

### VOLUME 11, ISSUE 272 | www.orissapost.com



### Stampede at Vaishno Devi claims 12 Jammu: Twelve people lost their lives and over a dozen others were

injured in a stampede at Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir in the early hours of Saturday. This is the first such tragedy at the shrine, located atop the Trikuta hills - about 50 km from here - that attracts lakhs of people every year. The incident occurred between 2:30am and 2:45am Saturday near a relatively narrow passage at Gate Number 3 outside the sanctum sanctorum of the hilltop shrine where devotees usually arrive round the clock after trekking from the Katra base camp, a distance of nearly 13 km. A high-level inquiry was ordered into the stampede by Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha. **MORE P9** 



BHUBANESWAR | SUNDAY, JANUARY 2 | 2022

### Brajarajnagar bypoll in 6 months

**Bhubaneswar:** The Odisha Assembly has notified the vacancy of one seat due to demise of Brajarajnagar MLA Kishore Mohanty. "After receiving a report from the district administration of Jharsuguda, we have notified the vacancy of one seat in the Assembly," Speaker SN Patro told reporters here Saturday. The Assembly Secretariat has also informed the Election Commission of India and Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Odisha about the demise of Mohanty, Patro said. Mohanty, a four-time MLA and former Speaker of the Assembly, died December 30 due to cardiac arrest. His last rites were performed at Jhadeswar cremation ground Friday.



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## e-Gazettes in state from Feb

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: The state government has decided not to print its gazettes and books as part of its efforts to ensure paperless office works. Now, QR codes will be created for government gazettes. The Commerce and Transport department has initiated the process in this direction.

Various departments will use e-Gazette codes but can opt for printing in case of necessity. Egazette can be easily accessible to all through digital platforms. As per the decision, e-Gazette system will come into effect in February.

Appreciating the initiative of the Commerce and Transport department, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said, "E-gazette will make official works paperless and ecofriendly. It will be helpful for people and the departments in ensuring transparency in service delivery. People will not have to frequent to the departments for their works."

The state government, for the first time, had presented the Budget for 2020-21 financial year through



electronic mode. Presenting the paperless Budget, Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari had said, "E-Budget could help us save nearly 2,000 trees and Rs 1.5 crore towards paper use." All kinds of official communications are being accomplished on elec-

## NEW YEAR PRAYERS

## IIT-Delhi, Jamia among 6K lose FCRA licence

■ These entities either did not apply for renewal of their FCRA licence or the Union Home Ministry rejected their applications

### AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 1: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, Jamia Milia Islamia, Indian Medical Association (IMA) and Nehru Memorial Museum and Library are among nearly 6,000 entities whose Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) registration deemed to have ceased Saturday. These entities either did not apply

for renewal of their FCRA licence or the Union Home Ministry rejected their applications, officials said. According to the official website related to the FCRA, among or-

she related to the FCKA, among organisations and entities whose registration under the FCRA ceased or validity expired include the Indira Gandhi National Centre For Arts, Indian Institute Of Public Administration, Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial Foundation, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Delhi College of Engineering and Oxfam India.



- FCRA registration is mandatory for any association and NGO to receive foreign funding
- There were 22,762 FCRAregistered NGOs till Friday. On Saturday, it came down to 16,829 as 5,933 NGOs ceased to operate
- Among those organisations whose FCRA registration ceased were Medical Council of India, Emmanuel Hospital Association, which runs over a dozen hospitals across India, Tubercolosis Association Of India, Vishwa Dharamayatan, Maharishi Ayurveda Pratishthan, National Federation Of Fishermen's Cooperatives Ltd

Delhi School of Social Work Society, Bhartiya Sanskriti Parishad, DAV College Trust and Management Society, India Islamic Cultural Centre, Godrej Memorial Trust, The Delhi Public School Society, Nuclear Science Centre in JNU, India Habitat Centre, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Delhi College of Engineering and All India Marwari Yuva Manch are also among these entities.



Hundreds of devotees congregate outside Srimandir in Puri, Saturday, to offer prayers on the New Year's Day as the 12th century shrine remains shut owing to Covid-19 restrictions

## Ghastly murder in City on NYD

### POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 1:** The Capital city witnessed yet another ghastly murder within 24 hours of the killing of a youth by his brotherin-law Thursday night. The deceased was identified as Deepak



## Cop suspended for stealing goat

### POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bolangir; Jan 1:** Stealing a goat for a New Year's eve feast proved too costly for a policeman at Sindhekela, about 100 km from the district headquarters as he was suspended from duty for the offence.

tronic mode, said sources at the government. Moreover, question-answer process of the state Assembly, reports of various house committees and annual reports are being made through electronic mode.



Kumar Routray, 55, a resident of Nua Sahi of Sundarapada area under Airfield police limits.

Sources claimed that the prime accused Vicky Malia along with some of his friends, who belong to the neighbouring Kapileswar village, engaged in a verbal duel over the site for a yearend feast near Haja Pokhari Friday evening. Though the accused youths returned to their village following the tiff, they came back again to take revenge at around 1am.

They spotted Routray sleeping<br/>at the club near the village pond and<br/>attacked him with sharp weapons.Th<br/>hunt<br/>regist<br/>gard<br/>again<br/>him to Capital Hospital where he<br/>later succumbed to the injuries.Malia<br/>Sp<br/>Bhub

lagers blocked the traffic on E Sundarpada Road demanding immediate arrest of the accused per-

Locals block Sundarpada Road demanding immediate arrest of the accused persons. (Inset: Victim Deepak Kumar Routray)

sons and compensation to the kin of the deceased. The agitating locals also reportedly set a shop on fire. The police have launched a man-

hunt to arrest the accused after registering a case (01/22) in this regard. The case was registered against four persons including Malia.

Speaking to media persons, Bhubaneswar DCP Umashankar Dash said, "Our first priority would be to identify the persons present at the spot and nab them. We have been keeping strict vigil on the situation and the locality to avoid any untoward incident."

Notably, a person was hacked to death by his brother-in-law over some disputes at Dhirkuti slum under Mancheswar police limits here Thursday night.

The deceased was identified as Sushant Ghadei of Itabhati area in Nayagarh district. The Commissionerate Police managed to arrest accused Bapuni Naik while his associates were at large.

Over half of crimes against women from UP: NCW

Suman Mallick, an ASI of Sindhekela police station, was suspended after Bolangir SP Nitin Kushalkar intervened in the matter, Saturday.

The incident occurred when a goat strayed into the police station premises while grazing, Friday.

Some police officials including Mallick stole the goat and killed it for a feast Friday night.

Owner of the goat Sankirtan Guru went inside the police station and searched for his goat. He found the police officials feasting. Enraged, Mallick caught hold of Guru and kicked him for calling the police thieves. Residents gheraoed the PS and demanded exemplary action against Mallick and other officials.

The officials of the Union Home Ministry, which regulates the activities of the NGOs and associates registered under the FCRA, said that registration under the act is deemed to have ceased Saturday (January 1). FCRA registration is mandatory for any association and NGO to receive foreign funding.

There were 22,762 FCRA-registered NGOs till Friday. On Saturday, it came down to 16,829 as 5,933 NGOs ceased to operate.

Among those organisations whose FCRA registration ceased were Medical Council of India, Emmanuel Hospital Association, which runs over a dozen hospitals across India, Tubercolosis Association Of India, Vishwa Dharamayatan, Maharishi Ayurveda Pratishthan, National Federation Of Fishermen's Cooperatives Ltd. As per sources, these developments come after the Home Ministry cited "adverse inputs" to not renew the FCRA licence of the Missionaries of Charity, leaving the group - which operate orphanages and shelters for the poor, sick, and destitute across India without access to foreign funds in over 250 accounts.

This was weeks after a police complaint was registered in Gujarat against the Director of a children's home run by the Missionaries of Charity for allegedly attempting to convert young girls. The Home Ministry also said it had not received a request to review its decision.

The Hamdard Education Society,

## Commercial cylinder price cut by ₹102.50

#### AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 1: In some relief for consumers on the New Year's Day, National Oil Marketing companies have slashed the prices of 19kg commercial LPG cylinder price by ₹102.50 effective from January 1, 2022.

The 19 kg commercial cylinder will cost ₹1998.50 in Delhi from Saturday, sources said.

It will provide some relief to restaurants, eateries and tea stalls which constitute the largest user segment of the 19kg cylinder.

The prices of 19kg LPG cylinders were increased by ₹100 December 1, bringing the prices of the commercial cylinders to ₹2,101 in Delhi which was the second-highest price of 19 kg commercial cylinder after 2012-13 when it cost around ₹2,200 per cylinder.

However, there is no decrease ( in prices of other domestic cylinders.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, yesterday I was making a list of my New Year resolutions. This list is that of resolutions that I have broken!



**complaints** were received PRESS TRUST OF INDIA **New Delhi, Jan 1:** Nearly 31,000 complaints of crimes committed against women were received by the National Commission for Women (NCW) last year, the highest since

■ There was a **30%** rise in

crimes against women in

2021 as compared to

2020 when **23,722** 

2014, with over half of them from Uttar Pradesh. There was a 30 per cent rise in complaints of crimes against women in 2021 as compared to 2020 when 23,722 complaints were received.

Of the 30,864 complaints, a maximum of 11,013 were related to the right to live with dignity that takes into account the emotional abuse of women, followed by those related to domestic violence at 6,633 and dowry harassment at 4,589, according to official NCW data. The most populous state of Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest number of complaints of crimes against women at 15,828, followed by Delhi at 3,336, Maharashtra at 1,504, Haryana at 1,460 and Bihar at 1,456 complaints. According to the data, the high-

est number of complaints related to the right to live with dignity and domestic violence were received from Uttar Pradesh. The number of complaints re-

ceived by the NCW has been highest since 2014. In 2014, a total of 33,906 complaints were received.

NCW chief Rekha Sharma had earlier said there has been a rise in the complaints because the commission has been making people more aware about its work.

"Also, the commission has always made it a point to launch new initiatives to help women. Keeping in line with this, we have launched a round-the-clock helpline The highest number of complaints related to right to live with dignity and domestic violence were received from Uttar Pradesh

 The most populous state of Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest number of complaints of crimes against women at 15,828, followed by Delhi at 3,336, Maharashtra at 1,504, Haryana at 1,460 and Bihar at 1,456 complaints

number as well to provide support services to women in need where they can also register a complaint," Sharma said. From July to September this year, over 3,100 complaints were received every month, the last when over 3,000 complaints were received was in November, 2018 when India's #MeToo movement was at its peak. As many as 1,819 complaints have been received regarding the



offence of outraging modesty of women or molestation, 1,675 complaints of rape and attempt to rape, 1,537 of police apathy against women and 858 complaints of cyber crimes, according to NCW data.

Akancha Srivastava, the founder of Akancha Srivastava Foundation, a non-profit organisation that works towards imparting cyber safety knowledge, said when complaints rise it is a good thing because it

means more women have the courage to speak up and there are platforms in place now and they are aware of where to report.

"People are reaching out now. Earlier women might not be coming forward to lodge their complaint... They didn't know what they are going through is harassment but now they do, and they are coming forward to report which





is a good thing," she told PTI.





# elsure

## **EMMA WANTED TO LEAVE** HARRY POTTER FRANCHISE

Actress Emma Watson, who played the part of Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter films, once considered leaving the franchise. Emma revealed this when she appeared on Harry Potter 20th Anniversary: Return to Hogwarts special.

## WHEN NICOLAS CAGE FELT 'MARGINALISED'

Academy Award winner Nicolas Cage, revealed about the attitude of some movie studios after his films didn't fare well. Cage said: "I knew after a couple of flops that I had been marginalised in the studio system and I wasn't going to get invited by them."



## FORTUNE FORECAST



Today you will feel like dis-

ARIES

playing your power. If you find that people are awestruck when you pass by, take it that your labours are doing the trick. Otherwise, take it that you have to get things in better order. Ganesha says either ways you have more work to do.

### TAURUS

This is not a day when you should be fooling around with your health. Do not

take your health and fitness for granted, warns Ganesha You will be feeling lazy and listless all day long. Chances are that you could fall ill on account of carelessness. Both physical exertion as well as mental stress should b meticulously avoided

### GEMINI

Interactions with member of the opposite sex may yield positive and pleasurable results today. Public servants will get the much-needed encouragement and moral support from bosses and family

### CANCER Today, you are likely to

remain open-minded while dealing with others. However, it doesn't mean that you will always be soft on others. Later in the day,

your approach may be different and stubborn. In the evening, you will enjoy the company of family and friends

**LEO** Pack your bags, and don't

forget the sunscreen and the shades. Look at the stars today - Ganesha foresees for you a strong prospect of going on a tour. If not an individual backpacking adventure, then an elaborate family holiday, but travel you shall.

## 

Reflect on past glories and assemble the machinery for accomplishing more in the future. New relationships will mark the road to progress. You easy-going nature will help you get along famously with people.

## **\_IBRA**

Today might be a good day to invest in that body armour you saw on the telly last night. At least find one that will shield you from being at the receiving end of your seniors and the daily gr of life. If you happen to be a job aspirant, be prepared to slog it out for your success. Put off auction bids and sealed tenders for a luckier day.

## **Taapsee** in no hurry to marry

Mumbai: Actress Taapsee Pannu who had a fabulous year with her twin towering achievements-Haseen Dillruba and Rashmi Rocket, has no immediate plans of tying the knot with her boyfriend former badminton player Mathias Boe.

When I ask her about marriage in 2022, she retorts, "Just because weddings are the flavour of the season? No no. Not really. I have no immediate wedding plans. I have quite a few assignments on hand. I don't want to do a rush-rush wedding.'

Taapsee, one of the busiest actors in India wants to get married when she has the time. "Whenever I get married it will happen in a relaxed atmosphere. I am in no hurry to get married. Nothing much will change after marriage so I am not feeling any great need to take the plunge right now

She hopes for a more organised 2022 than 2021. "Because of the lockdown the last two years have been a little crushed and cluttered for me. I have been literally running in and out of sets trving to find time for myself and my family. This has taken a toll on my physical mental and health. I am hoping 2022 will be

more peaceful. AGENCIES

WISHLIST FOR 2022 Kangana wants fewer FIRs, more love letters Mumbai: Actress Kangana

Ranaut shared what she wishes for 2022. She says this year she wants less of police complaints and FIRs

and more of love letters. The actress, who is known for speaking her mind, took to Instagram, where she shared a motley of pictures praying at a temple, very close to Tirupati Balaji. She even performed some rituals

Kangana captioned the images: "There is only one Rahu Ketu temple in the world.... It's very close Tirupati Balaji...performed some rituals there .... Out of five elemental Lingas, Vavo (air element) Linda is also situated here ... Quite a remarkable place." She added: "I went there to have the

mercy of my beloved enemies, in this year I want less Police complains / FIRs and more love letters.... Jai Rahu Ketu ji ki."

Speaking about her work, Kangana is gearing up for her next Dhaakad, an action thriller, which was slated for an April 8, 2022 release. It has now been

pushed to Mav 2022.

**Betty White no more** The actress, who played Sue-Ann Nivens on 'The Mary Tyler Moore Show' in the 1970s and Rose on 'The Golden Girls' from 1985-92, was a staple on TV for more than

60 years

Los Angeles: Betty White, the Emmy-winning TV star who had a remarkable later-career resurgence in films, TV commercials and the hit series The Golden Girls and Hot in Cleveland, has passed away aged 99, reports variety.com. White would have celebrated

her 100th birthday January 17. White is believed to have died Thursday night at her Brentwood home.

White's agent and close friend Jeff Witjas confirmed her death.

White, who played Sue-Ann Nivens on The Mary Tyler Moore Show in the 1970s and Rose on The Golden Girls from

1985-92, was a staple on TV for more than 60 years, having started as the sidekick on a local Los Angeles daytime show that kept her on live TV five hours a day, five days

The Golden Girls star

a week In her 80s, White was still stealing scenes in film comedies such as The Proposal, You Again and Bringing Down the House, as well as making regular appearances on late night talk shows, where she delighted audiences with her quickfire repartee with Jay Leno, Craig Ferguson and other hosts.

She was a television phenomenon in the 2000s, guesting as herself on Ugly Betty. She also recurred on soap The Bold and the Beautiful from 2006 09, on That's'70s Show and as Catherine Piper both on The Practice and on Boston Legal.

In 2010 she became the oldest person ever to host Saturdav Night Live.

White hosted and produced the hidden-camera reality show Off Their Rockers in 2012-13, earning two more Emmy nominations.

# 'Started 2022 with all things positive except for Covid'

Mumbai: Actor Akshay Kumar has started 2022 on a positive note by greeting his oldest friend' – the sun.

Akshay, who is currently holidaying with his family, posted a video staring at the sun with him chanting the Gavatri Mantra

'New Year, same me. Woke

up and greeted my old friend,

the sun and started my 2022

with all things positive except for Covid. Praying for everyone's good health and happiness. Happy New Year!" Akshav wrote as the caption.

Akshay has his diaries full for next year. The 54-year-old star has several back-to-back releases such as Prithvirai.

Bachchan Pandey, Raksha

Bandhan, Ram Setu and Oh

IANS

My God! 2.





### **SCORPIO**

House renovation is in the offing. You may furnish it with portraits and artefacts Today, you may also feel like playing the stock market game and stake your bets, says Ganesha. Have a great time at home by hosting friends over.

## SAGITTARIUS

A paradigm shift in your temperament and your looks is on the cards today. Your personality will get better as you don some chic attire, jewellery and a rather loud perfume today. You're a magnet today, says Ganesha, and will charm your way through a crowd of admirers who will clamour for your attention.

## CAPRICORN

Money will flow in from various quarters today, but it will also find its way out of your pockets. Keep a tab on your income and more on your expenses, says Ganesha. Situation at work may get a little trying, but you will overcome all problems by means of your innate and acquired skills, and past experience.

## AOUARIUS

You are ambitious, and quite unapologetic about the way you pursue your goals! You will work hard and push your way through if you have to. Not just that, you will see to it that you have all the skills and competency required to make it big.

## **PISCES**

For those in the creative, marketing or advertising fields, today will likely bring about an important milestone on their path to progress, says Ganesha. Your creativity and ingenuity will be at their peak. Remembering that confidence is the key to success will keep you from shying away from challenges, which when surmounted will bring you substantial gains.

## NO MATCH FOR STUPENDOUS MAN'S STUPENDOUS STRENGTH ROLLS A GIGANTIC SNOWBALL

**CALVIN AND HOBBES** 

EARTH'S EXCESSIVE GRAVITY

YOU DIDN'T TYPE

WHAT I WROTE AT

ALL !! YOU'VE RUINED

ME! I GOT A

FAILING GRADE!

THAT WAS

SUPPOSED

TO BE MY

TERM PAPER

PROBABLY A

UNFORTUNAT

LOVE AFFAIR

9

I'M

RUINED!



PEANUTS

WHAT KIND OF

TYPIST

ARE YOU ?!







## SUDOKU

SO

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.

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			5	9				6
9	8		6	1				
		4		3		Ĩ		
3				7		9		
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SWOF	U	M A N	В	E R	A	A G E	E	S B	F	N A	Т	B A K	L
CROSSWORD	F	D A R	R	REMO	W	W E I R	L	- 0 L 0 G	L		A	PUS	E
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sudoku	5	5	4	6	-	3	9	1	3	2	8		1
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CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW





## downtown



## WINGED BEAUTIES

Cranes in large numbers perch on a tree at Sundarpada in Bhubaneswar, Saturday



**COVID-19 TRACKER** INFECTED RECOVERED DEAD 28,87,32,127 25,39,07,547 54,55,518 3,48,61,579 3,42,75,312 4,81,486 10,55,132 10.44.962

## Govt invites inputs for Budget 2022-23 Naveen seeks Lord's blessings from home

POST NEWS NETWORK

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: The state government Saturday sought sugges tions and inputs from the common people, civil society organisations and different advocacy groups for preparation of the annual Budget for the 2022-23 fiscal.

