



## PARALLEL PERFORMANCE

Actor Tara Sutaria says she is not playing second fiddle in *Tadap*, the launching vehicle for Ahan Shetty

LEISURE P2



## US OFFICIALS' PHONES HACKED

At least 11 US State Department officials' iPhones have been hacked by Israel-based NSO Group

INTERNATIONAL P10



## SINDHU IN FINAL

PV Sindhu enters final of BWF Tour Finals with a hard-fought win over Akane Yamaguchi

SPORTS P12

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We all must love the fact that Pakistan is our neighbour and it can be blamed for anything

## NOD FOR PRODUCTION OF 5 LAKH AK-203 RIFLES

New Delhi: The Centre has approved the plan for production of over five lakh AK-203 assault rifles at Korwa in Amethi in Uttar Pradesh ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India, sources said. The government is seeing it as an endeavour to provide a big boost to self-reliance in defence manufacturing in India. The project, worth ₹5,100 crore, is in partnership with Russia. Sources said that this endeavour reflects the deepening ties between the two countries in the defence sector. The project will provide business opportunities to various MSMEs and other defence industries for supply of raw material and components. **MORE P8**

## VETERAN JOURNALIST VINOD DUA DIES AT 67



New Delhi: Veteran journalist Vinod Dua, who started his career with Doordarshan in the black and white era and went on to make his mark in the digital space in the decades that followed, died in Delhi's Apollo Hospital Saturday. He was 67. The last rites of the television journalist, who was hospitalised with Covid earlier this year and lost his wife, radiologist Padmavati 'Chinna' Dua, to the virus in June, will be performed at the Lodhi crematorium here Sunday, his daughter and actor-comic Mallika Dua said.

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# JAWAD SPARES STATE

The state govt's evacuation efforts appear to have gone in vain as the system is likely to move north-northeast wards and weaken into a well-marked low pressure area in 24 hours

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: The India Meteorological Department (IMD), which had predicted that Cyclone Jawad was likely to hit somewhere near Puri, Saturday said that the system weakened into a deep depression and may further convert into a depression before reaching Puri coast.

The cyclonic storm as named by Saudi Arabia as Jawad-the liberal or merciful- moved nearly northwards with a speed of 9 kmph during the past six hours, weakened into a deep depression and lay centered over west-central Bay of Bengal, the IMD said in its evening bulletin.

It is located about 180 km east-southeast of Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), 260 km south of Gopalpur, 330 km south-southwest of Puri and 420 km south-southwest of Paradip, it said.

The system is likely to move north-northeast wards and weaken further into a depression by Sunday morning. It may reach Puri around Sunday noon, it said.

Subsequently, it is likely to con-



DATE/TIME IN UTC	INTENSITY
02/12, 25KT, D	LESS THAN 34 KT
03/00, 30KT, DD	34-47 KT
03/03, 30KT, DD	48-63 KT
03/12, 40KT, CS	64-81 KT
04/00, 40KT, CS	82-100 KT
04/12, 30KT, DD	101-119 KT
04/18, 30KT, DD	120 KT
05/00, 25KT, D	121-137 KT
05/12, 20KT, D	138-154 KT

tinue to move north-northeast wards along Odisha coast towards West Bengal coast and weaken into a well marked low pressure area during subsequent 24 hours, the Met department said. It is now clear that this cyclone is not a threat anymore to Odisha

Heavy rainfall is likely to occur at one or two places in Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Keonjhar, Angul, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Jajpur, Khurda and Puri, Sunday

Highest 23 mm rainfall was recorded at Paradip, followed by 21 mm at Chandbali, 19.6 mm at Bhubaneswar, 12 mm at Balasore, 4.6 mm at Chhatrapur, 4 mm at Puri and 2 mm at Gopalpur, says the IMD sources

Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Jajpur, Khurda and Puri, Sunday.

Since the sea condition will remain rough, fishermen have been advised not to venture into west-central & northwest Bay of Bengal till Sunday.

The state government Saturday scaled down evacuation and shifted only 1,500 people, including 300 pregnant women to safe places, Special Relief Commissioner PK Jena said. People living in low-lying area of Ganjam, Khurda, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara and Niali area of Cuttack district were evacuated and kept in shelter houses, he said.

Stating that the state will be impacted by rain and not by wind, Jena said the government has asked the Collectors to assess damage caused to the standing crop due to downpour in the coastal region. The crop damage assessment will be done in next 7 days, Jena said.

## PERFECT 10 FOR PATEL

Ajaz becomes the third bowler in the history of Test cricket to take 10 wickets in an innings after England's Jim Laker (1956) and India's Anil Kumble (1999)



PNN & AGENCIES

Mumbai, Dec 4: Ajaz Patel's name will forever be etched in the annals of the game as the Mumbai-born New Zealand left-arm spinner became the third bowler in the history of Test cricket to take 10 wickets in an innings. Only two others have achieved this distinction before him - England's Jim Laker (1956) and India's own Anil Kumble (1999). Also, Patel is the first bowler to achieve this distinction on foreign soil, the other two did it in their respective home turfs.

The bowler's 47.5-12-119-10 may ultimately turn out to be for a losing cause, but make no mistake it is indeed a stupendous feat. Even in school or club-level cricket such a feat is often deemed impossible. The last time a bowler took 10 wickets in a match in India was way back in January 2001. Debashis Mohanty of Odisha

achieved the feat in a Duleep Trophy game between East Zone and South Zone. Patel, later on in the day termed his feat 'pretty special'. Prior to his magical spell in Mumbai, the left-arm spinner had played only 10 Tests with 5/59 as his best bowling figures. Saturday, however, he became a household name not only in the cricketing world but also in countries that do not play cricket. **MORE P12**

## Omicron enters Guj, Maha; total count 4

The 72-year-old Gujarat man returned from Zimbabwe while the 33-year-old from Mumbai had arrived at the Delhi airport from South Africa via Dubai

AGENCIES

Ahmedabad/Mumbai, Dec 4: A 72-year-old man has been found infected with the Omicron in Jamnagar city of Gujarat, days after he arrived in the state from Zimbabwe while another man who returned to Mumbai from abroad also tested positive for the new variant of coronavirus.

As per Gujarat Health department sources this is the third case of Omicron in the country as two persons were earlier found infected with this strain in Karnataka.



Gujarat's Commissioner of Health Jai Prakash Shrivhare confirmed that the man has tested positive for the Omicron variant. The man had arrived in Gujarat from Zimbabwe November 28 and had tested positive for coronavirus December 2, after which his sam-

ple was sent for genome sequencing, officials said. Jamnagar municipal commissioner Vijaykumar Kharadi had said that the sample was sent to Ahmedabad for genome sequencing to ascertain whether he was infected with the Omicron variant.

The man, who hails from Jamnagar, has been living in Jamnagar since the last many years. He arrived in the state to meet his father-in-law. After he got a fever, his doctor advised him to get an RT-PCR test done. The private laboratory Thursday informed the civic authorities that his report has come out positive for Covid-19, he said.

Similarly, a man from Kalyan Dombivli municipal area near Mumbai who had arrived at the Delhi airport from South Africa via Dubai before flying to Mumbai has tested positive for the Omicron variant of coronavirus, officials said Saturday, adding that it is the first such case from Maharashtra.

The 33-year-old man had arrived in Delhi November 23 and had given his samples for Covid-19 testing at the Delhi airport. He had then taken a flight to Mumbai, official sources said in Delhi.

"A man from Kalyan Dombivli municipal corporation area has tested positive for the Omicron variant. He is the first official case in the state," Maharashtra health director Archana Patil said.

## Centre worries over fewer tests in Odisha

New Delhi: The Union Health Ministry, in a letter to Odisha Saturday, expressed concern over the declining trend in weekly tests conducted. The ministry also directed five high Covid-19 reporting states including Odisha to take necessary steps to control the spread of the infection, and reduce fatalities, officials said. The states - Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Odisha, Mizoram and UT J&K - have been told to take the required steps according to the strategy of Test-Track-Treat-Vaccinate-Covid appropriate behaviour to keep the situation under control. **PAGE 4**

## SOME DAYS START BETTER THAN OTHERS



A tourist couple takes a selfie on the golden beach of Puri, Saturday, close on the heels of IMD's forecast that cyclonic storm Jawad has weakened into a deep depression over the Bay of Bengal

## Naidu calls for debate on govts doling out freebies

The VP said expenditures must be carefully balanced so that both short-term and long-term development objectives get equal focus

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 4: Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu Saturday called for a wider debate on harmonising the welfare and development objectives against the backdrop of governments "doling out freebies". He also said Parliament should meet for a minimum of 100 days every year and state legislatures for at least 90. Addressing an event in the

Central Hall of Parliament to mark 100 years of Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Naidu said expenditures must be carefully balanced so that both short-term and long-term development objectives get equal attention.

"We are all alive to the present scenario of governments indulging in doling out freebies for obvious reasons. While ensuring the welfare and social security of the needy people is an important obligation of the governments, it is time that there is a wider debate on harmonising the welfare and development objectives," he said in the presence of President Ram Nath Kovind, Speaker Om Birla and PAC chairman Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury.



Since the PAC has to examine the effectiveness of resource use in terms of socioeconomic outcomes, "it may be in order for the Committee to examine the issue of

## Odisha has 6,970 beggars: Minister

4,128 male and 2,842 female beggars have been identified in the state

Cuttack district tops the list with 1,060 beggars

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: The Odisha government has identified a total of 6,970 beggars across the state and is implementing a scheme called 'Sahaya' for their welfare, Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Minister Ashok Chandra Panda said Saturday. In a written reply in the Assembly, the minister said as many as 4,128 male and 2,842 female beggars have been identified by the state government in all 30 districts. However, Panda said that there is no child beggar in the state.

Cuttack district tops the list with 1,060 beggars, followed by 595 in

Bargarh, 545 in Ganjam, 502 in Bolangir, 447 in Sundargarh, 418 in Khurda, 363 in Kalahandi, 354 in Nuapada and 350 in Puri, Panda added. Among other districts, 283 beggars are identified in Sonepur district, 222 in Koraput, 205 in Angul, 196 in Jajpur, 188 in Bhadrak, 183 in Nabarangpur, 176 in Rayagada, 164 in Mayurbhanj, 132 in Dhenkanal and 131 in Balasore, he said. The process is on to include left-out beggars in the list, Panda said.

The government is implementing Sahaya. In the first phase, special drives named as Niladri Nilaya and Ekamra Nilaya have been launched in Puri and Bhubaneswar towns, respectively, the minister said. Beggar rehabilitation centres have been opened in Khurda and Sambalpur districts while funds have been sanctioned for establishment of such centres in Rourkela municipality, Ganjam and Dhenkanal.

Parliament should meet for a minimum of 100 days every year and state legislatures for at least 90 days, said the RS Chairman

balancing these two objectives for wider consideration", Naidu said. The Rajya Sabha Chairman lamented that members of Parliament do not attend meetings of parliamentary committees. It was time for "introspection", he said. Pointing to the scope of wasteful expenditure and misutilisation

of scarce resources, Naidu recalled former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi saying about 35 years back that out of every rupee spent, only 16 paise went to the people.

Based on the experience of the last 100 years, the PAC can reinvent itself to more effectively handle the complexity of scrutinising the accounts and audit of expenditure through capacity-building, accessing the inputs of experts and information exchanges for setting higher benchmarks and adoption of best practices elsewhere, he said. "Since the audit review is also a core function of PAC, I suggest that it may be re-designated as Public Accounts and Audit Committee (PA and AC)," he said.

# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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### ARIES

There is all likelihood today of things not shaping up as you desired. It may seem you made all the wrong investments, as the benefits may be very less. However, Ganesh indicates that life is full of unexpected happenings. There is a chance that you may meet an old friend which will make you very happy.

### TAURUS

Emotions will flow generously as sincerity translates in your every action and expression. Be alert and cautious today, warns Ganesh. Your luck may make you like the princess in the locked tower, and the lack of white knight in the story won't make things any better, says Ganesh.

### GEMINI

You are likely to throw a small treat for your relatives. Through the rest of the day will be spent cleaning the utensils and putting the place in order, you will manage to get some time for your friends, maybe by arranging a slumber party. A day full of partying and post-party cleaning, except for the evening yoga classes.

### CANCER

You will feel self-satisfaction. Your simplicity will impress people. You may visit a religious spot to set up rapport with God. A beautiful and inspiring day, says Ganesh.

### LEO

You will not shy away from hard work to attain success in personal and professional endeavours. Your attitude will come in for praise from your superiors and you will be rewarded as well. Your responsibilities in the office will increase, says Ganesh.

### VIRGO

The day will transform from being the usual bore to an exciting evening, predicts Ganesh. Afternoon may hit a snag, though, with stress rising alarmingly. But come sunset and all that will evaporate as you enjoy the warm, loving company of loved ones, says Ganesh.

### LIBRA

Life is a stage, and we are all characters in the play, so better put up a good show! Pay close attention to the image and emotions that you depict today, as you spruce up your outward show, says Ganesh. Work-wise, you will be on to something new – a new business tactic perhaps – to help you succeed. For those on the lookout for employment, the day promises to be lined up with interviews.

### SCORPIO

It's time to live your dreams. You may just land up in your dream house or drive in a plush car, you once dreamt of. Evening time is spared for family and loved ones, says Ganesh. You may even go shopping to buy object de art for your new cosy corner.

### SAGITTARIUS

You may plan a romantic outing with your beloved today. Professionally, you may don the robes of a generous winner and a graceful loser. But expect nothing more, says Ganesh, as you may find yourself disappointed.

### CAPRICORN

It is your day today! You'll feel like everything is coming your way, without you making any effort whatsoever. Though sub-consciously, you will want to showcase your talents and achievements to impress people around. And, you will succeed at that, says Ganesh.

### AQUARIUS

Today, your innermost feelings take precedence over all else. You may also make a short trip on a whim. At your workplace, people will find you more sympathetic than usual. It's the same with your loved ones, who will enjoy your softer side. Do this more often, suggests Ganesh.

### PISCES

Financially, you will be treading cautiously today. Savings will take precedence over indulgences. You are likely to invest in debt instruments over equities. New business proposals may come your way in the afternoon. Cultural and social activities will keep you occupied as well, says Ganesh.



## WOULD BE STARSTRUCK BY DWAYNE: ADELE

English singer Adele says actor Dwayne Johnson is the person who she'd be starstruck to meet. She nearly fell off her chair when she got a bouquet from him as an apology for not being able to make it to her *One Night Only* TV special, admitted the *Easy on Me* hitmaker.

## NICOLE KIDMAN PRAISES HUSBAND KEITH URBAN

Fifty four-year-old actress Nicole Kidman credited her husband - the father of her youngest daughters Sunday, 13, and 10-year-old Faith - for providing the support she needs to be able to go out to work and she's grateful to have him in her life.



# No playing second fiddle for Tara

**THOUGH TADAP IS DESIGNED AS AHAN'S LAUNCHPAD, THE ACTRESS SAYS SHE IS FORTUNATE TO GET A STRONG CHARACTER THAT DRIVES THE NARRATIVE FORWARD**

**Mumbai:** It's easy to get lost in the brouhaha surrounding a star kid's launch. But Tara Sutaria harbours no such fears. Even though all eyes are on Ahan Shetty as he makes his Hindi film debut this weekend with *Tadap*, Sutaria — who plays his love interest in the Milan Luthria-directed film — is confident that her role will grab the audiences' attention. "My character here is different from what I played in the past or for that matter, from the roles that other actresses are doing. It is strong and well-written. *Tadap* is Ahan's launch (vehicle), but I was happy to see that Ramisa (her character) is present throughout the story and not playing the second fiddle." A fan of tragic love stories, the actor remembers being moved by the script narration. Little did she know that she would be joined by Shetty junior in the drama. "I didn't know who (the lead) was. Milan sir asked us to perform a scene. Ahan and I did it, and it was liked by everyone," she recounts. *Tadap*, a remake of the Telugu film *RX 100* (2018), is among the first few films to be theatre-bound after the shutdown. AGENCIES



# Wanted to take revenge from Anu Malik: Sanu

**Mumbai:** Popular singer Kumar Sanu recreated the song *Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhen* from the movie *Baazigar* to mainly sing the rap part of the song on *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*. Sanu is appearing as a special guest on the singing reality show. Talking about his song, Kumar Sanu said: "I actually wanted to take revenge from Anu Malik. He didn't let me sing the rap part of the song *Yeh Kaali Kaali Ankhen*." He added: "I could have done it easily, but he didn't let me do it. Since then, I always wanted, from the bottom of my heart to take revenge on him by singing the rap part. And today my revenge is completed on the sets of *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*." *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* airs on Zee TV. IANS



BTS topped the list among Korean artistes, followed by BLACKPINK, TWICE, Stray Kids and Tomorrow X Together

# Bad Bunny, Swift, BTS, Drake, Bieber top 5 most-streamed global artistes

**Seoul:** South Korean group *BTS* was the third most-streamed global artiste on the global music streaming service *Spotify* this year, reports Yonhap News Agency quoting data from the service. According to the *Spotify Wrapped 2021* data, *BTS* ranked third after the Puerto Rican vocalist Bad Bunny and Taylor Swift, thanks to its hit single *Butter*. The K-pop group was followed by Drake and Justin Bieber. *BTS* topped the list among Korean artistes, followed by *BLACKPINK*, *TWICE*, *Stray Kids* and *Tomorrow X Together*. IU was the only individual artiste in the top 10 list of the most-streamed Korean artistes.

## Most Streamed Artists Globally

- 1 Bad Bunny
- 2 Taylor Swift
- 3 BTS
- 4 Drake
- 5 Justin Bieber

Spotify #SPOTIFYWRAPPED



Six of the 10 most-played K-pop songs were from *BTS* with *Butter*, *Dynamite*, *Permission to Dance* and *Life Goes On* in the top four places. *BTS* also claimed nine of the top 10 most-streamed K-pop albums with *BLACKPINK* in fourth place. IANS

# Odia transgender's life to come alive in bilingual biopic

POST NEWS NETWORK

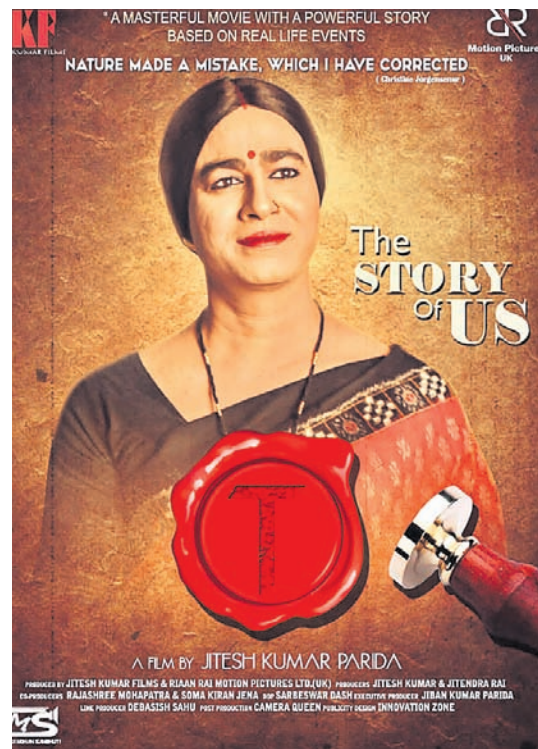
**Bhubaneswar:** Known for playing negative roles in Odia films, actor Debasish Sahoo has been roped in to play a transgender's character in upcoming movie *T*.

Directed by Jitesh Kumar Parida and produced by Jitendra Rai, the bilingual film – in Odia and Hindi – is based on the life of transgender Meghna Sahoo.

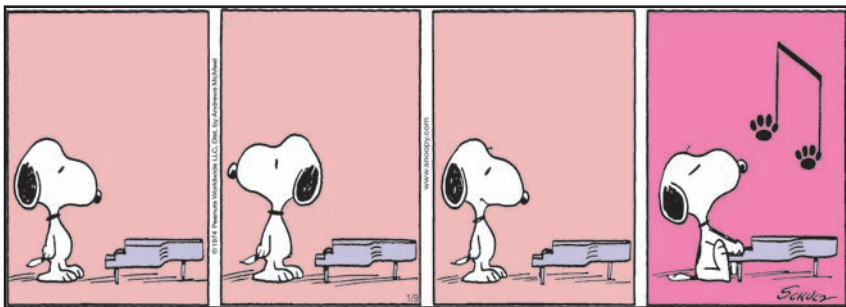
Debasish says, "Meghna is multi-talented - a journalist, teacher and social activist - who has been at the forefront of the fight for transgender rights. She was also the first from her community in Odisha to marry a man whom she had befriended on Facebook. Besides, she visits several educational institutions to deliver lectures on gender issues. Meghna, an MBA, is the first transgender cab driver in Odisha. Since, her journey from a sex worker to a successful activist was required to be told, I agreed to play the role."

Shooting has already begun and the movie will be sent to film festivals before its OTT release, informed the actor.

Actor Ushasi Misra will be playing transgender Meera Parida in the movie. Besides, the film features actors Hara Rath, Ranbir, and Prasanjit in key roles.



