

leisure



MICHELLE WILLIAMS QUILTS MOVIE INSPIRED BY HER FIANCÉ'S DEATH

Actress Michelle Williams decided just before filming that she couldn't star in a movie inspired by the loss of her late fiancé and actor Heath Ledger, Bradley Rust Gray, the film's director and a friend of Ledger, told *Entertainment Weekly*.

GROWING UP AS QUEER WAS ISOLATING: CARA

Actress-model Cara Delevingne has opened up about the challenging time she had navigating her sexuality. Speaking to *The Sunday Times*, Delevingne said, "Growing up as a queer child was isolating and hard to navigate at times."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You will be very logical and rational today, as creativity is put on the back-burner. The situation at your workplace will be full of challenges, but you will take them head-on. Later, all the stress will be mitigated by the soothing touch of your loved ones, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
Today, you will strike a great balance between your professional and personal life, predicts Ganesh. You will save your money from being swindled by others. You may be lagging in the race to catch up with your goals, but will not be disappointed by what you achieve. It is an auspicious day to undertake business deals and start new projects, feels Ganesh.

GEMINI
A fantastic day to enter into all kinds of partnerships. A day to bond with your close friends, open joint accounts, strike deals, and make plans for a bright future, says Ganesh. You will be at the top of your game in almost everything you do. Some of you, who want to go for further studies, may take a well-informed decision today.

CANCER
Today, you may find yourself marooned in a sea of emotions, and the tides of turmoil will keep on getting stronger as the day progresses. However, such dire circumstances bring out the best in you, and you will be able to wade through the storm with nothing but patience on your side.

LEO
The complete family man that you are, it is your near and dear ones who have always laid the foundation of your success. So why should today be any different. The auspicious tides of the day begin from your home and follow you everywhere. Be it work or play, you have a tempo that is undiminished. It's going to be a great day, says Ganesh, so just go with the flow and smile your way through everything.

VIRGO
The extraordinary way in which you do things will earn you many admirers. Superiors at work will laud you for your commitment. Evenings will be fun-filled and entertaining. Look to relax with some meditation or music... or both.

LIBRA
Put up that 'Do Not Disturb' sign on the door today. That's because Ganesh feels the tingle in your bones to want to stick to your preferred subject matter. This will help you achieve good progress in your research. Also, expect to be hit by a wave of nostalgia, as loving memories from the past sweeten your heart. Keep your eyes open, for, you are likely to find someone special with whom you will share your innermost feelings, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO
Ganesh predicts you will possibly plan to launch a new product today. But put off the launch if you want to supersede certain unscrupulous elements. But after a waiting game, you may go ahead with your plan with much fanfare, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Zoom in on complicated problems and solve them with style, says Ganesh. Don't fret over problems; instead concentrate on ways to solve them. Your day will get even better when perhaps, news from an overseas friend reaches you.

CAPRICORN
Today, you will get back to playing the power game, using both fair and unfair means to achieve your goals, says Ganesh. Intellectual growth will be phenomenal; equally good will be your intuitions. In fact, your gut feelings will guide all the decisions you take today, and rest assured, none will leave you in a soup. You will be sensitive to and understanding of others' problems, and will lend a helping hand to those who seek your assistance.

AQUARIUS
Expect the unexpected today! Success, money, love, whatever it is that you'd lost hope of will suddenly come your way! In the evening, you may catch up with reading, research, discussion or other such activity, says Ganesh.

PISCES
Being a graceful loser is just about as important as being a generous winner, for success does not come by every day. Lowering your expectations will help steel you against disappointments today. There are indications you will embark on a pleasure trip with your soul mate, says Ganesh.



TEJASSWI LIFTS BB-15 TROPHY

MUMBAI: Ending 16 weeks of drama and suspense, and occasional talk about the inability of Season 15 to get the kind of audience engagement that the previous editions were able to manage, the reality show's host Salman Khan well past Sunday midnight declared Tejasswi Prakash as the winner of *Bigg Boss 15*.

Tejasswi, engineering graduate-turned-television actress who was earlier in the evening named as the face of *Naagin 6*, Ekta Kapoor's fantasy drama aired on Colors, gets to go home with the Bigg Boss trophy and a cheque of Rs 40 lakh.

Reacting to the victory, the actress said, "Thank you #TejaTroops and every-one who

made this possible! A dream come true after four months of a very challenging journey! The trophy comes home!!!! #salmankhan @voot @vootselect @colorstv @endemolshineind."

The favourite to win the trophy, Pratik Sehajpal, an Amity Law School alumnus who's now a motivational speaker and actor, had to be content with the runner-up slot. Karan Kundrra, a former Roadies 'gang leader' who later hosted the crime show *Gumraah*, was No. 3.

