

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



You carry on, sir. There is no competition left. We have forced to retire all those stand-up comics!

BJD backs Centre's stance on farm Bill repeal sans talks

In sync with its political stand in the past, the BJD has yet again backed the Centre on repeal of farm laws without discussion

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Nov 29: Amid Opposition's protest over the passing of the Farm Laws Repeal Bill 2021, without discussion, the Biju Janata Dal Monday welcomed the passing of bill in both houses and countered the opposition's demand for a bill on MSP simultaneously.

BJD Parliamentary Party leader in Lok Sabha Pinaki Misra opposed the demand of the Congress, the TMC and the DMK in particular for seeking introduction of a bill on MSP simultaneously, saying this process would further delay the repeal of the three farm laws. He proposed that the bill on MSP should not be brought in a hasty manner.

The senior BJD MP said the Centre came up with a suggestion to the business advisory committee that enough discussion has taken place on the issue both in the house and outside and now the repeal bill should be passed without discussion.

The government intended to pass the bill in LS in the morning to put



BKU spokesperson Rakesh Tikait with farmers after the bill to cancel the three farm laws was passed in Parliament, at Ghazipur border. Tikait said they will continue with the stir.

an end to this whole issue immediately so that they can ask the farmers to go back to their homes. "However, Congress, TMC and DMK wanted discussion on the repeal bill and also wanted that MSP bill be simultaneously brought in. To which I countered as the government wants to repeal the bill immediately it should be welcomed. Let's not link that with other things. There is no question of a hasty bill being drafted in half an hour," said Misra. The Puri MP proposed that the government should make any law on MSP after having a detailed consultation with farmers and experts. "Farmers said don't give us gifts we don't want. So, have a detailed talks with farmers, experts and economists. This is something which

will have far reaching impact. Bring in something that will be beneficial and long-lasting. So today let's go for repeal without discussion and then within a week or next 10 days let's have in this session itself a long standing discussion on the farmers' issue," he said.

Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha passed the Farm Laws Repeal Bill 2021 amid opposition's demand for talks on the bill. The bill repeals the three farm laws the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020 passed by Parliament in September 2020.

ASSEMBLY WINTER SESSION

Mamita, LPG to generate heat

The Oppn will try to corner the government on Mamita Meher murder case while the ruling party will raise the rising LPG prices in the country

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: Ahead of the month-long winter session of Assembly Speaker Surjo Narayan Patro Monday conveyed an all-party meeting to finalise the modalities of functioning of the house in view of the prevailing Covid-19 situation.

The Opposition is ready to corner the government on Mamita Meher murder case while the ruling party will raise the rising LPG prices in the country. The Assembly will sit for five hours every day with strict adherence to Covid guidelines. While the house will function from 10.30 am till 1.30 am and again from 4 pm to 6 pm, the first day of the session will begin at 11 am, Patro told reporters after the meeting.

On the first day, after condolence moves, the house will be adjourned till 5 pm and then, supplementary budget for 2021-22 will be tabled. Similarly, the appropriation bill on the first supplementary statement of expenditure for 2021-22 will be tabled December 10. The Speaker will allow 55 minutes to opposition members. While Opposition BJP will be allowed to move adjournment motion for four days, Congress will be given two days (Tuesday and Saturday) for the same. There will be no business December 5, 12, 19 and December 26 due to Sunday and December 25 for Christmas.

The Speaker also informed members about the new rules barring pandemonium during Question Hour and the Governor's address. "All members have been instructed not to create ruckus in the house during Zero Hour and Governor's speech. BJP boycotted the meeting as two of its members were not allowed.

State to continue MMSY till 2024

₹2,000 cr will be spent over three years for building nearly 550 road projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: With an aim to provide all weather connectivity to rural and remote areas, the state government has decided to continue the Mukhya Mantri Sadak Yojna (MMSY) till 2023-24.

Following the state cabinet's decision, the Rural Development (RD) department Monday issued a notification for extending the scheme by another three years from 2021-22 with a total outlay of ₹2,000 crore.

The scheme was originally launched to provide all weather connectivity to unconnected habitations in

rural areas which are not covered under any other schemes.

Now, the scope of the scheme was extended to include upgradation/widening as part of improvement to existing RD roads and Panchayati Raj (PR) roads transferred to RD department.

As per the notification, the rural roads which have not been covered under any other scheme are to be taken up. The selected roads under the scheme will be constructed with carriageway of 5.5 mtr with 7.5/9 mtr formation width as per availability of land and conform to ODR standards.

The state government has targeted to improve 350 km of RD roads of 2343.95 km and construction of 37 new road projects of 417.25 km in left wing extremist affected areas.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	57260.58 ↑ 153.43
NIFTY	17054.00 ↑ 27.50
DOLLAR	75.12 ↑ ₹0.82
EURO	84.61 ↓ ₹0.30
GOLD	₹47,678 ↑ ₹93
SILVER	₹61,947 ↓ ₹98

WEATHER	
BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	28.2°C
TEMP. MIN	15.0°C
Humidity	60%
Rainfall	NIL
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky

DSPL - 290

Shri Naveen Patnaik
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha
announces
New Smart Health Card
with New Guidelines of
Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana

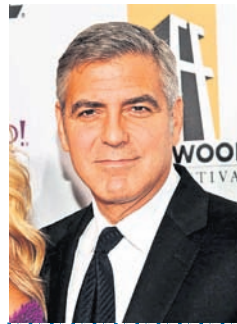
State Government will bear full cost of health services provided to all in Government facilities

Each beneficiary family will get health coverage of Rs.5 lakhs and additional Rs.5 lakhs for the women members of the family per annum in empanelled private hospitals

OIPR-10001/13/0101/2122

HEALTHY ODISHA, HAPPY ODISHA | TOLL FREE NO-104

leisure



GEORGE CLOONEY THOUGHT HE'D DIE IN BIKE MISHAP

Hollywood star George Clooney thought he would die in his 2018 motorbike crash. The 60-year-old actor-director flew over the handlebars of his bike when a car turned in front of him while riding in Sardinia, Italy, in 2018, and was convinced he would die in the aftermath, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

HADID HEARTBROKEN AFTER ABLOH'S DEATH

Supermodel Gigi Hadid says fashion designer Virgil Abloh will be deeply missed. The 26-year-old wrote on Instagram: "I am heartbroken by the loss of my dear friend, and a friend to the world, Virgil Abloh." The Off-White founder had passed away Sunday following a secret battle with a rare form of cancer



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL \$5181*

ARIES
A plain Jane day. Work goes on as usual, and there is progress. But as Ganesh says, it's an ordinary day. Hum, whistle, doodle, and sip your green tea. While day dreaming, start planning your dream home. After all, that's where the first plan takes shape.

TAURUS
Feel your imagination run wild as you star-gaze throughout the day wondering about the existence of the extra terrestrial. You will paint the workplace in your flavour of innovation, combined with a drive to work equally hard.

GEMINI
You will be afforded full co-operation by your relatives and friends. You will also be able to provide a solution to their problems by utilising your practical thinking. You will be influenced by your emotions while choosing between multiple alternatives. You need to carefully weigh the pros and cons of any decision you make today, says Ganesh.

CANCER
There is a chance today to benefit from womenfolk. Though you are methodical and disciplined in your work, you will feel rudderless. Yet you will get relief from this monotony and feel jovial, says Ganesh.

LEO
You will not be able to reap the rewards of your hard work fully today. You will take all matters very seriously today. You will feel a sense of responsibility and will try to find lasting solutions to problems today. It is a good day to put to rest some worries that have been haunting you for some time now, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You better identify your worth in the realms of emotions, feelings and sentiments. You shall warm up to and about everything - from play to colleagues to family. Simultaneously, you may realise where your limitations are. Ganesh predicts that the artist in you will flourish beginning today.

LIBRA
Somebody in a position of power at your workplace may decide to pick on you, just for fun. But your luck is strong, and no one but your own thoughts and misgivings can harm you. You shall find it relatively easy to come out of these troubles; much to the chagrin of those who wish otherwise, predicts Ganesh.

SCORPIO
At work, you would want to change the perspective with which people see you. Your colleagues recognise you as the emerging alpha-lion. Ideas and opinions will impress your bosses. But keep a level head and learn where to stop, even when winning, counsels Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
You may have to make important decisions of life today, says Ganesh. Remember, haste makes waste, so take every decision only after thinking about its long-term consequences or end results. Be patient.

CAPRICORN
Print and electronic media will attract your attention, if you're just planning to begin your career. Your spiritual and philosophical approach give you inner peace, and also inspire you to visit a holy place. Overall, you will have a balanced day, today, says Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
You will aim for the bull's eye today. Whatever you'll do today, will be done with your focus set firmly on your target, says Ganesh. You will not waste your resource on something unfruitful, and such an attitude will make your journey smoother and faster. By the end of the day, you will surprise everyone around with your spectacular performance.

PISCES
You will find favourable conditions at work as you co-ordinate with your colleagues and seniors to tackle tough problems. You will be able to get the desirable results for all the effort you put in, in the office, says Ganesh.

Chinta O Chetana celebrates 43rd Barsha festival

Odisha Governor Professor Ganeshi Lal felicitated several persons with Chinta O Chetana National Award-2021 for their exceptional feats in respective fields



Artistes perform during a cultural programme at Rabindra Mandap

Das(Law), Trinath Lenka(Economy), Manish Singala(Culture), Lalita Agrawal(Social service) and RM Manoj (Hospitality).

Odia daily The Samaj bagged Neelachakra National Award 2021. While Governor Ganeshi Lal gave away the awards at Raj Bhawan during the day, several dance troupes performed in the evening to mark the occasion.

ity' to Lord Rama's chase after 'golden deer', abduction of Sita, Jataayu Vadha and finally the Rama-Ravana war.

In another performance by Nruty Nivedya, a premier institution formed by Pravat Swain in 2013 to promote Odissi dance, music and fine arts, the artistes showcased the story of Paika Rebellion through dance drama unfolding the story of martyrs like Jayee Rajguru who initiated the revolt against the British in early 19th Century. Other freedom fighters like Buxi Jagabandhu, Madhav Chandra Routray, Pindiki Bahubalendra and Krutibasa Patrani also featured in the show.

Speaking on the occasion, Shashi Bhusan Behera, Chairman of Chinta O Chetana said that the pandemic disrupted all cultural activities in the state in the last two years. He was optimistic about the return of normalcy sooner than later.

Secretary Surendra Das said Chinta O Chetana, once headed by former Chief Ministers of Odisha like Harekrushna Mahatab, Biju Patnaik, Nandini Satpathy, always aims to promote state's art and culture on global platforms.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: The 43rd edition of Barsha 2021, a cultural festival of monsoon organised by Chinta O Chetana in association with the Union Ministry of I&B and Home Affairs, was held here at Rabindra Mandap, Monday.

This year, the Chinta O Chetana National Award-2021 was conferred on several persons who shone in respective fields. The names of the awardees include Padma Shri Kumkum Mohanty(Odissi dance), G Hariprasad Raju, Soumendra Priyadarshi, Sushree Sagarika Nath, Kishore Kumar Panigrahi, Bishnu Prasad Patra, Arun Kumar Swain (all for police service), Surendra Kumar Jhunjhunwala



Governor Ganeshi Lal speaking during the event held at Raj Bhawan OP PHOTOS

and Subash Chandra Gupta (Industry), Pradeep Kumar Patnaik(Medical Science), Rakshyak Nayak(Literature), Seemta Tolia, Bijaya Kumar Sahu, Hari Prasad Bharati (Bravery), Surya Narayan

Odissi dance troupe Srjan kicked off the evening with *Ravana*.

The recital was a musical presentation of *Ramayana* starting from Ravana getting the boon from Lord Brahma for his 'immortal-

Chaka Chak from Atrangi Re celebrates south India: Sara



Mumbai: The trailer of the Aanand L Rai directorial *Atrangi Re* starring Akshay Kumar, Dhanush and Sara Ali Khan, gave a glimpse of a classic template of exploration of a new found love. Now the makers have released the first song from the film.

Titled *Chaka Chak*, the track is set against the backdrop of the engagement of Dhanush's character and features Sara dancing to the fusion of a folk and classical tune. Composed by maestro AR Rahman, the track is laced with Carnatic instruments like Sundari and Thavil and portrays Sara's character dancing her heart out on her husband's

engagement to another girl.

The production design takes centre-stage in the song with adroit camerawork cutting through the engagement attendees and Rai's signature shade of yellow rendering the vibrance to the frames. The song has been crooned by Shreya Ghoshal with lyrics penned by Irshad Kamil and choreography by Vijay Ganguly.

Talking about the song, Sara says, "Chaka Chak, much like the name suggests, is a fully vibrant and colourful song. It's a celebration of south India, full of drama, masti and fun."

