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BHUBANESWAR | SUNDAY, JANUARY 9 | 2022

SPORTS P12

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ODM GLOBAL

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Redeveloped rly stations to attract charges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: Long-distance train travel is likely to be costlier for passengers boarding or alighting at redeveloped stations as the Indian Railways is planning to levy a station development fee ranging from ₹10 to ₹50 depending on the class of travel.

Officials said the fee is likely to



be added to the train tickets during booking. The fee will be levied only after such stations become opera-

The user fee would be in three categories. ₹ 50 for all AC classes, ₹25 for sleeper class and ₹10 for the unreserved class. No station development fee will be charged for suburban train journeys, according to a circular issued by the Railway Board.

It stated that platform tickets at these stations will also be costlier

"Station Development Fee (SDF) shall be collected from the passengers (boarding as well as alighting at such stations). "Class-wise SDF for devel-

oped/redeveloped stations shall be charged as under: For alighting passengers at such stations, the SDF shall be 50 per cent of the rates indicated above. If both boarding/alighting such stations, in that case, SDF shall be 1.5 times of the applicable rate, the circular stated.

SDF shall be uniform across all such stations and shall be charged as a separate component plus applicable GST, for which instructions shall be issued separately, it

Officials said that the levying of SDF will ensure a continuous revenue stream for the Railways and will make the model financially viable for the national transporter to lure private players

INCENTIVES FOR ANGANWADI WORKERS HIKED

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday announced hike in one-time incentive of the Anganwadi workers from ₹20,000 to ₹40,000. Similarly, the incentive for Mini Anganwadi workers has been enhanced to ₹30,000 from ₹15,000. The incentive of Anganwadi helpers has been increased from₹10,000 to ₹20,000. The enhancement will be affective retrospectively from January 2019. As many as 1,991 Anganwadi Workers, Mini Anganwadi workers and Anganwadi helpers will be benefited by this move. The Chief Minister also announced a special package for 50,000 community mobilisers under Mission Shakti programme. Patnaik announced ₹1,000 as annual dress code assistance for all communality mobilises including master book keepers.



GLOBAL FOOD PRICES UP 28.1%

Geneva: Although global food prices decreased slightly in December 2021 month-on-month, they were much higher throughout last year than in 2020, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Abdolreza Abbassian, senior economist of the UN agency, told a press briefing here Friday that in 2021, the FAO Food Price Index was 28.1% higher than in 2020, reports xinhua news agency. Global cereal prices were at their highest level since 2012, on average 27.2% above 2020 prices, he said. In 2021, vegetable oil prices increased by 65.8 per cent over 2020; sugar prices soared to their highest level since 2016 and meat prices were 12.7% above 2020 prices. P11

Election

voters that

all necessar

steps are

being taken

to ensure

Covid safe

elections

40 SEATS

February 14



1800 266 266 1 (toll free)

EC RESTRICTS THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE FOR DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGNS TO 5

Rallies banned; polls from Feb 10

■The Election Commission announces the schedule for *Assembly elections in UP,* Punjab, Uttarakhand, Manipur & Goa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa will be held between February 10 and March 7 in seven phases with counting of votes March 10, the Election Commission (EC) announced Saturday, and banned physical rallies and roadshows till January 15 due to Covid concerns.

The elections have huge political significance with BJP ruling four of these five states, while it is making a big push to capture Congressruled Punjab, where the Aam Aadmi Party is also emerging as an important player.

Announcing the schedule with a strong focus on digital and virtual modes of campaigning, Chief **Election Commissioner Sushil** Chandra said the ban on rallies. roadshows, nukkad sabhas, padayatras and vehicle rallies will



403 SEATS 7 phases Feb 10 to March 7

117 SEATS be reviewed January 15. Asked about experts predicting the third wave of the Covid pandemic to peak in February, when voting for

PUNJAB

is very dynamic and nobody can predict Covid numbers of future date. He also assured voters that all necessary steps are being taken

five of the seven phases of the polls

will take place, he said the situation

to ensure 'Covid safe' elections and said they should come out in large numbers to exercise their franchise as polling booths will be sanitised and polling officers vaccinated.

February 14

In all, elections will be held for 690 Assembly seats, and 18.3 crore people, including 8.5 crore women, will be eligible to cast their votes in the five states.

60 SEATS

2 phases

Feb 27 and March 3

In the politically important Uttar Pradesh, voting will start from the western region and move towards the east over seven phases. Elections will be held in 403 Assembly seats in the state in the seven phases from February 10 to March 7.

For Manipur's 60 Assembly constituencies, elections will held in two phases February 27 and March 3, while polling in Goa (40 seats), Punjab (117 seats) and Uttarakhand (70 seats) will be held on February 14. The Model Code of Conduct has come into effect in the five states with the announcement of the elections.

"The commission will not hesitate to bar parties from further rallies if Covid protocol is not followed," Chandra said.

The EC has restricted the number of people for door-to-door campaigns to five and has asked political parties to provide masks, hand sanitisers to people attending rallies, if they are allowed, Chandra said. The poll panel has also banned victory celebrations and only two persons will be allowed to accompany a candidate to collect the winning certificate.

The EC said that it has asked chief secretaries of the poll-bound states to expedite the vaccination drive. The EC has also doubled the air time on Doordarshan for political parties, he said.

Chandra said parties and candidates have been advised to conduct their campaigns on virtual and digital modes as much as possible.

14 new Omicron cases in Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: Fourteen fresh Omicron cases were detected in Odisha Saturday, taking the state's tally to 75, a health official

Eight new Omicron patients have travel history, while four are local cases, and the travel history of two others are yet to be ascertained, he said. Institute of Life Sciences (ILS), Bhubaneswar, the only facility in the state where genome sequencing is conducted, has informed the Health department about the development.

Five Omicron patients have recovered from the disease so far, while a 45-year-old patient has died in Bolangir district. Odisha had first reported Omicron cases December 21 last year.

Director of Health Service Bijay Mohapatra said that the Omicron variant has been detected in all

the districts of the state. 30 students of XIMB +ve

The BMC Saturday declared a hostel (Studio) at the Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar (XIMB) as Containment Zone after 30 students tested positive for Covid-19. The infectees have been kept under isolation at the hostel and necessary medical assistance is being

provided by the BMC. The civic

body has also initiated contact trac-

ing of the infected students.

State ready for panchayat polls

the state govt officials to ensure safe conduct of rural polls in view of raging Covid POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: After completing the exercises like reservation of seats, the state government has shown its readiness to go for the three-tier panchayat elections.

The Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department has issued three call upon notifications for the polls.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) and (2) of Section 12 of the Odisha Grama Panchayat Act, 1964 (Odisha Act 1 of 1965), read with rule 13 of the Odisha Grama Panchayat Election Rules, 1965, the State Government do hereby call upon all the Grama Panchayats of the State to elect

Sarpanches in accordance with the provisions of the aforesaid Act and the rules made thereunder except Dhinkia Grama Panchavat under Erasama Block of Jagatsinghpur district," read a notification issued for the elections.

The state government Saturday released the final list of reservations for ZP chairperson posts in the 30 districts for the upcoming three-tier panchayat elections.

As per a notification issued by the Panchayati Raj department, 12 seats have been reserved for SC and ST categories - 7 for ST and 5 for SC candidates.

The government has reserved the ZP chief post in Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Boudh and Bhadrak districts for SCs while STs would head the ZPs in

While 12 seats have been reserved for SC& ST categories, 50% of the ZP chief posts have been reserved for women

Kandhamal, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Mayurbhanj, Malkangiri, Rayagada and Sundargarh districts.

Similarly, ZP chief posts of 18 other districts have been put under unreserved category.

Moreover, 50 per cent of the ZP chief posts have been reserved for women. The districts are— Kandhamal, Kendrapara, Koraput, Khurda, Ganjam, Jharsuguda, Dhenkanal, Nuapada, Puri, Bolangir, Boudh, Malkangiri, Jajpur, Rayagada and Sambalpur.



Commuters wade through a waterlogged Heritage street following heavy downpour near the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Saturday

Public has been waiting for hours to listen to you, sir. But the security arrangements are not good enough

WEATHER

3rd wave peak likely between Feb 1 & 15 ■ *The IIT-Madras analysis* THE R-NAUGHT VALUE WHICH shows that as compared to **WAS CLOSE TO 2.9 NATIONALLY** previous waves, there will be IN THE PAST WEEK HAS REACHED 4 THIS WEEK a sharper increase to the peak this time AGENCIES New Delhi, Jan 8: India's R-naught

value which indicates the spread of Covid-19 was recorded at 4 this week, suggesting a very high transmission rate of the virus, as per a preliminary analysis by IIT-Madras predicting the peak of the third wave between February 1 and 15. R-naught or R0 indicates the

number of people an infected person can spread the disease to. A pandemic is considered to end if this value goes below 1.

Based on preliminary analysis by computational modelling done by IIT-Madras which was shared with PTI, the R0 value was close to 2.9 nationally in the past week (December 25 to December 31). The number was 4 this week (January



Explaining further, the IIT's Mathematics department assistant professor Jayant Jha said R0 depends on three things -- transmissibility probability, contact rate and the expected time interval in which infection can happen.

"Now, with the increase in quarantine measures or restrictions,

maybe the contact rate will go down and then in that case R0 can decrease. So, based on our preliminary analysis, which is just based on the last two weeks, we can tell these numbers, but again, these numbers can change based

on how much affirmative action is

taken with respect to social gath-

ering and all," he said.

The Union Health Ministry Wednesday said India is seeing an exponential rise in the number of coronavirus cases, which is believed to be driven by the Omicron variant. It also highlighted that the country's R naught value is 2.69, higher than the 1.69 recorded during the peak of the pandemic's second wave.

Jha said the ministry's estimates are based on a different time interval than IIT-Madras which has done the preliminary analysis from the past two weeks.

He further said that as per their estimate, the peak in the current wave is expected to come between February 1 and 15 and it is expected to be sharper than earlier

"What we expect from the exploratory data analysis is that the peak will happen somewhere between February 1-15 and our analysis also shows that as compared to previous waves, there will be a sharper increase to the peak," Mr Jha said.

Saudi Princess, jailed without charge, freed

AGENCIES

Riyadh, Jan 8: Saudi authorities have released a princess and her daughter who had been held without charge for nearly three years in the capital, a human rights group said Saturday.

Basma bint Saud, 57, a royal family member long seen as a proponent of women's rights and a constitutional monarchy, has been detained since March 2019, and in April 2020 implored King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to release her on health grounds. "Basma bint Saud Al Saud and her daughter Suhoud... have been released," the ALQST for Human Rights said on Twitter. "She was denied the medical care she needed for a potentially life threatening condition," the rights group added. "At no point during her detention has any

charge been levelled against her." Princess Basmah was arrested



shortly before a planned trip to Switzerland for medical treatment, according to a source close to the family. The nature of her illness has never been disclosed.

Prince Mohammed has overseen a reform drive since he was appointed by his father King Salman in June 2017 at the expense of the previous designated heir to the throne, Mohammed bin Nayef.

In November 2017, an anti-corruption campaign saw Riyadh's luxury Ritz-Carlton hotel serve for three months as a de facto detention centre for dozens of princes andsenior officials suspected of graft or disloyalty.



eisure



GRAHAM URGES FANS TO FEEL BEAUTIFUL IN THEIR OWN SKIN

Model Ashley Graham - who has Isaac, 23 given birth to twins - has slammed society's version of beauty and urges fans to feel beautiful in their own skin.

KRISTEN STEWART HAS CHOSEN WEDDING OUTFIT

Spencer actress Kristen Stewart got engaged to girlfriend Dylan Meyer in November after two years together. Although she is unsure how many traditions they will follow on their big day, she's already chosen her clothes but wants to keep the details a surprise.





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

TAURUS

You need to be very and practical and realistic in all that you do today, urges Ganesha. You are known to be pretty emotional and sensitive and generally go by your feelings. Your mind, your reason do not normally feature in you decision making. Even minor problems, complica tions get you worked up.

GEMINI

If you are into retail business, planetary positions indicate today is a day for bumper sales. You will set records in making profits. After work, you may want to take your beloved out shopping.

CANCER

Ganesha advises you to watch your back today. However, he wants to make it clear that you may be at the receiving end of others' actions. Anyway, your cautious and watchful approach will save you from needless discomfiture

The bourgeoisie feasted on cake, while the masses starved for want of a mere loaf of bread. Ganesha foresees something similar for you today, as you show the propensity to indulge in unwanted expenses. Whether it is impulsive decisions or compulsive buying, they shall not serve as an excuse on a later date when the milk is already spilt.

■ VIRGO

You will be cool as a cucumber today. Nothing that happens will unsettle that composure, says Ganesha. Your loved ones will stand tall and strong behind you, and inspire you to overcome obstacles. Your work will reflect dedication, says Ganesha.

Sit back and think hard you really want when it comes to your business enterprises things at work, and they all shall lead vour somewhere different. The stars favour you today with a golden touch, so take it in your stride and make hay while the sun shines. Learn to take charge and take initiatives, says Ganesha.

SCORPIO

While not the Trot, you shall, however, trot on the lines of radicalism today, predicts Ganesha. Learn to think as you would, and always have, but act as others would have you to, advises Ganesha. Be the maverick that you are only with those

SAGITTARIUS

Your friend base is slated to multiply today. At work, additional responsibilities will be thrust upon you, and you will also be given charge of new resources. Ganesha predicts you taking up the challenge and emerging triumphant in all spheres today.

CAPRICORN

Overcome with feelings, you may take decisions that may stand in the way of success. Don't let vour sentiments ruin your future prospects because the damage done will be beyond repair, warns Ganesha. Today, there are also chances that your down-to-earth nature and amiable approach will win the hearts of many.

AQUARIUS

You will come out top in whatever you choose to do, and success will smell honeysuckle sweet! Naturally, recognition and rewards await you. Take your friends to that trendy café; you needn't wait for a reason to party, says Ganesha.

PISCES

Major expenses are coming your way, but the good news is a lot of them can be avoid ed simply by drawing a line between your needs and your wants. Exercising a little restraint now will go a long way in boosting your savings later on, says Ganesha.



months with husband Justin Ervin and has just

Swara slams trolls wishing her death

> Mumbai: Actress Swara Bhasker, who tested Covid Friday, has clapped

Pak actress Saba excited over her show on Indian OTT

Mumbai: Pakistani actress Saba Qamar who is known for appearing in Hindi film Hindi Medium alongside the late Irrfan Khan, will soon be seen in an upcoming Zindagi original show Mrs & Mr Shameem.

As the show releases on ZEE5, the actress is quite excited and looking forward to connecting with the Indian audience through the show.

Zindagi originals announced three new shows that will be released this vear on ZEE5. Out of the three shows. one untitled show features Fawad Khan, another favourite of the Indian audiences, post his fame for Kapoor & Sons and Ae Dil Hai Mushkil.

Saba Qamar is part of a show titled Mrs & Mr Shameem.

Saba, who is playing the female protagonist in the film, said, "Mrs and Mr Shameem is a contemporary story that questions the stereotypical gender roles defined by society. The subject of this show is very different from what we normally see on our screens and I am so excited to be a part of this trailblazing Zindagi series.' IANS



She wrote: "Hello Covid! Just got my RT-PCR test resulted and have tested positive. Been isolating & in quarantine. Symptoms include fever, a splitting headache and loss of taste. Double vaccinated so hope this passes soon. Stay

safe everyone.'

The actress later shared a screenshot of her name trending on Twitter, where several users wrote 'Rest In Hell' with a picture of

Clapping back at her haters, Swara wrote: "And to my dear Nafrati Chintus and trolls praying for my demise.. doston apni bhaavnaaein kaabooo mein rakho. mujhey kuch ho gaya toh aapki rozi roti chhin jaaegi.. ghar kaisey chalega (Friends keep your feelings in control� If something happens to me, how would you run your household?)."



A show underway to pay tribute to Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra on his 96th birth anniversary at Utkal Rangamanch, Bhubaneswar

Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra remembered on birth anniv

Bhubaneswar: Premier dance school Srjan in collaboration with Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra Odissi Research Centre Saturday organised Antardrishti, a cultural event, here at Utkal Rangamanch, to pay homage to Odissi legend Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra on his 96th birth anniversary.

Srjan ensemble presented a bouquet of mesmerising choreographies especially designed by Guru Ratikant Mohapatra. Students of Srjan performed 'Bho Sambho' a prayer to Lord Shiva, penned by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, with an exploration of the multifarious facets of

formed the second piece titled Meepa which is inspired by sinuous dance movements and explores the sheer joy of dancing without being bound by the strictness of grammar.

The second half of the evening presented a musical presentation by Jabahar Mishra and Sandeep Kumar Raut with tabla accompaniment by Subhransu Sekhar Sahoo. The recital commenced with Raga Gorarakha Kalyan set to Mata Tala and Dhrut Teen Taal. The second presentation was the popular Bhajan Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram set to Raga Mishra Pilu and Tala Dipchandi and Kaharva. The musicians created a magical spell and left the audience spellbound right through the show.

Vicky urges Aanand Rai to cast him in his next

Mumbai: Actor

FUN

POST

Vicky Kaushal, whose wedding with Katrina Kaif was the centre of attention recently, has made a public appeal to Aanand L Rai to cast him in his next venture.

Vicky took to his Instagram story and posted the poster of Rai's recent directorial, Atrangi Re starring Sara Ali Khan, Dhanush and Akshay Kumar. Mightily impressed with the film, the Masaan actor wrote on the picture, "Kitni pyaari Film hai... mazaa aa gaya! @saraalikhan95 such a difficult role to play and how wonderfully

CROSSWORD

dered yourself to

Lord. Srjan students

also per-

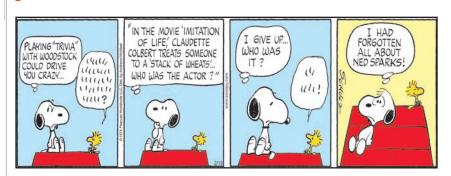
absolutely genius. @akshaykumar Garda uda diye! @aanandlrai Cast me in your next Film Sir, please!

Atrangi Re took the direct-to-digital route as it released to a positive response on Disnev+ Hotstar. As for Vicky, the

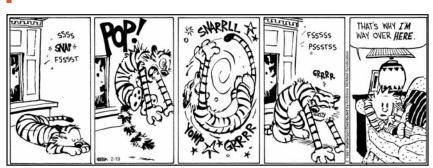
actor will have three releases this year including Govinda Naam Mera, The Great Indian Family and Mimi director Laxman untitled film. IANS



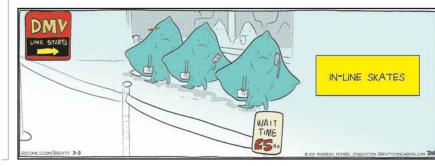
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES

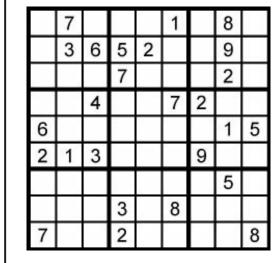


BREVITY



SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

EXCITERAMBLE CROSSWOR INFULLSWING

2 6 3 8 7 4 8 5 8 3 5 4 3 7 5 1 8 7 6 3 5 9 2 1

9 1 4 5 2 6

SUDOKU

6 2 1 9 4 7 9 2 8 4

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

apparel (3,4)

23

4 Lash

6 Rivulet

12 Disability

vegetables

14 Speech

18 Ending

19 Mineral

21 Former

16 Leafy

5 Scalp condition

Copyright ©2022 PuzzleJunction.com

20 Deposit

22 Anxious

23 Receive

1 Tune

2 Savoir faire

3 Skin divers

21 Attic

Down

Across

7 Treat

13 Mesh

15 Suffering

17 Concede

8 Shred (4,2)

9 Something of

little value

10 Substitutes (5-3)

11 Serious infection



downtown



HOMEWARD JOURNEY

Orissa POST	Soo is the state of the state o	HOMEWARD JOURNEY	***	CO	/ID-19 '	TRACK	ER
SUNDAY JANUARY 9 2022 BHUBANESWAR		Girls leave Ravenshaw University hostels in Cuttack, Saturday, as the state government has		World	INFECTED 30,40,82,711	RECOVERED 25,84,54,434	DEAD 54,99,515
downtown		announced closure of all colleges and varsities from January 10		India	3,53,68,372	3,44,12,740	4,83,463
a o vvi i co vvi i	4 1	in the wake of the recent surge in Covid cases	688 m	Odisha	10,66,155	10,46,231	8,468

12-fold jump in state's daily cases since Jan 1 50% fall in passenger

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: Odisha registered 3,679 fresh Covid-19 cases, a 36-per cent rise over the previous day and the biggest single-day spike in more than six months. the state Health department said Saturday. The coastal state's coronavirus tally stood at 10.66 lakh.

The daily test positivity rate (TPR) rose to 5.15 per cent from 3.92 per cent Friday, it said, adding that the new infections include 384 children.

STATS **SO FAR**

- Saturday saw 3,679 fresh cases, a 36-per cent rise over Friday and the biggest single-day spike since June 18
- TPR rose to 5.15 per cent from 3.92 per cent Friday
- Khurda district reported onethird of the fresh cases with 1,223 infections
- Odisha now has 11.663 active cases, a steep climb from 8,237 a day earlier

The state's death toll remained at 8.468 as no fresh fatality was reported in the past 24 hours. Fifty three other Covid patients have died due to comorbidities so far, Health officials said



COUNTER-MEASURES

Puri administration has imposed restrictions on cremation of bodies from outside the district at the Swargadwara from w.e.f January 10

Friday, the SJTA announced that the Srimandir will remain closed for devotees from January

Orissa HC will go virtual from January 10. subordinate courts and tribunals to run with 50 per cent staff on rotation till February 4

Khurda district, of which state Capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported one-third of the fresh cases with 1,223 infections, followed by 582 in Sundargarh, 372 in Sambalpur, 310 in Cuttack, 134 in Jharsuguda and 100 in Puri, the Health department said in a bulletin.

Single-day cases in the state jumped more than 12-fold from 298 infections January 1 and nearly doubled in just two days from 1,897

Thursday.

Odisha now has 11,663 active cases, a steep climb from 8.237 a day earlier, while 10.46 lakh patients have recovered from the disease thus far, the bulletin said. A total of 71,432 samples have been tested for Covid-19 since Friday, it added.

As many as 3,01,00,599 people have taken the first dose of Covid vaccine in the state, where as more than 2.18 crore beneficiaries have

22 more containment zones in Capital city

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Saturday deployed 22 more containment zones in the state Capital, keeping in view the Covid boom in those areas. Among the 22 containment zones, four are from north zone while 18 are from south-eastern Bhubaneswar. The addition of these 22 zones swiftly took the total containment zone tally to 41, it was learnt.

been fully inoculated.

Meanwhile, the district administration of Puri has imposed restrictions on cremation of bodies from outside the district at the Swargadwara here. The order will be effective from January 10. Puri Collector Samarth Verma told media.

Earlier Friday, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) announced that the 12th century shrine will remain closed for devotees from January 10 till January 31 in view of the surge in

Orissa HC to function virtually from Jan 10

High Court will function in the virtual mode from January 10 as coronavirus cases continue to spiral in the state. The High Court, subordinate courts and tribunals will function with 50 per cent staff on a rotation basis on each working day till February 4 in accordance with the latest guidelines issued by the Odisha government. In an order issued Friday, the judicial registrar said that all the benches of the High Court will function only through video conferencing during the period due to the increase in Covid cases and its Omicron variant. Except for the officers and staff of the High Court, there will be restrictions for others on the entry into the campus. However, in a case where there is a specific direction of any bench, an advocate may come for removal of errors or shortcomings in the legal documents after informing the deputy registrar, it said. The offices will function with 50 per cent strength. except officers in the rank of assistant registrar and above, it added. For lower courts, another order directed the district and sessions judges, and the presiding officers of the tribunals to strictly follow the guidelines regarding physical attendance.

traffic at City airport



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: The Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) in the Capital city witnessed a 50 per cent decline in passenger traffic compared to last week following a surge in Covid-19 pandemic.

According to sources, around 12,000 passengers travelled from BPIA in the previous week. Their number declined to 7,000-8,000 in the current week in view of the alarming rise in Covid-19 cases in state.

Meanwhile, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has directed the airport authorities to conduct random RT-PCR tests of passengers arriving at the airport. "All the necessary Covid-19 guidelines are strictly in place at the BMC, the concerned officials are carrying out random RT-PCR tests of passengers who do not carry RT-PCR reports conducted 72 hours prior to the boarding of the flight," said BPIA Director Pravat Ranjan

"The passengers found to be symptomatic during screening are being immediately isolated and taken to a medical facility of the BMC. De-boarding is being also done after ensuring physical distancing," added Beuria.

According to reports, travelers destined to Bhubaneswar are now required to isolate at home following the RT-PCR test till the result is communicated to them by BMC. Those found positive will be required to follow usual Covid protocols announced by the state gov-

RUSH AT SRIMANDIR



Hundreds of devotees throng Srimandir, Saturday, as the authorities decided to close the shrine for people from January 10 to 31 due to the recent surge in Covid cases in Odisha

PLANETARY PARADOX

Google climate change, see fossil fuel ads

Google is letting groups with

the resources people receive

JAKE CARBONE | SENIOR DATA ANALYST,

searches for "net zero".

INFLUENCEMAP

report said.

when they are trying to educate

vested interests in the continued

use of fossil fuels pay to influence

in total -- appeared on 86 per cent of

a net zero company by 2050 and align it-

self with a 1.5°C warming target, the

An ad from Shell says it's "a willing

and able player in the energy transi-

tion". Another ad from BP says it is

"building and advocating for more re-

"Net zero" has become a popular goal

newable capacity & infrastructure."

Many promoted its pledge to become



ig fossil fuel firms and their allies are top spenders on Google ads, and 1 in 4 ads on Google search results for 78 climate-related terms are placed by companies with interests in fossil fuels, new research has revealed.

Of more than 1,600 ads, over one in five were from companies "with significant interests in fossil fuels," according to an analysis by The Guardian and climate think tank InfluenceMap.

The top 20 advertisers included fossil fuel giants ExxonMobil, Shell and Aramco. Consulting firm McKinsey and investment firm Goldman Sachs, which have been criticised for working with fossil fuel companies, were also big spenders.

"Google is letting groups with vested interests in the continued use of fossil fuels pay to influence the resources people receive when they are trying to educate themselves," InfluenceMap senior data analyst Jake Carbone told The

Guardian. Oil major Shell's ads - 153 were counted

- Oil major Shell's ads 153 were counted in total - appeared on 86 per cent of searches for "net zero"
- and able player in the energy transition", while another ad from BP says it is "building and advocating for more renewable capacity & infrastructure"
- Aramco had 114 ads on the keywords "carbon storage", "carbon capture" and "energy transition"

■ An ad from Shell says it's - "a willing

State-owned Saudi oil company

for companies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions they produce by burning fossil fuels. BP and Shell have set goals to reach net zero by 2050.

"Shell's target is to become a net zero emissions energy business by 2050, in step with society. Our short, medium and long-term intensity and absolute targets are consistent with the more ambitious 1.5°C goal of the Paris agreement," a company spokesperson was quoted as saying. In a statement to The Verge, Google reiterated its policy banning ads that feature climate denial. The company also said that it adequately labels its ads.

State-owned Saudi oil company Aramco had 114 ads on the keywords "carbon storage", "carbon capture" and "energy

According to the report, a number of their ads claimed the companies "promoted biodiversity" and "protected the planet".

Rare scorpiontailed spider spotted in City

POST NEWS NETWORK Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: A

rare Yellow Scorpion-Tailed (Arachnura Spider Melanura Simon 1867) was spotted and photographed by Department Biotechnology, NIIS Group of Institutions, here recently



The surprising aspect of spotting such a creature is that the creature has not been reported in the Eastern Ghats of India, unlike its diversity observed in the Western Ghats by many scientific studies (Rajeevan et al. 2019; Sen and Sureshan, 2020). The species was first reported in India in 1970s in Sikkim. Later in 2011, a female spider was reported in Satara district of Maharashtra. Arachnura species are of

different colour like red and yellow, and their abdomen looks like a scorpion tail. They curl up the tail when disturbed, but are completely harmless. These species are mostly seen across Australasia, Southern and Eastern Asian regions with some species scattered in Africa.

Kotia dispute: Odisha files original suit against AP in SC⁺ and deliberately violated the prohibiting and restraining

New Delhi, Jan 8: The Odisha government has filed an original suit in the Supreme Court against Andhra Pradesh over the border dispute related to the villages in Kotia Gram Panchayat. In the suit filed through ad-

vocate Sibo Sankar Mishra, the Odisha government has pleaded the apex court to declare the villages in Kotia as a part and parcel of Odisha. It also prayed before the court to declare that Odisha has the absolute right to possess and administer those areas.

At the same time, the Odisha government has pleaded before the apex court to restrain Andhra Pradesh from anv act of intrusion or trespass in the villages in Kotia Gram Panchayat in future.

"Pass a decree of injunction.

Andhra Pradesh, its servants and agents, from intruding or committing acts of trespass or in any way interfering, in future, with the possession and administration of Odisha over the 'Disputed Area' or any part thereof," Odisha prayed in the original suit.

Significantly, original suits are being filed in the Supreme Court under Article 131 of the Constitution to resolve any dispute between states or between a state and the Centre.

Earlier, Odisha had filed a contempt petition against Andhra Pradesh over the Kotia dispute alleging that the latter had violated the 2006 judgment reached in the apex court on the issue. The contempt petition is pending before the apex court. In the contempt petition, Odisha had stated that Andhra Pradesh willfully

Supreme Court order dated December 2, 1968 and judgment dated March 30, 2006 by transgressing into Odisha's territory.

The apex court in its order of 1968 and its 2006 judgment had asked the both states to maintain status quo on the boundary dispute with regard to the villages in Kotia Gram Panchavat with the consent of both states. However, Odisha contended that Andhra Pradesh has been attempting to encroach upon the disputed villages and even conducted local body election there.

that Andhra Pradesh changed the name of the three villages of Kotia Gram Panchavat, The name of Ganjaipadar was changed to Ganjaibadra, Phattusenary to Pattuchennum and Phagusenary to Phaguluchennuru.

The state has also contended

सेन्ट्रल बेंक ऑफ़ इंडिया Central Bank of India

REGIONAL OFFICE, BHUBANESWAR: 108 - B, Unit-VII, Surya Nagar, Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar-751003, Ph. No.: 0674-2397551, 2397199

INVITING TENDERS FOR SALE OF BANK'S CASH VANS

Central Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Regional office invites offers from interested parties, individuals to purchase the Bank's Cash Vans details are mentioned below, on "As is where is basis' An application fee of Rupees 1000/- per vehicle for general public by means of Demand Draft (DD) or pay order in favour of Central Bank of India payable at Bhubaneswar must be submitted along with the bid. The forms & details can be downloaded from Bank's website www.centralbankofindia.co.in under tender section. The details of Cash vans proposed for Sale as follows:

SI No.	Registration No.	Make and Model	Reserve Price below which bid will not be accepted (EXCLUDING GST) (In Rs.)	Parked At / Date & Time of Inspection of vehicle
1	OR02 AZ-6244	Tata 207, Diesel	₹ 30,000/- (Without RC) ₹ 35,000/- (With RC)	Central Bank of India, Jatni Branch / (Any working day upto 29th Jan 2022 between 10.00 AM to 3.30 PM)
2	OR05 AG-1657	Tata 207, Diesel	₹ 1,50,000/-	Central Bank of India, Mahatab Road Branch, Cuttack / (Any working day upto 29th Jan 2022 between 10.00 AM to 3.30 PM)

Earnest Money Deposit of Rupees 10000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only) per vehicle for General Public and Rupees 5000/- (Rupees Five Thousand Only) for Staff and Ex-staff of the Bank shall be paid along with the offer for each vehicle separately. A separate bid must be submitted for each vehicle in which the bidder is interested and an envelope that must be super scribed as "For Purchase Of Cash Van Registration No.". The Last Date of Submission of offer: 31st Jan 2022 upto 3.00 PM & application will be opened on 01st Feb 2022 at 3.30 PM

Date: 07.01.2022 Sd/- Chief Manager

Bank of India

SAS

Sundargarh, PIN-770019

Borrowe

Bank of India Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Sastri Nagar Branch 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 a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrowers 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 and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property 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 in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India, Sastri Nagar Branch 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.

TRI NAGAR BRANCH / ame & Address of Borrowers ers: 1) Mr. Bibhuti Bhusan			Liabilities due	Date of Demand		
				Notice/ Date of Possession		
				27.07,2017		
S/o: Ramesh	Ch.	Naik,	+ interest & expenses thereon	04.01.2022		
Momita Naik	D/α	Rinod	exhenses mereon	04.01.2022		

Immovable Property All that part and parcel of the property situated over Duplex

Description of the

No.: D-12, Banadurga Enclave, Plot No.: 583, Sub Plot No.: 12 in Khata No.: 162, Area: Ac.0.041.32Dec., Kissam: Ch. Naik, Both are At/P.O.: Gharabari, at Mouza: Nijagarh Kuruki, within SRO: Pipili, P.S.: Pipili, Tahasil: Pipili, Dist.: Puri, Kinjirama, P.S.: Bhasma, Dist.: Odisha, Bounded by North: Sub Plot-11, South: Road, East: Road left by Vendor, West:

Authorised Officer, Bank of India

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 09.01.2022

SUNDARPADA MURDER CASE

3 accused taken on 5-day remand

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: The Commissionerate Police Saturday took three accused, involved in the brutal killing of Deepak Kumar Routray alias Deepu during the wee hours of January 1, on five-day remand for further enquiry into the incident.

The Airfield Police took the accused individuals under custody from the special jail at Jharpada Saturday morning after the court of the Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate (SDJM) granted permission in this connection Friday.

The alleged killers Bicky Mallia and Sujit Panda had surrendered themselves to the police Wednesday, while Gunu Mallia BICKY ALONG WITH OTHER
ACCUSED HAD ENGAGED IN A
VERBAL SPAT OVER THE SITE
FOR A YEAREND FEAST NEAR
HAJA POKHARI LAST FRIDAY
EVENING

ATER, THE ACCUSED INDIVIDUALS BRUTALLY ASSAULTED ROUTRAY, WHO WAS SLEEPING AT THE CLUB NEAR THE VILLAGE POND, WITH SHARP WEAPONS, LEAVING HIM IN A POOL OF BLOOD

ROUT WAS RUSHED TO THE CAPITAL HOSPITAL WHERE HE SUCCUMBED TO THE INJURIES

had surrendered before the SDJM court here Thursday.

Police will further interrogate the accused individuals to unearth the

detailed account that led to the murder of Deepu on the fateful night. Cops will also try to know if any other person was involved in the crime.

the crime.
Police may also recreate the crime scene with the accused at the murder spot.

Notably, Bicky along with other accused had engaged in a verbal spat over the site for a yearend feast near Haja Pokhari last Friday evening.

Later, the accused individuals came back to the spot and brutally assaulted Routray, who was sleeping at the club near the village pond, with sharp weapons, leaving him in a pool of blood. Rout was rushed to the Capital Hospital where he succumbed to the injuries.



Prepaid auto service

Police Commissioner Saumendra Priyadarshi distributes identity cards among auto-rickshaw drivers after re-launching the prepaid auto service at Cuttack railway station, Saturday. Cuttack DCP Prateek Singh and Traffic DCP S Susree are also seen

OP PHOT

CM raises financial incentive for Mission Shakti groups

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Jan 8: Ahead of the panchayat polls, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday announced a special package for 50,000 community mobilisers under the Mission Shakti programme.

Patnaik announced `1,000 dress code assistance per year for all communality mobilizes, including master book keeper; Bank Mitra, Krushi Mitra, Prani Mitra, community resource person and others. Identity cards will be provided to all such person.

In addition, the Chief Minister has announced a financial assistance of ₹5,000 to such persons for buying smartphone, while the

Community Resource Person – Community Mobiliser will get a remuneration of ₹3,000 per month and ₹350 per month as travel allowance (TA).

Monthly telephone bill charges have been enhanced to ₹250 for the Community Resource Person – Community Mobiliser Patnaik said the announcement will be implemented soon as the government has made necessary budgetary provision in this regard.

"Today, the Mission Shakti movement has changed the lives of 70 lakh women in Odisha. This year, Mission Shakti members have been given bank loans to the tune of record ₹6,000 crore. For this purpose, ₹200 crore has been deposited in the

ndian Institute of Technology,

Guwahati, researchers have

developed a novel low-cost

'Improved Natural Draft Charcoal

Retort' (INDCR) to address the

technological and capital

investment challenges of Indian

Charcoal is widely used as a

fuel in domestic and industrial

heating applications. While most

of the developed countries are

producing industrial charcoal

through the retort system, it was

not available for Indian charcoal

producers because of technolog-

ical barriers and the need for

for waste to energy projects had or-

ganised an open competition 'Green

Charcoal Hackathon 2020', where

IIT Guwahati innovators presented

the INDCR. "Upon further evalu-

ation and mentorship by the NTPC

officials, the developed reactor has

been given an opportunity to be

demonstrated at the NTPC town-

ship of Ramagundam Thermal

Power Station in Telangana to pro-

duce charcoal from municipal solid

waste (MSW) of five tonne per day,"

a release from IIT Guwahati said.

NTPC Ltd's new initiative wing

higher capital investment.

charcoal makers.



bank accounts of Mission Shakti members towards interest subsidy,"

As per the decision of the state Cabinet, Mission Shakti members have been provided with various government works ranging from paddy procurement to supplying foods to the patients in hospitals, Aahaar Incentive for Anganwadi workers has been enhanced from ₹20,000 to ₹40,000

■ The incentive for the Mini Anganwadi workers has been enhanced to ₹30,000 from ₹15,000

■ Community Mobiliser will get a remuneration of ₹3,000 per month

and ₹350 per month as TA

Kendra management, fish farming and so on.

The Chief Minister thanked the community mobilisers for their important role in supporting the Mission Shakti movement at the panchayat level. He hoped that this financial package will encourage them to work towards building a

ransformed Odisha.

transformed Odisha.

Patnaik also announced a hike in the one-time incentive of the Anganwadi workers. Now, the Anganwadi workers will get a one-time incentive of ₹40,000 instead of ₹20,000. Similarly, the incentive for the Mini Anganwadi workers has

been enhanced to ₹30,000 from ₹15,000. The incentive of Anaganwadi helpers has been increased from ₹10,000 to ₹20,000. The enhancement will be affective retrospectively from January 2019. As many as 1991 Anganwadi workers, Mini Anganwadi workers and Anganwadi helpers will be benefited from this move. Besides, about 1.30 lakh anganwadi workers will also get the benefits.

Brown sugar worth

₹25L seized, 1 held

Pipli, Jan 8: The police Saturday

claimed to have arrested a drug

dealer from Pipli area of Puri dis-

trict and seized 255 grams of brown

from accused Jagabandhu Baithari,

31, of Bhabanipur. The market value

of the seized brown sugar has been

pegged at ₹25 lakh, said Puri ASP

Acting on a tip-off, a special team

led by Pipli Sub-Divisional Police

Officer (SDPO) Debadatta Baral

and Pipli inspector in-charge (IIC)

Abhimanyu Nayak raided a build

ing in the locality and arrested the

"A case has been registered under

ne NDPS Act and the accused has

been produced in a local court," said

Pipli IIC. The accused had earlier

been arrested by Pipli police in

sugar from his possession. The police have also seized ₹5,000

Purna Chandra Pradhan.

drug dealer, sources said.

POST NEWS NETWORK

ILLEGAL STONE QUARRYING

Ganjam DM told to file ATR against Tehshildar



POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Jan 8: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked the Ganjam Collector to file an affidavit stating what action has been taken against Sanakhemundi Tehsildar for his criminal complicity with people involved in illegal stone quarrying in the district.

A bench of judicial member B Amit Sthalekar and expert member Saibal Dasgupta noted that the affidavit filed by the district authority is silent on whether a chargesheet has been issued to the Tehsildar for his criminal complicity. The affidavit also didn't disclose the name of the persons, in whose favour the environmental clearance was granted on the recommendation

of the Tehsildar.
"We direct the Ganjam district
Collector to file his personal affidavit in compliance with our order
for action against the Tehsildar,"
the tribunal said.

The green body also found that environmental compensation and loss of royalty due to illegal stone mining has not been computed by the com-

The green body noted that the affidavit filed by the district authority is silent on whether a chargesheet has been issued against the Tehsildar for his criminal complicity with people involved in the illegal quarrying

mittee constituted by the tribunal to enquire into the allegations of illegal stone mining in the district. The bench directed the committee to compute the amount of illegal stone mining carried out in the district, loss of royalty caused to the state exchequer and the environmental compensation on account of degradation of environment in the locality.

"We direct the committee to file its affidavit before the next date of hearing. Remedial measures for restitution of the degraded environment may also be suggested by the committee," the tribunal said.

2 more City hosps for Covid patients

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: In view of the surge in Covid cases, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has added two more hospitals to provide healthcare to Covid-19 patients in the state capital.

According to sources, a tripartite

agreement was signed between the BMC, represented by Commissioner Sanjaya Kumar Singh, KIMS Hospital, Odisha COVID Hospital Operator, represented by Dr Ambika Prasad Mohanty, Principal, KIMS Hospital, Bhubaneswar, and a representative of Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC).

In addition, a bilateral agreement was also signed between the Governments of Odisha (acting through BMC) and represented by Commissioner, BMC, and Hi-tech Medical College & Hospital, Bhubaneswar, represented by Jyotirmaya Panda, Chief Operating Officer of the facility.

As per the agreement, KIIMS will provide services for 500 patients, whereas Hi-tech will accommodate 239 patients.

Two other hospitals, namely Aditya Aswini and SUM, which have been providing services to COVID-19 patients, will also continue their services. Presently Aditya Aswini has the

capacity to serve 150 Covid pa-

tients, while SUM Hospital has 810 beds for such patients. Besides, Covid Care Centers are also functional at Patia and Dumduma with a total capacity

of 100 beds.

Youth attacked in City

BHUBANESWAR: Unknown miscreants Saturday attacked a youth in front of Congress Bhawan here. Police have registered a case in this regard on the basis of a complaint lodged by the inured victim. Sources claimed that the victim, Durga Madhab Mahalla, was thrashed by the miscreants allegedly for getting some news published in different news papers against the accused persons few days back. Police after getting information about the incident reached the spot and rescued the victim. Mahalla was later rushed to Capital hospital for treatment.

PPHOTO MIA Noticindra Nath Mitra inaugurates hive ambulance service at Khurda district headquarters hospital. Saturday

MLA Jyotirindra Nath Mitra inaugurates bike ambulance service at Khurda district headquarters hospital, Saturday

Arun Kumar Chandrasekaran

and Senthilmurugan Subbiah,

Professors in the Department of

Chemical Engineering at the in-

stitute, who were the lead inno-

vators of the INDCR system, have

filed for an Indian patent for the de-

sign of this innovative reactor.

The reactor's technical detail and

its performance have been pub-

lished in the reputed peer-reviewed

journal Energy & Fuels Journal of

Researchers from IIT Guwahati

the American Chemical Society.

have chosen various biomasses

such as Prosopis juliflora,

Casuarina equisetifolia,

Bambusoideae, Biomass briquettes,

wood pellets and refuse-derived

fuel (RDF) briquettes from MSW

as the input feedstock for char-

The definition of good quality

charcoal depends on its end-user.

Hence, the retort reactor has been

developed to be capable of pro-

ducing charcoal in higher mass

vield (34-42 per cent), versatile

quality of fixed carbon (76-88 per

cent), higher energy content (6400-

7200 kcal/kg), minimal noxious

emission (2.65 kg of CO2/kg of

charcoal) and lesser carbonisa-

coal making process.

NOVEL ENDEAVOUR

IIT Guwahati's low-cost, improved natural-draft charcoal retort

The pilot-scale The demonstration of the whole research mobile charcoal production unit has consumed two years 125 kgs of input with more than 60 field loading capacity with trials to ensure consistent yield and the two-phase mode of operation quality of charcoal The developed charcoal retort reactor was installed and tested at Paramakudi. Ramanathapuram district (Tamil Nadu) with help of M/s Optima Heat Technologies

tion time (4 hours). Further, the reactor has the ability to control the process at any point in time during operation. It

is user-friendly in terms of loading biomass/feedstock and unloading charcoal. Upon attainment of 270°C and upward, the volatile gases produced in the wood chamber, which are mainly low molecular-weight organic volatile compounds, are redirected back into the combustion chamber for complete burnout and liberated as complete

said, "The innovative reactor is proven to produce high-quality charcoal from a wide range of feed-stock, and it's designed to use its own feedstock as heating fuel. This reactor is portable to agricultural fields, and it is proven to convert all the agricultural waste to charcoal without the noxious gas emissions."

The developed charcoal retort re-

The innovative reactor is proven to produce high-quality charcoal from a wide range of feedstock, and it's designed to use its own feedstock as heating fuel. This reactor is portable to agricultural fields, and it is proven to convert all the agricultural waste to charcoal without the noxious gas emissions

SENTHILMURUGAN SUBBIAH | PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERING,

combustion products.

The retort system operates in an environmental-friendly way with very low emissions of carbon monoxide, carbon sioxide, hydrocarbons, and particulate matter. Further, the charcoal produced from the retort reactor can be used as a fuel in barbeque & blast furnace heating applications and as a sorbent in pharmaceutical wastewater treatment, the release added.

Highlighting the unique aspects of the developed reactor, Subbiah

actor was installed and tested at Paramakudi, Ramanathapuram district (Tamil Nadu) with the fabrication help of M/s Optima Heat Technologies.

The pilot-scale mobile charcoal production unit has 125 kgs of input loading capacity with the two-phase mode of operation. The demonstration of the whole research consumed two years with more than 60 field trials to ensure consistent yield and quality of charcoal.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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 (HB 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-889550649, 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, Levis 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 Coke Room-7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookilman-9439491273, Nigamannada-Omm Sai Travels-9688284823, 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- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-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**

₹20cr for revamp of Ranisagar

Bolangir: Ranisagar, the largest water body in Bolangir town. will be renovated. ₹20 crore has been earmarked for the project. The foundation stone for the project was laid hv MLA Narasingha Mishra. With the renovation and beautification of Ranisagar, local people will have facility of recreation and protection of ecology along with tourism boost. It will also create a scope of earnings for locals said the MLA. The district administration and the **National Project Construction** Corporation (NPCC) signed an agreement in December, 2021, for construction of the project ₹20 crore was allocated from OUIDF. Components of the project included boating facility, water sprinklers with colourful lights, a park, a food zone, a games zone for children, art and craft zones, a party lawn, gymnasiums and gardens.

2 dead, as many hurt in accident

Jajpur: Two youths were killed

while two others sustained grievous injuries in a fatal

road mishap that took place near Dhanapur Square under

Panikoili police limits in Jajpur district late Friday night. The

deceased have been identified

as Chandan Mahalik, son of

Premananda from Jhatiasahi

village under Jajpur Road

police limits and Debashis

Kantara village under Korei

police limits in the district.

According to an eyewitness

the incident occurred while

four youths were returning to

Jajpur Road at around 11 pm

by a car. Their vehicle skidded

into a roadside pond after the

vouth driving the car lost

control after a speedy truck

tried to overtake them. The

Failing to come out of the

eyewitness stated. Locals

Community Health Centre

(CHC) at Jajpur Road. On

being informed, Panikoili

police seized the bodies for

post-mortem and started an

a narrow escape, the

vehicle, two of them died on

the spot while two others had

rescued and rushed them to a

car got half-submerged in the

pond with the youths inside it.

Nayak, son of Jayant of

BSF jawans defuse five HANGING BY A THREAD landmines in Malkangiri



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Jan 8: Border Security Force (BSF) personnel defused five Improvised Explosive Device (IED)powered landmines in Malkangiri district Saturday morning which were allegedly planted by a faction of outlawed CPI (Maoist). Significantly, two binoculars of Chinese make were also recovered.

A major mishap was averted

due to alertness of the personnel. A BSF senior official said the explosives were planted near an under-construction road at Kadigandi village of Swabhiman Anchal (erstwhile cut-off area) in the district.

"It is suspected that the ultras had planted the IEDs to target the security personnel who have been deployed in the area," the BSF official added. "Landmines were detected by some BSF jawans posted at a recently established Company Operating Base (COB) of the 9th Battalion at Ghanabeda during a combing operation in the area. The explosives were later successfully defused by a bomb disposal squad stationed at the camp," the official informed.

Bomb squad cordoned off the area and destroyed the landmines. More details of the incident are



A truck precariously hanging from the side railing of the Tel river bridge after the driver lost control over the vehicle, leading to an accident on the bridge at Manmunda in Boudh district, late Friday night. The driver had a close shave

Coming soon: 'Swabhiman Anchal' turmeric on Amazon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Jan 8: People in Swabhiman Anchal of Malkangiri district produce over 50 tonnes of turmeric annually, but for lack of marketing facility, producers fail to get fair price for their produce.

The district administration has initiated a process to sell the turmeric of Malkangiri globally through online marketing platforms like Amazon.

As part of the initiative, women affiliated to various SHGs have been provided small mills to grind the turmeric. In the next phase, five big milling units will be set up in Chitrakonda area to produce quality turmeric powder.

The administration has focused on creating livelihood for people through turmeric farming and it marketing while a project worth ₹5 crore has been taken up. Moreover, an agro-based industry with an estimated cost of ₹10 crore will be set up in the area to process agriculture produce to make them marketable, said Collector Vishal Singh here Saturday.

The Collector said that now focus



Turmeric produced in **Swabhiman Anchal is** better than the Kandhamal variety in terms of quality

is being laid on augmenting income of the tribals from vegetable and cash crop farming in the area.

"In Swabhiman Anchal, tribals are being encouraged to take up farming of millets, cashew, coffee, groundnut, pine apple, banana tola, suan, and alasi while cold stores will be set up for preservation of their produce," he added.

This is how the tribals will be weaned away from ganja farming gradually, he noted. However, major focus will be on turmeric farming. In the days to come, all farmers will be trained on modern farm techniques along with supply of high yielding turmeric seeds, the

The turmeric produced in Swabhiman Anchal is better than the Kandhamal turmeric in terms of quality. Farmers will have irrigation facility and a packaging unit. They can increase their income by selling their produce through online marketing platforms like Amazon, he observed.

Collector said.

Youth defrauds girl of ₹1.10 lakh on marriage promise

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Jan 8: Police Saturday arrested an inter-state fraudster on charge of defrauding money from girls on the promise of marriage after befriending them on social media. The accused was identified as Bhabani Siddharth Shankar, 26, a native of Khalari village under Angul Town police limits, Chhatrapur IIC Satya Ranjan Pradhan said. Bhabani is accused of defrauding a girl of Gopalpur area of Rs1.10 lakh.

Police seized ₹1.7 lakh, three mobile phones, a bank pass book, an Aadhaar card, 10 pages of WhatsApp screen shots from his possession. A case was registered and the accused produced in court, the IIC said.

Police said Bhabani befriended a 26-year old girl of Gopalpur area in Ganjam district on social media and promised to marry her.

Later, he duped her of ₹1.10 lakh in phases. However, instead of giving her his own account number to deposit the money he asked her to transfer the amount to the PhonePe number of one of his associates Ram Pangi based at Umbel village near Nandapur in Koraput district

Workers' exodus may spoil BJP's applecart

COVID SPIKE IN GANJAM

RELIGIOUS PLACES SHUT FROM TODAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Jan 8: Keeping in view the resurgence of Covid-19 cases in Ganjam, all religious places in the district will remain closed for the public from 5 am of January 9 till 5 am of February 1.

However, religious rituals are allowed with bare minimum priests/servitors and staff in adherence to Covid safety guidelines.

In an order issued by the district administration, it was stated, "All religious places/places of worship of Ganjam district including the temples of Maa Tara Tarini, Maa Thakurani, Berhampur and Maa Siddha Vairabi shall remain closed for public. However, religious rituals are allowed with bare minimum priests/servitors and staff adhering to Covid safety protocols. Religious congregations are strictly prohibited.'

The district administration has warned stern action against people violating the Covid protocols. The order said, "Any person found violating the order shall be punished

DRDA office closed for three days

JHARSUGUDA: Amid fears for Covid's third wave, cases of infection are rising in Jharsuguda district over last one week. As many as 20 staff of the district rural development agency (DRDA), including its PD have tested positive for Covid, Friday. The administration has declared the DRDA office as a containment zone. The DRDA office has been closed for three days. Contact tracing has started. It was learnt that DRDA staff have come in contact with the staff of the Vedanta company. The company's office premises have been included in the Covid cluster zone.

under the provision of Disaster Management Act, 2005 and other relevant laws'

It was stated in the order that due to the resurgence of Covid-19 in parts of the country and the state, a critical stage of Covid-19 pandemic has loomed large in the state.

Student unrest grips **Bhadrak College**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Jan 8: Tension prevailed after students of Bhadrak (Autonomous) College staged a demonstration protesting admission of hundreds of students in Plus III stream based on disability certificates, a report said. Agitating students locked up the

main gate of the college and burnt tyres while staging a demonstration outside. On being informed, tehsildar Madhusudan Navak, principal Umakanta Samal and DSP Kamal Lochan Bhuyan reached the spot and tried to placate the students. The students relented after they were assured of a probe and subsequent legal action on the

Students protested after reports made available under Right to Information (RTI) Act revealed



that three middlemen and unscrupulous college staff owing allegiance to a political party had connived to give disability certificates to hundreds of students in lieu of money for taking admission in the college.

Many of the admitted students have scored only 40 per cent marks in their Plus II examinations but have been able to take admission in Plus III stream by producing fake disability certificates. This has hit meritorious students who despite scoring good marks have been deprived of admission, the students alleged.

party leaders with their supporters to the BJD might spoil the BJP's applecart in Jajpur in the upcoming panchayat elections, a report said. The party might not repeat the success it had achieved in 2017 panchayat and 2019 general elec-

Reports said the ruling BJD had received 49.81 per cent votes, BJP 40.5 per cent votes and Congress 7.63 per cent votes in the last general elections. The saffron party's vote share jumped to 40.5 per cent in the 2019 general elections which had received only 15.53 per cent votes in the 2014 general elections. The astounding results thrown up by the saffron party were termed as a warning bell for the BJD.

However, things have changed by now. The rise in prices of essential commodities has pinched the common people hard. This may reflect in their choices for the party in the panchayat and civic body

The ruling BJD had won 33 Zilla Parishad seats and the BJP six seats in 2017 panchayat elections. The saffron party's vote share in the 2017 panchayat elections increased to 31 per cent from 16 per cent in the 2014 general elections. The increase in the support base of the BJP had sparked concern for the BJD. In the 2019 general elections, the BJP did not win a single seat in the district but managed

to increase its vote share. The party candidates were able to give a tough fight in Barchana and Bari Assembly segments. The BJP candidate at Barchana was defeated by just 1,485 votes in the 2019 general elections. Similarly, the BJP candidate in Bari was defeated by 4.062 votes. Party leaders and analysts attributed the rise in the vote share to Prime Minister Modi's popularity.

JAJPUR: PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS



However, with the change in time, election analysts now claim the saffron party might not be able to repeat its previous success. The price bogey will have a negative bearing on the upcoming panchayat

Meanwhile, irregularities in housing projects and other developmental works have sparked re-

sentment among people. It is alleged that benefits of central welfare schemes do not reach the people. The district lags behind other districts on many fronts like nutrition, drinking water and communication. The BJP, however, has failed to reap political mileage from these issues due to lack of political activities.

BJD had received 75,401 votes, BJP 37,944 votes and Congress 16,477 votes in Dharmasala block in the 2017 panchayat elections. The BJD's vote share dropped to a large extent in the last panchayat elections in Jajpur Assembly seg-

In Dasarathpur block, BJD received 59,687 votes, BJP 50,649 votes Jajpur block, BJD received 54.912 votes and BJP 27,711 votes. BJP's success in Binjharpur block was surprising. Here BJD received 48,992 votes while BJP received 40,678 votes in the panchayat elections. In Korei block, BJD got 45,041 votes while BJP received 27, 642 votes and Congress only 20,933 votes. In Rasulpur block, BJD received 47,623 votes while BJP received 45,524 votes. In Bari block, BJD received 40.331 votes while BJP received 43,828 votes. In Sukinda and Danagadi blocks BJP failed to get much success. In Sukinda block, BJD received 41,559 votes, BJP 7543 votes and Congress 20,233 votes.

In Danagadi, BJD got 35,663 votes, BJP 6418 votes and Congress 27,501 votes. In Barchana block, BJD received 63,266 votes, BJP 30, 216 votes and Congress 27,781 votes.

AGAINST EVICTION



Street vendors holding a meeting to decide their next course of action following their eviction from roadsides in Sambalpur to check spread of Covid-19, Saturday

Sambalpur Collector, **SP cremate body**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Jan 8: District Collector Dibyajyoti Parida and SP Batula Gangadhar Saturday participated in the cremation of an unknown body. The ritual was organised by local outfit 'Sambal' at Swargadwar crematorium in Kamlibazaar of the town.

Sambal has been cremating unknown and unclaimed bodies since 2011 which reached 500 with the cremation of the latest body, Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said cremating unknown bodies with honour and dignity is a noble work and hoped the outfit will continue with this job. He also assured all assistance and cooperation to the outfit from the district administration.

The SP thanked the members of the outfit for their good work and called them to help people and the administration at time of their need

Bird census underway at Hirakud Dam reservoir

Sambalpur, Jan 8: A census of migratory birds at Hirakud reservoir in Sambalpur district is underway, a forest officer said Saturday. Teams of Hirakud Wildlife Division, equipped with binoculars, bird field guides and census sheets, began the exercise Friday, he said.

The reservoir and power channel have been divided into 15 sectors covered by 38 teams comprising forest officers and experts from outside. Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Anshu Das said that the census will cover the reservoir till the Odisha-Chhattisgarh interstate boundary.

A total of 30 boats will cover the entire reservoir, spread over 533 sq km, and a 5.7-km power channel of the dam. The number of migratory birds and their species will be declared January 9. Every year, thousands of winged guests from Caspian Sea, Baikal Lake,



Aral Sea, Mongolia, central and southeast Asia and the Himalayas make Hirakud reservoir their home from November to March.

Common pochard, red crested pochard, spot-billed duck, great crested grebe, pond heron, painted stork, whiskered tern and many more are sighted during this period

More than 1.24 lakh birds of 98 species thronged the reservoir last winter. Similarly, over 1.45 lakh birds of 93 species were sighted in 2020.



We must march on with the quiet certitude that what has to be done will be done

THE MOTHER



Aakar Patel

A course can be

accept we are

corrected only if we

direction. Since we

think we are fine,

wherever the path

we will land up

is leading us

Where're we headed

ome changes come up on us so slowly that the present generation does not take on the responsibility of the consequences. Climate change is the obvious issue that we can think of to illustrate this. One remembers phrases and words like 'greenhouse gas' and 'chlorofluorocarbons' and 'hole in ozone layer' in the 1980s. These were used even in school, meaning that as far back as 35 years ago, the issue was one of common knowledge. And yet very little was done and very little continues to be done on this front.

One reason is the two lobbies that want carbon emissions to continue. The oil and gas industry is the world's largest business and automobile manufacturers are the world's second largest business. And of course these two are also the major source of carbon dioxide emissions, which we know is a primary cause of climate change. The second reason is that as a race, we have not taken the threat seriously because we feel that it doesn't concern us directly in our generation. A little warming here and a little colder weather there is not sufficient cause for us to drastically change our way of life and pay more for things and inconvenience ourselves. That is, we can speculate, how the mass thought process worked from 1985 onwards and that is the only reason why we have accepted climate change as a phenomenon but are reluctant to do much about it. The problem is, and again experts have been shout-

ing this into our ears, that if we do not act things will inevitably keep getting worse for the planet in the next few years. But we can say with certainty that we have not acted decisively against the threat.

Another place where this is happening is in our economy. I have written here before that our government data is telling us things about where we are headed. Five crore more Indians were working in 2014 than are working today (and this was also the case before the pandemic). 800 million people (60% of the population) are dependent on 6 kilos of free grain monthly. GDP growth declined for two years and three months before the pandemic. This year our economy will be the same size as it was in 2019 but in 2019 it had already been on a trajectory of weak and weakening growth. Bangladesh, which was about 50% behind us in per capita GDP in 2014, is now ahead of us.

What is the cause of this and where are we headed in the wrong headed? We can answer these questions only if we first accept that there is something wrong with the way the economy is being managed. A course can be corrected only if we accept we are headed in the wrong direction. Since we think we are fine, we will land up wherever the path is leading us.

A third place where we are doing something to ourselves whose consequences we haven't fully

understood and are not discussing in mature fashion is the communalisation of our society, which is complete. Today attacks on minorities, whether they are on Muslims or Christians, are so commonplace as to not even make it to the front pages. Every day there is something new, often triggered by the government or the party in office. The persecution of minority Indians that we have done through law and violence has taken our society into a place quite quickly. Like climate change and perhaps unlike the economy, this can be seen as an act of deliberate commission. It would be incorrect to say that the government deliberately sabotaged GDP growth. But it is accurate to say that India has been quite consciously been led to the stage today when communalism has infected the nation fully.

What are the consequences of this for us? One can think of the following. An even weaker economy because overall trust levels are low, meaning investments will remain low. Capital is a coward and flees from uncertainty and it is the case that there is not much certainty in India today. A further breakdown of the rule of law and the empowering of mobs and groups to be violent. An intrusion from the outside world, which cannot ignore a nation the size of India starting to eat itself. This has already happened and India has been on the list of nations against whom sanctions have been recommended (though not activated) since 2019.

Damage to a generation and perhaps two generations of youth, who on one side have been brainwashed quite thoroughly into thinking about internal enemies. Then there is the wrecking of institutions, which have been delicately put together over decades. These include constitutional bodies like the judiciary and the election commission, which after 2014 have functioned as extensions of the executive. Also other institutions like the civil services and the armed forces which are aligned to the thinking of the government and the ruling party more than ever in our history.

We have done this to ourselves while applauding and cheering and so it will not be easy to halt much less reverse. There is an English saying 'Act in haste, repent at leisure'. Like with climate change and the economy, on this issue also we will have the opportunity soon to repent, though it is not clear that we will be able to do so at leisure.

WISDOM CORNER

The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential... these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal

I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their

The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind.

WORDS**WORTH**

■ Recessionista

new term for our credit-crunched and straitened times, recessionista is Aa play on the much older term fashionista, known from 1993, for a devotee of the fashion industry or a wearer of high-fashion clothing. Michael Gore wrote about recessionista in The Times on 6 October 2008: "Apparently a recessionista is a fashionista (natch) who is decisively on trend in these straitened times and dresses exclusively in black (it's grim), vintage (it's all we can afford) and long skirts (going short during bad economic times is as frowned on in hemlines as it is in hedge funds)." Another term for it is recession chic. Recessionista had previously been sighted in the San Francisco Chronicle, the Minneapolis Star Tribune, the Washington Post and the Daily Mail and first appeared as far back as November 2007 in US News & World Report. But in that last report it had the sense of an economist who considered a recession to be a desirable corrective for surging house prices and untrammelled financial speculation.



Baby pigeon said, "I can't make it; I'll get too tired." His mother said, "Don't worry; I'll tie a piece of string

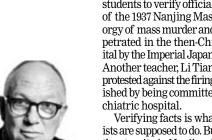
to one of your legs and the other end

The baby started to cry.

"What's wrong?" said the mother. "I don't want to be pigeon towed!"

FOCUS TRIUMPHALISM

HISTORY BY DECREE



Ian Buruma

THE PROBLEM WITH **HISTORY AS PROPAGANDA IS NOT THAT IT MAKES PEOPLE FEEL GOOD OR BAD. BUT THAT IT CREATES PERPETUAL ENEMIES - AND THUS THE PERPETUAL RISK OF WARS**

ong Gengyi, a journalism teacher in Shanghai, was fired last month for doing her job. She had encouraged her students to verify official accounts of the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, the orgy of mass murder and rape perpetrated in the then-Chinese capital by the Imperial Japanese Army Another teacher, Li Tiantian, who protested against the firing, was punished by being committed to a psy-

Verifying facts is what journalists are supposed to do. But because the atrocity in Nanjing during the Sino-Japanese War has become a cornerstone of Chinese nationalism. and thus of the Communist Party of China's propaganda, any critical scrutiny of what precisely happened is seen as criticism of the Chinese government. Perhaps this needs some explanation. Until the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, official Chinese accounts paid little attention to the Nanjing Massacre. History under Mao was instead a heroic tale of communist victory over fascist and bourgeois oppressors. Nanjing had been the Chinese Nationalist capital at the time of the Sino-Japanese War. The massacre was thus a story of Nationalist defeat, not communist heroism.

By the time of Mao's death. Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought had lost their appeal, even for many CPC members. The new party orthodoxy is a form of nationalism based on memories of collective humiliation. such as the Nanjing Massacre, whose stain only the CPC's con-

tinued hegemony can erase. At about the same time as Song was fired, a Moscow court ordered the closure of Russia's Memorial International and its sister organisation, Memorial Human Rights Center. Memorial was founded in 1989 to investigate Stalin-era crimes in the Soviet Union and to honour the victims. Like Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin wants to control the historical narrative. That means glossing over the horrors of Stalinism and highlighting the



Triumphalist history has many dangers. A feeling of national superiority blinds people to their own faults and makes them oblivious to the way they treat others

heroic victory of the Russian people against fascism in World War II.

History has of course always been political. At least since the time of the great court historian Sima Qian, born around 140 BC, official scribes in China have compiled histories to lend legitimacy to the rulers who commissioned them. Every dynasty had its own historians. Much the same was true in ancient Rome.

Democratically elected leaders in more modern times have no court historians (although Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. came close to performing that role for US President John F. Kennedy). But history in Western democracies can nonetheless be highly political. Consider the role that the history of slavery plays in US politics today. While some on the left project America's history as one of white supremacy, right-wing politicians try to have books that make this case banned from schools. Significantly, official history in Xi's China is in line with the strong tendency in the West to define collective identity in terms of victimhood. If the official narrative of Mao's China was in the heroic mold, history under Xi is a story of unrelieved degradation at the hands of foreign invaders until the communist revolution of 1949. The heroic story of the 1934-35 Long March, when Mao's Red Army evaded Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists, is now less important than the Chinese people's sufferings in Nanjing or during the nineteenth-century Opium Wars.

Something like this happened in Israel, too. The story promoted after the founding of the Jewish state in 1948 was one of heroic freedom fighters and virile kibbutzniks, while the Holocaust in Europe was something shameful that was better forgotten. This began to change in the 1960s, after the trial in Jerusalem of Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi genocide's logistical mastermind. The new narrative was that memories of the Holocaust should make Israel tougher on its enemies, especially the Palestinians.

Putin still prefers the heroic version of Russian history. Triumph, not victimhood, and especially not suffering under their own rulers is what Russians need to remember.

Triumphalist history has many dangers. A feeling of national superiority blinds people to their own faults and makes them oblivious to the way they treat others. It can also foster a natural sense of entitlement, a bit like that felt by the British at the height of their imperial power, or by Americans in more recent times.

But official histories of victimhood can be at least as dangerous. They fuel the belief that past wrongs must be avenged, and that old enemies can never be forgotten

If a triumphal mood can lead to arrogance, the wounds of hu miliation nurture collective rage. These wounds can be so old that their causes are long forgotten; victimhood becomes mythical. But vengeful emotions can be easy to stir up. For example, Serbian nationalism in the 1990s tapped into grievances going back to the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, when a Serbian army fought troops of the Ottoman Empire. When hostile feelings are whipped up, historical accuracy is irrelevant. Bosnian Serb troops rampaging in Prijedor and Srebrenica during the Bosnian War called their Muslim victims 'Turks,' as though they were fighting Ottoman soldiers in the late fourteenth century.

In fact, the difference between official narratives of heroism and victimhood is not as great as it might seem. The point of history as propaganda in China and Russia today - and, indeed, in Israel - is to legitimise those in power. Only the strength of the CPC will guar antee that the Chinese people will never again be humiliated by foreigners. Only Putin will keep Russians safe from their enemies, just as Stalin did when Hitler invaded. And only an Israeli government that knows how to be ruthless will prevent another Holocaust. The problem with his tory as propaganda is not that it makes people feel good or bad, but that it creates perpetual enemiesand thus the perpetual risk of wars.

The writer is the author of The Churchill Complex: The Curse of Being Special, From Winston and FDR to Trump and Brexit. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS

Kazakhstan & the price of Russia's empire



Nina L. Khrushcheva

WHATEVER PUTIN'S INTENTIONS. HIS **ACTIONS ARE FATALLY** UNDERMINING THE **IDEA THAT UNDERPINNED THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S CREATION 30 YEARS AGO**

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

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

military, have arrived in Kazakhstan to suppress violent, nationwide protests against the country's Kremlin-friendly regime. The action comes at a time when Russian troops are already massed near Ukraine's border, and just 15 months after a Russian rifle brigade intervened to end the fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh, Is President Vladimir Putin really attempting to rebuild the Russian Empire?

Of course, it is impossible to know with any certainty what the Kremlin sphinx has in mind. But. whatever Putin's intentions, his actions are fatally undermining the idea that underpinned the Russian Federation's creation 30 years ago. Boris Yeltsin, Russia's first post-Soviet president, is rarely a topic of conversation nowadays. If Russians mention him, they are most likely recalling his excessive drinking or, more important, the inflation and poverty that pervaded Russia's transition to a market economy. They are probably not crediting him with profound historical insights.

It was Yeltsin who recognised the monumental costs of sustaining the Soviet empire – costs that contributed to immiserating Russians and keeping them imprisoned in a

aratroopers from Russia's police state. Only by shedding these costs – by dissolving the empire shock troops of the Russian and establishing a free-market economy – could Russia deliver liberation and prosperity to its people.

But, on New Year's Eve 1999, Yeltsin might have doomed his own vision. The man to whom he handed power that night now seems determined to discard his keenest insight. While Putin may not seek to rebuild the Russian Empire per se, he seems resolved to establish suzerainty over former Soviet states That is a highly costly proposition.

The precise share of Soviet GDP that went toward maintaining the empire is unclear. But, given the demands of industrial production and the Soviet military-industrial complex - which together claimed up to 80% of all government revenues – it is safe to say that the Soviet Union could not afford, say, subsidies to unproductive factories in isolated areas of its constituent states. And this is to say nothing of the empire's price in blood, highlighted in the years following the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan.

These costs were not lost on ordinary Russians, who resented having to shoulder them, just as British, French, and Austro-Hungarian citizens did during their own empires' heydays. But the same cannot be said of those in charge. From the czars to Lenin and Stalin to Putin today, Russia's leaders have almost universally believed that the cost of empire was justified. For Russia, the costs of Putin's

ambitions are mounting. Consider the country's military expenditure, which increased from 3.8% of GDP in 2013 – the year before Russia invaded Ukraine, annexed Crimea, and supported secessionist forces in the eastern Donetsk and Luhansk regions - to 5.4% in 2016. While military expenditure as share of GDP declined in 2017 and 2018, it is now climbing once again. With Russian troops stationed in the occupied Georgian region of Abkhazia, the breakaway Moldovan region of Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Belarus, this is not a surprise.

More difficult to quantify are the strategic costs of empire, which Putin is loath to recognise. The Kremlin's imperial agenda, especially the annexation of Crimea, has called into question the post-Cold War settlement in Eurasia, from the Baltic to the Bering Sea. The world's other powers - particularly the United States and China - are strongly invested in upholding the status quo that Putin is seeking to $\,$ upset. The post-Cold War settlement enabled governments to divert resources from military budgets to social programmes. The peace dividend not only enabled Russia's economic transition; it also supported the long economic boom in

the West that ended with the 2008 financial crisis.

But the biggest beneficiary was China. Recall that 40 years ago, vast armies were positioned along the Chinese-Soviet border, and thousands of Russian nuclear warheads were trained on Chinese cities. The Cold War's end thus enabled China to redirect resources toward economic development and poverty reduction. China's success on these fronts over the last 30 years speaks for itself.

Against this backdrop, one wonders how Chinese President Xi Jinping views Russia's intervention in Kazakhstan, which shares a nearly 1.800-km border with China. especially in light of Putin's earlier comments diminishing the history of Kazakhstan's independent statehood. The domestic costs and polling by the Levada Center in Moscow suggest that few Russians are willing to trade their living standards for enhanced global status - ought to be sufficient to convince Putin to abandon his imperial ambitions. If not, the possibility of reigniting a rivalry with China surely should. But it is far from guaranteed that Putin will give reason its due. He is already ignoring the lessons of Russia's own history.

> The writer is Professor of International Affairs at The New School.

Quelling protests

Sir, This refers to 'Kazakh Prez orders shoot-to-kill to quell uprising', Orissa POST, January 8, 2022. The protests that broke out in Kazakhstan January 2 over a fuel price hike have snowballed into the biggest political crisis in the oil-rich Central Asian country. Nursultan Nazarbayev, the country's powerful leader, stepped down as President in 2019, but retained an outsize influence over the government of his cherry-picked successor Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and also remained the centre of the public anger. To quell the public unrest, Tokayev reversed the fuel price hike, sacked his Cabinet and replaced Nazarbayev as the Security Council's chair with himself. He could also get the troops from the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation for help. However, Kazakhstan has witnessed growing labour and ethnic unrest in recent years. Despite its oil wealth, low salaries and poor working conditions have always been issues. Many hoped that Tokayev would bring in change. But they saw Nazarbayev continuing to pull the strings. The pandemicinduced economic slowdown and soaring inflation made matters worse. Public resentment was building up against the ruling elite over the years, but the fuel price hike became the trigger for the protests. Going forward, it is also an opportunity for the President to come out of the shadows of the old regime. The outcome of the current crisis would largely depend on the choices he would make. Dealing with the protests only through force, including with help from Russia would not resolve the underlying issues. The other option, the most sensible one, is to reach out to the angry public, hold consultations and build consensus to enter a new social contract with the people of Kazakhstan. N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Welcome ruling

Sir, The Supreme Court allowing the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) counselling to proceed so as not to dislocate medical admissions this year is a welcome ruling. The court also upheld the 27 per cent reservation for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) and 10 per cent for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in the All India Quota (AIQ) seats under a July 29, 2021 government order. As a result, the ₹8 lakh gross annual family income limit criterion for identifying the EWS as notified by the government would now be implemented for the admission year 2021-2022, bringing relief to lakhs of medical students.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

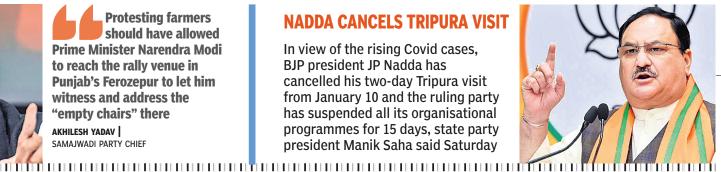
national



Protesting farmers should have allowed **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** to reach the rally venue in **Punjab's Ferozepur to let him** witness and address the "empty chairs" there AKHILESH YADAV SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

NADDA CANCELS TRIPURA VISIT

In view of the rising Covid cases, BJP president JP Nadda has cancelled his two-day Tripura visit from January 10 and the ruling party has suspended all its organisational programmes for 15 days, state party president Manik Saha said Saturday





Channi, Randhawa and Sidhu are acting like a confused lot who have no idea about how to do their job and perform their duties

AMARINDER SINGH | PUNJAB'S FORMER CM

The third wave of the pandemic along with Omicron variant of COVID-19 has hit the state from January 1 and now the government will treat all coronavirus cases as patients of the highly infectious new variant HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

There will be no night curfew in Goa for the moment but gatherings with more



PRAMOD SAWANT GOA CM

SHORT **TAKES**

Two drivers choked to death

New Delhi: Delhi police have arrested two persons for killing two Uber drivers within a span of few hours, an officia said here Saturday. The accused have been identified as Akku alias Aakash and Junaid, both residents of Anand Parbat, According to the official, at around 8:45 a.m. on January 7, a police patrol vehicle noticed an Uber taxi parked on the roadside near the Ramjas ground with a man lying unconscious inside it. The person was immediately shifted to RML Hospital where he was declared brought dead. No apparent injury was visible. but blood was seen coming

Bhawra is new **Punjab DGP**

out of the victim's mouth.

Chandigarh: A 1987-batch IPS officer, Viresh Kumar Bhawra, Saturday assumed the charge of Director General of Police (DGP) in Punjab, replacing Siddharth Chattopadhyaya. Bhawra is the third DGP in just three months of the Congress government led by Charanjit Channi. Chattopadhyaya replaced senior IPS officer Iqbal Preet Singh Sahota.

Three injured

Bangalore: Three persons suffered serious burn injuries after two LPG cylinders, which were allegedly being refilled illegally, exploded here Saturday, According to the police, the incident took place inside the Bharath Bhayani Gas agency's premises located in Panchasheela Nagar near Moodalapalya locality.

Bizman raided

New Delhi: A team of Income Tax (I-T) Department officials conducted raids at the house of Varanasi-based tobacco businessman Lakshmikant Pandey who has been accused of tax evasion. Pandey, also known as 'Pammi' is the owner of the Aashiqui brand of gutkha and runs his office from Varanasi where the ongoing raid began on Friday night. The brand is famous in western Uttar Pradesh and Pandey supplies his products in Lucknow, Jaunpur and Pratapgarh.

Seven arrested

New Delhi: The Ghaziabad police said Friday that they have arrested seven persons involved in printing fake Indian currency notes (FICN). who already have printed counterfeit cash having a face value of ₹15-16 lakhs. The police have seized fake currency notes having face value of ₹6.59 lakh, which includes all denominations of notes ranging from ₹100 to ₹2000.

Five-cornered contest on cards in Punjab

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Jan 8: As the Election Commission of India announced dates for the assembly polls, Punjab is likely to see a five-cornered contest this election, a marked shift from a traditional duel between the Congress and the Shiromani Akali Dal. Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur, and Goa will be held between February 10 and March 7 in seven phases with counting of votes on March 10, the **Election Commission announced** on Saturday.

Punjab has a total of 117 assembly seats. It is going to be a keenly-watched contest with the Congress, the AAP, the SAD-BSP alliance, and the BJP-PLC-SAD (Sanyukt) battling to form the government in the state, with a probable entry of farmers' front in the form of Sanyukt Samaj Morcha.

Nineteen farmer bodies, which participated in a protest against the Centre's three farm laws, have also declared to test electoral waters. Whether they contest all assembly seats, it is yet to be seen.

Punjab's political landscape witnessed major changes in the last more than one year with the Shiromani Akali Dal breaking its ties

19 cellphones recovered from Tihar inmates

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 8: At least 19 mobile phones were recovered from the possession of inmates at the high-security Tihar Jail in the national capital during a surprise check, an official said here Saturday.

The surprise check was conducted by the jail authorities on the intervening night of January 6-7, sources said. "During the checking 19 phones (six android + 13 small ones), Rs 1,500, chargers, wires and handmade sharp objects were confiscated," they said.

The matter came to light just a day after a prisoner was hospitalised after he swallowed a mobile phone. Director General (Prison) Sandeep Goel said that the incident took place on January 5.

"Although his condition v fine so far, but mobile phone was still inside his body," Goel had said on Friday. The Tihar Jail has been strengthening its security arrangements following the major backlash it has received over its officials being caught providing facilities to the inmates, of which the main gadget was a mobile phone.

Over 40 officials at the prison have been booked by various law enforcement agencies during the past six months for extending benefits to the prisoners in one or the other way.

Goel, in an interview earlier, had said that the Tihar Jail will soon have two X-ray based human body scanners that can prevent infiltration of illegal articles and gadgets inside the prison premises. The usage of mobile phones by inmates is a serious concern, however, can be tackled with the usage of apt technology.

Goyal said they are installing three new towers inside the jail premises that would confine the mobile signals emanating from the prison.



with the BJP over the farm laws issue and stitching a new alliance with the Bahujan Samaj Party.

After facing heat over the farm laws, the SAD in September 2020 quit the National Democratic Alliance and Harsimrat Kaur Badal resigned from the union cabinet.

The SAD in June 2021 formed an alliance with the Mayawati-led BSP under which, the Akalis will fight on 97 seats and BSP on 20 seats. After the Akali Dal parted ways, the BJP, which used to contest on 23 seats, forged an alliance with former chief minister Amarinder Singh's Punjab Lok Congress and Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa-led Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt).

Amarinder Singh was made to resign as the Chief Minister by the Congress last year over his bitter power tussle with Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu. Later he decided to form his own party.

The Aam Aadmi Party, which is the main opposition party in Punjab, has announced to go alone. The SAD and the AAP have announced their candidates for the polls. The former has named candidates for over 90 assembly seats while the latter has declared names of 104 contestants.

The Congress is yet to declare any candidate, though deliberations within the party's screening committee are underway. A decision regarding the seat-sharing arrangement was yet to be made by the

t is going to be a keenly-watched

the SAD-BSP alliance, and the BJP-

PLC-SAD (Sanyukt) battling to form

the government in the state, with a

form of Sanyukt Samaj Morcha Punjab's political landscape

last more than one year with the

Bahujan Samaj Party

Shiromani Akali Dal breaking its ties

with the BJP over the farm laws issue

and stitching a new alliance with the

probable entry of farmers' front in the

witnessed major changes in the

contest with the Congress, the AAP,

BJP-PLC-SAD (Sanyukt). All the major political parties are trying to woo voters with freebies and other promises. While the AAP is hard-selling Arvind Kejriwal's Delhi model of governance it has also made several promises such as 300 units of free power and Rs 1,000 per month to every woman of Punjab.

With its 13-point charter, the Akali Dal has made promises including free power up to 400 units per month for all households. Rs 2,000 per month to women heads of "blue card" holder families (indicating below poverty line), and a Rs 10 per litre reduction in price of diesel for agriculture consumers.



IIM students write to

Modi on hate speech

boldens" voices of hate. The letter with over 180 signatories, has flagged hate speech and attacks on minorities."Your silence on the rising intolerance in our country, honourable prime minister, is disheartening to all of us who value the multicultural fabric of our country. Your silence, honourable prime minister, emboldens the hate-filled voices and threatens the unity and integrity of our country," it said. We ask your leadership to turn

vide us" and said his silence "em-

our minds and hearts, as a nation. away from inciting hatred against our people. We believe that a society can focus on creativity, innovation, and growth, or society can create divisions within itself," it added.

They urged him to steer the country away from "forces that seek to divide us". The letter said hope that Modi will lead the country in making the right choices

the signatories wanted to build an India that stood as an exemplar of inclusiveness and diversity in the world and expressed hope that Modi will lead the country in making the right choices. It noted that the Constitution

gave people the right to practice their religion with dignity, without fear and without shame. "There is a sense of fear in our country now Places of worship, including churches in recent days, are being vandalised, and there have been calls to take arms against our Muslim brothers and sisters. All of this is carried out with impunity and without any fear of due process," it added.



Srinagar: All scheduled flights were cancelled Saturday due to heavy snowfall that reduced visibility at the airport here, snapping air link between Kashmir and rest of the country, officials said. The snowfall, which started late in the afternoon on Friday, continued through the day at most places in the Kashmir valley, they said."All the 40 flights scheduled to operate at the Srinagar airport had to be cancelled due to snowfall," an official of the Airport Authority of India (AAI) said. He said that snowfall had reduced visibility to less than 600 metres at the airport. Problems related to low visibility will be addressed soon as an upgraded instrument landing system (ILS) will be installed at the airport by November this year, the official said. "The installation of the CAT-II ILS will begin in April 2022 and would be completed by November 2022. Hopefully, we will not face these difficulties next year." he added.



A labourer rests on a cart during the weekend curfew imposed by the Delhi government to curb the spread

COVAXIN BOOSTER DOSE

Trial shows long-term safety: Bharat Biotech

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 8: Hyderabadbased vaccine manufacturer Bharat Biotech said Saturday that its trials for Covaxin booster dose have shown long-term safety with no serious adverse events'

Bharat Biotech said that 90 per cent of the recipients of the booster dose had a "detectable neutralising antibody response" against the wild-type strain, six months after the second Covid dose.

"The analysis showed that six months after a two-dose BBV152 vaccination series, cell-mediated immunity and neutralising antibodies to both homologous (D614G) and heterologous strains (Alpha, Beta, Delta, and Delta plus) persisted above baseline, although the magnitude of the responses had declined," the vaccine manufacturer

said in a statement.

It added that the neutralising antibodies against homologous and heterologous SARS-CoV-2 variants increased 19 to 265-fold after a third vaccination.

"Booster BBV152 vaccination is safe and may be necessary to ensure persistent immunity to prevent breakthrough infections," said the vaccine manufacturer.

Krishna Ella, Chairman and Managing Director at Bharat Biotech, said, "These trial results provide a strong foundation towards our goal to provide Covaxin as a booster dose. Our goals of developing a global vaccine against Covid-19 have been achieved. Covaxin is now indicated for adults, children, 2-dose primary and booster doses. This enables the use of Covaxin as a universal vaccine."-

AAP part of anti-BJP space in Goa: TMC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Panaji, Jan 8: The Trinamool Congress Party's Goa desk in-charge Mahua Moitra Saturday said that the party will do "whatever necessary" to ensure that BJP does not form the next government in the coastal state and added that even the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is part of the anti-BJP space, an assertion viewed as a strategy by the Mamata Banerjee-led party to project itself as the anti-BJP pivot.

Addressing a press conference in Panaji, Moitra also said that "no ego is involved in doing anything" (to ensure BJP's defeat)."The TMC wants to defeat BJP and will do whatever necessary. We want to ensure that BJP does not win or form a government through the backdoor," Moitra said when asked about a possible prepoll alliance with the Goa Forward Party (GFP) and Congress.

The day before Moitra had tweeted that the TMC will do "everything possible to defeat BJP" and tagged GFP and Congress. Moitra, however, didn't include the name of the Aam Aadmi Party in that tweet.



for Goa polls Saturday, she said, "The AAP is also part of the anti-BJP space. I

won't tie up with TMC

may not have added them in the tweet. We are also including them," she said, adding that "nothing is impossible in politics.

Notably, the AAP leadership had asserted in the past that the Arvind Kejriwal-led party won't tie up with the TMC for Goa polls. Stating that no discussion is held yet on pre-poll alliances, Moitra said, "this is a general view that we (TMC) are

putting forward the people of Goa.' Without naming Congress, Moitra said it was wrong to term TMC a "B team "of BJP which wants to divide votes in Goa and give extra mileage to BJP. "It is wrong to say that BJP will manage to win because of the TMC," she said.

Maharashtrawadi The Gomantak Party (MGP) had announced it would contest the forthcoming Assembly elections in an alliance with the TMC, the new entrant in Goa politics.

Fire not an 'act of God' if no external natural force involved: SC

A three-judge bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar made the observation while setting aside an Allahabad HC order which had termed the fire in the warehouse of a company as an 'act of God' and exempted excise *liability of the company* engaged in the manufacture of liquor PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: A fire accident cannot be termed as an 'act of God' if it did not happen due to the operation of any external natural forces like storm, floods, lightning or earthquake, the Supreme Court has said.

A three-judge bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar made the observation while setting aside an Allahabad High Court order which had termed the fire in the warehouse of a company as an 'act of God' and exempted excise liability of the company engaged in the manufacture of liquor.

"The present one had not been a case where anything related with the forces of nature like storm,



floods, lightning or earthquake had been in operation or caused the fire."When nothing of any external natural force had been in operation in violent or sudden manner, the event of the fire in question could be referable to anything but to an act of God in legal parlance,' the bench also comprising Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and Krishna

Murari said. The top court also said the fire in question had not taken place due to any mischief by any person.

"Noticeably, the fire that started around 12:55 pm on April 10, 2003 could be brought under control by the firefighters only by 5 am the next day."When all the relevant factors are cumulatively taken into account, we find it difficult to accept that the fire and the resultant loss had been beyond the control of human agency so as to be termed as inevitable accident,"

the bench said. The top court said the fire had not generated on its own and with appropriately laid fire proof electrical installations as also firefighting measures, the incident was an avoidable one or at least the loss could have been minimised.

It said the observations of the high court in this regard do not appear sound and are required to be disapproved.

The top court was hearing an appeal filed by the Uttar Pradesh Excise Department challenging an order of the high court which quashed the demand raised against McDowell company towards loss of excise revenue because of destruction of liquor in fire.

The high court had said the order passed by the excise commissioner seeking Rs 6.39 crore as excise revenue was based on conjectures and without any cogent evidence about negligence on the part of the company andthat the "incident was nothing but an act of God".



TWO STATES





Bengal may impose total lockdown Missionaries of Charity gets

EXPERTS ARE OF THE OPINION THAT IF THE TRANSMISSION CHAIN IS NOT BROKEN IMMEDIATELY THEN THE NUMBER OF DAILY CASES MIGHT BREAK THE RECORD WITHIN A COUPLE OF DAYS

Kolkata, Jan 8: With more than 73,000 new Covid-19 registered in the last seven days, speculations are rife that West Bengal, which has already announced formation of micro-containment zones, might impose a full lockdown curb the unprecedented spike.

Friday, the state recorded 18,213 new cases, close to the highest single-day spike registered May 14, 2021 (20.836).

Experts are of the opinion that if the transmission chain is not broken immediately then the number of daily cases might break the record within a couple of days.

What is more alarming for the state is the astronomical rise of cases in the last 10 days. January 4, the number of fresh was 9,073 which then doubled within a span of two days.

January 1 the number was just 4,512 but in the next seven days, the cumulative figure touched 73,412 causing real concern for the state administration.

In an effort to curb the steep rise of the virus, the state government has already announced a series of measures bringing back



A Covid-19 patient waits to get admission at a state government-run Covid

the micro-containment zone mechanism to restrict people from high infectious zones to get into the mainstream areas.

So far, the local administration has announced 48 micro-containment zones of which 28 are in Bidhannagar - the satellite township of Kolkata.

Though Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said the state government is against a total lockdown because it hampers the life of the common people, recently, she indicated that the state government is mulling stricter restrictions.

Not only in Kolkata and its adjacent areas, but the local administration has imposed partial lockdown in several other areas.

The local administration of South 24 Parganas, Howrah, Hooghly, Jalpaiguri, Nadia and North 24 parganas have announced a total lockdown three days a week.

"Presently we have decided to continue with a total lockdown Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday and will carefully observe the situation for the next seven days. If the number of fresh cases doesn't come down then we might think of a

stricter imposition of the lockdown conditions. We are going for a mass campaign so that the people become aware of wearing the masks and maintain social distance. This is the only way to control the spread of the disease," a senior official of a district adjacent to Kolkata said. According to senior officials of the state government, the administration is not waiving out the possibility of a total lockdown in the state.

"We have one advantage that there is no rush in the hospitals and we don't have any shortage of oxygen either. It indicates that the people are having mild symptoms and will be safe if the maintain the government regulations strictly and stay in home isolation," a senior state government official said.

"We are preparing for the worst. If there is a huge rush in the hospitals then the government might think of imposing a lockdown in the entire state. Presently the situation is under control and we are having a close watch on the development. If the situation becomes critical then we will have think in a different way. Lockdown is our last resort and we will not impose it unless it is inevitable.'

Kolkata, Jan 8: The Indian government renewed permission for late Catholic nun Mother Teresa's charity to receive foreign funds, weeks after rejecting it, the organisation said Saturday.

On Christmas Day the Narendra Modi government moved to cut off foreign funding to the Missionaries of Charity and refused to renew its licence under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act

Charities and non-profit firms need to register under FCRA to receive money from abroad.

"The FCRA application has now been renewed," Sunita Kumar, a close aide to Mother Teresa, told

The Missionaries of Charity, which runs shelter homes across India, was founded in 1950 by the late Mother Teresa, a Catholic nun who devoted most of her life to helping the poor in the eastern city of Kolkata.

She won the Nobel Peace Prize and was later declared a saint.

India's home ministry issued a statement in December saying it was rejecting the renewal appli-



meet "eligibility conditions" and that "adverse inputs were noticed".

back access to foreign funds

Last week, Oxfam India said the Indian government had blocked its access to international funds, a move which it said would have severe consequences for its humanitarian work.

The Modi government has been accused of cutting off access to funding of charities and rights groups in the country.

Amnesty International announced in 2020 that it was halting operations in India after the government froze its bank accounts.

Derek's swipe at PM

NEW DELHI: TMC MP Derek O'Brien took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday after the government restored the FCRA registration of the Mother Teresa-founded Missionaries of Charities.

Tagging a screenshot of the list of FCRA-registered associations, O'Brien tweeted, "The POWER OF LOVE is stronger than the power of 56 inch," he added, taking a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

BJP fights to retain power in Manipur

Imphal, Jan 8: Manipur will vote in two phases - February 27 and March 3 - as the elections are held for the 60-member state Assembly, the Election Commission announced Saturday.

According to the EC, six districts of Manipur will go to the polls on February 27, while voting in the other 10 districts will take place March 3.

In the 2017 state elections, Congress had emerged as the single-largest party by winning 28 seats. Several leaders, however, later quit the party.

Later, the BJP which had 21 seats managed to form the government with Nongthongbam Biren Singh as the Chief Minister in an alliance with three regional parties Naga People's Front (NPF) National Peoples Party (NPP), the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP), an Independent candidate, and even a former Congress MLA.

Over the past five years or so, 13 Congress MLAs have switched over to BJP. Chief Minister N Biren Singh, a former Congress leader, has been able to steer the alliance for five years with a strong lobby in-

side the party in Manipur, pushing BJP central leadership more than once for a leadership change in the state. Biswajit Singh is another BJP leader who has made efforts to bridge the divide between the hills and the valley areas of Manipur and sustain peace.

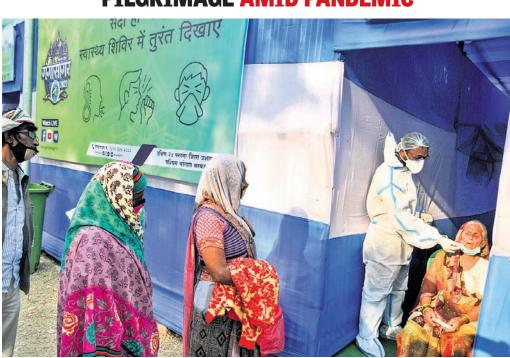
The BJP's relation with its alliance partner NPF was recently strained after the party had poached few key members of its ally. The NPP - another component of the coalition - has this time decided to go solo. Congress which is facing a cri-

sis due to infighting between state units aims to wrest power from the BJP in the state. The party also suffers due to the absence of vibrant and energetic young leaders.

The party has vowed to push for "the immediate and complete removal of AFSPA" from Manipur if it is elected to power.

Nitish Kumar's JD(U) had earlier announced that the party will contest the Assembly elections in Manipur. JD(U) and BJP are allies in Bihar as well as at the Centre. Conducting elections in Manipur amid frequent insurgent attacks is one of the biggest challenges for the EC

PILGRIMAGE AMID PANDEMIC



A health worker collects swab sample of a pilgrim as others stand in a queue near a transit camp for pilgrims of Gangasagar Mela 2022, in Kolkata, Saturday,

Dhankhar summons CS, DGP over incident involving Suvendu

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Jan 8: West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar Saturday summoned Chief Secretary Hari Krishna Dwivedi and Director General of Police (DGP) Manoj Malaviya to brief him on an incident involving BJP Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari, in which he was allegedly stopped from entering Netai under Binpur Block in Jhargram Friday.

Adhikari was going there to pay homage to nine persons who were shot during the Left Front rule.

"In view of the highly-disturbing scenario, reminiscent of Emergency, in Jan 07 communication @SuvenduWB, WB Guv has directed CS @MamataOfficial &



DGP@WBPolice to brief him, fully updated, with written report, on Jan 10 at 11 am," the Governor tweeted.

Dhankhar's directive to the state administration came after Adhikari wrote to the Governor alleging that he was not allowed to go to Netai. "On Friday on my way to Netai, a huge contingent of WB Police blocked my way, barricading the whole road." Adhikari wrote. Adhiakri also said that he was not

allowed to go to Netai despite him saying that he would go there alone. Writing in detail, the BJP MLA said, "I would request you to kindly analyse the following information that I am about to share with you as a specimen of the deterioration of the democratic order in West Bengal where even the judiciary holds no importance in the eyes of the authorities in charge of law and order.' Adhiakri said that January 7, 2011, armed goons fired indiscriminately targeting innocent villagers of Netai, in which nine lives were lost while several others got injured.

The Governor responded immediately and asked the two senior state government officials to be present in person Monday and brief him on the details.

'Important to have civilian population in border areas'

Arunachal Pradesh shares a 1,080-km border with China, 440 km with Myanmar and 160 km with Bhutan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, Jan 8: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has stressed on the importance of the presence of civilian population in border regions, asserting that the Centre is focused on speedy development of such

He also said border areas in the state will soon have the facility of 4G connectivity.

'The government now is focused on speedy development of the border regions by constructing roads and building other vital infrastructure. It is because of such aggressive stance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that road connectivity has extended to places like Taksing and other remote border areas in Arunachal, which was earlier unthought of," Khandu

The chief minister was speaking at a public rally Friday in Nacho constituency in remote Upper Subansiri district bordering Tibet.

"Regions near the international borders in the state will soon be con-

nected with 4G mobile connectivity." Khandu was quoted as saying in an official release.

Khandu said people along the_ border areas should be "able to move freely and take up activities for sustenance.

He said in Tawang, activities like yak rearing are gaining importance, and tourism and pilgrimage centres are being developed.

Arunachal Pradesh shares a 1,080-km border with China, 440 km with Myanmar and 160 km

Ships from NE to be connected to Haldia via B'desh: Sonowal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Jan 8: Work has begun for national waterways along the Brahmaputra and Barak rivers and cargo and passenger ships from Assam and the northeast will be connected to Haldia in West Bengal via Bangladesh, Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal said Saturday.

Speaking at the 'Brahmaputra River Conclave' at the ongoing Northeast Festival here, he said transformation through transportation is the idea behind the revamping of national waterways as means of communication.

Work has already begun to pave way for national waterways (Brahmaputra and Barak) to facilitate movement of cargo ships. Cargo and passenger ships from Assam and the northeast will be connected to Haldia via Bangladesh. The work of dredging has already begun," the Union ports, shipping and waterways minister said.

He added that coastal and maritime shipping will get a boost with opening up of the northeastern markets.

Sonowal also said that "we must



He spoke about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to develop the northeastern region. "All the eight states must come together and work towards the region's development," he urged.

Director of Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) A Selvakumar made a presentation on measures taken for revamping

river networks in the northeast. Rituparna Baruah, director of Assam Tourism Development Corporation Ltd, and Lakshya Konwar, vice president of Sports Authority of Assam and general secretary of Assam Olympic Association, were also present at

the conclave. The three-day Northeast festival was inaugurated by Assam Governor Jagdish Mukhi Friday. It is being held at Radisson Blu here with necessary Covid protocols and only double-vaccinated people are being allowed.

How chocolate from Assam reached Myanmar market

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Jan 8: A chocolate named 'dark fantasy', manufactured in Assam's Mangaldai town, made its way into the markets of Myanmar after travelling over 2,000 km and passing through Siliguri, Kolkata, Singapore, Yangon to finally reach Kale.

This nugget of information was shared by KK Dwivedi, Commissioner to the Department of Industries & Commerce, Assam, while speaking at the ongoing Northeast Festival here Friday.

At the 'Make in Northeast -DoNER Dialogue', Dwivedi also dwelt on several aspects of the region including how the term 'Northeast' was first used in 1884 by the then chief commissioner of Burma, Alexander Mackenzie, in his book 'History of the Relations



of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal'.

Dwivedi also recalled how Jyoti Prasad Saikia coined the term 'seven sisters' for the northeast

while participating in a talk show

On the journey of 'dark fantasy', he said this is a classic example of why there is a need for proper connectivity for cost effectiveness and

"A team of officials and MLAs from Assam had visited Kale in Myanmar. In a small market there. they saw a chocolate made in Mangaldai called 'dark fantasy'. After inquiring about it, they found the chocolate came through Guwahati, Siliguri, Kolkata, Singapore and Yangon before reach-

ing Kale town," Dwivedi said. The chocolate travelled over 2,000 km and for nearly two months when it would have taken two days had it travelled through the border town of Moreh in Manipur, he added.

Once there is connectivity network, trade and commerce will accelerate, he asserted.

The DoNER Dialogue under the chairmanship of Union Tourism, Culture and Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Minister

up owners to mentor budding entrepreneurs to help them chalk out a future of growth and development. He also asked the busi-

G Kishan Reddy saw a series of

discussions highlighting the

Northeast as an ideal destination

In his address, Reddy urged start-

for investments and start-ups.

ness community to carry the message of 'invest in the northeast' across the country. Assam's Industries and Commerce Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary also spoke.

Thangjam Dhabali Singh, a prominent figure in medical diagnostics, promotion of tourism and entrepreneurship from Manipur, brought to the fore pertinent issues about the healthcare and hospitality industry. The session was moderated by Numaligarh Refinery

Ltd MD SK Barua.

not limit ourselves to the Brahmaputra. We must go beyond and develop waterways through other rivers like Aie, Dhansiri,



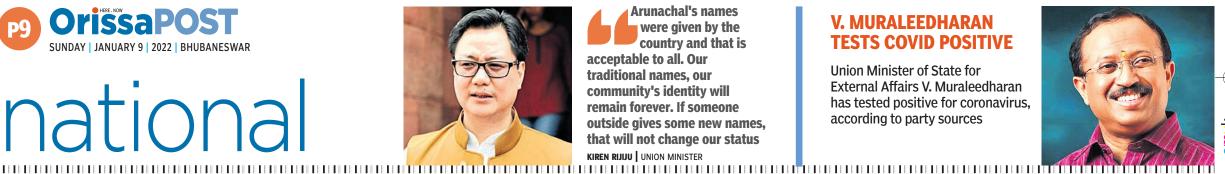
national



Arunachal's names were given by the country and that is acceptable to all. Our traditional names, our community's identity will remain forever. If someone outside gives some new names, that will not change our status KIREN RIJIJU | UNION MINISTER

V. MURALEEDHARAN **TESTS COVID POSITIVE**

Union Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan has tested positive for coronavirus, according to party sources





continuation of international tourists' charter will depend on the international Covid



TOURISM AND CULTURE



issues. Also, the Centre should also start vaccination drive of children in ASHOK GEHLOT RAJASTHAN CM





community's progress ASADUDDIN OWAISI | AIMIM LEADER

SHORT **TAKES**

Leopard kills girl

Tapi (Gujarat): A three-yearold girl was mauled to death by a leopard at a village in Gujarat's Tapi district, a forest official said Saturday. The toddler was taken away by a wild animal while her family members were working at a brick kiln in Hanumantiya village on Friday evening, said range forest officer (RFO) Chirag Ajara."After hours of search, the family members found the girl's body with her severed head lying near a sugarcane field around midnight. Primarily, we suspect that she was attacked by a leopard. Her body has been sent for postmortem," said Ajara, RFO, Sadadval forest range in the Tapi district.

4 techies killed

Bangalore: Four people including two women were killed while six others injured in a serial accident on the NICE road in the city leading said Saturday. Those who died in the accident Friday night were young software professionals between the age group of 25 to 30 years who were travelling in a car bearing Kerala registration number, they said adding that their vehicle was hit by a rashly driven truck from Tamil Nadu.

One dead

Jabalpur (MP): A 50-year-old woman from Mumbai and her son's fiancée fell into the Narmada river while taking selfies in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur district, an official said Saturday. The body of the 50-year-old woman was fished out later while the 22-year-old woman remains missing, he said. The incident occurred at the New Bhedaghat area, a famous tourist spot, some 25 km away from the Jabalpur district headquarter, on Friday, Tilwara police station subinspector Lekh Ram said.

Truck mows down 3

Fatehpur (UP): Three people were killed and another seriously injured after a speeding truck hit them in the Khaga Kotwali area here, police said Saturday. The victims, passengers of a jeep, were repairing their vehicle after it developed a snag near Mahicha Mandi police outpost on Kanpur-Allahabad highway on Friday night when the accident took place, Circle Officer, Khaga, Gayadutt Mishra said. Dharmendra alias Bhura (25), Babbu (27) and Pintu (24) died on the spot. Another person was seriously injured and he has been admitted to a hospital in Kanpur, he said. The bodies have been sent for post mortem, Mishra said.

HIGH STAKES FOR BJP IN ASSEMBLY POLLS Over 2 crore teens

The ruling BJP is leaving no stone unturned to retain four states and win Punjab as this election will set the political narrative in the country for the next general elections

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 8: The BJP's stakes are high in the assembly polls announced Saturday as the saffron party is in power in four states -Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur, while the Congress is ruling the state of Punjab.

The biggest challenge of the BJP is not only to retain these four states but also make its political presence felt in Punjab which the saffron party is jointly contesting with Amarinder Singh's Punjab Lok Congress and Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa's Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt).

The ruling BJP is leaving no stone unturned to retain four states and win Puniab as this election will set the political narrative in the country for the next general elections. BJP's loss in Uttar Pradesh and other states will strengthen opposition and will also give a shot in the arm to much talked about opposition unity. Similarly, retaining Uttar Pradesh will boost BJP's chances for the next general elec-

Uttar Pradesh will vote in seven phases - on February 10, 14, 20, 23, 27. March 3 and March 7. "It is always believed that the Uttar Pradesh assembly poll results will set the tone for the Lok Sabha polls. Similarly, Uttar Pradesh assembly polls this time will also set the agenda either in favour of BJP or against it in the run up for 2024 general elections. Uttar Pradesh, the biggest state with 403 assembly and 80 Lok Sabha seats, is politically very important," a BJP leader said.



To blunt the opposition charges - of existence of anti-incumbency against its state government, Covid mismanagement during second wave, farmers' protests and other issues, the BJP is aggressively sticking to the developmental issues emphasising development of state taking place only due to 'double engine' government.

The BJP, however, claims that there is no anti-incumbency against any of its state governments and highlights several infrastructural projects completed and welfare measures taken in the last five

In 2017 polls, the BJP had swept Uttar Pradesh along with its alliance partners by winning about 325 seats in 403 member assembly. This time Samajwadi Party (SP) is emerging as the biggest challenger for the BJP. The saffron party is also little worried about the SP-RLD alliance which may work against

In 2017 polls, the BJP had swept Uttar Pradesh along with its alliance partners by winning about 325 seats in the 403-member Assembly

it in Western Uttar Pradesh. A senior BJP office bearer claims that people have already decided to elect the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh. "The love and blessings we received during 'Jan Ashirwad Yatras' in all the 403 assembly constituencies is clearly showing people have already made up their mind to elect the BJP government to continue uninterrupted development of the state," he said.

The BJP is campaigning aggressively to gain political ground

in Punjab after its alliance came to an end with Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) in 2020 on controversial three farm laws. The saffron party leaders believe that Punjab Lok Congress and Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt) will make political gains in the state. The result will also show whether repeal of three farm laws benefited the BJP and its alliance partner or not in Punjab.

In Goa, where the BJP is in power for 10 years and will be contesting assembly polls for the first time after death of its biggest leader Manohar Parrikar, is facing challenge from Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Congress and debutant Trinamool Congress (TMC).

In Uttarakhand, whether changing three chief ministers in four months has benefited the BJP or not will be found out after the assembly poll results. In March, BJP had made Tirath Singh Rawat Chief Minister of Uttarakhand replacing Trivendra Singh Rawat. In July Tirath Singh was replaced by Pushkar Singh Dhami. The BJP has set a target of winning over 60 seats in next assembly polls in Uttarakhand. In the last assembly polls in 2017, the BJP won 57 seats. Puniab, Goa and Uttarakhand will vote on February 14.

The BJP is trying to retain Manipur on the issues of development, and 'bandh, blockade' free state in the last five years. The BJP had won 21 of the 60 seats in 2017 Manipur Assembly polls and formed the government with support from regional parties. Manipur will vote in two phases on February 27 March 3.

given first vax dose

A healthworker administers a dose of COVID-19 vaccine to a student at a school in Maharashtra

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 8: More than 2 crore teens have been inoculated with the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine, since the beginning of vaccination drive for children aged between 15 to 18 years on January 3.

According to the CoWIN portal, as of now, a total of 2,17,42,837 teens have been vaccinated and the numbers are increasing every minute. Congratulating the children on the occasion, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya tweeted: "Great Going, my Young Friends. Over 2 crore youngsters between the 15-18 age group have received their first dose of COVID19 vaccine in less than a week of vaccination drive for children", said Mandaviva in a tweet.

As per the CoWIN portal, as many as 2, 37,67,488 youngsters of 15 to 18 age group have registered for the vaccines so far. As per an estimation, around 7.50 crore teens of this As per the CoWIN portal. as many as 2, 37,67,488 youngsters of 15 to 18 age group have registered for the vaccines so far

age bracket are in India to whom vaccines will be administered across the country. Out of total, over two crore have received their first dose of the vaccines within the first week of its beginning.

On December 25, the Prime Minister had announced that the vaccination for the 15-18 age group would begin from January 3. As of now only Bharat Biotech's indigenously-made Covaxin will be available for vaccinating this age bracket. According to the health ministry, additional doses of Covaxin have been sent to the states and Union territories for inoculating this population category.

HC ALLOWS WOMAN TO TERMINATE PREGNANCY



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: The Delhi High Court has allowed a woman to terminate her over 30-week pregnancy as the foetus had a rare chromosomal disorder and said had she given birth, the child would have such substantial abnormalities that normal life might have never been an option.

If the woman is forced to continue with the pregnancy she will be in constant fear about the high odds of a stillbirth. Even if the infant is born alive, the mother would be bearing the heavy pain of knowing the child can die within a few months, the High Court said.

Justice Rekha Palli said there are certain risks to the petitioner in undergoing termination of her pregnancy at this stage. But when considered in light of the medical opinion, which clearly suggests that the foetus is suffering from a rare chromosomal disorder, the compelling reason for her to seek permission to end the pregnancy is not difficult to fathom, the High Court judge said.

The court was informed by the woman, who was present at the hearing, that she has been explained the risks involved in the procedure."I, thus, have no hesitation in holding that this is a fit case where the petitioner should be granted permission to undergo medical termination of her pregnancy at a medical facility of her choice. However, the same shall be done at her own risk and consequences," the judge said.

The court, in its order, said, "Not to mention that the child will be born with such substantial abnormalities that living a normal life may never be an option, thus causing grave hardship to the child as well as putting the petitioner through extreme amounts of menThe court was informed by the woman, who was present at the hearing, that she has been explained the risks involved in the procedure

tal, emotional, and even financial

"It is thus a clear case where, leaving aside the lifelong anguish and trauma which may be caused to the petitioner, the foetus itself suffers from such abnormalities that it clearly falls under the ambit of section 3(2B) of the MTP (Medical

Termination of Pregnancy) Act." The court disposed of the plea by the woman seeking permission to undergo medical termination of her pregnancy, which was 28week at the time of filing of the petition, under the MTP Act.

According to the petition, the foetus was suffering not only from Edward Syndrome (Trisomy 18) but also from non-ossified nasal bone and bilateral pyelectasis.

According to medical opinion, if the pregnancy is taken to its logical conclusion, the child is not likely to survive beyond one year and that too with continued medical assistance will not only cause severe harm to her physical health but mental health as well.



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jharkhand, Jan 8: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which is probing the murder of Dhanbad Court Judge Uttam Anand, told the Jharkhand High Court that the accused wanted to steal a cellphone which led to the murder of the judge.

A division bench of Chief Justice Ravi Ranjan and Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad was hearing the matter when the CBI officials gave this statement before the court. However, the bench was not satisfied with the reply of the central

alliance with the Akali Dal.

In her absence most of the BSP

leaders are joining the SP and

mostly Brahmins are choosing it

over the BJP. Former Bahujan

Samaj Party MP Rakesh Pandey -

- father of BSP leader in the Lok

Sabha, Ritesh Pandey -- joined the

Samajwadi Party on Monday along

with his supporters. Earlier, Kushal

Tiwari, a former BSP MP and son

of Harishankar Tiwari, joined the

probe agency officials. The bench said that there was

nothing new in the probe of the CBI and each time the latter come up with a new angle to drag the mat-

"The CBI officials are now saying that Judge Uttam Anand was killed for cellphone robbery. But CCTV tells a different picture. As per the CCTV footage it could be seen that he was killed intentionally," said the Chief Justice.

The CBI officials said that they conducted a narco test and brain mapping of the accused but didn't find anything.

Four held for 6 workers' death

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gandhinagar, Jan 8: The Surat police have arrested four persons for the alleged illegal discharge of chemical waste due to which six workers died from inhaling toxic fumes. They have been arrested

under various charges. Twenty two others were hospitalised January 6. The Surat police crime branch arrested four persons, including two transporters, a bank employee and a garage

owner, the police said. The arrests were carried out with the help of Vadodara and Bharuch police. According to the police, the chemical waste being illegally dumped was supplied by one Ashish Gupta, a transporter and a partner in a firm. He provided the hazardous chemical for disposal to one Jaipratap Tomar and an-

other person identified as Yadav. Tomar works in the loan department of a bank while Yadav runs a garage, the police official said. The police have also identified one Premsagar Gupta, who had accompanied Tomar and Yadav in

the tanker to the Sachin GIDC area.

The Sachin GIDC police station had filed an FIR on Thursday against unidentified persons under sections 304 (punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder), rash and negligent act endangering human lives (336, 337, and 338), rash and negligent act involving poisonous substance (284), voluntarily corrupting water of public spring or reservoir (277), making atmosphere noxious to health (278), criminal conspiracy (120 (B) of the Indian Penal Code. and sections of the Environment

(Protection) Act, 1986.

Mayawati missing in action, focus on Dalit votes in UP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Uttar Pradesh polls the political parties have now shifted to the virtual mode but missing in action is Mayawati. The BSP supremo has not started her campaign but all the other political parties are active including the BJP with Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing several rallies.

Mayawati's inaction has led to some serious contenders throwing their hat into the ring for the Dalit votes, especially the Jatays who have been with the Bahujan Samai Party and did not desert during the bad times. But the silence of the BSP on core issues has led to suspicions in the minds of its leaders and almost all the big leaders including the legislative party leader have left the party and joined the



Samajwadi Party.

But the BSP seems unfazed with the exit of its leaders and except for Satish Chandra Mishra no other leader is seen at its forefront. The Congress has termed it as the "B

team" of the Bharatiya Janata Party while SP leader Akhilesh Yadav has refrained from attacking the BSP leader but has inducted all

the BSP turncoats into his party. The four time Chief Minister

SP with his whole clan. Bahujan Samaj Party leaders say that the party has finalized candidates for a majority of the seats and the names of the selected candidates are being announced in

leaders in various districts. The BSP president has been ac-

cused of staying away from the political arena and has been limiting her activities to press statements and tweets. Party national general secretary Satish Chandra Mishra has refuted this and said, "The BJP. SP and Congress are luring leaders with tickets for the assembly elections.'

Mishra said that the BSP was working on the social engineering formula of 'sarvajan hitaye - sarvajan sukhaye' to win the elections. Members of all communities were being given adequate representation in the distribution of tickets.

The BSP had managed to win only 19 seats in the 2017 assembly polls and is now left with merely six legislators since the others have either left or have been expelled.

of UP has been active only on meetings organised by the party Twitter. She sometimes issues a New Delhi, Jan 8: Ahead of the press note. She tweeted about the PM's security breach and criticized the Punjab government where her party is contesting elections in

international



When some make from their freedom ... a motto, not only do they put others' lives at risk. but they are also curtailing others' freedom. That I cannot accept. When you are a citizen you must agree to do your civic duty EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

WHATSAPP USAGE

SWISS ARMY BANS

Citing privacy concerns, the Swiss army has banned the use of Metaowned WhatsApp among other popular messaging services by army personnel. Apart from WhatsApp, the Swiss army has also banned the use of Signal and Telegram

MORNING MIST

tres and maneuvered laterally ap-

peared to be an exaggeration.

Ministry officials said the claim

was likely aimed at a domestic au-

dience to boost public confidence

North Korean leader Kim Jong

Un has been calling for greater

unity and improved weapons de-

velopment in the face of pandemic-

related difficulties. He has refused

to return to disarmament talks

with Washington and Seoul while

maintaining tough anti-virus re-

strictions. The UN Security Council

scheduled closed consultations on

the North Korean launch Monday

afternoon and diplomats said mem-

bers will receive receive a brief-

ing from Assistant-Secretary-

General Khaled Khiari.

The meeting was requested

by the United States, United

Kingdom, France, Ireland

in its missile program.





series of are an opportunity for Russia to demonstrate that it is dialogue and diplomacy. We are

always ready to listen to Russian concerns. And NATO will make every effort to find a political way forward JENS STOLTENBERG

SECRETARY GENERAL, NATO

This pandemic, especially this

latest wave has put our health professionals under enormous pressure. Please be polite and considerate when dealing with the frontline health workers

We know now that Omicron is less severe and we certainly know that once you get boosted that your chance of

hospitalisation, our latest analysis shows, is almost 90 per cent less than it was with Delta

SAJID JAVID HEALTH SECRETARY, UK

SHORT TAKES

Cafeteria blast kills 16 in China

Beijing: A lunchtime explosion at an office cafeteria killed 16 people in southwest China Friday and injured 10 others, authorities said. A gas leak is the suspected cause of the blast, the Chongqing city government said in an online statement. The cafeteria collapsed, trapping victims inside. Rescue workers searched the debris into the night and all the bodies were recovered by midnight, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Mandela items' auction halted

Johannesburg: US-based Guernsey's Auction House has agreed to suspend its planned auction of the key to the cell on Robben Island where former President Nelson Mandela served out most of his 27 years as a political prisoner before becoming the first democratically-elected president of South Africa in 1994. This followed interventions by the South Africa government after it emerged that the key had been made available for auction January 22 alongside other Mandela curios.

14 killed in bus collision

Cairo: At least 14 people were killed and 17 injured Saturday when a coach and a minibus smashed into each other at high speed in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, security officials said. The minibus and the coach, which had come from the capital Cairo and was heading for the Red Sea tourist resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, collided while speeding in poor visibility due to fog around dawn, officials added. The crash took place close to El-Tor in southern Sinai, some 300 kilometres southeast of Cairo.

Earthquake hits Qinghai Province

Beijing: A strong overnight earthquake shook a sparsely populated area in western China early Saturday and forced the suspension of high-speed rail service because of tunnel damage, with minor injuries in conference. The magnitude a mountainous part of

'World tops over 2mln new daily Covid cases'

Europe, as well as the

Canada, are the world's

their lowest level since October

2020, with an average of 6.237 per

day recorded in the period between

January 1 and 7. Although early

studies suggest Omicron causes

less severe illness, experts have

warned the sheer volume of cases

fuelled by the strain could still

Countries around the world have

reintroduced restrictions and

ramped up vaccination pro-

grammes in a bid to stem the spread

Russia furious over

Blinken's comment

Moscow: Russia responded angrily

of State Antony Blinken that

Saturday to a comment by US Secretary

Kazakhstan might have a hard time get-

ting rid of Russian troops, saying he

should reflect instead on US military

meddling around the world. Blinken

days of violent unrest in the Central

Friday challenged Russia's justification

for sending forces into Kazakhstan after

Asian country. One lesson of recent his

tory is that once Russians are in your

house, it's sometimes very difficult to

Blinken's remark typically offensive and

get them to leave. Blinken said.

Russia's foreign ministry called

events in Kazakhstan. It said

accused him of joking about tragic

Washington should analyse its own

tries such as Vietnam and Iraq. If

track record of interventions in coun-

Antony Blinken loves history lessons so

much, then he should take the following

into account when Americans are in

your house, it can be difficult to stay

alive and not be robbed or raped, the

media channel. We are taught this not

to end what he has called attacks

only by the recent past but by all 300

years of American statehood.

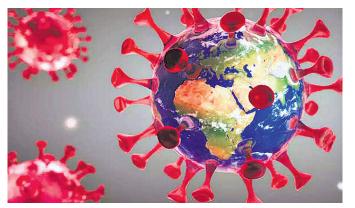
by bandits and terrorists.

ministry said on its Telegram social

overwhelm health systems.

United States and

infection hotspots



KAZAKHSTAN UNREST

Ex-security chief

held over treason

AGENCE-FRANCE PRESSE

Paris, Jan 8: The world recorded more than two million daily coronavirus cases on average between January 1 and 7 with figures doubling in 10 days, an AFP tally showed Saturday.

An average of 2,106,118 new daily infections were reported over the seven-day period, shortly after the one million case threshold was passed in the week of December 23-29, 2021. New global case numbers have soared by 270 percent since the highly contagious Omicron variant was discovered in South Africa in late November.

But Covid-related deaths were at

Almaty, Jan 8: Kazakhstan's for-

mer intelligence chief has been

arrested on suspicion of treason.

the state security agency said

Saturday, as the former Soviet re-

public cracks down on a wave of un-

The detention of Karim

Massimov was announced by the

National Security Committee which

he headed until he was fired by

President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev

Wednesday after violent protests

swept across the Central Asian na-

tion. Tokayev's office said he had

told Russian President Vladimir

Putin in a phone call that the sit-

At the same time, hotbeds of ter-

rorist attacks persist. Therefore, the

fight against terrorism will continue

with full determination, it quoted

Tokayev's idea to convene a video

call of leaders from the Collective

Security Treaty Organisation

(CSTO), under whose umbrella

Russia and four other former Soviet

republics have sent troops into

Kazakhstan to help restore order.

It was not clear when this would

killed, thousands have been de-

tained and public buildings across

Kazakhstan have been torched over

the past week in the worst violence

experienced in the oil and ura-

nium producer since it became in-

dependent in the early 1990s as the

Soviet Union collapsed. Tokayev has

ordered his troops to shoot to kill

Dozens of people have been

The Kremlin said Putin backed

uation was stabilising.

him as saying.

take place.

rest and starts to assign blame.

Europe, as well as the United States and Canada, are the world's infection hotspots. The two regions respectively represented 49 percent and 33 percent of global Covid cases in the past week.

Covid cases skyrocketed by 47 percent in Europe and 76 percent in the United States and Canada compared with the previous week.

In the same period, Covid infections increased by 224 percent in Oceania, 148 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 116 percent in the Middle East and 145 percent in Asia. The number of new cases reported in Africa remained stable but, as elsewhere, were at their highest level since the start of the pandemic in March 2020.

The figures are based on official statistics produced by national health authorities. A significant proportion of less severe or asymptomatic cases go undetected despite intensified testing regimes since the beginning of the pandemic.

Testing policies also vary from one country to another.

Taking into account excess mortality linked to Covid-19, the World Health Organization estimates the overall death toll could be two to three times higher.

Indian-origin taxi driver assaulted

ed hate crime, an Indian-origin Sikh taxi driver in the US has been assaulted by an unidentified man, who knocked off his turban and also used expletives against him outside the JFK International Airport here, according to a video on social media. The undated 26-second video was uploaded by Navjot Pal Kaur on microblogging site Twitter January 4, showing a man assaulting the Sikh taxi driver outside the airport. The person can be heard allegedly using expletives against the victim. He repeatedly hits and punches him and knocks off his turban. "This video was taken by a bystander at John F. Kennedy International Airport. I do not own the rights to this video. But I just wanted to highlight the fact that hatred continues to remain in our society and unfortunately I've seen Sikh cab drivers get assaulted again and again," Kaur tweeted.

Deer wander through frost and mist ahead of sunrise in Bushy Park, London, Britain S Korea dismisses North's hypersonic missile launch

Seoul. Jan 8: South Korea disputed North Korea's claim to have recently launched a hypersonic missile as an exaggeration Friday, saying it was a normal ballistic missile that could be intercepted.

The assessment is certain to anger North Korea. South Korea has previously avoided publicly disputing North Korea's weapons tests, apparently so as not to aggravate relations.

South Korea's Defence Ministry said it believes North Korea hasn't acquired the technologies needed to launch a hypersonic weapon.

It said in a report that what North Korea fired Wednesday was a type of ballistic missile that was displayed in October during a weapons exhibition in Pyongyang, its capital. It said South Korean and US forces could shoot it down.

claim that the weapon flew 700



James Webb's 'golden eye' opens up

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape Canaveral, Jan 8: NASA's new space telescope opened its huge, gold-plated, flower-shaped mirror Saturday, the final step in the observatory's dramatic unfurling.

The last portion of the 21-foot mirror swung into place at flight controllers' command, completing the unfolding of the James Webb Space Telescope.

"I'm emotional about it. What an amazing milestone. We see that beautiful pattern out there in the sky now," said Thomas Zurbuchen, NASA's science missions chief.

More powerful than the Hubble Space Telescope, the USD 10 billion Webb will scan the cosmos for light streaming from the first stars and galaxies formed 13.7 billion years ago. To accomplish this, NASA had to outfit Webb with the biggest and most sensitive mirror ever launched — its "golden eye,"

as scientists call it. Webb is so big that it had to be folded orgami-style to fit in the rocket that soared from South America two weeks ago. The riskiest operation occurred earlier in the week, when the tennis court-size sunshield unfurled, providing subzero shade for the mirror and infrared detectors.

Webb should reach its destination 1 million miles away in another two weeks.

PAK: 22 TOURISTS FREEZE TO DEATH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, Jan 8: Pakistan's popular hill station Murree was declared a calamity-hit area Saturday after at least 22 people, including ten children, froze to death in their stranded vehicles due to unprecedented snowfall and rush of tourists to the picturesque town in Punjab province.

All the routes in Murree in Rawalpindi district were blocked after thousands of vehicles entered the city, leaving the tourists helpless on the roads

Around 1,000 cars were stuck on the hill station while the Punjab chief minister Usman Buzdar issued instructions for expediting rescue work and providing aid to the stranded tourists, the Dawn newspaper reported.

The Punjab government has imposed a state of emergency in hospitals, police stations and admin-



istration offices. According to a list issued by Rescue 1122, at least 22 people died, including ten children. it said. Prime Minister Imran Khan said he was shocked and upset at the tragic deaths of tourists on the road to Murree.

"Unprecedented snowfall & rush of ppl proceeding without checking weather conditions caught district admin unprepared. Have ordered inquiry & putting in place strong regulation to ensure prevention of

such tragedies," Khan said in a tweet. The military has been mobilised to clear roads and rescue people still trapped, Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid said in a video message. He said Murree had "seen a huge number of tourists after 15-20 years, and due to that, a crisis took place.

Rashid said the government was forced to close the road from Islamabad to Murree. The commissioners of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, deputy commission-

19 deaths took place in cars. The locals provided food and blankets to the stranded people," Rashid said. He said the authorities would evacuate 1,000 vehicles by Saturday evening, while the roads would remain closed to Murree till Sunday at 9 pm. "We have also decided to

ban tourists who are planning to visit

Murree. This is not the time to come

ers, police, are carrying out rescue

operations, he said. "As many as

1.000 vehicles have been stuck since

night, some have been evacuated: 16-

to Murree," the minister was quoted as saying by the Geo News. The Punjab government has declared Murree as a calamity-hit area after heavy snowfall wreaked havoc in the city. Taking notice of the chaos and emergency situation, Punjab Chief Minister Buzdar has directed to open the government's offices and rest houses for

the stranded tourists.

Colombian man felt tranquil before euthanasia ended his pain

Escobar was the first to use a July ruling of the nation's top court that changed the rules for euthanasia, allowing it to be applied to people who suffer intense physical or

for his lung disease. There was no longer any need. On Friday evening, he became the first Colombian to be euthanised despite not yet being in terminal condition. "I feel an immense tranquility.

I don't feel fear of what is to come,' Escobar told The Associated Press They have told me that the

process is going to be a slow sedasay goodbye.



The country depenalised euthanasia in 1997, but only for those considered to have fewer than six months to live. While polls indicate most Colombians favour expanding it to people like Escobar, the legislature so far hasn't

thanasia took place.

formally followed the court's lead by exwe ask for a plicitly authodignified death it is

cient to calm his pain and he said other medications were losing their effects.

He had been ill since 2008, when two strokes cost him the movement of half his body, though some of that returned. He later developed chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hypertension, diabetes, severe arthrosis and costochondral junction syndrome — a painful inflammation where the ribs meet the breastbone. Escobar fought to obtain eu-

thanasia for more than two years. Judges twice turned him down because his illnesses were not yet considered terminal.

Escobar said he would say farewell to his wife, three children, brother and cousins at a midday meal.

psychological suffering tion at first so that I have time to rising it and pecause we are tired of authorities said. Four people some remain due to a grave and all the illnesses that "After that is the injection of deeply opposed. overcome us. For us, life incurable disease, even if Menyuan Hui Autonomous the euthanasia, which is going to From the County had been treated and ended a long time ago apartment in they are not yet near death be something without pain — a released, they said at a news VÍCTOR ESCOBAR very tranquil death. I trust in God Cali, where he was ASSOCIATED PRESS that that all this will be that way,' born, Escobar 6.9 guake struck at 1:45 am in he said in a weak voice while sitwas conscious of Cali (Colombia), Jan 8: For the first His lawyer, Luis Giraldo, said Escobar was dead. ting on a sofa in the small home the importance of his case, the Qinghai province that is 3,659 Friday evening that the process His family declined to reveal the time in years, Víctor Escobar stopped he had been paying off with a penfirst in Latin America meters above sea level. Even morphine was insuffitaking most of the medicines needed sion of \$250 a month had been completed and name of the clinic where the eu-

business



Thank you to over a million people who booked more than half a million nights with us this New Years. For all of us at OYO, it was a busy NY (new year) RITESH AGARWAL

ITC BEST INDUSTRY FOR CSR ACTIVITIES

The Union Minister of Jal Shakti has awarded ITC Ltd for their work and efforts towards water conservation in the 'Best Industry for CSR activities' category of the 3rd National Water Awards, Adani Foundation grabbed the second position followed by HAL and Dharampal Satyapal Ltd, jointly bagging the third position



New stock, Omicron

impact to curb rising





extraordinary zeal shown by the potential entrepreneurs needs

deep domain expertise, or else there is a danger of failing for entirely K VIJAYRAGHAVAN PRINCIPAL SCIENTIFIC

ADVISER TO GOVERNMENT

The golden weeks have been crucified due to the new wave. December and January form the backbone of a

restaurant's profitability SAGAR DARYANI

CEO & CO-FOUNDER, WOW! MOMO

A gradual pick up in volumes including from FIIs and DIIs along with stable domestic cues and release of advanced estimates of a rise in FY22 GDP by 9.2 per cent portend well for the near term

DEEPAK JASANI HEAD OF RETAIL RESEARCH, HDFC SECURITIES

SHORT **TAKES**

Nadella joins Groww as investor, adviser

New Delhi: Tiger Global-backed Groww Saturday said Microsoft chief executive officer Satya Nadella has joined the company as an investor and advisor. "Groww gets one of the world's best CEOs as an investor and advisor. Thrilled to have @satyanadella join us in our mission to make financial services accessible in India," Groww's co-founder and CEO Lalit Keshre tweeted. Groww had raised \$251 million (around ₹1,885 crore) in October last year in a funding round led by Iconiq Growth, which valued the mutual fund and stock investment platform at \$1 billion.

FIEO inks pact with RebelCorp

New Delhi: Apex exporters body FIFO has inked an initial nact with digital platform provider RebelCorp to help MSME exporters create their own websites at affordable cost and expand business. Saad Khan. Founder and COO of Mumbai based startup RebelCorp said the company will help the exporters create a portal which can be easily managed by themselves. "At a time when the world is facing serious issues due to Covid-19 pandemic, our product will help exporters and businesses particularly from the MSME segment to create their own websites and reach out to global players," Khan said.

D-Mart Q3 net profit up 23.6%

New Delhi: Avenue Supermarts, which owns and operates retail chain D-Mart, Saturday reported a 23.62 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to ₹552.53 crore for the third quarter ended December 31. The company had posted a net profit of ₹446.95 crore in the same quarter a year ago, Avenue Supermarts said in a BSE filing. Its revenue from operations was up 22.22 per cent at ₹9,217.76 crore during the quarter under review against ₹7,542 crore in the same quarter last fiscal.

Agility Ventures to launch ₹450cr fund

New Delhi: Angel investor network Agility Ventures Saturday said it has received approvals from markets watchdog Sebi for an angel fund with a total corpus of ₹450 crore (\$60 million) that will be deployed over the next 3-4 years. Agility Ventures network invests in startups or early-stage businesses in industries such as education, technology, healthcare, ecommerce, automobiles, electric vehicles, robotics, agritech and manufacturing, among others.

AMID VOLATILITY IN MARKET

'Cats & Dogs' touch 52-week high

Innumerable counters are moving up without logic, many defying fundamentals and eluding the eyes of the regulator and the exchanges. It remains regulator SEBI's incumbent duty to retain oversight through stringent surveillance and scrutiny mechanisms

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 8: Some penny stocks or low-priced stocks scaled new highs or went up in straight trading sessions this week in an otherwise volatile broader market.

In the last 18 months since the onset of Covid 1. markets have moved up dramatically from 24,000-odd levels to close to 62,000 on the BSE Sensex and many penny stocks have seen this operation undertaken without so



et Freight Logistics hit a 52-week high of ₹62.45 on BSE January 7, surging

nited Polyfab on J the NSE was locked in the upper circuit January 7 at ₹22.10, up by 4.99%

ONE MONTH CLOSING FRIDAY

much as by your leave. SEBI needs to be in action mode

in order to sift the wheat from the chaff. This process of winnowing is crucial to curtail the needless froth driven to the top by operators and punters, who are clearly in some cases working in collusion with some of these companies.

It is this collusion between operators fronting for certain promoters which is creating this distortionary trend in the market. Many market analysts maintain that this emergent trend line may well be part of a circular trading operation where a cabal of operators resort to pump and dump. Pump and dump is a well-known

system of price rigging and manipulation when identical buy and sell orders are entered at the same time with the same number of shares and the same price. Try buying one of these shares at precisely 9.15 am and one will find that it has already hit the upper or lower circuit for the day. This is being done in a brazen manner in complete contravention of SEBI and exchange rules and regulations.

The latest lot of those who appear to be cocking a snook are Jet Freight Logistics which hit a 52week high of ₹62.45 on BSE January 7, up 4.96 per cent. It has been rising consistently in the last few trading sessions. On January 3, it was at ₹49.95 and ended January 7 at ₹62.45.

United Polyfab also hit a 52week high at ₹22.10. It has risen consistently since December 31 when it was at ₹17.35 and went up to ₹22.10 January 7. STL Global on BSE closed Friday at ₹29.65, up by 4.96 per cent, its 52-week high. The stock has doubled in the last one month. It was at ₹15.55 December 7. It has gone up in the last few sessions. On January 3, it was at ₹25.2.

Balkrishna Paper Mills also hit a 52-week high Friday at ₹45.85, up by 4.91 per cent. On January 3, the stock was at ₹37.95. On December 7, it was at ₹25.05. Shivam Autotech hit a 52-week high Friday at ₹40.75, up by 4.89 per cent. The stock was at ₹25.97 December 7. On January 3, it was at ₹33.6. Ind-Swift Ltd is also close to its 52week high and closed up 4.99 per cent up at ₹16.21 per cent. On January, the stock was at ₹13.

SEBI has in the past turned to big data to crack many such cases, but it needs to do this with greater alacrity. On December 31, it rejigged its market data advisory panel. It needs to go beyond the pale and bare its fangs and stop this abomination in its tracks.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 8: New stock arrivals as well as the Omicron Covid-19 variant's expected impact on demand is likely to arrest any further rise in cotton prices during the short-term, said India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra).

As per the credit ratings agency, cotton prices are expected to get corrected in the short term, because of increased new arrivals as well as the spread of the Omicron variant which would impact demand. Till recently, healthy international and domestic demand along with minimal opening stock, sustained high prices.

The continued surge in domestic cotton prices during November 2021 was led by a rise in international and domestic demand along with minimal opening stock, despite new cotton arrivals and nil procurement by Cotton Corporation of India, the agency said in a report.

Accordingly, the prices of 'Shankar-6' (medium staple) increased by 14 per cent month on month (MoM), and remained higher by 55 per cent year on year (YoY) because of the strong demand and lower base effect.

Prices in China also shot up in



The domestic stock-to-use ratio is expected to decline in the new cotton season

November 2021 due to a YoY lower cotton output for the current season, leading to a supply shortage amid the strong demand. Besides, Ind-Ra expects inventory levels to decline by end of the current cotton season with the lower opening stock and a slightly higher consumption.

Incremental consumption levels are likely during the current season against a marginal increase in production, hence reducing the expected ending stock as per USDA-FAS.

In addition, Ind-Ra expects 'cotton varn' and 'spurn varn' prices to continue to rise in the short term, due to a higher demand from downstream players as well as export markets.

FRESH CURBS

Business volume down 45%: CAIT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 8: Increase in Covid cases along with imposition of various restrictions by different states have had an adverse impact on business and economic activities across the country, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said Saturday.

According to the CAIT, the situation has led business of various verticals of goods to go down by an average of 45 per cent in the last 10 days.

The Confederation also ur the Central government and the Chief Ministers to take all possible steps to prevent further Covid

Besides, it cited the double whammy of lower intra-regional trade due to the restrictions and subdued local buyers' sentiments. The main reason for this decline is the panic among the people due to the third wave of Corona, the

THE CAIT

MAJOR

EXPECTS A

BUSINESS

DECLINE

WEDDING

SEASON

DURING THE

Reluctant mood of traders to come to the distribution centres from neighbouring cities, money crunch, large sums of money getting stuck in credit and imposition of various Covid restrictions without consulting the traders are some of the factors that have hit the businesses, it said. The CAIT also expects a major

business decline during the wedding season.

During the wedding season, which will start on the day of Makar Sankranti January 14 and go on for two-and-a-half months, business of about ₹4 lakh crore was expected, it said.

But due to the various restrictions imposed by the state governments across the country, a steep drop is seen in the business of nearly about 75 per cent, it added.

Now it is estimated that in the next two-and-a-half months, there is a possibility of about ₹1.25 lakh crore only in this business vertical,



Global food prices up 28.1% in 2021

GLOBAL CEREAL PRICES WERE AT THEIR HIGHEST LEVEL SINCE 2012 WHILE RICE, ONE OF THE WORLD'S KEY STAPLE FOOD, LOST 4%

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Geneva, Jan 8: Although global food prices decreased slightly in December 2021 month-on-month, they were much higher throughout last year than in 2020, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Abdolreza Abbassian, senior economist of the UN agency, told a press briefing here Friday that in 2021, the FAO Food Price Index was 28.1 per cent higher than in 2020, reports Xinhua news agency. Global cereal prices were at their highest level since 2012, on average 27.2 per cent above 2020 prices, he said

According to Abbassian, in 2021,



vegetable oil prices increased by 65.8 per cent over 2020; sugar prices soared to their highest level since 2016; meat prices were 12.7 per cent above 2020 prices; and dairy prices were 16.9 per cent higher than in 2020. Biggest gainers were maize, up 44.1 per cent, and wheat, gaining 31.3 per cent.

The Vegetable Oil Price Index declined 3.3 per cent in December, due to lower global import demand, that may be linked to concerns over the impact of rising Covid-19 cases, which have led to delays in the supply chain. For the year as a whole, the

Oil Index reached an all-time high, increasing 65.8 per cent compared with 2020.

The monthly increase in prices since the last quarter of 2020 was a signal for producers to produce more, but whether or not 2022 would see an adjustment depends on several factors, including the repercussions of the pandemic, the cost of fertilizers and climate conditions, he noted.

Cook earned over 1,400x the average $_{\perp}$ Apple worker in '21



Washington, Jan 8: Apple Inc boss Tim Cook's pay in 2021 was 1,447 times that of the average employee at the tech giant, a filing_ showed, fueled by stock awards that helped him earn a total of nearly \$100 million

In 2021, the median pay for employees was \$68,254, Apple said, adding it had selected a new median employee for comparison due to changes in hiring and compensation. The median pay in 2020 was \$57,783 and the pay ratio was 256 times Cook's salary.

The iPhone maker has benefited from strong demand over the past two years as consumers working from home splurged on upgrades. Apple's revenue rose more than 30% to \$365.82 billion for its fiscal 2021 and its shares briefly crossed \$3 trillion in market capitalisation this year.

Cook, whose salary remained at \$3 million, received \$82.3 million in stock awards, \$12 million for hitting Apple's targets and \$1.4 million for air travel, 401(k) plan, insurance premiums and others.

In total, he earned \$98.7 million. compared with \$14.8 million in 2020. Cook took the helm in August 2011 after the company's co-founder Steve Jobs stepped down months before his demise. The stock has surged over 1,000% since Cook

E-CUSTOMS DUTY PAYMENT

HDFC integrates with ICEGATE

New Delhi: HDFC Bank's integration with Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)



customers to pay for their customs duty directly via the bank. With this, the bank will offer customers the convenience of directly paying customs duty by selecting HDFC Bank, the lender said Friday. This follows authorisation by the Principal Chief Controller of Accounts of CBIC to collect IGST on import and export of goods and services. HDFC Bank said it has facilitated both retail and wholesale payments of customs duty. With HDFC Bank on board, clients would no longer need to route payments through other bank accounts. This integration also offers the bank the opportunity to acquire current accounts of customers who bank with others that do not offer this facility, it said in a release.

ICICI starts online customs deposit

New Delhi: Private sector lender ICICI Bank Friday said it now facilitates online payment of customs duty, to benefit both retail and corporate customers. Corporate customers can pay customs duty through the bank's corporate internet banking (CIB) and mobile banking app InstaBIZ, while retail customers can do so through the bank's retail internet banking platform, Customers can make online payment by selecting ICICI Bank from the list of banks on the website of the Indian Customs Electronic Gateway (ICEGATE), it said in a statement. ICICI Bank has been successfully facilitating payment of direct and indirect taxes for more than a decade

now, it said further. ICICI Bank

Ancient India is marking its entry into the NFT world

The collaboration between government advisory firm Sapio Analytics and WazirX NFT will feature some of the greatest artworks ever created by humankind from the ancient times of India

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 8: Ancient Artworks of India will now be available for ownership through data-driven government advisory firm Sapio Analytics. The AI based government support organisation is joining hands with

WazirX NFT marketplace as they drop an exclusive digital artwork on India's trusted NFT marketplace. The platform has introduced multiple use-cases in just a matter of 6 months, the NFT drop by Sapio Analytics being the latest one. This collaboration will feature

some of the greatest artworks ever created by humankind from the ancient times of India. These works have been photographed and digitally restored by legends such as Benoy K Behl, and selected items are now on offer through NFT. The drop is 7th January.

The introductory NFT is an artwork from 5th century CE, that shows the meaning of divinity with the power to elevate the consciousness of those who engage with the art. The artwork belongs to Pitalkhora Buddhist Caves and was



What makes this drop additionally special is the fact that a firm that works so closely with the government is now recognising the potential NFTs hold and how blockchain can be used as a source of communication and connection with the new generation

VISHAKHA SINGH I VP. WAZIRX NFT MARKETPLACE

photographed by world-renowned filmmaker and art historian Benoy

K Behl in 1992. It has been painstakingly digitally restored by him to get

What is non-fungible token (NFT)?

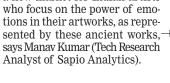
Anon-fungible token (NFT) is a unique and non-interchangeable unit of data stored on a blockchain, a form of digital ledger. NFTs can be associated with reproducible digital files such as photos, videos, and audio. NFTs use a digital ledger to provide a public certificate of authenticity or proof of ownership, but do not restrict the sharing or copying of the underlying digital files. The lack of interchangeability (fungibility) distinguishes NFTs from blockchain cryptocurrencies, such as Bitcoin. NFTs have drawn criticism with respect to the energy cost and carbon footprint associated with validating blockchain transactions as well as their frequent use in art scams. Further criticisms challenge the usefulness of establishing proof of ownership in an often extralegal unregulated market.

it ready in a format that can show its original powers

The first artwork being launched on WazirX NFT platform is one of the greatest creations by humans ever. We are still offering it at a nominal price

to its bidders because we believe

that this launch shall initiate a revolution in the world of art, creating a new market for Indian artists who focus on the power of emotions in their artworks, as represented by these ancient works. says Manav Kumar (Tech Research



I don't think it has

sunk in yet. I've

always wanted to

score a century in

both innings of

first class cricket

and never done it.

But it's a nice one

to tick off and put

the team in a

situation where

hopefully we can

win a Test match

tomorrow

(Sunday)

USMAN KHAWAJA

Doug Walters (v West

Indies, 1969) and Ricky

Ponting (v South Africa,

2006) to score centuries

in both the innings of a

The highest successful run-

chase in the fourth innings

of a Test at the SCG with the

feat achieved by Ponting's

men against South Africa in

2006 making the then

Australian skipper's 100th

Test more special,

considering his twin tons in

the same match

Test at the SCG

Usman Khawaja

became only the

third batter, after

LEFT-HAND BATTER MARKS HIS RETURN WITH CENTURIES IN BOTH INNINGS AS HOSTS PILE UP 388-RUN TARGET FOR ENGLAND ON THE FINAL DAY AT THE SCG

KHAWAJA MAKES MERRY AT SCG

Sydney, Jan 8: Usman Khawaja's (101 n o, 138b, 10x4, 2x6) stunning return to Test cricket continued

Saturday with a blistering century in Australia's second innings on day four which led the hosts to 265/6 declared and set England an unlikely 388 runs to win the fourth Ashes

Openers Zak Crawley and Haseeb Hameed then survived a nervous 11 overs in fading light to get England safely to stumps at 29 with-

Khawaja, who scored 137 in the first innings in his first appearance since the 2019

Ashes series

in England. headlined another dominant day for Australia with an unbeaten century as part of a 179run partnership with Cameron

The 35-year-old scored his first fifty off 86 balls, but then accelerated his scoring rate by playing some extragavant strokes and brought up his hundred just 45 balls later with a two off Dawid

Green (74, 122b, 7x4, 1x6).

It was just the third time that twin centuries have been made at the Sydney Cricket Ground with former Australia captain Ricky Ponting the last man to score two

against South Africa.

Khawaja is playing this Test only because of Travis Head testing positive for COVID-19 ahead of the match, but has surely put in an undeniable claim to be retained for the fifth test in Hobart after back-to-back centuries.

Green made a welcome contribution for Australia, which had sunk to 86/4 earlier in the day, with his second half-century in his eighth Test. The record successful fourth innings chase at the SCG is 288 runs, which was achieved by Ponting's Australia in the same 2006 Test against South Africa.

While it's highly unlikely England will defy SCG history and chase down a near 400-run target, Crawley (22 batting) and Hameed (8 batting) helped give England a glimmer of hope that it may yet save the game and achieve its best result so far in the series.

Rain is also forecast for Sydney Sunday which may assist England's cause in playing for a draw. "(It will) be interesting to see how tomorrow plays," said Khawaja.

"Fingers crossed we get some good weather because we probably need all those 98 overs that we have. It's going to be a bit of a grind but if we can keep asking questions over and over again I think we're a chance.' Earlier, Spinner Jack Leach (4/84)

took four wickets for England, including taking Green and Alex Carey off the final two balls of Australia's innings, in what was his best bowling performance of the series.

Leach also took Marcus Harris (27) and then got the prize wicket of Steve Smith for 23, bowling the star batsman with a delivery that kept low of the SCG pitch to reduce Australia to a potentially vul-



Mark Wood, who has troubled all of Australia's batsmen with his pace this series, got the wickets of David Warner (3) and Marnus Labuschagne (29), both caught behind by Ollie Pope, who had replaced injured wicketkeeper Jos

Resuming Saturday at 258/7, England could only muster another 36 runs as Nathan Lyon (2/88), then Scott Boland (4/36) quickly mopped up the lower order to establish a first-innings lead of 122

BRIEF SCORES

Australia 416/8d & 265/6d (Usman Khawaja 101 n o, Cameron Green 74; Jack Leach 4/84); England 294 (Jonny Bairstow 113; Scott Boland 4/36, Pat Cummins 2/68, Nathan Lvon 2/88) & 30 for no loss. Match to continue.

Cape of 'confusion' over bowling lineup

Team management swings between Ishant's restrictive bowling and Umesh's attacking instinct ahead of final SA Test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: Ishant Sharma's immense experience might gain precedence over Umesh Yadav's classical outswingers when Indian team management zeroes in on an injured Mohammed Siraj's replacement for the series-deciding final Test against South Africa.

Siraj, who sustained a hamstring strain while bowling on the first evening of the second Test, managed only 15.5 overs in the two innings and coach Rahul Dravid admitted that his injury did affect the team strategy while defending 240 in the fourth innings.

Dravid had said that it is difficult to commit whether Siraj will get fit in next few days as hamstring injuries don't heal that easily. They require extensive rest and rehabilitation, more so for fast bowlers, who have way more workload than batters.

In this backdrop, India have two options for the Newlands Test starting January 11. One is 33-year-old Ishant, who hasn't been in the best of forms but has experience of more than 100 Tests and is a workhorse.

The other is 34-year old Umesh, who has 51 Tests under his belt and in the recent past has been a better performer than Ishant, who seemed to have also lost out on a bit of pace with age catching up.

However both Dravid and skipper Virat Kohli, who everyone expects would make a comeback from his back injury in the final game, may prefer the lanky Delhi speedster for multiple reasons.

One of the biggest reasons could be his near 6 feet 3 and half inch height, which might help in creating those awkward lengths for the Proteas batters, something that the home team pacers like Marco Jansen

and Duanne Olivier have enjoyed. The ideal length on South African tracks is somewhere in between back of the length (short) and good length (6 metre). It's indeed a tricky one says former India keeper Deep Dasgupta, who feels that despite Ishant going off the boil in past few games, he still should be preferred at Newlands.

In case of Umesh, he bowls a fuller length, gets that lethal outswing going his way at 140 clicks but the question is, if India can afford to play a bowler, who has a propensity to bowl too many boundary balls. This habit of Umesh could prove to be very costly in low-scoring games where periods of lull created by defensive bowlers are like gold dust.

Just like at the erstwhile WACA ground in Perth where the afternoon sessions used to help the swing bowlers with lateral movement due to the 'Freemantle Doctor' - afternoon sea breeze that blew across the ground, some of the sessions at Cape Town are guided by the effect of High and Low Tides, assessed Dasgupta, who had played



India at eves Asian Cup



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: The upcoming AFC Women's Asian Cup is set to create history as Video Assistant Referee (VAR) will be used for the first time in India from the quarterfinals stage of the continental competition

The tournament will be played across three venues in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Pune from January 20 to February 6. The event will see VAR making its tournament debut when the teams walk out for the games from January 30 onwards.

The technology will be used till the final match on February 6 across the two knockout venues -DY Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai and the Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Balewadi, Pune.

Preparations for installation and setup of the technology have already begun in the respective venues. Apart from the stadiums on match days, the referees' training sites will be equipped with a similar VAR setup and simulators will also be made available to the referees in their hotel.

The AFC is leaving no stones unturned in ensuring the highest standards of refereeing at the tournament with multiple technical tests being performed at the stadiums and training sites before the VAR is officially introduced in the country, the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said. During the tournament, six ded-

icated video match officials will have access to seven different live camera feeds to inspect every action on the field.

There are four categories of decisions that VAR can review goal/no goal, penalty/no penalty, direct red card, and mistaken identity in awarding a red or yellow

The VAR match official and the on-field referee will work in tandem to make the category of decisions wherein either the VAR or the onfield referee can initiate a review.

Upon review, the VAR can recommend the on-field referee to overturn their decision in case a clear and obvious error has been

Alternatively, the on-field referee may choose to conduct an On Field Review (OFR) by halting the game and reviewing footage from the screen which will be installed in the Referee Review Area behind the fourth official's bench, just outside the touchline of the playing

At all times, the on-field referee can ignore the advice from the

VAR to make debut in Novak Djokovic had covid last month

Melbourne, Jan 8: Novak Djokovic's lawyers filed court papers Saturday in his challenge against deportation from Australia that show the tennis star tested positive for COVID-19 last month and recovered, grounds he used in applying for a medical exemption to the country's strict vaccination rules

The ATP World No.1 was denied entry at the Melbourne airport late Wednesday after border officials canceled his visa for failing to meet its entry requirement that all non-citizens be fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

Djokovic was given a medical exemption backed by the Victoria state government and Australian Open organizers based on information he supplied to two independent medical panels.

But it has since emerged that the medical exemption, allowed for people who tested positive for the coronavirus in the previous six months, was deemed invalid by border authorities

Djokovic is in an immigration detention hotel in Melbourne preparing for his challenge in the Federal Circuit Court Monday.

The ABC reported that in the documents filed Saturday, Djokovic's lawyers said Tennis Australia January 1 granted the 34-year-old Serbian player a "medical exemption from COVID vaccination" on the grounds that he had recently recovered from the coronavirus.



The exemption certification said the date of Djokovic's first positive test was December 16, 2021, and that he had not had a fever or respiratory symptoms in the past 72 hours.

The court submission said Djokovic received a document from Australia's Department of Home Affairs saying that his travel declaration had been assessed and that his responses indicated that he met the requirements for quarantine-free arrival in Australia.

If he fails to have his visa cancellation overturned and gets deported for not having enough evidence to support a medical exemption to Australia's COVID-19 vaccination rules, Djokovic risks missing more than one Australian Open and

could be barred for up to three years. In an emailed response to this news agency about what could transpire if Djokovic loses his legal fight, the Australian Border Force said: "A person whose visa has been canceled may be subject to a three-year exclusion period that prevents the grant of a further temporary visa.'

"The exclusion period will be considered as part of any new visa application and can be waived in certain circumstances, noting each case is assessed on its own merits, they added. Australian Open organizers have

not commented publicly, except to tell Australian newspapers that no players have been misled over the vaccination requirements.

Tournament director Craig Tiley has continued working with Djokovic, hoping to get the defending champion into the tournament that starts a week from

Monday. Tiley's video message to Australian Open staff about the tournament's "difficult time in the public arena" was published in News Corp. newspapers Saturday.

"There's been a circumstance that relates to a couple of players, Novak particularly. In a situation that is very difficult," Tiley said in the video. "We're a player-first event. We're working closely with Novak and his team, and others and their team, that are in this situation.'

The 34-year-old Djokovic, who shares the men's record of 20 Grand Slam singles titles with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, is one of two players put into detention in a hotel in Melbourne that also houses refugees and asylum seekers. A third person, reported to be an official, left the country voluntarily after border force investigations.

The other player was identified Friday by the Czech Republic embassy in Canberra as 38-year-old doubles player Renata Vorácová.

Djokovic reached out to the world for the first time in three days later Friday night, posted on social media to mark the Orthodox Christmas and thank his supporters. There's been large-scale rallies in Belgrade and small groups of supporters have gathered daily outside his detention hotel.

"Thank you to the people around the world for your continuous support," Djokovic posted on Instagram. "I can feel it and it is greatly appreciated.'

Canada set up Spain date in ATP Cup final



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sydney, Jan 8: Felix Auger-Aliassime and Denis Shapovalov qualified Canada for its first ATP Cup final Saturday when they defeated Daniil Medvedev and Roman Safiullin 4-6, 7-5, 10-7 in doubles to complete a 2-1 win against Russia. Canada will play Spain in the final Sunday.

Medvedev and Safiullin had been 3-0 in doubles this week. Shapovalov got the match off to a good start for Canada by winning his opening singles but Medvedev then leveled with a comprehensive victory against Auger-Aliassime.

Friday, Roberto Bautista Agut clinched Spain's spot in the final with a 7-6(8-6), 2-6, 7-6(7-5) victory over Poland's Hubert Hurkacz. Earlier Pablo Carreno Busta gave Spain the lead with a 6-2, 6-1 win against late replacement Jan Zielinski.

Kamil Majchrzak went 3-0 for Poland in the group stages, but was forced into isolation due to a positive COVID-19 test.

Odisha FC-ATKMB ISL tie postponed

MARGAO (GOA): The match between Odisha FC and ATK Mohun Bagan (ATKMB), scheduled for Saturday evening, in the ongoing Indian Super League (ISL) has been postponed by the organisers after a player from the Kolkata-based team tested positive for Covid-19. The match was to be played at the PJN Stadium in Fatorda and the league will now look to reschedule the fixture to a later date. "The decision has been taken in consultation with the League's medical team after an ATK Mohun Bagan player tested positive for Covid-19," ISL said in a statement. The ongoing season is being held behind closed doors.

Man City hammer Swindon in FA Cup

SWINDON (ENGLAND):

Manchester City easily coped without seven coronavirusinfected players in eliminating fourth-tier club Swindon 4-1 to open the third round of the FA Cup. City were still able to deploy a lineup packed with international players including the first three scorers - Bernardo Silva, Gabrie Jesus and Ilkay Gundogan. The 19vear-old Cole Palmer scored the fourth after Harry McKirdy scored past goalkeeper Zack Steffen to pull one back for Swindon Friday. With manager Pep Guardiola isolating with COVID-19, assistant coach Rodolfo Borrell led the Premier League champions.

Bayern go down to **Gladbach at home**

BERLIN: Bayern Munich lost at home to Borussia Mönchengladbach 1-2 as the Bundesliga resumed despite coronavirus-induced absences. The first game after the league's winter break was in doubt due to a host of infections at both clubs with Bayern particularly hard hit. League authorities decided the club had enough strength in depth to play Friday. Robert Lewandowski got Bayern off to good start with his 20th league goal, but Gladbach answered with two goals in four minutes through Florian Neuhaus and Stefan Lainer and held on for the win. Gladbach also won their previous meeting - 5-0 in the German Cup in October.

Bopanna, Ramkumar in final

ADELAIDE: India's Rohan Bopanna and Ramkumar Ramanathan upstaged fourth seeds Tomislav Brkic and Santiago Gonzalez in straight sets to reach the final of the Adelaide International, here Saturday, The unseeded Indian duo ousted the Bosnian-Mexican duo 6-2, 6-4 in the doubles semifinals. The Indians will now lock horns with top seeds Ivan Dodig of Croatia and Brazilian Marcelo Melo in the summit clash of the of the ATP 250 event. It will be an interesting match as the 41-year-old Bopanna and Dodig have often paired up together, the most recent being in the US Open in September when the duo was knocked out in the third round. Bopanna and Ramkumar, who have paired up for the first time on the ATP tour, have enjoyed a good week so far. The two have notched straight-set wins in the tournament barring the second round match against the American duo of Nathaniel Lammons and Jackson Withrow when they were stretched to a super tie-breaker. The Adelaide event is a tune up tournament for the Australian Open, starting January 17 in Melbourne.

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