Moments before declaring the winner, Salman Khan created a heart-stopping moment by pulling a prank on Pratik, saying he had been evicted, only to call him back on the stage and break the bad news to Karan that it was he who had to exit. Kundrra said he was disappointed that he was not able to make it to the Top 2. **IANS**



Being single suits you best: Shehnaaz to Salman

MUMBAI: While actress Tejasswi Prakash hogged the limelight bagging the *Bigg Boss* trophy this season, the other big part of the finale was the emotional appearance of Shehnaaz Gill, the rumoured girlfriend of late actor Sidharth Shukla, the winner of Season 13 of the reality show. Apologising to Salman for breaking into tears, Shehnaaz said she had been working on herself and improving her skills on Salman's advice.

Then she engaged in banter with Salman, saying that Katrina Kaif had become Punjab's Katrina, after getting married to Vicky Kaushal, and then asked the host why he looked so happy about it. And she added wickedly: "Being single

suits you best. Stay that way."

After performing to Tuada Kutta, a song based on the favourite expression of Shehnaaz from *Bigg Boss 13*, Salman hugged Shehnaaz for a long time and said he was proud to see Shehnaaz trying to move on in life. Salman added that the last few months had been tough for Shehnaaz and Sidharth Shukla's mother.

Remembering Sidharth, Shehnaaz said he will always be special to her. "There have been many winners of *Bigg Boss*, but king ek hi tha and that is Siddharth Shukla," Shehnaaz told Salman. **IANS**

INT'L FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT ODIA MUSICIAN ANURAG COMPOSES THEME SONG

BHUBANESWAR: Though India's hopes of progressing deep into the ongoing Women's Asian Football Cup 2022 under Asian Football Confederation (AFC) were dashed by the emergence of multiple COVID cases in the squad, we can still cheer up every time *Are You Ready*, the theme song of the tournament is played during the matches.

The song is composed by Anurag Patnaik, a Bhubaneswar-based musician.

Shot and edited by Mausam Sahoo at Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Navi Mumbai, the song's lyrics have been penned by Imran Farhan. Navya Jaiti has lent the voice. The song was recorded at Studio 6 here while the final packaging was taken care of by Musictechnica Studios.

Anurag, who works in movies of different languages including Odia, says, "Earlier



I worked for Paramin Advertising and Marketing Associates and composed a song to create awareness about Swachh Bharat Abhiyan for Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation. A few days ago, I got a call from AFC and the advertising agency asked me to do the theme song for the international sports event.

It took nearly five days to compose the song. We shot it in Odisha, Mumbai and Navi Mumbai to maintain diversity. I feel honoured to be part of this project." **PNN**



Hindi version of Rashmika's Pogaru crosses 200 mn views

BANGALORE: Actress Rashmika Mandanna, who's basking in the success of *Pushpa - The Rise*, has one more reason to celebrate now.

The Hindi dubbed version of her Kannada film, *Pogaru*, has crossed 200 million views on YouTube in just a few months.

This is not the first time that Rashmika has crossed the milestone on the video streaming platform. The Hindi version of her blockbuster film, *Dear Comrade*, has also crossed 300 million views on YouTube, apart from her two songs, *Inkem Inkem* from *Geetha Govindam*, and *Karabuu* from *Pogaru*, both crossing the 200 million views mark.

With *Pushpa* enjoying unprecedented success in all the five languages it was released in, Rashmika has earned the sobriquet of 'National Crush.'

Her song, *Saami Saami* from *Pushpa* has become a global rage, leaving the audiences eager to savour her Hindi releases. *Mission Majnu* and *Good Bye* are her two major Hindi projects slated for release this year. **IANS**

