Actor Fatima Sana Shaikh feels that a lot of acting is defined by how an actor reacts to his/her co-actor

DEFINING ACTING

LEISURE



#### RELIEF FOR REEF

Australia unveiled a billion-dollar package to protect the climate-ravaged Great Barrier **Reef Friday** 

INTERNATIONAL P10



#### ON CUSP OF HISTORY

Rafa Nadal is just one match away from winning a record 21 Grand Slam singles title

SPORTS P12

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**VOLUME 11, ISSUE 298 | www.orissapost.com** 

BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY, JANUARY 29 | 2022

New Delhi: The government Friday appointed economist V Anantha Nageswaran as the Chief Economic Advisor (CEA). Nageswaran, an academic and former executive with Credit Suisse Group AG and Julius Baer Group, succeeds KV Subramanian, who demitted office of CEA in December 2021 after the completion of his three-year term. An official statement said Nageswaran assumed charge Friday. Nageswaran's appointment comes days before the annual Budget Tuesday. The CEA generally authors the economic survey - a document that indicates the government's policy



#### Pak teen kills family under PUBG influence

Lahore: A 14-year-old boy shot dead his entire family, including mother and two minor sisters, allegedly 'under the influence' of online game PUBG, police here in the capital of Pakistan's Punjab province said Friday. Nahid Mubarak, a 45-year-old health worker, was found dead along with her 22-year-old son Taimur and two daughters aged 17 and 11 in Lahore's Kahna area last week. Her teenage son who remained unhurt and is the lone survivor of the family turned out to be the murderer, police said in a statement. "The PUBG addict boy confessed to have killed her mother and siblings under the influence of the game. He has developed some psychological issues because of spending long hours of the day playing the online game," the statement said.



#### **TPCL** is 'authority': **Orissa High Court**

ADMISSIONS OPEN

I - XI (Day Boarding)

VI - XI (Residential)

www.odmglobalschool.org 1800-120-2316

AGENCIES

Cuttack, Jan 28: The Orissa High Court Monday held that the Tata Power Company Limited (TPCL) is an 'authority' within the meaning of Article 226. Justice BR Sarangi noted that TPCL, although a company, has engaged in the distribution of electricity in four distribution areas of the state under different names.

It was further noted that the company's management is also controlled by the state through GRIDCO. Accordingly, the court held, "In view of the foregoing discussions, it is made clear that though TPCL is a company, but it has indulged in distribution of electricity in four distribution areas of the State in different names, such as, TPNODL, TPWDL, TPSODL and TPCODL and, thereby, discharging the public duty and, as such, its management is also controlled by the State through GRIDCO. Therefore, TPCL can be said to be an 'authority' within the meaning of Article 226 of the Constitution of India.'

The court noted that under Article 12, the phrase 'State' has not been defined. It includes all other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India, the court said.

The court then proceeded to refer to a host of Supreme Court judgments on the interpretation of Article 12 and accordingly held that TPCL falls under the purview of an 'authority' within the meaning of Article 226 of the Constitution. Therefore, the court held that writ petitions are maintainable against these electricity distribution companies.

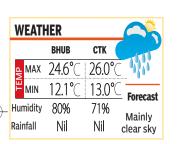
#### **IRREGULAR** by MANJUL



Forget what I've done in the past 5 years. Let me remind you on what happened 500 years ago!

#### **MARKET WATCH** VARIATION **INDEX** SENSEX **57200.23** + 76.71 17102.00 DOLLAR **75.58** EURO 83.92 ₹0.53 ₹388 ₹47,522 GOLD

SILVER



#### V Anantha Nageswaran is new CEA

direction and serves as a precursor to the Budget.



# **HOLDING HIGH**

NCC cadets perform during the Prime Minister's NCC rally at Cariappa Parade Ground in New Delhi, Friday.

eration by April," he said. However,

it is only for laboratory use, not

for home tests, Singh said, adding,

"Our next step will be to develop

a self-test kit so that one can undergo

Bhubaneswar first started develop-

ing the kit and RMRC Bhubaneswar

provided intellectual support for in-

house testing and validation.

Subsequently, we submitted the pro-

posal for approval," said Sanghamitra

Pati, director of RMRC, Bhubaneswar.

She said the ICMR follows the crite-

ria of sensitivity and specificity

while approving any Covid test kit and

this Odisha made kit has passed on

many as 150 rapid antigen test kits

have been validated (including 31

revalidations), and have been found

As per the ICMR, till date, as

all parameters.

to be satisfactory.

The IMGENEX India Pvt. Ltd,

Covid test by sitting at home.'

## **SRIMANDIR TO**

## Made-in-Odisha test **REOPEN FEB 1** POST NEWS NETWORK kit gets ICMR nod

**Bharat Biotech's** 

nasal booster dose

trials get approval

NEW DELHI: India's drug regulator

Biotech to conduct phase-3 clinical

trial for its intranasal Covid vaccine

as booster dose on participants who

SARS-CoV 2 vaccines. India is vet to

approve the use of intranasal COVID-

19 vaccine BBV154 developed by the

Hyderabad-based company. Drugs

Controller General of India (DCGI) on

January 27 gave the nod to Bharat

domised multi-centric clinical study

Biotech to conduct phase-3 ran-

to evaluate immunogenecity and

safety of its intranasal vaccine as

booster dose on participants who

have been previously vaccinated

with COVID-19 vaccines approved

under new drugs under New Drugs &

Clinical Trials Rules, 2019, According

to official sources, the trial would be

conducted at five sites, including

AIIMS Delhi, In December, Bharat

DCGI to conduct phase-3 study.

Biotech had sought permission from

have been previously inoculated with

has given permission to Bharat

Puri, Jan 28: The Odisha government Friday announced the reopening of the Shree Jagannath Temple here for devotees from February 1 keeping in view the livelihood of locals and 'slight' improvement in the coronavirus situation in the state.

The twelfth century shrine will, however, remain closed Sundays for sanitisation, Puri District Collector Samarth Verma told reporters after a meeting of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) and members of the Chhatisa Nijog (temple servitors' body).

"The local economy is mostly dependent on the temple. This apart, keeping in view the sentiments of the people and slight decline in COVID-19 cases, it has been decided to reopen the temple for public from February 1," he said.

He said that the temple will be closed on festivals keeping in view the local situation. "The devotees will be allowed entry into the temple from its eastern gate (Lion's Gate) while the local people of Puri will go inside the shrine through the western gate," the collector said.

The SJTA had closed the shrine from January 10 till January 31 in view of the resurgence of COVID-19 cases in the state and some servitors and temple employees getting infected by the virus.

## BJP richest party in 2019-20, BSP second

■ *Among the seven national* parties, the highest assets worth ₹4,847.78 crore were declared by the BJP, the ADR report said

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 28: The BJP declared assets worth ₹4,847.78 crore in financial year 2019-20, the highest among all political parties, followed by the BSP at ₹698.33 crore and the Congress at ₹588.16 crore, according to poll reforms advocacy group ADR.

The Association for Democratic Reforms prepared its report based on its analysis of assets and liabilities of national and regional parties in 2019-20. According to the analysis, the total assets declared by the seven national and 44 regional parties during the financial vear amounted to ₹6.988.57 crore and ₹2,129.38 crore, respectively.

Among the seven national parties, the highest assets were declared by the BJP (Rs 4847.78 crore or 69.37 per cent), followed by the BSP (Rs 698.33 crore or 9.99 per cent) and the Congress (588.16 crore or 8.42 per cent), the ADR report said. Among the 44 regional parties, the assets of the top 10 parties were worth ₹2028.715 crore or 95.27 per cent of the total declared by them all combined. In the FY 2019-20, among the regional parties, the highest assets were declared by the Samajwadi Party at ₹563.47 crore (26.46 per cent), followed by the TRS at ₹301.47 crore and the

AIADMK at ₹267.61 crore Fixed Deposits/FDR constituted the largest share of ₹1,639.51 crore (76.99 per cent) of the total assets declared by regional parties in the



FY 2019-20. Under the FDR/Fixed Deposits category for the financial year, the BJP and the BSP declared ₹3,253.00 crore and ₹618.86 crore, the top two among all national parties, while the Congress declared ₹240.90 crore. Among regional parties, politi-

AIADMK (Rs 246.90 crore), DMK (Rs 162.425 crore), Shiv Sena (Rs 148.46 crore), BJD (Rs 118.425 crore) among others declared highest assets under FDR/Fixed Deposits. The total liabilities declared by

cal parties such as the SP (Rs 434.219

crore), TRS (Rs 256.01 crore),

the seven national and 44 regional parties for the FY 2019-20 amount to ₹134.93 crore.

'The National Political Parties declared the total liabilities of ₹74.27 crore in FY 2019-20. National Parties declared ₹4.26 crore under Borrowings and ₹70.01 cr under Other Liabilities and in the FY 2019-20, Congress declared the highest total liabilities of ₹49.55 crore (66.72 per cent) followed by AITC that declared ₹11.32 crore (15.24 per cent)," the ADR said.

Regional political parties declared total liabilities of ₹60.66 crore in FY 2019-20, it said

"Regional Parties declared ₹30.29 crore under Borrowings and ₹30.37 crore under Other Liabilities and in the FY 2019-20, TDP declared the highest total liabilities of ₹30.342 crore (50.02 per cent) followed by DMK that declared Rs 8.05 crore (13.27 per cent)," the analysis said.

## COLD WAVE RETURNS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: Winter chill is set to return to Odisha and some districts are likely to be in the grip of a cold wave, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Friday. Minimum temperatures will be 3-5 degrees Celsius below normal in many places in the next three days as northwesterly dry and cold winds are entering the state, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said in a bulletin.

The weatherman forecast cold wave conditions in some areas of Kandhamal, Nuapada, Boudh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Sundargarh, Angul and Keonihar districts till

Sunday morning.

Cold wave conditions may prevail in a few places in Jharsuguda, Bolangir, Bargarh, Subarnapur and Kalahandi for a 24-hour period till Monday morning, it said. At least 12 weather stations logged minimum temperatures below 10 degrees Celsius as the mercury fell below normal in many places across the state Friday.

Daringbadi hill station recorded 6.5 degrees Celsius, the lowest in the state, while the mercury plunged by 5.4 degrees Celsius below normal to settle at 9.6 in Angul. Bhubaneswar recorded a minimum of 12.1 degrees Celsius, four notches below normal, and it was 13.2 degrees Celsius in Cuttack, it added

## NeoCov: Scientists warn of new coronavirus from bats

■ Considering the extensive mutations in the RBD regions of SARS-CoV-2 variants, especially the heavily mutated Omicron, these viruses may hold a latent potential to infect humans through further adaptation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: Soon made

in Odisha rapid antigen testing

kits will hit the market for testing

of SARS-CoV-2 infection in people.

Research (ICMR) has validated the

first made in Odisha Covid-19 rapid

Bhubaneswar-based IMGENEX

India Pvt. Ltd, with intellectual

input from Regional Medical

Research Centre (RMRC). The kit

can detect various variants of

Covid-19 by using nasopharyngeal

swab samples, said CEO of IM-

Singh said his firm has started

working on this project since June

2020 and the state government's

department of biotechnology has

developed antigen and antibody,

which is required to develop the kit.

The kit was developed at a cost of

Rs 1 crore. We are constructing a

building where we will manufac-

ture about 20 lakh kits per month.

This facility is likely to start op-

"By utilising the fund, we have

sanctioned a grant for this.

GENEX, Sujay Singh.

The kit has been developed by

antigen test kit, ImCOV-Ag.

The Indian Council of Medical

AGENCIES

Beijing, Jan 28: A type of coronavirus, NeoCov, that spreads among bats in South Africa may pose a threat to humans in future if it

mutates further, according to a study by Chinese researchers.

The yet-to-be peer-reviewed study recently posted on the preprint repository BioRxiv, shows that NeoCov is closely related to the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), a viral disease first identified in Saudi Arabia in 2012.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause diseases ranging from the common cold to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome

Researchers from Chinese Academy of Sciences and Wuhan University noted that NeoCov is found in a population of bats in



South Africa and to date spreads exclusively among these animals. In its current form, NeoCov does

not infect humans but further mu-

tations may make it potentially harmful, the researchers noted. "In this study, we unexpectedly found that NeoCoV and its close relative, PDF-2180-CoV, can efficiently use some types of bat Angiotensinconverting enzyme 2 (ACE2) and, less favourably, human ACE2 for entry," the authors of the study noted.

ACE2 is a receptor protein on cells that provides the entry point for the coronavirus to hook into and infect a wide range of cells.

"Our study demonstrates the first case of ACE2 usage in MERSrelated viruses, shedding light on a potential bio-safety threat of the human emergence of an ACE2 using 'MERS-CoV-2' with both high fatality and transmission rate, they said.

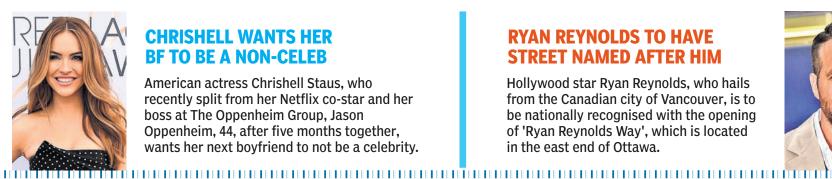
The researchers further noted that infection with NeoCov could not be cross-neutralised by antibodies targeting SARS-CoV-2 or MERS-CoV.

'Considering the extensive mutations in the RBD regions of the SARS-CoV-2 variants, especially the heavily mutated Omicron variant, these viruses may hold a latent potential to infect humans through further adaptation," the authors of the study added.

A receptor-binding domain (RBD) is a key part of a virus that allows it to dock to body receptors to gain entry into cells and lead to infection.



## leisure



#### **CHRISHELL WANTS HER BF TO BE A NON-CELEB**

American actress Chrishell Staus, who recently split from her Netflix co-star and her boss at The Oppenheim Group, Jason Oppenheim, 44, after five months together, wants her next boyfriend to not be a celebrity.

#### **RYAN REYNOLDS TO HAVE** STREET NAMED AFTER HIM

Hollywood star Ryan Reynolds, who hails from the Canadian city of Vancouver, is to be nationally recognised with the opening of 'Ryan Reynolds Way', which is located in the east end of Ottawa.



GaneshaSpeaks.com accuracy • reliability • trust

Your big ambitions may come to fruition today by the evening, Ganesha says that you will do your best not to make impulsive choices: whatever the expected results may be, you will take sensible

#### **TAURUS**

Ganesha sees you devoting the day in taking care of your personal affairs and relationships. You are likely to review the state of affairs, and identify problems and persons who need more time and attention. This naturally implies that you will be spending a lot of time with your friends and family members, sorting differences and misunderstanding, if any.

#### **GEMINI**

There are indications that you will pay special attention to your food habits today, predicts Ganesha. You may go for an interview or start a new job later in the day. At work, you will get both encourage ment and inspiration from seniors

#### **CANCER**

You will take unusual interest in places of historical significance and destinations not frequented by many, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you will be the centre of attention in a group discussion. You will show your excellent troubleshooting skills while executing all your plans, hopes Ganesha.

#### **LEO**

No matter what you do, on some days, you just can't save the world, even if you were superman. Remember that, since it looks very likely that today you shall be bringing upon yourself the displeasure of your bosses, and a lackadaisical support from your colleagues.

#### **■ VIRGO**

The day promises to be full of surprises and twists and turns, each of which you will handle with maturity. If anyone makes the mistake of taking you for granted. they will repent for their poor judgement as you are not one to be pushed around.

#### **LIBRA**

The day brings with it the

gift of passion, and all its various nuances. On the career front, you may take steps today that will establish your identity in office. Later in the day, there are also chances o you having differences with your business associates. But your alert mind shall enable you to have an edge over your rival's plans, says Ganesha.

#### **SCORPIO** There is a strong prospect

that you will be buying a state-of-the-art motor vehicle, foresees Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may finalise deals regarding your dream house. In the evening, you are likely to buy a household item to please your life partner, expects Ganesha.

#### **SAGITTARIUS**

It is very likely that you will pay enough attention to your family members today Take time out to validate the efforts of others and show consideration when and where required. At workplace, people will admire your honesty. Romance is in the air in the evening, says Ganesha.

#### CAPRICORN

Get ready for a thrilling day ahead, says Ganesha. A lot of unexpected events may bring in happiness, and you may suddenly find yourself deliriously delighted. At work, finding answers to intriguing questions will consume most of your time. There are also chances that you may get adequate financial support to start a new venture or a business enterprise; the existing one may also prosper beyond expectations.

#### AQUARIUS

Excellence is the buzzword today! But that implies only to your work and not to the results. Nothing earth-shattering is on the cards, so slog away. Kids may howl or your spouse may yell in the evening, but you will simply pull your feet up and relax!

#### PISCES

It is a day where you are likely to be busy in tempering fraved relationships or indulging in tempestuous secretive affairs. Either way, the expenses incurred on the same will return to haunt you at the end of the day, says Ganesha

## **Acting is all about** reacting: Fatima

Mumbai: Dangal actress Fatima Sana Shaikh, feels that a lot of acting is defined by how an actor reacts to their co-actor. She maintains that actors feed off each other's energy to sketch a good per-

Elaborating on her stance, she said: "I believe, acting is a lot of reacting. It's always good to have good performers opposite you so that you can feed off their energies. The actress recently worked in a TVC with Sidharth

Malhotra. They instantly clicked and their camaraderie seems to have translated into their work as well, going by her statement on her experience of working with the actor. "It has been a blast working with Sidharth for the ad. We gelled so well on the sets, it did-

n't feel like it was the first time we were work-



Drawing on his own memories, Ruskin Bond pays

through his new offering 'A Little Book of India'

homage to the country that has been his home for 84 years

apologises after MP police lodge FIR

context and has been misconstrued. Tiwari added that the 'bhagwan' she was referring to was her co-star Sourabh Raaj Jain, who has played the role of Lord Krishna on TV earlier.

When put in context, one will understand that the statement in reference to 'Bhagwan' was in context with

#### REFERENCE TO GOD Raj Jain's OVER INNERWEAR popular

role of a deity. People associate character names with actors and hence, I used that as an example during my conversation with the media," Tiwari said.

'Please be assured that it has never been my intention to hurt anyone, with my words or actions. Hence, I would humbly apologise for the hurt my statement has unintentionally caused to a lot of peo-

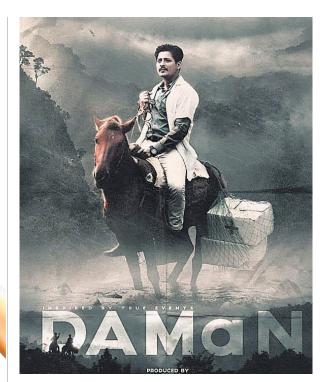
> During the conversation at the event, while replying to one of her colleagues, Tiwari had said, "Mere bra ki size bhagwan le rahe hai (God is measuring my bra).' Her statement created a con-

troversy and the Madhya Pradesh Home Minister on Thursday directed the police to lodge an FIR against the actress for hurting people's sentiments. IANS

Bhopal: Hours after the Madhya Pradesh Police registered an FIR against television actress Shweta Tiwari for allegedly referring to God while making a statement about her innerwear, she apologised Friday

In a statement by her spokesper-





#### Babusan's much-awaited Daman trailer out

Bhubaneswar: The trailer of Daman, one of the eagerly awaited films of top star Babusan, was released on the Republic Day on various social media platforms by the production house JP Motion Pictures.

Directed by Bishal Morya and Devi Prasad Lenka, the film also has theatre actor Dipanwit Das Mohapatra in an important role. The trailer, after its release, aroused a lot of excitement among the cine-goers. Based on real events, Daman

sources revealed.

"The film is expected to get widespread appreciation from viewers who often complain that Odia films lack novelty and originality" said Dipendra Samal, the producer of the

tells the story of a doctor, who

fearlessly performs his duties

in the remote regions of

Odisha. The movie is an in-

credible journey of a doctor

who has taken the oath to save

people of Malkangiri from

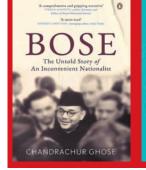
Malaria, production house

Books with the India twist

#### s the sunny rays of winter pour through our windows, curl up on your reading chair and indulge in these binge-

Bose: The Untold Story of an Inconvenient Nationalist by Chandrachur Ghose

New information throws light on Bose's intense political activities surrounding the revolutionary groups in Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra and United Provinces, his efforts to bridge the increasing communal divide and his influence among the splintered political landscape; his outlook and relations with women among other. Pacey and thought-provoking, this book will open a window to many hitherto un-



told and unknown stories of Netaji

The Puffin Book of 100

Subhas Chandra Bose.

