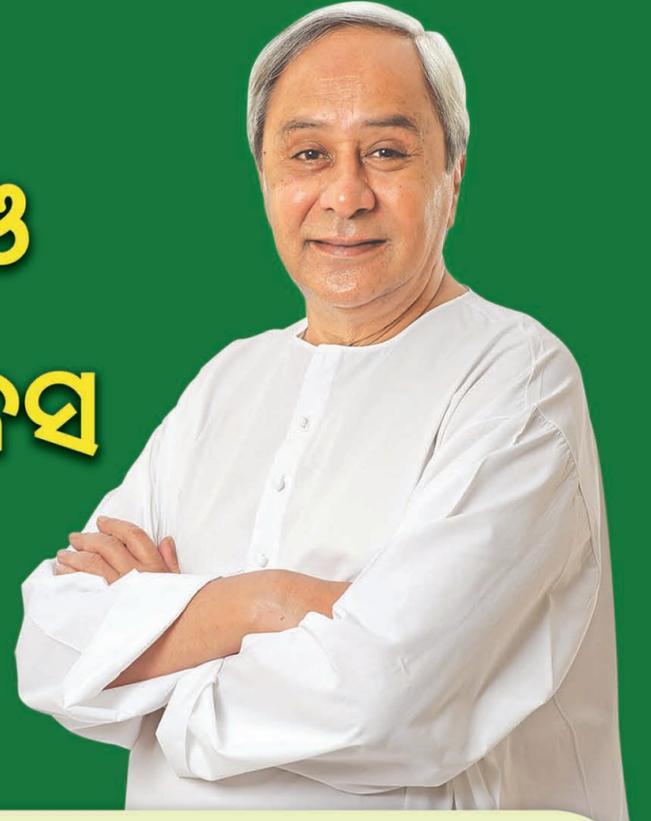




ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର

ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଓ

ଲୋକସେବା ଦିବସ



ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥାକୁ ଶକ୍ତିଶାଳୀ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ମୋ ସରକାର ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ନେଇଛି । ଗଣତନ୍ତ୍ରରେ ଲୋକ ହିଁ ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ । ବିଜୁବାବୁ ସବୁବେଳେ ସାଧାରଣ ଲୋକର ହକ୍କୁ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱ ଦେଉଥିଲେ । ତେଣୁ ମାର୍ଚ୍ଚ ୫ ତାରିଖକୁ ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଓ ଲୋକସେବା ଦିବସ ଭାବରେ ପାଳନ କରାଯିବ ।

ନବୀନ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ମହାନ୍ତି
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

କରୋନା ସଂକ୍ରମଣ ଭୟାବହତା ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ସଠିକ୍ ପ୍ରାକ୍ ଆକଳନ, ଏହାକୁ ପ୍ରତିରୋଧ କରିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ସମୟୋପଯୋଗୀ ପ୍ରତିକାର ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଏବଂ ଏହାର ସୁପରିଚାଳନା ପାଇଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଜାତୀୟ ଓ ଆନ୍ତର୍ଜାତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ ପ୍ରଶଂସିତ ହେବା ସହ କୋଭିଡ୍ ଟିକାକରଣରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ଅପାର ସଫଳତା ଲାଭ କରିଛି ।

ଲୋକସେବାକୁ ସମୟୋପଯୋଗୀ କରାଇବା ପାଇଁ ୫'ଟି'ର ପ୍ରୟୋଗ । ପୁରୀ ଶ୍ରୀମନ୍ଦିର, ଲିଙ୍ଗରାଜ ଏବଂ କୋଣାର୍କ ପରି ବିଶ୍ୱ ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ତୀର୍ଥକ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ରୂପାନ୍ତରଣର ଶୁଭାରମ୍ଭ । ଖୁବ୍ ଶୀଘ୍ର ମା' ସମଲେଶ୍ୱରୀ ପୀଠର ବିକାଶ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହେବ ।

ଜନମତ ଆଧାରରେ ସରକାରୀ ସେବାରେ ସ୍ୱଚ୍ଛତା ସହିତ ଉତ୍ତରଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରିବା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟରେ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଥିବା 'ମୋ ସରକାର' କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ରାଜ୍ୟର ସମସ୍ତ ସରକାରୀ ବିଭାଗ ସାମିଲ ।

ହିତାଧିକାରୀଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରୋସାହନ, ସ୍ୱଚ୍ଛତା ଏବଂ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗତ ତଦାରଖ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଗ୍ରହଣ କରି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରେକର୍ଡ ସଂଖ୍ୟକ ବାସଗୃହ ନିର୍ମାଣ କରିବାରେ ସଫଳତା ହାସଲ କରିଛି । ୨୦୨୦-୨୧ ବର୍ଷରେ ୨.୮ ଲକ୍ଷ ଗୃହ ନିର୍ମାଣ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସମ୍ପନ୍ନ ।

ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀଙ୍କୁ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ପାନୀୟ ଜଳ ଯୋଗାଇଦେବା ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟରେ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ୪.୭ ଲକ୍ଷ ନଳକୂପ, ପରିମଳ କୂପ ଏବଂ ୧୩,୦୫୦ ପାଇପ୍ ଜଳଯୋଗାଣ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକାରୀ କରାଯାଇଛି । ସମସ୍ତ ସହରାଞ୍ଚଳରେ ପାଇପ୍ ଜଳଯୋଗାଣ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ପ୍ରଚଳନ କରିବାରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଦେଶରେ ଅଗ୍ରଣୀ ରାଜ୍ୟ ।

କୋଭିଡ୍ ମହାମାରୀ ସମୟରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ୧.୨୫ ଲକ୍ଷ କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କାର ପୁଞ୍ଜିନିବେଶ ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ ସହିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆଜି ସମଗ୍ର ଦେଶରେ ପୁଞ୍ଜିନିବେଶ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଏକ ଅଗ୍ରଣୀ ରାଜ୍ୟ ।

ମିଶନ ଶକ୍ତି କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ୮୦ ଲକ୍ଷ ମହିଳାଙ୍କୁ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ କରି ସେମାନଙ୍କ ସଶକ୍ତିକରଣ ସହ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସରକାରୀ ଯୋଜନାରେ ଜୀବିକାର୍ଜନ ଏବଂ ଔଦ୍ୟୋଗିକ ସଫଳତା ହାସଲ ପାଇଁ ତାଲିମ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରାଯାଉଛି ।

ମମତା ଯୋଜନାରେ ରାଜ୍ୟର ୪୫ ଲକ୍ଷରୁ ଊର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ଗର୍ଭବତୀ ଓ ପ୍ରସୂତି ମହିଳାଙ୍କ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କ୍ ଆକାଉଣ୍ଟକୁ ୨୧୩୩ କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କାର ସହାୟତା ରାଶି ସିଧାସଳଖ ହସ୍ତାନ୍ତର ।

ଯୁବ ଉଦ୍ୟୋଗୀମାନଙ୍କ ଔଦ୍ୟୋଗିକ ବିକାଶ ପାଇଁ ଷ୍ଟାର୍ଟଅପ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ନୀତି ଏବଂ ଷ୍ଟାର୍ଟଅପ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପୋର୍ଟାଲ୍ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକାରୀ ।

କଟକ ଶ୍ରୀରାମଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଭଞ୍ଜ ମେଡ଼ିକାଲ କଲେଜକୁ ଏମ୍-ପ୍ଲସ୍ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ଭାବେ ଗଢ଼ିତୋଳିବା ପାଇଁ ୩୫୦୦ କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କା ବିନିଯୋଗ ।

ଉତ୍ତମ ଜାତୀୟ ଏବଂ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଜାତୀୟ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ କ୍ରୀଡ଼ାର ଏକ ପ୍ରମୁଖ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ପରିଣତ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଆମ ସରକାର ପ୍ରତିବଦ୍ଧ । ରାଉରକେଲାଠାରେ ନିର୍ମିତ ହେଉଛି ଦେଶର ସର୍ବବୃହତ୍ ହକି ଷ୍ଟାଡ଼ିୟମ୍ ଏବଂ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ସହିତ ମିଶି ରାଉରକେଲା ଆୟୋଜନ କରିବ ଆଗାମୀ ୨୦୨୩ ବିଶ୍ୱକପ୍ ହକି ।

ପରିଦୃଶ୍ୟ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ସହ ଏକ ନୂଆ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗଢ଼ିବା ପାଇଁ ଆମେ ପ୍ରତିବଦ୍ଧ ।





KIM TO KEEP CALIFORNIA HOUSE POST DIVORCE WITH KANYE

Reality TV star Kim Kardashian will be keeping her house in Hidden Hills, California, post her divorce with musician Kanye West. "She has made her life there and it's her kids' main home," an insider was quoted told *US Weekly*.

MARKLE ACCUSES ROYAL FAMILY OF 'PERPETUATING FALSEHOODS'

In another sensational preview of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's interview with Oprah Winfrey, which will be aired Sunday, Meghan has accused the Royal family of Britain and its staff of 'perpetuating falsehoods' against the couple.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

TAURUS
You are likely to get extra passionate and fervent today, predicts Ganesh. If your logic prevails over your heart, things will probably change for better during the course of the day. It is high time that you set into motion the poignant side of your character, suggests Ganesh.

GEMINI
You will be in an extremely emotional and romantic mood today. You may be worried about your personal relations, health, diet, career etc. You need to guard against giving into excessive stress and worry and look after your health, says Ganesh.

CANCER
The day is very favourable, says Ganesh. You will feel a sense of joy and happiness with your valuable possessions. You may fall into love or have a strong romantic ties with someone. A great time for lovers. Ganesh foresees chance of having new contacts and ties.

LEO
Call it the momentary re-ignition of the spark of brilliance and energy, this day finds you at the peak of your dynamism. Ganesh predicts a fantastic day for all, especially those in the freelancing business, as your imagination and inspiration reach new heights and motivate others to excel.

VIRGO
Today is the day when you'll be like the Iron Man: heart of gold, nerves of steel — minus the shiny body armour, though. Tolerance, optimism and exceedingly artistic talents will rule the roost. Pursue academics in the arts, advises Ganesh.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today will be a wonderful day and bring forth a breakthrough for you. You shall get to know and learn a lot from top most officials and elderly people. The higher ups in your office will give you good support today.

SCORPIO
"It's a dream come true," you may utter these words in surprise today, feels Ganesh. Your palatial home is ready or you may just get the keys of your much desired vehicle. You may have an extended celebration by receiving or giving gifts to your closed ones. However, make sure you do not make a hole in your pocket.

SAGITTARIUS
A balanced day is in store today. Find yourself as much at home as at your desk. You may engage in a time of fun and games with your buddies. But when it comes to family, something more practical, like rearranging your house, is on the cards.

CAPRICORN
If you are a sports person, you will enjoy both good health and fame, while engineers will be investing money in new business ventures, foresees Ganesh. But make sure you know what you are doing, a minor slip can cost you a fortune, and you would have realised by now that repenting won't undo anything. Your social standing may get stronger; people may develop a high opinion about, and your reputation may get a boost too.

AQUARIUS
Money matters are very important, and your family will demand your presence in all financial dealings. At work, things will be more comfortable. You may also get new projects. Ganesh predicts a trip in the offing.

PISCES
Your inherent sparkle and energy will sparkle forth today. Freelancers will be struck with inspiration, and will conjure masterpieces. Pleasant surprises await you in the evening, says Ganesh.

KANGANA

to expose her 'obsessed lover'

Mumbai: Actress Kangana Ranaut Thursday declared she would soon reveal the name of a 'jilted obsessed lover' she had a 'small fling with'. Kangana accused the person of running smear campaigns on social media against her.

"The man behind this particular social media smear campaign is a jilted obsessed lover I had a small fling with, he is faking a high profile relationship but won't marry the kid cause he has many skeletons in his closet, I will reveal his name with solid proofs, hang in there," Kangana tweeted.

"My team has tracked down this source, from where the money for smear campaigns flowing, we found unidentified companies and fake emails from where the information and memes along with money generate, but deep down I know who this is. When the time is right I will reveal his name," the actress wrote in another tweet.

Kangana further alleged that paid trolls are actively being circulated, trying to ruin her image on Instagram.

IAN S



Shreya announces pregnancy

Mumbai: Singer Shreya Ghoshal took to Instagram Thursday to share the news of her pregnancy with fans. The singer posted a picture of herself flaunting a baby bump.

Dressed in a blue and green ensemble, the mom-to-be poses with her bump in the picture and is visibly glowing. "Baby #Shreyaditya is on its way! @shiladitya and me are thrilled to share this news with you all. Need all your love and blessings as we prepare ourselves for this new chapter in our lives," she posted.

Congratulatory messages poured from all sections of the film fraternity.

Dancer Shakti Mohan posted: "Congratulations," while actress Sophie Choudhry wrote: "This is so so so amazing!!! Huge love and congrats to you my darling." Singer-composer Vishal Dadlani wrote, "Oyyyy!!! Guplu!!! @shreyaghoshal @shiladitya I'm so happy for you guys!!! Congratulations!!!"

The singer tied the knot with Shiladitya Mukhopadhyaya in a low key affair in 2015.

IAN S

Evelyn's XRay image in radiant red

Mumbai: Actress Evelyn Sharma posted a behind-the-scenes picture of herself on Instagram. The photo is from the set of her upcoming film X Ray: The Inner Image.

In the picture, Evelyn, who seems to be deep in thought, looks radiant in a red mesh top. "Behind the scenes shenanigans and some posing!!! #Jigliya #Xray #BTS," she wrote.

The cast of the psychological thriller has Rahul Sharma and Yaashi Kapoor, and is directed by Rajiv S. Ruia.

Meanwhile, Evelyn has been spending time with her Australia-based fiance Dr.



Tushaan Bhindi in Sydney and has been treating her fans to pictures of the two on social media.

The couple adopted a puppy a while back. Evelyn made her foray into Hindi films with the film From Sydney With Love in 2012. She has been part of films such as Nautanki Saala, Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani and Yaariyan. She was also seen in Prabhastarrer Saaho, which hit the screens in 2019. IAN S

NATIONAL THEATRE FESTIVAL - DAY 4

Nagin Tera Vansh Badhe tells about human frailties



A scene from Hindi play Nagin Tera Vansh Badhe staged at Rabindra Mandap, Thursday.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Actor's Repertory Theatre of Delhi presented Hindi musical play *Nagin Tera Vansh Badhe* on the fourth evening of National Theatre Festival Purba Ranga here at Rabindra Mandap, Thursday.

Written by Vijay Dan Detha, the play was designed and directed by Avtar Sahani, an alumnus of National School of Drama.

According to Indian folk stories, a Nagin or a female serpent swallows her own snakelets, therefore, it represents the image of destruction. But in the said

story, she sacrifices her love to fulfill other's desires.

"The play is an allegorical tale of human frailties and power of love. A snake sacrifices her husband for the voluminous pain of a childless couple. But her spouse on being transformed into a man and a partner of a beautiful girl, is unable to resist the temptation of female flesh and deserts his life partner," said director Sahani.

The musical entertainer is of 95 minutes duration and a team of 26 actors, musicians and backstage workers are involved in the production. It is an outcome of 50 days of extensive work-

shop where the actors were introduced to different aspects of theatre, he added.

Purba Ranga is being organised by the Culture Department in collaboration with Odisha Natya Sangh and Eastern Zonal Culture Centre, Kolkata. The dignitaries who attended the event include OFDC Chairman Satyabrata Tripathy, Mo College Chairman Akash Das Nayak, Culture Department Director Ranjan Kumar Dash, Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi Secretary Prabodh Kumar Rath and eminent playwright Ramesh Prasad Panigrahi.

FUN post

PEANUTS



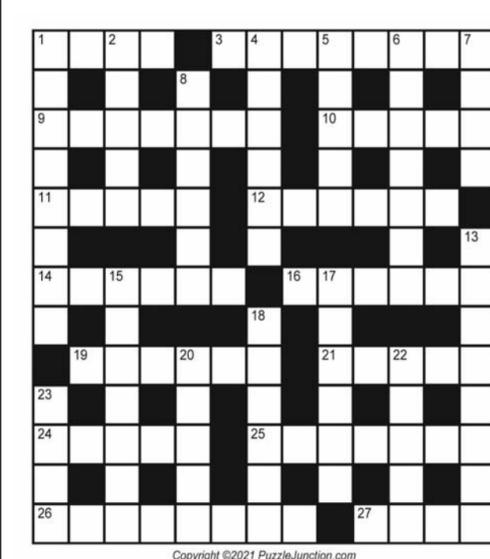
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



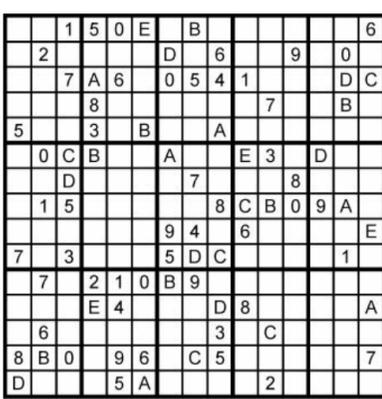
CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2021 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
1 Quarries
3 Sing a song
9 Vulture's dish
10 Greek letter
11 Beginning
12 Restless
14 Lend a hand
16 Playful river animals
19 Manitoba locale
21 Model material
- Down**
24 Put to the test
25 Macaroons, e.g.
26 Party floaters
27 Sea swallow
17 No-nos
1 Chest muscle
2 Conditions
4 Confesses (4,2)
5 Words of wisdom
6 Stalemate
- 7 Dutch export**
8 Break in the action
13 Hit man
15 Water dog
18 Peregrine
20 Part of a TV feed
22 River of Orleans
23 Ticket part

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



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HERE . NOW

STERN WARNING

Actor Kangana Ranaut says she would soon reveal the name of an 'obsessed lover' she had 'a small fling with'

LEISURE



EASE OF LIVING INDEX

Bhubaneswar's ranking notched up from 18th to second in the Ease of Living Index 2020 survey

DOWNTOWN P3



SPIN MAGIC

Axar Patel and Ravi Ashwin again weave the magic wand to dismiss England for 205

SPORTS P9

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BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY, MARCH 5 | 2021

P1

WHILE THE GOVT SAYS THE INFERNO IS UNDER CONTROL, SATELLITE DATA SAYS OTHERWISE



30 RESERVE FORESTS IN SIMILIPAL STILL AFIRE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, March 4: Forest fires are still uncontrollable in 30 reserve forests in Similipal sanctuary as per the satellite data while forest officials and firefighters struggle to contain them, a report said.

