TALL CLAIM

OLUME 10, ISSUE 325 | www.orissapost.com

Actor Kangana Ranaut has claimed that she is the only actor after Sridevi to have given comedy a shot



CONG FACTIONS CLASH

Two groups of Congress party clashed in the presence of media in Bhubaneswar over election issues

FRESH CURBS

The guidelines also make it mandatory

WhatsApp to identify the originator of

a message that authorities consider to

Social media companies will also have

for platforms such as Twitter and

be anti-national

DOWNTOWN



COUP PROTESTERS ATTACKED

Supporters of Myanmar's military, armed with knives, clubs and catapults attacked those opposing the coup

INTERNATIONAL P10

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BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26 | 2021

Chokehold on digital media, OTT platforms

GOVT SAID A CODE OF ETHICS AND A THREE-TIER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM WOULD BE APPLICABLE FOR NEWS PUBLISHERS

New Delhi, Feb 25: The government Thursday announced sweeping regulations for social media firm like Facebook and Twitter as well as OTT players such as Netflix, requiring them to remove any content flagged by authorities within 36 hours and setting up a complaint redressal mechanism with an officer being based in the country.

The guidelines also make it mandatory for platforms such as Twitter and WhatsApp to identify the originator of a message that authorities consider to be anti-national and against security and sovereignty of the country.

The rules about digital media and OTT focus more on in-house and selfregulation mechanism whereby a robust grievance redressal mechanism has been provided while upholding journalistic and creative freedom.

This is the first time such rules have been framed for digital and online media operating within the country's jurisdiction.

The norms on social media come weeks after a spat between the government and Twitter over certain messages around farmer protests that the government saw as inciting violence. The government sought removal of about 1.500 accounts and messages, a request that Twitter complied with, only after being warned of penal action.

IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad Thursday said concerns have been raised over rampant abuse of social media platforms and spread of fake

'Social media companies are welcome to do business in India, and empower Indians...We welcome criticism and dissent... But it is important that users of social media are given a proper forum for resolution of their grievances in a time-bound manner," Prasad said.

Vhy these guidelines on digital content,

sir? Are we scrapping sedition law?

BHUBANESWAR

RECORDS 39.4°C

continued to be the hottest place in

Odisha for the third consecutive day

Meteorological Department predicts

BHUBANESWAR: The capital city

Thursday recording maximum

temperature of 39.4°C. The India

that the mercury level will touch

40°C in the next few days. Apart

from Bhubaneswar, 14 other places

recorded day temperatures above

35°C. These places are Balasore

(35.4°C), Chandbali (36.2°C),

Baripada (38°C), Jharsuguda

(36.6°C), Sambalpur (36.2°C),

Cuttack (37°C), Angul (37.7°C),

India is a large market for digital and social media companies and is witnessing strong growth on the back of booming smartphone sales and availability of dirt cheap data.

Prasad said intermediaries will fall into two categories – social media intermediary and significant social

media intermediary. This distinction is based on the number of users on the social media platform, and the government will soon notify the threshold of user

base that will distinguish the two. The rules require the 'significant'

social media intermediaries to follow additional due diligence including appointment of chief compliance officer, a nodal contact person and a resident grievance officer. All the three officials will have to reside in India.

Significant social media companies will also



INS ASKS GOOGLE TO COMPENSATE NEWSPAPERS

NEW DELHI: The Indian Newspaper Society (INS) Thursday asked Google to compensate Indian newspapers for using their content and insisted that the global search giant increase the publisher share of advertising revenue to 85 per cent. In a letter to Google, INS president L Adimoolam said publishers are also facing a very ing value chain. "The Society insisted that Google should increase the publisher share of advertising revenue to 85 percent, and also ensure more transparency in the revenue reports provided to publishers by Google," the INS said in a statement. It noted that, over the past year publishers across the world have been raising the issue of fair payment for content and of proper sharing of advertising revenue with Google. It is also noted that Google has recently agreed to better compensate and pay publishers in France, the European Union and notably in Australia.

monthly compliance report disclosing details of complaints received and action taken, as also details of contents removed proactively.

In a move that could have major amifications for players like Twitter and WhatsApp, government said that significant social media intermediaries providing services primarily in the nature of messaging will have to enable identification of the "first originator" of the information that undermines sovereignty of India. security of the state, or public order.

The intermediary, however, will not be required to disclose the contents of any message. The rules also state that users who

voluntarily want to verify their accounts should be given an appropriate mechanism to do so, and be accorded a visible mark of verification. Users will have to be provided with

a prior intimation and explanation when significant social media intermediary removes content on its own. In such cases, users have to be provided an adequate and reasonable opportunity to dispute the action taken by the intermediary.

Rules related to social media will be administered by Ministry of Electronics and IT, while those related Code of Ethics and procedure and safeguards in relation to digital media will be administered by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

On rules related to over-the-top (OTT) and digital media, the government said, guidelines have been framed keeping in mind the difference between viewership in a theatre and television, as compared to watching it on Internet

A Code of Ethics and three-tier grievance redressal mechanism would be applicable for news publishers, OTT platforms and digital media.

OTT platforms would have to selfclassify the content into five agebased categories - U (Universal), U/A 7+ (years), U/A 13+, U/A 16+, and A (Adult). Such platforms have drawn flak for content that contains obscenity, and has at times hurt religious sentiments.

Publishers of news on digital media would be required to observe Norms of Journalistic Conduct of the Press Council of India and the Programme Code under the Cable Television Networks Regulation Act, providing a level-playing field between the offline (print, TV) and digital media, an official statement said. MORE P9

Records tumble as India spinners

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AGENCIES

Spinners ruled the roost as India took a 2-1 lead in the four-match Test series with an emphatic 10-wicket win over England on the second day of the third match here Wednesday. India needed to score only 49 runs for a win and openers Rohit Sharma (25 not out) and Shubman Gill (15 not out) scored those runs in 7.4 overs, even as the dusty pitch comes under scrutiny. Indian spinners took 19 of the 20 England wickets to fall for a dominating performance at the newly constructed stadium with a pitch that was largely unknown. Sunil Gavaskar described it as a "challenging pitch".

Ahmedabad, Feb 25:

In England's second innings, three Indian slow bowlers Thursday bagged all 10 wickets to spin out England for a mere 81 runs, leaving India to score 49 to win, Left-armer Axar Patel

captured five wickets to complete a match haul of 11. Off-spinners R Ashwin bagged four and Washington Sundar. England batsmen were completely exposed against spin and only three of them entered double-digit scores, with Ben Stokes being the top scorer with 25 (34 balls, 3x4s).

Earlier in the day, India took a slender 33-run firstinnings as they were bowled for 145 in 53.2 overs in the first session. England captain Joe Root, at best a parttime spinner, took a staggering career-best figures of five wickets for eight runs - his first five-wicket haul in first-class cricket – to hasten India's demise.

Left-arm spinner Jack Leach bagged four wickets for 54, as India slumped from 98 for two to be all out for 145. Only four Indian batsmen reached the double figures in their first innings, with Rohit Sharma being the highest scorer with 66 off 96 balls.

Nirav Modi can be

extradited: UK court

The fugitive, wanted in India on charges of fraud and money laundering, Thursday lost his legal battle against extradition

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Feb 25: Nirav Modi, the diamond merchant wanted in India on charges of fraud and money laundering in the estimated \$2-billion Punjab National Bank (PNB) scam case, Thursday lost his legal battle against extradition as a UK judge ruled that he does have a case to answer before the Indian

The 49-year-old appeared via videolink from Wandsworth Prison in south-west London and showed no emotion as District Judge Samuel Goozee handed down his judgment at Westminster Magistrates' Court in London.

"I am satisfied on the evidence that a prima facie case of fraud and money laundering is established," said Judge Goozee, as he read out parts of his judgment in court and concluded that he will send his ruling to the UK's Secretary of State, Priti Patel. It is the Cabinet



apply in this case, including the possible imposition of a death penalty.

Whatever the ministerial decision, the losing side – Nirav Modi - has up to 14 days within which to approach the High Court and seek leave to appeal after the Home Secretary's decision. Any appeal, if granted, will be heard at the Administrative Division of the High Court in London.

Nirav Modi was arrested on an extradition warrant March 19, 2019,

Water flow in Mahanadi to decrease drastically: Min

CWC IS NOT GIVING CLEARANCE FOR SEVERAL IRRIGATION PROJECTS AS THE CASE IS PENDING IN MAHANADI TRIBUNAL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: The water level in Mahanadi River has decreased during the non-monsoon period and it will decrease further in the coming years as Chhattisgarh has stopped the water flow by constructing barrages on the river, Water Resources Minister Raghunandan Das said, Thursday

In a written reply to a question, the minister said Chhattisgarh has constructed several barrages in the up-stream of Mahanadi to stop water. Due to this the water flow in the largest river of Odisha is declining constantly during the nonmonsoon period. However, Chhattisgarh has sufficient water in the river, he said.

Das also apprised the House that the state government had lodged a statutory complaint with the Central Government in 2016 urging for a so-

lution. In response, the Centre had constituted Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal (MWDT) in 2018.

Later, the state government filed an IA with the Tribunal to ensure sufficient water flow to the Hirakud reservoir during non-monsoon period, the minister stated. Now, the matters relating to the Mahanadi water dispute are sub-judice with the MWDT.

Later talking to the media outside the House, Das said, "CWC has returned seven out of the 15 project reports (feasibility and DPR) as cases are pending in the Tribunal. The projects have been stayed. As the matter is sub-judice with the Tribunal, CWC has sent back those reports. A previous standing order of the Apex Court is in force and, as a result, the projects have been stayed."

Asked about why the state government is not constructing barrages in the down-stream, the minister stated, "There isn't any problem for us to build barrages and store water in the downstream of Mahanadi. But, since several barrages have been built in the upper stream, the downstream will au-

tomatically dry up.' The last hearing of Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal was conducted February 6 this year. The tribunal has asked Chhattisgarh to file its response to the counter proposal sent by Odisha for the release of 1.002 million acre feet (MAF) of water flow during non-monsoon period, within three weeks.

In November last year, Chhattisgarh had proposed to release around 0.4 MAF water to Odisha during non-monsoon months. However, the state government had rejected the proposal citing that the Mahanadi water flow to Odisha before the commencement of hearing was around

Traders across India to go on strike today

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 25: Going ahead with their protest against arbitrary regulations and changes in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and alleged norm violations by ecommerce giants, traders across the country will go a day-long strike Friday.

In a statement, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) the umbrella body which has called for the strike said that over 8 crore traders belonging to more than 40,000 trade associations across country will observe the 'Bharat Vyapar Bandh' to protest against some of the "draconian, arbitrary and critical" amendments made recently in GST rules.

It will also urge the government to rectify glitches in e-commerce for preventing violation of law by

foreign e-commerce companies. The All India Transport Welfare Association (AITWA) an apex body of one crore transporters have already supported the strike and has also announced 'Chakka Jam' of transport sector Friday all over India. CAIT secretary general Praveen Khandelwal said that not only traders but even small industries, hawkers, and women entrepreneurs among others will also join the bandh.

Further, associations of chartered accountants and tax advocates have supported the strike.



Hirakud (36.1°C), Talcher (37.1°C), minister who is authorised to order and has appeared via videolink Bhawanipatna (36°C), Balangir an extradition under the India-UK from Wandsworth Prison for a se-(37°C), Titlagarh (37.6°C), Sonepur ries of court hearings in the ex-Extradition Treaty and has two (35.8°C) and Nayagarh (36.5°C). The months within which to make that tradition case. His multiple at-IMD has said the maximum day tempts at seeking bail have been temperature will be above normal The Home Secretary's order repeatedly turned down, both at by 2°C -4°C at many places in rarely goes against the court's conthe Magistrates' and High Court Odisha during the next 4-5 days. level, as he was deemed a flight clusions, as she has to consider However, there will not be any risk. Nirav Modi is the subject of major change in the night only some very narrow bars to extemperature during this period. tradition which are unlikely to two sets of criminal proceedings.





WHEN THERON MADE HERSELF **SMALLER IN A RELATIONSHIP**

Hollywood actress Charlize Theron opened up about men and past relationships. "I found myself in my twenties and then early thirties and I think back how I made myself smaller for a guy or in a relationship. One fine day, I thought that it's really ridiculous," Theron said.

HEMSWORTH SHARES HIS SON'S CREATIVE WRITING

Hollywood star Chris Hemsworth Thursday shared a handwritten note by his seven-year-old son Tristan on Instagram. The note reads: "My special friend is dad, together we go in the pool, together they make me feel happy." Chris captioned the picture saying: "My little boys creative writing."



FORTUNE **FORECAST**

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Joining a yoga class? Good for you. Try an Ayurvedic diet too. You may be in for a lot of new things in your life, but you will have to choose today

There's a bit of money coming in to

smoothen the road, assures Ganesha

TAURUS

Clarity will be a concentric circle today. You may feel trapped in a labyrinth. puzzled and perplexed, about a personal problem, predicts Ganesha, You may not be inclined to deal with unpleasant situations in the afternoon. You will exhibit your flair with words that may impress people around you, says Ganesha

GEMINI

Today, you will be busy doing grocery shopping and other household chores. By noon, you will be pretty bored. In fact, you are likely to walk up to unknown people and chat with them to kill time. You are also likely to experiment and take a trip to the wild side

CANCER It is highly probable that

today you will recognise

the importance of time will realise how long was the time that you wasted cribbing about how short is the deadline for the work allotted to you **LEO**

to have become your

A busy mind has no

time for a hungry stom-

ach. This phrase seems motto for the day as the stars dictate every possibility of you staying extremely busy with work. This might kill your appetite in the afternoon

VIRGO The place you dwell in could do well with a

is what you want to do today. Add some lively show pieces and sprinkle some of that personality to get the right effect, says Ganesha.

It's smooth sailing for

you today. Your eloquence shall take precedence, and your accom foreshadow your real achievements. But there is nothing wrong in that.

SCORPIO

The power of your perso ality will be under the scanner today, feels Ganesha. At work, you will be occupied with looking for solutions to pending problems. Your creative out look and innovation will help you find a way out of difficult situations. It is the most favourable day for getting the support of your colleagues or superiors,

SAGITTARIUS Chances are high that you will be isolated and left to fend for yourself Your resourcefulness and enterprising nature may be tested by an unpleasant situation. Seeking Ganesha's blessings can make all the difference.

CAPRICORN

Nothing as melodramatic as a Bollywood saga, but you will pour your heart out in front of you family members, letting out your fears, concerns, regrets and every other feeling that has been building up inside you over the years, says Ganesha. The second half of the day will find you high on energy, and you will go that extra mile to interact with your peers.

AQUARIUS

Today, you may finally that valuable piece of abstract art in your living room! You have fine taste, but sometimes forget to see things from the heart. Your sensitivity is at an all-time high, says Ganesha, and consequently, you may even get touchy today.

PISCES You are likely to achieve a goal you have been slaving over for the past some time. However, keep your celebrations muted, for merely winning a battle does not win the war, says Ganesha.



Mumbai: Actress Sushmita Sen Thursday confirmed a second season of her web series Aarva, which marked her digital debut last year. 'She sees a storm

coming...in the mirror!!! #Aarya #season2. Your wish is our command. I love you guys!!! Let's do this @madhvaniram

films @disnevplushotstarvip #TeamAarya #duggadugga," the actress wrote on Instagram.

Sushmita made her comeback

on screen with the Ram Madhvani web series. The series was a hit and fans have been waiting for a second season. The series marked Sushmita's return to the screen five years after her last release, the 2015 Bengali film Nirbaak. Her last release was Anees Bazmee's 2010 multistarrer, No Problem.

'I am the only one after Sridevi to try comedy'

Mumbai: Kangana Ranaut has claimed that she is the only actress after late superstar Sridevi to have given comedy a shot. Her assertion came Thursday, which marks 10 years of release of her hit romantic com edy, Tanu Weds Manu.

"I was stuck in edgy/neurotic roles, this film changed the trajectory of my career, was my entry in to mainstream that too with comedy, with Queen and Datto I strengthened my comic timing and became the only actress after legendary SriDeviji to do comedy #10 years oftanuwedsmanu," Kangana Ranaut tweeted. In a separate tweet. the actress mentioned how the Aanand L. Rai directorial film contributed in shaping her career.

Thanks to @aanandlrai and our writer Himanshu Sharma for this franchise, when they came to me as struggling makers I thought I can make their careers but instead they made my career, one can never tell which film will work and which won't, all destiny, glad my destiny has you." the actress wrote.

lleana is a 'beach bum for life'

Mumbai: Actress Ileana DCruz Thursday shared a twist of nostalgia from her holiday this time last year, in the process confessing she is a beach bum for life.

She posted the picture on Instagram Stories, where she is seen lying in a hammock wearing black swimsuit, against the backdrop of a blue sea On the image, she wrote:

This time last year. #Beachbumforlife.' The picture seems to be

from her holiday last year in Andaman Islands. Ileana is currently

> all set to Unfair NLovely, comic take on India's obsession with fair skin. Set against the backdrop of Harvana, the film features Ileana opposite Randeep Hooda.

23RD KALINGA NATYA MAHOTSAV CONCLUDES



Ghatotkach, Hidimbi's agony comes alive on stage



A scene from Assamese play Ghatotkach Putra Morstaged at Rabindra Mandap, Sunday

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: Purba Ranga theatre troupe from Guwahati staged Assamese play Ghatotkach Putra Mor Sunday, on the concluding day of 23rd Kalinga Natva Mahotsay here at Rabindra Mandap. The drama was adapted from a subplot of epic Mahabharata. Written by Mrinmoy Bhuyan, the play was staged to a full house under the direction of Gunakar Dev

Bheema, the second among the five Pandavas had married Hidimbi, the sister of demon Hidimba and Ghatotkach was born out of the wedlock. The incident took place a few years before the start of Kurukhetra War. But the mother-son duo was abandoned by Bheema for some reasons. However, Ghatotkach, performing an ideal son's duty, joined his father at Kurukhetra and needless to say, he changed the fate of the war to a large extent. The play showcases the painful

life of both Ghatotkach and Hidimbi and their sacrifices.

The actors who portrayed the main characters included Shiujpriya Barathakur, Gunakar Dev Goswami, Vishal Barua, Priyam Raj Das, and Utpal

Earlier in the evening, eminent theatre director NSDian Dolgovind Rath was conferred with Pramila Prativa Samman while actress Bhaswati Basu. journalist Samikhya Pattnaik and photo journalist Bikash

SUDOKU

0 to 9 and the letters A to E.

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row,

column and box must contain the numbers

9

D

ANGST

8

9

D

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

В

Nayak were felicitated on the occasion. The drama festival was organised by Satabdira Kalakar, a prominent theatre troupe of Odisha.

Several dignitaries including Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi, Culture Department Principal Secretary Bishnupada Sethi, Principal Commissioner of Income Tax Department Manoranjan Panigrahi and Culture Department director Ranjan Kumar Das were in attendance

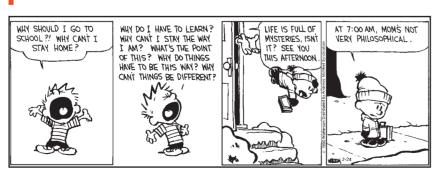
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PEANUTS



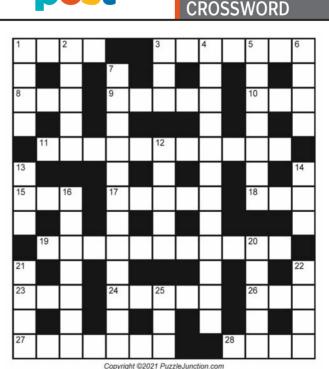
CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



FUN



Across

1 Warning device 3 Looks up to

8 Zero

9 Loathe

10 Basenji, e.g.

11 Dentist's forte

15 Balloon filler

17 Flip-flop

18 Have a bawl

19 Artist's bane

(6-5)23 Permit

27 Baked dessert 28 Huffy state

24 Keyed up

26 Lenient

<u>Down</u>

1 Sharpen

2 Chill out

3 Cigar residue

4 Vine having

funnel-shaped

flowers (7,5)

5 Chinchillas

6 Philosopher

7 Extinct tigers (5-7)

12 Chorus 13 Gullible one

14 Diminish 16 Nature's alarm

clock 20 Parachute

material 21 Heidi's home

22 Door sign 25 Sidekick

SUDOKU

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



downtown



TRIBUTE TO HISTORIAN

Dignitaries release a book during the observance of Padmashri Krushna Chandra Panigrahi's death anniversary at Odisha State Museum in Bhubaneswar, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER World

RECOVERED 11,32,45,505 8,88,18,021 25,11,624 1,10,46,914 1,07,38,501 1,56,705

Cuttack girl set on fire in murder bid

SOURCES CLAIM THAT A VIDEO OF THE GIRL HAD GONE VIRAL ON SOCIAL MEDIA A FEW DAYS AGO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Feb 25: In a heart-rending incident, some miscreants Thursday tried to kill a Plus II second year girl by setting her ablaze at Mansinghpatna here, police said.