**Extraordinary Indians** 

Extraordinary Indians is a cele-

bration of achievements and per-

sonal stories of those who forged

new paths for themselves and oth-

The Puffin Book of 100 ers in a way that it continues to affect modern lives. Written as short anecdotal biographical sketches, the book presents the lives of scientists, doctors, activists, painters, sportspeople, dancers, political leaders and many more from different walks of life. Featured in this collection are names like Irom Sharmila, Dutee Chand, Bhagat Singh, Gauri Sawant, Virat Kohli and Sundar Pichai.

#### A Little Book of India by Ruskin

As India completes 75 years of independence, a slice of the nation is presented through the words of our favourite author, Ruskin Bond. Drawing on his own memories and impressions of this unique land, he pays homage to the country that has been his home for 84 years. Bond talks fondly about the diverse elements that make up this beautiful land -- its rivers and forests, literature and culture, sights, sounds and colours

#### The Authentic Yoga by PY **Deshpande**

Heartfulness launched The Authentic Yoga originally written by PY Deshpande with additional content by Heartfulness Guide - Daaji, that includes the\_ Foreword and a new chapter presenting the yogic practices in the light of Heartfulness for everyone to benefit from Yoga directly. The book gives a deep insight into the true state of Yoga in finding unity within body, heart, and soul in totality that can rightly translate us into being 'human'.

#### **PEANUTS**



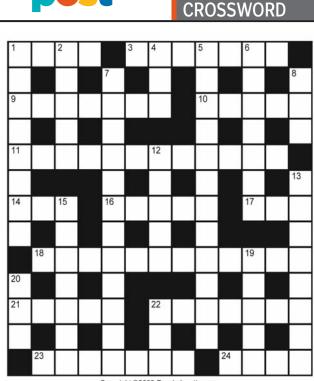
#### **CALVIN AND HOBBES**



#### **BREVITY**



#### FUN **CROSSWORD**



Copyright @2022 PuzzleJunction.com 22 Type of long

grained rice

speaking (2,1,4)

23 Generally

24 Difficult

situation

#### Across

- 1 Urban centre 3 Queen's
- residence?
- 9 Porridge 10 Bouquet 11 Stake driver
- 14 Salad ingredient
- 16 Weighty books 17 Label
- 18 Public official
- (5,7)
- 21 Media attraction
- Down 1 Religious
- residence 2 Church offering 19 Maxim
- 4 Building
- addition
- 20 Riel part

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Paese cheese

5 Principal at a

6 Ferocious

camels

(3,5)

15 Sailplanes

7 Bodybuilder

8 Cave dweller

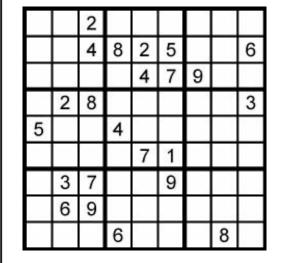
12 They're found on

13 Prideful journeys

girl's school

#### SUDOKU

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



#### SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

5 9 6 7 3 1



## downtown



#### **GODDESS OF WISDOM**

An artisan gives finishing touches to the clay idols of Goddess Saraswati at Kumbharsahi in Cuttack, Friday

***	COV	/ID-19	TRACK	ER
		INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
	World	36,78,71,459	29,06,40,602	56,59,280
	India	4,06,22,709	3,80,24,771	4,92,327
	Odisha	12,36,226	11,73,907	8,560
	11111111	: 	: 	: 

#### PEACE PAGODA A BIG DRAW



A team of visitors taking a selfie in front of Dhauli Peace Pagoda in Bhubaneswar, Friday, as the structure is currently undergoing a renovation

## KBN mastermind held, sword seized

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: The mastermind of the notorious Koi Bhai Nahi (KBN) gang finally fell into the police net here Friday. The leader of the gang, Devi Prasad Jena, alias Bubu, 22, was arrested by the commissionerate police from Delta Square area here Friday.

Bubu, who hails from Srirampur village in Pattamundai area of Kendrapara, has been staying along with his family at Gandamunda under Khandagiri police limits.

Several videos of the gang went viral on social media last year in which the accused were spotted wielding fire arms, swords, other sharp-edged weapons and roaming freely on city roads. The denizens went into a tizzy after the videos went viral on social

Police later launched a manhunt to nab the accused members



**Mastermind Devi Prasad Jena** 

of the KBN gang. Police have registered a case against 29 members of the gang. The gang's operation was influenced by Hindi movies.

Bubu, considered the mastermind of the gang along with sevDEVI PRASAD JENA, ALIAS BUBU, 22, WAS PICKED UP BY THE COMMISSIONERATE POLICE FROM DELTA SQUARE

SEVERAL VIDEOS OF THE GANG WENT VIRAL ON SOCIAL MEDIA LAST YEAR IN WHICH THE ACCUSED WERE SPOTTED WIELDING FIRE ARMS, SWORDS, OTHER SHARP-EDGED WEAPONS AND ROAMING FREELY ON **CITY ROADS** 

eral other members of the gang had reportedly attacked two youths with sharp-edged weapons at Nayappalli and ransacked the Laxmi Puja Mandap nearby in October, 2021.

Nayapalli police later started an investigation into the case after registering a case (494/21) in this regard. Bubu's father works in

cial team of the commissionerate police conducted raids at the residences of the accused including Bubu in November last year. Police also razed the houses of some of the accused searching for the fire arms.

Police had also taken five members of the gang, Suman Kumar Parida, Rajesh Behera, Sanatan Behera, Rahul Jena and Narendra Kumar Sahu on a two-day remand to elicit more details about the operations of the gang during interrogation in November, 2021.

Police Friday arrested Bubu and seized a sword from his possession. Earlier, five associates of Bubu had been arrested by police.

Bubu is involved in more than a dozen cases registered at different police stations of the city.

Police Friday produced Bubu before the court and sought its permission to take him in remand for further inquiry.

## Restrictions at Swargadwar eased

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, Jan 28: The Puri district administration has lifted restrictions on the cremation of bodies from outside the coastal district at Swargadwar crematorium in the wake of an improvement in the Covid-19 situation here, an official said Friday.

The authorities had imposed curbs on cremation of bodies from other districts and outside Odisha at Swargadwar January 10 as the Holy City witnessed a surge in coronavirus infections.

The restrictions imposed on the funeral services of deceased belonging to other parts of Odisha and neighbouring states at Swargadwar The administration had imposed curbs on cremation of

bodies from other districts and outside Odisha at Swargadwar January 10 with rise in Covid cases in the Holy City

and also on immersion of ashes at 'Mahodadhi' (sea) to contain the ministration Thursday. spread of Covid-19 were withdrawn with the decreasing trend of coronavirus-positive cases in the Puri

district, the official said, citing a notification issued by the local ad-

Relatives of a deceased have to submit the necessary documents at the reception counter of Swargadwar Seva Samiti, he said. A maximum of 10 people will be allowed for funeral services at the crematorium, and they will have to follow the Covid appropriate behaviour, the offi-

The Sub-Collector of Puri and the convener secretary of the Swargadwar Seva Samiti have been instructed to ensure strict implementation of the order and take appropriate action in case of violations.

Apart from Odisha, people from neighbouring West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Bihar bring bodies for cremation

## 'Baraatis' get away with ₹2L, ornaments

The host family found out

from the CCTV footage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: Criminals have always a trick up their sleeve to loot people.

In an interesting case, two miscreants including a minor boy decamped with gold ornaments worth around Rs 2 lakhs from a marriage programme at 'Pallavi Mandap' in Kesura area on the outskirts of the city here January 23.

The victim family while examining the CCTV footage of the function shocked to find out that the welldressed duo in suits entered the wedding hall as guests.

Subsequently, the minor accused decamped with a bag containing a gold chain, earrings and five rings gifted that the well-dressed duo and a minor had entered the wedding hall as guests

to the bride by the guests and relatives of the bride and bride groom.

The family members of the bride have lodged a complaint in this regard with Sahid Nagar police the next day. Police are yet to nab the accused despite the presence of the CCTV footage.

Similarly, another miscreant impersonating a customer appeared at an interior showroom,

Annapurna Interior, located at Tankapani road and ran away with Rs 1.28 lakh from cash counter while the elderly owner was busy otherwise here Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the commissionerate police Thursday busted an interstate robbers' gang that would target chemist shops impersonating customers. Sources claimed that some other members of the group of the looter gang from West Bengal are involved in the loot spree in the city. The city police have been inter-

rogating the owners and staff of the two hotels where the arrested gang members were staying for not checking the identity details dur-

## STA goes filmy to raise road safety awareness



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: The State Transport Authority (STA) has taken inspiration from super hit movie Pushpa to create awareness on road safety among people.

The STA Friday tweeted the image and poster of Allu Arjun starrer Pushpa and said, "Always wear a helmet while riding a bike. Else, not only you will pay fine but also you will endanger your life."

The STA also modified a popular dialogue from the movie to create awareness on road safety. "Pushpa ho Ya Pushparaaj! Bina Helmet Ka Challan Sabka Katega,' read the modified dialogue.

The Twitter users from Odisha and Andhra Pradesh are retweet-

ing the poster and images in large numbers in social media.

The STA also requested Good Samaritans to assist the victims after the accident. Road accident deaths can be reduced by 50 per cent if the victims get medical assistance within the golden hour. Do not hesitate to help. Protection of a Good Samaritan is guaranteed by law, said the STA.

The twin city Commissionerate Police had earlier used popular movie dialogues to raise awareness about Covid-19 and traffic rules.

Pushpa: The Rise is a Telugu action drama, written and directed by Sukumar. It stars Allu Arjun as the titular character alongside Fahadh Faasil and Rashmika

#### Man uses Yogi's name to extract money, arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Jan 28: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Delhi Police, in assistance with the Commissionerate Police here, Friday arrested a man for trying to cheat businessmen using fake letterheads and signature of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in 2016.

Sources said a team of EOW sleuths reached Kharavela Nagar police station and sought their assistance in arresting Manoj Seth, a resident of Sadhu Nagar area under Dhauli police limits here.

The sleuths were tipped off about Seth's regular movements in Kharavela Nagar and Master Canteen areas. The team managed to arrest Seth from Master Canteen area," said an official, adding that the accused was produced before a local court that allowed the sleuths to take him on a transit

Sources said Seth was running a newspaper in Delhi

a few years back when the incident was reported. 'When Yogi Adityanath was an MP from Gorakhpur in 2016, the accused (Seth) forged his letterhead and signature to seek donations from businessmen for his newspaper. A case was registered in this regard," added the official.

New Delhi: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has reserved its judgment on an application alleging illegal sand mining in Subarnarekha river in Balasore district. A bench of judicial member B Amit Sthalekar and expert member Saibal Dasgupta reserved the judgement in the matter. The application alleged that people residing near the site are affected by the sand mining, which has led to severe air pollution, depletion of water level, change in course of the river and obstruction of the natural flow by

#### **NGT reserves order over sand mining**

wooden bridges and approach roads.

## Parbati Giri finds place in Centre's book

The tome narrates the valour of several unsung women freedom fighters

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Jan 28: The Centre has released a pictorial book narrating the valour of several unsung women freedom fighters, including Parbati Giri of

The book, released in partnership with Amar Chitra Katha, dwells on the lives of 20 brave women of the country.

"Parbati Giri was one of Odisha's most prominent women freedom fighters. She was called the Mother Teresa of Western Odisha for her work in the uplift of people," the Union Ministry of Culture said.

The book illustrates tales of Rani

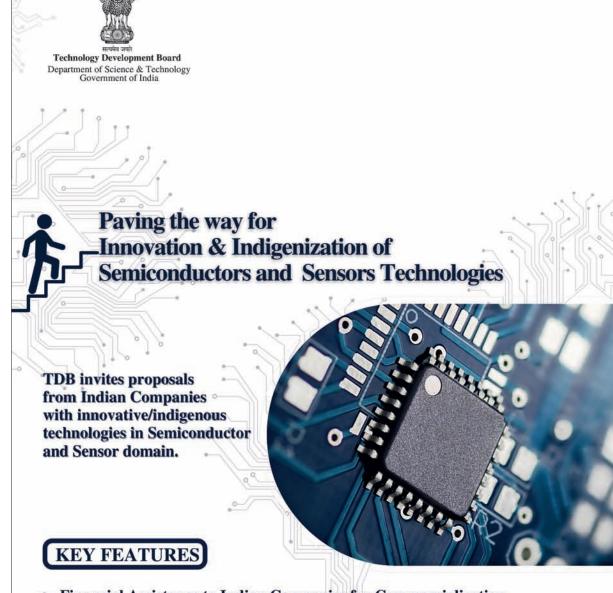


Abbakka, Velu Nachiyar, Jhalkari Bai, Matangini Hazra, Gulab Kaur, Chakali Ilamma, Padmaja Naidu, Bishni Dev Shah, Subhadra Kumari, Durgawati Devi, Sucheta Kripalani, Accamma Cherian, Aruna Asaf Ali, Durgabai Deshmukh, Rani Gaidinliu, Usha Mehta, Tarkeshwari Sinha, Snehlata Varma and Tileshwari Barua.

Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister of State for Ministry of Culture Meenakashi Lekhi said that the book celebrates the lives of some of the women who led the charge and lit the flame of protest and rebellion throughout the country

It contains the stories of queens who battled colonial power in the struggle against imperial rule and women who dedicated and even laid down their lives for the cause of the motherland, she

"If we go through our glorious past, we will find that the Indian culture was the one which celebrated women and there was no place for gender discrimination. This is amply evident from the fact that women had the courage and physical strength to fight like soldiers in the battlefield," Lekhi said.



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## **Cov cases on downward spiral** as state sees 5k new infections

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: Daily Covid-19 cases continued to dip in Odisha, where 5,057 more people tested positive Friday, 844 less than the previous day, the Health department said.

As many as 667 children are among the newly infected, it said in a bulletin.

The coronavirus tally stood at 12,36,226, while 10 fresh fatalities pushed the death toll to 8,560.

Fifth-three coronavirus patients have died of comorbidities in the past, the bulletin said.

The state had logged 5,901 singleday cases and eight deaths on Thursday. A week ago, it had reported 9,833 fresh infections.

Odisha tested 61,635 samples in the past 24 hours at a positivity



tally stood at 12,36,226, while 10 fresh fatalities pushed the death toll to 8,560

rate of 8.2 per cent, it added Khurda district reported 1,111 new cases, followed by 495 in Cuttack and 429 in Sundargarh, the bulletin said. The Test Positivity Rate (TPR) was 17.1 per cent in

Khurda and 12.9 in Sundargarh.

Nineteen more districts have a pos-

itivity rate of over five per cent. The coastal state now has 64,217 active cases, and 11,63,396 patients

have recovered from the disease so far, including 11,157 since

Public Health Director Niranjan Mishra said people were developing less severe symptoms due to vaccination. "The restrictions can be relaxed only when the cases are very low as the highly-transmissible Omicron variant can spread again," he told reporters.

#### **CHORUS FOR ONLINE EXAM**



Members of All Odisha D-Pharmacy Students' Association stage a demonstration in front of the Directorate of Drugs Control office in Bhubaneswar, Friday, demanding online mode of examination for pharmacy

#### **Govt ITI in City earns** 'Eat Right Campus' tag 🔰

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: The Government ITI, Bhubaneswar, has been accorded the Eat Right Campus by the Food Safety and Standards

Authority of India (FSSAI). Principal Jeetamitra Satpathy said the Food Beverage and Guest

Services Assistant department of

ITI-Bhubaneswar got this certificate. 'The Eat Right Campus initiative of the FSSAI aims at promoting safe, healthy and sustainable food in campuses across the country. The objective is to improve the health of people and promote socio-economic development," Satpathy said.

Eat Right Campus is a part of Eat Smart Cities challenge, which is envisioned as a competition among cities to recognise their efforts in adopting and scaling up various initiatives under Eat Right India.

As part of Eat Right India, the Eat Right Campus initiative has been launched for colleges, universities, institutions, workplaces, hospitals, jails and tea estates.

## Caste papers, govt sops elude Kela tribe

Puri/Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: "We are deprived of government entitlements because we do not have a caste certificate," said Meena Das. 34, before a gathering of academicians, researchers, and journalists in Bhubaneswar in late September.

Das belongs to Sabakhia Kela, one among 13 listed Kela communities found in Pipli, Brahmagiri and Sadar blocks of Puri. They have lived for generations as a nomadic tribe. Some members of the community are still snake charmers, while others perform stunts for money and food. Many of them play instruments like Tingi Khadu as they go door-to-door, collecting alms. Murali Shikari, 41, from the

Mundapota Kela community said, "The male members of the community bury their heads under the earth and hold their breath while the women beat the drums to attract the public so that they can collect alms. We've also been performing a typical dance form, the 'ghoda nacha'. That was our livelihood.'

The Kela tribes have been subject to continuous neglect and social stigma. All because the community has never been entitled to the all-important caste certificates that can open the doors to various kinds of government support, claimed Meena Das

A district official on the condition of anonymity said it is difficult to issue certificates to the Kela community as they do not have past records or any information

about their origins in Odisha. "One of the key problems placing these communities on unavailability of authentic and relevant data. It is not available as no caste-wise census was undertaken between 1931 and 2011," said Sandip Patnaik, a researcher studying the socio-economic condition

of Kela communities. Patnaik added that most of these communities are nomadic and their numbers are not likely to be enumerated in the census data.

"A number of states have not prepared the list of de-notified or nomadic communities," he said. adding, "The lack of official records has made them invisible in the development process. Many of them are still struggling to get a caste certificate so that they can avail government benefits. In search of homes

The study revealed that Kela communities have limited access to land, housing and sanitation, forcing them to live in neglect.

Murali Shikari said the government has not been able to provide proper housing for his family either through the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana or the Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana meant for the poor: "We are living in a marshy place and are

vulnerable to diseases," he said. Lata Shikari (65), a widow living in Pipli block, has been waiting for 40 years to build a house through government support. She has attended most of the rallies conducted by the ruling party in Bhubaneswar with the hope that her demand will be fulfilled. She has not succeeded so far.

community burying his

head under earth to attract

In the past, Meena Das said, members of the Kela community would eat anything they could find -from dead birds to snakes. But now, things have changed as many look forward to a dignified life. "Now, we either work as seasonal labourers or farm labourers and sharecroppers," she said, adding that people of her community would be able to live a better life if they had a home.

No jobs, no school

for example, has left the Kela community unable to access job cards that are given under the Mahatma National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

This was particularly tough when job prospects were further dented by the coronavirus pandemic and the nationwide lockdown imposed by the government in March 2020. "The meagre income we used to get as labourers stopped. We had to depend on the five kilograms of rice that we got from the public distribution system. It was insufficient," Meena Das said.

Lakhia Shikari (44) of the Beherasahi in Pipli block, who belongs to Mundapota Kela community, said that the pandemic forced them to once again take up their traditional occupation.

"The sudden lockdown an nouncement crushed our livelihood. We lived hand-to-mouth. When there were no work opportunities due to the pandemic, we fell back on our traditional occupation -- begging for alms," she said.

Muna Das, 21, from Ghusuria Kela community, had to quit college during the pandemic and work at a farm to provide for his family. He was unable to procure a stipend when he was completing his degree as he had no caste certificate. He had to pay regular fees like his counterparts from the general category, ultimately making it difficult for him to continue his studies.

"I approached government officials and even the District Collector to request a caste certificate, but to no avail," he said. Muna Das' dreams of becoming a teacher were shattered due to the lack of caste certificates. "We are so invisible in the eves of the government that even after so many

**India's Expanding Clean Energy Workforce** 

The study—India's Expanding Clean Energy

years of independence we are deprived of a caste certificate. Now, the pandemic has broken all our hopes," he rued.

