ahluwalia said here Wednesday. In an interactive session with former RBI Governor D Subbarao. organised by Manthan virtually, he said the rising fiscal deficit of the country due to Covid-19 is one of the major concerns and it cannot be allowed to continue.

# 'Insurers to withstand pandemic-led downturn'

The report said that

premium growth has

been in the positive

territory due to the

general insurance

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 20: Indian insurance companies are likely to withstand the economic downturn exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic, with general insurance premium growth in positive territory, Moody's Investors Service report has said.

The report said that general insurance premium growth has been in the positive territory due to the persistent strong sales of health and protection cover.

It noted that resilient sales of health and protection policies reflected the rising consumer aware-

POST NEWS NETWORK

Wednesday.

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Odisha

dropped two ranks from its previ-

ous position among the top ranking

'maior state' in Niti Aayog's sec-

ond edition of India Innovation

Index 2020 that ranks different

states based on how they supported

innovation and disruptive tech-

nologies. Odisha was ranked 14 in

this index that was released

Innovation Index released in 2019,

Odisha was positioned at 12th po-

sition, but now it has dropped by two

In the 'Major States' category,

Karnataka continued to occupy

the top position, while Maharashtra

moved past Tamil Nadu to reach the

second place. Telangana, Kerala,

Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat,

Uttar Pradesh and Punjab com-

pleted the top ten in that order.

Karnataka's rank is attributable

to its substantive number of ven-

ture capital deals, registered geo-

graphical indicators and informa-

tion and communications

Karnataka's high Foreign Direct

Investment (FDI) inflow has also en-

hanced the innovation capabilities

of the state. Four southern states—

Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana

technology exports.

ranks with a score of 18.94.

Earlier in the first edition of



tor's actions in enabling the in-

surers to offer protection against

**INNOVATION INDEX 2020** 

Odisha drops by two ranks to 14

and Kerala—occupied the top five

spots under the 'Major States' cat-

Among the Union Territories,

Delhi retained its first rank, while

Chandigarh made a big leap since

2019 and landed in the second place

this year. Under the 'North-

Eastern/Hill States' category,

Himachal Pradesh moved up from

the second position to emerge as the

top ranker this year, while 2019's top

performer (in this category), Sikkim,

slipped down to the fourth posi-

In the second edition too, the

index found that the level of com-

petitiveness among the states and

egory this year.

ness about these products during the pandemic, as well as regularapidly developed their digital of-

THE INNOVATION INPUTS WERE MEASURED THROUGH FIVE ENABLER

PARAMETERS, AND THE OUTPUT THROUGH TWO PERFORMANCE

persistent strong sales of health and protection cover The Indian insurers have also

ferings during the pandemic, the report added.

Mohammed Ali Londe, Moody's

Odisha was ranked

was released

Wednesday

■ Earlier in the

first edition, the

was ranked 12

Among the UTs,

union territories was high, which

is essential for them to continu-

ally improve on their enabling fac-

tors as well as innovation per-

The innovation inputs were

measured through five enabler

parameters, and the output

through two performance pa-

rameters. While 'Human Capital',

'Investment', 'Knowledge

Workers', 'Business Environment',

'Safety and Legal Environment'

were identified as enabler pa-

rameters, 'Knowledge Output'

and 'Knowledge Diffusion 'were

chosen as the performance

formance, year by year.

mineral-rich state

Delhi retained its

Chandigarh made a

big leap since 2019

first rank, while

14 in this index that

Vice President and Senior Analyst, said: "Although the economic slowdown had had an adverse impact on the Indian insurers, with general insurance growth slowing to 2.5 per cent and life insurers' new business premiums falling by 1.7 per cent in the nine months till December 2020, we expect general insurance premium growth

coverage. Over the longer term, the industry may benefit as the central government injects capital into publicly owned insurers, and as pri-

to remain in the positive terri-

tory due to persistently strong

demand for health and protection

vate insurers reinforce their solvency through a combination of raising of capital and M&A, the report said.

Moody's has said that India's real GDP may contract by 10.6 per cent in FY21.

