



NOSTALGIC MOMENTS

Actor Sara Ali Khan recreates her mother Amrita Singh's popular song *Jab Hum Jawan Honge* from 'Betaab' in a reality show

LEISURE P2



HINDU DEITY'S HOMECOMING

An ancient idol of a goddess missing from a UP temple will soon find its way back home to India from the UK

INTERNATIONAL P10



AUSSIES TAKE LEAD

Australia draw first blood in the Ashes as they beat England by 9 wickets in the series-opener at the Gabba

SPORTS P12

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 251 | www.orissapost.com BHUBANESWAR | SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12 | 2021 12 PAGES + SUNDAY POST | ₹5.00

₹2.33cr down the drain as check dams lying defunct

Lack of proper planning, unsuitable locations, flawed concepts and incomplete check dams have ensured huge losses to the state exchequer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 11: Although the state government is pumping in huge amount of money for building check dams for irrigation purposes, large tracts of farmlands do not get a drop of water as many of these check dams remain dysfunctional, indicating large-scale corruption in the process.

This was revealed in the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India's report which was tabled in the Assembly recently.

The purpose of building the check dams was also to provide employment to rural populace under MGNREGS. The CAG scrutinised documents of 2 Gram Panchayats and BDOs under 7 Panchayat Samitis between 2018 and 2020. Construction of 48 check dams at the cost of ₹3.13 crore was targeted between 2009 and 2018 under MGNREGS. By March 2018, 37 check dams were built with ₹2.48 crore, out of which, 30 costing ₹2.03 crore were audited. This apart, 11 check dams costing ₹30.35 lakh remained incomplete.

The audit revealed that these check dams were not being utilised for irrigation of farmlands, were built randomly with no farmland nearby and lacked water containing capacity.



None of the aforementioned directions were followed and no observation was made as to which crops required irrigation, before building the check dams.

Even more shockingly, the dams were not handed over to the local farming groups or Pani Panchayats, the CAG report revealed. Due to this, check dams built at the cost of ₹2.03 crore have been lying defunct for years.

With this, MGNREGS scheme's goal of strengthening the natural resources and increasing the farmland's fertility to boost employment in rural areas has taken a back seat.

NAVEEN WRITES TO PM FOR 14.84L PMAY-G HOUSES

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding 14.84 lakh housing units under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana—Gramin (PMAY-G). Patnaik urged Modi to sanction 1.84 lakh houses for families hit by Cyclone Fani under PMAY-G and 13 lakh houses for the non-Fani affected in tribal dominated districts and backward KBK region. He thanked the PM for sanctioning 8.17 lakh PMAY-G houses to Odisha while drawing his attention to the woes of many families of KBK region and tribal dominated districts of the state and many families who have lost their houses in Cyclone Fani in 2019. He said the RD Ministry had allowed identification of eligible left-out families through 'Awas Plus' by March 7, 2019. But the state could identify only 35,000 families within this stipulated period.

P-3

JSW Cement
The Leaders' Choice
1800 266 266 1 (toll free)

SC junks DQ in govt plot allotment

The top court allowed a state govt's petition and cleared decks for prosecution of three officials, who had given away prime lands in Bhubaneswar for a song

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Dec 11: The Supreme Court Saturday held that discretionary quota (DQ) in allotment of government properties inevitably leads to nepotism, corruption and favouritism, and this practice needs to be stopped. The bench held that the allotment of public properties must be through auction process.

A two-judge bench of the apex court comprising Justices MR Shah and BV Nagarathana set aside an order of the Orissa High Court and allowed the state government's plea to initiate trial against three accused officials of Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) and Housing and Urban Development department, who clandestinely distributed prime plots in Commercial Complex District Centre at Chandrasekharpur in Bhubaneswar.

Allotment of public properties must be transparent and has to be fair and non-arbitrary. In such

The accused officials caused losses to the tune of ₹30,27,849 and ₹71,57,055 to the BDA

It was alleged that BDA officials Pratima Mohanty, Prakash Chandra Patra and Rajendra Kumar Samal distributed the prime plots among themselves or their relatives and that too at minimal rates as compared to the prevalent rates in the area

matters, public interest has to be the prime guiding consideration. The allotment of plots in the discretionary quota cannot be at the whims of the persons in power and/or the public servants who are dealing with the allotment of plots in the discretionary quota," the bench held.

The apex court noted that even if guidelines are issued to be followed while allotment of the plots under the discretionary quota and it is found that many a time they are hardly followed or are manipulated to suit the particular circumstances. Therefore, the best thing is to do away with such discretionary quota and allotments

of the public properties/plots must be through public auction by and large, the apex court said.

"Even in the case where the policy decision is taken to allot the plots to a particular class—down-trodden class—in that case also the guidelines must be strictly followed and as observed hereinabove the allotment must reflect the fair play and non-arbitrariness and should have objective, criteria/procedure," the bench ruled.

Significantly, it was alleged that BDA officials Pratima Mohanty, Prakash Chandra Patra and Rajendra Kumar Samal distributed the prime plots among themselves or their relatives and that too

at minimal rates as compared to the prevalent rates in the area. The accused officials caused losses to the tune of ₹30,27,849 and ₹71,57,055 to the BDA.

As per settled proposition of law while examining an FIR/complaint quashing of which is sought, the court cannot embark upon any enquiry as to the reliability or genuineness of allegations made in the FIR/complaint," the 25-page judgement read.

Notably, a case was registered against the accused by Vigilance unit of Bhubaneswar which filed the chargesheet against all the accused.

The chargesheet said that the accused had entered into criminal conspiracy and committed criminal misconduct by abusing their official position showing undue favour to their relatives and allowed illegal pecuniary advantage to the allottees in allotting 10 plots.

Five accused—Bibhuti Bhushan Ray, Parsuram Biswal, Pratima Mohanty, Rajendra Kumar Samal and Prakash Chandra Patra approached the High Court and prayed to quash the criminal proceedings against them. The HC had quashed the criminal proceedings against Pratima, Prakash and Rajendra.

State extends free ration scheme by 4 more months

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 11: The state government has extended the distribution of free ration to the beneficiaries covered under its own State Food Security Scheme (SFSS) by four months.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has directed officials concerned to extend distribution of additional 5 kg of rice per head free of cost to beneficiaries of the SFSS from December 2021 to March 2022. Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said in a statement Saturday.

The directive was issued in view of the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic situation. As many as 2,88,528 families comprising 9,15,532 members covered under the scheme will be benefited from this move, it said.

For this purpose, the state government will distribute 4,578 tonne rice per month totalling 18,310.640 tonne rice (for four months) from the state pool with an expenditure of ₹68.13 crore from its own fund.

"This will facilitate beneficiaries enrolled in the State Food Security Scheme to remain on par with beneficiaries under NFSA, the CMO said. Notably, the Centre has recently extended the free food-grain distribution scheme under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana by four more months.

State bids adieu to Rana Pratap

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 11: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and other dignitaries paid floral tributes to Junior Warrant Officer (JWO) Rana Pratap Das, who was killed in the helicopter crash in Tamil Nadu's Coonoor, as his mortal remains arrived at the Bhubaneswar airport Saturday morning.

Das, a native of Talcher in Angul district, was killed in the helicopter crash December 8 along with India's first Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat and 11 others.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) officer was given a guard of honour by the personnel of the 120 Infantry Battalion. State ministers, MLAs and top police officers, including Director-General of Police Abhay, were among those who paid floral tributes to JWO Das at the airport. The body was then taken to his native village of Krushnachandrapur in Talcher. Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL), on the direction of Union



CM Naveen Patnaik pays homage to JWO Rana Pratap Das

Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, prepared a special crematorium at the village for his last rites.

People of JWO Das' native village have been demanding that the road between Talabada and Krishnachandrapur be named after him. Later in the day, Rana Pratap's mortal remains were consigned to flames in the presence of family members, officials of the IAF and hundreds of people.

Tornadoes tear through US, claim at least 70

AGENCIES

Mayfield (US), Dec 11: At least 70 people were feared dead in Kentucky after tornadoes and severe weather tore through multiple states and caused catastrophic damage.

Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear said at a news conference Saturday that the death toll may exceed 100. "This has been the most devastating tornado event in our state's history," Beshear said.

The storms hit a candle factory in Kentucky, an Amazon facility in

Illinois and a nursing home in Arkansas. Beshear said about 110 people were in the Mayfield factory when the tornado hit.