Murali Shikari's children studied for free till Class 8 in a government school. However, to put them through high school, he will now have to pay fees. "Due to lack of caste certificates, our children are unable to get a stinend to continue studies. Many children drop out from schools as their parents fail to pay school fees," he said.

Stigma that haunts them

The stigma attached to the Kela communities has followed them even in dire situations, highlighting rampant discriminatory practices. They were not spared even during natural calamities.

When Cyclone Fani killed 74 people in Odisha in May 2019 and caused damages worth ₹1200 crore, several shelters were built to temporarily rehabilitate the displaced. Here, the members of the Kela communities were allegedly subjected to casteist behaviour by people of the upper caste.

'In the multi-purpose cyclone shelter, the upper castes had already occupied the space and they didn't allow us to enter,' said Meena Das. "Thus, we returned and took shelter in a school verandah. Here, the upper caste people did not allow us to use the washroom. We're forced to urinate at a faraway place even when it was raining heavily." she said. Even in their day to day lives, the women of Kela community have had to face discriminatory remarks, like while for aging for date leaves that they use to stitch mats or make brooms.

#### injured in attack POST NEWS NETWORK

**BTech student** 

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: A student of a private engineering college here Friday sustained injuries after another student attacked him with a knife in Sailashree Vihar area under Chandrasekharpur police limits. The injured has been identified

as Gauri Prasad Lenka of Naugaon in Jagatsinghpur. Lenka, a final year BTech student, has been staying at one of his relatives' house at Sailashree Vihar. According to sources, Lenka was in a relationship with a girl who

also pursues BTech at the same

college in Patia area. Recently, the

girl stopped talking to Lenka after she developed friendship with Priya Ranjan Nayak of Puri. Lenka had reportedly damaged the mobile phone of the girl following a heated argument around

a month ago. Nayak had reportedly spent around ₹10,000 to repair the phone. Lenka had promised Nayak he would pay the amount. However, he

did not keep his promise despite repeated reminders by Nayak and the girl, sources said. Lenka, meanwhile, asked Nayak

to come to his room at Sailashree Vihar to get the money. Accordingly, Navak went to his room to receive the amount Friday afternoon.

After a brief argument, Lenka and his friends attacked Nayak. The latter too picked up a knife from the kitchen and attacked Lenka.

Both Lenka and Nayak were rushed to a nearby private medical college and hospital, where they are currently undergoing treatment,

#### Ex-Bijepur MLA dies

India's developmental map is the

Bhubaneswar: Former Bijepur MLA Rajeev Lochan Hota died at Bargarh Friday, He was 86, Hota was hospitalised after his health deteriorated. He died around 6pm, family sources said.

#### **CLASSIFIED**

I Manoj Kumar Bag, S/o.

Late Giridhari Bag, At/ PO/ PS- Dharmagarh, is the sole owner of Plot No. 524, Khata No. 817, Mouza-Dharmagarh, Revenue Colony. The Original Sale Deed (No. 1774/1993) was lost during the Bus journey. This was also reported in Dharmagarh Police Station, Station Diary No. 006/28-10-20. The above land is being mortgaged by Indian Overseas Bank, Dharmagarh for house loan. If anyone has any objections to this, please contact BM, IOB, Dharmagarh within 15 days. Manoj Kumar Bag, Mob-9777312947

## 'Renewable energy sector to create 1mn jobs by 2030' INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: An important component of its climate action plan. India's renewable energy sector could potentially employ around one million people by 2030, which would be ten times more than the existing workforce of an estimated 1.1 lakh employed by the sector, according to an inde-

pendent study. The study 'India's Expanding Clean Energy Workforce' highlights that most of the new jobs would be generated by small-scale renewable energy projects such as rooftop solar and mini and microgrid systems compared to utility or large-scale projects like solar parks.

The study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and Skill Council for Green Jobs (SCGJ) was released

The CEEW-NRDC-SCGJ analysis also highlighted the adverse impact of the pandemic on employment in the renewable energy sector. In comparison to 12,400 new workers employed in the sector in the year 2018-19, only 5,200 new workers were employed in 2019-20 and mar-

ginally better at 6,400 were employed in 2020-21. In 2020-21, a majority of the new workers were employed in the rooftop solar segment where annual capacity additions grew by nine per cent over previous year and accounted for 1.4 GW capacity.

The study further found that India has successfully trained 78,000 people under the Surya Mitra training programme between 2015 and 2017 to improve the availability of skilled workers for clean energy projects. These are exciting statistics in

view of the 2030, 2050 and 2070 targets that India has set for itself in its action plan for combating the impacts due to changing climatic conditions. At the annual global climate

change negotiations in November last year at Glasgow, UK, Prime Minister Modi had presented an ambitious agenda for India's contribution to the global efforts to combat climate change.

His vision of Panchamrit or five nectar elements involved installation of 500 GW non fossil energy capacity by 2030, reduction in emissions intensity of GDP by 45 per cent over 2005 levels, 50 per cent electric

like solar parks

t found that India has successfully trained 78,000 Workforce—highlights that most of the new jobs would be generated by small-scale people under the Surya Mitra renewable energy projects such as rooftop training programme between solar and mini and micro-grid systems 2015 and 2017 to improve the compared to utility or large-scale projects availability of skilled workers for clean energy projects

> Availability of a skilled workforce is critical to leveraging the employment opportunities that the renewable energy sector could generate in the coming years. The clean energy skill development programmes should target rural areas and training curriculums should be periodically updated to meet the industry requirements. It's also important to provide training on emerging technologies such as batteries and green hydrogen so that a skilled workforce is available to accelerate their deployment

PRAVEEN SAXENA I CEO OF SKILL COUNCIL FOR GREEN JOBS

installed capacity coming from non-fossil sources by 2030, 1 billion tonnes reduction in carbon emissions till 2030 and India to become net-zero by 2070

Most of the new capacities for electricity generation are expected to be based on solar and wind energy. "If India were to meet its commitments, then these two sectors could potentially create 3.4 million jobs over the next eight fiscal years which would employ a million people. However, jobs created are different from the workforce needed since one person could occupy more than one position," the

"India's ambitious renewable energy targets provide an opportunity to deliver on jobs, growth and sustainability while transitioning to a low-carbon economy. The upcoming Union Budget must especially focus on scaling up rooftop solar, mini and micro grid systems.

and domestic solar manufacturing to maximise the employment opportunities in the sector." CEO. CEEW, Dr Arunabha Ghosh said.

Further, to accelerate the deployment of solar parks and increase the uptake of decentralised renewable energy applications such as solar pumps and rooftops in rural India, it would be critical to train the rural youth and make them employable in various parts of the renewable ecosystem, he said.

Director, India Programme at NRDC, Sameer Kwatra said, "India's unprecedented renewables journev can set a new paradigm on how countries pursue prosperity without adding carbon to the atmosphere. With nearly 700 million people under the age of 30, creating clean futuristic jobs is a priority for the country. Powering the economy through renewable energy will not only enhance energy independence, avoid carbon emissions, and air pollution, but also help meet India's employment goals. The time to invest in renewable energy technologies and skillset

of the future is now.' "Availability of a skilled workforce is critical to leveraging the employment opportunities that the renewable energy sector could generate in the coming years. The clean energy skill development programmes should target rural areas and training curriculums should be periodically updated to meet the industry requirements. It's also important to provide training on emerging technologies such as batteries and green hydrogen so that a skilled workforce is available to accelerate their deployment," said Dr Prayeen Saxena, CEO of SCGJ.

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#### SHORT **TAKES**

**OrissaPOST** 

SATURDAY | JANUARY 29 | 2022 | BHUBANESWAR

#### No nomination in 235 wards

Jaipur: No one filed nomination for ward member posts in 235 wards of Jaipur district. Significantly, 1,511 ward members have been elected uncontested. According to reports, no nomination paper was received in 19 wards each of Bari and Sukinda blocks: 53 in Dharmasala block; 16 in Jajpur sadar block: 16 in Barchana; 41 in Korei: seven in Binjharpur; 23 in Dasrathpur; 13 in Danagadi and 28 in Rasulpur.

#### 13 villages demand **PMGSY road**

Phulbani: Many villages in Khajuripada block of Kandhamal district are grappling with commuting woes and a case in point is Sudreju panchayat under which 13 villages do not have motorable roads. People of Meniakathi, Mulagudari, Landuguda, Sambipada, Gudabari, Banameru, Jargisaru, Surapaju, Sagadakuti, Kudupelli, Barapada, Sudapaju and Prangapada have demanded that a stretch of road from Bhetakholi to Meniakathi be included under Pradhan Mantri Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). They lamented that ambulances fail to reach the village for hospitalisation of critical patients as there is no proper road. Locals have warned of agitation if road connectivity is not improved in the region. They have submitted a memorandum to the sub-collector in this

#### **Police flag march** in Chhatrapur

Chhatrapur: To ensure law and order ahead of the panchayat elections, police started flag march in different pockets under Chhatrapur and Chamakhandi police limits in Ganjam. As candidates are carrying out door-to-door campaign in 18 GPs under this block, police are monitoring enforcement of Covid-19 norms. A candidate is allowed to accompany five people during campaign. The police, through public address system, are sensitising people about compliance of Covid norms.

## Reserved civic body chief post sparks row

POST NEWS NETWORK

Anandapur, Jan 28: Reservation of chairperson's post for scheduled tribe (ST) women in Anandapur municipality has triggered discontentment among aspirants of various political parties as there would be direct election for the civic body chief posts this

Opposing the quota for the post, Ramakant Behera, a resident of ward no-5, has sent his complaint to the state urban development au-

In the complaint, Behera stated that the state government had published the seat reservation list for all civic bodies January 15, 2022. The

chairperson post of Anandapur municipality has been reserved for ST women. Behera sought to know the basis on which the post has been reserved for ST women.

In 2013, the post of the municipality was reserved for STs. While the post was unreserved in 2008, it was reserved for women in 2003. The civic body comprises 16

wards with a population of over 25,000. Since the ST population is 5 per cent less than the general population, it has been alleged that people of other categories have been ignored in the electioneer-

People from various quarters have demanded to leave the post un-



A delegation of officials from Commission for Railway Safety inspect the ongoing doubling work of Sambalpur-Titlagarh railway track Friday

## Road mishaps in state up 12%

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Jan 28: Although the Supreme Court appointed committee has directed the state government to reduce road mishaps by 50 per cent, the incidents have increased by 12.02 per cent till October 2021, as per a report available with the state Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Crime Branch (CB).

According to the report, the state has earned a bad name for itself by going up from the rank of 16 to 12 in the list of states with road fatalities.

Among the districts, Nuapada tops the chart with 40.74 per cent rise in road fatalities while Gajapati and Rayagada districts have secured the second spot by registering 40 per cent rise in such cases.

The matter came to the fore after Commerce and Transport department principal secretary Bishnupada Sethi directed the district Collectors, SPs, DCPs of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack Commissionerate Police (Traffic), regional transport officers (RTOs) to form joint enforcement squads comprising RTO and police officials and crack down on traffic violators, speed driving and illegal roadside parking.

However, there is some silver lining as Subarnapur district has created a record by reducing road fatality rate to 21 per cent.

Road mishaps have increased

#### FATALITIES RISE

The state has earned a bad name for itself by going up from the rank of 16 to 12 in the list of states with road fatalities

Among the districts, Nuapada tops the chart with 40.74% rise in road fatalities while Gajapati and Rayagada districts have secured the second spot by registering 40% rise in such cases

Road mishaps have increased in mines and industrially rich districts like Jharsuguda, Jajpur, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Angul, Dhenkanal and Keonjhar

in mines and industrially rich districts like Jharsuguda, Jajpur, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Angul, Dhenkanal and Keonjhar. This has sparked a major concern.

The SC had directed to form a road safety committee headed by a retired judge to suggest measures to reduce road accidents. However, there is relentless rise in road accidents as the directions of the committee have been thrown to the winds

According to reports, while

3,931 persons had died in road mishaps in 2014, the number stood at 4,738 in 2019 - an increase of 21 per cent. During January to April 2021, the death toll in road accidents increased by 27.60 per cent as against the corresponding period of 2020

Malkangiri topped the list while Jagatsinghpur came second and

Jajpur third. However, during January-April 2020, the state reported 7,619 acci-

dents, 3,637 deaths and 6,977 in

4,074 deaths and 8,087 injuries. An analysis of the death tolls in these mishaps reveals that

juries in road accidents. In 2021, the

state reported 8,922 road accidents,

death toll have slightly decreased in Puri, Nayagarh, Koraput, Deogarh, Kendrapara and Subarnapur districts.

Similarly, road fatalities in Nuapada, Gajapati, Rayagada and Jagatsinghpur districts have shot up by 33.87 per cent, Boudh 32.08 per cent, Malkangiri 28.89 per cent, Jharsuguda 28.57 per cent, Mayurbhanj 26.60 per cent, Bhadrak 26.58 per cent, Jajpur 25.64 per cent, Kandhamal, 23.08 per cent, Bargarh 21.88 per cent, Cuttack 16.74 per cent, Balasore 5.09 per cent, Khurda 13.61 per cent, Bolangir 11.11 per cent, Sundargarh 9.86 per cent, Dhenkanal 6.56 per cent, Sambalpur 6.29 per cent, Kalahandi 5.98 per cent, Angul 4.86 per cent, Nabarangpur 4.61 per cent, Ganjam 3.38 per cent, Keonjhar 2.59 per cent and Puri 1.02 per cent. However, there is a decline in such fatal mishaps in Nayagarh (1.4 per cent), Koraput (3.13 per cent), Deogarh (4.76 per cent), Kendrapara (6.82 per cent) and Subarnapur (21.43 per cent).

Expressing concern over the rising road fatalities, the state Commerce and Transport department has directed for regular meetings of district road safety committees and necessary measures to

#### Man gets 20-yr jail for rape PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasore, Jan 28: A court in Balasore district Friday sentenced a 63-year-old man to 20 years of imprisonment for raping a differently-abled child in 2018.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court judge Jagadish Prasad Mohanty also imposed a fine of ₹20,000 on Manmath Jena, special public prosecutor Pranab Panda said.

It was May 16, 2018, when Jena had raped the 10-year-old girl at her house in a village of Baliapal block in the district. Her parents had gone out for work when the incident occurred. As the girl screamed, her grandmother rushed to her rescue following which the accused ran away.

The girl had communicated her ordeal to her grandmother through sign language. The judgement was



when Jena had raped the 10-year-old girl at her house in a village of **Baliapal block** 

based on the girl's statement, medical reports, and statements of 10 witnesses, the prosecution added.

## 14 labourers rescued-

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kantabanji/Bolangir, Jan 28: Fourteen tribals including two children were rescued by police officials from Kantabanji railway station in Bolangir district late Thursday night while they were being trafficked to work as bonded labourers. The labourers are from Kantabanji area and were being trafficked to Tripura. According to sources, there were four men, eight

women and two children in the group of bonded labourers. They were about to be taken from the railway station via Link Express train at around 11pm when Kantabanji police, acting on a tip-off, swung into action and rescued them. "As per norms of the Labour department, registration is mandatory for labourers prior to their migration. However, the 14 rescued persons could not produce any valid document," an official said

# IVE ASSESSMENT PLEA Students of Vikram Dev Autonomous College at Jeypore in Koraput stage a protest demanding an alternative way of assessment and cancellation of Plus II

(offline and online) examinations

## Kandhamal ZP polls: BJD eyes clean sweep

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, Jan 28: After the end of the nomination process, candidates for sarpanchs, samiti members and zilla parsihads have started their campaigning in Kandhamal district. The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) has been working on its strategies to improve its tally in zilla parishad elections as compared to 2017 elections.

There are 68 candidates in the fray for 17 ZP zones in the district. BJD, BJP and Congress have fielded 18 candidates each while seven people have thrown their hats into the ring as independents. Aam Aadmi Party has fielded four candidates while Kalinga Sena and Bahujan Mukti Morcha have fielded one each.

In the 2017 elections, the BJD had formed the ZP by registering victories in nine ZP zones. BJP



and Congress had won four zones each. One independent had also won. The independent had supported the BJD in forming the ZP.

This time, Kandhamal MP Achyuta Samant (BJD) and party's district observer and Panchayatiraj Minister Pratap Jena have been looking after the organisational activities in consultation with MLAs and frontline leaders in the district. They are said to be working hard with hopes of making a clean sweep in the ZP elections.

On the other hand, the BJP and Congress are trying their best to gain more ground in the district. It is said that the Congress is ridden with rift in certain zones which may provide ample scope for the BJD and the BJP to improve the tally.

In 1997 and 2002, Congress had formed the ZP while the BJD-BJP had formed ZP in 2007.

#### Kanupur oustees warn poll boycott

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, Jan 28: People identified for displacement by Kanupur major irrigation project have decided to boycott the upcoming panchayat polls as they have been deprived of land pattas at Ingajharan village of Birikala panchayat in Keonjhar district. They have intimated their decision to the Joda block development office (BDO) and the district election officer.

They stated that the government has not included them as oustees (affected by the irrigation project). As a result, they are deprived of compensation and land pattas.

As per the rehabilitation and resettlement rules, project oustees are supposed to get 10 decimal of land.

On the other hand, the administration had served them notices

In protest against the callous attitude of the administration, the villagers have decided not to take part in the panchayat elections.

#### Huge rocks could be game-changer for tourism half-circular and the like," a local **MANY RESIDENTS NATURE'S BOUNTY**

**PIN HOPES THAT** THE COLOSSAL **ROCKS CAN BE UTILISED FOR BEAUTIFICATION OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN** THE DISTRICT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 28: The rich natural resources in Keonjhar district attract a large number of tourists from the state and outside. However, many locals here have suggested that these gigantic rocks have missed the eyes of tourists due to lack of proper planning and publicity.

According to sources, the district is home to scenic natural resources like hills, forests, waterfalls, rivers and creeks that attract the tourists. However, the huge



and artistic rocks are not being

utilised to woo the tourists, the

'Colossal rocks seen in

residents said.

of artistic rocks are usually found in Sitabinj village under Ghatagaon block. There are also large rock floors in the region

Numerous kinds

Some of the colossal rocks located on hills appear like a fort when seen from a distance

These rocks can be better utilised for beautification of tourist destinations in the district

Ghatagaon, Sadar, Patana and Harichandanpur blocks of Keonihar are of different shapes and sizes such as oval, circular and stated. Numerous kinds of artistic rocks are usually found in Sitabinj village under Ghatagaon block. There are also large rock floors in the region. Some of the colossal rocks located on hills appear like a fort when seen from a distance. Some of the rocks are around halfa-km in diameter and a square km in area, which need to be measured, the residents said

A rock at Sitabinj – known as the birthplace of Lord Ram's wife Sita-is a major source of attraction. Another big rock located nearby is regarded as Bhandara Ghara (treasure house) of Dasyu Ratnakar. The huge rock has one more rock placed on it which is called Ravana Chhaya and it has ancient stone carvings on its lower part. One such large rock at Dhanabeni village under Harichandanpur block has a Shiva temple on it. This place of attraction in Keonjhar still awaits the status of a tourist destination.

Similarly, the passersby get mesmerised by seeing one more colossal rock with a 'Sunya Mandira' on it at Belada under Sadar block and beside NH-49. Some of the rocks contain inscriptions and symbols like human footprints as well.

Likewise, there is a gigantic rock at Deobandha village to the right of Keonjhar-Harichandanpur road. The place will certainly attract tourists if its periphery is developed with greenery, said Pradip Kumar Rout, a local columnist and compiler.

"A number of such huge rocks do possess ancient carvings and inscriptions. If Keonjhar administration develops hills with artistic rocks and utilises the same for beautification of tourist destinations, it might contribute to the district's economy by augmenting the revenue," said Bimbadhar Behera, a resident and retired educationist.

It is pertinent to mention here that several artifacts belonging to the days of Buddha and Jain are found in the hills and forests of the district. Some of the hills have many caves which are believed to have had accommodated saints in ancient times.

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE** Notice is hereby given to all

Acharya S/o Bipin Bihari Acharya At-Gandabahal, Po/Ps-Ulunda Dist-Subarnapur has sworn ar Affidavit on dt.13.01.2022 and has reported to IIC, Police Station Ulunda on 24.01.2022 regarding loss of original Regd. Sale Deed No.11661102520/11 dt.10.10.2011 of Registering Officer

Subarnapur.