According to the reports, valuable flora and fauna have been destroyed in these forests since the last several days. The fires have not been controlled till date.

It was seen that wild animals were running for shelter to save their lives.

On the other hand, PCCF Sahsi Paul, field director of STR, Jag Jayanad and deputy director of the STR Jainadat Pati have been monitoring the fire control exercise inside Similipal.

It was also reported that some new areas have seen fires.

Notably, a high-level team along with PCCF Sashi Pal visited the Similipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district and conducted a review meeting Wednesday on the means to control and douse the raging fire.

"Now, 1,100 forest officials and fire-fighting personnel have been engaged in bringing the flames under control and dousing it," said Baripada ranger Laxmidhar Behera. They have been carrying out their work with help of 240 fire blowers in core and buffer zones. Forty vehicles including fire tenders are also being used in the dousing operations. The fire fighting exercise has been intensified, said the PCCF.

WILDFIRE IN CHAMPUPA

CHAMPUPA: Even as the Central and the state governments are leaving no stone unturned to control the wildfire at Similipal Sanctuary in Mayurbhanj, now an inferno has been spreading in several forests under Champupa range in



Forest dept personnel douse the raging inferno in Champupa

Keonjhar, a report said.

According to the report, controlling the forest fires which have been spreading in forests under Champupa, Balibandh and Ukhunda sections has been a headache for the Forest department. It was stated that this year more areas have witnessed forest fires than that of the previous year. As the fires are spreading, they have been destroying valuable trees and killing wild animals coming on their way.

In the last three days, the forest officials and fire-fighters have managed to douse fire at over 40 places. The places where wildfire have caused havoc are Sareli, Basudevpur, Rajia, Hunjipasi, Godhuli and Bhaliadhipa under Champura section; Jhalibada, Banakati and Mangalpur under Ukhunda section; Kanakana, Gugudari, Chamakpur, Brahmanijhari, Brahmanidhi and Sanakalimati under Balibandh section. It was said that valuable trees, herbs and medicinal plants have perished in these areas due to fires.

Contacted, Champupa ranger Sanjib

Rout said that people collect mahul flowers from forest floor. Before the mahul flower collection, locals clear the ground by igniting dry leaves and straws under mahula trees. He pointed out that small fires later spread far and wide in the forest overnight. By the time the fire is controlled, it has already caused massive damage to flora and fauna in the areas.

Meanwhile, the Forest department has been on its toes to control forest fires wherever they are reported.

"The department has engaged 48 officials along with blowers to control fires. Para staff and regular staff are camping at different places in these forests to keep vigil on forest fires. Help of members of local Vana Suraksha Samitis (VSS) are being taken in fire fighting exercise and creation of awareness among local people," he added. As forests are natural resources for people, all are responsible for protection of forests. People should refrain from clearing forest floor by igniting dry leaves, he concluded.

Now, 1,100 forest officials and firefighting personnel have been engaged in bringing the flames under control and douse it

LAXMIDHAR BEHERA | BARIPADA RANGER

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



There is no point returning to politics now. See, I was in politics still was jailed for scams.

ArcelorMittal to invest ₹50K cr in Kendrapara



Industries secretary Hemant Sharma and AM/NS India chief executive officer Dilip Oommen signed the MoU in the presence of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and chairman of the Mittal Group, LN Mittal

Kendrapara was the Karmabhumi of Biju Babu and he loved the place and its people from the core of his heart. Kendrapara also provides ideal prospects for an integrated steel complex and the state government will provide all the required support

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: Steelmaker ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) Thursday inked an agreement with the state government for setting up a 12 million tonne per annum (MTPA) integrated steel plant in Kendrapara district with an investment of ₹50,000 crore.

Industries secretary Hemant Sharma and AM/NS India chief executive officer Dilip Oommen signed the MoU here in the presence of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and chairman of the Mittal Group, LN Mittal. During the occasion, the CM said the state government will provide all the required support and facilitation for the setting up of this mega project, he added.

Patnaik further stated that Odisha has successfully emerged as the most attractive investment destination in the country today

because of its forward looking industrial policy, facilitation mechanism and robust infrastructure growth.

Mittal mentioned that he is very happy to partner with the state government in setting up this integrated steel complex at Kendrapara, which is in addition to the other investments of the company in Odisha. Mittal said he is amazed at the speed of work by the state government and termed it as the best he has experienced in his world-wide business experience. He reiterated that AM/NS India is committed to partner with the state government in the journey for industrial growth journey of the state.

In 2006, ArcelorMittal signed an MoU with the state government for setting up a 12 MTPA steel plant in Keonjhar district with an investment of ₹50,000 crore. However, in 2013, the company scrapped the project due to inordinate delays, problems in acquiring land and securing iron ore linkages.

AFTER 14 YRS

MARKET WATCH table with columns for INDEX and VARIATION, listing SENSEX, NIFTY, DOLLAR, EURO, GOLD, and SILVER.

WEATHER table with columns for BHUB and CTK, listing MAX, MIN, Humidity, and Rainfall.

BENGAL BATTLE

In Nandigram, Didi to take on Suwendu

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 4: Former close aide of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Suwendu Adhikari, has expressed his desire to contest on a BJP ticket from the Nandigram Assembly constituency in the upcoming state polls.

Banerjee had earlier announced that she will contest from Nandigram, from where Adhikari had won the last Assembly polls.

In December last year, rebel Trinamool leader Adhikari had joined the BJP in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah at a rally in Midnapore.

A marathon meeting lasting over five hours was held at the residence of BJP chief JP Nadda here Thursday to shortlist the names of probable candidates for 60 Assembly constituencies that will go to the polls in the first two phases March 27 and April 1.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and core committee members of BJP's West Bengal unit were present in the meeting.

BJP National Vice President Mukul Roy, state in-charge Kailash Vijayvargiya, state unit chief Dilip Ghosh, Adhikari and other



Suwendu Adhikari had succeeded in securing the support of the Maoists in Junglemahal during the Nandigram agitation to provide the firepower to the TMC when the Left Front was at its peak

His organisational skills are such that he is known to have convinced the Maoists to help the Trinamool overthrow the 34-year-long Marxist regime

senior leaders were present in the meeting.

After the meeting, former West Bengal minister Rajib Banerjee, who recently joined the BJP, said that Adhikari has informed the party leadership about his desire to contest from Nandigram.

"Adhikari has said that he wishes to contest from Nandigram. Now, the party leadership will take a final call on this," Banerjee said.

He further stated that 60 seats where polling will be held in the first two phases were discussed in the meeting.

JSW Cement advertisement with logo and slogan 'Start Strong. Grow Stronger.' and contact number 1800 266 266 1 (tollfree).

Bus fare hiked again

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: The state government once again hiked the fares of all categories of buses, Thursday. The state Transport department has hiked the fares following steep hike in diesel price.

Last time the bus fares were increased February 8 this year. In between, the price of diesel has been increased to ₹88.77 per litre from ₹78.17 per litre; a hike of ₹10.60 per litre.

The fares of ordinary and express buses have been increased by five paise per kilometre while that of deluxe and AC deluxe buses have been hiked by 10 paise/km. In case of super premium class of buses, the fare has been hiked by 15 paise per km.

With the latest rise, the



Last time the bus fares were increased February 8 this year. Since then, the price of diesel has been increased to ₹88.77 per litre from ₹78.17; a hike of ₹10.60 per litre

fare for the ordinary buses has gone up to 85p/km. The fares for express buses will be 89p/km. Commuters will now have to pay 121p per km for travelling in deluxe buses and 149p/km for AC deluxe buses. For travelling in super premium buses, commuters will have to pay ₹2.32/km.

Large advertisement for Business Eminent Awards 2021, featuring OrissaPOST logo, award title, and photos of Inaugurator Shri Naveen Patnaik and Chief Guest Shri Dharmendra Pradhan.

Advertisement listing Associate Sponsors (MGM Minerals Ltd., OSL Group, Adventz, Imfa, MCL), Co-sponsors (HDFC Bank, News 18, 91.9), and Associates (TEAM).

Action against people showing fake papers for Covid-19 shots

Few takers for Citizen Portal in twin city

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: Even though the state government had launched a citizen centric portal under the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) in 2015, denizens of twin city are showing little interest in seeking help of the police through the portal.

The citizens were urged to avail various police related services through the portal without going to the police stations.

The services offered through the portal include filling of complaints with the local police and FIR copy download, issuance of character certificates, permissions for taking out processions and rallies, nod for holding events and performances, protests and strikes, verifi-



Airfield police received 55 complaints while 25 persons lodged complaints with CS Pur police through the portal

cation of tenants, employees, missing person registration and reporting about lost property.

However, data received through RTI revealed that very few people have filed complaints with local police through the citizen portal during the last few years.

According to the information, Khandagiri police station received 1,276 complaints through the portal

while Laxmisagar police received 231 complaints between 2015 and 2020.

Similarly, 135 victims lodged their complaints with Mahila police during the above mentioned period.

Airfield police station received 55 complaints while 25 persons lodged complaints with Chandrasekharpur police through the portal. As many

as 71 persons sought the help of Nayapalli police through online.

Capital police station received 95 complaints while Tamando and Jatni police have received 12 and 40 complaints online respectively.

Most of the other police stations either received no complaints or a very few between 2015 and 2020.

Speaking on the issue, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Umashankar Dash said that a complainant has to come to the police station again after lodging of the complaint through citizen portal for formal registration of an FIR. "This is the reason why many are not showing interest in lodging complaints online, the DCP added.

Sources in the police revealed that the courts are also yet to accept e-FIRs.

Bhubaneswar, March 4: The Health department Thursday asked citizens to refrain from the practice of furnishing fake co-morbidity certificates to get the Covid-19 vaccination in the ongoing drive.

State Health and Family Welfare director Bijoy Panigrahi told reporters that strict actions could be taken against such persons indulging in unfair practice.

"Those found indulging in such activities would be handled as per law and punished accordingly. Till now we have not seen such activities. The doctors at such vaccine centres are verifying the health conditions too," he said.

The official said that the health ministry norms had been disseminated to all hospitals where 20 forms of co morbidities were identified. "The vaccine centre handlers have been asked to verify the comorbidity certificates. Only an MBBS doctors or those having higher qualifications can issue such certificates. Fake certificates could not be accepted at the vaccination centres," he said.

The Health department now claims that the vaccination drive for Covid-19 for senior citizens is going on smoothly in the state. The drive for frontline workers and health workers is also running parallel.

The official said it has been working to expand the number of vaccination centres across the state.

"There are now around 36 private hospitals that are onboard for vaccination. The process is on to expand the private sector vaccination centre. We are increasing the vaccination centres across the state now," the official added.

Meanwhile, the state Prisons



Governor Ganeshi Lal takes Covid vaccine at Raj Bhawan hospital in Bhubaneswar

State sees 81 fresh cases, tally 3,37,529

The state's Covid-19 caseload mounted to 3,37,529 Thursday after 81 more people tested positive for the infection, a Health department official said.

The coastal state's death toll remained unchanged at 1,917 as no fresh fatality was reported since Wednesday.

Of the 81 new cases, 49 were cases of quarantine—at home or designated centres—and the rest were detected during contact tracing, the official said. The positivity rate stands at 4.02 per cent.

Sambalpur accounted for the

maximum number of new cases at 14, followed by Mayurbhanj at eight. Currently, Odisha has 792 active cases, while 3,34,767 patients have recovered from the highly infectious disease. Over 84 lakh sample tests have been conducted in the state so far, including 21,850 in the past 24 hours.

As many as 28,260 people, comprising senior citizens, healthcare workers, other frontline Covid-19 warriors and people in the age group of 45 to 59 years were inoculated across the state Wednesday, the official added.

Directorate has directed all the jail superintendents across Odisha to

take steps for Covid-19 vaccination of prisoners above 60years of age.

VISIT TO TEMPLE CITY



The delegation, led by Bruno Bosle, Country Director, Agence Française de Développement in India, pose for a photo opportunity in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

Survey to indentify children with disabilities from April 1

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: The state government is going to conduct a survey to identify children with disabilities from April 1.

The Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department is conducting the survey to identify the differently-abled children through Anganwadi workers.

Identification of children with disabilities within the first couple of years of their birth is important for affective treatment and mitigation of their disabilities.

The SSEPD secretary, Bhaskar Jyoti Sarma, has sought cooperation from District Collectors for smooth conduct of the survey.

Supervisors, Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs) and District Social Welfare Officers (DSWOs) working under Integrated



Identification of children with disabilities within the first couple of years of their birth is important for affective treatment and mitigation of their disabilities

After receiving all data about the children with disabilities, the government will take necessary steps for affective treatment and mitigation of their disabilities

Child Development Services (ICDS) projects will monitor the survey at field level, sources said.

A mobile application is being developed for the purpose. Training of master trainers is in progress. Master trainers will provide training to some other officials at district level following which training for Anganwadi workers will begin. All these process will end by March 26, the source said.

To identify such children in non-

ICDS area, the department has planned to organise special camps in the urban areas concerned. After completion of the survey, Anganwadi workers will have to keep surveillance on suspected cases of children with disabilities on regular intervals.

After receiving data about the children with disabilities, the government will take necessary steps for affective treatment and mitigation of their disabilities.

French delegation in City to monitor CITIIS projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: A high-level delegation led by Bruno Bosle, Country Director, Agence Française de Développement (AFD) in India visited the Temple city Thursday to take an overview of the City Investments to Innovate Integrate and Sustain (CITIIS) projects in Bhubaneswar.

The delegation included Thomas Salez, Economic Counsellor- Energy and Industry Division from the Regional Economic Services of the French Embassy Representatives from the CITIIS PMU at National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) were also present.

During the visit, Bosle held high-level talks with senior officials of Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA), Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) and Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). The meeting was chaired by BDA Secretary Harish Chandra Nayak. This was followed by site

visits to CITIIS Project locations, including, heritage sites like Debi Padahara and Ganga Jamuna Tanks.

Bhubaneswar's B-Active (Bhubaneswar-Active) proposal was submitted by BSCL under the theme of Public Open Spaces.

It was selected as one of the 12 city proposals under CITIIS Challenge Programme in February 2019 at the Second Apex Smart City CEO's conference held in Delhi.

Subsequently, a tripartite agreement was signed March 5, 2019 for the CITIIS Programme between MoHUA, Government of Odisha and BSCL.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the French Development Agency (AFD), European Union (EU), National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) and BSCL are jointly implementing the CITIIS Programme in the Temple City. CITIIS Programme is supported by the national PMU at NIUA in New Delhi.

BRIDGE COLLAPSE

NHRC seeks report from Nabarangpur Collector



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the District Magistrate (Collector) of Nabarangpur seeking an action-taken report (ATR) regarding collapse of an under-construction Biju Setu near village Talapadar in the district January 10, 2021.

One worker had died while several others sustained severe injuries during the mishap.

The deceased was identified as Mahendra Malli, 45, of Raighar in the district.

The Collector has been asked to submit the ATR within four weeks of the receipt of the NHRC notice. The commission issued the notice while after a plea filed by rights activist Akhand.

The activist had urged the apex rights panel to direct the authorities to take stringent action against erring officers who were responsible for the alleged substandard work and lack of safety measures that led to the fatal mishap. He had also sought compensation for the next kin of the victim, Malli.

Notably, the under-construction bridge over Nagi River in Nabarangpur caved in January 10 evening resulting in the death of Malli.

A team of engineers after initial inspection at the spot claimed that the mishap occurred due to weak centering support, use of substandard raw materials and compression of the ground where the foundation was laid.

'Mo College Abhiyan' likely to be rolled out March 21

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is likely to launch the much awaited 'Mo College Abhiyan' March 21, 2021 at the Lok Seva Bhawan here, an official letter from Higher Education department said, Thursday.

Higher Education department's additional secretary Rajashree Mohanty through a letter to officer on special duty of 'Mo College Abhiyan Parichalana Sangathan' said that the Chief Minister will launch Mo College Abhiyan March 21, 2021 at 5pm from the convention centre of Lok Seva Bhawan through videoconference.

The state government had earlier planned to launch 'Mo College' campaign for holistic development of colleges across the state from second week of March.

'Mo School' inspection drive

Chairperson of Mo School Susmita Bagchi has directed the team to start a monitoring drive. To ensure effective implementation of the programme at the school-level, the programme monitoring team and senior officials of Mo School will visit the schools regularly. The officials will submit a detailed report on project implementation in the schools. Accordingly, from March 6, the Mo School team will cover 200 schools in 50 days and review the projects.

After the launch of 'Mo School Abhiyan' in 2017, the government had decided to roll out 'Mo College' initiative last year. However, the outbreak of Covid-19 delayed its implementation, sources said.

Pradhan reiterates demand for OBC quota

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, March 4: Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Thursday reiterated his request to the Odisha government to implement reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in government jobs and educational institutions, and for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBCs) in educational institutions in the state.

"I had written letters to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik seeking reservations for OBCs in government jobs and educational institutions and for SEBCs in educational institutions in Odisha. However, my request for 27 per cent reservation for SEBCs in government jobs and educational institutions in Odisha has remained unaddressed till date," Pradhan told Odisha media in New Delhi.