The miscreants reportedly tied the limbs of the girl and sedated her with an injection before the immolation attempt, police added.

Locals rescued the girl with burn injuries on his face, head and hands. The victim was rushed to SCB Medical College and Hospital where her condition is stated to be stable.

According to locals, the girl, a student of Christ College, along with her family members has been staying in a rented accommodation at Mansinghpatna for the last one year. Her father is an auto-rickshaw driver.

"The girl was alone in the house after returning from the college. Her mother had gone to a nearby temple while her father was away. Taking advantage of the situation, four miscreants entered the victim's house and tied her hands and legs with a dupatta (stole). The mis-



Fire brigade personnel along with the locals dousing the fire

creants poured kerosene on the girl and set her on fire before fleeing the

spot," said a police officer. The girl's landlord along with a few locals rescued her, added the of-

"I spotted smoke billowing out of the house around noon. I rushed to the spot and pulled her out," said Sudarshan Jethi, the girl's land-

On being informed, fire brigade personnel reached the spot and doused the fire. "It took us an hour to douse the blaze. However, all the household goods were reduced to cin-

ders," said a fire brigade personnel. Sources, meanwhile, claimed that a video of the girl had gone viral on social media a few days ago. "Our investigation is on. We suspect a love angle to the incident," said a police officer on conditions of

BARBARIC ACT

BEFORE THE

GIRL WITH BURN

INJURIES ON HIS FACE,

HEAD AND HANDS

THE VICTIM WAS

RUSHED TO SCB

MEDICAL COLLEGE AND

HOSPITAL WHERE HER

CONDITION IS STATED

TO BE STABLE

'OUR STAFF STEPPED FORWARD AND TOOK TURNS IN ENSURING **AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES TO**

7 hen the Covid-19 induced lockdown was announced, we were plunged into a period of uncertainty. One of the fundamental pre-requisites for any business to operate and flourish is to have a reasonable amount of visibility into the future, and to have some amount of control over its actions so that favorable outcomes can be achieved. Covid-19 was a challenge like no others. In March 2020, we had no idea how long the lockdown would last. Once the lockdown ended in May 2020, hotels were not allowed to operate. It was only in late August that hotels were per-

mitted to operate with severe re-

strictions. Restaurants were closed

until October for dine-in.

Restrictions on banquets continue

COVID WARRIORS'

even to this day. The hospitality industry is capital intensive. Promoters invest enormous sums to build properties. Further, fixed costs such as staff salaries, bank EMIs, lease rent on the property account for almost 60% of a hotel's expenses, due to which the breakeven point is rather high. Just to meet operating costs, a hotel such as ours needs 50% occupancy. A complete halt in the cash flows makes it impossible to meet financial ob-

ligations beyond a month. As the lockdown began and the pandemic continued to spread across the state, we wanted to offer all possible assistance. Pramod Convention and Club Resort, Cuttack partnered with **Cuttack Municipal Corporation** and offered our property as an institutional quarantine center

that we partnered with Ashwini Covid Hospital and became a quarantine center for doctors treating Covid-19 cases in Cuttack. It was a proud moment for all of us to play a small, yet significant role in combating the disease. Our staff and associates stepped forward and took turns in ensuring availability of services to Covid warriors. To ensure seamless services, our staff were divided into three teams - one in service at

Covid's impact on hotel ind

is severe: Durga Prasad Rath

ଧରିତ୍ରୀ । OrissaPOST BUSINESS **EMINANCE** AWARDS

second in iso

lation and the third ready to serve. Thanks to the relentless and dedicated efforts of the staff - we were able to provide services to doctors without any cases of infections at the hotel.

The pandemic brought culinary innovations at Pramod. Lots of our customers were not ordering food online due to hygiene concerns. The guests who ordered home delivery would often be disappointed as the food would reach cold and lose the restaurant grade taste. To address both these concerns, we launched a new service called FreshBox – in which a selection of our most sought after items would be packed and delivered to guests in a hygienic and easy to cook format. Customers could order a FreshBox, fry the contents and enjoy safe and delicious food without leaving the safety and

comfort of their homes. The concept became an instant hit and was a great way for us to connect with our customers during the lockdown.

Finally, the pandemic has permanently changed our approach to services. In order to meet service demands while meeting Covid restrictions, our staff have become multi-skilled across departments. It is no longer possible for hotels to have specialists in each and every role due to the uncertainties brought by Covid-19. The pandemic has also provided an opportunity to identify more efficient practices, cost effective sourcing while having the highest focus on customer and staff safety. In the days forward, we expect demand to reach pre-Covid levels. The introduction of vaccines fidence to customer sentiments. With that, we expect more customers to dine out, travel for work and leisure, host banquets for social events. 2020 was a tough year for all of us. In 2021, we believe that

> Durga Prasad Rath is the Managing Director of Odisha Ford and Pramod

the best is yet to come.

TUSHARKANTI



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: Electronics & Information Technology and Sports & Youth Services Minister Tusharkanti Behera tied the knot with Nandini in a traditional Hindu ceremony at Deulimatha in Kakatpur, Thursday. The minister took to Twitter to announce the same. Family members and relatives of the couple were present during the wedding and blessed the newlywed.

Wishes poured in from several quarters for the couple. Kendrapara MP Anubhav Mohanty wished the couple a healthy life with neverending togetherness

POLITICKLE by MANJUL





Oppn tears into govt over paddy, Kotia Apps, portals launched for W&CD dept

Deputy Speaker Rajanikant Singh calls all-party meeting to resolve the deadlock

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: Opposition BJP and Congress members created ruckus in the Assembly Thursday by raising paddy procurement and Kotia issues. The House adjourned four times as Opposition members demanded ruling from the chair on the twin

Raising the issues during the Zero Hour, Congress Legislature Party leader Narasingha Mishra said, "Farmers want to sell their paddy, but government is refusing to procure. Though the plight of farmers was raised in the House umpteen times, the result is zero. This is most unfortunate." Now, the poor farmers have started committing suicide, he alleged.

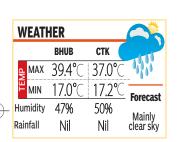
Terming the steps taken by the government to resolve the border dispute as an eyewash, Mishra said, "While the Andhra Pradesh government is providing old age pen-



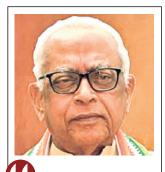
EURO

GOLD

SILVER



₹70.085 1



While the Andhra Pradesh government is providing old age pension of Rs 2,050 per month in Kotia area, the state government is providing only Rs 500 NARASINGHA MISHRA

CONGRESS LEADER

area, the state government is pro-

viding only Rs 500. He also raised questions on the

petition filed by state government in Supreme Court on the issue.

'The Chief Minister should con-

vene an all-party meeting to discuss the matter. We have dispute with all the neighbouring states. Leaders cutting across the party lines should visit the border areas and discuss with residents regarding their problems," the Congress leader said

"The state government should assure that all the paddies from farmers are procured. This is an important subject. Besides, the minister concerned should beg an apology for calling farmers 'Dalal'," said Leader of Opposition Pradipta Kumar Naik.

Senior BJP legislator Jayanarayan Mishra also came down on the government for not procuring paddy from farmers resulting in massive unrest across

Deputy Speaker Rajanikant Singh called an all-party meeting to resolve the paddy procurement issue. After the meeting, Singh said he will put forth the concerns of the opposition

members before the Speaker. The adjournment motion on law and order problems moved for Thursday will be discussed Friday,

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: In pursuit of 5T mantra propounded by the state government, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday launched five online services of the Women and Child Development (W&CD) department through videoconfer-

The Chief Minister launched three mobile applications and two web portals of the department. The three mobile applications are-Mamata App & MIS, Mo-Chhatua and e-Kalika. The web portals are: e-manadeya and Mo Sishu.

Naveen said his government is working for the development of children and empowerment of women for past 20 years. The government has taken initiatives starting from reservation of seats for women in Panchayti Raj Institutions (PRI) to empowerment of 80 lakh women through self-help groups (SHGs), he said. Odisha is the only state in India to have nutrition

budget, he added. Mo-Chhatua App was launched for streamlining supply chain management of Take Home Ration (Chhatua) while e-Kalika is an ap-



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik releasing a booklet on the 5T initiative of W&CD department, Thursday

The three mobile applications launched are: Mamata App & MIS, Mo-Chhatua and e-Kalika

The web portals launched by the Chief Minister are: e-manadeya and Mo Sishu

plication for monitoring crèches for children under three years. Mamata App will help making the flagship conditional cash transfer

benefit for pregnant women has-

sle free, paperless and citizen centric, sources said.

Similarly, Mo Sishu portal is a comprehensive web-based information management and monitoring system exclusively for child protection services;

The e-manadeya' portal will help the department for seamless, paperless transfer of honorarium to 1, 34,758 anganwadi workers, mini anganwadi workers and helpers.

On the occasion, the department entered into technical collaboration with Central Food Technological

Research Institute (CFTRI) and United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP) for improving the quality of take home ration.

Another MoU was signed with ICMR- RMRC (Indian Council of Medical Research - Regional Medical Research Centre) to conduct annual nutrition survey. The department has also entered into a technical collaboration with UNICEF for capacity building of the Odisha State Child Protection Society

Cong factions clash; Niranjan assures probe

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: Infighting within the Odisha Congress was out in the open again Thursday when two groups were seen engaged in fisticuffs and verbal duel

in front of the media persons here. A group of Congressmen Thursday started abusing Congress leader Bishnu Barik, accusing him of working for the BJD and blamed him for the defeat of party leader Chiranjibi Biswal who contested Jagatsinghpur Assembly constituency. The aggressive party leaders claimed that BJD leaders had stayed in Barik's house and indulged in anti-party activities during elections.



Rival groups clash at Congress Bhawan in Bhubaneswar

Barik, however, denied any such allegation by saying, "I have no links with the BJD. I have been voting for the Congress party in elections and remained loyal to the party. A few party men with vested

interests have started levelling base less allegations against me.'

He also said, "I have been working with the party for long and devoted myself to the party. Chiranjibi Biswal and me were members of the

Election Committee. He didn't give me any responsibility during the elections. People who have no grassroots working experience are now attacking me.

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) President Niranjan Patnaik, on the other hand, asked for some time to investigate the incident. He, however, said that people working against the party would not be tolerated.

He said, "If there is any such incident this is unfortunate. I want to get more details into the issue. If there are any woes, the members can approach the PCC Chairman or the AICC. If they indulge in such activities, it will harm the party only."

Cong women wing stir over fuel price

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: The Women wing of the Congress party Thursday staged a protest here to raise their voice against the consistent rise in the prices of petrol, diesel and domestic gas.

The party leaders took out a rally from the Master Canteen Square with LPG cylinders and raised slogans against the Union government, which, they said, is adding burden on the middle class

The party leaders also attacked the state government and made anti-BJD slogans to attract their at-

tention towards the issue. Posters of Prime Minister



Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan were shown during the rally holding them responsible for ruining the financial backbone of the citizens through oil price hike.

2 flyers test Covid +ve at City airport

ONE FRESH FATALITY IN BOLANGIR PUSHES ODISHA'S CORONAVIRUS TOLL TO 1.915

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: At least two passengers were detected Covid-19 positive during an RT-PCR test at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here, said Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation additional commissioner Subhendu Sahu, Thursday. The duo had reached Bhubaneswar Wednesday afternoon.

One of them has been admitted to hospital, while the other is in home isolation, he said. However, it was not confirmed whether the duo was infected with the new variant of the virus. So far, no new strain of Covid-19 has been detected in Odisha, the official said.

The government has also started contract tracing of the duo and contacting their co-passengers.

BMC commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhury, who received the jab at the Capital Hospital here, said, "We have set up screening and testing facilities at the airport and are in contact with the railways for similar facilities to screen passengers coming from other



POST NEWS NETWORK

IN CITY MARCH 7

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: A women's car rally will be organised by Seva Prayas foundation March 7, on the eve of International Women's Day. This was revealed at a press meet held here Thursday.

The International women's Daytheme "ChooseToChallenge". A challenged world is an alert world and from challenge comes change. "So, let's all choose challenge. Collectively, each one of us can help create a gender equal world what makes International Women's Day successful. We can actively choose to challenge stereotypes, fight bias, broaden perceptions, improve situations and celebrate women's achievements," said Linkan Subudhi, founder of Seva Prayas Foundation.

Namrata Chadha, director of Seva Prayas Foundation, said this rally will also be a fund-raising event for project "SPF eSHiksha" to set up a digital classroom for rural students not privileged with mobiles or laptops for online studies in two villages of Nayagarh district.

The 15-km rally will start from Janata Maidan and will pass through Jaydev Vihar, Acharya Vihar, Vani Vihar and Rasulgarh. The rally will culminate at Utkal Kanika Galleria in Kalpana square.

Agitating Forestry students polish shoes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: The students of College of Forestry at OUAT here Thursday polished shoes as part of their agitation urging the state government to make 4-year BSc degree in Forestry as minimum qualification for recruitment to key posts like forest range officer, assistant conservator of forests, assistant manager of OFDC and OFDC junior manager.

The agitating students also met Forest and Environment Minister Bikarm Keshari Arukha to put forth their demand. The minister reportedly assured the students of taking up the issue with departmental officials. However, the students decided to continue with their agitation until their demand is met.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By an affidavit before Notary Public, Kakatpur, Puri I have changed my name J. Susila Kumari Readdy to T. Susila Reddy for all purposes.



BMC commissioner PC Chaudhury receives Covid jab at Capital Hospital

Status report sought on

college infra projects

It was not confirmed whether the duo was infected with the new variant of the virus

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: Higher

Education (HE) department

Thursday wrote to the chief engi-

neer of Works department asking

for the status report on infrastruc-

ture development work undertaken

The Higher Education dept has

granted Rs 60 crore for construction

of different infrastructure

development projects in government

colleges for 2020-21 fiscal

But the department is in dark about

the progress of the work on these

infrastructure projects

In the letter to the chief engi-

neer (Buildings), Odisha, Snigdha

Champatiray, deputy secretary of

HE department said that in the fi-

nancial year 2020-21, the depart-

ment has released Rs 60 crore for

infrastructure projects in govern-

ment-run colleges of the state.

However, the department is un-

aware about the progress of the

Therefore, the department has di-

rected them to furnish detailed re-

ports on uitilisation of Rs 60 crore

on different works, for kind ap-

praisal of the principal secretary.

Earlier, the HE department had

written to the Works department

February 17 requesting it to un-

dertake infrastructure develop-

ment work for the proposed Odia

University at Satyabadi in Puri

projects, she added.

in different colleges of the state

Now, the focus will be on passengers arriving from Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh which have witnessed an upsurge in new cases

Now, the focus will be on passengers arriving from Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh which have witnessed an upsurge in

Meanwhile, state's Covid-19 tally Thursday surged to 3,36,924 after 89

Rajdhani College

told to submit UC

righer Education depart-

ment has directed the

Rajdhani College here to

submit the pending utilisation

certificate (UC) for Rs 1.0 crore

given to the institution for infra-

structure development under

Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha

In a letter to principal of

Rajdhani College, additional sec-

retary of Higher Education de-

partment Rajashree Mohanty said

that Rs 1.5 crore has been released

in favour of Rajdhani College in

two instalments. The first instal-

ment was of Rs 50 lakh and second

mitted the UC amounting to Rs

50 lakh. The UC against the second

instalment amounting to Rs 1.0

crore is still pending at your level."

Mohanty said. According to RUSA

guidelines, the next instalment

would be released only after sub-

mission of UC for the balance

amount to the Ministry of Human

Resource Development (MHRD).

'The college has so far sub-

Rs 1.0 crore.

Abhiyan (RUSA) 1.0.

more people tested positive for the infection, while one fresh fatality pushed the coronavirus death toll to 1,915, a senior Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department offi-

The new cases were detected in 19 of the state's 30 districts, with 53 cases reported from quarantine centres and 36 local contact cases.

The Covid fatality was recorded in Bolangir district. Sambalpur district recorded the highest of 14 cases followed by nine each from Khurda and Balasore and Sundargarh (eight).

Kandhamal and Dhenkanal turned coronavirus free as both the districts have no active Covid-19 case. This apart, 53 other Covid-19 patients have also died in the state due to comorbidities, said the

Odisha currently has 623 active Covid-19 cases while as many as 3,34,333 patients have recovered from the highly infectious disease.

The state has so far tested over 82.55 lakh samples for Covid-19, including 24,639 Wednesday. Odisha's positivity rate stands at 4.08 per cent.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: The Health department Thursday said that it had been waiting for central nod and more instructions to start the vaccination drive for

March.

The database The vax rates are creation is not likely to be between under the control of the state govern- ₹300 and ₹400 but ment. It is under final price is yet to be Centre where they informed to states use the COWIN app

beneficiaries. As soon as the registrations are done, we can plan istration," he said.

The COWIN app may give beneficiaries option to choose between government setups and private in-

stitutions for the vaccination. He said, "The system is likely to give the option to the citizens to

choose the government hospitals. However, if any beneficiary opts for private hospitals, he/she is free to do this. We will work accordingly."

The rates are likely to be between Rs 300 and Rs 400 but final price is yet to be informed to states. The registration system for the elderly is likely to start in the next three days," he said.

The official said that the state is ready to tackle the situation of higher demands. "We

plan to cover the target population as soon as posible. In the first phase of vaccination, we have been able to perform effectively. If there is more demand for the vaccines, we have to make arrangements accordingly."

Guv praises CP, recommends recognition

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: Congratulating twin city Police Commissioner Sudhanshu Sarangi and his team of officials for arresting the prime accused in the sensational 1999 Barang gangrape case, Governor Ganeshi Lal Thursday recommended the state government to recognise the outstanding detective work as it would inspire others to work towards securing justice in crimes against women.

GANGRAPE CASE

Appreciating the achievement of the police top brass and his team, the Governor wrote to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, "It gives me immense pleasure to note that Odisha Police under the leadership of Dr. Sudhanshu Sarangi, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Bhubaneswar-Cuttack Twin City Commissionerate has been successful in arresting one of the prime accused in a heinous crime which occurred 22 years back in a sensational case in the year 1999.'

The letter added, "It has brought laurel to the State Police for their dedication and commitment to the profession. There is a need to recognize such outstanding performers in a befitting manner which will inspire others in a great way.'

The twin city Commissionerate Police (CP) with help of Pune Rural Police launched the operation 'Silent Viper' and tracked down Bibekananda Biswal, the prime accused in Anjana Mishra gangrape case in 1999, from Amby Valley in Lonavala.

The last of the three accused in the case that led to the exit of then Congress CM JB Patnaik was working as a plumber in Maharashtra using the pseudonym of Jalandhar Swain for the past 22 years.

State awaits Central nod for vaccinating elderly

elderly from

CBK Mohanty, Director of the Medical Education and Training (DMET) said that the database creation is likely to start in the next three days.

and website for registration of the the exercise and execute it. However. till now we do not have any information on the starting of the reg-

TO MARK GANDHIJI'S ARRIVAL IN STATE



Cuttack MP Bhartruhari Mahtab, Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani and CMC commissioner Ananya Das along with others at a meeting at the Collector's office in the Silver City, Thursday, for celebration of 100 years of Mahatama

Cyber fraudsters dupe sr citizens of ₹ 25L

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: It appears that there is no end to cyber frauds as the tricksters continue to target gullible citizens in the state despite all the efforts by the state police. The fraudsters are targeting the elderly and women victims the

Recently, cyber fraudsters duped two sexagenarians of more than Rs 25 lakh on various pretexts. The victims have been identified as Nirmal Chandra Patra, 65, of Chauliagani in Cuttack and Amulva Kumar Hota, 68, of Keshura in

Sahid Nagar police limits here. According to sources, Patra received a phone call from an unknown person who identified himself as the agent of SBI life insurance in November 2013. The man told Patra to invest in an SBI insurance

policy which would yield hefty re-insurance policies.