Prakash Chandra Acharya S/o Bipin Bihari Acharya has applied to the UJJIVAN SMALL FINANCE BANK, Sambalpur to avail loan for construction on the above propert by mortgaging the said property

All concerned therefore, having claim over the property rchased under the said docum egd. Sale Dee No.11661102520/11 dt.10.10.2011
of Registering Officer,
Subarnapur is required to file their
claim with the undersigned within 15(Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice failing which it will be presumed that, the property having link with the said documents/s is/are free fron ncumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applican as a mortgager and the company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15(Fifteen) days of publication of

Aswini Ku. Dabta, Advocate UJJIVAN SMALL FINANCE BANK, ambalpur, At/Po-Modipara, Sambalpur, Odisha, Mobile No. 9437158519 Dt. 23.01.2022



Life is life--whether in a cat. or dog or man. There is no difference there between a cat or a man. The idea of difference is a human conception for man's own advantage.

Orissa Post

SATURDAY | JANUARY 29 | 2022 | BHUBANESWAR





## Babu appointment raises eyebrows

The trend is now too pronounced for the IAS lobby to ignore. In recent years, the government has been empanelling officers from all services and posting them to crucial positions in important ministries, positions that were the once-exclusive preserve of the IAS. So, the recent appointment of B.V. Umadevi, a 1987-batch Chhattisgarh cadre Indian Forest Service (IFoS) officer, as additional secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), is very much in keeping with this trend.

Going by the rulebook, of course, the government is well within its rights to bring in any civil services official to any post, based on the babu's merit and performance. The IAS does not have a first-right on any position, though they can always claim tradition and past precedent to back their claim.

But as similar appointments in the past have shown, the current government is less likely to care for the past and is more about finding the right babu for the position, irrespective of cadre. Just last month, the government promoted

and posted IFoS officer Bharat Lal, of the Gujarat cadre as Secretary to the Lokpal. He had been earlier brought to the Centre as additional secretary to the Ministry of Jal Shakti. Quite likely Umadevi will be given a key charge in MHA.



**BABUDOM BYTES** Dilip Cherian

And interestingly, unlike on previous occasions, her new posting has not overtly triggered the IAS officers to defend their hallowed "turf", so far.

#### Who'll be MP's next DGP?

Though appointed during Kamal Nath's tenure as chief minister, Madhya Pradesh DGP Vivek Johri is finally reaching the end of his long career in March. Due to retire in 2020, he was given an extension of two years in March that year. When the Shivraj Singh Chauhan-led BJP came to power, the new CM surprised some babus by choosing to retain Johri.

Now with the end of his extended term near, babu circles in Bhopal are speculating on the probable senior IPS officers who are eligible to succeed Johri. That the state government is yet to send a panel of names to the UPSC for selection has only heightened the uncertainty, in which rumours are having a free play. But knowledgeable sources have informed DKB that with crucial assembly elections due in the state next year, the Chauhan government is stepping carefully to ensure it chooses the right person for the top post in the state.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com.

Let's multiply the effect

#### WISDOM CORNER

As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so a life well spent brings happy death.

Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.

Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he

#### WORDS**WORTH**

#### ■ Abditory

t's a hiding place, from Latin abditorium, a hiding place, whose source is abdere, to put away or hide. It appears in the story Instead of Evidence, in which explosive devices were found in an abditory in a factory. The Oxford English Dictionary notes its first example from 1658, but it has never been in common use. Oddly, it is now more often employed than at any time in its history, not only because of Rex Stout but also by SF and fantasy authors, who have occasionally found it useful to help build a sense of otherness: That abditory, the one in the buffet at home, contained a set of spare passports and other papers that might be useful under extraordinary circumstances. Other abditories, like the compartment under the front hall stairway, contained survival kits, or weapons, or money, or things as prosaic as the emergency roll of toilet paper.

#### Backronym

Abackronym (sometimes bacronym) is a reverse acronym. To create Aone, you take a word that isn't an acronym and create a fictitious expansion for it. Some backronyms are designed as mnemonics. A classic example is the Apgar score to test the health of newborns. It was named after the American physician Virginia Angar but to help student doctors and nurses remember the system, it has been changed to the acronym "Appearance, Pulse, Grimace, Activity, and Respiration". Similarly, the US Amber Alert programme is said to mean "America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response", though it was actually named after a missing child, Amber Hagerman. Backronyms are frequently humorous - Microsoft's Bing, some quip, is actually an acronym for "Because It's Not Google"; world-weary sailors say navy really means "Never Again Volunteer Yourself", some car owners hold that Ford stands for "Fix Or Repair Daily". Many of this type are actually reinterpreted acronyms, included by courtesy in the backronym collection because nobody has yet come up with a different -nym for them. For example, the name of the one-time Belgian national airline Sabena (which derives from "Société Anonyme Belge d'Exploitation de la Navigation Aérienne", bless the guy who shortened it) was said to be an acronym for "Such A Bad Experience, Never Again" Meredith Williams, in an entry to a competition in The Washington Post on 8 November 1983, seems to have coined bacronym, as a portmanteau of back and acronym. Previously, according to lexicographer Ben Zimmer, the form was called, somewhat cumbersomely, a prefabricated acronym as well as a reverse acronym. The word was popularised in July 1994 by another contest, in New Scientist, though it was then said to be a reinterpreted acronym, neither the original nor the current principal sense.

#### What causes arthritis?

man who smelled like a distillery Aflopped on a subway seat next to a priest. The man's tie was stained, his face was plastered with red lipstick, and a half empty bottle of gin was sticking out of his torn coat pocket. He opened his newspaper and began reading. After a few minutes, the disheveled guy turned to the priest and asked, "Say, father, what

causes arthritis?" "Mister, it's caused by loose living,



alcohol and a contempt for your fellow man." "Well I'll be." the drunk muttered, returning to his paper. The priest, thinking about what he had said, nudged the man and apologised. "I'm very sorry. I didn't mean to come on so strong. How long did you have arthritis?' "I don't have it father. I was just

reading here that the Pope does."

#### FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

## **RUSSIA'S ANTI-NATO GAMBIT**



Hilary Appel and Jennifer Taw

**RUSSIA'S** 

**AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE SINCE 2014 HAS SUCCEEDED ONLY IN MAKING NATO MEMBERSHIP MORE** APPEALING IN **UKRAINE AND GEORGIA** 

ecent talks in Geneva between Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken regarding the crisis over Ukraine achieved little. Russia asked for a written response to its demands, which include a halt to NATO enlargement. For now, Russian President Vladimir Putin might be as relieved at the current standstill as the United States and its NATO al-

That is because Putin is playing a dangerous game of brinkmanship vis-à-vis Ukraine. True, he has succeeded in calling into question the strength of NATO's commitment to the country, highlighted its internal divisions, and forced the world to pay greater attention to Russian

power. And he may yet manage to wring concessions from the US and NATO. But Putin also risks putting himself in the position of having to launch a materially and politically costly invasion of Ukraine.

Stopping NATO expansion has been one of the Kremlin's main forbut Putin's approach has yielded few results. Russia's aggression against Ukraine since 2014 has succeeded only in making NATO membership more appealing in

and Georgia. Moreover, Russia's actions failed to prevent smaller candidate countries from acceding to the Alliance, with Montenegro and North Macedonia joining in 2017 and 2020, respectively.

Worse yet, Putin's bellicose foreign policy led to NATO membership being seriously considered by mainstream politicians in neutral countries like Sweden and Finland.

The escalation of tensions over Ukraine also carries enormous domestic risks for Putin. The Kremlin's 2014 annexation of Crimea and intervention in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region required little sacrifice and massively increased Putin's political support at home. Invading eastern Ukraine now is unlikely to yield a similar political dividend,



Despite his repeated claims that NATO poses a threat to Russia, Putin may regard the current standoff as a way to demonstrate to Ukraine and other Eastern European states that the NATO and US commitments to them are actually quite weak

as opinion polls in Russia have long shown low public support for such a move: just a quarter of Russians currently support the incorporation of Donbas into

Moreover, the likely costs to Russia of such an invasion today are greater than they were in 2014 Significant troop losses would turn public opinion against Putin's actions in Ukraine, while severe Western sanctions would further damage the Russian economy.

Given these political and economic risks, what could Putin hope to gain by seemingly backing himself into a corner?

Despite his repeated claims that NATO poses a threat to Russia, Putin may regard the current standoff as a way to demonstrate to Ukraine and other Eastern European states that the NATO and US commitments to them are actually quite weak, US President Joe Biden arguably reinforced this impression at his January 19 press conference, when he appeared to suggest that a "minor incursion" by Russia into Ukraine would elicit a milder Western response than a full-scale invasion of the country. (Biden and other administration officials subsequently

scrambled to walk back 13 the comment)

Russia benefits from such gaffes. because the Kremlin obviously wants to sow discord and highlight fissures among NATO members. While the US and several Eastern European countries have supported Ukraine's accession, the Alliance has long been divided over the issue, owing to its members' differing economic, security, and energy relations with Russia.

In the days leading up to the

2008 NATO summit in Bucharest, Ukraine presented Germany and France with a letter requesting the two countries' support for its entry into NATO. But France's then-prime minister, François Fillon, emphasized his country's opposition to Ukraine (and Georgia) joining the alliance. "We think it is not the right response to the balance of power in Europe and between Europe and Russia, and we want to have a dialogue on this subject with Russia," Fillon said. Then-German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier expressed a similar view.

But publicly, at least, US and NATO officials have reaffirmed the Alliance's continuing unity. While Biden suggested at his news

conference that America's European allies were not united on how to respond to a small Russian incursion into Ukraine, there have been no bilateral negotiations between other Western powers and Russia regarding Ukraine.

Perhaps most importantly from Putin's perspective, at a time when US and European leaders would rather be dealing with the rise of China and the COVID-19 pandemic. and promoting economic recovery, the current crisis is forcing them to pay more attention to Russia's interests.

On the surface, Putin seems to have unnecessarily boxed himself in by making unacceptable demands on an issue - Ukraine's NATO accession – that was unlikely to materialize anyway. But Putin has in fact made real gains by exposing the West's disarray and the weakness of its

commitment to Ukraine.

If US and European negotiators make even symbolic concessions. Putin can use them to burnish his image. Even if he de-escalates tensions without the written guarantees he wanted the stationing of Russian troops in Belarus, and the recent deployment of a Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization "peacekeeping" mission in Kazakhstan, demonstrate Russia's continued leadership role among former Soviet states.

But Putin's brinkmanship over Ukraine remains dangerous. One can only hope that when US and Russian officials return to the negotiating table, they will find a way to prevent a manufactured crisis from turning into a hot war.

Hilary Appel is Professor of Government and Director of the Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies at Claremont McKenna College. Jennifer Taw, a former policy analyst at the RAND Corporation, is Associate Professor of Government at Claremont McKenna College.

@ PROJECT SYNDICATE, 2022.

#### SPECTRUM ECONOMY

## Why not promise direct cash transfer?



Bharat Jhunjhunwala

**WE SHOULD ABANDON THIS WHOLE IDEA OF DISTRIBUTION IN** KIND AND MOVE **TOWARDS DISTRIBUTION IN CASH SO THAT PEOPLE CAN GET ENOUGH INCOME** TO KEEP THEIR **BODY AND SOULS TOGETHER** 

freebies to the people. The people were already getting free education, farmers were getting free electricity and the government had already implemented programs like distribution of free gas cylinders under Ujjwala scheme. Now political parties are promising laptops, bicycles and even in one case reportedly free distribution of liquor in addition to the freebies already being given. Whether these distributions will get votes or not is something that and we may not know; but it is clear that such distribution does not help people in earning stable and long term incomes. The first objection to such free

distribution is that this is not financially sustainable. The Government does not have enough revenue to provide free cash distribution in a substantial manner. The issue here is slightly different. The Government expenditures take place in three ways: One, free distribution of cash or kind; Two, government consumption; and Three, government investment. If we have to increase the expenditures on free distribution, then we have to reduce either government consumption or government investment. If the reduction is made in

free distribution becomes sustainable. On the other hand if the reduction is made in government investment, then indeed free distribution becomes unviable.

The second objection is that free distribution is misuse of tax money. Indeed, the taxes are paid mostly by the upper classes. The use of the tax revenue for providing free distribution to the people involves transfer from the rich to the common man. Now, this is part of the welfare state. The Government has provided that corporations will have to spend part of their profits in "Corporate Social Responsibility" programs. Similarly, if the government uses the tax revenue for providing free distribution to the people, then it also is like the Corporate Social Responsibility.

The real issue in free distribution is whether we distribute in terms of cash or in kind? The distribution in kind is the same as providing subsidies on fertilizers and food grains. The idea is that by providing subsidies on specific goods we encourage the people to increase the use of those particular goods. For example, in 1960s when the country was facing food shortage because of drought, the provision of subsidies on fertilizer was made so

crease production. But this was an emergency situation. Similarly when the government provides free education, the underlying idea is that people would be encouraged to send their children to the schools. The presumption in both these cases is that the people are themselves fools and they do not understand that necessity of either using fertilizers or of sending their children to school. This idea does not seem to be correct. The fundamental basis of democracy is that people are wise enough to be able to choose the Prime Minister of the country. If they are competent to choose the Prime Minister, how can they not be competent to decide to use chemical fertilizers and provide education to their children?

My sense is that the farmers would have used fertilizers even if the Government not provided subsidies on fertilizers in the 1960s because it would have been profitable for them to increase production of food grains. The real reason therefore, for distribution in kind is not that the people need to be goaded in a particular direction. The real reason is that the bureaucracy gets huge benefits when distribution in kind takes place. For example, the

olitical parties are competing government consumption, then that the farmers would be encour- bureaucrats get opportunities in grains and in making of ration cards in the public distribution system. So, the distribution in kind is actually a smokescreen to protect the interests of the bureaucracy. We should therefore, abandon this whole idea of distribution in kind and move towards distribution in cash so that people can get enough income to keep their body and souls together and they can then use their income wisely as per their own wisdom to obtain education, fertilizers and whatever may be their need.

> In conclusion, the ideal approach is to change the economic model and move it towards creation of jobs. If that is not possible, then the second level solution is to go for cash distribution and empower the people to use the money as per their own requirements. The third level solution is to go for distribution in kind, which provides more benefits to the bureaucracy and less to the people. In this election time it is imperative that the parties move from promising free distribution of laptops and bicycles to free distribution of cash.

The author is formerly a **Professor of Economics** at IIM Bangalore

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

#### rissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

#### **Needless Controversy**

Sir, The staff of the Reserve Bank of India at Chennai needlessly stoked a controversy by not standing up when the State anthem Tamil Thai Vazhthu (TTV) was played during the Republic Day celebrations. Even though the Madras High Court observed that TTV is only a 'prayer' and not an 'anthem', an order later from the TN State government clearly indicated that TTV should be sung before the start of any state-level function. And the officials of the country's central bank naturally cannot be ignorant and disrespectful to this directive from the State government. Strong passion towards a national or a state anthem like the Tamil Thai Vazhthu will be something congenital and will self-propel one to stand up and pay respect when aired.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

#### **Laudable Effort**

Sir, We must laud the Indian Army for sparing no effort in securing the safe return of an Arunachal teen who went missing from the fuzzy India-China border. Miram and his friend Johnny Yaving had ventured into a forest near the LAC to hunt wild animals and collect medicinal herbs. While Jhonny fled to safety, Miram landed in the Chinese soldiers net and was taken into custody. The PLA handed over the young boy Shri Miram Taron to the Indian Army at Wacha-Damai in Kibithu of Arunachal's Anjaw district. The authorities would reunite Miram with his family after serving the quarantine period.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

#### **Poor Decision**

Sir, It is a pity that Indian Ranji Trophy competition is likely to be hit due to the ongoing COVID third wave. What is more ironic is that BCCI, one of the cash rich cricket boards, is planning to organise IPL and other international matches but they can't organise Ranji Matches citing COVID reasons. If India wants to develop a formidable Test team in all conditions for a considerable period of time, Ranji is the only source from which we can generate qualitative Test players. The likes of Rahanes, Pujaras should go back to Ranji trophy format, score tons of runs and return to Test cricket. The present day cricketers are losing patience in staying at the wickets for longer durations by curbing their tendency to play strokes, especially in adverse batting conditions. Cancellation of Ranji ties, year after year, throws water on the aspirations of budding cricketers which can harm their future and Indian cricket as well.

*V Nagendra Kumar*, HYDERABAD

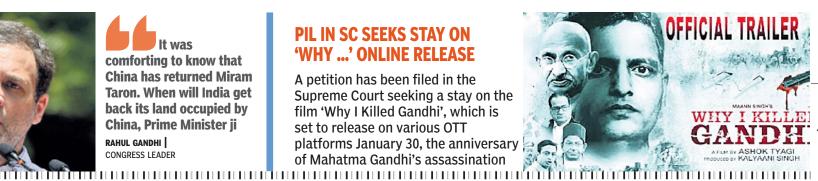
# national



comforting to know that **China has returned Miram** Taron. When will India get back its land occupied by China, Prime Minister ji RAHUL GANDHI

#### PIL IN SC SEEKS STAY ON **'WHY ...' ONLINE RELEASE**

A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking a stay on the film 'Why I Killed Gandhi', which is set to release on various OTT platforms January 30, the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination





country. Situation is becoming dire. Looking away from it

Earlier, the

is like covering fire with cotton VARUN GANDHI | BJP MP

Congress used to loot Puniab for five years and angry voters then chose the Akalis, who also looted the state for another five years and angry voters again chose the Congress

ARVIND KEJRIWAL AAP NATIONAL CONVENER

We will again form the government in

Punjab with an overwhelming majority





#### ■ WB post-poll violence: 7 held

Kolkata: The CBI, which is probing cases of political violence in the aftermath of assembly elections in Bengal, has arrested seven persons in connection with the death of BJP worker Manik Moitra in Sitalkuchi area of Cooch Behar district, agency sources said Friday. The accused are residents of a village in Cooch Behar, the sources said. They were produced before a district court, which sent them to judicial custody till February 11, according to the sources.

#### Two minors brutally killed

Pakur (Jharkhand): In a horrific incident two minors were brutally killed and their eyes gouged out allegedly by their uncle following personal enmity and land dispute in Jharkhand's Pakur district, a senior police official said Friday. The incident occurred at Manjhi Tola of Ambadih village under Amrapara police station area in the district

#### **Senior journalist E Somanath dead**

Thiruvananthapuram: Veteran journalist E Somanath passed away Friday at a private hospital here, family sources said. He was 58, Somanath, a well-known political and environmental reporter, was undergoing treatment for brain hemorrhage at a private hospital here. A veteran in political and Assembly reporting. Somanath retired from Malavalam daily, Malavala Manorama, last year.

#### Over 100 migratory birds found dead

Agartala: More than 100 migratory birds from California in the United States have been found dead in Sukhsagar, a sprawling lake in Tripura's Gomati district, forest officers said Friday. The carcasses were found floating on the lake, they said. Gomati Divisional Forest Officer Mahendra Singh and Udaipur Sub-divisional Forest Officer Kamal Bhowmik visited the site Thursday and collected one carcass for post-mortem examination.

#### **Drugs found along Indo-Pak border**

Chandigarh: A BSF jawan was injured in an exchange of fire with Pakistani smugglers along the Indo-Pak border in Punjab's Gurdaspur district Friday, and the force recovered 47 kg heroin, two pistols and some ammunition. police said. The incident took place at 5:15 am in an area falling under border outpost Chandu Wadala.



## **India probes illegal immigration**

CANADA IS A SOUGHT-AFTER DESTINATION BY INDIANS FACING MASSIVE UNEMPLOYMENT

Mumbai/Toronto, Jan 28: Indian police have detained six people in a crackdown on illegal immigration after four Indians were found frozen to death near the border between the United States and Canada last week, officials said.

On the same day, India's High Commission in the Canadian capital of Ottawa confirmed the identities of the deceased as 39-year-old Jagdish Baldevbhai Patel, 37-yearold Vaishaliben Jagdishkumar Patel, 11-year-old Vihangi Jagdishkumar Patel and 3-yearold Dharmik Jagdishkumar Patel. The Ministry of External Affairs Friday said Canadian authorities have informed that based on the circumstances, their death has been determined to be consistent with exposure to outdoor elements.