The Finance department has been holding pre-Budget consultations with the cross section of the society for last several years. In order to make the budgetary process more transparent and participative using information and communication technology, the government has sought public opinion through e-mail, SMS, WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook, said Finance Minister Niranian Pujari.

He said the Finance department developed a webpage, budget.odisha.gov.in, to host the Budget documents and suggestions are invited in a structured format (displayed in the web page) for preparation of annual Budget for 2022-23.

Pujari said the suggestions can also be mailed to odisha.budget@gov.in. Similarly, suggestions



he said.

In order to make the budgetary process more transparent and participative, the state government has sought public opinion through e-mail, SMS, WhatsApp, **Twitter and Facebook** 

for the Budget are also invited through WhatsApp at mobile no. in the past years. The department (+91)9438161111, Twitter (@FdOdisha) and Facebook also used many of these inputs while preparing the annual Budget, (@FinanceOdisha) sources said.

his first day of 2022 by seeking blessings from Lord Jagannath at his residence, Naveen Niwas. Patnaik offered prayers before Lord Jagannath at his residence in

the morning. A video of this moment went viral in social media. Patnaik, an ardent devotee of Lord Jagannath, usually visits Srimandir in Puri on the first day

This facility will be available for of every year. a month from January 1 to January Since the 12th century shrine 31, 2022, said the Finance Minister. was closed for people temporarily The common people, members to check the spread of Covid-19. of civil society organisations, ad-Patnaik offered prayers to Lord

vocacy groups and other stake-Jagannath at his residence. holders are requested to make use Notably, the state government of this unique opportunity to parunder the leadership of Patnaik ticipate in the Budget-making has decided to implement the amprocess of the state government,' bitious Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa (heritage corridor project) The Finance department had in Puri, for which the foundation received good response from the stone was laid as per the Vedic ritpublic for preparation of the Budget

uals in November last year. The state government has also launched the Augmentation of **Basic Amenities and Development** of Heritage and Architecture



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik exchanges New Year greetings with ministers, secretaries and senior police officers through videoconference, Saturday

(ABADHA) scheme for transforming Puri into a world-class heritage city. The Chief Minister also greeted the people and prayed for their prosperity. He also urged the people to follow Covid appropriate behaviour.

"Still there is fear of coronavirus. We can face the challenge if we remain alert. Therefore, I appeal to all to follow Covid-19 protocol and keep the virus at bay," Patnaik said. Later, in a video conferencing with IAS and IPS officers, the Chief Minister wished them on the occasion.

Though Odisha's Secretariat building 'Loka Seva Bhavan' was open, the state government had banned New Year celebrations in government offices and exchange of flowers or sweets in the wake of

nation centres," said the DGP.

Bansal had earlier said that

Odisha Police would take all possible

steps to ensure safety for people. He

had claimed that the police force has

achieved milestones in containing

major challenge for law enforcement

agencies. I would make all possible

efforts to take forward the good

work started by my predecessors,"

Bansal had said while assuming the

charge from the outgoing DGP

Bansal, a 1987-batch IPS officer,

returned to Odisha recently after

spending 27 years in Central

deputation. Earlier, he was work-

ing with the Intelligence Bureau as

its special director, sources said.

Abhay Friday.

"Cybercrime has emerged as a

the Naxal menace in state.

the Covid-19 pandemic.

All major places of worship and picnic spots too remained closed for two days to avoid crowding. The state government had prohibited New Year celebrations in hotels, clubs, and restaurants.

People from all walks of life, ranging from politicians to school students, took to social media to exchange greetings.

## Student's body found hanging in hostel room

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: The body of a 23-year-old girl student was found hanging in the hostel room of a private management institute under Infocity police limits here, Friday evening.

The deceased, Sushree Pragyamita Sethi of Koraput, was a second year MBA student.

According to sources, Sethi was residing alone in her room after other inmates left for their respective homes few days ago. Friday evening, she did not open the door despite repeated knockings by her friends and other college staff. The college authorities called the police who reached the spot and recovered the body. Later, her parents were informed about her death by the police. The body was handed over to her parents after post-mortem.



## MUTED **CELEBRATION**

1) Youngsters take a selfie in front of the Ram Mandir in Bhubaneswar on the New Year's Day as the shrine was temporarily closed to check the spread of novel coronavirus

2) People enjoying boating at Silver City Boat Club in Mahanadi in Cuttack

Despite restrictions on

## New DGP warns stern action against outlaws

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Jan 1: A day after assuming office, new Director General of Police (DGP) Sunil Kumar Bansal Saturday warned stern action against criminals and drug mafia.

Those involved in organised crimes, illegal drug business and other anti-social activities would not be spared," Bansal said in a video message while greeting the people on the occasion of the New Year.

The Odisha Police is committed to extend its helping hand to the poor, senior citizens, women and tribal people.

"Our personnel will provide the necessary help for enforcement of Covid-19 guidelines and maintenance of discipline at the vacci-

## Covid vax: Registration begins for 15-18

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Saturday commenced the registration process for inoculation of beneficiaries in the 15 to 18 age

and register through an existing account. Every one born in 2007 or before is eligible for the vaccination. In a statement, the BMC said that Covaxin will be administered to the beneficiaries in the area under its jurisdiction. The beneficiaries in the age group of 15-18 years must carry a valid ID proof like Aadhaar card or school ID card to the vaccination centre They can also register for the vac-

cination onsite. A verifier or vaccinator at the vaccination centre will register such beneficiaries in facilitated registration mode. Services on the onsite or walk-in mode will be available subject to the availability of vaccination slots. Vaccination centers will operate between 8 AM and 1 PM for beneficiaries in the 15 18 years age group; whereas people above 18 years can receive the jab between 3 PM and 6 PM.

New Year celebration, some visitors enjoying merry-go-rounds on OP PHOTOS Puri beach

group against Covid-19.

The beneficiaries can register themselves on CoWin portal https://cowin.gov.in to get a jab. The beneficiaries can visit Cowin portal

## Omicron less severe as it mostly avoids attacking lungs: Report

series of recently published studies found that the fastmoving Omicron variant may be less severe than other Covid strains because of the way it attacks the lungs, media reports revealed. According to The New York Times, studies on mice and hamsters have found that Omicron produced less damaging infections to the lungs, and instead was limited largely to the nose, throat, and windpipe.

Previous variants would cause scarring in the lungs and serious breathing difficulty, quoting NYT, The Times of Israel reported.

"It is fair to say that the idea of a disease that manifests itself primarily in the upper respiratory system is emerging," Roland Eils, a computational biologist at the Berlin Institute of Health who has studied how coronaviruses infect the airway was quoted as saying.

One of the studies found that Omicron levels in the lungs were one-tenth or less of the level of other variants, the report said. Several experiments published in recent days all pointed to the conclusion that Omicron is milder than Delta and other earlier versions of the virus, in line with real-world data, it added.

The studies were posted online in preprint form, meaning they have yet to be reviewed by other scientists and be published in scientific journals.

Omicron was first identified in South Africa and Botswana in late November. It quickly became the dominant strain in South Africa, causing an explosion of infections with a peak of about 26,000 daily cases recorded by mid-December, according to official statistics.

The variant is currently present in



more than 100 countries, according to the World Health Organisation, and affects vaccinated people as well as those who have already had coronavirus.

Many studies suggest Omicron, now the dominant strain in some countries, carries a reduced risk of being admitted to hospital, but the WHO still urged caution.

Meanwhile, as India continued to report a Covid surge with 16,764 new cases in the last 24 hours, and an active caseload of 91,361, AIIMS chief Randeep Guleria said that the highly infectious Omicron variant mainly affects the upper respiratory tract and airways, rather than the lungs - and those without comorbidities should not panic and start blocking hospital beds.

The focus, Guleria said, should be on effective home isolation since recovery time for the latest variant is much faster.

"Omicron is affecting the upper respiratory tract and more of the airways, rather than the lungs. That is why we see fewer patients with a drop in oxygen saturation or the other severe symptoms we saw in Delta. What we are seeing here is more of fever, running nose, sore throat, and a lot of body ache and headache. If any of these symptoms persist, they should come forward and get themselves

tested. Because then they can isolate themselves and prevent the infection from spreading to other people in the community," he said.

One of India's top pulmonologists and a member of India's Covid Task Force, Guleria emphasised that hospital beds should be left free to those who are more vulnerable to severe disease.

'There is no need to panic. It is important to understand that, unlike last time, this new variant doesn't cause that much of a fall in oxygen saturation. Therefore, the focus in those who don't have comorbidities should be home isolation. You should work on a home-isolation strategy, and not get into panic situations, blocking beds in hospitals, which is not required. Data also suggests that recovery happens much faster, therefore people will tend to improve faster." he said.

According to Guleria, Covid-appropriate behaviour will be the most potent tool to fight the new variant. "So therefore, wearing your mask properly when vou are going out, maintaining physical distancing and washing your hands is the key," he said. Referring to preliminary data on Omicron, both within the country and outside, Guleria said testing is key to stopping the spread.

"As compared to the past, there is no reason to panic. Because the data we see on Omicron emerging from Europe, US, and South Africa, suggest it is mild. That it causes flu-like symptoms, and hospital and oxygen requirement is very little. We will have an increase in the number of cases, but hospitalisation should not be as much as it was in the last wave,' he said. AGENCIES



## **POSSESSION NOTICE**

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Concerned Branches under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices calling upon the Borrowers/Guarantors in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **possession** of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrowers/Guarantors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India, Concerned Branches for an amount mentioned below with interest & expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

<u>BRANCH</u> / Name & Address of Borrowers/Guarantors	Liabilities due as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice/ Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Properties			
SASTRI NAGAR BRANCH / Borrowers: 1) Mr. Jitendra Nath Palai, 2) Mrs. Namita Palai, W/o: Mr. Jitendra	₹34,92,594/- + interest & expenses thereon		All that part and parcel of the Property situated at Khata No.: 526/1440, Plot No.: 978/3644 (Area: Ac.0.006Dec. and Plot No.: 978/3645 (Area: Ac.0.040Dec.), <b>Total Area</b> bari, at Mouza: Mukunda Prasad, P.S.: Khurda, Tahasil:			
Nath Palai, Both are at Flat No.: 01, siddhartha Apartment, RD-8, Bhoi Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751022	Khurda, Dist.: k Nath Palai, Bo Dhruba Charan	Khurda, standing ounded by North Mohanty, West	in the name of <b>Mr. Jitendra Nath Palai</b> , S/o: Late Jogendra : Arati Dash/Jitendra Nath Palai, South: Pvt. Land, East I: Jitendra Nath Palai			
Basudeipur, P.O.: Raichand, Dist.: Kendrapara, PIN-754223 out of Ac.0.050Dec., Corresponding to	+ interest & expenses thereon Corresponding Mutation Surve Mutation Surve	/ 28.12.2021 Ac.0.050Dec., to Hal Survey No y No.: 1043/212, rey No.: 1043/24	Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building in the name o <b>Prakash Kumar Jena</b> situated at Survey No.: 347, Area Plot No.: 196 at Basudeipur, Raichand, Kendrapara o.: 420, Plot No.: 237, Area: Ac.0.050Dec., Corresponding to Plot No.: 237, Area: Ac.0.030Dec. 3 Links Northern Portior 19, Plot No.: 237, Area: Ac.0.050Dec., Kissam: Gharabari & Others, East: Dibakar Jena & Others, West: Village Road			
TANKAPANI ROAD BRANCH / Borrowers: 1) Mrs. Basantilata Samal, W/o: Jagannath Samal, 2) Mrs. Swagatika Das, W/o: Mr. Biswajit Sama 1) Mr. Biswajit Samal, S/o: Jagannath Jagannath Samal, S/o: Late Nityana are at Quarter No.: EB-306, Badagad P.O./P.S.: Badagada, Bhubaneswar, 0	expenses thereon I / Guarantors: I Samal, 2) Mr. Inda Samal, All da Brit Colony,	Unit No.: 35, P Badagada, Tah Mrs. Basantila and Dist.: Khur	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of House No.: EB-306, Khata No.: 1240, Plot No.: 2404 & 2405 Area: 805 Sq.ft, Kissam: Gharabari at Mouza: Badagada S.: Badagada (Area: 805 Sq.ft) SRO: Bhubaneswar, P.S. asil: Bhubaneswar, Dist.: Khurda, standing in the name o ta Samal within the registration Sud-District: Bhubaneswa da, Bounded by North: House No.: EB-305, South: House ast: House No.: EB-309, West: 40 Ft. Road			
TANKAPANI ROAD BRANCH /	₹12,15,184/-					
Borrowers: 1) Mr. Bhimsen Sahoo, S/o: Narayan Sahoo, 2) Mr. Khirod	+ interest & expenses thereon	12.04.2019 / 31.12.2021	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Khata No.: 1530/608, Plot No.: 778/5890 (Area: Ac.0.040Dec.			
Borrowers: 1) Mr. Bhimsen Sahoo, S/o: Narayan Sahoo, 2) Mr. Khirod Chandra Sahoo, S/o: Bhimsen Sahoo, Both are at Plot No.: 778/5890, 780/ 5891, Jhinti Sasan, Balianta, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751018	expenses thereon Ac.0.025Dec.), i.e. 2831.40 So District: Baliant	/ 31.12.2021 Mouza: Jhinti Sa .ft, standing in t	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Khata No.: 1530/608, Plot No.: 778/5890 (Area: Ac.0.040Dec. and Khata No.: 1530/609, Plot No.: 780/5891 (Area isan, P.S.: Balianta, Dist.: Khurda, <b>Total Area: Ac.0.065Dec</b> he name of <b>Mr. Bhimsen Sahoo</b> within the registration Sub rda, Bounded by North: Village Road, South: Dibakar Sahoo			
S/o: Narayan Sahoo, 2) Mr. Khirod Chandra Sahoo, S/o: Bhimsen Sahoo, Both are at Plot No.: 778/5890, 780/ 5891, Jhinti Sasan, Balianta, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751018 SAHID NAGAR BRANCH /	expenses thereon Ac.0.025Dec.), i.e. 2831.40 Sc District: Baliant East: Govt. Po ₹37,46,730/-	/ 31.12.2021 Mouza: Jhinti Sa I.ft, standing in that a and Dist.: Khui	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Khatt No.: 1530/608, Plot No.: 778/5890 (Area: Ac.0.040Dec. and Khata No.: 1530/609, Plot No.: 780/5891 (Area isan, P.S.: Balianta, Dist.: Khurda, <b>Total Area: Ac.0.065Dec</b> he name of <b>Mr. Bhimsen Sahoo</b> within the registration Sub da, Bounded by North: Village Road, South: Dibakar Sahoo rdhan Sahoo			
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S/o: Narayan Sahoo, 2) Mr. Khirod Chandra Sahoo, S/o: Bhimsen Sahoo, Both are at Plot No.: 778/5890, 780/ 5891, Jhinti Sasan, Balianta, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751018 SAHID NAGAR BRANCH /	expenses thereon Ac.0.025Dec.), i.e. 2831.40 Sc District: Baliant East: Govt. Po ₹37,46,730/- + interest & expenses thereon disha, Prop.: Mr Glave, Prachi V Guarantor: Mrs	/ 31.12.2021 Mouza: Jhinti Sa I.ft, standing in ti a and Dist.: Khuu nd, West: Goba 04.08.2021 / 31.12.2021 r. Guru Prasad /ihar, Palasuni, s. Bishnupriya	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Khata No.: 1530/608, Plot No.: 778/5890 (Area: Ac.0.040Dec. and Khata No.: 1530/609, Plot No.: 780/5891 (Area isan, P.S.: Balianta, Dist.: Khurda, <b>Total Area: Ac.0.065Dec</b> he name of <b>Mr. Bhimsen Sahoo</b> within the registration Sub rda, Bounded by North: Village Road, South: Dibakar Sahoo			



## OrissaPOST SUNDAY | JANUARY 2 | 2022 | BHUBANESWAF

## downtown

## 298 NEW CASES MARK **nCoV RISE IN ODISHA**

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: Odisha reported 298 new Covid-19 cases Saturday, the highest in more than a month, which took the tally to 10,55,132, the Health department said in its bulletin.

The toll rose to 8,462 as two men, aged 40 and 65, succumbed to the disease in Cuttack district. Fiftythree other Covid-19 patients have died due to comorbidities in the past, the bulletin said.

The coastal state had logged 335 coronavirus cases November 25 and the daily count did not exceed thereafter: On Friday, 225 fresh cases and one fatality were registered. Khurda, of which state capital The state had logged 335 coronavirus cases

ENTATION Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the maximum number of fresh cases at 119, followed by 35 in Cuttack.

November 25 and the daily count did not exceed thereafter those newly afflicted with the disease.

Odisha currently has 1,814 active cases, while 10,44,803 people have recovered -- 209 of them in the last 24 hours -- the Health department bulletin said. More than 2.92 crore people have

been inoculated with the first dose of the anti-Covid vaccine and over 2.08 crore have been administered both the doses, it added. Thirty-three children are among



People visit stalls at Sisir Saras fair being held at the Exhibition ground in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

The ruling BJD said that the state government

could not make provision

of quota due to certain

legal obstacles, but the

to OBC candidates in

rural and urban polls

party is giving 40pc seats

moved the Supreme Court to press

for the OBC reservation in pan-

chavat elections but the Odisha gov-

ernment remained complacent on

the matter. A delegation of BJP

lawmakers had earlier met Governor

Ganeshi Lal and submitted a mem-

orandum seeking his intervention

into the matter. They had demanded

that the panchayat elections be held

only after making provision of reser-

that the state government could

not make provision of quota for

OBCs due to certain legal obstacles.

However, the party has announced

to give 40 per cent seats to OBC

candidates in rural and urban polls

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: The IMD

the minimum (night) temperature

in several parts of the state.

Saturday predicted further dip in

likely to be held this year.

The ruling BJD, however, said

vation for the OBCs.

## **FOSTERING FARMERS' FUTURE**

## State to bolster irrigation in 3,500 hectares

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: Aiming to enhance irrigation facilities for farmers all across Odisha, the state Water Resources department stated that it will provide water to farmers covering about 3,500 hectares of area in the next five years.

In a review of major milestones added in the outgoing year, the department detailed about different major and medium irrigation proj ects that are likely to be completed in next five years

The department stated that the Gangadhar Meher Lift Irrigation Project in Bargarh district is in advanced stage of construction. Similarly the construction work has resumed for Kanupur Irrigation Project and is expected to be completed by December 2023.

Meanwhile construction of Lower Suktel Irrigation Project has resumed and project is expected to be completed by January 2024. Sandul Project of Kalahandi has been approved by the Cabinet while Sono and Banktira Projects in Mayurbhanj are ready for grounding.

## Prisons told to initiate e-Furlough, e-Parole

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: The state Home department has instructed the Directorate of Prisons to immediately operationalise e-Furlough and e-Parole systems in all the jails in the state.

The department also issued a Standard Operating Procedure



Assessment-2020 has been suc-

cessfully completed in collaboration

with Central Ground Water Board.

It has revealed that the state still

does not have any over-exploited or

critical blocks. Despite increase

in water extraction in line with

state's development goals, the

ground water level has been sat-

partment said.

Cementious Composite Geo-synthetic Mattress (CCGM) technology, resulting in complete makeover of the area." it added

Meanwhile, in a move towards sustainable irrigation, a scheme for installation of about 11,618 solar based micro river lift (MRL) has been approved. The Cabinet has also approved Rs10,757.12 crore for 170 new megalift projects, to be undertaken in a phased manner

COVID INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

isfactory," the Water Resource de-"The historical Taladanda Main over a period of five years, under Canal in the millennial city of the Parvatigiri Megalift Irrigation Cuttack was renovated using Scheme which will create addi-

## NEW NODS

scheme for installation of Asbout 11,618 solar based micro river lift has been approved

he Cabinet has also approved Rs10,757.12 crore for 170 new megalift projects, to be undertaken in a phased manner over a period of five years under the Parvatigiri Megalift Irrigation Scheme

Projects on raising and strengthening of vulnerable saline embankments in the coastal districts have been planned and an MoU is to be signed with National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai in this regard

tional irrigation potential of 2,63,800 hectares.