Subsequently, various cyber criminals contacted Patra through various phone numbers identifying themselves as agents of different insurance companies. Each of them lured the victim with lucrative fake cases

Patra claimed that he had de posited money to the tune of over Rs 15 lakh in various bank accounts of the cyber fraudsters between the period 2013 and 2019.

The cyber cell

Branch office

has started

probe into

the issues

registering

two separate

after

at Crime

Similarly, Hota received a phone call from one Apurva who imper-

July 24, 2020. The lady told Hota that the company wanted to erect mobile tower in his locality and urgently required land. Hota initially denied as the vacant land possessed by his family was registered in the name of his wife.

sonated the staff of Bharti Airtel

However, they continued to pursue him to dupe him through various lucrative offers. Hota finally agreed to let the company erect the tower in his land.

He subsequently invested Rs 10 lakh as asked by the fraudsters for various purposes like registration of the land in his name and others. However, he smelt a rat when they repeatedly demanded money from him.

The cyber cell at Crime Branch office has started investigations into the matters after registering two

SOARING MERCURY

As temperature rises, two girls walk using umbrella at Janpath in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

KARNATAKA MAN LOSES ₹4.50CR TO FRAUDSTERS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: Several fraudsters allegedly duped a senior official of Samsung Electronics to the tune of Rs 4.5 crore. The victim identified as Jagannath Rao Doddamanni, has filed a case with the EOW of Crime Branch in this

According to the sources, in 2017. victim Dodđamani when working as a senior research staff at the electronics major in Korea came across an advertisement in the website, www. expatriates.com, seeking investments in an upcoming south Indian movie 'Shankar Puram' to be produced by one of the accused G Vijaya Sugumaran.

Subsequently, the victim contacted another accused identified as AM Raghunath of Kottayam in Kerala. Raghunath told Doddamani that he should invest in the granite stone mining project in Odisha

The Crime Branch has started investigations into the case on the basis of a complaint lodged by the victim



being run by Sugumaran instead of investing in the movie. Later, Doddamani along with Raghunath met Sugumaran at his office, Sri Sai Enterprises, in Madurai in Tamil Nadu and Doddamani agreed to invest Rs 30 lakh in the Green Granite quarry project in Odisha.

Later, a partnership deed was signed by the wife of Doddamni and the accused Sugumaran 25

agreed to invest a total Rs 50 lakh in both green and black granite



quarry projects.

In December 2017, Raghunath introduced his brother Allagu Muttu Shankar of Jeypore in Koraput to the victim informing him that the investment in green granite was not yielding more profit so they should invest more money in black granite mining being run by one AM Shankar. Subsequently, the victim invested another Rs 30 lakh in the black granite project of Shankar in Koraput.

Later, accused Shnakar gave another proposal before the victim asking him to invest in china clay unit in Odisha which he also did accordingly eyeing for more profit.

In the course he invested Rs 4.50 crore in various projects in Odisha.

The CB has started investigations into the case on the basis of a complaint lodged by the victim.

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Odisha, Bengal officials discuss modalities to resolve border row

Jaleswar, Feb 25: Amid the raging border row in Kotia panchayat of Koraput district with Andhra Pradesh, officials of Odisha and West Bengal initiated efforts to resolve the border dispute along the Subarnarekha river in Jaleswar of Balasore district. Both the sides held a meeting Thursday.

OrissaPOST

This meeting has come following a directive from the NGT to settle the dispute along the Subarnarekha

Top officials of Balasore district and West Midnapore district discussed the modalities at Midnapore to sort out disputes arising out of several bordering villages near Jaleswar and Bhograi blocks

The officials visited various disputed sites along the river course. It was learnt that another round of meeting will be held in Balasore March 2 and a decision will be taken in this regard.

The Subarnarekha river course and some villages in Bhograi and Jaleswar have been an apple of discord between the two states. In 1938, then Collector of Balasore

Soleman had identified Subarnarekha river as the border between both the states.

Later, the river has been chang-



Officials of Balasore and West Midnapore districts at a meeting Thursday

ing its course inside the Odisha. People of Dantun in Bengal have encroached upon parts of the river on the other side

Over years, Bengal mafia has been extracting sand from the river, triggering anger in the Odisha side. There are several cases relating to the environmental issues pending with the NGT.

Recently, the NGT had directed the Odisha and Bengal governments to identify the disputed sites through field investigations.

A few days ago, two scientists of ORSAC have identified a base point in the border area with the help of GPS and DGPS Survey of India.

Similarly, the West Bengal government has pinpointed base points at Dantun. According to reports, in order to maintain peace and tranquility in the adjoining areas and resolve the issue, higher authorities

MARINE CREATURE

Forest officials and villagers trying to release a rare whale shark into sea after it was washed ashore on Sunupur sea

from both the states are deliberat ing to find ways and means.

Following a directive from Balasore Collector, Additional District Magistrate (ADM), Sambit Kumar Nayak, Sub-Collector Kishore Kumar Swain, scientists Pramod Kumar Parida, Manoj Kumar Samsada of Odisha Remote Sensing Application Centre, tehsildar Khirod Kumar Panda and other officials met their West Bengal counterparts.

It may be noted here that the National Green Tribunal (NGT) had intervened in the row and directed both the sides to resolve the issue with mutual deliberations between representatives of both the states. An aerial survey of the area has been made with the use of geo-referencing technologies to demarcate the

Konark jute mill an iron ore stockyard now

DAYS BEFORE, THE STATE GOVT SOLD THE JUTE MILL TO ORISSA STEVEDORES LTD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandikhole, Feb 25: The Konark Jute Mill at Dhanamandal in Jajpur district has lost its existence after the plant was completely closed down and turned into a stockyard for iron ores following its sale to Orissa Stevedores Ltd (OSL), a report said.

The development comes days after the state government sold the mill to OSL. The closure of the plant has rendered over 4,000 mill workers jobless and snatched away the livelihood of over 2,000 people indirectly dependent on it.

Reports said iron ores coming from Keonjhar are being stored on the mill premises to be transported to Paradip in trains. Moreover, there is even a plan to supply iron ores from here to various sponge iron ore units in the state.

Former Chief Minister Nandini



ment of farmers and agriculture in the area had established the jute mill at Dhanmandal in Jajpur district in 1972. The jute mill is spread over 86.80 acres near the Dhanmandal railway station. The current value of the land is estimated to be over Rs 80 crore while the machineries, equipment, buildings and staff quarters will be even more.

The jute mill employed over 4000 workers while 2000 people indi-

it. Later, former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik announced a financial package for revival of the mill after it suffered heavy losses in 1992. The mill again suffered loss in

2004 following which the state government decided to sell it off to some private firm. It was decided to sell off the

plant to OSL at a price of Rs 33 crore in 2010 but the proposal was

shelved due to some errors. However, finally the mill was sold off to OSL February 17. Several agitations have been staged in past by various political parties, employees and civic society activists

demanding revival of the mill. The employees have even submitted a memorandum to the state government urging it not to sale the mill to a private firm. However, the ultimate happened and the mill

was sold to a private firm.

Over 417 workers had taken VRS when the mill was closed down in 2012. The state government had announced to rehabilitate these employees elsewhere but that never happened.

When contacted, Binay Ketan Ojha, manager of OSL, said the iron ore stockvard has been built temporarily while the company is yet to take a call on operating the

Man nabbed 20 years after hurling acid on woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Feb 25: Dhusuri police in Bhadrak district Thursday arrested a man for allegedly hurling acid at a woman nearly 20 years ago. The accused went underground after committing the crime, a police source said.

The accused has been identified as Subash Behera, a resident of Raipur village under Dhusuri police limits.

According to the police, they had re-

ceived a written report from a woman in 2002. In her FIR, the woman had accused Behera of hurling acid at her. She had also mentioned that he had attempted to rape her and it was when she resisted he threw acid on her. On the basis of her

report, the police had

then registered a case (Case No-25/2002) and launched a probe. But Behera had been evading arrest for close to two decades. He ran out of luck Thursday when he was caught by the Dhusuri police. The police arrested him from an unidentified place.

Ivory worth ₹18L seized in Mayurbhanj, 2 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Udala, Feb 25: An ivory smuggling racket is allegedly active in Mayurbhanj distrist. Forest officials arrested two ivory smugglers and seized eight pieces of ivory weighing 45 kilograms at Angarapada village under Udala forest division Wednesday evening.

The smugglers were finalizing a deal to sell the ivory at Rs 18 lakh when they were arrested. Some forest department officials masquerading as customers nabbed the smugglers of the animal body part. The arrested persons were

identified as Fagu Prasad

Hansda of Angarpada village

and Peeth Soren, a resident of Anantpur village under Udala police limits. According to a forest department official, they were tipped off that two smugglers had ivory pieces and were look-

ing out for customers. A team



of forest department officials met the duo introducing themselves as ivory customers. And subsequently, they were nabbed. "As the duo failed to pro-

duce valid documents in support of possessing the tusks, they were arrested and will be produced in court," he added. While talking to journalists, DFO Santosh Joshi said the seized tusks are believed to be of a fully grown elephant. The tusks will be sent to Wild Life Institute of India in Dehradun for tests.

Notably, a tusker was found dead in Sarisua Ramkunda forest under Kaptipada range January 7 while its tusk was missing. It was suspected that the ivory was those of the dead

Lost forests being rejuvenated with JAICA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhanjanagar, Feb 25: Over years, forests in North Ghumsar Forest Division in Ganjam district have vanished due to timber smuggling and firewood collection. However, the forest department has renewed its efforts to regenerate greenery on the lost patches in the region with help of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JAICA), a report said.

The regeneration of lost forests is aimed at improving the living standards of people living in the periphery of the forests.

Forest officials have started reviewing progress of the project in the presence of Vana Surakhya Samitis. It was learnt that after execution of the forest regeneration, people including women associated with over 100 VSSs are becoming self reliant by improving their economy. Forest officials laid stress on cooperation between the forest officials and people to ensure successful implementation of the project. Some VSS members observed that some forests have been rejuvenated.

'Joranda Magha Mela' a low-key affair

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Feb 25: Amidst Covid-19 fears, the popular 'Magha Mela' kicked off at the samadhi peetha of Mahima Gosain, the founder of Mahima cult, at Joranda in Dhenkanal district Thursday.

Every year lakhs of Mahima Dharma followers saints throng Joranda. But this year the festival is a lowkey affair as the district administration has put restrictions on the usual observance of the festival. The move came as the fear of the new strain of coronavirus is looming large.

This year, the presence of only 60 saints including those of the shrine and from other states inside the shrine is allowed. And at one go, only 50 persons can enter the shrine. This year, the Jhada Deepa (sacred fire) will begin at 5:40

For maintaining the law and order situation, under

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Feb 25: Five

members of a family were

sentenced to life imprison-

ment after they were con-

victed by a court in the mur-

der of a woman in Balasore

der, district sessions

judge-2 Subash

Behera pronounced

the verdict. He also

imposed a penalty of

Rs 1 lakh each.

Thursday.

5 of Balasore family

get life sentences

the active supervision of the SP. one additional SP. three DSPs, eight inspectors, 44 subinspectors and assistant subinspectors, 50 constables. seven havildars, 120 homeguards, seven traffic policemen and seven platoons of OSAP force have been deployed at the fair ground. That apart, sniffer dogs

beach in Ganjam district, Thursday The animal is of 15ft in length

and bomb squads are also in place. District Collector Bhumesh Chandra Behera, SP K Siva Subramani and Sub-Collector Saphalya Mandit Pradhan had visited the place Wednesday evening to take stock of the situation. Steps for illumination and drinking water facilities have been taken. The businessmen coming

to the fair every year have been denied permission to put up their stalls or do business on the fair ground.

Because of all these restrictions, the shrine and the mela ground have borne a deserted look this year.

50,000 and various assets as

dowry to his daughter dur-

ing the marriage. A few days

after the marriage, the in-

laws of Mandakini asked

her to bring a bike from her

father. Both the families had

a bitter fight over the de-

mand for a bike. The family



"This year no businessmen from nearby areas or from outside have come to Joranda. Similarly, saints from outside have also been denied entry into the fair ground. In a line, it can be said that the fair looks like devoid of its marked sheen.' observed Prashant Kumar Rout, sarpanch, Joranda.

'Since saints from outside have been denied from participating in the festival, there will definitely be the shortage of ghee as the lion's share of the required ghee is donated by these visiting saints," said Nityananda Das. a senior Mahima saint.

Sub-Collector Saphalya Mandit Pradhan said, "For

the smooth conduct of the mela, barricades have been put up, illumination has been done and availability of drinking water facility has been ensured. The mela is being observed in accordance with the state government's Covid-19 guidelines, Similarly, Covid-19 tests of the local saints and followers have been done. All the steps have been taken for the three-day-long festival being observed without any problem.'

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. ST-OT-AMC-PA ANNAIE-212, Dated : 18.02.2021

Name of Work: PROVISION FOR COMPREHENSIVE ON SITE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR VARIOUS PASSENGER AMENITIES SYSTEMS AT PASSENGER AMENITIES SYSTEMS AT BHUBANESWAR, KHURDA ROAD, KHALLIKOT, CHATRAPUR, BRAHMAPUR, ICHCHAPURAM, PALASA, TALCHER, ANGUL, DHENKANAL, PARADEEP, CUTTACK, PURI, BALUGAON, JAJPUR KEONJHAR ROAD, KENDUJHARGARH, BHADRAK, MALATIPATPUR & SALEGAON STATIONS OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION O EAST COAST RAILWAY FOR A PERIOD OF

Tender Value : ₹ 3,26,54,621.28, Cost of ender document : ₹ 11,800, (including 18%)

start date: 26.02.2021. Tender closing date & time: at 1100 hrs. of 12.03.2021. No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or n person shall be accepted against such

implete information including e-tender website: http://www.ireps.gov.in

Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender. Divisional Railway Manager (Signal & Telecom)

Mrs Rubi Panda (Co-Borrower)

Vil/Town- Mundamal, At/Po- Fcp Project Near Colony Gate, Gp/Town- Jajpur, Dist- Jajpur

none No. 06821-241026(O)/241079(R) Fax No.- 06821-241026/240056 e-mail: eerwss_bnj@ori.nic.in; eerwssbnj2009@gmail.co OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, **RWS&S DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR-761126** 1st Corrigendum to Bid Identification No. E.E. RWS&S_67 of 2020-21

treated as dt.26.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 04.03.2021 up to 5.00 P.M instead of 26.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 04.02.2021 upto 5.00 P.M. All other terms and conditions remain unaltered.

OIPR-25021/11/0043/2021

OIPR-25065/11/0026/2021

RWS&S Division, Bhanjanagar

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

No. 1960 (Online - 22) Date: 23.02.202 No. O-1152: The Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division. Puri on behalf of Government of Odisha invite rcentage rate tenders through e-procurement for 5 Nos. of work for the year 2020-21 in the district of Pur Total No. of Works

Amount varies from Rs.8.85 lakhs to 33.36 lakhs Tender Cost of Packages As per DTCN Class of Contractor

Period of Completion Period of availability of tenders Online/Date & time of bidding Online/last date of seeking clarification/Da of opening of tender papers Bid Availability of Tender Online Last date & time Date, time & venue of of seeking tende Opening of Tender

Rural Works Division. Office of the E.E., R.W. upto 3.00 P.M 1.00 P.M. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents, which is available in website "https://tendersodisha.gov.in".

Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Pur

NITI officer reviews schemes in Kalimela

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kalimela, Feb 25: Ranjit Kumar Mishra, an officer of NITI Ayog, came to Malkangiri on a visit Thursday Mishra conducted a review meeting with PD (DRDA) Balkrushna Bhuyan, district education officer Ramesh Chandra Sethi, executive engineer of the RWSS Basant Kumar Rout, district welfare officer Soudamini Pradhan, BDO Umashankar Dalai and tehsildar Alok Kumar Anugulia.

Earlier in the day, he inspected the Kalimela block office, dents nearby and inquired about various educational institutions

healthcare infrastructure at the CHC and inquired patients about

the community health centre, online education. He also reviewed the progress of Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana Mishra took stock of the at MV-81. This Yojana was executed in 10 villages under Kalimela block

he met some stu-



Regd Office: No. 21, Pattulos Road, Chennai - 600 002. Corporate Office: 46, Whites Road, Chennai-600014. Ph: 044-2851 5267 Branch: A /108, 1st Floor, Banadev Bhawan, Saheed Nagar, Khurda Dist. Bhubaneshwar - 751 007. Phone: 0674 - 254 4677

SALE NOTICE

Whereas the Authorized Officer of Sundaram Home Finance Limited, formerly known as Sundaram BNP Paribas Home Finance Limited., under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Section 13(2), issued a demand notice calling upon the Borrower to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of notice

The Borrower and Co-Borrower having failed to repay the amount within the statutory period, the Authorised Officer in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act in accordance with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, had taken the actual possession of the property described herein below.

Public are hereby informed that the property more fully described in the table hereunder will be sold under Rule 8 & 9 of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 in "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" CONDITION, by inviting sealed tenders from the public up to 17.00 hrs on 13.04.2021. Those who want to participate in the auction sale can forward their bids only by RPAD in sealed covers to the undersigned on or before 17.00 Hrs. on 13.04.2021. Tenders received after 17.00 Hrs. on 13.04.2021 and thereafter will be rejected. The sealed tenders received by RPAD up to 17.00 Hrs. on 13.04.2021 will be opened on 13.04.2021 at 17.30 hrs. at the place mentioned hereunder. The successful bidder has to pay the balance amount within 15 days from the date of receipt of intimation. The sale shall be completed only on deposit of the Balance amount as stated above.

Name and Address of the Borrower & Co-Borrower	Secured Debt (Rs.)	Reserve Price (Rs.)	Sundaram Home	
Mr Rabindra Kumar Panda (Borrower), Vil/Town-Mundamal At/Po- Fcp Project Near Colony Gate, Gp/Town - Jajpur Dist - Jajpur, Jajapur Road, Jajpur - 755020. Also at: Near Indian Oversea Bank, Gopabandhu Chhaka, Vyasanagar, Jk Road,	One Lakhs Six Thousand Five Hundred and Nineteen Only)	Rs. 21,10,000/- (Rupees Twenty One Lakhs and Ten Thousand Only)		
Jajapur Road, Jajpur-755019. Also at: Plot No-974/1758, Khata				
No-251/6, Ps- No- 11, Mauza- Umapada, Jajpur Raad, Jajpur Jajapur Road, Jajpur-755020		Earnest Money	Sundaram Home Finance Limited, Sundaram Tower No. 46 Whites Road, Royanettah Chennai-	

25% of the

tender

Jajapur Road, Jajpur-755020. Description of Property: All that piece and parcel of the property admeasuring Ac. 0.043 dec, which is correspondence to sabak khata No.15 & Plot No.32 and comprised in Khata No.251/6. Situated at Plot No.974/1758, Umapada (Unit-2), Jajpur Road, Tahasil Sukinda, Jajapur District, Road, Odisha, Bounded on the: North: Part of the Plot No.32, South: Road, East: Road and West: Part of the Plot No.32. Within the Registration District of Jajapur and Sub-Registration District of Sukinda. Which is more fully and particularly described in the Title Deed No.5293/2012.

Expenditure

Legal Expenses

+ Incidental

Charges

Note: The intending purchasers are requested to verify the documents and participate in the auction after satisfying about the title to property. Refund will not be given after sale confirmation in case if there arises any dispute regarding the title.

For detailed terms and conditions of the Sale of Property of Mr. Rabindra Kumar Panda, Loan Account No.66200046

please refer to www.sundaramhome.in/uploads/files/sale_notice/66200046.pdf

for SUNDARAM HOME FINANCE LTD.,

Royapettah, Chennai-

600014

Date of opening the Tender

13.04.2021 @ 17:30

Date: 26.02.2021 **AUTHORISED OFFICER**

police limits, was married to Ranjan Jena, son of Debendra Jena of Anladhia Apil 19, 2014.

Ratnakar had given Rs

diary, Mandakini Dulari,

daughter of Ratnakar Dulari

of Pathadurga under Silang

According to reports, members of Ranjan started hearing the case of murtorturing Mandakini. DEATH According to the case

the family members of Ranjan told Mandakini's parents that Mandakini was critically burnt after setting herself afire. She was admitted to district headquarters hospital and later shifted to a private hospital in Bhubaneswar where she

succumbed days later.