Their family has been informed, the High Commission said in a statement, highlighting the need "to ensure that migration and mobility are made safe and legal and that such tragedies do not recur."

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) said they believe the family came to Canada January 12, arriving in Toronto, and traveled to Emerson, Manitoba, around January 18. No vehicle was abandoned near the border, suggesting someone dropped them off and left, said Criminal Operations Officer Rob Hill. The six people detained by Indian

tourism company in the western state of Gujarat, said police official AK Jhala in the state capital of Gandhinagar. We are now trying to nab the

police were running a travel and

human traffickers who managed to send this family and others abroad via illegal channels," he

added. US authorities have charged a Florida man, Steve Shand, with human trafficking after the four were found dead in Manitoba, a few vards north of the frontier with Minnesota. A US court granted Shand conditional release Monday.

The four were among four families from the same village who had traveled to the border this month.

Officials said they got separated from the group of 18 people and were probably caught in a blizzard, resulting in a tragedy

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau described as "mind-blow-

ing."
The situation came to light only when US authorities intercepted the group and found one of them carrying a backpack with baby supplies, although there was no infant among them.

'The nexus of human trafficking runs deep, often involving local politicians too," said police official Jhala, adding that people even sell their land and homes to fund efforts to get to the United States or Canada.

A foreign ministry official in the India's capital New Delhi said authorities were coordinating with US and Canadian border officials to investigate the illegal immi-

Crossings like this, into the United States from Canada, are relatively rare: US Customs and Border Patrol apprehensions of migrants trying to cross between ports of entry along the US-Canada border dropped from 6,806 in 2009 to 916 in 2021.

US Customs and Border Patrol apprehended 339 Indians trying to cross into the United States at the northern border in 2019, 129 in



During the Monsoon Session July 5, 2021, 12 BJP MLAs were suspended for "misbehaving" and using "abusive language" vis-a-vis the then Presiding Officer Bhaskar Jadhav, during a discussion on OBC quotas in the House



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: Soon after the Supreme Court quashed the suspension of 12 Opposition legislators from the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly for one year, the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) reacted cautiously while the Bharatiya Janata Party was euphoric, here on Friday.

The Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress leaders termed the suspension as a decision of the legislature which had the power to take the action though the BJP said the apex court verdict was a 'tight slap' on the MVA government. "The Maharashtra Legislature

has the power to suspend MLAs or, for that matter the Lok Sabha and Raiva Sabha can suspend MPs, it is well within their powers," said Sena MP and Chief Spokesperson Sanjay Raut. The NCP's senior ministers -- State Party President Jayant Patil and National Spokesperson Nawab Malik -- said now it is an issue of the "jurisdictions of the court and the legislative bodies, concerning legislatures across the country and the Parliament". "The decision to suspend the legislators was of the Speaker and not the (MVA) government. The State Legislature Secretariat will study the order after which the Speaker would take a call in the matter," Malik added.

Congress State President Nana Patole - himself an ex-Speaker -

said that the Legislature Secretariat will first study the SC order and the powers of the legislature before proceeding further.

Terming it as a "tight slap" on the MVA government, Leader of Opposition (Assembly) Devendra Fadnavis said it wasn't only a question of 12 legislators but of more than five million citizens in those 12 constituencies, "Right from the start, we have been saying that the suspensions were unconstitutional, unethical, unfair, undemocratic, illegal and gross misuse of the power to suspend our MLAs for such a long period (one year), without a valid reason, and to create an artificial majority. The SC has upheld our stance," Fadnavis said.

Hitting back, Congress State Spokesperson Atul Londhe said the SC verdict was not a 'clean chit' and there was nothing for the BJP to indulge in celebrations like this.

'They should read Pt. No. 74 in which the SC has raised concerns about the rough behaviour of MLAs, cautioned how the masses are watching everything, their actions in the House and raising commoners' issues. I don't understand why the BJP is thinking that they are exonerated from such behaviour, abusing the Chair, the public expectations and the Assembly. Londhe said in a sharp statement.

the matter will be taken by the Assembly Speaker, who had given his ruling on the suspensions at that time after a scuffle in his chamber.

Raut added that any decision in

#### 1K drones to form part of Beating **Retreat ceremony** INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE New Delhi, Jan 28: Around 1,000

indigenously built drones will form a part of the light show at the Beating Retreat ceremony here Saturday evening.

This will make India the fourth country, after China, Russia and UK, to carry out such a large-scale show with these unmanned aerial vehicles, Union Minister of State Science and Technology Jitendra Singh said on Friday.

"Indian StartUp "Botlab", funded by Technology Development Board (TDB) under Union Ministry of Science & Technology and led by IIT Delhi alumni, will fly 1,000 Drones in "Beating Retreat" ceremony tomorrow evening, as a part of the Light Show marking the conclusion of nearly week long programmes related to Republic Day," Jitendra Singh said, adding that this will make India the fourth country, after China, Russia and UK, to carry out such a large-scale show with 1,000 drones.



At a demonstration of the Drone presentation today, the Minister interacted with the "Botlab" StartUp team members at his residence including Tanmay Bunkar, Sarita Ahlawat, Sujit Rana, Mohit Sharma, Harshit Batra, Kunal Meena and

Singh said that the Start-Up, Boatlab Dynamics was given an initial seed fund of Rs One crore rupees for R&D by Department of Science & Technology (DST) and subsequently Rs Rs 2.5 crore for scale up and commercialisation by Technology Development Board to develop first of its kind technological project in India.



**BIHAR RAIL EXAM AGITATION** 

Bandh hits normal life

Jan Adhikar Party activists burn tyres to block a road during the Bihar bandh

rail traffic, which had been hit during recent stirs, was spared on the day. Road traffic was, however, affected as bandh supporters placed burning tyres at crossroads in cities and on the highways, resulting in long queues of stranded

Police said some bandh supporters were apprehended at places where they caused much trouble and tried to intimidate shopkeepers to down their shutters, though details were not available. The men in uniform have been drawing flak from political parties, including Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U), for lodging cases against agitators which has given rise to a volatile situation.

The students have been hitting the streets ever since results of entrance tests for the Non Technical Popular Category were declared by the Railway Recruitment Board.

They have been livid that the RRB was far from completing selection process for 30,000 vacancies nearly three years after advertising the posts. Moreover, there have been goof ups like candidates

"with more than one roll number". Introducing an extra screening test for Group D has also been resented by the candidates who say the jobs are not of a highly skilled nature and hence a complex selection process was unnecessary.

#### Indian Navy, IIFL Home Finance Ltd ink MoU for jobs to veterans

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: Indian Naval Placement Agency (INPA) and IIFL Home Finance Ltd (IIFL HFL) have signed a memorandum of understanding to provide an opportunity for ex-servicemen competent for various roles in their organisation.

"Both entities will explore opportunities for the recruitment of naval veterans within IIFL HFL who would endeavour to provide an opportunity for veterans/ex-servicemen/dependents competent for various roles in their organisation," Indian navy stated.

Vice Admiral Suraj Berry, Controller of Personnel Services, Indian Navy and Monu Ratra, CEO, IIFL HFL signed the MoU. Vice Admiral Suraj Berry said: "The INPA is committed to facilitating Ex-Servicemen, our veterans, find employment opportunities after their service to our Nation and it is our endeavour to work with the corporate sector to identify and



develop programmes that enables this cause. We look forward to working with IIFL HFL on this initiative".

Through the MoU, INPA will identify a pool of ex-servicemen and dependents candidates for relevant roles as per standards of IIFL HFL. The company will, in turn, enable these individuals' transition to the corporate sector through inhouse assimilation and training programmes

IIFL HFL, under the aegis of its Diversity inclusion initiative, aims to offer Ex-Servicemen opportunities in line with their qualifications, experience, and attributes acquired during their service period.

## Girl is not property that can be donated: Bombay HC

A single bench of Justice Vibha Kankanwadi made the observation while hearing a bail application filed by self-styled godman Shankeshwar Dhakne

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 28: A girl is not a property that can be given in donation, the Aurangabad bench of the Bombay High Court observed, while taking strong objection to a case wherein a man had given his 17-year-old daughter in "daan" to a

self-styled godman. A single bench of Justice Vibha Kankanwadi made the observation earlier this month while hearing a bail application filed by the godman Shankeshwar Dhakne and

his disciple Sopan Dhanke, arrested for allegedly raping the minor girl.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

handedness against protesting

Opposition parties like the RJD.

the Left and the Congress extended

their support to the bandh, took ac-

tive part in many places and ex-

pressed satisfaction over its

"success". The BJP, which is in the

focus of the agitation as it rules at

the Centre besides shares power in

the state, urged the student com-

munity to have faith in the

Narendra Modi government and be

wary of playing into the hands of

RJD-led opposition. There was no

incident of full blown violence and

The two accused lived in a temple at Badnapur in Jalna district along with the girl and her father. The girl on August 2021 filed FIR against the duo for allegedly raping her, following which they were

Justice Kankanwadi in her order took note of the prosecution's case that in 2018, a document styled as "danpatra" on a stamp paper of Rs 100 was executed between the girl's



father and the Dhakne. "It is stated that the father of the girl has given his daughter on donation (daan) to

said 'kanyadan' has been made in the presence of god. When the girl as per her own statement is minor, then why the father, who is in all respect guardian, to the girl, give the girl as Daan?" the court said in its order.

"A girl is not a property, which can be given in donation," Justice Kankanwadi said, adding that this was a disturbing fact. The court noted that it was concerned about the future of the minor girl and "cannot shut its eves"

This was a fit case where directions needed to be given to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) of Jalna district to hold inquiry on an expeditious basis and find out if the girl was fit to be declared as a child in need of care and protection.

This is in view of the future of the girl and she should not be driven to do any illegal activities,' the court said, directing the CWC to hold its inquiry and submit its report to the court.

The court granted bail to the duo on a bond of Rs 25,000 each andposted the matter for further hearing February 4.

#### **BATTLE FOR UTTAR PRADESH**

## Lakhimpur, Pilibhit trouble spots for BJP

THE BJP IN UTTAR PRADESH FACES ITS BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN TERAI REGION IN THE ENSUING ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS DUE TO A COMBINATION OF FACTORS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Jan 28: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Uttar Pradesh faces its biggest challenge in the Terai region in the Assembly elections, due to a combination of

The biggest troubled spot in this region is Lakhimpur Kheri which goes to polls in the fourth phase February 23.

Lakhimpur Kheri is now best known for the October 3 incident in which four farmers and a journalist were moved down by an SUV, allegedly owned by Union Minister Ajay Misra Teni's son, Ashish Misra, following a farmers

Three BJP workers were killed in retaliatory violence.

Ashish Misra is in jail and Ajay Misra Teni remains comfortable in his ministerial position though he has been asked to remain away from the public eye. The SIT that probed the incident has said that it was 'pre-planned'.

A strong sense of unease is palpable among the voters and local



THE BIGGEST TROUBLED SPOT

IN THIS REGION IS LAKHIMPUR

KHERI WHICH GOES TO POLLS

IN THE FOURTH PHASE FEB 23

BJP leaders are acutely aware of the ground situation.

Surject Singh, a young farmer from Palia, says, "The wounds are still raw and the ruling party has not fulfilled its promises that included dismissal of Ajay Misra Teni. Farmers are not being aggressive, but there is a strong wave

of resentment among them. The party suffered another jolt

JOINED THE SAMAJWADI PARTY when its sitting MLA from Dhaurhara, Bala Prasad Awasthi,

THE PARTY SUFFERED ANOTHER JOLT

DHAURHARA, BALA PRASAD AWASTHI,

WHEN ITS SITTING MLA FROM

joined the Samajwadi Party. In Nighasan, where the October 3 incident took place, the BJP has replaced sitting MLA Ram Kumar

Patel with Shashank Verma. In the neighbouring Pilibhit, the situation is no better. Local BJP MP Varun Gandhi has been rather vocal in criticising his own

party over the farmers' issues.

Varun enjoys considerable support from the Sikh community his mother Maneka Gandhi is a Sikh – and his posture during the farmers' agitation as well as the Lakhimpur Kheri incident in which he demanded the minister's arrest, has added to the BJP's troubles here.

The saffron party has retaliated by dropping Varun Gandhi and Maneka Gandhi from the national executive and now the list of star campaigners.

Sensing trouble, the BJP has also changed two of its four candidates

Kishan Rajput has been replaced by Swami Pravaktanand in Barkheda while in Bisalpur, Vivek Verma has replaced Agyash

The party has, however, retained Sanjay Gangwar from Pilibhit Sadar and Baburam Paswan from Puranpur Assembly seats.

Top BJP leaders have not yet started campaigning in the region and party sources were evasive about their programme.

## Akhilesh supporter of Pak: Yogi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Jan 28: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Friday hit out at Samajwadi Party and its president Akhilesh Yaday, calling them supporters of Pakistan and "worshippers of Jinnah".

Adityanath's remark ostensibly refers to the SP president's recent statements on Pakistan and its founder Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

"They are worshippers of Jinnah, we are worshippers of Sardar Patel. Pakistan is dear to them, we will sacrifice our life for Maa Bharati (Mother India),'

of Jinnah. of Sardar Patel. Pakistan is dear to them, we will sacrifice our life for **Maa Bharati** (Mother India)

UP CHIEF MINISTER

Adityanath said in the Hindi tweet without taking any name.

they were (in power), Ram devotees

YOGI ADITYANATH In another tweet, he said, "When

were fired upon. Kanwar Yatras were cancelled. Exploits (karnamey) like Safai Mahotsav took place. When we are (in power)...dream of Sri Ramlala . Virajman came true, flowers were showered from helicopter on 'kanwariyas'. Deepotsav and Rangotsav become the identity of Uttar Pradesh."

Adityanath was referring to firing on "kar sevaks" in Ayodhya when SP patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav was the chief minister of

Earlier this month, Adityanath had made the 80 versus 20 comment, subtly referring to the religious composition of Uttar Pradesh.

He said the election is of the 80 vs 20 and that 80 per cent of the voters are with the BJP. Before that Adityanath referred to Akhilesh Yadav's father Mulayam Singh Yadav as "abbajaan".

## Delhi lifts weekend curfew, reopens restaurants & bars

New Delhi, Jan 28: The national capital lifted a weekend curfew and allowed restaurants and marketplaces to reopen Friday, following a sharp drop in new infections of Covid-19.

Under new orders, however, the city will remain under night time curfew, and schools will be closed, Delhi's lieutenant governor said Restaurants, bars and cinemas will be allowed to operate with up to 50 per cent capacity and the number of people at weddings will be restricted to 200. "In view of the decline in posi-

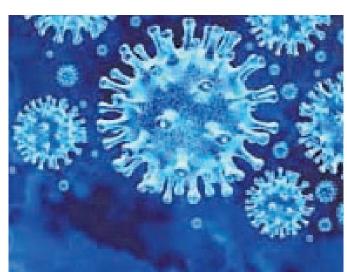
tive cases, it was decided to gradually ease restrictions while enadherence Covid-appropriate behaviour,' Delhi lieutenant governor Anil

Baijal, who represents the federal government, said. The number of new cases in Delhi fell to 4,291 January 27 from a peak of 28.867 January 13. More than 85 per cent of Covid beds

across the city's hospitals were un-

occupied, government data showed. "The hospitalisation is far, far lower compared to what we saw in the previous wave," said Desh Deepak, a senior physician with state-run Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital in Delhi.

"Most patients who have died had underlying conditions such



UNDER NEW ORDERS, HOWEVER, THE CITY WILL REMAIN UNDER NIGHT TIME CURFEW, AND SCHOOLS WILL

RESTAURANTS, BARS AND CINEMAS WILL BE ALLOWED TO OPERATE WITH UP TO 50 PER CENT CAPACITY AND THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AT WEDDINGS WILL BE RESTRICTED TO 200

INDIA REPORTED 251,209 NEW COVID-19 INFECTIONS OVER THE LAST 24 HOURS, TAKING THE OVERALL TALLY TO 40.62 MILLION THE HEALTH MINISTRY SAID. DEATHS INCREASED BY 627 AND TOTAL **FATALITIES WERE 492,327** 

as cancer or kidney disease and most were not fully vaccinated." Last week, authorities eased

some curbs, allowing private offices to be partially staffed but advised people to work from home as much as possible.

The capital has been one of the

worst hit in the ongoing third wave led by the highly infectious Omicron variant of the coronavirus and the city government had imposed the curfew January 4 and ordered schools and restaurants to close.

Late Thursday, the federal home ministry urged states to remain vigilant and said it was a concern that 407 districts across 34 states and Union Territories were reporting an infective rate of more than 10 per cent, Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla told them in a letter.

India reported 251,209 new Covid-19 infections over the last 24 hours, taking the overall tally to 40.62 million, the health ministry said. Deaths increased by 627 and total fatalities were 492,327.

## Clamour for reopening of gyms in Delhi

Lucknow: The BJP Friday released a list of 91 candidates for the Uttar

Mukut Bihari Verma, whose son Gaurav will be contesting from his

Deoria. The BJP repeated its sitting MLA from Ayodhya, Ved Prakash

Kaiserganj seat in Bahraich. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi

contesting from Ayodhya but the BJP decided to field him from

Gorakhpur Urban Assembly constituency. Gupta will again face

found a place in the list and he will contest from Pathardeva.

Samajwadi Party's Tej Narayan, alias Pawan Pandey, whom he had

Pradesh Assembly polls, giving tickets to 13 ministers and repeating its

sitting MLA in Ayodhya. The party dropped Co-Operative Affairs Minister

Adityanath's media adviser Shalabh Mani Tripathi has been fielded from

Gupta. Earlier, speculations were doing rounds that Adityanath may be

defeated in the 2017 Assembly elections. Ayodhya will go to the polls in

the fifth phase of the elections February 27. The list cleared by the BJP's

have been fielded include Siddharth Nath Singh, who will contest from

Allahabad West, and Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi', who will be in the fray

from Allahabad South. Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi has also

central election committee has names of 13 ministers. The ministers who

The gym fraternity criticised the DDMA's decision to keep fitness centres shut, which is affecting the livelihood of over 1 lakh people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: Owners of gyms and an association representing them will stage a protest near the Delhi lieutenant governor's office Saturday to demand reopening of their establishments. which have been shut for a month under Covid restrictions.

Though the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Thursday lifted the weekend curfew and allowed restaurants, bars and cinema halls to operate with 50 per cent capacity, gyms and

schools in the city are still shut. Restrictions had come into force

under a 'yellow alert' issued by the authority in December last year when the Covid positivity rate had crossed 0.5 per cent in the national capital.

Delhi Gym Association vice president Chirag Sethi said gym owners have suffered the most due to the Covid pandemic and they should be allowed to reopen their establishments. Gyms are always the first to be shut and the last to be

opened, he claimed.

"Cinema halls, multiplexes and banquet halls were shut along with gyms as a first step to curb the virus' spread in December. But vesterday, everything was opened except for gyms and spas, Sethi told PTI. "To oppose this biased decision, we will stage a massive protest outside the L-G's (lieutenant governor) office. We want authorities to allow us to function and permit us to open our establishments in the next DDMA meet-

Sethi said the gym fraternity criticises the DDMA's decision to keep fitness centres shut, which is affecting the livelihood of over 1 lakh people.

Even liquor shops and weekly markets in the city are open, but gyms have been asked to be closed, he said. "This decision by the government shows that health is never the priority. If the DDMA doesn't want people to be healthy, please let us know and we will also open liquor shops. This is really unfair to the fitness industry of Delhi," Sethi rued. He said that gvm owners have no option left but to take to the streets and protest to make their voice heard. In Delhi, there are about 5,500 gyms and over 1 lakh people are dependent on this industry.