Pankaj on brand endorsements

'I'm an actor, not a salesman'

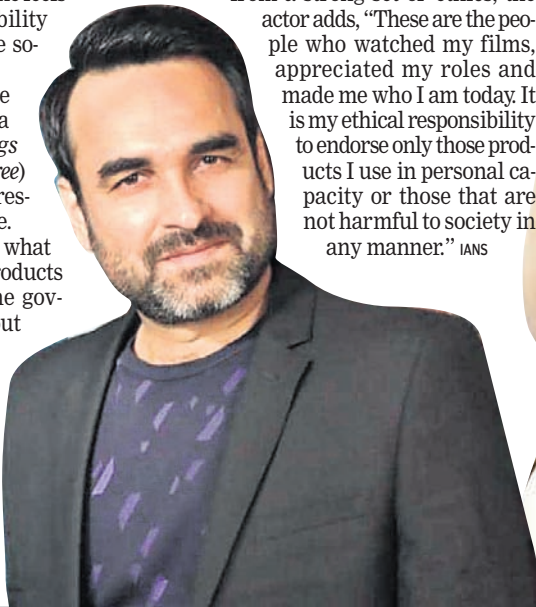
Mumbai: As major brands are lining up to sign actor Pankaj Tripathi for endorsements, the actor refuses to recklessly sign deals because he feels he has a moral responsibility towards his fans and the society.

His characters like Kaleen Bhaiyya (*Mirzapur*), Sultan (*Gangs of Wasseyapur*), Rudra (*Street*) and many others have resonated with the audience.

He chooses to endorse what he uses and only those products that are approved by the governing body. Talking about the same, Pankaj says, "I am an actor not a salesman. I am also a responsible citizen of my country. What I do or say is heard by millions in my country today. Why would I do something just for the sake of it? I have been very true

to my craft and as a public figure I want to be true to my fans and followers as well."

Maintaining his firm stance that stems from a strong set of ethics, the actor adds, "These are the people who watched my films, appreciated my roles and made me who I am today. It is my ethical responsibility to endorse only those products I use in personal capacity or those that are not harmful to society in any manner." IANS



We've become lockdown specialists: Sushmita Sen

Mumbai: Ram Madhavi's *Aarya* has emerged as one of the most gripping crime thrillers. An official adaption of the hit Dutch series *Penoza*, the Sushmita Sen-starrer is returning with its second season.

The lead character will become fiercer after spiraling into dark alleys of the crime world. Interestingly both the seasons were shot during the pandemic with the entire crew shielding themselves inside a bio bubble.

Sushmita recently spoke about the experience of working during lockdowns and how everyone pulled off both the seasons with clinical precision, she said, "We've become lockdown specialists now! We either release during a lockdown or shoot during it, that's our new thing. When we completed the shoot for *Aarya 2*, on our farewell, we said how blessed we were to be working during

the pandemic."

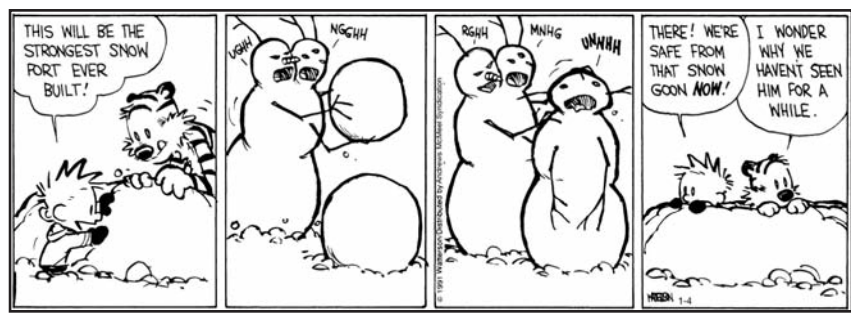
She credits the incredible teamwork behind the successful culmination, as she adds, "There were so many people who had to sit at home, but this is also a nice culmination of teamwork. We had Disney+ Hotstar, Ram Madhavi, the entire crew and the cast together. Everyone just pulled in following the rules and making it possible." IANS



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

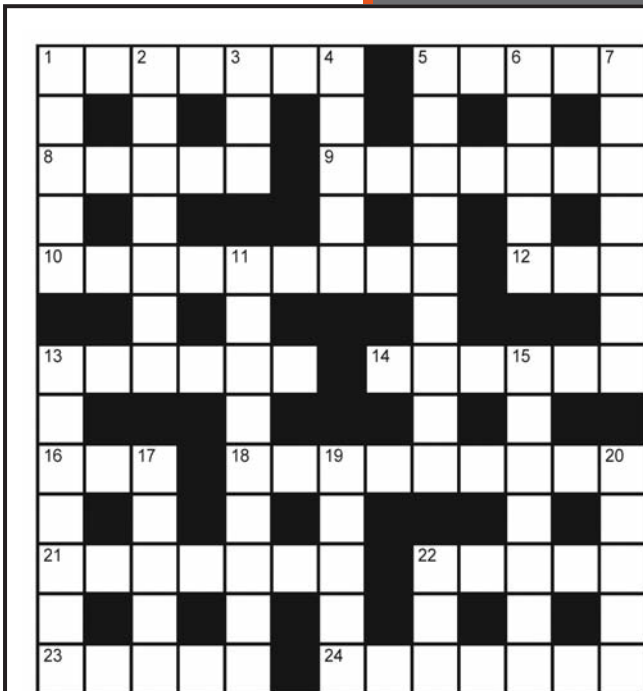


BREVITY



FUN post

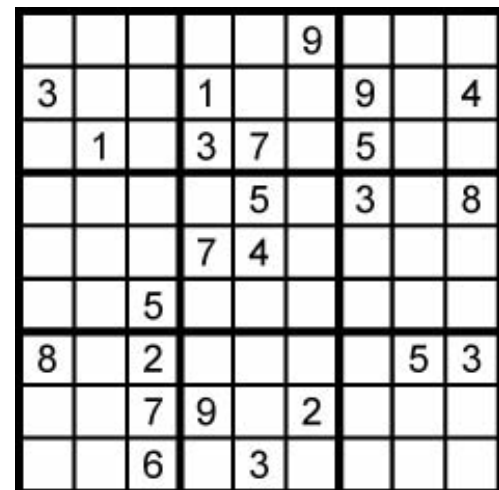
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Keas and macaws
 - 5 Picture puzzle
 - 8 Invoice word
 - 9 Tolerated
 - 10 Go to bed (3,3,3)
 - 12 Furrow
 - 13 Negev, e.g.
 - 14 Large black birds
 - 16 Mountain pass
 - 18 A bit out of whack (3-6)
 - 21 Kind of penguin
 - 22 Small terrestrial lizard
 - 23 "Rabbit food"
 - 24 Corroded
 - 5 Track event (5,4)
 - 6 Shady spot
 - 7 Calms down, medically
 - 11 Sheltered, as a criminal
 - 13 Deviate
 - 15 Little sound
 - 17 Trainee
 - 19 Sent packing
 - 20 Oxlike antelope
 - 22 Rainbow shape
- Down**
- 1 Capital of Western Australia
 - 2 TV devices
 - 3 Choose
 - 4 Demolish

SUDOKU

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

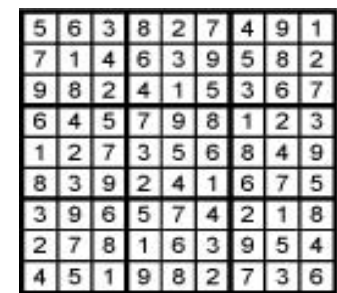


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

There is no greater courage than that of recognising one's own mistakes.

THE MOTHER



Ominous Omicron

The name of the new threat to the world is 'Omicron', the coronavirus variant with deadly mutations that first manifested itself in southern Africa. It is no coincidence that African countries are among those that remain at the bottom of the vaccination coverage. And that appears to be a problem. The looming threat of Omicron ravaging the world seems to be the consequence of the fault in distribution of vaccines. With vaccine distribution heavily tipping in favour of developed and developing countries, poor countries have been left in the lurch. Omicron seems to be reminding the vaccine-rich countries that if under-developed countries do not have adequate vaccine coverage, they are not safe as well, no matter how well and widely they have vaccinated their own people. The lesson the latest coronavirus variant has for the world is that no one is safe until all are safe. No wonder, Omicron is making its footprints in the vaccine dose-rich West from Europe to Australia triggering a panic reaction in the form of fresh travel bans and lockdowns. This also exposes a chink in the armour of the developed nations. All those multi-billion dollars of investment by large pharmaceutical companies have gone into development of various vaccines.

The old saying of 'prevention is better than cure' undoubtedly holds true. However, modern medicine had never encountered a pandemic of this proportion. The constant mutation of the COVID-19 virus and the new threat of the Omicron variant could be giving out a message that new variants are working their way around the vaccines. If that is proven correct in the near future then prevention alone may not be the solution. Investing into research for finding a cure for the virus is more important now than ever before, apart from spreading the net of vaccination to poor countries.

Some experts claim the new variant is a deadly side effect of vaccine inequality. It means a global system has been put in place allowing wealthy nations and large developing countries to get most of the jabs available in the market leaving the poor countries to fend for themselves. This is a vicious cycle the whole world has been caught in. For, low vaccination rates in poor countries have turned them into potential breeding grounds for viral mutations that can fast spread to the rest of the world. Full vaccination rates in the United States, France and China stand at 60 per cent, 70 per cent and 77 per cent, respectively. Against such coverage, Africa's 1.2 billion people have succeeded in getting vaccines at the rate of a meagre 6 per cent. This negates the achievements made in the rich countries, China and India as they now stand helplessly exposed to Omicron rearing its head from Africa. Preliminary indications suggest Omicron may spread fast and with relative ease, though it is not clear as yet whether it will be as virulent as the Delta variant.

There is no doubt that travel ban against African nations could possibly be the only way to prevent another major global wave of the pandemic. This also emphasises the need for researching and developing a cure, as soon as possible, and extending the vaccine network to deprived nations.



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

ANY THREAT TO GLOBAL SOLIDARITY IS A THREAT TO GLOBAL SECURITY AND STABILITY

It is incredible to think that when the last Paris Peace Forum was held, in November 2020, no COVID-19 vaccine had yet been approved. A year later, more than seven billion doses have been administered, preventing countless deaths and helping to turn the tide of the pandemic in many countries. But this scientific triumph is being overshadowed by the failure to ensure that all people benefit from it.

At the time of writing, more than one-third of the world's population is fully vaccinated. But in Africa, that share is just 6.7 per cent. This is unacceptable, and we must urgently change it. Any threat to global solidarity is a threat to global security and stability. All governments have a responsibility to protect their own people. But the failure of some governments to share crucial resources – including information, biological samples, and tools including vaccines, tests, and other supplies – has deprived their counterparts in many low- and lower-middle-income countries of the ability to fulfill that mandate.

The COVID-19 pandemic will not be our last. That is why, as we recover and rebuild from this crisis, we must also take steps to ensure that we can meet future disease outbreaks with effective cooperation and collaboration, instead of the kind of chaos and confusion that have exacerbated the current one.

The global response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been the subject of much analysis. And there have been many recommendations for measures that would enable us to detect the next disease outbreak early, and either prevent it from becoming an epidemic – let alone a pandemic – or ensure a rapid and effective response. In all of these reviews and reports, four themes stand out. First, global governance must be made more inclusive, equitable, and accountable. The existing global health-security ar-

FOCUS PANDEMIC RESPONSE

SOLIDARITY IS SECURITY



The COVID-19 pandemic will not be our last. That is why, as we recover and rebuild from this crisis, we must also take steps to ensure that we can meet future disease outbreaks with effective cooperation and collaboration, instead of the kind of chaos and confusion that have exacerbated the current one

chitecture is complex and fragmented, and voluntary mechanisms have not produced the necessary level of collective action.

That is why I advocate the creation of a new international instrument, such as a treaty to guide pandemic preparedness and response. By providing an overarching framework for global cooperation, including clear rules of the game, such a mechanism could boost solidarity among countries significantly. The World Health Organisation's member states will discuss this initiative this month, at a Special Session of the World Health Assembly.

Second, we need more and better financing for pandemic preparedness and response. That includes a substantial increase in domestic investment, as well as far more international financing to support low- and lower-middle-income countries. Crucially, any financing facilities must be built via existing financial institutions; creating new ones would fragment the global health architecture further. Moreover, such mechanisms should not be funded solely by vol-

untary development assistance, which would intensify competition for already scarce resources. Rather, we propose a Health Threats Fund to pool additional resources, which could be established at the World Bank as a Financial Intermediary Fund, and financed by countries and regional organisations on a burden-sharing basis.

Third, we need to devise and implement better systems and tools for multisectoral health surveillance. Already, the WHO has begun building such tools. September 1, we inaugurated the new WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence in Berlin, which will provide the world with better data and analytics to support the detection of, and response to, public-health emergencies. I then had the honour of joining French President Emmanuel Macron in Lyon to celebrate the groundbreaking ceremony for the WHO Academy, which will use cutting-edge technologies to expand access to high-quality, lifelong learning for the world's health workers.

Other initiatives are in development, such as the WHO BioHub,

a facility for storing and sharing pathogens in Switzerland, and the Universal Health and Preparedness Review. Modeled after the Universal Periodic Review used by the United Nations Human Rights Council, the UHPR will make use of peer review to increase accountability and transparency among WHO member states as they identify gaps and build capacity for pandemic preparedness and response.