Notably, the state government is set to begin a survey of backward

Work on reservation in progress: BJD

BHUBANESWAR: On a day when Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan reiterated his demand for OBC quota in jobs and educational institutions, the state unit of Congress Thursday also joined the fray to seek reservation for other backward classes (OBCs) in the state. The party blamed the state government for the delay in executing the reservation policy. Congress leader Suresh Routray Thursday addressed the media and blamed the government for the delay. He said, "There should be 27 per cent reservation for the OBCs in the Congress party. The state government had been surveying the issue for the last 21 years. It will remain only on paper and will keep on extending. The OBC community needs support to excel in all walks of life." The Biju Janata Dal (BJD), however, claimed that the work for the same has started. BJD leader and Khandapada MLA Soumya Ranjan Patnaik told the media about the status of the plan. He said, "We have already started the process of survey for OBC community for the same. After their identification they will get their due rights. The government has assured people that this would be done. Just wait for 1 and half months or some more this could be done. I want to ask the BJP to refrain from raking up issues which are not needed."

classes based on the social and educational status. "The current move for enumeration of SEBCs comes across as a dichotomous and dilatory step trying to mask the extant policies of the Odisha government denying reservations for OBCs and SEBCs categories," he added.

He further said that the state government has access to its own SEBC list as well as OBC list of the Centre, which can be used for providing appropriate reservations in the field of education. The minister said backward classes constitute a considerable portion of the total

population of Odisha.

"There are more than 210 communities identified as SEBCs in Odisha. Most of them are suffering from the twin curses of poverty and illiteracy. Even after 30 years of a provision for reservations under Article 15(4) and 16(4) of the Constitution for such communities, the state government is not providing any such reservations to OBCs in government jobs as well as in educational institutions," said Pradhan.

The minister also cited the Supreme Court judgement in Indra Sawhney Vs Union of India and contended that the apex court has stipulated that on extraordinary grounds which need to be specifically made out the percentage of reservations may be exceeded. Pradhan also alleged that the move for enumeration of SEBCs comes across as a dichotomous step trying to mask the extant policies of the state government, denying reservations for OBCs and SEBCs categories.

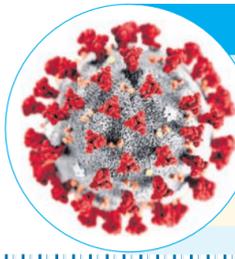
FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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FIREMAN IN ACTION

A fire brigade personnel dousing flames that engulfed a storeroom of Cuttack Municipal Corporation, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	11,58,99,053	9,15,65,562	25,73,907
India	1,11,56,923	1,08,26,075	1,57,435
Odisha	3,37,529	3,34,838	1,917

Naveen completes another yr in office

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: On this day in 2000, Naveen had taken oath as the Chief Minister of Odisha. Since then, he has emerged as an invincible leader in the state and is still continuing as people's Chief Minister even as he completes 21 years in the office Thursday.

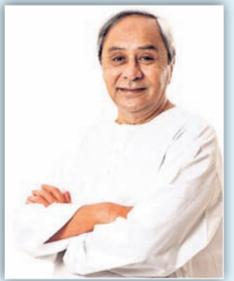
The state has managed the situation by setting up temporary medical centres. Train charges and Rs 2,000 financial support was provided to migrants from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

At political level, his party (BJD) has also faced by-elections for two Assembly seats during the pandemic. The BJD led by Naveen

Due to advanced measures and proactive steps like lockdowns and shutdowns, the Naveen Patnaik government has successfully managed the Covid-19 pandemic

Nearly 7 lakh people returned to Odisha during the pandemic. Train charges and Rs 2,000 financial support was provided to migrants from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund

Fulfilling long standing demand of Odia people, he has given state anthem status to Bande Utkala Janani song



The past one year remained challenging for him as the entire world including Odisha went through an unprecedented pandemic.

Due to advanced measures and proactive steps like lockdowns and shutdowns, the Naveen Patnaik government has successfully managed the Covid-19 pandemic.

Nearly 7 lakh people have returned to Odisha during the pan-

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Due to advanced measures and proactive steps like lockdowns and shutdowns, the Naveen Patnaik government has successfully managed the Covid-19 pandemic.

Nearly 7 lakh people have returned to Odisha during the pan-

CM brings to reality Biju's dream for state

BIJU BIRTH ANNIVERSARY TODAY



Family photos of legendary leader Biju Patnaik, his spouse Gyan Patnaik and their three children—Prem, Geeta and Naveen—on display at Anand Bhawan Museum and Learning Centre in Cuttack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has taken a lot of measures to realize the dream of his father and former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik. Starting from strengthening the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) to empowerment of women, Naveen has taken many landmark decisions.

While Biju had introduced 33 per cent reservation of seats in PRI for women, his son and present Chief Minister reserved 50 per cent seats

in the panchayati raj system for women. Taking it a step forward, now, he is fighting at the national level for 33 per cent reservation of seats for women in Lok Sabha and Assemblies.

For strengthening the panchayats, Naveen Patnaik has enhanced their allocations and provided a lot of funds for creation of critical infrastructure through Ama Gaon, Ama Bikash programme. During Covid-19 pandemic, he has given Collector's power to sarpanches for effective management and it

While Biju Patnaik had introduced 33 per cent reservation of seats in PRI for women, his son and present Chief Minister reserved 50% seats in the panchayati raj system for women

was successful also. His government is also committed to translating Biju Babu's industrial dreams into reality. Introducing investor friendly policy measures, his government has been able to attract over ₹1.2 lakh crore investments even during the pandemic. On the eve of Biju's birth

anniversary, the state government has also signed a MoU for setting up an integrated steel plant in Keonjhar with an investment of ₹50,000 crore, which itself is a milestone in industrialization in Odisha.

Moreover, he has decided to bring the Dakota aircraft of the legendary leader from Kolkata airport to Odisha.

On this day in 2000, Naveen had taken oath as Chief Minister of Odisha. Since then, he has emerged as an invincible leader in the state and is still continuing as people's Chief Minister. He has completed 21 years in the Office of Chief Minister of Odisha.

Biju Patnaik was born March 5, 1916, and died on April 17, 1997. He was Chief Minister of Odisha for two terms.



Hoardings of former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik put up on the median between Capital Hospital and AG Square in Bhubaneswar, Thursday, on the eve of the legendary leader's 105th birth anniversary

Bhubaneswar second in Ease of Living Index

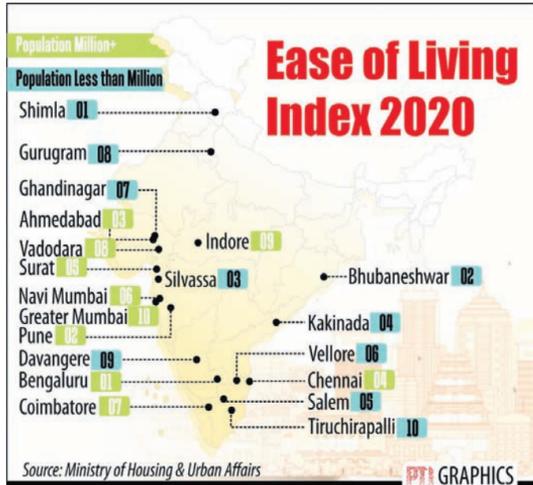
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: The state capital, Thursday, bagged second position in the Ease of Living Index (EoLI) 2020 survey as per the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). About 111 cities participated in the assessment that was conducted in 2020.

The rankings under the EoLI were assessed under two separate categories. While cities having more than one million population come under the first category, those having less than one million population are classified under the second set of cities. Bhubaneswar, which falls under the second category, scored 59.85 and was ranked second, only after Shimla which scored 60.90 points. Silvassa (58.43) in Dadra and Nagar Haveli grabbed the third spot.

Bhubaneswar showed significant improvement compared to its last year's assessment as its ranking notched up from 18th to second

Bhubaneswar showing a significant improvement as compared to its last year's assessment saw its ranking notched up from 18th to second. Moreover, under the category of Indian cities having a population of over a million, Bangalore was rated as the top city in the survey. This was followed by Pune and Ahmedabad. Meanwhile, Bareilly, Dhanbad and Srinagar remained lowest in the survey.



MPI ranking: Capital not in top 10

The ministry also released ranking of Municipal Performance Index (MPI) as an accompaniment to the Ease of Living Index. The MPI seeks to examine local government practice in municipalities across areas of services, finance, policy, technology and governance. As per the rankings, Bhubaneswar with a score of 43.38 was ranked 25th among 60 other smart cities under category of cities have population less than a million. While Delhi was ranked first, Shillong was placed last. Meanwhile, Indore was rated as the best city out of 51 having the highest MPI score (66.08) under the category of cities having more than a million population. Meanwhile, Guwahati with just a score of 18.14 was placed last under the same category.

It can be mentioned here that EoLI is an assessment tool that evaluates the quality of life and the impact of various initiatives for urban development. The first edition of the index was launched in 2018. It provides a comprehensive understanding

of participating cities across India based on economic-ability of a city, its sustainability and resilience. The assessment also incorporates the residents' view on the services provided by city administration through a citizen perception survey.

Process has started for urban poll: Jena

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: The state government has started a process to conduct elections in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), said Housing and Urban Development Minister Prapat Jena here Thursday.

Though the minister has not spoken much about the process and the deadline, it seems the government is getting ready for the urban polls. The tenure of the councils of almost all ULBs including Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has ended over two years ago. Due to non-conduct of polls, administrators are running the civic bodies.

Commenting on this issue, State Election Commission (SEC) secretary Rabindra Sahu, said, "Delimitation and reservation are the responsibility of the state government. After completing the process, they will submit a report to us. We will then finalise voters' list and conduct the poll."

Meanwhile, Opposition BJP and the Congress slammed the government for delaying the urban election. BJP leader Golak Mohapatra said, "After the order of the Supreme Court, the state government should have acted fast and conduct the pending municipal corporation. But there are reasons for them to delay the whole exercise. The urban areas now do not have strong BJD voters and that is why the state government is shying away from the urban elections."

He also added, "They are trying to find new excuse to avoid the polls. It has been more than one year that the exercise has been delayed. Lack of elections has been delaying the development of urban areas."

I WANT TO ESTABLISH A GOOD SOCIETY BY GROOMING STUDENTS: MINAKETAN

Education is not limited to degrees. Creating value-based quality education with an aim to boost morality among students is the primary responsibility of an educationist. Chairman of ODM Educational Group Satyabrata Minaketan is among those scholars who aim to bring changes in society through education. He is an educator, social worker, writer and also the founder of Healthville, a diagnosis centre. During a tete-a-tete with **Orissa POST**, Minaketan shares his objectives and plans. Excerpts.



How bad was the impact of Covid-19 on education in state?

The 2019-20 academic year was severely affected by the pandemic. We were a bit worried from the beginning of the academic year 2020-21 about holding classes offline. However, with all modern facilities we imparted education to our students in a hassle-free manner. Classes under the roof are an unparalleled experience for all including students, teachers and the management.

What are the plans for 2021-22 academic year?

Unlike in the previous academic year, we will set up a cutting edge facility in 2021-22 academic year. We hope the performance of ODM School is visible everywhere. Education doesn't mean study, exams and results or not just getting a job. But we believe that education develops morality among students to create a better community and ODM School of Education will bridge the gap.

What was the impact of the pandemic on ODM group?

Our journey started with only three teachers and 30 students but now we have 300 teachers and 5,000 students. As the founder, it is my responsibility to offer moral education to my students. We arranged several programmes for our students during the lockdowns. Although schools were shut for several months, now things are limping back to normalcy.

Education doesn't mean study, exams and results nor just getting a job. We believe that education develops morality among students to create a better community

Education doesn't mean study, exams and results nor just getting a job. We believe that education develops morality among students to create a better community

How do you see the Union Budget?

The Union Budget 2021-22 is a multifaceted one. It will boost value-based education. It is the responsibility of an educationist to observe new policies. In the Budget, the central government has taken significant steps to help the economy bounce back and boost the market demand.

How do you see the competition as there are many premium schools in Bhubaneswar?

Those who understand the definition of education never try to be competitive but they always

focus on strengthening the value of education. I'm not worried about what others are doing. I am focused on providing better education facilities to my students.

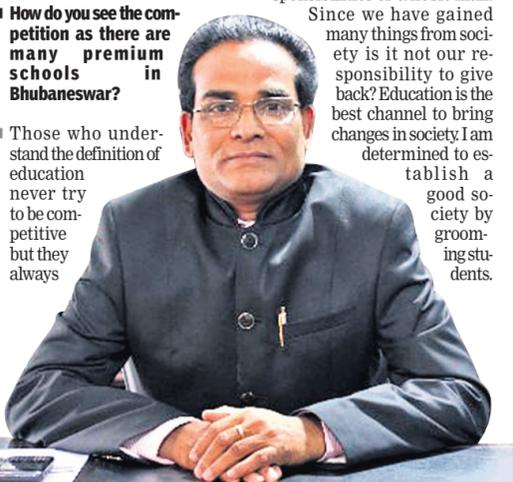
Who are the pillars of your success?

We achieve success when we work hard all together. My wife supported me in this successful journey. My staff and parents have showered their love and trust on ODM family which inspired us to move forward.

How do you balance education, social service, art and health service?

I hail from a small village and came to a big city. I believe that serving society and nurturing art and culture are the responsibilities of a noble man.

Since we have gained many things from society it is not our responsibility to give back? Education is the best channel to bring changes in society. I am determined to establish a good society by grooming students.



City filling station sealed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: Commissionerate Police Thursday sealed a petrol pump at Baramunda bus stand selling adulterated petrol. The authorities of the Hindustan Petroleum and Khurda Forensic Science Laboratory collected samples of the filling station for testing.

The HP authorities assured strict action against the dealer if found any proof regarding the adulteration allegations. Speaking to media persons, HP's area in-charge claimed that there might be some technical problem in the outlet resulting in dispensation of water-mixed petrol.

Notably, customers complained about being supplied adulterated petrol by the filling station 'Highway Service Center' Wednesday.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



The consciousness of the seer is a greater power for knowledge than the consciousness of the thinker. The perceptual power of the inner sight is greater and more direct than the perceptual power of thought...

SRI AUROBINDO



FUEL AND POLLS

Petrol and diesel prices have been relentlessly rising over past few months. Petrol currently sells at over Rs100 per litre in a few states like Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Petrol price had shot to Rs100 per litre in Malkangiri. The Opposition and people in general have been clamouring for a cut in the fuel prices as they fear such mindless rise in fuel rates will automatically push up the prices of common essentials and then will make life painful for the common man. As it is, people are reeling from joblessness and many more ills caused by the economic recession and then COVID-19 pandemic. Such rise in fuel prices, even when the economy is still stuttering, has shocked one and all. Amid all this clamour and protests centering on the rise in fuel prices, the government has done precious little. Last week Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the rates will come down once winter goes. This was cold comfort. The Centre and the state governments have brazened out the protests against fuel rates all these months. Meanwhile, the government is reportedly planning to cut down the excise tax on fuel. The cut could be as high as ₹8.50 per litre of petrol. Not only petrol, and diesel, has LPG rate also gone out of control. The gas price has firming up by over ₹100 over last one month alone – a never seen before phenomenon. Excise duty was raised between Rs13 and Rs16 per litre on petrol and diesel between March 2020 and May 2021 which now stands at ₹31.8 on diesel. But, the government did not restore the taxes to their original levels when oil prices recovered. Central and state taxes make up for 60% of the retail price of petrol and over 54 per cent of diesel. The Modi government raised Excise duty on petrol and diesel on nine occasions between November 2014 and January 2016. Therefore, there is no reason why it cannot roll back the tax when the price of fuel has reached a three-digit mark. Making the rollback decision contingent on electoral interests is unfair.

It is a no brainer why the government is reportedly exploring the option of slashing the excise rate now when it was sitting quite all this while. Five states and a Union Territory, including the all important West Bengal are going to polls beginning March. There has been no rise in the fuel rates for five days now. Ever since the Election Commission (EC) announced the dates for the Assembly polls, there has been a halt in the upward movement of fuel rates. Last year, there was a similar pause on the runaway rise in fuel prices ahead of the Assembly elections in a few states, including in Bihar. However, as soon as the elections were over, oil companies increased the retail prices. Similarly, this time around the Centre is exploring the options of cutting down the excise rate on fuel. If the cut really happens, it would mean the government had enough room to scissor the excise rate without impacting its target for revenue from the tax on the fuels. If it is so who prevented it from doing so all these months. The NDA government certainly waited for the EC to announce the dates before it goes about easing or hitting the pause button on fuel price rise.

WISDOM CORNER

I always did something I was a little not ready to do. I think that's how you grow. When there's that moment of 'Wow, I'm not really sure I can do this,' and you push through those moments, that's when you have a breakthrough. **MARISSA MAYER**

Great things are done by a series of small things brought together. **VINCENT VAN GOGH**

If you hire people just because they can do a job, they'll work for your money. But if you hire people who believe what you believe, they'll work for you with blood and sweat and tears. **SIMON SINEK**

WORDSWORTH

Bug

The most common version of this story is that bug results from an incident with the US Navy's Harvard Mark II computer soon after the end of World War Two, in which a technician cured a fault by extracting a moth from between the contacts of a relay in the system. It is also said that this was the source of debug, the process of finding and removing errors from a computer programme. The incident really did happen: the log book, dated 9 September 1947, survives with the actual moth taped to it and is available online; that page says it happened in 1945 but recent research shows it actually happened two years later. The log entry itself blows to pieces the story about this being the origin of bug by noting under the insect, "First actual case of bug being found". This makes it clear that bug for a fault was already in use. Indeed, Rear Admiral Grace Hopper (an early programmer who worked on the machine and who inspired the computer language COBOL) used to tell this story in lectures and would remark that the word was applied to problems in radar electronics in World War II. It's actually older still.

Bully pulpit

It's certainly in the news at the moment. I wonder, though, if the meaning that I think you have in mind is really known to everybody? When I first came across it, years ago, I assumed that bully was in the usual current sense of a person who intimidates others through force and that bully pulpit meant that some person in authority was abusing his powers. This is by no means an uncommon assumption: It was a while before I realised that bully here had a different sense, one now hardly known, of something first-rate or excellent. Oddly, the two senses are from the same source, since bully was originally a term of endearment, from Dutch boel, lover, and later became a compliment for a male companion, meaning admirable. Our current sense grew out of this as the word went down in public estimation. At one time you might have heard people say bully for you as a way to express admiration for another's action. The term became known, though hardly fashionable, in the years that followed its first appearance, most frequently in commentaries on Roosevelt's presidency, but then largely fell out of use.