Gym and spa owner Pradeep Tyagi said that fitness centres follow all Covid norms, but still they



Railway exam imbroglio: Members of Indian Youth Congress stage a protest near Rail Bhavan in New Delhi, Friday, against the alleged repressive action by the administration on youth associated with Railways and Group D examination

## Azam Khan's son, wife file papers from same seat

New Delhi: The total number of calls received on Covid helpline, en-

quiring about availability of beds, vaccination programme, e-passes

and other details, fell from 2,041 January 12 to 983 January 25, ac-

cording to official data. These figures were shared during the meet-

ing of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on con-

tainment of Covid-19, held Thursday. According to data about the

'1031' Covid helpline run by the Delhi government, 180 channels are

active which is sufficient to handle 8,000 to 10,000 calls a day.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noida, Jan 28: Jailed Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan's son and wife have filed their nominations from the same assembly constituency as the party's candidates for the Uttar Pradesh polls. Both Mohammad Abdullah

Azam Khan, who was released from jail recently, and his mother Tazeen Fatma have filed their affidavits from the Suar assembly seat in Rampur district, accord ing to the Election Commission (EC) website.

Azam Khan, who was a cabinet minister in the previous Akhilesh Yadav-led government, had on Thursday filed his nomination papers, while being in jail, for the assembly polls from the Rampur

Suar goes to polls February 14 during the second of the sevenphase Uttar Pradesh elections. While Saturday is the date for

#### Akhilesh 'stranded'

Akhilesh Yadav Friday alleged that he got stranded in Delhi as his helicopter was not being allowed to take off for UP's Muzaffarnagar. In a tweet in Hindi, the SP president posted a picture with the helicopter in the background and said no reason was giver for it. "My helicopter is still detained in Delhi without assigning any reason and not being allowed to go to Muzaffarnagar, whereas a top BJP leader has just flown from here. This is a desperate conspiracy of the losing BJP," he said.

seat, candidates can withdraw their nomination till January 31, ac-

cording to the official schedule. Azam Khan, his son and his wife had surrendered in a Rampur court in 2020 after they were booked under multiple charges, including

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party president

scrutiny of nominations for the

cases of forgery and land grab.

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA said.

New Delhi, Jan 28: The South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) in its standing committee meeting Friday approved the creation of a 'Bollywood Park' in Jangpura and also the development of Phase-2 of 'Waste to Wonder Park' where it will build a 'Dinosaur Park' for children, civic authorities

According to standing committee chairman BK Oberoi, "The 'Bollywood Park' will showcase the history of Indian cinema and its evolution through various artefacts, sculptures, cutouts of actors — all made out of waste material.

"The Bollywood Park will be built in an old park in Jangpura. This will be a unique park where artists will display the evolution of Indian cinema right from the first movie Raja Harishchandra to the contemporary films. Along with Hindi cinema, we will also try to showcase the history of other language cinema as well," Oberoi

He added that this theme park will also become a good source of revenue like Waste to Wonder Park and Bharat Darshan Park.

An official of the SDMC's horticulture department said Bollywood Park will be constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 25 crore out of which Rs 4 crore will be for maintenance and operation of the park.

The area of the park is likely to be around five acre. Scenes of popular movies, songs, cut-outs of actors etc will be displayed here, the official said

All the replicas related to Indian cinema in the park will be made through scrap materials like iron rods, nuts and bolts, fans, wires, pipes among others, the official said.

Similarly, the civic body will develop phase-2 of the popular "Waste to Wonder Park" where a theme park "Dinosaur Park" will be constructed for children with the help

## South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय

THIS WILL BE A UNIQUE PARK WHERE ARTISTS WILL DISPLAY THE EVOLUTION OF INDIAN CINEMA RIGHT IN AN OLD PARK IN FROM THE FIRST MOVIE RAJA HARISHCHANDRA TO THE CONTEMPORARY FILMS

SIMILARLY, THE CIVIC BODY WILL DEVELOP PHASE-2 OF THE POPULAR "WASTE TO WONDER PARK" WHERE A THEME PARK "DINOSAUR PARK"

WILL BE CONSTRUCTED FOR CHILDREN WITH THE HELP OF SCRAP ITEMS

of scrap items.

According to the proposal document, this park will come up in a three-acre land lying unused in Waste to Wonder Park.

"Here we will develop Dinosaur Park to attract more children.

South Delhi to have 'Bollywood Park', 'Dinosaur Park'

Replicas of various types of dinosaurs will be made out of scrap materials here. Arrangements will also be made to ensure that each replica of a dinosaur produces the sound that the particular species used to produce," Oberoi said.

Meanwhile, the SDMC's standing committee also approved proposals of creation of urban infrastructure at Shaheed Park at ITO and development of phase-2 of Bharat Darshan Park in Punjabi Bagh. Standing Committee Chairman Oberoi said that more statutes or replicas of historical leaders and kings will be built in Shaheed Park.

We aim to build replicas of prominent historical figures such as Subhas Chandra Bose, Chanakya, Chandragupta Maurya, Sardar Patel etc. All these will be made out of waste materials on the con-

cept of waste to art," Oberoi said. He added that historical monuments of remaining states and Union Territories, which could not be covered in the first phase, will be developed in the phase-2 of the Bharat Darshan Park.

Bharat Darshan Park has replicas of historical monuments, including Qutub Minar and Konark-Temple, from nearly 17 states and Union Territories.

# national



teleconsultation centres will help us not only during the COVID pandemic but also for non-Covid medical care MANSUKH MANDAVIYA I UNION HEALTH MINISTER

#### YEDI'S GRANDDAUGHTER FOUND HANGING

Former Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa's granddaughter Dr Soundarya V Y was found hanging in her house here Friday and police suspect it to be a case of suicide. Soundarya, daughter of the BJP leader's second daughter Padmavathi, was married to Dr Neeraj S, who works in the same hospital where she is employed, police said





Superintendents of Police should play an effective role in strengthening the law and order situation up to the

bottom level, and also ensure that every victim gets timely justice

ASHOK GEHLOT RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER

Maharashtra plans to deploy electric vehicles (EV) to transport tourists world heritage sites of Ajanta and

AADITYA THACKERAY MAHARASHTRA CABINET MINISTER

Why some people who enjoy the best freedom and privilege in India join the anti-India

propaganda peddled by foreign based anti India forces? What's the satisfaction that they acquire by defaming India? At least, people in remote villages without facilities are loyal to motherland

KIREN RIJIJU LAW MINISTER

#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### Roadshows, rallies banned in N Goa

Panaji: The North Goa district administration Friday banned all physical rallies, roadshows and padyatras until January 31 in order to contain the spread of Covid-19 in the coastal state. An order issued by North Goa District Magistrate Ajit Roy Friday stated that "no physical rally of political parties and candidates (including probable or any other group related to the elections) shall be allowed till January 31.

#### **Cops clash with** villagers in Bengal

Birbhum (WB): At least two policemen were injured during clashes with locals at a village in West Bengal's Birbhum district, where a raid to recover illegally stacked coal was conducted Friday afternoon, a senior office said. No sooner the police team reached Lokpur village to conduct the raid, villagers blocked the way and started hurling stones at its vehicle, following which a clash broke out between the two sides, Superintendent of Police Nagendra Tripathi said.

#### 4 soldiers iniured in explosion in J&K

Jammu: Four soldiers were injured in an explosion during a training session near the line of control (LoC) in J&K's Rajouri district Friday, defence officials said. Defence sources said the four soldiers including a Havaldar were injured in an explosion that took place during the training session of a regiment in Kalsian area near the LoC in Nowshera sector of Rajouri.

#### Ch'garh: Naxals set ablaze 3 trucks

Narayanpur: Naxals Friday evening set on fire three trucks on which semal logs were being loaded for transportation in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district, police said. The incident took place in a forest under Dhanora police station limits, an official said, adding that the wood consignment was to be transported to Jagdalpur in neighbouring Bastar district.

#### **Cop escapes** militant attack

Srinagar: A J&K Police constable escaped unhurt in a militant attack in Srinagar Friday, police said. Police sources said at about 3.50 p.m., militants fired at the constable in SD Colony of Batmaloo area.

## **Apex court refuses to lay down** yardstick for quota in promotion

3-JUDGE BENCH SAYS STATES ARE OBLIGATED TO COLLECT DATA ON INADEOUACY OF REPRESENTATION OF SCS/STS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: The Supreme Court Friday said laying down a criteria for determining the inadequacy of representation of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) would result in curtailing the discretion given to the state governments.

A bench of Justices L Nageswara Rao, Sanjiv Khanna, and BR Gavai said: "We are of the opinion that no vardstick can be laid down by this Court for determining the adequacy of representation of SCs and STs in promotional posts for the purpose of providing reservation." Attorney General KK

Venugopal's stand that court has to lay down the yardstick for measuring adequacy of representation did not yield a favourable result, as the court said that the Jarnail Singh (2018) judgment had found it befitting for states to have the liberty to evaluate the representation of SCs and STs in public employment.

Justice Rao, who authored the judgment on behalf of the bench, said laying down criteria for determining the inadequacy of representation would result in curtailing the discretion given to the state governments. "In addition, the prevailing local conditions, which may require to be factored in, might not be uniform," he said.

The bench noted that in M. Nagaraj (2006) judgment, the top court made it clear that the validity of law made by the state governments providing reservation in promotions should be decided on



pose of establishing whether the inadequacy of representation is supported by quantifiable data.

"Data collected to determine inadequacy of representation needs to be reviewed periodically. The period for review should be reasonable and is left to the Government to set out," it said.

The bench emphasised that before providing for reservation in promotions to a cadre, the state is obligated to collect quantifiable data regarding inadequacy of representation of SCs and STs. "Collection of information re-

garding inadequacy of representation of SCs and STs cannot be with reference to the entire service or 'class/group' but it should be relatable to the grade/category of posts to which promotion is sought. Cadre, which should be the unit for the purpose of collection of quantifiable data in relation to the promotional post(s), would be meaningless if data pertaining to representation of SCs and STs is with reference to the entire serv-

ice," it added. The bench added that determination of inadequate representation of SCs and STs in services under a state is left to the discretion of the state government. as the determination depends upon myriad factors which the court cannot envisage.

The Central government had asked the apex court to lay down a definite and decisive ground for it and the states to implement reservation in promotions to SCs and STs in government jobs. Several states had moved the apex court, as many high courts had struck down the provisions providing reservation in promotion along with an application seeking clarification in the Jarnail Singh case. After hearing detailed arguments in the matter, the top court in October last year had reserved the judgment.

The top court said the Nagaraj judgment -- which laid down conditions like collections of quantifiable data, adequacy of representation, and overall impact on efficiency of administration -- will have prospective effect.

## ISIS-KERALA MODULE CASE

#### NIA files chargesheet against 8 terrorists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: The NIA has filed a chargesheet against eight alleged ISIS terrorists for their involvement in radicalising, recruiting, organising terror funds and grooming gullible Muslim youth through different secured social media platforms to join the global terrorist organisation, an official said Friday.

Deepthi Marla, Mohammad Waqar Lone, Mizha Siddeeque, Shifa Haris, Obaid Hamid Matta, Madesh Shankar, Ammar Abdul Rahiman and Muzamil Hassan Bhat have been named in the chargesheet, the official of the premier investigation agency said.

The NIA registered the case in March last year over terrorist activities of an accused. Mohammed Ameen of Kerala, and his associates, who were running various ISIS propaganda channels on different social media platforms such as Telegram, Hoop and Instagram for propagating the violent jihadist ideology of the ISIS and radicalising and recruiting new members for the ISIS module, the official said.

Earlier, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) filed a chargesheet against three accused in the case in September last year.

All the eight accused chargesheeted on Friday are affiliated with the banned terrorist organisation ISIS and were involved in radicalising, recruiting, organising terror funds and grooming like-minded gullible Muslim youth through different secured social media platforms to perform 'Hijrat' (migration) to ISIS-controlled territory for joining ISIS, the official said, adding further investigation in the case continues.

## **MEA slams Ansari** over intolerance row



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: The external affairs ministry Friday reacted strongly to comments by former vice-president Hamid Ansari and four US lawmakers over the human rights situation in the country, saying India is a robust and vibrant democracy and does not require certification from others and attacked them for their "biases and political interests.

'The track record of the event organisers is as well known as the biases and political interests of the participants," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said while responding to queries regarding the comments made by Ansari and others during a virtual panel discussion organised by the Indian American Muslim Council Wednesday.

During the event, Ansari had said,"emergence of trends and practices that dispute the well-established principle of civic nationalism and interpose a new and imaginary practice of cultural nationalism", triggering a controversy with Union ministers and the BJP attacking the former vice-president, also a former diplomat. "We have seen reports on this event. India is a robust and vibrant democracy. It does not require certification from others, " Bagchi said and asserted that the claim that others need to protect our constitution is "presumptuous and preposterous".

During the panel discussion, Democratic Senator Ed Markey, who has a history of taking anti-India stands, had said, "As the Indian government continues to target the practices of minority faiths, it creates an atmosphere where discrimination and violence can take root. In recent years, we have seen an uptick in online hate speeches and acts of hate, including vandalised mosques, torched churches, and communal violence.'

Participating in the discussion from India, Ansari expressed his concern over the rising trend of cultural nationalism.

"In recent years, we have experienced the emergence of trends and practices that dispute the wellestablished principle of civic nationalism and interpose a new and imaginary practice of cultural nationalism... It wants to distinguish citizens on the basis of their faith, give vent to intolerance, insinuate otherness, and promote disquiet and insecurity,"

## 'India, China agreed to stay in close contact'



New Delhi, Jan 28: India and China agreed at the previous round of Corps Commander-level talks to stay in close contact and maintain dialogue via military and diplomatic channels to work out a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues related to the LAC in the western sector at the earliest, the Ministry of External Affairs said Friday

Asked about the border standoff with China, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said, "As you are aware, the 14th round of India-China Corps Commander level meeting was held on January 12 this year. The two sides agreed that resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest would help in the restoration of peace and tranquillity along the LAC in the western sector and enable progress in bilateral relations." "The two sides agreed to stay in close contact and maintain dialogue via military and diplomatic channels and work out a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest," he said.

In this context it was also agreed that the next round of the commanders level talks should be held at the earliest, Bagchi added, China on Thursday said it will work "closely" with India to properly handle the ongoing border tension as it strongly criticised the United States for saying it was concerned by Beijing's attempts to coerce its neighbours, including India.

The Chinese defence ministry said the border problem is a bilateral matter and both China and India oppose interference from a third party. The eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake area. Both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry. As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process last year in the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area. Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the sensitive sector.



NCC cadets perform during Prime Minister's NCC rally at Cariappa Parade Ground in New Delhi

## India inks deal with Philippines to supply Brahmos missiles

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: India joins the elite club of missile exporters on Friday with the Philippines signing a \$374.96 (Rs 2,770 crore) million deal for procuring Brahmos shore based anti-ship variant supersonic cruise missiles.

Philippines signed a pact with Brahmos Aerospace Pvt ltd for the supply of three batteries of 290 kilometers range BrahMos missile system for its naval force.

The Philippines Navy is ramping up its naval prowess to counter China's belligerent behaviour in the South China Sea. The country has territorial disputes with Beijing in the region as China claims sovereignty over the sea that has a huge source of hydrocarbons.

The first ever contract to export Brahmos missiles, which India has developed jointly with Russia, will pave the way for more such deals. Brahmos Aerospace is the Joint Venture between India's



DRDO and Russia's NPOM. The shore based anti-ship system of the Brahmos is a deadly conventional weapon that flies almost three times the speed of sound.

Earlier this month, the Brahmos had sent the proposal to the Philippines government, which after deliberations was accepted by them. The Philippines Department of National Defence had informed the BrahMos Aerospace about the decision

through a Notice of Award. Besides, other Southeast Asian countries, which have evinced interest in BrahMos supersonic missile system, include Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia

## BSF to get over 100 steel fabricated habitats along LoC

**APART FROM THE** LoC, THE BSF IS **TASKED TO GUARD ABOUT 2289 KM OF** THE INDIA-PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL **BORDER, RANGING** FROM JAMMU TO PUNJAB, RAJASTHAN AND UP

TO GUJARAT IN THE

**WESTERN PART OF** 

**THE COUNTRY** 

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: The Border Security Force will soon get over 100 steel fabricated composite habitats along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, BSF officials told IANS on Friday.

According to the officials, the BSF is in the process of setting up over 100 steel fabricated containers in high altitude Forward Defence Localities (FDLs) along the LoC to protect its troopers from the inclement weather, with an attached kitchen and toilets. The total cost of these will come to around Rs 35 crore, they added.

"These steel fabricated living accommodations will be insulated from inside, have bunk bed facili-



erator power supply," a senior BSF official said, adding that the locations of these FDLs will range from 8,000 feet to 15,500 feet.

The proposal for these units has been sent to the Ministry of Home

The BSF officials have already contacted senior officials of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in Delhi to get solar power projects sanctioned for these FDLs

using power sourced from kerosene and diesel, they said.

These upcoming habitats will accommodate at least 12 troopers at a time and the attached kitchen will have all facilities to serve freshly cooked food in even the most inclement and harsh conditions. The kitchen and toilets will

be attached to the main living huts. As of now, the troops at these icy locations at altitudes ranging from 8,000 feet-16,000 feet, live in corrugated galvanized iron sheet-made hutments along with their rations and weapons, exposing them to the sub-zero temperatures. Due to the weather, the areas remain snow clad on an average of five to seven

be provided with entertainment systems too.

The officials said that once they get final clearance from the government, the construction of these huts will start at the higher altitudes first. They expect that the construction work can start from May-June onwards.

They said that before finalizing the design, they evaluated the composite Border Out Posts (BoPs) of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police and that of the Army deployed on the higher altitudes to equip them with

modern facilities. The BSF move came after the visit of Director General Pankaj Kumar Singh to these locations in



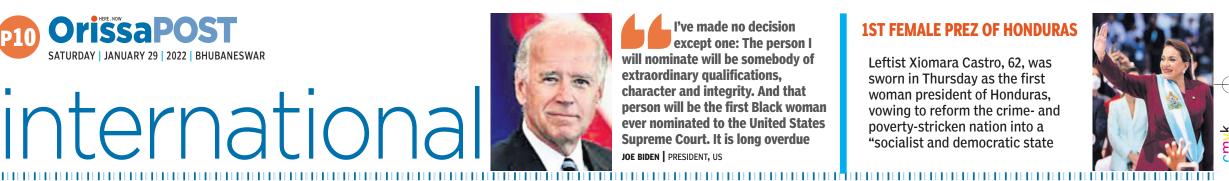
# international



I've made no decision except one: The person I will nominate will be somebody of extraordinary qualifications, character and integrity. And that person will be the first Black woman ever nominated to the United States **Supreme Court. It is long overdue** JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

#### **1ST FEMALE PREZ OF HONDURAS**

Leftist Xiomara Castro, 62, was sworn in Thursday as the first woman president of Honduras, vowing to reform the crime- and poverty-stricken nation into a "socialist and democratic state





We can hardly fail to see that these days, in addition to the infodemic is

distortion of reality based on fear, which in our global society leads to an explosion of commentary on falsified if not invented news

POPE FRANCIS HEAD OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Russia selling S-400 missile defense system



NED PRICE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON, US

China welcomes Madam



promote exchange and cooperation, not investigation based on the presumption of guilt. We oppose anyone using this for political manipulation to pressure China

ZHAO LIJIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN, CHINA

#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### 10 Pak soldiers dead in attack

New Delhi: Ten Pakistani soldiers were killed after militants attacked a security forces' checkpost in Balochistan's Kech district. the military's media wing said. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the "fire raid" by militants occurred on the night of January 25-26, Dawn news reported. During the intense exchange of fire, one terrorist was killed and several injured. While repulsing terrorists' fire raid, 10 soldiers were killed. said the ISPR statement.

#### ■ 11-hour standoff in Tokyo; 1 dead

Tokyo: One hostage died and another remained unconscious in a hospital after the Japanese police arrested a 66year-old man following an 11 hour-long standoff near Tokyo Friday. The man attacked three visiting medical workers and shot one of them dead in the standoff that started at around 9 pm Thursday night until early Friday morning, reports Xinhua news agency. According to local reports, the assailant, named Hiroshi Watanabe, was armed with what has been described as a hunting gun.

#### 4 quakes hit Spain within one hour

Madrid: Spain's northwestern region of Galicia was hit by four earthquakes within an hour. said the country's National Geographic Institute (IGN). According to the IGN, the first one occurred at 2:57 pm Thursday and measured 3.7 on the Richter scale, followed by a 4.6-magnitude quake at 3:44 pm local time, which was felt by residents along the coast and in such cities as Pontevedra and Vigo, reports Xinhua news agency. Then two more lighter tremors measuring 1.9 and 2.5 on the Richter scale took place in the next 13 minutes.