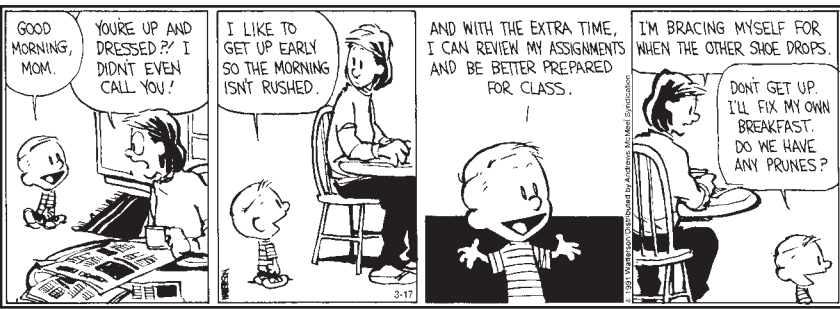


FUN post

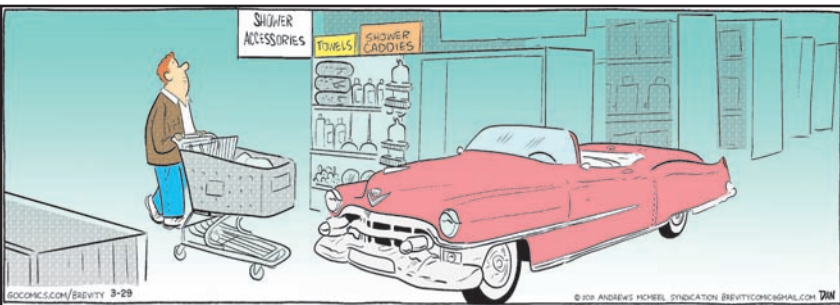
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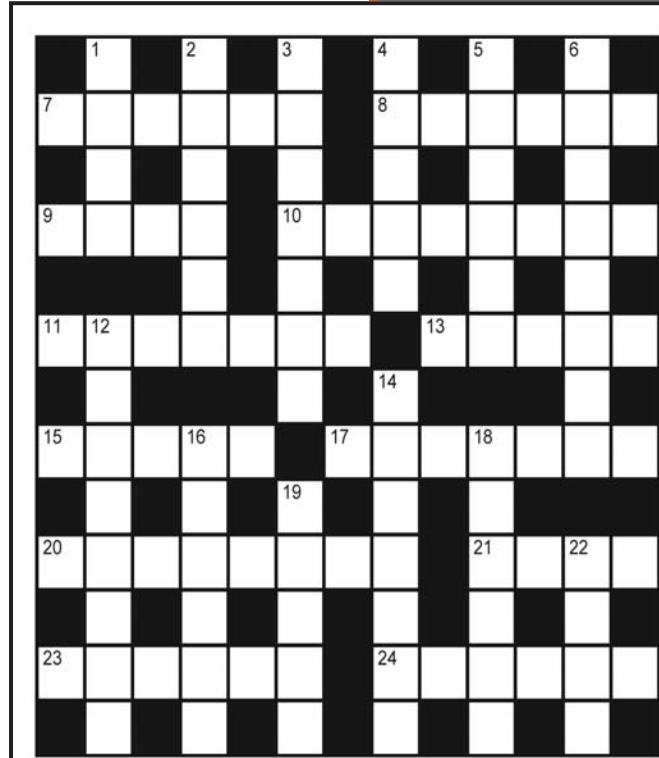
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



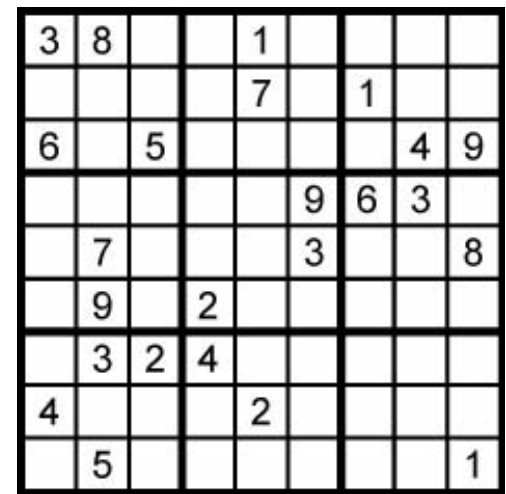
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Chess piece
 - 8 Polished
 - 9 Greek portico
 - 10 Driver's aid (4,4)
 - 11 Beat up
 - 13 Capital of Lombardy
 - 15 Parlour piece
 - 17 Movie promo
 - 20 Delighted
 - 21 Fishing spot
 - 23 Igloo dweller
 - 24 Relax
 - 6 Cease to flow
 - 12 Travel accessory
 - 14 Laugh unrestrainedly (5,2)
 - 16 Reach
 - 18 Acquired kin (2-4)
 - 19 Endured
 - 22 Neck problem

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Final notification for ULB posts reservation declared

Expectations from Union Budget '22



As per the notification issued by the Housing & Urban Development (H&UD) department, the offices of chairpersons in 54 ULBs have been reserved for women candidates. The chief posts in 9 ULBs have been reserved for Scheduled Caste (women), five for Scheduled Tribe (women) and another 40 for unreserved women.

Similarly, the chairperson posts in eight other ULBs have been reserved for Scheduled Caste and three for Scheduled Tribe, while 42 others are under unreserved category.

The department has issued the final notification after seeking objections and suggestions from all stakeholders and the general public on the draft reservation list.