"In the initial phase of 2021, 18 megalift schemes have been completed creating additional potential of 24,188 hectares of irrigation facilities. About 129 megalift schemes have been completed with creation of 1,55,183 hectares of irrigation po-

## **IN QUEUE**

The Gangadhar Meher Lift Irrigation Project in Bargarh District is in advanced stage of construction

onstruction work has resumed Cfor Kanupur Irrigation Project and is expected to be completed by December 2023

Construction of Lower Suktel Irrigation Project has resumed and project is expected to be completed by January 2024

Sandul Project of Kalahandi has been approved by the Cabinet while Sono and Banktira Projects in Mayurbhanj District are ready for grounding

tential in the later phase of the year,' a review by the department said.

Furthermore, projects on raising and strengthening of vulnerable saline embankments in the coastal districts of the state have been planned. An MoU is to be signed with National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai in this regard.

## 213 from City lost ₹60L to cyber frauds in December

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: Cyber fraudsters have whisked away several lakhs from the bank accounts of 213 persons from the Capital city during the month of December in 2021. According to the data released

## BJP's signature campaign for OBC quota in rural polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 1: Dubbing Odisha's ruling BJD government as "anti-OBC", opposition BJP Saturday decided to launch a statewide signature campaign and stage demonstrations demanding reservation in the upcoming panchavat elections.

The BJP is protesting the state government's move to go for the panchayat elections without making provision for OBC reservation.

"The state government is deliberately neglecting the people from the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category for its vested interests. OBCs, who constitute 54 per cent of the state's population, are being denied their constitutional rights,' BJP OBC Morcha president Surath Biswal told reporters. "We will launch a signature cam-

paign and stage demonstrations before the collectorates and block offices in all the districts. The signatures collected till January 8 from the people supporting the OBC quota will be given to the governor," he said.

Biswal said that Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh governments

## Yellow warning for cold wave issued POST NEWS NETWORK

As many as 100 victims complained about UPI fraud while 66 people lost their hard-earned money in credit and

The minimum temperature is likely to fall gradually by 3°C to 4°C to in the next three days. There will be no major change thereafter. "Dry weather is most likely to prevail over the districts of Odisha in the next 24 hours. Shallow to moderate fog is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of south interior Odisha, Angul, Dhenkanal and Cuttack,' IMD said in its bulletin.

(SOP) for the release of prisoners, who have applied online for parole and furlough through the e-Prisons system.

Prisoners can apply for e-Parole and e-Furlough though the kiosks inside the jails. They can also apply for conditional release under both the systems through a written application. The relatives of prisoners can seek parole and furlough by applying through NPIP.

The prison welfare officers will then send the applications to the concerned SPs/DCPs for enquiry and verification. A copy of the application will also be sent to the respective district Collectors or the Commissioner of Police in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack areas

The DCP/SP will send the field enquiry report to the Collector and Police Commissioner who will recommend to the state government for the e-parole and IG of Prisons for e-furlough applications.

## **WASSUP TODAY**

### BHUBANESWAR

 Get-together and poetry recitation by Utkal Publishers and Booksellers Association, Kedargouri, 11am

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.



People enjoying street food near Baliyatra Ground in Cuttack, Saturday, while flouting Covid protocols OP PHOTO by the DCP office, as many as 414 victims including 201 from other districts contacted the cyber help desk of the anti fraud cell last month.

The cyber criminals have withdrawn ₹60,59,649 from the accounts of victims in Bhubaneswar alone in December. The accused conmen duped the majority of victims through Unified Payments Interface (UPI) fraud. As many as 100 individuals complained about UPI fraud while 66 people lost their

debit card frauds

hard-earned money in credit and debit card frauds.

Meanwhile, police managed to recover or block around 30 per cent of the total amount duped by the fraudsters. Police efforts resulted in the recovery of ₹19.72.226 in December.

As many nine cyber fraud cases were registered while 48 accounts of the accused persons were blocked in the last month of the year.

The weather is most likely to be dry Sunday, with likelihood of shallow to moderate fog in one or two places over districts of south interior Odisha.

was noted that for the protection

of wildlife, there has to be elevated

road, underpasses, road cordon-

ing, noise and light absorbance

and other measures. In the mat-

ter concerning protection of forest

and wildlife, the NGT directed clos-

ing down of restaurants and non-

forest activities in the forest of

dealt with the matters pertaining

to industrial accidents causing fa-

talities. In all such cases, the green

body constituted joint committees

and sought investigation reports.

It was broadly inferred that acci-

dents were mainly on account of

lack of proper training to the work-

During the year 2021, the NGT

Nahargarh fort, Rajasthan.

## NGT cleared 2,288 cases via videoconferencing in '21

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) disposed of 2,288 matters and received 2,083 applications through video conferencing in 2021. The Tribunal followed virtual

hearings at all of its benches. The Tribunal on its own undertook matters relating to industrial accidents which caused fatalities and directed for compensation, an official statement said.

The green body dealt with many issues relating to the water quality of rivers which included Ganga, Yamuna, Ghaggar, Hindon, Satluj among others. It specifically emphasised on rejuvenation of Ganga and the matter was transferred by the Supreme Court. The issues on river cleaning are comprehensively dealt with, relating to the restoration of water quality of 351 polluted river stretches, it said. The tribunal also dealt with air pollution, and based on the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data on air quality observed that there are 124 non-attainment cities exceeding ambient air quality norms. The Tribunal has reviewed the collated data on the status and directed countermeasures accordingly.

It also reviewed different sources and their apportion in causing deterioration in air quality. It has been a fact that Central and North India have high background dust compared to other parts of the country.

The Tribunal also dealt with developmental projects, particularly road widening including major highways. Such projects quite often get stuck up in Forest



## STAFF OF THE TRIBUNE

he green body dealt with issues relating to water quality of rivers like Ganga, Yamuna Ghaggar, Hindon, Satluj, while specifically emphasising on rejuvenation of Ganga as the matter was transferred by the Supreme Court

he issues on river cleaning, relating to the restoration of water quality of 351 polluted river stretches, were dealt with comprehensively

he tribunal also dealt with air pollution, and basing on CPCB data on air quality, observed that there are 124 non-attainment cities exceeding ambient air quality norms

/ hile dealing with industrial accident cases, NGT broadly inferred that accidents were attributable mainly to lack of proper training, poor maintenance schedule, mishandling of chemicals, and not practicing on and off-site crisis management

and Wildlife clearances at the time of construction, for alleged violation of norms. The Tribunal directed and involved Secretary and Chairman of NHAI for laying down protocols and SoPs for un-

dertaking such projects in an environment-friendly manner. While dealing with the issues, it

ers, poor maintenance schedule, mishandling of chemicals, and not practicing on and off-site crisis management, it added.

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Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488 Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347 Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.







## SHORT TAKES

## **Contractor gives** fake currencies to labourers, held

Malkangiri: In a shocking incident, a contractor gave labourers fake currency notes towards their wages in Malkangiri district. He was arrested. According to reports, Rasik Mandal, a contractor of MPV-70 village, had taken labourers of Gokharapalli village to Andhra Pradesh and engaged them in construction work for a vear. However, Mandal did not pay their wages despite repeated pleas. The labourers returned to their village disappointed. They held a meeting with covillagers and the contractor. The locals directed Mandal to clear the dues of the labourers as soon as possible. Villagers said, after some days, Mandal gave money to them at night and left for Andhra Pradesh, When the labourers made purchase of their essential with the money, the notes given by the contractor were found counterfeit. The labourers filed a complaint at the police station against the contractor. Police registered a case and arrested the accused.

## 7 smart roads in Dhenkanal town

Two major tourist spots like Kapilash and Saptasajva have been developed with new infrastructure

## POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Jan 1: The state government has decided to make an overhaul of major roads in Dhenkanal municipality. It has provided ₹12 crore for the construction of seven smart roads under the Smart Urban Road Execution scheme. The civic authorities started the ground work for the project after Dhenkanal town was declared a model town.

According to reports, smart roads with a total span of 6.02 km will be laid in ward nos – 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10. These smart roads will have drains

on both sides while there will be provisions of sports equipment and gymnasiums for children and youth alongside the roads. This apart, avenue plantation will be done.

Besides, several infrastructure projects have been developed in the town at a cost of ₹5.27 crore under MUKTA. Under this scheme, small parks, open gymnasiums and vending zones have been set up. Moreover, four ponds in the town have been renovated and beautified. Two major tourist spots like Kapilash and Saptasajya have been developed with new infrastruc-

ture. Meanwhile, four welcome gates have been built at four entry points of the Dhenkanal town. District Collector Saroj Kumar Sethi said a host of developmental

projects has been undertaken for the civic body area and tourist spots like Kapilash and Saptasajya in the district.

## PRAYING FOR WELLBEING



Devotees offer lamps to Goddess Samaleswari praying for wellbeing of their kin on New Year day outside the main gate of Samaleswari temple in Sambalpur despite closure of the shrine as part of Covid restrictions OP PHOTO

## **10 foreign returnees untraceable**

## ₹93 crore for Bhanjanagar dvpt

Bhanjanagar: The state government has sanctioned ₹93 crore to carry out various infrastructure projects in Bhanjanagar area. Forest, **Environment and Climate** Change Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha laid the foundation stones for the projects. It was learnt that ₹25 crore has been allocated for expansion of the road from Pahanda Chhak up to Galeri Chhak while ₹17 crore will be spent for widening of the road from Galeri to Badangi. Besides, Lalsingh-Sanakodanda-Mujagad road will be expanded at a cost of ₹18 crore. ₹4 crore will be utilized for dredging of Khaira creek. Another ₹14 crore has been allocated for expansion of Nidhiaplli-Birikote-Baibali road and Baruda- Buduli road under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. A bridge across Sahanadi on Galeri-Barahakud road has been built at a cost of ₹5.5 crore while another bridge built

with ₹10 crore at Sorisamuli was inaugurated.

relative detained

Tribal girl raped;

## **OMICRON FEAR GRIPS DHENKANAL DISTRICT AS HEALTH DEPT WORRIED**

## POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Jan 1: Amid rising Omicron cases in the state, the health and administration officials in Dhenkanal district are worried over sudden missing of 10 of the returnees from abroad.

Reports said, with a steady increase in the number of Omicron cases in the state, the district administration has taken up various preventive measures in the form of restrictions and fresh guidelines.

It was learnt that a total of 134 people in the district who worked abroad have returned to the district. Till Thursday, 29 returnees were from Omicron-hit red zone countries while 105 were from Covid-hit green zone countries.

Meanwhile, the health department has traced 124 foreign returnees, but has failed to get details about 10 others. The administration has conducted RTPCR tests



and Omicron tests on 28 returnees from the red zone and 44 from the green zone countries. Test reports of 66 have come out negative while testing of others is still on.

Health officials are worried that 10 people who have since been untraceable might have come in contact with their family members, relatives and other people and infected them. According to health officials, if anyone of them is infected with Omicron, that will trigger transmission in their respective areas

The state government has sent a list of foreign returnees to the district health department, said CDMO Dr Ashok Kumar Das. But the health department is completely clueless about the contact numbers, addresses and travel details

CDMO said: We have asked officials of all health centres, ASHAs and health workers to identify the untraceable. If these people had given wrong phone numbers and addresses, it will be difficult to locate them

of the unidentified returnees.

'We have asked officials of all health centres, ASHAs and health workers in the district to identify the untraceable returnees. If these people had given wrong phone numbers and addresses, it will be difficult to locate them, 72 returnees have undergone tests while reports of 66 have come out negative," the CDMO said.

## Dengue tops 8-yr record in Ganjam

**BEMC AREAS ALONE ACCOUNT FOR 148 CASES** 

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur; Jan 1: Dengue has acquired alarming proportions in Ganiam district with cases being reported from different areas every day. Given the present tally, the district has recorded the largest ever dengue cases in eight years. Total dengue cases till December 31, 2021, stood at 333 in the district.

In 2016. the district had recorded the hitherto highest dengue cases at 329. According to reports, dengue is rapidly spreading in Berhampur Municipal Corporation(BeMC) areas. The civic body areas have accounted for 148 of 333 dengue cases in the district. The district first reported a dengue case in July, 2021. Later, the number of cases continued to rise in the district, particularly after September with unseasonal rains, health department said. The district had recorded 143



dengue cases in 2013; 64 in 2014; 74 in 2015; 329 in 2016; 146 in 2017; 155 in 2018; 307 in 2019 and 9 in 2020.

However, poor sanitation, clogged drains and abandoned ponds are breeding grounds of dengue mosquitoes in BeMC area, locals alleged. CDMO Dr Umashankar Mishra said teams of health officials have been visiting villages and BeMC wards where positive cases are being reported.

The BeMC officials are eliminating larva of the mosquitoes and sanitising unhygienic surroundings. He also said people are being sensitised on preventive measures against dengue while BeMC staff are using mosquito repellant smoke.

## SUBARNAPUR TRIBALS FUME OVER POLL QUOTA

## POST NEWS NETWORK Sonepur; Jan 1: People from

Anandapur: A tribal girl was

seat reservation in such a It also said that as per the way that the tribal people reservation system prescribed in the Constitution, people of ST category are

entitled to get scope for con-

testing elections. "Over 10

per cent of the population

in the district belong to ST

category while they are de-

## 5 yrs on: No compensation to Dalit rape victim POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara. Jan 1: The district administration was caught in a wrong foot after the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) pulled it

directed the district administration to pay compensation to the victim by February 5 and submit a compliance report, December 29.

However, the district administration is vet to pay com-

Pattamundai police limits became pregnant after she was raped by a youth in her area. The accused was arrested after a complaint was registered in Pattamundai police station October 1, 2016. The accused

ministration for immediate\_\_\_ payment of compensation to the victim January 6 2020 Later, the district adminis-

tration decided to transfer

₹3.75,000 to the savings bank ac-

at Khalapal under Ghasipura police limits in Keonjhar. Police detained a person in this connection, Saturday. Reports said, the girl along with her father had gone to attend the death rituals of a relative Tuesday. She was returning home alone when a relative dragged her to a desolate place and committed the crime. She was also attacked by him. The victim was admitted to Anandapur hospital.

pressed displeasure over the reservation of seats for the upcoming panchayat elections in Subarnapur district.

People from OBC category in certain areas are miffed over the reservation while those from ST category have termed the seat reservation as faulty.

The Zilla Adivasi Sangh, a body of tribal people, alleged that the district administration had suggested

for proper representation in the three-tier panchayat polls. This has, in fact, let down the tribal communities in the district, the Sangh said.

Sore over seat reservation, the Sangh has warned of boycotting the upcoming elections.

would not get a fair chance

alleged that not a single seat for the post of sarpanch was reserved for the ST category.

prived of their rights to contest elections for sarpanch seats," the Sangh added. According to reports, there A delegation of the Sangh submitted a memoare 109 panchayats in the district. However, the Sangh

randum to District Collector Aboli Sunil Naravane and sought a revision of the reservation of seats.

up for not paying compensation to a Dalit minor rape victim for five years, a report said.

According to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Amendment Act-2018, a Dalit minor rape victim is entitled to ₹5 lakh compensation.

The matter came to the fore after the national rights body

pensation to the Dalit victim even as five years have gone. The incident was reported from Pattamundai police station area in Kendrapara district.

The national rights body has expressed displeasure on the district administration for its negligence. Reports said a minor girl from Dalit community residing under

was produced in court and later police submitted the chargesheet during his trial. The matter came up before

the rights body after Sagar Kumar Jena, a native of Endar village filed a petition before NHRC alleging non-payment of compensation to the victim, October 2, 2019. The NHRC directed the district adcount of the victim and the remainder on completion of hearing, January 29, 2021. The district administration submitted a report before the NHRC informing it about its decision. Eleven months have since passed but there is no sight of the compensation. Peeved over the delay, the NHRC has sent a reminder to the administration

# A peek into past through palm leaf manuscripts

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Jan 1: His passion for collection of ancient palm leaf manuscripts has helped him build a library and a museum in Navagarh district.

A banker by profession, Sanjay Kumar Sahu is a native of Durdura village under Nuagaon block in the district. His passion to protect culture and ancient glory preserved on palm leaf manuscripts has helped him find a place in the OMG Book of Records. His efforts have put the spotlight on his non-descript village.

Before the arrival of print, many households and temples in the state and outside possessed palm leaf manuscripts containing mythology and religious works.

As printed books crowded bookshelves, people started discarding these manuscripts as it was difficult to conserve them. However, collectors like Sanjay recovered the discarded ones before they are trashed and built a library and museum out of it.



His passion for collecting palm leaf manuscripts.

ancient manuscripts started from his childhood from the house of Dambarudhar Sahu of Dimashar village in 2010. His first manuscript was Srimad Bhagavad Gita. Later, he went on a collection spree and was able to collect 180 manuscripts by 2011. Soon people started noticing his works and various

dailies carried reports on him. Since then, there was no looking back for him as he built the Sri Jagannath Museum and Library. He has collected over 2000 ancient Among his collection, there

are 410 sets of Ramayan, 280 Srimad Bhagavata Katha. five Telugu manuscripts, 350 Srimad Bhagavad Gita, five ancient texts of Vaidya Shastra, two poetry collections of Kabi Purusottam Das, two sets of Dwitiya Osha, five Khudurkuni Osha. His collection also includes the printed version of Odia Mahabharat published in 1929 which was then available at

a price of ₹1. He has been able to build a permanent building and liof various countries, tribal artefacts and indigenous paddy and other crop seeds are conserved. His library also houses handwritten letters written by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India. Showing his prized collection, he said ancient manuscripts are the legacy of our past when writers used to write

brary where his manuscripts,

stamps of various countries,

match boxes of various sizes

and shapes, honey combs,

weaver bird nests, currencies

mythology, epics, religious texts on them when printing technology was not invented. Even people used palm leafs

to write invitation cards during marriage while traditional astrologers called 'Nahak' wrote the horoscope of the newborns on these leafs. However, the use of palm leafs started declining after the advent of printing, he said. He said he joined the banking profession to keep his library and museum running without any hitch.



## TENDER CALL NOTICE NO.-04/2021-22

The Block Development Officer. Korukonda invites sealed tenders on behalf of Governor of Odisha from registered and eligible Contractors of the State P.W.D. (R&B)/Water Resources/Rural Works/M.I./C.P.W.D. for the following works eventually to be drawn up in the P.W.D. F-2 forms in conformity with the Detailed Tender Call Notice.

SL No.	Name of the G.P.	Name of the work	Amount put to tender in rupees	Cost of tender paper	E.M.D. in Rupees. (1%)	Time for completion of the work in months	Class of Contractor
1	Old Chimtapalli	Const. of Minor Bridge over Chimatapally Nallah between Chimatapally-C and Chimatapalli	19,80,000/-	6,000/-		04 (Four) calendar months	"C" & "D"
2	Korukonda	Development of Mini Stadium with facility of Indor GYM at Korukonda	13,50,000/-	6,000/-		06 (Six) calendar months	"C" & "D"
3	Korukonda	Development of Mini Stadium with facility of Indoor GYM at Korukonda (Supply of GYM equipments)	5,00,000/-	2,000/-		02 (Two) calendar months	Registered Manufacturer/ Dealer with valid GST & IT clearance certificate

Sale of tender paper: Panchayat Samiti, Korukonda from 03.01.2022 to 10.01.2022 (Office hour from 10.00 AM to 5.30 PM, Except Sunday and public holidays)

Place and date of receipt of tender Paper: Panchayat Samiti, Korukonda, 03.01.2022 to 11.01.2022 through Registered/ Speed post only (office hour from 10.00 AM to 5.30 PM, Except Sunday and public holidays).

Place and date of opening of tender paper: Panchayat Samiti, Korukonda on dt.12.01.2022 at 11.00 AM. Mode of receipt of tender paper: Registered/Speed Post only.

Name of the Scheme: SCA for the year 2021-22.

The tender documents along with term and conditions thereof shall be had from Panchayat Samiti, Korukonda on payment of Demand Draft/ Banker Cheque in favour of B.D.O., Korukonda payable at Malkangiri branch as per the cost noted above. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons thereof.