Both the sides had tried to settle the issue mutually three times, but failed. Some months later;

Date and Time of availability of bid document in the Portal may be

Sd./- Executive Engineer

1 (One) Calendar month to 4 (Four) Calendar months

Executive Engineer 26.02.2021 10.03.2021 at 11.00 A.M 09.03.2021 08.03.2021 upto Online - 22 at 11.00



In each world, in each being, in each thing, in each atom is the Divine Presence, and it is man's mission to manifest it.

THE MOTHER



Farming needs more

he state government has set out to spend an estimated ₹1.70 lakh crore in the 2021-22 financial year – a rise of over 13 per cent over the last year's annual Budget. The annual credit plan for the year 2021-22 has been enhanced to ₹1.10 lakh crore with an increase of 22.5 per cent over the target of 2020-21. The government has amped up expenditure in most of the sectors, except for agriculture. Odisha is basically a farm-driven economy. Over 75 per cent of its population depends on farming for their livelihood. Unfortunately, a predominant portion of these people are poor. So much so that 'poor' is a synonym for an overwhelming number of farmers in Odisha. Therefore, majority welfare in the state cannot be imagined unless they cover the state's farming community. Therefore, it is apt that the government has a plethora of schemes tailor-made for farmers. Since 2013-14, the state government has been presenting a separate agriculture budget. From an amount of ₹7,162 crore in 2013-14, the farm budget reached ₹19,408 crore in 2020-21. However, the allocation for the agriculture sector has seen a massive 10 per cent drop for the 2021-22 financial year. The farm sector in the state has contracted by a massive 6.5 per cent in the current financial year and the least we were expecting from the Budget was that there would be a rise in spend to boost farm activities. Further, inasmuch as the whole country has been seized of prolonged farmer unrest, a cut in the allocation for farming is shocking. Similarly, the allocation for the much talked about KALIA scheme has come down from ₹3,195 crore last year to ₹1,800 crore — a slashing by a hefty 43 per cent. Granted that implementation of KALIA has seen a lot of anomalies. In fact, this has been one of the most controversial schemes being in vogue in the state. To a question in the House Wednesday, Agriculture Minister Arun Sahoo admitted that money has gone to the accounts of 1.04 lakh fake beneficiaries and the government has lost ₹100 crore on this count. The minister said efforts are being made to recover the money from the bogus beneficiaries. He, however, said that the scheme has helped many small and marginal farmers in the state by giving them cash benefits. In fact, small $\,$ and marginal farmers in rural areas bore the brunt of the Covid-19 pandemic ever since it occurred. Unlike in other states, the land-holding pattern in Odisha is too fragmented. In fact, this is one of the key reasons why farmers here are saddled with low returns on their farm produces. Also, the state does not have much infrastructure in terms of cold-storages and warehousing facilities. Farmers invariably find themselves at the receiving end when it comes to selling their produce. The government should carry out more pro-farmer activities and undertake awareness measures to push farmers to crop diversification. The Budget has nothing to provide for boosting agriculture infrastructure to help farmers raise the yield per acre. In this context, KALIA was well-received by the poor. In fact, the Centre aped the state government in this and introduced PM Kisan Samman Nidhi under which it provided an annual assistance of ₹6,000 to every beneficiary. Thus, wrong implementation of the KALIA scheme is no excuse to cut down on the size of the Budget for KALIA. Monetary support to these marginalised sections of society, who bore the pandemic shock quite acutely, should not be stopped or reduced. Odisha cannot afford to allow its agriculture sector to continue as a Cinderella.

WISDOM CORNER

Don't be afraid to give up the good to go for the great.

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER "Everything comes to him who hustles while he waits.

Every sucessful person in the world is a hustler one way or another.

We all hustle to get where we need to be. Only a fool would sit around and wait on another man to feed him.

WORDS**WORTH**

Most of the meanings of buff are linked to buffalo. One of my reference books (I shall leave it unnamed so as not to its author) suggests that the word originated in the US a the result of the great buffalo hunts of last century. There is an American link, which I'll come back to, but the word itself is very much older, being recorded from about the middle of the sixteenth century. So the buffalo referred to was almost certainly not the American one, which I believe was unknown to Europeans at the time, but one of the several species of Asiatic wild oxen (and buffalo buffs will know that the American plains buffalo technically isn't a buffalo anyway, but a species of bison that's most closely related to the wisent or European bison). The origin of buffalo is the Greek boubalos, though that didn't refer to the buffalo either, which the Greeks didn't have, but was instead the name for a species of antelope. The word was later taken up in Latin for the Indian buffalo, or water buffalo, which was introduced into Italy as a draught animal about the year 600. This animal was widely used in the warmer parts of southern Europe and in North Africa in medieval times. Just to confuse you further, the short form buff, usually in the spelling buffe, came into English before buffalo, in about 1550, being derived from the French version of the word, buffle. Buffalo itself is only recorded in 1588, and seems to have arrived via the Portuguese, who came across various such species during their explorations in Asia (they'd reached India in 1499). From here on we have a series of changes verging on the bizarre. The first was to use buff (or buffe) as the term, not only for the animal, but also for its hide, specifically its tanned hide turned into leather. Later the term was transferred to another very stiff kind of leather made from ox hide, which was softened with oil and used for military uniforms. This sense is used in my translation of Dumas' Three Musketeers: "The baldric was glittering with gold in the front, but was nothing but simple buff behind". So buff-coat was a nickname for a soldier and to wear buff or be in buff was to be in the army. Buff leather was a characteristic light colour, not unlike that of the skin of Europeans exposed to the sun, so it soon led to the expression to be in the buff, or naked. Thomas Dekker is first recorded as using it in 1602: "I go in stag, in buff". Strips of leather were once used in various metal finishing trades to bring goods to a high polish, so leading to our verb to buff meaning "to polish", and to the noun meaning a device to do the polishing with. And the colour of buffalo leather was, of course, the source of the word's meaning of things yellowish-brown.

PROBLEMS OF AGING

Sixty is the worst age to be," Said the 60-year-old. 'You always feel like you have to pee. And most of the time, you stand at the toilet and nothing comes out!" "Ah, that's nothin'," said the 70-yearold. "When you're seventy, you can't even crap anymore. You take laxatives, then you sit on the toilet all day and nothin' comes out!"

"Actually," said the 80-year-old, "80 is the worst age of all!" "Do you have trouble peeing too?"

old said, "Let me get this straight. You pee every morning at 6:00 and crap every morning at 6:30. So what's so tough about being 80?"

year-old.

every morning at 6:00. I pee like a

"Do you have trouble crapping?"

"No, I crap every morning at 6:30."

With great exasperation, the 60-year-

asked the 70-year-old.

racehorse on a flat rock; no problem

'No, not really. I pee

asked the 60-

"I don't wake up until 7:00!"

FOCUS UYGHURS IN CHINA

Challenges to ethnic movements

¶he Xinjiang autonomous region in China is facing the worst kind of cultural and ethnic genocide. There is a long history of dissonance between the indigenous ethnic Uyghur and Chinese authorities.

The Chinese government refuses to categorise Uyghurs as an indigenous population and describes Uyghurs as a regional minority. One among China's 55 ethnic minorities, Uyghurs is a Turkic ethnic group originating from central and eastern Asia.

China is facing criticism and worldwide condemnation over its unkind and harsh treatment towards the Uyghur Muslims. A Uyghur-Kazakh citizen, Gulbahar Jelilova reported that she was ruthlessly beaten and raped while in custody.

Dr Burhan Uluyol

CHINA IS FACING

CONDEMNATION

CRITICISM AND

WORLDWIDE

UNKIND AND

TREATMENT

TOWARDS THE

OVER ITS

HARSH

UYGHUR

MUSLIMS

Stew Chao, a journalist working with Aljazeera reported that Abduveli Ayup, a prominent Uyghur writer, activist and Uyghur language defender, was put in a detention center and later brutally tortured.

Evidence suggests that China is systematically targeting Uyghur Muslims through a state-planned birth control process, Zumrat Dawut and Kalbinur Sidik, who survived from Chinese detention camps, narrated that Uyghur women who conceive more than three children are forcefully sterilized.

Women survivors from these camps narrated that they were beaten, raped, and given mystery injections. A ground study from concentration camp survivors suggests that Chinese authorities have adopted brutal methods to stop new Uighur births. Forced pregnancy checks, medications that stop menstruation, forced abortions, sterilizations, IUDs, and mystery injections are given to Uyghur women by Chinese officials to stop new births.

Person to person outreach suggested that people who were imprisoned and kept in so-called education camps experienced the worst kind of brutalities. People are mercilessly beaten, tortured. and interrogated. Authorities beat them ruthlessly, torture them with electric shocks, and pull-off their nails. They are accused of crimes they never committed.



Uyghur movement gained power with the support of western governments like the US, UK, Turkey. In addition, human rights organisations of Jews working in UK and the inter-parliamentary alliance in China, certain advocacy groups such as the World Uyghur Congress, IHH in Turkey are making efforts to organise Uvghurs to achieve their goals

Muslims in Xingang are not only facing physical carnages but are downgraded and lowered psychologically as well. Uighur Muslim minorities confined in camps were forced to criticize their faith and basic Islamic values. They are forced to recite communist party propaganda and criticize Islam as part of the indoctrination process. Chinese authorities claim that these camps have benefited millions of workers through educational and vocational training. However, according to testimony from survivors these so-called education camps are the worst places so far as human rights violations are concerned.

Political analysts believe that situation in Xinjiang is gruesome and the response from the global community is sneaky. Countries around the world didn't want to affect their ties with economically durable China. However, as a positive development recently MPs in the UK voiced out against human rights violations in Xinjiang and urged British officials and athletes to respond by not taking part

in 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. President Joe Biden reaffirmed the US agenda to counter China on human rights abuses and levelled a series of attacks on China's alleged human rights abuses during his first phone call as president with Xi Jinping. The statement has come as a hope for the Uyghurs movement.

Uyghur movement has received Western attention and support that have internationalised the issue. Support from different communities, organisations, and individuals have improved the movement. They have support all over the world, of course at the expense of the life of Uyghurs.

Since 1949, China is using the policy of racial discrimination, mass killing, and jailing on the pretext of national security. ETIM is used by CCP as an excuse and justification for their oppressive policies, especially the Nazi-style concentration camps in East Turkistan.

China politicises its investment and mutual cooperation to get its political goals fulfilled. It seems China bought the silence of many countries most of them Muslims and underdeveloped nations ruled by dictators using Chinese money. Even the US sees its economic interest over human rights to some extent. Uyghur movement gained power with the support of western governments like the US, UK, Turkey. In addition to these countries human rights organisations of Jews working in UK and the inter-parliamentary

alliance in China, certain advocacy groups such as the World Uyghur Congress, IHH in Turkey are making efforts to organize both Uyghur and non-Uyghur groups to achieve their goals.

What is more important is the need for more Uyghur advocators, international platforms, and support from international organisations. Countries need to open their diplomatic gates so that the Chinese state urgently evolves a political architecture that will allow the Uyghur to maintain their identity and peacefully co-exist with the Hans. However, world communities really should not oppose secular movements for the reassertion of basic political, individual, and religious rights-especially if such movements are peaceful.

China needs to rethink its policies and bring about political changes that are accommodative towards its minority nationalities. The Uyghur movement seems to have lost its momentum by the Chinese repression and strike hard campaign but at the same time, the international campaigns for Uyghur rights and possible independence have become increasingly vocal and well organized. The Uyghur community survives among the diaspora, which spread across central Asia and Europe. They can influence different policies in different parliaments of the world towards their interest.

Individual supporters, activists need financial help to stop China. The Xinxiang independence movement that seeks independence of Xinxiang Uyghur Autonomous The region needs proper guidance and international support. OIC members are being cowed by China's power and are accused of abetting China's Uyghur genocide.

It is very clear that China has an economic chokehold on the Muslim world and is really fearful of paying even lip service to the

The author, also known as Burhan's saiti, is an associate professor at the Istanbul Sabahattin Zain University and a Uyghur activist. The views are personal.

SPECTRUM URBANISATION

Are cities finished?

Carlo Ratti & Richard Florida

FAR FROM RENDERING CITIES OBSOLETE, AS SOME PREDICTED EARLY ON, THE PANDEMIC HAS UNLOCKED AN EVER-BROADER POTENTIAL FOR RENAISSANCE

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST

(200 words), articles and

words). Contributors are

requested to send their contact numbers and full

columns (between 750-1250

postal address/email ID. They may also

and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

rissapost

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

send in their valuable comments, opinion

ue de Rivoli, a boulevard running through the heart of Paris, has been developed in fits and starts. Napoleon Bonaparte initiated construction in 1802, after years of planning and debate, but work stalled following the emperor's abdication in 1814. The boulevard remained in limbo until another military strongman, Napoleon III, completed the project in the 1850s. The next century, construction began again - this time, to accommodate cars. But this past spring, Rue de Rivoli experienced its fastest transformation yet.

With Paris traffic subdued by a COVID-19 lockdown, Mayor Anne Hidalgo decided on April 30 to close the nearly two-mile-long road to cars, in order to create more space for pedestrians and bicyclists. Workers repainted the road and transformed a major artery in central Paris - home of the worldrenowned Louvre museum - vir-

tually overnight. It was not just Rue de Rivoli. Using only paint and screw-in markers, nearly 100 miles of Parisian roads were temporarily reallocated to cyclists in the early months of the pandemic – a revolution in urban reprogramming. It was later announced that the changes would become permanent.

The Parisian example highlights the extent to which the pandemic has accelerated the pace of urban innovation, compressing what would have taken years into months or even weeks. Beyond highlighting the flaws in pre-pandemic urban systems - such as high levels of pollution – it has allowed city leaders to bypass cumbersome bureaucracy, and respond much more efficiently to the needs of people and businesses. During the pandemic, remote work has become the rule in many industries - and many companies plan to keep it that way, at least to a large extent. This re-integration of work and home threatens one of the last remaining vestiges of the Industrial Age: central business districts that pack and stack office workers in skyscrapers.

With many workers unlikely to return to their cubicles, old office towers may be transformed into much-needed affordable housing after the pandemic. One-dimensional business districts could become vibrant neighborhoods.

Non-work activities have been transformed as well. Dining, entertainment, and fitness have increasingly been moving into the open air, occupying space that used to be designated for cars. So, as with the bike lanes in Paris, the pandemic is creating prototypes for a permanently post-automobile, human-centric city. In fact, the changes in Paris are part of a broader plan to create a "15-minute city" (ville du quart d'heure), where core daily activities - including working, learning, and shoppingcan be carried out just a short walk or bike ride from home. So, far from rendering cities ob-

solete, as some predicted early on, the pandemic has unlocked an everbroader potential for renaissance - what the economist Joseph Schumpeter famously called "creative destruction" on an urban scale. The crisis left governments with little choice but to adopt a fast-paced, trial-and-error approach. The extraordinary innovations in pedestrianisation, affordable housing, and dynamic zoning that have emerged highlight the power of positive feedback loops.

In this new age of urban innovation, leaders must take great care to minimize the risks to - and redistribute the returns toward – disadvantaged and vulnerable

groups. That means, first and foremost, listening to them. The Black Lives Matter movement in the United States is a powerful example of a disadvantaged group demanding to be heard. Leaders everywhere should pay attention and address racial and class divides head on. Urban design is central to any such strategy.

A stroll along Rue de Rivoli today reveals none of the desolation and dullness we have come to expect on city streets during the pandemic. Instead, the storied boulevard is bustling with masked Parisians, zooming along on bikes, scooters, e-bikes, and rollerblades, or pausing for coffee at cafes and restaurants. A street deadened by the pandemic has been revived. With thoughtful planning, bold experimentation, and luck, such transformations can be just the start for cities everywhere.

Carlo Ratti is Director of the Senseable City Lab at MIT. Richard Florida is University Professor at the University of Toronto's School of Cities and Rotman School of Management.

Victory of democracy

Sir, "If highlighting the farmers' protest globally is sedition, then I am better in jail," climate activist Disha Ravi told the Delhi court. Twenty-one year-old Disha Ravi, a social worker from Bangalore who was arrested in the Toolkit case, has been granted conditional bail by the Delhi Sessions Court. The court also commented on the police action and approach in this regard. A social worker who has no criminal charges against him/ her cannot be jailed, the court said. "There is no evidence of conspiracy against her," the court said. Such a decision by the court has strengthened Indian democracy. Many thanks and regards to the judge Dharmendra Rana. The verdict has strengthened the Constitutional Right to Freedom of expression. The role of the media when Disha Ravi was arrested was lost after the court's decision, and it has been proven in the public opinion that a section of the media is also acting at the behest of the government. The saddest thing is that the comments made by two BJP leaders, Anil Bij and PC Mohan, on Disha Ravi. Will the BJP take action against them for their comments? Will these two apologise to Disha Ravi?

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Varsity in kalyan mandap restaurant

Sir, Over the years the state government has been magnanimous enough in spending in crores of rupees to improve our higher education institutions and huge funds have been allocated towards this. However, one may be amazed to find that the Khallikote Cluster University is running in a kalyan mandap restaurant for which the government is spending lakhs of rupees towards rent every month. This university has a student strength of below hundred, but our government is spending crores of rupees on this institution. But for whose benefit? The higher education institutions have been flooded with funds from educational excellence and equity to RUSA programme to improve infrastructure for research faculties but the lackadaisical attitude of working has necessitated the deployment of passionate persons to make an educational inventory over all these institutions before draining more public funds to such institutions. Such aberration further points that the government has no proper feedback mechanism in force to uplift these public universities for which such huge spending are made from time to time. Hence it's urgent to deploy people with expertise for a independent appraisal of all the universities in state.

Janaki Ballav Dash, MAYURBHANJ



TWO STATES



OrissaPOST

FRIDAY | FEBRUARY 26 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR

SHIV SENA QUESTIONS MODI-LED GOVT ISRO to launch new-gen rocket **OVER THAW IN TRADE TIES WITH CHINA**

The Uddhav Thackeray-party also said that while the government is once again laying a red carpet for Chinese firms, it should not forget that China is an "untrustworthy and unreliable" neighbour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, Feb 25: The Shiv Sena Thursday slammed the Centre saving that on the one hand it called for a boycott of Chinese products and banned some apps of that country after the border standoff, on the other hand the neighbouring country emerged as India's top trading partner in 2020.

The party also said that while the government is once again laying a red carpet for Chinese firms, it should not forget that China is an "untrustworthy and unreliable" neighbour.

The border tension between India and China de-escalated last week. The tension in trade ties between the two countries also looks set to reduce. There is a possibility that 45 Chinese companies will be given permission to work in India. In short, the tough stand taken by the Modi government after the Covid-19 outbreak towards the Chinese companies and their investment seems to be easing," the Sena said in an editorial in party mouthpiece 'Saamana'.

Politics and diplomatic relations with other countries keep changing

as per the circumstances, it said. "But is it a just coincidence that the Centre has softened its stand towards the Chinese trade after the



de-escalation of tension on the border?" it asked.

Over the last eight months, the border conflict had turned severe. After the Chineseaggression, fierce conflict in the Galwan Valley, India and China reached an agreement on disengagement in eastern Ladakh last week. But soon after that it emerged that the trade ties between the two countries are thawing, it said.

The Uddhav Thackeray-party said that China is the most "unreliable and untrustworthy" neighbour and though it has taken a soft stand on the border for its trade, it can again start its troublesome actions on the border once its purpose is achieved.

Last year, India banned 59 Chinese apps including Tik-Tok. Some trade agreements with China were cancelled, curbs were imposed on the Chinese investment in India and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and nationalism were promoted, it said.

"The Modi government blew its trumpet about how they blocked China...So what exactly happened in the last eight months that red carpet is being laid for 45 Chinese firms now?" it asked.

Citing the provisional data from

WHAT'S GOING ON?

THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT 45 CHINESE COMPANIES WILL BE GIVEN PERMISSION TO WORK IN INDIA

N SHORT, THE TOUGH STAND TAKEN BY THE MODI **GOVERNMENT AFTER THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK TOWARDS** THE CHINESE COMPANIES AND THEIR INVESTMENT SEEMS TO BE EASING

OVER THE LAST EIGHT MONTHS, THE BORDER CONFLICT HAD TURNED SEVERE

the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Sena said it is a fact that China has returned as the top trade partner of India in 2020.