"In pursuance of sub-section (4) of Section 47 of the Odisha Municipal Act, 1950 (Odisha Act 23 of 1950) read with sub-rule (6) of rule 67 of the said rules, the state government do hereby reserve the offices of Chairpersons for the categories," read the notification.

The H&UD department had reserved mayor seat in Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) for women candidates while Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) Mayor post is unreserved.

Notably, the state government has amended the Odisha Municipal Rules, 1994, to hold direct election for the posts of mayors of municipal corporations and chairpersons of municipalities and NACs during the upcoming poll. The urban election is very likely to be held soon after completion of the Panchayat polls in the state, sources said.

POST NEWS NETWORK

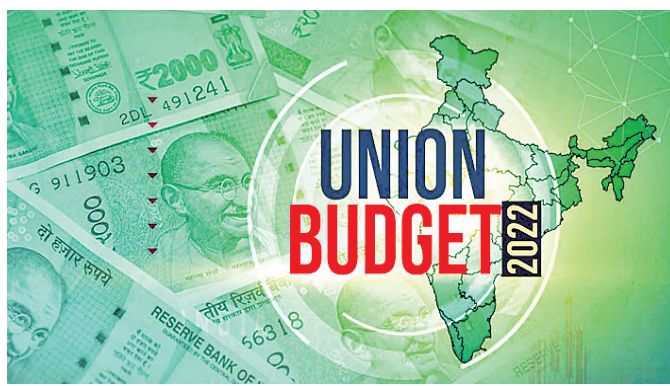
Bhubaneswar, Jan 31: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the fourth Annual Budget of the Modi 2.0 government Tuesday. The focus of the Budget is expected to be on accelerating India's pace of recovery from the pandemic-dented state, along with shoring up India's health-care system to prepare for any future outbreaks.

The government will continue to spend more to aid the recovery and put India back on a higher growth trajectory. Orissa POST interacts with experts from different sectors over their expectations from the coming annual budget.

Mona Lisa Bal, Chairperson of KIIT International School, said the year 2022 has started with a fresh wave of the pandemic that has further shaken the backbone of our education system. The learning loss created by the pandemic demands immediate attention of the Budget. The existing digital divide in the country is no longer news. According to UNESCO's State Education Report 2021, the availability of computing equipment in schools in India has been found to be only 22 per cent, and only 19 per cent of the schools have internet facility. The development of digital infrastructure did not receive due consideration last year. Hence, it is imperative to allocate sufficient fund for the development of a robust and improved digital infrastructure.

"With physical classes being shut once again, students will be dependent on online classes. We must ensure no student in the country is left behind owing to financial and technological disadvantage," she added.

General Secretary of Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha (HRAO) Srinibas Subudhi said, "We expect special plans from government for the hospitality sector which employs nearly 4.5 crore people and provides livelihood to



ones achieve glory and substantial financial rewards, others find it difficult to even survive. A good financial support will help create more athletes of repute as it would provide a means of livelihood even when one doesn't study," he said.

City resident and urban planner Piyush Ranjan Rout said, "The pandemic has presented more poor in urban areas than unemployment. So an employment guaranteed livelihood programme seems reasonable for India's urban sector budget 2022. The government can't do much on price escalation in LPG & Petroleum products. However, it can abolish taxation in Bicycle & Cycling accessories for affordability of majority of people."

Environment expert Jaya Krushna Panigrahi said in addition to various pro-people programmes, the government is expected to emphasise on the environmental challenges by making appropriate budget provisions. Areas such as alternative sources of energy, electric vehicles, green technology, pollution prevention, forest and wildlife conservation, and afforestation need to be prioritised. Provisions for adaptation and mitigation measures regarding global warming and climate change should be atop our environment agenda to meet international commitments.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 31: Moving a step forward in conducting elections to the urban local bodies (ULBs) in state, the Odisha government Monday issued final notification on reservation for the post of chairperson in 107 municipalities and notified area

Vignesh Mahanti to command COSA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 31: Brigadier Vignesh Mahanti, Sena Medal, took over the charge of Commander of Chhattisgarh and Odisha Sub Area (COSA) Monday from Brigadier Prashant Chauhan, Sena Medal, at a solemn ceremony at Naya Raipur.

During his illustrious career spanning over three decades, Brigadier Mahanti acquired the experience of numerous important operational and administrative appointments, both in India and abroad. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (Khadakwasla), Army School of Ammunition (UK), Defence Service Staff College (Wellington) and National Defence College (Phillippines). He has commanded an Engineer Regiment in Kashmir Valley and a Mountain Brigade in Eastern Theatre.