LOL

Engineers Vs Accountants

Three engineers and three accountants are traveling by train to a conference. At the station, the three accountants each buy a ticket and watch as the three engineers only buy one ticket. "How are three people going to travel on only one ticket?" asks an accountant. "Watch and you'll see," answered an engineer. They all board the train. The accountants take their respective seats but all three engineers cram into a rest room and close the door behind them. Shortly after the train has departed, the conductor comes around collecting tickets. He knocks on the rest room door and says, "Tickets, please!" The door opens just a crack and a single arm emerges with a ticket in hand. The conductor takes it and



moves on. The accountants see this and agree it is a clever idea.

So after the conference, the accountants decide to copy the engineers on the return trip and save some money. When they get to the station, they buy one ticket for the return trip. To their astonishment, the engineers don't buy a ticket at all. "How are you going to travel without a ticket?" says one perplexed accountant. "Watch and you'll see," answered an engineer. When they board the train all three accountants cram into a rest room and the three engineers cram into another one nearby. The train departs. Shortly afterward, one of the engineers leaves his rest room and walks over to the rest room where the accountants are hiding. He knocks on the door and says, "Tickets, please!"

HARBINGER OF INDO-US TIES

FOCUS BIJU PATNAIK

Today on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Biju Patnaik, it is propitious to recall his seminal role in laying the foundational edifice of the strategic defence and security cooperation with USA to face the China threat. A major offshoot of the Sino-Indian war of 1962 was the intensification of cooperation and confidentiality between the intelligence agencies of the two countries – the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the USA and Intelligence Bureau (IB) of India.



Rup Narayan Das

TODAY ON THE OCCASION OF THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF BIJU PATNAIK, IT IS PROPITIOUS TO RECALL HIS SEMINAL ROLE IN LAYING THE FOUNDATIONAL EDIFICE OF THE STRATEGIC DEFENCE AND SECURITY COOPERATION WITH USA TO FACE THE CHINA THREAT

Immediately after the 1962 war, the USA assisted India in raising certain paramilitary formations in the India-China border. The creation of Tibet force was one such instance, which was conceptualised to co-opt the Tibetans refugees and convert them into warriors. The idea was mooted by Biju Patnaik to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru who endorsed it. With the help of American financial aid and a CIA instructor team General Sujjan Singh Uban, it was decided to set up the camp in the tranquil hill village of Chakrata. The Tibetan unit exceeded all expectations. The Tibetans particularly excelled as parachutists and had the distinction of conducting jumps at the altitude up to 15,400 feet using chutes specially procured by the CIA. In later years the unit developed into what is now called the Special Frontier Force which valiantly fought in the Galwan Valley on August 29/30 last year. One of its brave soldiers Nyima Tenzin sacrificed his life while defending the Indian border.

Yet another programme with the objective to lend air support to the Tibetan commandos and agents was the Aviation Research Centre (ARC), a covert aviation outfit for use along the India-China border. This was also the brain child of Biju Patnaik. The ARC was actually a subsection of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and was staffed by IB officers and aircrews deputed from



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the Indian Air Force. Its aircraft consisted of transport and light planes that mostly came from USA, courtesy the CIA. Biju Patnaik was again instrumental in setting up the project. Patnaik visited the USA in 1963 to work out the concept with the CIA. The Americans saw merit in the plan and dispatched two officers to India for initial fact finding tour: Rameshwar Nath Kao was its first Director

As the USA was deeply concerned about China's nuclear programme, it wanted to keep a tab on the development of nuclear weapons by China. Not many options were available to monitor China's nuclear programme. One option available to the USA was satellite imagery, which was not very developed then and the resolution of the imagery were not of very high order. Another US option, the U-2 spy plane, had its own set of problems. As China's test sites

were believed to be concentrated in distant Xinjiang, spy planes launched from airstrips in Taiwan did not have the range to make the round trip. The CIA had earlier made discreet use of an airfield at Peshawar, Pakistan, which put Xinjiang within range. But that had ended after the diplomatic furore following the shoot-down over the Soviet Union of a U-2 launched from Peshawar in 1960. It was against this backdrop that the ARC airbase at Charbatia configured between USA and India.

In May 1964, a small CIA team arrived at Charbatia with an unmarked spy plane. As planned, the plane performed a single mission over Xinjiang and headed back to Charbatia. As it touched down, its brake failed, and the U-2 rolled off the end of the runway. Wary of the media exposure, ARC personnel put the aircraft into the hanger and waited for the CIA

technicians to make the necessary repairs. Once they were completed, the plane was discretely flown out without attempting further over-flights from Indian soil.

A report based on a set of declassified documents obtained from the CIA under the freedom of Information Act in August 1963, the independent National Security Archive (NSA), shed more light on the incident. According to this report, the use of Charbatia, was agreed during a meeting between President John F Kennedy and the visiting Indian President S Radhakrishnan on June 3, 1963. However, as the Indian work to improve it took longer than expected, the missions presumed from Thailand's Takhli. The report further said that the first mission out of Charbatia did not take place until May 1964. The operation ceased consequent to the death of Prime Minister Nehru. The US detachment stayed on at Charbatia till 1967 and served as an adjunct to the main operational base in Thailand.

The report further said, the pilots and aircraft left Charbatia, but others remained in place to save staging costs. In December 1964, when Sino-Indian tensions increased along the border, Detachment G returned to Charbatia and conducted three highly successful missions, satisfying all requirements for the Sino-Indian border region. By this time, however, Takhli had become the main base for Detachment G's Asian operations, and Charbatia served merely as a forwarding staging base. The information gathered from aerial surveillance was yet another aspect of the close Indo-US cooperation in the immediate aftermath of the Sino-Indian war of 1962.

The writer, a Delhi based China Scholar, is a senior fellow of Indian Council of Social Science Research at the Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi. The views are personal.

SPECTRUM GENDER BIAS

The social returns of ending son bias

M Niaz Asadullah, Nazia Mansoor, Zaki Wahhaj & Teresa Randazzo

IN MUCH OF EMERGING ASIA, PERSISTENT BIAS IN FAVOUR OF SONS REMAINS A BARRIER TO GIRLS' LIFE PROSPECTS - AND OFTEN TO LIFE ITSELF

In much of emerging Asia, persistent bias in favour of sons remains a barrier to girls' life prospects – and often to life itself. Pre- and postnatal sex selection, including abortion and infanticide, has led to significant demographic imbalances.

Son preference also perpetuates large-scale social problems. Because a majority of the population still values sons more highly than daughters – a preference reinforced by cultural traditions in which sons play an important role (like performing funeral rituals in Hinduism) – South Asia is rife with domestic violence, child marriage, and deaths due to dowry disputes. And parents' cultural preference for sons can create additional human-development challenges.

Nowhere is this more evident than in India. Educational and economic opportunities for boys and girls remain deeply unequal, as the country's rapid economic growth since the 1990s was not accompanied by large-scale changes in gender attitudes and traditional social values. And, owing to sex selection, the country's ratio of males to females is imbalanced, with millions of girls and women missing from schools and the labor market.

The problem is getting worse. Most deaths among girls under five are due to postnatal sex selection, and the spread of ultrasound

technology has aggravated the imbalance. Consequently, the number of "missing" women in India has doubled over the last 50 years. According to the United Nations Population Fund's State of the World Population 2020 report, India alone now accounts for 46 million missing girls, nearly a third of the global total of 142 million.

Understanding sex bias in fertility is important for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 5 (gender equality), because it helps to explain parents' unequal treatment of daughters, particularly in rural or poverty-stricken areas. The large gender disparities in South Asian educational outcomes must be addressed at the root.

Traditional gender norms – men as breadwinners and women as homemakers – could explain the higher value placed on male children, as could the perceived economic benefits of having sons (who, for example, will receive a dowry rather than costing his parents one). These traditional views underpin gender inequality in educational attainment, with the gap perpetuating further inequalities in the next generation. In contrast, more educated women tend to have smaller families, with healthier and better-educated children.

Ending son bias in desired fertility, curbing the preferential

treatment of boys, and addressing parents' underinvestment in daughters requires increased spending on public education for girls. Bangladesh offers an example of the long-term social returns of such an approach.

In a recently published paper, we analyzed the desired and actual fertility choices of thousands of Bangladeshi women of child-bearing age. Although fertility decisions are still influenced by son preference, our results confirm a decline in the desire for sons. Moreover, women with secondary schooling are more likely to desire gender balance in fertility. This finding contrasts with a 1994 study, which suggested the opposite relationship between Bangladeshi mothers' secondary education and son preference. What has changed?

Three decades ago, educated Bangladeshi women had limited income-earning opportunities, and their economic status remained low. There simply were not enough educated women to shift son preference in favour of daughters. Since then, however, girls' education has benefited from the nationwide Female Secondary School Assistance Project, which was introduced in the early 1990s. The program provided financial aid for girls, and encouraged them to delay marriage in favor of education. Bangladesh has since leapfrogged neighboring India in

girls' secondary education.

Thus, as a consequence of increased female education and employment, son preference is giving way to a desire for gender balance. This is reflected in improvement in Bangladesh's sex ratio. Excess female deaths as a share of overall under-five mortality rate is now around 3%, indicating a decline in pre- and post-natal sex selection.

In 1992, former World Bank chief economist Lawrence H Summers famously identified women's education as the single most influential investment that can be made in the developing world. Our research confirms this finding. The policy lesson from Bangladesh is that investment in girls' schooling and the creation of economic opportunities can have important intergenerational effects at birth, in education, and beyond.

M Niaz Asadullah is Head of the Southeast Asia cluster of the Global Labor Organization and Nazia Mansoor is a lecturer at the University of Paris-Dauphine's London campus, while Teresa Randazzo is an assistant professor at Cà Foscari University of Venice and Zaki Wahhaj is an associate professor at the University of Kent

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Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Sinking ship

Sir, It is said the BJP is afraid of losing a state and the Congress is shy of winning one. It does not matter for the BJP how big or small the state is; it wants to form a government in every state irrespective of its size. Though it had a minuscule presence in Pondicherry, the astute power game of the BJP ensured its indirect control over the Union Territory through President's rule. After Kiran Bedi, a BJP nominee, was removed as Governor it was quite clear that the Union Territory was heading for a big spectacle barely a month away from the Assembly elections. However, the intent of the BJP separates it from the Congress. Assam, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, along with West Bengal and Pondicherry, are going to polls shortly, and the party has a stake in each state. What about the Congress? The grand old party's grip over states is loosening by the passing day. Very importantly, the intention to go all the way and the determination to win appear missing. When a party is reluctant to learn even after repeated drubbings, nothing can infuse hope among the people in the party's future. Despite top leaders sighing "enough is enough" nothing has been done to revive the party.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Cheque bounce case

Sir, In an interesting judgment, the Madras High Court has held "If a cheque is issued by a person in discharge of the liability of another person and if the cheque is dishonoured, the person who issued the cheque can be prosecuted under Section 138 of Negotiable Instruments Act". This is the right decision. When someone takes over the liability of another person, such person has to be prosecuted. If the drawer of the cheque in dishonoured cases is let off the hook, then many persons can come to the rescue of other persons who fail to clear their debts. The case relates to Sree Gokulam Chits and Finance Corporation Private Limited v/s. Jaishankar (Accused-1) and Nagalakshmi (Accused-2). The story is that Jaishankar joined some chit groups floated by Gokulam Chits Finance and became a subscriber. He was given chit amounts against which he issued some cheques as security. But he defaulted on the repayment of the chits. When the A-1 was informed of the legal action against him, his wife who is A-2 issued a cheque which bounced.

KV Seetharamaiah, HASSAN

Bangladeshis desperate for domicile certificates

A husband and his nephew jointly attacked a woman as she refused to sign papers that would have otherwise designated the nephew as an Indian citizen in Kendrapara

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, March 4: The problem concerning illegal Bangladeshi immigrants in Kendrapara district is growing with each passing day, a report said. The immigrants after entering Kendrapara district have started showing their might on local residents. If unchecked, this might result into a serious law and order problem.

In the latest case, a woman was allegedly assaulted by her husband and nephew after she refused to accept that the latter is her biological son, a report said. The woman was identified as Subhadra Ray, wife of Bikash Ray of Barkolikhal village under Mahakalapara block. The accused were identified as Bikash Ray and nephew Amit Ray.

The dispute arose after Subhadra refused to acknowledge Amit as her own son which the later wanted to get a domicile certificate and other papers. Enraged, Bikash and Amit attacked her rendering her critical. She was admitted to Mahakalapara community health centre. Later, she lodged a complaint at Jambu Marine



THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION HAD ISSUED DEPORTATION NOTICE TO 1551 IMMIGRANTS IN 2005 WHICH WAS REJECTED BY THE ORISSA HIGH COURT 15 YEARS LATER IN FEBRUARY

Residents demanded an enumeration of the actual citizens in the district. Social activists said the population of Bangladeshi immigrants has grown exceptionally posing a serious threat to the security of the country

During the Bangladesh war, only 1237 immigrants had been permitted to stay in the district

Police station but police are yet to take any action.

Subhadra is originally a native of Malkangiri district and was once a Zilla Parishad member. Later, she came in contact with Bikash, a Bangladeshi immigrant who was then living in Malkangiri and eventually married him. The couple soon shifted to Barkolikhal village. She alleged that her husband is a native of Arwel village in Bangladesh.

Two years back Amit came to live with them. He tried to generate the papers to prove his nativity for which he asked Subhadra to identify her-

self as his mother to which she denied. As a result, Bikash and Amit started torturing her.

She lodged a complaint with then Collector following which Amit was asked to leave the country and his Bangladeshi passport and voter identity card of India were seized. Amit again trespassed into the area and asked Subhadra to help him get the papers. He and Bikash assaulted Subhadra after she declined to oblige them.

The assault of the woman is indicative of the serious problem posed by the Bangladeshi immigrants in the

district. However, the problem is on the rise as the political leaders and the administration are keeping mum due to vote bank politics. The district administration is equally silent and is only waiting for an order from the government.

Residents have demanded an enumeration of the actual citizens in the district. Senior citizen Pratap Kumar Tripathy, social activist Sunil Kumar Gantayat, Bibhuti Bhushan Rout and Amarbar Rout said the population of Bangladeshi immigrants has grown exceptionally posing a serious threat to the security of the country. However, only 1237 immigrants were permitted to stay in the district during the Bangladesh war.

The district administration had issued deportation notice to 1551 immigrants in 2005 which was rejected by the Orissa High Court 15 years later in February.

When contacted, ADM Basant Kumar Rout said the local police have been asked to take action on the complaint of the woman. Jambu Marine IIC Maneswar Sethi said a primary inquiry has been ordered.

People in mine-rich Joda block live in dark; no use of DMF fund

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, March 4: Roida is a mineral-rich area under Joda block in Keonjhar district. As mines operate around the Bhuyan Roida panchayat, the mines areas are illuminated. But paradoxically, Mankad hutting village has been in the dark. Electricity and other basic amenities are a dream for its residents.

There is no shortage of funds in the district mineral foundation in the district, but this mines-encircled village has remained under developed, a report said. According to the report, people in the villages still depend on oil lamps after sunset even 73 years after independence.

In the absence of electricity, life of people is fraught with dangers from wild animals from nearby forests. "It is dangerous to go out after the sunset when darkness prevails everywhere," locals lamented.

The village with a population of 600 is surrounded by forests and mines. Most of the residents are of tribal communities. Mining provides livelihood for a few people while a majority of them eke out their living from selling minor forest produce.

On the east of the village is Tata mines while OMDC mines



are on its west. On its north are OMC and IDC mines. Sri Metallic's is on its south. Conscious citizens and social activists say, there is no dearth of funds from the mining sector, but the people affected by the mines are in darkness. Nearly, Rs 3000 crore has been collected from the DMF, which is supposed to be spent on development works in the mining-affected areas.

Locals alleged that mining firms had been claiming to be working for peripheral development only through advertisements, but the reality is different on the ground.

Ward member Gopal Oram, former ward member Sanka Purty, local like Samara Bentakar, Krishna Purty, Debasish

Bentakar, Arjun Munda, Gopal Munda lamented that they had apprised the Collector and the authorities of the Joda electricity division office about the need of electricity for villages in Roida and Makad Hutting several times in the past, but all reminders have fallen on deaf ears.

They alleged that for lack of electricity, their wards are unable to study at night. Bhuyan Roida sarpanch Jyotish Chandra Nayak said efforts are on to electrify the Makand Hutting. As the area is in the forest area, approval for electrification has been pending. Locals warned that they would resort to dharna if nothing happens.

Jumbo tramples man to death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Ullunda, March 4: Even as elephant menace continued in Ullunda area of Subanrapur district, a man was trampled to death by an elephant while his daughter escaped with injuries, a report said.

The deceased was identified as Naryan Bhoi(78). The man was staying at his son-in-law Bisikesan's house at Pandakital.

An elephant was damaging the house of a neighbor at 3 am Thursday. As the family members of Bisikesan created commotion to scare away the animal, the latter charged at the family. All ran for their lives, but Naryan was caught by the animal by its trunk. He was slammed on the ground.

Following the incident, forest officials and police visited the spot.

CAMPUS UNREST



Students of Rajendra University in Bolangir stage protests, alleging that non-students get free access into the varsity campus and create an atmosphere of unrest, Thursday

Manu Bhai's herbal tea a big draw

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, March 4: Every town has its own popular restaurants, fast food centres and tea stalls. In Balasure town, the town denizens' favourite haunt is Manu Bhai's tea stall. The stall's claim to fame is its herbal tea.

Situated near the Fakir Mohan roundabout in the town, Manu Bhai's tea stall has been here since 1984. The tiny tea joint experiences hundreds of footfalls every day.