Finally, we need a strengthened, empowered, and sustainably financed WHO at the center of the global health framework. With 194 member states and 152 country offices, the WHO stands out for its global mandate, reach, and legitimacy. But over the last several decades, it has been progressively weakened by a debilitating imbalance between assessed (compulsory) contributions and voluntary, earmarked contributions. This distorts our budget, thereby constraining our ability to attract and retain top talent and to fulfill our member states' expectations. The pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of global health security. The further weakening of the WHO, and the further fragmentation of the institutional framework of global health, are among the greatest risks to such security. The world must now invest in an organisation that truly represents and works for the health of all countries.

In the coming months and years, other crises will inevitably demand our attention. But we must not lose sight of the importance of bolstering global health security. If the world continues down its current path, our health will only deteriorate – with devastating economic and political consequences. But if we embrace new ideas and work together in solidarity, we can build a future that is healthier, safer, fairer, and more peaceful.

The writer is Director-General of the World Health Organisation.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

MARGARET MEAD

It is only the farmer who faithfully plants seeds in the spring, who reaps a harvest in the autumn.

BC FORBES

Treasure the love you receive above all. It will survive long after your good health has vanished.

OG MANDINO

WORDSWORTH

Predictive policing

In the Steven Spielberg SF film Minority Report police use psychics to predict when a crime is going to happen. Real police prefer digital databases. By entering detailed information about where, when and what types of crimes have occurred, it is possible to forecast future crimes and deploy officers accordingly. Predictive policing is now in use in a number of US cities, including Los Angeles and – most recently – Seattle, where a scheme went live in February. It is being applied in other countries – West Midlands Police in the UK are trying out the method; in South Africa, game wardens use the same tools to identify likely poaching hotspots. The technique behind it is well established. It's called predictive analytics or predictive modelling; it uses mathematical algorithms to mine data and spot links. The technique is already being widely used by retailers. When Amazon, for example, suggests you might like some book or film, the suggestion is based on an analysis of the buying habits of customers who have bought similar items. If computerised predictive policing catches on, Ferguson expects a test case eventually to work its way up to the US Supreme Court. In the meantime, he expects noisy kickback from civil rights groups. "That a computer can effectively curtail the Fourth Amendment rights of individuals in certain areas would be particularly troubling to the civil liberties lobby," he says (The Independent, 11 Jan. 2012). Predictive policing, on the other hand, might replace such intuitive knowledge with a naive belief in the comprehensive power of statistics. If only data about reported crimes are used to predict future crimes and guide police work, some types of crime might be left unstudied – and thus unpursued (The Observer, 10 Mar. 2013).

Preposterous

To the dismay of those few surviving writers on language who like to argue sense from etymology, this word no longer quite means what its Latin precursor says it ought. It appeared in English in the sixteenth century, derived from the classical Latin praeposterus, which is made up of praee, before, plus posterus, coming after, so meaning something reversed (and hence nonsensical). In the middle of the nineteenth century it attracted the ire of the philologist Richard Chenevix Trench, who was at various times Dean of Westminster and Archbishop of Dublin, but is much better known to dictionary makers as the man who put forward the original idea for the Oxford English Dictionary. He argued in his book English Past and Present that the term strictly refers to something that is absurd because the true order of things has been reversed: "It is 'preposterous,' in the most accurate use of the word, to put the cart before the horse, to expect wages before the work is done, to hang a man first and try him afterwards; and in this strict and accurate sense the word was always used by our elder writers". He lamented that the word had been debased by sloppy writers to the point at which "It is now no longer of any practical service at all in the language, being merely an ungraceful and slipshod synonym for absurd". Dean Chenevix Trench may have been one of the founders of modern linguistics, but here he makes the same mistake as earlier writers on language who felt that words ought always to mean what their Latin originals meant and that change always implies decay. Sadly for him, his most famous inspiration, the OED, eventually refuted him. It records that the sense of something absurd was first used by Nicholas Udall in 1542, in his English translation of the works of Erasmus, ten years before the first example of the sense Trench regarded as the only proper one.

SPECTRUM PAIN MANAGEMENT

Don't deter medical use of opioids



Dr MR Rajagopal & Jagdish Rattanani

THE 'PRINCIPLE OF BALANCE' IN REGULATING OPIOIDS WILL BE TILTED AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM INTENSE PAIN

The repeal of the three farm laws is in the headlines. A little beneath the surface and reportedly all set for the ongoing winter session of Parliament are amendments to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. These are causing some worry among medical professionals and palliative care specialists on fears that the 'principle of balance' in regulating opioids will be tilted against the interests of patients suffering from intense pain.

The 'principle of balance' acknowledges the dual responsibility laid down in the UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961. This is the responsibility placed on any government to achieve two ends – prevent inappropriate non-medical use of the medicine while at the same time ensuring its availability for treatment of pain. The lesson is that with reasonable controls, the medicine can be safely used and help relieve pain for patients with cancer and a host of other diseases.

Except for morphine and medicines belonging to that class (opioids), there is no other medicine that can relieve many kinds of pain, particularly about 75% of pains in cancer. It should also be obvious from decades of experience that irrational controls would impact only access to pain relief and have very little impact on non-medical use.

The need for pain relief has been

known and clear to health professionals around the world, but the US recognised this only at the turn of the century. That was when an ill-advised, industry-driven campaign without adequate control measures resulted in the growing abuse of opioids in North America. It was half a century ago that the growing burden of addiction in the US resulted in President Nixon announcing the 'war on drugs'. India responded to the ensuing ripple effect across the globe with the NDPS Act of 1985 – a draconian law which effectively paralysed the availability of morphine for pain relief, but had little impact on inappropriate and non-medical use.

Hospitals and pharmacies stopped stocking the medicine. State drug controllers stopped issuing necessary licenses. The national consumption of medical morphine came down from more than 600 kg in 1985 to a meagre 17 kg by 1998. Rather obviously, that increased the pain burden in the country in inverse proportion.

There should have been a lesson in this for us. Kerala brought in rational rules in 1998, largely driven by non-government action supported by the government. Morphine and other opioids became at least 15 times more accessible than in the rest of the country, with more than 170 institutions in the state safely stocking and dispensing them for pain relief.

The fact that this has been successfully done in Kerala and demonstrated by a low-income country, Uganda, for decades, has attracted little attention. Contrast this with the attention given to the misuse of drugs and the talk of a 'drug epidemic' that we hear globally and now also from parts of India.

Concerted efforts by civil society and medical fraternity advocates eventually bore fruit. Reason prevailed, and in 2014 the Parliament passed an amendment Act – which, for the first time, acknowledged the responsibility of the government to provide pain relief.

In recent times however, there have been unfortunate instances of doctors being jailed and prosecuted on misconceived grounds. This further dissuades them from prescribing controlled medicines or using them in hospitals. Doctors and NGOs working in pain management and palliative care have made a representation to the government, to ensure that professionals and members of the pharmaceutical industry will face prosecution only for illicit use or diversion of controlled medicines and not on misconceived grounds.

The trouble with a campaign for pain relief is that pain and suffering are not very visible till it happens in one's own family, though there are over a million people with cancer pain in India, and millions

more with other diseases. People who have not experienced or borne witness to excruciating pain from diseases like cancer cannot understand the enormity of the suffering – pain like an axe falling on one's jaw-bone every few seconds or hundreds of needles relentlessly jabbing a foot. These are the experiences that are not usually shared, and when shared, deliberately unheard. A man with cancer in his jaw once asked one of the authors, "Tell me, how can I be strong, when a nail is driven into my ear again and again, through the night and day?"

Similarly people showing up with a rope burn scar around the neck are not rare in palliative care clinics. The National Crime Records Bureau of India reports that more than 26,000 people die by suicide every year owing to health-related suffering.

India must work to build on the gains painstakingly made over the years, build further on the Kerala experiment and honour the principle of balance – and strike a compassionate balance between the government's responsibility to control drug misuse and its responsibility to mitigate unnecessary suffering caused by excruciating pain.

Dr MR Rajagopal is Chairman of Pallium India. Jagdish Rattanani is a journalist and a faculty member at SPJIMR.

THE BILLION PRESS

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, Russagarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Alarming situation

Sir, In the light of the new variant of coronavirus 'Omicron' found in South Africa that has been designated as a 'variant of concern' by the WHO, Prime Minister Narendra Modi directed a review of plans to ease international travel restrictions. Many countries have suspended flights with African countries. Meanwhile, the new variant has spread to more countries. The variant has shaken the smugness of the developed world. In the wake of the new variant, Indian scientists have raised an alarm. African countries need support to control it so that it does not spread in other parts of the world. The new variant is concerning as it has as many as 32 mutations. It can escape immunity and it has high transmissibility. Thus the variant has serious public health implications. Its emergence is a serious setback in the battle against the disease. Given the gravity of the situation, international travellers from high-risk countries must be subjected to rigorous screening and testing. Their contacts must be closely tracked. There is a wide chasm between the vaccinated and unvaccinated people across the world. This gap leads to emergence of new variants. The developed world must put in efforts to bridge this gap. The developed world must help the poorer world by supplying sufficient doses of vaccines. Vaccine production and availability must be scaled up. As for India, it must get rid of its complacency about the disease. Over 100 crore vaccine doses is a great achievement. However, much remains to be done in the fight against the pandemic. Given that the potency of vaccines weakens over time, India needs to introduce booster shots.

Venu GS, KOLLAM (KERALA)

Unsafe UP

Sir, The slew of rapes and murders in Uttar Pradesh shows no sign of easing with four members of a Scheduled Caste family axed to death in Prayagraj district, 200 km from the capital Lucknow. What is disturbing is that a teenage girl who was among those murdered was gangraped before being killed. Police found their bodies in their house at Phaphamu in the district. It is believed that the family had a land dispute with an upper-caste family from the same village, and though a complaint was lodged a few months ago, the police took no action. Tormenting Dalits and the deprived has become a regular affair in UP. It is a shame that the authorities have failed to stem the rot.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

LOL

Why the big fight?

A man being mugged by two thugs put up a tremendous fight! Finally, the thugs subdued him and took his wallet. Upon finding only two dollars in the



wallet, the surprised thug said: "Why did you put up such a fight?" The man promptly replied: "I was afraid that you would find the \$200 hidden in my shoe!"

national

of the day quote

Mamata Banerjee's party is looking forward to expanding its political base across the Northeast ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections
MUKUL SANGMA | MEGHALAYA TMC LEADER

Community events like mass marriages put an effective control over social evils of child marriage and dowry
YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

Right from the start, we had been maintaining that these laws are not in the interest of farmers. Now that these laws have been repealed, the cases against farmers too should be taken back
BHPINDER SINGH HOODA | FORMER HARYANA CM



NC will single-handedly continue its fight for the restoration of Article 370, if the grand old party is not ready to fight this battle
OMAR ABDULLAH | NATIONAL CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT

MAMATA TO VISIT MUMBAI

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will be on a three-day visit to Mumbai from November 30, during which he is scheduled to meet NCP supreme Sharad Pawar and her Maharashtra counterpart Uddhav Thackeray



12 RS MPs suspended for indiscipline

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: As many as 12 opposition MPs were suspended from Rajya Sabha Monday for the entire Winter session of the Parliament for their "unruly" conduct in the previous session in August, even as the Opposition termed the suspension as "undemocratic and in violation of all the Rules of Procedure" of the Upper House.



The suspended MPs are -- six from the Congress, two each from Trinamool Congress and Shiv Sena, and one each from CPI and CPM

The suspended MPs are -- six from the Congress, two each from Trinamool Congress and Shiv Sena, and one each from CPI and CPM. The motion to suspend Phulo Devi Netam, Chhaya Verma, Ripun Bora, Rajamani Patel, Syed Nasir Hussain and Akhilesh Prasad Singh of the Congress; Dola Sen, Shanta Chhetri of Trinamool Congress; Priyanka Chaturvedi, Anil Desai of Shiv Sena; Elamaram Kareem of CPM; and Binoy Viswam of CPI was moved by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Prahlad Joshi.

The motion was brought under rule 256 - which provides for suspending a member for "disregard of the authority of the Chair or "abuse" of the rules of the Council by "persistently and willfully obstructing the business thereof."

their, unprecedented acts of misconduct, contemptuous, unruly, and violent behaviour and intentional attacks on security personnel on the last day of 254th Session of Rajya Sabha (Monsoon Session) ie August 11, 2021, thereby lowering the dignity of and bringing disrepute to this August House," the resolution read.

It was passed by voice vote despite objections by opposition parties

Leaders of the 12 opposition parties unitedly condemned the suspension and termed it as "unwarranted and undemocratic" and

NO OMICRON IN INDIA YET



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: India has not reported any case of the Omicron variant of coronavirus yet but the Karnataka health minister Monday said the sample of one of the two recent South Africa returnees appears "different from the Delta variant", even as experts stressed vaccines remain a critical tool.

The result will be known after seven days, Kalyan Dombivli Municipal Corporation's (KDMC) epidemic control officer Dr Pratibha Panpatil said.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said, "Information on passengers coming from abroad should be received regularly so that they can be monitored and the infection can be prevented in time." In Delhi, authorities ordered RT-PCR testing for all people arriving from 'high-risk' countries, genome sequencing of the positive cases and mandatory isolation.

Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said the situation is being closely monitored in consultation with other ministries regarding "any further decision" on resuming scheduled international passenger services.

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia told the media the new 'Omicron' variant was discussed by experts in the meeting and it was stressed that there should be no relaxation in preparation to deal with Covid infections and in monitoring the situation.

A senior Central government official said in Delhi no case of the new variant has been detected in the country, but results of genomic analysis of positive samples of international travellers are being expedited.

In Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur, health authorities have launched a search for a woman from Botswana, named Khuno Oremeeet Selyn, who visited the city on November 18. An official from the Botswana Embassy told us over phone that she is in isolation at a military organisation in Jabalpur. We have asked him to share her mobile phone number and her local contact." Jabalpur Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr Ratnesh Kurariya said.

In Maharashtra's Thane, a 32-year-old Merchant Navy engineer who tested positive for coronavirus after returning from South Africa has been kept in isolation and his sample sent for genome sequenc-

SHORT TAKES

Afghan national found dead

New Delhi: An Afghan national was found dead on a street in Delhi, police said Monday. There were reports that the deceased had a bullet injury on his body. According to the official, a call was received on Sunday night that a man, who appears to be an Afghan, was lying unconscious on street no 9 in Wazirabad area of north Delhi.

Quake hits Vellore

Chennai: A 3.6 magnitude quake hit 59 km Southwest of Vellore city in Tamil Nadu in the wee hours on Monday. According to the National Center for Seismology, the depth of the quake that occurred at 4.17 a.m. was 25 km. The Tamil Nadu State Disaster Management Authority said no damage has been reported yet. Vellore District Collector Kumaravel Pandian said that the tremors were felt in the border areas between Vellore and Tirupattur districts.

Two killed

Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh): Two persons were killed and one injured when two groups attacked each other in a village in the Jhangha area of the district. The incident took place on Sunday evening and SSP Vipin Tada, said the additional police force has been deployed in the village and that an investigation has been initiated with five teams under an SP-rank officer.

Three held

Chennai: Three persons were arrested by the Customs officials of Chennai airport on the charges of trying to smuggle in gold, an official statement said. In the statement issued here, the Commissioner of Customs, Chennai International Airport said a male passenger, hailing from Ramanathapuram, arrived from Abu Dhabi by Etihad Airways on November 28.

REHEARSAL FOR NAVY DAY



Indian Navy sailors participating in rehearsal parade for the Navy Day at Gateway of India, in Mumbai

190 armed forces personnel died of COVID: Govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: A total of 190 personnel died of COVID-19 in the armed forces, with a maximum of 137 deaths being reported in the Army, the government said in the Rajya Sabha Monday.

According to the details provided by Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt, 49 personnel died in the Indian Air Force and four in the Indian Navy. Replying to a question, Bhatt said 45,576 positive COVID-19 cases were reported in the Army, while the number in the Indian Air Force was 14,022 and it was 7,747 in the Navy. According to the details provided by the minister, 1,311 family members of serving Army personnel died of COVID-19, while the number in the IAF was 114. The number of family members of serving Navy officials who died of the infection was 66. Bhatt said the total number of cases of death of civilians in Army hospitals due to COVID-19 was 276. The minister said 13,010 positive cases of family members of serving Army personnel contracting the infection were reported, while the number of relatives of serving IAF personnel hit by it was 7,380.

SC concerned at low COVID ex-gratia

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 29: The Supreme Court Monday expressed concern at state governments grappling with various issues in connection with Rs 50,000 ex-gratia distribution to next of kin of Covid victims.



The Kerala government could not identify next of kin of Covid victims, many state governments have registered low numbers of claims for Covid compensation, and Maharashtra government has not provided information on claims forms received.

top court asked the Centre to bring on record data from various state governments in connection with ex-gratia distribution for Covid deaths and also provide information on setting up of grievance redressal committees. It

asked governments to give wider publicity to the Covid compensation scheme, as many people who have lost their family members to the viral infection, may not be aware about it and also set up an online system to register for compensation.

Taking into consideration Centre's affidavit on Covid claims, a bench of Justices M.R. Shah and B.V. Nagarathna noted in Kerala, 38,737 deaths were recorded and 6,116 claim forms were received, but amount disbursed is nil, due to lack of clarity on next of kin who can receive the ex-gratia.

Need proper plan for schools: Experts

NEW VARIANT OF COVID

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: With the new variant of COVID-19 sparking concerns and uncertainty, health and education experts have called for a well thought of plan for schools rather than prolonged closures again.



The B.1.1.529 Covid variant or Omicron, first detected in South Africa last week, was designated by the World Health Organisation as a 'variant of concern', the health body's top category for worrying coronavirus variants.

Schools across the country were closed in March last year ahead of a nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of coronavirus. Several states have partially reopened schools for different classes after prolonged closures. Seema Kaur, Principal, Pacific World

School said just when the schools had started to settle in, the looming threat from the new virus has caused uncertainty and anxiety. "The education sector has been the worst-hit wherein children's academic, social and mental skills have gone for a toss. Since 2019, we

have observed that Covid has evolved, and it generally comes in waves. But the real challenge is to understand the situation and take a call for the well-being of all," Kaur said.

In India, the recovery rate is much higher in comparison to the growth rate of cases. So, a suitable decision is to be taken with respect to the scenario, she said. "As the cases surge, the right call is to switch to online mode of education; but when the numbers are in control, we must make the most of it and work in a hybrid model to work on the skills that have taken a back seat due to online mode of education," she said.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.O-1111
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KORAPUT
 Email: eerwkoraput@yahoo.co.in; Phone: 06852-251263
e-Procurement for Road Works
Bid Identification No.: SERWKPT - Online - 14/2021-22
Letter No. 6285 Date: 25.11.2021

01. Name of the work	: Repair to Road, Buildings, Bridges and approach Roads works in the Dist. of Koraput for the year 2021-22.
02. Total Number of works	: 17 (Seventeen) Nos.
03. Approximate Estimated cost	: Rs.1.77 lakhs to Rs.46.58 lakhs (Approximately)
04. Class of Contractor	: 'A' & 'B', 'C' & 'D' Class
05. Period of Completion	: Within 2 and 3 months
06. Other Details	:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding
Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division, Koraput	Online Tender/14/RWD-KPT/2021-22	From 29.11.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 07.12.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgpe/app. All amendments, time extension, clarifications etc. will be uploaded in the website only. Bidders should regularly visit the above website to keep themselves updated.
 *N.B.: Any Addendum or Corrigendum will be available in the Website only.
 Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Koraput
 OIPR-25088/11/0012/2122

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.b-27
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, NH DIVISION, JEYPORE
 e-mail: eenhdivisionjeypure@gmail.com
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. 02 /2021-22[e-Procurement]

1) The Executive Engineer, NH Division, Jeypore on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in Single cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for construction of building works as detailed in the table below.
2) Nature of work : Buildings
3) No. of work : 4 Nos.
4) Tender Cost : Rs. 6000/-
5) Class of Contractor : 'C' & 'B'
6) Availability of Bid : From 30.11.2021 at 11.00 hours to 08.12.2021 at 17.00 hours.
7) Date of Opening of Bid : 10.12.2021 at 11.30 hours
8) The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tendersorissa.gov.in .
9) Any Corrigendum/Addendum/Cancellation of will be displayed in the e-tender website only.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, N.H. Division, Jeypore
 OIPR-34149/11/0003/2122

'e' PROCUREMENT NOTICE No. 10 of 2021-22 No.O-1051

1. Name of work	: Road & Bridge Works
2. Total No. of work	: 36 (Thirty Six) works
3. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 3.89 to Rs.39.82 lakhs
4. Period of Completion	: 01 (One), 02 (Two) & 03 (Three) Months
5. Class of Contractors	: 'D', 'C' & 'B' Class only

Other details as follows:

a) Procurement Officer	: Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Cuttack
b) Availability of tender online for bidding	: From 01.12.2021 to 07.12.2021 upto 17.00 hours
c) Last date & time of seeking of tender clarification	: 06.12.2021 upto 17.00 hours
d) Date & time of opening of Technical Bid	: 08.12.2021 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the Govt. website www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
 Sd./- Superintending Engineer Rural Works Division, Cuttack
 OIPR-25097/11/0015/2122

E-Mail ID - rwd.padampur@yahoo.co.in, Ph.No. 9437255440
Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No: Online- 08-OF 2021-22
 No.O-1062

1. Name of the work	: Road works (As per Annexure-'A')
2. Amount put to Bid excluding GST	: As per Annexure-'A'
3. Class of contractor	: 'D', 'C' & 'B'
4. Cost of Tender paper	: As per Annexure-'A'
5. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	: From Dt. 29.11.2021 at 10.00 A.M.
6. Last date & Time for receipt of bids in the portal	: Dt. 06.12.2021 up to 05:00 P.M.
7. Last date of seeking clarification	: Dt. 04.12.2021 up to 5.00 P.M.
8. Date & Time of bid opening	: Dt. 07.12.2021 at 11.00 A.M.
9. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Executive Engineer, R.W.Division, Padampur, AT/Po-Padampur, Dist.-Bargarh, Pin-768036

(1) Other details can be seen from DTGN available in website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
 (2) Corrigendum if any shall only be published in the above website
 Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Padampur
 OIPR-25069/11/0011/2122

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.B-689
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER BHANJANAGAR (R&B) DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR
 (Phone/Fax: (06821) 241133 / E-mail: eernbng@yahoo.in)
 Ltr. No. 9998 Dtd.24.11.2021
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)
E-Procurement Bid Identification No. E.E.-BNJ-R&B-20/2021-22

1. Name of work	: One No. Road work
2. No. of works	: One No. Road work
3. No. of Covers	: Single Cover
4. Estimated Cost	: Rs.34.012 lakhs
5. Period of Completion	: Two Calendar Months
6. Date of time of availability of bid documents in the portal	: From 12.00 Noon of dated 30.11.2021 to 5.00 P.M. of dated 09.12.2021
7. Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal	: Upto 5.00 P.M. of dated 09.12.2021
8. Date of opening of bid documents	: At 11.00 A.M. of 10.12.2021
9. Class of Contractor	: 'C' & 'B' Class Contractor
10. Name and address of Officer Inviting Bid	: Executive Engineer, Bhanjanagar (R&B) Division, Bhanjanagar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in. The Addendum/Corrigendum if any will be hosted in the website only.
 Sd./- Executive Engineer Bhanjanagar (R&B) Division
 OIPR-34015/11/0012/2122

NGOs receiving foreign funds under govt's scrutiny in MP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Nov 29: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan Monday asked senior officials to scrutinise all Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) operating in the state and are receiving funds from overseas.

During a virtual meeting with senior officials from all districts in the state, the Chief Minister asked the officials to prepare an audit report on funding of NGOs and money being spent by them (NGOs) and submit a report to his office.

He said it has been noticed that some NGOs are involved in conversion especially in tribal areas and instructed the officials that it must be stopped immediately. "Find out all NGOs involved in religious conversion in the state. There is no place for such practices in Madhya Pradesh," Chouhan said.

He further said that many NGOs are involved in spreading hatred among the communities. "Who are these NGOs and what are their resources, their fund flow -- all this needs to be probed immediately," Chouhan said while reviewing law and order situation of



Find out all NGOs involved in religious conversion in the state. There is no place for such practices in Madhya Pradesh

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | CHIEF MINISTER

the state Monday. Earlier this month, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) uncovered an alleged conversion racket wherein Hindu girls were being converted in a Christian Missionary girls' hostel in Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh.

It was informed in the meeting that seven hardcore Maoists (Area Committee Members or ACM)

were killed in police encounters and three arrested in the past two years, which had led to the seizure of arms and ammunition as well as curbing of extortion activities of the ultras among tendu leaf contractors.

The officials also informed that 18 people were arrested on charges of supplying arms to the Maoists during this period.

Chouhan expressed concern over crimes against women in the state and directed that every effort must be taken to stop them.

It was informed in the meeting that 11,268 missing persons, including 1665 boys and 3609 girls, were traced and rescued between January 1 and October 31 this year.

Will form next govt in Punjab with BJP, Akali faction: Captain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Nov 29: Former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Monday said his party will form the next government in the state along with the BJP and a breakaway Akali faction as he held a surprise meeting with Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar here.

Amarinder Singh described his meeting with the Haryana CM a courtesy call. "There was no political development. I had a very nice cup of coffee with the Chief Minister," said the former Punjab CM after meeting Khattar, a senior BJP leader.

However, when asked whether 'big faces' will join his party Punjab Lok Congress ahead of the Assembly elections, he

said, "Wait for the time. Everything is going fine. People are very upbeat and our membership drive is going good."

"God willing, we and with our seat adjustment with the BJP and with Mr (Sukhdev Singh) Dhindsa

party (SAD Sanyukt), we will form the government," he said.

Amarinder Singh had quit the Congress following his resignation as the Punjab CM after a bitter power tussle with state Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu.

His meeting with Khattar came on a day when a Bill to repeal the three contentious farm laws, against which farmers have been protesting for over a year, was passed by Parliament.