#### HK cuts foreign arrival quarantine

Hong Kong: Hong Kong is cutting the length of mandatory quarantine for people arriving from overseas from 21 to 14 days, even as the southern Chinese city battles a new surge in Covid-19 cases. The relaxation of rules doesn't satisfy calls for a lowering of almost all quarantine requirements, as some countries have done, but represents a break with China and its "zero tolerance" policy.

## We don't want wars: Russia

The comments were among the most conciliatory that Moscow has made on the Ukraine crisis, which has escalated into one of the tensest East-West standoffs since the Cold War ended three decades ago

REUTERS

Moscow, Jan 28: Russia Friday sent its strongest signal so far that it is willing to engage with U.S. security proposals and reiterated that it does not want war over Ukraine.

"If it depends on Russia, then there will be no war. We don't want wars. But we also won't allow our interests to be rudely trampled, to be ignored," Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told Russian radio stations in an interview.

Russia has massed tens of thousands of troops near the Ukrainian border as it presses demands for a redrawing of post-Cold War security arrangements in Europe.

Lavrov said the West was ignoring Russia's interests but there was at least "something" in written responses submitted by the United States and NATO Wednesday to Russia's proposals.

While the responses have not been made public, both have stated they are willing to engage with Moscow on arms control and confidence-building measures. They have ruled out acceding to other demands, including that Ukraine must never be allowed to join NATO.

Russia's military buildup near Ukraine has expanded to include supplies of blood along with other medical materials that would allow it to treat casualties, in yet another key indicator of Moscow's military readiness, said three US officials.

Current and former US officials say concrete indicators - like blood supplies -- are critical in deter-



The disclosure of the blood sup-

plies by US officials adds another

piece of context to growing US

I believe that the decision to

attack has not yet been

made. The crisis can

BRUNO KAHL | HEAD OF GERMANY'S

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

develop in thousands of

warnings of Russian invasion.

mining whether Moscow would be prepared to carry out an invasion, if Russian President Vladimir Putin decided to do so.

It's the equivalent of if you and I were having a discussion or a negotiation. If I put a gun on the table and say that I come in peace, that's threatening

**West ignored key concerns: Putin** 

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin said Friday the

offered his first reaction to the US and NATO responses to

Emmanuel Macron after weeks of personal public silence on the crisis, ir

said Putin had underlined that he did not want the situation to escalate.

into account Russia's principal concerns," the Kremlin said of Putin's

conversation with Macron. It listed those concerns as avoiding NATO

expansion, not deploying offensive weapons near Russia's borders and

was ignored - how the United States and its allies intend to follow the

returning NATO "military capabilities and infrastructure" to how they were

before former Warsaw Pact states in eastern Europe joined. "The key question

principle of security integrity ... that no one should strengthen their security at

which Russia has massed troops near Ukraine. A French presidency official

"Attention was drawn to the fact that the US and NATO replies did not take

Russia's demands in a phone call with French President

the expense of another country's security," it said.

security demands in their standoff over Ukraine, Putin

United States and NATO had not addressed Moscow's main

JOHN SULLIVAN US AMBASSADOR TO MOSCOW

#### **Biden rings Zelensky** to reaffirm US pledge

Washington: In a phone call with his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky, US President Joe Biden reaffirmed Washington's readiness along with its allies and partners to "respond decisively if Russia further invades" Kiev, according to the White House. In a statement following the call Thursday, the White House said that Biden also "underscored the commitment of the US to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity". "President Biden noted the US has provided Ukraine with over half a billion dollars in development and humanitarian



assistance in the last year, and is exploring additional macroeconomic support to help Ukraine's economy amidst pressure resulting from Russia's military build-up," it said. According to the White House, the leaders also discussed coordinated diplomatic efforts on European security, underscoring the principle of "nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine". Taking to Twitter, Zelensky said that during the call the two leaders discussed "recent diplomatic efforts on deescalation and agreed on joint actions for the future". He also confirmed that "possibilities for financial support to Ukraine were

## 3 rockets strike Baghdad airport



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Baghdad, Jan 28: At least three rockets were fired Friday at the Iraqi capital's airport, causing damage but no casualties, security sources said, the latest in a string of attacks the US blames on Iran-linked militias.

The rockets hit Baghdad International Airport's runways or parking areas, one of the sources said. "One civilian plane has been hit and damaged," this source, based at the interior ministry, said.

A second security source confirmed the attack consisted of three rockets that fell around civil installations at the airport, damaging a stationary plane. A third source identified the plane as a Boeing 767 belonging to the stateowned Iraqi Airways, noting that it was not in service and was undergoing repairs.

Recent months have seen rocket and drone attacks target the US embassy in Baghdad's high-security Green Zone, a US diplomatic facility at the airport and troops belonging to a US-led coalition sta-

anuary 3, US forces downed two armed drones that targeted the coalition at Baghdad airport

anuary 13, three people, including two children, were wounded by a rocket that hit a school in the Green Zone, while two other rockets fell inside the US embassy complex

tioned at Iraqi bases.

The attacks are rarely claimed but are routinely pinned on pro-Iran factions, who demand that US troops who were deployed to help Iraqi forces fight the Islamic State group leave the country.

The US-led coalition ended its combat mission in Iraq in December, four years after Iraq's government declared victory over the jihadists. But roughly 2,500 American soldiers and 1,000 coalition soldiers will remain deployed in Iraq to offer training, advice and assistance to national forces.

In September, an "armed drone" attack targeted Arbil international airport in Iraqi Kurdistan, where a base hosts coalition troops.

#### **PUBG ADDICTION**

## Minor guns down mom, three siblings in Pakistan



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, Jan 28: A 14-year-old boy shot dead his entire family, including mother, elder brother and two minor sisters, allegedly under the influence of online game PUBG, police here in the capital of Pakistan's Puniab province said Friday.

Nahid Mubarak, a 45-year-old health worker, was found dead along with her 22-year-old son Taimur and two daughters aged 17 and 11 in Lahore's Kahna area last week. Her teenage son who remained unhurt and is the lone survivor of the family turned out to be the murderer, police said in a statement.

"The PUBG (PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds) addict boy confessed to have killed her mother and siblings under the influence of the game. He has developed some psychological issues because of spending long hours of the day playing the online game," the statement said.

Police said Nahid was a divorcee and often used to admonish the boy for not paying attention to his studies and spending most of his time playing PUBG.

On the day of the incident, Nahid scolded the boy over the matter. Later, the boy took out her mother's pistol from a cupboard and shot her and his three other siblings dead in their sleep.

Next morning, the boy raised an alarm and the neighbours called the police. The boy that time told police that he was on the upper storey of the house and did not know how his family was killed," the statement said

According to a report in Dawn newspaper, this is the fourth such crime related to the online game in Lahore. When the first case surfaced in 2020, the then capital city police officer Zulfigar Hameed had recommended a ban on the game to save lives, time and the future of mil-

World Health Organisation has officially included gaming disorder as a disease in the International Classification of Diseases

## NK confirms missile tests

North Korea has been ramping up its testing activity in recent months, including six rounds of weapons launches so far in 2022, demonstrating its military might

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, Jan 28: North Korea said Friday its two latest rounds of weapons tests this week were successful while vowing to bolster its nuclear war deterrent and speed up the development of more powerful

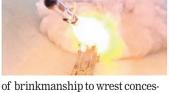
It appeared North Korean leader Kim Jong Un did not attend the tests Tuesday and Thursday, which were detected by the militaries of neighbours South Korea and Japan.

But Kim did inspect a munitions factory where workers pledged loyalty to their leader, who smashes with his bold pluck the challenges of US imperialists and their vassal forces, state media said.

While aggressively expanding his military capabilities despite limited resources, Kim is also reviving Pyongyang's old playbook



sions from Washington, which leads international sanctions over the North's nuclear program.



The North's official Korean Central News Agency described the two ballistic missiles launched from a coastal area Thursday as sur-



face-to-surface tactical guided missile armed with a conventional warhead and said they accurately struck a sea target.

The North has described this weapon as strategic, implying that it's being developed to deliver nuclear weapons.

'The Enigma' goes up for auction

#### Spotify removing Young's music post Rogan ultimatum

REUTERS

Washington, Jan 28: Neil Young's music is being removed from Spotify's streaming service after the singersongwriter objected to his songs playing on the same platform that of-\_ fers Joe Rogan's podcast, said the company and the musician.

Earlier this week, Young had released a letter addressed to his manager and record label, Warner Music Group, demanding that Spotify no longer carry his music because he said Rogan spreads misinformation about Covid-19 vaccines.

'Spotify has become the home of life threatening Covid misinformation," he said on his website. "Lies being sold for money."

The Swedish company said it worked to balance "both safety for listeners and freedom for creators" and had removed more than 20,000 podcast episodes related to Covid-19 misinformation.

#### **MYSTERY BLACK DIAMOND**

REUTERS

Beverly Hills, Jan 28: A black diamond weighing a staggering 555.55 carats is going up for auction at Sotheby's and living up to its name "The Enigma.

Sotheby's said it is the largest faceted Fancy Black Diamond known to ever appear at auction and was listed as the largest cut diamond in the world in the 2006 Guinness Book of World Records.

Also known as a carbonado diamond, it is possible the black diamond came from outer space.

"Thev are shrouded in mystery as to the origin or formation because there's not that many of them found on Earth," geologist Aaron Celestian, the curator of mineral sciences at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles said,

Celestian said most carbonados are about 2.6 to 3.2 billion years old. As Earth itself dates back to 4.65 billion years ago, carbonados were formed when Earth's plates were still moving and the oxy genation of the atmosphere was tak-



ing place, he said.

The Enigma has not been exhibited before and is expected to sell for between \$4 million and \$7 mil-

Bids will be invited from Feb 3 to Feb 9 and cryptocurrency will also be accepted

lion. Its owner has had it for two decades, but little is known about its history before that.

The diamond, which was exhibited in Dubai last week, was shown in Beverly Hills this week before heading back to London for the auction.

## Oz announces billion-dollar relief for Great Barrier Reef

The move comes ahead of a general election expected in May, when Morrison will have to win key Queensland seats near the reef to

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Sydney, Jan 28: Australia unveiled a billion-dollar package to protect the climate-ravaged Great Barrier Reef Friday, hoping to pre-

remain in power

vent the vast network of corals from being removed from UNESCO's World Heritage list.

Conservative Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced the Aus\$1 billion (\$700 million) nineyear plan, months after narrowly avoiding the reef being placed on UNESCO's "in danger" list.

"We are backing the health of the reef and the economic future of tourism operators, hospitality providers and Queensland communities that are at the heart of the reef economy," Morrison said. When the UN previously threat-

ened to downgrade the reef's World

created a "Reef 2050" plan and poured billions of dollars into protection. The measures are believed



Heritage listing in 2015, Australia cline, but much of the world's largest reef system has already been damaged.

**Unless you are cutting** emissions deeply this decade the situation on the reef will only get worse LESLEY HUGHES | PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY,

A recent study found bleaching had affected 98 percent of the reef since 1998, leaving just a fraction of it untouched.

The Morrison government's support for coal and reluctance to tackle climate change has seen the party bleed support in major cities and prompted the emergence of a string

of electoral challenges from climatefocused independents. Australians are overwhelmingly in favour of action to limit climate change, having experienced a string of global warming-worsened disasters such as bushfires, droughts and floods.

One of the world's biggest exporters of coal and gas, Australia's 🗦 economy is heavily reliant on fossil fuels. Its political parties also receive significant funds from coal and gas-linked donors.

The Climate Council pressure group said this latest package offunding was like putting "a Band-Aid on a broken leg".









# business



In the phase one, about 15 accounts aggregating to ₹50.000 crore are expected to be transferred to the NARCL. We are trying to have these accounts transferred within this financial year after completing all the required processes DINESH KHARA | CHAIRMAN, STATE BANK OF INDIA

#### **AIRASIA CHANGES** NAME TO CAPITAL A

Malaysia's AirAsia Group said Friday it has changed the name of its listed holding company to Capital A to reflect the diversity of its business portfolio as it seeks to grow its non-airline revenue





Bank of India is committed to its mandate to keep prices stable while growth objective

MICHAEL PATRA DEPUTY GOVERNOR, RB

The company is raising funds to ramp up annual production to one million scooters over the next three vears amid a surge in demand



TARUN MEHTA | CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, ATHER

We are looking at escalating this to some respectable figure in double digits. We are focusing on higher value and specialised

products like man-made fibre (MMF) apparels, medical and technical textiles

NARENDRA GOENKA CHAIRMAN, AEPC

#### SHORT TAKES

#### **Forex reserves** dip to \$634.28bn

Mumbai: The country's foreign exchange reserves declined by \$678 million to \$634.287 billion in the week ended January 21, according to RBI data. In the previous week ended January 14, the reserves had increased by \$2.229 billion to \$634.965 billion. It touched a lifetime high of \$642.453 billion in the week ended September 3, 2021. During the reporting week ended January 21, the dip in the reserves was on account of a drop in the Foreign Currency Assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves, as per the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) weekly data released Friday.

#### **Reliance in talks** to raise \$1.6bn

New Delhi: India's Reliance Industries is in talks with investors to raise up to \$1.6 billion for its broadcasting business as its partner. ViacomCBS, looks to pare its interest in the joint venture, two sources told Reuters Thursday. Reliance is holding talks with an investment company set up by James Murdoch, son of media mogul Rupert Murdoch, and former Disney India executive Uday Shankar to together pick up a significant stake in the Viacom18 ioint venture, one of the sources with direct knowledge said. Currently, Reliance holds a 51% stake in Viacom18.

#### **Adani wins 14** city gas licenses

New Delhi: A joint venture of billionaire Gautam Adani-run group's gas arm and Total of France Friday walked away with the most 14 licenses to retail CNG to automobiles and piped cooking gas to households in the latest city gas bidding round, according to oil regulator PNGRB. Adani Total Gas Ltd won city gas rights in 14 out of the 52 geographical areas for which Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board declared results Friday. Hyderabadbased Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Ltd won 13 GAs, while state-owned Indian Oil Corporation was adjudged winner in 8 GAs.

#### **Exports to China** rise 34% in 2021

Mumbai: India's exports to China have increased about 34 per cent to 422.9 billion in 2021 from \$17.1 billion in 2019. according to data from the commerce ministry. Imports rose 28 per cent to 487.5 billion in 2021 as against \$68.4 billion in 2019. The trade deficit has increased to \$64.5 billion last year as compared with \$51.2 billion in 2019. Further, in 2021, the US has taken a top slot as India's merchandise trade partner with a value of \$112.3 billion.



*Under the larger strategic goals of the partnership, both companies will work* on the co-creation of India-specific use cases for 5G and other standards

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: Google will invest as much as \$1 billion in Bharti Airtel in picking up a 1.28 per cent stake and in scaling up offerings of India's second-largest mobile phone operator, the telecom major said Friday.

Alphabet Inc's Google will pay \$700 million (Rs 734 per share) for a 1.28 per cent stake in Bharti Airtel Ltd and the rest towards multi-year plans that will include devices.

This will be the second investment by Google, which had two years ago committed to investing \$10 billion in India via its digitisation fund over 5 to 7 years through equity deals and tie-up.

It had in July 2020, invested \$4.5 billion for a 7.73 per cent stake in billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Jio

The US tech behemoth got a seat on Jio's board and has co-developed JioPhone Next - the world's most affordable all-touchscreen smartphone running on Pragati OS - an optimized version of Android OS.

Out of the total investment, \$300 million will go towards implementing commercial agreements. which will include investments in scaling Airtel's offerings that cover a range of devices to consumers via innovative affordability programs as well as other offerings aimed at accelerating access and digital



The funding from Google gives billionaire Sunil Mittal-led Bharti more firepower to bolster its 5G plans as well as take on market leader Jio

The 2020 investment valued Jio Platforms' equity at ₹4.36 lakh crore, the \$700 million investment announced Friday values Bharti Airtel's equity at ₹4.1 lakh crore

Google made the investment as part of its Google for India Digitization Fund

inclusion across India's digital ecosystem.

"Under the larger strategic goals of the partnership, both companies will also potentially co-create Indiaspecific network domain use cases for 5G and other standards, with cutting-edge implementations,' the statement said.

Bharti Airtel board has approved the issuance of up to 71,176,839 equity shares of face value of ₹5 each of the company to Google International LLC on a preferential basis at a price of ₹734 per equity share aggregating to ₹5,224.3 crore (around \$700 million).

"Airtel and Google share the vision to grow India's digital dividend through innovative products. With

our future-ready network, digital platforms, last-mile distribution and payments ecosystem, we look forward to working closely with Google to increase the depth and breadth of India's digital ecosystem," Bharti Airtel chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal said the statement.

"Our commercial and equity investment in Airtel is a continuation of our Google for India Digitization Fund's efforts to increase access to smartphones. enhance connectivity to support new business models, and help companies on their digital transformation journey," Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai said.

#### **Gold demand zooms in 2021**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 28: India's gold consumption surged to 797.3 tonne in 2021, on the back of recovery in consumer sentiments and pent-up demand post Covid-19-related disruptions and the bullish trend is set to continue this year as well, according to the World Gold Council (WGC).

WGC in its Gold Demand Trends 2021 Report said India's total gold demand jumped to 797.3 tonne in 2021, registering a massive 78.6 per cent jump from 446.4 tonne



"The year 2021 revalidated the strength of conventional wisdom about gold and holds several lessons in revival that will shape policy thinking for years to come," WGC CEO, India, Regional Somasundaram PR told PTI.

Somasundaram further said. "India's gold demand recovered by 79 per cent to 797.3 tonne chiefly a re sult of an exceptional fourth quarter demand of 343 tonne that surpassed even our most optimistic expectation articulated in the third quarter and turned out to be the best quarter in our recorded data series"

The report further noted that jewellery demand during 2021 was up by 93 per cent at 610.9 tonne, compared to 315.9 tonne in 2020.

## High inflation set to haunt global growth

Bangalore, Jan 28: Persistently high inflation will haunt the world economy this year, according to a Reuters poll of economists who trimmed their global growth outlook on worries of slowing demand and the risk interest rates would rise faster than assumed so far.

just three months ago, when most economists were siding with central bankers in their then-prevalent view that a surge in inflation, driven in part by pandemic-related supply bottlenecks, would be transitory.

economies covered. While price pressures are still ex-

pected to ease in 2023, the inflation outlook is much stickier than three months ago. At the same time, economists

downgraded their global growth forecasts. After expanding 5.8% last year, the world economy is expected to slow to 4.3% growth in 2022, down from 4.5% predicted in October, in part because of higher interest rates and costs of living. Growth is seen slowing further to 3.6% and 3.2% in 2023 and 2024, respectively. Nearly 40% of those who an-

bringing inflation expectations close to their targets, emerging economies face a similar challenge.

This represents a sea change from

In the latest quarterly Reuters surveys of over 500 economists taken throughout January, economists raised their 2022 inflation forecasts for most of the 46

swered an additional question singled out inflation as the top risk to the global economy this year, with nearly 35% picking coronavirus variants, and 22% worried about central banks moving too quickly.

"The odds of an accident have

US Fed signalled it would raise the benchmark federal funds rate from a record low of 0-0.25% in March

Bank of England was the first to raise rates since the pandemic started and is expected to act again

risen and the likelihood of a soft landing in 2022 requires some favourable assumptions and a modicum of good luck." Deutsche Bank group chief economist David Folkerts Landau said, noting high inflation, the persistence of supply chain strains and the pandemic, as well as international political tensions. While the tightening cycle is in

early days in developed markets, many emerging market central banks, with a few notable exceptions like Brazil and China, are waiting for the Fed's cue while grappling with the pandemic and their own economic challenges However, with major central

banks showing concern about

## SpiceJet gets breather as SC stays winding up order



an airline

NV RAMANA I

CHIEF JUSTICE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 28: In a breather to SpiceJet, the Supreme Court Friday stayed the Madras High Court order for three weeks, in which the HC had asked the airlines to wind up its operations after it failed to make a payment of \$24 million to Credit Suisse.