An engineering graduate, he holds a post graduate degree in Defence & Strategic Studies from Chennai University, and Masters in National Security Administration from the Phillipines.

Vice Army Chief CP Mohanty retires

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 31: Lieutenant General CP Mohanty superannuated as Vice Army Chief Monday, an official statement said.

Mohanty took charge as Vice Army Chief February 1 last year. He was heading the Army's Southern Command when he was appointed as Vice Chief of the Army Staff (VCOAS). "Lieutenant General CP Mohanty, Vice Chief of Army Staff (VCOAS) superannuated today," the Indian Army tweeted.

An alumnus of Indian Military College, Dehradun, and National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Mohanty was commissioned into the Rajput Regiment June 12, 1982.



BACK TO RIVER

Forest officials catch a Gharial near Mahanadi bridge in Cuttack, remove a net from its mouth and release it back to the river, Monday

OP PHOTOS

CLASHING SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Another group demands timely Plus II board exam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 31: Few days after some Plus II students demanded cancellation of board exams due to the ongoing pandemic, another group of students Monday here staged a protest demanding the opposite, i.e. commencement of board examination.

Several Plus II students gathered near the Master Canteen Square Monday to press for their demand of conducting the board examination. They said they are prepared for the exam which should be held at any cost as "it is directly linked to their future."

"We have gathered here to demand for the commencement of our board exams, be it in offline or online mode. Our future will be uncertain if the examination is not held," said students.

They further remarked that only

the students who have not prepared for the exams are demanding for the cancellation.

Earlier January 27, several Plus II students had staged a protest at the same venue i.e. Master Canteen Square demanding cancellation of board exams. They had alleged that their future would be at stake if the exams were held without completing their curriculum. They demanded complete cancellation of the exams, asking as to why the board exam needed to be held in an offline mode while classes were being conducted online.

The students had also said that the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) and the state government should announce their Plus II board exam result over marks scored in quarterly exams in their respective colleges.

The annual Plus II examinations are tentatively scheduled to be held in the month of March 2022.



IIT-Madras team finds gene spurring Indians' risk of diabetes, BP

An international team of researchers led by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has identified a gene protein variation present among Indians and other South Asians that increases their risk of diabetes, heart attacks and hypertension.

The team found that the gene variation was present in approximately 15 per cent of Indian and other South Asian populations. Further, people carrying this variant are 1.5 times more likely to have hypertension, type-2 diabetes, and coronary artery disease.

This combination could account for the higher prevalence of metabolic diseases among Indians and other South Asians, according to the study published online in the peer-reviewed Diabetes journal.

Pancreastatin is a small part (peptide) of a protein called Chromogranin A (CHG-A) in mammals. It exerts important physiological effects, mostly with respect

This study has implications in the area of diagnostics and personalised medicine. For example, our research findings may help in identifying individuals (at earlier stages of their lives - much before the onset of the disease - because the genetic make-up mostly remains unchanged throughout the life) who may be susceptible to Type-2 diabetes. This should be particularly useful for people with family history of cardiovascular and metabolic diseases for preventive healthcare and better management of disease

NITISH MAHAPATRA | RESEARCHER, DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY, INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, MADRAS



NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK

The researchers used a combination of experimental and computational modeling studies to unravel the mechanistic basis for the higher activity of the variant peptide (PST-297S) in comparison to the wild-type peptide (PST-WT) and to account for the higher disease risk in the carriers of the 297 Ser allele

The study showed that the variant peptide had a higher affinity to the insulin receptor in cells, which prevents insulin from binding to the receptor of the cells for glucose uptake

This results in a higher risk of insulin resistance and diabetes among people who carry the variant of this peptide

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"This study has implications in the area of diagnostics and personalised medicine. For example, our research findings may help in identifying individuals (at earlier stages of their lives - much before the onset of the disease - because the genetic make-up mostly remains unchanged throughout the life) who may be susceptible to Type-2 diabetes," said Nitish Mahapatra from the Department of Biotechnology.

"This should be particularly useful for people with family history of cardiovascular and metabolic diseases for preventive healthcare and better management of disease," he added.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By the virtue of an affidavit No. 52AA186207 Dt.27.01.2022 before the Court of Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar, that I, do hereby declare that, myself Bishnu Prasad Lenka and Bishnu Prasad Lenka, who is son of Maheswar Lenka of Jagannath Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 25 is one and same person.