"So after the ministry's data, it is now clear that big balloons filled with nationalistic air about banning Chinese products, apps, call for Swadeshi, have now burst," the editorial said.

"In a nutshell, as soon as China pulls back from the border, our government gives it a go-ahead (to do business in India). But the Centre should not forget that China is an untrustworthy neigh-

The Bangalore-headquartered ISRO has over the years realised five generation of launch vehicles: SLV-3, ASLV, PSLV, GSLV and GSLV-MkIII

Bangalore, Feb 25: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is getting ready to launch a new-generation compact rocket on its maiden orbital test flight, the space agency said. Bangalore-headquartered ISRO has over the years realised five generation of launch vehicles -- SLV-3, ASLV, PSLV, GSLV and GSLV-MkIII.

It had taken up development of the mini rocket -- Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) -- to cater to emerging global small satellite launch service market.

Multiple sources in ISRO said on Thursday SSLV-D1 is targeted to be launched towards the end of March or early April -- most likely in the first month of the financial year -- though no firm date has been set so far.

"We are flying an earth observation satellite (EOS-02) on board the first development flight of SSLV", ISRO Chairman and Secretary in the Department of Space, K Sivan said.

SSLV has been designed to meet "launch on demand" requirements in a cost-effective manner for small satellites in a dedicated and rideshare mode.

It is a three-stage all solid vehicle with a capability to launch up to 500 kg satellite mass into 500 km low earth orbit (LEO) and 300 kg to Sun Synchronous Orbit (SSO).

By comparison, PSLV - the work-



horse of ISRO -- can take up to 1,750 kg payload into SSO of 600 km altitude, according to ISRO officials. With lower per kg launch cost, the mini launcher will have

multiple satellite mounting options for nano, micro and small satel-

Sivan had earlier termed the SSLV an innovative vehicle which can be assembled in just 72 hours.

"Instead of 60 days (for building a PSLV), it (SSLV) will be assembled in three days; instead of 600 people (needed to build a PSLV), it (SSLV) will be done by

Chairman and MD of ISRO's commercial arm, NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), G Narayanan said: "world over there is a big boom for

are flying an earth observation satellite (EOS-02) on board the first

development flight of **SSLV** K SIVAN I ISRO CHAIRMAN & SECRETARY (DEPARTMENT

small launch vehicles and that's why we are focusing on that," Narayanan said. "As soon as SSLV-D1flight is over successfully, further roadmap (for SSLV)

will be charted out", Narayanan told PTI. In fact, Seattle, USbased satellite rideshare and mission management provider, Spaceflight Inc., has al-

ready purchased the first commercial launch of the SSLV (SSLV-D2) from NSIL for launch from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in

FUEL PRICE HIKE

Maha Cong chief accuses Centre of looting public

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 25: Maharashtra Congress chief Nana Patole Thursday claimed that the BJPled Union government was a looter and a dacoit for keeping the fuel nrices high across the country, despite low rates of crude oil in the international market.

Patole alleged that heavy charges levied by the Centre on fuel in the domestic market has raised the retail prices to

three digits for the

first time in the

country's history



mer Assembly Speaker said.

pocket, he said.

The BJP-led government, which

came into power in 2014, has been

increasing various taxes and cesses

that come out of the common man's

cesses including ₹18 for highway de-

velopment and ₹4 for farmers' ben-

efit. Both these cesses were mini-

"The Centre has levied several

Speaking to reporters, Patole alleged that heavy charges levied by the Centre on fuel in the domestic market has raised the retail prices to three digits for the first time in the country's history.

"The Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre is a looter and dacoit for keeping the fuel prices high across the country, irrespective of the low rates of crude oil in the international market," the formal when the Manmohan Singh government was in power," Patole

In Maharashtra, the Devendra Fadnavis government had increased various taxes on petrol and diesel, he said, adding that the hike was as high as ₹11 in his five-year tenure. "In comparison, the MVA government has increased its taxes by ₹1 only," the Congress

HC allows Rao's counsel to visit him for bail formalities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 25: The Bombay High Court Thursday permitted a counsel of poet-activist Varavara Rao, an accused in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case, to visit him in the Nanavati Hospital here to obtain his signatures for completion of his bail formalities.

Rao, 82, was Monday granted interim bail for six months by the high court on medical grounds in the case being probed by the National Investigation Agency

The court had asked Rao to deposit a personal bond of ₹50,000

Ninterim bail for six months by the high court on medical grounds in the case being probed by the National **Investigation Agency**

hursday, a bench of Justices SS Shinde and Manish Pitale allowed advocate R Satyanarayan to meet Rao to get his signatures on an application seeking permission from the HC

ao was arrested in August Rao was arrested 2018. He has been in custody, awaiting trial since then

and two solvent sureties of the like amount, and at that time refused to grant request of his lawver Anand Grover for permission to the activist's counsels to meet him.

On Thursday, a bench of Justices S S Shinde and Manish Pitale allowed advocate R Satvanaravan to meet Rao to get his signatures on an application seeking per-



mission from the HC to modify his bail conditions

On Wednesday, Grover approached the HC seeking that Rao be permitted to deposit temporary cash bonds before the NIA court here instead of the solvent sureties.

Grover had said that the procedure for obtaining sureties was time-taking.

He had sought permission to deposit the cash bonds for a period of two months and complete the solvent sureties formalities in such period.

On Thursday, he urged the HC to allow advocate Satyanarayan to meet Rao to get his signatures on the application for permission to deposit the cash bonds instead.

The HC granted permission for

Satvanaravan to meet the activist. It also directed Rao's counsels to mention on Friday the application for modifying the condition for sureties. Rao was arrested in

August 2018. He has been in custody,

awaiting trial since then. He was admitted to the Nanavati Hospital by the Maharashtra government in November last year following HC's intervention.

On Monday, while granting interim bail to Rao, the HC imposed several conditions on his release. including a direction to him to remain in the city, within the juris-

diction of the NIA court here. Rao will be discharged from the hospital and released on bail if his health condition is stable and once the bail formalities are completed.

ROPEWAY PROJECT IN NANDI HILLS SOON: MIN-

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chikkaballapur; Feb 25: Karnataka Health Minister K Sudhakar Thursday said that a cable car facility at the popular tourist spot of Nandi Hills will be a reality soon as the state government has released ₹10 crore already for developing this place into an international tourist destination.

After inspecting the development works at Nandi Hills here, Sudhakar who is also Chikkaballapur MLA and district in-charge minister, said that there is popular demand from people for a cable car service for the last several years but this time it will be a reality.

"Preliminary work will start i next three or four months. Tender will be called soon to allocate the work order." he said.

According to him, the district administration plans to introduce trekking trails to five hills surrounding the Nandi hills as part of its eco-tourism initiative. "Beside this conservation of archaeological monuments, beautification, infrastructure devel-

up in the coming days. Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa is more keen to give priority to the tourism sector in the coming Budget," he added.

opment works will also be taken

The cable car project or rope way project has remained a pipe dream for nearly 35 years, after this project was mooted by then Kannada superstar and director Shankar Nag who died in an accident almost three decades ago.

Successive governments since, SM Krishna who was CM of Karnataka between 1999 to 2004, had proposed to construct this ropeway and even allocated ₹1.25 crore to conduct feasibility study for setting up ropeway projects not only in Nandi Hills but also on Chamundi Hills and Krishna Raj Sagara garden (Brindavana garden) in Mysuru, Jog waterfalls in Shivamogga, Vaikuntha Hills at TungaBhadra Dam, Ballari and

Shravanabelagola hills in Hassan. However, ropeway projects have regularly figured in state Budgets since then but failed to take off at any place owing to forest and ecological concerns



JAKKUR AVIATION TRAINING SCHOOL TO REOPEN: MIN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Feb 25: The Government Aviation Training School at Jakkur that was shut for the past three years will reopen, Minister of Youth Empowerment and Sports, Planning and Statistics,

Dr Narayana Gowda said Thursday. The Minister visited the aviation training school at Jakkur in the city spread over 214 acres and directed the officials to initiate measures to reopen it at the earliest.

Gowda expressed his displeasure over the mess around there. Later in a statement, he said,

"There are students for the aviation school but there is a lack of teaching faculty due to which the students are in trouble.'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 25: Upholding a 35year-old man's conviction for assaulting his wife, the Bombay High Court has said the wife's refusal to make tea for husband could not be accepted as provocation for him to assault her, and observed that wife is "not a chattel or an object".

In an order passed earlier this month, Justice Revati Mohite Dere said "marriage, ideally, is a partnership based on equality". But, notions of patriarchy and the idea that the woman is a man's property still prevail in society, leading a man to think that his wife is his "chattel", the court observed.

The HC also said the testimony of the couple's 6-year-old daughter inspires confidence and cannot be disbelieved.



The court upheld the conviction and 10 years' imprisonment awarded to Santosh Atkar (35), a resident of Pandharpur in Solapur district, by

a local court in 2016. He was found guilty on the charge of culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

N AN ORDER PASSED EARLIER THIS MONTH, JUSTICE REVATI MOHITE DERE SAID "MARRIAGE, **IDEALLY, IS A PARTNERSHIP BASED ON EQUALITY'**

THE HC ALSO SAID THE TESTIMONY OF THE COUPLE'S 6-YEAR- OLD **DAUGHTER INSPIRES** CONFIDENCE AND CANNOT BE

As per the order, Atkar and his wife had been having disputes since some time.

On the day of the incident in December 2013, his wife insisted on going out without making a cup of tea for him.

The man then struck her with a hammer, injuring her grievously. As per the case details and testimony of the couple's daughter, Atkar then cleaned the spot of the crime, gave his wife a bath and took her to hospital.

She succumbed to her injuries after being in the hospital for about a week. The defence argued that Atkar had been provoked into committing the crime because his wife refused to make tea.

The HC, however, rejected the argument and held that there existed adequate evidence, including testimony of the man's daughter, to prove the charges against him.

'The deceased, by refusing to make tea for the appellant (Atkar), by no stretch of imagination, can be said to have offered grave and sudden provocation for the appellant to assault her, much less, such a bru-

tal assault," it said. "It would not be out of place to observe that a wife is not a chattel or

an object," the HC said. Such cases reflect the imbalance of gender and skewed patriarchy, the socio-cultural milieu one has grown up in, which often seeps into a mar-

ital relationship, it said.

The court said an imbalance of gender roles exists in society, where the wife is expected to do all the household chores

"Emotional labour in a marriage is also expected to be done by the wife. Coupled with these imbalances in the equation, is the imbalance of expectation and subju-

gation," Justice Mohite Dere said. Social conditions of women also make them handover themselves to their spouses, she said. "Thus, men, in such cases, consider themselvesas primary partners and their wives, chattel," the judge said.

national



Dear PM, fishermen folk need an independent and dedicated ministry of fisheries, not just a department within a ministry

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

"issues", which drew

from the BJP

whose leaders ac-

cused him of an

opportunistic anti-

Modi also took on

Gandhi over his

statement that

there was no 'ded-

North bias.

icated' fisheries ministry at the

Centre, adding the NDA govern-

make a fisheries ministry. I was

shocked. The truth is it is the cur-

rent NDA government that had

made a ministry for fisheries in

eries has grown more than 80 per

cent in two years," he said, adding

the earlier NDA dispensation under

the late Atal Bihari Vaipavee had es-

tablished a ministry for the tribal

"The budget allocated for fish-

"Congress leader says we will

ment had set it up in 2019.

condemnation

UP LEGISLATURE PASSES BILL ON RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

The Uttar Pradesh legislature Thursday passed a bill aimed at curbing religious conversions by fraudulent or any other undue means, including through marriage





government is fully sensitive towards farmers. We have held several rounds of talks... We proposed many amendments as well as keeping the farm reform Acts on hold for 1.5 years... but, they haven't responded to our proposals

NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER

We wanted to find a way to resolve this issue amicably, and with a unanimous resolution passed in the House today, we have found that wav out

JAI PRAKASH MAYOR, NORTH DELHI There are

various choices with regards to scholarships. Firstly, the higher

education institutes of Ireland themselves are offering merit based scholarships. Besides, education in Ireland, as a national brand, will be giving scholarships to 10 Indian students on the day of the showcase

GILES O'NEILL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

SHORT TAKES

5 killed in blast at explosives unit

Virudhunagar: Five people were killed and six injured in an explosion at a fireworks factory near Sivakasi in the district Thursday, police said. More than ten sheds where chemicals had been stored were razed to the ground in the mishap, the second such incident this month in a cracker manufacturing unit in this region, the country's fireworks hub. Fire and Rescue service teams battled the blaze in the unit at Kalayar Kurichi, police said, adding the injured were rushed to hospitals. The cause of the explosion was not known immediately.

E-auction of surplus paddy

Raipur: The Chhattisgarh government Thursday decided to sell surplus paddy procured from farmers in the kharif marketing year 2020-21 in the state through eauction, an official said. A decision in this regard was taken during a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel in the premises of the legislative assembly here, he said. In the kharif marketing year (KMY) 2020-21, 92 lakh metric tonne (LMT) of paddy was procured from farmers at minimum support price (MSP) in the state.

Delhi govt to switch to EVs

New Delhi: All departments of the Delhi government will now use only electric vehicles, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia announced Thursday. The transition to EVs will be done within the next six months, he said. The government, which has over 2,000 cars in its fleet, hopes its decision will inspire other cities in the country and the world to tackle the issues of pollution and climate change with the urgency they deserve, he said.

Cong to gherao Pb Raj Bhavan

Chandigarh: The Congress will 'gherao' Punjab Raj Bhavan March 1 in protest against "rising" fuel prices. Punjab Congress chief Sunil Jakhar Thursday said the party will gherao the Raj Bhavan to take the people's voice against this "cruel" rise in prices of essential commodities to the Centre. "We will keep pressurising the central regime, which has completely forsaken the interest of common man."

'Divide, lie & rule' Cong's policy 'No fundamental right

MODI TARGETS RAHUL OVER THE LATTER'S RECENT 'NORTH-SOUTH' REMARKS

AGENCIES

Pondicherry, Feb 25: Attacking Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his recent 'north-south' remarks. Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday alleged the party's policy was to "divide, lie and rule.

Not mincing words, he said the Congress culture of feudal politics, dynasty politics and patronage politics was ending and people all over the country were rejecting the party. He also expressed shock over

Gandhi's contention that there was no 'dedicated' fisheries ministry. .They are gold, silver and bronze medal winners in telling lies." Modi

said addressing a public meeting in poll-bound Pondicherry, as he said people of the union territory were celebrating the "freedom from misgovernance of Congress. Modi hit out at former Pondicherry Chief Minister V

Narayanasamy, implying he headed a 'high command' government that served the interests of a few Congress leaders in Delhi.

He also slammed him for "lying" about the complaint made by a woman against the government during the Congress leader's visit here a fortnight ago.

Pitching Pondicherry as a region with potential in various sectors, he said the NDA wanted to make it the BEST, saying the acronym meant the UT being a hub of Business, Education, Spirituality and Tourism.

Training his guns against the Congress, whose party-led gov-



Congress leader

says we will make a

fisheries ministry. I was

shocked. The truth is it is

the current NDA

ministry for fisheries

NARENDRA MODI I

ernment fell on Monday after it was reduced to minority in the wake of resig-

nations he said government that made a 'the Congress culture vou saw in Pondicherry for five years is how the party works nation-"Our colonial rulers had the

policy of divide and rule. Congress has a policy of divide, lie and rule. Sometimes their leaders put region against region, sometimes they put community against community." "They are gold, silver and bronze

medal winners in telling lies," he said, apparently referring to Gandhi's recent statement in Kerala. During his Kerala visit Tuesday,

Gandhi had said he was used to a "different type of politics" in north India and coming to the southern state was "very refreshing" as peocommunities as well

Referring to the BJP's sweep of the Gujarat municipal polls, he said the number of wards won by the saffron party was ten times that of

his party's archrival Congress.
"This is how big the gap is..," he

"People all over India are rejecting Congress. Their seats in parliament are the lowest ever. The Congress culture of feudal politics, dynasty politics, patronage politics is ending. India is young, aspirational and forward looking."

Recalling his earlier Pondicherry visit, he said the excitement and energy is 'excellent' now and that "the winds of change" here are visible

He said people were happy for two reasons, with one of them being him earlier launching several developmental works.

The other reason was that people of Pondicherry were celebrating the "freedom from misgovernance of Congress," he said referring to the fall of the Narayanasamy government.

While the people had voted for Congress with great hopes in 2016 that their problems would be solved, after five years they were disappointed and "their dreams and hopes are broken," he said.

In 2016, the people of the UT did not get a government of people but one that was serving the high command of the Congress.

"They got a government that was busy serving Congress high command in Delhi.'

for same-sex marriage'

The Centre stated this in an affidavit filed in reply to a petition by same-sex couples seeking enforcement of fundamental right of choice of partner



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 25: The Centre Thursday told the Delhi High Court that there is no fundamental right to seek recognition for same-sex marriage.

The government stated this in an affidavit filed in reply to a petition by same-sex couples seeking enforcement of fundamental right of choice of partner. "Despite the decriminalisation

of Section 377 of the IPC, the petitioners cannot claim a fundamental right for same-sex marriage being recognised under the laws of the country," the affidavit stated.

It said that the fundamental right under Article 21 cannot be expanded to include the fundamental right for same sex marriage. "In India, marriage is not just a

matter of union of two individuals

but a solemn institution between

riage in India is regarded as a sacrament and depends on age-old customs, rituals and cultural ethos and societal values.

a biological man and a biological

The Centre further stated that liv-

ing together as partners and hav-

ing sexual relationship with same-

sex individuals, which is

decriminalised now, is not com-

parable with the Indian family unit

concept of a husband, wife and

children. It submitted that any in-

terference with the marriage laws

framed by the Parliament in the

country would cause complete

havoc with the delicate balance of

The Centre submitted that mar-

personal laws in the country.

woman," the affidavit read.

Marriage of same-sex persons would violate the existing personal as well as codified laws, the Centre claimed, while seeking dismissal of the petition.

UP isn't mulling to cut taxes on petrol, diesel



Lucknow, Feb 25: The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has said that there is no proposal to reduce tax on petrol and diesel as revenue is needed to ensure betterment of health services and other development works requirements for improving health facilities and other developmental works keeping in mind the Covid-19 pandemic. He further said, "At present, con-

sumers in Uttar Pradesh are getting diesel at a lower price than the states of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Punjab and Uttarakhand." He added that petrol also is avail-

able at lower prices in Uttar Pradesh as compared to Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Punjab, Orissa, Delhi, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh. About the decrease in the LPG

prices, the minister said since the

At present, consumers here are getting diesel at a lower price than in Andhra Pradesh. Raiasthan. Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, **West Bengal, Punjab and Uttarakhand**

SATISH MAHANA | CABINET NINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, UTTAR PRADESH

due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Replying to a question by Samajwadi Party (SP) MLA, Narendra Verma during the question hour in the state Assembly Thursday, state minister Satish Mahana said, "There is no proposal under consideration to reduce tax on petrol and diesel in view of the resources and financial Goods and Services Tax (GST) came in force on July 1, 2017, the state has no right to reduce the tax. "It is for the GST council to decide on it," he said.

The opposition, Congress and SP, staged a walkout, saying the government was "antifarmers, anti-women, and anticommon man".

DIDI'S WAY OF PROTEST



In a unique style of protest against fuel price hike, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Thursday commuted to and from state secretariat Nabanna on an electric scooter. While on way to Nabanna in the morning, Baneriee was seen riding pillion on the battery-powered electric scooter driven by minister Firhad Hakim, the TMC supremo herself took the driver's seat on way back to her residence in Kalighat area from secretariat in the afternoon

AIMIM rally not allowed in Bengal, Owaisi fumes

AGENCIES

Hyderabad, Feb 25: AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi Thursday blasted the Kolkata Police for 'denying' permission for his rally in the pollbound West Bengal capital and mocked at ruling TMC MPs for talking about democracy in Parliament.

The Hyderabad MP, whose party has decided to contest the polls in the eastern state, claimed permission was denied for the rally scheduled for Thursday without assigning any reason.

"You (Trinamool Congress Government) allow (Union Home Minister) Amit Shah to hold a public rally. You allow BJP to hold public rallies. Congress and Left hold rallies. But not MIM. Why?.. he asked.

Talking to reporters here, he said the TMC MPs in Parliament use 'flowery' terms such as democracy and freedom of speech, but it doesn't reflect at the ground level in West Bengal.