Sd./- Block Development Officer, Korukonda







## FOCUS LOOMING THIRD WAVE

Others boast of their love for God. My boast is that I did not love God: it was He who loved me and sought me out and forced me to belong to Him. SRI AUROBINDO



## **Collective Punishment**

The scholar Pratap Bhanu Mehta has warned us of the Kashmirification of India. He means that the hard police state with few individual rights that India runs in Kashmir is being extended to India. If we observe the events of the recent past it appears that he is right. Kashmir regularly has had its internet cut off because the government wants to punish its citizens collectively. Kashmiris had no internet (and therefore no online education or tele-medicine) for all of 2020

The peak of violence in Kashmir came in 2001 when there was no mobile telephony in the state let alone mobile internet but the Indian government does not operate in Kashmir on the basis of logic. The farmers who were parked at Singhu and Tikri and not allowed to enter Delhi similarly had their internet cut off. Why? We do not know and were not told. The government wanted to punish them collectively and it has acquired the power to do so and after Kashmir feels entitled to do this elsewhere. After 2014 India has earned itself the distinction of being the country with the most internet blockades imposed on its citizens. This is Kashmirification.

Similarly UAPA, a law that was reserved for extremism is now commonly used against dissenters who include academics, poets and journalists. Just like the Indian State's internal checks and balances like the judiciary failed in Kashmir on this issue they failed in the rest of India. With Kashmirification there is another shift which I propose is happening and that is the Gujaratification of India. How does it express itself? To examine that let us look at how it expressed itself in the past. Of the four leaders of the freedom movement three — Jinnah, Patel and Gandhi — were Gujaratis. Patel, who came from the peasant Patidar community is seen as inflexible and rigid

but Jinnah and Gandhi came from mercantile communities and stressed compromise (forget the caricature of Partition that Indians are taught and we can see this to be true). The Pakistani journalist Khaled Ahmed has written about this aspect of Guiaratis and linked their flexibility to their trading roots. Surat was the primary west-facing port for the Mughals and the British and trade usually produces a culture that is not rigid. A trading hub since Greek and Roman times. Gujarat benefited from its engagement with the world. And Gujaratis may be found globally practising their talents. However, Gujarat is also insular and conservative in many ways. The control of capital is limited to a few communities and it is their culture that is imposed on that rest. Gandhi's non-violence and vegetarianism was Jainic. It made no concession to other communities and their diets and believed itself to be supreme. Today that imposition is on all of us across India because of the power of the prime minister and the home minister who are both culturally closed and insular. In today's Gujaratified India we revere capital and celebrate wealth. A record number of billionaires was added in the pandemic while 23 crore Indians fell into poverty. The latter fact went almost unnoticed while the new rich are famous and celebrated. Also unnoticed went the fact that this creation of billionaires is deliberate. The economic strokes of India after 2014 have been those designed to further empower and enrich the wealthy. Demonetisation was a massacre of the small traders and sent their share of business to the organised spaces controlled by corporate magnates. The highly complex compliance mechanism of the Goods and Service Tax

was intended to put the small manufacturer and trader out of business and it has been successful in doing so. The government proudly calls this process 'formalisation'. The mass protests and rallies against GST by traders on the streets of Surat and Ahmedabad in 2017 again went unnoticed by the rest of us. Unlike the farmers, the traders did not have the will or strength for a long fight and capitulated.

The farmers protest should be seen in this light as a revolt of the peasants against the merchants. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's farm laws proposed the dismantling of an existing system built for farmers to be replaced by one favouring merchants. This is how the farmers saw it and they stood up to fight. The power of capital tried to suppress them through its control of the State but it was their hardy peasant spirit (which the Gujarati duo is not familiar with and did not anticipate) which saw them through. Like Gandhi's rigid vegetarianism, the Gujarati's intolerance for diversity can be seen in India's hard nationalism which is showing itself in Kashmir and the northeast. These are not in line with the idea that the Guiarati has of India — which is Hindu and conservative — and therefore must be beaten into submission (it may be observed that when the bigger force does the bullying at the border the Gujarati looks away and chooses pragmatism over honour).

### Aakar Patel

These two trends of Kashmirification and Gujaratification are long term and will be difficult to root out. That is why their effects on our economy, our democracy, our society and even our nationhood itself are so visible in the brief period since 2014 **NO EXCUSE THIS TIME** 

he nation should be alarmed at the slow manner in which the administration has responded to the snowballing nature of the pandemic in the light of the spread of the Omicron variant of the Sars-Cov-2 virus. In fact, it is more like a non-response, almost a carte blanche given to the virus, if that is possible, to do its bidding. This is even more surprising given the experience that India has had and the devastation that has been seen with the first and the second waves of the disease in the evolving pan-



Dr. T Jacob John

WE HAVE SURRENDERED **TO WHATEVER THE VIRUS DOES** 

demic situation. It was more than a month ago, November 26, 2021, to be precise, that the WHO declared Omicron to be a variant of concern. The WHO took just two days after the announcement from South Africa about this variant to issue its warning. Scientists in South Africa provided early signals of two sinister properties-transmission efficiency higher than that of the then record-

holder, the Delta variant, and Omicron's ability to dodge immunity, whether induced by infection with other variants or the locally used vaccines, mainly mRNA, even two doses. That WHO made the right decision at the earliest is a lesson in the process and spirit of an 'evidence-based decision.

Japan, the country that had enjoyed two months of endemic prevalence of COVID-19 since end-September, decided to block importation of Omicron by disallowing all arrivals of travellers from any country. But the virus had already entered Japan through a twice-vaccinated Namibian diplomat. Japan abandoned the no-entry policy but is bracing for a new wave with all other well-known defences, including booster doses. India must watch the situation there.

India had been enjoying endemic state for over four months. from the second week of July till November 26. Our stakes were high; we did not desire a third wave. Life was limping back to normal; educational institutions



Stipulating a minimum of nine-month gap between the second and the third dose. instead of the suggested and science-based six-month gap informs us that the government is in no hurry to reduce the impact of a third wave on the lives and health of the vulnerable

were open. Elections were approaching in Uttar Pradesh. Immediate intervention to block a probable third wave was the expected response, but that was not the strategy the policymakers opted for. They chose not to make any decisions for the time being.

That decision, to apply no intervention to block a wave of disease or at least to flatten the probable epidemic curve is very strange, almost as if the policymakers were deliberately unconcerned about the risk of a third wave. Experience in other countries clearly showed that India must expect a huge rise in infections. Omicron was and is causing severe disease in other countries in lesser proportions than with Delta – but the sheer magnitude of infections was sure to cause an increase in disease cases, mostly affecting senior citizens, those with risk-prone medical conditions, and pregnant women. There was no reason for expecting zero-risk of a wave of disease. Why would a government defer action then and seemingly welcome a fresh wave?

The response strategies adopted against the first and second waves do not provide any clue. No vaccine was available during the first wave. Vaccines were approved for

'emergency use' January 3 2021, almost three months prior to the second wave. But significantly, no effort was visible to use vaccination as a method of mitigating disease, hospitalisations and death. That was also surprising and disappointing. The pace of vaccinations was about 1% of population covered per month, slowly increasing to 2% but no more until the second wave abated naturally. We could attribute that to traditional inefficiency, slow roll outs, mismanagement at logistics, distribution and a host of factors that come into play when such a large operation gets into the works. But now none of these should be factors. We have enough vaccines to create a wall of population immunity to dampen the onslaught of an impending Omicron wave of disease. Yet, one full month, November 26 to December 26, passed without any sign of using vaccinations to mitigate the size or severity of the potential third wave. Then came a decision for deferred action, more tokenism than substance. The

native plan of action, this response is unlikely to affect the shape or mass of a third wave. In effect, our delayed response will make no impact on a possible third wave, which will come and go, if it wishes, the way it wishes, when it wishes. We have surrendered to whatever the virus does.

Another deferred action is to offer a booster dose for those above 60 or those with medical conditions as well as for frontline workers - healthcare and others. But stipulating a minimum of a ninemonth gap between the second dose and the third dose, instead of the suggested and science-based six month-gap informs us that the government is in no hurry to reduce the impact of a third wave on the lives and health of the vulnerable people.

These decisions were announced without explanations or supportive logic. They create the impression of action. But underneath that facade is also a message that the government is in no hurry to fight Omicron and reduce the misery it can bring, particularly on vulnerable sections of society. We may even ask - are we doing this because Omicron apparently causes less disease among the young, the fit and those with means. Are we not bothered about the elderly, those who are ailing or those whose immunity has been compromised?

If that is not the intention, actions would have been quicker and more goal-oriented – not merely trickling, minimalistic and ritual-like. Even if we let pass the response at the time COVID-19 first struck or during the two deadly waves, the lack of prompt action in increasing vaccine coverage this time cannot be condoned.

The writer is a retired **Professor of Clinical** Virology, Christian Medical College, Vellore, and a former president of the Indian Academy of Paediatrics. ©THE BILLION PRESS

## SPECTRUM CAPITALISM

## Manic investing & careless lending

ikening today's capitalist in introductory economics texteconomies to the communist ⊿ bloc of vestervear may seem farfetched. What could the free market possibly have in common with Sovietstyle central planning? In fact, the comparison increasingly offers useful insights into what has become of the winning side since the end of the Cold War. Consider the 'soft budget constraints' that socialist stateowned enterprises (SOEs) used to enjoy and that turned out to be one of the main reasons why Sovietbloc economies failed. Similar financial conditions are becoming pervasive in capitalist America.

books, real-world consumers' budgets aren't capped, and venturesome consumers can borrow to pay for the next new hot item. By consuming beyond their means, they boost the demand for iPhones and Teslas, creating incentives for innovators.

ing constraints have weakened in recent decades, the growth in households and businesses' debt has exceeded the growth in their incomes and profits by a wide margin. Similarly, the growth in the US

have apparently dropped plenty of proverbial 'helicopter money,' the funds have not been evenly spread. Monetary policies have been designed to lower credit standards, thereby favouring feckless borrowers. Savers who are too sensible to speculate have fallen behind. So, too, have the businesses that resisted the temptation of cheap money. Under current conditions, their less prudent competitors can pay more for scarce employees and other resources.

These two trends of Kashmirification and Gujaratification are long term and will be difficult to root out. That is why their effects on our economy, our democracy, our society and even our nationhood itself are so visible in the brief period since 2014.

### WISDOM CORNER

- Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world. DESMOND TUTU
- There is only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self. ALDOUS HUXLEY
- You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them. MAYA ANGELOU

### WORDS**WORTH**

### Rannygazoo

t's a century-old term, now rare, for a deceptive story or scheme, pranks, tricks or other irritating or foolish carryings-on. If it's familiar to you, especially if you're not native to its former US heartland, it may be because you are widely read in the works of PG Wodehouse. He used it a lot and is credited with being the first writer to use it in its modern spelling: I'll hang around for a while just in case friend Pilbeam starts any rannygazoo (Bill the Conqueror, by P G Wodehouse, 1924). Early in its existence, in the 1890s, it became a word of the moment, especially among Washington newspapermen, though it was then spelled rannikaboo or reinikaboo. A syndicated article that appeared in many American newspapers in early 1898 explained its allure for journalists: "Reinikaboo" is entitled to a place in the next revision of the dictionaries. It has grown into the degree of usage which warrants formal recognition in the language. A reinikaboo is ... a statement of news out of all proportion and almost out of relation to the facts, and yet having a certain origin and shadowy foundation. ... In the classification of the Washington newspaper men there are fakes, reinikaboos, and real news (Chicago Daily Tribune, 9 Jan. 1898). As there's more reinikaboo around today than there has ever been, you may feel the word deserves to be revived. As to where it comes from, we have to admit almost total defeat. Jonathon Green suggests the first part may be from the dialect ranny, rash or giddy. We might guess that the second part of the rannikaboo form could derive from kaboom, but that imitative term became popular only in the 1940s. A connection to peekaboo seems unlikely.



Amar Bhidé

**CENTRAL BANKERS** HAVE DELIBERATELY INCITED

**INDISCRIMINATE LENDING AND 'RISK-ON' TRADING ON A HISTORICALLY UNPRECEDENTED SCALE** 

etters

are most welcome to contribute letters

postal address/email ID. They may also

and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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send in their valuable comments, opinion

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TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST

(200 words), articles and

words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full

columns (between 750-1250

As the Hungarian Marxist apostate János Kornai famously argued. SOEs could ignore losses and consumer preferences because they could always count on the state to keep them afloat. Kornai's thesis was popular with the Chinese reformers of the 1980s: seeking to make SOEs more responsive to the market, they 'hardened' companies' budget constraints. By contrast, capitalist America seems to be on the same misbegotten path as the Soviet economies. Though it is starting from a different place, the result is the same. Budget constraints are softening, and capital is increasingly being funneled toward the fashionable and the wellconnected fantasists and schemers.

To be sure, borrowing can, up to a point, energise capitalist enterprises. Contrary to what one reads

Likewise. Tesla and other upstart businesses often rely on external funding, not profits, to advance their innovations, just as governments issue bonds to help pay for highways, bridges, harbors, and airports. Savers also benefit. Instead of stuffing surplus cash into mattresses, they can profitably cover the financing needs of consumers, businesses, and governments.

But too much financial flexibility can be toxic. Though individuals, businesses, and governments can reasonably predict next month's wages, revenues, and tax receipts (respectively), they can only guess at their capacity to meet obligations many years from now. The more optimistic one's forecast, the greater one's willingness to spend beyond one's current means or invest more than just one's retained earnings.

Moreover, fractional banking and fiat money can further soften financing constraints. Banks do not lend out only the savings of their depositors; they leverage those deposits several-fold. And central bankers have even more potent powers to create funds out of thin air. As traditional financ-

government's debt - now exceeding \$29 trillion – boggles the imagination. Yet while borrowing has jumped, interest rates have plummeted, encouraging even more borrowing and imprudent lending.

age range of vaccination will be

enlarged to cover adolescents of 15-

18 years, starting January 3. Even

if we achieve high coverage, which

is very unlikely seeing no imagi-

These lax lending standards have apparently spilled over into equity markets. Last year, some four million self-described 'apes' bought billions of dollars of AMC stock, saving the movie theater chain from bankruptcy. Celebrities now float SPACs (special purpose acquisition companies) with a strangely effective pitch: "Give us your money, but we won't tell you what for."

This combination of manic investing and careless lending has not emerged spontaneously or resulted from the complacency that comes with an extended period of stability, as Hyman Minsky, the great theorist of financial crises, argued. The collapse of the internet bubble in 2000 and the global financial crisis eight years later should still be fresh in most financiers' and investors' memories. The problem, rather, is that central bankers have deliberately incited indiscriminate lending and 'risk-on' trading on a historically unprecedented scale. Worse, while central bankers

What kind of reckoning capitalism faces - or when - is impossible to predict. In the end, Kornai's Hungary failed slowly, not suddenly. It and other Soviet-style economies that fed the 'investment hunger' of favoured SOEs kept shop shelves bare of the goods that consumers wanted and that less-connected producers might have supplied. In the absence of wartime or 1970s-style price controls of the kind imposed by President Richard Nixon, such shortages and rationing regimes seem unlikely in the capitalist West. The current inflationary surge may yet subside as supply-chain bottlenecks ease, while the US Federal Reserve forestalls another financial meltdown. But staunchly defending stock markets simply extends the state-sponsored misallocation of capital.

The writer is Professor of Business at Tufts University. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

### Cautious optimism

Sir, This refers to the news item 'Omicron replacing Delta in India', Orissa POST, January 1, 2022. Swift rise and subsidence of Omicron wave in South Africa, less mortality due to the variant in countries with higher vaccination coverage, along with the current trends in India have led to cautious optimism that the variant could herald progressively weaker strains of the virus, preventing serious disruption in the economy. The presence of Omicron in genome sequencing in India indicates Omicron is rapidly replacing the Delta as the dominant strain. And around 80 per cent of COVID-19 cases among international arrivals are of Omicron. However, many cases being detected in India were due to contact tracing or testing due to travel plans, underlining that the infections are often asymptotic. While Omicron is certainly more potent than the influenza, it is being assessed if it will be the first step towards a milder form of the virus. It is being evaluated if the pandemic moving towards endemicity - becoming a common, but milder ailment. In South Africa, Omicron cases began to rise around mid-November and came down in a month. Add to this, health ministry study of countries with high number of cases shows daily deaths are higher in countries with lower vaccine coverage or where vaccination drive is stalled. Also, evidence provided by global and domestic studies pointed to India's expanding vaccination coverage and hybrid immunity delivering a high level of protection against the serious disease. All these reports give us a sigh of relief over the effects of Omicron. N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

### Read India drive

Sir, It is welcome to note that the Union Ministry of Education and Skill Development has initiated the 'Padhe Bharat' reading campaign. The 100 Days Reading Campaign is a vital step in improving students' learning levels since it fosters creativity, critical thinking, vocabulary, and the ability to express oneself verbally and in writing. It aids children in making connections with their surroundings and real-life events. All stakeholders at the national and state levels, including children, teachers, parents, the community, and educational authorities, are encouraged to participate in the reading campaign. Children can complete the activities with the assistance of instructors, parents, peers, siblings, or other family members. The need of the hour is for our society to provide more resources for read-tellectual abilities, skills and knowledge

Amit Singh Kushwaha, SATNA (MP)













# national



We have to prepare for the possible third wave of Covid-19 along with pushing the economy forward. We can't just sit back imposing the restrictions. We need to face it with various strategies. We have to work with greater vigour to tackle it BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CM

## 657 CHALLANED IN DELH

Delhi Traffic police has challaned as many as 657 people for various offences on New Year eve, an official said





The ruling AINRC-led government has failed to mount pressure on the Centre to grant the Union Territory statehood

V NARAYANASAMY CONGRESS LEADER

We have recovered from the first and second wave of coronavirus infection and in fact I took up the reins as Chief Minister and also the responsibility for your well-being when the pandemic was at its peak during the second wave MK STALIN TN CM

Whether further Covidrelated restrictions need to be imposed in the national capital will be reviewed as hospital admissions are less, despite a rapid rise in coronavirus

SATYENDAR JAIN DELHI HEALTH MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

## India, China exchange sweets

New Delhi: India and Chinese troops Saturday exchanged sweets and greetings at 10 border posts along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) including in eastern Ladakh to mark the New Year, officials said. The gesture by both sides came in the midst of an over 18 month-long standoff between the two sides in several friction points in eastern Ladakh. The border areas in the Ladakh region where the two sides exchanged sweets and greetings are Konkala, Chushul Moldo, Demchok Hot Springs, Daulat Beg Oldi, Bottleneck and KK pass, the officials said.

## **Terrorist killed**

Srinagar: One terrorist has been killed in an encounter between terrorists and security forces at Jumagund area of North Kashmir's Kupwara district, officials said Saturday. "One unidentified

## **COVID ALARM**

## **Set up makeshift hospitals: Govt to states**

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 1: To tackle a possible surge in COVID-19 cases, the Centre advised all states and Union territories to initiate the process of setting up makeshift hospitals and to constitute special teams to monitor patients in home isolation.

In a letter to all chief secretaries. Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said it is imperative to reemphasise the significance of timely and swift upgradation of health infrastructure in all states and UTS

"This becomes all the more important since with the sudden increase in cases, we may start seeing a stressed health infrastructure," he said. To address potential surge in cases with a view to ensure preparedness, the Centre has asked states to initiate creation of field or makeshift hospitals to augment availability of health infrastructure. "This can be done with coordi-

nation with DRDO and CSIR as well as the private sector, corporations, NGOs, etc. This will aid the process of rapid creation of field

Wankhede ducks

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

further orders.

under his watch.

tension.



hospitals or temporary hospital set-ups," Bhushan said.

The Centre also said that states may also consider leveraging hotel rooms and other accommodations linked with the COVID dedicated hospitals in government and private sector to cater to patients having mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19, as was also done in some states during the earlier surge in cases.

"A large number of positive cases may be eligible for home isolation. These cases would require effective follow up and a clearly defined mechanism for prompt

shifting to a health facility in case of deterioration in their health situation," Bhushan said.