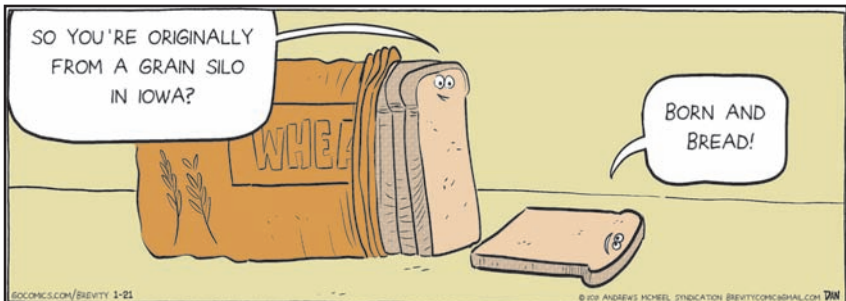
## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

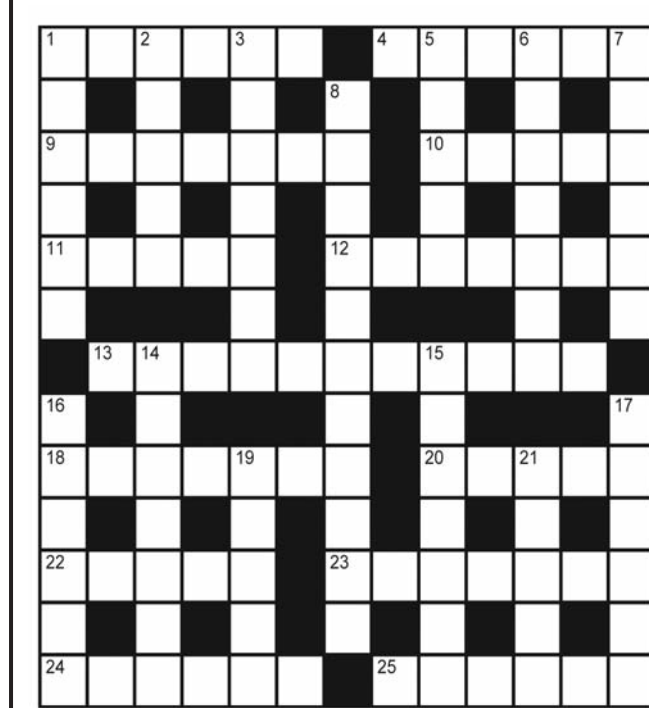


## BREVITY



## FUN post

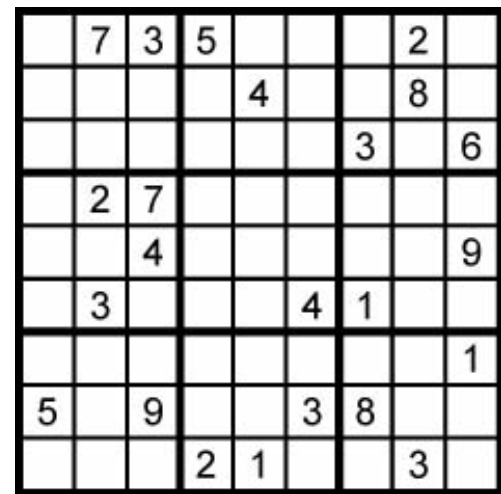
## CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Cigar
  - 4 Unconscious mind
  - 9 Wretched
  - 10 Lowest deck on a ship
  - 11 Cocoon contents
  - 12 Brisk, musically
  - 13 Sneaky
  - 18 Reddish purple
  - 20 Small three-masted vessel
  - 22 Utopian
  - 23 Popinjay's voyage? (3,4)
  - 24 Kind of enemy
  - 25 Take stock of
  - 5 Pollute
  - 6 Perfume
  - 7 Hire
  - 8 Not mentally confused
  - 14 Kind of sub
  - 15 Toxic
  - 16 Ratify
  - 17 Rifle
  - 19 Chip dip
  - 21 Shouldered
- Down**
- 1 Limber
  - 2 Playful aquatic animal
  - 3 Ignite, as an argument

## 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



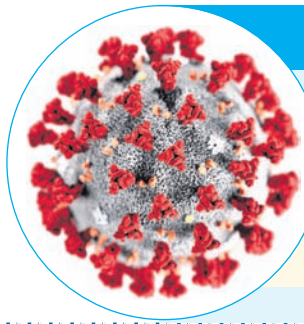
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## RAIN-SOAKED CITY

Normal life was thrown out of gear in Bhubaneswar due to inclement weather, Saturday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	26,54,13,733	23,91,73,276	52,61,978
India	3,46,24,360	3,40,53,856	4,70,530
Odisha	10,50,060	10,39,461	8,420

## NET, IIFT exams postponed in some centres over Jawad

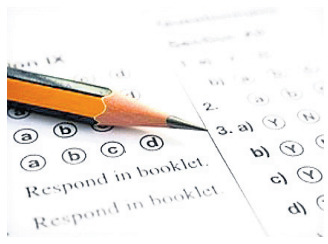
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 4:** The University Grants Commission - National Eligibility Test (UGC-NET) and an entrance exam of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) that were scheduled for Sunday has been postponed in some centres of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal due to Cyclone 'Jawad'.

The UGC-NET 2020 and June 2021 has been rescheduled for the centres in Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, and Puri, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur in Ganjam district and Gunupur in Rayagada district of Odisha, the National Testing Agency said in a notice Friday.

Entrance examination of the MBA (International Business) of the IIFT has been postponed at the centres in Kolkata and Durgapur in West Bengal; Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Sambalpur in Odisha; and Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, it said.

The date of the exam of the candidates who are admitted to the exam centres in the mentioned cities will be announced later, the NTA said. However, candidates are advised to note that the postponement is applied only to the cities mentioned and the exam will be held at all other cities of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and



other states as per schedule, it said. Candidates check the NTA website - www.Nta.Ac.In - for latest updates, information, and contact the helpdesk - 00140459000 - or email at ugc.Net@nta.Ac.In for queries, it added.

The NET is conducted on behalf of the University Grants Commission (UGC) for determining the eligibility for assistant professorship, junior research fellowship or both. The deep depression over the Bay of Bengal intensified Friday into Cyclone 'Jawad'.

The weather system is likely to reach west-central Bay of Bengal off the north Andhra Pradesh-south Odisha coasts by Saturday morning, the India Meteorological Department said.

Then, the storm is likely to recurve north-northeastwards and move along the Odisha coast, reaching near Puri around Sunday noon. Subsequently, it is likely to continue to move north-northeastwards along coastal Odisha towards West Bengal coast.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 4:** Pandemonium continued in the Assembly for the fourth consecutive day of the Winter Session as the Opposition Congress and BJP stuck to their demand for removal of Minister of State for Home Diba Shankar Mishra in connection with teacher Mamita Meher murder case.

As soon as the House assembled at 10.30am Saturday, the Opposition members trooped into the well by holding placards and shouted slogans against Mishra.

Dressed up as a Hindu priest, senior Congress legislator Tara Prasad Bahinipati sprinkled 'Ganga Jal' and 'cow urine' inside the Assembly hall in a bid to 'purify' it.

The Congress MLA has alleged that Diba Shankar Mishra, who has been accused of having links with Gobinda Sahu - the prime accused in the murder of Mamita Meher, has put his 'unholy feet' in the House and the temple of democracy has become 'desecrated'.

So in a bid to purify the House, Bahinipati, donning the attire of a priest, performed puja in the Assembly amidst ringing of bells by his party colleague. He also chanted mantras.

Speaking to the media outside the House, Bahinipati said, 'Minister Mishra put his unholy feet in the temple of democracy and desecrated it. I sprinkled Ganga Jal, cow urine and basil leaves on the floor to purify it.'

In his response, Speaker SN Patro said, "It is not a drama hall... please go to your seat." Other party colleagues also joined Bahinipati.

Opposition BJP and Congress stuck to their demand for removal of MoS Diba Shankar Mishra in connection with teacher Mamita Meher murder case

Dressed up as a Hindu priest, senior Congress legislator Tara Prasad Bahinipati sprinkled 'Ganga Jal' and 'cow urine' inside the Assembly hall in a bid to 'purify' it

The BJP members, who performed a similar act in the Assembly premises Friday, also continued to create uproar in the House along with the Congress MLAs.

Unable to conduct the Question Hour, the Speaker repeatedly requested the members to go to their seats. As the Opposition members did not respond to him, the Speaker first adjourned the House till 4pm.

When the BJP and Congress members continued their protest in the post-lunch session, the House was adjourned till Monday.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had made a statement in the House through videoconference



Opposition MLAs creating ruckus in the Assembly, Saturday. (Inset) Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati dressed up as a priest



Friday saying his government is committed to give justice to Mamita Meher.

However, it seems that the Opposition is not in a mood to relent until their demands are not fulfilled.

BJP deputy leader in the House, Bishnu Sethi said, "Chief Minister's

statement neither changed the fact that Mamita was murdered nor gave justice to the victim. The CM did not say anything on our demand regarding removal of the Minister and a CBI probe into the incident."

Targeting the Chief Minister, Congress legislature party leader Narasingha Mishra said, "It is unfortunate that the leader of the House, whose responsibility is to ensure smooth conduct of the proceedings, is yet to show his face in the Assembly."

Mishra further said, "As per tradition, the Speaker was supposed to convene a meeting with the Opposition leaders to resolve the deadlock. However, he is not doing so. Instead, the Speaker is adjourning the House repeatedly, which is against democracy."

However, BJD MLA Snehangini Chhuria refuted the allegations and said that the Opposition is doing drama even though the Chief Minister has stated that there would be free and fair investigation into the incident.

# Odisha adopted a transformational approach in governance: Naveen



Union Minister Jitendra Singh speaks at the regional conference on good governance, Saturday

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 4:** Odisha has adopted a transformational approach in its governance, keeping people at the forefront, said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here Saturday.

Speaking at the valedictory session of Regional Conference on Replication of Good Governance Practices organised at the Convention Centre in Lok Seva Bhawan, the Chief Minister underlined the significance of Mo Sarkar in good governance.

A 'Mo Sarkar' programme has been rolled out with direct random feedback from citizens who visit government institutions for various services to instill high professionalism in the governance and monitor feedback from the citizens, he said.

"The spirit behind Mo Sarkar is that in a democracy the citizens are supreme and their satisfaction of government service delivery must be taken seriously and used as a benchmark for initiating change. This has been welcomed by our people," he said.



Good governance is ultimately the greatest tool of transformation and we all have a genuine responsibility to the people, Patnaik said.

Elaborating his views on good governance, the CM further said that good governance precisely includes building competency, aligning strategies with goals, being accountable, having a high level of ethics and integrity, defining roles and responsibilities. And above all, he said, having a pro-people approach to all interventions.

Naveen further added that Odisha has initiated a number of good governance

## Centre to replicate Mo Sarkar, OSWAS and Bhubaneswar Land Use Information System, said Union Minister Jitendra Singh

practices and various e-governance projects, including Odisha One Portal and Odisha Right to Public Services Act to provide services to people within the stipulated time frame.

E-Jana Sunani has also been rolled out to cater to the grievances of citizens anytime and anywhere, he added.

Stating that this conference has played a major role in seamlessly exchanging unique ideas and best practices from across the country, he hoped that the constant picture of a digitised government envisioned will definitely get into motion with the deliberations carried out in this forum.

Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister of State for Administrative Reforms, Public Grievances & Pension Jitendra Singh said that this initiative is directed towards a natural way of improving work culture. Best practices in governance in different regions will be replicated in other regions that are suitable for a specific purpose, Singh said.

"With improvement of the system, grievance registration has improved significantly. We have to redress them to achieve maximum satisfaction among people," the minister said.

Appreciating the digital initiatives of Odisha such as OSWAS, Mo Sarkar, and Bhubaneswar Land Use Information System, the Union minister said that the Centre will collaborate with the state government for its replication in other regions.

# ED attaches properties of businessmen

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 4:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Saturday attached properties worth ₹5.67 crore of the Seashore Group of companies, one of the 44 sham firms involved in the multi-crore chit fund scam. The ED had earlier released a provisional attachment order (No. 08/2021 dated 26.11.2021) under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 in this regard.

Sources claimed that ₹5 crore from the account of Seashore Group had been transferred to the account of one Dr Dillip Amrutlal Gudhaka, a businessman from Thane in Maharashtra, while Mayuresh Dash, the managing director of Herald Overseas Pvt Ltd had received ₹1 crore from Seashore's account. Gudhaka had allegedly taken the money to buy land in Ahmadabad, claimed some sources. Dash took the above mentioned amount allegedly to buy raw materials for his company.

"During the investigation, it was revealed that a part of the proceed gen-

## PONZI TRAIL

Around ₹5 crore from the account of Seashore Group had been transferred to the account of Dillip Amrutlal Gudhaka, a businessman from Thane in Maharashtra, while Mayuresh Dash, the managing director of Herald Overseas Pvt Ltd, had received ₹1 crore from Seashore's account

erated by Seashore Group amounting to ₹6.5 crore had been transferred to bank accounts of two of its beneficiaries namely, Dr Dillip Amrutlal Gudhaka and M/s. Herald Overseas Pvt Ltd (represented by its Managing Director Mayuresh Dash). Hence, a Provisional Attachment Order No. 08/2021 dated 26.11.2021 had been issued, attaching immovable properties worth ₹5.67 crore belonging to Dr Dillip Amrutlal Gudhaka and Sri Mayuresh Dash," read the press note issued by ED.

The ED has already attached movable and immovable properties worth ₹258

Gudhaka had allegedly taken the money to buy land in Ahmadabad while Dash took the above mentioned amount to buy raw materials for his company

The ED has already attached movable and immovable properties worth ₹258 crore belonging to the Seashore Group.

Several cases have been registered against Seashore Group for allegedly duping investors of crores through various ponzi schemes. The Economic Offence Wing (EOW) of state Crime Branch submitted a charge sheet before the court of SDJM here, March 22, 2014 in a case (39/2012) registered against Seashore group by EOW.

Following the Supreme Court's direction, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had also registered another case against 44 companies, including the Seashore Group.

**Indian Bank**

**Zonal Office,**  
Indian Bank Building, B-2 (East),  
Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 751007

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE**

(see Proviso to rule 8(2) & 8(6) Sale Notice for Sale of property/ies under SARFAESI Act 2002)

Sale of Immovable Property/ies mortgaged to Bank under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (No. 54 of 2002)

Whereas, the Authorised Officer of Indian Bank had taken possession of the following property/ies pursuant to the notice issued under Sec 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 in the following loan accounts with right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS", "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WITHOUT ANY RECOURSE BASIS" for realization of Bank's dues plus interest as detailed hereunder and whereas consequent upon failure to repay the dues, the undersigned in exercise of power conferred under the said Act proposes to realize the Bank's dues by sale of the said property/ies. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the website <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp>

Sl. No.	Branch / Name & Address of the Borrowers / Guarantors / Mortgagees	Description of the Immovable / Movable Properties	Date of Demand Notice/ Date of Possession / Outstanding dues (As per 13(2) notice)	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount	Date & Time of E-Auction
1.	<b>SATSANG VIHAR BRANCH, (Ph: 0674-2541148)</b> Borrower: M/s Ashirwad, Proprietor: Sri Manoranjan Sahoo, S/o: Mr Bhikari Charan Sahoo, Guarantor/Mortgagor: Late Bhikari Charan Sahoo, represented by Igal heirs: (1) Smruti Rekha Das ( Daughter of Mortgagor), W/o: Shakti Ranjan Das, R/o: Qtr. No. N/2, Govinda Nivas, Khapuria Labour Colony, near lakshwar temple, Madhupatna, Cuttack-753010, Odisha. (2) Mr Manoranjan Sahoo, S/o: Late Bhikari Charan Sahoo, Address: GA Plot No. B-31, Omfed Road, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007, Odisha	All that piece and parcel of land and building at GA Plot No. 170, Khata No. 682, Mouza: Bhubaneswar Sahar, Unit-11, Tahasil/DSRO: Bhubaneswar, Saheed Nagar, Omfed Road, Bhubaneswar-751007, Dist: Khurda, in the name of Late Bhikari Charan Sahoo, Area: 2400 Sqft. Bounded by: East- GA Plot No. B-30, West- GA Plot No. B-32, North- Road, South- Conservancy lane	14.06.2021 / 18.10.2021 / Rs.25,53,510/- as on 31.05.2021 plus further interest @ applicable rates till the date of realization and costs, charges and expenses	Rs.2,21,17,000/- / Rs. 22,11,000/- / Rs. 10,000/-	10.01.2022 (Monday) between 11.00 AM to 01.00 PM
2.	<b>NAYAPALLI BRANCH, (Ph: 0674-6513361)</b> Borrower: M/s Atman Pipes Pvt Ltd., (1) Sri Santosh Kumar Mohanty (Director/ Guarantor), Plot No. 37/1222, Arundoy Market, Gopabandhu Lane, Cuttack- 753012, (2) Sri Mihir Kumar Mohanty (Director), Plot No. 67/1222, Arundoy Market, Gopabandhu Lane, Cuttack- 753012, (3) Smt Sharmista Priyadarshini (Director), Pratiksha Mahatab Road, Cuttack-753012, (4) Mr Sapon Kumar Mohanty, (Director), Plot No.3, Osho Dhara Residential Complex, Road No.2, Jamshedpur-831011, (5) Smt Soudamini Swain, Pratiksha Mahatab Road, Cuttack- 753012	All that part and parcel of the land in the name of Sri Santosh Kumar Mohanty situated at Khata No. 119/129, Plot No. 163/3697, Area: Ac.0.940 dec.(40946 sqft), Mouza: Fakirpada, Tahasil: Baranga, Thana No. 24, Cuttack, Bounded by: North- Plot No. 158, 160 & 162, South- Plot No. 164, East- Road, West- Plot No. 151	30.12.2019 / 12.03.2020 / Rs.2,58,09,016/- as on 27.12.2021 plus further interest @ applicable rates till the date of realization and costs, charges and expenses	Rs.3,48,00,000/- / Rs. 34,80,000/- / Rs. 25,000/-	10.01.2022 (Monday) between 11.00 AM to 01.00 PM
3.	<b>KIIT BRANCH, (Ph: 0674-2742392)</b> Borrower/Mortgagor: M/s Maa Timber, Proprietor: Mr Basanta Kumar Sahoo, Guarantor: Mrs Bishnu Priya Sahoo, W/o: Mr Basanta Kumar Sahoo, both are resident of Plot No. 2994/7945, Jharana Sahi, Badagada, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, PIN- 751018	All that part and parcel of the landed Property in the name of Mr Basanta Kumar Sahoo bearing Khata No. 255, Plot No. 874, Sub Plot : Kha, Mouza: Andio, PS/Tahasil/SRO: Baliana, Dist: Khurda, Area of Ac.0.14249 decimal out of total area of Ac.0.900 decimal, Bounded by: North- Road, South- Nikunj Bihari Dev, East- Ratnakar Sahoo, West- Sarat Kumar Sahoo	07.06.2021 / 15.09.2021 / Rs.81,84,328/- as on 02.12.2021 plus further interest @ applicable rates till the date of realization and costs, charges and expenses	Rs.87,05,000/- / Rs. 8,70,500/- / Rs. 10,000/-	10.01.2022 (Monday) between 11.00 AM to 01.00 PM
4.	<b>KIIT BRANCH, (Ph: 0674-2742392)</b> Borrower: M/s Prasad's Kitchen, Prop.: Mrs Mitanjali Behera, W/o: Mr Siba Prasad Das, Guarantor/Mortgagor: Mr Siba Prasad Das, S/o: Mr Balabhadra Behera, both are resident of SCR-14, Sector- 1, Chandralok Market Complex, Niladri Vihar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, PIN- 751021	All that part and parcel of the Property in the name of Mr Siba Prasad Das, S/o: Mr Balabhadra Behera bearing Khata No. 619, Plot No.-CP-142, Door No. 1580/94, Mouza: Bhubaneswar, Chandrasekharpur BDA Commercial Plot, New Capital Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khurda, Area: 800 Sqft. Bounded by: North- CP-40 & CP-39, South- CP-143, East- Parking, West- CP-136	03.04.2021 / 15.09.2021 / Rs.44,74,422/- as on 02.12.2021 plus further interest @ applicable rates till the date of realization and costs, charges and expenses	Rs.35,89,214/- / Rs. 3,58,921/- / Rs. 10,000/-	10.01.2022 (Monday) between 11.00 AM to 01.00 PM
5.	<b>JHARPADA BRANCH, (Ph: 0674-2570218)</b> Borrower: Mr Soumen Bhatta, S/o: Kishore Chandra Bhatta, Permanent Resident of At: Plot No. 19-SCR, Bapuji Nagar, P.S: New Capital, Bhubaneswar, Khordha-751009, Guarantor: Mr Kishore Chandra Bhatta, S/o: Jagannath Bhatta, Plot No. 19-SCR, Bapuji Nagar, P.S: New Capital, Bhubaneswar, Pin-751009	Residential Flat No. B-410, Block-B, Fourth Floor, Gatikrushna Green, Ranga Bazar, Alarpur - 752100, Total Area- 1078 sqft., Mouza - Alarpur, Plot No. 196, Khata No. 197, Tahasil/Sub Registrar: Baliana, Khordha alongwith parking in the name of Mr Soumen Bhatta, S/o: Kishore Chandra Bhatta, Bounded by: North- Open Space, South- Corridor, East- Flat No. 409, West- Stair Case	08.08.2019 / 06.11.2021 / Rs.35,72,572.08 as on 20.02.2021 plus further interest @ applicable rates till the date of realization and costs, charges and expenses	Rs.30,04,000/- / Rs. 3,00,400/- / Rs. 10,000/-	24.12.2021 (Friday) between 11.00 AM to 01.00 PM

**DATE AND TIME OF E-AUCTION:** For Property SI. No.1 to 4 is 10.01.2022 (Monday) from 11.00 AM to 1.00 PM with unlimited extension of 10 minutes duration & For Property SI. No.5 is 24.12.2021 (Friday) from 11.00 AM to 1.00 PM with unlimited extension of 10 minutes duration.