"We expect general insurance premium growth to remain in positive territory. Persistently strong demand for health and protection coverage will support general and life insurance premiums." it said.

Health premiums rose 13.7 per cent in the fiscal's nine months up to December 2020, supporting general insurance premium growth.

#### Sensex closing in on 50K-mark, ends on a new high

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Jan 20: The Indian equity indices continued their upward journey for second consecutive day Wednesday with key indices closing at record highs. The S&P BSE Sensex closed in on the 50,000-mark, hitting an intraday high of 49,874 points, just 126 points short.



Market analysts cited positive global cues, healthy quarterly results and slow-but-sustained FII inflows as the factors for indices' rise.

Globally, shares were mostly higher ahead of Joe Biden's inauguration as US President on Wednesday.

On the domestic front, sustained FII inflows and strong corporate earnings kept the sentiments high. Among sectors, auto, IT, PSU banks and media rose the most while FMCG ended marginally in the negative.

Besides, rise in the shares of index-heavyweight Reliance Industries (RIL) also supported the Sensex. Its shares closed at ₹2,054.85, higher by ₹38.55, or 1.91 per cent, from its previous close.

Consequently, Sensex ended at its record closing level of 49,792.12, higher by 393.83 points, or 0.80 per cent, from its previous close of 49,398.29. The Nifty50 too settled at new closing high of 14,644.70, higher by 123.55 points, or 0.85 per cent, from its previous close.

all expenditure requirements. An additional borrowing limit of 2 per cent over and above 3 per cent of gross state domestic product (GSDP) already allowed had been provided to states. This has already pushed up debt burden on states.

states, which account for 90 per cent of aggregate gross state domestic product (GSDP), indicates

Says Manish Gupta, Senior Director, CRISIL Ratings Ltd, "Composition of GFD, apart from its level, is one of the critical indicators of credit quality of states. Higher contribution of capex in a state's GFD composition is viewed positively as it supports capital formation, which improves the state's tax potential.

In its pre-budget memorandum

submitted to Finance Minister

Nirmala Sitharaman last month,

Finance Industry Development

Council (FIDC) said bank funding

of small and medium NBFCs has

## Fiscal deficit of states to hit peak of ₹ 8.7L cr as tax collections slide

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 20: The Covid pandemic-induced lockdown and consequent slump in economic activity will hit tax collections of states and result in a near fourfold expansion in their revenue deficits this fiscal, year-on-year, ratings agency Crisil said in a re-

With this, the states' aggregate gross fiscal deficit (GFD) will not only get expanded to an all-time high of ₹8.7 lakh crore, or 4.7 per cent of GSDP, but also skew its composition towards revenue deficit which is relatively less value-accretive towards future tax potential, the report said.

Though tax collections are expected to improve slowly with improving economic outlook, higher interest burden because of high debt funding of this year's GFD, coupled with sticky revenue expenditures, may keep revenue deficits high for states and GFD composition skewed over the next 2-3 years. This will, in turn, increase the credit risk for states.

It may be noted that the Centre had already given extra leeway to

A CRISIL Ratings study of 18

# MCL produces 37.98 MT NBFCs SEEK CONTINUED of coal in Q3, FY'20-21

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: One of the leading coal producing companies Mahanadi Coalfields (MCL) ended its third quarter with total coal production of about 37.98 million tonne during current financial year.

The subsidiary of Coal India Limited fell short to achieve its target for third quarter. The company had set target to post about 47.42 million tonne of coal production during Q3 of current fiscal.

The company has also not met its monthly target during third quarter as well.

According to production data available at MCL's website, the company registered about 14.10 million tonne of coal production in the month of December, 2020. It has targeted to achieve 15.84 million tonne in same month. MCL produced 0.048 million tonne of coal from underground while 14.05 million tonne from opencast mining. In November, MCL produced

12.79 million tonne of coal from both underground and opencast mining while it has set target to achieve 15.98 million tonne. Similarly, the company produced 11.08 million tonne out its target of 15.60 million tonne in October.