He said it is particularly important that all states should monitor their home isolation protocol and its actual implementation at the field level.

"Special teams be constituted to monitor all home isolation cases, call centres/control rooms must aid outbound calling for monitoring such patients and ensuring that all such cases can be shifted to an appropriate health facility through dedicated ambulances,

In a letter to all chief secretaries, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said it is imperative to re-emphasise the significance of timely and swift upgradation of health infrastructure in all states and UTs

To address potential surge in cases with a view to ensure preparedness, the Centre has asked states to initiate creation of field or makeshift hospitals to augment availability of health infrastructure

he added.

"A mechanism wherein citizens can call and get ambulance and a bed in a transparent manner needs to be operationalised. The call centres, district or state-level dashboards/portals can play an important role in organising the same," he said.

Bhushan said states are also requested to ensure that the existing Covid dedicated health infrastructure is revisited and necessary action to ensure its operational readiness be taken.

4 killed in landslide, many feared trapped



#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhiwani (Haryana), Jan 1: Four people have been killed and many others are feared trapped following a landslide at Dadam mining site here Saturday.

Police said around half-a-dozen dumper trucks and some machines were buried under the debris caused by the landslide which occurred around 9 am in Tosham block. Harvana Home Minister Anil Vij said several rescue teams have been pressed into service for the rescue work.

Vij gave information about the death toll in a tweet. "I am deeply saddened over the incident that took place at the mining site in Bhiwani district of Haryana. The rescue operation is being run by the administration. National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team from Ghaziabad, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) from Madhuban and an Army unit from Hisar have been called. So far four people have died," said Vij in a tweet.

Bhiwani Chief Medical Officer Raghuvir Shandilya had earlier said that Toofan Sharma (30), a native of Bihar and Binder (23), who hailed from Baganwala in Haryana's Jind district, have died in the incident.

Deputy Superintendent of Police (Siwani) Manoj Kumar said four to five people may still be trapped under the debris. Some locals, however, claimed that the number of

**Chief Minister Manohar** Lal Khattar said he is in constant touch with the district administration to ensure swift rescue operations

those trapped could be more but there was no official confirmation on this.

Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said he was in constant touch with the district administration to ensure swift rescue operations.

"Saddened by the unfortunate landslide accident in Dadam mining zone at Bhiwani. I am in constant touch with the local administration to ensure swift rescue operations and immediate assistance to the injured," he said in a tweet.

State minister J P Dalal took stock of the situation and told reporters that the administration's priority was to rescue the trapped people and that a team of doctors had arrived at the site.

Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala alleged that illegal mining was going on under the Khattar regime and asked the BJP government who was responsible for these deaths. In a tweet, he also asked the state government if it would order a judicial probe into the alleged mining racket.

## Deployment of S-400 -**CRASH** (Report to be submitted next week to end by next month

**IT IS LEARNT THAT THE PROBE TEAM** LED BY AIR MARSHAL MANAVENDRA



the crew when the heli- caused by visual disorientation for landing.

copter was preparing triggered by the loss of situational awareness by pilots.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

vite US sanctions.



terrorist killed in an encounter at Jumagund area of Kupwara. Army and Police are on the job," police said.

### Man held

New Delhi: Delhi Police Saturday said they have arrested a man for allegedly posting private pictures of a girl on social media and blackmailing her for the same. The accused, identified as Rajesh Singh Suman, a resident of Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh, was arrested under sections 354D (stalking), 384 (extortion), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) of the IPC.

SINGH EXAMINED ALL LIKELY **SCENARIOS FOR THE CRASH, INCLUDING A POSSIBLE HUMAN ERROR** 

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 1: The report of the tri-services investigation into the chopper crash, that killed CDS Gen Bipin Rawat and 13 others, is set to be submitted to the Air headquarters next week, people familiar with the development said Saturday.

They said the investigation into the December 8 accident near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu has nearly been completed and the volumi-

It is learnt that the probe team led by Air Marshal Manavendra Singh examined all likely scenarios for the crash, in-

cluding a possible human error. The experts also investigated if it was a case of disorientation by

The sources said the findings of the Court of Inquiry and the procedure it followed in the probe are being legally

vetted."The legal vetting is being done to ensure that the probe team followed all the laid

down norms and procedures." a source privy to the developments said

When asked about possible causes of the crash, several aviation experts said there were a significant number of air accidents

And, bad weather could be a factor contributing to the loss of situational awareness at times, said one of them while refusing to speculate on the Coonoor crash. They said the probe team, led by Air Marshal Manavendra Singh, investigated all possible angles and is finalising the report, which is expected to be submitted to Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, in a week's time.

However, there are no official details available on the matter. The black box, comprising the flight data recorder (FDR) and the cockpit voice recorder (CVR), of the illfated Mi-17V5 helicopter of the Indian Air Force (IAF) was recovered from the crash site December 9

New Delhi, Jan 1: The Indian Air Force is likely to complete the deployment of the first regiment of the S-400 Triumf missile systems at an airbase in Punjab by February,

military officials said Saturday. They said the process of deployment of the missile system has begun and it will take at least six more weeks to complete the deployment. The first regiment of the missile system is being deploved in such a way that it can cover parts of the border with China in the northern sector as well as the frontier with Pakistan.

"The transportation of various critical components of the missile systems as well as its peripheral equipment to the site of the deployment is going on," said an official. In total, India will get five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems from Russia.

In October 2018, India had signed a USD 5 billion deal with Russia to buy five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems, despite a warning from the Trump administration that going ahead with the contract may in-

The Biden administration has not vet clarified whether it will impose sanctions on India under the provisions of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) for procuring the S-400 missile systems.

The CAATSA, which was brought in 2017, provides for punitive actions against any country engaged in transactions with Russian defence and intelligence sectors. The US has already imposed sanctions on Turkey under the CAATSA for the purchase of a batch of S-400 missile defence systems from Russia.

Following the US sanctions on Turkey over the procurement of S-400 missile systems, there were apprehensions that Washington may impose similar punitive measures on India.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said last month that the S-400 missile defence deal between India and Russia has a very important meaning for the Indian defence capability and it is being implemented despite the US attempting to "undermine" the cooperation.

No. C-1753 Tender	ID: 2021_ORUL	B_73370				
Tender Call Notice	No. 7705 (PW)	Date: 30.12.202				
Name of Works	: Civil Wor	ks				
No. of Works	: 30 Nos.	: 30 Nos.				
Bid Value	: Rs.2.63 lakhs	lakhs to Rs.42.6				
Period of Completio	on : One Ca Three Ca					
Date and Time Sche	edule :					
Start	End	Opening				
11.00 A.M. on Dt.03.01.2022	5.00 P.M. on Dt.13.01.2022	11.00 A.M. on Dt.18.01.2022				

Executive Engineer, City Division-II, CMC OIPR-13031/11/0066/2122

At 24, Trinamool Congress eyes national stage

Mamata Banerjee's clarion call for opposition unity to remove the BJP from power has not stopped her from expanding her centre-left party in various states

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 1: Twenty-four years after Mamata Banerjee formed the Trinamool Congress January 1. 1998 to unseat the Left Front from power in West Bengal, her party has transcended the geographical boundaries of the eastern state and now attempts to expand its footprint across the country to pose a direct challenge to the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

With the Congress in shambles, the TMC, which Banerjee floated after quitting the Congress, is attempting to grab that space by challenging the grand old party, branding it as "war-weary" and accusing it of failing to put up a fight against the BJP.

At the same time, the party is positioning itself as the "real Congress" and the only outfit to oppose the saffron camp tooth and nail, after its landslide victory in this year's assembly elections in West Bengal despite the BJP's massive campaign to unseat her from power.

In a bid to project West Bengal Chief Minister as the main opposition face against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the TMC is on a rebranding overdrive, inducting people from diverse geographies and political backgrounds, mooting to change the party's constitution, and its name for a pan-India appeal before it takes a plunge into a massive nationwide campaign for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections

and Meghalaya.

Banerjee's clarion call for opposition unity to remove the BJP from power has not stopped her from expanding her centre-left party in various states. In the last six months, her party has opened units in Goa, Haryana, Tripura



The party, which hardly had any meaningful existence in Meghalaya, has emerged as the main opposition party in the northeastern state after 12 of the 17 Congress MLAs led by former chief minister Mukul Sangma joined the TMC. In neighbouring Tripura, the party aims to pose a challenge to the ruling BJP, although the saffron party swept the recently held civic polls in the state.

As part of its national expansion strategy, the TMC has inducted Congress leader from Bihar and former BJP MP Kirti Azad, former JD(U) MP Pawan Verma, former Congress Haryana chief Ashok Tanwar, Delhi-based RTI activist Saket Gokhale, former Mahila Congress chief Sushmita Dev. former Goa chief minister Luizinho Falerio, tennis icon Leander Paes, former Union minister Babul Supriyo among many others.

'The TMC wants to shed its regional party tag. None of these recently inducted leaders are mass leaders, but each has his/her own identity and strength. These inductions are part of our national expansion so that we have a pan-India appeal and a holistic view before formulating the 2024 Lok Sabha poll strategy," a senior party leader said

The party has decided to change its constitution and expand its core committee to accommodate more fresh inductees from diverse

#### backgrounds.

"The TMC is undergoing a qualitative and quantitative change under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee to emerge as the main opposition force by 2022. We will be the real Congress. There are a lot of proposals that are being discussed on how to emerge as a national party. Talks are on with prospective allies in various states who are opposed to the BJP," Verma said.

TMC sources said that the party wants to create its identity without having to carry the "baggage" of being an offshoot of Congress, and also promote the "Bengal model of development" vis-à-vis the "Gujarat model" showcased by the BJP ahead of the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

"In the last 10 years, the TMC, through its stint in government, has created a niche for itself where our developmental policies have not only earned national and international recognition, but also have been followed by other states too. We want to replicate the Bengal model nationally," the party's West Bengal general secretary Kunal Ghosh said.





## **Protest over house arrest of 3 ex-CMs**

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Jan 1: PAGD leaders including three former chief ministers were put under house arrest Saturday before a protest against the proposals of J&K Delimitation Commission, prompt ing angry reactions from political parties which said such steps will only 'incentivise and facilitate' violent agitations.

The day began by police parking trucks outside the residences of top National Conference leaders and former CMs Farooq Abdullah, his son Omar Abdullah, PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti and CPM leader Mohammed Yusuf Tarigami. They were conveyed that they were under house arrest.

The protest call was given by the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) -- an amalgam of various mainstream political parties in J&K including the NC, the PDP, CPI (M), Peoples Movement and Awami National Conference.

"Good morning and welcome to 2022," tweeted Omar Abdullah, who stays with his father. "A new year with the same JK police illegally locking people in their homes and an administration so terrified of normal democratic activity. Trucks parked outside our gates to scuttle the peaceful @JKPAGD sit-in protest. Some things never change.



Leaders and activists of National Conference shout slogans during a peaceful protest march against proposal of delimitation commission, in Srinagar, Saturday. PTI PHOTO

He said the police had even locked time, we've been placed under house the internal gates of their resiarrest for trying to organise a peaceful protest," Mehbooba wrote on dence. The PDP chief said the Twitter. Centre was "deeply paranoid and intolerant when people of J-K want Tarigami said it was sad that

the J-K administration was "scared even to allow a peaceful protest". "In Kashmir, New Year began on another disappointing note where

370 and dismembering JK throughout the country but is deeply para-Police resumed their work of scutnoid and intolerant when people of tling the legitimate voices and JK want to protest against its dissqueezing democratic space by empowerment. For the umpteenth cracking down on protests against

The protest call was given by the PAGD. an amalgam of various mainstream political parties in J&K including the NC and the PDP

the Delimitation Commission. Entire PAGD leadership including me have been put under house arrest,' Tarigami wrote on Twitter later.

In a scathing attack over the government's move, Peoples Conference chief Sajad Lone said democracy is a precious relic for which thousands have laid down their lives in the last three decades.

By stopping political and non-violent protests, the administration was "incentivising and facilitating" the conditions for a violent form of protest, he said.

"Please do not unwittingly or er roneously damage it beyond recognition. Non-violent mode of protest in the context of violent strife needs to be facilitated not stifled. If you stop political, non-violent protests what are you incentivising by default. You are incentivising and facilitating and setting the conditions for a violent form of protest,' Lone wrote on Twitter.

The PC chief said the right to protest is intrinsic to the concept of a vibrant democracy.

Notwithstanding the detentions of its leaders, scores of the NC and the PDP activists took out separate protest marches here near their party offices against the detention of their leadership and the draft proposals of the Delimitation Commission.

The NC activists, including the party's spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar and party's youth wing president Salman Sagar, took out a protest march from NC headquarters Nawa-i-Subah here.

They party activists tried to move towards Gupkar Road - which houses Abdullah's residence -- but were stopped by the police outside the party office.

"We wanted to take out a peaceful protest march against the Delimitation Commission's draft proposals, but were stopped by the police. They did not even allow us to hold a sit-in," Dar said, adding the police 'dragged' them back to the party office.

Similarly, PDP activists also took out a protest march, and demanded the restoration of Articles 370 and 35-A which were revoked by the Centre on August 5, 2019. They were stopped by the police near GPO and later dispersed peacefully. Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba praised their party colleagues for taking out the protests.

**'Positive development'** soon on AFSPA in Assam and Nagaland: Himanta



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Jan 1: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Saturday said 'some positive development' could be expected during the year with regard to Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) in the state where militancy is on the wane.

Sarma, a senior BJP leader of the North East, said 'certain positive development' regarding the Act will take place soon in neighbouring Nagaland, where too it is

in force. With militancy on the wane the Army has virtually withdrawn from Assam, except from five-six districts and when AFSPA comes up for renewal after four months the state government will take a 'pragmatic decision', he said.

AFSPA has often been termed as 'draconian' by political parties of the north east because of the special powers it grants to the Indian Armed Forces to maintain public order in 'disturbed areas' and its withdrawal has been demanded by civil society groups and rights activists.

It was imposed in Assam in November 1990 and has been extended every six months since then after a review by the state government.

"As far as AFSPA is concerned, Assam will see some rationalising in 2022 ... How and when we don't know. But I am an optimistic man. We are looking at 2022 as a year of hope. There will be some positive moments regarding the Act," Sarma told reporters here.

On the continuation of AFSPA in Nagaland, he said the Centre has already formed a committee to look into the matter.

The er<u>a of tribal</u> <sup>/</sup> militancy is over. All militant groups, but for the ULFA have come overground and deposited arms ... Our last hurdle is ULFA(I)

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA ASSAM CHIEF MINISTER

lifting the controversial AFSPA in Nagaland, apparently to soothe the rising tension in the northeastern state over the killing of 14 civilians.

The committee was set up three days after Union Home Minister Amit Shah held a meeting with Sarma and his Nagaland counterpart Neiphiu Rio.

The demand for repeal of AFSPA from the north east came to the fore in December last year after 13 civilians were gunned down by the Army in a botched anti-insurgency operation in Nagaland and another person was killed in subsequent violence. The demand was made to the Centre even by the chief ministers of Nagaland and Meghalaya.

The Act is in force in Manipur (excluding Imphal Municipal Council Area), in Changlang, Longding and Tirap districts of Arunachal Pradesh and areas falling within the jurisdiction of eight police stations of its districts bordering Assam, besides Nagaland and Assam. It was extended by six months in Nagaland by the Centre earlier this week.

Sarma said tribal insurgency is almost over in Assam and credited the civil society organisations and students bodies for it.

"The era of tribal militancy is over. All militant groups, but the ULFA have come overground and deposited arms ... Our last hurdle is ULFA(I)," he said. "The tribals are now firm on standing against insurgency. There won't be any resurgence of militancy among them if we do not inflict any injustice on them," the chief minister said.

## DNA test on slain militant who is suspected to be Pulwama attacker

erment.'

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Jan 1: A DNA test will be conducted of one of the three militants killed in the Anantnag encounter as his picture resembles that of the last surviving ultra involved in the 2019 Pulwama suicide attack in which 40 CRPF personnel lost their lives, Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said Saturday.

He said the picture of the slain ultra matched with that of Jaishe-Mohammad (JeM)'s top commander Samir Dar.

"The picture of one of the killed #terrorists in #AnantnagEncounter on Dec 30th matches with JeM top commander Samir Dar, who was the last surviving terrorist involved in Lethpora #Pulwama #TerrorAttack. We are going for DNA sample matching," the IGP said on Twitter.

to protest against its disempow-

"GOI trumpets scrapping Article

Police had said that three JeM terrorists were killed and their bodies retrieved from the site of the encounter that took place at Nowgam Dooru area of the South Kashmir district Thursday.

Police had then identified those killed as Sultan alias Rayees alias Mavia (a foreign terrorist), Nisar Ahmad Khanday, a resident of Dudwangan Kapran, and Altaf Ahmad Shah, a resident of Nathipora Dooru.

The IGP had said that Shah and Sultan along with another terrorist Suhail Rather were involved in an attack at Zewan Srinagar in which three policemen were killed and 11 others injured.

Rather was killed in a separate encounter at Pantah Chowk Saturday.



Indian Army soldiers exchange sweets with Pakistan soldiers on New Year day to promote peace, at a Crossing Point in Poonch, J&K, Saturday. PTI PHOTO

## Indo-Bangla border fencing in Tripura by next year

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Agartala, Jan 1: The India Bangladesh border in Tripura will be completely fenced by next year to ensure fool-proof security, a top BSF official said Saturday.

Border Security Force Inspector General (Tripura Frontier), Sushanta Kumar Nath, said that 80-85 per cent of the 856-km-long India-Bangladesh international border in the northeastern state has already been fenced.

"Substantial fencing work has been done in the Tripura's eastern sector last year, and work on a



31-km porous stretch has been taken up on a priority basis. Single

row fencing has gained momentum in the state's western sector, and 80-85 per cent of the 856-km-long **India-Bangladesh** international border in the northeastern state has already been fenced

10 km was fenced last year," he told reporters

Setting up of floodlights is going hand-in-hand with fencing work, he said. "We are hopeful of completing fencing and setting up of floodlights along the entire stretch of the India-Bangladesh border in the state by next year," he said.

Highlighting the BSF's achievement in containing insurgency in Tripura, he said that 31 NLFT insurgents have surrendered to the border guards since 2017. "Two more militants of proscribed outfit National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) surrendered to the BSF today. One of them had undergone arms training," he said. The BSF arrested 218 people for sneaking across the international border, and seized contraband items worth Rs 35.64 crore last year, he added.

"The committee will submit its report in 45 days and I am hopeful there will be certain positive development," he added.

The Centre had December 26 constituted a high-level committee headed by a secretary rank officer to examine the possibility of

## Arsalan Feroz's family claims he is innocent



Mother and sister of Arsalan Feroz, who was arrested by NIA, hold placards during their protest claiming his innocence and demanding his release, in Srinagar, Saturday.

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Jan 1: Family members of Arsalan Feroz, who was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for allegedly being involved in radicalising and recruiting youngsters to join terror ranks, Saturday held a protest here claiming that he was innocent and demanded his release.

The NIA Friday had said Feroz was an operative of The Resistance Front (TRF). However, the family members denied the charge. "He is innocent. First, they (NIA) declared him a stone-pelter. The next day, they declared him a TRF operative. Can

a 19-year-old, Class 12 student, be a TRF operative?," Feroz's sister told reporters at the Press Enclave where the family staged the protest.

She said a team of the NIA raided their Zaldagar residence in the city and conducted searches.

'They told us that they want to take Arsalan for questioning only. We handed Arsalan to them ourselves. Then they told us they will take him for questioning to Delhi. Then the next day, they labeled him a TRF operative," she said.

The family appealed to the J-K Lieutenant Governor and DGP-Dilbag Singh to intervene in the matter and have Feroz released.

## Aspiration for normalcy a distant dream in Nagaland

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kohima, Jan 1: The killing of 14 civilians by security forces in Mon district brought a disconsolate 2021 to a close for Nagaland, with the shared aspiration of its people for an early solution to the decades-old political issue remaining a distant dream.