**LAST DATE AND TIME FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD AND DOCUMENTS:** For Property SI. No.1 to 4 is ON OR BEFORE 09.01.2022 upto 05.30 PM & For Property SI. No.5 is ON OR BEFORE 23.12.2021 upto 05.30 PM

**DATE & TIME OF INSPECTION OF PROPERTIES:** For Property SI. No.1 to 4 is 03.01.2022 to 07.01.2022 between 10.00 AM to 5.30 PM (with prior appointment from bank) at their expenses & For Property SI. No.5 is 13.12.2021 to 17.12.2021 between 10.00 AM to 5.30 PM (with prior appointment from bank) at their expenses

**TERMS & CONDITIONS:**  
(1) For detailed terms & conditions of the sale please refer to the link: <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> and <https://ibapi.in>. Prospective bidders may also contact the Authorised Officers / Branch No. as mentioned in above list. (2) This is also a 15/30 days notice to the borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors of the above said loan about holding of this sale on the above mentioned date. (3) On receipt of the entire sale consideration, the Authorised Officer shall issue the Sale Certificate as per rules. (4) All expenses relating the stamp duty and registration of Sale Certificate conveyance if any, shall be borne by the successful bidder. (5) The Authorised Officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrance, property tax or any other dues to the Government or anybody in respect of the property under sale. (6) The Authorised Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject any bid or adjourn/postpone/cancel the sale without assigning any reason thereof. It may be noted that nothing in this notice constitute or deemed to constitute any commitment or representation on the part of the bank to sell the property.

**STATUTORY 15/30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT), RULE 2002.**  
Borrowers/Guarantors are hereby notified to pay the total dues along with up to date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of E-Auction, failing which the property will be auctioned / sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest & cost.

Place : Bhubaneswar, Date :04.12.2021 Sd/- Authorised Officer, Indian Bank

# Centre warns Odisha, 5 others of rising Covid cases

AMONG THOSE FLAGGED, ODISHA'S DHENKANAL DISTRICT REGISTERED A SPIKE OF 667% BETWEEN NOVEMBER 26 AND DECEMBER 2

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 4: The Centre Saturday wrote to five states - Odisha, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Mizoram, and the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir - to express concern over a rapid increase in daily new Covid cases and mortality rates, and underline the danger posed by the Omicron variant.

Letters signed by Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan urged concerned state and UT officials to enhance surveillance of foreign arrivals (particularly from 'at risk' countries), monitor emerging hotspots, and ensure that all samples from Covid patients are sent for genome sequencing.

Among those flagged, J&K's Kathua district reported a staggering 727 per cent increase in new cases between November 26 and December 2, as compared to a week earlier. During the same period, Covid cases spiked by 152 per cent in Karnataka's Tumkur district. Similarly massive surges in



weekly caseloads were seen in Mizoram's Saiha (237 per cent) and Odisha's Dhenkanal (667 per cent) districts, the government noted.

The government also expressed concern over jumps in Covid-related mortality figures from Kerala. 12 deaths in Thrissur district between November 19 and November 25 jumped to 128 the next week, and 70 deaths in Malappuram district in the same period became 109 in the next.

Overall daily Covid numbers in India have been on a steady decline since the peak of the second

wave in May, when over four lakh new cases were reported in a day. This morning fewer than 9,000 were reported from the previous 24 hours, and the national active caseload remains below 1 lakh.

Declining Covid case rates have been accompanied by an increase in vaccination rates.

All of this, however, is potentially under threat by the emergence of the Omicron variant, which medical experts and virologists believe is significantly more infectious than the Delta strain. Omicron is also believed to have

## Tally crosses 10.5L mark in state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Odisha logged 193 new coronavirus cases, taking the tally to 10,50,060 Saturday, while the Covid-19 death toll mounted to 8,420 with two more fatalities, a Health department bulletin said. One patient each in Khurda and Jajpur districts succumbed to the disease, it said.

The state currently has 2,383 active Covid-19 cases, while 10,39,204 people have recovered from the disease, including 233 in the last 24 hours, the bulletin stated.

Gajapati district has no active case for the second consecutive day, and 11 out of 30 districts in the state did not report any new cases of the contagion.

Khurda district, of which the state Capital Bhubaneswar is a part, recorded the highest number of 88 new infections, followed by 14 in Jajpur and 12 in Cuttack, it said. Twenty-three children were among those affected with the disease.

As many as 59,736 samples were tested in the last 24 hours. The daily test positivity rate (TPR) stood at 0.32 per cent, the Health bulletin stated. On Wednesday, the state had logged 270 new Covid-19 cases and three fatalities.

Nearly 2.8 crore beneficiaries in the state have received the first dose of the coronavirus vaccine and around 1.63 crore people have been administered both the doses, the Health bulletin added.

greater vaccine-resistance, although the World Health Organization has stressed that existing vaccines still provide a de-

gree of protection from the virus. The government Friday urged people to ensure they are double vaccinated as soon as possible.

# State, SFI ink pact to develop swimming infra

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: The Sports and Youth Services Department (DSYS) of Odisha government Saturday signed an agreement with the Swimming Federation of India (SFI) to develop, promote and expand the swimming ecosystem in state.

Through this collaboration, Odisha will provide support and sponsor SFI and the federation in conjunction with Odisha State Swimming Association (OSSA) providing their technical expertise. The partnership will be valid for one year and is extendable to five years, under mutually agreed terms.

Odisha Sports Secretary R Vineel Krishna and SFI Secretary General Monal Chokshi signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the sidelines of the ongoing Hockey Men's Junior World Cup 2021 here at the Kalinga Stadium.

The partnership, over the next five years, will be towards the holistic development of the sport from grassroot to elite, and will include conduct of national and interna-

tional reputed swimming competitions and events along with 'train the trainers' courses in Odisha.

"Swimming is a major discipline in multi events. The sport has a lot of potential to grow and many young swimmers are showing great prospects at the national level. We are delighted to partner with SFI for the holistic development of the sport of swimming in Odisha," said Vineel Krishna.

The Federation will assist in developing all forms of aquatic sports in the state and producing elite swimmers. "This partnership will also enable us to conduct the National and International reputed Aquatic Championships in Odisha," he said.

Stating that the Biju Patnaik Swimming Pool Complex at the Kalinga Stadium is one of the finest swimming infrastructures in the country, the Sports Secretary said, "We are strengthening our grassroot swimming training centres too. Our High-Performance Partnership with JSW Sports and this association will give impetus to the sport of Swimming."

## Temp plummets

Bhubaneswar: Saturday was a chilly day in several parts of Odisha as the maximum temperature dropped by several notches due to rain, cold wind and overcast skies owing to the impact of Jawad. Mercury in Bhubaneswar nosedived to 20.8°C as compared to 26.3°C Friday. Maximum temperature in Cuttack plunged by over 5°C to 21.5°C, while it was 21.4°C in Puri, down by more than 4°C. Nayagarh saw the maximum plummet by eight notches to 21°C. The temperature went south by over six notches in Balasore to reach 21°C. Chhatrapur in Ganjam, Chambali in Bhadrak and Talcher in Angul districts had the maximum crash by 6°C as compared to the previous day.

WEATHER	
BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX 20.8°C	21.5°C
MIN 18.4°C	18.0°C
Humidity 94%	98%
Rainfall 19.6mm	4mm
Forecast Generally cloudy sky	

## Man held for duping CA of ₹2.35cr

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: The Commissionerate Police Saturday arrested one Prinjna Prakash Nayak, 42, for allegedly duping a chartered accountant from Kolkata of more than Rs 2 crore on the pretext of transferring shares of a company in his name.

Police arrested the accused on the basis of a complaint lodged by a chartered accountant, Saikat Kumar, a resident of Lake Town in Kolkata.

Kumar, who had a CA firm in Dubai in UAE, was contacted by Chandrakanta Sahu, a friend of the accused Nayak and a CA himself, requesting him for a job in his firm in March 2021. However, Kumar told Sahu that he was wary of his business in Dubai and leaving for India due to Covid.

Subsequently, Sahu introduced Kumar to Nayak telling he would help him get projects in India.

The accused, actually a civil engineer, impersonated as a chartered accountant and a relative of

top bureaucrats including the Governor of Reserve Bank of India, told Kumar that he and one Prasanna Kumar Panda held 50 per cent shares each in a partnership firm that was empanelled with Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) for implementation of faceless assessment scheme - 2020.

He convinced the complainant that he would transfer the shares held by him in his firm Pfour Associates LLP in the name of Kumar as he was busy with another scheme, Faceless Litigation Scheme - 2020.

Nayak took signatures of Kumar in legal papers, security cheques worth Rs 3.05 crore and Rs 2.05 crore separately for his service and other expenses assuring him to start the paper works from July 2021.

However, Nayak neither transferred the 50 per cent stake nor did he help him get any government projects as promised.

Finding no other way, Kumar approached Lingaraj police who arrested the accused Saturday.

## MAN AND MACHINE



Fire Services personnel in Bhubaneswar all geared up to deal with possible damage due to Jawad

OP PHOTO

## CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Meenati Nayak spouse of Anadi Charan Nayak resident of Village - Panidol, P.O.- Kanti, Dist.- Puri, Odisha have changed my name from Meenati Nayak to Minati Nayak as per the affidavit dated 03.12.2021.

## LOST

I, Shiba Kumar Agarwal, S/o. Late Shankarlal Agarwal, MD of M/s. Narayan Food Products (P) Ltd., At: Hundula, P.O.- Palaspanga, P.S.- Sadar, Dist.- Keonjhar, affirms that I lost my original R.O.R. bearing Hal Khata No. 68/41, Mouza - Hundula while travelling from Hundula to Keonjhar on 30.11.21. If anyone finds then kindly contact with nearest Police Station.

I, HariPriya Biswal, W/o. Dillip Kumar Biswal, At/P.O.- Charnal, Dist.- Sambalpur is the owner of the land bearing Plot No. 668/3490, Khata No. 351/842, Mouza - Sambalpur Town, Unit No. 1, Bhatra. That the Registered Sale Deed bearing No. 860 Dt.28.03.2006 in which the aforesaid Patta has been misplaced on 10.11.2021 in between Dhanupali to Jail Chowk. In spite of my best effort the same could not be traced out.

# Ulaka bats for ST status to Jhodia community

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Dec 4: Congress MP from Koraput Saptagiri Ulaka introduced private member's a Bill in the Lok Sabha for inclusion of the Jhodia community, a prominent tribe in Kashiapur block of Rayagada district, in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category in the state of Odisha.

The Congress MP introduced the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2019 which seeks to amend the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950.

The Bill reads that Jhodia is a

prominent tribe in Kashiapur block of Rayagada district with more than one lakh population. They previously had tribal status and were getting all government benefits till 1997 after which they had been deprived of the ST status, thereby not receiving any benefits.

"Socially and culturally, Jhodias are members of the endogamous community of Jhodia Paraja and

are very much a part of the Paraja clan. Jhodia needs to be included as a synonym of 'Paroja' which is notified as Scheduled Tribe at serial number-55 in respect of the state of Odisha in the Scheduled Tribe list of India," the bill reads.

Ulaka further stated that Jhodias fulfil all the criteria proposed by the Lukur Committee (1965). They resemble the proposed tribal com-

munities from the view point of lifestyle, traditional culture, primitive traits, geographical isolation, educational and economic backwardness.

"Non-inclusion of their name in the ST list is depriving them of the benefits provided by the government. Though the Odisha government has written to the Government of India to include Jhodia as a synonym of Paroja, it is a fact that their revenue staff made clerical mistakes by writing on their Record of Right (RoR) as Jhodia instead of Jhodia-Paroja during land settlement," the Bill reads.



ODISHA IN PARLIAMENT

# ODISHA'S TRYST WITH 10 CYCLONES IN TWO DECADES

MEMORIES OF THE 1999 SUPER CYCLONE ARE STILL FRESH, WIND SPEED OF WHICH COULD NOT BE PROPERLY ASCERTAINED AS THE VELOCITY CROSSED THE CAPACITY OF THE ANEMOMETER AVAILABLE THEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Odisha has encountered 10 cyclones, including the approaching Jawad, in a span of 22 years and the frequency of such natural disasters is on only on the rise, official records of State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) showed.

Memories of the 1999 super cyclone is still fresh, wind speed of which could not be properly ascertained at the meteorological centre, Bhubaneswar, as the velocity crossed the capacity of the anemometer available then.

After the 1999 disaster, which left over 10,000 people dead, the state had experienced another major calamity in cyclone Phailin. It made landfall near Gopalpur in Ganjam district October 12, 2013, becoming the second strongest

tropical cyclone in India since the 1999 one. It had hit Odisha at a wind speed of 140 mph.

Twenty-three people were killed in the cyclonic storm after the Naveen Patnaik government set a "Zero Casualty" mission with precautionary measures in place, the records stated. Phailin was followed by cyclone Hudhud in 2014 that struck the Visakhapatnam city of Andhra Pradesh October 12, 2014.

Odisha, too, was affected by Hudhud. More than 60 people lost their lives in Andhra Pradesh, while the casualty count in the state was two.

Subsequently, cyclone Titli in 2018 had left authorities in shock, as the weather system had unexpectedly changed its course and entered Gajapati district, where no major preparations were made



Fishing boats brought ashore in Puri ahead of the cyclonic storm

OP PHOTO

to deal with the calamity. Seventy-seven people were killed in Odisha due to heavy rainfall and landslide that accompanied the cyclone.

In the year that followed, two

cyclones - Fani and Bulbul - hit the country's eastern coast, causing extensive damage in Odisha and West Bengal. Fani had reached its peak intensity a day before its land-

## NEWS SNIPPETS

### Drug trafficker from Rajasthan nabbed

Bhubaneswar: A team of Special Task Force (STF) of state Crime Branch, with the help of the Commissionerate Police of Jodhpur, has arrested an absconding drug peddler from Jodhpur area of Rajasthan. The accused, who was on the run, was identified as Sk Azbahar, a resident of Rajpur under Jaleswar police limits of Balasore district. The name of Azbahar came to fore when the STF sleuths were investigating into the case (30/2021) registered at the STF police station here. The sleuths had arrested three persons along with brown sugar weighing around 2.4 kg worth over Rs 2 crore during a raid at Jaleswar August 14, 2021.

### Half-burnt body found from riverbank

Cuttack: The half-burnt body of an unidentified man was recovered from Kathajodi riverbank near Ganesh ghat here Saturday. Purigat Police launched an investigation to identify the deceased and ascertain the cause behind his death. A scientific team and a sniffer dog were pressed into service to find clues. "Circumstantial evidence suggests that it is a murder case. A cycle has been found near the spot. We are suspecting that the body was of Birendra Pal of Telenga Bazar. Pal went missing from his house last night. He had been booked in 10 cases at different police stations. We will conduct a DNA test to ascertain the identity of the deceased person," said Purigat police in-charge Jatindra Sethi.

## FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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SHORT TAKES

**Naveen to visit Hinjili Dec 12**

**Shergad:** After a long gap, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will visit his constituency December 12. He would inaugurate 84 projects worth ₹14.61 crore. Patnaik will attend two programmes at Taratarini and Biju Patnaik Chhak that day. The CM will tour parts of his constituency. At Shergad, he will distribute ration cards to 29,760 families. Besides, he will unveil 84 newly-built projects including 13 related to energy department and a mega drinking water project in Shergad. "The drinking water project has been built at a cost of ₹3.10 lakh," said BDO Shambhunath Nandi. The visit of the Chief Minister after a long gap has brought cheers among the people.

**Female jumbo dead in Sonepur**



**Sonepur:** A female elephant was found dead on a farmland at Baslat village in Subarnapur district, Saturday. However, the reason behind its death is yet to be ascertained. The matter came to the fore after locals noticed the carcass and informed Subarnapur forest officials. On being informed, Subarnapur forest officials reached the spot and seized the carcass. An examination revealed the age of the animal within 35. Later, the forest officials conducted a post-mortem and buried the carcass in the area. Locals claimed that the animal might be part of a 33-member herd which had unleashed a reign of terror in the area by destroying crops and properties. The herd had also trampled a farmer to death at Bhalupali village November 29. The herd later strayed into the villages of Subarnapur district and the Baslat area Friday.

**Nayagarh ACSO under Vig lens**

**Nayagarh:** Separate teams of Vigilance sleuths carried out simultaneous raids Saturday morning on five places associated with an Assistant Civil Supplies Officer (ACSO) in Nayagarh district, who has been identified as Jayant Kumar Dash. Vigilance raids were conducted as Dash allegedly amassed assets disproportionate to his known sources of income, an official said. During the search operation, cash amounting to ₹2.74 lakh, a four-wheeler and three two-wheelers were seized by the sleuths. The total value of Dash's movable and immovable properties has not been ascertained yet. Several important documents were seized from his residence.

**Jawad impact: 73 pregnant women shifted to hospitals**



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, Dec 4:** The district administration has started rescuing operations in coastal pockets in Kendrapara amid sporadic drizzles and gusty winds. The district received 12.56 mm rainfall till 8 am Saturday. High waves continued to lash the coast. The administration has shifted 173 people to safe places while 73 pregnant women were admitted to different health centres.

Sudarshan Rout of Rajnagar said high waves have been lashing the coast since Friday while people have been living amid fears at Satabhaya, Talachua, Rangani, Talachua, Gupti, Kharinasi, Kansara Badandua and Suniti areas. Pratap Jena, a farmer of Mahakalpara expressed concern over loss of paddy and vegetables in the area. If the rains continue for a few days, soaked paddy in farmland will germinate, he added.

If the impact of the cyclone becomes intense, more people will be shifted to safety. The drizzles have affected paddy, vegetables and other crops in the district. In Derabishi, 85 people have been shifted; four in Garadpur; 30 in Marshaghai and 64 in Rajkanika.

Rescue operations in Rajnagar and Mahakalpara were on while officials of various lines departments have been on alert, said the district emergency officer.



With mercury dipping in the state, people checking on blankets from a roadside vendor at Phulbani in Kandhamal district

OP PHOTO

**MAHANGA DOUBLE MURDER**

**Show-cause to Mahanga IIC**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Nischantakoili/Salipur, Dec 4:** A local court at Salipur in Cuttack district issued a show-cause notice to the inspector-in-charge (IIC) of Mahanga police station while rejecting the time petition submitted by the police station in the sensational Mahanga double murder case, Saturday.

The court of judicial magistrate first class (JMFC) asked the IIC, Nihar Mohanty, to explain by 10.30 am of December 10 as to why coercive and punitive action will not be taken against him as per CrPC for failing to appear in person before the court and repeatedly buying time for filing the reinvestigation report and the call detail records (CDR) of the prime accused and deceased Prafulla Biswal and two associates of Minister Pratap Jena.

Umakant Biswal alias Bapi, PA of Jena and Sarat Chandra Nayak, chairperson of Mahanga block, are the two associates of the minister.

In its nine-page order, the court rejected a time petition filed by the police officer and issued the show-cause notice under Section 171 of Indian Evidence Act and 311 of CrPC.

The court expected the IIC to furnish the reinvestigation report



A file photo of Kulamani Baral (L) and his associate Dibyasingha Baral

and up-to-date CDR by December 10 apart from submitting a reply to the show-cause notice failing which the court warned of taking stringent action against him.

The IIC instead of appearing in person Saturday made a submission through the government pleader seeking an additional three weeks.

He also submitted in writing that he would file the CDR in court when he will be granted permission by his higher authorities. The court expressed displeasure over the submission and issued the above order.

BJP leader of Nrutang panchayat and former block chairperson Kulamani Baral and his associate Dibyasingha Baral were brutally murdered January 2 this year.

The JMFC court had ordered a

fresh probe into the brutal double murder after Ramakanta Baral, the son of the slain BJP leader filed a petition in the court challenging dropping of the name of Minister Pratap Jena from the chargesheet whose name had figured as accused no-13

The Salipur JMFC court November 20 had directed the police to submit the probe status report and CDR of deceased Prafulla Biswal, the prime accused in the case and two associates of Minister Pratap Jena - Sarat and Umakant by November 25. The court had given four days time to Mahanga police till November 29 after it failed to file the reinvestigation report. The Mahanga police, however, sought one more month to file reports, November 29.

**Two get life term in sodomy-murder case**

AGENCIES

**Phulbani, Dec 4:** A court here has sentenced two men to life imprisonment for sodomising and killing a nine-year-old boy in Kandhamal district five years ago, a sensational murder case that had sent shockwaves across the state.

Special POC SO Judge Bhaskar Chandra Sahu Friday also imposed a fine of ₹1.65 lakh each on the convicts, aged 21 and 20. March 14, 2016, the duo took the minor, who was a friend, to a secluded place under the Phulbani Sadar police station area and had unnatural sex with him.

As the boy warned them that he would reveal it to others, they strangled him with a towel. The body was then buried in the river bed of a nearby hilly stream and his clothes were also burnt, sources said.



As many as 15 witnesses were examined in the case, sources said. The court directed that the total fine amount of ₹3.3 lakh will be paid to the victim's family, according to the public prosecutor.

**Jawan kills self with service gun**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kalimela:** An OSAP jawan has shot himself dead with his service revolver at Poteru under Kalimela block in Malkangiri district, in the wee hours of Saturday. The deceased was identified as Duryodhan Majhi, deployed as SSBN sipahi at Poteru. He was a native of Gaisilet block in Bargarh. The reason be-

hind the OSAP jawan taking such an extreme step has not been ascertained. Following a directive from Malkangiri SP, a police team started an investigation. Duryodhan was staying inside the OSAP camp while his family lives near an outpost in the area. According to police, he picked up his service gun and shot himself in the chest. His body was sent for post mortem.

**NOTICE FOR LOSS OF DOCUMENTS**

Notice is hereby given on behalf of my Client, Sri Sujeet Kumar Das, Suryoday Bank at Bhubaneswar for advancing housing loan on the property at Plot No. 1432/2179/2205, Area - Ac.0.100 decimals, Khata No. 512/1003 at Mouza - Rampei, Tahasil - Athagarh, Dist.- Cuttack.