Muna Bhai, 68, says he adds ginger, cinnamon powder, small cardamom powder, clove powder, black pepper powder, bay leaf, molasses, lemon juice, honey, rock salt, raw turmeric, basil leaves, Shunthi, Pippali, Juani, Ashwagandha and



Muesli in their proper proportion to the tea.

Manoranjan Das, who is fondly known as Manu Bhai, is a native of Simulia. In search of livelihood, he along with his family shifted to Balasure town in 1984. Then he put

up a tea stall near the Fakir Mohan roundabout.

Until COVID-19 pandemic, he was selling milk tea and snacks. The pandemic induced lockdowns and shutdowns hit him hard.

"As the restrictions were lifted

and shops were allowed to open, I opened my tea stall. But I could not get customers for milk tea. I noticed people demanding for red tea. Then the idea of selling herbal tea occurred to my mind," said Manu Bhai. In order to save his business, he went through several Ayurvedic books and collected some roots and herbs. "Adding these Ayurvedic ingredients in their proper portions, I prepared Ayurvedic tea. And people started liking my tea," he admitted. He said he is selling over 200 cups of tea a day, with a cup of tea selling at Rs 5. He opens his stall at 7:00 am and keeps it open till 10:00 pm. "Whatever I am earning today is enough to meet my family expenses," he said with a smile, suggesting his satisfaction.

30 hurt as bus overturns

POST NEWS NETWORK

Thakurmunda/Baripada, March 4: Thirty passengers were injured after the bus they were traveling in overturned at Godabhangha ghat on Thakurmunda-Anandapur Road Thursday. Out of the 30, four have been critically injured.

A mechanical fault is said to be the reason behind the mishap. On being informed, police and fire personnel reached the spot and with the help of local people rescued all the passengers and rushed them in ambulance and other vehicles to Ghasipura and

Thakurmunda government hospitals. The condition of four passengers is stated to be critical. According to sources, the bus named Maa Tarini was on its way from Rairangpur to Bhubaneswar via Thakurmunda in Mayurbhanj district. As the bus was passing through the Godabhangha ghat, the driver felt the bus having developed a mechanical fault. Before he could do something to avoid the mishap, the bus overturned.

After the mishap, the bus caught fire before fire fighters subdued it, it was learnt. Mahuldiha police have launched a probe.

3 of kin die in road accident

GOLAMUNDA: Three people of a family died in a road accident at Durguruguda under Golamunda police limits in Kalahandi Thursday. The deceased were identified as Kushnachandra Bag, his wife Sukeshi Bag and his daughter Supriya of Turechhanda village. According to reports, the three were returning home on a bike after attending a marriage feast. On the way, the bike rider lost balance for some reason. The bike got collided with a bus coming at high speed at Durguruguda. The couple died on the spot while their daughter was critically wounded. She was rescued by locals. However, the girl succumbed on the way to a local hospital. Police seized the bodies and the bike. A case was registered in this regard. Police have started an investigation into it.

ପଞ୍ଚାୟତ୍ରିକା ଦିବସ ଓ ବିଜୁ ନୟତ୍ରୀ ଅବସରରେ ରୁନ ପଞ୍ଚାୟତ ସମିତି ପକ୍ଷରୁ ସମସ୍ତ ନିଯାଯାଗଣଙ୍କୁ ସ୍ୱାଗତ । ଭୁବନ ପଞ୍ଚାୟତ ସମିତି, ଭୁବନ

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS & S DIVISION, BARGARH
Email :- eervss_bgh@nic.in, Ph (O):-06646 233220, FAX :- 06646 234626 No. 884 / Dt. 2.3.2021
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE Bid Identification No 7 of 2020-21
No.O-1204- The Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bargarh on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites tenders from the valid licensed holder contractors of Class 'B' or 'A' registered with any department of State Government or equivalent class of Central Govt.etc. to be eventually drawn up in G2 Contract Form for the work as per terms and condition noted below.
1. Name of the work:- Execution of RPWS to Village under Paikmal, Jharbandh & Ambabhona Block in the District Bargarh - 03 Nos.
2. Approx. Estimated cost :- Varies from Rs 44.31 lakhs to 52.17 lakhs
3. Date and time of availability of document in the portal :- Dt 09.03.2021 to Dt 24.03.2021 up to 5.00 P.M
4. Last date/ time for receipt of bids in the portal :- Dt 24.03.2021 up to 5.00 P.M
5. Date & time of Opening of Tender :- Dt 25.03.2021 at 11.00 A.M.
6. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid :- Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bargarh, District - Bargarh
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "http://tendersorissa.gov.in".
The authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bargarh OIPR-25157/11/0008/2021

MCL MAHANADI COALFIELDS LIMITED
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)
JAGRUTI VIHAR, BURLA-769020, DIST-SAMBALPUR, ODISHA Ph.(EPABX):0663-2542461 to 469, Website:www.mahanadicoal.in
Ref: No. MCL/OA/OSA/OC-1&2/Per/2021/3545 Dt. 29.01.2021
To, Sri Tankadhar Kishan Design. General Mazdoor Emp. Code: 77547800 Mine No. 1&2, Orient Sub Area.
You have been absenting from your duties unauthorisedly w.e.f. 20.09.2019 without any information or sanctioned leave. Accordingly Charge-Sheet was issued vide letter No: MCL/OA/OSA/OC 1&2/CM/19/5420, dt 13.11.2019 which was sent to your permanent home address. But you have failed to submit your written explanation against the above charge-sheet. As a consequence it was decided to hold Domestic Enquiry and Enquiry Committee was constituted vide Office Order No: MCL/OA/OSA/OC 1&2/CM/ENQ/19/5593, Dtd. 23.11.2019 appointing Sri R.N.Rathore as EO and Sri Arnav Kumar Binha, Design Asst. Manager(Min) as Mgmt Rep. Subsequently Sri. R.N.Rathore was transferred to HBM, RSA, Sri. V.Abhilash, Dy. Manager (Min) has been appointed E.O. vide order no. MCL/OA/OSA/OC-1&2/Per/Enquiry/2020/1088 Dt. 11.07.2020.
The Enquiry officer issued Enquiry Notices vide letter (1st Memo) No:MCL/OA/OSA/OC1&2/PER/19/5782, dated 05.12.2019, (2nd Memo) MCL/OA/OSA/OC1&2/PER/20/1154 dtd 16.07.2020, (3rd Memo) MCL/OA/OSA/OC1&2/PER /20/1700, dtd 01.09.2020, respectively directing you to appear before the enquiry committee and all these notices were sent to your Present & Permanent address by Speed Post. But - you have failed to appear before the Enquiry Committee/Enquiry Proceeding. So the Enquiry Officer concluded the enquiry EX-PARTE. Copy of the enquiry report and findings of Enquiry Officer was sent to your permanent home address vide letter No: MCL/OA/OSA/OC1&2/PER/20/1916, dtd. 21.09.2020 asking you to submit your written explanation. But the same was 1916 not returned by Post Office, you have not submitted the written explanation till date.
In view of the above and considering the gravity of misconduct, the management proposes to impose penalty as per provision of the Certified Standing Orders of MCL, under which your services are governed.
You are once again directed to submit your representation/explanation, if any, to the Colliery Manager, Mine No. 1&2, OSA within 15 days from the date of paper publication. If no reply is received within the stipulated time it will be presumed that you have nothing to state on the matter and you will be removed from the service of the Company without giving any opportunity or without assigning any reason.
Colliery Manager/ Orient Mine No. 1&2, OSA R-5032

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to all concerned that Pratap Kumar Dash, S/o, Sri Laxmidhar Dash resident of Village: OTM Labour Colony, Choudwar, AT/P.O./P.S.- Choudwar has lost Original RSD No. 1948 Dtd. 14.07.2015 executed by Utala @ Bala Gauri in favour of Narayan Bal and another. The aforesaid Pratap Kumar Dash has applied for a Housing Loan to the LIC HFL, Cuttack by offering mortgage of the said property documents. All concerned therefore having any claim over the property purchased under the said document i.e. RSD No. 1948 Dtd. 14.07.2015 are required to file their claim with the undersigned within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be presumed that the property relating to the said document is free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as mortgagor and the company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 (fifteen) days of publication of this notice.
Cuttack Dt.04.03.2021
Sd./- (U.K. Mishra), Advocate LIC HFL, Cuttack Area Office Link Road, Cuttack

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to all concerned that Krushna Chandra Behera, S/o. Udaynath Behera of At/P.O./P.S.- Choudwar has lost Original RSD No. 1968 Dtd.01.10.2009 executed by Balaram Behera in favour of Susama Behera. The aforesaid Krushna Chandra Behera has applied for a Housing Loan to the LIC HFL, Cuttack by offering mortgage of the said property documents. All concerned therefore having any claim over the property purchased under the said document i.e. RSD No. 1968 Dtd. 01.10.2009 are required to file their claim with the undersigned within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be presumed that the property relating to the said document is free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as mortgagor and the company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 (fifteen) days of publication of this notice.
Cuttack Dt.04.03.2021
Sd./- (U.K. Mishra), Advocate LIC HFL, Cuttack Area Office Link Road, Cuttack

MCL MAHANADI COALFIELDS LIMITED
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)
JAGRUTI VIHAR, BURLA-769020, DIST-SAMBALPUR, ODISHA Ph.(EPABX):0663-2542461 to 469, Website:www.mahanadicoal.in
Ref: No. HBM/SOM/PER/2021/1703 Dt. 06.2.2021
To, Sri Mishra Kalo. Designation. General Mazdoor U.M.No: 77593051, Hirakhanda Bundia Mine.
You have been absenting from your duties unauthorisedly w.e.f. 19.01.2019 without any information or sanctioned leave. Accordingly under clause 26.30 of CSO a Charge Sheet was issued vide letter No: HBM/SOM/PER/2019/164, dated: 29/30.04.2019 which was sent to your permanent home address. But you have failed to submit your written explanation against the above charge sheet. As a consequence it was decided to hold Domestic Enquiry and Enquiry Committee was constituted vide Office Order No: HBM/SOM/PER/ 2019/1106, dtd:28/29.09.2019 appointing Sri Zerom Minz, Asst. Manager (Mining), HBM as E.O. and Sri Kurapati Manoj Kumar, Mgt. (T) as Mgmt. Rep.
The Enquiry officer issued Enquiry Notices/memos vide letter No: HBM/SOM/PER/2019/1118, dtd: 01.10.2019, (1st Memo) HBM/SOM/PER/2019/1244, dtd:24.10.2019 (2nd Memo), HBM/SOM/PER/2019/1349, dtd: 09.11.2019 (3rd Memo), HBM/SOM/PER/2019/1481, dtd: 03.12.2019 (4th Memo) & HBM/SOM/PER/2019/1555, dtd: 31.12.2019 (ex-parite memo) respectively directing you to appear before the enquiry committee and all these notices were sent to your Present /permanent home address by regd./speed post. But you have failed to appear before the enquiry committee/enquiry proceeding. So the enquiry officer concluded the enquiry Ex-parite. Copy of the enquiry proceedings and findings of enquiry officer was sent to your permanent home address vide letter No: HBM/SOM/PER/2020/2015, dtd. 05/06.06.2020 asking you to submit your written explanation. But no explanation has been received from your end till date.
In view of the above, considering the gravity of misconduct, the management proposes to impose penalty as per provision of the certified Standing Orders of MCL, under which your services are governed.
You are once again directed to submit your representation/explanation, if any to the Colliery Manager, HBM within 15 days from the date of paper publication. If no reply is received within the stipulated time, it will be presumed that you have nothing to state on the matter and action as per provision of CSO even amounting to Removal/Discharge from service will be initiated against you without further reference to you.
Disciplinary Authority/ Colliery Manager/ Hirakhanda Bundia Mine R-5033

national



There is nothing to fear. Doubts in people's mind about the vaccine no longer exist. I appeal to everyone eligible for the vaccine to come and get themselves vaccinated

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

INDIA TO EXPAND SPACE TIES WITH ITALY: ISRO

India has agreed to expand space cooperation with Italy by tapping opportunities in earth observation, space science, robotic and human exploration, the state-run Indian space agency said Thursday



of the day quote

Yes we are RSS. Even the Prime Minister is from RSS. Do you have the moral right to speak about RSS?

B S YEDIYURAPPA | KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

There is no reason to back anyone who poses a threat to national security. We all should take sensible positions on such issues. This is my clear view and it is the view of our Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) too

AJIT PAWAR | DEPUTY CM, MAHARASHTRA

I am hopeful that during the INSTC Coordination Council meeting, member states would agree to the expansion of the INSTC route to include the Chabahar Port and also agree on expanding the membership of this project

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Man dies after taking covid jab

Kota: A 60-year-old man died here Thursday, a day after taking his first anti-Covid vaccination shot at a government primary health centre with authorities saying his post mortem has been conducted to find out the exact cause of his death.

Man accidentally shoots himself

New Delhi: A 30-year-old civil defence volunteer accidentally shot himself and then cooked up a story of being shot allegedly by two bike-borne men in south Delhi's Neb Sarai area to mislead investigators, police said Thursday.

Rawat presents ₹57,400 cr Budget

Gairsain: Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat Thursday presented a Rs 57,400.32 crore budget for 2021-22 in the Assembly here with emphasis on health, rural infrastructure, education, employment generation and agriculture.

Sub-inspector shoots self

Lucknow: An on-duty Uttar Pradesh police sub-inspector allegedly shot himself dead at the parking lot located across the state Assembly complex on Thursday, officials said.

SHIV SENA OUT OF BENGAL POLLS, TO BACK MAMATA

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 4: The Shiv Sena has decided to opt out of the upcoming West Bengal Assembly elections, but the party has decided to 'wholeheartedly' support All India Trinamool Congress leader and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, a top official said here Thursday.

Sena MP and Chief Spokesperson Sanjay Raut said that since the West Bengal polls are turning out to be "Didi vs All", the Shiv Sena has decided not to contest the elections, but will stand in solidarity with her. "Looking at the present scenario, it appears like a 'Didi vs All' fight. All M's - Money, Muscle and Media - are being used against Mamata Didi. We wish her a 'roaring success', because we believe she is the real 'Bengal Tigress'!" said Raut.

He said that the decision was taken after discussions with Shiv Sena President and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. However, MVA sources said the move could have been prompted to ensure that there is no division of votes in the West Bengal polls that could damage Trinamool's prospects vis-a-vis the BJP as the Sena was tentatively planning to contest around 60 seats.



Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray with Mamata Banerjee (FILE PHOTO)

the poll bugle in West Bengal where it had contested the 2016 Assembly and 2019 Lok Sabha polls, but notched nil in terms of seats.

Earlier, the Sena - ruling Maharashtra in alliance with Nationalist Congress Party and the Congress - has contested various elections in different states including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir and Goa besides West Bengal.

The saffron party has justified its ventures in other states on grounds that the Bharatiya Janata Party at the Centre has been attempting to destabilize or dethrone Constitutionally-elected governments in all Opposition-ruled states, including Maharashtra and West Bengal. Incidentally, ruling ally NCP President Sharad Pawar has already said he would visit Kolkata to extend support to Mamata

Banerjee - as part of plans to build up a 'grand alliance' of national and state opposition parties - before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Similarly, political sources also do not rule out the possibility of a repeat of Maharashtra's MVA experiment - Sena-NCP-Congress with differing ideologies joining hands - in West Bengal if the eastern state brews up a fractured mandate in the elections, the results of which are expected in early-May. "The unthinkable happened in Maharashtra and it is working smoothly. Anything is possible... even in WB. The MVA is cited as a national example to make states strong," a senior state leader said guardedly, on the odds with three arch-rivals in West Bengal - Congress, Left Front and Trinamool Congress - hugging each other post-polls to keep the BJP at bay.

KERALA ELECTIONS

'Metro Man is BJP's CM candidate'



AGENCIES

Thiruvalla/Kochi, March 4: 'Metro Man' E Sreedharan, who recently joined the BJP, will be its chief ministerial candidate for the Kerala assembly elections April 6, senior leader and Union Minister V Muraleedharan said Thursday.

"BJP4Keralam will fight Kerala polls with E Sreedharan Ji as its Chief Ministerial Candidate. We will defeat both CPIMKerala & INCKerala to provide a corruption-free, development-oriented Governance for the people of Kerala," Muraleedharan said in a tweet.

His social media post on Sreedharan's leadership in the Assembly polls came hours after party's state chief K Surendran said he has requested the party's national leadership to announce 'Metro Man' as the NDA's chief ministerial candidate.

The 88-year-old technocrat also on Thursday announced his decision to end his 24-year long career with the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC). If the NDA, "under the leadership of 'Metro Man',

gets an opportunity to rule the state, "we are confident we will be able to implement development works under Prime Minister Narendra Modi with a ten-fold force in Kerala," Surendran said. Addressing a party meeting here, he highlighted the achievements of Sreedharan, including the completion of the reconstruction of Palarivattom flyover here in five months, much ahead of the stipulated time.

"He completed the project in five months without any corruption. That is why we requested Sreedharan and our party leadership that he should be projected as the (NDA's) Chief Minister candidate," he said at the meeting organised as part of the "Vijay Yatra" led by him.

This was the first time the party indicated that Sreedharan will be the NDA's chief ministerial candidate. The party sought to project Sreedharan's leadership in the polls amid the process of determining the candidates for the assembly election. Sreedharan has said his main aim was to help the party come to power in Kerala and that he will be open to chief ministership.

3 J'KHAND COPS KILLED IN MAOIST ATTACK

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ranchi, March 4: Three Jharkhand Police personnel were killed and two others injured, including one from CRPF, as an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) went off in West Singhbhum district Thursday morning.

The explosive device was planted by the Maoists. The incident took place around 8.45 a.m. when a "pressure IED blast" took place in thick forested area near Hoyahatu village under Toklo police station area in West Singhbhum.

Central Reserve Police Force's (CRPF) 197 Battalion along with the Jharkhand Jaguar (AG 11) of the state police were on an operation in the area when the incident took place, said CRPF Spokesperson Dalip Ambesh said.