Fourteen civilians, including six daily wagers working at a coal mine, were shot dead in a series of firings by security forces in Mon district over December 4-5 in a botched anti-militancy operation, triggering a nationwide outrage and reigniting the demand for withdrawal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), 1958 from the Northeastern state.

Even as political leaders of the region, including Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio, pushed for repeal of the controversial law, the Centre declared the entire state of Nagaland a 'disturbed area' for six more months with effect from December 30 under the AFSPA while terming the state's condition 'dangerous' The state assembly also held a

special session December 21, when it passed a resolution demanding withdrawal of AFSPA from the state and the Northeast, besides an apology for the killings in Oting village in Mon.

The move drew flak from the Congress and the newly-formed Rising People's Party as they demanded justice and not mere apology. In solidarity with Konyak Nagas, the tribe to which the victims belonged, the state government called off the signature Hornbill Festival, which was being held after two years due to the pandemic. Diplomats from a number of countries were attending the festival when it was called off amid rising tension.

The issue of resolution of the Naga political issue hit a bump during the year with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland Isak-Muivah (NSCN-IM) refusing to hold talks with the then Centreappointed interlocutor and state governor R N Ravi, claiming it did not trust him. Ravi was shifted to Tamil Nadu as governor September

PUNISH THOSE INVOLVED IN BARBARIC KILLING IN NAGALAND AASU/NESO

in Dimapur with the appointment of former Intelligence Bureau special director AK Mishra as the new interlocutor.

The dialogue subsequently moved to New Delhi but the insistence of the NSCN(IM), which had signed the Framework Agreement in August 2015, on a separate flag and constitution blocked a final solution as the Centre held on to its position of not conceding those demands. On the other hand, the parallel talks with the Working Committee of Naga National Political Groups (NPPGs), which is willing to go ahead and reach a final agreement, could also not

#### make much headway.

To facilitate resolution of the Naga issue and put forth a united voice before the Centre, principal opposition Naga People's Front (NPF), having 25 MLAs, proposed joining the government, which was accepted by the ruling People's Democratic Alliance (PDA).

This led to the formation of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) government, leaving no significant opposition in the state.

Asserting that resolving the Naga political issue tops its agenda, the state government in June constituted a committee of 60 legislators and two MPs to iron out the differences between the negotiating parties. The assembly also adopted a four-point resolution on the vexed political question in February, with the 60-member House resolving to work unitedly to facilitate meaningful negotiations.

However, unanimity proved elusive as the Congress urged all the 60 MLAs to resign to demonstrate their sincerity and pressure the Centre for a solution to the decadesold problem.

9. The talks resumed September 20









One has to remember that the proposal to increase GST on textiles has not been taken back, but only deferred. The decision may be put off by another month till the elections are over. Once the elections are over, the tax will be increased

RANDEEP SINGH SURJEWALA CONGRESS CHIEF SPOKESMAN

## **KOLKATA'S AIR QUALITY DIPS**

Kolkata's air quality turned 'poor' Saturday morning, hours after revellers burst firecrackers to ring in 2022, an official of West Bengal **Pollution Control Board said** 



## 12 dead in stampede at Vaishno Devi shrine uote The accident

due to a landslide at a mining site in Bhiwani district of Haryana is very sad. I have spoken to Chief Minister @mlkhattar. The local administration is engaged in rescue work, and our priority is to save as many lives as possible. I wish the injured a speedy recovery

AMIT SHAH UNION HOME MINISTER

When the Congress and BJP are in power, be it at the Centre or in states. they hold public meetings one after the other just a couple of months before the elections MAYAWATI BSP CHIEF

The NITI Aayog along with the traders should create more jobs in the textile sector and the Central government should work on policies and strategies that will increase textile exports in the future MANISH SISODIA DEPUTY CM OF DELHI

SHORT TAKES

### Three killed

Korba: Three cousin brothers were killed when their speeding motorcycle crashed into a parked truck in Chhattisgarh's Janjgir-Champa district, police said Saturday. The accident occurred on national highway no 49 near Banari area under the Janjgir police station limits late on Friday night, said Janjgir station house officer (SHO) Umesh Sahu. The trio, identified as Deepak Patel (19) Parmeshwar Patel (17) and Tarun Patel (16), died on the spot due to the impact, he said, adding that the deceased were residents of Janjgir-Champa.

## Two arrested

Mumbai: The Mumbai police have arrested two persons for allegedly duping people by with fake bookings of hotels,

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**OrissaPOST** 

SUNDAY | JANUARY 2 | 2022 | BHUBANESWAR

Jammu, Jan 1: Twelve people lost their lives and 16 others were injured in a stampede at the famous Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir in the early hours during a heavy rush of devotees on New Year.

This is the first such tragedy at the revered shrine located atop the Trikuta hills - about 50 km from here - that attracts lakhs of people every year. The incident occurred between 2:30 am and 2:45 am Saturday near a relatively narrow passage at gate number 3 outside the sanctum sanctorum of the hilltop shrine where devotees usually arrive round the clock after trekking from the Katra base camp, a distance of nearly 13 km. A high-level inquiry panel

headed by Principal Secretary (Home) Shaleen Kabra, with Divisional Commissioner Jammu Rajiv Langar and Additional Director General of Police Mukesh Singh as its members, has been set up by Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha and asked to sub-

mit a report within a week. Condolences poured in from all quarters and Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to LG Sinha. President Ram Nath Kovind and a number of other leaders including Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, union ministers and chief ministers expressed grief over the loss of lives.

According to eyewitness accounts, the number of devotees

## India sends 5L Covid vaccines to Afghan

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 1: India Saturday supplied 5,00,000 doses of the Covaxin vaccine to Afghanistan, the second tranche of humanitarian aid to the war-torn country after its takeover by the Taliban.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the consignment of vaccine doses was handed over to the Indira Gandhi Hospital in Kabul. It said another batch of additional 5,00,000 doses of the vaccine would be supplied to Afghanistan in the coming weeks. Today, India supplied the next batch of humanitarian assistance

consisting of 5,00,000 doses of COVID vaccine (COVAXIN) to Afghanistan. The same was handed over to the Indira Gandhi Hospital.



Bodies of Mata Vaishno Devi shrine stampede victims are kept at a Community Health Centre at Katra in Reasi district, Saturday morning PTI PHOTO

According to eyewitness accounts, the number of devotees was allegedly beyond the permitted level with flagrant violation of COVID-19 norms. and some of the survivors accused the Jammu and Kashmir administration of "mismanagement"

was allegedly beyond the permitted level with flagrant violation of COVID-19 norms, and some of the survivors accused the Jammu and Kashmir administration of "mismanagement". The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, however, denied the charges saying all necessary arrangements were made in view of the expected rush. Most of the deaths have taken

place due to suffocation, police said, adding among the deceased seven are from Uttar Pradesh,

A high-level inquiry panel headed by Principal Secretary (Home) Shaleen Kabra, with Divisional Commissioner Jammu Rajiv Langar and Additional Director General of Police Mukesh Singh as its members, has been set up by Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoi Sinha and asked to submit a report within a week

three from Delhi and one each from Haryana and J-K.

Director General of Police Dilbag Singh told reporters that the incident took place due to confusion or "probably due to some altercation". "All these things are being looked into. That area is a little narrow and people ran helter-skelter without knowing the reason. Most of the deaths have taken place due to suffocation and most of the injuries are also due to the same reason," he said. Singh had said that prelimi-

tercation among some boys, and within seconds, there was a stampede."Police and officials of the civil administration were quick to respond, and the order within the crowd was immediately restored but by that time, the damage had been done," said the DGP, who accompanied the Minister of State in the PMO, Jitendra Singh, during the visit to the shrine after the stampede. Prem Singh, from Gwalior in

nary information from the scene

suggests there was a minor al-

Madhya Pradesh, said there was a "complete mess" as neither was the number of pilgrims restricted nor were COVID-19 guidelines enforced. "It was a free-for-all-like situation. Many people were without mandatory face masks," he said, claiming that police personnel on duty at the checking point surrendered to the heavy rush and were warning people about the possibility of such an accident. 'Nothing but mismanagement was the cause for this tragic accident. They were aware about the possible rush but allowed the people in unhindered," a pilgrim from Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh said while waiting outside a mortuary to identify a body.

Many people were resting on the floor, instead of heading back, and this led to overcrowding and chaos at the site, he said. Senior officials present at the scene said 12 people died in the stampede and their bodies were taken to a hospital in the Katra base camp.

**PM-KISAN SCHEME** PM Modi releases ₹20,946 cr to farmers

Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, a financial benefit of ₹6.000 per year is provided to the eligible farmer families, payable in three equal installments of ₹2,000



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the release of the 10th installment under the PM-KISAN scheme in New Delhi PTI PHOTO

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 1: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday released Rs 20,946 crore to 10.09 crore farmers across India as the 10th installment of financial aid under the PM-KISAN scheme and said there was a need for innovation in agriculture along with promotion of natural farming.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, a financial benefit of Rs 6,000 per year is provided to the eligible farmer families, payable in three equal installments of Rs 2.000. The PM-KISAN scheme was announced in the February 2019 Budget. The first installment was for the period December 2018 to March 2019.

Addressing a virtual event for release of the amount. Modi said that the scheme is a big support for farmers and the Centre has transferred all installments on time directly into bank accounts of beneficiaries, without any involvement of middlemen. Nobody would have thought that India could achieve such a feat, he said.

"If we include today's transfer, more than Rs 1.8 lakh crore has been transferred directly to the accounts of the farmers under the PM-KISAN," he said, adding that the scheme has helped farmers in buying good quality seeds and fermany as nine chief ministers, several ministers from different states, and representatives of agricultural institutions.

The Prime Minister also released an equity grant of more than Rs 14 crore to about 351 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), benefiting 1.24 lakh farmers. He said small farmers are feeling the power of collective strength with setting up of FPOs as he listed out five benefits of FPOs for small farmers - increased bargaining power; scale, innovation, risk management and adaptability to the market conditions.

Through FPOs, farmers are now able to buy inputs wholesale and sell their agri produce at retail. The government is promoting FPOs at every level and they are getting help of up to Rs 15 lakh. As a result, organic FPOs, oilseed FPOs, bamboo clus-

ters and Honey FPOs are coming up. "Today, our farmers are benefitting from the schemes like 'One District One Products' and markets, both nation and global, are opening for them," Modi said. Pointing out that the country is still importing many commodities which Indian farmers can easily fulfill, Modi said edible oil is one such example and a lot of foreign exchange gets invested for that.

Modi highlighted that the National Palm Oil Mission has been launched with a budget of Rs 11.000 crore aimed at reducing imports of cooking oils. Talking about achievements in the agri culture sector in recent years, he said the foodgrains production has touched 300 million tonnes despite the pandemic.



private bungalows and villas for New Year celebrations at tourist spots, police said Saturday. The cyber police of the crime branch nabbed Mumbai residents Akash Rupkumar Jadhav (21) and Avinash Rupkumar Jadhvani (26) from a hotel in Viman Nagar area of Pune, an official said. The fraud came to light when a woman approached the police with a complaint that she was cheated of ₹72,000 over a booking of a bungalow in Lonavala for a day, he said.

### Soldier ends life

Gwalior (MP): A 20-year-old soldier of the Indian Army allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree in a cantonment area in Madhva Pradesh's Gwalior district, police said Saturday. The incident occurred in the Murar cantonment area of Gwalior on Friday, an official said. Manish Singh, a resident of Bihar, went missing from his barrack on Friday evening and when he did not return till the next day morning, his colleagues launched a search for him, Murar police station in-charge Shailendra Bhargava said. Singh was found hanging from a tree in a deserted area near the barracks, he said.

Kabul," the MEA said in a statement. "Another batch of additional 5,00,000 doses would be supplied in coming weeks," it said

The MEA said India has committed to providing to Afghan people humanitarian assistance consisting of food grains, one million doses of COVID-19 vaccine and essential life-saving drugs.

"In coming weeks, we would be undertaking the supply of wheat and the remaining medical assistance. In this regard, we are in touch with UN agencies and others for finalising the modalities for transportation," it said.

India has already announced that it will send 50,000 tonnes of wheat and medicines to Afghanistan by road transport through Pakistan. India and Pakistan are now finalising the modalities for transportation of the consignments.

India has been pitching for providing unimpeded humanitarian aid to Afghanistan to address the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the country. India has not recognised the

new regime in Afghanistan and has been pitching for the formation of a truly inclusive government in Kabul besides insisting that Afghan soil must not be used for any terrorist activities against any country.



A helicopter takes off from a helipad next to the Sabarmati river during the launch of the helicopter joyride service, in Ahmedabad PTI PHOTO

## Five die in TN blast INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Jan 1: At least five people died in a blast at a firecracker unit in Pudupatti near Sivakasi on Saturday morning. Ten people are seriously injured in the blast.

The accident took place in Saturday morning and fire and rescue personnel are working to douse the flame. The firecracker unit is owned by Murugan of Padupatti and the explosion took place at the chemical blending unit.

Sivakasi fire station officer, K.P. Balamurugan who is leading the rescue operations, said that the fire and rescue personnel have retrieved three bodies and are searching under the debris. Two people died in the hospital and the condition of ten others who are admitted with injuries is serious.

Fire force teams from Sivakasi and Vathirairuppu stations are leading the rescue operations and 20 units are at the premises.

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 1: India Saturday called on Pakistan to release and repatriate 356 Indian fishermen and two civilian prisoners whose nationality has already been confirmed and conveyed to Pakistani authorities.

In addition, Pakistan has been asked to provide immediate consular access to 182 Indian fishermen and 17 civilian prisoners who are in Pakistan's custody and are believed to be Indian, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

India made the request in the context of the exchange of the lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen by both the countries as part of a practice to do so on January 1 and July 1 of every calendar year under the framework of a 2008 agreement.



**Release prisoners soon: India to Pakistan** 

The MEA said India handed over a list of 282 Pakistan civilian prisoners and 73 fishermen in India's custody to Pakistan. Similarly, Pakistan has shared lists of 51 civilian prisoners and 577 fishermen in its custody, who are Indians or are believed to be Indians.

It said India has called for early release and repatriation of civilian prisoners, missing Indian defence personnel and fishermen, along with their boats, by Pakistan. "In this context, Pakistan was asked to

tilisers. On the occasion, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said around Rs 20.900 crore is being transferred to about 10.09 crore beneficiaries.

The event was attended by as

The MEA said India handed over a list of 282 Pakistan civilian prisoners and 73 fishermen in India's custody to Pakistan

expedite the release and repatriation of two Indian civilian prisoners and 356 Indian fishermen to India whose nationality has been confirmed and conveyed to Pakistan," the MEA said in a statement. In addition, it said, Pakistan has been asked to provide immediate consular access to 182 Indian fishermen and 17 civilian prisoners who are in Pakistan's custody and are believed to be Indians.

"The government also requested Pakistan to expedite the grant of visas to the members of the medical experts' team and facilitate their visit to Pakistan to assess the mental condition of believedto-be Indian prisoners of unsound mind, lodged in different jails of Pakistan," the MEA said, "It was also proposed to organise an early visit of the Joint Judicial Committee to Pakistan," it said.

The MEA said India remained committed to addressing, on priority, all humanitarian matters, including those pertaining to prisoners and fishermen in each other's country.

"In this context, India has also urged Pakistan to expedite necessarv action at its end to confirm the nationality status of 68 Pakistan prisoners, including fishermen, whose repatriation is pending for want of nationality confirmation by Pakistan." the MEA said.

## Indian tipplers becoming quality conscious, finds study Illegal arms factory uncovered

Banda: An illegal arms and ammunition manufacturing factory was uncovered following a raid here and five people were arrested, police said Saturday. The raid was conducted on Friday night based on a tip-off, SHO of Chilla police station Narendra Pratap Singh said. "Eight illegal arms and equipment used in making them have been recovered from the factory," he said.

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 1: With growing urbanisation and rising income levels, Indian alcoholic beverages consumers are becoming more quality conscious rather than staving pricesensitive, a recent study has found.

With increasing international travels and exposure to foreign brands, their behaviour change is reflected in their purchase choices, which makes India an attractive market for global manufacturers and retailers, the joint study by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and solicitor firm PLR Chambers said.

According to the study, the country is one of the fastest-growing markets for alcoholic beverages, with an estimated market size of USD 52.5 billion, and it is expected to grow at a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of 6.8 per cent between 2020 and 2023.

While this data does not capture the size of the informal or illicit liquor market, it does provide di-



rections to the state excise departments to plan their revenue projection based on the consumption demand, it said.

The data also demonstrates that by 2030, while 50 per cent of the consumers would buy more of the same category of alcoholic beverages that they are consuming, 26 per cent are expected to move to higher brands and 24 per cent will spend on newer categories of alcohol.

In India, judicious use of consumer purchase data to design tax rates was a rarity in the past. A lack

of organised data collection and collation led to ad hoc and non-aligned changes in excise policies.

Recently, various states are taking bold measures to see the impact of the policy changes on consumption and revenue collection. In the case of West Bengal, a downward alignment of previously increased excise duties on India Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) is allowing consumers to access better quality products, the study said.

A wrong policy may push con-

sumers towards lower quality products, and illicit markets may cause health hazards and reduce revenues, it warned.

Sushmita Mukherjee, assistant secretary of West Bengal Foreign Liquor, Country Spirits, ON, OF Shops and Hotels Owners' Association, said that the impact of price reduction is evident in the spurt in sales in the state. Though December is a festive season and sales are generally higher, -( the price drop has added to the rise in consumption, she said.













## international

How much violence is directed against women! Enough! To hurt a woman is to insult God, who from a woman took on our humanity - not through an angel, not directly, but through a woman POPE FRANCIS HEAD OF ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

## **UK'S WARMEST NEW YEAR'S EVE**

The UK Friday experienced its warmest New Year's Eve on record with temperatures hovering around 15 degrees Celsius, the Met Office said



## uote

We will also press on to bring in muchneeded migrant workers and ensure international talents feel welcome and are able to complement Singaporeans

LEE HSIEN LOONG PRIME MINISTER, SINGAPORE

By treasuring more than eve the connections among people, sharing our

pain and supporting each other, I hope from the bottom of my heart that we will overcome these hard times

NARUHITO EMPEROR, JAPAN

We must always keep a long-term perspective, remain mindful of potential risks, maintain strategic focus and determination, and 'attain the broad and great while addressing the delicate and minute

XI JINPING PRESIDENT, CHINA

## SHORT TAKES

## El Salvador seizes 4.1 tonne cocaine

San Salvador: El Salvador's navy seized two semisubmersible boats carrying 4.1 metric tons of cocaine off the country's Pacific coast, the government said Friday President Nayib Bukele said the cocaine was worth almost USD 104 million. It was the largest seizure so far in Bukele's administration, which began in June 2019. The navy detained five Colombians and two Ecuadorians found aboard the two vessels, officials said. Much of the illegal drug flow headed for the US market passes by air or sea to Central America, and then on to Mexico.

## NYE's fireworks kill two people

Berlin: Exploding fireworks killed two men on New Year's Eve, one in Germany and the other in Austria. local media reported Saturday. A 37-year old man died in Hennef near Germany's western city of Bonn. A 39-year-old was severely injured in the same incident and taken to the hospital. In Austria, a 23-yearold man died southwest of Vienna and three other people were injured. Several other people were injured in other mishaps involving fireworks in the German cities of Leipzig and Hamburg, German news agency dpa reported.

## **Omicron mars global New Year fete** Germany shuts 3 of

A year ago, the newly available vaccine offered hope that the COVID-19 pandemic may be under control by the start of 2022. Instead, the sudden arrival of Omicron has brought a surge in coronavirus cases across the globe

Washington, Jan 1: The Omicron coronavirus variant dampened New Year festivities around much of the world, with Paris cancelling its fireworks show, London relegating its show to television, and New York City scaling down its famous ball drop celebration in Times Square.