But it was found that, the owner of the Plot has lost the original link deed bearing No. 1124 on Dt.16.10.1995 & for which has filed FIR on SDE No. 15, Dt.02.12.2021 before P.S.- Khuntuni. Therefore notice is hereby given to General Public that if anybody has got any right, title interest over the property on the missing documents, they have to claim before the Suryoday Bank within 15 days from the date of publication. And after that the documents will lose its legal force & LICHL will not be responsible for any claim. What-so-ever on the property after 15 days.

**Address for Communication:**  
N.C. Patnaik, Panel Advocate  
Address: Suryoday Small Finance Bank Ltd.,  
350, Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar  
Mob.: 9853311189

**Dengue cases 300 in Ganjam**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, Dec 4:** Despite preventive measures, dengue cases refuse to come down in Ganjam. Four more dengue cases were detected in the district, taking the tally to 300. A special ward has been opened at MKCG Medical College and Hospital here for treatment of dengue patients. According

to health department, of the dengue cases, 62 are migrants. District malaria control officer Dr Santosh Kumar Padhi said people are being sensitised on preventive measures like clean surroundings. With rains now playing havoc due to cyclone Jawad, streets and drains in the city have been waterlogged, giving rise to fears on further spread of the disease.

**Admin builds libraries to boost reading habit among people**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sundargarh, Dec 4:** Books are a great source of information and knowledge. However, in this digital age, book reading habit has been impacted across generations. However, the district administration has developed a library with modern amenities to arouse reading interest among students, youth and common people.

Collector Nikhil Pavan Kalyan inaugurated the sub-divisional library established under 'Sundargarh Bahi Padha', a public library initiative. Books for children, school students, youths, biographies, literature, science and other age groups are available here.

The facility will have books and periodicals to help educated youth prepare for competitive exams. The library will remain open six days a week from 9 am to 12 noon and from 4pm to 7pm.

"The Bonai public library will benefit book lovers as it is equipped with a reading room and a separate room for children. We are focusing on building library and reading room facilities at different places across the district to connect students and common masses with information and knowledge through books," said Collector Nikhil Pavan Kalyan while inaugurating the library.

There are different library set ups across the district. A modern library and reading room has been established in Zilla Sanskruti Bhawan. With books on diverse subjects, the library will be



upgraded to e-library soon to fulfil the needs of students, researchers and youth.

The e-library will be linked with the State Library at Bhubaneswar so that readers at Sundargarh will get access to various books and information available at the State Library. The library at Zilla Sanskruti Bhawan remains open from 10am to 1.30 pm and 2.30pm to 5pm. The library is closed for the public, Mondays. Similarly, there is another library in Sundargarh under the District Information and Public Relations Department. Books of diverse interests catering to different age groups have been kept in the library for the benefit of a cross section of people. This library remains open from Monday to Saturday, 8am to 10.30am and 5pm to 8pm.

To attract students, educated youngsters and locals of rural areas, 'Grameen Pathagara' or rural libraries are being set up at block levels in Sundargarh. Two such libraries are operational at Kamlanga in Hemgir block and

Lephrupara block headquarters. Reading rooms, drinking water and clean toilet facilities are provided at every facility which will comfort the readers and visitors in Sundargarh district.

Under 'Sundargarh Bahi Padha' scheme, the 'Bahi Bagicha' or Book Garden has been established at the Collector's residence to ignite a love for books among children, youth and others. Every Sunday there used to be a variety of creative activities for children, including reading books. But the programme has remained shut due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Under the 5T Initiative of the state government, high schools are being transformed with facilities of digital blackboards, modern libraries, e-libraries, computer labs, clean toilets and playgrounds. In the first phase, students at 67 renewed high schools are availing e-library and ICT lab facilities. The district mineral foundation (DMF) has provided financial aid.

**Central Bank of India**  
(A Government of India Undertaking)  
Regional Office : Bhubaneswar, Plot No.: 108-B, Surya Nagar, Gopabandhu Chowk, Bhubaneswar, PIN-751003, Phone No.: 0674-2397551/2397199, E-mail: recoverybhubro@centralbank.co.in

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSETS UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 READ WITH PROVISIO TO RULE 8 (6) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002.**

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive / symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Central Bank of India- Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on the date and time specified here in below, for recovery of due to the Central Bank of India- Secured Creditor from the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s). The reserve price and the earnest money deposit of the respective properties is mentioned here in below:-

Sl. No.	Name of the Branch & Name & Address of the Borrowers	Name & Address of the Guarantors/ Mortgagees	Description of Properties	Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice / Possession Notice Date	Reserve Price EMD Bid Increase Amount
1.	ALGUM BRANCH / Borrower: M/s. Binayak Store, Prop: Mr. Kishor Kumar Nayak, At: Damodarpur Bazar, P.O.: Birapratappur, P.S.: Chandanpur, Dist.: Puri, PIN - 752012	1) Mr. Bijay Kumar Nayak, S/o.: Late Anand Nayak, 2) Mrs. Kalyani Nayak, W/o.: Mr. Bijay Kumar Nayak, Both are At: Damodarpur Bazar, P.O.: Birapratappur, P.S.: Chandanpur, Dist.: Puri, PIN-752012	All that part & parcel of the property consisting of Khata No.: 415, Plot No.: 1203, Area: Ac. 0.040 Dec., Plot No.: 1204, Area: Ac.0.060 Dec. & Plot No.: 1210, Area: Ac.0.010 Dec., Total Area: Ac.0.110 Dec., Mouza: Birapratappur, Tahasil: Puri, P.S.: Chandanpur, Dist.: Puri, in the name of Mr. Bijay Kumar Nayak, Bounded by North: East: Sadasiba Nayak, West: Narasingha Nayak, North: Road, South: Govt Land & NH-203 (Symbolic Possession)	₹ 4,73,440/- + interest & expenses thereon / 26.03.2019 / 14.06.2019	₹42,52,500/- ₹4,25,250/- ₹20,000/-
2.	KHANDAGIRI BRANCH / Borrower: M/s. Swati Boutique, Prop: Mr. Ranjan Kumar Rout, At: Plot No.: 2299, B h o t a p a d a, M a n c h e s w a r, Bhubaneswar	Mrs. Swagatika Rout, W/o.: Mr. Ranjan Kumar Rout, At: Plot No.: 2299, Bhotapada, M a n c h e s w a r, Bhubaneswar Ac.0.055 Dec., Mouza: Nijagarh Kuruki, Tahasil: Pipili, P.S.: Pipili, P.S. No.: 4, Dist.: Puri, in the name of Mrs. Swagatika Rout, Bounded by East: Vendor, Plot No.: 92, West: Vendor, Road left by the Vendor, North: Vendor, Sub Plot No.: 6, South: Road left by the vendor, Plot No.: 92 & 93 (Symbolic Possession)	All that part & parcel of the property consisting of Khata No.: 240/417, Plot No.: 84/1084, Area: Ac.0.028 Dec. & Khata No.: 240/424, Plot No.: 73/1091, Area: Ac. 0.027 Dec., Total Area: Ac.0.055 Dec., Mouza: Nijagarh Kuruki, Tahasil: Pipili, P.S.: Pipili, P.S. No.: 4, Dist.: Puri, in the name of Mrs. Swagatika Rout, Bounded by East: Vendor, Plot No.: 92, West: Vendor, Road left by the Vendor, North: Vendor, Sub Plot No.: 6, South: Road left by the vendor, Plot No.: 92 & 93 (Symbolic Possession)	₹ 35,86,682/- + interest & expenses thereon / 01.07.2021 / 23.09.2021	₹18,54,000/- ₹1,85,400/- ₹20,000/-

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:**

- Date & Time of E-Auction For Sl. No. 1 & 2 : 05.01.2022 from 12.00 Noon to 3.00 P.M.
- Last Date & Time of Submission of EMD and Documents For Sl. No. 1 & 2 : on or before 04.01.2022 till 4.00 P.M.
- For Participating in the E-auction sale, the intending bidders should register their details with the service provider <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> well in advance and shall get user ID & password. Intending bidders advised to change only the password. For detailed terms & conditions of the sale please refer to the link provided in <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> and Secured Creditor's website i.e. [www.centralbankofindia.co.in](http://www.centralbankofindia.co.in). The interested bidders who require assistance in creating Login ID & Password, uploading data, submitting bid, training on e-bidding process etc. may contact to [www.mstcecommerce.com](http://www.mstcecommerce.com) or their Central helpdesk Number 033-22901004.
- Bidder will register on website <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> and upload KYC documents and after verification of KYC documents by the service provider, EMD to be deposited in Global EMD wallet through NEFT/transfer(after generation for Challan from <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp>.)
- For any property related query, bidders may contact: Mr. Abhimanyu Prusty, Mob. No.: 7381002824 for Algum Branch, email id: [bmbhub2824@centralbank.co.in](mailto:bmbhub2824@centralbank.co.in) and Ms. Priyanka, Mob. No.: 7381003529 for Khandagiri Branch, email id: [bmbhub3529@centralbank.co.in](mailto:bmbhub3529@centralbank.co.in) at any working day during office hours up to 31.12.2021. For any other query, the Authorised Officer, Mr. M.K. Tripathy may be contacted by Mobile No.: 7908397602.
- Property under sale is also loanable and loan may also be obtained from our bank subject to fulfillment of rules.
- If Bank/Authorized officer fails to handover the physical possession of the sold secured assets to the purchaser, within 6 months from the date of auction, the amount deposited by the auction purchaser shall be refunded to the purchaser if request is made by him/her to the Authorised officer of Bank.
- The purchaser shall bear the applicable stamp duties/additional stamp duties/transfer charges, fees etc and also all statutory/non-statutory dues, taxes, TDS, rates, fees etc owing to anybody.
- Other terms and conditions are available in the auction site.

**STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002**  
Place : Bhubaneswar, Date: 04.12.2021  
Authorised Officer, Central Bank of India

FOCUS PANDEMIC RESPONSE

# BUCKLING UP FOR OMICRON



Although widespread vaccination against COVID-19 remains the top priority, the emergence of the Omicron variant indicates that additional lines of defence are needed. The most promising complement by far lies in new-generation monoclonal antibody treatments

need to be tailored to counter the particular strains circulating at any given moment. But the benefit remains: a single dose could protect people for up to eight months with no additional pills and no additional doses required. Consider what this intervention could mean for all the people in congregate living settings or at higher risk of severe disease. If you are older, morbidly obese, immunocompromised, or unable to mount an immune response after vaccination, new data show that you are much more likely than your healthier, vaccinated counterparts to have not only a breakthrough infection but also a more severe illness. This single injection could still save you.

Moreover, we already have a very good understanding of the potential adverse effects of monoclonal antibody treatments. All are manageable, which is more than can be said of the antiviral pill molnupiravir, which is currently before the FDA for emergency-use approval. Its potential side effects, heatedly discussed among the FDA experts who issued a very narrow approval, include potential birth

defects and the possible mutagenesis of the virus itself, essentially supercharging the virus' ability to create highly mutated variants. The side effects of other pills awaiting further study are still unknown.

The challenge with applying the belt-and-suspenders approach in the past has been the cost of production and the burden of delivery of first-generation monoclonal antibodies. Initially, the therapies could be administered only intravenously, in a clinical setting, over a period of hours. To be effective, the dose needed to be delivered shortly after symptoms appeared and before severe illness set in. Between the high costs and the extra administrative demand placed on overburdened health-care systems, this treatment option simply could not have been applied broadly as a preventive tool. Instead, it was limited to the select few who could both afford and access the required facilities.

But now there is a new generation of antibody treatments that can be administered by injection in a nonclinical setting, at a cost of roughly \$400 per gram (according to my conversations with

Indian manufacturers of monoclonal antibodies). At that price, a single dose should cost no more than \$500 (while still allowing room for profit). Admittedly, \$500 is a relatively steep price if the treatment is used broadly as a means of prevention. Nonetheless, it is far lower than the thousands of dollars a single IV infusion costs, and it pales in comparison to the cost of caring for a person hospitalised with COVID-19. Either way, these treatments offer a compelling return on investment.

What we need now is the same kind of rapid mobilisation that delivered safe and highly effective COVID-19 vaccines in record time. That feat was made possible by a coordinated effort between government, global pharmaceutical manufacturers, and health-care payers to streamline the supply chain, improve the speed of delivery, and ensure affordability and accessibility for all those potentially in need.

COVID-19 testing also should be made more accessible, especially in congregate living settings, but also for individuals in general. Antibody testing for those at high risk should become commonplace.

Omicron's emergence demonstrates that SARS-CoV-2 still has many tricks up its sleeve, the likes of which we may not even be able to imagine. Early tests suggest that monoclonal antibodies are holding up against the new variant. This is promising news, as is the news that the White House will create monoclonal antibody strike teams to administer the life-saving treatment. While sartorial observers counsel against wearing a belt and suspenders together, public health calls for precisely such an approach.

The writer, a scientist, biotech entrepreneur, and infectious disease expert, is Chair and President of the global health think tank ACCESS Health International.

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As yet another new SARS-CoV-2 variant emerges and begins to spread – one with a worryingly large set of mutations that may make the virus more capable of evading our immune defenses – we are all being forced to reassess the strategies we have come to rely on for protection.

In many countries, like the United States, vaccines have been viewed as the primary ring of protection, allowing Americans to live in relative security from the virus. But the more we learn about the virus' ability to dodge and elude the early lines of immune-system defense, the more obvious the need for additional measures becomes.

Instead of relying on a single layer of protection, we should adopt a 'belt-and-suspenders' approach. Vaccines remain the primary ring of support – the belt keeping our protective pants on straight. But we would do well to add a set of suspenders for additional support, just in case the belt breaks under mounting pressure from the virus. Based on what we know, our best bet lies with the wider use of monoclonal antibodies for early treatment of COVID-19 and for long-term prevention and protection from the disease.

To see the importance of this approach, imagine a long-term care home in which one resident tests positive for COVID-19, or a ship or submarine at sea, where there would be no possibility of relief from continual and intense exposure in the event of an outbreak. If the people in these congregate settings were immediately administered a single dose of monoclonal antibody treatment, the odds of an infection in that group leading to severe disease would be reduced by up to 70%. And beyond protection from disease, the single dose would also have a powerful preventive effect for future infection, providing ongoing protection for up to eight months (depending on the therapy used).

As is the case for most antiviral drugs, monoclonal antibodies will



William A. Haseltine

OMICRON'S EMERGENCE DEMONSTRATES THAT SARS-COV-2 STILL HAS MANY TRICKS UP ITS SLEEVE, THE LIKES OF WHICH WE MAY NOT EVEN BE ABLE TO IMAGINE



Aakar Patel

Perhaps the BJP will win the UP elections but that will be a political win and will leave the problems on the ground from the economy to national security to disaffected farmers and minorities intact

## Unsolved Problems

This month marks the beginning of the time two years ago when the government lost its way. The Modi government had fixed the three things it had been campaigning for strongly for decades. The law criminalising triple talaq came August 1, 2019. The Supreme Court had already declared triple talaq invalid so there was no reason for the government to criminalise it but this was done anyway. Four days later August 5, Kashmir lost whatever autonomy it allegedly had and Article 370 was 'deoperationalised'. Earlier in the year, the Balakot strikes had apparently sorted out India's national security problems. November 9, the Supreme Court decided the Babri Masjid issue which had been pending for three decades in favour of the Hindu groups. December 11, after Amit Shah assured the Parliament the day before that a nationwide National Register of Citizens (NRC) was on its way, the government passed the Citizenship Amendment Act.

Four days later December 15, 2019 the Shaheen Bagh protest began, sparking a nationwide movement against the discriminatory law. After this the government has not been able to enforce its agenda and it is striking to see what has happened in the two years since compared to the months before Shaheen Bagh.

Assemblies across India passed resolutions against the NRC. The last of these was Bihar February 20, 2020, where the BJP legislators joined a unanimous resolution against what Shah had promised was coming in Parliament. The Shaheen Bagh protest wrapped up the next month but victory had been already achieved. The Delhi pogrom and the fury of figures like Anurag Thakur and Kapil Mishra showed how deeply affected the government was by the setback. In March began the pandemic and the lockdown flattened the Indian economy. Per capita GDP went behind Bangladesh, the fiscal deficit was blown and a stressed government passed on the costs of governance to all Indians through extortionate taxes on petrol and diesel. The effects of the lockdown were felt for the full 12 months of financial year 2020-2021 and we are still to recover from it.

Twenty-three crore Indians fell into poverty during the pandemic and the unemployment rate which had already reached a post-1947 high of 6% by 2018 remains there.

In June 2020, the farm ordinances were passed during the pandemic. In September, the Bills were passed in the Parliament without a division vote. The farmers arrived at the outskirts of Delhi at the end of November and remain there even today. The government of course has rolled back the three laws but now faces trouble on the issue of a guarantee on the Minimum Support Price. It is also apparently worried over the fall-out of the agitation on its constituency especially among the farmers in western Uttar Pradesh, a state going to the polls in a few months.

In January 2021, the Biden administration was sworn in, after the defeat of Modi's friend Trump in the presidential elections (other friends like Japan's Abe have also departed). A few days after that India lifted the 17-month internet blockade on Kashmiris fearing pressure from Biden's democracy.

In May 2020, India was told the Chinese were aggressively moving into Ladakh. June 15, last year, the two sides clashed with clubs and stones and 20 Indians lost their lives. The situation remains tense along the border and the government suddenly made peace with Pakistan on the Line of Control and shifted tens of thousands of troops over to the China side. The problem of national security, assumed to have been solved after Balakot, was apparently not really solved at all. India's naval alliance with the United States and two other nations (the so called Quad) was demoted this year when the US announced a proper military naval alliance with UK and Australia in the region.

The issue of Kashmir also has not proven to be 'solved'. The state today has no democracy and is the only Indian state/Union territory without an elected government. Violence has not come down as we can see from events daily and from the data. The population has become even more hostile. In effect an army that was tasked with two things: managing a hostile border with Pakistan and counter-insurgency in Kashmir is now tasked with three major things, the third being China.

It is not easy to see how the government and the Prime Minister will come out of this period of slump easily. The economy is said to grow at over 8% this year but that merely brings total GDP back to where it was before the pandemic, when it had already slowed to a crawl.

Perhaps the BJP will win the UP elections but that will be a political win and will leave the problems on the ground from the economy to national security to disaffected farmers and minorities intact.

### WISDOM CORNER

- There are two ways to live: you can live as if nothing is a miracle; you can live as if everything is a miracle. ALBERT EINSTEIN
- Whenever you do a thing, act as if all the world were watching. THOMAS JEFFERSON
- They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

### WORDSWORTH

#### Pridian

You're extremely unlikely to encounter this old adjective relating to yesterday, it being one of the rarest in the language. The Oxford English Dictionary has only two examples, one from a glossary of 1656, and my electronic searches have failed to find any more beyond the OED's other citation, which is from William Makepeace Thackeray's A Shabby Genteel Story of 1840: "Thrice a-week, at least, does Gann breakfast in bed – sure sign of pridian intoxication". It has the most respectable antecedents – it's from Latin pri-, before, plus dies, day, and so belongs with diary, diurnal, journal, and journey, all of which can likewise be traced back to dies. However, like an ineffectual political candidate, it was unable to muster enough support to be elected a permanent member of the English lexicon, and we must now consider it to be one of yesterday's words.

#### Prion

Nobel Prize has been awarded to Professor Stanley Prusiner for his work in finding the origin of certain kinds of disease in animals and humans. The diseases include scrapie in sheep, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease) and Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease (CJD) in humans, all of which cause degeneration of the nervous system, leading to loss of coordination, dementia and death. They have in the past been called slow viruses because it has been assumed they are caused by a virus too small to detect, and because years pass after infection before visible effects appear, but no virus has ever been found. His theory, developed over the past 15 years, is that the infectious agent is not a virus but a protein, which can force other proteins in the infected body to change shape and so cause disease to develop. He called such infectious proteins prions, an invented word which is a contraction of the full descriptive name proteinaceous infectious particle. The theory, unusually for one gaining a Nobel Prize, is still controversial, with its truth yet to be finally demonstrated experimentally.

### SPECTRUM WARNING SYSTEMS

## Met forecasts from societal perspective



Biswanath Dash

IT IS TIME WARNING SERVICES LOOKED BEYOND THEIR DISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE TO INVOLVE OTHER AGENCIES IN A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO BECOME MORE USEFUL

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has gained global recognition in recent past for its reliable and advance warning for tropical cyclones in the north Indian Ocean. Take for example, some of the extremely severe or very severe cyclonic storms in the last decade such as Phailin, Hudhud, Titi or Fani. In each case, the meteorological agency provided forewarning much in advance and with near pinpoint accuracy over the landfall location and time. However, these successes should not become the ground to avoid an objective evaluation of its performance. The cyclone 'Jawad' which is still lurking near Odisha coast is a case in point to examine the efficacy of meteorological forecasts from a societal perspective.

The cyclonic storm which developed in the south Andaman Sea before entering into Bay of Bengal was closely monitored by IMD even before it became a low pressure system. It was forecast as early as November 27 that it is likely to intensify to become a low pressure system November 29 and a cyclone by December 3. It was tracked and relevant information was disseminated periodically through mass media and social media. December 2, the forecast was that the cyclone is likely to cross the coast in the early hours of December 4 over north

of Andhra Pradesh or south of Odisha with the former more likely between the two. Thus the districts of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam in AP were preparing themselves as also the districts of Ganjam, Gajapati, Puri in Odisha which were issued red warning by IMD for heavy to very heavy rainfall. The specific advisory from IMD that farmers should harvest ripen crops and similar advisories from the state authorities led to premature harvesting in many coastal areas of Odisha. There were also reports of distress selling of farm produce as a result of large scale harvesting and there is no formal government mechanism to deal with such large farm produce in such an emergency situation.