As Jharkhand is afflicted by the scourge of extremism, the state government on February 19, 2008 sanctioned the creation of 20 Assault Groups (AGs) of Special Task Force (STF) for eradication of extremist activities.

This force was later given the distinctive name of Jharkhand Jaguar (JJ), and also a distinctive uniform.

CHINESE HACKERS SLOWLY SPREADING THEIR WINGS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 4: Besides 10 organisations in the Indian power sector and two ports, Chinese state-sponsored hackers might also have targeted Indian Railways infrastructure, an expert with cyber intelligence company Recorded Future said Thursday.

However, there is still not enough data to confirm that Indian Railways infrastructure were actually attacked, Charity Wright, Cyber Threat Intelligence Expert, Recorded Future, said during a virtual briefing with reporters.

Recorded Future had earlier released a report in which it had identified 10 distinct Indian organisations in the power generation and transmission sector and two in the maritime sector which were targeted by Chinese hackers. The intrusions were conducted by a China-linked activity group that Recorded Future termed as "RedEcho". The 12 "victim" organisations are - Power System Operation Corporation Ltd, NTPC Ltd, NTPC Kudgi STPP, Western Regional Load Despatch Centre, Southern



Regional Load Despatch Centre, North Eastern Regional Load Despatch Centre, Eastern Regional Load Despatch Centre, Telangana State Load Despatch Centre, Delhi State Load Despatch Centre, DTL Tikri Kalan (Mundka) of Delhi Transco Ltd, V.O. Chidambaranar Port, Mumbai Port Trust.

Recorded Future observed the intrusions in the Indian power sector beginning in mid-2020 amid heightened border tensions between India and China. Relations between India and China deteriorated significantly following the border clashes in June 2020 that resulted in the first combat deaths in 45 years between the world's two most populous nations, the report noted.

INDIA IS NOW ONLY 'PARTLY FREE' UNDER MODI REGIME

CIVIL LIBERTIES IN INDIA HAVE BEEN IN DECLINE SINCE PM NARENDRA MODI CAME TO POWER IN 2014, SAYS FREEDOM HOUSE IN ITS REPORT DEMOCRACY UNDER SIEGE

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 4: India's status as a free country has changed to "partly free", according to an annual report on global political rights and liberties.

Civil liberties in India have been in decline since PM Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, said Freedom House in its report Democracy Under Siege.

It said the change in India's status is part of a global shift in the balance between democracy and authoritarianism.

There was no immediate response from the Indian government to the report. US-based Freedom House, a non-profit organisation which conducts research on political freedom and human rights, added that the number of countries designated as "not free" was at its highest level since 2006. It added that India's "fall from the upper ranks of free nations" could have a more damaging effect on the world's democratic standards. Since 2014, it says, increased pressure on human rights organisations, intimidation of journalists and activists, and a spate of attacks, es-



pecially those against Muslims, had led to a deterioration of political and civil liberties in the country. And this decline only "accelerated" after 2019, it added. In 2014, India's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won a landslide general election victory. Modi returned to power with an even greater majority five years later. "Under Modi, India appears to have abandoned its potential to serve as a global democratic leader, elevating narrow Hindu nationalist interests at the expense of its founding values of inclusion and equal rights for all," the report said. It said that the crackdown against those protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act, a bill which offers amnesty to

non-Muslim illegal immigrants from three neighbouring countries had contributed to India's decline in the ratings. The government argues that the law will give sanctuary to people fleeing religious persecution. Critics say the bill is part of the BJP's agenda to marginalise Muslims in Hindu majority India. The report also noted the government's response to the pandemic, saying it had exacerbated the global decline in freedom. Last year, in March, India imposed a sudden lockdown which left millions of migrant workers stranded in cities across India without work and money to get home. Many walked hundreds of miles, while some died because of exhaustion or in accidents along the way.

Bomb scare at Taj Mahal following hoax call

New Delhi/Agra: The Taj Mahal complex in Agra was vacated Thursday morning following a hoax bomb call, police said. The caller, identified as Vimal Kumar Singh, has been detained for questioning in Firozabad, Additional Director General (ADG) of Police, Agra zone, A Satish Ganesh said Singh called the 112 emergency response number of the Uttar Pradesh police at around 9 am and claimed that a bomb was kept inside the monument that is conserved by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and protected by armed personnel of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). The police immediately informed the CISF personnel, who asked the visitors to vacate the premises of the iconic 17th-century monument and launched anti-sabotage checks around 9:15 am. Nothing suspicious was found during the checks at the monument, a CISF officer said in Delhi. An initial probe revealed that Singh is a resident of Patiyali in Kasganj and was presently staying in his maternal grandmother's house in Okhra village in the Narkhi area of Firozabad, the ADG said.

India not utilizing vax to full capacity, says Delhi HC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 4: The Delhi High Court on Thursday showed apprehensions over non-utilization of coronavirus vaccine to its full capacity by the country, asserting that it is either being donated or sold off to foreign countries rather than being provided to Indians.

Justice Vipin Sanghi made the observations while hearing a suo motu public interest litigation concerning vaccination of judges, court staff and lawyers on priority and for them to be treated as frontline workers so that they could receive it without limitations of their age or physical condition.

In the recent phase of the vaccination drive which commenced on

March 1, the government is inoculating only those who are over 60 years of age and for people aged 45 and above with specified co-morbid conditions. The priority was first given to the healthcare and frontline workers.

Justice Sanghi said, "If the capacity of the two vaccine manufacturers were being utilized to the full and then the restrictions were to be put, it would have been one thing. We should not have the situation where we are not even utilizing the full capacity." His remarks came after Covishield and Covaxin vaccine manufacturers Bharat Biotech and Serum Institute of India apprised that the capacity to vaccinate the judicial staff is available. "They have the full capacity to

Sputnik V could be India's 3rd Covid vax



manufacture and supply. We are not utilizing it because of our restricted control approach. We are ei-

ther donating or selling it off to foreign countries rather than giving it to our own people. It is well settled and the experts are also saying that there should be a sense of urgency in this process of vaccination," the judge said. He said that the present petition is to find out if the whole judicial system can be prioritized without age limit and comorbidity. The court then issued slew of directions. Bharat Biotech and Serum Institute of India have been directed to file affidavits on capacity to manufacture the vaccines and the unutilized capacity.

The Government of India has been asked to indicate the transport capacity of the vaccine and the extent to which it is being used. The Centre has also been asked to explain the rationale over strict class of persons that can be vaccinated.

ONLY 20% ABLE TO GET VACCINATION APPOINTMENT: As the vaccination drive progresses in the country, the challenge for the people shifts from getting an OTP to getting an appointment slot.

Only 20 per cent of those who tried to get vaccination appointment were able to do so; while OTP generation is no longer a big challenge, getting an appointment is, according to a survey by LocalCircles.

However, as people tried to register themselves for vaccination via the CO-WIN site or the Aarogya Setu app, many had difficulty getting an OTP or finding an appointment.



Our relationship with China will be competitive when it should be. Collaborative when it can be and adversarial when it must be
TONY BLINKEN | US SECRETARY OF STATE

SPACEX STARSHIP LANDS AND EXPLODES

SpaceX's futuristic Starship looked like it aced a touchdown Wednesday, but then exploded on the landing pad with so much force that it was hurled into the air. The failure occurred just minutes after SpaceX declared success



of the day quote

UK's decision to unilaterally extend a grace period on checks for goods moving between Great Britain and Northern Ireland amounts to a violation of the so-called Northern Ireland Protocol



MARÓŠ ŠEFČOVIC | FORMER VICE-PRESIDENT, EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Facebook took action like this. It can be interpreted in many ways. We must make it clear



PRAYUTH CHAN-OCCHA | PRIME MINISTER OF THAILAND

The Covid-19 pandemic has not only consolidated injustices and inequalities that already existed in our societies, it is also likely to wipe out decades of achievements by women



DAVID SASSOLI | EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

HK court denies bail to activists

Hong Kong: A Hong Kong court Thursday denied bail to 32 out of 47 pro-democracy activists charged under a Beijing-imposed national security law, ending a four-day marathon court hearing. The group of activists was charged with conspiracy to commit subversion under the law and detained Sunday over their involvement in an unofficial primary election last year that authorities said was a plot to paralyze Hong Kong's government.

Mongolia to open air border

Ulan Bator: Mongolia is planning to reopen its air border from May 1 to resume international passenger flights, according to the country's government press office. "At the direction given by Prime Minister Luvsannamsrai Oyun-Erdene, it is planned to reopen Buyant-Ukhaa international airport from May 1 to resume international passenger air traffic," the press office said in a statement Thursday. Mongolia suspended international passenger flights in mid-February 2020 to prevent the spread of Covid-19, the Xinhua news reported.

Lanka approves Sputnik V vax

Colombo: Sri Lanka's drug regulatory body has approved the Russian Sputnik V vaccine as the second available for use in the Indian Ocean island nation. The state minister overseeing pharmaceutical products, Channa Jayasumana, said Sri Lanka has requested doses from Russia's Gamaleya Research Institute and was awaiting confirmation of the amount it would get.

Gunmen kill 7 in Afghan

Kabul: At least seven Afghan civilians were shot and killed by unknown gunmen overnight in the country's east, a provincial security official said Thursday. Gen Juma Gul Hemat, provincial police chief in Nangarhar province said the victims of the brutal attack were workers at a plaster factory in the Sorgh Rod district. Police arrested four suspects, he added. In a separate attack in Jalalabad, a female doctor was killed when a sticky bomb attacked to a rickshaw she was traveling in exploded, the provincial governor's office said.

Biden issues high alert on China

HE SAID THE US WILL SUPPORT CHINA'S NEIGHBOURS AND DECLARED, "WE WILL DEEPEN OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH INDIA"

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

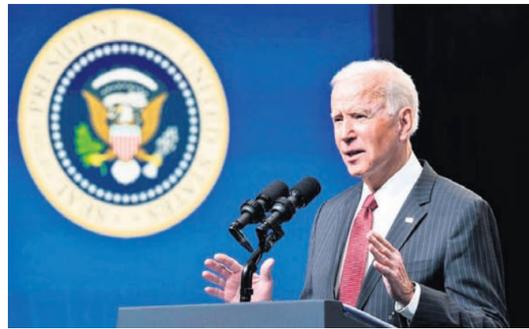
New York, March 4: Issuing a high alert about the growing dangers to the international system from China, President Joe Biden has called for building alliances with like-minded countries and said the US will deepen its ties with India.

The Interim National Security Guidance he released Wednesday singled out China as the only "competitor" capable of mounting a sustained challenge with its multifarious capabilities to the international order.

He said in the document that the US will support China's neighbours and declared, "We will deepen our partnership with India."

Introducing the document, he said it would "convey my vision for how America will engage with the world" and guide his administration while Washington begins work on a new National Security Strategy.

He sketched a vision of a cooperative of democracies to face China, which "has rapidly become more as-



sertive". He called Beijing "the only competitor potentially capable of combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to mount a sustained challenge to a stable and open international system".

To counter this as well as the challenge from Russia, the US will have to "promote a favorable distribution of power to deter and prevent adversaries from directly threatening the United States and our allies, inhibiting access to the global commons, or dominating key regions", he said.

"We can do none of this work alone. For that reason, we will reinvigorate and modernise our alliances and partnerships around the world," he said.

"Our democratic alliances enable us to present a common front, produce a unified vision, and pool our strength to promote high standards, establish effective interna-

tional rules, and hold countries like China to account," he said.

Envisaging the framework for the alliance of democracies to face the China challenge, he said, "Beyond our core alliances, we will also double down on building partnerships throughout the world, because our strength is multiplied when we combine efforts to address common challenges, share costs, and widen the circle of cooperation." Biden drew attention to the risk from China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative that seeks to bring countries around the world, especially developing nations, under its economic dominance.

To counter this Chinese programme, he said, "We will support China's neighbours and commercial partners in defending their rights to make independent political choices free of coercion or undue foreign influence. We will pro-

Security tight at US Capitol post militia attack warning

Washington: Security has been tightened around the US Capitol in Washington - scene of a deadly assault in January - after police warned that a militia group might try to attack it Thursday, an important day in the calendar for some pro-Trump conspiracy theorists. An unidentified group of "militia violent extremists" discussed plans in February to "take control of the US Capitol and remove Democratic lawmakers on or about March 4," according to a bulletin issued on Tuesday by the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The police force that guards the US Capitol, seat of the legislature, said in a statement that it had "taken immediate steps to enhance our security posture and staffing for a number of days, to include March 4." Capitol Police also said that they were "aware of and prepared for any potential threats towards members of Congress or towards the Capitol complex," including the possible militia attack.

te locally-led development to combat the manipulation of local priorities." He also portrayed China as the main challenge to the US and world and stressed building alliances to meet it.

N KOREA MAY BE TRYING TO EXTRACT PLUTONIUM



AGENCIES

Seoul, March 4: North Korea may be trying to extract plutonium to make more nuclear weapons at its main atomic complex, recent satellite photos indicated, weeks after leader Kim Jong Un vowed to expand his nuclear arsenal.

The 38 North website, which specialises in North Korea studies, cited the imagery as indicating that a coal-fired steam plant at the North's Yongbyon nuclear complex is in operation after about a two-year hiatus. Smoke was observed emanating from the plant's smokestack at various times from late February and early March.

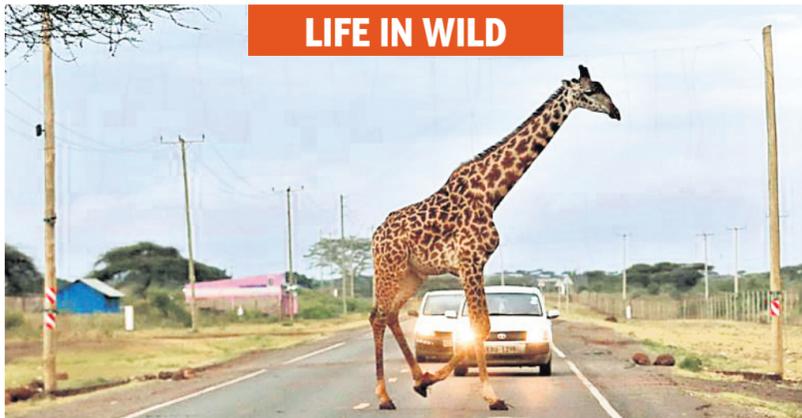
This suggests "preparations for spent fuel reprocessing could be underway to extract plutonium needed for North Korea's nuclear weapon," the website said Wednesday. But it added that "this could also mean simply the facility is being prepped to handle radioactive waste."

Earlier this week, International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi

said some nuclear facilities in North Korea continued to operate, citing the operation of the steam plant that serves the radiochemical laboratory at Yongbyon. The laboratory is a facility where plutonium is extracted by reprocessing spent fuel rods removed from reactors.

"The DPRK's nuclear activities remain a cause for serious concern. The continuation of the DPRK's nuclear program is a clear violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and is deeply regrettable," Grossi told the IAEA's board of governors, according to IAEA's website. DPRK refers to North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Plutonium is one of the two key ingredients to build nuclear weapons along with highly enriched uranium. The Yongbyon complex, north of the capital city of Pyongyang, has facilities to produce both ingredients. It's not clear exactly how much weapons-grade plutonium or highly enriched uranium has been produced at Yongbyon and where North Korea stores it.



A giraffe crosses a road laced with an electric fence within the Kimana Sanctuary, part of a crucial wildlife corridor that links the Amboseli National Park to the Chyulu Hills and Tsavo protected areas, within the Amboseli ecosystem in Kimana, Kenya

'Indo-Bangla ties a truly 360 degree partnership'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, March 4: Describing India's ties with Bangladesh as a truly "360 degree partnership," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said Thursday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's planned visit to Dhaka later this month will surely be a "very memorable" one.

Jaishankar arrived here on a day-long visit to prepare the ground for Prime Minister Modi's visit to Bangladesh later this month to participate in the celebrations of 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's Independence and 50 years of

Bangladesh-India diplomatic relations. After holding comprehensive discussions with his Bangladeshi counterpart A K Abdul Momen, Jaishankar said Bangladesh was central to India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and increasingly relevant to the country's 'Act East Policy'. "We are working to prepare for the planned visit of our Prime Minister. It will surely be a very memorable visit: if I recall right it would be his first visit outside India since the coronavirus pandemic and his second as Prime Minister to Bangladesh," he told reporters here at a press conference

along with Momen. Prime Minister Modi is likely to pay a two-day visit from March 26 to Bangladesh to participate in a series of events.

Jaishankar acknowledged that it was a "very special year" for the people of Bangladesh when both countries mark the Mujib Barsho, 50 years of Bangladesh's Liberation and 50 years of India-Bangladesh bilateral relationship.

"May all your dreams come true and I can assure you that India will always be there by your side, as a reliable friend," he said in his opening remarks at a joint press inter-

7.3 quake hits off NZ coast, Tsunami feared

AGENCIES

Wellington, March 4: A shallow, powerful earthquake struck off the northeastern coast of New Zealand Thursday, with officials warning of a possible tsunami threat. There were no immediate reports of serious damage or casualties.

New Zealand's National Emergency Management Agency said it was still assessing whether the quake had triggered a tsunami that could affect the country. It measured the quake at magnitude 7.3.

It advised people near the coast to immediately move to high ground if they felt strong or long shaking.



The US Geological Survey said the quake measured a preliminary 6.9 magnitude and was centered at a depth of 10 kilometers (six miles) about 178 kilometers (111 miles) northeast of the city of Gisborne. Residents of Gisborne reported light to moderate shaking, it said.

A magnitude 6.3 quake hit the city of Christchurch in 2011, killing 185 people and destroying much of its downtown.

'CO2 emission cuts must increase 10x to tackle climate emergency'

THE WORLD HAS WARMED BY OVER 1 DEGREE CELSIUS SINCE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION BECAUSE OF EMISSIONS OF GREENHOUSE GASES FROM HUMAN ACTIVITIES

AGENCIES

London, March 4: Sixty-four countries reduced their fossil carbon dioxide emissions during the period between 2016 and 2019, but the rate of global reduction needs to increase tenfold to meet the Paris Agreement goals to fight climate change, according to a study.