Once the Code of Conduct for the polls likely in April-May comes into force, AIMIM would be compelled to approach the Election Commission, against the continuation of the police officer (who rejected permission) in the same post, he added.

"If the officer is there, the elections will not be free and fair," he contended, a day after his party announced the cancellation of the rally citing denial of police permission for it.

He was scheduled to kick off his party's campaign ahead of the West Bengal assembly elections with the rally in the minority-dominated Metiabruz area of Kolkata

WB needs vaccine against 'tolabaji, cut-money': Nadda

AGENCIES

Anandapuri (WB), Feb 25: BJP president JP Nadda Thursday said that people of West Bengal need a vaccine against "cut-money" and "tolabaji" (extortion) and the Trinamool Congress has to be sent for "aaram (relaxing)", and the Saffron party should be given the "kaam (work)" of running the___



Addressing a function to mark the culmination of the 'Paribartan Yatra' rally in West Bengal, which he flagged off February 6, Nadda claimed that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee does not represent the "true Bengali culture" and said that the BJP will restore it if voted to power.

'Yesterday, Mamata ji has said that she wants help from the prime minister to procure COVID-19 vaccines so that she can make them available to people before the assembly polls free of cost. The Centre has already said that those above the age of 60 will get free vaccines. Those who are above 45 and have comorbidity will also get it," he said.

FUEL ANGER

GOVT GETS TAX-RICH, CONSUMERS BEAR THE BRUNT

IN THE NINE MONTH PERIOD OF CURRENT FISCAL ENDING DEC 31, 2020, CENTRE'S EXCISE DUTY COLLECTIONS FROM THE PETROLEUM SECTOR HAS ALREADY TOUCHED ₹2,35,811 CRORE- MARK, MUCH MORE THAN WHAT IT GOT IN THE FULL FINANCIAL YEAR 2019-20

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 25: Government is all set to walk away with the highest level of excise duty collection from the petroleum sector this year, even as fuel consumers continue to face persistent increase in petrol and diesel prices that has taken the retail prices to historic high levels across the country.

In the nine month period of current fiscal ending December 31, 2020, Centre's excise duty collections from the petroleum sector has already touched ₹2,35,811 crore-mark, much more than what it got in the full financial year 2019-20. At this pace, collections may well cross ₹3 lakh crore for the very first time in FY21.

Last fiscal, the Centre received ₹2,23,057 crore as excise revenue from the petroleum sector. The numbers were even lower at ₹2,14,369 crore in FY19. Only in FY17, excise collections remained firm at ₹2,42,691 crore when the government raised excise duty taking advantage of low crude prices.

Higher collections as taxes have come at a time when consumers are facing the brunt of rising fuel prices with sharp increase in retail price of petrol and all through 2021. In fact, petrol price has breached the ₹100 a litre mark in several parts of the country burning a larger hole in consumers' pocket.

"It is the heavy load of taxes that has kept the two auto fuel prices at

all-time high levels now with the pandemic-affected revenue stream preventing the government from considering a duty cut. But with global oil prices expected to firm up further, a decision may be needed soon on revision of duties as has been done by a few state governments to tame fuel prices," said an oil industry expert asking not to be named.

Taxes and duties now account for over 60 per cent of the retail price of petrol and over 55 per cent of the retail price of diesel in the capital at current level of pump prices.

The taxes component has fallen over the fortnight as the global price of petrol and diesel has also risen in the past few days. Otherwise taxes were well over 70



per cent of the retail price of petrol till last year.

What the higher level of taxes means is that the bulk of the retail price a common man pays to get

fuel is tax and if the government would not have targeted petrol and diesel to raise revenue every time there is a pressing need for it, the fuel prices in India today would have mirrored retail prices prevailing decades ago (in 2003) and closer to what consumers in oilrich countries in the Gulf pay.

The current state tax (VAT) rate on petrol and diesel has risen to ₹20.61 and ₹11.68 per litre, respectively, in Delhi though the state government cut taxes on diesel to bring down the fuel price that had even crossed petrol rates in the national capital.

Similarly, the Centre's decision in May to raise excise duties on petrol and diesel by ₹10 and ₹13 per litre, respectively, had taken up the component of this tax on retail prices by ₹32.90 on petrol and ₹31.80 per litre on diesel.

So the total tax component (Central and state in Delhi) is ₹53.51 a litre on petrol and ₹43.48 on diesel. Compare this with the base price of the two products today and the tax load becomes clearly visible. The base price of petrol currently is a mere ₹31.82 a litre and diesel is just ₹33.46 a litre.

The base price was much lower till late last year meaning that the two products are being heavily milked for revenue at the cost of consumers who are at the receiving-

end of the pandemic bearing higher prices for both food and fuel.



HOW OTT PLATFORMS ARE REGULATED WORLDWIDE

The OTT sector in India was lesser regulated than its offline counterparts like film and television

he media and entertainment industry has witnessed a steady growth across the world. The recent trend of the use of the internet for media consumption has catalysed this growth. Today, many online media platforms or over-the-top platforms (OTT / OTT platforms) offer curated video content suited to the needs and demands of individual consumers. The OTT market in India alone is expected to cross \$5 billion by 2023.

As the Centre has finalised new rules for digital content, social media companies and OTT platforms, it is worthwhile to look at how other countries around the world regulate OTT content

SINGAPORE The laws on the regulation of OTT content in Singapore are direct. The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA), the media regulatory body of Singapore issued a code of practices for OTT and video-on-demand services to follow from 1 March, 2018. Service providers are required to classify their content on the same basis as offline films – a) G: for general, b) PG: for parental guidance, c) PG13: for parental guidance for children below 13, d) NC16: for no children below 16 years of age, e) M18 for mature audiences (18 and above) only, and f) R21 for content restricted to people of 21 years and above only. Service providers are allowed to offer content rated NC16 and above only if provide for a parental lock function on their plat-

This allowed creative freedom to content creators which enabled **OTT platforms to cater to the tastes** of a wider audience

The Broadcasting Services Act, 1992

(BSA) is the principal legislation gov-

erning the OTT sector. It is regulated

through a complaints-based mechanism

introduced January 1, 2000 known as the

online content co-regulatory scheme.

Schedule 5 (for content hosted outside

Australia) read together with Schedule 7

(for content with an 'Australian connec-

tion') of the BSA lay down detailed guide-

lines on the kind of content which may be

hosted online. The BSA covers both con-

tent which has been classified and also con-

tent which has not been classified. Content

which has not been classified is treated at

par with the rating it is most likely to get

Board has been classifying both online and

offline content. Recently though, after a

two-year pilot test, Netflix got the ap-

proval to self-classify its content using

In September 2018, the Director General

of the British Broadcasting Corporation

(BBC) called for a regulation on video

streaming services such as Netflix and

Amazon. Following this, the UK Culture

Secretary hinted that video streaming

services should face the same scrutiny

as other public service broadcasters.

Despite an absence of any specific regu-

lations covering online videos, the British

Board of Film Certification announced a

partnership with Netflix under which it

allowed the streaming giant to set its own

So far, the Australian Classification

AUSTRALIA

if classified.

its own tools.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

This, coupled with the convenience of accessing the OTT platform anytime anywhere appeared to be one of the main reasons behind the popularity of these platforms with the modern audience



ratings for film and television programs.

Thereafter, the UK government released a white paper on the threat that unregulated online content posed and sought closed consultation on how it could be dealt with. The white paper is concerned only with user-generated content at the moment. It proposes a new regulator and a regulatory framework to ensure online safety of British citizens.

The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTUK) of Turkey is the primary body tasked with the regulation and supervision of radio, television and on-demand media services in the country. It recently notified a regulation which aims to regulate content being broadcast on the internet. It mandates joint stock companies established locally, providing radio, television or on-demand broadcast services over the internet to obtain a licence. The licence would be granted for 10 years. It further mandates the licence holders to encrypt the audio and visual feeds; pro-

political, didactic, or other end. vide their access to the RTUK for remote monitoring and also share various IP licences with the RTUK to enable broadcast recording. It also mandates the sharing of

Art for art's sake, a slogan translated

from the French l'art pour l'art, was

coined in the early 19th century by

the French philosopher Victor Cousin

The phrase expresses the belief held

by many writers and artists, espe-

justification, that it need serve no

cially those associated with

Aestheticism, that art needs no

of the license holder. While this brings the OTT content market in Turkey under a licencing regime, many feel that regulations prescribing censorship of the OTT content too may follow soon

program catalogue, corporate structure

and contact information of representatives

INDONESIA

Indonesia's biggest telecom operator Telkom blocked Netflix after its global rollout in 2016 for violating local censorship laws. In 2017, Indonesia's Ministry of Communication and Information Technology gave Netflix a month to comply with local regulations and partner with a local operator or create a local unit. Subsequently, Netflix entered into a partnership with Telkom following which the latter unblocked user access.

The Indonesian Broadcasting

Commission (KPI), the state body monitoring all broadcasting content, announced August 7, 2019 that it would release rules which would enable it to monitor digital

media content such as that hosted by YouTube, Netflix and other social media. No such rules were available at the time of publishing of this piece. Kenya's film certification body Kenya Film Classification Board (KBFC) banned

Netflix two weeks after its launch in the country citing the service to be a threat to moral values and national security. KBFC planned to release a law under which anybody uploading and broadcasting any videos on the internet would be required to have a filming license. After public uproar, the KBFC went back on its plan. Although not much is known on the licencing front, but Kenya seems to be in the final stages of developing a framework to tax foreign OTT services such as YouTube and Netflix. This suggests that the country may not let the services carry on their business without some form of regulatory oversight.

SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia's Anti-Cyber Crime Law (ACCL) appears to be a sweeping law on all-things-internet. The seemingly short legislation uses wide language to give overarching powers to the country to censor internet activity. While it is unclear if the country has any laws dealing specifically with OTT content, it recently used the ACCL and invited international criticism. The Communications and

India, Pak agree on ceasefire along LoC

Information Technology Commission cited Article 6 of the ACCL and requested Netflix to remove an episode of 'Patriot Act' which was critical of the government, from its domestic catalogue. Though Netflix complied with the request, it attracted criticism for giving-in to the country's severe restriction on freedom of expression. **EUROPEAN UNION**

In the EU, there have been recommendations for tackling illegal online content. Last year, a European Union paper on 'Illegal and harmful content on the Internet' listed contents which can be concerns to national security "such as instructions on bomb-making, illegal drug production, terrorist activities." It also spoke about protection of minors, racial hatred or racial discrimination, instructions on pirating credit cards, electronic harassment as content which needs to be checked. **UNITED STATES**

In the USA, there was a proposal in 2019 recommending a new regulatory framework to monitor the harm unregulated online content does to society. Online Harms White Paper in May 2019 recommended a new regulatory framework. Additionally, an 'Online safety Bill' was also proposed with an independent regulator. The US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) had earlier claimed that the regulations were "unnecessary and heavy-handed" but had sought to introduce practical regulations instead to incen-

SHORT **TAKES**

Gelatin loaded car near Antilia

Mumbai: A suspicious vehicle with gelatin, an explosive material, inside was found parked near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's house in Mumbai Thursday evening, police said. The vehicle was found on Carmichael Road near 'Antilia'. Amhani's residence. a police official said. A Romb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS) team reached the spot immediately, he said. It was not an assembled explosive device. he said, adding that further investigation was on. The Crime Branch of Mumbai police is conducting probe.

■ 1.3 crore vaccine

number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered to healthcare and frontline workers in the country has crossed 1.30 crore, the Union Health Ministry said Thursday. From March 1, the COVID-19 vaccination will be extended to people aged 60 years and above and those aged above 45 years with comorbidities, it stated. February 24, the Centre held meeting with all states and Union Territories to review the progress of COVID-19 vaccination drive with a focus on improving pace of vaccination.

doses given so far

New Delhi: The cumulative

Shantanu gets

Thursday granted protection from arrest till March 9 to Shantanu Muluk, who is accused along with Disha Ravi in connection with allegedly being involved in sharing a "toolkit" on social media related to the farmers' protest. Muluk along with Ravi and another co accused Nikita Jacob, was booked for alleged sedition and other charges. Additional Sessions Judge Dharmender Rana granted the relief after Delhi police said it needed time to conduct further interrogation before filing a detailed reply to Muluk's anticipatory bail plea.

No thinning of troops along LoC, says Army

New Delhi, Feb 25: There is no proposal of thinning of troops along Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir as Pakistan has not stopped terrorism, Indian Army said

The force, however, said that they are hopeful that Pakistan would end support to cross border ter-The Army also said that the sit-

uation along the northern borders has no bearing on Line of Control/Western Front. India and Pakistan have reached

understanding to implement ceasefire reached during the talks between Director-General of Military Operations (DGMO) of both the countries over hotline Monday. "Our endeavour is to achieve

peace and stability which is beneficial for the region and especially for the population residing along the LoC, this is an attempt to bring the violence levels down," the Indian Army said. It also stated that DGMO of India

and Pakistan Army interact regu-



larly over the established mechanism of hotline.

The purpose of the mechanism is to review the situation along the Line of Control, International Boundary and endeavour to achieve observance of all understandings and agreements between the two

militaries. The force said that Indian Army remains committed to fight the scourge of terrorism. "Acts of terror will not be tolerated and befitting response would await any misadventure," it said.

"Over the last few years our counter infiltration posture along

the LoC has further strengthened and terrorists have found infiltration across the LoC increasingly

The force said that infiltration of terrorist remains a primary concern. "The ceasefire violence is prirorism along and across LoC.'

There is trust deficit with Pakistan, said the force stating: 'We have a history of bitter experiences with Pakistan. The peace processes in the past have been derailed either because of acts of terror or Pakistan Army's belligerence. We are alive to this reality and we all remain prepared to meet any eventuality. However we remain cautiously optimistic. Peace

along LoC is mutually beneficial." On terrorism, the army said: We don't have any reason to believe that proxy war or proxies have been rolled up. LeT, JeM, Al Badr and others still operates from Pakistan and remain potent. United Jihad Council is still operational. Weapons smuggling is still there. However, we are hopeful that our AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 25: India and Pakistan reviewed the situation along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, and agreed for strict observance of all agreements, and understandings, Indian Army said Thursday.

A joint statement was issued in New Delhi and Islamabad. It stated that the Director Generals of Military Operations of India and Pakistan held discussions over the established mechanism of hotline

"The two sides reviewed the situation along the Line of Control and all other sectors in a free, frank and cordial atmosphere," the state-

It further pointed out that in the interest of achieving mutually beneficial and sustainable peace along the borders, the two DGMOs agreed to address each other's core issues and concerns which have the propensity to disturb peace and lead to violence.

Both sides agreed for strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease firing along

CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS IN J&K

MONTH	2018	2019	2020	2021 (upto 25 Feib)
MAL	203	203	367	336
FEB	223	215	366	255
MAR	201	267	411	
APR	176	234	387	
MAY	104	221	382	
JUN	19	181	387	
JUL	13	296	398	
AUG	44	307	408	
SEP	102	292	427	
OCT	178	351	394	
NOV	180	304	350	
DEC	175	297	423	
TOTAL	1620	2148	ALAE	COI

the LoC and all other sectors with effect from midnight February 24 and February 25, 2021.

Both sides reiterated that existing mechanisms of hotline contact and border flag meetings will be utilised to resolve any unforeseen situation or misunderstanding." the statement said.

Wednesday, Indian Army Chief General M.M. Naravane. while speaking at a webinar organised by the Vivekananda International Foundation, said

that there is definitely a great improvement in the internal security situation in Jammu and Kashmir: He, however, stated that Pakistan-promoted terror still remains a threat.

Indian Army Chief said that Pakistan is committed to the strategy of supporting terrorism in all its forms as terrorist launchpads continue to be operated and terrorists continue to be there on the other side of the LoC looking for an opportunity to cross over.

'Lack' of spectrum major issue before 5G rollout

THE TELECOM MINISTRY IS FACING INSUFFICIENCY OF SPECTRUM WITH THE DEFENCE AND SPACE SECTORS SEEKING NEARLY HALF OF THE SPECTRUM

relief from court

New Delhi: A court here

■ Of the 300 megahertz available, 25 megahertz is required for certain satellite uses by ISRO and 100 megahertz is wanted by the defence sector

■ If these 125 megahertz are deducted from the available spectrum, only 175 megahertz will be available with the DoT, under the Telecom Ministry, to divide it among three present operators

AGENCIES

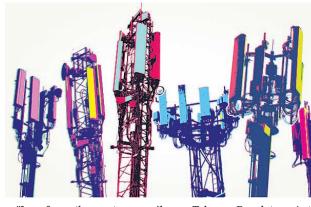
New Delhi, Feb 25: As the stage is almost set for selective rollout of 5G (fifth generation) mobile network technology in India by 2021-

end, the Telecom Ministry is facing insufficiency of spectrum with the defence and space sectors seeking nearly half of the spectrum. Of the 300 megahertz which are

available, 25 megahertz are required for certain satellite uses by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and 100 megahertz is wanted by the defence sector.

If these 125 megahertz are deducted from the available spectrum. only 175 megahertz will be available with the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), under the Telecom Ministry, to divide it among three present operators.

However, DoT has been addressing the issue of "lack of spectrum" and deliberating with Department of Space (DoS) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for making sufficient spectrum available for 5G IMT (International Mobile Telecommunications) services.



"In so far as the spectrum availability is concerned, typically, we are talking of 5G spectrum as the band which is between 3.3 and 3.6 gigahertz. Of these 300 megahertz, which are available, 25 are required for certain satellite uses," a written note by DoT Secretary to a parliamentary committee clarifies.

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), which is the regulator of the telecommunications sector in India, has also said that ISRO should be given 25 megahertz with "a suggestion for beyond the footprint of the use"

Now, the official said out of balance 275 megahertz, about 100 megahertz -- between 3.3 and 3.4 gigahertz -- is wanted by defence sector.

We are having discussions with them. Two meetings have been held. A very positive response has come. I am sure this issue will be resolved. If this is deducted, then 175 megahertz are available to us," the DoT Secretary stated.

The official said "Ideally we should have about 300 megahertz. We are also trying to see if we can get a little more, that is, beyond 3.6 giga-

"There we have a problem, because that is already committed for satellite usage. There is also millimetre wave, which has not yet gone to TRAI for recommenda-

The DoT official also said that the auction, right now, is not thought

process. So, I would like to assure

of as no recommendation has come. "There will be a consultation

the committee that we will take a balanced and holistic view, and see how the interest of the industry, consumers and the public which is prime and supreme is balanced and then we will act accordingly."

Explaining the impact of allocating less amount of spectrum, the parliamentary committee had stated that the 3.5 gigahertz of spectrum, which we call as sub-6 band in 5G, almost every operator across

the globe has 100 megahertz of it. There are some exceptions with 80 megahertz of it. But if we go lower than that, there is equipment on which we will spend billions of dollars, it would be a severe underutilisation of that," said the

"It is like buying a car and using it with one particular seat because the other three seats are not available. The equipment itself will be severely underutilised."

international



Together with our partner, the Serum Institute of India, we plan to supply over 300 million doses to 145 countries through COVAX in the first half of 2021 as part of our global and equitable access pledge RUUD DOBBER | PRESIDENT OF ASTRAZENECA'S

RARE VAN GOGH PAINTING TO BE DISPLAYED

A rare painting by Dutch impressionist master Vincent Van Gogh of a street scene in the Parisian neighbourhood of Montmartre will be publicly displayed for the first time



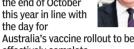
self-defence applies also to attacks by non-state actors. In fact, the source of the attack whether a state or a non-state actor, is irrelevant to the existence of the right of

K NAGARAJ NAIDU | DEPUTY PERMANENT

caused by the runs deep, but we are not without hope. India and China's projected economic growth figures give hope to the South African economy

TITO MBOWENI | FINANCE MINISTER OF

We are now planning for international travel to restart at the end of October this year in line with the day for



effectively complete

ALAN JOYCE | CHIEF EXECUTIVE, **QANTAS AIRWAYS**

SHORT **TAKES**

Venezuela expels **EU team head**

Caracas: Venezuela's government has ordered the expulsion of the head of the European Union delegation in the South American nation following the bloc's decision to impose sanctions on several Venezuelan officials accused of undermining democracy or violating human rights. Isabel Brilhante Pedrosa Wednesday was given 72 hours to leave the troubled country. Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza said Brilhante Pedrosa was declared persona non grata by decision of President Nicolas Maduro.