According to media report, MCL has set target to achieve 173 million tonne of coal during current fiscal

According to sources the company expected to extract around 5 lakh tonne of coal per day and 15 MT coal in a month. Also a media report claimed that the coal producer has also set a target to produce 263 million tonne of coal by

# LIQUIDITY SUPPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 20: Non-banking finance companies expect the government to provide continued liguidity support by encouraging banks to lend more to the sector, setting up a permanent refinance window and relaxing external commercial borrowing norms in the

upcoming Budget. The government will present the Budget for fiscal 2021-22 February

To mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on NBFC sector, the government and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have announced various schemes such as the Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme (PCGS), Targeted Long-Term Repo Operations (TLTRO) and Special Liquidity Scheme (SLS).

"This budget is important because it will be the first budget



after the pandemic, which dragged the economy into contraction mode and has taken more than 1.5 lakh

lives so far in India. "The government and RBI took calculated measures which aided economic recovery. We expect similar policy momentum to prevail in the Union Budget FY22," IndoStar Capital's CEO and executive vice-

chairman R Sridhar said

been a challenge due to various reasons, especially during the last two years The tepid response to the TLTRO 2.0, which mandated banks to invest

at least 50 per cent of the stipulated amount in small and medium NBFCs, was a clear example of this. The need, therefore, is to reduce the over-reliance on banks and have a dedicated refinancing body," FIDC, a representative body of assets and loan financing NBFCs, had said in the memorandum.

It suggested allocating a fund dedicated to funding small and medium NBFCs to SIDBI and

#### Jharsuguda plant POST NEWS NETWORK Bhubaneswar, Jan 20: Vedanta

**Vedanta's Covid** 

vax held at

Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, rolled out the Covid vaccination program for its medical personnel and healthcare staff, organised in partnership with the District Health Administration of Jharsuguda, Odisha.

In the first phase, 125 pe from Vedanta's Occupational Health team will be vaccinated. Dy CEO (Aluminium Business),

Vedanta Ltd Rahul Sharma said, "The Odisha Government's rapid and firm response in dealing with the situation, from creation of COVID Hospitals in every district to implementing stringent public protocols, has been a superlative example in keeping the disease under control."

"The safety and health of our employees and business partners is our foremost priority. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Odisha, we have lent extensive support to the state government, district administrations of Jharsuguda and Kalahandi, and the local communities, reaching out to more than 10 lakh people in the process. We remain committed to the fight against COVID and keeping our employees and communities safe,' Sharma added

# 'Pandemic, surging food prices leave many in Asia hungry'

THE LATEST ESTIMATE IS THAT NEARLY 688 MILLION PEOPLE GLOBALLY ARE UNDERNOURISHED. MORE THAN HALF OF THEM IN ASIA

AGENCIES

United Nations, Jan 20: United Nations agencies are warning that more than 350 million people in the Asia-Pacific region are going hungry as the coronavirus pandemic destroys jobs and pushes food prices higher.

The report issued Wednesday by four agencies says the pandemic is making it difficult for 1.9 billion people to afford healthy diets. It follows an earlier report that forecast that in a worst case scenario that 828 million people might suffer from acute hunger because of

The latest estimate is that nearly 688 million people globally are undernourished, more than half of them in Asia. The largest share is in South Asian countries like

Afghanistan, where four in 10 people are malnourished.

The report is mostly based on data up to 2019, before the pandemic struck. But it also estimates that an additional 140 million people were likely to have fallen into extreme poverty in 2020 due to the impact of virus outbreaks and lockdowns.

By the end of last year, some 265 million were estimated to be facing acute food insecurity.

A key factor is food affordabilitv. a problem in wealthy nations like Japan as well as impoverished places like East Timor and Papua New Guinea, said the report issued by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, UNICEF, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organisation. Disruptions and job losses due

to the pandemic are preventing families from getting enough to eat in many places. That's evident

In India, broken supply chains and transport problems, especially during pandemic lockdowns, have in the long lines seen at food banks prevented surplus grain stocks from reaching all those in need.