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SHORT TAKES

Fire at Keonjhar DHH; none hurt

Keonjhar: A major fire broke out at the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) in Keonjhar Monday, but no one was injured in the mishap, a senior health department official said. The blaze erupted inside the dialysis unit of the state-run hospital around noon. Though the exact cause is yet to be ascertained, short circuit is suspected to have led to the accident, the official added. The incident took place when 11 patients were in the dialysis unit, he said, adding, all of them are safe and have been shifted to other beds. The blaze has been brought under control with the help of fire brigade personnel and hospital staffers, the official added.

Talcher JE under Vigilance glare

Angul: Vigilance sleuths Monday conducted simultaneous raids on properties of a junior engineer (JE) in Talcher block of Angul district on charges of amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. The JE has been identified as Biranchi Narayan Sahu. Sources said the Vigilance sleuths conducted raids at four places including his residential house at Kumuda and another house at Ambal - both under Sadar police limits in Angul district - a relative's house at Meramundali in Dhenkanal district and Sahu's office room in the block.

Youth held for raping 8-yr old

Berhampur: Police arrested a youth on charge of raping an 8-year-old girl under Sadar police limits here, Monday. The accused was identified as Ananta Behera, 20, in the area. The survivor was taken for a medical examination Monday while her statements will be recorded before a magistrate, Tuesday. Later, the accused will be produced in the court. The incident occurred Saturday, when the survivor was on her way to her grandmother's house near their residence. Finding her alone, Behera lured the girl to an isolated place where he raped her. The victim's mother lodged a complaint at the police station after she came to know about the crime.

Kids engaged in poll campaign

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Jan 31: Campaigning for three-tier panchayat elections has intensified in Malkangiri district with candidates affiliated to various political parties launching a poster war to draw the attention of the voters. However, many candidates have illegally engaged minor children in the campaigning.



Children sticking posters and putting up party flags for some BJP candidates at MV-10 village in this district is a case in this point, it is alleged. The rule says no candidate of any political party or contesting as an independent is allowed to engage children below 18-years of age in the campaigning. However, several schoolchildren were found engaged by BJP leaders in sticking posters and in putting up banners and party flags. This has sparked resentment as well as surprise among the residents, who claimed that this has revealed the true face of the party which is advocating for development of children and vouching for a transparent government. Sources said the party leaders have engaged the children in party work by giving them some paltry sum which is highly disappointing.

STUDENTS' DEMO



Students stage a demonstration at the main gate of Gangadhar Meher University in Sambalpur, Monday, demanding cancellation of Plus II final year offline examination

Poor literacy, admin apathy bane of Juangs

DEVELOPMENT A FAR CRY



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 31: Despite execution of a host of development programmes by the state and the Central governments for the Juang tribe in the district, their progress on socio-economic and education fronts has been dismal, if the literacy rate of 12.24 per cent among these tribals is any indication. Most of the Juangs are leading a miserable life in hilly and forested pockets without basic amenities and decent livelihood. Given their miserable condition, they seem to be far from the social mainstream, a report said.

It is alleged that crores of rupees are being spent for their uplift through various agencies, but the Juangs fail to reap the benefits of the welfare programmes. More shockingly, the literacy rate among the Juangs is still extremely low. According to the report, Juangs, one of the primitive tribes in the state, live in 148 villages under Telkoi, Bansapal, Harichandanpur and Ghatagaon blocks. As per an official survey, their population is 21,146 (4,575 families) in the district. The annual population growth of this tribe is recoded at 2.6 per cent while average literacy rate

MOST OF THE JUANG VILLAGES DO NOT HAVE ALL-WEATHER ROADS, LET ALONE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE FACILITIES. PATIENTS BEING CARRIED ON COTS IN HILLY TRACKS TO HOSPITALS ARE A COMMON SIGHT IN THE JUANG VILLAGES. SCORES OF JUANGS HAVE NOT YET BEEN PROVIDED PATTAS FOR THE FOREST LAND UNDER FOREST RIGHTS ACT. RATIONS UNDER PDS DO NOT REACH THEIR VILLAGES DUE TO COMMUTING WOES.

among them is as low as 12.24 per cent. Most of the Juang villages do not have all-weather roads, let alone access to healthcare facilities. Patients being carried on cots in hilly tracks to hospitals are a common sight in the Juang villages. In many cases, patients die on the way to hospitals. In 1987, the government had set up Juang Unnayan Samiti at Gonasika under Bansapal block to carry out development works for the tribals. Initially, seven Juang villages were brought under the Samiti. In 1996, 32 more villages were included in it which was the last addition. Residents of the remaining 116