In the photographs of their meeting released by the Haryana government, Khattar is seen receiving Amarinder Singh with a

warm hug. Asked if he will meet BJP leaders for a seat sharing arrangement for the Punjab elections, the former Punjab CM said he will go to Delhi and certainly call on them.

Replying to a question on the farm laws, he said, "Everything is now over. The three bills (laws) have been repealed by Parliament."

The former CM said the Centre has agreed to other six to seven issues raised by farmers. "So, there is no issue left," said Singh.



Former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh meets Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Khattar in Chandigarh, Monday.

On the farmers' demand for the withdrawal of police cases against protesters, he said the Centre will take a look at these cases.

Definitely, states of Haryana and Punjab, where cases have been registered, will see and withdraw

them, he added.

To a question on the registration of his party, Singh said they should get information regarding it any time. The registration of the party was pending approval with the Election Commission of India.

Harjinder Singh Dhani is new SGPC president



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amritsar, Nov 29: Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee honorary chief secretary Harjinder Singh Dhani Monday became the new president of the apex religious body of the Sikhs.

Dhani succeeded Bibi Jagir Kaur as the president of the SGPC. The Shiromani Akali Dal had Monday announced Kaur as party candidate from the Bholath Assembly seat in Kapurthala district for the polls.

Dhani, a Badal family loyalist, is a member of the SGPC from Sham Chaurasi segment of Hoshiarpur district.

During a general house annual meeting of the SGPC at Teja Singh Samundri Hall here, the name of Dhani was proposed by SGPC senior vice-president Surjit Singh Bhhitewad and another member Harwinder Singh Khalsa.

After his name was proposed for the SGPC chief's post, some members from the opposition camp raised an objection and demanded polling by secret ballot. They proposed the name of Mithu Singh Kanekey for the SGPC chief's post. Later, Dhani polled 122 votes whereas Mithu Singh got 19 votes. There were 142 members present in the House, in which members owing allegiance to the Shiromani Akali Dal, enjoy a majority.

'Tiger state' reports 40 big cat deaths this year

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Nov 29: Yet another big cat was reported dead in Madhya Pradesh Monday, pushing the toll to 40 this year so far in the state, the highest across the country.

In the fresh incident, a 10-year-old tigress was reported to have died two days after being rescued from a buffer zone of the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) in Umaria district.

According to a forest official, the dead tigress identified as T-66, was spotted in the Khitoli and Panpatha buffer zones of the reserve for the past one month. The official told IANS that a forest team was constantly monitoring the carnivore and it seemed to be unable to hunt its prey due to some serious injuries.

The feline was rescued from the Khitoli zone November 26 and was brought to Baherha enclosure where a team of doctors from Nanaji Deshmukh



Veterinary Science University (Jabalpur) was treating the tigress, official added.

"The tigress was found injured and starved. Efforts were made to feed as per the advice of veterinary experts, but the tigress was unable to eat and died Sunday," the forest department said in a statement Monday.

Later, an autopsy was conducted

and carcasses were disposed of as per the directives of the National Tiger Conservation Authority, the statement read.

With this new death, Madhya Pradesh which is known as the 'tiger state' and has renowned reserves such as Kanha Tiger Reserve, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Pench Tiger Reserve, Satpura Tiger Reserve and Panna

MATTER OF CONCERN

MADHYA PRADESH KNOWN AS THE 'TIGER STATE' HAS RENOWNED RESERVES SUCH AS KANHA TIGER RESERVE, BANDHAVGARH TIGER RESERVE, PENCH TIGER RESERVE, SATPURA TIGER RESERVE AND PANNA TIGER RESERVE

LAST WEEK, THE MADHYA PRADESH HIGH COURT ISSUED NOTICES TO THE CENTRE AND THE STATE GOVERNMENT ALONG WITH THE FOREST DEPARTMENT AND THE NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY ON THE INCREASING NUMBER OF TIGER DEATHS IN THE STATE

Tiger reserve, has reported as many as 40 big cat deaths between January 1 to November 29. Last week, the Madhya Pradesh High Court issued notices to the Centre and the state government along with the forest department and the National Tiger Conservation Authority on the increasing number of tiger deaths in Madhya Pradesh.

Sidhu tears into Kejriwal over poll promises

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Nov 29: Punjab Congress president Navjot Singh Sidhu Monday slammed AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal over poll promises, saying "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones at others".

He dubbed as a 'lollipop' Kejriwal's promise of giving Rs 1,000 per month to all women above 18 in Punjab if AAP is voted to power and asked him how many women have been given this amount in Delhi.

The Congress leader also questioned the Delhi CM on how many jobs he has created for teachers, days after the opposition party's na-



tional convener promised to regularise services of temporary teachers in the state.

Sidhu's remarks came a day after Kejriwal accused the leaders of the Congress, BJP and the SAD of constantly bashing his party AAP for the announcements.

In a series of tweets, Sidhu targeted the Delhi CM for not having one woman in his cabinet.

"Those who live in glass houses

should not throw stones at others. @ArvindKejriwal Ji you talk of women empowerment, jobs & teachers. However, you don't have one woman minister in your Cabinet. How many women in Delhi get Rs 1000 despite revenue surplus left by (former Delhi CM) Sheila Dikshit Ji !!," tweeted Sidhu.

He said women empowerment means mandatorily engaging women in every step of electoral process like the Congress is doing in Punjab.

"True leadership is not in giving lollipops of Rs 1000 but investing in their future by providing skills for self-employment & woman entrepreneurs-Punjab Model," he said in another tweet.

On the issue of teachers, Sidhu accused the Kejriwal government of filling vacant posts by engaging guest teachers.

"On teachers and jobs, in 2015 there were 12,515 job vacancies of teachers in Delhi, & in 2021 there are 19,907 such job vacancies of teachers in Delhi... and you are filling most of the vacant posts by just guest lecturers," said Sidhu.

He further questioned Kejriwal where are eight lakh jobs and 20 new colleges his party had promised in 2015, dubbing them as "failed guarantees".

On the contrary, the unemployment rate of Delhi has increased by almost five times in the last five years," he alleged in another tweet.

'Langar baba' who fed thousands for decades no more

Jagdish Lal Ahuja was conferred the Padma Shri last year for his philanthropic service to the community at large

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, Nov 29: A self-made billionaire, who fed tens of thousands of hungry people with a fresh vegetarian meal everyday with his own funds outside the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) here, passed away Monday at the age of 86.

Popularly known as 'langar baba', Jagdish Lal Ahuja, who was battling cancer, had been serving free food in the langar - the practice of a free community kitchen and open to all - across Chandigarh since 1981.



For his philanthropic service to the community at large, he was conferred the Padma Shri last year. Since 2001, he had been organising a community kitchen daily initially outside the PGI Hospital

since 2001. Later, he started it at the Government Medical College and Hospital in Sector 32 too. The langar serves fresh vegetarian meals in the afternoon and late evening. Every day, food was served to

around 2,000 - 2,500 individuals, but on special occasions, that number could go as high as 4,000. Even the pandemic had not halted his routine community kitchens. Individuals wait in a queue to get the food.

In 2015, he sold his seventh property worth Rs 1.5 crore to arrange money to offer meals to anyone who shows up.

He was 12 when he left Peshawar and reached India during 1947 partition. After staying in refugee camps initially in Patiala and Amritsar, he finally moved to Chandigarh at the age of 21 and started selling fruits. Later, he had a roaring business of bananas.

About starting the noble gesture of serving the poor, Ahuja was quoted as saying, "On my son's eighth birthday, I decided to celebrate it by organising a 'langar' for children. When I saw the joy on the faces of the children, it reminded me of my childhood. I then decided to organise 'langar' every

day." "Since then, I am holding the 'langar' without a miss."

His afternoon and evening 'langars', which are desperately awaited by the poor and even patients' attendants at both the city's prominent hospitals, serve 'dal', 'chapatti', rice, 'halwa' and a banana.

Also, he served biscuits to cancer patients and toffees, lollipops and balloons to children.

Condoling his demise, Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi said: "His selfless gesture of providing free food and medicines to poor and needy at the PGIMER will ever inspire others for such noble service."

Even on the day of his death, the langar service continued as per his wish.

With prayers on lips and wet eyes, the poor and patients' attendants wished the continuation of the selfless service even in his absence and they believe he will remain in their hearts forever for his selfless service.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Punjab govt to set up research centre on Hindu epics: Channi

Khati (Phagwara), Nov 29: Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi Sunday said he will learn Sanskrit and do a doctorate on the Mahabharata as he announced to set up a research centre on the Hindu texts Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagvad Gita.

Addressing after laying the foundation stone of a Bhagwan Parshuram Taposthal here, he also compared SAD patriarch Parkash Singh Badal to Mahabharata's Dhritarashtra, saying the 'putra moh' (blind love) for his son has led to the 'ruin' of his party.

The CM said the research centre will showcase the message of the three Hindu texts.

Since ages, these texts have been a source of inspiration for the entire humanity and the research centre will act as a catalyst for disseminating the message of these among the masses in the simplest form, he said.

Channi said his government is trying to rope in a respected Shankracharya for this ambitious project.



Striking an emotional chord with the Brahmin community, he said they have strong ties with him.

Channi said he will learn Sanskrit language and then do a doctorate on the Mahabharata.

"I was told by a very wise and scholarly man to learn one shloka of the Bhagavad Gita every day to make my life meaningful and righteous. The Gita Updesh is unparalleled. My present PhD will be completed in three months. Then I will start learning Sanskrit and do a PhD on the Mahabharata," he added.

of the day quote

In the last three years, 58 tigers were victims of poaching, out of which seven were killed in 2020, 17 in 2019 and 34 in 2018

ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY | MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT

I have already suggested to the government to reach out to the Opposition to the maximum possible extent and take them into confidence on legislations that they intend to take up and also the rationale behind the legislation

VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

I have urged the Centre to send a team to assess the rain related damage to release funds accordingly

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CM

SHORT TAKES

Five killed

Prayagraj: In a shocking incident, five people, including four members of the same family, died in a road accident in the Nawabganj area in Uttar Pradesh. All five were riding on the same motorcycle when a truck rammed into them on the Shringverpur highway road on the intervening night of Sunday/Monday. The victims were returning after attending a marriage.

Man electrocuted

Shahjahanpur (UP): A man died after coming into contact with a high-tension power cable near his house and his wife died while trying to rescue him. The incident took place in Singhapur village under Mirzapur police station in Shahjahanpur district on Saturday night. Dangal Singh, 42, a marginal farmer, was working on the terrace of his house when he accidentally came in contact with the overhead cable and was instantly electrocuted. Hearing her husband's screams, his wife, Jashoda Devi, 38, rushed upstairs and tried to rescue him. She also sustained burns.

Student drowns

Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh): An undergraduate student of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K) died after slipping and falling into the Ganga River at Ganga Barrage in Kanpur while trying to take a selfie. The deceased, Sejal Jain, was a second year BS student in the Department of Earth Sciences at the IIT-Kanpur.

Two die in Bengal

Malda (WB): Two persons travelling on a motorcycle were killed after their two-wheeler collided head-on with a truck in West Bengal's Malda district, police said Monday. The accident occurred at around 8 pm on Sunday when their motorcycle was hit by the goods vehicle near Sreepur bus stand on National Highway 81, a senior officer said.

Cold wave intensifies

Srinagar: Cold wave intensified further in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on Monday as the minimum temperatures dropped further across the two union territories. An official of the Meteorological Department (MeT) said due to clear night sky the minimum temperatures dropped further in J&K and Ladakh thereby intensifying the cold wave conditions.



Nitish Kumar's police are just arresting liquor consumers while the liquor mafias who are the real culprits are roaming scot-free. Only poor villagers are either dying or getting arrested

TEJASHWI YADAV | RJD LEADER

EXPORT OF COVAXIN RESUMES

Bharat Biotech Monday announced that it has commenced export of Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin



DOC BHARAT BIOTECH
Lund, Sweden

Parl repeals farm laws sans debate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: Parliament Monday passed the bill to repeal the three contentious agricultural laws at the centre of protests by farmers for over a year with the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha giving their approval in quick succession amid an uproar on the first day of the Winter Session without any discussion as demanded by the opposition.

Though the repeal bill was passed by voice vote within minutes of its introduction in both the Houses, opposition members continued their protest demanding a discussion on farmers' issues, including legal sanctity to Minimum Support Price (MSP) of crops and compensation to families of farmers who died during the year-long agitation.

The Farm Laws Repeal Bill, 2021 now awaits the assent of President Ram Nath Kovind for the formal withdrawal of the three laws against which farmers have been protesting at Delhi borders.

Termining the repeal of the farm laws a victory of the protesters, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) called an emergency meeting on Wednesday to discuss the future course of action as leaders from Punjab unions asked the Centre to hold discussions and give an assurance on other demands, including a legal guarantee on MSP, in



The Farm Laws Repeal Bill, 2021 now awaits the assent of President Ram Nath Kovind for the formal withdrawal of the three laws against which farmers have been protesting at Delhi borders

THOUGH THE REPEAL BILL WAS PASSED BY VOICE VOTE WITHIN MINUTES OF ITS INTRODUCTION IN BOTH THE HOUSES, OPPOSITION MEMBERS CONTINUED THEIR PROTEST DEMANDING A DISCUSSION ON FARMERS' ISSUES

Parliament on November 30. Introducing the repeal bill in the two Houses, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has kept his word as the government brought the bill on the very first day of the Winter session of Parliament. Stating that the Prime Minister has shown a big heart by announcing the repeal of the laws on Guru Nanak Jayanti on November 19, Tomar sought the support of the members in its passage without a discussion, noting that both the government and the opposition are in favour of repealing the three laws.