Day labourers and migrants are betes but lack vitamins and minthe most vulnerable, despite a massive public distribution system that entitles 75% of the rural population and half of those living in cities to subsidised food grains.

Since eligibility for such programs is based on a census that is nearly a decade old, many urban poor and migrants cannot tap those resources.

Across Asia, high prices for fruits, vegetables and dairy products have made it "nearly impossible" for low income families to have healthy diets, the report said.

FAO data show food prices rose to their highest level in nearly six years in November.

Many in the region instead end up consuming high-calorie, cheap processed foods that contribute to problems with obesity and diaData in the report show that it

is more expensive to eat a healthy diet in Thailand, Laos, Bhutan and Indonesia, at about \$5 per day, than it is in New Zealand and Australia, at less than \$3 per day.

A nutritionally adequate diet tends to cost \$2 to \$3 per day in most countries, rich or poor, but is more expensive in Japan and South Korea. In most countries, the cost of a nutritious diet is two to three times that for a one just sufficient to provide enough energy.

The cost of long-term deprivation is seen in higher rates of death and illness. Tens of millions of children suffer from wasting or stunting, failing to grow well andunable to achieve their full



Forget India, the whole world will stand up and salute you: Shastri's rousing dressing room speech

# Guru praises Rahane & Co



Brisbane, Jan 20: There were smiles, lots of whistles and a round of applause to each other every few seconds as India coach Ravi Shastri got down to commending the 'courage, resolve and spirit' of his wounded warriors in a stirring dressing room speech after the conquest at the Gabba.

It was a little over three-minute speech that Shastri delivered after his injury-ravaged side chased down an imposing 328 in the fourth and final Test to hand Australia their first loss in 32 years at 'Fortress Gabba' to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in style.

'The courage, the resolve, the spirit, that you guys have shown is unreal. Not for once you were down, injuries, 36 all out (in the first Test), you had the self-belief in you," an

emotional Shastri said with captain Ajinkya Rahane standing calmly by his side.

"It doesn't come overnight but now that you have this self-belief, you can see where you have taken a game as a team. Today forget India, the whole world will stand up and salute you. So remember what you guys have done today. You need to enjoy this moment, don't let it just go away, enjoy as much as you can," advised the young team.

Batting mainstay Cheteshwar Pujara, who took blows to his body but stayed firm, match-winner Rishabh Pant's extraordinary strokeplay, and young opener Shubman Gill's calm counter-attack drew special appreciation from Shastri.

"It started in Melbourne. Sydney was fantastic, it allowed us to come here even-steven. And to pull off something (like this) today was simply outstanding, said Shastri

'Shubman great, great. Puji you will be known as the ultimate warrior," said Shastri to whistles, especially from young pacer Mohammed Siraj, and applause from the team.

"And Rishabh, simply outstanding. The way you were batting, you gave heart attacks to a few every moment but what you have done is magnificent," he added as the keeperbatsman looked on with a childlike grin on his face.

The man who continued to be resolutely calm amid the obvious excitement was Rahane and he nodded in acceptance as Shastri acknowledged his leadership.

"Jinx to lead the side from the position where we were and to make them bounce back and control things in the middle like the way you have

## Pant world's best-ranked

Test keeper

DUBAI: India's Rishabh Pant became the top-ranked wicketkeeper batsman in the world after his sensational serieswinning 89-run knock in the Brisbane match pushed him to a career-best 13th spot in the ICC Test batting rankings, issued Wednesday. Pant, who won many admirers for his fearless and mature batting, has 691 points in his kitty. South Africa's Quinton de Kock (677) is the next best wicket-keeper batsman in the list in the 15th position. Australia batsman Marnus Labuschagne went past India skipper Virat Kohli (862 points) to third position with a career-best 878 rating points. Kohli missed the action as he was on paternity leave. Cheteshwar Pujara moved up one place to seventh.

done is simply, simply, brilliant," said the 58-year-old former all-rounder.

And finally, Shastri applauded T Natarajan, the net bowler who became a front-liner, and the duo of Washington Sundar and Shardul Thakur, the men who made as much difference with the bat as with the ball.

