



REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Actor Priyanka Chopra says upcoming spy thriller series 'Citadel' is the most intense work of her career

LEISURE P2



G7 WARNS RUSSIA

The G7 nations warn Russia of "massive consequences" over Ukraine incursion and asked it to "de-escalate" its military buildup

INTERNATIONAL P10



VERSTAPPEN'S DAY

Dutchman Max Verstappen pips Lewis Hamilton in the last lap to emerge F1 world champion at Abu Dhabi

SPORTS P12



BANK DEPOSIT INSURANCE COVER UPPED TO ₹5L

New Delhi: Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal Sunday said that the Central government has increased the bank deposit insurance cover, in case of problems occurring such as closure, from ₹1 lakh to ₹5 lakh. The amount has to be refunded to the depositor within 90 days. Addressing "Depositors First: Guaranteed Time-bound Deposit Insurance Payment up to ₹5 Lakh" programme here, Goyal said, "Earlier there used to be a bank deposit insurance cover of ₹1 lakh for the deposit of the same amount or more under the 'Deposit Insurance Credit Guarantee Scheme'. "Now, if a person faces any problem or setback for all of his deposits in a bank, and if the bank is incapable of returning the deposit, then the depositor will get a refund of ₹5 lakh," he added. P11



190 HOUTHIS KILLED IN SAUDI-LED MILITARY OPS

Sanaa: The Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen said that 190 Houthi rebels had been killed in military operations in the last 24 hours. The coalition conducted 36 operations against Houthi targets in the oil-rich province of Marib in the period, the Saudi Press Agency tweeted. The operations also destroyed 20 military vehicles and drone control units, reports Xinhua news agency. The coalition regularly attacks Houthi military targets to deter the militia from launching drone and missile attacks against Saudi Arabian cities, mainly in border areas. In March, the coalition completed six years of fighting the Houthis in Yemen to assist Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

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Odisha sees 2.08L job loss in 8 months: CMIE

Around 29.53 lakh people in the 15-29 age group had jobs during the first quarter of 2021 (January-April), but the count shrunk to 27.45 lakh during the second quarter (May-August 2021)

Bhubaneswar, Dec 12: Around 2.08 lakh people in the 15-29 age group in Odisha, who had jobs during the first quarter of 2021 (January-April), were left jobless during the second quarter of the year (May-August), as per the latest quarterly report (May-August 2021) of the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE).
Confirming the recent NSSO report, the latest quarterly report



(May-Aug 2021) of CMIE drops the bombshell of high job loss in Odisha. According to another report, the unemployment rate in Odisha is greater than the national unemployment rate of 23.5 per cent. As per the report, around 29.53 lakh in the 15-29 age group had jobs during the first quarter of

2021 (January-April). However, the count shrunk to 27.45 lakh during the second quarter (May-August 2021), signifying the net job loss in the state at around 2.08 lakh. The unemployment rate in the job seekers of 15-29 years is astronomically high, said the report. "During the first quarter of the

year (January-April), the unemployment rate in the age group of 15-19 years had been astronomically high at 35.46 per cent. The joblessness rate in the age group of 20-24 years stood at 14.91 per cent, whereas the rate in the age group of 25-29 years had been 3.5 per cent," said the report. The unemployment rate in May-August 2021 in the age group of 15-19 years had been 16.81 per cent and at 12.26 per cent in 20-24 years age group. The joblessness rate in the job seekers of 15-29 years age group stood at 5.17 per cent at the end of the second quarter. The report puts the total unemployed in the state at the quarter ending August 31, 2021 at 4.9 lakh vis-a-vis 3.14 lakh at the end of April 2021 and 2.16 lakh at the end of December 2020. The numbers reveal that during the last eight months, the number of jobless persons in the state had risen by 2.08 lakh.

The CMIE has measured the despondency among youths in landing jobs in Odisha in the indicator of Greater Unemployment Rate (GUR). As per CMIE, the GUR is about youths who are unemployed and need a job but are not active jobseekers. The GUR in the May-August 2021 quarter had been estimated at 38.20 per cent in the 15-29 years age group and 32.27 per cent in the 20-24 years age group in Odisha. The corresponding figures at the end of December 2020 were 44.47 per cent in the 15-19 years age group, 29.56 per cent in the 20-24 years age group. During the first quarter of 2021, the GUR in the age group of 15-19 years was estimated at a high of 56.99 per cent. It was at 33.93 per cent in the age group of 20-24 years. Odisha had imposed lockdown to curb spread of Covid-19 from May 2021. The high unemployment rate and GUR in the pre-lockdown phase in 2021 is, therefore, eye-popping.



HOMEWARD JOURNEY: Farmers prepare to leave the Ghazipur border for homes after calling off their agitation in New Delhi, Sunday

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Just an opportunity to serve your country! Have you come across any foreign returnee? See, we couldn't trace them...

State acquired land illegally: CAG

No compensation was paid to the villagers in Kalahandi district who were dispossessed of their land for construction of five canals

Bhubaneswar, Dec 12: The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has revealed that the state government has acquired about 44.10 acres in Kalahandi district without paying compensation to the owners, thereby violating the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act. Describing the act as a 'blatant disregard' to the property rights of the concerned land owners, the CAG, in its latest report, held the Revenue and Disaster Management (R&DM) department responsible for illegal acquisition of private land. It found that the Executive Engineer (EE), Kalahandi Minor Irrigation Division, Bhawanipatna, had taken possession of the said land illegally and utilised it for construction of canals without providing compensation to the owners. "The EE of the Department of Water Resources (DoWR) had filed (during October 2009 to August 2012) requisitions with the Land Acquisition Officer (LAO), Kalahandi, for acquisition of 44.10



In response to the allegations, the Board of Revenue admitted acquiring private land by the Kalahandi MI Division without the consent of the land owners

acre private land in five villages - Badpodaguda, Tujung, Ratanpur, Krupapadar and Kushurla, for construction of five minor irrigation projects," the CAG said in its report. "However, despite non-completion of LA proceedings in all the five cases and without paying any compensation to the land owners, the EE constructed canals on the land notified for acquisition in gross violation of the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act, which clearly states that possession of land can only be taken only after tendering

at least 80 per cent of the compensation amount," it added. Furthermore, the EE had intimated (November 2018) the LAO to withdraw the LA proceedings since they had decided to purchase the said land directly from the land owners. However, the withdrawal notice was not accepted due to procedural lapses. The CAG observed that while the LAO and EE continued to engage in sorting out procedural issues on a lapsed LA proceeding, the EE without resorting to direct purchase of land, constructed canals unauthorisedly on the land intended to be purchased directly. It may be mentioned that villagers of Badpodaguda and Tujung had submitted (February 2016 and September 2018) representations to the District Collector, Kalahandi, for payment of compensation, alleging that they had been dispossessed of their land without payment of compensation. However, no action has been taken on the grievances as of June 2019. Meanwhile, in response to the allegations, the Board of Revenue admitted (July 2020) of unauthorised possession of the private land by the Kalahandi MI Division and construction of canal without payment of compensation or consent of the land owners. The CAG also mentioned that the matter has been reported (January 2021) to the Government of Odisha and a reply is awaited.

PM's Twitter hacked by crypto scammers



New Delhi, Dec 12: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's personal Twitter handle was restored after getting "very briefly compromised," the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a tweet Sunday, after it shared a link promising a Bitcoin giveaway. "The Twitter handle of PM @narendramodi was very briefly compromised. The matter was escalated to Twitter and the account has been immediately secured. In the brief period that the account was compromised, any tweet shared must be ignored," PMO India said in a tweet. The account of Modi, who has more than 73.4 million followers, has now been restored. Before the account was restored, a tweet was shared with a URL on

Central team in state to assess cyclone Jawad damage

Bhubaneswar, Dec 12: A six-member Central team led by a Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs Sunday left for the field verification to assess the damages done to agriculture and others due to Cyclone Jawad, which reached near Odisha coast in the form of a depression before moving towards West Bengal early this month. The team members left to the affected districts after holding discussion with Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena here. The team has been divided into three units. While one unit will visit Ganjam and Puri districts, the second will assess losses in Jagatsinghpur and Cuttack districts. Another unit will visit the Jajpur and Kendrapara districts. The inter-ministerial Central team led by Saurav Ray, Joint Secretary (CEPI), Ministry of Home Affairs, was apprised by the state government on the damages done by the calamity. Though there were no major damages to the electrical infrastructures and buildings, the extremely heavy rainfall during the calamity had severely damaged the standing crops. Stating that the loss assessment of agriculture is a little difficult task, Jena said the state government will submit a report to the team.

Varanasi-based NGO turns beggars into entrepreneurs

Common Man Trust, a not-for-profit in Varanasi, conceptualised the initiative 'Beggars Corporation' in February and launched it in July

Lucknow, Dec 12: Nullifying the phrase 'beggars can't be choosers', a non-profit organisation has launched a project to help them earn a living by making items such as laptop and conference bags. Common Man Trust, a not-for-profit in Varanasi, conceptualised the initiative 'Beggars Corporation'

in February and launched it in July. Laying stress on investment, and not on donation, this corporation envisages to make Varanasi - represented in the Lok Sabha by Prime Minister Narendra Modi - become a beggar-free city by 2023. The group has trained 12 families of beggars in Varanasi for different vocations and they have now shunned beggary. "If the pilot model succeeds, it can be replicated elsewhere in the country," Chandra Mishra, who heads the Common Man Trust, said. After the initial success, the Trust intends to turn Beggars Corporation into a profit making venture. "Earlier, we were experimenting as to whether the beggars would



work and whether their products can be marketed. Their products have been accepted. Now, we are trying to turn it into a profit-making company," he said. According to Mishra, the Beggars' Corporation will be registered as a 'for profit' company by March 2022 post it intends to raise ₹2.5 crore from angel investors and venture capitalists. "We will then pick 100 beggar families in the first phase in Varanasi," Chandra said.