256 in the fray for 69 ZP zones in Ganjam



PANCHAYAT POLLS

CPI HAS FIELDIED SIX CANDIDATES, CPM THREE, BSP FIVE WHILE 14 ARE FROM OTHER PARTIES AND 13 ARE INDEPENDENT. A TOTAL OF 1,563 CANDIDATES ARE CONTESTING FOR SARPANCH POSTS, 10,500 FOR WARD MEMBER AND 1,348 FOR SAMITI MEMBER POSTS IN 503 PANCHAYATS OF 22 BLOCKS.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Jan 31: Altogether 256 candidates are in the fray for the 69 zilla panchayat (ZP) zones in Ganjam district, said sources. According to reports, 67 ZP seats will see triangular fight as the Congress was unable to field candidates for two ZP seats. CPI has fieldied six candidates, CPM three, BSP five while 14 and 13 candidates are from other parties and independents respectively. Meanwhile, candidates contesting for posts of sarpanch, samiti member and ward member have started their door-to-door campaign. A total of 1,563 candidates are contesting for sarpanch posts, 10,500 ward member and 1,348 samiti member posts in 503 panchayats of 22 blocks.

According to political observers, the BJD and BJP are focusing on winning more sarpanch and ZP member seats while the Congress seems to have lagging behind in campaign, given its weak organisational base. Congress had failed to find a candidate for ZP zone-15 in Chikiti block. CPI has fieldied its candidate for ZP zone-25 in Digapahandi block as part of a seat arrangement with Congress, said Maheswar Patra, vice president of the district unit of Congress. In ZP zone-15 under Sadar block, both CPI and CPM have fieldied their own candidates, pointing out lack of mutual support and coordination. On the other hand, the BJD and BJP have been working on their own strategies to grab more ZP zones in the district.

FARM PROTEST



Farmers under the aegis of 'Sanyukt Kisan Morcha' during a protest in Berhampur over inability of the Union government in announcing the minimum support price (MSP) for agricultural produce

Parking on NH-49 threat to movement of jumbos

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 31: Scores of heavy vehicles plying in Keonjhar district for extraction and transportation of minerals have posed a serious threat to the free movement of elephants, said sources. Parking of hundreds of heavy vehicles on National Highway-49 leaves little space for free movement of animals, as per sources. The trucks have to stand in queues on the highway and adjoining roads waiting for their turn to carry minerals. As a result, the passage for wild animals gets shrunk, prompting them to stray into the nearby villages. This often leads to loss of human lives and properties. The blazing lights of hundreds of trucks parked on the highway near Kaipur and the deafening



sound of their horns are deterring the animals to move from one jungle to another. The man-animal conflict is only increasing by the day while forest officials are clueless about a lasting solution to the problem. The Kaipur-Anjar stretch on NH-49 has become a vulnerable zone for the pachyderms. Elephant herds residing in forests under Bhuyan

and Juanga Pidha ranges are finding it difficult to cross the highway with hundreds of trucks parked en route. Unable to cross the highway, a herd of nine elephants have stayed put at Bhejidihi-Talakainsiri jungle and are unleashing a reign of terror in the area. This has spread panic among the residents. The jumbo herd is now holed up in the jungle near Sanamachhakandana river bank and destroying crops and properties of people. The presence of the herd has posed a serious threat to the tourists visiting Badaghagra. Environmentalists have demanded an early solution to the problem. Zilla parishad chairperson Kamalini Patra has apprised the DFO and sub-collector about the problem. However, the authorities are yet to come up with a solution.

Migrant workers' votes crucial in Kendrapara rural polls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Jan 31: With the campaigning for the ensuing rural polls in Kendrapara district picking up pace by the day, the contestants here have eyed on migrant workers' votes to emerge victorious. Many of the candidates are busy making arrangements for the return of the migrant workers. Local party workers are leaving no stone unturned in convincing the migrant workers' families and booking tickets for the return of the migrants. A source said around 46 per cent of the total number of bona fide voters under Aul, Rajnagar and Mahakalpara Assembly segments are working outside the district and even outside the state. Every single vote counts as the total num-

ber of voters in panchayat segments is very limited. "Candidates in panchayat elections here win or lose by a very narrow margin. The three major political parties - BJD, BJP and Congress - have been attaching utmost importance to the upcoming three-tier polls in Kendrapara district, as it is perceived as a lit-

mus test ahead of the 2024 general elections. It has now become a prestige issue too," said Sunil Kumar Panda, a social activist. Around 57,000 educated youths in Kendrapara, who have registered their names under the district employment exchange, are still jobless. Similarly, more than 3 lakh workers have migrated to places outside the district and state as well, Panda stated. Meanwhile, local BJD youth wing leader Rajesh Kumar Panda said Chief Minister and the party supremo Naveen Patnaik has always given priority to employment. The BJD government has implemented welfare schemes such as KALIA and BALARAM for the farmers. The state government has introduced schemes providing loans to SHGs at nominal rate of inter-