"In this Test match, I would not want to forget is three debutants and their performances in that first innings. Nattu, Washi and I say Shardul because he was injured in the first Test he played (in 2018).

"For you to show that spirit, that's what broke the back of Australia, more than anything else, that we could come back and get 330 or 340 on this wicket after being

Cricket Australia

memorable series! > DBCCI

An open letter to our friends in Indian Cricket, and to

everyone who played their part to help deliver this

# Clarke slams negative Oz approach

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Jan 20: Former captain Michael Clarke has criticised Australia's 'negative' approach in the Test loss to an under-strength Indian team, saying the hosts, instead of pushing aggressively for wins, seemed scared of defeat.

Clarke, however, refused to blame team leader Tim Paine for the unthinkable Test series defeat at home. An injury-ravaged India beat Australia by three wickets in the final game in Brisbane Tuesday to win the series 2-1 and retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.



"I thought we might have been a tad negative at certain stages throughout because we were scared to lose versus attack hard and look to win the game," Clarke said on Big Sports Breakfast.

Paine, who took over from Steve Smith in 2018 after the ball-tampering scandal in South Africa, is copping criticism for not only the 1-2 defeat but also for his sloppy work behind the stumps. However, Clarke said it was the negative mindset that pegged Australia back.

"At the end of the day, whether we lost with 20 overs left in the game or on the last ball of the game, it didn't matter. We had to win that game to win that trophy. I sort of feel we should have approached the



Matthew Wade congratulates Cheteshwar Pujara as other Australian players, including skipper Tim Paine, look on after India's win at Gabba, Tuesday

#### PONTING SHOCKED

BRISBANE: A 'shocked' Ricky Ponting is struggling to comprehend how India's 'A team' overwhelmed Australia in the Test series in their own backyard.

Hit by a spate injuries, India competed without many a key players, yet downed Australia by three wickets in the series-deciding fourth Test at the Gabba, a month after the Adelaide debacle where they scored their lowest Test score of 36.

"I'm quite shocked that Australia weren't quite good enough to win this series. The cold hard facts of it are pretty much that was the India A team that played this Test match and still won," Ponting told cricket.Com.Au.

'Considering everything the Indian team has been through in the last five or six weeks, with the cap-

had-they've been through 20 players - (Australia) have been at fullstrength, bar Davey (Warner) missing early on, so it's really hard to comprehend. "It's probably not even (India's)

tain leaving, all the injuries they've

second-picked team because you think of Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Ishant Sharma and those guys who didn't even make it out here. Rohit Sharma turns up for the last two Test matches only."

Ponting said India won all the key moments throughout the series and that was the difference between the two sides. The legendary batsman, who coached Delhi Capitals in the last IPL in the UAE, said all the setbacks India had to deal with showed the depth and the talent the country has.

first ball of that game to the last ball of that game with a bit more of that attitude.

Clarke said there was a time when the buck stopped with the captain but it should not be the case anymore since there are other professionals, who call the shots in the Australian set up.

Former pacer Brett Lee too jumped to Paine's defence. "I think since he's taken over the captaincy he's shown real good leadership quali-

ties," Lee told foxsports.Com.Au. "And look, there's been a lot written about Tim Paine behind the stumps. He's grassed a few chances, but who hasn't? You look at all the keepers in history and I'm sure there would be plenty who had leaner periods behind the stumps.

"With the bat, you can't fault him. He goes along with Marnus Labuschagne as having one of the best techniques in the team. He stood up and took on the Indian players.

## Warne predicts 'huge fallout' in host team



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Brisbane, Jan 20: The legendary Shane Warne believes the embarrassing Test series loss to an understrength India will result in a 'huge fallout' in the Australian team and said a few heads could roll in the coming days. "I think there'll be a huge fallout

from this (defeat). There's not too many times that you lose to the second or third (choice) side," Warne was quoted as saying by Fox Cricket. "Their (Australia) tactics will

come into question, and they have to. Bowlers will come into question, people's spot in the team will come into question. It has to. You can't just deflect it and flick it off and say India were too good for us," he added.