Mexico starts vax drive

Mexico City: Mexican authorities administered their first shots of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine Wednesday to residents of the capital, with people lining up at a vaccination station on the city's south side, eager to get any protection they could. "I just want to be vaccinated; I don't care what company made it," said Ismael Avila, 72, of the southside borough of Xochimilco. "I want to make it out of this alive.' Avila said he was satisfied with the Russian vaccine's reported effectiveness rate of around 92%.

Armenia on the verge of a coup

Yerevan: Armenia's prime minister spoke of a military coup Thursday after the military's General Staff demanded that he step down after months of protests sparked by the nation's defeat in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan. The General Staff issued a statement calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. which was signed by top military officers. The move was triggered by Pashinyan's decision earlier this week to oust the first deputy chief of the General Staff.

Lanka receives vax from India

Colombo: Sri Lanka Thursday received 500,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccines ordered from India. Sri Lanka's acting health minister Channa Jayasumana said the new batch was ordered under an agreement between the State **Pharmaceuticals Corporation** (SPC) of Sri Lanka and the Serum Institute of India. The distribution of vaccines

Pro-military marchers rampage in Yangon

SEVERAL PEOPLE WERE SET UPON AND BEATEN BY GROUPS OF MEN. SOME ARMED WITH SHARP KNIVES. OTHERS FIRING CATAPULTS AND HURLING STONES. WITNESSES SAID

REUTERS

Yangon, Feb 25: Supporters of Myanmar's military, some armed with knives and clubs, others firing catapults and throwing stones, attacked opponents of the Feb 1 coup Thursday, as protests against the new junta continued in the country's

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the army seized power and detained civilian government leader Aung San Suu Kyi and much of her party leadership after the military complained of fraud in a November election. Protests and strikes have taken

place daily for about three weeks, and students had planned to come out again in the commercial hub Yangon Thursday.

But before many coup opponents congregated, about 1,000 supporters of the military turned up for a rally in the city centre.

Some threatened news photographers, media workers and scuffles soon escalated into more serious violence in several parts of

Several people were set upon and beaten by groups of men, some armed with knives, others firing catapults and hurling stones, witnesses said. At least two people were stabbed, video footage showed.



In one incident, several men, one wielding a large knife, attacked a cording to a witness and liveman outside a city-centre hotel. Emergency workers helped the bloodied man after his attackers moved off but his condition was

"Today's events show who the terrorists are. They're afraid of the people's action for democracy," activist Thin Zar Shun Lei Yi told Reuters. "We'll continue our peaceful protests against dictatorship."

not known.

As dusk fell, dozens of riot police fired tear gas into a neighborhood in the city to disperse a crowd that had gathered at an administrative

streamed video. The violence will compound worries about a country largely paralvsed by the protests and a civil dis

obedience campaign of strikes

against the military.

Earlier, police blocked the gates of Yangon's main university campus, stopping hundreds of students inside from coming out to demon-

The spokesman for the ruling military council did not respond to a telephone call seeking com-

Military chief General Min Aung Hlaing says authorities are using minimal force. Nevertheless, three protesters and one policeman have been killed in violence.

A rights group said as of Wednesday 728 people had been arrested, charged or sentenced in relation to the pro-democracy protests.

The army said its overthrow of the government was within the constitution after its complaints of fraud in the Nov 8 election, swept by Suu Kyi's party as expected, had been ignored. The election commission said the vote was fair.

US brings Countering Chinese Propaganda Act

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Feb 25: Legislation has been introduced in the US Congress for countering the Chinese propaganda by creating a new sanctions authority against state-backed disinformation net-

Republican Study Committee Chairman Congressman Jim Banks and Senator Tom Cotton Wednesday introduced the Countering Chinese Propaganda

The bill requires the Secretary of State to examine whether or not the United Front Work Department meets the criteria to be sanctioned under this new au-

The legislation is based on recommendations from the Republican Study Committee's National Security Strategy and authorises sanctions against the United Front Work Department (UFWD), which is an overseas influence arm of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC)

The United Front participated directly in the Uyghur genocide and the oppression of Christians in China, but its ultimate goal is to spread those persecutory tactics around the globe, Banks said.

The leadership in Washington may have changed, but China's political warfare hasn't. It's fallen

to Congress to expose and counter Communist Party disinformation. We can't back down now," he said.

"The Chinese Communist Party expands its disinformation campaign each day - concealing information on the origin of Covid-19, lying about its oppression of Uighurs and other religious minorities, and infiltrating American universities and businesses, Cotton said.

'The United Front Work Department (UFWD) is just another venue for the CCP to spread its propaganda and to co-opt foreign groups to toe the CPC line. We must put an end to their tactics,' he said.

Meanwhile, the Republican Study Committee Member Congressman Jody Hice sent a letter to the Carter Center in Georgia expressing concern over the group's decision to co-host an event with the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament, which is an organisation affiliated with the UFWD.

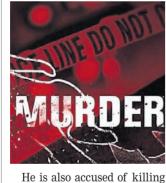
Four Senators -- Marco Rubio, Mitt Romney, Chuck Grassley and Rob Portman - Wednesday wrote a letter to US President Joe Biden to implement a proposed rule requiring US academic institutions to disclose their relationships with Confucius Institutes, which are funded by the CPC headed by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Man kills neighbour, cooks her heart with potatoes; held

AGENCIES

Oklahoma, Feb 25: A man in the United States' Oklahoma has killed a woman neighbour and cut out her heart before cooking it with po-While obtaining a search war-

rant, an agent with the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation told a judge that Lawrence Paul Anderson killed his neighbour, Andrea Lynn Blankenship, at her home in Chickasha, about 40 miles southwest of Oklahoma City, and cut her heart out before cooking it and serving it "with potatoes to feed to his family to release the



his uncle, Leon Pye, and a 4-yearold girl, Kaeos Yates, Pye's granddaughter, at his home that same night. His aunt, Delsie Pye, was also stabbed but survived. Anderson was found in another

room at the house vomiting on pillows and was arrested by officers at the scene.

Anderson later told officers about Blankenship while being interrogated, nydailynews.com reported.

He had recently also had a 20year-sentence commuted by Gov Kevin Stitt and was released from

Oz passes law to make Google, FB pay for news

Facebook

ban on

Australians

accessing and

sharing news



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canberra, Feb 25: Australia's law forcing Google and Facebook to pay for news is ready to take effect, though the laws' architect said it will take time for the digital giants to strike media deals.

The Parliament Thursday passed the final amendments to the socalled News Media Bargaining Code agreed between Treasurer Josh Frydenberg and Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg In return for the changes,

Facebook agreed to lift a ban on Australians accessing and sharing news. Rod Sims, the comdrafted the code, said he was happy that the amended legislation would address the market imbalance between Australian news publishers and the two gate-

ways to the internet. "All signs are good," Sims said. "The purpose of the code is to address the market power that clearly Google and Facebook have. Google and Facebook need media, but they don't need any particular media company, and that meant media companies couldn't do commercial deals," the Australian Competition and Consumer

The rest of the law had passed in Parliament earlier, so it can now

Commission chair added.

Google has already struck deals with major Australian news businesses in recent weeks including News Corp and Seven West Media. Frydenberg said he was pleased

to see progress by Google and more

recently Facebook in reaching commercial deals with Australian news But Country Press Australia, which represents 161 regional news-

papers across the country has raised concerns that tiny publications outside large cities might miss out. Sims said he was not surprised

that the platforms would strike deals with the large city businesses first. "I don't see any reason why anybody should doubt that all journalism will benefit," Sims said. "There things take time, Google

and Facebook don't have unlimited resources to go around talking to everybody. I think this has got a long way to play out,' he added.

Chris Moos, a lecturer at Oxford University's petition regulator who agreed to lift a Business School, said the latest amendments amounted to a "small victory" for Zuckerberg.

Moos said the legislation would likely result in small payouts for most Australian news pub-

lishers. But Facebook could again block Australian news if negotiations broke down. The legislation was designed to curb the outsized bargaining power of Facebook and Google in their negotiations with Australian news providers. The digital giants would not be able to abuse their positions by making take-it-or-leave-it payment offers to news businesses for their journalism. Instead, in the case of a standoff, an arbitration panel would make a binding decision on a win-



A helicopter dumps water on a wildfire in Ashikaga, Tochigi prefecture, north of Tokyo Wednesday

Xi declares absolute victory in China's poverty eradication

AGENCIES

Beijing, Feb 25: President Xi Jinping Thursday declared that China has scored a "complete victory" in its fight against poverty by lifting over 770 million people out of it in the last four decades, calling it another "miracle" created by the country that will go down in

Absolute poverty has been eradicated in the world's most populous country, Xi announced while addressing a gathering held here to mark the country's accomplishments in poverty alleviation and honour its model poverty fighters. China has a population of around

Xi said that all poor people in



poverty. With this, China has achieved the UN goal of poverty eradication 10 years ahead of the 2030 deadline, he said.

Over the past eight years, the final 98.99 million impoverished rural residents living under the current poverty line have all been lifted out of poverty. All the 832 impoverished counties and 128,000 impoverished villages have been

removed from the poverty list, he said. Since the launch of the reform and opening up in the late 1970s, 770 million impoverished rural residents have shaken off poverty when calculated according to China's current poverty line, China has contributed to more

Xi, also General Secretary of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), said. With such achievements, China

than 70 per cent of global poverty

reduction over the same period,

has created another "miracle" that will "go down in history," he said.

Xi said since he assumed power. China has invested accumulative fiscal funds of nearly 1.6 trillion yuan (about USD 246 billion) into poverty alleviation over the past eight years.

Amid COVID-19 pandemic, flu has vanished in the US

Experts say that measures like mask wearing, social distancing and virtual schooling — were a big factor in preventing a "twindemic" of flu and COVID-19

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Feb 25: February is usually the peak of flu season, with doctors' offices and hospitals packed with suffering patients. But not

Flu has virtually disappeared from the US, with reports coming in at far lower levels than anything seen in decades.

Experts say that measures put in place to fend off the coronavirus – mask wearing, social distancing and virtual schooling — were a big factor in preventing a "twindemic" of flu and Covid-19. A push to get more people vaccinated against flu probably helped, too, as did fewer people traveling, they say.

Another possible explanation: The coronavirus has essentially muscled aside flu and other bugs that are more common in the fall and winter. Scientists don't fully understand the mechanism behind that, but it would be consistent with patterns seen when certain flu strains predominate over others, said Dr Arnold Monto, a flu expert at the University of Michigan.

Nationally, "this is the lowest flu season we've had on record," according to a surveillance system that is about 25 years old, said Lvnnette Brammer of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Hospitals say the usual steady stream of flu-stricken patients never materialized

At Maine Medical Center in Portland, the state's largest hospital, "I have seen zero documented

flu cases this winter," said Dr Nate Mick, the head of the emergency department. Ditto in Oregon's capital city, where the outpatient respiratory clinics affiliated with Salem Hospital have not seen any confirmed flu cases.

"It's beautiful," said the health system's Dr Michelle Rasmussen.

The numbers are astonishing considering flu has long been the nation's biggest infectious disease threat. In recent years, it has been blamed for 600,000 to 800,000 annual hospitalizations and 50,000 to 60,000 deaths.

Across the globe, flu activity has been at very low levels in China, Europe and elsewhere in the

Northern Hemisphere. And that follows reports of little flu in South Africa, Australia and other countries during the Southern Hemisphere's winter months of May through

August The story of course has been different with coronavirus, which has killed more than 500,000 people in the United States. Covid-19 cases and deaths reached new heights -December and January, before be-

ginning a recent decline. Flu-related hospitalisations, however, are a small fraction of where they would stand during even a very mild season, said Brammer, who oversees the CDC's tracking of

the virus.







business



discussions with various stakeholders to bring in greater granularity in disclosures by listed companies in environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) space and would soon issue relevant guidelines AJAY TYAGI | SEBI CHAIRMAN

We are in active

JAPAN'S CABINET GREEN-LIGHTS BILL

Japan's cabinet Wednesday green-lit a Bill to ratify a FTA signed last year by 15 Asia-Pacific countries. The RCEP, which will cover a third of global trade and population, making it the world's largest FTA, will become the foundation of trade in Asia





In order to earn more profit in the interest of their countries, crudesupplying countries are increasing the prices of crude



DHARMENDRA PRADHAN UNION PETROLEUM MINISTER

Corporate loans, in particular have performed well because banks prior to the pandemic had largely provisioned for legacy problem loans and tightened underwriting standards SRIKANTH VADLAMANI VP & SENIOR

We also witnessed cybercriminals using relief efforts and public health information as spam

CREDIT OFFICER, MOODY'S

lures including targeted attacks on critical components of the vaccine supply chain. These all remain issues in

SUDEEP DAS I IBM TECHNOLOGY SALES. INDIA/SOUTH ASIA

SHORT TAKES

Club Mahindra launches 3 resorts

Mumbai: Club Mahindra, which is the flagship brand of Mahindra Holidays & Resorts, Thursday said it has launched three affiliate resorts in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The resorts Symphony Palms, Symphony Summer Sands and Symphony Samudra are located at Havelock Island, Neil Island and Port Blair, respectively, the hospitality group said in a statement. "In alignment with our robust expansion plan, the Symphony Samudra, Summer Sands and Palms resorts are sure to offer a 5-star experience and a peaceful getaway," Mahindra Holidays and Resorts India CRO Miguel

BharatPe loan-book crosses ₹1,000 cr

Mumbai: Small merchantsfocused credit supplier BharatPe has grown 10 times during the fiscal year so far, surpassing its full-year target of lending ₹1,000 crore of loans, and now expects to end the fiscal disbursing over ₹1,250 crore, a top company official said. So far, BharatPe has given loans to over 1.1 lakh merchants across 75 cities. It lists Delhi-NCR. Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Pune as its top performing cities where credit demand has been led by customers/merchants from groceries, food and beverages, and fashion, retail and beauty segments.

SBI, Shapoorji Pallonji sign MoU

Mumbai: State Bank of India and Shapoorji Pallonji Real Estate Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enable faster processing of home loans, approvals and to provide other benefits. The lender's head and chief general manager (Real Estate & Housing Business Unit) Shreekant said the collaboration will create winwin business opportunities for all stakeholders.

Hatsun Agro begins production

Chennai: Dairy products maker Hatsun Agro has commenced commercial production at its new facility in Maharashtra set up at a cost of ₹130 crore, the company said Thursday. The fully automated dairy plant has been set up on a 72-acre land at a cost of Rs 130 crore in Solapur district and can process six lakh litres milk per day, the Tamil Nadubased company said.

'India has no negative attitude towards Huawei'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 25: Chinese telecom gear maker Huawei Thursday said India has no negative attitude towards the company and there is no decision to block it from participating in 5G till date

Huawei Asia Pacific vice president Jay Chen during a virtual session of Mobile World Congress 2021 told reporters that the company can contribute to the production linked incentive scheme recently announced by the Indian government to boost telecom equipment manufacturing in

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 25: Reserve Bank of

India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta

Das Thursday said there is a need

for coordinated action between the

centre and state governments to re-

duce taxes on petrol and diesel prices.

action between the centre and the

states because there are inherent

taxes levied by both," the gover-

nor said, adding that calibrated re-

He, however, said both the cen-

tre and the state governments have

their revenue pressures and they are

required to spend high sums of

money to enable the country and the

people to come out of the Covid-19

and the compulsion of the gov-

ernments are fully understood. But

having said that the impact on in-

flation also is something, which

comes in from the fact that petrol

and diesel prices do have an im-

pact on the cost of manufacturing,

production...," the Governor said

"So the revenue requirement

pandemic stress.

duction of taxes is important.

"There is a need for coordinated

Manufacturing in India is an important and right strategy for India to further grow. We believe Huawei can also bring some contribution to this (PLI) scheme. It is their responsibility because we have long-term partnerships and strategy in India JAY CHEN I VICE PRESIDENT,

are very late. It looks like it will be the country. "Until now, they (Indian government) have no negative attitude or decision to block Huawei for

5G. Of Course, 5G trials in India

TAX REDUCTION IN FUEL PRICES

NEED COORDINATED ACTION

BETWEEN CENTRE, STATES: DAS

Both the centre and the

state governments have

their revenue pressures

and they are required to

country and the people

On the central bank's digital cur-

rency. Das said a lot of work is going

on internally in the RBI and some

broad guidelines and approach pa-

The governor said RBI has cer-

tain concerns on crypto curren-

pers will be released on it soon.

spend high sums of

money to enable the

to come out of the

pandemic stress

with partners and engaging with the Indian government. We are confident that the government will take the right decision for India," Chen According to a Parliamentary

launched now. Huawei is working

Panel report tabled in Lok Sabha this month, The Department of Telecom

He said RBI is looking into

strengthening the regulatory ar-

chitecture for asset reconstruction

upgrading the regulatory archi-

tecture in respect of the ARCs to en-

sure that they have a skin in the

game, and they are very much in

business is receiving a lot of at-

tention from us," Das said. On set-

ting up of ARC for non-perform-

ing asset (NPA) management, as

announced in the Budget 2021, he

said, "(in) no way will it jeopardise

the activity of the existing ARCs"

ing realisation and awareness

among banks to dealing with bad

assets and they are proactively

making provision in their books

for stressed assets. He said RBI has

sharpened and deepened its su-

pervisory methods and is doing

deep dive into areas of banking

"We have a precise idea of build-

up of stressed assets in banks and as soon as we see a sign of stress, we

immediately enter into a discus-

sion with the banks and proactively

deal with the problems," he said.

which were not done earlier.

The governor said there is grow-

"(We are) refining and further

companies (ARCs).

is keeping a close watch on the 5G development around the world and would take appropriate decisions after evaluation of all the pros and cons on the 5G ecosystem, including social, economic and security considerations.

The DoT secretary has told the panel that the department has not banned any company, however, it has issued orders based on representation from Indian telecom gear makers that public sector telecom firms should not buy equipment from vendors of any country that prevents Indian companies from supplying products.

Chen said Huawei can participate in the recently announced PLI scheme. Under the plan, companies will be given an incentive for manufacturing telecom gears in India. The incentive will be based on annual incremental production for a period of five years. "Manufacturing in India is a very important and right strategy for India to further grow. We believe Huawei can also bring some contribution to this (PLI) scheme. It is Huawei's obligation and responsibility because we have long term partnerships and strategy in India,' Chen said.

He also said that 2020 was uncertain for Chinese players in the Indian market.

"However, we never changed our strategy towards India. We continue to have a solid belief in this market and in cooperation with the Indian industry. For the past 20 years, we have served with great harmony and cooperation and hope so for continued collaboration between India, the industry and Huawei. This is our belief, very simple and clear," Chen said.

Privatisation of PSUs against interest of people: AITUC



New Delhi, Feb 25: Privatisation of public sector units (PSUs) is against the interest of the people of the country, according to trade union AITUC.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday made his strongest pitch for privatisation of nonstrategic PSUs, saying the government has no business to be in business and sustaining loss-making units on taxpayers' money drains resources that could otherwise have been spent on public welfare schemes.

Speaking at a webinar on privatisation by the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), he said the government has no business to be in business and his administration is committed to privatising all PSUs barring the bare minimum in four strategic sectors.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the All India Trade Union Congress Trade Union (AITUC) said "it deplores the policy of selling the PSUs, the national wealth to the corporates of Indian and foreign brand against the interest of our people and our country."

It said AITUC calls upon its unions, the working people and the general masses at large to "fight back these policies" of the government. The AITUC is among ten central trade unions.

position key credit challenge in 2021'

strap: It said the government's fiscal deficit for 2020-21 and 2021-22 should be lower than projected, supported by stronger revenue generation in ongoing March quarter

'India's weak fiscal

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 25: India's Budget is tilted towards supporting growth and the fiscal deficit target of 6.8 per cent for 2021-22 is realistic, Moody's Investors Service said Thursday.

With regard to India's finances. Moody's said weak fiscal position will remain a key credit challenge in 2021. It said the government's fiscal deficit for 2020-21 and 2021-22 should be lower than projected. supported by stronger revenue generation in ongoing March quarter and higher nominal GDP growth in the next fiscal year.

"India Budget tends to tilt a little bit in favour of support for growth. The deficit in Budget for FY'22 was above what we expected, but nevertheless we think that the deficit target is a realistic one.