By the noon of December 3, IMD confirmed that the system has become a cyclonic storm but it was revising its forecast. The revised prediction was in terms of landfall location, time and intensity attributed to a curving of the cyclone's path. The cyclonic storm, it was declared, is likely to make landfall in and around Puri December 5 around noon time with the maximum wind speed of 100 km per hour to be observed December 4 and thus categorising it under severe cyclone category. However, it was still not clear from the revised forecasts how will the system move

post landfall? For example, there was persisting confusion whether it will travel north-northeasterly parallel to the coast or cross over to the hinterland. In any case, a strike from a 'severe cyclone scale' storm was good enough reason for the state government to press emergency measures including evacuation of people to safe shelters, declaration of holidays for schools in 19 districts, and cancellation of leave for government employees.

The forecast for 'Jawad' was revised once again by the morning of December 4. IMD retained the location and time of landfall to be December 5 but forecast it to weaken considerably prior to its landfall and become a deep depression. Post-landfall it was expected to move along the coast towards West Bengal. Importantly the revised national warning bulletin of December 4 did not recommend harvesting of crops or securing them as was the recommendation in the bulletin of December 3. There was no specific forecast for tidal surge or inundation though sea condition was expected to be rough to very rough. One hopes the latest forecast holds given the difficulty involved in predicting a recurring track of a cyclonic system and in any case, this particular case of 'Jawad' does not stand out well on skills and accuracy in basic parameters such as

landfall location and time.

The downgrading of the cyclone's intensity to a deep depression is certainly a matter of relief. However, there will be those farmers who have reasons to be unhappy with the meteorological forecast service. A decision of premature harvest was largely based on an anticipated cyclonic intensity with the potential to damage standing crops altogether. In case the system continues to weaken further and is rather limited in its overall impact, then who will be responsible for the material losses of farming families? In a state like Odisha, where farmers are mostly on subsistence agriculture, a harvest decision carries enormous implication for their families and hence meteorological advisory and warning service need to take cognisance of such aspects, and factor them within the advisory framework. As is the practice, there is no provision of any government assistance for such losses. It is time warning services looked beyond their disciplinary perspective to involve other agencies in a multi-dimensional approach to become more useful.

The writer is Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Science, BITS Pilani, Hyderabad Campus. Views are personal.

### Harmless humour

Sir, The quintessential nature of our society to ban elements that offend us persists with the cancellation of standup comedian Kunal Kamra's show in Bangalore after Munawar Faruqui's show was cancelled last week. Although this time the Bangalore police has not ordered the show organisers to cancel the show citing law and order issues unlike the last time, such a 'cancel culture' as a means of retaliatory response to the views and opinions that oppose us speaks about the trending rise of intolerance in the country. The right wing outfits which are seen to be spearheading this trend need to revisit their principal leader's (Prime Minister Narendra Modi's) tweet in 2017 which said: "We surely need more humour in public life." The non-BJP states which frequently slam the authoritative policies of the BJP need to take a firm stand in support of the banned artistes and welcome them to perform in their states to reinstate the lost faith in civil society.

Debadurllav Harichandan, BHUBANESWAR

### Women in armed forces

Sir, In order to see if a country is actually developed we have to see how its women and children are treated. But when women in the armed forces in India are concerned they are way underrepresented with only 0.56 per cent in the Indian Army, 1.08 per cent in the Indian Air force and 6.5 per cent in the Indian Navy. These numbers are way better than they were just 5 years back with just 3,000 women as compared to 9,118 today. Women are fierce competitors and are dedicated performers in every field. The armed forces have always had the men's point of view. I think it is time they used the women's point of view.

Noopur Baruah, TEZPUR (ASSAM)

### Pragmatic step

Sir, The Union government's decision to wait for an expert view on COVID-19 vaccine booster dose or vaccines for children is a pragmatic step. Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya rightly said we should base the decision on pure science and knowledge. He also applauded the terrific work by the scientific community and the medical staff who put their lives on the line and saved millions of precious lives. The nation had so far reported 3.46 crore COVID-19 cases and 4.6 lakh deaths. The COVID death rate in India is one of the lowest in the world.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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

# national

## of the day quote

Just as the responsibility of our security rests on our soldiers, the same way their families' responsibility rests on all of us. It is a moral obligation of the people to come forward and support the soldiers and their families

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

People must remain vigilant and keep following Covid-appropriate behaviour till the pandemic is over

M VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

Assamese people have always been resilient against outside aggressors and the time has come to prove that again by taking control of the state's farming lands

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

## SHORT TAKES

### Policeman escapes unhurt in attack

**Srinagar:** A policeman of the railway protection force escaped unhurt Saturday in a militant attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district. Police said that the militants fired at the policeman in Pulwama district's Awantipora. The incident took place in Dogripora village of Awantipora. "Dogripora has been cordoned off after reports mentioned that the militants entered the village after firing at the policeman," a police officer said.

### 16 Naxals surrender

**Dantewada:** At least 16 Naxals surrendered before the police in insurgency-hit Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh Saturday, police said. The cadres turned themselves in before police officials in Dantewada, located around 400 km from the state capital Raipur, under the police's rehabilitation drive 'Lon Varratu'. Dantewada Superintendent of Police Abhishek Pallava said. Of the 16 surrendered rebels, militia member Joga Kunjam (26) was allegedly involved in several Naxal incidents, including an attack on security personnel in the district, the official said.

### Couple arrested

**Jabalpur:** A couple, carrying a reward of ₹10,000 on their heads, have been arrested for duping a man of ₹1.26 lakh by orchestrating a fake marriage in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh, police said Saturday. The accused Suman Jain (20) and her husband Bhanu (22) cheated Jaiprakash Tiwari (33), a resident of Panna district, who was in search of a bride, inspector Prafulla Srivastava of Lordganj police station said.

### 2 killed, 1 injured

**Tura:** Two persons, including a woman, were killed and another seriously injured when a rogue elephant attacked them on separate occasions in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district Saturday, the police said. The deceased persons have been identified as Malsa Marak (35) and Bitu Marak (52), while the seriously injured is Herod Sangma (55), a senior police officer said. All three are residents of Raksamgre community and rural development block of the district, he said. The elephant that went rogue apparently got separated from its herd, which had been moving along the state's boundary with Assam.



**A total of 164 high court proposals to appoint judges are at various stages of consideration between the government and the Supreme Court collegiums**

KIREN RIJU | MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE

## DELHI AIRPORT SETS UP 20 COUNTERS

The Delhi airport authorities Saturday said 20 dedicated counters have been set up for the passengers arriving from "at risk" countries and having pre-booked their mandatory COVID-19 test, after many flyers complained of chaos and crowding at the terminal following the implementation of new travel guidelines



## OMICRON EFFECT

# K'TAKA STEPS UP MEASURES

AGENCIES

**Bangalore, Dec 4:** Taking tough measures to contain the spread of Covid-19 and guard against its latest variant Omicron, Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said Saturday that any place with three or more Covid cases would be declared a cluster. Earlier, the minimum requirement was 10 cases.

Speaking to mediapersons, Bommai said that preliminary reports on Omicron cases have been received, and the health department has been instructed to obtain comprehensive reports on the treatment protocols being followed in various countries.

According to the available information, at present the protocol being followed for the Delta variant is being followed for Omicron too, Bommai said, adding, "I want a scientific system to be followed." "Expert opinion is that Omicron is a fast-spreading variant, but it has not shown severe implications so far. Instructions have been issued to intensify tracing and treatment," Bommai said. As for cluster management, two types of clusters have been planned. One for places like schools, colleges and hostels, and the other for the

### South Africans traced

**Bangalore:** The South African nationals, who had arrived in Bangalore and gone incommunicado, have been finally traced by the civic and police authorities in Bangalore, sources in the health department said Saturday. As many as 10 South African nationals were untraceable till Friday evening. Health department officials were worried in the backdrop of detection of the country's first two Omicron cases in Bangalore, amid testing of all passengers arriving to the state from the 'high risk' countries.

apartment complexes in Bangalore, from where cases have been reported.

Everyone in the clusters would be tested and treated. Only those with double vaccination would be allowed to assemble together in apartment complexes. No outsiders would be allowed into the apartment, and the BBMP Commissioner has been instructed in this regard, Bommai said. Double dose has been made mandatory for parents of students who attend classes in off-line mode, while testing is compulsory for all the inmates and staff of students' hostels.



# Centre effects major bureaucratic reshuffle

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** Senior bureaucrat Alka Upadhyaya has been appointed as the chairperson of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) as part of a major bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre Saturday.

Upadhyaya, a 1990-batch IAS officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, is currently Additional Secretary, Department of Rural Development, Sanjay Bandopadhyay, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, has been named chairman, Inland Waterways Authority of India, a Personnel Ministry order said.

Dharmendra S Gangwar, Additional Secretary and Financial Adviser, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, will be Secretary, Department of Border Management, and Sundeep Kumar Nayak has been appointed as Director General, National Productivity Council, Department for Promotion of

Industry & Internal Trade.

Upma Srivastava, a 1988-batch IAS officer of Sikkim cadre, has been named Secretary, National Commission for Scheduled Castes. Juthika Patankar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, has been appointed as Secretary, Central Information Commission.

Anita Praveen, Special Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, will be Special Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries. She will take over as Secretary of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries upon superannuation of Pushpa Subramanyam next month-end.

Amit Yadav, Director General, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, has been moved as Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, the order said. Ashish Srivastava, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, has been ap-

## NATION'S PRIDE



World's largest national flag being exhibited by the Western Naval Command on Navy Day at Naval Dockyard near Gateway of India, in Mumbai

PTI PHOTO

## Charge sheet filed against Param Bir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Dec 4:** The crime branch of Mumbai police Saturday filed a charge sheet against former city police commissioner Param Bir Singh and three others in an extortion case registered in suburban Goregaon.

This is a first charge sheet against Singh. Two days back, the Maharashtra government had suspended Singh in connection with the charges of extortion. Besides Param Bir Singh, dismissed police officer Sachin Waze, Sumit Singh and Alpesh Patel have been named as accused in the charge sheet. The charge sheet was filed before chief metropolitan magistrate S B Bhajipale. The complaint had been lodged by Bimal Agarwal, who alleged the accused extorted ₹9 lakh from him for not conducting a raid on two bars and restaurants, which he ran in partnership, and also forced him to buy two smartphones.

## SKM forms panel for dialogue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) Saturday formed a five-member panel for dialogue with the government on their pending demands including MSP, compensation to kin of farmers who died during the agitation against the agri laws and withdrawal of cases against the protesters.

The development comes after Union Home Minister Amit Shah, according to sources in the SKM, spoke to a senior farmer leader over the phone earlier this week. "The five-member committee will now hold talks with the government on our pending demands. There have been informal talks with the government in the past but we want a



Bharatiya Kisan Union spokesperson Rakesh Tikait addressing the media after farmers' meeting at Singhu border in New Delhi

UNI PHOTO

days, the SKM's state committees are likely to have meetings with the home ministers of states where cases have been registered against the protesting farmers.

"We will not end this agitation without a formal response on each of the issues being raised by us. We want to see all the cases foisted against farmers as well as their supporters, who were part of this movement, to be withdrawn and assurance to be made formally," the SKM said in a statement.

Farmer leaders Balbir Singh Rajewal, Ashok Dhawle, Shiv Kumar Kakka, Gurnam Singh Chaduni and Yudhvir Singh were named the members of the committee after a meeting was held by the SKM here on Saturday.

written assurance on the remaining issues, including withdrawal of cases and a legal guarantee on MSP," a farmer leader said. The sources said that in the coming

## K ROSAIAH PASSES AWAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, Dec 4:** Former Chief Minister of undivided Andhra Pradesh and veteran Congress leader Konijeti Rosaiah passed away here Saturday.

He was 88. Rosaiah died while being taken to a private hospital here after he fell ill Saturday morning, Congress sources said.

Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy, Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababhan Rao, state Congress president and MP A Revanth Reddy and several other leaders condoled the death of Rosaiah. Chief Justice of India N V Ramana paid homage to the late leader.



The Chief Minister, who visited Rosaiah's house in Hyderabad and paid his tributes, instructed the officials to conduct the funeral of the departed leader with State honours, an official press release said. The State government also declared three days of mourning, it said.

# Courts should be last resort, says CJI

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana Saturday said the business community should explore the alternate dispute resolution mechanism like mediation, conciliation, and arbitration to resolve disputes, rather than going to courts, which should be the last resort.

Justice Ramana was speaking at the 'Stakeholders' Conclave' at the International Arbitration and Mediation Centre, Hyderabad. He said in business, differences of opinions should be initially sorted through a dialogue and if this doesn't work then parties should look for people who can resolve the issue by negotiation. He said: "If this also

doesn't work, then the only option people consider is to go to courts. My advice, after participating in the legal profession for over 40 years in different capacities, is that you must keep the option of going to courts as a last resort".

He added, "Use this last resort only after exploring the option of ADR (alternate dispute resolution) - arbitration, mediation and conciliation. Arbitration and mediation are efforts at restoring a relationship".

He said every day in our lives, "we face conflicts - be it between family members or in our business or professional life". Justice Ramana said nobody can imagine a world without conflicts. "Conflicts have a



Image source: PTI

human face and it helps to be humane in our approach to resolve the same. One must have the foresight to look beyond the conflict", he said.

He said the most important factor behind the resolution of any dispute is having the right attitude. "By right attitude, I mean we should

leave aside our ego, emotions, impatience and embrace practicality. But, once these conflicts enter a Court, much gets lost in the practice and procedure", he added.

Justice Ramana cited various reasons for opting for mediation or arbitration over traditional litigation, saying its benefits are manifold: fewer delays, less expensive, greater party choice, more control, more comfortable and amicable environment for the parties etc.

Justice Ramana said despite the presence of some arbitration centers in India, Indian parties that enter into an international arbitration agreement often opt for an arbitration centre outside India incurring huge expenses.

**OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, PIPILI**  
No.C-1486 "e" - Procurement Notice  
**BID REFERENCE NO. (PIPILI-NAC-8/2021-22)**  
**TENDER CALL NOTICE NO.2486/Dt.3.12.2021**

- Name of the work:- Civil construction works.
- No. of works:- 10 (Ten)
- Bid Value and Period of completion:- As per DTCN
- Date & time of availability:- from 11 A.M. on 07.12.2021 to 5 P.M. on 16.12.2021.
- Opening of Online Received Bid:- Dt.17.12.2021 at 2.00 PM onwards.
- Bid Inviting Authority:- Executive Officer, Pipili NAC.

Further details seen from the e-procurement portal:- <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>

Sd./- Executive Officer, Pipili NAC  
OIPR-13107/11/0013/2122

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA** No.O-1200  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**  
**RURAL WORKS DIVISION-II, JAJPUR**  
nwddivision\_jaraka@yahoo.co.in

**'E' PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO.RWD-II/JJPR-06/21-22 DTD**

- Name of work : Special Repair to Road, Bridge & Building works in the District of Jajpur for the year 2021-22
- Total No. of Work : 32 nos. of Road, Bridge & Building work.
- Estimated Cost (Approx.) : As indicated against each work in the NIT
- Period of Completion : As indicated against each work in the NIT
- Class of contractors : As indicated against each work in the NIT

**Other details as follows:**

- Procurement officer : Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division-II, Jajpur at Jaraka
- Availability of tender online & submission of bid : 07.12.2021 at 11.00 AM to 13.12.2021 upto 5.00 PM
- Last date & time of seeking of tender clarification : 10.12.2021 up to 5.00 PM
- Opening of Tender : 14.12.2021 at 11.30 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the Govt. website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)

Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division-II, Jajpur at Jaraka  
OIPR-25080/11/0011/2122

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE**  
**Office of the Superintending Engineer**  
**Puri (R&B) Division, Puri**  
No. B-735 Phone/Fax: (06752) 296839; E-mail: eerbpuri@yahoo.co.in

**Invitation for Bids**  
**Bid Identification No. S.E. (R&B) Puri-35/2021-22**

- The Superintending Engineer, Puri (R&B) Division, Puri, on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in Single Cover system/Double Cover System in ONLINE MODE only.
- Nature of work : Roads & Bridge
- No. of work : 10 Nos.
- Tender Paper Cost : Rs.10,000/-, Rs.6,000/- to be remit online only.
- Class of Contractor : "B" & "A" for Sl. No. 1 to 4 and "C" & "B" for Sl. No. 5 to 7, "D" & "C" for Sl. No. 8 to 10
- Availability of Bid Documents in the website : From Dt.06.12.2021 at 12.00 hours to Dt.12.12.2021 at 17.00
- Date of opening of Bid : Dt. 13.12.2021 at 11.30
- EMD/Bid Security : As specified in the notice to be remitted online only.
- The Bidders shall have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason therefor.

**Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Puri (R&B) Division, Puri**  
OIPR-34064/11/0008/2122

# Now, AK-203 rifles to be made in Amethi



The government has approved the plan ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** The Central government has approved a plan to produce over five lakh AK-203 assault rifles at Korwa in Uttar Pradesh's Amethi, in what official sources described as an endeavour to provide a big boost to self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

Uttar Pradesh is on way to become a defence manufacturing hub of India, they said.

A source said: "It reflects the ever increasing paradigm shift in defence acquisition from buy (global) to Make in India. This endeavour will be done in partnership with Russia and reflects the deepening partnership between the two countries in the defence sector."

The project will provide business opportunities to various MSMEs and other defence industries for the supply of raw material and components, which will lead to new employment opportunities,

they said. The 7.62 X 39mm caliber AK-203 rifles will replace in-service INSAS Rifle inducted over three decades back.

AK-203 assault rifles, with an effective range of 300 meters, are lightweight, robust and easy to use modern assault rifles with proven technology that will enhance the combat potential of soldiers to adequately meet present and envisaged operational challenges, the sources noted.

They will enhance the operational effectiveness of the Indian Army in counterterrorism and counter insurgency operations.

The project will be implemented by a special purpose joint venture called Indo-Russian Rifles Private Ltd (IRRPL). It has been created with erstwhile OFB (now Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Limited (AWEIL) and Munitions India Limited (MIL)) of India and Rosoboronexport (RoE) and concern Kalashnikov of Russia, they said.

The government has approved the plan ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India. The project marks a significant stride towards making UP a key contributor in the ascendant defence manufacturing prowess of India.

# Akhilesh ties up with small outfits to take on BJP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Jhansi, Dec 4:** Training guns on the Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government on various issues, Samajwadi Party President and former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav has said that Uttar Pradesh is headed for change and his party's strategy will help in dethroning the BJP in next year's Assembly elections.

His arrival to address meetings at various places in Jhansi city and district on the last day of his 'Vijay Yatra' Friday enthused the party cadre, who poured out in large numbers, including one mounted on a horse, while his pictures festooned the streets.

Talking to IANS before addressing a public gathering at Moth in the district, Akhilesh Yadav, when asked what benefits he saw by taking smaller parties on board, said: "Samajwadi Party is taking the support of small political outfits, which can help us defeat the BJP. The present dispensation is only misleading the people and



has done nothing for them. During the Covid pandemic, it just forced them into lines for everything. Even if a farmer goes to get fertiliser, he has to stand in line. It is just like the conditions after demonetisation."

"The people of Uttar Pradesh will now get into line to wipe out the BJP," he added.

Asked how he saw the warm welcome in Bundelkhand with peo-

ple showering flowers on him, Akhilesh Yadav said: "The people of Bundelkhand have now closed their doors on the BJP. The people have supported the Samjwadi Party's rally. This time the BJP will not get a single seat in Bundelkhand."

"The people had given full support to the BJP in the last elections, but have got nothing to show for it. The people of Jhansi are not

“Our emotional people voted for them (the BJP), but now see how much prices have risen. Petrol, diesel, and LPG cylinder prices are going out of the common man's reach. Money is being taken out of the pockets of the poor to fill the treasuries of the rich.”

AKHILESH YADAV | FORMER CHIEF MINISTER

going to fall in this trap again. The Yogi government only changes the names of various places... they have not come to Moth, otherwise its name would have been changed too."

Asked about AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, Akhilesh Yadav declined to respond.

Addressing the gathering at Moth, he attacked the BJP over rising prices.

"Our emotional people voted for them (the BJP), but now see how much prices have risen. Petrol,

Under the Ujjwala scheme, an LPG cylinder was given to everyone but can anyone get them filled? Now, the government should rename it as Buijwala (extinguished) scheme," the Samajwadi Party leader added.

Taking up the issue of unemployment, Akhilesh Yadav said: "Under Yogi's rule, the youths are not getting jobs or any form of employment... only big advertisements are being issued. They (the BJP) are promising tablets, but the laptops distributed by our government are still working. Whenever the beneficiaries use them, they remember us."

He then asked the people to choose between a Yogi government and a 'Yogya' (capable) government, saying that the Samajwadi Party wants to come to power; so that it can help the farmers and the poor.

# Atma Nirbhar Krishak development scheme gets UP Cabinet approval

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, Dec 4:** Ahead of the upcoming 2022 Assembly elections in the state, the UP Cabinet has approved a scheme aimed at boosting the agriculture sector; which will be implemented from the current financial year.

In a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the Cabinet Friday gave its nod to implement Atma Nirbhar Krishak Integrated Development Scheme in Uttar Pradesh from 2021-22.

Under this scheme, 1,475 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) will be formed in the next three years in each development block of the state, the UP government said in a statement.

The state government is likely to bear an expenditure of Rs 1,220.92 crore for implementation of the scheme from financial year 2021-22 to 2031-32.

The scheme will also help in achieving the target of utilising a budget of Rs 12,000 crore allotted to the state by the Centre under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund(AIF).