The researchers at the University of East Anglia (UEA), UK, Stanford University in the US and the Global Carbon Project examined the progress in cutting fossil CO2 emissions since the Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015.

The findings, published in the journal Nature Climate Change, show the need for far greater ambition ahead of the important UN

climate summit in Glasgow, UK, in November.

"Countries' efforts to cut CO2 emissions since the Paris Agreement are starting to pay off, but actions are not large-scale enough yet and emissions are still increasing in way too many countries," said Corinne Le Quere, Royal Society Professor at UEA.

"The drop in CO2 emissions from

responses to COVID-19 highlights the scale of actions and of international adherence needed to tackle climate change," Le Quere, who led the study, said.

The researchers noted that the annual cuts of 0.16 billion tonnes of CO2 are only 10 per cent of the 1.2 billion tonnes of CO2 cuts that are needed globally every year to tackle climate change. They explained that emissions decreased in 64 countries during 2016-2019, they increased in 150 countries.

According to the study, Global carbon emissions grew by 0.21 billion tonnes of CO2 per year during 2016-2019 compared to 2011-2015.

The researchers noted that in 2020, confinement measures to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic cut global emissions by 2.6 billion tonnes of CO2, about 7 per cent below 2019 levels. They explained that 2020 is a "pause button" that cannot realistically continue while the world

overwhelmingly relies on fossil fuels. Confinement policies are neither a sustainable nor desirable solution to the climate crisis, according to the researchers.

They noted that annual cuts of 1-2 billion tonnes of CO2 are needed throughout the 2020s and beyond to avoid exceeding global warming within the range 1.5 degrees Celsius to well below 2 degrees Celsius, the ambition of the UN Paris Agreement.

The world has warmed by over 1 degrees Celsius since the Industrial Revolution because of emissions of greenhouse gases from human activities, the researchers said.

According to the study, of the 36 high-income countries, 25 saw their emissions decrease during 2016-2019 compared to 2011-2015, including the US, the European Union, and the UK. The team noted that emissions decreased even when accounting for the carbon footprint of imported

goods produced in other countries.

The research shows that 90 out of 99 upper-middle income countries also saw their emissions decrease during 2016-2019 compared to 2011-2015. This suggests that actions to reduce emissions are now in motion in many countries worldwide, the researchers said.

The growing number of climate change laws and policies appear to have played a key role in curbing the growth in emissions during 2016-2019, the researchers said, adding that there are now more than 2000 climate laws and policies worldwide.

They noted that a full bounce-back in 2021 to previous CO2 emission levels appears unlikely. However, the researchers said unless the COVID-19 recovery directs investments in clean energy and the green economy, emissions will likely start increasing again within a few years.



Agriculture sector is being promoted through reforms in-laws. This is expected to bring revolutionary changes. The government has been making continuous efforts for the progress of rural and agriculture sector

NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR |
AGRICULTURE MINISTER

ODISHA AMONG TOP THREE
MP, Bengal and Odisha are the best performing states in land record digitisation, according to NCAER Land Records and Services Index 2020-21, which revealed that almost all states/UTs have shown an improvement in their efforts to digitise land records compared to 2020



of the day quote

The pandemic has had a perceptible impact on women in various stages of their lives, across different industry sectors, occupational status, work experience, and life stages

MADHURA DASGUPTA SINHA |
FOUNDER & CEO OF ASPIRE FOR HER

We have been working closely with the respective metro rail corporations to deliver a world-class experience for commuters through our expertise in delivering turnkey solutions and partaking in India's vision to build a strong public transport network across the country

ANIL SAIN MATHUR | COO, GODREJ INTERIO

More women than men are Airbnb hosts globally, and we are committed to increase the share of India hosts that are women each year. In addition, our community partnerships are aimed at economically empowering and creating opportunities for women across India

AMANPREET SINGH BAJAJ |
GM, AIRBNB INDIA, SE ASIA, HK AND TAIWAN

SHORT TAKES

Non-basmati rice exports increase

New Delhi: The country's non-basmati rice exports have increased to ₹26,058 crore during April-January 2020-21 as against ₹11,543 crore in the same period last fiscal, the commerce ministry said Thursday. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) Chairman M Angamuthu said several measures have been taken in terms of ensuring safety and hygiene while ensuring that rice exports continue uninterrupted. The first consignment of 'red rice' was flagged off Thursday to the US, he added.

'No deemed approvals for slots'

Mumbai: The winning bidder for the now-defunct Jet Airways will have to apply for slots as there cannot be any deemed approval for the slots, according to submissions by the civil aviation ministry and regulator DGCA. The Ministry of Civil Aviation and DGCA mentioned their stance to the NCLT, which had February 25 sought their responses to Jet Airways' slots issue.

FM takes first dose of Covid vax

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Thursday took the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine. "Got my first dose of the vaccination against Covid-19 this morning," Sitharaman tweeted. She also thanked sister Ramya PC for her "care and professionalism". "Fortunate to be in India, where development and dissemination has been prompt and affordable," she added.

Flipkart enables 'voice' search

Bangalore: e-Commerce marketplace Flipkart Thursday introduced voice search in Hindi, English as well as Hinglish on its platform to enable customers to search from a pool of over 150 million products across over 80 categories through speech. Flipkart said that the introduction of the voice search feature will enable faster onboarding of customers from smaller towns and simplify their e-commerce journey.

Fulfill promise of stable oil prices: India urges OPEC+

THE BASKET OF CRUDE OIL INDIA IMPORTED IN FEBRUARY AVERAGED \$61.22/BARREL AND \$54.79 IN JANUARY THIS YEAR. IT HAD FALLEN TO \$19.90 IN APRIL LAST YEAR

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 4: With retail petrol and diesel prices going through the roof, India Thursday again urged oil producers group OPEC to ease production curbs to fulfill their promise of stable oil prices.

Though the average price of crude oil India imports was less than \$50 per barrel between April and December 2020 and comparable to 2019-20 average rate of \$60.47 in months thereafter, petrol and diesel prices are at a historic high now as the government has so far not rolled back the taxes it levied when prices plummeted almost a year back.

The record taxes coupled with international rates returning to pre-



Covid levels on resurrecting demand have meant that petrol has crossed ₹100 mark in some places in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Speaking at the CERAWeek conference by IHS Markit, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said India, where fuel demand is recovering to pre-pandemic levels, wants reasonable and responsible oil prices.

importer and consumer, had supported the decision of the oil producers' cartel OPEC and its allies to cut production last year in view of the oil demand collapsing due to the spread of Covid-19.

"At that point in time, the producers especially OPEC assured the global market, that by the beginning of the 2021 demand will be coming back and production will be as usual. But I am sorry to say the production is yet to be normal," he said.

"If you do not supply properly, if there is a gap in demand and supply artificially (created), there is a price rise." Crude, rebounded this year to over \$62/barrel after the OPEC slashed output to drive a rebalancing of the market following last year's slump.

Govt bought paddy worth ₹1.26L cr at MSP so far



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 4: Procurement of Kharif paddy has increased nearly 15% to 669.59 lakh tonnes at MSP so far in the current Kharif marketing season, costing over ₹1.26 lakh crore, amid ongoing farmers protest against three new farm laws. Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) starts in October. Paddy is a major Kharif (summer-sown) crop but it is also grown in rabi (winter-sown) season. "In the ongoing Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2020-21, the government continues to procure Kharif 2020-21 crops at MSP (Minimum Support Price) from farmers as per existing MSP schemes, as was done in previous seasons," an official statement said.

The government has 669.59 lakh tonnes of paddy till March 3, up 14.78 per cent from 583.34 lakh tonnes in the corresponding period of the previous year.

"About 97.70 lakh farmers have already been benefitted from the ongoing KMS procurement operations with MSP value of ₹1,26,418.70 crore," the statement said.

Out of the total purchase of 669.59 lakh tonnes, Punjab has contributed 202.82 lakh tonnes.

'State must procure products from local SMEs'



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: The SMEs bodies Thursday demanded that the Odisha government should procure products from state's units instead of other outside industries through government e-marketplace (GeM).

SME bodies like Orissa Young Entrepreneurs Association, Utkal Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association, Orissa Small Scale Industries Association and OASME organised a press meet to address the issue.

OSSIA president Smarajit Mohanty said, "To help MSEs in marketing their products, Directorate of Export Promotion and Marketing (DEPM) was created which was entrusted with registration of MSE manufacturing units and formulating a process of procurement for the state government, known as 'Rate Contract System'.

Since then, this time tested procurement system is followed for procurement of goods and services and has been incorporated in OGFR as one of the procurement processes for goods and services benefiting majority of MSEs of our state."

The state government issued a new circular mandating all procurement through only GeM which will lead big loss of over 1000 industries of Odisha.

EPFO keeps interest rate unchanged at 8.5% for FY'21

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 4: In a major relief for India's working class, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has decided to keep interest rates on Provident Fund deposits for the financial year 2020-21 unchanged at 8.5%.

Thursday, the Central Board of Trustees, EPF, recommended 8.50% annual rate of interest to be credited on EPF accumulations in members' accounts for the Financial Year 2020-21.

The interest rate would be officially notified in the government gazette following which EPFO would credit the rate of interest into the subscribers' accounts.

At 8.5%, PF is generating maximum returns over various other savings instruments available to individuals. The bank fixed deposit rate has gone down to almost 5.5 to 6% level, Kisan Vikas Patra is offering rate of 6.9%, government's employees' GPF is giving 7.1%, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana 7.6%, PPF 7.1%, 5-year NSC 6.8%, 5-year senior citizen savings scheme 7.4%, recurring deposit 5.8%, 5-year monthly income account - 6.6%.

Since FY 2014 EPFO has consistently generated returns not less than 8.50%, said an official statement. A high EPF interest rate along with compounding, makes a significant difference to gains of subscribers. This is despite the fact that EPFO has consistently followed a conservative approach to-



The Central Board of Trustees, EPF, had recommended 8.50% annual rate of interest to be credited on EPF accumulations in members' accounts for the FY 2020-21

Since FY 2014 EPFO has consistently generated returns not less than 8.50%

wards investment, putting highest emphasis on the safety and preservation of principal first approach.

Risk appetite of EPFO is very low, since it involves investing poor man's retirement savings also, it added. EPFO over the years has been able to distribute higher income to its members, through various economic cycles with minimal credit risk. Considering the high credit profile of the EPFO investment, the interest rate of EPFO is considerably higher than other

comparable investment avenues available for subscribers.

During the period from 2015-16 EPFO prudently started investing in equity through exchange traded funds based on the NSE 50 and BSE 30 indices. The investment in equity assets started from 5 per cent for FY 2015 and subsequently went up to 15 per cent of the incremental portfolio. For FY 2021, EPFO decided to liquidate investment in and the interest rate recommended is a result of combined income from interest received from debt investment as well as income realised from equity investment.

This has enabled EPFO to provide higher return to its subscribers and still allowing EPFO with healthy surplus to act as cushion for providing higher return in future also. There is no over-draw on EPFO corpus due to this income distribution.

MSME Trade Fair to commence today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: State government will host a five-day long MSME Trade Fair here from March 5 at Idco exhibition ground. State MSME Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra Thursday addressed the media in this regard. The principal secretary of MSME department Satyabrata Sahu was also present at the press meet.

The event is being organised in coinciding with the Entrepreneur's Week with taking all safety measures in accordance with Covid-19 protocol. The event will have five hangers with capacity of 60 stalls. The four hangers have been dedicated for startups, food processing units, Mission Shakti, PSUs respectively and the remaining one is being dedicated for general pur-



pose. Also, an open platform for demonstration of machineries and new technology has been set up. The state government has been organising the event since 2013 to bring potential buyers and sellers to a single platform for mutually beneficial trade in service, product and technology.

The minister said, "There will be no international participants in view of Covid-19. Women entrepreneurs, food processing units and Mission Shakti, and startups are the focal sector for 2021's event."

WhatsApp expands voice, video calling to desktop PCs

The Facebook-owned company noted that to make desktop calling more useful, the company has made sure it works seamlessly for both portrait and landscape orientation

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 4: WhatsApp Thursday said it has rolled out one-to-one voice and video calls on its desktop app, a move that will now allow users to make calls through their laptops or desktop PCs.

The Facebook-owned company said voice and video calls on the platform are end-to-end encrypted, and



so WhatsApp can't hear or see them whether the call is made from phones or computers.

"We're starting with one-to-one calls on the WhatsApp desktop app so we make sure we can give you a reliable and high-quality experience. We will be expanding this feature to include group voice and video calls in the future," it added.

WhatsApp said there has been a significant increase in people calling one another on WhatsApp over

the last year and often for long conversations.

"Last New Year's Eve, we broke the record for the most calls ever made in a single day with 1.4 billion voice and video calls. With so many people still apart from their loved ones, and adjusting to new ways of working, we want conversations on WhatsApp to feel as close to in-person as possible, regardless of where you are in the world or the tech you're using," WhatsApp said.

It noted that to make desktop calling more useful, the company has made sure it works seamlessly for both portrait and landscape orientation appears in a resizable standalone window on computer screens and is set to be always on top so users never lose video chats in a browser tab or stack of open windows.

'SPECTRUM BUYS TO BOLSTER TELCOS' MARKET POSITION'

AGENCIES

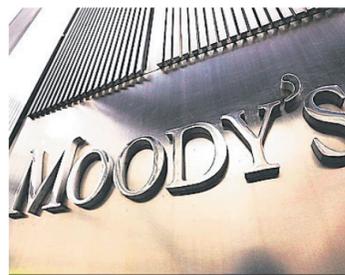
New Delhi, March 4: Spectrum renewals in the recently-held auction will boost telcos' market position and there may not be a significant impact on their balance sheets, as pricing competition abates and profitability improves, Moody's Investors Service said Thursday.

The spectrum renewals and additional purchases will help the incumbents - Jio and Airtel - strengthen their radio wave holdings and improve their network coverage.

At the same time, as some telcos have large cash holdings while others recently raised debt to fund the purchases, there will not be a sig-

nificant impact on their balance sheets particularly, as pricing competition abates and profitability improves across the sector, Moody's said in its report. It also expects operators to opt for deferred spectrum payments, thus helping to mitigate the effect on liquidity and cash flows. Spectrum will be offered for a period of 20 years.

Successful bidders can pay the entire bid amount in one go (upfront), or exercise an option to pay a certain amount (25% for spectrum won in 700 MHz, 800 MHz, 900 MHz bands or 50% for spectrum won in 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz bands) upfront with the remaining amount in a maximum up to 16 equated annual instalments,



after a moratorium of two years. It is pertinent to mention that bids were received in 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz and 2300 MHz bands, but airwaves in the premium 700 MHz and 2,500 MHz

bands went unsold. Reliance Jio's purchase of 488.35 MHz of spectrum across the 800MHz/ 1800MHz/2300MHz bands will enhance its spectrum footprint and improve its network coverage

and capacity, Moody's noted.

The company had consolidated cash holdings of \$30.1 billion as of January 2021, implying that the upfront payment of \$2.7 billion "can be easily absorbed", it said.

Bharti Airtel Limited's renewal of its expiring spectrum, along with the purchase of additional bandwidth, would strengthen its network coverage. The company recently issued \$1.25 billion of bonds, a portion of which is likely to be used to fund the upfront payment for its spectrum purchases. So, the effect on credit metrics of the total spectrum outlay has already been taken into consideration, Moody's said.

Spectrum purchases by Vodafone Idea will not have any impact on the

credit quality of Vodafone, Moody's concluded. "This is because Vodafone does not intend to inject any further capital to support VIL. Vodafone's liability related to VIL is capped at ₹3,400 crore for certain identified contingent liabilities relating to legal, regulatory, tax and other matters, including the adjusted gross revenue case," it said.

India's first auction of telecom spectrum in five years ended on Tuesday with ₹77,814.8 crore of airwaves being acquired by telcos, with billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio spending the most.

Reliance Jio picked up 488.35 MHz spectrum in bands such as 800 MHz, 1800 MHz and 2300 MHz for ₹57,122.65 crore.

PROBLEMS GALORE

AHMEDABAD: England pacer Jofra Archer was not considered for the fourth Test against India due to a persisting elbow injury and some of the squad members including Ben Stokes also have an upset stomach, the ECB said Thursday. Archer had missed the second Test in Chennai due to the same issue. "Jofra Archer is not playing in this Test match due to his ongoing right elbow issue. The ECB medical team will provide an update in due course," said a statement from the England cricket board. "Ben Stokes has had an upset stomach, the same issue which has affected other members of the touring party. It is not expected to keep him (Stokes) off the field," it added.

SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND (1ST INNINGS)

Zak Crawley c Siraj b Patel 9, Dom Sibley b Patel 2, Jonny Bairstow lbw b Siraj 28, Joe Root lbw b Siraj 5, Ben Stokes lbw b Sundar 55, Ollie Pope c Gill b Ashwin 29, Dan Lawrence st Pant b Patel 46, Ben Foakes c Rahane b Ashwin 1, Dom Bess lbw b Patel 3, Jack Leach lbw b Ashwin 7, James Anderson n o 10, EXTRAS: (B-3, LB-5, NB-1, WD-1) 10, TOTAL: (all out in 75.5 overs) 205.

FALL: 1-10, 2-15, 3-30, 4-78, 5-121, 6-166, 7-170, 8-188, 9-189.

BOWLING: Ishant Sharma 9-2-23-0, Mohammed Siraj 14-2-45-2, Axar Patel 26-7-68-4, Ravichandran Ashwin 19.5-4-47-3, Washington Sundar 7-1-14-1.

INDIA (1ST INNINGS)

Shubhman Gill b Anderson 0, Rohit Sharma batting 8, Cheteshwar Pujara batting 15, EXTRAS: (NB-1) 1, Total (for 1 wicket in 12 overs) 24, FALL: 1-0.

BOWLING: James Anderson 5-0-1, Ben Stokes 2-1-4-0, Jack Leach 4-0-16-0, Dom Bess 1-0-4-0.