"The government has incorporated a conservative assumption of nominal GDP growth and we think most revenue assumptions con-



servative, with the possible exception of monetisation expectations pegged in Budget," Moody's Associate Managing Director (Sovereign Risk) Gene Fang said. Wide fiscal deficits combined

with lower real and nominal GDP growth over the medium term will constrain the government's ability to reduce its debt burden, Fang said in an online conference organised by Moody's and its affiliate ICRA on India Credit Outlook 2021'.

Moody's said the prospects for fiscal consolidation remain weak particularly given the government's mixed track record of implementing revenue-raising measures.

Max Life attains 'highest-ever' claim settlement ratio



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 25: Max Life Insurance Thursday said it has settled individual claims worth over ₹562 crore in 2019-20, and attained a settlement ratio of 99.22 per cent during the year.

The company has paid off 15,342 claims received in 2019-20, thereby settling ₹562.54 crore worth of individual claims received in 2019-20, it said in a statement.

Max Life has achieved the highest claim settlement ratio of 99.22 per cent in 2019-20 in comparison with the company's last five years' performance, said the insurer.

With consistent investment in fraud detection and its mitigation, Max Life has demonstrated a steady improvement of 226 basis points (bps) in the claims paid ratio over the past five years to 99.22 per cent in 2019-20, from 96.95 per cent in 2015-16.

The company said the numbers are based on the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India's (Irdai) an-

at an event organised by Bombay cies and it has already been communicated to the government. Chamber of Commerce.

ABROS SHOE ENTERS ODISHA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: Abros, a shoe brand, was officially announced its launch into Odisha market. Ramii Enterprises is the distributor for the Abros shoe.

The announcement was made during an event organised at Puri, Wednesday. Company's CEO Pramod Sharma, director Pradeep Sharma and chief of Ramji Enterprises Sanjay Lohia were present at the event. Also, the meeting was joined by around 200 dealers. The company will provide shoes

for all groups (children, gents and ladies). "We are offering best quality shoes equipped with great design, looks and high technology," said Sharma.

The price range starts from ₹199 to ₹4.000. The products like chappal, sandal, formal and sports shoes are available here

The company has already



started its operation in West Bengal and Chhattisgarh. Now it has in Odisha, as part of expansion plan. Officials claimed that they will start operation across the country in next 3-4 month and is likely expand its operation outside India by December, 2021. The company works under Make in India campaign.

The firm is also offering various schemes for the dealers even there is a chance for London tour.

STATE TRADERS' BODIES SUPPORT ALL-INDIA STRIKE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 25: State's traders associations have extended their support to the call of Bharat Bandh February 26 by Confederation

of All India Traders (CAIT). The CAIT has called for all India strike protesting against illogical regulations and changes in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) ecommerce and FSSAI rules. Traders' bodies in Cuttack have also joined

in the protest. The traders claimed that the rules on input tax credit are illogical and it is a penalty for them. They also stated that they would face difficult in doing business due to

complexity of GST. According to the report, about 40,

000 trade associations, representing around eight crore traders in the country, are joining at the nation wide Bandh.

The protestors demand a review of the provisions of the goods and services tax (GST) regime. The traders made allegation of violation of e-commerce rules by major e-

CAIT statement stated that all commercial markets across the country will remain shut supporting to the strike. Plans are also afoot for a Chakka Jam.

Odisha Jewellers Association has also extended their support to the nationwide strike. The association has requested all to compulsory shutdown of their showrooms protesting against new GST policy imposed by the Central government.

Moreover, the All India Transport Welfare Association (AITWA), an apex body of 1 crore transporters, has agreed to join the strike and also declared Chakka Jam of transport sector Friday across India.

"There is no effective regulator to monitor e-commerce business in the country because of which ecommerce firms are adopting unethical and unfair business practices which are affecting offline traders,' the statement read

A report claimed that the protest will be taking place in over 1,500 towns and cities across states and no traders will login to GST portal to register their protest.

nual report for 2019-20.

Product customisation attracting retail customers: Report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 25: With increasing competition across product categories, creating unique value propositions is becoming more and more challenging for brands and as a result, customisation, personalisation and bespoke offerings are becoming a norm to attract and retain consumers, according to a Deloitte India report.

The report released during the Retail Leadership Summit organised by Retail Association of India (RAI) said: "Do-it-yourself products, especially in the food and beauty segment, reflect consumers' desire to take control of what they eat, drink,

They are more aware of the brands they use, their sourcing and supply chain, the ingredients of the food products they consume, the environmental and social impact of production processes among others, it said.

As a result, consumers are likely to be more mindful in their consumption of products, and they are likely to be more thoughtful in their purchase decisions, it added. Further, technological advance-

ments, and the growing internet and smartphone penetration have facilitated information exchange from most advanced and developed countries to the remotest rural regions in the country.



merce among others and pick up on global and regional trends, thereby influencing their buying decisions.

Speaking at the report launch,

ing behaviour, making consumers more digitally inclined and demanding at one end, whilst becoming more health and socially conscious on the other."

from home and learn from home culture that often may lead to con

The pandemic continues to transform consumer buying behaviour, making consumers more digitally inclined and demanding at one end, whilst becoming more health and socially conscious on the other

> RAJAT WAHI I PARTNER, DELOITTE TOUCHE TOHMATSU LIMITED

Global State of Consumer Tracker, 73 percent consumers are ready to spend more on convenience, which

is further driving online sales. "A new dimension in the world of retail known as retailtainment is also emerging, where shopper/consumer experience (CX) has become a key factor for consumers to differentiate between retailers - this implies that retailers and brands need to mine the consumer and shopper data better so as to provide best-in-class CX to their online and offline shoppers," Wahi said.

Kumar Rajagopalan, CEO, Retailers Association of India (RAI) said that one of the key behavioural changes driven by the pandemic has been the fast-track adoption of digital, both by con-

and put on their skin." This information exchange has Rajat Wahi, Partner, Deloitte sumption uptick, he noted. As per the report, modern conallowed varied and distinct con-Adding to this trend is the evolv-Convenience continues to be an Touche Tohmatsu Limited (DT-TILP), said: "The pandemic consumers to connect, through chatsumers are more connected and ing technology enabled lifestyle, important factor impacting the environmentally conscious. ting, social media, vernacular comtinues to transform consumer buybetter access to data, and the work shopper journey, and as per Deloitte's sumers and retailers.

India wrap up the third Test in less than two days to take 2-1 lead in the four-match series and dash England's hopes of World Test Championship final chances

the 22nd Test which ended on Day 2 and only second in India after India wrapped up the match against Afghanistan in Bangalore in 2017. This was also the seventh such instance since 1946

This was Axar's third successive five-wicket haul as he bagged 5/60 in the second innings of the second Test in Chennai against England

Axar became the fourth spinner to take wicket on the first ball of an innings after R Ashwin (vs England, Chennai; 2020-21), Bert Vogler (South Africa, vs England: 1907) & Bobby Peel (England, vs Australia; 1888)

No. of wickets for Ashwin as Jofra Archer became his 400th Test victim

No. of Tests Ashwin took to reach 400-wicket milestone. becoming the second fastest to reach the landmark after Sri Lankan spin great Muttiah Muralitharan (72 Tests to reach 400 wickets)

No. of times Ashwin dismissed Ben Stokes in Tests, most for any batsman, surpassing David Warner

England's second innings total in this match, their lowest in Tests against India as their previous lowest was 101 at The Oval, London in 1971

England's aggregate runs (112 & 81) in this Test, their lowest since 175 runs (93 & 82) against NZ in Christchurch in 1983/84

No. of Test wins on home soil for Virat Kohli as captain, surpassing MS Dhoni's 21 victories as skipper

Percentage points of India after the win as they moved to top in the WTC standings, while England (64.1) dropped to fourth. New Zealand (70). who have already qualified for WTC final, are second ahead of Australia (69.2)

WICKETS FOR AXAR PATEL IN THIS MATCH, INCLUDING TWO FIFERS (6/38 & 5/32)

WHEN IT HAPPENS, IT FEELS SO EASY, NOT SO MUCH WHEN IT DOESN'T (...SIC). I AM **NOT THINKING MUCH. I WANT TO CONTINUE THIS FORM. I AM HAPPY THAT** IF I AM NOT CONTRIBUTING WITH THE BAT, I AM DOING IT WITH THE BALL. MY STRENGTH IS TO BOWL WICKET-TO-WICKET AND NOT GIVE ANY ROOM. I JUST WANT TO BOWL AS MANY DOT BALLS AS POSSIBLE

AND MAKE LIFE DIFFICULT FOR BATSMEN **AXAR PATEL**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Feb 25: Leftarm spinner Axar Patel created an illusion of turn with 11 straighter deliveries that put India on the brink of the World Test Championship final with a 10-wicket demolition of England inside two days in the day-night third Test here

In only his second Test, Patel (15-0-32-5), with a match-haul of 11/70, relentlessly hit the good length area and hoodwinked England batsmen, who played for turn only to find that there was none on offer from him.

The result was their lowest total against India - 81 all out in 30.4 overs leaving the hosts with a target of 49 which they achieved with minimum fuss (in just 7.4 overs) taking a 2-1 lead in the four-match series. Rohit Sharma (25 n o) and Shubman Gill (15 n o) remained unbeaten before the former finished off the game with a maximum.

At the other end, off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin (15-3-48-4) was an ideal foil, becoming the fourth Indian bowler and second fastest in the world to complete a commendable milestone of 400 Test wickets with the

dismissal of Jofra Archer. This was after England skipper Joe Root's fabulous career-best spell of 6.2-3-8-5 resulted in India's dramatic collapse from 114/3 to 145 all out.

India lost as many as seven wickets for only 31 runs after looking solid at 114/3at one stage in the game but England lost all 10 in an entire session in which no pacer was seen in action.

Ironically, it was the non-turning deliveries from Patel that had the England's rank and file pressing the panic button as they pre-empted away turn every

Whether it was Zak Crawley, or skipper Root, every-



mind-game as Ashwin also joined the fun with records tumbling one after another: When Patel sent back Ben Foakes, he became the first spinner to get 11 wickets in a pink ball Test match.

Following the two-day finish, ICC will be watching the Motera track with a 'Hawk Eye' even though the debate can continue for ages whether it was the turn that did the batsmen in or the lack of it.

The turn on offer was standard for any sub-continental track and no deliveries misbehaved. However, all eyes will now be on ICC match referee Javagal Srinath from India and his assessment of the 22-yard strip.

A case in point would be the wickets taken by the two left-arm spinners – Patel and Jack Leach. They bowled deliveries at a speed between 88 kmph and 92 kmph with a round arm action and pitched them on good length leaving batsmen in two minds whether to play forward or go backwards.

While a bowler might end up getting the man of the match, Rohit Sharma's 66 off 96 balls in the first essay was 24carat gold given that other batsmen looked like sitting ducks.

But Indian batsmen save Rohit did have a torrid time during an afternoon session when Root and Leach made their lives miserable.

Ajinkya Rahane, who has never had much success against slow left arm bowlers, was rapped on the pads as Leach fired one in and it was not much of an issue for umpire Nitin Menon to adjudge him leg before.

OF AXAR

11 SHADES

Suddenly, a pitch, on which India looked way more comfortable, started to challenge and just like England in the second session on the first evening, the Indians wilted under pressure. Rohit missed a sweep off Leach and

Menon's decision was retained as per Umpires' Call. Once Rohit was gone, it was time for Root to enter the scene and do a Michael Clarke (6/9 with his left arm orthodox in Mumbai 2004) as Rishabh Pant (1), Washington Sundar (0) and Patel (0) were accounted for in quick succession.

At one point, Root's figures were 3-3-0-3 as he exploited the friendly conditions, repeatedly hitting the rough which helped him dismiss three lefthanders in succession. Root's superb effort led to a

England captain Michael Vaughan, "Indian batsman can't play off spinners from Yorkshire.' He was referring to the green top strips that are always on offer at the Leeds. Ravichandran Ashwin (17) and Ishant Sharma (10 not out), who hit his first ever six in his 100th Test appearance, scored a few which proved to

cheeky tweet from former

India need to win the fourth and final Test at the same venue from March 4 to seal the WTC final spot.

be priceless in the

It feels amazing actually (to reach 400 Test wickets). The entire stadium stood up and clapped for me. **Pleased it** happened in the winning cause. I can't really get a grip of what has happened in the last 2-3 months. It has been a

fairytale

R ASWHIN

SCORECARD

ENGLAND 1ST INNINGS 112 INDIAN 1ST INNING (OVERNIGHT 99/3)

Rohit Sharma Ibw b Leach 66, Ajinkya Rahane Ibw b Leach 7, Rishabh Pant c Foakes b Root 1, Ravichandran Ashwin c Crawley b Root 17, Washington Sundar b Root 0, Axar Patel c Sibley b Root 0, Ishant Sharma not out 10, Jasprit Bumrah lbw b Root 1; Extras: 5 (B-2,LB-2,W-1); Total: 145 all out (53.2 overs). Fall: 1/33 (Gill), 2/34 (Pujara), 3/98

(Kohli), 4/114 (Rahane), 5/115 (Rohit), 6/117 (Pant), 7/125 (Sundar), 8/125 (Patel), 9/134 (Ashwin), 10/145 (Bumrah)

Bowling: James Anderson 13-8-20-0, Stuart Broad 6-1-16-0, Jofra Archer 5-2-24-1, Jack Leach 20-2-54-4, Ben Stokes 3-0-19-0, Joe Root 6.2-3-8-5.

Zak Crawley b Axar 0, Dominic Sibley c Pant b Axar 7, Jonny Bairstow b Axar 0, Joe Root Ibw b Axar 19, Ben Stokes Ibw b Ashwin 25, Ollie Pope b Ashwin 12, Ben Foakes Ibw b Axar 8, Jofra Archer Ibw b Ashwin 0, Jack Leach c Rahane b Ashwin 9, Stuart Broad not out 1, James Anderson c Pant b Sundar 0; Total: 81 all out (30.4 overs). Fall: 1/0 (Crawley), 2/0 (Bairstow), 3/19 (Sibley), 4/50 (Stokes), 5/56 (Root), 6/66

(Pope), 7/68 (Archer), 8/80 (Foakes), 9/80 (Leach), 10/81 (Anderson). Bowling: Axar Patel 15-0-32-5, Ravichandran Ashwin 15-3-48-4,

Washington Sundar 0.4-0-1-1. Rohit Sharma not out 25, Shubman Gill not out 15; Extras: 9 (B-8, LB-1); Total: 49 for no loss (7.4 overs) Bowling: Jack Leach 4-1-15-0, Joe Root

Cancelo sparks Man City victory

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Budapest, Feb 25: Versatile, tactically astute and boasting the creativity of a midfield playmaker, Joao Cancelo is a one-of-a-kind defender who is proving to be Manchester's City unlikely secret weapon this season. Borussia Monchengladbach cer-

tainly couldn't handle the Portugal international in the Champions League Wednesday.

Two pinpoint and almost-identical crosses from Cancelo — City's roving full back — set up goals for Bernardo Silva and Gabriel Jesus in a 2-0 win for the Premier League leaders in a one-sided first leg in the last 16.

Make that 19 straight wins in all competitions for City. Seeking to push more players into offensive positions, Guardiola has devised a system that enables the technically gifted Cancelo to drift from full back into a deep-lying midfield role

see Cancelo in the right position to intercept a poor pass out from the back by Gladbach's midfield anchorman, Christoph Kramer, in the 29th minute and then pick out Silva with an inswinging cross to

the back post. The diminutive Silva It was no surprise, therefore, to headed the ball firmly across the goalkeeper and into the net. The same combination struck again in the 65th, Cancelo popping up in an inside-left position and sending over a similar-looking cross



Joao Cancelo (C) & Raheem Sterling (R) celebrate Bernardo Silva's goal

to prod into the net from inside the six-vard hox

Mendy saves Real Madrid the blushes

BERGAMO (ITALY): Real Madrid struggled to break down 10-man Atalanta before Ferland Mendy netted an 86thminute winner to give the Spanish giants a 1-0 win in the first leg of the round of 16. Atalanta's chances diminished further when midfielder Remo Freuler was sent off in the 17th minute after being adjudged to have denied a scoring opportunity. Madrid still found it difficult to test Atalanta goalkeeper Pierluigi Gollini until the end of the first half, when he pulled off a great reaction save to keep out Casemiro's header. Just as it looked as if Atalanta would hold on for a draw, Mendy received the ball outside the area after a corner and curled a shot into the right side of the net from 20 yards.

Alli wonder goal helps Spurs sail into UEL last 16 ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Feb 25: Dele Alli scored with an overhead kick and set up two other goals as Tottenham beat Wolfsberg 4-0 in the Europa League to become the first team to qualify for the last 16.

Alli, handed a rare start by Tottenham manager Jose Mourinho, flicked the ball up after meeting a right-wing cross by Matt Doherty then leapt with his back to goal and directed an acrobatic effort into the bottom corner in the 11th minute of the second-leg match in the round of 32.

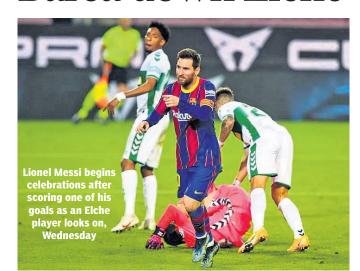


The midfielder crossed for Carlos Vinicius to head in the second goal in the 50th then played in substitute Gareth Bale to curl a over their Austrian opponent.

Alli has largely been frozen out by Mourinho this season but enjoyed the best night of his reintegration to the squad following a failed exit in the January transfer window exit.

Messi brace helps Barca down Elche

3.4-0-25-0.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, Feb 25: Lionel Messi scored twice in the second half as Barcelona stayed near the top of the Spanish league by defeating Elche 3-0 in a match postponed from the first round because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Jordi Alba also scored after the break to help Barcelona move back to third place in the league standings, two points behind secondplace Real Madrid and five from leader Atletico Madrid, which still has a game in hand.

Barcelona were coming off two consecutive setbacks at home — a 1-4 loss to PSG in the first leg of the round of 16 of the Champions League and a 1-1 draw against Cadiz

in the Spanish league.

poned as Barcelona was among the clubs given extra time to rest after playing in the Champions League late into last season.

Messi reached 18 league goals with his double, moving two ahead of Atletico Madrid's Luis Suarezhis former Barcelona teammate at the top of the scoring list. The Argentina star has scored 13 goals in his last 12 matches in all competitions, and six in his last four.

Messi opened the scoring at the Camp Nou Stadium in the 48th minute with a shot from inside the area after a give-and-go exchange of passes with Martin Braithwaite, then added to the lead in the 68th after picking up a pass from Frenkie de Jong and fending off a few defenders before finding the net. Alba closed \ the scoring in the 73rd after being set up by Braithwaite and Messi.

Pugilist Naveen in medal round

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 25: Naveen Boora (69kg) assured himself of at least a bronze by advancing to the semifinals while Manjeet Singh (+91kg) entered the quarters on an all-win day for Indian boxers at the 72nd Strandja Memorial Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Boora defeated Brazil's Eravio Edson in his quarterfinal bout, prevailing 5-0 in the contest. Manjeet, on the other hand, got the better of Ireland's Gytis Lisinskas in his last-16 stage bout Wednesday night.

Another Indian to enter the quarterfinals on the second day was Bhagyabati Kachari, who outclassed Russian opponent Anna Galimova

5-0 in the 75kg category. The tournament features boxers from 30 nations, including France, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine, United States of America and Uzbekistan. India has sent a 12-member team for the prestigious event – seven men and five women

AGENCIES

Goa, Feb 25: Jamshedpur FC edged past Bengaluru FC in a five-goal thriller as the Men of Steel eked out a 3-2 win in their Indian Super League (ISL) encounter, Thursday.

Jamshedpur all but sealed the match in the opening half as they headed into the break with a 3-0 lead. However, Bengaluru FC came out all guns blazing and kept pressure on Jamshedpur defense. Finally they managed to reduce the deficit to 2-3, but couldn't find the well-deserved equaliser.

Jamshedpur edge past Bengaluru

Stephen Eze helped Jamshedpur draw the first blood on the night, before Seiminlen Doungel doubled the advantage in the 34th minute. David Grande then all but assured the Men of Steel to head into the break with a 3-0 lead.

However, Bengaluru didn't let their morale down, rather they came with more intent in the second period. Francisco Gonzalez pulled one back for the Bengaluru side in the 62nd before Sunil Chhetri reduced the deficit to one goal in the 71st.

powerful 73rd-minute shot into the top corner. Vinicius added a fourth for Tottenham, which completed an 8-1 victory on aggregate

Wednesday's match was post-

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