He also attacked the Congress for adopting a "double standard" on the laws, as its own election man-

ifesto talked about the need for reforms in the farm sector.

Reacting to the accusation by the opposition of not allowing a discussion, Tomar told reporters there was unanimity on the issue as both the government and opposition parties wanted to nullify the legislations.

Outside Parliament, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged that repealing of the three farm laws without a debate shows that the government is "terrified" of having a discussion and knows that it has done something wrong.

Tomar, however, suggested that a discussion on the bill could have started in the Lok Sabha but protests by opposition parties ruled it out.

Speaker Om Birla repeatedly told opposition members that he was ready for initiating a discussion if they went back to their seats, Tomar noted.

The SKM, an umbrella body of 40 farmer unions, rued the absence of a discussion in Parliament.

"This is a victory for us and a historic day. We want withdrawal of cases against farmers. We want a committee to be formed on the legal guarantee of MSP for crops. The Centre has time till tomorrow (Tuesday) to reply to our demands. We have called an emergency meeting of SKM on Wednesday to discuss future course of action," farmer leaders told a press conference.

Tharoor's tweet sparks controversy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor Monday posted a selfie with six women MPs on Twitter with a caption: "Who says the Lok Sabha isn't an attractive place to work?", triggering a controversy with many rights activists and women organisations accusing him of "sexism".

Faced with severe criticism, Tharoor later apologised for offending "some people" and said the "whole selfie thing" was done at the women MPs' initiative in "great good humour and it was they who asked me to tweet it in the same spirit". "Who says the Lok Sabha isn't an attractive place to work? With six of my fellow MPs this morning," he said and posted a picture of himself with Supriya Sule, Preeti Kaur, Thamizhachi Thangapandian, Mimi Chakraborty, Nusrat Jahan Ruhi and Jyothimani.

His tweet sparked controversy with many accusing him of "sexism" and "objectification". Reacting sharply, National Commission for Women chairperson Rekha Sharma tweeted, "you are demeaning their contribution in parliament and politics by making them an object of attraction. Stop objectifying women in Parliament". "Incredible that someone, as ex-

posed to equality discourse, as @ShashiTharoor would attempt to reduce elected political leaders to their looks, and centre himself in the comment to boot. This is 2021, folks," tweeted Karuna Nandy, a Supreme Court advocate.

Responding to Nandy's tweet, badminton player and Arjuna awardee Jwala Gutta tweeted, "not really Karuna. I think we need to take a few things in a lighter note. And not see everything with a magnifying glass. And this was a compliment to all the women in the Parliament which is generally stereotyped!! just my opinion."

BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla also lashed out at Tharoor for his tweet, saying no woman in the country should be reduced to just about her looks.

Commenting on Tharoor's remark, a Twitter user said, "Women in the Lok Sabha are not decorative items meant to make your workspace 'attractive'. They are parliamentarians and you are being disrespectful and sexist."

No man seems to be beyond casual everyday sexism, another netizen said. After the online backlash, Tharoor tweeted, "the whole selfie thing was done (at the women MPs' initiative) in great good humour & it was they who asked me to tweet it in the same spirit."

NAWAB MALIK GRANTED BAIL

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Nov 29: A Mumbai court Monday granted bail to Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik in a Rs 100 crore defamation suit filed by Bharatiya Janata Party activist Mohit (Kamboj) Bhartiya. Malik, who responded to a notice by the Mazgaon Magistrate Court three weeks ago, was granted a bail of Rs 15,000 and the matter has been posted for further hearing on December 30.

Last month, the BJP functionary had filed the defamation case against the NCP leader for allegedly defaming him by revelations that his brother-in-law Rishabh Sachdev was among the persons detained by the Narcotics Control Bureau after it raided the Cordelia Cruise on October 2 and was released later.

Bhartiya contended that the minister allegedly used his power and position to raise doubts and spread canards about the release of his brother-in-law, and has spoiled his image and reputation. After examining the evidence provided by Bhartiya, the Magistrate ruled that prima facie, Malik's statements at his media briefings on October 9 and 11 pointed at defamation and issued the process against him.

Interacting with media, Malik said that he had honoured the court notice and appeared before the Magistrate in the defamation suit filed by Bhartiya, but denied the all contentions of the complainant.



REFINING SKILL



Border Security Force personnel during target practice at a firing range near Line of Control at Sunderbani area in Jammu

PTI PHOTO

Pollution: Apex court seeks responses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: The Supreme Court Monday directed the Centre to respond to issues related to construction activities including the Central Vista project under its domain besides asking Delhi and NCR states to file their replies to show compliance of directions issued by the commission on air quality management to curb pollution.

The Commission for Air Quality Management in the NCR and Adjoining Areas said it has been holding meetings and passing directions to deal with air pollution well in advance and urged the apex court to seek a report from states

on issues including the status of industries running on fuels, other than PNG, implementation of direction to ban diesel generating (DG) sets, impounding of old petrol/diesel vehicles and on steps taken by states to control dust.

Observing that "intentions (of the Commission for Air Quality) are good and directions are given but the result is zero", a special bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana said that forthwith compliance of directions of the panel by the states was needed and punitive measures like imposing a fine of Rs 1000 or ordering one day jail to violators are not going to work.

The bench, also comprising



justices D Y Chandrachud and Surya Kant was told by senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for the petitioner, that construction activities for big projects like the Central Vista are going on in full swing and such a project cannot be "more important than the lives of citizens".

Taking note of the submissions, the bench, in its order, said, "Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General is directed to file a response to the said submission made by Vikas Singh... And get instructions on his behalf on the next date of hearing."

The bench also took note of the affidavit of the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, and said, "We are inclined to grant an opportunity to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi and the State Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, and Rajasthan to respond to the averments made in the affidavit filed by Respondent No.1, well before Wednesday, December, 1."

WOMAN SELLS BABY BOY, GETS ROBBED OF MONEY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Nov 29: Chennai police are probing into a complaint filed by 28-year-old woman Yasmin that two men robbed her of Rs 2.5 lakh which she had received by selling her baby.

The woman, a native of Puzhal, complained that the incident occurred on Sunday. In the complaint lodged at the Vepery police station, Yasmin said that a woman, Jayageetha who arranged the sale of the baby might be behind the money theft.

The police have constituted special teams and launched search for Jayageetha and two men who the complainant alleges to have robbed her of the money.

According to Yasmin, she met Jayageetha, a resident of Tsunami colony in Ennore during a visit to a private hospital in Kellys, and he befriended her. Yasmin was pregnant with her second child and wanted to abort it as her husband had left her and she was struggling to make the two ends meet on her own.

The woman said that Jayageetha convinced her that she would get



her lot of money if she sells the baby to a person. Yasmin gave birth to a baby boy on November 21 at a government hospital and after a week, Jayageetha asked her to bring the baby boy to Purasawalkam Highway.

She said that Jayageetha introduced her to another woman, Dhanam, and two male accomplices and asked her to sign in a blank paper which they would use as a 'bond'. She handed over the baby boy to Dhanam and an amount of Rs 2.5 lakh was given to her. Yasmin in her complaint said

that when she was returning home along with her daughter, Sharmila, the two men followed her in a two-wheeler and stopped her auto in between, threatened her, and snatched the money from her. She complained that they rode off after taking the money and she suspect that Jayageetha is behind the theft.

A senior police officer said that there seems to be some missing dots and that the police are studying all the angles in the case. He, however, said that the police are tracking Jayageetha, Dhanam, and the two men.

international



Omicron is a clarion call for people to be vaccinated
ANTHONY FAUCI | CHIEF MEDICAL ADVISER, WHITE HOUSE

2,150-YEAR-OLD DISCOVERY

Israeli archaeologists have unearthed the relics of a Hellenistic (Greek culture) farm in the heart of the coastal city of Tel Aviv, dated to about 2,150 years ago, the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) said



of the day quote

Strengthening the capabilities to fight and win should be the starting point and ultimate goal of military talent cultivation



XI JINPING | PRESIDENT, CHINA

Britain should take its responsibilities on migrants. France will not be hostage to UK's domestic policy. In France, there have been 150,000 asylum requests since January 1. In Britain, it's 30,000



GERALD DARMANIN | INTERIOR MINISTER, FRANCE

What was at stake with these laws was the stability of India's entire food system. Let's hope that subsequent actions on reforming Indian agriculture are informed by the country's human rights commitments and taken through meaningful consultations with farmers, communities and unions



MICHAEL FAKHRI | UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD

OMICRON SCARE

World slams doors shut

AGENCIES

Brussels, Nov 29: Nations around the world sought Monday to keep the new omicron variant at bay with travel bans and further restrictions, even as it remains unclear what it means for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Japan announced it would suspend entry of all foreign visitors, while new cases of the variant identified days ago by researchers in South Africa appeared as far apart as Hong Kong, Australia and Portugal. Portuguese authorities were investigating whether some of the infections there could be among the first reported cases of local transmission of the variant outside of southern Africa.

The stream of new cases showed the near impossibility of keeping the genie in the bottle in a globalised world of travel and open borders. Yet, many tried to do just that, even against the urging of the World Health Organisation, which noted that border closures often have limited effect but can wreak havoc on lives and livelihoods. Some argued that such restrictions still could provide valuable time to analyse the new variant.

Little is known about it, including whether it is more contagious, more likely to cause serious illness or more able to evade the protection of vaccines. While the initial global response to COVID-19 was criticised as slow and haphazard, the reaction to the new variant came quickly.

'MILD SYMPTOMS'

Johannesburg: South African doctors say that the rapid increase in COVID-19 cases attributed to the new omicron variant cases is resulting in mostly mild symptoms. Dr. Unben Pillay, a general practitioner in Gauteng province where 81% of the new cases have been reported, says he has seen a sharp increase in new COVID-19 cases in the past 10 days. He said that so far the cases have been very mild cases, with patients having flu-like symptoms, dry coughs, fever, night sweats, a lot of body pains. He said most have been treated at home. He also said that the vaccinated are faring much better than the unvaccinated. The recent surge in South Africa has been among people in their 20s and 30s and doctors emphasise that COVID-19 symptoms are often mild in that age group.



Japan Airlines planes sit on the tarmac at Haneda international airport in Tokyo, Monday

We call upon all those countries that have imposed travel bans on our country and our southern African sister countries to immediately and urgently reverse their decisions. These restrictions are unjustified

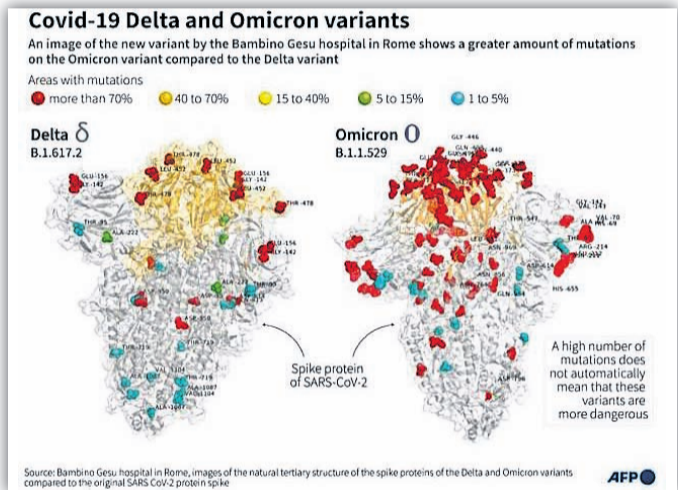
CYRIL RAMAPHOSA | PRESIDENT, SOUTH AFRICA

The WHO has also praised South Africa and Botswana for quickly alerting the world to the presence of the new variant — and many

have warned they should not be punished for their speed, especially since it may never be known when or where the new version first

cropped up. Cases had already been reported in Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands, before Portuguese authorities identified 13 cases of omicron among team members of the Belenenses professional soccer club. Quarantining also became an issue when Dutch military police had to arrest a husband and wife who left a hotel where they were being held after testing positive and boarded a plane bound for Spain. Israel decided to bar entry to foreigners, and Morocco said it would suspend all incoming flights for two weeks starting Monday. And in some parts of the world, authorities were moving in the opposite direction. In Malaysia, officials went ahead with the partial reopening of a bridge connecting it to the city-state of Singapore. And New Zealand announced it will continue plans to reopen internally after months of shutdown, though it is also restricting travel from nine southern African nations. The US is banning travel from South Africa and seven other southern African countries starting Monday.

WILL OMICRON OUTRUN DELTA?



Scientists race to understand the consequences of the Omicron variant and whether it can outrun the globally dominant Delta variant. The WHO said it is coordinating with many researchers worldwide to better understand how the variant will impact the pandemic.