VISITORS CLUELESS AGAINST SPIN AS INDIA TAKE COMMAND

ASHWIN, AXAR ANNIHILATE ENGLAND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Mar 4: England's batsmen lost the battle of both the mind and skills in yet another shoddy performance to surrender the momentum to India with Axar Patel (4/68) and Ravichandran Ashwin (3/47) calling the shots on the opening day of the fourth and final Test here Thursday. The visitors were bowled out for 205 and in reply India were 24 for the loss of Shubman Gill's (0) wicket at stumps. Cheteshwar Pujara (15 batting) and Rohit Sharma (eight batting) were at the crease when stumps were called.

It was certainly not what England skipper Joe Root had hoped for after winning the toss and opting to bat. England batted on the first day pitch

and the conditions will certainly deteriorate as the game progresses.

There was turn and bounce but the pitch was far from being a minefield that some of the England batsmen save Ben Stokes (55, 121b, 6x4, 2x6) made it out to be.

Axar and Ashwin weaved a magic web around the already clueless England batsmen. They were well-supported by Washington Sundar (1/14) and pacer Mohammed Siraj (2/45). Sundar dismissed Stokes while Siraj got the wicket of Root (5).

A cursory look at the England lineup, loaded with an extra batsman, will reveal that four players got starts but failed to convert. They were Stokes, Jonny Bairstow (28), Dan Lawrence (46) and Ollie Pope (29). The others came in and went without breaking a bead

of sweat. It was as if already in their minds, they were playing on a track they thought would turn square.

Stokes was a cut above the rest both in defence and offence before a moment's indecision cost him his wicket. Sundar angled one in and Stokes was on the back-foot after initially trying to come forward preempting an off-break. The ball didn't turn and hit the back leg with clear indication of crashing into the leg stump. Stokes' dismissal, after a good show, upset the team's rhythm just when England were looking to redeem itself after a poor first session.

It was the post tea session where the lower order caved in with Ashwin in his elements. England lost their last five wickets for 39 runs in 14.2 overs.



AXAR PATEL

Siraj relishing Root dismissal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD: Perfect execution brings with it an inherent satisfaction which India speedster Mohammed Siraj felt after dismissing England captain Joe Root on the opening day of the fourth and final Test here Thursday. Root was trapped before the wicket by Siraj, who bowled a beautiful inswinger which would have hit the middle and leg stump.

"I wanted to set Root up bowling away going deliveries. And then I thought I should bring one back in. I could execute it as I had planned. It gave me great satisfaction. Mazaa aa gaya (It was fun)," Siraj said about the dismissal.

Similarly he had done his homework on Jonny Bairstow's apparent weakness against in-coming deliveries. The in-cutter that got Bairstow was bowled at more than 146kmph.



WOW MOMENT: Mohammed Siraj jumps up in joy after dismissing England skipper Joe Root at Ahmedabad, Thursday

"Bairstow, I wasn't bowling him at a lot of pace at the start. But whatever footages I have seen of him, he gets out to in-swinging deliveries. So I wanted to bowl in one area and bring it back consistently and it worked," informed Siraj. Siraj said that both skipper Virat Kohli and senior pacer Ishant Sharma had told him about the importance of bowling in the right areas. "They told me not to try too much and hit one area consistently," Siraj informed.

The Hyderabad bowler was also asked about the heated exchange Kohli and Ben Stokes had also on the field. "Well Stokes was giving me gali (abusive language). I told Virat bhai and he took up the matter with Stokes," Siraj informed.

As far as the pitch is concerned, what Siraj said would certainly not be music to England batsmen's ears. "This is a fantastic batting wicket," Siraj said.

I HAVE REALISED THE IMPORTANCE OF BOWLING CONSISTENTLY IN ONE AREA. IT HELPS TO BUILD UP PRESSURE AND WICKETS COME AUTOMATICALLY

MOHAMMED SIRAJ

SHORT TAKES

Biggest win

Buenos Aires: India's Sumit Nagal registered the biggest win of his tennis career when he stunned second seed Cristian Garin of Chile in straight sets to enter the quarterfinals of the Argentina Open ATP 250 tournament here Wednesday. Nagal, ranked 150, produced high-class tennis to register an impressive 6-4, 6-3 second round win over his Chilean rival, who is ranked way above at the 22nd spot in the ATP chart. Nagal will next play Spain's Albert Ramos-Vinolas, in what will be the Indian's maiden quarterfinal appearance at the ATP level.

4 medals assured

New Delhi: Asian champion Pooja Rani (75kg) entered the semifinals to secure a medal but two-time world bronze-winner Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) bowed out after a quarterfinal loss at the 35th Boxam International Boxing Tournament in Castellon, Spain. In late night bouts Wednesday, Olympic-bound Rani defeated Italian Assunta Canfora to join the seasoned MC Mary Kom (51kg), Simranjit Kaur (60kg) and debutant Jasmine (57kg) in the last-four stage. The three had won their quarterfinals earlier in the day. However, Borgohain lost 0-5 to Russia's Saadat Dalgatova to make a surprisingly early exit from the tournament.

Back in Chennai

Chennai: Chennai Super Kings (CSK) captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni has arrived here to take part in the team's training camp likely to begin March 9 in the lead-up to the upcoming season of the IPL. The former India skipper arrived here late Wednesday and will serve a five-day quarantine. CSK tweeted a picture of Dhoni at the airport and wrote: "Thalai-Vaa! Smile with the Mass(k) on! Super Night! # Den Coming #WhistlePodu #Yellow." Former India batsman Ambati Rayudu also reached here Wednesday while the Tamil Nadu players in the squad will be joining a little later.

SINDHU, SRIKANTH WIN, BUT SAINA FALLS

MIXED DAY FOR INDIAN SHUTTLEERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Basel, March 4: Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu, Kidambi Srikanth and Ajay Jayaram had a good day in office as they advanced to the quarterfinals of singles competition at the Swiss Open Super 300 badminton tournament here Thursday. Indian mixed doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and

Ashwini Ponnappa also progressed to the quarterfinals, continuing their recent good run in international tournaments.

World Champion PV Sindhu hardly broke any sweat, beating USA's Iris Wang 21-13, 21-14 in the women's singles competition, while former World No. 1 Srikanth notched up a 21-10, 14-21, 21-14 victory over World No. 50 Thomas Rouxel of France. Jayaram on the other hand eked out a hard-fought 21-18, 17-21, 21-13 against third-seeded Dane Rasmus Gemke.

Satwik and Ashwini, who reached the semifinals at Thailand Open Super 1000 in January, defeated the Indonesian combination of Rinov Rivaldy

and Pitha Haningtyas Mentari 21-18, 21-16 in a mixed doubles second-round match.

Sindhu will next meet fifth-seeded Thai Busanan Ongbamrunphan, while fourth seed Srikanth, who had won the title in 2015, will face sixth-seeded Thai Kantaphon Wangcharoen. Jayaram will be up against another Thai Kunlavut Vitidsarn, seeded eighth, in the last eight stage. Vitidsarn had beaten Sourabh Verma lost 21-17, 21-14 to book a clash with Jayaram.

In a late night match played Wednesday, two-time former champion Saina Nehwal bowed out of the tournament after a hard-fought first round loss in the women's singles opening round. Saina battled for 58 minutes before losing 16-21, 21-17, 21-23 to Phittayaporn Chaiwan of Thailand. The Indian was distinctly unlucky as a sure winner floated wide.

AT A GLANCE

PV Sindhu bt Iris Wang 21-13, 21-14
Kidambi Srikanth bt Thomas Rouxel 21-10, 14-21, 21-14
Ajay Jayaram bt Rasmus Gemke 21-18, 17-21, 21-13
Saina Nehwal lost to P Chaiwan 16-21, 21-17, 21-23



DOMINATING SHOW: PV Sindhu had an easy outing to seal a quarterfinal spot at the Swiss Open

BARCELONA SCRIPT EPIC COMEBACK

AGENCIES

Madrid, March 4: Barcelona pulled off a stirring comeback to overturn a two-goal deficit and reach the Copa del Rey final, beating Sevilla 3-0 after extra time in Wednesday's second leg semifinal. The Catalan giants went through to the summit clash winning 3-2 on aggregate.

Danish forward Martin Braithwaite grabbed the decisive goal with a scrappy diving header early in the extra period after Ousmane Dembele had given Barca the lead in the 12th minute and Gerard Pique had levelled the tie deep in added on time, moments after Fernando had been sent off for Sevilla.

Sevilla won the first leg at home 2-0. However, they deployed uncharacteristically negative tactics and yet they wasted a glorious chance to make it 1-1 in the second half and effectively kill the tie when Lucas Ocampos squandered a penalty.

Barcelona will meet either Levante or Athletic Bilbao in the final in Seville April 17, looking to lift the Copa del Rey for a record-extending 31st time.

"I haven't been this happy for a long time, it was a magical night," said Barca's Jordi Alba. "It's just a shame our fans weren't there to see it. We played superbly and we were always convinced we would go through but we couldn't score until the last minute. I'm so proud of the team," Alba added.

Pollard joins Yuvraj with 6 sixes in 1 over



West Indian batsman Kieron Pollard became the second cricketer to hit six sixes in an over in a T20 international

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Coolidge (Antigua), March 4: Sri Lanka leg-spinner Akila Dananjaya experienced the precipitous highs and lows of Twenty20 cricket when he claimed a hat-trick which included the wicket of West Indies star Chris Gayle for a first-ball duck, then was hit for six sixes in an over by Keiran Pollard in the first international in Antigua. The West Indies won the match by four wickets with 41 balls to spare while chasing down Sri Lanka's score of 131 for nine.

Dananjaya became only the 15th player and the fourth Sri Lankan to take a T20 international hat-trick when he dismissed Evin Lewis (28), Gayle and Nicholas Pooran (0) with consecutive deliveries in the fourth over. He had little time to reflect on his new-found fame when it turned to notoriety. In his next over, he was hit to all parts of the ground by Pollard, who became only the sec-

ond player after Yuvraj Singh to hit six sixes in an over in a T20 game.

Pollard said he thought six sixes was a possibility "after the third one". I just had to come out and back myself," he said. "It was something the team needed. I didn't see the hat-trick, I only heard. But I still had to come out and do what the team required at that point in time," he added.

Even though Pollard fell for an 11-ball 38, the hosts were taken over the line by skipper Jason Holder (29 n o, 24b, 1x4, 2x6). Earlier Lendl Simmons (26) and Evan Lewis (28) had given West Indies the perfect start reaching 52-0 before it suddenly turned 52-3 due to Akila's hat-trick.

BRIEF SCORES

Sri Lanka 131 for 9 (Pathum Nisanka 39) lost to **West Indies 134 for 6 in 13.1 overs** (Kieron Pollard 38, Akila Dananjaya 4/62) by four wickets.

NEWS AT A GLANCE

Sania ousted

DOHA: Sania Mirza's first tournament in more than a year ended with a semifinal defeat as she was ousted from the Qatar Total Open tournament along with her partner Andreja Klepac, here Thursday. Sania and her partner lost 5-7, 6-2, 5-10 to USA's Nicole Melichar and Demi Schuurs in a match that lasted 88 minutes.

New SA captains

JOHANNESBURG: Cricket South Africa (CSA) has appointed Temba Bavuma and Dean Elgar as the national team captains for limited overs and Tests respectively. In a CSA statement, Director of Cricket Graeme Smith thanked Quinton de Kock for leading the side in what are tumultuous times for South African cricket.

Indian campaign ends

DOHA: India's challenge at the World Table Tennis Contender series ended after veteran Sharath Kamal suffered a loss to World No. 7 Lin Yun-Ju of Chinese Taipei in the men's singles pre-quarterfinals here Thursday. The 38-year-old Indian suffered a 6-11, 4-11, 8-11 defeat against Lin. Sharath failed to tackle the pace of his aggressive opponent and bowed out tamely. Earlier, Manika Batra and Sreeja Akula also lost their respective final qualifying round matches in the women's singles category.

SAI-STC edge past Odisha Police

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 4: SAI-STC overcame Odisha Police in a hard-fought encounter of the Odisha Women's League (OWL) at the Capital Ground here Thursday. Deepa Nayak (36th) and Gudiya Kumari (90th) scored for the winners while Jyotsna Mallick (82nd) got the lone consolation goal for Odisha Police.

It was heartbreak for Odisha Police at the end as they deserved at least a point from the game. However, all their hard work while defending their goal, ended as they conceded in added on time.

Woman of the match, Deepa had put SAI-STC ahead capitalising on a defensive lapse on the part of the Odisha Police players. She

scored after a combined move down the middle. At the break SAI-STC were up by a goal.

However, after the interval, Odisha Police came back in a stronger manner. Their players combined well and repeatedly breached the SAI-STC defence. They missed a couple of good scoring opportunities midway into the second session. However, their efforts bore fruit when Jyotsna picked up a loose ball and scored with quick shot.

Just when it looked like that Odisha Police would end their losing streak, disaster struck. A long clearance landed in the Odisha Police box and an unmarked Gudiya was quick to pounce on it and score. Moments after the goal, the referee blew the long whistle signalling the end of the game and yet another heart-breaking loss for Odisha Police.



Players of Odisha Police (in red) and SAI-STC fight for the ball during the OWL game played Thursday



Government of Odisha

Inauguration of



by

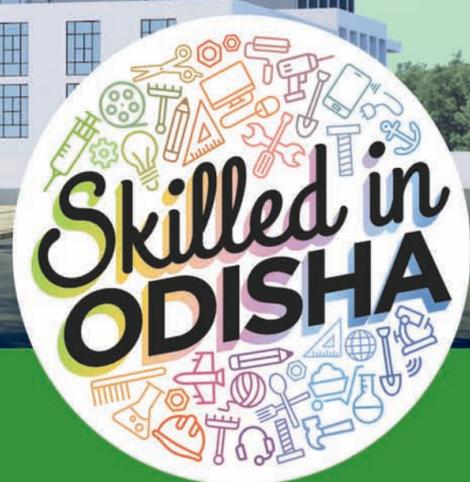
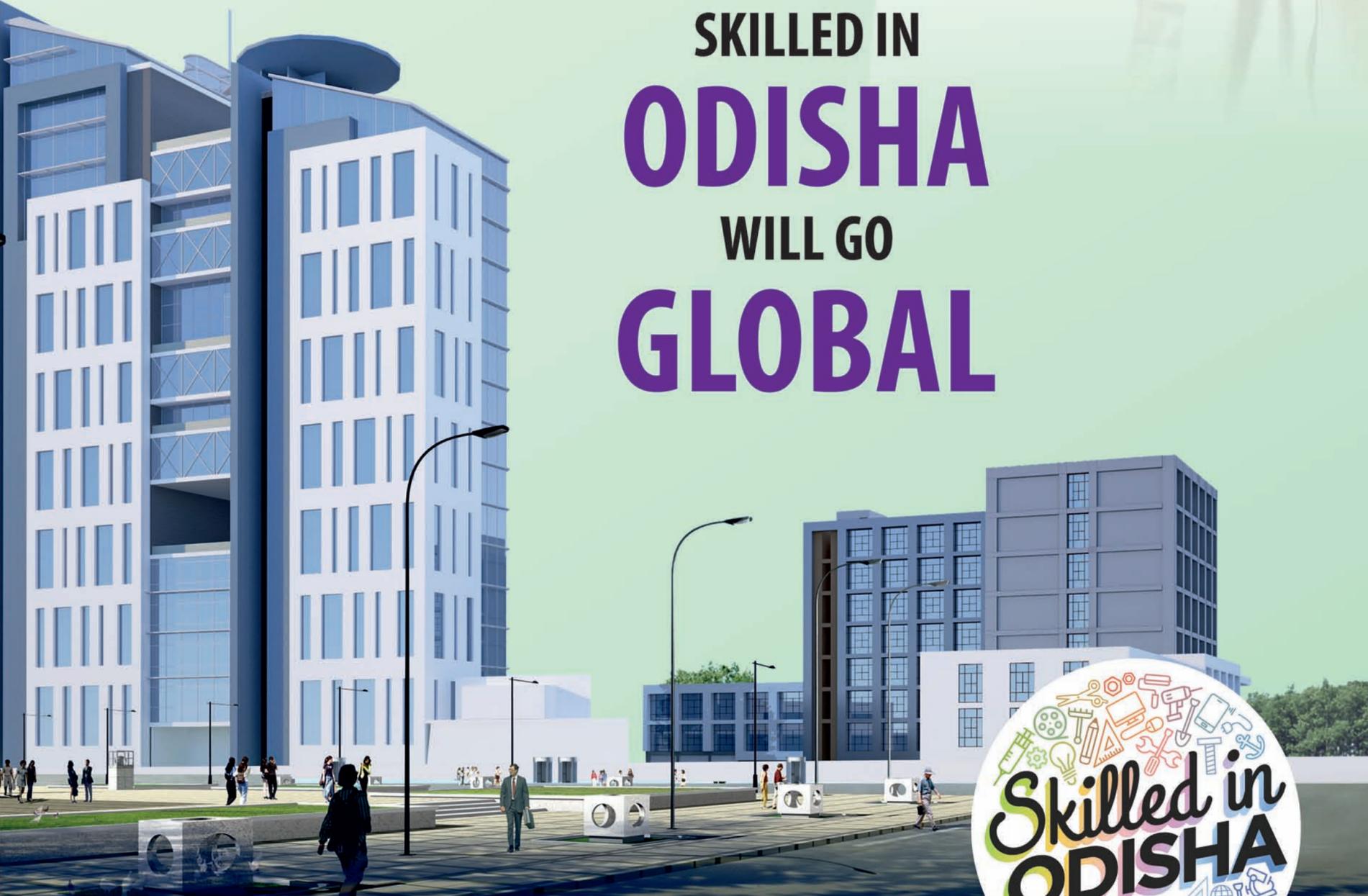
Shri Naveen Patnaik

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

5th March 2021

Mancheswar Industrial Area,
Bhubaneswar

**SKILLED IN
ODISHA
WILL GO
GLOBAL**



Skill Development and Technical Education Department