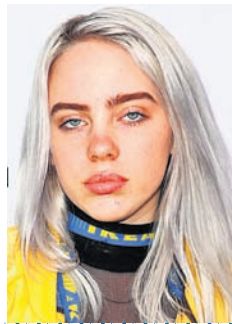
The Trust also runs a 'School of Life' at Rajendra Prasad Ghat in Varanasi, where 32 children from beggar families are studying. Lauding the initiative, chairman MSME, Confederation of Indian Micro Small Medium Enterprises, Uttar Pradesh, Gaurav Prakash said, "This idea has the power to reform and transform the livelihood and give them (the beggars) dignity and respect, which will be a huge game changer in coming times." As per the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation report of 2017, Indians spend ₹34,000 crore as donation to beggars. "Since we are highly religious, we believe we earn punya (spiritual reward) by giving alms to the poor. This 'punya' market was ₹34,000 crore in 2017 and it is growing gradually," Mishra said. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment citing the 2011 census says India has over 4 lakh beggars. Mishra urged the government to allow the organisation to identify beggars in Varanasi and issue them identity cards so his group could differentiate between those really in need of help and those who are part of rackets. He said the differently-abled and aged beggars can be shifted to rehabilitation centres while those in the age group of 18-45 years can be trained for three months and be provided with loans to float their business on the model of Bangladesh's Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus.

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	27.2°C	27.2°C
MIN	17.4°C	17.0°C
Humidity	79%	86%
Rainfall	NIL	NIL

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky

leisure



ILISH WAS TOLD TO AVOID ACTING BY HER MOTHER

Popstar Billie Eilish was hosting *Saturday Night Live* and in her opening monologue detailed how her mother Maggie Baird, 62, had told her to give up her dreams of becoming an actress. She said: "Somebody wise once told me: 'Billie, you should never, ever act...that person was my mom!'"

RAPPER RAJA KUMARI'S NEW SINGLE GET IT IN OUT

After much-celebrated numbers including *City Slums, US* and *Firestarter*, rapper Raja Kumari has come up with her new single *Get It In*, for those who shine their light in the dark. Penned by Sanjoy, Elvis Brown, and Sirah, the single highlights living each day like it's the last.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today is a bright day, and the stars foretell success for you. If you find yourself in a creative mood, indulge in some activity that will satisfy the urge. But, Ganesh says, if you are driving alone, exercise a great deal of caution to be on the safe side.

TAURUS
Your business is going to thrive this day, says Ganesh. Your plans, projections, speculations and gambles are likely to pay off and give you good dividends. You will be admired and respected in the business world for your honesty and integrity. You will be in the right frame of mind to think about expanding your business.

GEMINI
You need to pay more attention to yourself today. Your kind and generous nature means you often think about others rather than about yourself. Now is the time to pay attention to your own needs. You need to spend more time with your family and friends as well, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will secure your place with hard work in your job or business. Ties with partners will improve. Closeness with spouse is indicated. Melody and joy will mark domestic bliss. You will spend the evening with your beloved. Ganesh's blessings are with you.

LEO
The pressure at work will be high. Some person may try to tempt you with lucrative offers to go against your principles. However, you will be able to resist the lure of easy money. Your health may suffer today, so be on guard, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You will stay calm and steady today, and there is hardly anything that can disturb your peace of mind. Your family and friends will back you fully and motivate you to overcome hurdles. You will work with devotion, says Ganesh. You may ask for work that others may find very difficult to do.

LIBRA
Ganesh says people will try to take advantage of your amiable nature and disposition. Small issues will crop up today making your nature a little tensed and enhance your anger too. You will be inspired to take chances in monetary matters. Ganesh says you need to keep your mind steady and regain your lost charm soon.

SCORPIO
Your imagination runs wild today. Though you do not travel geographically, your mind travels beyond boundaries. Think and act according to your will, advises Ganesh. However, practice caution before taking any major step.

SAGITTARIUS
You will be loaded with responsibilities at work today, fore sees Ganesh. But, you are pro challenges and will take it up sportingly. On personal front, the list of your friends is likely to get longer. All in all, Ganesh sees you in an active avatar today.

CAPRICORN
Don't let your emotions play a spoilsport while deciding about the future. Think practically, otherwise, your expectations and reality will not be on the same boat, guides Ganesh. Friendly and supportive, today you will spread happiness and win the love of one and all. Whenever you get confused about which path to take, take advice from the experienced people around you.

AQUARIUS
Set any target, take up any activity or accept any challenge; you will succeed in any of them with flying colours, foresees Ganesh. Your well-wishers will shower praises upon you for those hard earned achievements. Friends are like family to you, take them out and have a gala time before another busy day begins.

PISCES
You will be busy with romance throughout the day. While singles are likely to find the person of their dreams, those who are married will establish a new closeness in their relationship. Your attitude towards work will begin to change. You will become more serious about your career, and the fruits of this transformation will be reaped by you shortly in the near future, says Ganesh.

PC talks about her most intense work

Mumbai: Priyanka Chopra has completed the filming of Amazon Studios' upcoming spy thriller series *Citadel*. For her, the series has been the most intense experience.

The actress took to her Instagram and shared a series of pictures with her crew members. She wrote in the caption, "Photo dump* It's a wrap on #Citadel Phew. a whole year of doing the most intense work during the most intense time. It could not have been possible without this incredible lot of people. Some you see here some you don't. It's been hard but when you all see it.. it will be worth it! Onwards and upwards (sic)."

Along with the happy faces during the course of filming and post the wrap, she also shared a few solo pictures of herself where she can be seen acting goofy and wearing the special effect make-up for her part in the series.

Talking about *Citadel*, the series produced by

Amazon Studios, AGBO and Midnight Radio, in addition to Chopra, also stars Richard Madden and Roland Møller. The series will also inspire spin-offs set in Italy, India, Spain and Mexico, all of which will explore the deeper layers of the storylines and will centralise into the main series.



Elli excited to be part of Tiger-starrer Ganapath

Mumbai: The Tiger Shroff-starrer *Ganapath* has made another addition to its cast in the form of Elli AvrRam.

The actress is into martial arts, which makes her entry into the cast even more interesting given that Tiger is known for acrobatics and martial arts skills.

The actress, who earlier finished shooting the half schedule of her film *Goodbye* co-starring Amitabh Bachchan, Neena Gupta and Rashmika Mandanna, said, "This year has been really grateful for me. After the success of my song *Har Funn* *Maula* and now *Goodbye*, I'm very excited to begin my journey for *Ganapath*. I'm currently in London shooting for it. It's a really cool script and I'm very excited to be a part of the film."

The film directed by Vikas Bahl (Queen), also stars Kriti Sanon and Rashin Rahman, and is produced by Jacky Bhagnani, Vashu Bhagnani and Deepshikha Deshmukh under the banners of Good Co. Production and Pooja Entertainment.

Earlier, Elli also bagged the Best Actress honour at the Stockholm City Film Festival for her Swedish short film *With You*, which touched upon the topic of mental health awareness and childhood trauma.



KLF-21 comes to an end

Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri attended the valedictory session and said the event, over the years, has been offering a unique experience to the participants

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Three-day Kalinga Literary Festival (KLF) came to an end here Sunday. Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri, who attended the valedictory session of the event via video link from New Delhi, said the festival has been offering a unique experience to the participants from all sections of the society.

He appreciated the organisers for physical hosting of its ninth edition since it could not be held last year due to the pandemic outbreak.

In the inaugural session, former Indian ambassador to Nepal Ranjit Rae said India needs to act upon two aspects

— identifying the areas where India has competitive advantage and investing in future technology - to become *Atmanirbhar* or self-reliant. He was also of the opinion that the international business agreements made by the Centre must have to meet their logical end to make a resilient India.

Participating in a session on private and corporate funding in sports in India, Paralympic medal winner Pramod Bhagat said, "Corporate investment in sports should not be based upon return on investment concept alone, since it requires nearly a decade of effort to produce an Olympic level sports person. They should have long term vision while planning an investment in this area."

Quo Vadis, Aida? emerges biggest winner at 34th EFAs

SIR ANTHONY HOPKINS BAGGED THE EUROPEAN ACTOR PRIZE FOR HIS PERFORMANCE AS A MAN WITH DEMENTIA IN FLORIAN ZELLER'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DRAMA *THE FATHER*

Mumbai: The 34th European Film Awards (EFAs), which were held virtually from Berlin, honoured and celebrated excellence in European cinema.

Bosnian filmmaker, Jasmila Zbanic's film *Quo Vadis, Aida?* which follows the events upto the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, has emerged as the biggest winner at the prestigious awards with top three awards to its credit: European Film 2021, Best Director honour for Zbanic and European actress honour for Jasna Duricic for her performance as a



Bosnian translator.

Danish filmmaker Jonas Poher Rasmussen's animated documentary, *Flee* also won three awards including the Best European Animated Film, Best Documentary and the European University Film Award.

Close on the heels of the award count of both *Quo Vadis, Aida?* and *Flee*, *The Father* emerged as the third highest winner as Sir Anthony Hopkins bagged the European Actor prize for his performance as a man with dementia in Florian Zeller's psychological drama, for which the actor also won an Oscar earlier, this year.