Warne was, however, effusive in his praise for the Indian team which braved injuries to its key players and absence of regular skipper Virat Kohli after the first Test on paternity leave to emerge triumphant.

'That's not taking anything away from those Indian guys that played but their first selection side, there's probably only two or three players in that side who would play.'

The spin legend said Australia didn't grab their chances in the series. "Yes they were, but Australia had so many chances in this series to bury it and crush India, but they couldn't do it. They just couldn't do it," he said.

Warne was also critical of Tim Paine's captaincy and said the wicketkeeper didn't own up responsibility for his failed tactics. "I think at times their tactics haven't been good enough, and I suppose that's got to come down to Tim Paine as captain," he said.

"It's not just Tim Paine's fault, the bowlers are allowed to say 'Tim I want to do this', so it's a combination between the bowlers and the captain. But at the end of the day, you are captain, you have to take responsibility. He'll be disappointed."

## CA lauds India for epic series win KP warns India of

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Jan 20: Cricket Australia (CA) Wednesday saluted the Indian team's 'resilience, courage and skill' during their historic Test series win over the hosts and expressed gratitude to the BCCI for the 'sacrifices' it made to ensure a smooth conduct of the epic contest.

A second-string Indian team, led by Ajinkya Rahane, braved all odds to defeat a full-strength Australia by three wickets at the Gabba here to win the four-Test series 2-1 and retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy Tuesday in Brisbane.

"On behalf of everyone at CA, we congratulate Team India for their resilience, courage and skill demonstrated in retaining the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in a series that will be talked about for generations to come," CA wrote in a Thank You note to the BCCI.

The note, written by CA interim CEO Nick Hockley and Chair Earl Eddings, was addressed to 'friends in Indian cricket', the BCCI, acknowledging the role played by the Sourav Ganguly-led board in successfully completing the tour amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Australian cricket will forever be grateful to the BCCI for their friendship, trust and commitment in helping to deliver a series that has brought joy to many millions of people around the world at a time they needed it most," the letter read.

"The unique challenges of international touring during a global pandemic are considerable and we thank India's players, coaches and support staff for all they have given. 'Over the past nine weeks, the

Indian and Australian men's teams completed outstanding ODI and T20I series, followed by one of the greatest Border-Gavaskar Test series ever competed," it added.

The CA officials said that the BCCI's cooperation was crucial to making the tour a hit. The series gave the financially struggling CA a major boost with expected revenue of 300 million Australian dollars.

The two teams brushed aside some unsavoury controversies like the racist chants against Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah by the crowd in the Sydney Test, to ensure that the focus remained firmly on cricket.

"Despite the many public health and logistical challenges, the BCCI engaged with a spirit of cooperation befitting their status as one of international sport's greatest ambassadors. We will never forget

the sacrifices made by our friends

at the BCCI that made all this pos-

sible," they said. The note also appreciated the contributions of all other stakeholders, saving the series witnessed many enthralling contests between

players of the two sides. "From the sublime fast bowling of Jasprit Bumrah and Pat Cummins, to the wonderful batting of Ajinkya Rahane and Steve Smith, to the exciting debuts of Shubman Gill and Cameroon Green - and much, much more-the past two months of cricket have been absolutely enthralling.

"May we also take this opportunity to thank everyone who played their part to deliver this memorable series - governments, health officials, venues, broadcast and commercial partners, cricket associations, players, match officials, staff and their families.

# England in a tweet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 20: Kevin Pietersen's tweet in Hindi language had the netizens in splits as the former England skipper asked India to celebrate their monumental Test series-win over Australia but also warned that the 'real team' is coming to take them on.

The former England skipper tweeted after India's heart-stopping three-wicket won in the Brisbane Test Tuesday. "India yeh aitihaasik jeet ka jashn manaye kyuki yeh sabhi baadhao ke khilaap hasil hui hai (India celebrate this historic win because it has come after overcoming all the obstacles)." Pietersen tweeted.