WOOING FARMERS



An amount of Rs 1 lakh crore will be provided by banks and financial institutions as loans to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, Marketing Cooperative Societies, FPOs, SHGs, farmers, joint liability groups, multipurpose cooperative societies, agri-entrepreneurs, startups, aggregation infrastructure providers and central/state agency or local body sponsored PPP project

July 8, 2020, the Union Cabinet had approved the AIF scheme. The scheme shall provide a medium to long-term debt financing facility for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets through interest subvention and financial support.

Under the scheme, Rs 1 lakh crore will be provided by banks and financial institutions as loans to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, Marketing Cooperative

Under this scheme, 1,475 Farmer Producer Organisations will be formed in the next three years in each development block of the state

The state government is likely to bear an expenditure of Rs 1,220.92 crore for implementation of the scheme from financial year 2021-22 to 2031-32

Societies, FPOs, Self Help Groups, farmers, joint liability groups, multipurpose cooperative societies, agri-entrepreneurs, startups, aggregation infrastructure providers and central/state agency or local body sponsored Public Private Partnership Project.

All loans under this financing facility will have interest subvention of 3 per cent per annum up to a limit of Rs 2 crore. This subvention will be available for a maximum period of seven years.

# TN reduces value of encroached land on water bodies to zero

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Dec 4:** The Tamil Nadu registration department in a government order recently reduced the value of encroached land and properties on water bodies, waterways, and water catchment areas to zero leading to a major hit in the sale of land parcels in these areas.

The decision of the state registration department has come after the Waterworks and Revenue Department in a detailed study found that over 50 lakes in Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram, and Chengalpattu districts were converted into land holdings and residential properties worth crores.

A senior official with the state registration department told IANS: "Most of the encroached lands are



classified as Neernilai (Water bodies) 'pormaboke' but 'pattas' or registration deeds were issued to them mainly between 1980 and 1997. This has facilitated construction in these Neernilai leading to the present flooding and inundation in Chennai and adjoining districts."

Interestingly, a list of survey numbers in Chennai and adjoining districts that are classified as water bodies in land records, now are converted into sprawling constructed properties including residential properties and office buildings.

M. Saravanan, a social activist based out of Chengalpattu and who has been in a relentless pursuit against the conversion of water bodies into landed properties in Chennai and adjoining districts, told IANS, "The decision of the Tamil Nadu registration department to assign zero value to land parcels on water bodies will help recover many water bodies back to normalcy. Land sharks and those who are owning these properties will not sit silent but if the government sticks to its decision with data and records then there is no question of any reversal and water bodies can be retrieved."

# AIADMK top duo set to wrest apex posts in party poll

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, Dec 4:** AIADMK top leaders O Panneerselvam and K Palaniswami are set to be elected unopposed for the first time in organisational polls as party Coordinator and Joint Coordinator respectively.

The duo, all smiles, Saturday filed nominations together at the party headquarters to contest for the posts, the last day to file papers for the apex party positions.

Party sources said the applications of Panneerselvam and Palaniswami alone were received when the deadline ended Saturday 3 PM to submit papers for the two top party posts.

Party office-bearers at various levels, former Ministers and district secretaries have been filing papers, backing the nomination papers of the two leaders, a party release said.

December 1, the AIADMK

were appointed to the posts in the general council meeting that year.

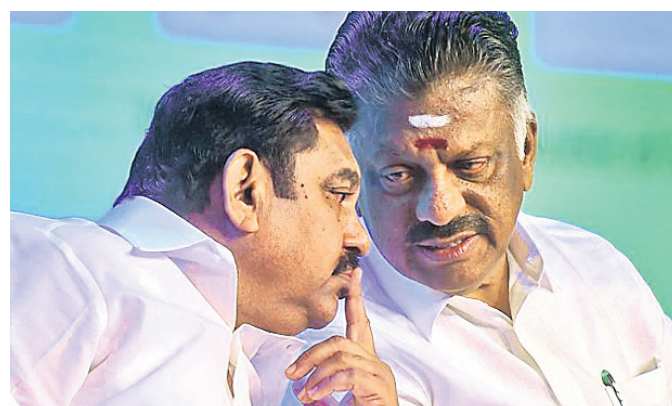
The AIADMK had said that applications for the posts of coordinator and co-coordinator could be obtained and filed on two days, December 3 and 4 by eligible partymen.

The applications would be scrutinised Sunday and December 6 is the last date to withdraw nominations.

While the party had said that December 7 shall be the 'day of voting', it is now expected that the two leaders would be declared elected unanimously.

Avvai Shanmugam Salai, where the party headquarters is located here, witnessed chaotic scenes for a while when a person, suspected to be an 'intruder' in the party's organisational poll process, was allegedly manhandled by AIADMK workers.

A similar chaos was witnessed Friday as well, the opening day to



## PARTY POLITICS

In 2017, the till then top post of General Secretary (GS) was 'eternally' set apart for Jayalalithaa and a new leadership structure of coordinator and joint coordinator was evolved

Panneerselvam and Palaniswami were appointed to the posts in the general council meeting that year

Jayalalithaa was the last person to hold the post of GS. Sasikala was named interim GS following the death of Jayalalithaa in December 2016

Subsequently, Sasikala was eased out of the party, which she has challenged in a court here

# 'In 10 yrs, electrocution claimed 93 elephants in TN'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Dec 4:** A Right to Information (RTI) activist from Tenkasi in Tamil Nadu, R. Pandiraja said that 93 wild elephants were electrocuted in the state in the last ten years up to December 2020. He said that he received a reply to his query from K. Muthamizh Selvan, Scientist D (Project Elephant) in the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Pandiraja told IANS: "While 93 wild elephants were electrocuted to death in Tamil Nadu in the last ten years up to December 2020, the national statistics are very disturbing and according to the reply to my RTI query, 1,160 wild elephants died due to various reasons across the country."



The RTI activist, who is also an animal rights activist, said that the loss of lives of wild elephants will alter the ecology of the forests in the country and that the Department of Forests and Wildlife of the Union Government must make more efforts to prevent ele-

phants and other wild animals from getting killed.

R. Pandiraja said that a total of 186 wild elephants were killed after being hit by speeding trains across the country in the last ten years till December 31, 2020. He said that of this Assam recorded the highest

with 62 elephant deaths while in Tamil Nadu five elephants were killed after being hit by trains.

A total of 741 wild elephants were electrocuted in the country in the last ten years, of which Odisha recorded the maximum deaths at 133. In Tamil Nadu, 93 elephants were killed by electrocution.

As many as 169 elephants were hunted down and poached of which again Odisha tops the list with 49 poaching deaths while in Tamil Nadu, nine elephants were killed by hunters.

Pandiraja said that 32 elephants were poisoned to death in Assam and in Tamil Nadu, one elephant died due to poisoning. He also said that the Ministry of Environment and Forests had spent Rs 212.5 crore in the last ten years for the conservation of elephants.

The RTI activist who is also a researcher on the ecosystem of wild animals said that the 2017 census revealed that there were 29,964 wild elephants in the country. Karnataka tops the list with 6,049 elephants while Tamil Nadu has 2,761 elephants.

Pandiraja told IANS: "It is saddening to note that several wild elephants are losing their lives due to callous and negligent behaviour of humans. The recent mowing down of three elephants including two female elephants in the Kanjikode- Madhukkara sector by the Mangalore-Chennai Express train is tragic. If the Railways had been a little more careful, we could have saved the lives of these animals that play a significant role in maintaining the ecological balance."

amended its bylaws at its executive committee meet here to retain and strengthen the present leadership structure of top two positions held by Panneerselvam and Palaniswami.

According to the changes, the coordinator and joint coordinator would be elected by the party's primary members.

While the posts are two, there cannot be separate votes, as the twin positions together constitute the party top leadership, effectively a single entity.

The AIADMK had said that amendments to bylaws came into immediate effect, adding that approval would be sought for such decisions in the next party general council meeting.

In 2017, the till then top post of General Secretary (GS) was 'eternally' set apart for Jayalalithaa and a new leadership structure of coordinator and joint coordinator was evolved. Panneerselvam and Palaniswami

file papers for the two top party posts. The AIADMK, meanwhile, referring to the ongoing organisational poll process, lodged a complaint with Chennai Police Commissioner and jurisdictional police station, seeking police protection to the party headquarters.

The complaints said that the party apprehended trouble from people like those expelled from the party and anti-socials.

Such elements had plans to unleash violence in the garb of submitting nomination papers in the party HQ, the plaintiffs said, seeking appropriate police action.

Jayalalithaa was the last person to hold the post of GS. Sasikala was named interim GS following the death of Jayalalithaa in December 2016.

Subsequently, Sasikala was eased out of the party, which she has challenged in a court here.

Organisational polls for several other positions across Tamil Nadu will be held later this month.



# national

## of the day quote

I am here to give a report card before people, to give full account. We have formed government to serve people. We will work with full honesty and transparency. What I say, I will deliver. I will not break people's trust

CHARANJIT SINGH CHANNI | PUNJAB CM

The UP chief minister does not think he is answerable to people. At the election time, he gets away talking about religion

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

The Modi government has reduced the MGNREGA budget by nearly Rs 38,000 crore. It reduced the budget allocation from Rs 1.11 lakh crore to Rs 73,000 crore. Now, even out of the Rs 73,000 crore budget allocation, Rs 63,000 crore has been spent, and some states do not have the money under the scheme

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS LEADER



People have understood the BJP after its rule and the party's 'tricks' won't work now. Now, there will be a change in Uttar Pradesh

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY PRESIDENT

## FRESH FINDING

A recent survey undertaken by Povaddo, a firm specializing in global public opinion research, revealed that nearly nine out of ten respondents believe that e-cigarettes/ENDS (which includes products like vapes, heat not burn products etc) are a better alternative to cigarettes



# TMC bins Sena's editorial piece

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Dec 4: The TMC leadership Saturday declined to attach much importance to Shiv Sena's remarks on the party's effort to build an opposition alliance, one parallel to the UPA, and said that it would continue to cobble up an alternative front as the Congress "failed to lead the fight" against the BJP.

In a snub to TMC chief Mamata Banerjee, whose party is currently engaged in a tussle with the Congress, the Shiv Sena Saturday said keeping the grand old party away from national politics while creating an opposition alliance parallel to the UPA is akin to strengthening the ruling BJP and other "fascist" forces.

In an editorial in party mouthpiece 'Saamana', the Sena also said that those who don't want a Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) should make their stand clear publicly instead of creating confusion by talking behind curtains.

"The Shiv Sena is free to have its opinion. But let's not talk about what is right and wrong. The Shiv Sena itself was part of BJP-led NDA. It left the NDA after a fracas



over the chief minister's post in Maharashtra. It joined hands with the NCP and the Congress for CM's chair," TMC MP Sougata Roy said.

He stated that the party would continue to increase its strength and venture out to other states.

"The TMC only wants opposition unity to be strengthened. We have never said that an opposition alliance will be forged without Congress. But if Congress can't perform its duty, we have nothing to do. They can't blame us for their incompetence. If one fails, then someone else has to fill the vacuum," he said.

Echoing him, TMC's state general secretary Kunal Ghosh said Shiv Sena's comment is out of its "alliance compulsion" in Maharashtra. "We don't want any misunderstanding with the Shiv Sena. It is running a government in Maharashtra with the support of Congress. So they have some compulsions, and these statements have been made out of that compulsion. We are cobbling up an opposition front as the Congress has failed to do so," he underlined.

Reacting to TMC's remarks, veteran Congress leader and

# Congress starts campaign for COVID compensation

The Congress said that under the disaster management guidelines, the government is required to compensate the families of COVID-19 victims with ₹4 lakh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Saturday launched the party's online campaign demanding compensation for the families of those who died of Covid and accused the government of sleeping while people coped with pain and loss.

The Congress party said the aim of the "#SpeakUpForCovidNyay" campaign was to demand that the central government disclose the actual number of Covid deaths in the country and "properly compensate all families of the victims with Rs 4 lakh". "When it comes to people's pain and loss, Government of India is sleeping. Let's wake them up," Rahul Gandhi said on Twitter while launching the campaign. The Modi government has very tactfully tried to cover up its failures in managing the COVID-19 pandemic by distorting the number of Covid deaths, the party alleged.



"#SpeakUpForCovidNyay so the govt is forced to disclose the correct number of Covid deaths," it said on its official Twitter handle. The party alleged that the government lacked the intention to support the distressed families.

"If the government doesn't have data of Covid deaths, the entire country is willing to share it with the government. There is no dearth of fund.... The real issue is the government is lacking in the intention to help Covid-hit families. We demand Rs 4 lakh each for the kin of those who died of the pandemic," Congress spokesperson Pawan Khara said.

## SHORT TAKES

### Militant arrested

Srinagar: A Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant was arrested Saturday and arms and ammunition were recovered from his possession in Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. Acting on a specific input regarding the movement of terrorists in Poshkar area of Budgam, security forces launched a cordon-and-search operation, a police spokesman said. During the search operation, the joint team arrested an active terrorist linked with the proscribed terror outfit LeT, he said. The spokesman identified the arrested as Ab Hameed Nath, a resident of Pethzanigam Beerwah, Budgam in central Kashmir.

### Four killed

Chitradurga (Karnataka): Four people died on the spot after being hit by a speeding gas tanker in the wee hours of Saturday in Chitradurga district of Karnataka. The deceased are identified as Hulugappa from Raichur, Sharanappa, a resident of Rona, Sanjay, a resident of Vijayapura and Manjunath, a resident of Kusthagi. The incident took place on National Highway 40 near Daddasiddavanahalli village in Chitradurga district. The deceased were travelling towards Bangalore from Rona town of Gadag district in a truck loaded with onion bags.

### Beef seized

Palghar: The police in Maharashtra's Palghar district have seized beef worth Rs 20.6 lakh and arrested two persons from Tamil Nadu who were allegedly transporting it in a container truck, an official said Saturday. Based on a tip-off, the district rural police laid a trap at Ghul village on Mumbai-Ahmedabad Highway in Palghar and intercepted a container truck on Tuesday evening, senior inspector Ajay Vasave said. On inspection, the police found that beef from Tamil Nadu was being transported to the state, he said. The transporters had given fake declaration about the consignment and made an attempt to escape but were caught, the official said.

### Man kills daughter

Thane: Police Saturday arrested a 33-year-old man from Mumbai in Thane for allegedly strangulating to death his own seven-year-old daughter following an argument with wife, an official said. The accused was identified as Anish Maldar, a labourer, who resided in Santosh Nagar area of Mumbai, he said.

# Scams exploded during UPA rule: PM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/Uttarakhand, Dec 4: Launching a scathing attack on the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA), Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday said scams exploded in the name of infrastructure during the ten year rule of the Manmohan Singh government.

Addressing a public gathering in poll-bound Uttarakhand after inaugurating and laying the foundation stones for development projects worth Rs 18,000 crore in Dehradun, the Prime Minister accused the Congress of doing politics of appeasement and dividing the country.

He said perversion of politics does not allow people to be strong and makes them dependent on the government for their needs. Modi claimed that "Whatever schemes we bring, we will bring them for everyone, without discrimination. We do not make vote bank politics the basis but give priority to the service of the people. Our approach has been to strengthen the country."

Targeting the Congress, Modi said: "For 10 years there were scams, scams in the name of infrastructure in the country. We worked twice as hard to make up for the loss caused to the country and are doing it even today."

## MODI HEAPED PRAISES ON HIS PARTY LEADER AND STATE CHIEF MINISTER PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI

He heaped praises on his party leader and state Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama and also spoke about other veteran BJP leaders in the state. The Prime Minister said that Uttarakhand is not just the centre of faith but is the symbol of hard work and determination. That is why development of the state is one of the foremost priorities of the 'double engine government' of the Centre and the state.

Comparing the pace of development, the Prime Minister pointed out that between 2007 and 2014, the then Central government (UPA), built only 288 km of national highways in Uttarakhand in seven years, whereas the current (NDA) government has constructed a national highway of more than 2,000 km in the state in seven years. He charged that the earlier governments did not work on the infrastructure of the border hill areas as seriously as they should have.



People use umbrella and plastic sheet to take cover during rains in Kolkata

UNI PHOTO

## 2 TSR personnel shot dead by colleague

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Agartala, Dec 4: Two Tripura State Rifles (TSR) personnel were allegedly shot dead by a colleague Saturday at a camp next to a gas collection station (GCS) of ONGC in Sepahijala district, around 25 km from here, following a heated altercation, the police said.

The accused - Sukanta Das, a rifleman of the fifth battalion of TSR - gunned down his seniors - Subedar Marka Singh Jamatia and Naib Subedar Kiran Jamatia - as he was "not given relief despite approval of his leave application", a police officer said.

"Other members of the battalion, on hearing gun shots, rushed to the spot and found the subedar and naib subedar lying in a pool of blood. They were taken to a hospital, where the subedar was declared 'brought dead' and the naib subedar later succumbed to his injuries," Krishnendu Chakraverty, the superintendent of police in Sepahijala, said.

Das subsequently surrendered at Madhupur police station. The accused rifleman, during interrogation, stated that he was not relieved from duties despite his leave getting sanctioned, as his seniors wanted him to take part in a "refresher training" programme.

# BMC clamps stringent home isolation norms

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Dec 4: With Omicron cases getting detected in the two adjoining states of Karnataka and Gujarat this week, the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has introduced a set of stringent home quarantine norms, which include five calls a day and visits by medical teams with ambulance.

BMC Commissioner I.S. Chahal said that after the successful 'Dharavi Model' in the first Covid-19 wave - which earned global accolades - and the 'Mumbai Model' which was also very successful, this is the third initiative to secure the country's commercial cap-

## Medical teams will be sent with ambulance to see whether passengers are complying with rules

ital from Omicron.

The process will start daily morning with the Mumbai International Airport Ltd sending a list of all Mumbai passengers landing at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, or who have visited from the 'high risk' and 'at risk' nations in the past 15 days, to the Disaster Management Unit (DMU).

Thereafter, the DMU will relay it to the 24 administrative wards based on the passengers' addresses

and then to the Ward War Rooms (WWR) which will track, test and start contact tracing.

Chahal added that the WWR will call each person under home quarantine at least five times a day to monitor their health and also ascertain if they are indeed in isolation at home and following the rules, and if needed counsel them and address their concerns.

Besides, medical teams will be sent regularly with ambulance to see whether the passengers are complying with the rules, and check their health. After seven days in home isolation, they will ensure that the concerned passengers take undergo RT-PCR tests.

The housing societies/complexes

where they live shall be informed in writing by the BMC, asking them to ensure that the passengers remain isolated at home, and no visitors are allowed.

Violators shall face stringent punishment, including being shunted to compulsory institutional quarantine.

If any passengers develop any symptoms, they will be immediately put on treatment protocols or hospitalised, said Chahal.

The WWRs would be adequately staffed and would have multiple functional communication lines and 10 ambulances at their disposal. They would inform the DMU of any violation of the rules by any passenger.

# 1 in 3 Indians continues to refrain from carrying masks: Survey

THE SURVEY, CONDUCTED IN APRIL, RECEIVED MORE THAN 25,000 RESPONSES FROM CITIZENS RESIDING IN 364 DISTRICTS OF INDIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: Mask compliance continues to remain at its lowest in India despite concerns

over detection of Omicron variant in the country, with only 2 per cent of surveyed citizens saying that people in their area, city or district are complying well with mask-wearing norms.

According to a latest survey conducted by digital community based platform LocalCircles, one in three Indians say most people in their area are not even carrying masks when stepping out of their houses.

The survey, conducted in April, received more than 25,000 responses from citizens residing in 364 districts of India. It also said that 29 per cent of citizens rated mask compliance as high. This percentage



dropped to 12 per cent in September, and dropped drastically to only 2

per cent in November. The need of the hour is to edu-

cate the public on the effectiveness of masks as two in three Indians are still wearing cloth masks that provide limited protection from COVID-19.

"It is critical that the central government, state governments and district administrations introduce all possible mechanisms to create awareness about mask compliance in light of the Omicron variant and enforce necessary penalties to drive this compliance," Sachin Taparia, founder, LocalCircles said.

If two individuals in an indoor space are not wearing a mask, in just 10 minutes, the infected person

can transmit the virus to the other person, while if both are wearing a fitted N-95 mask, it requires over 600 hours of exposure for transmission, he said.

The Omicron variant, which has scientists and epidemiologists from around the world raising red flags, was categorised as a "variant of concern" by the World Health Organisation earlier this week after it was identified in three countries. Within a week, Omicron has been detected in over 40 countries around the world, with India reporting its first two cases in Karnataka

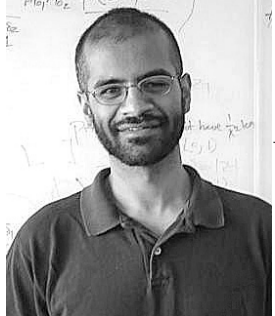
# international



With the effective and safe vaccines, we have the key to this in our hands. Get vaccinated, no matter whether it's a first vaccination or a booster  
ANGELA MERKEL | CHANCELLOR, GERMANY

## LAURELS FOR MATH GENIUS

Eminent Indian-American mathematician Nikhil Srivastava, who teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, has been jointly selected for the inaugural Ciprian Foias Prize in Operator Theory by American Mathematical Society (AMS)



## of the day quote

Afghanistan may face an economic collapse if its frozen assets are not released to cope with the burgeoning needs. Human tragedy can happen if attention is not paid to the Afghanistan situation  
SHAH MAHMOOD QURESHI | FOREIGN MINISTER, PAKISTAN

We need to stand in solidarity with the Uyghurs, with religious minorities all over the world, to make sure that they can live in security and dignity  
JEN PSAKI | SPOKESWOMAN, WHITE HOUSE, US

The virus does not know passports, it does not know borders. We should not do geopolitics about the virus... We should be collaborating and understanding. Is that how you reward science? By blacklisting countries?  
DR SIKHULILE MOYO | VIROLOGIST, BOTSWANA HARVARD AIDS INSTITUTE PARTNERSHIP

## SHORT TAKES

### Pak re-elected to OPCW Council

Islamabad: Pakistan has been re-elected to the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for the term 2022-2024, the country's Foreign Office said Saturday. The elections were held during the recently concluded 26th Session of the Conference of States Parties held in The Hague from November 29 to December 2, it said. "The re-election of Pakistan to the 41-member Executive Council of the OPCW is a testament to Pakistan's positive role at the OPCW," the FO said.