The EFAs also announced the nominees for the newly-configured

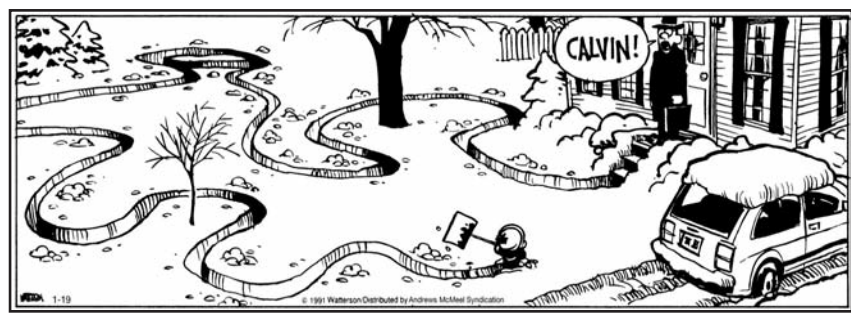
LUX Audience Award. The award, which was launched in September 2020 by the European Parliament and the European Film Academy, in partnership with the European Commission and Europa Cinemas will be awarded to one of the three nominated films, *Flee*, *Great Freedom* and *Quo Vadis, Aida?*

All three films will be subtitled in all the 24 EU languages for the purpose of accessibility to a wide set of audience. The award will be given out on the basis of audience votes from a period of mid-December to May 25, 2022. The winner will be announced in a ceremony in the European Parliament June 8, 2022.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

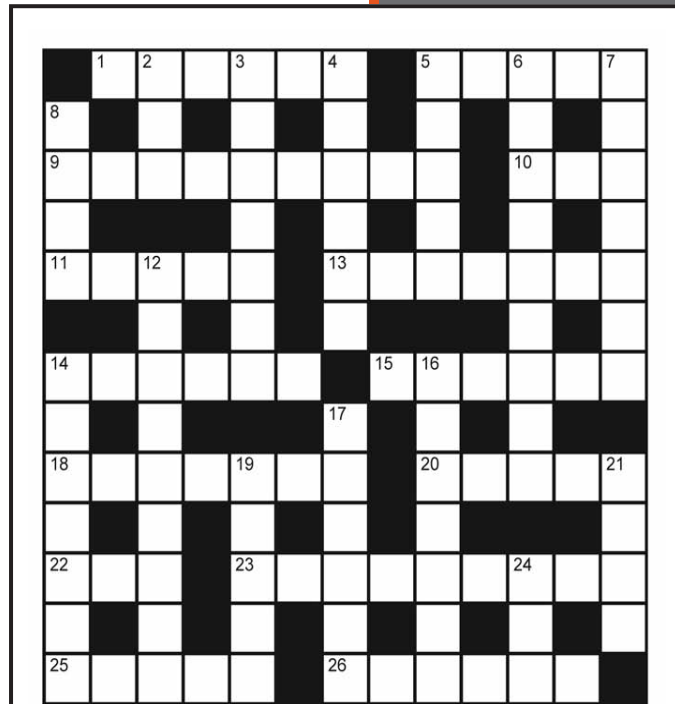


BREVITY



FUN post

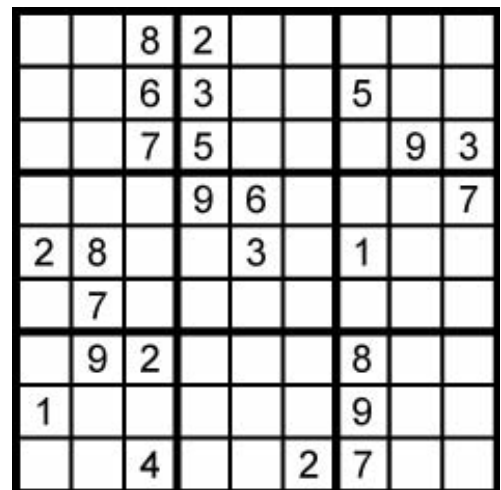
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Chinese philosophy
 - 5 Upright
 - 9 Become suspicious (5,1,3)
 - 10 Beer garden
 - 11 Intense hatred
 - 13 Give out, as an odour
 - 14 Resist strongly
 - 15 Recurring experience? (4,2)
 - 18 Ship sinker
 - 20 Fresh from the shower
 - 22 Luau treat
 - 23 Old printer (3,6)
 - 25 Kind of panel
 - 26 Ogres
 - 6 Seashore walkway
 - 7 Scene
 - 8 Norse capital
 - 12 Unbiased creature
 - 14 Tentacle territory
 - 16 Enclosed
 - 17 In a way (4,2)
 - 19 Downy duck
 - 21 Barbershop call
 - 24 Reel's partner

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

CM to distribute BSKY cards in 2 dists today

POST NEWS NETWORK
Khurda/Cuttack, Dec 12: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is scheduled to visit Begunia Monday to launch the distribution of Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) smart health cards in Khurda district. The Chief Minister will also launch the distribution of BSKY smart health cards in Cuttack district on the same day. He is also scheduled to launch a slew of development projects in the district, sources said.

Patnaik will reach Begunia in a helicopter at 11.40am, said Khurda Collector Sangram Keshari Mahapatra Sunday.

Apart from launching the distribution of BSKY smart health cards, the Chief Minister will inaugurate around 80 development projects and lay foundation stones for 221 new ones during his visit to



Preparations in progress for CM's programme in Cuttack

Begunia, said Mahapatra.

At least 16 lakh people of 4 lakh families in Khurda district will be benefitted by the smart health card scheme.

"We have set a target to distribute BSKY smart health cards among



FOR PAY HIKE

Members of Vocational Trainers' Association stage a sit-in at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Sunday, demanding a pay hike

two Additional SPs, four DSPs and 15 IICs to maintain law and order during the Chief Minister's visit to Begunia, said Khurda Superintendent of Police (SP) Raj Kishore Dora.

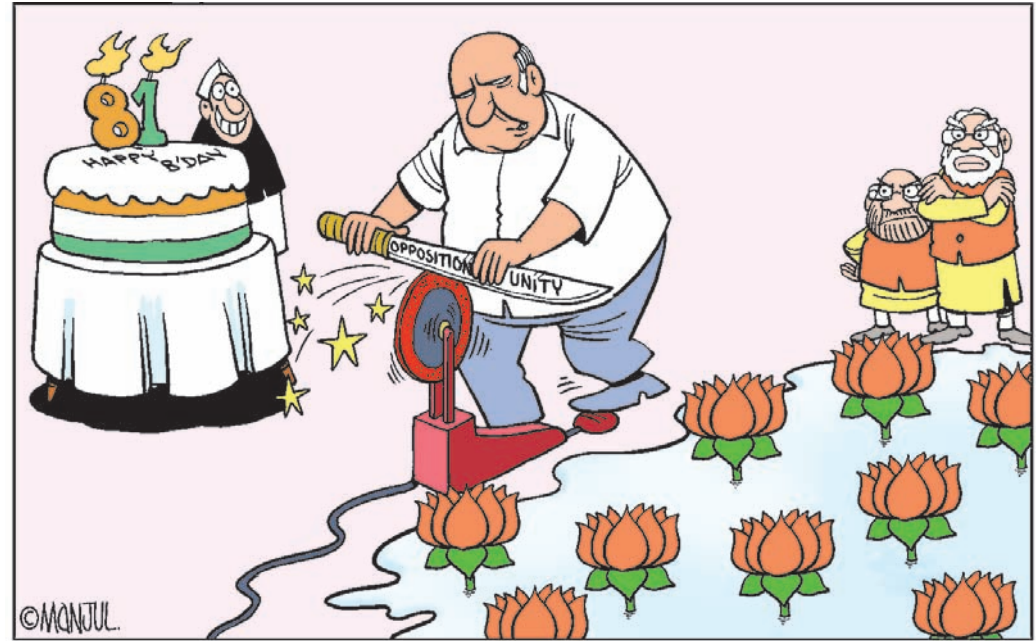
Begunia MLA Rajendra Kumar Sahoo, meanwhile, expressed his gratitude to the Chief Minister for launching several development projects for Khurda district.

"Only 300 locals and 100 officials of various departments will participate in the Monday's event. The programme will be organised with strict adherence to Covid norms," Sahoo said.

The Chief Minister will inaugurate projects worth Rs 267 crore and lay foundation stones for various new projects in Cuttack district. The state government would spend Rs 1,455 crore for the new projects, sources said.

COVID-19 TRACKER			
	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	27,01,43,542	24,29,13,262	53,20,512
India	3,46,90,510	3,41,22,795	4,75,434
Odisha	10,51,574	10,41,365	8,434

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Helpline against atrocities on SC, ST to be launched today

AGENCIES
New Delhi, Dec 12: With the objective to build informed awareness about provisions of the law that are aimed at ending discrimination and providing protection to Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), the Union government will launch a National Helpline Against Atrocities (NHAA) Monday.

The helpline will be launched by Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment with an aim to ensure proper implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) (PoA) Act, 1989 which was enacted with a view to, inter alia, preventing atrocities on mem-

bers of SCs and STs.

The ministry said that the NHAA will be available round the clock on toll-free number 14566 across the country. It can be accessed by making a voice call/VOIP either from a mobile or landline number of any telecom operator across the country.

This service will be available in Hindi, English and regional languages of the states/UTs. Its mobile application will also be available. The system will ensure that every complaint is registered as an FIR, relief is provided, all registered complaints are investigated and all chargesheets filed are prosecuted in the Courts for decision — all within the given timelines in the Act.