Many questions remain, including whether Omicron will evade vaccine protection and whether it will cause more serious illness. But such characteristics would be far less concerning if the new variant remains rela-

tively contained. Several disease experts said there are strong grounds already for believing that Omicron will render vaccines less effective. Omicron shares several key mutations with two previous variants, Beta and Gamma, which made them less vulnerable to vaccines. In addition, Omicron has 26 unique mutations, many of them in regions targeted by vaccine antibodies. Within months, however, Delta spread far more quickly than any of its predecessors.

David Ho, professor of microbiology and immunology at

Columbia University, believes Omicron will show a substantial degree of resistance, based on the location of its mutations in the virus's spike protein. The vaccine antibodies target three regions on the coronavirus spike, and Omicron has mutations in all three of those regions, Ho said.

Others note that earlier variants, such as Beta, also had mutations that rendered the vaccines less effective, but that those vaccines still helped prevent severe disease and death. Even if neutralising antibodies induced by vaccines become less effective, other immune system components known as T cells and B cells will likely compensate, they said. Vaccination will likely still keep you out of the hospital, said John Wherry, director of the Penn Institute for Immunology in Philadelphia.

Ho said the fact that Omicron is already spreading in the presence of Delta, which outperformed all the other variants, is worrisome. But others insist it is still an open question. When it comes to the specific mutations that could help Omicron spread, it doesn't look too much different from Alpha or Delta.

Chair feels positive as N-talks resume



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vienna, Nov 29: Negotiators in Vienna resumed talks Monday over reviving Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, with the United States taking part at arm's length as in previous rounds since the Trump administration pulled out of the accord three years ago.

Hopes of quick progress were muted after a hard-line new government in Tehran led to a more than five-month hiatus in negotiations. But the European Union official chairing the talks sounded an upbeat note after the first meeting concluded.

"I feel positive that we can be doing important things for the next weeks," EU diplomat Enrique Mora told reporters.

All participants had shown a willingness to listen to the positions and "sensibilities" of the new Iranian delegation, Mora said. At the same time, Tehran's team made clear it wanted to engage in "serious work" to bring the accord back to life, he said.

The remaining signatories to the nuclear deal formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action — Iran, Russia, China, France, Germany and Britain — convened at the Palais Coburg, a luxury hotel where the agreement was signed six years ago.

A US delegation headed by the Biden administration's special envoy for Iran, Robert Malley, was staying at a nearby hotel where it was being briefed on the talks by diplomats from the other countries.

President Joe Biden has signalled he wants to rejoin the talks. The last round, aimed at bringing Iran back into compliance with the agreement and paving the way for the US to rejoin, was held in June.

"There is a sense of urgency in putting an end to the suffering of the Iranian people," said Mora, referring to the crippling sanctions the US re-imposed on Iran when it quit the accord.

"And there is a sense of urgency in putting the Iranian nuclear program under the transparent monitoring of the international community," he said.

"What has been the norm over the first six rounds will be again the practice in this seventh round," Mora added. "Nothing new on working methods."

Ali Bagheri, an Iranian nuclear negotiator, told Iranian state television late Sunday that the Islamic Republic "has entered the talks with serious willpower and strong preparation." However, he cautioned that "we cannot anticipate a timeframe on the length of these talks now."

SHORT TAKES

Sweden: Andersson elected again as PM

Copenhagen: Magdalena Andersson, who last week was Sweden's first woman Prime Minister for a few hours before resigning because a budget defeat made a coalition partner quit, was Monday elected again as head of government. In a 101-173 vote with 75 abstentions, the 349-seat Riksdag elected Andersson, leader of the Social Democrats, as Prime Minister. She will form a one-party, minority government. The Cabinet is expected to be named Tuesday. Andersson served as Prime Minister for seven hours before stepping down last week after the Greens left her two-party coalition.

Six terrorists held in intel-based ops

Islamabad: Six terrorists were arrested in separate intelligence-based operations in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of the police said Monday. The CTD in Punjab told local media that the militants were apprehended during a string of operations launched across multiple cities of the province based on intelligence tip-off received.

Russian navy tests hypersonic missile

Moscow: Russia's navy successfully test-fired a prospective hypersonic missile, the military said Monday. The Defense Ministry said that the Admiral Gorchkov frigate in the White Sea launched the Zircon cruise missile, hitting a practice target 400 kilometers (215 nautical miles) away. The launch was the latest in a series of tests of Zircon, which is set to enter service next year. President Vladimir Putin has said Zircon would be capable of flying at nine times the speed of sound and have a range of 1,000 kilometers (620 miles).

Dozens stuck in pub after storm

London: Dozens of customers who stopped for a drink at Britain's highest altitude pub got a longer stay than they bargained for, after the building was cut off by a blizzard. Sixty-one people woke up Monday after their third night at the Tan Hill Inn in the Yorkshire Dales, 270 miles (435 kilometers) north of London. They have been unable to leave since Friday, when a late autumn storm brought snow and heavy winds that felled power cables and blocked roads.

Probe into model's bareheaded shoot in Kartarpur started

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, Nov 29: The Pakistan police Monday initiated a probe into a Pakistani model's bareheaded photoshoot for a clothing brand at the revered Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur.

This came following an Indian Sikh journalist's criticism of the pictures for hurting the religious sentiments of the community.

Noting that the pictures have been uploaded on the social media, Indian Sikh independent journalist Ravinder Singh in a tweet highlighted the disrespect shown to the community and also tagged Prime Minister Imran Khan in his post.

Modelling bareheaded for ladies' attire, in the premises of Gurdwara Sri Darbar Sahib at #KartarpurSahib in Pakistan, by a Lahoreite woman has [severely] hurt the religious sentiments of Sikhs, he said in the tweet.

Covering one's head in a gurdwara is mandatory and considered as a way of showing respect for the revered place.

Reacting to his tweet, Azhar Mashwani, the Punjab chief minister's focal person for digital media, said the matter had been forwarded to concerned authorities for legal action.

Shortly after, the Punjab police tweeted that they are investigating all aspects related to this incident and strict legal action will be taken against those responsible.



An aerial view from a house surrounded by the lava of the Old Summit volcano near Tajuya, on the Canary Island of La Palma, Spain

Prince Charles to witness Barbados cut ties with monarchy

As of Tuesday morning, Barbados, regarded as the 'most British' of the Caribbean nations and still called 'Little England' by many, will no longer owe allegiance to the Queen

AGENCIES

Bridgetown, Nov 29: Britain's Prince Charles flew to Barbados as the Caribbean nation prepared for a celebration Monday marking the founding of a republic and the removal of the queen as sovereign, cutting imperial ties some 400 years after English ships first arrived.

Barbados won independence from Britain in 1966 but has retained Queen Elizabeth as its official sovereign. She will be replaced with a Barbadian president in an inauguration ceremony to be held when the country celebrates independence Tuesday.

Shedding the final vestiges of a colonial system that once spanned the globe will not have a direct impact on Barbados' economy or trade relations.

Prince Charles will deliver a speech just after midnight Tuesday, saying that much of the relationship between the two nations will remain the same, including the myriad connections between the people of our countries — through which flow admiration and affection, co-operation and opportunity. Buckingham Palace says the



issue is a matter for the people of Barbados to decide. It will mark the first time in

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taipei, Nov 29: Lawmakers from all three Baltic states met with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen Monday in a sign of further cooperation between European Union nations and Taiwan.

It is the first joint visit to Taiwan by members of parliament from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, Tsai said. She welcomed the lawmakers, who are attending the 2021 Open Parliament Forum, hosted by Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

China claims Taiwan is its own territory and rejects any attempts by the self-ruled island to participate in international forums or establish diplomatic relations with other countries that would give it international recognition.

Tsai noted the values and experiences that Taiwan has in common with the three countries.

"Taiwan and the Baltic nations share similar experiences of breaking free of authoritarian rule and fighting for freedom. The democracy we enjoy today was hard earned, Tsai said. This is something we all understand most profoundly."

Matas Maldeikis, head of the Lithuanian delegation, said he hopes to see even stronger ties with Taiwan. "We are here to express our solidarity with you. We hope the soon-to-be-open Lithuanian trade office in Taiwan will help to expand the partnership between Taiwan and Lithuania and contribute to a closer relationship with Taiwan and the whole European bloc," he said.

Earlier in November, Taiwan opened a de facto embassy in Lithuania under the name of Taiwanese Representative Office. Lithuania also plans to open a representative office in Taiwan.

claimed itself a republic in 1992. The celebration will begin late Monday and extend into Tuesday, when Sandra Mason will be inaugurated as the country's first president to serve as a largely symbolic figure behind Prime Minister Mia Mottley.

Mason currently holds the position of Governor-General, the queen's representative in Barbados.

The shift may spur discussion of similar proposals in other former British colonies that have Queen Elizabeth as their sovereign, which include Jamaica, Australia and Canada. Mottley in a speech Saturday said foundation of the republic marks a step forward for Barbados, but added that citizens must confront challenges such as inequality and climate change with the same fervor with which they sought independence in the 20th century.

business

of the day quote

Primary objective is to make sure that our digital economy is a trillion dollar economy - the largest in the world. If not the largest then at least one of the top 2 digital economies in the world

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR | MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND IT

We are commissioning the second plant to be ready for 2022. With this capacity expansion, Ather is well on its way to becoming the country's largest EV producer by next year

TARUN MEHTA | CO-FOUNDER & CEO, Ather ENERGY

We are pleased to extend our partnership with Accor to offer enhanced benefits, as we strive to offer the best service to our customers every single day

WILLIAM BOULTER | CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICE, INDIGO

SHORT TAKES

LIC gets RBI nod to up stake in Kotak

New Delhi: Insurance behemoth LIC will raise its stake in private sector lender Kotak Mahindra Bank to nearly 10 per cent, after receiving grant of approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Kotak Mahindra Bank (Kotak) said it has received an intimation from LIC regarding the same. "Kotak Mahindra Bank has received an intimation from Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) stating that the Reserve Bank of India had granted its approval to LIC, for increasing its holding in the bank up to 9.99 per cent of the paid-up equity share capital of the bank," Kotak said.

Steel demand goes down by 5% in FY21

New Delhi: Demand for steel from sectors like infrastructure, automobile and engineering fell by more than 5 per cent to 94.9 million tonne during the financial year ended March 31, 2021, Parliament was informed Monday. According to the information shared by Singh to the house, the building and construction sector consumed 41 MT steel in 2020-21 as against 43.4 MT in 2019-20. The demand in infrastructure sector also fell to 23.8 MT from 25.1 MT a year ago.

Bharti Axa settles claims of ₹106cr

Chennai: Life insurer Bharti Axa Life Insurance Company Ltd Monday said it had paid ₹106 crore in Covid-19 related claims during the first half of FY22. The company also said it had earned a total premium of ₹1,023.88 crore during the same period up from ₹912.39 crore earned during the previous year corresponding period. According to Bharti Axa Life, its 13th month persistency ratio (policy continuity) has improved to 64.4 per cent during the period under review, up from 60.7 per cent the previous year.

Versa partners with Jabil

Bhubaneswar: Versa Networks, the leader in Secure Access Service Edge (SASE), announced its partnership with global manufacturing solutions provider Jabil to manufacture its leading SD-WAN appliances in support of the national Make in India initiative. Versa Networks' Secure SD-WAN is a transformative technology that simplifies the IT infrastructure control and management by delivering a virtual WAN architecture that securely connects users to their applications.



The current macroeconomic situation is certainly much better than what it was one year back. We are seeing recovery in most sectors
PINAQI CHAKRABORTY | ECONOMIST

RELAINCE DENIES BT BID INTEREST

Shares in BT jumped as much as 9 per cent Monday before sliding back, after Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) denied a media report it was weighing a bid for the British telecom group. Agencies said Reliance might make an unsolicited offer to buy into BT or try to get a controlling share, citing sources familiar with the matter



Fintech firm Slice latest addition to unicorn list

NEARLY 38 INDIAN STARTUPS HAVE MADE IT TO THE UNICORN LIST THIS YEAR, RAISING MORE THAN \$32 BILLION (TILL OCT)

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bengaluru, Nov 29: Fintech company Slice Monday announced it has become India's new unicorn with raising \$220 million in a Series B round, that values it at over \$1 billion.

The round was led by Tiger Global and New York-based global private equity and venture capital Insight Partners. Slice is a credit

card challenger to pay bills, manage expenses and unlock rewards.

"We've kept our heads down in the initial years and focused solely on simplifying the consumer journey and creating a cutting-edge risk underwriting system," said Rajan Bajaj | Founder and CEO

New and existing investors including Advent International's Sunley House Capital, Moore



Strategic Ventures, Anfa, Gunosy, Blume Ventures, and 8i also participated in the round.

Users can sign up with Slice in seconds, quickly get a virtual card (and get a physical card delivered to their home), and enjoy up to 2 per cent cash-back on each transaction.

Slice, which is shipping over 200,000 cards each month, recently opened doors to the new-to-credit population. They can start their financial journey with

the newly introduced card with a limit of ₹2,000.

"Slice has built a product that customers love, which we expect will result in continued growth and market share gains," said Alex Cook, Partner at Tiger Global.