### 3 Indians held over illegal entry to US

Washington: Federal law enforcement has arrested three young Indian nationals in the US Virgin Islands on charges of illegally entering the country, an American attorney said Friday. Krishnaben Patel (25), Nikunj Kumar Patel (27), and Ashok Kumar Patel (39) were arrested at St Croix airport in US Virgin Island as they were about to board a flight for Fort Lauderdale in Florida November 24.

### Mali truck attack claims 30 civilians

Bamako: Gunmen attacked a truck carrying civilians in central Mali, killing at least 31 people, a local official said Saturday. The mayor of Bandiagara, Housseini Saye, said the truck was carrying about 50 civilians when the identified gunmen attacked the vehicle Friday about 10 kilometers outside the town. "The shooting caused the truck to catch fire, and 31 people died, most of them burned to death," said the mayor, who is also a member of Mali's transitional parliament. "There were several injured and two missing."

### 18 killed as bus plunges into river

Nairobi: At least 18 people died after a bus carrying choir members to a wedding plunged into a river in Kenya Saturday, police said. Mwingi East Sub-County Police Commander Joseph Yakan said the driver tried to steer the bus past a flooded bridge, but the strong current swept the vehicle into the river. Ten people were rescued but "we have 18 bodies now," he said. The choir members of Mwingi Catholic Church had been travelling for their male colleague's wedding when the accident occurred in Kitui County.

# US officials' iPhones hacked by Pegasus: Report

According to a report in The Wall Street Journal, Apple has notified 11 US State Department employees in Uganda that their iPhones were hacked

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, Dec 4: At least 11 US State Department officials' iPhones have been hacked by Israel-based NSO Group which is the seller of infamous Pegasus spyware to the governments, the media reported. According to a report in The Wall Street Journal, Apple has notified 11 US State Department employees in Uganda that their iPhones were hacked.

The investigators have linked the attack to a tool developed by NSO Group, an Israeli technology company that was blacklisted by the Biden administration, ac-

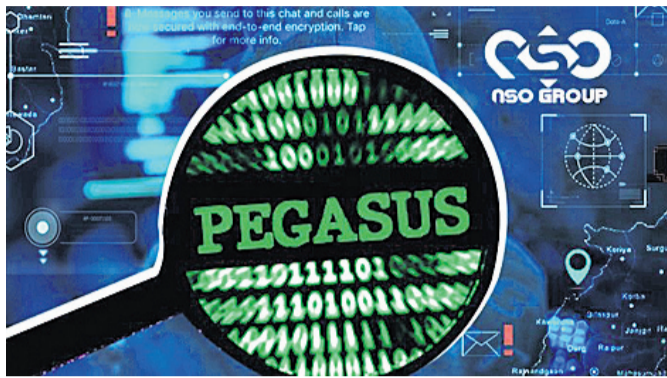
ording to a person familiar with the matter, the report said late Friday.

The hacked phones were linked to State Department email addresses, the report added.

An NSO Group spokesperson said in media reports that the company would probe the reports.

The NSO Group has been placed by the Joe Biden administration on an export prohibition list that restricts it from obtaining some types of technology from the US.

After filing a lawsuit against the NSO Group, Apple has started sending threat notification alerts to victims of state-sponsored hack-



ers, beginning with Thailand, El Salvador and Uganda. The lawsuit seeks a permanent

injunction to ban the Israeli company from using any Apple software, services or devices.

# 'Russia planning Ukraine offensive'

US Prez Biden and Russian Prez Putin will speak in a video call Tuesday as tensions escalate over a Russian troop buildup on the Ukrainian border



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Dec 4: President Joe Biden pledged Friday to make it "very, very difficult" for Russia's Vladimir Putin to take military action in Ukraine as US intelligence officials determined that Russian planning is underway for a possible military offensive that could begin as soon as early 2022.

The new intelligence finding estimates that the Russians are planning to deploy an estimated 175,000 troops and almost half of them are already deployed along various points near Ukraine's border, according to a Biden administration official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the finding.

It comes as Russia has picked up its demands on Biden to guarantee that Ukraine will not be allowed to

join the NATO alliance.

The official added that the plans call for the movement of 100 battalion tactical groups along with armor, artillery and equipment.

Intelligence officials also have seen an uptick in Russian propaganda efforts through the use of proxies and media outlets to denigrate Ukraine and NATO ahead of a potential invasion, the official said. Asked about the intelligence finding as he set out for the presidential retreat at Camp David Friday evening, Biden reiterated his concerns about Russian provocations.

"We've been aware of Russia's actions for a long time and my expectation is we're gonna have a long discussion with Putin," Biden said.

The risks of such a gambit for Putin, if he actually went through

with an invasion, would be enormous.

US officials and former US diplomats say while Putin clearly is laying the groundwork for a possible invasion, Ukraine's military is better armed and prepared today than in past years, and the sanctions threatened by the West would do serious damage to Russia's economy. It remains unclear if Putin intends to go through with what would be a risky offensive, they say.

Earlier Friday, Biden pledged to make it "very, very difficult" for Putin to take military action in Ukraine and said new initiatives coming from his administration are intended to deter Russian aggression.

## RUSSIA REJECTS MEDIA REPORTS

MOSCOW: Russia has dismissed new US media reports about a possible Russian attack on Ukraine, accusing Washington of trying to aggravate the situation while blaming Moscow, the Kommersant newspaper said Saturday, citing the Foreign Ministry. The Washington Post cited officials and an intelligence document Saturday as saying US intelligence thought Russia could be planning a multi-front offensive on Ukraine as early as next year involving up to 175,000 troops.

## LYNCHING OF LANKAN NATIONAL

# 800 booked under terrorism charges

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lahore, Dec 4: Over 800 people have been booked under terrorism charges while 13 prime suspects are among 118 arrested so far in the horrific lynching of a Sri Lankan national over allegations of blasphemy in Punjab province of Pakistan, a top police official said Saturday, as pressure mounted on the government to bring the guilty to justice.

In a shocking incident Friday, angry supporters of the hardline Islamist party Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) attacked a garment factory and lynched its general manager Priyantha Kumara Diyawadana before setting his body on fire over allegations of blasphemy.

Sri Lankan Parliament and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa Saturday condemned the lynching of a Sri Lankan national in Pakistan and hoped that Prime Minister Imran Khan will keep his commitment to bring all those involved to justice and ensure the safety of the rest of the island nation's expat workers.

The incident sparked widespread condemnation from all walks of life. Police were also chided for reaching the crime scene after the incident. Only a couple of police-



Sri Lankan Parliament and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa Saturday condemned the lynching

men can be seen in one video asking the people to stay back while the body was burning.

Taking to Twitter, Prime Minister Rajapaksa said "Shocking to see the brutal and fatal attack on Priyantha Diyawadana by extremist mobs in #Pakistan. My heart goes out to his wife and family. #SriLanka and her people are confident that PM @ImranKhanPTI will keep to his commitment to bring all those involved to justice."

Khan said in a tweet "The horrific vigilante attack on a factory in Sialkot & the burning alive of a Sri Lankan manager is a day of shame for Pakistan. I am overseeing the investigations & let there be no mistake, all those responsible will be punished with full severity of the law. Arrests are in progress."

# In final Gulf stop, Macron meets Saudi Crown Prince



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, Dec 4: French President Emmanuel Macron met Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Saturday for the final leg of a two-day Gulf tour: Concerns over Iran's nuclear programme, the multiple crises in Lebanon and the ongoing war in Yemen were expected to be aired in private by both sides.

Earlier in the day, Macron was

in Qatar, where he told reporters that France and a number of European nations were considering opening a joint diplomatic mission in Afghanistan but stressed it would not mean recognition of the country's Taliban rulers.

He also said he would be raising the issue of Lebanon with the Saudi crown prince, particularly the importance of standing by the politically deadlocked country as it careens from one crisis to another.

In Saudi Arabia, Macron met the crown prince in the Red Sea city of Jiddah, where the kingdom is in the midst of hosting its first ever Formula One race and a pop concert by Justin Bieber, despite calls by rights groups for a boycott.

It's the latest push by the young crown prince to showcase the social reforms he's ushered in and been hailed for.

## MISTREATED, MALNOURISHED



Buffaloes eat food given by volunteers at a farm where Environmental Police found hundreds of malnourished and mistreated buffaloes in Brotas, Sao Paulo state, Brazil

# In democracy's birthplace, Pope warns of populist threats

FRANCIS' VISIT TO CYPRUS AND GREECE HAS FOCUSED ON THE PLIGHT OF MIGRANTS AS EUROPE HARDENS ITS BORDER CONTROL POLICIES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Athens, Dec 4: Pope Francis warned Saturday that the "easy answers" of populism and authoritarianism threaten democracy in Europe and called for fresh dedication to promoting the common good.

Francis used a speech to political and cultural leaders in Greece, the birthplace of democracy, to address Europe at large, arguing that only robust multilateralism can successfully address the pressing issues of the day, from protecting the environment to the pandemic and poverty.

"Politics needs this, in order to put common needs ahead of private



interests," Francis said after arriving in Athens Saturday. "Yet we cannot avoid noting with concern how today, and not only in Europe, we are witnessing a retreat from democracy."

Francis, who lived through Argentina's populist Peronist era as well as its military dictatorship, has frequently warned about the threat of authoritarianism and populism and the danger it poses

to the European Union and democracy itself. He did not name any specific countries or leaders during his speech. The EU, however, is locked in a feud with members Poland and Hungary over rule-of-

law issues, with Warsaw insisting that Polish law takes precedence over EU policies and regulations.

Outside the bloc, populist leaders in Brazil and the administration of former US President Donald Trump pressed nationalist policies on the environment that contrasted sharply with Francis' call to care for "our common home."

Opening the second leg of his five-day trip to Cyprus and Greece, Francis recalled that it was in Greece, according to Aristotle, that man became conscious of being a political animal and a member of a community of fellow citizens.

"Here, democracy was born," Francis told Greek President Katerina Sakellariopoulou. "That

# RARE MOVE US school shooter's parents charged with manslaughter

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, Dec 4: The parents of a 15-year-old boy who shot dead four students at a high school in the US state of Michigan with a gun bought for him by his father just days earlier were charged with involuntary manslaughter Friday.

Oakland County prosecutor Karen McDonald, in a rare move by law enforcement, announced that James and Jennifer Crumbley, the parents of Ethan Crumbley, each face four counts of involuntary manslaughter.

These charges are intended to hold the individuals who contributed to this tragedy accountable and also send the message that gun owners have a responsibility, McDonald said at a press conference. While the shooter was the one who entered the high school and pulled the trigger, there are other individuals who contributed to the events on November 30 and it's my intention to hold them accountable as well, she said.

Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard said the whereabouts of the parents was not currently known and they were considered fugitives.

"We'll have them in custody soon, Bouchard said. They cannot run from their part in this tragedy.

Four students, aged 14 to 17, were killed in the shooting at Oxford High School north of Detroit and six more were wounded, along with a teacher.

Ethan Crumbley has been charged as an adult with state murder and terror charges.

While school shootings carried out by teens occur frequently in the United States, it is unusual for parents to face charges.

# Mt Semeru erupts; 1 dead, dozens hurt

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lumajang, Dec 4: The highest volcano on Indonesia's most densely populated island of Java spewed thick columns of ash, searing gas and lava down its slopes in a sudden eruption triggered by heavy rains Saturday. At least one villager died from burns and dozens were hospitalised.

Mount Semeru's eruption in Lumajang district in East Java province left several villages blanketed with falling ash.

A thunderstorm and days of rain, which had eroded and finally collapsed the lava dome atop the 3,676-metre (12,060-foot) Semeru, triggered an eruption, said Eko Budi Lelono, who heads the geological survey centre.

He said flows of searing gas and lava travelled up to 800 metres to a nearby river at least twice Saturday. Several hundred people were moved to temporary shelters or left for other safe areas, he said, adding that power blackout hampered the evacuation. One man died from severe burns, and 41 others were hospitalised with burn injuries, said Indah Masdar, the deputy district head.

People were advised to stay 5 kilometres from the crater's mouth, the agency said.

"Thick columns of ash have turned several villages to darkness," said Lumajang district head Thoriqul Haq.

# business



**A new variant that may spread very rapidly can dent confidence, and in that sense, we are likely to see some downgrades of our October projections for global growth**

KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA | MD, IMF

## INDIA-UAE CEPA TALKS FROM MON

The third round of India and the UAE's meeting on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) will be held here from December 6-10. Union Minister Piyush Goyal met the representatives of aluminium, copper, chemicals and petrochemicals industries Friday as part of the ongoing multi-stakeholder consultations related to the negotiations



## of the day quote

We have started a pilot project under which we are providing for free medical check for insured persons (IPs) of ESIC who are of 40 years or above age every year. We have a dream of 'swasth bharat'

BHUPENDER YADAV | UNION LABOUR MINISTER

This (issue) is being talked about that it consumes more time (to charge an e-vehicle battery). ARAI has been directed to work on it. In fact they have developed a prototype of a fast charger and the product is expected to be ready by December 2022

MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY | HEAVY INDUSTRIES MINISTER

We must make India the centre of manufacturing both for the Indian market and for the rest of the world. And that is now dependent on all of you and makes the states of India the centre of manufacturing

AMITABH KANT | CEO, NITI AAYOG

## SHORT TAKES

### Starlink to apply for licence by Jan

**New Delhi:** Starlink, the satellite internet division of billionaire Elon Musk's rocket company SpaceX, will apply early next year for a commercial licence in India to provide broadband and other services, its country head said Friday. If the company can roll out its services by April, it aims to have 200,000 Starlink devices in India by December 2022, it said in a presentation. The company has previously said it expects 80% of these devices to be in rural areas.

### ICICI Pru rolls out new product

**Bhubaneswar:** ICICI Prudential Life Insurance launched a new non-participating savings product 'ICICI Pru Guaranteed Income for Tomorrow (Long-term)'. This product provides customers with the option to either receive regular guaranteed tax-free 'income' or 'income with 110% return of premium'. Both these plan options provide income for up to 30 years. Customers have the flexibility to select the premium payment term of either 7 or 10 years and based on their needs can opt to receive income for a period of 15, 20, 25, or 30 years.

### Coal from captive mines likely to rise

**New Delhi:** The government Saturday said that coal production from captive mines is likely to touch 85 million tonnes (MT) during the ongoing fiscal, which is significantly higher than last year's 62 MT. The coal production from from captive mines during this year till November has already reached around 50 million tonnes, the coal ministry said in a statement. Also, Coal Secretary Anil Kumar Jain reviewed the issues related to environment and forest clearances impacting development of new coal blocks, with senior officers.

### Dish TV to hold AGM Dec 30

**New Delhi:** Direct-to-Home service provider Dish TV, which is facing a notice from its largest shareholder Yes Bank to reconstitute its board, has said it would convene its Annual General Meeting December 30. "The board of directors of the company vide circular resolution dated December 3, 2021 have approved the convening of the 33rd AGM of the equity shareholders of the company on Thursday, December 30, 2021," said Dish TV.

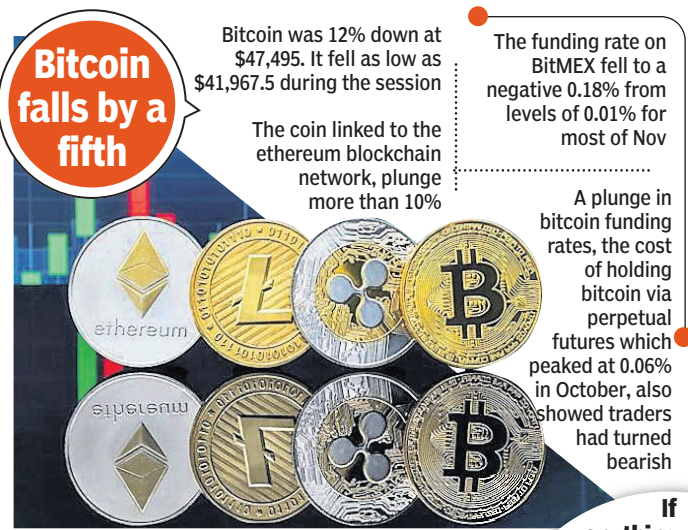
# Cryptos see \$1bln worth liquidated

The selloff comes ahead of testimony by executives from eight major cryptocurrency firms before the US House Financial Services Committee Dec 8

AGENCIES

**Washington, Dec 4:** Bitcoin shed a fifth of its value Saturday as a combination of profit-taking and macro-economic concerns triggered nearly a billion dollars worth of selling across cryptocurrencies.

The plunge follows a volatile week for financial markets. Global equities and benchmark US bond yields tumbled Friday after data showed US job growth slowed in



November and the Omicron variant of the coronavirus kept investors on edge.

Based on cryptocurrency data platform Coingecko, the market

capitalisation of the 11,392 coins it tracks dropped nearly 15% to \$2.34 trillion. That value had briefly crossed \$3 trillion last month, when bitcoin hit a record \$69,000.

Justin d'Anethan, Hong Kong-based head of exchange sales at cryptocurrency exchange EQONEX, said he had been watching the increase in leverage ratios across the cryptocurrency mar-

kets as well how large holders had been moving their coins from wallets to exchanges. The latter is usually a sign of intent to sell.

"Whales in the crypto space seem to have transferred coins to trading venue, taken advantage of a bullish bias and leverage from retail traders, to then push prices down," he said.

The selloff also comes ahead of testimony by executives from eight major cryptocurrency firms, including Coinbase Global CFO Alesia Haas and FTX Trading CEO Sam Bankman-Fried, before the US House Financial Services Committee Dec 8.

The hearing marks the first time major players in the crypto markets will testify before US lawmakers, as policy-makers grapple with the implications of cryptocurrencies and how to best regulate them.

Last week, the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) rejected a second spot-bitcoin exchange-traded fund proposal from WisdomTree.

Data from another platform Coinglass showed nearly \$1 billion worth of cryptocurrencies had been liquidated over the past 24 hours, with the bulk being on digital exchange Bitfinex.

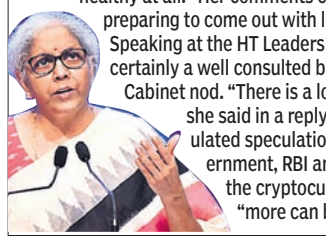
**If anything, this is the opportunity to buy the dip for many investors who might have previously felt like they missed the boat. We can see tether bought at a premium, suggesting people are getting cash ready, to just that crypto space, to do just that**

JUSTIN D'ANETHAN | HEAD OF EXCHANGE SALES, EQONEX

## 'Lot of unhealthy speculation on crypto'

**New Delhi:** Asserting that a lot of speculation is taking place on cryptocurrencies, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Saturday said these speculations are not "healthy at all."

Her comments come against the backdrop of the government preparing to come out with legislation to regulate cryptocurrencies. Speaking at the HT Leadership Summit, the Finance Minister said there is certainly a well consulted bill which is coming in Parliament after the Cabinet nod. "There is a lot of speculation...That's not healthy at all," she said in a reply to a question if she thinks that a lot of unregulated speculation is taking place on crypto. She said the government, RBI and Sebi have been cautioning people about the cryptocurrencies that could be a "high risk" area and "more can be done" to create awareness.



# 'India exemplary in publishing its forex market intervention'

The authorities should allow the exchange rate to move flexibly to reflect economic fundamentals, limit foreign exchange intervention, said US Treasury

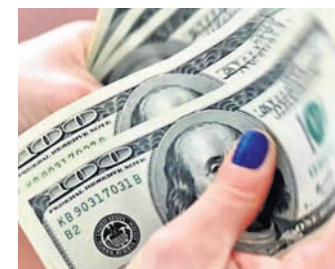
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Washington, Dec 4:** India has been exemplary in publishing its foreign exchange market intervention, the US Treasury Department said Friday adding that New Delhi should allow the exchange rate to move flexibly to reflect economic fundamentals.

"As the economic recovery progresses, the authorities should continue to pursue structural reforms that can help lift productivity and living standards, while supporting an inclusive and green recover," the Treasury said.

In its semi-annual Report to Congress on Macroeconomic and Foreign Exchange Policies of Major Trading Partners of the United States, the Treasury reviewed and assessed the policies of its major trading partners, comprising more than 80 per cent of its foreign trade in goods and services, during the four quarters through June 2021.

In accordance with the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (the 1988 Act), the Report concludes that no major US trading partner manipulated the rate of



exchange between its currency and the US dollar for purposes of preventing effective balance of payments adjustments or gaining unfair competitive advantage in international trade.

The RBI frequently intervenes in both directions, the RBI purchased foreign exchange on net in 10 of the 12 months through June 2021, with net intervention reaching \$131 billion, or 4.6 per cent of GDP, it said.

The RBI made large purchases between July 2020 and February 2021, followed by modest sales in March and April this year as India's second outbreak took hold and net foreign portfolio flows turned negative, it said.

According to the report, India's goods and services trade surplus with the United States was \$40 billion over the four quarters through June 2021, up substantially from its relatively consistent level of around \$30 billion from 2013 to 2019. The higher trade surplus came largely on the back of higher US imports of Indian goods and steady imports of Indian services, while US exports of both fell due to India's weak domestic demand, it said.

## TECHNOLOGY CRACKDOWN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Beijing, Dec 4:** China's dominant ride-hailing service, Didi Global Inc, has said it will pull out of the New York Stock Exchange and shift its share trading to Hong Kong as the ruling Communist Party tightens control over tech industries.

Didi gave no explanation, but China's leaders increasingly fret about who controls information gathered about its public by e-commerce, ride-hailing and other tech companies. Beijing sees that as a valuable asset and security risk.

Regulators said in July they would step up scrutiny of tech companies with shares traded abroad and their information security and cross-border data flows.

Didi's share price fell 25 per cent after regulators launched an investigation into its handling of

# Didi plans to exit US stock mkt



customer data following its June 30 stock market debut.

"After conscientious research, the company will start delisting operations on the New York Stock Exchange immediately and commence preparations to list in Hong Kong," Didi said on its social media account Friday.

A separate statement said US shares would be converted into "freely tradable shares" on another "internationally recognised exchange."

The company's shares fell 22.17%, losing about \$8.4 billion in market value. Didi shares have fallen about 57% since their June 30 IPO price

Didi Chuxing raised about \$4.4 billion in its market debut. The company earlier denied a news report it planned to buy back its US shares.

Other companies including Alibaba Group, the world's biggest e-commerce company, and Tencent Holding, which operates the popular WeChat message service, also have been hit by data security and anti-monopoly probes.

## Over 200 Chinese cos may be ousted

**New Delhi:** If the US loses Chinese companies, Wall Street will gradually alienate itself from the world's most prosperous market and the US will no longer be the true global financial centre, Chinese state media claimed. After the announcement of Didi leaving US stock market, the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) issued a mandate requiring foreign companies listed in the US to provide audits for inspection. Otherwise, they could be delisted from NYSE and Nasdaq in three years. The new SEC regulation clearly targets Chinese companies listed in the US. Analysts believe that it could lead to more than 200 companies being kicked off US exchanges, Global Times reported.

# Agri exports up by 13% in Apr-Nov

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** India's exports of agricultural and processed food products rose by more than 13 per cent during the first eight months of the current fiscal on a YoY basis.

As per the data furnished by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, export of products under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) ambit increased from \$11.671 billion in April-November 2020-21 to \$13.261 billion in April-November 2021-22.

The target for exports under the APEDA basket products has been set at \$23.713 billion for 2021-22.



"The export of rice was the top forex earner at \$5,937 million during April-November 2021-22, growing 11 per cent over the corresponding period of 2020-21 when it had touched \$5,341 million. Exports of meat, dairy and poultry products grew 12 per cent at \$2,665 million

in April-November 2021-22, compared to \$2,371 million in the corresponding eight-month period of 2020-21," the ministry said.

Besides, fruits and vegetables exports were up by 12 per cent to \$1.720 billion during April-November 2021-22 against \$1.536 billion during April-November 2020-21.

"Exports of cereal preparations and miscellaneous processed items grew by 26 per cent during April-November 2021-22 to touch \$1,418 million against \$1,127 million in April-November 2020-21. Cashew exports also grew by 29 per cent to \$302 million in the first eight months of the current fiscal," the ministry said.

## OMICRON CONCERNS

### Reverse Repo hike can wait, says SBI

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mumbai, Dec 4:** The need to raise 'Reverse Repo' rate during the upcoming monetary policy review can wait till concerns over Covid-19's new variant -- Omicron are addressed, said SBI Ecowrap report.

Lately, concerns have risen over Omicron's impact on growth. The monetary policy review is slated for December 6-8. It is widely expected that RBI's MPC (monetary policy committee) will maintain a status-quo in key lending rates.



At present, the MPC of the central bank has maintained the repo rate, or short-term lending rate, for commercial banks, at 4 per cent. Consequently, the reverse repo rate was kept unchanged at 3.35 per cent. Besides, system liquidity remains in the surplus mode with the average daily net absorption under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) at ₹7.6 lakh crore in November 2021.

However, the RBI has made a calibrated progress towards liquidity normalisation since the October policy with amount parked in overnight fixed reverse repo declining to ₹2.6 lakh crore from ₹3.4 lakh crore at pre-October policy.

# Ikea plans mega presence in Delhi to boost growth

The firm plans to have an omnichannel approach which will have a combination of 'big and small stores' as well as an online presence

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** After announcing its plans to enter Gurugram, Sweden-based Ingka Group's home furnishings brand Ikea plans to have stores in Delhi as well as Noida.

The company will enter the NCR market via Ingka Centre which will come up in Gurugram.

The centre is a mixed use retail destination which will be anchored by a large format Ikea store and is expected to come up within 3-4 years.

In conversation with IANS, Ikea India's CEO Peter Betzel, who also acts as the company's Chief Sustainability Officer said: "We have bought land in Gurugram and Noida and in parallel looking for suitable locations in Delhi. We should be able to announce the timelines (for Delhi and Noida proj-



ects) in the near future."

The home furnishings brand had opened its first physical store in 2018 in Hyderabad followed by the second one at Navi Mumbai in 2020, and recently, expanded its omnichannel presence through

the launch of the 'IKEA App'.

Notably, it made an 'App' entry in Bangalore and several cities in Gujarat, including Ahmedabad, Surat, and Baroda.

"We are looking forward to open our first city store in Worli, Mumbai

The ambition is to increase sourcing from India up to 50 per cent in the coming years to create more affordable products for our customers, reduce carbon footprint and grow the manufacturing sector in India

PETER BETZEL | CEO, IKEA INDIA

within this year.

At present, the company is present in Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Surat and Baroda.

On the pandemic's business impact, Betzel cited that more and more customers are shopping online. "We have been strengthening our online presence in new markets

and also introduced many online services such as 'Click & Collect', home furnishing consultancy, remote planning amongst others. Consumers are also looking for more affordable solutions. Consumers are thinking twice about every spend. During this time, Ikea has been able to lower prices for many of its products for the benefit of the customers."

On the other hand, he poited out the brisk business conducted by the conducted during the festive season.

"Demand for home furnishing has been getting better and will improve even further as the pandemic situation improves. Especially during this festive season, we have seen a lot of customers spending money on what they need for themselves and their families."

# INDIA ON TOP DESPITE PATEL FEAT

## Hosts bowl out Kiwis for 62 in the 1st innings and now lead by 332 runs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Dec 4:** Mumbai-born New Zealand left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel had an unforgettable afternoon Saturday when he entered the annals of Test cricket history with a 10-wicket haul. However, it seems that his efforts will ultimately go in vain as Indian bowlers made it a forgettable evening for him as well as his team. New Zealand were dismissed for a paltry 62 and by the end of the day the hosts had reached 69 without loss – an overall lead of 332 runs with three days remaining. Cheteshwar Pujara, (29 batting, 51b, 3x4, 1x6) opening the innings in place of the injured Shubman Gill, looked in good nick. Giving him company was Mayank Agarwal (38 batting, 75b, 6x4).

The second day of the second Test should have solely belonged to the 34-year-old Patel, who had figures of 47.5-12-119-10, to join the 'Elite List', where he has late Jim Laker and Indian great Anil Kumble for company.

However, Patel's joy was short-lived as his team ended up scoring the lowest total by an overseas side on Indian soil.

After being bowled out for 325,

India struck back quickly with Mohammed Siraj (3/19) dismantling the top-order. The middle-order and tail were decimated by spinners Ravichandran Ashwin (4/8) and Axar Patel (2/14).

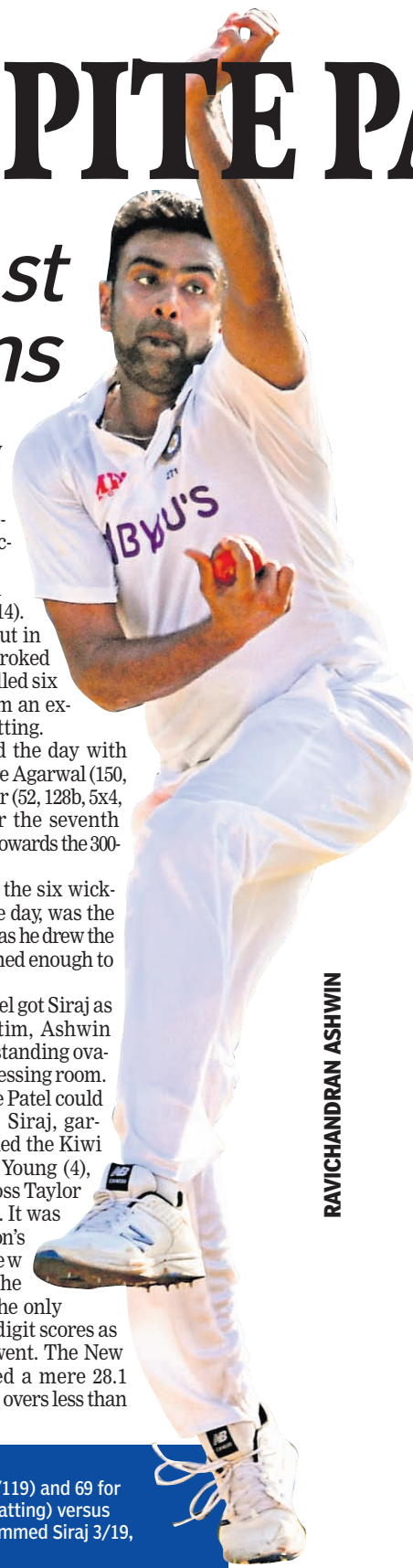
With the match all but in their pocket, Pujara stroked freely and also got a pulled six off Patel – a rarity from an exponent of defensive batting.

Earlier Patel started the day with two quick wickets before Agarwal (150, 311b, 17x4, 4x6) and Axar (52, 128b, 5x4, 1x6) added 67 runs for the seventh wicket to take the score towards the 300-run mark.

The best delivery of the six wickets that Patel got on the day, was the one that got Ashwin out as he drew the batter forward and turned enough to clip the bails.

No wonder when Patel got Siraj as his 10th and final victim, Ashwin was seen giving him a standing ovation from the Indian dressing room.

However, even before Patel could enjoy his special feat, Siraj, garnering lively pace rattled the Kiwi top-order getting Will Young (4), Tom Latham (10) and Ross Taylor (1) in quick succession. It was only due to Kyle Jamieson's (17) knock that New Zealand could go past the 50-run mark. He was the only batsman to get double digit scores as others just came and went. The New Zealand innings lasted a mere 28.1 overs, approximately 19 overs less than those bowled by Patel.



RAVICHANDRAN ASHWIN

## Cricket world hails Ajaz



**WELL DONE MATE:** Mayank Agarwal congratulates Ajaz Patel after the end of the second day's play at the Wankhede Stadium

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, Dec 4:** The cricket fraternity Saturday hailed New Zealand left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel's stupendous feat of taking all the 10 wickets in an innings of a Test match, terming it an 'unreal' and a 'special' effort. Here's what they said on various social media platforms. The 33-year-old Patel's effort was also the best by a visiting spinner in India, surpassing Australia's Nathan Lyon (8/50) in 2017.

**ANIL KUMBLE:** Welcome to the club #AjazPatel #Perfect10 Well bowled! A special effort to achieve it on Day1 & 2 of a Test match.

**SIMON DOULL:** I have been privileged to see some incredible things from @BLACKCAPS in my 15 years of commentary and today is right up there. @Ajaz P That was special mate.

**RAVI SHASTRI:** One of the toughest things to do in the game of cricket. To have an entire team in your kitty in an innings is too good

to be true. Simply unreal. Well done young man - Ajaz Patel.

**RAVICHANDRAN ASHWIN:** Well done on joining a club that eludes 99 per cent of the bowlers that play the game @AjazP. 10 for in an innings is the stuff of dreams

**VVS LAXMAN:** Sensational! Just sensational!! To take all 10 wickets in a Test innings is the stuff dreams are made of. Take a bow, Ajaz Patel, you are in the elite company of Jim Laker and Anil Kumble. And to do it in the city of your birth, wow!!

**HARBHAJAN SINGH:** "Ajaz Patel This will be remembered forever 47.5-12-119-10 simply outstanding. Let me stand and clap.

**SHARDUL THAKUR:** 10 wickets in an innings!! (Surprised face emoji) Truly amazing, well done Ajaz Patel (clapping hands emoji).

**AARON FINCH:** That's the most amazing thing I've ever seen!! Ajaz Patel... What a phenomenal performance.

### BRIEF SCORES

**INDIA 325** (Mayank Agarwal 150, Axar Patel 52, Ajaz Patel 10/119) and 69 for no loss (Mayank Agarwal 38 batting, Cheteshwar Pujara 29 batting) versus **NEW ZEALAND 62 ALL OUT** (Ravichandran Ashwin 4/8, Mohammed Siraj 3/19, Axar Patel 2/14). Match to continue.

# India's tour of SA deferred by a week

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Dec 4:** The Indian cricket team's tour of South Africa will go ahead but the team's departure has been postponed by a week and T20 Internationals are no longer a part of the schedule, the two boards announced Saturday. The announcement ended the speculation surrounding the series after the new Covid-19 variant Omicron triggered anxiety. The four T20s will be played at a later date and Cricket South Africa (CSA)

said it will confirm the venues for the new schedule in the next 48 hours.

The Indians were originally set to leave December 9 but the travel plans have changed. It means that the Tests will now start December 26 instead of the previously finalised December 17.

"India's tour of South Africa, 2021-22 will proceed with the revised dates and itinerary. The team will participate in a three-match Test series followed by a three-match ODI series starting December 26," stated BCCI secretary Jay Shah here.

CSA and Shah's statements came as the Indian board officials met for an AGM here.

CSA appreciated BCCI's commitment to the series. "Cricket South Africa can confirm that the India Tour will continue as originally scheduled, with a few adjustments to the logistical arrangements, such as the arrival time of the Indian team," the CSA said in a release.

"...The tour is now confirmed and the arrival timings of the Indian team will be moved out by a week, to allow for effective logistical planning. CSA is also



pleased to announce that this tour will also take place under the strictest Covid-19 guidelines," it added.

CSA also made it clear the venues will be picked considering the safety of the players. "CSA is also

- 1st Test to start December 26 instead of December 17
- T20Is will be played later, the dates of which CSA will announce soon
- Strict Covid-19 protocols to be followed during the series

pleased to confirm that the allocation of match venues will also be in respect of the bubble safe environment (BSEs) and therefore the decision on the allocations will take into account the need for safer playing environments," it said.

## SINDHU IN BWF FINAL

Indian shuttler pulls off hard-fought win over Yamaguchi

INDO-ASIAN NEW SERVICE

**Bali, Dec 4:** PV Sindhu reached the final of the 2021 BWF World Tour Finals after beating Japan's Akane Yamaguchi in a women's singles match here Saturday. The

two-time Olympic medallist beat her opponent Yamaguchi 21-15, 15-21, 21-19 in an exciting clash that lasted 70 minutes. Sindhu will now face South Korea's An Seyoung, in the final. Seyoung defeated Thai top seed Pornpawee Chochuwong 25-23, 21-17 in the other semis.

It was Sindhu and Yamaguchi's fourth meeting of the year. While the Indian beat the Japanese shuttler at the All England Open and the Tokyo Olympics quarter-

finals of the Indonesia Masters. Right from the beginning, the momentum constantly shifted swung between the two players. However, it was the reigning badminton World Champion Sindhu who took a two-point advantage into the first game's midway interval.

However, leading 15-14 in the first game, Sindhu suddenly upped the ante and raced away to a 20-14 lead before winning it by a big margin. In the second game, the Japanese player led 11-10 at the interval. After restart it was her turn to increase the tempo and restore parity in the tie as she closed out the game at 15.

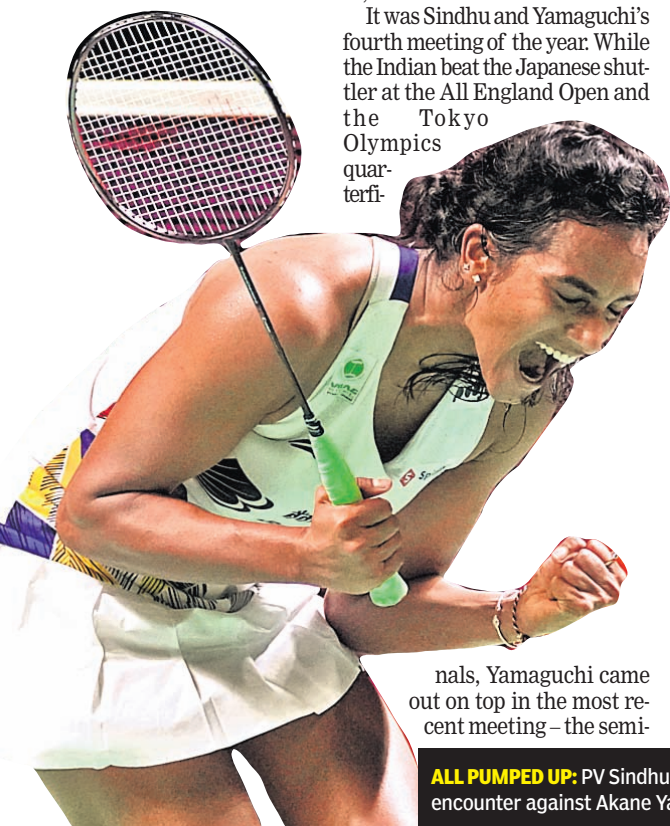
Thereafter, both players went in all guns blazing in the third and deciding game. Down 4-5 at one stage, Sindhu rallied to win the next eight points on the trot and turned the tide of the game in her favour.

Yamaguchi managed to cut the Indian's lead following some long, exhausting rallies and even drew level at 17-17. However, Sindhu won the battle of nerves to secure herself a place in the final.

In the men's singles semifinals, Lakshya Sen lost to top-seeded Viktor Axelsen of Denmark 13-21, 11-21 in a lop-sided encounter.

nals, Yamaguchi came out on top in the most recent meeting – the semi-

**ALL PUMPED UP:** PV Sindhu screams after winning her semifinal encounter against Akane Yamaguchi at Bali, Saturday



## Hockey teams to participate in 2022 CWG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 4:** Hockey India (HI) has reversed its decision to pull out its teams from next year's Birmingham Commonwealth Games (CWG) and will compete in the multi-sport quadrennial event 'if they qualify', a Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) official told this agency Saturday.

HI had earlier this year decided to withdraw its teams from the 2022 CWG, citing Covid-19 related concerns and short turnaround time between the Birmingham CWG and Hangzhou Asian Games, a qualifier for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

The Birmingham CWG is scheduled to be held from July 28 to August 8 next year while the Asian Games are starting September 10.

"No team have been offered a place yet but the IOA (Indian Olympic Association) has said to CGF president that they will accept if the teams qualify which is highly likely," the official said.

"Indian Sports Minister (Anurag Thakur) has been involved I understand and he has been influential. The CGF president (Dame Louise Martin) has been in close dialogue with IOA president (Narinder Batra)," the official added.

Thakur had earlier criticised HI's decision to pull out of the event without any consultation with his ministry.

## NEWS IN BRIEF



West Ham players celebrate with Arthur Masuaku (26) after his goal Saturday

### Oldest living Test player dies

**London:** Eileen Ash, the oldest living Test cricketer, has died at the age of 110, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said Saturday. Ash played seven Tests for England on either side of the second World War, taking 10 wickets at an average of 23 with her right-arm pace bowling. She had made her Test debut against Australia in 1937. She was part of the Ashes tour of Australia in 1949 apart from playing representative cricket for Civil Service Women, Middlesex Women and South Women in the domestic arena. Apart from her cricket career, Ash also worked for MI6, the Secret Intelligence Service, during World War II.

### West Ham stun Chelsea

**London:** West Ham stunned PL leaders Chelsea 3-2 in a match played Saturday. The defeat was all

the more surprising as it was Chelsea who had taken the lead in the exciting game. Thiago Silva put Chelsea ahead with a majestic header in the 28th minute of the match. However, Manuel Lanzini equalised for West Ham from the spot in the 40th minute. Chelsea again took the lead just before half time when Mason Mount scored off a combined move. The second half was dominated to a large extent by West Ham. Jarrod Bowen brought West Ham on level terms in the 56th minute and then three minutes before the scheduled close of play Arthur Masuaku got the winning goal for the Hammers.

### Pakistan finish 11th

**Bhubaneswar:** South Africa defeated Korea 4-0 to finish ninth at the ongoing FIH Junior Men's Hockey World Cup at the Kalinga Stadium here Saturday. The goals were scored by skipper Guy Morgan (35th, 47th minutes), Trevor de Lora (47th) and Zenani Kraai (53rd). In another match, Pakistan juniors thrashed Poland 5-

### Last minute winner

**Margao:** A last-gasp winner by Khassa Camara enabled North East United FC (NEUFC) beat FC Goa 2-1 and grab all the three points Saturday in their ISL encounter played at the Fatorda Stadium in here. NEUFC took the lead in the 10th minute of the game through Rochharzela. However, within three minutes Jesuraj equalised for the Goa side. Just when everyone thought that the points will be shared Camara struck to give some breathing space to NEUFC coach Khalid Jamil.

### Chennai City FC barred

**New Delhi:** Former champions Chennai City FC were Saturday barred from participating in the upcoming I-League after failing to comply with AIFF's club licensing regulations. The decision to bar them was taken by the AIFF's Licensing Committee. Kenkre FC, who finished second in the I-League qualifiers, will replace the former champions. The I-League will kick off in Kolkata December 26, but the fixtures are yet to be announced. Besides being banned from participating in the I-League, the AIFF also imposed a FIFA transfer ban on the club, which does not allow them to sign players. Chennai City FC won the I-League crown in 2018-19 season.