Kentucky State Police Trooper Sarah Burgess said search and rescue teams were going through the rubble Saturday but didn't yet have a number for how many have died. "We just can't confirm a number right now because we are still out there working, and we have so many agencies involved in helping us," Burgess said. President Joe Biden tweeted Saturday that he was briefed on the situation. **MORE P10**

WINTER IS HERE



A tourist couple posing for a photo on a cold winter day at Shimla in Himachal Pradesh, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

'Triumphant' farmers start returning home

The 15-month-long protests ended Thursday when the Centre promised the farmers to consider all other demands apart from scrapping the contentious farm laws

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 11: Tikri and Ghazipur borders of Delhi Saturday witnessed the end of a long protest as farmers who have been camping in the national capital for over a year started heading back homes celebrating their success of repeal of the three contentious farm laws.

Farmers were seen packing their bags and moving in tractors used in their fields— which they have been using for commuting and protesting. They hugged each other and bade good bye. Some were seen



distributing sweets and rejoicing with dancing steps. Their makeshift homes were dismantled almost 15 months after farmers' agitation began against the (now scrapped) farm laws and other issues.

The majority of the farmers will start returning to their villages in Punjab from the Singhu and Tikri borders, which they made their homes since November last year. Hundreds of tractors are queued

up at Delhi borders to take the farmers back home.

While the farmers have started dismantling the tents, some have already left for their villages after the government Thursday sent a letter promising to meet the demands.

Some elderly farmers were seen cleaning the place where they had set up tents. The roads are also being cleared of things to make it look like what it was before the agitation. It may take days to completely vacate the entire border area as the protesters are large in numbers. However, the traffic slowly started to resume at Singhu border as hundreds of tractors carrying farmers left the site.

A farmer, Rohi Singh from Bhatinda told IANS that they were not totally satisfied with the way government treated the farmers, on one hand we say "Jai jawan, Jai

kisan" on the other, the government is totally against the farmers. He also said that they feel sad for 700 farmers who lost their lives during the protest.

Barricades are still in place but once the protesters completely vacate, police said, they will take charge of the place. The entire area that changed due to the protests over a long period, is set to start regular activities and mixed reactions have been seen by the locals.

A shopkeeper named Yash Verma said, he has a shop of electrical appliances, but his customers have been facing hardships as the way to his shop was diverted due to the protest. He has been facing a forty per cent loss in sales as most of the areas or the routes were closed due to which the customers found troublesome to reach the shop, Verma said.

leisure



THE MONKEES SINGER-SONGWRITER MICHAEL NESMITH DIES AT 78

Singer, guitarist and songwriter Michael Nesmith, who was with the 1960s pop group *The Monkees*, has died at the age of 78. The quartet enjoyed hits like *Daydream Believer* and *I'm A Believer*, and starred in their own popular TV sitcom.

MCU'S ETERNALS HEADS TO DISNEY PLUS IN JAN 2022

The most recent chapter in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) -- *Eternals*, will land on Disney Plus in just over a month January 12, 2022. Disney made the announcement Saturday, a week ahead of the theatrical release of *Spider-Man: No Way Home*, the next highly anticipated MCU film.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES

Carry the peace sign if you have to, because today, people will literally pull you into arguments. You could even be facing some kind of litigation or trouble with peace-keeping forces, warns Ganesh. Meditate, walk, or simply seek the company of friends and loved ones.

TAURUS

Armed with ingenuity and lateral thinking, you are all set to take on today with practised ease, feels Ganesh. The toughest of problems will crumble like a house of cards before your intellect. A promotion or salary hike is also likely today. Money lenders and brokers will have a profitable day, says Ganesh.

GEMINI

An extremely profitable and progressive day awaits you. You may come into a handsome inheritance. Your responsibilities will increase along with a possible promotion at work. However, do not let your success go to your head, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Ganesh says that you will carve out your path for progress. You will get respect and recognition from people. Business rivals and illness may bother you. Beware of enemies' actions. Your alertness will thwart their designs.

LEO

You will be in a light-hearted mood today. Be it at the office or at the home, you will be full of joy and will be looking to pass your time leisurely. You will spend time with family and friends. You will be unable to implement your plans for tackling work today in your current mood, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

You may relieve all the tension and pressure inside you today, a day which will be full of light and relaxing moments. Ganesh foretells a beneficial and progressive day for you. You will receive many invitations to social gatherings and parties.

LIBRA

Ganesh says that to gain future opportunities you may have to rely on past experience. You will tend to become possessive about things close to you. You will also have to deal with unpleasant situations where your integrity is questioned. All said and done your day will go good except for minor issues and your understanding attitude will be praise worth today.

SCORPIO

Today, Ganesh is in the mood to give you health tips. Cultivate healthy eating habits and exercise regularly to stay away from disorders like obesity. Irregular eating habits and unhealthy lifestyle may lead to many other troubles. Eat healthy, stay happy.

SAGITTARIUS

You are on a high today and a feeling of ecstasy surrounds you. You are performance driven and shall give you best in anything you take up. Listen to your inner voice, it will guide you to the correct path. Ganesh showers His benevolent blessings on you.

CAPRICORN

You have meticulously planned every aspect of your plan and prepared the check list. The only thing left now to do is execution of that plan. Delays and obstacles, however, will block your path and will leave you disheartened. Don't doubt your abilities though. You have planned properly and have faith as those delays are not permanent, assures Ganesh.

AQUARIUS

Don't let your emotions play a spoilsport in the important decisions of your life. The tendency to be sentimental when you need to be rational will become an obstacle in your path. Learn to curb this habit otherwise you may have to pay a heavy price, advises Ganesh.

PISCES

Take one cautious step at a time today, says Ganesh. You will discuss intimate matters at home and official matters at work but be careful about whom you trust and deception from someone close might lead to worry and stress in the future.

Sara recreates Betaab moments

Mumbai: Actress Sara Ali Khan will be seen dancing on her mother and veteran actress Amrita Singh's popular song *Jab Hum Jawan Honge* from the 1983 movie *Betaab* that starred Sunny Deol opposite Amrita.

Sara is going to appear as a special guest along with director Aanand L Rai on the singing reality show *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*.

After watching the performance by contestant Rajshree Bag on the track *Jab Hum Jawan Honge*, Sara got nostalgic and she went on stage and asked Rajshree to sing the song once again so that she could dance on it. Host Aditya Narayan also joined her, and the duo danced together recreating the beauty of that song all over again.

Sunny and Amrita had made their debut in blockbuster *Betaab*, directed by Rahul Rawail and produced by Dharmendra, in the Hindi film industry. The singing re-



ality show *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*, judged by Himesh Reshammiya, Vishal Dadlani and Shankar Mahadevan airs on Zee TV.



I'm playing a small part in Atrangi Re: Akshay

New Delhi: A-lister Akshay Kumar is all set to enchant the audience with his latest role in the upcoming film *Atrangi Re*.

Crediting it as a complete Sara Ali Khan and Dhanush movie, the *Khiladi* actor says he is just a character actor in the Anand L Rai directorial.

Not much is known about Akshay's role in *Atrangi Re*, which is slated to release December 24 on Disney+ Hotstar.

In an interview, Akshay said: "I am just a small part of the film but this is actually Dhanush and Sara's film. They are the main lead and I am just a character in it. So, when this film came to me I liked the story." The 54-year-old star revealed why he said 'yes' to such a character: "The character was small but I liked it so much that I told Anand L Rai that I will do it and he was also shocked to hear how I said 'yes' to this," said Akshay, who in 2020, was ranked as the highest-paid Hindi film actor by Forbes.

9TH KALINGA LITERARY FESTIVAL- DAY 2

'Every ruler has destroyed history of previous rulers'



Orissa POST Editor Tathagata Satpathy makes a point at the event

Bhubaneswar: The second day of Kalinga Literary Festival (KLF) here witnessed nine sessions ranging from history, sports, climate change to social and political lives along with regular sessions on poetry recitations, Saturday.

Participating in the inaugural session Rajya Sabha MP Amar Patnaik said that India was the global Vishwa Guru because of its rich and vibrant literature containing themes such as love, peace and universal brotherhood. The country will regain its position soon, he added.

Dharitri and Orissa POST Editor Tathagata Satpathy, participating in a discussion titled *Rulers Erases History of Other Rulers*, said,

"Every ruler on the Earth has destroyed the history of previous rulers as it is the nature of power."

"Be it BJD in Odisha or the NDA at the Centre, each of them has tried to remove history of previous rulers. This (attitude) is with everyone, across the party lines," he remarked while talking about intolerance in regimes.

Speaking during a session on *Empowerment of women through sports and how to strengthen the trend*, Indian women footballer Bembem Devi said "Indian women's football has come a long way from where it was a decade ago but it will take another decade to play the football World Cup. The men's football in India has

been strengthened due to participation of corporate and private players. If similar support is extended towards the women's football team then it would tremendously benefit the team."