Slice said it now has a registered user base of over 5 million and a 40 per cent month-on-month growth rate accompanied by industry-leading risk metrics.

No proposal to recognise Bitcoin as a currency: FM

BITCOIN IS REPORTEDLY THE FIRST DECENTRALISED DIGITAL CURRENCY WHERE PEER-TO-PEER TRANSACTIONS TAKE PLACE WITHOUT ANY INTERMEDIARY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: The government has no proposal to recognise Bitcoin as a currency in the country, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a reply to the Lok Sabha Monday.

Whether the government has any proposal to recognise Bitcoin as a currency in the country, the Finance Minister said "No, sir".

Bitcoin is a digital currency that allows people to buy goods and services and exchange money without involving banks, credit card issuers or other third parties.

Meanwhile, the government plans to introduce the Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill 2021 in the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament. The Bill seeks to ban all but a few private cryptocurrencies to promote underlying technologies while allowing an official digital currency by RBI.

In a separate reply to a written question, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said the government has received a proposal from the RBI in October 2021 for amendment to the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 to enhance the scope of the definition of 'bank note' to include currency in digital form.

RBI has been examining use cases and working out a phased im-



NIRMALA SITHARAMAN INFORMED THE HOUSE THAT THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT COLLECT DATA ON BITCOIN TRANSACTIONS

RBI wants digital currency included under definition of 'bank note', proposes amendment to law, according to an official

RBI has been examining use cases and working out a phased implementation strategy for introduction of Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) with little or no disruption, he said

plementation strategy for introduction of Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) with little or no disruption, he said.

Chaudhary said introduction of CBDC has the potential to provide significant benefits, such as reduced dependency on cash, higher seigniorage due to lower transaction costs and reduced settlement risk.

"Introduction of CBDC would also possibly lead to a more robust, efficient, trusted, regulated and legal tender-based payments option. There are also associated

risks which need to be carefully evaluated against the potential benefits," he said.

In reply to another question, Sitharaman said, ministries and departments have spent ₹2.29 lakh crore as capital expenditure during the April-September period of the current fiscal.

This is 41 per cent of the Budget Estimate (BE) of ₹5.54 lakh crore for 2021-22. The actual expenditure during current fiscal is about 38 per cent higher than the corresponding expenditure in FY 2020-21, she said.

RBI supersedes RCL board; to commence bankruptcy process

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 29: The Reserve Bank Monday superseded the board of Anil Ambani promoted Reliance Capital Ltd (RCL) and will shortly initiate bankruptcy proceedings against the debt-ridden NBFC in view of payment defaults and serious governance issues.

Nageswar Rao Y (Ex-Executive Director, Bank of Maharashtra) has been appointed as the administrator of the company, the RBI said in a statement.

The RBI has initiated similar proceedings against Srei Group NBFCs and Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL). While the proceedings against DHFL has been completed, the Srei issue is still pending.

"In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 45-IE (1) of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the Reserve Bank has today superseded the Board of Directors of M/s Reliance Capital Ltd (RCL) in view of the defaults by RCL in meeting the various payment obligations to its creditors and serious governance concerns which the Board has not been able to address effectively," RBI said in a statement.

It further said the Reserve Bank will shortly initiate the process of resolution of the company under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Proceedings of Financial Service Providers and Application to



This is the third large NBFC against which the central bank will initiate bankruptcy proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code recently



Adjudicating Authority) Rules, 2019.

Reserve Bank will also apply to the NCLT, Mumbai for appointing the Administrator as the Insolvency Resolution Professional, it said.

In September, Reliance Capital in its annual general meeting (AGM) had informed shareholders that the company's consolidated debt was ₹40,000 crore.

BIZ BUZZ

upGrad makes 1st overseas deal for AUD 16mln

Mumbai: Leading edtech player upGrad Monday said it will acquire Global Study Partners (GSP), the largest study abroad company in Australia, for AUD 16 million, with a commitment of a further AUD 10 million in future. UpGrad, which has been growing through acquisitions and has earmarked an M&A war chest of \$250 million, has entered into an acquisition agreement to buy 100 per cent of GSP for AUD 16 million with a commitment of a further AUD 10 million in future, the Ronnie Screwvala-promoted firm said in a statement Monday.

PPL bags environment award

Bhubaneswar: Paradeep Phosphates Limited (PPL) was conferred with Greentech Foundation Environment Award for the year 2021. Ambikesh Mishra, Dy General Manager (Environment Management) of PPL received the Award from Dinesh Waghmare, Principal Secretary (Energy), Government of Maharashtra at a glittering function held at Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu. Kamalleshwar Saran, Chairman and CEO Greentech Foundation was also present at the event. Greentech Foundation is committed to recognise and celebrate ethos of outstanding performance in Environment Management. Every year it appreciates the effort and ability of different industries that are practicing Best Environment Management Practices.



GOVERNANCE CONCLUDES AWARDS 2021 CSR INDIA SUMMIT & AWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AWARD 2021

Banks write off ₹46,382cr NPA in HI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: Banks have written off bad loans amounting to ₹46,382 crore during the first six months of 2021-22, the finance ministry informed the Lok Sabha Monday.

As per the RBI guidelines and policy approved by bank boards, non-performing loans, including, inter-alia, those in respect of which full provisioning has been made on completion of four years, are removed from the balance sheet of the bank concerned by way of the write-off.

In a written reply, Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad said banks evaluate consider the impact of write-offs as part of their regular exercise to clean up their balance-sheet, avail of tax benefit and optimise capital, in accordance with the RBI guidelines and policy approved by their boards. As per RBI



data on global operations, scheduled commercial banks have written-off loans of ₹46,382 crore during the first six months of the current financial year 2021-22, he said.

The borrowers of written-off loans continue to be liable for repayment and the process of recovery of dues from the borrower in written-off loan accounts con-

tinues. In another reply, Karad said the total loans outstanding of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) stood at ₹3,34,171 crore at end-March 2021, up from ₹2,98,214 crore at end-March 2020.

He said RRBs have been playing an important role in purveying agricultural credit, particularly to small and marginal farmers and weaker sections of society.

Textile Inc rolls out the red carpet for UAE, rest of the world

THE OFFICIALS HIGHLIGHTED STRONG RELATIONS OF INDIA AND THE UAE AND THE POTENTIAL OF TAKING ADVANTAGE OF DUBAI'S STRATEGIC LOCATION FOR THE INDIAN TEXTILE SECTOR TO EXPAND GLOBALLY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dubai, Nov 29: Indian textile leaders have rolled out the red carpet to investors from the UAE and other parts of the world, urging them to become part of the country's textile success story.

At a global investor summit, organised as part of the ongoing 'Textile Week' at the India Pavilion in Expo 2020 Dubai, government representatives and industry stakeholders highlighted Dubai's role as a great platform for the Indian textile industry to target the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) markets and beyond.

The participants deliberated on the potential of the Indian textile sector and deepening engagement with the UAE and the world. Emphasising the strong network be-



tween India and the UAE, speakers said that the UAE is a preferred destination for India due to its strategic location, explaining how the two nations also shared strong

trade and cultural ties.

India's Additional Secretary, Textiles, Vijoy Kumar Singh, in his inaugural address said, "Dubai offers a huge potential to the

Indian textiles sector. We have a very strong textile manufacturing industry that employs a large number of people, and also have a robust exporting base. With the help of the PLI scheme, we are now trying to

We are also working towards organising the textile sector with the help of the PM Mega Integrated Textile Scheme that will assist us in meeting the global levels of sustainability as well

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY I TEXTILES, VIJOY KUMAR SINGH

strengthen the sector and promote the production of high-value Man-Made Fibre (MMF) fabrics,

garments, and technical textiles."

"We are also working towards organising the textile sector with the help of the PM Mega Integrated Textile Scheme that will assist us in meeting the global levels of sustainability as well," he added while hailing India's new PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel Parks (PM MITRA) scheme launched with an outlay of ₹4,445 crore (\$600 billion) to build 7 mega textile parks, aimed at creating a modern, integrated large-scale, world-class industrial infrastructure including 'plug n' play facilities.

In a special address, Jay Karan Singh, Trade Advisor, Ministry of Textiles, said, "The Indian textile sector focuses on creating reliability, maintaining quality, and ensuring sustainable development."

RAVINDRA-PATEL COMBO FASHIONS MEMORABLE DRAW FOR NEW ZEALAND IN THE FIRST TEST

'INDIANS' DEIFY INDIA

Rahane lauds bowlers' efforts despite a draw



THE SAVIOURS: Rachin Ravindra (L) and Ajaz Patel look towards the onfield umpires after helping New Zealand avoid a defeat, Monday

cracking from at the least second day... There was low bounce for sure but the slow turn made it easy to negotiate and also the failure of the two senior pacers put immense pressure on the spin trio...

Ashwin eclipses Bhajji

R Ashwin went past Harbhajan Singh to become the third highest wicket-taker for India in Test cricket, reaching the mark in his 80th match. The legendary Anil Kumble tops the chart with 619 scalps...



Leaving the disappointment behind: Ajinkya Rahane speaks with his counterpart Kane Williamson after the match, while Tom Latham looks on

KANPUR: India failed to bowl out New Zealand on a deteriorating track on day five of the first Test but skipper Ajinkya Rahane praised his players saying they tried their best...

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

In a noble gesture, new India head coach Rahul Dravid paid Green Park's groundstaff, led by Shiv Kumar, ₹35,000 for preparing a sporting pitch for the match.

Kanpur, Nov 29: Two Indian-born cricketers, Rachin Ravindra (18 n o, 91b) and Ajaz Patel (2 n o, 23b), showed remarkable resilience under fading light and on a deteriorating track to defy India's famous spinners...

but it once again showed that Indian spinners might not be completely effective on tracks that don't start out of question but the gutsy New Zealanders didn't lose any wicket in the first session...

Indian spinners, led by Ravindra Jadeja (4/40), put up one of their most persevering performances in recent times but Mumbai-born Patel and Karnataka-born Ravindra consumed 8.4 overs after the fall of the ninth wicket to keep New Zealand on even keel in the two-match series.

The result at Green Park is the first time that New Zealand has gone 10 Test matches undefeated (eight wins, two draws) with the current streak starting against India at the start of 2020.

The last half an hour was a thriller with umpires Nitin Menon and Virender Sharma checking light and Ravindra appreciating Patel for every copybook forward defensive stroke.



WONDERFUL BOWLING: Ravindra Jadeja celebrates after dismissing Ross Taylor (not in pic) at the Green Park

Vinicius scores decisive strike in Real victory

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, Nov 29: Vinicius Junior ran to the corner and performed some samba moves by the flag before his teammates rushed in to embrace him. The young Brazilian forward had just scored another decisive goal for Real Madrid.

It was the second goal in the last three matches for Vinicius, and the 11th in total in what has been his best season by far since joining Madrid. He has already scored more goals now than in his previous three seasons in total.



INDIAN SUPER LEAGUE

SCEB test awaits Odisha FC



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vasco, Nov 29: SC East Bengal will look to register their first win of this season's Indian Super League when they lock horns with high-flying Odisha FC at the Tilak Maidan Stadium here Tuesday.

match 3-1 against Bengaluru FC courtesy Javi Hernandez's brace, will hope to continue their winning run while SC East Bengal will focus on bouncing back after a defeat to arch-rivals ATK Mohun Bagan.

Satwik, Chirag qualifies for World Tour Finals

BALI: World No.11 duo of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty has become the first Indian men's doubles pair to qualify for the season-ending BWF World Tour Finals starting here Wednesday.



Warne meets accident

MELBOURNE: Australian spin legend Shane Warne has been left "battered and bruised" after suffering a motorbike accident. The 52-year-old met with an accident Sunday while riding his bike with son Jackson.

Napoli's tribute to Diego

MILAN: Dries Mertens scored twice as Napoli beat Lazio 4-0 to take the outright lead of Serie A on the night it paid tribute to soccer great Diego Maradona. As well as Mertens - who has taken over several of Maradona's records at Napoli - Piotr Zielinski and Fabian Ruiz also netted to help Napoli move three points clear of second-place AC Milan.

Stokes recalls tablet tale

BRISBANE: England all-rounder Ben Stokes has revealed that a tablet taken wrongly caused him to "choke horribly" and fear for his life ahead of the first Ashes Test against Australia here from December 8. In his column for 'The Daily Mirror', Stokes wrote about his frightening experience but doesn't mention when and where the incident took place.

Jorginho makes amends in draw against Man Utd



ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Nov 29: Ballon d'Or contender Jorginho made amends for an error leading to Manchester United's goal with an equalizing penalty for Chelsea in a 1-1 draw in the Premier League Sunday. Jorginho was around the halfway line when he failed to control Bruno Fernandes' hooked clearance from the edge of the United penalty area.

Eves suffer 0-3 defeat to Chile

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Manaus (Brazil), Nov 29: The Indian women's team displayed good fighting spirit but still went down 0-3 to Chile in its second game of the four-nation tournament at the Amazon Arena here Monday. Striker Maria Urrutia (14th minute) gave Chile a first-half lead before two quick-fire goals (84th and 85th minutes) towards the end of the match snuffed out any hopes of an Indian comeback.