Credit Suisse had moved the winding-up petition before a company court you don't want to claiming that SpiceJet was inrun the airlines, we will debted to it for declare you insolvent. more than \$24 mil-This is not the way to run lion for maintenance, repair, and overhauling (MRO)

the Zurich-based MRO service provider SR Technics. The MRO company had assigned Credit Suisse AG the right to receive payments on behalf of SR Technics and the company court had admitted the winding up of SpiceJet. After the company court admitted the winding up petition, SpiceJet appealed against it in the Madras

High Court. The high court de-

clined to entertain the appeal.

During the course of the hearing, Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing SpiceJet, apprised the top court that the airline is trying to work something out and as such urged the court to adjourn the hearing for a period of three weeks.

Earlier, SpiceJet had argued in the Madras High Court that SR Technics did not possess the approval from the Director-

General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) from 2009 to 2015 but the court did not heed to the argument and said that the airline had availed of the services of

Technics. The airline company also argued that the Swiss company had made a "fraudulent misinterpretation" of having the DGCA approval and argued that this was against the Indian and other applicable laws and that this has led to the entire agreement being pointless or unnecessary.

## Government pulls out all stops: Report

LIC, which has nearly \$500 billion in assets and commands more than 65% of India's market for life insurance policies, too is sparing no effort to ensure its IPO is a success

New Delhi, Jan 28: The government has asked regulators for a swift review of Life Insurance Corporation's draft prospectus, two government sources with knowledge of the matter said - as it pulls out all the stops to have the country's biggest IPO completed by the end of March

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has been urged to complete its vetting



process in less than three weeks instead of the 75 days it usually requires, they said.

We have 10 bankers for the deal. They are available 24/7 for any questions SEBI might have, said one of the government officials, adding that a "clean" draft prospectus would be submitted.

The official also said the government's divestment department was solely focused on the IPO for



for this fiscal year. The draft prospectus is likely to be submitted to SEBI in the next few days, said the sources, who were not authorised to speak to media and declined to be identified.

aside other privatisation plans

Having pledged numerous times to list LIC by the end of the fi-

Narendra Modi's administration is keen to avoid any loss of face and gain further momentum for its privatisation programme aimed at replenishing government cof-

In addition to heavy advertising in local newspapers, some 1.2 million field agents have been dispatched across the country to woo many of its more than 250 milion policyholders into becoming retail investors for the first time. Policyholders have also received a text message recommending they open an electronic stock holding account early so they can take part in the IPO.

With LIC a household name in the country, bankers working on the IPO say they are confident of robust demand from retail investors, but the strength of institutional demand will be key.

#### **Kotak Mahindra profit surges 15%**

New Delhi: Private sector lender Kotak Mahindra Bank Friday reported a 15 per cent rise in its standalone net profit at ₹2,131 crore for the quarter ended December 2021. The bank had posted a net profit of ₹1,854 crore in the quarter ended December 2020. The total income of the lender on the standalone basis grew by 4 per cent to ₹8,260.48 crore in Q3FY22, from ₹7,950 crore in the same quarter of FY21, Kotak Mahindra Bank said in a regulatory filing. On a consolidated basis, the

net profit of the bank rose by 31 per cent to ₹3,403 crore in October-December period of 2021-22, as against ₹2,602 crore in the yearago period. However, the income was down at ₹14,176 crore on a consolidated basis, from ₹14,671 crore in the year-ago period. Shares of Kotak Mahindra Bank were trading at ₹1,918.50 apiece on BSE, up by 1.54 per cent from the previous close.



#### **Central Bank net rises 69%**

New Delhi: Central Bank of India Friday reported 69 per cent jump in net profit at ₹279 crore for the quarter ended December 2021 on the back of healthy growth in core income and fall in bad loan proportion. The bank had posted a net profit of ₹165 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Total income of the bank rose to ₹6,666.45 crore during



October-December 2021-22 as against ₹6,556.98 crore in the same period of the previous year, Central Bank of India said in a regulatory filing. Net interest income improved to ₹2,746 crore as compared with ₹2,228 crore in the year-ago quarter, the lender said. Gross non-performing assets (NPAs) reduced to 15.16 per cent at end-December 2021, improving by 114 basis points from 16.30 per cent by the year-ago same period, it said. Central Bank of India stock was trading at ₹22.45 on BSE, up 3.22 per cent from the previous close.

## Toyota heading to Moon with cruiser, robotic arms, dreams

The vehicle being developed with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency is called Lunar Cruiser, whose name pays homage to the Toyota Land Cruiser sport utility vehicle

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, Jan 28: Toyota is working with Japan's space agency on a vehicle to explore the lunar surface, with ambitions to help people live on the moon by 2040 and then go live on Mars, company officials said Friday.

The vehicle is based on the idea that people eat, work, sleep and communicate with others safely in cars, and the same can be done in outer space, said Takao Sato, who heads the Lunar Cruiser project at Toyota Motor Corp.

Gitai Japan Inc, a venture contracted with Toyota, has developed

**Sending our cars to** the moon is our mission. Toyota has vehicles almost everywhere but this is about taking our cars to somewhere we have never been SHINICHIRO NODA | TOYOTA ENGINEER

a robotic arm for the Lunar Cruiser, designed to perform tasks such as inspection and maintenance. Its "grapple fixture" allows the arm's end to be changed so it can work like different tools, scooping, lifting and sweeping.

Gitai Chief Executive Sho

of blasting off into space has ba-



Nakanose said he felt the challenge

sically been met but working in space entails big costs and hazards

#### TOYOTA: WORLD'S BIGGEST CAR SELLER

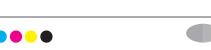
Toyota Motor Co said Friday its vehicle sales rose by 10.1% last year, making it the world's biggest carmaker for a second straight year and putting it further ahead of its nearest rival, Germany's Volkswagen AG. The carmaker said sales were 10.5 million vehicles in 2021, including those by affiliates Daihatsu Motors and Hino Motors. That compares with 8.9 million delivered by Volkswagen in the same period, 5% fewer than in 2020 and its lowest sales figures in 10 years. Toyota, which releases third-quarter earnings Feb 9, has said it is likely to fall short of a production target of 9 million vehicles in the business year that

ends March 31 because of disruptions linked to Covid-19.

for astronauts. That's where robots would come in handy, he said.

Since its founding in the 1930s, Toyota has fretted about losing a core business because of changing times. It has ventured into housing, boats, jets and robots. Its net-connected sustainable living quarters near Mount-Fuji, called Woven City, are set to open later this year.







# HISTORY BECKONS Shuttler Swetapadma



**RAFA NADAL** 

Melbourne, Jan 28: Rafa Nadal is within one victory of a record 21st Grand Slam singles title. The 35year-old Spaniard advanced to the Australian Open final for the sixth time with a 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 win Friday over seventh-seeded Matteo Berrettini. After the last point, Nadal stopped, beamed widely and then punched the air three times.

Top seed Daniil Medvedev now stands in the way as history beckons Nadal. The Russian advanced to the men's singles final for the second year in succession beating fourth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas 7-6(7 5) 4-6, 6-4, 6-1. Last year Medvedev

had lost in the final to the now 'deported' Novak Djokovic.

Sunday's final will be the fifth career meeting between Nadal and Medvedev, the Spaniard leading their head-to-head encounters 3-1. The pair clashed in the 2019 US Open decider, which Nadal won in five sets.

One more win will help Nadal break the record of 20 Grand Slam titles that he shares with Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic. It should however, be stated that Nadal has won the Australian Open only once in his illustrious career – way back in 2009.

"For me, it's all about winning the Australian Open more than anything else," Nadal said in his oncourt TV interview. "I have been a little unlucky (here) in my career with some injuries. I played some amazing finals with good chances. I feel very lucky that I won once. I never thought about another chance in 2022," the Spaniard added.

Nadal broke Berrettini's opening service games in the first two sets and, after dropping the third set on a rare service lapse, he rallied to finish off the match in just under three hours. That in itself was a relief after his long five-set win over Denis Shapovalov two days earlier in the quarterfinals.

Nadal later said that more than statistical highlights, what matters

# keeps medal hopes alive

Cuttack, Jan 28: Odisha's promising shuttler Swetapadma Nanda kept her medal hopes alive by en-tering the mixed doubles semifinals of the Odisha Open badminton tournament here Friday. In a onesided quarterfinal encounter, Swetapadma and Balkeshari Yadav defeated their Indian counterparts R Kumar Shah and R Jaiswal 21-12, 21-12. The scoreline itself suggests the dominance Swetapadma and her partner enjoyed during the match.

In both the games, Swetapadma and Yadav took early leads and never allowed the opponents to settle down. The winners showed good understanding and the Odiya shuttler looked very good from the back of the court.

In the men's singles, Kiran George stunned third seed Subhankar Dey to advance to the semifinals while in-form shuttler Malvika Bansod also cruised to the last four stage in the

women's event. The unseeded Kiran eked out a hard-fought 21-16, 10-21, 21-19 win over the higher ranked Subhankar, who was the last remaining seed in men's singles. The 21-year-old Kiran will now meet Ansal Yadav who defeated Tharun Mannepalli 21-

Malvika, who reached the final of the Syed Modi International where she lost to PV Sindhu before defeating Saina Nehwal at the India Open earlier this month, continued to impress as she registered a 21-13, 16-21, 21-17 victory over fellow Indian Tanya Hemanth in a gruelling 58-minute quarterfinal contest.

Fifth seed Ashmita Chaliha got

Swetapadma Nanda has shown good form throughout the tourney OP PHOTO

21-15 to seal her semifinal spot. She will meet compatriot Smit Toshniwal, who came from behind to beat USA's Ishika Jaiswal 8-21, 21-9, 21-14.

In another women's singles quarterfinal, Unnati Hooda handed fellow Indian Samiya Imad Farooqui She will now lock horns with Malvika for a place in the final.

Unseeded Mithun Manjunath, who had stunned Thursday seventh seed June Wei Cheam of Malaysia, lost a hard fought battle 21-13, 14-21, 8-21 to Priyanshu Rajawat in 51 minutes in another

#### **NEWS IN BRIEF**

#### **Covid-19 strikes Winter Olympics**

Beijing: Snowboarder Zan Kosir of Slovenia has tested positive for the coronavirus after landing here for the Winter Olympics, the country's national committee said Friday. Kosir, who had been chosen as one of Slovenia's flag bearers for next Friday's opening ceremony, took a second test to confirm the result and is now in isolation. "The management followed the organisers' instructions and the athlete is now isolated," the Slovenian team said. The 37year-old Kosir will have to selftwice. Another Slovenian, ski team staffer member Darko Centrih has also tested positive.

#### **Aditi shines**

Boca Rio (US): Indian golfer Aditi Ashok got off to a flying start at the Gainbridge LPGA with a superb 6-under 66 to be tied third and three short of leader Lydia Ko (63) here Thursday. Aditi, who missed the cut last time she played here at this course, was in sparkling form, finding the first 17 green in regulation. She faltered only once on the 18th and it ended in a bogey. She played very well on the longer holes. LPGA debutant Nishtha Madan however struggled.

#### Stunning triumph

Coolidge (Antigua): Afghanistan sneaked into the under-19 World Cup semifinals after edging out Sri Lanka by four runs, courtesy a sensational fightback, here Thursday. Afghanistan had posted a small total of 134 after being put in by the opposition. However, their bowlers and fielders dismissed the island nation for 130 in 46 overs. Afghanistan conceded 31 wides, but even then they won as the Sri Lankans committed hara kiri with four batsmen being run out. Afghanistan will now face England in the first Super League semifinal February 1.

#### **ICC bans Taylor**

**Dubai:** Former Zimbabwe captain Brendan Taylor was Friday banned for three-and-a-half years by the ICC for failing to report a 2019 spot-fixing approach by an Indian businessman on time. In a statement, the ICC said Taylor admitted to being in breach of the provisions of the ICC Anti-Corruption Code (Articles 2.4.2, 2.4.3, 2.4.4 and 2.4.7). AGENCIES

#### **HUGE RELIEF FOR DOMESTIC CRICKETERS**

## RANJI TROPHY IN TWO PHASES: BCCI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: BCCI secretary Jay Shah said Friday that the postponed Ranji Trophy will be held in two phases starting next month. The announcement thus cleared the decks for India's premier domestic competition to resume after being cancelled last season. It is expected that the 38-team tournament will begin in the second week of February and the first phase will continue for about a month.

The tournament was not held last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was the first time since its inception that the event was not held. This year the Ranji Trophy was scheduled to begin January 13 but was postponed owing to a third wave of infections across India.

"The BCCI has decided to conduct the Ranji Trophy this season in two phases. In the first phase, we plan to complete all matches of the league stage while the knockouts will be held in June," Shah said in a statement.

'My team is working closely to mitigate any kind of health risk caused by the pandemic, while at the same time ensuring a highly

#### Shastri's message

New Delhi: Former head coach Ravi Shastri said Friday that Indian cricket would become 'spineless' if the Ranji Trophy is ignored. "The Ranji Trophy is the backbone of Indian cricket. The moment you start ignoring it our cricket will be SPINELESS!" Shastri tweeted earlier in the day.

competitive red-ball cricket con

Shah said that the BCCI under-

board intends to host the event.

test," Shah added.

stands the significance of Ranji Trophy. "Ranji Trophy is our most prestigious domestic competition, which has been providing Indian cricket with an enviable talent pool every year. It is absolutely important that we take all necessary steps to safeguard the interest of this premier event," asserted the top BCCI official. The BCCI announcement has come a day after its treasurer Arun Dhumal had said that the

The two phases are required since the BCCI also plans to host the IPL from March 27 and hosting two big tournaments would not be possible practically as the players' availability would also be an issue.

#### INDIAN SQUAD BOOSTED BY RETURN OF KEY PLAYERS INCLUDING SKIPPER DHULL PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Osbourn (Antigua), Jan 28: Covidhit India will be bolstered by the return of key players when the record

four-time champions meet holders Bangladesh in the third quarterfinal of the U-19 Cricket World Cup here Saturday. Most of the half a dozen India players, who were affected by the dreaded virus, have recovered and are set to feature in the crucial clash. Six players, including skippe

to him is a Grand Slam triumph.

more than all these statistics, it's

about being in the final of the

Australian Open one more time.

That means a lot to me. To me it's

more important to be in the final

of the Australian Open and fight

to win another title than the rest

of the statistics for the history of

the sport," asserted the Spaniard.

rivals, Djokovic and Roger Federer,

who were not part of the men's

singles draw this time around. "I

just feel happy to be part of this

amazing era of tennis, sharing all

these things with the other two

players," Nadal stated.

Nadal was asked about his two

"For me at the end it's about

Yash Dhull, had gone into isolation ahead of India's second league fixture against Ireland, dealing a big blow to the side. Five of them tested positive in the RT-PCR tests and also ended up missing the last league game against Uganda. However, the depth in the squad ensured India won both those games comfortably and qualified for the quarterfinals as group toppers.

However, Nishant Sindhu, who captained the team in the absence of Dhull, tested positive after the game against Uganda and won't be available for the Bangladesh game. However, Dhull, his deputy Shaik Rasheed, Sidharth Yadav, Aaradhya Yadav and Manav Parakh are now available for the Bangladesh game. "All are fit now,



Boys in Blue start favourites

except for Sindhu," said an ICC source. "They have been medically deemed fit to play. They have a day or so to train and be game ready, added the source.

Both Dhull and Rasheed are important batters for the team and had looked in good touch against South Africa in their tournament opener.

Opener Angkrish Raghuvanshi and all-rounder Raj Bawa's confidence must be sky high after they scored match winning tons against Uganda. Left-arm spinner Vicky Ostwal has been India's stand out bowler in the tournament with seven wickets. The Bangladesh batters will also not have an easy time negotiating the extra pace of Rajvardhan Hangargekar.

The game will be a rematch of the previous edition's final in 2020

when Bangladesh had stunned the favourites to win their maiden title. Current Bangladesh skipper Rakibul Hasan was part of that

memorable final. In the recently held Asia Cup semifinal in the UAE, India had outplayed Bangladesh and gone on to win the title. So the 'Boys in Blue' will certainly start the game

## Consolation bronze for eves

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Muscat, Jan 28: Last edition champions India defeated China 2-0 to register a consolation third place finish at the women's Asia Cup hockey tournament here Friday. The Indian eves left behind the disappointment of their semifinal defeat to Korea and controlled the proceedings in the first two quarters. They scored a goal each in the two quarters to lead 2-0 at the interval. However, in spite of dominating the second session, the eves failed to add to the tally.

The Indians started brightly and earned a couple of penalty corners and from one such situation Sharmila Devi gave her side the lead in the 13th minute. She scored from a rebound after Gurjit Kaur's initial flick was blocked by the Chinese defence. The second goal came six minutes later when Gurjit made no mistake from India's fourth penalty corner.

China responded swiftly, securing a penalty corner which was brilliantly kept away by India captain and goalkeeper Savita Punia.



Indian eves vie for the ball with a Chinese player during the game Friday

Down by two goals, China came out with more intent after the change of ends and tried to put pressure on the Indian defence but to no avail. The Indian eves kept up the pressure on the Chinese defence at the start of the fourth and final quarter but failed to create any

clear cut chances Lack of match practice due to the

Covid-19 pandemic, after finishing in the fourth place at the Tokyo Olympics, cost defending champions India dearly. They were very inconsistent throughout the tournament which led to their ouster from the title race.

In the semifinals, the eves had gone down 2-3 to Korea in a hardfought encounter.

#### ACT LOSS A WAKE-UP CALL FOR TEAM Reid harps on consistency

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: Still smarting from the semifinal exit at the Asia Champions Trophy (ACT), the Indian men's hockey team chief coach Graham Reid said Friday the setback came as a reality check for the Tokyo Olympic bronze medal winners ahead of a busy calendar year. Defending champions India were stunned 3-5 by Japan in the semifinals of the ACT in Dhaka last month.

"It's always difficult. You have to be put in situations. Everybody including myself hated that semifinal loss to Japan. No one likes to experience something like that. But sometimes you have to face it to learn from it," Reid said in a virtual press conference.

"The message after that tournament was 'Look this is what happens if we don't treat every single game with the utmost importance. I think it was really good learning experience," Reid added.

India will start the year with back-to-back Pro League ties against South Africa and France in Potchefstroom from February 8 to 13. Manpreet Singh will lead a 20member team in the double-leg contests in South Africa. The team will also have their veteran goalkeeper PR Sreejesh back besides getting two new faces - young drag-flicker Jugraj Singh and striker Abhishek.

Skipper Manpreet too highlighted the importance of starting the year on a positive note. "It's a very important year for the team. It's a good opportunity for us to play matches against France and South Africa and we hope to start the New Year on a winning note and make good progress. No doubt an important tour for us," asserted Manpreet.

Reid was asked about the two new players in the squad. "Jugraj is quite a versatile player who can play in both midfield and defence. He is also very quick when he dragflicks. I am quite excited if we can get him to be a little more consistent with his strikes," Reid pointed out. "Abhishek likes scoring goals, a prolific scorer. He is strong and young," Reid added.

#### JFC WIN, DENT FC GOA HOPES

as favourites.

Bambolim, Jan 28: Jamshedpur FC (JFC) inflicted a huge blow to FC Goa's aspirations for a play-off berth with a solitary goal win in their ISL match played here Friday. The winning goal was scored by Daniel Chima Chukwu (49th minute), who struck on his first outing for JFC after signing for them in the January transfer window.

The win took Owen Coyle's men to second place in the league table but kept Derrick Pereira's men stuck at ninth place. FC Goa will next face an ambitious Odisha FC here Tuesday while JFC await the challenge of an in-form Bengaluru FC

at the same venue next Saturday. The match had an eventful start with Chukwu shooting wide with a clear look at the Goa goal. On the other end, Ivan Gonzalez hit the underside of the crossbar with a header. The rebound fell to Edu Bedia whose low shot was brilliantly saved by TP Rehenesh. The Gaurs threw in more subsequent attacks at the JFC defence but to no avail.

Printed and published by Tathagata Satpathy on behalf of Navajat Printers and Media Pvt. Ltd. and printed at Navajat Printers, B-15 Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar -751010, Odisha; Phone: 7894447142 (Marketing). Editor: Tathagata Satpathy, RNI No. ORIENG/2011/37159