"LEKIN, ASLI TEAM toh kuch hafto baad a rahi hai jisse aapko harana hoga apne ghar mein (But the real team is coming after a few weeks and you have to beat it in your own backyard)," he wrote referring to India's next assignment against England at home.

The four-match series, starting February 5, will be played inside a bio-bubble in Chennai and Ahmedabad. "Satark rahe, 2 sap-

#### **BCCI likely to allow** 50 per cent crowd

**NEW DELHI:** The BCCI brass is

seriously contemplating

allowing 50 per cent crowd

and the newly constructed

attendance at both Chepauk

Motera Stadium during india?

upcoming four Test matches

against England. The first two

Tests will be played in Chennai. beginning February 5, while the next two will be played at the renovated stadium at Motera in Ahmedabad. The BCCI is believed to be taking a cue from Cricket Australia which had allowed entry of spectators during the India series that concluded Tuesday. "As of now, we are likely to allow 50 percent spectators for the four Test matches. The BCCI is in talks with both state cricket associations (TNCA and GCA) and also state health authorities," a senior BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity. "If you allow 50 percent crowd with all necessary precautions, then it

taah mein bahut adhik jashn manaane se saavadhaan rahen (Stay alert and don't over-celebrate in these two weeks)," added the former England captain.

will be an indicator if we can

also allow spectators during

IPL in India," the source said.

# Praveen last-gasp winner lifts Blasters

AGENCIES

Goa, Jan 20: Kerala Blasters came back from behind to rivals Bengaluru FC 2-1 in an ISL clash at the GMC Stadium in Bambolim, Wednesday.

Cleiton Silva had given Bengaluru the lead in the 24th minute but Puitea (73rd), who came on as a substitute in the second half, brought Kerala Blasters back in the game. Rahul KP (added-on time) then netted the late goal to seal crucial three points for the Yellow Army.

Kerala Blasters moved up on the league table eclipsing East Bengal to the ninth position with 13 points from 12 games. Bengaluru, on the other hand, remained on the seventh position, same points as Kerala.



Blasters came close to open the account twice inside five minutes but failed to find the target. In the 14th, Sahal Abdul Samad curled in a corner and Gary Hooper managed to get a touch as he flicked it towards the far post and Vicente headed the ball down. Costa Nhamoinesu attempted to lob the ball over Gurpreet Singh Sandhu in a first-time attempt but it went above the crossbar.

Four minutes later, Vicente Gomez won a ball in the midfield and found Hooper on the right of the box. Hooper tried to square it towards his left but it came off a Bengaluru defender and fell to Hooper again who tried to slot the ball home through the far post but it went wide.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 20: Sanju Samson replaced Steve Smith as Rajasthan Royals captain after the Australian batsman and some other underperforming stars were released by their respective IPL franchises even as Chennai Super Kings retained veteran Suresh Raina for the upcoming IPL-14.

The deadline for the eight franchises to submit the lists of retained and released players for the next edition of the lucrative league ended Wednesday. Samson was appointed to the top job after RR decided against renewing former skipper Steve Smith's contract. Smith's contract ended in October 2020.



Smith released, Raina retained

The Australians, smarting from a Test series loss to an injury-plagued India, took a hit as the likes of the explosive Glenn Maxwell and opener Aaron Finch too were released by KXIP and RCB respectively.

Also released by KXIP were West Indies all-rounder Sheldon Cottrell, Afghanistan's Mujeeb-ur-Rahman and New Zealand's Jimmy Neesham, who underwent a surgery recently to treat an injured finger.

CSK's Harbhajan Singh and Mumbai Indians' Lasith Malinga were among the other big names to be released by their respective sides ahead of next month's auction. Harbhajan was joined by the likes of Kedar Jadhav, Pivush Chawla and Murali Vijay who were also let go by the franchise.

Also released by MI was Sherfane Rutherford, while Delhi Capitals decided to enter the next edition without English batsman Jason Roy, wicketkeeper Alex Carey, legspinner Sandeep Lamichhane and seamer Mohit Sharma.

The seasoned Raina was retained by the MS Dhoni-led CSK notwithstanding his sudden departure from the last IPL in the UAE.

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