REUTERS

The illuminated ball made of Waterford crystal panels slid down its pole at the midnight hour in Times Square, but only 15,000 spectators were allowed into the official viewing area instead of the usual 58.000

A year ago, the newly available vaccine offered hope that the COVID-19 pandemic may be under control by the start of 2022. Instead. the sudden arrival of Omicron has brought a surge in coronavirus cases across the globe

Worldwide infections hit a record high over the past seven-day period, with an average of just over a million cases detected a day between Dec 24 and 30, up some 100,000 on the previous peak posted Wednesday, according to Reuters data. Deaths, however, have not risen in kind; bringing hope the new variant is less lethal.



New York City reported a record 44,000 cases Wednesday and another 43,000 Thursday, leading some critics to question whether the cel-

ebrations should go ahead at all. But officials decided an outdoor party of vaccinated, masked and socially distant revellers was safe. and a better option than the virtually vacant celebration that rung in 2021. Elsewhere around the globe, events were scaled back or can-

celled outright, such as with the traditional fireworks over the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur. Midnight passed in Paris without a planned fireworks display or

DJ sets, as city officials cancelled events planned on the Champs-Elysees following the advice of a scientific panel that declared mass gatherings would be too risky.

In the Netherlands, where out side groupings of more than four people are banned, police dispersed several thousand people who had defiantly gathered at Amsterdam's central Dam Square, ANP news agency reported

But in London, where a fireworks display and light show had been cancelled in October, officials announced Friday the spectacle would come to life on the television screen, as Big Ben rang in the New Year for the first time since 2017 following a restoration.

BBC images of the fireworks showed very light vehicle traffic and virtually no in-person spectators

In the wake of encouraging data, Cape Town abruptly lifted a curfew just in time for the New Year, after South Africa became the first country to declare its Omicron wave had crested - and with no huge surge in deaths.

Hours earlier, the Australian city of Sydney also feted the New Year with something like full swagger, as spectacular fireworks glit tered in the harbour above the Opera House. People in Madrid queued for hours to get into the main Puerta del Sol square where celebrations went ahead with multiple security checkpoints, mandatory masks and capacity at 60% of normal levels.

In Asia, celebrations were mostly abridged or cancelled. In South Korea, a traditional midnight bellringing ceremony was cancelled for the second year, while festivities were banned in Tokyo's glittering Shibuya entertainment district, and Prime Minister Fumio Kishida took to YouTube to urge people to wear masks and limit numbers at parties.

China, where the coronavirus first emerged in late 2019, was on high alert, with the city of Xian under lockdown and New Year events in other cities cancelled.

# its last 6 N-plants



Three of Germany's last six reactors Dismantling to cost over \$10 billion to shut down Anti-nuclear consensus still strong, Final phase-out by the end of 2022 minister says

#### REUTERS

Berlin, Jan 1: Germany has pulled the plug on three of its last six nuclear power stations as it moves towards completing its withdrawal from nuclear power as it turns its focus to renewables.

The government decided to speed up the phasing out of nuclear power following Japan's Fukushima reactor meltdown in 2011 when an earthquake and tsunami destroyed the coastal plant in the world's worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl in 1986.

The reactors of Brokdorf, Grohnde and Gundremmingen C, run by utilities E.ON (EONGn.DE) and RWE (RWEG.DE), shut down late Friday after three and half decades in operation.

The last three nuclear power plants - Isar 2, Emsland and Neckarwestheim II - will be turned off by the end of 2022.

Preussen Elektra, which runs the Brokdorf and Grohnde plants, said in a statement Saturday the two ating just under 28% and gas around 15% Germany aims to make renewables meet 80% of power demand by 2030 by expanding wind and solar power infrastructure.

had been shut down shortly be-

fore midnight Friday, RWE said

the Gundremmingen C plant also

stopped generation Friday evening.

Knott thanked staff for their com-

mitment to safety. "We have made

a decisive contribution to the secure,

climate-friendly and reliable sup-

ply of electricity in Germany for

The phase-out of an energy

deemed clean and cheap by some

is an irreversible step for Europe's

biggest economy even as it faces am-

bitious climate targets and rising

contributed to around 12% of elec-

tricity production in Germany in

2021, preliminary figures showed.

The share of renewable energy

was almost 41%, with coal gener-

The six nuclear power plants

decades," she added.

power prices.

Preussen Elektra CEO Guido

## Earthquake rocks northern Pakistan

Islamabad: A 5.3 magnitude earthquake rocked parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region in northern Pakistan, including the provincial capital of Peshawar Saturday, triggering panic among residents, according to media reports. The earthquake struck around 6.15 pm along the Afghan-Tajikistan border, with tremors being felt in Swat, Peshawar, Lower Dir, Swabi, Nowshera, Chitral, Mardan, Bajaur, Malakand, Pabbi, Akora, capital city of Islamabad and its surroundings, the Pakistan Meteorological Department said. Gripped by fear and panic, scores of residents scampered out of their homes to seek refuge in safer places, the Dawn newspaper reported.



Debris surround the remains of homes burned by wildfires after they ripped through a development Friday in Superior,

UK ex-PM Tony Blair Taiwanese President slams awarded knighthood Chi China's military adventurism

Zoo tiger shot as it bit man's arm

### ASSOCIATED PRESS

Naples (US), Jan 1: Body camera footage released by authorities showed a man screaming in pain and pleading for help just before a sheriff's deputy shot a Malayan tiger that had grabbed the man's arm at a Florida zoo.

The Collier County Sheriff's Office said the man was seriously injured Wednesday evening when he entered an unauthorized area near the tiger's enclosure at Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens. The 8vear-old tiger named Eko later died

The man worked for a thirdparty cleaning service contracted to clean restrooms and the gift shop, the sheriff's office and the zoo said. He was hospitalized and his condition was not available on

Friday. The body camera video released

## **2 TTP terrorists** killed in Pakistan

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Peshawar: Two terrorists of the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan were killed during a gun battle with security forces in the country's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan, the Army said Saturday. The militants, associated with the TTP's Asmatullah Shaheen group, were killed in the operation in Kotkut area of Tank district, the Army's media wing Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement. One terrorist was arrested in the operation, it said.

#### Thursday by the sheriff's office appeared to show the tiger's jaw wrapped around the man's arm between his hand and elbow

fence into an unauthorized area

in front of the tiger habitat.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA "Please, please help me, please," the man screamed during a nearly 9-minute call with a sheriff's office dispatcher. The dispatcher is heard mistaking the man's screams for a known as Sir Tony from Saturday. woman and calling him m'am during the call. The man could be seen Blair has been apon video bracing his body against

pointed as member of the the enclosure with his leg in the air Order of the Garter, and his shoulder in the dirt. England's oldest and most A zoo statement said that after senior honour which is the facility had closed Wednesady made as a personal choice to the public, 26-year-old River of the monarch. Rosenquist jumped a public barrier

The ceremonial order, founded in 1348, is a recognition of significant pub-

lic service, and is made without "It is believed that he was trying to feed or pet the tiger through the prime ministerial advice as with enclosure fence to the point where other New Year Honours. the tiger was able to reach him It's an immense honour, said and pull his arm into the enclo-Blair, who was the Labour Party Prime Minister for 10 years besure," the statement said, adding a deputy rushed to the scene. tween 1997 and 2007.

"I would like to thank all those who served alongside me, in poli-London, Jan 1: Former British tics, public service and all parts Prime Minister Tony Blair has of our society, for their dedication been awarded a knighthood by and commitment to our country,' Queen Elizabeth II and becomes he said

In other high honours conferred

directly by the 95-year-old monarch, Camilla - the Duchess of Cornwall - is appointed as a royal companion.

The duchess, wife of the Queen's son and heir Prince Charles, has had an increasingly high profile with her own campaigns, in-

cluding raising awareness of domestic abuse and sexual violence. The move is likely to be seen as

showing the Queen's endorsement for Camilla's role as a senior member of the royal family and spouse of the future monarch.

Chinese warplanes have made a historically high number of incursions into Taiwan's air defence zone in recent months

### REUTERS

Taipei, Jan 1: Taiwan's president Saturday urged China to curb its military adventurism, with tensions between the two sides at their highest level in years.

Beijing has ramped up military and diplomatic pressure on Taiwan since Tsai Ing-wen came to power in 2016, as she rejects the stance that the island is Chinese territory.

Chinese warplanes have made a historically high number of incursions into Taiwan's air defence zone in recent months.

The authorities in Beijing should stop the spread of military adventurism within their ranks, Tsai said in her New Year speech. The use of military means is

President Xi Jinping in his New Year address declared that the complete reunification of our motherland is an aspiration shared by people in both China and Taiwan.

Taiwan's defence ministry warned in October that military tensions with China were at their highest in four decades after a record number of Chinese jets entered its air defence zone.

Beijing has also stepped up efforts in recent years to isolate Taiwan on the international stage. It regards any formal declaration

of an independent Taiwan as a provocation and has repeatedly threatened consequences for countries that support Taipei in its selfdetermination.

Beijing has encouraged Taiwan's dwindling diplomatic allies to switch sides.

## North Korea's Kim talks food not nukes for 2022 THE DOMESTIC FOCUS OF THE SPEECH UNDERSCORED THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS KIM FACES AT HOME

#### REUTERS

Monday.

## Mall of America shooting hurts 2

Minneapolis: Two people were shot and wounded Friday following an apparent altercation at the Mall of America, sending New Year's Eve shoppers scrambling for safety and placing the Minneapolis mall on temporary lockdown, authorities said. One man suffered a gunshot wound to the leg during the shooting that happened about 4:30 pm on the third floor of the mall and another person was grazed, police said.

Seoul, Jan 1: North Korean leader Kim Jong-un capped off his 10th year in power with a speech that made more mention of tractor factories and school uniforms than nuclear weapons or the United States. according to summaries by state media Saturday.

North Korea's main goals for

2022 will be jump starting eco-

nomic development and improving

people's lives as it faces a great

life-and-death struggle, Kim said in

a speech Friday at the end of the

4th Plenary Meeting of the 8th

Central Committee of the Workers'

Party of Korea (WPK), which began

The meetings coincided with

the 10-year anniversary of Kim effectively assuming leadership of the country after the death of his father in 2011. Kim has used previous speeches

around the New Year to make major policy announcements, including launching significant diplomatic engagements with South Korea and the United States.

But summaries of his speech published in North Korean state media made no specific mention of the United States, with only a passing reference to unspecified discussions of inter-Korean relations and external affairs.

The domestic focus of the speech underscored the economic problems Kim faces at home, where selfimposed anti-pandemic border lock-



downs have left North Korea more isolated than ever before, with international aid organisations warning of possible food shortages and a humanitarian crisis.

"The main task facing our Party and people next year is to provide

The main task facing our Party and people next year is to provide a sure guarantee for the implementation of the five-year plan and bring about a remarkable change in the state development and the people's standard of living KIM JONG-UN SUPREME LEADER, NK

a sure guarantee for the implementation of the five-year plan and bring about a remarkable change in the state development and the people's standard of living,' Kim was quoted as saying.

Kim spent the majority of his

speech detailing domestic issues from an ambitious plan for rural development to people's diets, school uniforms and the need to crack down on non-socialist practices. The big focus on rural develop-

absolutely not an option for re-

solving the differences between

Beijing considers Taiwan a part

of its territory, and has vowed to

seize it one day, by force if

our two sides

necessary

ment is likely a populist strategy, said Chad O'Carroll, founder of NK News, a Seoul-based website that tracks North Korea

Overall, Kim might be aware that revealing sophisticated militarv development plans while people are suffering food shortages and harsh conditions outside of Pyongyang might not be such a good idea this year, he wrote on Twitter. Saturday's state media report cited the development of one ultra-modern weapon system after another as a major achievement of the past year and said Kim called for bolstering the national defence to face an unstable international situation.

A tractor factory he discussed in the speech was likely used to build launch vehicles for missiles, foreign analysts have said, and North Korea is believed to have expanded its arsenal despite the lockdowns.

The reports of Kim's speech did not mention the United States' call for denuclearisation talks, or South Korea's push for a declaration to formally end the 1950-1953 Korean War as a way to restart those negotiations.

North Korea has previously said it is open to diplomacy, but that the American overtures appear hollow while hostile acts such as military drills and sanctions continue.





# business



## **ONGC WITHOUT A CHAIRMAN**

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Saturday became a company with no chairman and managing director after incumbent Subhash Kumar superannuated and the government did not immediately name his replacement. Kumar, who was Director-Finance of ONGC and has been since April last year holding the additional charge of chairman and MD, superannuated December 31, 2021, said ONGC



## uote

Core sector growth deflated to a lower than expected 3.1 per cent in November 2021 from the revised 8.4 per

cent in October 2021, adding further evidence that the momentum slackened after the festive season amidst supply disruptions in parts of southern India related to heavy rainfall

ADITI NAYAR CHIEF ECONOMIST, ICRA

We believe silver ETF will be one of the preferred ways for



purity, quality or liquidity of the investment

CHINTAN HARIA HEAD (PRODUCT AND STRATEGY), ICICI PRUDENTIAL MUTUAL FUND



performance continues to be encouraging and traffic is far higher than it was this time last year

ALEX S MCEWAN COUNTRY MANAGER (SOUTH ASIA), VIRGIN ATLANTIC

## SHORT TAKES

## **Over 5.89cr ITRs for** FY21 filed so far

New Delhi: Nearly 5.89 crore income tax returns for the 2020-21 fiscal (ended March 2021) have been filed on the new e-filing portal till December 31 deadline, the I-T department said Saturday. Of this, more than 46.11 lakh ITRs were filed on the last date or December 31 alone. "Nearly 5.89 crore Income Tax Returns (ITRs) have been filed on the new e-filing portal of the Income Tax Department as on 31st December, 2021, the extended due date," the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement.

Power usage rises 4.5% in December

### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

of 2022.

- and explore strategic inorganic growth opportunities in the beauty Gurugram, Jan 1: Digital-first and personal care segment. "Our flagship brand, Mamaearth consumer brands platform Honasa, that owns personal care brands like has established itself as a leader

Mamaearth, Saturday said it has in D2C personal care with a strong raised \$52 million led by Sequoia, purpose of Goodness Inside. Looking becoming the first Indian unicorn at the scale of Mamaearth and the success of The Derma Co. we are Along with launching new brands, confident that we have the expert-Honasa Consumer Pvt Ltd said that ise to build brands with a millennial connect," said Varun Alagh, Coit will continue to aggressively expand distribution for existing brands

founder and CEO, Honasa. - Mamaearth and The Derma Co -The round also saw participa

Currently catering to over 1,000 cities in India, Honasa has become a billion-dollar personal care House of Brands in just five years

Mamaearth parent Honasa becomes 1st unicorn of '22

Next year is starting

on a bull wicket as

tion by Sofina Ventures SA, the Belgium-based investment company, and Evolvence, a UAE-based India focused fund. The round also

GST collection Swiggy, Zomato to



gave employees an opportunity to monetise their vested ESOP.

"As discovery and consumption of FMCG brands is getting more in-

fluenced by digital channels, it is providing a unique opportunity to founders to build brands of the future," said Ishaan Mittal, MD, Sequoia India.

Currently catering to over 1,000 cities in India, Honasa has become a billion-dollar personal care House of Brands in just five years.

India saw at least 42 startups becoming unicorns (each with a market valuation of over \$1 billion), that registered over \$39 billion in overall investment.

NEW NORMS

**RE sources bolster November all-India** power generation INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 1: All-India power production increased marginally in November 2021 supported by increase in generation from renewable sources, said India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra).



Accordingly, the total all-India generation increased marginally by 2 per cent to 99.4BU (billion units) in November 2021.

'The overall increase in generation was, however, supported by a 16.4 per cent YoY increase in the generation from renewable sources and a 16 per cent YoY rise in generation from hydro power sources,' Ind-Ra said.

Whereas, the generation from coal-based thermal power plants reduced by 0.3 per cent YoY. Besides, the report said the all-India energy demand increased just 1.7 per cent YoY to 99.6 BU in November 2021, after growing 12 per cent YoY in 7MFY22.

The slowdown in the improvement was led by the onset of the winter season, impacting the demand from the northern region and southern region. The reduction in the energy demand in November 2021 is also attributable to lower generation, as reflected in an increase in the power outages at thermal power plants due to

coal shortages Additionally, it said that all-India energy demand for the first 25 days of December improved 3.5 per cent YoY to 88.7BU. In addition, the agency cited an improvement in domestic coal production which has led to a rise in coal inventory levels.

Consequently, the number of thermal power plants with critical or subcritical levels of coal stock as per technical criteria has improved to 59 as November 30. 2021. The coal production cumulatively by Coal India and the Singareni Collieries Company increased to 5 per cent YoY to 59.4mt, owing to the improved all-India power demand.

## December is the sixth month in a row when the revenues from goods sold and services rendered stood at over ₹1 lakh crore

### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 1: India's GST collection rose 13 per cent in December 2021 on a year-on-year basis to ₹1,29,780 crore. However, December's collections declined on a sequential basis from ₹1,31,526 crore reported for November.

'The revenues for the month of December 2021 are 13 per cent higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year and 26 per cent higher than the GST revenues in December 2019," the Ministry of Finance said in a statement.

"During the month, revenues from import of goods was 36 per cent higher and the revenues from domestic transaction (including import of services) are 5 per cent higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.'



"The GST collection in the month

is close to ₹1.30 lakh crore despite

reduction of 17 per cent in the

number of e-way bills generated in

the month of November, 2021 (Rs

6.1 crore) as compared to the month

of October, 2021 (Rs 7.4 crore) due

to improved tax compliance and bet-

ter tax administration by both

Central and State Tax authorities."

GST collection for the third quar-

ter of the current year has been

₹1.30 lakh crore against the aver-

age monthly collection of ₹1.10

lakh crore and ₹1.15 lakh crore in

the first and second quarters re-

In addition, the ministry cited

that economic recovery, anti-eva-

'The average monthly gross

Consequently, the total revenue of Centre and the States last month after settlements is ₹48,146 crore for CGST and ₹49,760 crore for the SGST

sion activities, especially action against fake billers have been con tributing to the enhanced GST.

"The improvement in revenue has also been due to various rate rationalisation measures undertaken by the Council to correct inverted duty structure.<sup>2</sup>

"It is expected that the positive trend in the revenues will continue in the last quarter as well.' Icra Chief Economist Aditi Navar said the GST collections for December 2021 are certainly impressive in absolute terms as well as the year-on-year growth, given the sequential drop in GST e-way bills that had been seen during the festive month of November 2021.

## collect 5% GST now AGENCIES New Delhi, Jan 1: Food aggre-

depositing the tax. Also, cab aggregators like Uber and Ola will have to collect five per cent Goods and Services Tax (GST) for booking two and three-wheeler vehicles effective January 1. Also, footwear irrespective of prices will attract 12 per cent tax from Saturday.

These are among the many changes in the GST regime that have come into effect in this new year 2022. Also to tackle evasion, the GST law has been amended to state that the input tax credit will now be available only once the credit is appearing in GSTR 2B (purchase return) of the tax payer. Five per cent provisional credit, earlier allowed in GST rules, will not be permitted post January 1, 2022.

EY India Tax Partner Bipin Sapra said, "this change will have an immediate impact on working capital of tax pavers who are currently availing credit of 105 per cent of matched credit. The change will also mandate industry to validate that the procurements are made from genuine and compliant vendors.

zomato SWIGGY

The move is intended to curb the menace of fake billing whereby sellers would show higher sales in GSTR-1 to enable purchasers to claim input tax credit

The other anti-evasion measures which would come into effect from the new year include mandatory Aadhaar authentication for claiming GST refund, blocking of the facility of GSTR-1 filing in cases where the business has not paid taxes and filed GSTR-3B in the immediate previous month.