Chief of Odisha Skill Development Authority Subroto Bagchi, on the Covid outbreak, maintained that "Covid management handling couldn't have been possible by a corporate. Governments across globe are not dumb; they are actually smarter than we think. A government responds to ideas that has the ability to change on a large scale basis"

The three-day literary extravaganza will conclude Sunday.

West Side Story lacks exquisite 'Spielberg' stamp

This 156-minute script is engaging but very perfunctorily it spends a valuable amount of time on the songs

Steven Spielberg's *West Side Story* is a vital and vibrant remake of the 1957 original Broadway musical of the same name and its faithful 1961 film adaptation whose dramatic theme was famously based on William Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*.

Set in early 1950, in the backdrop of the gentrification of the Upper West Side neighbourhood of Manhattan in New York City, the story concerns the feud between rival street gangs; The white Jets and the Puerto Rican Sharks, each wanting to control the Upper West Side Neighbourhood.

The film begins with a witty flourish with members of the Sharks gang being taunted by the white



gang because the turf that they're fighting over is changing and shrinking beneath their feet.

Amidst their conflict, Maria (Rachel Zegler), the younger sister of the Shark leader Bernardo (David Alvarez) falls in love with Tony

Faist), and is the sworn enemy of her brother. But when she realises this, it is too late.

Bernardo is not happy that his sister is attracted to a gringo, a white American, and with their long-standing enmity with the Jets, he challenges Riff for a duel and insists that Riff invite Tony to the rumble.

During the fight, the situation goes out of control. And Bernardo and Riff are killed. And then the tragedy of errors concludes the drama just like in *Romeo and Juliet*.

This 156-minute script is engaging but very perfunctorily it spends a valuable amount of time on the

DIRECTOR: Steven Spielberg

CAST: Ansel Elgort, Rachel Zegler, Ariana DeBose, David Alvarez, Mike Faist and others

songs and the general rambling of the working-class Puerto Ricans.

On the performance front, every actor gives their sincere best. Elgort and Zegler make a brilliant pair but they lack on-screen chemistry.

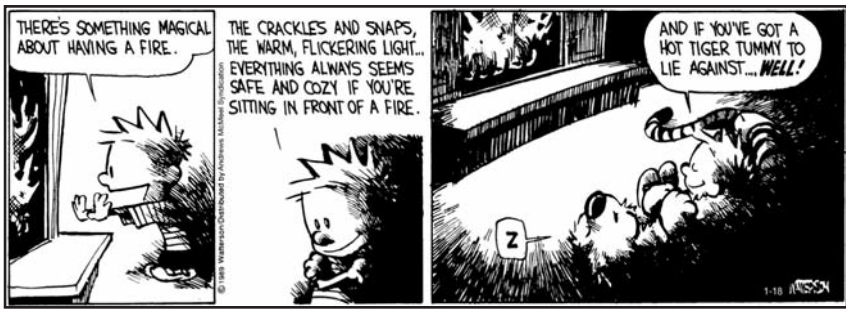
Overall, this film is brilliantly mounted, with good production values, picture-perfect shots, seamless editing, and excellent music, but it lacks the exquisite 'Steven Spielberg' stamp on it.

FUN post

PEANUTS



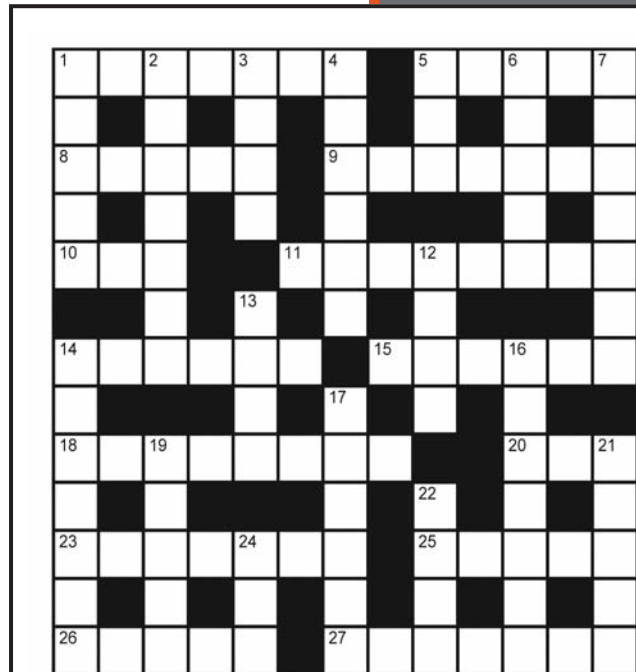
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



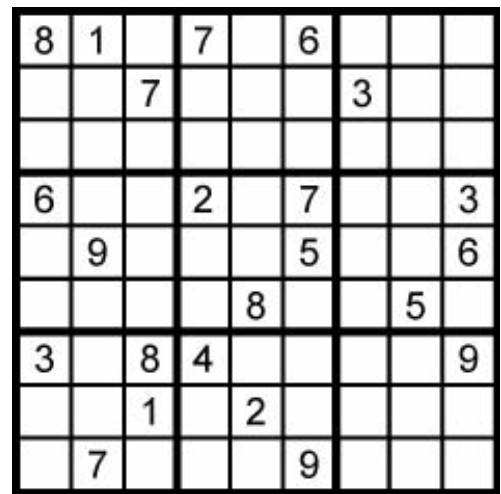
CROSSWORD



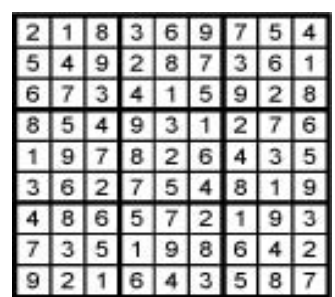
- Across
- 1 Seaport
 - 5 Renaissance fiddle
 - 8 Eskimo boat
 - 9 Pimiento powder
 - 10 Apply gently
 - 11 Gulf of Venice neighbor
 - 14 Persian Gulf kingdom
 - 15 See eye to eye
 - 18 French pastry
 - 20 Captain's journal
 - 23 Contemplative
 - 25 Sufficient result
 - 26 Poison ivy
 - 27 Game break (4-3)
 - Down
 - 1 Harrier, e.g.
 - 2 Storm follower, at time
 - 3 Sturdy trees
 - 4 River feature
 - 5 Cemetery inits.
 - 6 Constructed
 - 7 *Canterbury Tales* author
 - 12 Links club
 - 13 Coffee grinder
 - 14 Heyerdahl's transport (3,4)
 - 16 Odysseus's detainer
 - 17 Cloak-and-dagger word
 - 19 Go to pieces
 - 21 Belgian urban centre
 - 22 Raffia, e.g.
 - 24 True laurel

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

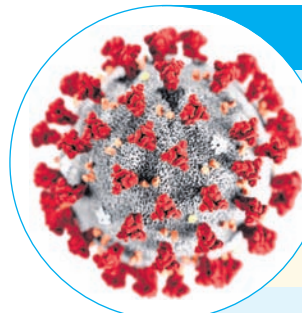


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



FOR LORD'S BLESSINGS Hundreds of devotees queuing up on the Grand Road in Puri to visit Srimandir, Saturday



COVID-19 TRACKER

Table with 4 columns: Region, Infected, Recovered, Dead. Data for World, India, and Odisha.

Naveen seeks 14.84L houses under PMAY-G

The Chief Minister wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking 1.84 lakh housing units for cyclone Fani-affected people and 13 lakh houses for poor people living in tribal and KBK districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 11: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding 14.84 lakh housing units under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G).



visit in May 2019, Naveen said that there are 1.84 lakh families whose houses got damaged by cyclone Fani and they are not otherwise entitled for availing normal PMAY (G) houses.

"So, these families may be considered for PMAY-G (Special) houses waiving the pre-condition of their names to be in PWL of PMAY (G)," he wrote.

Thanking Modi for sanctioning 8.17 lakh PMAY-G houses to Odisha, Naveen drew his attention to the woes of many families of KBK and tribal-dominated districts of the state and the families who have lost their houses in cyclone Fani.

CAG censures BMC for failure to stop roadside animal slaughter

THE CIVIC BODY HAD BUILT AN ABATTOIR AT A COST OF ₹7.27 CRORE AT GADAKANA, BUT FAILED TO UTILISE IT OWING TO THE APATHETIC APPROACH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 11: The Comptroller and Audit General (CAG) has censured the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) for not heeding to the advice of the expert committee to start the operation of abattoir constructed at a cost of ₹7.27 crore and the civic body's failure to end open slaughter of animals.