₹9.12cr wasted on Malkangiri BEd college: CAG

POST NEWS NETWORK
Bhubaneswar, Dec 12: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has censured the School and Mass Education (S&ME) and the ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare (SSD) departments for their failure to operationalise a BEd college in Malkangiri, for which buildings and other infrastructure were built with an expenditure of Rs 9.12 crore.

In its latest report, the CAG stated that lack of coordination between the SSD and S&ME departments in assessing requirement for a BEd college for Malkangiri resulted in wasteful expenditure of Rs 9.12 crore.

The SSD department had decided in April, 2012 to set up BEd

colleges in Tribal Sub-Plan districts with an intake capacity of 100 trainees in a batch per institution for ensuring quality teaching in tribal dominated districts of Odisha, said the report.

In the first phase, the construction of a BEd college at Malkangiri was proposed to be taken up in the 2012-13 fiscal. The officials were instructed to identify a suitable patch of land of about five acres in and around Malkangiri for the BEd college.

The functioning of BEd colleges in the state comes under the administrative jurisdiction of the S&ME department.

On scrutiny of records of the project administrator (PA) of Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) in Malkangiri, the audit noticed that the SSD de-



partment sanctioned Rs 10.12 crore for construction of the college building and allied infrastructure.

The college with campus area of five acres, 18,885 sqft academic buildings, 56-bed hostels for boys and girls and 17 staff quarters was completed in February, 2018 with an expenditure of Rs 9.12 crore. The college was inaugurated July

26, 2018, around five months behind the scheduled date.

On joint physical inspection of the college, the audit found that the college buildings were lying idle. It was only after a lapse of about 20 months from the completion of the building, the PA of ITDA in Malkangiri requested the Director of SSD department for handing over of the college to the S&ME department, observed the audit.

Thereafter, Malkangiri Collector requested the Commissioner-cum-Secretary of S&ME department to take steps to operationalise the college.

Despite this, the S&ME department did not take any step to take over the BEd college buildings and functionalise the institution, said the report.

The affiliation of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), which is a pre-requisite for functioning of BEd colleges, had not been obtained for the college. Apart from this, appointment of teaching and non-teaching staff had not been done by the S&ME department. Thus, except for construction of the civil structure of the college, no other measures had been taken to make the college functional even though the construction was completed three years ago, said the report.

In its reply, the SSD department stated that they had requested the S&ME department time and again to make the college functional.

Due to delay in functionalising the college, the buildings were being utilised as a Covid care hospital.

BUDDING DANCERS



Girls perform Odissi at an event organised by Happiness Foundation at Sanskruti Bhawan in Puri, Sunday

'Future belongs to organic products'

POST NEWS NETWORK
Bhubaneswar, Dec 12: The two-day organic fair organised by the Press Club of Odisha here attracted good number of visitors, including many youngsters.

Stalls selling organic vegetables and foods were the main attraction of the fair that began Saturday. This apart, crafts made of waste materials also attracted the attention of the visitors.

Several organic farmers from various parts of the state congregated at the fair to exhibit and sell their produce.

A wide range of products, including freshly-harvested green vegetables and organic daily-use items, were displayed and sold in the two-day event that concluded Sunday. Many children also exhibited crafts made of waste materials like match sticks, water bottles, juice cans, CDs and masks at the fair.

"Our aim is to encourage recycling of waste materials. One can design decorative items and daily-use goods from unwanted materials. We are also raising funds for the education of children by selling our products," said Shweta Agarwal of Unmukt Foundation



who exhibited crafts at the fair.

This apart, paintings, greeting cards and calendars prepared by the children were also displayed at the fair. A class IX student drew the attention of many by designing a robot from waste materials like boxes and small cups.

"The main purpose of this fair is to encourage the production and consumption of organic produce. The Covid-19 pandemic has made people more conscious of health aspects. So, the demand for organic products will go up manifold. The future belongs to the organic produce," said I-Concept Initiative MD Prabodh Kumar Mohanty.

Mohanty's organisation has been encouraging the farmers to opt for organic farming and market their products through Sabujavarna Organic Ltd, sources said.

"At present, we are working with 4,000 farmers from Bolangir, Kendrapara, Puri and Nayagarh districts," Mohanty added.

Interstate vehicle lifters' gang member nabbed in City

POST NEWS NETWORK
Bhubaneswar, Dec 12: The twin city Commissionerate Police Sunday nabbed the member of an interstate vehicle lifters' gang active in and around Odisha, an official said.

The accused was identified as Abdul Saqoor, who hails from Chhattisgarh, was residing in Chandaka area here, added the official. About their modus operandi, a Saheed Nagar police official said that Saqoor used to get stolen vehicle from a notorious gang and tamper with their registration details before selling those to prospective buyers.

"Saqoor used to purchase damaged vehicles put on sale by a leading non-banking financial institution. After getting vehicles stolen by the gang, mostly from Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, Saqoor would change its registration details

with that of the scrapped ones. Then, he would sell those to prospective buyers in and around Odisha," said the official. A team of Madhya Pradesh police, investigating the involvement of the gang in a series of vehicle theft cases, recently visited Odisha searching for Saqoor. The team informed the matter to the Commissionerate Police and, with the help of local police, carried out raids at several places in the City. However, they failed to trace Saqoor and returned empty-handed.

Following the lead, Saheed Nagar police launched a manhunt and managed to arrest Saqoor Sunday. The accused reportedly confessed to have sold at least 40 stolen vehicles received from the gang with forged registration numbers. The Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh police have been informed about Saqoor's arrest. They will soon reach Bhubaneswar to take the accused on remand, added the officer.

ML can predict death risk in suspected, known heart patients

POST NEWS NETWORK
Bhubaneswar, Dec 12: A novel artificial intelligence score provides a more accurate forecast of the likelihood of patients with suspected or known coronary artery disease dying within 10 years than established scores used by health professionals worldwide, researchers have found.

The research, presented at EuroEcho 2021, found that the machine learning (ML) score was able to predict which patients would be alive or dead with 76 per cent accuracy.

"This means that in approximately three out of four patients, the score made the correct prediction," said researcher Theo Pezel of the US' Johns Hopkins Hospital.

For the study, the team involved over 30,000 patients referred for stress cardiovascular magnetic resonance (CMR) between 2008 and 2018 because of chest pain, shortness of breath on exertion, or high risk of cardiovascular disease but no symptoms.

High risk was defined as having at least two risk factors such as hypertension, diabetes, dyslipidemia, and current smoking.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR ACCURACY

For study, the team involved over 30,000 patients referred for stress cardiovascular magnetic resonance (CMR) between 2008 and 2018 because of chest pain, shortness of breath on exertion, or high risk of cardiovascular disease but no symptoms.

High risk was defined as having at least two risk factors such as hypertension, diabetes, dyslipidemia, and current smoking. The average age was 64 years and 66 per cent were men.

Information was collected on 23 clinical and 11 CMR parameters. Patients were followed up for a median of six years for all-cause death, and during the follow-up period, 2,679 (8.4 per cent) patients died.

ML was conducted in two steps. First, it was used to select which of the clinical and CMR parameters could predict death and which could not.

Second, ML was used to build an algorithm based on the important parameters identified in step one, allocating different emphasis to each to create the best prediction. Patients were then given a score of 0 (low risk) to 10 (high risk) for the likelihood of death within 10 years.

The ML score was able to predict which patients would be alive or dead with 76 per cent accuracy (in statistical terms, the area under the curve was 0.76).

Using the same data, they calculated the 10-year risk of all-cause death using established scores and a previously derived score incorporating clinical and CMR data.

The ML score had a significantly higher area under the curve for the prediction of 10-year all-cause mortality compared with the other scores.

Information was collected on 23 clinical and 11 CMR parameters and patients were followed up for a median of six years for all-cause death, and during the follow-up period, 2,679 (8.4 per cent) patients died.

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ODISHA PUSHTI MAHOTSAV

MUB promotes enhanced dietary diversity, nutritional knowledge



POST NEWS NETWORK

66 Odisha Pushti Mahotsav as India's largest nutrition festival highlights how every rural household in the state is now nutritionally literate. With Mo Upakari Bagicha in every backyard, every family will have four-square nutritionally balanced diet around the year

Bhubaneswar, Dec 12: In a bid to fortify nutritional knowledge in the hinterlands of the state, Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) of Mission Shakti celebrated a week-long Odisha Pushti Mahotsav across 2,500 Gram Panchayats in the state, which concluded Sunday.

Through the initiative, around 25 lakh women self-help group (SHG) members in 25,000 villages are leading the era of nutritional enlightenment. The Mahotsav celebrated the promotion of nutrition garden leading to enhanced dietary diversity and nutritional knowledge of rural communities in Odisha.

The Mahotsav was organised in a campaign mode from December 6 to 12 this year in partnership with the Azim Premji Foundation (APF), Women and Child Development and Health and Family Welfare departments.

As per the recent study conducted by Oxfam India, the Mo

Upakari Bagicha (MUB) programme has successfully promoted 4,74,000 nutrition gardens. Approximately 4,70,000 SHG women have been trained to adopt positive health and nutrition practices through Participatory Learning & Action-Linking Agriculture & Natural Resources to Nutrition (PLA-LANN) process. Nearly 11,704 community cadres have been capacitated to support rural households in adopting nutrition garden and practices.

The programme has bagged many accolades including Outlook Poshan Award 2019 in the category of 'Safe and Nutritious Food'. MUB is one of best practices of Mission Shakti department and is now being implemented in other states like Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh. Mission Shakti Commissioner-Secretary Sujata R Karthikeyan said, "Odisha Pushti Mahotsav is a community led celebration that signifies augmented nutritional outcomes in every village of Odisha. It is delightful to see how communities across the state have embraced the MUB programme as their own initiative."

CEO of Odisha Livelihood Mission Mansi Nimbhal said, "Odisha Pushti Mahotsav as India's largest nutrition festival highlights how every rural household in the state is nutritionally literate. With Mo Upakari Bagicha in every backyard, every family will have four-square nutritionally balanced diet."

Sabita Bada, a member of Dharitri SHG group from Jujomara Block of Sambalpur district said, "Rural communities are welcoming this effort of the state government with great ardour. It enhances and strengthens nutritional knowledge at the grassroots. After learning about the importance of consuming 10 food groups (pulses, grains, nuts, seeds, dairy, meat, eggs, fish, green leaf and vegetables), households in my village have diversified their everyday food platter."

CULTURAL CONGLOMERATION



The concluding event of 9th 'Odishi Raaga Mahotsav' in progress at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

OP PHOTO

DAILY TPR DIPS TO 0.26% IN STATE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 12: Odisha's Covid-19 caseload Sunday mounted to 10,51,574 after 160 more people including 20 children, tested positive for the infection while one fresh fatality pushed the death toll to 8,434, a Health department official said.

There has been a drop in the number of new infections as the state logged 173 cases Saturday, 286 cases Friday, 195 Thursday, and 255 Wednesday.

Of the new infections, Khurda district, of which state Capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the highest of 86 cases followed by



10 in Sundargarh. Ten districts did not report any new cases in the last 24 hours. With 160 people testing positive

There has been a drop in the number of new infections as the state logged 173 cases Saturday, 286 cases Friday, 195 Thursday, and 255 cases Wednesday

out of 59,346 samples tested Saturday, the coastal state's daily test positivity rate (TPR) now stands at 0.26 per cent.

One fatality in Bhadrak district took the state's Covid-19 death toll to 8,434.

This apart, 53 other Covid-19 patients have died due to comorbidities so far, the Health department official said.

The coastal state currently has 1,955 active Covid-19 cases while 10,41,132 patients have recovered from the highly infectious disease, including 205 Saturday.

Odisha has thus far conducted over 2.44 crore sample tests and the state's cumulative positivity rate stands at 4.3 per cent.

As many 1,75,98,902 people have been fully inoculated with both doses of Covid-19 vaccine.

Application on for ASI posts

Bhubaneswar: Odisha Police has invited applications for the posts of assistant sub-inspectors (ASI) of police (communication). The application process will commence December 13, 2021 at 9am and end January 2, 2022. The recruitment drive will fill over 140 vacancies in Odisha Police. Odisha Police is looking for eligible candidates who have passed BSc or B.Tech in Computer Science / Information Technology / Information Science and Technology / Electronics & Telecommunications / Information Technology and Management / Physics / Mathematics / Statistics / Electronics or allied subject or Bachelor in Computer Application (BCA) from any recognized University or Bachelor Degree in Engineering in Computer Science / Information Technology / Electronics and Communication / Electrical / Electronics / Instrumentation or allied subjects from a recognized university for appointment as ASI of Police (Communication) on initial appointment basis. Interested candidates can check the official notification on the official website at www.odishapolice.gov.in.

XIM varsity hosts Foundation Day

Bhubaneswar: Xavier Institute of Management (XIM) University hosted its Foundation Day Saturday at the Old Campus at Xavier Square, Bhubaneswar. Students from the MBA-Business Management and Executive MBA programmes attended the event. Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), was the chief guest and speaker for the event. With over 33 years of experience with CII, he has been serving as the Director General since 2008 and is responsible for the overall operations of CII. On the occasion, Banerjee was conferred with the Honorary Doctoral Degree in Business Management by the university. Banerjee addressed the gathering and shared his insights on Indian economy, calling it the largest developing country globally, and shared his dream for India 25 years down the line.

WASSUP TODAY

CUTBACK

- Distribution of BSKY smart cards by CM Naveen Patnaik, Bali Yatra Ground, 10:50am
- Book launch, hotel Dwarika, Bajrakabati Road, 5pm

Programmes/announcements for wassup today may be sent to opwassup@gmail.com for record, it must also carry the sender's mobile number for our verification, but not for publication.

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SHORT TAKES

COUNTERING THE MENACE

Trenches to be dug on elephant routes



POST NEWS NETWORK

Loisingha, Dec 12: While people in many villages under Loisingha block in Bolangir district have lost their sleep over persistent elephant menace, the forest department has decided to dig trenches on the elephant routes in the area to prevent the animals from causing mayhem. Besides, another decision was taken to instal solar lights in the villages facing elephant mayhem.

According to reports, the animals have damaged crops on large tracts of land and pulled down several houses in Bhalupalli,

Badibahal, Jogisarda and other villages for some weeks.

In view of the problem, officials of the forest department held discussion with people of Bhalupalli how to deal with the menace. ACF Babajicharan Roul, ranger Alok Majhi and forest officials were present at the meeting. Locals expressed their displeasure over the frequent entry of elephants into villages. A marauding tusker has made matters worse for locals and killed a person in the area. The ACF said that the officials of the Bhubaneswar wildlife division have been intimated about the need of tranquillising the tusker and shifting it elsewhere.

The forest officials said that solar lights will be installed in these villages soon. Most importantly, a decision was taken to dig trenches across some elephant routes on the outskirts of Ramai and Bhaludunguri village to prevent the animals from entering human habitations.

Teacher among 2 held for poaching

Kendrapara: A primary school headmaster was among two people arrested for allegedly killing a spotted deer by setting up traps in Bhitarkanika National Park, a forest officer said Sunday. Acting on a tip-off, forest personnel nabbed the duo in a village near the national park Friday, and seized 5 kg of venison, six traps, two nets and two sharp weapons from their possession, he said. The arrested persons, identified as Fakir Mohan Nayak, headmaster of government-aided Bagapatia Primary School, and Baikuntha Parida were booked under several sections of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and produced before a court which remanded them to judicial custody, the forest officer added.

Driver dies as truck falls off bridge

Parjang: In a tragic mishap, a driver was killed after an iron ore-laden truck fell off the Saranga bridge on National Highway-53 under Parjang police limits in Dhenkanal district, Sunday. The driver was identified as Manas Ranjan Dhibar, a resident of Pallahara in Angul district. The mishap occurred when he was enroute to Angul from Keonjhar. However, the driver lost control on the wheels and fell off the bridge following a blast on its tyre. The driver died on the spot. On being informed, Talcher fire service personnel reached the spot and launched a rescue operation. Later, police sent the body for post-mortem and launched an investigation into the incident.

Job scams alleged in 17 panchayats

Kotpad: Various projects were executed under MGNREGS in 17 panchayats under Kotpad block in Koraput district during the pandemic to create scope of labour-intensive works for local people. However, funds in many cases have allegedly been misappropriated by some contractors, panchayat executive officers and junior engineers. It was alleged that job card holders in 17 panchayats were not engaged in works, but some contractors had somehow managed to get their job cards and prepared forged muster rolls. The wages of the job card holders were embezzled. BDO Dasarathi Sorabu said that no such complaint in this regard was received. Action will be taken only after a complaint, he added.

CORRIGENDUM

Orissa POST carried a report '10cr NGT fine on Hindalco, GMR' on December 10, 2021 edition. The name of GMR has been inadvertently mentioned instead of Raipur Energen Ltd (REL). The error is regretted.

MAKING A POINT



A training programme for farmers and farmwomen organised by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Rayagada, is underway at Gunupur, Sunday

POST NEWS NETWORK

'Sudakshya' gives wings to youths' dreams

Sundargarh, Dec 12: A free coaching programme titled 'Sudakshya' launched by the district administration here has been helping educated youths in fulfilling their career dreams, a report said.

Recounting his experience, Nutap Behera, an educated youth from the district said that after finishing studies, he applied for various competitive exams with self preparation for government jobs. However, he was not well prepared to crack them.

But with the help of free coaching programme, 'Sudakshya', he tasted success and was appointed as the Junior Revenue Assistant at the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) in Sundargarh. Behera said while sharing his career story.

Nutap hails from Gangajal village under the mining affected Kutra block of Sundargarh district. His father Yudhisthir Behera earlier worked as a security guard but now stays at home due to ill health. His mother Urmila is an Anganwadi worker. Nutap has achieved his goal with coaching and mentoring under the unique programme of the district 'Sudakshya'.

'Sudakshya' has been instrumental in fulfilling the dreams of many other educated youth in Sundargarh district. The pro-

FREE COACHING FOR JOBS



'Sudakshya' initiative was launched by the Sundargarh district admin to provide free job oriented coaching for +2 & +3 pass out students

The new initiative of the admin, which started from February 2021, has already completed coaching for three batches

+3 pass-out students in the district. The programme entails coaching for banking and insurance, staff selection commission, Indian

programme, designed by the district administration and started from February 2021, has already completed coaching for 3 batches.

With free coaching at three centres spread strategically in Sundargarh, Rourkela and Bonai, as many as 245 candidates have secured jobs at various government and private institutions so far.

The District Mineral Foundation (DMF), Sundargarh supports the 'Sudakshya' programme while a voluntary organisation Niyatee Foundation is the implementation partner.

The 'Sudakshya' initiative was launched by the district administration of Sundargarh to provide free job-oriented coaching for +2 and

SOCIAL SERVICE



Volunteers of National Service Scheme (NSS) of Indira Priyadarshini Higher Secondary School at G Udayagiri in Kandhamal district warming up before taking part in a sanitation drive under their NSS programme held on the college premises, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Olive Ridleys spotted along Gahirmatha coast

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kendrapara, Dec 12: Olive Ridley sea turtles have begun emerging from the swirling waters of the Bay of Bengal off Gahirmatha coast marking the commencement of the mass nesting of this endangered marine species.

Forest personnel on patrolling duty have sighted pairs of turtles on the beach.

The turtle surveying teams spotted hundreds of pairs of turtles along the Gahirmatha coast, which is acclaimed as the world's largest known nesting ground of these marine creatures, officials said.

Apart from Gahirmatha, the threatened aquatic species also reach the Rushikulya river mouth and Devi river mouth for mass nesting.

Prohibition on fishing has been clamped in Gahirmatha zone to ensure the mating of the marine animals, said Debashis Bhoi, the Gahirmatha forest range officer.

After the end of the mating season, most of the male turtles usually return to the sea leaving behind the female turtles to lay the eggs.

The female turtles virtually invade the nesting beaches usually at the dead of the night for laying the eggs, a phenomenon called 'arribada'.

A female turtle usually lays about 120 to 150 eggs and leaves the nesting ground to stride back into the deep sea water. Hatchlings emerge after 45 to 60 days but many of the eggs are devoured by the predators. Besides, eggs are also washed away by sea waves during high tide. The eggs are incubated in the nests and grow, sans mothers to emerge as hatchlings. This is a rare natural phenomenon as the baby turtles grow without their mother, Bhoi said.

DGP REVIEWS SECURITY IN SWABHIMAN ANCHAL

'New strategy chalked out to counter Reds'



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri/Chittrakonda, Dec 12: DGP Abhay said that police have chalked out a new strategy to counter the Left wing insurgency in Swabhiman Anchal and will ensure peaceful and smooth conduct of the panchayat elections in the area.

The DGP reviewed security arrangements in Swabhiman Anchal under Chittrakonda block of Malkangiri district Sunday. He also visited the newly set up BSF camp at Ghanabeda where he took stock of the ongoing anti-Maoist operations by the security forces.

The DGP also talked to local residents about various issues. He said that the state government has been carrying out various developmental projects like road connectivity drinking water, schools and bridges with help of Odisha Police and security forces.

The DGP also assured locals that more projects will be taken up in the area. "Odisha Police has been working to provide security for people and ensure progress of various developmental works in the area. It will do the same in future," he observed. He expressed his pleasure over establishment of the BSF camp

at Ghanabeda as a result of the hard work by BSF, SOG jawans and police officials braving all odds.

While interacting with the DGP, people of Ghanabeda urged him to ensure implementation of various other works in the Swabhiman Anchal.

He discussed with police officials and BSF jawans on future strategies to make the Swabhiman Anchal completely free of left wing extremism. At Ghanabeda BSF camp, the DGP recalled the sacrifices of many police, BSF and CRPF jawans in the anti-Maoist operations.

"All developmental works will be carried forward in Swabhiman Anchal. People in the area have been living peacefully and will do the same in future. I hope those who have left their villages due to Maoist threat will return to their homes. Police are always on toes to render their services," he added.

Director of Intelligence Lalit Das, IGP (Operation) Amitabh Thakur, BSF DIG Sanjay Kumar Singh, SIW Anirudh Singh and Malkangiri SP Prahlad S Meena were present at the review meeting.

Later, the DGP left for Koraput. He also inaugurated the new building of Pottangi police station on the Andhra Pradesh border.

Railways, Indian Army, Indian Air Force, Indian Navy, Odisha Police and various paramilitary forces.

Candidates are trained to crack various competitive exams with coaching on subjects like mathematics, reasoning, general knowledge, computers, personality development, communication skills, etc.

Besides, regular weekly tests and mock interviews are held for the candidates under 'Sudakshya'. Textbooks and previous question papers are provided to the students to prepare for different exams. Moreover, aspirants of police, armed and paramilitary forces are trained accordingly for their test on physical ability.

Candidates from the mining affected blocks like Koida, Rajgangpur, Kutra, Lahunipada, Hemgir and Kuanrunda, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and BPL card holder families are given priority during enrolment for the 'Sudakshya' programme.

Along with free coaching, the candidates are also provided with free food and accommodation, uniforms, study materials and 24x7 internet facility with e-Library. As a result, educated youngsters from poor, tribal and middle class families in the district have been able to augment their skills and crack jobs in various government and private organisations.

national


of the day quote

Today's new India strives for solving problems, today India does not avoid problems



NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

Hindus think nothing will happen to them. We are facing challenges because of this mentality



RABINDRA NARAIN SINGH | VHP PRESIDENT

These state governments have to come clear and state whether they trust the CBI or not, or whether they trust CBI selectively as they continue to give selective consent in cases which suit them



DR JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL

SHORT TAKES

Complaint boxes soon in schools

Chennai: Tamil Nadu education department has directed all elementary and higher secondary schools in the government sector to install complaint boxes for students on campuses. According to a statement from the Tamil Nadu education department, 31,214 elementary schools and 6,177 government higher secondary schools will install complaint boxes in their respective schools.

Police, civic volunteer held

Kolkata: An assistant sub-inspector and a civic volunteer have been arrested for allegedly molesting a woman in Karunamoyee area, police said Sunday. The woman, in her twenties, had arrived in a bus from Asansol around midnight Thursday and sought help from the accused, they said. The duo offered a lift to the woman on their motorcycle and allegedly molested her, a senior police officer said, adding, they were suspended.

Couple found hanging at home

Jaipur: A man and his wife were found hanging from ceiling fans in two separate rooms of their house in Rajasthan's Bhilwara district, police said Sunday. Prima facie, it appears to be a case of suicide, they said. The incident occurred in the Beegod area, where Deepak Nagori (33) and his wife Kavita Nagori (30) were found hanging Sunday morning, SHO Thakkar Ram said. Kavita was Deepak's second wife. He had two children from his first marriage.

20 Bangladeshi nationals nabbed

Kolkata: Twenty Bangladeshi nationals were Sunday nabbed from a building in Anandapur area in the city for allegedly staying in the country illegally, a police officer said.

Kidnapper killed

Diphu (Assam): A member of a gang that had abducted a man was killed during an operation by security forces to rescue him in Assam's Karbi Anglong district Sunday, police said. The abducted person, an employee of a company engaged in four-laning work of a stretch of the national highway, was rescued safely, they said. A team of local police and the CRPF carried out the operation in Kania Engti village in the district, and during an exchange of fire, one of the gang members was killed, a senior official said.



If inflation has to be brought down, then BJP will have to be defeated

BHUPESH BAGHEL | CHHATTISGARH CHIEF MINISTER

PLASTIC WASTE SCULPTURE MUSEUM TO COME UP NEAR BANGALORE

Karnataka will house a museum of plastic waste sculpture near Bangalore's picturesque holiday destination of Nandi Hills soon to sensitise people, it was announced Sunday



'India a country of Hindus, not Hindutvawadis'

AGENCIES

Jaipur, Dec 12: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Sunday said India is a country of Hindus and not Hindutvawadis, who want to be in power at any cost.

He said if there is inflation in the country and there is suffering, then this has been done by Hindutvawadis.

"This is a country of Hindus, not Hindutvawadis. If there is inflation in the country and there is suffering, then this has been done by Hindutvawadis. Hindutvawadis want power at any cost," Rahul said addressing a rally against rising inflation here. He also targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying, "Modiji and his three-four industrialist friends ruined the country in seven years."

Describing Hindu and Hindutva as two different words, Rahul said just as two living beings cannot have one soul, two words cannot have the same meaning. A Hindu is one who is not afraid of anyone, embraces everyone and respects all religions, the Congress leader said. Mahatma Gandhi was a Hindu and Godse was Hindutvawadi, the Congress leader said, stressing that a Hindu continuously searches for truth and spends his entire life



The Congress leader said Hindutvawadis have to be 'ousted' once again and the 'rule of Hindus' have to be brought in the country

for the search just like Mahatma Gandhi. But, in the end, one Hindutvawadi fired three bullets in his chest, Rahul said. "Hindutvawadi spends his entire life for power and he has nothing to do with truth. He only wants the power and he can do anything for that, whether he has to beat or kill someone," he said in a statement.

"His way is Sattagrah and not Satyagrah," Rahul said.

"On the contrary, Hindu faces his

fears and does not step back even one inch. Fear drowns Hindutvawadi and this fear creates hatred in his heart whereas a Hindu's heart contains love and strength," the Congress leader said.

"They say that they want power and they have nothing to do with truth. There is a rule of Hindutvadis in the country since 2014," he said. "I am Hindu and not Hindutvawadi," he added. Referring Hindu epics, he said it is nowhere written to kill and suppress the poor: "Be it the *Ramayana* or *Gita*, tell me where it is written that the poor has to be killed and down-trodden has to be crushed. Lord Krishna did not tell Arjun to kill brothers for power. It is written in the *Gita* that fight for the truth even if you have to die," he said. He

Pandemic becomes 'unexpected catalyst' for healthcare startups

The pandemic exposed the gaps in the healthcare industry

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 12: The Covid-19 pandemic wreaked havoc not only on human health but also on the global economy. However, for healthcare startups in India, the Covid-induced lockdowns and social distancing turned out to be a blessing in disguise and a driver of growth.

In India, the crumbling healthcare infrastructure was laid bare — poor hospital infrastructure, acute shortage of doctors, nursing staff and equipment and specialised treatment facilities, particularly in primary healthcare centres, in rural areas.

The widening gap between the number of healthcare providers and patients emphasised the role of digital technology to make healthcare available, accessible and affordable for the masses.



Further, with the pandemic propelling increased acceptance of online delivery of medicines, remote patient monitoring, digital health and tele-health, the healthcare startups began to gain a strong foothold.

According to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)-Praxis Global Alliance, in 2020, India's healthcare industry was around \$1.9 billion, or under 1 per cent of the healthcare industry. With over 5,000 healthcare startups, it is estimated to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 39 per cent to touch \$5 billion by 2023.

Omicron reduces vax efficacy: WHO

The WHO said that given available data, it is likely that Omicron will outpace the Delta variant of coronavirus where community transmission occurs

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

New Delhi/Geneva, Dec 12: The Omicron coronavirus variant is more transmissible than the Delta strain and reduces vaccine efficacy but causes less severe symptoms according to early data, the World Health Organisation said Sunday.

The Delta variant, first identified in India earlier this year, is responsible for most of the world's coronavirus infections.

But South Africa's discovery of Omicron — which has a large number of mutations — last month prompted countries around the world to impose travel bans on southern African countries and reintroduce domestic restrictions to slow its spread.

The WHO said Omicron had spread to 63 countries as of December 9. Faster transmission was noted in South Africa, where Delta is less prevalent, and in Britain, where Delta is the dominant strain.

But it stressed that a lack of data meant it could not say if Omicron's

rate of transmission was because it was less prone to immune responses, higher transmissibility or a combination of both.

Early evidence suggests Omicron causes "a reduction in vaccine efficacy against infection and transmission", the WHO said in a technical brief.

"Given the current available data, it is likely that Omicron will outpace the Delta variant where community transmission occurs," it added.

Omicron infections have so far caused "mild" illness or asymptomatic cases, but the WHO said the data was insufficient to establish the variant's clinical severity.

South Africa reported Omicron to the WHO on November 24. Vaccine manufacturers Pfizer/BioNTech last week said three doses of their jabs were still effective against Omicron.

Countries with sufficient vaccine supplies such as Britain and France have encouraged their populations to receive a third "booster" jab to fight Omicron.



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

Learning losses could ruin a whole generation: WB report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 12: The present generation of students risks losing \$17 trillion in lifetime earnings in present value, or about 14 per cent of today's global GDP, as a result of Covid-19-related school closures, according to a new report prepared by the World Bank in collaboration with UNESCO and UNICEF.

The report reveals that the impact is more severe than previously thought, and far exceeds the \$10 trillion estimates released in 2020.

The report, titled "State of the Global Education Crisis: A Path to Recovery report", shows that in low- and middle-income countries, the share of children living in learning poverty — already 53 per cent before the pandemic — could

potentially reach 70 per cent given the long school closures and the ineffectiveness of remote learning to ensure full learning continuity during school closures.

"The Covid-19 crisis brought education systems across the world to a halt. Now, 21 months later, schools remain closed for millions of children, and others may never return to school. The loss of learning that many children are experiencing is morally unacceptable. And the potential increase of learning poverty might have a devastating impact on future productivity, earnings, and wellbeing for this generation of children and youth, their families and the world's economies," said Jaime Saavedra, World Bank Global Director for Education. The report pointed out that simu-



TEARFUL ADIEU

Family members of Lt Colonel Harjinder Singh who died in the Tamil Nadu chopper crash, perform his last rites at Brar Square in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

Look at criminal's mental state too: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 12: It is the duty of courts to take into consideration not only crime but also the criminal, his state of mind and his socioeconomic conditions, the Supreme Court has said. A bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao said it is the duty of courts to take into consideration the probability of the accused being reformed and rehabilitated.

"In view of the settled legal position, it is our bounden duty to take into consideration the probability of the accused being reformed and rehabilitated." "It is also our duty to take into consideration not only the crime but also the criminal, his state of mind and his socioeconomic conditions," the bench



also comprising Justices B R Gavai and B R Nagarathna said.

The observations were made by the top court while converting death sentence awarded to a man, convicted for killing two of his sib-

lings and his nephew over a property dispute, to life imprisonment for a period of 30 years. The top court said the state (Madhya Pradesh) has not placed on record any evidence to show that there

is no possibility with respect to reformation or rehabilitation of the convict.

"The appellant comes from a rural and economically poor background. There are no criminal antecedents. The appellant cannot be said to be a hardened criminal. This is the first offence committed by the appellant, no doubt, a heinous one. The certificate issued by the Jail Superintendent shows that the conduct of the appellant during incarceration has been satisfactory," the bench said.

The apex court said it cannot therefore be said that there is no possibility of the appellant being reformed and rehabilitated foreclosing the alternative option of a lesser sentence and making imposition of death sentence imperative.

COVID'S HIDDEN THREAT



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

lations estimating that school closures resulted in significant learning losses are now being corroborated by real data.

"For example, regional evidence from Brazil, Pakistan, rural India, South Africa, and Mexico, among others, show substantial losses in

math and reading. Analysis shows that in some countries, on average, learning losses are roughly proportional to the length of the closures. However, there was great heterogeneity across countries and by subject, students' socioeconomic status, gender, and grade level," it

said. The report highlighted that, to date, less than three per cent of governments' stimulus packages have been allocated to education and much more funding will be needed for immediate learning recovery.

It also noted that while nearly every country in the world offered remote learning opportunities for students, the quality and reach of such initiatives differed — in most cases, they offered, at best, a rather partial substitute for in-person instruction.

"More than 200 million learners live in low- and lower middle-income countries that are unprepared to deploy remote learning during emergency school closures. Reopening schools must remain a top and urgent priority globally to stem and reverse learning losses. Countries should put in place learn-

ing recovery programs with the objective of assuring that students of this generation attain at least the same competencies of the previous generation.

"In terms of improving the efficiency of learning, techniques like targeted instruction can help learning recovery, which means that teachers align instruction to the learning level of students, rather than an assumed starting point or curricular expectation.

"Targeted instruction will require addressing the learning data crisis by assessing students' learning levels. It also necessitates additional support to teachers so that they are well-equipped to teach to the level of where children are, which is crucial to prevent losses from accumulating once children are back in school," it added.



The Modi government at the Centre repeatedly questions what Congress has done in 70 years. I say leave the talk of 70 years. Tell us what you have done in seven years

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

UNABATED COLD WAVE IN KASHMIR, LADAKH

Cold wave continued unabated in Kashmir and Ladakh Sunday as the night temperature remained below the freezing point with icy winds adding to the chill factor. An official of the Meteorological Department (MeT) said the minimum temperature remained below the freezing point in Kashmir and Ladakh region, while at minus 17.8 degrees Celsius, Drass town was the coldest



of the day quote

congress leader
 NH-334B is nearing completion with 93% progress and is targeted for an early completion by 3 months in January 2022

NITIN GADKARI | UNION ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS MINISTER

Kerala government never desires the post of Chancellor of state universities. I request Governor Arif Mohammed Khan not to quit the post

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CHIEF MINISTER

Go after the cyber criminals, come what may there should be no compromise, we have zero tolerance for them and the time has come to wage a war on cyber crimes

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

PM'S TWITTER ACCOUNT HACKED BRIEFLY

Oppn concerned over chinks in cyber security

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 12: Several Opposition leaders Sunday expressed concern over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Twitter account being hacked briefly, and said this exposes chinks in the cyber security.

They said cyber security was as important as border and internal security and asked whether the Aadhaar data of all Indians was safe.

Congress spokesperson Jaiveer Shergill said, "Hacking of Twitter handle of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is an issue of big concern, worry and exposes the chinks in cyber security. With advancement and reliability on technology, policy makers must realise that cyber security is equally important as border, internal security."

Shiv Sena deputy leader in Rajya Sabha Priyanka Chaturvedi said, "Prime Minister's account hacked briefly. Cyber security level exposed greatly." Another Congress spokesperson, Shama Mohammed, said, "PM Modi's Twitter handle was hacked last night. This is a major security breach." "If the government cannot adequately secure the account of the Prime Minister, how is it protecting the

biometric aadhaar data of crores of Indians which it insisted on collecting," she asked. Indian Youth Congress president BV Srinivas made a cheeky comment in response to a tweet on the hacking. "Good Morning Modi ji, Sab Changa Si?" he said in response to the tweet that claimed India has "officially adopted bitcoin as legal tender" was put out from the hacked account.

Srinivas also asked, "When hackers were selling Bitcoin from Modi ji's account, where was the 'chowkidaar' at the time." "So the hackers knew, Modi ji's password didn't have the 'STREANH?(sic)' he said in another tweet. Prime Minister Modi's Twitter handle was briefly hacked Sunday, and a tweet claiming that India has "officially adopted bitcoin as legal tender" was put out from it. The Prime Minister's Office later said the account was immediately secured after the matter was escalated to Twitter. "The Twitter handle of PM @narendramodi was very briefly compromised. The matter was escalated to Twitter and the account has been immediately secured. In the brief period that the account was compromised, any Tweet shared must be ignored," it said.

1st Omicron case in AP, C'garh, Ker

THE NUMBER OF OMICRON PATIENTS IN INDIA TICKED UP TO 38

AGENCIES

Chandigarh/Bangalore, Dec 12: Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Chandigarh reported their first Omicron case Sunday, while Maharashtra and Karnataka each recorded one more case of the Covid-19 variant, taking the tally in the country to 38. All the five persons in the cases reported Sunday had arrived from foreign countries.

According to state health officials, a 20-year-old fully vaccinated man who came to Chandigarh from Italy to meet his relatives and a 34-year old foreign traveller, who came from Ireland to Mumbai and then to Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, have tested positive for the variant. Kerala Health Minister Veena George said the first case of Covid-19 variant Omicron has been confirmed in the state. In a video posted on her Facebook page, the minister said that the patient was a Kerala native who recently came from the United Kingdom. The patient's condition is stable and there



was no need to panic as the government was taking all necessary steps to curb the spread of the new variant of the virus, she said.

A man who had arrived from South Africa became the third person to test positive for the Covid-19 variant in Karnataka, while a 40-year-old man tested positive after returning to Nagpur in Maharashtra from a West African country, taking the state's tally of Omicron cases to 18. With this, Omicron has been detected in Maharashtra (18), Rajasthan (9), Karnataka (3), Kerala (1) and Andhra Pradesh (1) and

Union Territories of Delhi (2) and Chandigarh (1). The man in Chandigarh had landed in India on November 22 and is currently in institutional quarantine. His seven high-risk family contacts were put under quarantine and were tested for Covid-19 by the RT-PCR method. All of them tested negative, an official statement said.

It said the traveller has been asymptomatic throughout. "He is fully inoculated with Pfizer vaccine which he got in Italy. He has been kept in isolation for the last 11 days." "His report for whole genomic sequencing was received

late night on December 11 and has been found positive for Omicron variant," the statement said.

In the Andhra Pradesh case, the state health department said the person, who first landed in Mumbai from Ireland, was tested and found negative for Covid-19. He was then allowed to travel onward to Visakhapatnam November 27. "On conducting a second RT-PCR test in Vizianagaram, he tested positive for Covid-19. The person, however, did not have any symptoms and a re-test December 11 showed he was Covid-19 negative. The Omicron variant was first detected in India in Bangalore with two people testing positive for it comprising a South African national of Indian origin and a doctor.

"Third case of #Omicron has been detected in Karnataka. A 34-year-old male returning from South Africa has tested positive. He is isolated and being treated in a govt hospital. 5 primary and 15 secondary contacts have been traced and samples sent for testing," state Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar tweeted.

SHORT TAKES

Compulsory vaccination

Pondicherry: Compulsory vaccination against Covid-19 has become mandatory in Pondicherry from Sunday, Lt Governor Tamilai Soundararajan said. Addressing reporters, she said that she was keen that Pondicherry emerge as a fully vaccinated Union Territory. She called upon the people to carry the vaccination certificate with them at all times as there would be surprise check. Visiting the Viliannoor Primary Health Centre for a direct check on the vaccination drive, Soundararajan was full of praise for the health staff who were implanting vaccination even Sundays.

10 arrested in murder case

Thiruvananthapuram: Ten accused were arrested Sunday in the brutal murder of a man in the Pothencode area of the state capital, police said. Police suspect 11 people to be behind the murder, which took place Saturday. Sudheesh, 32 was attacked in his home by a gang. The attackers threw country-made bombs and then hacked Sudheesh to death.

Army officer commits suicide

Jammu: An Indian Army officer reportedly committed suicide Sunday in a camp in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district. Police sources said an "Army Major shot and killed himself with his service rifle inside a camp in the Banihal town of Ramban district".

Delhi records coldest day

New Delhi: The national capital recorded its lowest temperature of the season at 6.4 degrees Celsius Sunday morning, which was two notches below the season's average, the Met office said. The chilly morning gave way to a sunny and pleasant day as the maximum temperature settled at 23.9 degrees Celsius, a notch above the season's average, it said.

Man hacked to death

Thiruvananthapuram: A man, wanted in an attempt to murder case was hacked to death and his leg chopped off a day ago by a gang of 12 assailants, four of whom have been taken into custody, police said. The four arrested include an auto driver whose three-wheeler was used by the assailants to reach the victim's house and then flee from the spot, an officer of Pothencode police station said.

JeM TERRORIST KILLED IN ENCOUNTER



Srinagar: A Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir Sunday, police said. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Baragam area of Awantipora in the south Kashmir

district after specific inputs about the presence of terrorists there, an official said. "During the search operation, as the presence of the trapped terrorist was ascertained, he was given ample opportunities to surrender. However, he denied and fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party which retaliated, leading to an encounter," a police spokesman said. In the ensuing encounter, the terrorist was killed and his body retrieved from the site of encounter, he said. The spokesman identified the slain terrorist as Sameer Ahmad Tantray, a resident of Baragam.

Hyd doctors perform first breathing lung transplant

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Dec 12: Doctors at the Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) Hospitals Sunday performed what is claimed to be India's first-ever breathing lung transplant.

The transplantation (Xvivo organ perfusion system) was done in a middle-aged patient with end stage interstitial lung disease on 10 litres of oxygen support waiting since August 2021.

This procedure was performed in Hyderabad by Dr Sandeep Attawar of KIMS Hospitals and his team Sunday morning. Breathing lung procedure can help in mitigating the ill-effects of cold ischemia time and improves lung function there by increasing the organ utilisation. This results in 30 per cent more donor lung to be utilised, benefiting more recipients who are waiting for lung transplant. The idea of 'breathing lung' is to run the lungs through



a device that cools the organ while it breathes, nourishes it with a substrate enriched solution that has antibiotics which wipe out small traces of infection. Cleaning of the air passages by means of bronchoscopy can be performed while on the machine as well as several tests can be done simultaneously to further assess and enhance the performance of the lung before it is cooled and then transplanted into the recipient, the doctors said. "This paradigm is

the cutting edge of lung transplantation and is part of the organ regeneration concept. We at KIMS Hospitals are the first to take this unique approach in India, and with this we could provide best results in the long term. Only a select few transplant institutions in the US, Canada, and Austria take this approach to enhance lung transplant outcomes," said Dr Sandeep Attawar, Program Director - Lung Transplant program, KIMS Hospitals.

The transplantation (Xvivo organ perfusion system) was done in a middle-aged patient with end stage interstitial lung disease on 10 litres of oxygen support waiting since August 2021

Kashi Vishwanath corridor set to be inaugurated by PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Varanasi, Dec 12: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will dedicate to the people Monday the ambitious Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in the heart of Varanasi, a mega project that is expected to boost tourism in the ancient city in a big way.

The inauguration of the state-of-the-art infrastructure surrounding the historic Kashi Vishwanath Temple near the iconic Dashashwamedh Ghat comes ahead of the assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh early next year.

The gateways and other structures have been built with stones and other material using traditional craftsmanship.

There is a palpable excitement among majority of the residents of the temple town and domestic tourists flocking the holy shrine of the Hindus in the run-up to the high-profile event, in view of which the police security in Varanasi has been stepped up. From saints and seers to shopkeeper and hotel owners, there is a smile on people's faces as they await the inaugura-



tion day with visible excitement.

In a statement, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said Modi will visit the temple at around 1 pm and inaugurate phase one of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham, constructed at a cost of around ₹339 crore, after offering prayers.

It was Modi's vision for a long time to facilitate pilgrims and devotees of Lord Shiva as they had to encounter congested streets and surroundings with poor upkeep while they went about the age-old custom of taking dip in the holy river, collecting its water and offering it at the temple. A total of 23 buildings will be inaugurated in the phase one of the project.

India sees drastic drop in wildlife crime incidents

THE WILDLIFE CRIME CONTROL BUREAU HAS TAKEN SEVERAL STEPS TO PREVENT ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING OF ENDANGERED ANIMALS AND WILDLIFE SPECIES AND TO CONSERVE THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE COUNTRY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 12: Incidents of wildlife crime have come down drastically in the country in the current year, owing to the stringent measures adopted by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB).

According to the data accessed by IANS, there has been a drop of 127 per cent this year in comparison to 2020. As per the data available with WCCB, provided by state forest and police authorities, a total number of 281 wildlife crime cases were registered this year. In 2020, they stood at 601 and a year before in 2019, at 805. The second wave of

the Covid-19 pandemic too played a major role in the reduction in such incidents. From time to time, the department is conceiving, planning and coordinating nationwide 'species specific operations' like Save Kurma, Turtschild, thunder series, etc, with the focus on coordinated action on transnational wildlife crime particularly along the borders of India with Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar and Nepal.

The WCCB has been conducting joint operations with state enforcement agencies to apprehend criminals involved in smuggling wildlife. A total of 16 species specific operations have been carried out till



now in collaboration with Interpol and other enforcement agencies. In the last 7 years from 2014 to 2021, the WCCB conducted 717 joint operations resulting in the arrest of 1488 wildlife criminals and profiling of 3248 wildlife offenders.

There were large seizures of ivory, rhino horns, tiger skins/body parts/bones, leopard skins, pangolins, turtles, mongoose hair, monitor lizards, shark fins, sea horses and others. According to the data, 153 joint operations were conducted

in 2019-20 which led to the arrest of 344 wildlife criminals while in 2020-21, 101 joint operations resulted in the arrest of 304 criminals and in 2021-22 till September, 74 joint operations have been conducted in which 202 wildlife criminals have been apprehended. The proactive approach of the WCCB seems to be instilling a sense of fear in the minds of the criminals involved in such activities. Wildlife crime is considered an environmental offence. Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change too released the overall data but it was only till 2020. The Crime in India report released for

2020 indicated that the number of cases registered for environment-related offences has increased from 34,676 in 2019 to 61,767 in 2020.

Apart from the WCCB's tough approach towards the criminals, it is conducting sensitization programmes for officials of the Border Guarding Forces, Customs, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Judicial officers, RPF, GRP and other forces/stakeholders. In 2020-21, 108 such programmes were conducted and 8603 officials sensitised. This year, till September, 76 online webinars have been conducted through which 4480 stakeholders have been sensitised.