Currently, the law restricts filing of return for outward supplies or GSTR-1 in case a business fails to file GSTR-3B of preceding two months. Also, the GST law has been amended to allow GST officers to visit premises to recover tax dues without any prior show-cause notice, in cases where taxes paid in GSTR-3B is lower based on suppressed sales volume, as compared to supply details given in GSTR-1.

up 13% in Dec gators like Swiggy and Zomato will have to collect and deposit tax at five per cent rate beginning Saturday, a move which will widen the tax base as food vendors who are currently outside the GST threshold will become liable to GST when provided through these online platforms. Currently, restaurants registered under GST are collecting and

New Delhi: India's power consumption grew by 4.5 per cent in December to 110.34 billion units (BU) over the same period a year ago, according to power ministry data. In December 2020, consumption was 105.62 BU, up from 101.08 BU in December 2019. Experts are of the view that power consumption as well as demand has grown at a steady pace in December with improvement in economic activities across the country.

## Kannan takes over as CEO of Vistara

New Delhi: Full-service carrier Vistara Saturday said that Vinod Kannan has been appointed as the airline's Chief Executive Officer, effective from January 1. Besides, Deepak Raiawat has been elevated to take up the role of Vistara's Chief Commercial Officer. "Kannan started his stint with Vistara as the Chief Strategy Office in June 2019 and took over as Chief Commercial Officer in January 2020 with responsibility for developing, executing, and sustaining Vistara's corporate strategy and ensuring the airline's commercial success," a statement said.

### HDFC Life Insurance acquires Exide Life

New Delhi: HDFC Life Insurance has completed the acquisition of Exide Life by allotting over 8.7 crore shares of the company to Exide Industries, the insurer said Saturday. Accordingly, Exide Life became a wholly-owned subsidiary of the company with immediate effect -- from January 1, 2022, it said.

## **CCI** orders probe into **Apple's biz practices**

spectively

#### REUTERS

tain antitrust laws

its dominant position in the apps

market by forcing developers to

use its proprietary in-app purchase

The complainant, "Together We

Fight Society", argued that Apple's imposition of a 30% in-app fee for distribution of paid digital con-New Delhi, Jan 1: India's competition watchdog Friday ordered an tent and other restrictions hurts investigation into Apple Inc's busicompetition by raising costs for ness practices in the country, sayapp developers and customers, ing it was of the initial view that while also acting as a barrier to the iPhone maker had violated cermarket entry.

The CCI said Apple's restrictions The order from the Competition prima facie result in denial of market access for potential app devel-Commission of India (CCI) comes after a non-profit group alleged opers and distributors. The company denied the allethis year that Apple was abusing

gations in a filing to the CCI last month, seen by Reuters, and asked the regulator to throw out the case, stressing that its market share in India was an "insignificant" 0-5%.

## DEC VEHICLE SALES REPORT Tata, M&M rise; MSI, Hyundai dip

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 1: Passenger vehicle market leaders Maruti Suzuki and Hyundai Saturday reported a decline in wholesales in December 2021, although homegrown majors Tata Motors and Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) reported growth, amid semiconductor shortage continuing to impact production.

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) reported a 4 per cent fall in wholesales to 1,53,149 units in December 2021 as against 1,60,226 units a year ago. Its December 2021 domestic sales slipped 13 per cent to 1,30,869 units as against 1,50,288 units in December 2020.

### Gainers Tata sees 50% growth in PV sales Mahindra total sales up 10%

The second-largest player Hyundai Motor India Ltd reported a drop of 26.6 per cent in the total wholesales to 48,933 units as against 66.750 units in December 2020. The company's domestic dispatches dropped 31.8 per cent to 32,312 units as against 47,400 units in the same month last year.

Contrary to the two top players, homegrown auto major Tata Motors reported a 50 per cent jump in total PV sales to 35,299 units in December 2021. It had sold a total of 23,545 units

Losers Maruti Suzuki sales plummet 4%

a year ago.

Another homegrown player Mahindra & Mahindra also reported a 10 per cent rise in its domestic PV sales at 17.722 units last month, against 16,182 units in December 2020.

Honda Cars India Ltd (HCIL) reported an eight per cent dip in its domestic sales at 7,973 units. It had dispatched 8,638 units in

the domestic market in

December 2020. The company, however, said its domestic wholesales in 2021 grew 26 per cent to 89,152 units as against 70.593 units in the January-December period in 2020.

Another carmaker MG Motor India also reported a 43 per cent increase in retail sales in 2021 at 40,273 units. It sold 28,162 units in 2020.



## From Memecoins to NFTs, 2021 was crypto's wildest year

Digital assets started the year with a stampede of cash from investors large and small. And bitcoin and its rivals were rarely out of the spotlight since, with the language of crypto becoming firmly entrenched in the investor lexicon

REUTERS

system.

Washington, Jan 1: Bitcoin close to \$70,000, memecoins worth billions of dollars, a blockbuster Wall Street listing and a sweeping Chinese crackdown 2021 was the wildest yet for cryptocurrencies, even by

the sector's volatile standards. Here is a look at some of the major trends that dominated cryptocurrencies this year.

### **Bitcoin still on top**

The original cryptocurrency held its crown as the biggest and most well-known token - though not without a host of challengers biting at its heels. Bitcoin soared over 120 per cent

from January 1 to a then-record of almost \$65,000 in mid-April. Fuelling it was a tsunami of cash from institutional investors, growing acceptance by major corporations such as Tesla Inc and Mastercard Inc and an increasing embrace by Wall Street banks.

Spurring investor interest was Bitcoin's purported inflation-proof qualities - it has a capped supply - as record-breaking stimulus packages fuelled rising prices. The promise of quick gains amid record-low interest rates, and easier access through fast-developing infrastructure, also

helped attract buyers. Emblematic of bitcoin's mainstream embrace was major US exchange Coinbase's \$86 billion list-



ing in April, the biggest yet of a cryptocurrency company.

### The rise of the memecoins

Even as bitcoin remained the go-to for investors dipping their toes into crypto, a panoply of new - some would say joke - tokens entered the sector.

"Memecoins" - a loose collection of coins ranging from dogecoin and shiba inu to squid game that have their roots in web culture - often

have little practical use

launched in 2013 as a bitcoin spinoff, soared over 12,000 per cent to an all-time high in May before slumping almost 80 per cent by mid-December. Shiba inu, which references the same breed of Japanese canine as dogecoin, briefly muscled its way into the 10 largest digital currencies

#### **Regulation: The (large) elephant** in the room

As money poured into crypto, regulators fretted over what they saw as its potential to enable money laundering and threaten global financial stability.

Long sceptical of crypto -Cryptocurrencies rebel techand NFTs' popularity nology inmay also be linked to a decline in social mobility. I don't see a situation where licensed financial institutions are actively and aggressively trading (these) digital assets in the next three years

dogs called JOHN EGAN | CEO, for more L'ATELIER powers over the sector, with

some warning consumers over volatility. With new rules looming, crypto markets were skittish to the possible risk of a clampdown. When Beijing placed curbs on crypto in May, bitcoin tanked almost 50 per cent, dragging the wider market down with it.

#### NFTs

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As memecoin trading went viral, another formerly obscure corner of the crypto complex also grabbed the limelight. Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) - strings of code stored on the blockchain digital ledger that represent unique ownership of artworks, videos or even tweets - exploded in 2021

In March, a digital artwork by US artist Beeple sold for nearly \$70 million at Christie's, among the three most expensive pieces by a living artist sold at auction. Sales in the third-quarter hit \$10.7 billion, up over eight-fold from the previous three months.

Soaring crypto prices that spawned a new cohort of cryptowealthy investors - as well as predictions for a future of online virtual worlds where NFTs take centre stage - helped fuel the boom.

Dogecoin,







## OrissaPOST SUNDAY | JANUARY 2 | 2022 | BHUBANESWA

# BUMRAH'S **ELEVATION** RAISES **EYEBROWS**

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 1: It was a decision that not many saw coming but once it did, Jasprit Bumrah's elevation as India's ODI vice-captain, albeit as a stop-gap arrange ment, seemed a perfectly justified reward for his terrific all-format consistency.

It won't be surprising if the Chetan Sharma-led selection panel felt inspired by Pat Cummins' recent elevation as Australia's captain while making this choice, a very interesting one considering that two proven IPL captains -Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant were in the mix to become KL Rahul's deputy for the bilateral series against South Africa.

If sources close to the selection committee are to be believed, Bumrah being elevated as vice-captain is a message to both Pant and Iver to show supreme all-format consistency, something that the Gujarat fast bowler has mastered ever since he burst into the international scene back in 2016.

"Look, this is just for one series as Rohit (out injured) is almost certain to come back during the home leg against West Indies and Sri Lanka. Then KL will again become the deputy," a BCCI source privy to selection matters told PTI on conditions of anonymity

"However, the selectors wanted to reward Jassi (Bumrah's nickname) for his consistency as well as cricket brain. That's why he was picked ahead of Pant and

#### Iyer," he said.

Former chairman of selectors MSK Prasad said that since this was vice-captaincy for just one series, it was an easy decision for selectors.

'Jasprit is a very sensible young man with a lot of rationality. So why not reward him? I like this decision as why can't we make a fast bowler captain, If he is doing well in all formats?" Prasad said, when asked how he viewed the decision.

"Unless you give him an opportunity to be a part of the leadership group, you won't know what to expect of Jasprit. But having said that, I would also say that possibly since it was a decision on vice-captaincy for one series, it was an easy call.

"Had it been for captaincy with both Rohit and Rahul unavailable, it could have been different," the former India keeper-batter added.

While Iyer guided Delhi Capitals to its maiden IPL final in 2020, Pant, who was his deputy, took over the reins in 2021 and lost in the second Qualifiers after finishing on top during the round robin stage.

According to Prasad, the IPL leadership is different from leading the national side and being successful in one isn't an indicator that the player will be successful in the other.

'In IPL, a team might have four to five guaranteed superstars with different drifts and pulls. Then

you need to manage at least a couple of domestic players, who may or may not withstand the pressures of franchisee cricket.

"In the Indian team, you have at least 12-13 top class talented fellows, who know their exact roles at the biggest stage. Captaining India is at times easier," Prasad said.

So why does he think that Pant and Iyer were overlooked even if it was for one series? "I think it's got a lot to do with the fact that Iver is now coming in after surgery and also Pant needs to be a bit more consistent in the white ball format," he pointed out.

"Also this my assumption that since till 2023, Rohit will remain the captain and KL will be his deputy, making Pant or Iyer vice-captain now means that you give them an idea that they are in leadership mix which might not be the case." he said.

THE SELECTORS WANTED **TO REWARD JASSI** (BUMRAH'S NICKNAME) FOR HIS CONSISTENCY AS WELL AS CRICKET BRAIN. THAT'S WHY HE WAS PICKED AHEAD OF **PANT AND IYER** 

SOURCE CLOSE TO SELECTION COMMITTEE

## Chetan Sharma backs Ruturaj to do wonders

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 1: Chief selector Chetan Sharma has heaped praise on in-form opener Ruturaj Gaikwad, who has been selected for the upcoming ODIs against South Africa, saving that the Maharashtra batter would "do wonders" for the national team

The Indian team is scheduled to play three one-day internationals against South Africa January 19, 21 and 23 at

Paarl and Cape Town respectively. The team for the same was picked Friday by the Sharmaled selection panel.

'Look, absolutely (he has) got the opportunity at the right time. He was in the T20 team and also now he is in the ODI team, wherever his place can be made, selectors are thinking he will go and do wonders for the country," Sharma said

at the team selection press conference.

The 24-year-old Ruturaj, who hails from Pune, was the leading scorer in the 2021 Indian Premier League, after he amassed a staggering 635 runs and played a key role in Chennai Super Kings winning the title.

According to Sharma, Ruturaj was rewarded for his stellar performance. "We have selected him (Ruturaj). Now it is up to the (team) management to see when he can play in the XI, when he is required and how to go about the combination, these things we will coordinate.

"But, at present, he (Ruturaj) was in the T20 side also against New Zealand and he is in ODI now. He is doing well and he is rewarded for that," added Sharma, himself a former India pacer. After his IPL high, the opener

continued his dazzling form in the Vijay Hazare Trophy too and was the leading scorer there, aggregating 603 runs from five matches with 168 as his highest score. He made his T20I debut against Sri Lanka last July at Colombo.

## Experience was the difference between India and SA: Amla

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Johannesburg, Jan 1: Legendary South Africa batter Hashim Amla says more "collective experience' in the Indian side was one of the key factors in the visiting side's comfortable victory in the seriesopener at Centurion.

"It was a fair result," said Amla in Cricket South Africa website. "They (India) have been a strong unit over the last two years or so. They have more experience collectively and it always makes a huge difference when you have runs on the board to back you up.'

South Africa did not have many experienced players in their ranks with only skipper Dean Elgar, Quinton de Kock, Kagiso Rabada and Lungi Ngidi having some decent exposure in traditional format while India had all top players in the line-up.

Amla said India's big lead in the first innings made all the difference in the outcome of the match. "Centurion is notorious for becoming more difficult to bat as the days progress. So once India won the toss, batted and scored in excess of 300 it was game on for the Protea batters to match that score at the very least," Amla said. "Being 130 runs behind is what really hurt them, and it ended up being the difference.

The 38-year-old praised the Indian batters for their top-class show on the first day of the Test. "Day one, the pitch looked best for batting and credit to the Indians for playing disciplined cricket," he said. "It's obvious when teams come to SA that their batsman talk about leaving well outside off stump and that's probably were the Proteas let themselves down."

Amla felt the South Africa bowlers fought back well after that tough opening day. He acknowledged there is work to do for the South Africans, although he still believes they can bounce back and defend their proud record of having never lost a home series to India.

The batting legend wants Temba Bavuma to bat higher in the order now that Quinton de Kock has retired from Test cricket. "Be it three or four, allow him time to play a so-lidifying role as opposed to a recovery one.'

The second Test will be played from January 3-7 at Wanderers in

## Rodri helps City extend lead -ATP Cup: Spain, Argentina sail on

ASSOCIATED PRESS Sydney, Jan 1: Argentina's Diego



AGENCIES

London, Jan 1: A stoppage-time goal from Rodri gave English



ur?

**BYJU'S** 

Schwartzman and Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut led their respective teams to comfortable victories Saturday on the opening day of the 16-team ATP Cup tournament.

Argentina beat Georgia 3-0, while Spain easily accounted for Chile by the same margin in the opening ties of the team-based tournament being played across two Sydney stadiums.

World No.13 Schwartzman defeated Georgia's Nikoloz Basilashvili 6-1, 6-2, after compatriot Federico Delbonis won by the same score against Aleksandre Metreveli to give Argentina an unassailable 2-0 lead from the singles matches.

Maximo Gonzalez and Andres Molteni then gave the Argentines a clean sweep defeating Georgian pair Saba Pertseladze and Zura Tkemaladze 6-1, 6-2 in the doubles tie to give Argentina a 3-0 win.

In the day's other tie, World No.20 Pablo Carreno Busta gave Spain an

Roberto Bautista Agut (L) and Diego Schwartzman in action during their respective matches of ATP Cup, Saturday

Even without Rafael Nadal, who's

preparation for the Australian

Open has been disrupted by a pos-

itive test for coronavirus, Spain

showed why they are among the fa-

vored teams at the tournament.

early lead as he rallied from being a break down in both sets to defeat Chile's Alejandro Tabilo 6-4, 7-6(7-4). Roberto Bautista Agut appeared in excellent form as he disposed of Chile's world No.17 Cristian Garin 6-0, 6-3 to seal the tie for Spain.

Barrios Vera and Tabilo.

"Todav was a good start for me. Alejandro Davidovich Fokina a very solid game, really happy. I and Pedro Martinez clinched a like these conditions," World No.19 clean sweep for Spain with a 7-6(7-Bautista Agut said. 3), 4-6, 10-7 win over Chile's Tomas

Serbia, which is without World No.1 Novak Djokovic, begins its tournament against Norway led by World No.8 Casper Ruud, later Saturday. Greece play Poland in the evening's other tie, which will see the tournament's first top-10 rubber with World No.4 Stefanos Tsitsipas facing 9th-ranked Hubert Hurkacz.

The other eight participating teams are Russia, France, Italy, Australia, Canada, The United States, Germany and Britain.

Premier League leaders Manchester City a 2-1 win at Arsenal on New Year's Day as the home side finished a thrilling encounter with 10 men following the sending-off of defender Gabriel.

Arsenal coach Mikel Arteta missed the game due to a positive COVID-19 test, but his side cast aside any lingering memories of their 0-5 thrashing at the hands of City in August as they pressed high up the pitch from the first whistle. The Gunners eventually took a

deserved lead in the 31st minute when Bukayo Saka finished a sweep ing move by rifling home Kieran Tierney's pass, and they closed out the first half without allowing City a single shot on target.

Seeking their 11th Premier League win in a row, City were not prepared to give up and they flipped the script in the second half to claw their way back into the game. The visitors levelled from the spot through

Rodri (bare body) celebrates Man City's winner with his teammates

Riyad Mahrez early in the second half when Granit Xhaka was adjudged to have fouled Bernardo Silva in the box after a VAR review.

Gabriel Martinelli missed a glorious chance to put Arsenal back in the lead moments later before Gabriel was sent off for his second yellow card, picked up for a foul on Gabriel Jesus.

Arsenal held their shape but they failed to deal with a high ball into the box in stoppage time and it fell to Rodri, who drilled it home to grab all three points with only their second effort on target in the game.

The win extends City's lead over Chelsea, who take on third-placed Liverpool Sunday, to 11 points, while Arsenal are fourth on 35 points.

## Sports in 2022: Here's what to look forward to

The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over but the world seems to be adapting to a life with the dreaded virus and as this churning continues, sports is set to be a major source of joy in 2022 with several big events lined up. Here is a look at some of the extravaganzas that will be keenly anticipated in India and across the world apart from the usual roster of annual tournaments like the tennis Grand Slams and the badminton calendar...

#### **CRICKET:**

India's tour of South Africa (December 26 to January 23): An engrossing Test series is currently underway in which India have made a winning start. The threematch rubber will be followed by as many ODIs.

ICC U-19 Men's ODI World Cup in the West Indies (January 15 to February 5): Yash Dhull would be leading the Indian Colts as they look to add a fifth title to the nation's kitty. A total of 16 teams will fight it out over 48 matches in the premier age group showpiece.

ICC Women's ODI World Cup in New Zealand (March 4 to



Raj, who would be aiming to leave the big stage with a bang after a stellar career

ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Australia (October 16 to November 13): Just a year after Australia were crowned World Champions for the first time in this format, they would be defending the crown on home turf.

#### **MULTISPORTS:**

Winter Olympics in Beijing, China (February 4-20): Mired in political controversies due to China's not so flattering human rights image, the Games have already been diplomatically boycotted by superpowers like the US and Britain among others. For India, who have never won a medal at the winter ex-

travaganza, skier Arif Khan would be the one to watch out for having become the first from the country to qualify in two events - Slalom and Giant Slalom.

**Commonwealth Games in** Birmingham, England (July 28 to August 8): A happy hunting

ground for Indian athletes, the CWG would be a shade less joyful BIRMINGHAM for the con-2022 tingent this time with commonwealth shooting not

part of the competition roster.

Asian Games in Hangzhou, China (September 10 to 25): India registered its best ever Games performance in the previous edition in 2018 and would be expected to only do better in the backdrop of a stellar Olympic performance.

#### **FOOTBALL:**

AFC Asian Women's Cup in India (January 20 to February 6): It would be a huge step forward for women's football as the country hosts the premier regional tournament for the first time since 1979. The Indians have decent history to inspire themselves as they have been runners-up twice in the

FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in India (October 11 to 30): Another ground-breaking tournament for women's football in

the country, which was originally planned for 2021 but had to be postponed due to COVID-19.

FIFA Men's World Cup in Qatar (November 21 to December 18): The first World Cup to be



#### **FIFA WORLD CUP** punish Qat\_ar2022 ing sum-

mer making it impossible for matches to be held during the usual June-July window.

IAAF World Championships in USA (July 15-24): Another marquee



competition that was postponed to this year because of the pandemic. Focus will be on Olympic gold-grabber Neeraj Chopra's javelin.

#### **HOCKEY:**



and The Netherlands (July 1-24): The Indian women's hockey team have raised the bar significantly with a gutsy fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics. Their best at a – World Cup was a fourth-place finish at the 1974 edition.







event, in 1979 and 1983.

ATHLETICS: