

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 295 | www.orissapost.com

Ex-beauty queen Manushi Chhillar has launched a platform titled Limitless to bring inspiring women icons together LEISURE P2



NATO SENDS REINFORCEMENTS

NATO said it is putting forces on standby and reinforcing eastern Europe with more ships and fighter jets

INTERNATIONAL P10



AWARD FOR MANDHANA

Smriti Mandhana bags the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for the Women's Cricketer of the Year in ICC Awards

SPORTS P12

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BHUBANESWAR | TUESDAY, JANUARY 25 | 2022

ADMISSIONS OPEN I - XI (Day Boarding) VI - XI (Residential)

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Students should be

board exams: Min

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: School and

Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Monday said stu-

dents of Classes X and XII should

be ready for writing their board ex-

aminations offline as the third wave

Addressing the media, Dash said

a look at the current scenario re-

veals the downward trend of the

Covid infection graph. "We hope the

examination can be conducted un-

less some unprecedented situation

The S&ME Minister, however,

said that the state government would take an appropriate deci-

sion after reviewing the Covid-19 situation. Notably, the Summative

Assessment-I for Class X students has already been completed.

Odisha is currently observing a

sharp decline in daily detections of

According to data shared by the

health and family welfare depart-

ment, the coastal state reported

7,291 fresh Covid-19 cases Monday,

pushing the tally to 12,11,951. The

state had logged 8,520 cases Sunday,

8,845 cases Saturday, 9,833 Friday,

10,368 cases Thursday, and 11,607

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

hologram of vikas?

VARIATION

1545.67

₹0.17

₹0.06

↑ ₹205

MARKET WATCH

SENSEX **57491.51**

DOLLAR **74.84**

EURO

GOLD

SILVER

17149.10

₹48,454

INDEX

Covid-19 cases.

cases Wednesday.

arises," Dash told reporters.

was showing a downward trend.

ready for offline

PNN & AGENCIES

Sensex tanks 1,546 points

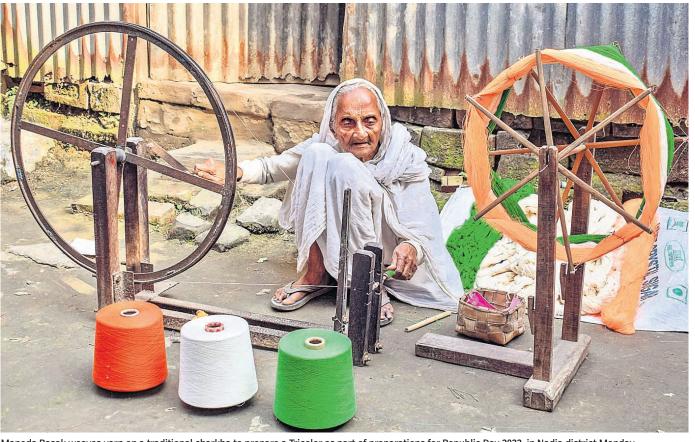
Mumbai: Equity benchmark Sensex Monday crashed about 1,546 points to sink below the 58,000-level due to across-the-board selloff tracking sluggish global markets. Besides, persistent foreign capital outflows continued to affect the market sentiment, traders said. Benchmark indices started the session on a weaker note and the selling intensified during afternoon trade, with almost all sectoral indices ending in the red. The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 1,545.67 points or 2.62 per cent lower at 57,491.51. Similarly, the NSE Nifty slumped 468.05 points or 2.66 per cent to 17,149.10. All Sensex components ended in the red. Bajaj Finance was the top loser, shedding around 6 per cent, followed by Tata Steel and Bajaj Finance.



Air India handover by this weekend

New Delhi: Air India is likely to be handed over to the Tata group by the end of this week, senior government officials said Monday. After a competitive bidding process, the government had on October 8 last year sold Air India to Talace Private Limited -- a subsidiary of the Tata group's holding company -- for ₹18,000 crore. On October 11, a Letter of Intent was issued to the Tata group confirming the government's willingness to sell its 100 percent stake in the airline. On October 25, the Centre signed the share purchase agreement for this deal. The remaining formalities regarding this deal are expected to be completed in the next few days.





5-year old rape victim battling for life at SCB

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Jan 24: A five-vear-old girl. who was allegedly raped on the rooftop of her house in Puri town, is battling for life at the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, the police said Monday. The incident happened Sunday when the girl was alone at home, police said.

When the girl was playing near her home, the accused, an acquaintance to the family of the victim, forcefully took her to a rooftop and raped her. As the girl was crying, the girl's mother rushed to the roof and by that time found the accused had fled from the spot, police said.

The girl was admitted to the Puri district hospital and later shifted to the medical facility in Cuttack as her condition deteriorated. Four separate teams have been formed to nab the accused, a driver, Superintendent of Police KV Singh said. "We are giving our best possible efforts in this case. We are in consultation with all conrequired we will form more teams to arrest the accused," Singh added.

A case has been registered under relevant sections of the IPC and POCSO Act, he said. The accused is a native of Jagatsinghpur district, police said.

A human rights activist Monday filed a petition before the National Human Rights Commission urging it to direct Puri SP to take stringent action against the accused and submit the action taken report within three weeks. Odisha is among the top ten states in the country on the count of registration of cases under the POCSO Act.

Meanwhile, the Chairperson of Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OS-CPCR), Sandhyabati Pradhan Monday visited SCB Medical College & Hospital here and talked to the doctors about the health condition of the rape survivor Monday evening.

Atrocities against women continue to haunt Odisha despite tall claims by the government to have stemmed the ghastly deeds.

State on brink of community spread

■ *About 60 per cent of* the Omicron cases in the state are local contacts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: Even though Covid-19 cases are on decline in the state, Odisha is rushing towards community transmission of Omicron variant of

Sars Cov 2

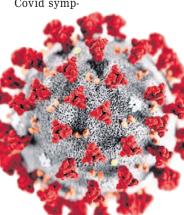
This indication was given by Public Health Director Niranjan Mishra while he was talking to reporters here Monday. The Omicron variant will soon be in a community transmission stage in Odisha as the transmission rate of the variant is high, he said.

Giving a reason for such an alarming situation in the state, he said, during the last genome sequencing, it was found that about 60 per cent of the Omicron cases in the state were local contacts. At any moment, the cases might explode as the variant is highly transmissible, Mishra added.

"In metros, 80 to 90 per cent cases

have Omicron strain. However, we have to wait for some more time to get the data about the prevalence of the strain in our state," he further said

The director urged people with



toms to get tested without delay. If testing is not done and Covid appropriate behavior is not followed, the virus can spread even more rapidly and infect more people, said Mishra.

When asked, when it can be said

that community transmission is there, he said if multiple cases are detected from one place with positive persons having no international travel history or contact with foreign travelers, it is termed as community transmission which

is a technical term. 'We have seen Omicron replacing the Delta variant in many countries and it is also happening in many places in our country," he

stated. At present, the state is showing a declining trend as far as the daily reporting of Covid-19 cases are concerned. Odisha reported 7,291 fresh Covid-19 cases Monday, pushing the tally to 12,11,951 while the death toll mounted to 8,525 with five

nore fatalities The state had registered 8,520 single-day cases and six deaths Sunday. As many as 954 children are

among the new patients. The daily infections are the lowest in 13 days and have reduced by 30 per cent from 10,489 a week ago. The state had January 11 reported 7071 cases in the last 24 hours (January 10).

BOLANGIR SHOP LOOT CRACKED

Cell phones worth ₹30L seized from Nepal border

looted 180 high-end mobile phones worth over ₹50 lakh from a shop in Bolangir

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, Jan 24: District police busted an international looter gang from Bihar-Nepal border and arrested three members of the gang. The police also seized 113 mobile phones worth ₹30 lakh from their possession as they were planning to smuggle the stolen phones into the Himalayan country.

This was stated here by SP Nitin Kushalkar Monday. The accused were identified as Kanhaiya Kumar, 50, of Dehri police limits, Meeraj Ansari, 50 and Kausar Alam, 20 of East Champaran district in Bihar.

The accused had looted mobile phones worth ₹50 lakh from a mobile phone shop near Ramai Talkies in Bolangiri town in the night of January 14. The accused first damaged the CCTV cameras in the area and got inside the store by break-

ing open its shutter locks. Later, their associates locked the shutter from outside to avoid getting caught by passersby. The



Bolangir police produce the accused

looters stole over 180 high-end mobile phones by tearing their packets. After their operation, they came out and locked the shutter again. Store owner Sobhakar Meher came to know about the theft when he opened the store, January 15 morning and lodged a complaint at the Town police station

Based on the complaint, a case was registered and special teams formed to crack the case. Technical surveillance helped the police crack the case. Police got clues based on scientific and tower dump analyses. During investigation, it was found that the criminals have moved near the Nepal border via Rourkela and Bihar. Credible clues were received by the mobile patrolling team as well, the Bolangir SP said

SC adjourns Kotia hearing by 4 weeks

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Jan 24: The Supreme Court Monday adjourned the hearing in a contempt petition filed by the state government against Andhra Pradesh over a dispute on its order related to Kotia group of villages.

A two-judge bench of the apex court comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar and CT Ravikumar adjourned the matter after a letter circulated by the state government seeking deferment of the hearing to another date.

During the hearing, a counsel submitted in the court that the meeting of bureaucrats of both the states to deliberate on outstanding issues of mutual interest including the Kotia border dispute was postponed due to Omicron. The counsel pleaded the court to adjourn the matter for four weeks.



On January 6, Odisha had informed the apex court that the committee led by the Chief Secretary will discuss the issue January 10 with a committee formed by Andhra Pradesh and sought listing of the case after four weeks.

Significantly, following the meeting between Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy November 9, the state government constituted a panel headed by the Chief Secretary to deliberate on various bilateral issues.

Meanwhile, Odisha has filed a fresh original suit in the apex court over the border dispute. The state pleaded the SC to declare that Odisha has absolute right to administer and posses Kotia group of villages. It is to be mentioned here that Odisha, in the contempt petition filed through advocate Sibashankar Mishra, submitted that Andhra Pradesh deliberately violated the SC order dated December 2, 1968 and the judgment dated March 30, 2006 by transgressing into Odisha's territory.

Row kicks off over govt school allowing Friday Namaaz

■ *Muslim students, a few of* them wearing skull caps, offered Friday prayer inside a classroom in the afternoon

AGENCIES

Kolar (KTK), Jan 24: The administration of a government school at Mulbagal town in the district is incurring the ire of parents, alumni and Hindu outfits for allegedly allowing Muslim students to offer Friday Namaaz on the school premises.

The Hindu organisations led the parents of other students and alumni of the school in staging a

protest inside the Balechangappa Government Karnataka Model Secondary School Someshwarapalya for setting a 'new precedence' of allowing Friday prayers. According to a video which has gone viral on social media, the Muslim students, a few of them wearing skull caps, offered Friday prayer inside a classroom in the afternoon.

One of the alumni, who staged the protest Saturday, sought the intervention of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and the Kolar MP S Muniswamy and the education department officials. He said the school never had a

history of allowing Friday prayers

and this would set a wrong precedent, appealing to the Education department officials not to let such events take place again. Another

parent alleged that this had been

going on every week with the consent of the school administration. A school teacher refuted the charge

that every week such prayers were happening. She told reporters that it happened only last Friday when she and other teachers were away from the school during the lunch. She said she received a call from

the Block Education Officer asking her why the Friday prayers were allowed inside the school premises. When she rushed to the school, she noticed the Muslim boys offering Namaz.

As tension prevailed due to the protest Saturday, police reached the spot and calmed the angry parents, alumni and some Hindu activists. However. no police complaint has been lodged, police sources said.

Mainly clear sky



eisure

SUPERMODEL BELLA HADID VOWS TO OUIT DRINKING

Supermodel Bella Hadid vows to never drink alcohol again. Bella shared in a new interview that she had decided to stop drinking, explaining that it had something to do with how alcohol has affected her health, reports aceshowbiz.com.

ELVIS COSTELLO PERFORMED IN HIS GARDEN DURING LOCKDOWN

English singer-songwriter Elvis Costello has revealed how he kept his voice in trim amid the global health crisis. "During the morning I like to work on new songs. I managed to keep my voice in trim over the past year by performing in the garden," he explained.





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A new acquaintance will make you feel happy today. You must remember that things don't have to be expressed explicitly; a word or a song from deep within can make a bigger impact. Ganesha says today is the right time to do something which will be more rewarding in the long-term.

TAURUS

This day, your heart is likely to rule your head. You will be driven by your moods feelings and sentiments. Most of the decisions will be based on your emotions instead of your reason and experience. Ganesha urges you not to allow your emotionality to enter your professional activities. On no account should you be hasty or impulsive. As far as possible do not allow your feelings to interfere in your

GEMINI

You will meet someone special who is here to stay for good, predicts Ganesha. Your kind and considerate nature will henefit others. You need to understand that it's okay to spend a little on comforts and entertainment. Be ready for a busy, vet cheerful, day ahead,

CANCER

Those around you have always thought that there is something different about you, but could never put their finger on what exactly it was. You always knew. You are better than them, and today is the day to make them realise that. How? The best course of action is to do your job appreciated and may even be seen as a future leader by some of your colleagues.

One way to assure success is by believing in oneself and one's abilities. Let this confidence and your high spirits take you to newer heights today, says Ganesha. Remain cheerful all day long, and you will see your hardships disappear as you tackle them with consummate skill. But more importantly, Ganesha foresees the day leading you to a fulfilling evening. Enjoy!

VIRGO

A medley of good and bad awaits you today. Emotional people will find you immature and inconsistent. But your hag o' jokes is never empty, and you remain the jester as always. Ganesha advises you to meditate and engage in spiritual ly rich activities to channel and focus all

There is no end to work, so buckle up, as it is highly probable that work pressure will take up most of your time today. This leaves precious little for your family, but as always, they fully understand. Ganesha expects you to be both hardworking and conscientious today. You may also launch a new business scheme. especially if you are self-employed.

SCORPIO

The spectre of financial instability will keep haunting you. But there can be a brighter side to life too, says Ganesha. Long overdue payments might get encashed today. And those blind bluffs vou call sometimes in business might pay handsome rewards, predicts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

You may have women swooning over you today; such is your charm and way with them, says Ganesha. But friends are highly valuable to you, and you shall spend much time with them cherishing their company and reliving amazing times spent together.

CAPRICORN

It may seem to be an unusual combination, but you will experience pain and pleasure in equal measure today, says Ganesha. The errands you may have to run for at home will leave you exhausted, so conserve some energy for the rest of the day. Your wit can get you whatever you want, but it's important that you use it in the right way and not just to meet your selfish interests.

AQUARIUS

Good news may hit home today. Promotion, profit, scholarship, anything you've been working for will probably materialise. You are ingenuous, and will crack the toughest of problems with consummate ease. Ganesha sees money lenders and brokers doing well.

PISCES

A day filled with socialising awaits you, says Ganesha. You will likely make contact with near and dear ones you haven't met in a while. New associations and friendships could also occur. It is a pleasant and joyous day, so make the most of it.



MUMBAI: Former beauty queen and debutante Manushi Chhillar is launching a social media property named Limitless that will see her speak to the country's most inspiring women icons.

Manushi wants to bring out the back stories of these influential women and also find out what motivates them to constantly shatter gender stereotypes

Manushi says: "Growing up and even now, I've been in awe of so many women icons who are working incessantly to break the glass ceiling. They inspire fellow women across the world to dream big.

"I always harboured the thought of creating a digital property that enables me to talk to these icons and $help\,me\,get\,to\,know\,more\,about\,their$ lives, how their mind works and what inspires them.

She added: "And what better day than National Girl Child Day to launch this project, which is really close to my heart.

Manushi is all set to make her Hindi film debut in Akshay Kumarstarrer Prithviraj.

Prithviraj is based on the life and valour of the Samrat Prithviraj Chauhan. Akshay is essaying the role of the warrior who fought valiantly against the merciless invader Muhammad of Ghor. IANS

Ajit Natya Mahotsav concludes

atre troupe Expressions staged

Odia play Botala Bhuta on the last

Written and directed by troupe's

evening of the festival.



A scene from the play Botala Bhuta

BHUBANESWAR: Aiit Natva Mandan, Monday, City-based the Mahotsay, a three-day national theatre festival organised by Abhinava Jagruti Institute of Theatre (AJIT), came to an end here at Rabindra

him to drink country liquor to get rid of all his physical and mental stress. Gradually he gets addicted to liquor and sells all his belongings. The play ends on a tragic note with Sahukar eventually making Nandibali's son work as a slave and daughter to sleep with him.

The artistes who performed on stage included Biswa, Jaga, Rabi, Joseph, Puppy, Sujit, Bapi, Surya, Soumva, Akash, Sunil, Jasmine, Beauty, Anjali and Debanand.

founder member Debananad Nayak

the play showcased the suffering of

a tribal cultivator Nandibali who

gets exploited by the Sahukar (local

money lender), revenue officer, and

the police. They manage to lure

Former Lok Sabha MP Prasanna Patsani was the chief guest of the evening.

FUN

WHEN AAMNA CAME OUT OF HER COMFORT ZONE

MUMBAI: Actress Aamna Sharif, who portrayed the role of a police officer in the just released web series Damaged 3, says she is a 'girly' by nature but playing such a character put her out of the comfort zone to grow as an actress.

In the web series, she plays a nononsense police officer, Rashmi. Sharing how different her prepa-

ration was for the role, Aamna said: "The most exciting part for this show was its story, and how my character is shown in a multi-dimensional manner.

'She is grey, she is strong and a police officer, finding her space in the male dominating territory. Since there is a different body language I had to imbibe for Rashmi and also had a few action sequences, I had to go through an extensive workshop. Honestly, I am just the opposite of this character.

"I am quite a feminine, girly girl

who loves to dress up, pose and by nature I am quite a soft-spoken person. So, putting myself out of that comfort zone was a step towards my growth as an actress. Damaged 3 revolves

around a police officer Rashmi and a journalist Shanava. As Shanaya is in search of a real path-breaking story, she crosses paths with Rashmi and how a lovehate relationship these two women get into while a bigger truth gets revealed through that journey. IANS

Sonakshi's quirky reply to fan

MUMBAI: Actress Sonakshi Sinha gave a witty answer when she was asked about tying the knot during a question and answer session on social media.

Sonakshi treated her fans with an in-

teractive session, where she asked her fans "what did you get upto this week

A user asked her: "Mam everyone is getting married when will you get married? To which, Sonakshi gave a

get that too?' Speaking about her upcoming work, the actress is

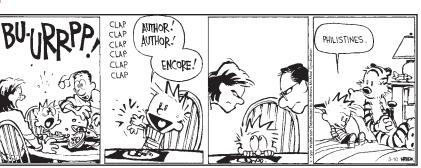
and will also be seen Bulbul Tarang.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



CROSSWORD

10 24

	С	opyrigh	t ©2022 PuzzleJunction.co	om	
Across 7 Elbow grease		20 Picasso's art 21 Detest		5 James Cameron movie	
	Ask over		Hastened	6	Kind of heel
9	Textile machine	24	Seldom	12	Stew ingredient
10	A long slender				(4,4)
	cigar	<u>Down</u>		14	Deform
11	High spirits	1	Retro hairdo	16	Attention-getting
13	Pontificate	2	Do the crime	18	Bailiwick
15	Impact sound	3	Family member	19	Robust

4 Fool

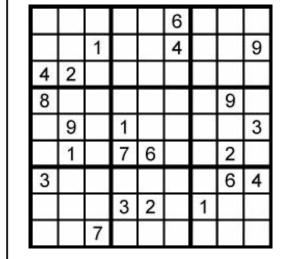
17 Some flights

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

22 Yarn

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

POKE HALLOWED CROSSWOR

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

downtown



IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM	2123	COVID-19 TRACKER				
IN MEMORIAM			INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD	
Members of Odisha Paika Academy pay tribute to freedom		World	35,26,59,476	28,03,85,541	56,16,427	
fighter Buxi Jagabandhu on the latter's death anniversary at		India	3,95,43,328	3,68,04,145	4,89,848	
Kalpana Square in Bhubaneswar, Monday		Odisha	12,11,951	11,31,917	8,525	
		ппп	: 	: 	: 	

Below 8k fresh Cov cases after 2 weeks

Odisha reported 7,291 fresh Covid-19 cases Monday, pushing the tally to 12,11,951, while the death toll mounted to 8,525 with five more fatalities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: Odisha reported 7,291 fresh Covid-19 cases Monday, pushing the tally to 12,11,951, while the death toll mounted to 8,525 with five more fatalities, the Health department said in a bulletin.

The state had registered 8,520 single-day cases and six deaths

As many as 954 children are among the new patients. The daily infections are the lowest in 13 days and have reduced by 30 per cent from 10,489 a week ago. The state had last reported below 8,000 daily Covid-19 cases January 11 (7,071).

Odisha Congress president Niranian Patnaik said in a tweet that he has tested positive for Covid-Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik wished him a speedy recovery.

Renowned sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik also said late Sunday that he was hospitalised after contracting the disease

As many as 11,31,917 patients have so far recovered from the dis-

POST NEWS NETWORK

ties for any surge.

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: With the

state Capital witnessing a mar-

ginal drop in Covid cases, the ac-

tive micro containment zones also

saw decline while the Bhubaneswar

Municipal Corporation (BMC) stated that the city is well prepared

with additional healthcare facili-

As per BMC sources, the state Capital which had seen only 638 pos-

itive cases until Jan 7, saw a 141 per

cent jump in new cases in 15 days with

about 1,532 new cases recorded Jan

22, highest during the month.

However, the daily new cases in City

saw decline for the first time, with

The sudden surge in daily cases

also saw the civic body declaring a

large number of micro contain-

ment zones with state Capital wit-

nessing 300 Covid restricted areas

being identified within 15 days, the

most in the state. However, sources

at the BMC said that only 135 active

containment zones remain in the

City now and new zones are being

notified only after detection of sev-

eral positive cases in a locality.

only 1,275 being recorded Jan 23.

Containment zones

drop to 135 in City

ease, including 10,309 in the last 24 hours, the bulletin said.

Fifty-three other coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities so far.

The positivity rate stood at 11.77 per cent after 61,969 samples were tested in the past 24 hours.

Khurda district, where state capital Bhubaneswar is situated, reported nearly a quarter of the new cases with 1,705 infections, followed by 646 in Sundargarh and 561

in Cuttack, it said. On Sunday, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) had stated that the Capital city bearing the brunt of the pandemic was nothing unusual as the City has a floating population. The civic authority also clarified that there were enough beds and treatment facilities available, in case of any further rise in cases.

Khurda now has 29,673 active cases, while Sundargarh, Cuttack Puri, Jajpur and Sambalpur are among the 15 districts that are in the yellow zone with over 1,000 pa-

The TPR was 25.9 per cent in Khurda, 25.5 per cent in Sundargarh, 23 per cent in Rayagada and 20.6 per cent in Subarnapur. Thirteen other districts have a positivity rate of over

Odisha is currently observing a sharp decline in daily detections. The state had logged 8,520 cases Sunday, 8,845 cases Saturday, 9,833 Friday, 10,368 cases Thursday, and 11,607 cases Wednesday. The TPR also reduced to 11.77 per cent Monday from 15.62 per cent Wednesday.

School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said that students of classes 10 and 12 should be ready for board examinations as the third wave was showing a downward trend.

'We hope that the examination can be conducted unless some unprecedented situation arises," Dash told reporters.

He said that the state government would take an appropriate decision after reviewing the Covid-

Public Health Director Niranjan Mishra appealed to the people who have mild symptoms to get themselves tested as they could infect their family members if they were

Nod to 120 teaching posts

Odisha has approved the creation of several posts for the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research at Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar, an official said Monday. In a letter to the Principal Accountant General (A&E), the Additional Secretary to Odisha government, Prakash Chandra Mohanty directed for the creation of 120 teaching and 50 non-teaching posts. Apart from this, a total of eight posts of Accountant, Assistant and Head Clerk will also be created.

25 platoons of police force for R-Day celebrations







A full dress rehearsal of police personnel ahead of the state-level Republic Day celebrations in progress at Mahatma Gandhi Marg in Bhubaneswar, Monday. Senior police officials including DGP Sunil Bansal and twin city police commissioner Saumendra Priyadarsi are seen

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: As many as 25 platoons of police force, 70 officers and two special tactical units (STU) will be deployed for the state-level Republic Day celebrations at the Mahatma Gandhi Marg here, said director general of police (DGP) Sunil

Bansal as he reviewed the security arrangements as well as the full dress rehearsal here Monday.

Addressing the media, Bansal said the event will be organised in a low scale, but with full decorum and respect.

"The number of contingents participating in the state-level parade this time has been reduced parade this year, has performed to 10 for effective implementation of the Covid-19 norms, RT-PCR hearsal. test has been made mandatory for those participating in the parade. We hope the function will be conducted without any hassle like previous year," said

well during the full dress re-Twin city police commis-

sioner Saumendra Priyadarsi and other officials participated in the full dress rehearsal conducted by the security the personnel at the Mahatma Gandhi

Nabarangpur girl wins Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

BANITA DASH, 16, HAS RECEIVED THE PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR HER EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN THE FIELD OF INNOVATION

POST NEWS NETWORK

The official also added that even though only 22 percent of the 1,800 beds have been occupied, the BMC has kept four more healthcare facilities at Sparsh, KIDS, Sanjivani and Blue Wheel hospitals in readiness to reduce burden on dedicated DCHs in case of any surge. "The four new healthcare facilities will

increased testing in city with about

9,000 tests being conducted across all private and public testing cen-

three Dedicated Covid hospitals

(DCHs) and two Covid Care

Centres," said a BMC official.

There is no need to panic as we have about 1,800 Covid beds in

add 600 beds to increase the strength of Covid beds in the city to 2,400. We have the resources to increase the bed strength to 4,000 if require," the official said.

"Micro Containment Zones have It can also be mentioned that been an effective strategy to contain the spread without enforcing out of total 12.04.660 cases reported complete lockdowns. High rise in in the state, Khorda district has cases for the state Capital is not unaccounted for 18.9% cases of which usual as Bhubaneswar largely has the state capital has reported the a floating population. We have also highest 1.45 lakh cases until now.

New Delhi, Jan 24: Banita Dash, 16, of Nabarangpur district has been awarded the prestigious Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP)-2022 for her excellence in the field of innovation.

A student of Navodaya Vidyalaya, Dash has discovered an asteroid that has been validated by NASA. She has been recognised as a 'citizen scientist' by NASA and IASC. The schoolgirl has designed an automated sanitising school bag which has been recognised at the national level, it was learnt.

The Centre has been conferring the PMRBP award to children for their exceptional achievement in six categories-innovation, social service, scholastic, sports, art & culture and bravery. This year, 29 children, including 14 girls, from across the country, under different categories of Bal Shakti Puraskar, have been selected for

PMRBP-2022. On the occasion of National Girl Child Day and also as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsay Monday Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually interacted with the winners and gave them digital certificates using blockchain technology developed by IIT-Kanpur under the National Blockchain Project and a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh.

The digital certificates ware stored on digital wallets installed on the mobile devices of the recipients.

The awardees of PMRBP 2021 and 2022 along with their parents and concerned District Magistrates ioined the event from their district



Banita Dash

headquarters, virtually. Taking to Twitter, Modi said, "Banita Dash has designed an automated sanitizing school bag.

BANITA HAS DISCOVERED AN ASTEROID IN SPACE WHICH HAS BEEN RECOGNISED BY

Bansal, adding that Angul ASP

Rohit Verma, who is leading the

ASTUDENT OF NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA, DASH HAS ALSO DESIGNED AN **AUTOMATED SANITISING SCHOOL BAG**

THIS YEAR, 29 CHILDREN, INCLUDING 14 GIRLS, FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY, UNDER DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF BAL SHAKTI PURASKAR, HAVE BEEN **SELECTED FOR PMRBP-2022**

She has been globally recognised for her work. India looks forward to seeing more innovations

Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani lauded Banita. "Banita Dash from Odisha discovered an asteroid which has been recognised by NASA. She has also designed an automated sanitising school bag for children. She aspires to become a successful astrophysicist and make the Nation proud.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, too, wished her success. "Congratulate budding astrophysicist from #Odisha, Banita Dash on being conferred with #PradhanMantriRashtriyaBalPur askar in innovation category. Banita discovered an Asteroid which has been validated by #NASA. May she be successful in her endeavour & continue to make Odisha proud (sic)." Naveen

'50% of Covid infected may have lasting loss of smell'

TESTS ON 100 INDIVIDUALS

bout 50 per cent of people infected with Covid-19 during the first wave of infections in 2020 may have long-term and even permanent changes to their sense of smell, according to preliminary research from Sweden. From the early pandemic days

sudden loss of smell, or an impaired or distorted perception of odours, emerged as an unusual symptom of Covid. While some people recovered,

for some the sense of smell never quite returned to normal.

To explore, scientists at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm ran comprehensive tests on 100 individuals who caught Covid in the first wave of infections in 2020, the Guardian reported. The findings of the yet-to-be peer-reviewed study showed that 18 months after recovering from Covid, 4 per cent people lost their sense of smell entirely.

However, a third had a reduced abil-

complained of parosmia- where the sense of smell is distorted.

cent of those who recovered from

Covid displayed either a loss of

smell, a reduced sense of smell,

ity to detect odours, and nearly half The team concluded that 65 per

or distortions to the sense 18 months after the infection, compared with 20 per cent of those who had not caught the virus, the report said.

"Given the amount of time since

[the] initial insult to the olfactory

system, it is likely that these ol-

he team concluded that 65 per cent of those who recovered from Covid displayed either a

loss of smell, a reduced sense of smell, or distortions to the sense 18 months after the infection, compared with 20 per cent of those who had not caught the virus

parosmia- where the sense of smell is distorted

Scientists at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm ran comprehensive tests on 100 individuals who

caught Covid in the first wave of infections in 2020

after recovering from Covid, 4 per cent people

odours, and nearly half complained of

lost their sense of smell entirely

he findings of the study showed that 18 months

owever, a third had a reduced ability to detect

factory problems are permanent,"

According to the UK Health Security Agency, a loss of smell or taste is less than half as common with Omicron than the Delta variant.

But there is no reliable data

demonstrating that Omicron is less dangerous to the olfactory system, Johan Lundstrom, who led the research at the Karolinska Institute, was quoted as saying.

A severe loss of smell could also lead to depression and to people changing their diets, often for the worse, causing them to put on weight, Lundstrom said.

'When you cannot smell, all you can sense is the five basic taste qualities, tactile sensations and spices," he said.

"Unconsciously, people start to add more sugar and fat, or have an increased urge for fried food for the texture, all to get some enjoyment out of eating." Lundstrom stated that people can get help by doing olfactory training.

"They might not regain 100 per cent of past performance, but most of them will, with training, get back to a point where their reduced sense of smell will not affect their lives," he said.

Dense fog, rain likely in state for next three days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Monday predicted the likelihood of light to moderate rain or thundershower to occur in nine districts of Odisha, with dry weather prevalence over the rest of state in the next 24 hours.

Coastal Odisha, Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Malkangiri, Koraput are likely to face light to moderate rain or thundershower at one or two places over the districts, the IMD predicted.

It also issued a yellow alert for the districts of Bolangir, Sonepur, Boudh, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Gajapati, Ganjam, Nayagarh, Khurda, Cuttack, Rayagada, Koraput, Malkangiri predicting dense fog till the morning of January 27 be-

The SRC has issued an advisory to district Collectors and SPs in view of the yellow alert

ginning January 25 morning

Special Commissioner's (SRC) office has issued an advisory to all district Collectors and SPs in view of the yellow alert and has alerted the Police and Transport officials of the districts to take necessary steps for controlled plying of vehicles on highways during dense fog to 🗦 avoid any road accident.

Furthermore, the IMD also stated that there will be no large change in minimum temperature (night temperature) during the next two days and a gradual fall by 3 to 5 °Cwill be observed thereafter over the districts of Odisha.

By utilising the ESD

cancer can

be removed

completely,

the next day

ensuring there was

no bleeding, and the

patient can go home

MANOJ KUMAR SAHU | HOD,

GASTROENTEROLOGY, INSTITUTE

OF MEDICAL SCIENCES AND SUM

technology,

FOR LAND & ROUTE THE THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPE

Slum dwellers under the Cuttack Municipal Corporation jurisdiction protest before the Collectorate pressing for their demands for land and housing, Monday

ESD for precise, efficient GI cancer treatment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: Thanks to the technological advancements, diagnosis and treatment of gastro intestinal tract is possible at the early stages, which ensure complete cure, according to Manoj Kumar Sahu, Head of the Department of Gastroenterology at the Institute of Medical Sciences and SUM Hospital here.

High resolution narrow band imaging systems now help diagnose pre-cancer and early cancers very accurately and the same can be treated and cured completely, he said.

"There will be no recurrence and no need for chemotherapy or radio therapy. Also, the patient can lead a healthy normal life," Sahu said.

After diagnosis of early cancers, the best form of treatment is complete removal of the cancer by surgery which can be open or la-

paroscopic in nature. But Endoscopic Submucosal Dissection (ESD), the latest technology available, can do it without any cut from outside by using the natural orifices through

endoscopic method.

By utilising the technology of ESD, cancer can be removed completely, ensuring there was no bleeding, and the patient can go home

"It is a very safe and low cost technology ensuring complete cure of GI cancers," added Sahu who led a team of doctors to successfully treat two patients using the latest technology at IMS and SUM Hospital. They had been diagnosed with early cancer.

This technology has been brought to Odisha for the first time from Japan by Sahu and his team to provide world class health care.

Fake PwD certificate row

Colleges told to flush out erring students admitted in past 3 yrs

The principals have been asked for strict and thorough verification and authentication of disability certificates of such students, furnished for the academic session 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: Following the revelation of a scam in the admission process into degree courses in Bhadrak Autonomous College with the furnishing of fake Persons With Disability (PwD) certificates, the state government has woken up and asked all degree colleges in Odisha to verify the disability certificates furnished by students under the quota during the past three academic years.

Principal Secretary of the state Higher Education department Saswat Mishra Monday wrote to the principals of all government, non-government, government-aided and self-financing colleges under the department's jurisdiction in this regard.

The principals have been asked for strict and thorough verification and authentication of disability certificates of such students, furnished for the academic session 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Mishra wrote in his letter to the principals that the Department has came to know that in Bhadrak

OUTCK RECAP

n an RTI query, it was revealed that several students gained admission in the Bhadrak Autonomous College by furnishing fake disability certificates

The RTI query revealed that students with as low as 40 per cent mark are getting admission by producing fake

On the other hand, protesters also alleged, students who have secured over 80 per cent marks are being denied admission.

Following this, the agitating students staged road blockade and demonstrated before the Collector's office in Bhadrak

Autonomous College, students took admission in recent years under the PwD quota submitting fake disability certificates. The matter is under enquiry and strict action will be taken against such students after the enquiry, he said.

The issue created furor even in the political arena when allegations

were leveled that the erring students

reportedly with the help of youth and

performed such audacious act

student BJD leaders

The principals were directed to verify the disability certificates of the Physically Handicapped and Orthopaedically Handicapped (PHOH) students through their respective Chief District Medical Officers. "After verification, if students are found to have taken admission with fake certificates, appropriate steps must be taken to cancel their admissions immediately," Mishra wrote.

The college authorities were also directed to lodge FIRs against such students at the local police stations. All the regional directors of education at Bhubaneswar.

35 PER CENT OF

THAT THEIR

LEARNING

DURING

EFFECTIVELY

LOCKDOWNS

ore than the impact of

being infected with

Covid-19, children are

facing many indirect effects of

the pandemic in terms of health

In a research review from the

Murdoch Children's Research

and wellbeing.

STUDENTS ARE

THOSE PARTICIPANT

TEACHERS BELIEVE

Balasore, Berhampur, Sambalpur and Jeypore have also been informed about this move.

In an RTI query, it was revealed that several students gained admission in the Bhadrak Autonomous College by furnishing fake disability certificates. The query revealed that students with scores as low as 40 per cent got admission by producing fake PwD certificates. On the other hand, protesters also alleged, students who have secured over 80 per cent marks were denied admission.

Following this, the complaining students staged road blockade and demonstrated before the Collector's office in Bhadrak. The issue created furor even in the political arena when allegations were levelled that the students performed such audacious act reportedly with the help of youth and student BJD leaders.

NATIONAL GIRL CHILD DAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) Odisha Regional Office celebrated the National Girl Child Day across five districts of Koraput, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Malkangiri and Deogarh, Monday.

Nabard has been supporting various tribal development projects in these districts, and as many as 250 girl children among the beneficiaries were invited to the celebration of the National Girl Child Day.

Nabard also identified and fe-

Nabard felicitates tribal girls



licitated 14 tribal girls who have become inspiration for others in their respective areas.

Nabard Odisha Regional Office CGM C Udayabhaskar advised these girls to focus on studies and nutritional food, and assured that the support of Nabard will continue in their areas. Madhusmita Sahoo, IAS, Project

Director, Odisha Community Tank Development and Management Society, Department of Water Resources, was the chief guest for the occasion. She interacted digitally with

She interacted digitally with the girl children and apprised them about the importance of education and hard work to excel in life.

District Development Managers of Nabard from all the thirty districts of Odisha also participated in the hybrid mode event.

PRESSING FOR PROTECTION



Agitators at the office of the Labour Commissioner, Bhubaneswar, staging a demonstration against the commission's alleged attempt to dismantle their union, Monday

OSOU application last date today

BHUBANESWAR: The Odisha State Open University (OSOU), Sambalpur has invited online applications from eligible candidates for engagement of Academic Consultants in different disciplines. The last date for the application process is January 25, as per the notification.

CLASSIFIED

LOS1

I Sushree Sagarika Mohapatra, W/o. Satyaranjan Kar would like to inform that I have misplaced anywhere my original RSD vide No. 501200982, Dtd.18.02.2012. If anyone finds kindly contact: 7008033499 / 7978980748, At: Kunjakanta, P.O.-Dhenkanal Town, Dist.-Dhenkanal.

A SURVEY OF 5,000
TEACHERS FINDS
THAT ONLY
THE PROBLEM TO THE PROB

the Guardian reported.

These include online learning, social distancing, increased screen time, reduced access to health-care, less community sport and less outside play all having repercussions.

"The public health measures

for some, while others have been adversely and inequitably impacted," Goldfeld was quoted as saying.
"Children and adolescents experiencing adversity before the pandemic have been dispropor-

have resulted in positive benefits

child health, wellbeing, and developmental outcomes," he added.

The review, published in the Medical Journal of Australia (MJA), includes findings from a Royal

Children's hospital poll that found

tionately affected, potentially lead-

ing to a widening of disparities in

one-third (36 per cent) of Australian parents felt that the pandemic had negatively affected the mental health of their child, and that 31 per cent of parents had delayed or avoided medical care for a sick or injured child due to concerns about catching the virus

catching the virus.
A separate study found some

lian children and adolescents infected with the virus experienced stigma and mental health distress such

Pandemic causing 'generation-defining disruption' among kids

friends, the report said.

The review also refers to Kids
Helpline data, and paediatric emergency department data, that shows

as difficulty sleeping, having night-

mares and withdrawing from

COVID BLOW

n a research review from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, paediatrician Prof Sharon Goldfeld said children are facing a 'generation-defining disruption' with public health restrictions and interventions

These include online learning, social distancing, increased screen time, reduced access to healthcare, less community sport and less outside play all having repercussions

A study released by the UN cultural agency UNESCO last year revealed that more than 100 million children are falling behind the minimum proficiency level in reading due to Covid-related school closures

Goldfeld suggested developing urgent intervention programmes to address growing disparities

a rapid rise in mental health and self-harm presentations.

A survey of 5,000 teachers cited in the review found only 35 per cent of them reported their students were learning effectively during lockdowns.

Goldfeld said some families also lacked the resources and time needed to support their children during remote education.

Further, Goldfeld said even areas such as child nutrition and child safety had been impacted due to reduced family income and job losses during lockdowns, and parental mental health issues and stresses.

"Job loss and reduced income is a known risk factor for harsh parenting and maltreatment," she said. A study released by the UN cultural agency UNESCO, last year, revealed that more than 100 million children are falling behind the minimum proficiency level in reading due to Covid-related school closures.

Goldfeld suggested developing urgent intervention programmes to address growing disparities. IANS

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INFRA BOOST

Explosive haul in

Malkangiri ahead

of Republic Day

SHORT **TAKES**

Youth shot dead in Ganjam village

Polsara: In a shocking incident, a youth was shot dead at Rampudi village under Polsara police limits of Ganjam district over past enmity, police said Monday. The deceased was identified as Kartik Sabar, 25, in the village. Polsara police rushed to the spot and started an investigation after a complaint was filed by the widow of the victim. A case was registered in this connection and further investigation is in progress. The incident occurred after Kartik allegedly misbehaved with the daughter of Ladu Sabar of the village. Enraged, Ladu picked up a gun and shot Kartik on his head. A profusely bleeding Kartik collapsed and died on the spot. The accused absconded soon after the incident.

Poacher, wild boar die in same trap

Boinda: A poacher was electrocuted along with a wild boar late Sunday night after getting ensnared in live wire laid for poaching animals in a jungle near Nuhurapada under Thakurgarh police limits in Angul district. The 37-year-old man died when he was trying to pull out the carcass of the boar entangled in the live wire. However, attempts were made to suppress the incident as some poachers recovered the body and the carcass and buried them in the jungle. This sparked resentment among the people in the area. On being informed, Thakurgarh police reached the spot and launched an investigation but failed to make any headway as the body and the carcass were missing. Residents of nearby Sapaghara village alleged that poaching of wild boar has been rampant in the jungle with involvement of local politicians. Boar meat is being smuggled to other parts of the district, they said, adding that many poachers have lost their lives in similar fashion earlier. Recently, a leopard was killed after getting ensnared in live wire at Batrakhol jungle. Such incidents are on the rise due to lack of punitive action and patrolling by the forest officials, they added. Thakurgarh IIC Pitambar Nayak said he is yet to receive a complaint while Athamallik SDPO Chintamani Pradhan assured of a

ummunimu

BPL beneficiaries in

Ganjam get plastic rice

POST NEWS NETWORK

said Monday

the PDS dealer.

Ganjam, Jan 24: In a shocking in-

cident, BPL beneficiaries were al-

legedly distributed Re 1-kg rice

mixed with plastic rice at Puintola

under Ganjam NAC area, sources

to have received rice mixed with

plastic rice in their sacks during dis-

tribution of Re 1-per-kg rice during

this month. Some of the benefici-

aries have lodged a complaint with

inspector Santosh Kumar Dash

said the samples will be collected

and sent for an examination to as-

certain the veracity of the claims

Sources said people living below

poverty line (BPL) as well as sched-

uled castes, scheduled tribes, dif-

ferently-abled and beneficiaries of

Antyodaya Anna Yojana were dis-

of distribution of substandard rice

but distribution of plastic rice to the

beneficiaries has surfaced for the first

time. Angry locals alleged that bon-

homie between the millers and dis-

trict civil supplies department of-

They claimed that as per rules.

ficials has resulted in the mess.

Earlier, there were allegations

made by the beneficiaries.

tributed Re 1-a-kg rice.

When contacted, block supply

Many beneficiaries complained

A bypass road built to ease increasing traffic on National Highway-49 passing through Keonjhar town was thrown open to public, Monday

civil supplies officials should check

the quality of the rice before dis-

They alleged that the supplies of-

ficials have not learnt a word or two

from the distribution of moth-in-

fested rice at Umuri Dharma

Saranpur village under UDS Pur

panchayat and at Podampeta vil-

lage of Palibandha panchayat.

This had sparked protests a few

served a notice on the district Civil

Supplies department asking it to

show cause on distribution of moth

and insect infested rice, they added.

The district Collector had then

vears back.

of Maoists ahead of Republic Day 500gm, brass gas welding stove, a wrist watch and other materials. celebration were foiled, it said. 9L tourists stayed away from state sites

PNN/AGENCIES

Malkangiri, Jan 24: Ahead of

the Republic Day celebrations, se-

curity personnel Monday seized

and defused a huge cache of ex-

plosives at Swabhiman Anchal in

Border Security Force (BSF)

Malkangiri district, police said.

jawans and the district police per-

sonnel recovered seven impro-

vised explosive devices (IEDs)

and explosives concealed under

stone piles near the village

Sadaram-Sanyasiguda and

The seized items included 1 steel

container IED (approx 5 kg), 4 steel container IED (approx -2 kg), 1

brass container IED (approx 1kg),

1 brass container IED (approx 500

gm), other powdered explosive-

Totaguda, they said.

POST NEWS NETWORK



Popular tourist destinations like Konark Sun Temple, Puri Srimandir, Chilika Lake and the scenic sea beaches of the state have witnessed maximum footfall while the remaining fail to attract the tourists.

These sites have witnessed a drop of 9 lakh tourists during October of last three years while dip in footfall of foreign tourists is stated to be 9,000, thanks to the raging pandemic. This in turn has taken a heavy toll on the livelihood of people dependent on these sites. They are virtually struggling for survival.

Reports said over 14,07,482 Indian and 9,181 foreign tourists had visited various tourist destinations of Odisha in October 2018. However, these tourists have stopped visiting the state since March 2020 till date due to spread of Covid pandemic in the country.

According to Tourism department assistant director (Statistics) Pratapdev Raj, "Only 5,66,939 Indian



INDIAN AND 9,181 HAD VISITED VARIOUS TOURIST **DESTINATIONS OF** ODISHA IN OCTOBER 2018

THESE TOURISTS, HOWEVER, HAVE STOPPED VISITING THE STATE SINCE MARCH 2020 TILL DATE DUE TO SPREAD OF COVID PANDEMIC IN THE COUNTRY

THIS HAS TAKEN A HEAVY TOLL ON THE LIVELIHOOD OF PEOPLE DEPENDENT ON THESE TOURISM SITES

and 210 foreign tourists visited the state in October 2021."

Raj has submitted a detailed report on dip in arrival of tourists to the Union Ministry of Tourism

He has mentioned about 75 tourist sites in the state. The report mentions zero arrival of Indian foreign tourists at Nandankanan Zoological Park near Bhubaneswar, Bhanjanagar, Aska, Patnagarh, Nrusinghanath, Khiching, Tikarpada, Sunabeda,

Gupteswar, Dhabaleswar, Kapilash, Tara Tarini, Pathrajpur and Daringbadi.

The report said Puri witnessed the maximum footfall of tourists as compared to other tourist sites in the state. A maximum of 1,99,826 Indian and 13 foreign tourists have visited Puri while 3.381 Indian and no foreign tourist visited Konark during October 2021. Similarly, 84,793 Indian and 140 foreign tourists visited the Temple city of Bhubaneswar and 8.252 Indian and

zero foreign tourists visited the Silk city Berhampur.

All the IEDs were defused

this, the nefarious designs

All the IEDs were defused by the

With this, the nefarious designs

bomb disposal squad at the site,

by the bomb disposal

squad at the site. With

of Maoists were foiled

an official release said.

Likewise, 15,192 Indian and no foreign tourist visited Sambalpur while 18,567 Indian and zero foreign tourists visited Jharsuguda and Brajarajnagar.

Moreover, 13,233 Indian and no foreign tourist visited Rourkela while 38,318 Indian and zero foreign tourists reached Cuttack and Chowdwar. The data also says Jajpur Town witnessed footfall of 1,417 Indian and zero foreign tourists while in Jajpur Road it is 7,034 and six respectively. It also says 7,514 Indian and seven foreign tourists visited Paradip, the port town of Odisha.

Similarly, 16,213 Indian and six foreign tourists thronged Balasore while 7,185 Indian and zero foreign tourists visited Chandipur. Bhadrak saw 8,967 Indian and seven foreign tourists while 9,127 Indian and zero foreign tourists visited Angul

Similarly, 842 Indian and zero foreign tourists visited Burla and Hirakud while 287 Indian tourists visited Chandikhole. Likewise. Malkangiri and Keonjhar saw 2,148 and 13,365 Indian tourists visiting the tourism destinations in the districts. It is alleged that lack of proper campaign to attract the tourists to the state has also proved

Poll boycott call over water, road woes

POST NEWS NETWORK

thorough probe into

Keonjhar; Jan 24: Residents in hilllocked Badakhaman in the district have warned the administration of boycotting the ensuing panchayat elections citing lack of good road and drinking water facilities in their village.

The village under Talapada panchayat of Telkoi block is surrounded by hills and inhabited by 80 families with voter strength of over 200. During rains, it is an uphill task to reach the village as it lacks an all-weather road. Moreover, the village lacks drinking water facilities for which the residents have to depend on rivers and creeks.

What worries them the most is that they remain cut-off from the rest of the world for 4-6 months during the rains as their village, which is surrounded by a river, gets flooded during the period.

During the monsoon months, they can neither visit the panchayat office, which is about 4km away, to bring their ration nor can





ack of good road makes it difficult to hospitalize the patients and

buy other essentials. Their children

they visit the nearest market to

also fail to visit the school during Lack of good road makes it difficult to hospitalise the patients

and pregnant woman in emer-

gencies. Some women of the village alleged that during emergency, they risk their lives while crossing the overflowing river.

The villagers alleged that it is only during the elections that the candidates promise them the moon

it is only during the polls that the candidates promise them the moon

The residents alleged that

but conveniently forget when voting is over.

Telkoi block development officer (BDO) P Chand visited the village and tried to convince the villagers to participate in the voting. He assured them to take up their issues with higher authorities. However, the villagers refused to relent and said that their demands should be met first.

When contacted, executive officer of Talapada panchayat Khirod Nayak said they have failed to construct a road due to forest land is-

"A plan has been prepared and the matter will be resolved soon. Construction of a bridge, drinking water and all other facilities will be in place once the road is constructed," he added.

Paper snatched away from sarpanch aspirant

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonihar, Jan 24: A woman aspirant for sarpanch post could not file her nomination due to stiff opposition allegedly by supporters of the ruling party in Badakalimati panchayat under Bamebari police limits in Keonjhar. The woman, Gori Nayak, filed a police complaint in this regard.



Meanwhile, police have registered a case under various sections of IPC and SC/ST Prevention

of Atrocities Act-1989. In the complaint, Nayak alleged

A case has been registered under various sections of IPC and **SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act-1989**

that she along with her supporters had come to Badakalimati panchayat to file her nomination at 11am January 21. "However, some supporters of Champua MLA threatened her with weapons and did not allow her to enter the panchayat office," she said. They also snatched away nomination papers from her and hurled abuses at her following which she along with her supporters had to return with utter disappointment.

IIC AM Tudu said that a case has been registered while investigation was handed over to the deputy superintendent of police (DSP).

to be a double whammy.

EAST COAST RAILWAY Tender Notice No. 33/ET/SBP ENGG/2021-22, Dated: 19.01.2022

(1) e-Tender No. 22-eT-DENS-SBP-21 (1) e-tender No. 22-e1-DENS-SBP-217

NAME OF WORK: REPAIRS TO RCC
SLAB STAFF QUARTERS BY
PROVIDING APP SHEET ROOFING,
SEPTIC TANKS OF SERVICE
BUILDINGS & STAFF QUARTERS AD
DIFFERENT STATIONS, COVER SLAB
ON TITLAGARH YARD DRAIN UNDER
ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER TITLAGARH JURISDICTION O SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. Cost of the Work : 75,00,275.39, <u>EMD :</u> ₹ 1,50,100/-

(2) e-Tender No. 23-eT-DENS-SBP-21 NAME OF WORK REPAIRS TO RCC
SLAB STAFF QUARTERS BY
PROVIDING APP SHEET ROOFING
DESLUDGING OF SEPTIC TANKS.
REPAIRS TO DAMAGED DOORS AND
WINDOWS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONA ENGINEER / MUNIGUDA OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. Cost of the Work :

(3) e-Tender No. 24-eT-DENS-SBP-2 NAMEOF WORK REPAIRS TO STAFF QUARTERS BY REPLACING DAMAGED DOORS, WINDOWS AND FLY PROOF MESH FROM TITLAGARN TO RUPRA ROAD STATION OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION Approx. Cost of the Work

1,00,00,409.10, EMD : ₹ 2,00,100/-(4) e-Tender No. 25-eT-DENS-SBP-2 (4) e-Tender No. 25-eT-DENS-SBP-21 NAME OF WORK: MISCELLANEOUS REPAIRS TO PLATFORM, SERVICE BUILDINGS, PF SURFACE, BOUNDARY WALL, WATER BOOTHS, BENCHES, MINISHELTER, DRAINS ETC. IN NORLA ROAD-THERUBALI AND LANJIGARH ROAD-JUNAGARH ROAD SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER / MUNIGUDA OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. Cost of the Work:

Completion Period of the Work (Twelve) Months (for all SI. Nos.) Tender Closing Date and Time : (for a Tenders) 14.02.2022 at 1500 Hrs.

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier Fax or in person accepted against suc a-tenders even if these are submitted or irm's letter head and received in time. A such manual offers shall be considered nvalid and shall be rejected summar

without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender vailable in website http://www.ireps.gov.in

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen days before the date of closing of tende to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered or

IREPS Portal. Only registered tendere bidder can participate on e-tendering. Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.) PR-743/M/21-22 Sambalpu

Squabbles in Ranpur BJD may come to Oppn advantage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Jan 24: The ongoing internecine squabbles within Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in Ranpur Assembly segment may come as a blessing for the Opposition parties in the upcoming three-tier rural polls.

According to political analysts, all is not well within Nayagarh BJD and the ruling dispensation could fail to outshine the opposition if the internal bickering doesn't end. However, it all depends on the strategies of BJP and Congress to take good advantage of the rift within the BJD, they added.

The party workers who have been denied tickets may play spoilsport to the BJD prospect in the upcoming panchayat elections, said sources.

Recently, Ranpur MLA Satyanarayan Pradhan (BJD) had to return without laying a foundation stone at the local block office due to protests. In another incident, Pradhan was hurled eggs in his home turf during Ranpur Bikash Samavesh. The incidents are believed to have made a deep impact on local voters.

Ranpur Assembly constituency segment has six zilla parishad zones, including Zone No 21, 22, 23 and 24 under Ranpur block and 3 and 4 under Odagaon block. Out of the six, Zone No 3, 4, 22 and 23 were captured by BJP (earlier bastions of BJD) and while 21 and 24 were

WHAT EXPERTS SAY



■ BJD's local dissidence has been growing and assuming alarming proportions in ZP

Some BJD workers alleged that the local MLA does not give enough time to work on strengthening the

AS FAR AS CONGRESS IS CONCERNED, THE PARTY HAS BEEN GRADUALLY STRENGTHENING ITS BASE IN NAYAGARH DISTRICT IN GENERAL AND RANPUR

occupied by the latter in 2017 threetier polls. The ruling party's or-

ganisation gradually became weaker thereafter. However, MLA

Pradhan could retain the Assembly seat in 2019.

According to the political analysts, BJD's local dissidence has been growing to alarming proportions in ZP Zone No 21 covering Darpanarayanpur, Brajarajpur,

Damasahi, Gourangapur, Rankadeuli, Baunsagada, Khatia, Pimpal and Bajrakote panchayats and zone 24 covering the panchayats such as Bandhamunda, Champagada, Chandapur, Jankia, Patia, Mayurajhalia, Raipada, Kerenda-tangi, Kandhanuagada

Meanwhile, some BJD workers have alleged that the local MLA does not give enough time to work on strengthening the party base.

and Jhadapada in the district.

On the other hand, it has become difficult for BJP to retain its seat in ZP Zone 4. It is said that local voters had given the mandate to the saffron for a change and also due to anti-incumbency factor in 2017. Besides, BJP could not act as an

effective Opposition in the zone.

As far as Congress is concerned, the party has been gradually strengthening its base in Nayagarh district in general and Ranpur Assembly constituency segment in particular, the political analysts added.

The upcoming three-tier polls in Nayagarh will leave a lot for the three major political parties to learn.



The path is long, but selfsurrender makes it short; the way is difficult, but perfect trust

THE MOTHER



Biden Under A Cloud

t is no music to US President Joe Biden's ears that the euphoria over his presidency has considerably dissipated only within a year of his assuming office. As he has just completed the first year in office, he is not only greeted with a series of setbacks - legislative and judicial -, his popular rating has also alarmingly gone down. Fear is even looming large that the Democrats may lose out to their rivals, the Republicans, in the fight to retain control of Congress in the midterm elections later this year. What began as ominous when he ineptly handled the US army pullout of Afghanistan is now looking like a recipe for disaster. He has lost the support of two of his own Democrats in the Senate sealing the fate of a legislation that the President desperately wanted to be passed to protect his constituency. The warning bell has sounded so loudly that Biden himself has conceded that henceforth he would behave more like a President than a Senator. For the past few decades he has been known as a Senator operating from within the four walls of the Senate. He has decided that phase of his long career is over and he would now hit the road to convey his plans to the Americans directly. Virtually admitting that his approach needed to change, Biden said he planned to spend less time locked in private negotiations and more time on the road to convince Americans about his policies as Democrats fight to retain control of Congress in the November midterm elections. "The public doesn't want me to be the President-senator," said Biden, who spent decades in the chamber as a senator from Delaware. "They want me to be the President, and let senators be senators," he said at a Press conference.

Though he sought to downplay the latest ratings by pretending not to trust such figures, his words do betray his anxiety deep down. A new poll from the Associated Press - NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that for the first time a majority of Americans now disapprove of his handling of the Presidency. According to the poll, 56% of Americans disapprove of the way Biden is handling his job as President, compared to 43% who approve. A dismal 28% of Americans say they want Biden to run for re-election in 2024, including only 48% of Democrats. The figures indicate a sharp decline for Biden, who began his Presidency with relatively strong support from a public which hoped he would bring a sense of normality after four tumultuous years of Donald Trump. Apparently, his political fortunes have been declining since the chaotic and rushed military withdrawal from Afghanistan and the arrival of the Delta variant triggering a spike in coronavirus infections.

When he assumed office a year back Biden inherited some dire crises such as a once in a century pandemic, economic uncertainty and a democracy threatened by partisan division and lies. Things have worsened since then on each of these fronts and he is confronted with setbacks no one could imagine he would face. Of course, he spared no pains to defend his first year in office and insisted that the administration had handled the coronavirus "remarkably well." He even reeled off statistics to show tens of millions of Americans had been fully vaccinated. On the economy, he claimed record low unemployment and unveiled his plans for taming inflation and alleviating supply chain bottlenecks. But, he is no longer as assured as he was a year back and admitted it as much when he said: "It is going to be difficult. I make no bones about that." This was only hours before Republicans blocked Democrats' latest attempt to pass crucial Bills, which the President described as critical to the fate of American democracy. The Bills could not be passed as two Democrats opposed a crucial Bill tilting the balance in favour of the Republicans though the numbers before voting were 50-50. The legislation was vital for the Biden Presidency as it would have helped the Democrats bypass a rule - known as the filibuster - that for any legislation getting some Opposition support is needed. The vote brought to the fore the difficulty Biden faces delivering on his campaign promises, despite Democratic control of Congress. The voting rights Bills are vital to preserving US democracy against Republican attempts to exclude Black and other predominantly Democratic voters through a spate of recently enacted laws by Republicans at the local level.

The US Supreme Court recently ruled against Biden's Covid-19 test-or-vaccine mandate on large businesses. This administrative fiat was a key component in the Biden Presidency's bid to control the spread of the Omicron variant when only 62 percent of Americans are fully vaccinated. Biden had issued the mandate for companies with 100 employees or more to insist on vaccinations or regular testing as a way to put a lid on the stunning spread of the latest Covid variant. However, conservatives questioned the mandates as undue governmental interference in the people's working arena. The SC's disapproval is a slap on the administration's face.

All these do not augur well for Biden and it would be foolish for him and his fellow-Democrats to believe that former President Donald Trump would sit quietly in his Florida resort. In fact, instead of fading into exile, Trump has during the past whole year waited and watched for the right opportunity to stage a comeback. The result of his tactic can already been seen. Though banned from mainstream social media platforms and twice impeached, the former president has only tightened his grip on the Republican Party. His base remains deeply loyal as he succeeds in convincing his supporters that the 2020 election was stolen from him and they seem to be eager to see him return to power in 2024.

WISDOM CORNER

Put your heart, mind, and soul into even your smallest acts. This is the secret of success. Share this Quote SWAMI SIVANANDA

Not life, but good life, is to be chiefly valued.

SOCRATES

There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WORDS**WORTH**

■ Abacot

enerations of reference books once included this term, including the Girst edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, dated 1771: "the name of an ancient cap of state worn by the kings of England, the upper part whereof was in the form of a double crown". The word first appeared in that spelling in Abraham Fleming's edition of Holinshed's Chronicles in 1587 and later included in dictionaries, including Nathan Bailey's of 1721 and Noah Webster's of 1828. James Murray, the famous editor of the Oxford English Dictionary, found that the original word was bycoket, which was indeed a form of headgear, a cap or headdress with a peak both in front and behind, whose name he thought derived from an Old French term for a small castle crowning a hill. He declared abacot to be a ghost word and wrote in an article in the Athenaeum in February 1882: "There is not, never was, such a word". His entry for abacot in the first edition of the OED read in its entirity "a spurious word found in many dictionaries, originating in a misprint of bycoket." There is, after all, no shortage of words that have been grossly altered through popular error. The revision of its entry in the Oxford English Dictionary in December 2011 takes this view, giving 13 citations of its use from 1548 to 1951 and omitting Murray's comment.

What was the problem before?

axiing down the tarmac, the jetliner abruptly stopped, turned around and returned to the gate. After an hour-long wait, it finally took off. A





LANGUAGE MATTERS



n Mumbai, a civic garden in

the upper-class suburb of Bandra West was renamed

language, shops have even been asked to put up boards in Marathi, which many people cannot read. It indicates what is wrong with the language policy in India. Part of the blame lies with the mono lingual English language elite and some in regional languages who want to foist English on schools as the medium of instruction. This is without any understanding of reality. Many parents are not equipped to teach children in English or even in their own mother tongues. The result is that we now have children who are good neither in regional languages nor in English. This is the case in large segments of society.

The ridiculous board outside the civic garden in Mumbai is a result of such a policy. In this case, however, the appalling contract system introduced in civic gardens is also responsible. For errors and corruption, the administration absolves itself and puts all the blame on the contractor. The D'monte family apparently is unaware of the error because like many of the younger generation across language affiliations, the Devanagari script is unclear and unfamiliar. Darryl's family is one of the oldest East Indian Christian families in Bandra and belonged to what was originally a mainly agrarian community. The mother tongue of this community is a dialect of Marathi which many in its upper sections have stopped using

The problems don't centre around Marathi, dialects of languages, English or Hindi. There are problems galore and they are ज्ञा नाधा हिन्दी विध्या ठी മലയാളം विक्रमा प्रा

It is much better to retain English terms or use simple words in the regional language rather than sanskritised words. For instance, why say 'yakrut' for liver, when 'kaleji' or just the English word for the organ - 'liver' - is fine?

across India and have to be considered before taking any step involving a language. For instance, the conversion of a Hindi medium school to English, mid-session, violates Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution (freedom of speech and expression) and cannot be permitted, a court in Rajasthan ruled recently while setting aside the Rajasthan government's decision to convert Shri Hari Singh Government Senior Secondary School in Pilwa, Jodhpur district, to an English medium one in September, 2021.

The parents maintained that they were not against English as a medium of instruction, but against the "complete conversion of the present institution." The abrupt change, they said, would compel students to take admission in other schools during the academic session, which would affect their studies. The Rajasthan government argued that the students could easily take admission in the numerous Hindi medium government schools in the same area.

The government seems to be so casual about people's problems. In this case, the State government evidently thinks it is easy to get admission in another school - in a village how many schools would there be in the vicinity to choose from? The problem with the craze

about introducing English as the medium of education in schools is that most families and schools in non-urban settings do not have enough resources even for studies in the local languages. The dominance of English and the relegation of regional languages is one problem. Then the regional languages elite also hinder transmitting knowledge with their insistence on the use of sanskritised terms. These deter youngsters from learning their own languages. It is much better to retain English terms or use simple words in the regional language rather than sanskritised words. For instance, why say 'yakrut' for liver, when 'kaleji' or just the English word for the organ - 'liver' - is fine?

Language can be the cause of divisions in society. In the instance of Konkani, script is a dividing factor. Christians in Goa have been demanding that Konkani is written in the Roman script while others insist on writing in Marathi or the Nagari script which is a precursor of Devanagari.

Then there is the problem of widespread ignorance regarding the language issue at all levels. For instance, Sadanand Date, a police officer praised for his role in the 26/11 terrorist attack in Mumbai, recalled his experience of a meeting of adivasis addressed

by the chief minister of Chhatisgarh in a Naxalite area in that State. He noticed that the audience was not reacting at all. Only then it was realised that they did not know Hindi. Sadanand Date got an interpreter who knew the local dialect, he acted as a translator and the problem was solved. This doesn't happen in most cases and a lot is lost without the translation!

This is probably the main reason why the Naxalites have succeeded despite all the efforts to stop them: Language! Learning the local language has helped Naxalites manage inroads in tribal areas. They have learnt local bolis, dialects and reached the ears of the tribals. Whereas the governments are talking to the tribals in a language only the governments understand!

For the rest, our insular upper class is one of the major problems in the way of learning languages or dialects and thus a hurdle in the way of communication of any kind. So why are we celebrating a language with "language weeks" and fortnights without understanding the language?

> The writer is a senior Mumbai-based journalist, author and cultural critic. Views are personal. **©THE BILLION PRESS**

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

Vidyadhar Date

CHRISTIANS IN

GOA HAVE BEEN

THAT KONKANI

IS WRITTEN IN

SCRIPT WHILE

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OF DEVANAGARI

MARATHI OR

THE NAGARI

THE ROMAN

DEMANDING

Cut I-T rates, stop PSU sale



Shivaji Sarkar

THE FM SHOULD **RETHINK OF INCENTIVISING SAVINGS BY ASKING RBI TO RAISE INTEREST RATES. IF SHE** DOES, IT WOULD **BRING BACK** THE SUSTAINED **GROWTH PATTERN AND STRENGTHEN INDIAN FAMILIES** TO COME OUT OF

THE CRISIS

etters

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

rissapost

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

et another year of uncertainty begins with difficult finances, not so certain growth and perhaps some experimentation by the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Two years ago, the government announced a massive corporate tax rate cut, lowering the base rate to 22 per cent from 30 per cent, and to 15 per cent from 25 per cent for new manufacturing companies. Till such time individual and tax rates were in sync.

Now people want that synchronisation to be re-established. The individual income tax rates remain very high at 42 per cent and 30 plus 3 per cent. It robs an income tax pavee of almost 73 to 83 per cent of his income. The aspiration is that it be lowered to 20 to 22 per cent, possibly ideally as per Chanakya principles to around 17 per cent to help generate demand. One wishes that the Finance Minister listens to them.

She has her problems of constricted finances, not the desired growth or rather uneven growth instead of a high trajectory that could have generated jobs. increased demand, boosted production and paved the way for demand. Though she should do that, it's possible she would like to avoid the call. And people should be thankful that she does not introduce her own thought of expenditure tax, earlier rejected by many finance ministers.

The FM should rethink of incentivising savings by asking Reserve Bank of India to raise interest rates. If she does, it would bring back the sustained growth pattern. The FM needs to do it. If she

had done this before, the government would possibly not have to resort to free food, edible oil and other doles to 80 crore or 61.54 per cent of the population. The FM should now, through

various policy formulations, try to empower the families. It may help the country reduce these expenses in the next four to five years.

The budget would invest in many metro, infra projects, healthcare, railways and ports. It also may take up the issue of regulating crypto currencies. Last year, the new National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID), with a capital base of 20,000 crore and a lending target of 5 lakh crore over a three-year horizon was set up. In five years, it targets ₹111 lakh crore investment.

NaBFID Chairman KV Kamath says that it would require ₹80 lakh crore in 2022-23 to kickstart big ticket projects like high-speed railways, airports, ports, highways, river interlinking for the national infra pipeline. Infra is critical and risky both. Highway investments may go up by 35 per cent. The ASEAN had gone bust with high infra investment. It aims to make it up by further asset sales of the PSUs.

It looks interesting but the financial risks cannot be overlooked. The rise of private at the cost of public sector has its ramification. There are proposals for disinvesting 36 PSUs, including Central Electronics, PDIL, LIC, four major banks by 2024. The funds through sales would only help reduce fiscal deficit. The number of profit-making PSUs was 183 in 2017-18, 179 in 2018-19 before declining to 171 in 2019-20, said industry minister. According to the government's new public sector policy, profit or loss incurred by a PSU is not criterion for disinvestment anymore.

It has to lay special emphasis on agriculture. Procurements are on the rise but still unable to satisfy farmers. The budget proposes to increase loan limit to ₹18 lakh. Various infra funding, healthcare, agriculture, small businesses would depend heavily on banks, which are certainly not so comfortable. As per the RBI, banks have ₹8.35 lakh crore Non Performing Assets. Even there are plans to allow youth to have loans from banks for entrepreneurship.

Looks good. But MUDRA loans' record is not that bright. Bad debts for Mudra loans have spiked for PSBs, and, at the end of 2018-19 (FY19), stand at 9.3 per cent of advances. There has been 71 per cent jump in the number of MUDRA loan accounts that have turned NPAs in Gujarat in 2021.

Creating jobs and less reliance on the public sector are contradictory. Organisations like PDIL are watchdogs that private or foreign investors detest. Mere infra cannot sustain or boost job demands for long. It has to look how the medium and small industries grow. So far the stress on MSME is a bit lukewarm. The budget has to be more innovative.

Collective failure

postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

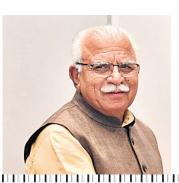
Sir, The game of cricket is a game of chess and so each and every move counts in the shortest form of the game. Having lost the test series in a one day fashion we could have chalked out a strategy to rectify the mistakes committed in the longest form of the game. The major shortcoming is that the so-called strong batting failed to live up to the expectations and thereby the bowlers were put to test. In the event of a small total to defend most of the time on the tour, our strategy should be prudent enough to dismiss the opposition also within a low score. This we have witnessed in the tour of New Zealand and in the World Test Championship as well. We lost both ODI and T-20 World Cup chances through sheer lack of shrewd captaincy and the will to win. We carried a team having a number one bowler in the world but we made him to toil hard for a place in the side in England and in the T20 World cup. When everything was lost in T-20 World Cup against Pakistan and New Zealand we resorted to the services of the number one off spinner Ashwin. By that time our fate was already decided. South Africa opened their innings with a left hand batsman and the services of Ashwin, the off spinner could have been pressed into service straightaway with the new ball. But that didn't happen and we finished the tour on a losing note. **CK Subramaniam**, NAVI MUMBAI

Dynasty politics, a reality

Sir, Apropos, "Race for tickets tearing apart families," Orissa POST, Jan 24. Fortunes of many political families are on the line in the upcoming five state Assembly elections and for a change these elections are seeing some family members on opposing sides of the political divide. After a prolonged schism, Akhilesh Yadav has marginalised everyone else in his big family. With no future in SP, his sister-in-law Aparna Yadav has joined BJP. Dynastic succession is a reality in Indian politics except for parties like BJP and fading CPM, CPI. That none of BJP's top rung leaders are dynasts allows Prime Minister Narendra Modi to go on the offensive against big political families like Gandhis. Yadav family politicians are conspicuously missing at Akhilesh's side in these elections. In Punjab and Uttarakhand, Congress is attempting a one family, one ticket rule - discomfiting the likes of Charanjit Singh Channi and Harish Rawat. BJP has likewise denied the prestigious Panaji seat to Manohar Parrikar's son. Indian politics and its economy are in dire need of reforms that improve opportunities for the youth.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

national



Ensuring a holistic and equitable development of **Haryana** is the utmost priority of the state government MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR HARYANA CHIEF MINISTER

DD PLANS IMPACTFUL R-DAY COVERAGE

With 59 cameras, including one fixed on the dome of the Rashtrapati Bhavan, public broadcaster Doordarshan is all set to beam live every bit of action of the Republic Day parade which features a fly-past by 75 aircrafts of the Indian Air Force (IAF) over the iconic Rajpath





The total rice cultivation in the state is 50-60 lakh tonnes per year but only 15 lakh tonnes are sent to mills in absence of



HEMANT SOREN JHARKHAND CHIEF MINISTER

(ministerial) berths are vacant, so naturally there will be aspirations. There is

nothing wrong with it. Party leadership is aware of when and how to do it. I'm also bringing it to leadership's notice. Whenever the leadership calls me for discussion. I will give them all the details

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI K'TAKA CM

and girls to be agents of committed to ensure Nari Shaktis' social and economic empowerment while redressing long-standing inequalities to build a more just and resilient society

manoj sinha | j&k lt governor

SHORT TAKES

Delhi: Nursing staff protest

New Delhi: The nurses' unions of Delhi governmentrun hospitals Monday wore black ribbons to register their protest over pending ex-gratia which was announced by the Arvind Kejriwal-led government. The nurses were protesting over the pending ex-gratia of eight nurses who died during Covid duty during the second wave the pandemic last year.

Ex-AIMIM leader gets life-term

Hyderabad: A fast-track court in Telangana's Adilabad district Monday sentenced a former leader of AIMIM to life imprisonment for killing his political rival. Mohammed Farooq Ahmed, former deputy chairman of Adilabad municipality, had opened fire killing a former corporator and injuring two others in Adilabad town December 18, 2020.

Tight security in Kashmir

Srinagar: Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir said Monday that all arrangements are in place to ensure that the Republic Day functions are held peacefully in Srinagar and other district headquarters of Kashmir, Viiav Kumar, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir said that all security arrangements have been put in place and that security forces will ensure peaceful conduct of Republic Day functions in Srinagar and other district headquarters of the Valley.

Two arms suppliers held

New Delhi: The Special Cell of Delhi Police has arrested two notorious arms suppliers of the infamous Neeraj Bawania and Tillu Tajpuriya gang, an official said Monday. The accused were identified as Manish, 25, a resident of Bawana, Delhi and Shokeen, 38, a resident of district Shamli, Uttar Pradesh.

Man held for raping minor

Bangalore: A 36-year-old man has been arrested for raping an eight-year-old girl here, police said Monday. The incident took place in the limits of Nandini Layout police station. According to police, the accused Anil Kumar (36), an auto driver lived next to the girl's house. The survivor's mother is a garment factory worker and had gone to work on Saturday when the crime took place. On seeing the girl alone, the accused entered her house and sexually assaulted her.

46% of girls under 15 anaemic in India: Report

Anaemia is a condition in which there is a decreased number of circulating red blood cells and/or haemoglobin contained therein and is the most prevalent nutritional deficiency disorder in the world

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 24: About 46 per cent of girls in India under the age of 15 are anaemic, according to a report released Monday on the

Srinagar, Jan 24: About 104 to

135 militants are ready to sneak

into the Indian side of the Line of

Control (LoC), Raja Babu Singh,

Inspector General (IG) of Border

Security Force (BSF) said Monday.

fire agreement last year, the over-

all situation on Kashmir LoC

remained peaceful, but the fresh in-

telligence inputs suggest that 104

to 135 militants are ready to sneak

to the other side of LoC to facilitate

the infiltration of the waiting mil-

itants. Their movement is being

tracked and their families are under

constant watch of security agen-

cies." the IG said while address-

ing the annual conference at the

BSF headquarters in Humhama

on the outskirts of Srinagar city.

said, "Our inputs suggest that there

are 104 to 135 militants at the launch

pads who are ready to infiltrate

into this side". "Their movement

is being tracked. The primary job

of the guide is to bring groups of

LoC. the IGBSF said that it guards

96 kms of LoC in Kashmir and the

drone threat was real. "We are

Asked about the drone threats on

militants along", he said.

The IG BSF Kashmir Frontier

'Some guides have crossed over

into this side.

The IGBSF said that post cease-

National Girl Child Day, annually observed January 24 to raise awareness to promote the rights, education, health, and nutrition of the girl child across the country.

The findings by SRL Diagnostics is based on a total of 8,57,003 haemoglobin tests conducted in the past 7 years, between January 2015 and November 2021.

The study shows that 63 per cent of all samples, across all age groups of women, tested positive for anaemia. But in girls less than 15 years, the

percentage of samples positive for anaemia was 46 per cent. Of these, 13 per cent were severely anaemic.

Further, the study also showed that Assam is the worst affected with 72 per cent of married women

104 to 135 militants waiting

across LoC to sneak in: BSF

AK-47 Rifles, pistols, Hand

Grenades recovered in '21

The Border Security Force Monday said that it has successfully recovered

Hand Grenades, two IEDs and 17.3 kg Heroin worth around Rs 88 crore in

annual press conference at Srinagar, the BSF Inspector General Kashmir

are being made to foil bids aimed

at transporting narcotics from LoC.

He said the Taliban takeover in

Afghanistan last year has not af-

fected J&K in any form so far, but

the security agencies are moni-

toring the situation closely.

different operational incidents during the year 2021 in J&K. Holding an

Raia Babu Singh said that the Kashmir Frontier has been manning the

Line of Control (LoC) Kashmir Valley with full zeal and devotion.

and seized three AK-47 Rifles, six 9MM pistols, 1071 ammunitions, 20



being anaemic, followed by Haryana (69.7 per cent) and

Jharkhand (68.4 per cent). Globally, anaemia affects 1.62 billion people,

which corresponds to 24.8 per cent of the population.

According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-(III), more than half of women in India (55 per cent) have anaemia.

Prevalence of anaemia in all the groups is higher in India as compared to other developing countries," Anand K., CEO of SRL Diagnostics said in a statement.

"Diagnosing the root cause of anaemia is very important. While predominantly anaemia is caused due to iron deficiency or a deficiency in vitamin b12, there could be other reasons for anaemia that needs to be investigated," added Dr Anurag Bansal, Technical Director, SRL **Diagnostics**

BUDGET SESSION

Parl to function in two shifts owing to Covid

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 24: The Parliament will function in two shifts during the Budget Session from February under which the Rajya Sabha will function from 10 am to 3 pm, and the Lok Sabha from 4 pm to 9 pm, owing to the prevailing Covid situation.

The Budget Session will be held in two parts this year, from January 31 to February 11 and from March 14 to April 8. The Union Budget for FY23 will be tabled February 1.

All Covid protocols will be in place in the Parliament to prevent the outbreak of the disease. As per the schedule, President Ram Nath Kovind will address the joint sitting of the two Houses at 11 am January 31. "During the sittings from 31.1.2022 to 11.2.2022, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha chambers and their galleries will be used for sitting of members in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic," said a source. The President will arrive at the Central Hall of the Parliament at 10.55 am along with the Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Prime Minister, Speaker of Lok Sabha and the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. Seating arrangements for members have been made in the Central Hall, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha chambers and their galleries.

Over 700 Parliament staff have tested positive for Covid till now during random testing.

Army signs pact with ideaForge for UAVs

The Army had in January 2021 signed the previous contract with the Mumbai-based company to supply an undisclosed number of SWITCH1.0 drones for approximately \$20 million

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 24: The Indian Army has again signed a contract with ideaForge to procure an undisclosed number of a high-altitude variant of SWITCH1.0 unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to strengthen its surveillance along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), military officials said.

The Army had in January 2021 signed the previous contract with the Mumbai-based company to supply an undisclosed number of SWITCH1.0 drones for approximately \$20 million. In a statement Monday, ideaForge

said it has fulfilled the January 2021 contract by supplying the specified number of SWITCH1.0 drones to the Indian Army within the prescribed time limit. The company said the Indian

Army has "entrusted" it with "an additional order" for the same UAV The new order is similar to the previous one, the company stated.

SWITCH1.0 UAV is a fixed-wing drone that is capable of vertical takeoff and landing and it can be deployed at high altitudes and harsh environments for day-and-night



surveillance.

In its statement, the company quoted a "Defence Official" saying that: "We have received deliveries of the SWITCH 1.0 UAVs in time and are eager to strengthen our northern and eastern borders with swift induction of this force multiplier technology.'

The statement quoted ideaForge CEO Ankit Mehta as saying that the additional order for SWITCH1.0 UAV is a testament to its class leading capabilities which have been exhibited not only during the product trials against a dozen global players but also in the operational environment.

"We have completed the delivery of the previous order in time and are gearing up to deliver the additional order within the set timelines as well," Mehta noted.

10-yr-old girl cycles from Kashmir to **Kanyakumari**

Thane: A 10-year-old girl from Thane city, who cycled a distance of more than 3.600 km between Kashmir and Kanyakumari to spread awareness about hazards of vehicular pollution and saving the girl child, was given a warm welcome when she arrived here at the end of her expedition. Sai Patil, a resident of Balkum, accompanied by her father started the cycling expedition last month. The girl was given a warm welcome by city residents when she arrived here Sunday evening. The local residents took out a procession with Sai Patil sitting on a decorated chariot and felicitated her at a function.

COVID PREPAREDNESS

Health Minister to interact with nine states, UTs today



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 24: Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya will hold a virtual meeting with nine states and United Territories Tuesday to take stock of the prevailing Covid situation.

A source said that Mandaviya will interact with the health ministers of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Ladakh, Uttar

Pradesh and Chandigarh. This meeting will discuss the prevailing Covid situation and public health preparedness for containment and management of the pandemic in these states, he said.

procuring our own drones to

counter the drone threat. Besides,

a series of measures are in place

to deal with drone threats," he

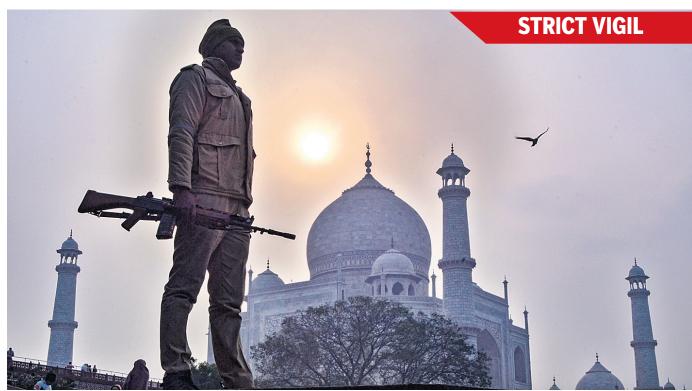
said. He said that last year 17.3 kg

heroin worth Rs 88 crore was seized

on the LoC by BSF and all efforts

Earlier January 10, Mandaviya had held a meeting with the health ministers and senior officials of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Goa, Dadra & Nagra Haveli and Daman & Diu.

Mandaviya had told these states to utilise efficiently the fund provided under ECRP-II for strengthening the health infrastructure across the country, and urged the states to make robust preparations in terms of physical infrastructure. India's vaccination coverage has crossed 162.77 crore with over 49 lakh doses being administered till 7 pm Monday.



A security personnel stands guard near Taj Mahal ahead of the Republic Day in Agra

90% PEOPLE LOST SOME DEGREE OF VISION: EXPERTS

DOCTORS SAID THAT EARLY DETECTION AND TREATMENT IS **KEY TO CONTROL** THE DISEASE AND **PREVENT ANY LOSS IN VISION**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 24: About 9 in 10 people have lost some degree of vision during the last two years of Covid pandemic, health experts said Monday.

PANDEMIC'S HIDDEN THREAT



It is because most of them skipped their regular eye check-ups

and follow-ups due to pandemic-induced lockdowns, fear among others. Retinal diseases such as diabetic retinopathy or age-related macular degeneration have few or minor symptoms at first and are only detected by eye examination or a screening. These conditions have the tendency to create severe damage to the eyes if not timely intervened with.

'Unfortunately, 90 per cent of patients lost some degree of vision due poor follow ups, during the first and the second wave of Covid. especially the ones suffering from wet AMD (Age Related Macular Degeneration). These patients mostly missed taking their Intravitreal injection, owing to which the diseases progressed rapidly," Dr Ajay Dudani, CEO Vitreoretinal Surgeon, Mumbai Retina Centre, told IANS.

"Owing to the fear of Covid, we have witnessed a decline in patients coming for a regular eye check-up in the past 3-4 months. This has resulted in delays in diagnosis and treatment, which can compromise vision in the long run,' added Dr Chaitra Jayadev, Senior Vitreo-retinal Consultant, Narayana

Nethralaya Eye Institute, Bengaluru. The longer one puts off visiting the clinic, the worse the eye health will get. "While we should take precautions during this Covid wave, patients should not delay visits for macular degeneration or diabetic

"With the third wave, we are seeing a similar pattern from the past, as patient visits, especially amongst elders, have dropped by nearly 50 per cent. Since the retina cannot be replaced, missing an iniection, or treatment follow ups, can magnify the eye disease,'

macular edema, unless the patient has

Covid symptoms," Dr Raja Narayan,

the General Secretary, Vitreoretinal

Society of India, told IANS.

Dudani said. Doctors also encouraged patients to take up teleconsultations. There are vision tests that one can undertake sitting at home, whose reports can be sent to thedoctor for examination and further intervention

Nadda reveals seat sharing for Punjab, BJP to contest 65 seats

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 24: BJP chief JP Nadda Monday announced seat sharing arrangements with alliance partners -- Punjab Lok Congress (PLC) and Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt).

Addressing a joint press conference with PLC chief Amarinder Singh and Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa's Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt), Nadda said, The BJP will contest 65 assembly seats, PLC will contest 37 and SAD (Sanyukt) will contest on 15 assembly seats in Punjab.

Nadda said that Punjab is a border state having 600 km of international border with Pakistan and security is a very important issue as far as assembly elections are concerned. "Punjab is a border state and for the security of the country, it is necessary to have a stable and strong government in the state. We are aware of Pakistan's actions towards our country. We



have seen that there are attempts to smuggle drugs and weapons," Nadda said.

He mentioned that the country is moving ahead leaps and bounds and some anti-national forces tried to derail it. This election is not only a means of change of regime but to secure the coming generations and to give stability to Punjab. If Punjab is safe then the country will remain safe, the BJP chief said.

Centre and the state."

Nadda promises to end drug, arm and sand mafia in Punjab after NDA comes to power.

Hailing Punjab as a 'leader', es-

pecially in defence and food secu-

rity of the country, Nadda said,

"Contribution of Punjab is never

forgotten in defence and agriculture

sector. Punjab always fulfilled the

expectations of the country. Today

Punjab needs special attention; it

needs a double engine government

and better coordination between the

Nadda also listed initiatives of the Narendra Modi government for Punjab and Sikhs like opening of Kartarpur corridor, sending accused of 1984 riots behind bars, redevelopment of Jallianwala Bagh and others.

Former Punjab chief minister Singh said that for the sake of national security and welfare of the state, all three parties decided to jointly contest the assembly polls.

Singh claimed that after many rounds of discussion, consensus has emerged between the alliance partners for the sake of stability and security of the nation.

Dhindsa said that three parties joined hands to save Punjab and take the state forward.

CO-OP SUGAR MILL SCAM

Anna Hazare alleges scam, writes to Shah

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, Jan 24: Social activist Anna Hazare has written to Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah demanding a probe by a retired Supreme Court judge into the alleged Rs 25,000 crore scam in the selling of cooperative sugar mills in Maharashtra and their purchase at throwaway prices.

In his letter to Shah, Hazare requested that a high-power committee be set up under a retired judge of the Supreme Court to probe the alleged scam.

"We have been agitating against the sale of sugar mills in connivance with politicians at the negligible value since 2009 and against irregularities in cooperative financial institutions. In 2017, we had filed a complaint in Mumbai, and one DIG-rank officer was appointed to investigate the complaint," Hazare wrote.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 24: A day after

Maharashtra Chief Minister

Uddhav Thackeray's comments on

Hindutva, senior BJP leader

Devendra Fadnavis Monday hit

back at former ally Shiy Sena, say

ing its Hindutva is merely on paper

Fadnavis said under the lead-

ership of Prime Minister Narendra

Modi, a Ram temple is being built

in Ayodhya. Modi also developed the

Kashi Vishwanath temple corri-

dor, the former Maharashtra CM

said addressing a press conference.

(which is in power in Maharashtra)

could not even rename Aurangabad

as Sambhajinagar, and Osmanabad

as Dharashiv. But, Allahabad was

renamed as Prayagraj (under the

BJP government in Uttar Pradesh),

while the Sena kept merely minc-

The Shiv Sena has time and

again referred to Aurangabad — a

city built by Mughal ruler

Aurangzeb — as Sambhajinagar

after second Maratha king

Chhatrapati Sambhaji (the son of

Maratha warrior Chhatrapati

ing words, he said

On the other hand, the Sena

and doesn't go beyond speeches.



He added that after two years, a closure report was submitted saying no irregularities were detected.

If the Maharashtra government is not ready to act against a scam worth Rs 25,000 crore, then who will take the action the veteran anti-corruption activist questioned.

He said the Centre had set up the ministry of cooperation for the welfare of farmers and to improve the cooperative sector.

Shivaji Maharaj), and Osmanabad as Dharashiv.

'Sena's Hindutva merely on

paper, not beyond speeches'

The Sena fell out with the BJP after the 2019 Maharashtra polls and tied-up with the NCP and Congress to form the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government in the state.

In his address to Shiv Sainiks Sunday, which was also the birth anniversary of his father and party founder Bal Thackeray, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said the Sena has left the BJP and not Hindutva.

The CM had also said, "I believe that BJP's opportunistic Hindutva is only for power. The Shiv Sena had aligned with the BJP as it wanted power for Hindutva. The Sena never

used Hindutva for the sake of power.
Reacting to the comments,
Fadnavis Monday said, "Who all
from the Sena participated in the
Ram Janmabhoomi movement?
We are the ones who took bullets and
lathis in the movement. Your (Shiv

Sena) Hindutva is merely on paper.'

"Modi ensured that Ram temple was built in Ayodhya (in Uttar Pradesh), but the Sena could not solve the Durgadi temple issue in Kalyan (town of Maharashtra). "What is your Hindutva beyond speeches? You need to live Hindutva. It is not restricted to speeches," the BJP leader said

NCP invites Thackeray at national level to fight BJP

New Delhi: A day after Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhay Thackeray said that Shiv Sena has wasted 25 years with BJP, the NCP which is an alliance partner in the state, has welcomed him to the national secular front and said he would be helpful in fighting the BJP. Majeed Memon, NCP leader said, "If Maharashtra CM believes 'Hindutva' as a way of life where there is no religious discrimination and does not agree with what Dharam sansad proclaims, he would be welcome in secular confederation to fight BJP at national level. The MVA which is running the government in Maharashtra has been critical to the BJP and the party leader Nawab Malik too echoed the line and alleged that BJP wants to finish the party which allies with them and it's good to have pride in their own religion but should not have hatred towards others. The MVA has Shiv Sena, Congress and the NCP in the government but the alliance could not be repeated in Goa despite efforts from Sena and NCP as Congress did not listen for alliance call, but NCP's acknowledgement of Shiv Sena outside Maharashtra could be a bigger political move to hit BJP on hindutva. But the Congress will have to rethink its strategy as it may be difficult for the grand old party to clarify Shiv Sena's past work and ideology.

include Sidhu in my Cabinet' Former Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh Monday said that he received a request from Pakistan Prime Minister to take Congress

'Got request from Pak PM to

Former Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh Monday said that he received a request from Pakistan Prime Minister to take Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu in his cabinet. Singh called Sidhu a totally incompetent, incapable and useless man as a minister. "I removed Sidhu from my cabinet because that man is totally incompetent, incapable and totally useless. Sidhu was looking after local self-government. For 70 days he did not complete a file. I called him a few times and offered to give him more power if he wanted, which Sidhu denied," Singh said. "After two or three weeks, I got a message from somebody whom we both (Sidhu and Singh) knew, saying that he (Pakistan Prime Minister) requested me to include Sidhu in my government and remove if it doesn't work," Singh said. Talking about the message he received, Singh said, "Message was that the Pakistan Prime minister has sent a request that if you can take Sidhu in you cabinet he will be grateful. He (Sidhu) is an old friend of mine (Pakistan Prime Minister) and if he doesn't work then you can remove him."

Ban 'Why I Killed Gandhi': Cong to CM

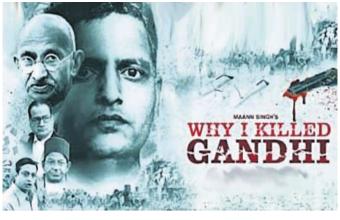
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 24: The Maharashtra Congress Monday urged Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to ban the film Why I Killed Gandhi, set to release on various OTT platforms January 30, the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination.

Similarly, the All India Cine Workers Association (AICWA) has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding a total ban on the film, which 'seeks to glorify Gandhiji's assassin Nathuram Godse, and its exhibition would shock the people'.

The film features Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MP Amol Kolhe in the role of Godse, sparking friction among the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi allies Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress since the past few days.

Shooting off a letter to CM Thackeray, state Congress President Nana Patole said Mahatma



Gandhi's ideology of truth, peace and non-violence is respected all over the world and his death anniversary is observed globally as the day symbolising his teachings.

If the film 'Why I Killed Gandhi' is allowed to be released on the day of Gandhiji's assassination, it would give strength to the fascist forces. Hence, we request you to kindly

order a ban on the movie, Patole said. "On one hand, Gandhiji's death anniversary is observed for non-violence and peace. On the other hand, 'Why I killed Gandhi' is being released. This will give strength to

racist tendencies."

"The Indian culture has always opposed inhuman acts. This is why this movie should not be released

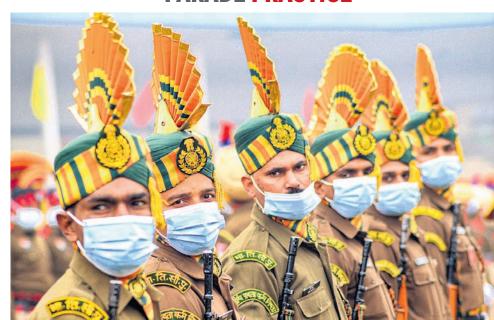
in state's theatres and OTT platforms," Patole stated in his letter. The AICWA sought a complete by an the film's release as it scales

The AICWA sought a complete ban on the film's release as it seeks to glorify Godse, a traitor and killer of the Father of the Nation.

As the film ignited a massive controversy in state political circles last week, Kolhe said that he had acted in the film way back in 2017, and he had also informed the NCP leadership before leaving the Sena to join it. However, NCP chief Sharad Pawar had supported Kolhe, saying the latter's decision to act in that movie should be seen as an artist's choice. Playing that role, doesn't mean subscribing to Godse's ideology or views, he had told Friday.

Though the Congress has strongly opposed the film, the Shiv Sena has adopted a neutral stance, while the NCP feels it should be viewed creatively as a freedom of expression. The opposition BJP has said that there is nothing wrong if Kolhe plays the role of Godse.

PARADE PRACTICE



Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) contingent march during full dress rehearsal for Republic Day Parade 2022, at Guru Gobind Singh Stadium in Jalandhar, Monday

AQI in Chandrapur crosses 400; fog apparent trigger

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagpur, Jan 24: In an unusual instance, the air quality index (AQI) in Chandrapur city in Maharashtra crossed 400 Monday, mainly due to fog moisture and change in temperature, an official said, adding that dust or industrial pollution doesn't seem to be the prima facie cause.

The air quality index at the Chandrapur Thermal Power Station crossed 300 to reach 325.

A Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) official in Chandrapur told PTI that their stations have registered the air quality index in Chandrapur exceeding 400 Monday and the air quality index at Chandrapur Thermal Power Station crossing 325.

To a query whether the AQI shot up due to industrial pollution or dust, the official said the AQI exceeding 400 seems accidental.

Fog log could be the cause. The censors only sense particles of dirt or fog moisture, he said.

The official also said that the reading at the thermal power station also showed an increase in AQI though there is no source of dust at that spot.

If AQI exceeds 400 it indicates the concentration of dust layer. But

To a query whether the AQI shot up due to industrial pollution or dust, an official said the AQI exceeding 400 seems accidental

this situation is due to fog which is also prevalent in the nearby Gadchiroli district. The fog situation is a natural phenomenon. During fog, environment monitoring systems would show the same reading anywhere. The reason for the higher reading is the change in temperature and fog, the official added.

Environment Ministry's regional committee member Suresh Chopne, a resident of Chandrapur, said that Chandrapur city in east Maharashtra is one of the most polluted areas.

The thermal power station is a major polluting industry. As the wind flows in the direction of the city and temperatures come down, the PM (Particulate Matter) concentration goes up. Local vehicular pollution is also a contributing factor. The role of a dust storm in increasing pollution can't be ignored but it needs confirmation from authorities, he added.

'AE MERE WATAN KE LOGON' IN R-DAY GALA

Kavi Pradeep's family feel hurt, but honoured

For this year's ceremony, the hymn 'Abide With Me' has been replaced by the popular patriotic song 'Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon', which was written by Kavi Pradeep to commemorate

the supreme sacrifice made by Indian soldiers during the 1962 Indo-China war

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Jan 24: Rashtra Kavi Pradeep's evergreen soulful patriotic song, 'Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon... (O Folks of My Motherland)' will now eject the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi's cherished Christian hymn, the iconic 'Abide With Me' for the Republic Day festivities ending with the Beating The Retreat ceremony this year.

However, the family of the legendary poet -- Ramchandra N Dwivedi, renowned by his pen-



name 'Kavi Pradeep' -- has been kept in the dark of the deviation by the government or its ministries,

his kin said here Monday.

"This is news to us... It's an epochal development. We are hurt that Gandhiji's favourite hymn has been dropped, but also feel honoured that my father's stirring song has been included," said an irked Mitul Pradeep, the daughter of the late Kavi Pradeep, who is zealously safeguarding her dad's legacy

of a nationalistic treasure trove.
While making it clear that there's
no need for anyone to take 'per-

While making it clear that there's no need for anyone to take 'permission', least of all from the Indian Armed Forces, she feels it would have been indeed gratifying if the concerned authorities had at least informed the family, especially when it was replacing Gandhiji's fondest number:

"This song is historic for the country and dear to all... My father had specially created it after

This is news to us... It's an epochal development. We are hurt that Gandhiji's favourite hymn has been dropped, but also feel honoured that my father's stirring song has been included

MITUL PRADEEP | DAUGHTER OF LATE KAVI

a request from the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehruji, through the great filmmaker Mehboob Khan, urging Bollywood to do something to boost the shattered morale of the people after the 1962 India-China War," Mitul told IANS

IANS.

Mehboob Khan had gone to the very same bungalow where she still lives, at Irla in Vile Parle west, with Kavi Pradeep - already synonymous with patriotism - instantly agreeing. Well... in barely a fortnight, Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon - a non-film song - was ready to carve a permanent niche in the countrymen's hearts and the country's history.

Kavi Pradeep's 350-words of patriotic pearls from the pen were musically weaved into a nationalistic garland by the master of the baton, C Ramchandra and sung by the melody queen, Lata Mangeshkar; now 92, and in a Mumbai hospital since a fortnight for Covid-19 treatment.

"When it was first rendered publicly at the 1963 R-Day at the National Stadium, Nehruji was in tears and wanted to meet my dad, who was not invited... Later that day, my father called up Lataji – now a Bharat Ratna – and congratulated her for the moving performance," remembers Mitul.

Soon after penning Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon, Kavi Pradeep had willed that all revenues and royalties generated by it should go to the Indian Army specifically for the widows of war heroes.

Meanwhile, she said all descendents of Kavi Pradeep, ahead of his 107th birth anniversary Feb 6-shall watch the R-Day gala event January 29 where Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon will be played first time but with a tinge of regret as Gandhiji's pet number, Abide With Me shall no more abide at the solemn event.

national



Today we feel proud when we see that the youth of India are innovating and taking the country forward NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

DELHI SLASHES NUMBER OF DRY DAYS TO 3

The Delhi government reduced the number of dry days to just three from the existing 21. Under the new excise policy, liquor shops and opium vends in the national capital will now remain closed only on three national holidays -- Republic Day (January 26), Independence Day (August 15) and Gandhi Jayanti October 2

dispute out-of-court





forced to sell their produce at half of their cost price they need no one to prompt them as to



The state is in favour of opening schools but not at the risk of the lives of the students. The decision will be taken by the Chief Minister



BRATYA BASU | WEST BENGAL **EDUCATION MINISTER**

Fear. corruption, discrimination and insecurity of life and property, that is, poor law and order, unemployment and

migration of lakhs, are the biggest problems of Uttar Pradesh with a huge population

MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Naxal killed in encounter

Narayanpur: A Naxal was killed in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district Monday, a senior police official said. The gunfight took place at around 1.30 am near a bridge in a forest, located about six km from Bharanda police station, when a team of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) was out on a search operation, Narayanpur's Superintendent of Police Girija Shankar Jaiswal said.

Sharad Pawar tests Covid+ve

Mumbai: Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president Sharad Pawar announced that he has tested Covid-19 positive Monday, and has started the necessary treatment, "I have tested Covid positive, but there is no cause for concern. I am following the treatment as suggested by my doctor," said the 81-year-old leader.

Man held with foreign currency

Tamil Nadu: An air passenger was arrested by customs officials at Trichy Airport for possessing huge foreign currency without having valid documents, official said Monday. "On January 22, the passenger was intercepted at Trichy Airport when he was about to catch a fight for Dubai. We have seized 50,000 Saudi Arabian Riyals and 5,000 US Dollars equivalent to Rs 13.30 lakh from his possession," said the official.

Two farmers mauled by leopard

Coimbatore: Two farmers near Tirupur district, 55 km from here, landed in hospital after an attack by a leopard Monday, police said. According to them, 60-yearold Varadarajan went to his farm early today when the animal pounced on him and mauled his shoulder.

Man beaten to death by mob

Mumbai: A 32 year-old auto driver died allegedly of injuries inflicted by a mob in Malad in north Mumbai on suspicion that he was a thief, after which his kin took out a protest march and demanded action against those involved in the incident, a police official said Monday. Shahrukh Sheikh was apprehended by residents of Damu Nagar some 10 days ago when he had gone to check on his autorickshaw that he

Omicron wave may intensify Assam, Nagaland in coming weeks, say experts ready to settle border

New Delhi, Jan 24: India's Covid-19 infections, led by the Omicron variant, may see a sharp rise in the coming weeks, some top experts said, noting that the variant was already in community transmission and hospitals were seeing more patients despite a decline in cases in major cities.

India reported 306,064 new infections over the last 24 hours, the health ministry said, about an 8% decline from the average daily cases reported in the last four days. Deaths were 439, the lowest in five days.

But weekly positivity rates have risen to 17.03% in the week to January 24, from about 0.63% December 27, led by the highlytransmissible Omicron variant.

"Omicron is now in community transmission in India and has become dominant in multiple metros." a report by the Indian SARS-CoV-

Covid has still got a 'long, long

way' to go: WHO Special Envoy

New Delhi: Covid has still got a "long, long way" to go and is "still

very serious" despite some optimism the end is in sight in Europe,

News reported. Dr David Nabarro said "it's as though we're just

long it will take to reach the end because of the way coronavirus

the World Health Organisation's special envoy on the virus said, Sky

passing the halfway mark on a marathon" and it is still not clear how

Representational image

2 Genomics Consortium (IN-SACOG) said January 10 in a report released Sunday.

Most cases of the Omicron variant have been mild, the advisory group said, although hospitalisations and cases in intensive care were increasing.

In last two weeks major cities such as the capital. Delhi, and financial hub Mumbai in the wealthiest state of Maharashtra, have been reporting big falls in cases after hitting peaks.

That might change, said Dr. Subhash Salunke, a member of the state-run Indian Council of Medical Research and the national taskforce on Covid, as the variant is spreading to semi-urban and rural areas. The state expects to see multiple peaks in the next eight to 10 weeks, said Salunke, who previously advised the Maharashtra government.

'The number of cases in cities like Mumbai and Pune are the tip of the iceberg," Salunke told Reuters, adding that the deadly Delta variant from the previous wave was also circulating.

India's tally of overall infections reached 39.54 million, the secondhighest globally behind the United States. The country has seen 489,848 people die of the virus.

Kohima/Guwahati, Jan 24: The governments of Nagaland and Assam are ready for an out-ofcourt settlement of the long-pending inter-state boundary dispute between the two northeastern neighbours, Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio said here

Rio said that Nagaland and Assam delegations are likely to meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah in February to discuss and formulate how to go about the settlement.

The Nagaland Assembly's select committee to examine the border issue held an hour-and-a-half closed-door meeting, a day after Rio, his deputy Y Patton and NPF legislature party leader T R Zeilang met Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at Guwahati

"We had gone to Guwahati and had fruitful discussions on the border issue with Sarma. Nagaland and Assam had jointly taken up the matter with Union Home Minister Amit Shah December 23, 2020. "Both the state governments are in favour of an out-of-court settlement, and maybe our teams will meet Shah in the first part of February to discuss and formulate how to go about it," Rio told reporters here. The

Naga bodies to boycott **R-Day celebrations**

Kohima: Various Naga groups and organisations in Nagaland and Manipur have decided to abstain from Republic Day celebration and urged people to refrain from participating in the national event to protest the killing of 14 civilians by the security forces in December and delay in Naga peace process. The Naga organisations, including Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO), All Naga Students' Association (ANSA), United Naga Council (UNC), are also strongly opposing the Armed Forces (Special Power) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) and demanding repeal of the "draconian law".

issue of royalty on petroleum and natural gas along the Assam-Nagaland border was also discussed. "If we resolve the border dispute and the issue of royalty, it will be good for both sides as we are going to remain neighbours,' Rio said.

Asked about the delay in getting the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) report on the killing of 14 civilians by security forces in Mon district, the chief minister said that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) has completed the probe and is awaiting

PM Modi interacts with Rashtriya Bal **Puraskar recipients**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 24: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday urged recipients of the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to support the 'Vocal for Local' campaign and said the youth is at the centre of all policies being framed by government.

During an online interaction with the awardees, Modi also talked about the unveiling of the hologram statue of freedom fighter Subhash Chandra Bose and said the "biggest inspiration we get from Netaji is of duty and of nation first, and you have to proceed on your path of duty for the country".

The prime minister awarded the Bal Puraskar recipients certificates digitally using block chain technology.

Calling for support for the 'Vocal for Local' campaign, Modi asked the awardees to list products at their home which are of foreign origin.

Noting that the youth of the country are at the centre of all policies being framed by the government presently, he said, "Today we feel proud, when we see that the youth of India are innovating and taking the country forward."

Lauding children over their participation in the Covid vaccination programme, the Prime Minister said children have shown their modern and scientific thinking in the vaccination programme as well.

"More than 40 million children got coronavirus vaccine till now since January 3," he said.

Revamped CGHS website launched

"challenges and surprises", the report said,

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 24: A revamped CGHS website and mobile app aimed at providing easy access to healthcare services and tele-consultation facility for over 40 lakh beneficiaries was launched by Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviva Monday

With the newly provided feature of tele-consultation, Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) beneficiaries can seek expert advice directly, he stated.

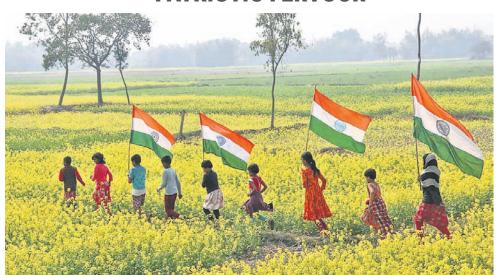
The minister said the launch of the revamped CGHS website linked with a mobile app is an important and timely step towards catering to India's increasing digital penetration.

The website has several updated features which shall hugely benefit more than 40 lakh beneficiaries (both in-service and retired personnel) with real-time information from the convenience of their homes," Mandaviya stated.



He said the facility will enable healthcare services being delivered without venturing out, and is a timely innovative step during the Covid-19 pandemic.

PATRIOTIC FERVOUR



Children wave Tricolor flags as they run across a mustard field at a village near Balurghat in South Dinajpur district of West Bengal

Intel alert for possible Maoist attack in WB

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Jan 24: The state intelligence department has sent an alert to all the districts, particularly to the Railways of a possible Maoist attack in several railway stations across the state on the Republic Day. The alert also says that there can be an attack on the ruling Trinamool Congress leaders, mobile towers and on police and central police camps. Though there has been hardly any kind of subver-



sive Maoist activity in the state. but the recent arrest of a Kolkatabased businessman Mahesh

Agarwal by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) from Salt Lake allegedly for funding the Maoists of Jharkhand was enough to the put the state police on high alert of the possible Maoist activities going on in the state.

The NIA also said that they were looking for his two business partners who are still absconding. Before Agarwal, the NIA also arrested one Maoist leader Monoj Tiwari who was absconding for the last three years.

Pak hands over 20 Indian fishermen

AGENCIES

Attari (Amritsar)/Islamabad, Jan 24: Twenty Indian fishermen arrested by Pakistan for allegedly entering into the country's territorial waters were handed over to India through the border Monday.

through the land transit route of Attari border Monday evening, said officials at the Attari horder They entered India on the basis of 'Emergency Travel Certificate' issued by the Indian High commission at Islamabad.

All of the twenty fishermen were

the fishermen will proceed back home to their native place in Gujarat dergone around four years of jail term in Pakistan after their arrest boats slipped into Pakistan through

TN fishermen threaten to give up citizenship

They crossed over to India

released from Landhi district Jail of Malir, Karachi on completion of their sentences. They were escorted Lahore by road by Pakistan-based NGO Edhi Foundation. The moment the fishermen crossed over to India, they knelt and kissed the ground. All were medically examined, including for Covid-19, said the officials.

They will stay for a night here in Amritsar, they said, adding that Tuesday. Some of them had unby the Pakistani Coast Guards. They were arrested when their territorial waters in the Arabian Sea. The fishermen thanked Edhi

Chennai: Fishermen from Ramanathapuram in Tamil Nadu

have threatened to relinquish all documents relating to Indian citizenship by February 2 if the union government fails to bring back the fishermen who are languishing in Sri Lankan jails for crossing International Marine Boundary Line (IMBL). The fishermen also demanded the Central government to stop the Sri Lankan fisheries department from auctioning the fishing boats of Tamil Nadu fishermen that were seized by the Lankan Navy between 2015 and 2018.

Foundation which helped them to return home. Pakistan and India regularly arrest rival fishermen for violating the maritime boundary which is poorly marked at some points. According to the lists of prisoners exchanged by India and Pakistan at the start of this year. at least 628 Indian prisoners were held in Pakistan, including 51 civilians and 577 fishermen. India also shared the list of 355 Pakistani prisoners in India, including 282 civilians and 73 fishermen.

Fishermen from Pakistan and India usually end up in jails after they are arrested for fishing illegally in each other's territorial waters.

Unvaccinated, those under 15 not allowed at R-Day parade

POLICE ALSO SAID THAT PEOPLE WILL **HAVE TO ADHERE** TO ALL COVID **PROTOCOLS AT** THE PROGRAMME **ON RAJPATH JANUARY 26**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 24: People attending the Republic Day parade must be fully vaccinated against Covid and children below 15 years of age will not be allowed to attend the function, a set of guidelines

issued by the Delhi Police stated. Police also said that people will have to adhere to all Covid-protocols, such as wearing face masks and maintaining social distanc-

ing, at the programme on Rajpath January 26. "It is necessary to have both doses of anti-coronavirus vaccine. Visitors are requested to bring their vaccination certificate," the Delhi Police tweeted.

It said that children below 15 years of age are not allowed in the function. The national Covid vaccination programme, which initially started with health care and frontline workers January 16 last year, was gradually extended for all those above 18 years of age. From this month, children in

the age group of 15-18 years started getting vaccinated, and healthcare and frontline workers and those aged 60 and above with comorbidities are being given 'precaution' doses, amid a spike in cases due to the Omicron variant. Listing the guidelines, the Delhi

Police tweeted that the seating

blocks will open for visitors at 7 am

and requested them to arrive ac-

cordingly. Since parking is lim-

ited, visitors have been advised to

use carpool or taxi. They are also requested to carry a valid identity card and cooperate during security check, it said.

"There will be a provision for depositing remote-controlled car lock keys in each parking area," po-



lice tweeted. On Sunday, Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana had said over 27,000 police personnel have been deployed for security duties in the national capital and anti-terror measures in-

tensified in view of Republic Day.

These personnel, include deputy commissioners of police, assistant commissioners of police and inspectors, sub-inspectors. Police personnel, commandos, officers and jawans of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) have also been deployed, he had said.

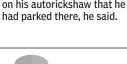
On Republic Day security arrangements, Asthana had said 27,723 Delhi Police personnel including 71 DCPs, 213 ACPs and 753 inspectors have been deployed in the capital for the parade. They are being assisted by 65 companies of CAPFs.

He had mentioned that the antiterror measures taken include blockades (nakka bandi) at various places, checking of vehicles, hotels, lodges and dharamshalas and various verification drives like that of tenants, servants, labourers. In the last two months, the anti-terror measures have been intensified, the commissioner has said. Counter drone technology is being used for air space security. The security in and around the area where the Republic Day celebrations will take place has also been secured with the help of the Delhi Police and other agencies, Asthana had said.

To create awareness, he had said that through social media, police are also putting out facts and important information so that no anti-social element runs a misinformation campaign.

About traffic arrangements, Asthana had said an advisory has already been issued stating specific restrictions on routes so that no inconvenience is caused to general public.

According to a recent order, operation of sub-conventional aerial platforms, including UAVs, paragliders and hot air balloons, over the national capital has been prohibited in view of the Republic Day celebrations. The order came into effect January-20 and would remain in force till February 15.





international



We will need to learn to manage it through a sustained and integrated strategy for acute respiratory diseases. **Dangerous to assume that Omicron** will be the last variant, or that this is the end game TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS | CHIEF, WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

B'DESH MARKS MASS UPRISING DAY

Bangladesh Monday commemorated the Mass Uprising Day which marks the climax of the movement of the people of the then East Pakistan for autonomy in 1969 that eventually led to the Independence War and emergence of the country in 1971





Imran Khan is a dashed hope of ineptitude stricken people of Pakistan who are waiting for you to spare them from the fouryear-long ordeal that has cost them

MARYAM NAWAZ OPPOSITION VP, PAK

The US and Japan are holding to Cold-War mentalities and inciting ideological antagonism. They yet again have

baselessly smeared and attacked China, and wantonly interfered with China's domestic affairs

ZHAO LIJIAN SPOKESPERSON, CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY

We are requesting them to



the starvation, because of the deadly winter, I think it's time for the international community to support Afghans, not punish them because of their political disputes

SHAFIULLAH AZAM TALIBAN DELEGATE

SHORT **TAKES**

Assange granted appeal in UK SC

London: WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange Monday was given the chance to challenge at Britain's highest court a decision allowing him to be extradited to the United States to face 18 criminal charges including breaking a spying law. US authorities want Australian-born Assange, 50. currently in jail in London as he awaits a ruling on his extradition, to face trial on 18 counts relating to WikiLeaks' release of vast troves of confidential US military records and diplomatic cables which they said had put lives in danger.

UK ends tests for jabbed arrivals

announced that it will scrap Covid-19 test requirements for fully vaccinated travellers entering England from next month. UK Transport Secretary Grant Shapps made a statement outlining the COVID travel update, confirming that from 4am local time February 11 travellers who have had both doses of a Covid vaccine will no longer be required to take a test. Shapps clarified that "fully vaccinated" means two doses of an approved vaccination, including those administered in India, or one dose of a Janssen vaccine.

UAE shoots down 2 Houthi missiles

Dubai: The UAE Monday intercepted and destroyed two ballistic missiles that the Houthi terror group fired towards its capital Abu Dhabi. the Ministry of Defence said, days after two Indians and a Pakistani were killed in a rare drone and missile attack claimed by the Yemeni rebels. The attack did not result in any human losses, it said, adding that the remnants of the intercepted and destroyed ballistic missiles fell in separate areas around Abu Dhabi.

Four wounded in **Germany firing**

Berlin: A lone gunman opened fire during a lecture at Heidelberg University in southwestern Germany Monday and wounded four people, some of them seriously, before killing himself, police said. The man opened fire with a longbarreled firearm in a lecture hall and then fled outside, police said. They stressed that they believe he was acting alone and there was no longer any danger.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE ESCALATION

NATO bolsters east Europe flank

The tensions over Ukraine have contributed to a rise in oil, with the latest Russia-US talks Friday failing to produce any big breakthrough

REUTERS

Kyiv/Brussels, Jan 24: NATO said Monday it was putting forces on standby and reinforcing eastern Europe with more ships and fighter jets in response to Russia's military build-up at Ukraine's borders.

The move added to a flurry of signals that the West is bracing for an aggressive Russian move against Ukraine, though Moscow denies any plan to invade.

'I welcome allies contributing additional forces to NATO," the Western military alliance's Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said in a statement. "NATO will continue to take all necessary measures to protect and defend all allies, including by reinforcing the eastern part of the alliance.'

Britain said it was withdrawing some staff and dependants from its embassy in Ukraine in response to "a growing threat from Russia", a day after the United States said it was ordering diplomats' family members to leave.

"Military action by Russia could come at any time," the US Embassy said in a statement. Officials "will not be in a position to evacuate



American citizens in such a contingency, so US citizens currently present in Ukraine should plan accordingly," it added.

US diplomats at the embassy in Kyiv were being allowed to leave vol-

untarily. The tensions over Ukraine have contributed to a rise in oil, with the latest Russia-US talks Friday failing to produce any big breakthrough.

Russia is $\check{\operatorname{demanding}}$ that NATO

EU ready for 'never seen before' sanctions if Russia attacks

never seen before sanctions if Russia were to invade Ukraine again." "Russia should know, (President Vladimir)

Putin should know that the price of using provocations and military forces to change borders in Europe will be

very, very high... We are ready to undertake the most severe sanctions, also more severe than in 2014," he said.

Brussels: The European Union is ready to impose "never seen before"

and EU foreign ministers said they would send a unified warning to

the West," Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis said as

economic sanctions on Russia if it attacks Ukraine, Denmark said Monday,

Moscow. "Knowing Russia's tactics, I'm sure one of their aims is to splinter

ministers gathered for regular talks in Brussels. "This is a victory we cannot

afford to give to the Russians." Danish Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod told

reporters: "There's no doubt we are ready to react with comprehensive,

BRITAIN WITHDRAWS SOME STAF DEPENDANTS FROM KYIV EMBASS

US says families of American diplomats must | coast 'not leave Ukraine

Russian war games off our welcome': Ireland

withdraw a promise to let Ukraine join one day, and that the alliance pull back troops and weaponry from former Communist countries in eastern Europe that joined it after the Cold War.

Washington says those demands are non-starters but it is ready to discuss other ideas on arms control, missile deployments and confi-

dence-building measures.

US carriers in SCS as China invades Taiwan again

Taipei, Jan 24: Two US aircraft carrier groups have entered the disputed South China Sea for training, the Department of Defense said Monday as Taiwan reported a new Chinese air force incursion at the top of the waterway including a fearsome new electronic warfare jet.

The South China Sea and self-governing Taiwan are two of China's most sensitive territorial issues and both are frequent areas of tension between the United States and China. US Navy ships routinely sail close to Chinese-occupied islands in the South China Sea to challenge Chinese sovereignty claims, as well as through the Taiwan Strait, to Beijing's anger

The US Department of Defense said the two US Navy Carrier Strike Groups, led by their flagships USS Carl Vinson and USS Abraham Lincoln, had begun operations in the South China Sea Sunday.

The carrier groups will carry out exercises including anti-submarine warfare operations, air warfare operations and maritime interdiction operations to strengthen combat readiness, it said in a statement.



The news of the US operations coincides with Taiwan reporting the latest mass incursion yesterday by China's air force into its air defence identification zone

"Operations like these allow us to improve our combat credible capability, reassure our allies and partners, and demonstrate our resolve as a Navy to ensure regional stability and counter malign influence," it quoted Rear Admiral JT Anderson, commander of the strike group led by the USS Abraham Lincoln, as saying.

GERMAN ABUSE CASE

Ex-Pope Benedict XVI admits false testimony



AGENCIES

Vatican City, Jan 24: Former Pope Benedict XVI acknowledged Monday he had been at a 1980 meeting over a sexual abuse case when archbishop of Munich, saying he mistakenly told German investigators he was not there. A report released last week on

abuse in the archdiocese from 1945 to 2019 said then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger failed to take action against clerics in four cases of alleged abuse when he was its archbishop between 1977-1982.

At Thursday's news conference in Munich, lawyers who investigated the abuse contested an assertion by Benedict in an 82-page statement that he did not recall attending a meeting in 1980 to discuss the case of an abuser priest.

In a statement Monday, the former pope's personal secretary, Archbishop Georg Ganswein, said Benedict did attend the meeting but the omission "was the result of

THE ERUPTION

an oversight in the editing of the statement" and "not done out of

Ganswein said no decision was made at the 1980 meeting about a new assignment for the priest but only a request to provide him with accommodation during therapeutic treatment.

"He (the former pope) is very sorry for this mistake and asks to be excused," Ganswein said. **'SHAME AND PAIN'**

He said Benedict planned to explain how the error happened after he finishes examining the nearly 2,000-page report, sent electronically last Thursday.

"He is carefully reading the statements set down there, which fill him with shame and pain about the suffering inflicted on the victims," Ganswein said. A complete review "will take some time due to his age and health," he added.

Presenting the report last Thursday, lawyer Martin Pusch said Ratzinger had done nothing against the abuse in four cases and there appeared to be no interest shown to injured parties.

"In a total of four cases, we have come to the conclusion that the then Archbishop Cardinal Ratzinger can be accused of misconduct in cases of sexual abuse," said Pusch.

"He still claims ignorance even if, in our opinion, that is difficult to reconcile with the documentation."

Conservatives have defended the former pope but victims groups and experts said the findings of the German report had tarnished the legacy of one of Catholicism's most renowned theologians.



Police set off a water cannon against protestors during a demonstration against Covid-19 measures in Brussels

Burkina Faso army deposes Prez

Ouagadougou, Jan 24: Burkina Faso's army said Monday it had ousted President Roch Kabore, suspended the constitution, dissolved the government and the national assembly and closed the country's

The announcement cited the deterioration of the security situation and what it described as Kabore's inability to unite the West African nation and effectively respond to challenges it faces, which include an Islamist insurgency.

Signed by Lieutenant Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba and read by another officer on state television, the announcement said the takeover had been carried out without violence and that those



detained were at a secure location. The statement was made in the name of a previously unheard-of entity, the Patriotic Movement for Safeguard and Restoration, or

MPSR, its French-language "MPSR, which includes all sections of the army, has decided to

end President Kabore's post today," it said.

Army putsches have toppled

governments over the past 18 months in Mali and Guinea. The military also took over in Chad last year after President Idriss Deby died fighting rebels on the battlefield in the country's north.

The MPSR said it would propose a calendar for a return to constitutional order "within a reasonable time frame, after consultations with various sections of the nation".

The army broadcast came after two days of confusion and fear in the capital Ouagadougou, where shooting erupted at army camps Sunday, with soldiers demanding more support for their fight against Islamist militants

Earlier, Kabore's party said he had survived an assassination attempt, but gave no details.

of hijacking PM's -WeChat account INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Oz blames China

Sydney, Jan 24: Senior coalition MPs in Australia Monday accused China of foreign interference after Prime Minister Scott Morrison's account on Chinese instant messaging platform WeChat was hijacked.

First reported by NewsCorp Australia, the WeChat account was reportedly renamed and Morrison faced accessibility problems. The Prime Minister is now unable to access the account at all.

The account has been renamed as "Australian-Chinese New Life", and the description is: "Providing living in Australia information for the Chinese community", reports

"It is a matter of record that the platform has stopped the Prime Minister's access, while (Opposition Leader) Anthony Albanese's account is still active featuring posts criticising the government," Liberal representative Gladys Liu was

quoted as saying in the reports. In China, Tencent-run WeChat has faced growing regulation for collecting more user data than deemed necessary when offering services.

Coalition MP and chair of the parliamentary intelligence and security committee, James Paterson, said he believed the move was an act of foreign interference by the Chinese government.

"However, WeChat has denied that the Prime Minister's account was hacked or removed from its platform. "Based on our information, this appears to be a dispute over account ownership -- the account in question was originally registered by a PRC individual and was subsequently transferred to its current operator, a technology services company," a spokesman said.

Tonga eruption equivalent to hundreds of Hiroshimas: NASA

BLANKETED THE ISLAND KINGDOM OF ABOUT 100,000 IN A LAYER OF TOXIC ASH, **POISONING DRINKING WATER, DESTROYING CROPS AND COMPLETELY**

WIPING OUT AT

LEAST TWO

VILLAGES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Nuku'alofa, Jan 24: The Tonga volcanic eruption unleashed explosive forces that dwarfed the power of the Hiroshima atomic bomb, NASA scientists have said, as survivors Monday described how the devastating Pacific blast "messed up our brains"

The NASA Earth Observatory said the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano spewed debris as high as 40 kilometres (25 miles) into the atmosphere during the January 15 eruption that triggered huge tsunami waves.

NASA said the eruption was hundreds of times stronger than the US atomic bomb dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima in August 1945, which



was estimated to be about 15,000

The agency said the eruption "obliterated" the volcanic island about 65 kilometres (41 miles) north of the Tongan capital Nuku'alofa.

It also claimed at least three lives in Tonga and resulted in the drowning deaths of two beachgoers in Peru after freak waves hit the South American country

Peruvian authorities have de-

We think the amount of energy released by the eruption was equivalent to somewhere between five to 30 megatons (five to 30 million tonne) of TNT

JIM GARVIN | NASA SCIENTIST

clared an environmental disaster after the waves hit an oil tanker offloading near Lima, creating a huge slick along the coast.

In Tonga, the scale of destruction remains unclear after communications to remote islands were knocked out.

Nuku'alofa-based journalist Mary Lyn Fonua said locals were still coming to terms with the scale of the disaster. "It's so beyond what anyone here has ever experienced,

she told AFP. "The shockwave from the eruption just messed up our brains, we're just starting to return to normal now.

Fonua said the coating of fine grey grime covering everything was proving difficult to live with and raising concerns about long-term health issues. "It gets everywhere," she said. "It irritates your eyes, you get sores in the corner of your mouth, everyone has blackened fingernails -- we look like a grubby lot. We need a good tropical deluge

to wash everything away." Japanese, New Zealand and Australian defence forces have started delivering urgent relief supplies, particularly water, while maintaining strict Covid-19 protocols to preserve Tonga's virus-

free status.

business



The Fed has got markets by the leash. And this week, it will once more tug and yank FREDERIC NEUMANN

CO-HEAD, HSBC

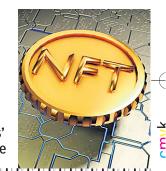
NSE Nifty

17,149.10

JSW Steel -6.92

INDIAN MYTHOLOGY ENTERS NFT SPACE

World's largest cryptocurrency exchange Binance Monday launched its first ever Indian NFT collection inspired by Indian mythology and Southeast Asian, Japanese and Chinese folklore. The Indian NFT Collection, MetaMasters, whose unique selling proposition is bringing good fortune - '888 times more money, wealth & profits for its collectors' - will be available for the 30 million global users of Binance

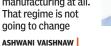




tremendous MeitY and in the to even create a new

system. We are talking to people. We are looking at a policy for that RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND IT

Telecom department is not going to enter mobile manufacturing at all That regime is not



COMMUNICATIONS AND IT MINISTER



market, \$12 billion edutech market

PRASHANT SINGHAL TMT EMERGING MARKETS LEADER, EV

SHORT TAKES

Engineering goods exports ri 54%

New Delhi: Exports of engineering goods rose 54 per cent to \$81.8 billion during April-December 2021-22 as compared to the same period of the previous year, the commerce ministry said Monday. In the corresponding nine-month period of 2020-21, exports stood at \$52.9 billion. The sector accounted for over 27 per cent in India's total exports basket during the period. In entire 2020-21, exports from the sector was \$76.62 billion. India's top five export destinations for engineering goods include the US, China, the UAE, Italy and Germany.

PNB observing Swachhata prog Bhubaneswar: Puniab

National Bank, Zonal Office Bhubaneswar is observing Swachhata Fortnight from January 16 to January 31. All branch offices under Bhubaneswar Zone in Odisha are also observing the programme. On this occasion, Sanjeev Bhardwaj, Zonal Manager briefed about the importance of cleanliness and advised employees to keen the environment clean. Rhardwai also encouraged the employees to take part in Clean India Mission.

Govt gets ₹256cr as dividend tranches

New Delhi: The government has received ₹256 crore as dividend tranches from 4 CPSEs. In a tweet, Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Secretary in the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), said the government has received about ₹148 crore from **Dedicated Freight Corridor** Corporation of India Ltd (DFCCIL) and ₹72 crore from Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL) as dividend tranches. About ₹21 crore as dividend tranche has been received from Bharatiya Rail Bijlee Co Ltd and ₹15 crore from Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd.

Ola Electric raises \$200mn in funding

New Delhi: Ola Electric on Monday said it has raised over \$200 million (about ₹1.490.5 crore) from Tekne Private Ventures, Alpine Opportunity Fund, Edelweiss and others, valuing the electric vehicle maker at \$5 billion. In September last year, Ola Electric had announced raising a similar amount in funding from Falcon Edge, Softbank and others that had valued the company at \$3 billion (about ₹22,272 crore).

MONDAY MAYHEM

Carnage on D-Street; Sensex sinks 1,546 pts

Shares ended in the red for a fifth straight session Monday, with metals and *IT* stocks dragging the most, as investor worries ballooned over possibilities of a quicker rate hike from the US Federal Reserve

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 24: The domestic equity market on Monday logged the steepest single-day drop in about two months, with the benchmark Sensex crashing nearly 1,546 points to crack below the 58,000-level due to panic selling across counters tracking subdued global stocks.

The BSE Sensex started the session on a weak note and got further overwhelmed by panic selling as the trade progressed and tanked over 2,050 points to touch the day's low at 56,984. Recouping some lost ground towards the fag-end, the index finally settled at 57,491.51 clocking a massive 1,545.67 points or 2.62 per cent drop.

On the Sensex chart, Tata Steel was the top loser, shedding around 6 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, Wipro, Tech Mahindra, Titan,



This is the steepest | single-day drop for the indices in about two months

BSF Sensex settled at 57,491,51 after dropping 2.62%

NSE Nifty slumped 468.05 points or 2.66%

Reliance Industries and HCL Tech. "The Indian markets have been under significant pressure in the past few days, correcting by 7 per cent from the recent highs, after a smart pullback seen since mid-December: It has been a quite broadbased correction across sectors and marketcaps, although the more expensively valued names and the recent IPO new age companies have seen a sharper cut," Milind Muchhala, Executive Director,

TOP GAINERS TOP LOSERS

0.82 Bajaj Fin

Tata Steel

Hindalco

The weakness largely mimics the rot in the global markets over the past couple of weeks, especially in the US markets, on continuing concerns of sticky inflation and Fed's action/rhetoric, he added.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said,

Investors poorer by over ₹19.50 lakh cr

New Delhi: Investors have become poorer by a massive ₹19,50,288.05 crore as equity market sell-offs continued for the fifth day in a row Monday. Over the last five sessions, the 30-share Sensex has tumbled 3.817.4 points or 6.22 per cent. As a result of hectic selling over the five days, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies have eroded by a whopping ₹19.50.288.05 crore to ₹2.60.52.149.66 crore. Monday alone, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms tanked by ₹9,13,651.88 crore. Interestingly January 17 this year, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies had reached a record high of ₹280 lakh crore.

"Sell-off in global markets, weak Q3 results and pre-budget nervousness triggered heavy sell-off in the domestic bourses as risk sentiment took a blow ahead of the FOMC meeting starting tomorrow.'

On the forex market front, the rupee weakened by 17 paise to end at 74.60 against the US dollar Monday. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the capital market, as they sold shares worth ₹3,148.58 crore Friday, according to stock exchange data.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 24: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Monday said penalties have been imposed on eight cooperative banks for deficiencies in their regulatory compliances.

RBI imposes fines

on 8 co-op banks

A penalty of ₹4 lakh has been imposed on The Associate Co-operative Bank Ltd, Surat (Gujarat) for contravention of directions on 'Loans and advances to directors, relatives and firms/concerns in which they are interested', and non-compliance with the Master Directions on 'Know Your Customer (KYC)'.

RBI said a penalty of ₹1 lakh has been imposed The Varachha Cooperative Bank Ltd, Surat for contravention of certain norms of The Depositor Education and Awareness Fund Scheme, 2014.

Mogaveera Co-operative Bank Ltd, Mumbai has been penalised ₹2 lakh for non-compliance with certain directions related to KYC norms.

A monetary penalty of ₹2 lakh has been imposed on Vasai Janata Sahakari Bank, Palghar for contravention of/non-compliance with the directions issued by RBI on 'Exposure Norms and Statutory/ Other Restrictions – UCBs'.

Further, RBI has imposed a penalty of ₹1 lakh on Rajkot Peoples Co-operative Bank, Rajkot for contravention of directions on 'Loans

VALUATION DOUBLES



and advances to directors, relatives and firms/concerns in which they are interested'.

A penalty of ₹2 lakh has been imposed on Bhadradri Co-operative Urban Bank for non-compliance with directions issued by RBI on 'Exposure Norms and Statutory/ Other Restrictions-UCBs' and 'Management of Advances - UCBs'.

Penalty of 1 lakh each has been imposed on The Jammu Central Cooperative Bank Ltd, Jammu and the Jodhpur Nagrik Sahakari Bank, Jodhpur for contravention of certain norms.

RBI, however, said the penalities are based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the banks with their respective customers.

BPCL's 'Pure for Sure' initiative to 100 cities



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 24: On the occasion of its 46th foundation day. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) extended digitally enabled NextGen 'Pure for Sure' (PFS) fuelling initiative to energy stations in 100 cities.

The iconic service initiative had a digital makeover in November 2019, when the PFS Quality & Quantity Assurance removed human intervention, offering greater transparency, building greater customer trust. The digitally enabled NextGen

PFS offers 100 per cent quality and quantity fuel delivered to BPCL fuel stations through tankers that are secured by tamper proof electronic locks secured through state-of-the art geo fencing technology, letting the tankers unlock for decantation only at the BPCL fuel station.

It also provides 100 per cent secured payments through an Integrated Digital Payment System which ensures automated billing of only dispensed fuel quantity

through their state-of-the-art re-

Another of its selling points remains the "UFill" - a digital customer experience which ensures their customers have complete control over time, technology and transparency as part of their fuelling experience. With UFill, the invitation to customers is to "Fast forward your fill" which obviates the need to look at zero or final reading.

A Fortune Global 500 Company, Bharat Petroleum is the second largest Indian Oil Marketing Company and one of the premier integrated energy companies in India, engaged in refining of crude oil and marketing of petroleum products, with a significant presence in the upstream and downstream sectors of the oil and gas industry.

Along with the Chief Guest Commodore Lalit Agrrawalla, other attendants in the flagging off ceremony held in Bhubaneswar were Privadarshee Panda and Beeram Sukesh, State Heads (Retail and LPG), Odisha, and Bhubaneswar Territorial Manger Tukun Mishra.

Amazon faces flak on social media for insulting Indian flag

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 24: Amazon Monday faced the ire of a section of Indian social media users over merchandising some products, including apparel and food items, that feature images of the Indian flag, with some saying that using the tricolour in such a way was an insult and a violation of the country's flag code.

Netizens shared pictures of items like apparel, cups, keychains and chocolates that feature images or imprint of the tricolour on Amazon.In website, and sought a ban on these items. Hashtags like #AmazonInsultsNationalFlag were trending on Twitter.



Some social media users noted that using the tricolour on products is against the Flag Code Of India, 2002. A section of the social media users said such usage is an insult to the national flag while others pointed out that it was a cheap method of increasing sales and that this will not increase the pa

triotism of Indian citizens. The flag shall not be used as a portion of costume or uniform of any description. It shall not be embroidered or printed upon cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins or boxes, as per the Code. This is not the first time that Amazon is facing such a backlash. In 2017, Amazon was forced to remove doormats depicting Indian flag that were listed on its Canadian website after a strong protest by India.

Demand for delivery of food and groceries has accelerated in the country since the onset of the pandemic, prompting companies to expand their operations in the race to dominate the sector

Bangalore, Jan 24: SoftBankbacked Swiggy doubled its valuation to \$10.7 billion in its latest funding round, two people familiar with the matter said, as booming demand for quick delivery of food and grocery in India drives up investments in the sector.



Swiggy binges to decacorn

The food-delivery firm said Monday it had raised \$700 million in the fundraise that was led by US investment firm Invesco and also included Baron Capital Group, Sumeru Venture, IIFL and Kotak. Existing investors Alpha Wave Global and Qatar Investment Authority also took part in the round.

Swiggy had raised \$1.25 billion in a SoftBank-led fundraising in July, which valued it at \$5.5 While the food delivery business

has nearly doubled in gross order value in the last year, this fundraise will enable Swiggy to further accelerate growth on the core platform and make meaningful investments to grow Instamart," it said Monday.

Swiggy said its grocery deliverv service Instamart was on track to reach an annualised gross merchandise value run rate of \$1 billion in the next three quarters.

Instamart competes with Tataowned BigBasket and Blinkit. formerly known as Grofers and in which Swiggy's rival Zomato Ltd holds a stake. Rivals also include Amazon.com Inc's Amazon Fresh and Reliance Industriesowned JioMart.

Q3 RESULTS

SBI Card net profit surges 84%

New Delhi: SBI Cards and Payment Services Monday reported 84 per cent jump in net profit at ₹386 crore for December guarter 2021-22 on the back of healthy card spends, fall in had loans and higher income from other sources. The nure-play credit card issuer promoted by the country's largest lender SBI had posted a net profit of ₹210 crore in the year- ago same guarter. Total revenues of the company rose 24 per cent to ₹3.140 crore during the guarter under review as against ₹2.540 crore in the same period of 2020-21. SBI Card said in a release. The increase in income was primarily due to higher income from fees and services during the guarter, SBI Card said. On the other key metrics, the

company witnessed 10 per cent growth in new accounts volume at 10,08,000 as against 9,18,000 in the vear-ago guarter, Card-in-force grew 15 per cent to 1.32 crore and total spends surged 47 per cent to ₹55.397 crore.



Axis Bank jumps over 3-folds

New Delhi: Axis Bank Monday reported an over three-fold jump

in its net profit to ₹3,614 crore in the quarter ended December 2021 on strong growth in loans and improvement in asset quality. The third largest private

sector bank had posted a net profit of ₹1,117 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Total income during the October-December period of 2021-22 rose to over

₹21,101 crore from ₹18,355 crore in the same guarter of 2020-21, Axis Bank said in a regulatory filing. Net interest income was up by 17 per cent to ₹8,653 crore during the December 2021 guarter, while the net interest margin improved by 14 basis points to 3.53 per cent. The lender registered 18 per cent year-on-year growth in retail loans, 20 per cent growth in SME loans and 13 per cent growth in corporate loan book. Stock of Axis Bank closed at ₹704.35 apiece on the BSE, down by 1.16 per cent from the previous close.

Bangalore airport logs highest cargo handling in 2021

WITH THE GRADUAL **EASING OF CURBS BY VARIOUS STATE GOVERNMENTS, DOMESTIC PASSENGER TRAFFIC RECORDED A DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH OF 22.0 PER CENT, AN UPSWING** FROM 12.39 MILLION **IN CY 2020 TO 15.12 MILLION IN CY 2021**



The airport processed an all-time high I tonnage of 406,688MT of cargo, record-

level tonnage of 379,348MT in 2019.

nternational cargo recorded a 32.8% growth, with 265,873MT being processed, as compared to 200,209MT

THE US AND EUROPE CONTINUE TO BE THE TOP TRADE LANES FROM BLR AIRPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Jan 24: The Kempegowda International Airport, Bangalore (BLR Airport) said Monday it recorded its highestever cargo tonnage, despite a turbulent pandemic environment.

During CY 2021, BLR Airport welcomed 16.07 million passengers, registering a growth of 18.9 per cent versus 13.51 million pas-

ing a growth of 28.6% vs 316,305MT in 2020 his is 7.2% more than the pre-Covid

Domestic cargo grew at 21.3%, 140,815MT processed versus

116.096MT in 2020

sengers in CY 2020. The airport said it has been able to recover 48.0 per cent of the pre-COVID level traffic of 33.65 million passengers

handled in CY 2019. MD & CEO, Bangalore

International Airport Limited, Hari Marar, said "The key factors that contributed to the cargo growth at BLR Airport are our resilient ecosystem that ensured efficient operations round the clock; focus on supply chain efficiencies; conducive geographic location, aided with robust infrastructure and technology; right mix of commodities, and adequate airline capacities to key markets, globally."

The second wave of Covid-19, which led to continued travel restrictions across the globe, followed by supply-side limitations on seat load factors have led to a decline in international traffic. During this period, international passenger traffic shrunk by 15.5 per cent, from 1.12 million in CY 2020 to 0.94 million in CY 2021

Air Traffic Movements (ATM) at BLR Airport were up by 22.5 per cent in CY 2021, with the total ATMs during this period being 153,212. Both domestic and international movements saw an upward trend of 23.8 per cent and 12.0 per cent, respectively.

BLR Airport currently serves 20 international destinations under the Government of India's Air Bubble arrangement.

CY 2021 was a historic year for international traffic at BLR Airport. In January, Air India commenced the twice weekly, non-stop Bangalore-San Francisco service. With this, BLR Airport became the first airport in South and Central India to have a direct connectivity to North America, the statement said.







ASSOCIATED PRESS

Melbourne, Jan 24: Alize Cornet dropped to her knees on the hard blue court, clasped her hands and took a few moments to let it sink in.

In her 17th trip to the Australia Open, her 63rd run at a Grand Slam, and two days after celebrating her 32nd birthday, Cornet finally qualified for the quarterfinals at one of the four major events in tennis.

Cornet recovered after a secondset meltdown in the hot Melbourne sun Monday to advance to the last eight at the Australian Open with a 6-4, 3-6, 6-4 win over two-time major champion Simona Halep.

"It's never too late to try again!" Cornet said in her on-court TV interview. "To be in my first quarterfinal. It's a dream come true. The journev goes on. I still can't believe it.

Cornet led by a set and 3-1 before losing five consecutive games and 16 straight points as Halep took the match to a decider. The match was 2-2 in the third set after Cornet held a service game at love, saying "allez" after every shot she hit.

Halep got a break-point chance two games later with a forehand down the line that just caught the outside of the paint and which Cornet could barely believe. She saved it and held serve, then broke Halep's serve for a 4-3 lead that set $her \, on \, course \, for \, the \, quarter finals.$

Cornet will next play Danielle Collins, the No.27 seed from the United States who beat 19th-seeded Elise Mertens 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 in an almost three-hour match to open play on Rod Laver Arena. Collins was a semifinalist in Australia in 2019.

Cornet made her main draw

Grand Slam singles debut as a wildcard entry at the 2005 French Open. She lost five previous fourth-round appearances but had gone close to reaching the quarterfinals before, having match points in the fourth round in Australia in 2009 before losing to eventual runner-up Dinara With a ranking of 61-50 lower

than her career-high No.11 — Cornet came into the 2022 season acknowledging retirement must be close and that it was now or never for a Grand Slam breakthrough. The marquee men's match was

on Margaret Court Arena, where US Open champion Daniil Medvedev beat 70th-ranked Maxime Cressy 6-2, 7-6(7-4), 6-7(4-7), 7-5.

The second-ranked Medvedey

is trying to become the first man

2014 US Open champion Marin Cilic 2-6, 7-6(9-7), 6-2, 7-6(7-4).

Medvedev beat the Canadian in the semifinals at last year's US Open. No.11 Jannik Sinner ended

vaccination criteria.

three wins from achieving that.

meet the country's strict COVID-19

He will next play ninth-seeded

Felix Auger-Aliassime, who beat

in the Open era to win his second Minaur 7-6(7-3), 6-3, 6-4. Cornet's victory over Halep, a formajor singles title in the next Grand Slam event. He's now potentially

mer Wimbledon and French Open champion and runner-up in Medvedev was a runner-up in Australia, gave her a record for Australia last year but avenged most appearances at a major before that with a win over Novak Djokovic reaching the quarterfinals. in the US Open final. Djokovic isn't Tamarine Tanasugarn previously held the mark at 45, set at defending his Australian Open title after being deported on the eve of Wimbledon in 2008 the year's first major for failing to Cornet had to do it the hard way,

too. She defeated third-seeded Garbiñe Muguruza in straight sets in the second round but had to rally from 6-4, 4-1 down to beat 2021 French Open semifinalist Tamara Zidansek in the third round.

In the first of the night matches 2020 French Open champion Iga Swiatek beat Sorana Cirstea 5-7, 6-3, 6-3 to move into a quarterfinal match against either second-seeded Aryna Sabalenka or Kaia Kanepi.

ICC AWARDS

Mandhana 'Women's Cricketer of the Year'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Jan 24: India's swashbuckling opener Smriti Mandhana was on Monday named the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year for the second time for her stellar run of form across all formats in 2021.

Mandhana, who also made it to the ICC T20 women's Team of the Year, pipped fellow nominees Tammy Beaumont of England, Lizelle Lee of South Africa and Gaby Lewis of Ireland for the to the top award – the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy, the ICC said in a statement.

The southpaw had won the award in 2018 as well when she was also named the women's ODI Cricketer of the Year, making her only the second women's player to win the highest individual distinction in the overall category.

The Indian T20 vice-captain is only the second India woman player to bag an ICC award after veteran fast bowler Jhulan Goswami, who was named the ICC Player of the Year in 2007.

Despite India enduring a difficult 2021, Mandhana's stock continued to rise this year in all formats of the game. She scored, 855 runs in 22 internationals at an average of 38.86 which included one century and five half centuries.

In the limited-overs series against South Africa where India won just two of the eight matches at home, Mandhana played a major role in both of the wins. She made 80 not out as India chased down 158 in the second ODI that helped them level the series and scored 48 not out in the win in the final T20I.

The southpaw was in good touch in the series against Australia, starting with the ODI series where

honoured for receiving the prestigious

Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for the ICC **Women's Cricketer of the** Year 2021. A recognition of such high class from the global governing body of cricket in an exceptional and difficult year will motivate me to continue to better my game and contribute to Team **India's success going** forward

SMRITI MANDHANA

she scored 86 in the second ODI. She compiled a brilliant century in the only Test (the first of her career), and was awarded the Player of the Match. She scored her second T20I fifty of the year in the

and lost the series 2-0. Mandhana made India's firstever pink-ball Test even more memorable by smashing her maiden century in the longest format.

final T20I, though India fell short

OTHER AWARD WINNERS

Men's Cricketer of the Year SHAHEEN AFRIDI (Pakistan)

Men's Test Cricketer of the Year JOE ROOT (England)

Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year BABAR AZAM (Pakistan) Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year

LIZELLE LEE (South Africa) Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year

MOHAMMAD RIZWAN (Pakistan) Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year TAMMY BEAUMONT (England)

Emerging Men's Cricketer of the Year JANNEMAN MALAN (South Africa)

Emerging Women's Cricketer of the Year

FATIMA SANA (Pakistan) Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year

ZEESHAN MAQSOOD (Oman) Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year

ANDREA-MAE ZEPEDA (Austria) Umpire of the Year

MARAIS ERASMUS (South Africa)

Chelsea shake off blues



Chelsea players celebrate a goal against Tottenham, Sunday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Jan 24: Once Hakim Ziyech's curling, dipping strike landed in the Tottenham goal, Chelsea never looked back. Sure, it took until two minutes into the second half to break the deadlock and the Moroccan was justified in ranking it "10 out of 10."

But the space gifted for Thiago Silva's header from Mason Mount's free-kick in the 55th minute to seal a 2-0 win on Sunday was a snapshot of this most lopsided of London rivalries. Chelsea should never have

doubted its four-match winless run in the Premier League would end Sunday. Not even with former Chelsea manager Antonio Conte going nine league matches unbeaten at the start of his Tottenham reign before the visit to Stamford

It's now 33 wins for Chelsea against Tottenham in the Premier League era — more than against any other opponent. Not since 2018 has a Tottenham player even scored against Chelsea in the league when the north London side last won this derby.

Tottenham will have complaints that Harry Kane was denied a firsthalf goal when it was ruled out for what appeared his slight touch on Silva before racing through on goal to meet Ryan Sessegnon's cross.

But for all Kane harangued ref-

eree Paul Tierney at halftime, Tottenham crumbling so soon after the break made the win for Chelsea look inevitable. Tottenham was also denied a spot in the League Cup final by Chelsea winning both semifinal legs this month. Victory for Thomas Tuchel's

was starting to look shaky before winning for the first time since December 26. Chelsea stayed a point behind second-place Liverpool, which won 3-1 across London at Crystal Palace

 $through \, first\text{-}half \, goals \, from \, Virgil$

side shores up a top-four place that

Van Dijk and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, and Fabinho's penalty. The results will give a flicker of hope that Manchester City can still be caught after the champions were held at Southampton to Saturday to now sit only nine points in front of Liverpool having played a game

While Tottenham is in seventh place, the coronavirus postponements distort the standings. Tottenham fell to 11 points behind Chelsea but with four games in hand. And Man United is only two points ahead in the fourth Champions League place having played two more games than Tottenham.

What helped Conte slightly was Arsenal being held 0-0 by Burnley Sunday. Arsenal did move above Tottenham into sixth place on goal difference but having played an extra game.

Barca bag much-needed win

Australia's last hope in the men's

draw when he beat No.32 Alex de

Madrid, Jan 24: Barcelona finally got things going its way, finding a late goal to end its winless run and go into the international break on a positive note.

Barcelona struggled again but Frenkie de Jong scored in the 87th minute to salvage a 1-0 victory at relegation-threatened Alayés in the Spanish league Sunday, snapping its three-match winless streak that included elimination from the Copa del Rey and the Spanish Super Cup.

The win moved the Catalan club one point behind fourth-placed Atlético Madrid in the final Champions League spot, and 15 points behind league leader Real Madrid with a game in hand.

Madrid needed a stoppage-time goal by Éder Militão to secure a 2-2 home draw against Elche. Madrid has a four-point advantage over Sevilla at the top after a tough day for Karim Benzema, who missed a penalty kick and later had to be

replaced because of an injury. Barcelona had won only twice in their last 10 away matches in the league, and it was coming off a draw at Granada when it conceded in the 89th. It then lost to Madrid in the semifinals of the Spanish



MAN OF THE NIGHT: Barcelona scorer Frenkie de Jong reacts after the referee (not in pic) blows the full-time whistle. Sunday

Super Cup and to Athletic Bilbao

Barcelona was without the injured Ansu Fati and also without Ousmane Dembélé, who the club said was a "no-show" reporting to the squad because of an upset stomach. Barcelona and Dembélé have been at odds over contract negotiations.

Benzema's struggles began when he missed an opportunity from close range with only the goalkeeper to beat inside the area in the first half. Moments later he had another chance to give his team the lead from the penalty spot, but the France striker sent his shot way over the crossbar.

To cap an unusually frustrating day, Madrid's top scorer had to leave the match in the 58th because of an apparent muscle injury. He grabbed the back of his left leg as he headed for the locker rooms. There was no immediate news on the seriousness of the injury.

Lucas Boyé and Pere Milla scored a goal in each half to give Elche a 2-0 lead, but Madrid pulled closer with Luka Modric's penalty kick in the 82nd and evened the match with Militão's firm header off a cross by Vinícius Júnior.

Gurjit's hat-trick guides India to Asia Cup semis



MONIKA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Muscat, Jan 24: Gurjit Kaur slammed a hat-trick while Monika and Jyoti scored a brace each as defending champions India spanked lowly Singapore 9-1 to register their second win in Pool A and qualify for the semifinals of the women's Asia Cup hockey tournament here Monday.

After drubbing Malaysia 9-0 in their opener, the Indians slumped to an unexpected 0-2 loss against pool toppers Japan. But the Indian put their last match defeat behind and dished out a much coordinated display Monday to steamroll Singapore. Gurjit (eighth, 37th, 48th minutes)

converted two penalty corners, while Monika (sixth, 17th) and Jyoti (43rd, 58th) scored two field goals apiece. The other goal getters for India were Vandana Katariya (eighth) and Mariana Kujur (10th).

India will take on Pool B leaders Korea in the first semifinal Wednesday, while Japan, who beat Malaysia 8-0 in another Pool B match, will be up against China



GURJIT KAUR

in the other last four match. The final of the tournament will

be played Thursday. The top four teams will automatically qualify for this year's FIH World Cup to be co-hosted by Spain and Netherlands.

As expected, a much superior India completely dominated the match from the word go and pumped in four goals in the first quarter.

India started on a bright note and enjoyed possession with their brisk, fast-paced one-touch game. India took the lead in the sixth minute through a field goal by Monika. Two minutes later the Savita Punia-led side doubled their lead through Mariana Kujur before Vandana deflected in seconds later to extend their lead.

Star dragflicket Gurjit made it 4-0 by converting a penalty corner in the 10th minute. India continued in the same vein in the second quarter and added another goal 🔌 through Monika.

It was raining penalty corners for India as they earned as many as 15 of them in the match but made use of just three, which would definitely be a cause of concern for chief coach Janneke Schopman.



A view of the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack, which is all set to witness the first Odisha Open, a Super 100 badminton tournament, starting Tuesday. The event is the third tournament of the 2022 BWF World Tour and carries a prize money of USD 75,000. The meet, which will see the likes of Parupalli Kashyap, Sourabh Verma, lubhankar Dey and Ajay Jayaram among others, will conclude January 30.