IN ITS LATEST REPORT, THE CAG STATED THAT IN 2011 THE BMC ENGAGED CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (CED) FOR CONSULTANCY TO CONSTRUCT A MODERN ABATTOIR

WHILE FORMING A DETAILED PROJECT REPORT (DPR), THE CED SUGGESTED THAT ADOPTING THE CONSTRUCT, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN (COM) MODEL WOULD NOT BE FEASIBLE FOR SMALL PROJECTS WHERE ONLY 100 SHEEP COULD BE SLAUGHTERED PER DAY

the COM model. Following this, the CED chalked out a second DPR and stated that the capacity of the slaughterhouse would be 100 sheep per day at an estimated project cost of ₹6.4 crore.

The BMC then invited Request for Proposal (RFP) in November 2013 for the COM of the slaughterhouse, but did not receive any response. Thereafter, in August 2014, the National Building Construction Corporation offered to complete the project on turnkey basis and constructed the slaughterhouse at Gadakana in 2017 at a cost of ₹7.27 crore.

The CAG observed that the BMC invited multiple bids for

O&M from 2017 but failed to receive any response. However, while one agency showed interest, an expert committee constituted by the BMC for its selection did not express any opinion on its acceptability. Rather, the committee suggested enforcing a ban on road side slaughtering to make the plant operational.

"However, no efforts were made either for engaging an operator nor was the ban on road side slaughtering enforced, rendering the abattoir at Gadakana useless. The BMC blatantly ignored suggestions by the CED, which is indicative of lackadaisical approach of the civic body in making the slaughterhouse operational," the CAG report said.

Meanwhile, the Housing and Urban (H&UD) department stated that it given its nod to an agency in February 2021 for O&M of the abattoir. While a MoU was signed between the party and the agency, the operations have been delayed owing to the pandemic.

"It is clear that the slaughterhouse is now going to be made operational through outsourcing of O&M activities to an external agency, something that had been suggested by the consultant in October 2013 itself, but ignored by the BMC. Non-adherence to the advice has led to the infrastructure being unused and failure in preventing roadside open slaughtering of animals," the report added.

Three middlemen nabbed from SCB

Cuttack: The police Saturday claimed to have arrested three middlemen from SCB Medical College and Hospital here. The arrested have been identified as Sushant Mahapatra of Mallahashi, Ajay Mahapatra of Ranihaat and Silan Kumar Jena of Tangi, police said.

Odia girl facing racial bias in NZ seeks Centre's help

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 11: A girl from Soro area in the state facing racial discrimination in New Zealand has sought help of the Government of India.

Padmavati Maharana, 32, a native of village Kanpur under Soro police station limits, has been in Rangiora town, under Canterbury of New Zealand after completing PG in English.

The girl, who was teaching Yoga since 2018, came under attacks from some local residents after she posted a video footage through

The girl, who was teaching Yoga since 2018, came under attacks from some local residents after she posted a video footage through social media (TikTok App) appealing to people to shun non-vegetarian food for a healthy life.

This post became controversial and she faced trolling in the social media against her and received uncomfortable messages in her social media accounts including Facebook account, Messenger and WhatsApp.

Padmavati alleged that she was getting calls from unknown numbers and even prepaid beef stuffed pizzas were being sent to her from unknown sources. Some people also staged demonstrations before her office. The girl lodged a complaint with the local police but in vain.

Due to COVID restrictions, while she was imparting Yoga training through an online medium, she was forced to live in her room as people are abusing her in filthy language with racial remarks in front of her rented accommodation.

BJP at Gov's door over House sine die



The BJP MLAs return from Raj Bhawan after meeting Governor Ganeshi Lal, Saturday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 11: A day after the Winter Session of Odisha Assembly adjourned sine die, the BJP legislators Saturday sought personal intervention of Governor Ganeshi Lal for proper functioning of the Assembly.

The BJP lawmakers alleged that the decision of Speaker SN Patro to adjourn the Winter Session sine die 20 days ahead of scheduled date is unconstitutional

and undemocratic. They urged the Governor to direct the Speaker to show respect to the Constitution and conduct the business of the House impartially.

They also requested the Governor to ask Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to attend the Assembly physically.

The BJP MLAs alleged that the Chief Minister was touring several districts and addressing public meetings as well as party events. But, he was staying away from Assembly debate and discussions despite being the leader of the House, they said.

The saffron party members also alleged that the Speaker was not maintaining impartiality in running the business of the House and he has been depriving the Opposition from discussing various issues concerning the interest of the people and the state.

BJP deputy leader in the Assembly, Bishnu Sethi, said as per the constitutional provisions the House should sit for 60 days in three sessions in a particular calendar year. During the last three years, the Assembly had only 112 sittings and eight sessions instead of 180 sittings and nine sessions, he said.

Sethi further said the long absence of the Chief Minister in the Assembly is an insult and disrespect to the House. "The Speaker had also lowered the dignity of the House by not directing the Chief Minister to attend the house", he stated.

The MLAs further said it was disappointing that several House sessions were terminated before the schedule. Stating that the action of the Speaker has led to a constitutional crisis, the BJP MLAs urged the Governor to personally intervene into the issue.

Opposition announces fresh stir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 11: A day after the state Assembly was adjourned sine die 20 days ahead of its schedule amidst a nine-day logjam over the Kalahandi woman teacher murder case, the opposition Congress and BJP Saturday announced fresh protests on the issue as well as police excess on youths and students demonstrators.

While Congress announced it would demonstrate in front of all the SP offices December 14 demanding action against erring police personnel who allegedly injured NSUI activists during an agitation in front of the Assembly Friday, the BJP Legislature Party members rushed to the Governor seeking his intervention on abrupt culmination of the Winter Session. At a press conference here, OPCC president Niranjan Patnaik and CLP leader Narasingha Mishra strongly condemned police "excess" on the peaceful agitation by NSUI activists.

MAMITA MURDER

Mishra termed the lathi-charge on party workers as "torture" and accused the state government of violating the human rights of students on "Human Rights Day" which fell Friday. "Law allows police to use of minimum force on the unruly crowd. But police barged into our party office and brutally assaulted workers. In a democratic setup, police have no right to enter into the office of a recognised political party unless deadly criminals have taken shelter there. Here too they have to take permission from the party office," he said.

Mishra alleged that attempts were made to break the doors at the Congress Bhawan where workers had taken shelter to escape police baton charge. The Commissioner of Police should be suspended, Mishra, a lawyer by profession said, adding police are liable to punishment under Section 307 of IPC, attempt

to commit murder, and a case should be registered for house trespassing. Many NSUI activists were injured in the police lathi charge during the agitation on Mahatma Gandhi Marg when they were on the way to "gherao the assembly". Mishra said that Congress would also move the Human Rights Commission, seeking action against erring cops and compensation for injured workers. The party will intensify the agitation in coming days, he said, adding that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was to blame for the police atrocities.

Meanwhile, BJP MLAs also strongly condemned the police action against the BJP Yuva Morcha activists. The BJP frontal organisation youths were injured while picketing before the Assembly Friday demanding removal of Minister of State for Home, DS Mishra. The BJP legislature party members also rushed to Puri and invoked blessings of Lord Jagannath to save the state from "anarchy".

Central Bank of India POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property). Includes details of regional office, legal notice, and a table of mortgage details.

SHORT TAKES

5 injured in acid attack

Bargarh: At least five people were injured in an acid attack at Nuapada under Bargarh Municipality, Saturday. The injured were identified as Harihar Bhoi, Manoj Soni, Paban Soni, Gita Devi and Pinku Paban. There were heated arguments between two siblings Paban and Manoj. At that time, some neighbours came to settle the issue. Paban Soni hurled acid at them. Paban himself was injured. They were admitted to Bargarh Town CHC. Some of them were shifted to VIMSAR. Police have detained Paban. However, the reason of such an attack is not known.

Teacher dies in bee attack

Rupsa: A teacher died due to bee attack in Kulida panchayat under Basta block in Balasore, Saturday. According to reports, Pradip Kumar Ghose, assistant teacher of Srustidhar UP School was on way back home. At Brahmapura Chhak, a swarm of bees attacked him leaving him critically hurt. Locals rescued and rushed him to GK Bhattar Hospital in Jaleswar where he succumbed during treatment.

Central team to visit Ganjam today

Chhatrapur: A central team will visit Ganjam district Sunday to conduct an assessment of crop loss arising out of cyclonic storm Jawad, a report said. Incessant rainfall lashed the district following the formation of the cyclonic storm and inundated large tracts of farmlands in the district. As a result, paddy crops and vegetables were destroyed. The team led by Sourav Ray, joint secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs will visit farmlands in various parts of the district and make an assessment of crop loss. They will prepare a report on crop loss and submit the report.

Ex-Champua MLA joins BJD

Keonjhar: Former Champua MLA Dhanurjaya Siddhu joined the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in Bhubaneswar, Saturday. Siddhu joined the ruling party in the presence of BJD's Keonjhar in-charge and Jajpur MLA Pranab Prakash Das, observer Ashok Bal and minister Premananda Nayak. BJD's OBC Morcha president Mitrabhanu Mahakur, general secretary Prabhat Kumar Sahu and joint secretary Seshadev Biswal also joined the party along with Siddhu. Speaking to media, Siddhu said he has only changed his political platform but will continue to work for the uplift of Juang, Bhuyan, Gond and Bathudi tribals in Telkoi Assembly segment in Keonjhar district. Siddhu was elected MLA from Champua on a Congress ticket in 2004 but lost twice in 2009 and 2014 from Telkoi. Later he joined BJD and contested from Telkoi.



Villagers and students of Kantapada panchayat in Angul district calling for a sustainable mountain tourism taking out a rally on the occasion of International Mountain Day, Saturday

MOUNTAIN TOURISM

Subsidy eludes PMAY beneficiaries

As funds for second installment have not been released, construction of houses have remained incomplete forcing beneficiaries to live in the open

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Dec 11: As many as 400 beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) have been forced to live outside or in half-finished houses in this district due to delay in release of subsidy, a report said. The beneficiaries have knocked the doors of Sambalpur Municipal Corporation (SMC) but the civic body is yet to release the subsidy. The civic body has also acknowledged the delay. The civic authorities have said that the beneficiaries have not received their subsidy from November 9 which they claimed has occurred because of technical problems. A few months ago, distribution of the centre-sponsored housing scheme had snowballed into a major controversy between the BJP and the BJD. The BJP claimed the centre sponsored scheme has made housing affordable for all and attacked the ruling party BJD for reportedly branding the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Houses (PMAY) houses as Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana (BPGY) houses. The party accused the BJD government of appropriating the central schemes and showcasing them as its own. The ruling party denied it stating that the state government provided the same amount of funds as by the centre. This has

been confirmed after the centre awarded Odisha for being the best performing state for rural housing, the BJD said. However, when over 400 beneficiaries are awaiting release of their subsidy, both the parties have stopped opening their mouth. A beneficiary of Tangarpali said he started construction of a house after receiving the work order. Till now, he has received only ₹40,000 in the first installment. He has now laid the roof of the house and is expected to receive the second installment as per norms. The SMC officials have monitored the house construction by visiting the site and has submitted the photograph of his house and other documents. He has made several rounds of the SMC office. Although a month has passed, he is yet to receive his second installment. Raw material suppliers regularly haunt him for payments and he is unable to carry out the work due to paucity of money. He was expecting the subsidy by within the deadline but has been let down. Similar is the fate of over 400 beneficiaries who are waiting for clearance of their final bills or second installment of subsidy. After demolishing their old houses, they are in a spot as they fail to complete their houses due to lack of funds and are forced to live under open sky.

Woman Maoist surrenders

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur Dec 11: A woman Maoist of Chhattisgarh surrendered before the DIG, South Western Range and Nabarangpur SP here, Saturday after being allured by the rehabilitation scheme of the state government. The woman ultra was identified as Kamleswari Marei, 30, alias Amila of Kondagaon district in Chhattisgarh.

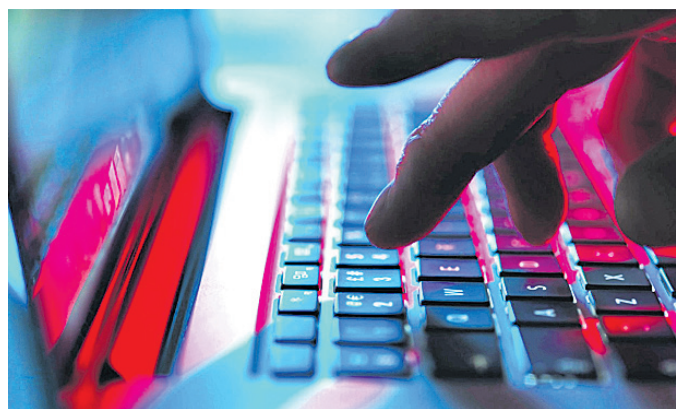
She was working as a party member in the local guerilla squad of Mainpur division of CPI (Maoists) in Garibandh district of Chhattisgarh. She surrendered in the presence of DIG Rajesh Pandit, Nabarangpur SP PS Parmar and CRPF second commandant N Ratan Kumar Singh at a presser, Saturday. Kamleswari is a native of Hanamundi village under Bishrampur police limits in Kondagaon district of Chhattisgarh.

Staff crunch cripples cyber crime control

FOUR CYBER CRIME POLICE STATIONS ARE RUN BY 26 STAFF, INCLUDING 11 EXPERTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Dec 11: Cyber crimes are spiraling in the state while cyber crime police stations have been plagued by shortage of technically trained staff, a report said. A per official reports, the state has recorded 7,330 cyber crimes from 2015 to September 30, 2021. However, the government has no specific data about the rate of conviction, number of cases under trial, cases settled and number of acquittals in these crimes. In the backdrop of the increasing cyber crimes, the state has only four police stations to deal with such cyber crimes. The four police stations have 26 staff including inspectors, sub-inspectors, ASIs and constables. This came to the fore in the Assembly in a reply to MLA Mohan Majhi's questions on the cyber crimes in the state. Dealing with cyber crimes in towns and interior pockets has been a challenge for four police stations. There is a need for technically trained staff to handle the cyber



crimes. Most of the crimes are related to financial frauds in banking system, snooping and black mailing via social media. Minister of State for Home Dibya Shankar Mishra in his reply said the rate of conviction is on the upswing. These police stations are CID cyber crime police station, Berhampur cyber crime police station and Rourkela cyber crime police station. CID cyber police station is run

by five inspectors, two ASIs and a constable while Berhampur cyber crime police station has an inspector, two sub-inspectors and three constables. Sambalpur has an inspector, a sub-inspector and three constables. For Rourkela, there are two inspectors, an ASI and four constables. What is surprising is that only 11 officials are technically trained. All these police stations are equipped with right blockers, forensic analysis tool kits, laboratory

For over four crore people in the state, only four cyber crime police stations sans adequate number of technical staff is a challenge for the existing police personnel. There is a need for more experts to handle such crimes and carry out proper investigation

facilities, password recovery system, CDR analysis softwares, mobile forensic softwares and online social media analysis tools. However, for more than four crore people in the state, only four cyber crime police stations lacking adequate number of technical staff is a tough challenge for the existing staff when such crimes are on the rise. There is a need for more technical staff capable of handling such crimes and for modern infrastructures, experts observed.

₹94-cr high-tech collectorate building in Chhatrapur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur: The district administration will have a high-tech building for the Collector's office at Chhatrapur. An estimated ₹94.46 crore will be spent for the 10-floored building. The roads and buildings department will carry out its construction. Meanwhile, the state government has given its administrative approval to its cost estimate. The new collectorate building will have a basement area, a ground floor and nine floors. The building will have lift systems while offices of all the departments will be housed in the building. People coming to the collectorate will get facilities at one place, it is said.

TRIBUTE TO THE GENERAL



Students and NCC cadets of Aska Womens' College offering tributes to late General Bipin Rawat, first chief of defence staff Saturday, following his death in a chopper crash in Tamil Nadu

Dolphin counting in Bhitarkanika from Dec 16

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajnagar, Dec 11: The forest department will carry out a dolphin census in Bhitarkanika area of Kendrapara district from December 16. "Dolphins will be enumerated for three days from Dhamra river mouth to Devi river mouth and in Bhitarkanika area," said DFO Jainadatt Pati. Nine teams have been formed for the exercise. Five teams will be deployed in the sea while four teams will be for rivers and creeks. Last year, 342 dolphins were detected in Bhitarkanika area.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.O-1287
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, GAJAPATI, PARALAKHEMUNDI
e-mail: rwd_gajapati@yahoo.co.in
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Identification No. Online Tender 08/GJP/2021-22
1. Name of the work : Road Works
2. Total No. of Work : 9 (Nine) Nos. of road works
3. Estimated cost : Rs. 39.51 lakhs to 8.86 lakhs
4. Class of Contractor : 'D' and 'C' & 'C' & 'B' Class Contractor
5. Period of Completion : Furnished in Annexure
6. Availability of Tender : 13.12.2021 at 10.00 AM to 22.12.2021 upto 5.30 PM
7. Date and Time of Opening of Tender : 23.12.2021 at 11.30 AM
8. Place of Opening : As per Annexure
Further details can be seen from the Website
www.tenderorissa.gov.in
Sd./- SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
R.W. DIVN., GAJAPATI
OIPR-25158/11/0009/2122

1,033 varsity teaching posts vacant

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Dec 11: Large-scale vacancies of teaching posts have affected studies in 11 universities in the state. Out of 1,663 sanctioned teaching posts, 1,033 posts of associate professors, assistant professors and professors (nearly 60 per cent) have remained vacant at 11 universities, a source said. This fact surfaced after the Higher Education Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo replied to a question raised by Keonjhar BJD MLA Mohan Charan Majhi during recent Winter Session of the Assembly. The minister clarified that positions of professor are filled based on promotion. Interestingly, 76 posts of professor have been filled up in the recent past. According to sources, not a single post of professor has been filled in Rajendra University of Bolangir and Kalahandi University, so far. Odisha's oldest - Ravenshaw University in Cuttack has the maximum of 267 sanctioned positions against which it has 193 vacancies including 113 assistant professors, 56 associate professors and 24 professors. The Utkal University has 257



sanctioned posts, of which 126 are still vacant, which includes 47 assistant professors, 44 associate professors and 35 professors. Likewise, Sambalpur University has 153 sanctioned positions against which it has 66 vacancies, including 31 posts of assistant professor, 20 associate professors and 15 professors. Berhampur University has 196 sanctioned positions against which it has 96 vacancies including 38 assistant professors, 41 associate pro-

fessors and 17 professors. Shree Jagannath Sanskrit University in Puri has 38 sanctioned positions against which it has 27 vacancies including 13 posts of assistant professors, 8 associate professors and 6 professors. Shreeram Chandra Bhanjdeo University has 115 sanctioned positions while 75 posts including 33 assistant professors, 27 associate professors and 15 professors are vacant. Gangadhar Meher University has 144 sanctioned positions against which it has 68 vacancies,

including 26 posts of assistant professors, 22 associate professors and 20 professors. Ramadevi University in Bhubaneswar has 138 sanctioned positions against which it has 102 vacancies, including 65 posts of assistant professors, 28 associate professors and 9 professors. Fakir Mohan University in Balasore has 117 sanctioned positions against which it has 42 vacancies, including 15 posts of assistant professors, 15 associate professors and 12 professors. Hundreds of meritorious students across the state depend on these universities for their higher education. Their studies have been affected by vacancies. Owing to senior positions not being filled up over years, the otherwise well-known educational institutions in the state have been losing their past glories. Besides, the private universities have succeeded in attracting students in the name of self-financing programmes and employability. During last five years, more than 80 per cent posts of professors have remained vacant at seven educational institutions which were accorded university status.

e-Procurement Notice for Road Works Identification No. 17/EERW/BLS/2021-22 No.O-1273
1. Name of the Work : Roads
2. Total No. of Works : 24 Nos.
3. Estimated Cost : Estimated Cost Rs. 4.42 Lakh to Rs. 26.52 Lakh
4. Class of Contractor : 'D', 'C' & 'B'
5. Time of Completion : 1 Month (One Calendar Month)
6. Other Details :
Procurement Officer : Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Balasore
Bid Identification No. : 17/EERW/BLS/ 2021-22
Availability of tender Online for bidding From : 13.12.2021 at 11.00 A.M. To : 20.12.2021 up to 5.00 P.M.
Last date & time of seeking tender clarification : 20.12.2021 up to 1.00 P.M.
Date & time of opening of tender in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division, Balasore : 21.12.2021 at 10.00 A.M.
Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
OIPR-25108/11/0014/2122 Sd./- Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division, Balasore

Kerala's higher edu sector has gone to dogs: Governor

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 11: Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan Saturday slammed the manner in which Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left government was running the higher education sector.

"The Chief Minister has nothing to do with Universities. While the school education in the state is fine, the higher education sector has gone to the dogs as even appointments are being made against the rules," said Khan while speaking to the media in Delhi.

"Since the chancellor's post is not Constitutional, I wrote to Vijayan to pass an Ordinance wherein the Chief Minister can take over as the chancellor," said Khan.

Friday night, it was learnt that Khan wrote to Vijayan that if things in the state's higher education sector continues in this manner, he will step down from the post of Chancellor of the state varisities.

The Governor in his letter has cited the statements of eminent personalities like Bharat Ratna CNR Rao and historian KN Panikkar on why Kerala is lagging behind in the education sector.

Khan Saturday said he was deeply pained, especially when the retiring Vice Chancellor of the Kannur University Gopinath Raveendran was given a four-year extension, last month.

"After signing the order I felt



Since the chancellor's post is not Constitutional, I wrote to Vijayan to pass an Ordinance wherein the Chief Minister can take over as the chancellor

ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN | KERALA GOVERNOR

it was not right and then wrote to the Chief Minister asking him to pass an Ordinance so that he can take over as the Chancellor," said Khan.

Leader of Opposition VD Satheesan said finally even the Governor himself has become aware of the manner in which things are happening in Kerala.

"All the fundamental rules are being violated and the higher education sector is run by Vijayan as a feeder organisation of the CPI-M.

We demand a judicial probe into all the recent appointments made in the education sector and all those including the Vice-chancellor at Kannur should quit their posts," said Satheesan.

The Congress and the BJP have been at loggerheads after a Vice Chancellor in the state was given an extension after attaining superannuation. It came at a time when a controversy broke out that rules were bent to appoint the wife of Vijayan's Secretary to a teaching post at Kannur University.

Friday, as a follow up to his letter, emissaries tried their best to pacify Khan, when Chief Secretary VP Joy called on Khan and later State Finance Minister KN Balagopal also called on him, but Khan stood his ground. Reportedly, Vijayan, who is presiding over his party meetings at his home town in Kannur, is likely to speak to Khan later in the day.

IUML questions Vijayan's Communist credentials

Vijayan attacked IUML over Waqf Board issue asking it to make clear if it was a political party or religious outfit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kozhikode, Dec 11: A day after Pinarayi Vijayan questioned the political credentials of the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), a top leader of the key Congress ally in Kerala Saturday came down heavily on the Chief Minister asking him whether he was a Communist.

Amid escalation in political fight between the CPI(M) and the Muslim League, the Kozhikode city police has registered cases against ten thousand Muslim League workers on charges of violating COVID guidelines while participating in the massive rally organised by the party at the beach here Thursday to mark their protest against the government's decision to entrust appointments in the Waqf Board to the state Public Service Commission.

Vijayan Friday had attacked the IUML over the Waqf Board issue asking it to make clear if it was a political party or a religious organisation.

"Is Pinarayi a Communist," senior League leader and MLA MK Muneer asked, reacting to the Chief Minister's allegations against IUML. He said his party believes that as per the old definitions of Communism, Vijayan is not a Communist.

Most of the followers of the Communist party also believe that Vijayan is not a Communist, the IUML leader claimed.

Talking to the media here today, Muneer, who is also a former minister, said Muslim League was a political party and it was a key ally



of the Left government headed by Communist leader EMS Namboodiripad during 1967-1969.

The Muslim League leader said it was out of fear over the massive turnout at the rally that prompted the Chief Minister's police to register cases against League cadres.

The fight by the party on the Waqf Board issue will continue, Muneer added. Asked about the remarks made by Muslim League leader Abdurahman Kallayi on the marriage between PWD Minister Muhammed Riyas and CM's daughter Veena, Muneer said it was a closed chapter after Kallayi had expressed regret over the statement.

Addressing the rally organised by the Muslim League in Kozhikode Thursday evening, party state secretary Abdurahman Kallayi urged the League workers to have the audacity to say loudly that

Riyas' marriage with Veena last year was 'illegitimate.' He later tendered an unconditional apology for the remarks.

Meanwhile, CPI(M) leader and state general education minister V Sivankutty said the Chief Minister's question as to whether the League is a political party or a religious organisation is relevant.

He attacked Muneer for questioning the CM's Communist credentials, saying Vijayan does not need any sort of certificate from the Muslim League leader.

Meanwhile, the Kerala Police Saturday registered a case against a Muslim League leader for allegedly making derogatory remarks against state PWD Minister P A Muhammed Riyas and his wife Veena.

Police said Muslim League leader Abdurahman Kallayi, who allegedly

Amid escalation in political fight between the CPI(M) and the Muslim League, the Kozhikode city police registered cases against 10,000 Muslim League workers on charges of violating COVID guidelines while participating in a massive rally organised by the party

described as "illegitimate" the marriage between Riyas and Veena, daughter of chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan, has been booked under relevant sections of the IPC including Section 153A (Promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc, and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony).

The case against the Muslim League leader was registered on the basis of a petition filed by Mujeeb, a local CPI(M) leader, police said. Kallayi made the alleged remarks against Riyas and his wife while addressing a massive rally organised by his party here on Thursday to protest against the stand of the state's ruling LDF on Waqf board appointments.

Kallayi's comments were widely condemned by political leaders and social media users in Kerala, forcing him to tender an apology.



FARMERS' VICTORY

Social activist Medha Patkar addressing a victory procession of joint farmers' group in front of Kerala Secretariat to mark the successful movement of farmers pressuring the Modi government to accept their demands, in Thiruvananthapuram, Saturday.

70% in Kerala get both doses of Covid vaccine



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 11: Kerala Health Minister Veena George said that 70 per cent of the state's population above 18 years has received both the Covid vaccine doses.

"So far 96.37 per cent (2,58,72,847) of Kerala's population above 18 years have by now taken one dose, of which 70.37 per cent (1,87,96,209) have taken both the doses. In all 4,46,69,056 vaccine doses have been given which includes the first and second dose," she said.

Nationally, the data for those who have taken the first dose is 86.52 per cent while 53.84 per cent have received both the doses. "With the threat of Omicron variant still looming large, the local bodies have been asked to ensure that extra efforts are made to see that those who are yet to receive their second dose should be identified and given the vaccine," George said.

Couple held for luring tribal women to change religion

During a meeting held November 29, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan had directed the police as well as the state administration to launch a probe against the NGOs receiving foreign funding, including those indulging in religious conversion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Barwani (MP), Dec 11: Police have arrested a couple in Barwani district of Madhya Pradesh for allegedly trying to lure tribal women to convert to Christianity, an official said Saturday.

The accused, identified as Anar Singh Jamre (35) and his wife Laxmi Jamre (32), residents of Nawalpura village, were booked and arrested Friday under the pro-



visions of Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, Rajpur police station in-charge Rajesh Yadav said. The action was taken based on a complaint filed by Prakash Chouhan, a resident of Madil village, he said.

As per the complaint, the couple had been luring the tribal women for conversion to Christianity by offering money, free education, free medicines, employment and other facilities after inviting them to their residence, Yadav said.

Police have also seized some related literature, pen drives and other material from the couple's house, he said, adding that they were released after a local court granted bail to them.

The amended Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act penalises religious conversions through fraudulent means including those for the sake of marriage. In cases

involving religious conversion of members of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minors, a provision has been made for imprisonment of two to 10 years and Rs 50,000 fine.

Last month, police had arrested 11 persons, including seven from Rajasthan and Gujarat, in two cases of religious conversion in Khargone and Jhabua districts. They had also booked a pastor from Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh) in the conversion case of Khargone district, officials said. December 6, the activists of right-wing groups had allegedly vandalised and created a ruckus at a missionary school in Ganjbasoda town in Vidisha district of MP over the purported religious conversion of eight students to Christianity.

Later, four persons of right-wing groups were arrested in connection with the vandalism, they said.

During a meeting held November 29, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan had directed the police as well as the state administration to launch a probe against the NGOs receiving foreign funding, including those indulging in religious conversion.

NCPCR issues notice on complaint of feeding beef to kids

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Dec 11: The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) Friday issued a notice to the Superintendent Police (SP) of Sagar district in Madhya Pradesh, seeking its report on a complaint of feeding cow meat to children at sevadham ashram.

The move came after the Commission received a complaint against St. Francis Sevadham located in the Shyampura area under Sagar district. The complaint alleged minor children were being forced to eat beef and read Bible. Recently, two siblings residing in St. Francis Sevadham with the help of their parents lodged a complaint in the Cantt police station in the district. As per the report, children have alleged that "they were forced to eat cow meat and read the Bible. On refusing to do so, the children alleged that they would be harassed by the ashram authorities."

Acting on the complaint, the NCPCR has directed Sagar District SP to investigate the matter and submit its report within next 48 hours. Father of the children, Deshraj Raikvar had written a letter to the Child Welfare Committee, Sagar, mentioning that a woman took his children to the sevadham ashram.

Dead man gets vax certificate in MP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rajgarh, Dec 11: A deceased senior citizen allegedly received a message about having taken the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and got a certificate for the same in Madhya Pradesh's Rajgarh district, an official said on Saturday. The authorities have cited computer error as a reason for the goof-up, in which Purushottam Shakyawar (78) of Biaora town, who died in May, received a message on his mobile phone number that he was administered the second dose of the vaccine December 3.

According to the deceased man's son Phool Singh Shakyawar, they received the message December 3 and were also able to download the vaccine certificate. Shakyawar said his father had taken the first dose of the vaccine April 8, and had died May 24 while undergoing treatment in Indore.

When asked about the goof-up, District Vaccination Officer Dr PL Bhagoria said he had received information about the matter and was inquiring into it.

A glitch in the computer might have generated such a



message, he said.

Biaora's block medical officer Dr Sharad Sahu said that since vaccination is being carried out on a large scale, someone might have entered the wrong mobile phone number while making an entry, and the mistake will be rectified.

Meanwhile, Congress MLA from Biaora Ramchandra Dangi alleged that the state government was misleading people by presenting the wrong data of vaccination.

Such incidents were exposing the government's claim and a high-level inquiry should be conducted into all such cases, he said.

international



BIDEN'S ADVISER TO HEAD UNICEF

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced the appointment Friday of Catherine Russell, an assistant to US President Joe Biden, as the next head of the UN children's agency UNICEF



of the day quote

A final message I want to impart as we close out this Summit for Democracy is that we know how hard the work is going to be ahead of us. But we also know we are up to the challenge

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

Social media, which was described as a symbol of freedom when it first appeared, has turned into one of the main sources of threat to today's democracy

RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN | PRESIDENT, TURKEY

You and the coalition partners have a responsibility to reform the vicious power model inherited from 12 years of authoritarian rule, to tackle corruption and lawlessness, the inequalities and poverty they create

RUMEN RADEV | PRESIDENT, BULGARIA

Glowing Covid detection masks made from ostrich cells

The scientists started by creating a mask filter coated with ostrich antibodies targeting the novel coronavirus, based on previous research showing the birds have strong resistance to disease

REUTERS

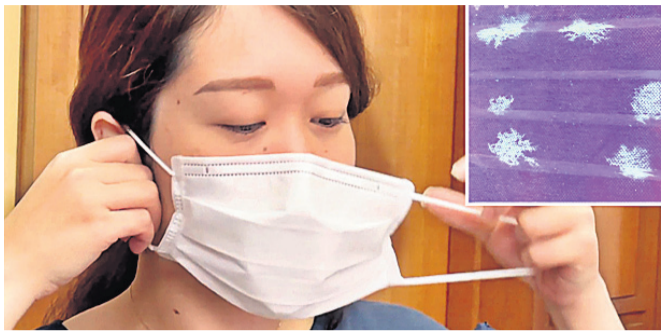
Tokyo, Dec 11: Japanese researchers have developed masks that use ostrich antibodies to detect Covid-19 by glowing under ultraviolet light.

The discovery by Yasuhiro Tsukamoto and his team at Kyoto Prefectural University in western

Japan could provide for low-cost testing of the virus at home, they said in a press release.

The scientists started by creating a mask filter coated with ostrich antibodies targeting the novel coronavirus, based on previous research showing the birds have strong resistance to disease.

In a small study, test subjects



wore the masks, and after eight hours, the filters were removed and sprayed with a chemical that glows under ultraviolet light if the virus

is present. The filters worn by people infected with Covid-19 glowed around the nose and mouth areas. The team hopes to further de-

velop the masks so that they will glow automatically, without special lighting, if the virus is detected.

Tsukamoto, a veterinary professor and the president of the university, has studied ostriches for years, looking for ways to adapt their immunity power to fight bird flu, allergies, and other diseases.

Tsukamoto told the Kyodo news agency he discovered his own positivity for Covid-19 after he wore one of the special masks and found that it glowed when checked. The diagnosis was confirmed after a standard test.

CEO who fired 900 on Zoom call takes time off

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, Dec 11: Vishal Garg, the Indian-origin CEO of US-based homeownership firm Better.com, who recently laid off 900 employees over a Zoom call and triggered widespread outrage, is taking time off from the company as it looks to build a positive culture, according to media reports.

Garg's leave is also effective immediately, according to a Friday email from the company's board of directors. Day-to-day operations will be taken over by the company's CFO Kevin Ryan, the CNN reported.

Better.com is hiring a third party firm to do a leadership and cultural assessment, whose recommendations will be taken into account to build a long-term sustainable and positive culture at the company, it said Friday, citing an email from the digital mortgage company's board.

On December 1 over a Zoom call that lasted less than three minutes, Garg abruptly fired more than 900 employees, about 9 per cent of the company's workforce.

"If you're on this call, you are part of the unlucky group that is being laid off. Your employment here is terminated, effective immediately," he told the employees. Garg, who is in his mid-40s, cited market efficiency, performance and productivity as the reason behind the firings. In a later post on the professional network Blind, he accused the fired employees of stealing from their colleagues and customers by being unproductive and only working two hours a day.

More than 70 die as tornadoes rip through US states

REUTERS

Benton (Kentucky), Dec 11: A devastating swarm of tornadoes ripped through six US states, killing more than 70 people in Kentucky and leaving a trail of destroyed homes and businesses along a path that stretched more than 200 miles, officials said Saturday.

Dozens were feared dead at a candle factory in western Kentucky where about 110 people were working when a powerful tornado ripped through the facility late Friday, causing the roof to cave in.

Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear said 40 of the 110 workers had been rescued from the factory so far. "The level of devastation is unlike anything that I have ever seen," Beshear said of the damage caused by the collection of twisters, with the primary tornado travelling more than 365 km across his state.

Earlier this morning at about 5 am, we were pretty sure that we would lose over 50 Kentuckians. I'm now certain that number is north of 70. It may, in fact, end up exceeding 100 before the day is

done. Beshear said, 189 National Guard personnel have been deployed to assist with the recovery, with a focus on Mayfield, a small city of about 10,000 people in the southwestern corner of the state where it converges with Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas.

Fire and police stations in Mayfield were destroyed, hindering the emergency response. Mayfield is also home to the candle factory, which collapsed soon after employees heard howling winds and the lights began flickering, according to Kyanna Parsons-Perez, a worker at the plant.

Video and photos posted on social media showed brick buildings in downtown Mayfield reduced to rubble, with parked cars nearly buried under bricks and debris. The steeple on the Graves County courthouse in Mayfield appeared to have been toppled, photos on Twitter showed. The genesis of the tornado outbreak was a series of overnight thunderstorms, including a super cell storm that formed in northeast Arkansas. That storm moved from Arkansas and Missouri and into Tennessee and Kentucky.



SHORT TAKES

Taiwan registers 1st Omicron case

Taipei: Taiwan has recorded its first case of the omicron variant in a passenger who recently travelled to the southern African country of Eswatini, health officials said Saturday. The passenger, a Taiwanese woman in her 30s who returned on December 8, is now in quarantine in hospital, according to the Central Epidemic Command Center, which is in charge of the island's pandemic response. Passengers who sat near her on the plane have tested negative so far.

US sanctions two SL military officers

Colombo: The US has imposed sanctions on two Sri Lankan military officers, including a murder convict pardoned by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, for human rights violations, banning them and their immediate family members from entering America. Chandana Hettiarachchi, a Naval officer, and Sunil Ratnayake, a former staff sergeant of the Sri Lankan Army, were among several officers from 12 countries who were sanctioned by the US over accountability for gross violations of human rights. Hettiarachchi was involved in the flagrant denial of the right to liberty of at least eight 'Trincomalee 11' victims, from 2008 to 2009, the US state department said in a statement issued on Friday, coinciding with the International Human Rights Day.

Gunmen attack cops in Pakistan

Peshawar: Gunmen attacked two police officers who were providing security for polio vaccination workers in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, killing one and wounding the other, police said Saturday, days after a major terror group announced that it has ended a month-long ceasefire deal with the government. Mohammad Khurasani, spokesman for Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), known as the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Mt Semeru death toll reaches 45

Jakarta: The death toll from the eruption of Indonesia's Semeru volcano has increased to 45 after rescuers recovered two more victims in Kampung Renteng hamlet of Lumajang district in East Java province, a disaster management official said. Meanwhile, nine people were still reportedly missing.

RINGS OR RIGHTS?



Members of the Tibetan Youth Association in Europe (TYAE) and Students for a Free Tibet protest against the Beijing 2022 Olympic Games outside the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Lausanne, Switzerland

REUTERS

Palestinians vote in rare polls

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ramallah, Dec 11: Palestinians took part in rare municipal elections across the occupied West Bank Saturday, following months of simmering anger towards their government and the cancellation of promised parliamentary and presidential elections earlier this year. Some 400,000 Palestinians are eligible to vote in the election where they will select representatives for 154 village councils under the jurisdiction of the Fatah-controlled Palestinian Authority.

Municipal elections are typically held every four to five years and last took place in 2017.

The increasingly unpopular president of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, confined the election to rural municipalities, postponing voting in the West Bank's major cities where anger towards his ruling Fatah



party is most acute. Saturday's elections are also being boycotted by the militant group Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip. Hamas's spokesman, Abdulatif al-Qanoun, told the Associated Press that the group wants parliamentary and presidential elections and considers holding the municipal vote alone a violation of previous agreements. "Today's vote does not 'satisfy the inspiration and needs of the Palestinian people."

The popularity of the Palestinian government has plummeted since Abbas cancelled long-awaited legislative and parliamentary elections in April.

G7: United front against Russia over Ukraine row

Britain, as current chair of the G7, is calling for its members to be more strident in their defence of what it calls the free world

REUTERS

Liverpool, Dec 11: The world's wealthiest democracies Saturday sought to present a united front against Russian aggression toward Ukraine as Britain hosted a meeting of foreign ministers in the northern English city of Liverpool.

The G7 meeting, attended in person by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his counterparts from France, Italy, Germany, Japan and Canada, comes amid international concern that Russia could invade Ukraine. Russia denies planning any attack. Ahead of the formal discussions, British foreign minister Liz Truss met Blinken Friday night where they expressed deep concern about the build-up of Russian troops on Ukraine's border. Britain's foreign office said in a statement.

Any incursion by Russia would be a strategic mistake for which there would be serious consequences, the foreign office added.



Tens of thousands march on main roads of Gwadar

'GWADAR KO HAQ DO'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gwadar, Dec 11: Tens of thousands of people, including women and children, marched on the main roads and streets of Gwadar in support of their movement launched for the rights of the people of the city in Pakistan's Balochistan province, Dawn reported.

Led by Maulana Hidayat-ur-

Rehman, the Balochistan General Secretary of Jamaat-i-Islami, the people of the port city launched the 'Gwadar ko haq do' movement 26 days ago.

The participants of the procession started their march from Seratun-Nabi Chowk, carrying placards and banners inscribed with slogans in support of their demands. They were chanting slogans against the provincial government, the report said. Addressing the participants



Friday, Maulana Hidayat said police and other law-enforcement agencies blocked the Coastal Highway at Uthal, stopping buses, coaches and other vehicles carrying people to travel towards the

city as thousands of people from Karachi and other areas of Sindh wanted to join the sit-in in Gwadar.

Maulana Hidayat said that the participation of hundreds of thousands of people in the procession and the sit-in was actually a referendum against the provincial and federal governments and the people would continue their struggle and protest till the achievement of their rights which had been denied to them for a long time.

Missing 'Goat Goddess' to find way back home soon

THE YOGINI, WHICH REFERS TO THE DIVINE FEMINE IN HINDUISM, DATES BACK TO THE 8TH CENTURY AND WENT MISSING FROM THE VILLAGE OF LOKHARI IN UP AROUND THE LATE 1970s AND EARLY 1980s

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Dec 11: An ancient Indian idol of a goddess missing from a temple in Uttar Pradesh, presumed stolen over 40 years ago, will soon find its way back home to India after it was discovered in a garden in a country home in England.

The Yogini, which refers to the divine feminine in Hinduism, dates back to the 8th century and went missing from the village of Lokhari in Banda district around the late 1970s and early 1980s.

This week, the Indian High Commission in London confirmed that the formalities for the ancient artefact's return to India are being

finalised and it will be restituted in a few months' time.

"High Commission of India in London is making all out efforts to bring back the identified Yogini," said Jaspreet Singh Sukhija, First Secretary - Trade and Economic, who has been liaising on the restitution of the sculpture.

"Most of the formalities are completed and we are in the final lap for bringing the artefact home. Chris Marinello and Mr Vijay Kumar have played a very important role in helping in the identification of the artefact a couple of months back. You would soon see the Yogini being handed over to the High Commission and restored



to its full glory," he said.

Marinello, a lawyer and Founder of Art Recovery International, became aware of the goat-headed sculpture when an unnamed elderly woman in the UK was selling her country home after her husband passed away.

"She was selling the home and the contents, which included some very valuable antiques. As part of the due diligence process, we were contacted to research and investigate this artwork found in her garden. She had purchased the house over 15 years ago and this was already in the garden," explained Marinello. He then contacted Vijay Kumar,

Co-Founder of the India Pride Project - an organisation that works on restoring India's lost artefacts - and he was able to identify the sculpture in the garden as the Yogini missing from Uttar Pradesh.

"I negotiated an unconditional release with the possessor, who was very cooperative. It was in my home office in London for a short period of time, and Vijay promised that she would watch over me during this process," recalls Marinello.

The journey of the Yogini back to its original home has been a long one, including a mysterious diversion when it briefly emerged on the auction circuit over 30 years ago.