est in a bid to promote women empowerment. It has launched single-window facilities for young entrepreneurs to avail loans, the youth wing leader added. BJD government has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with ArcelorMittal group to set up a heavy industry in Kendrapara, in order to generate employment opportunities. In addition, the government has opened State Institute of Plumbing Technology (SIPT) at Pattamundai, including a skill development centre in the district. Employment

fairs (Nijukti Mela) are being held for the local youths, Panda further said. BJD local youth wing leader Dillip Dash said, "The agricultural and industrial policies of the Central government are very much clear. If properly implemented, no job aspirant would have to leave the district and work elsewhere. The Union government's welfare schemes are being hijacked by the BJD government and voters have understood it." Congress local youth wing leader Sambit Srichandan said, "Our party is always concerned about migrant workers and youth workforce. Former Chief Minister Janaki Ballabh Patnaik had introduced the 'Thousand Industries Thousand Days' scheme. The party is capable of finding out a solution to curb migration, he stated.

8 minors rescued from Berhampur rly station

Berhampur: Childline officials Monday rescued eight children including two girls from Berhampur railway station while they were being trafficked to Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The children were rescued from Platform No-2 of the railway station where they were waiting to board a train. The officials of Sishu Sahayata Kendra and Railway Protection Force assisted the Childline officials during the rescue of the minors. The rescued children admitted that they were being taken to Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu for work in various establishments there. Among the minors, five had railway tickets to Tamil Nadu while the remaining three had tickets to Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh. While three boys and two girls belong to Ganjam district, two boys are from Kandhamal and one minor from Gajapati district.

international



A quasi-state of emergency has already started, and our basic thinking is that we will confirm its effect, see how the situation develops and work closely with municipalities before comprehensively making a decision
FUMIO KISHIDA | PRIME MINISTER, JAPAN

ISRAELI BOY CATCHES THREE COVID VARIANTS

In a rare case, an 11-year-old Israeli boy has been infected with three different Covid variants in a year. Alon Helfgott has officially been infected with Alpha, Delta, and now Omicron, the Times of Israel reported



of the day quote

It was a great electoral campaign, it was a unique opportunity for everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, it surpassed everything that had been done

I am not astonished by the harsh words from my opponents, but I am astonished by the silence of my well-wishers

EU leaders' cooperation with Libyan authorities is keeping desperate people trapped in unimaginable horrors in Libya. It is high time to put an end to this callous approach

SHORT TAKES

AU suspends Burkina Faso
Ouagadougou: The African Union has suspended Burkina Faso from all its activities in response to last week's military coup, effective until constitutional order is restored, the AU said Monday. Burkina Faso had already been suspended from the West African regional bloc, the Economic Community of West African States, though ECOWAS stopped short of imposing sanctions after the Jan 24 coup that ousted President Roch Kabore.

2 cops shot dead during traffic stop
Berlin: Two police officers were shot dead on a rural road in western Germany while on a routine patrol early Monday, police said. The shooting happened during a traffic check near Kusel at about 4:20 am, police in Kaiserslautern said in a statement. They were able to radio that shots were being fired, spokesman Bernhard Christian Erford told n-tv television. Reinforcements were unable to help the officers — a 24-year-old woman and 29-year-old man — when they arrived.

Pak: 17 hurt in grenade attack
Karachi: At least 17 people, including two policemen, were injured in a grenade attack in Jaffarabad district in Pakistan's restive southwestern Balochistan province, police said. Senior police officials said that unidentified motorcyclists hurled a hand-grenade near a shop in a busy market in Dera Allahyar town of Jaffarabad district Sunday night. At least 17 people, including two traffic constables, were injured in the attack, they said. No group so far claimed responsibility for the attack.

10 killed in Kenya vehicle explosion
Nairobi: A local official in northeastern Kenya says at least 10 people are dead after their vehicle ran over an explosive device on a highway Monday morning. North Eastern regional commander George Seda said the blast occurred outside Mandera town. It was not clear how many people were in the vehicle. Witnesses said the toll could rise because others had serious injuries. Police suspect the explosive device was placed by al-Shabab extremists operating in the area after crossing from nearby Somalia.

MARKING EU PRESIDENCY



A view shows the Eiffel Tower lit up in blue to mark the French presidency of the European Union in Paris, France

PARTYGATE PROBE REPORT CRITICISES LOCKDOWN PARTIES AT UK PM'S OFFICE



REUTERS

Failures of leadership, says report
Learn immediately, government told
Partygate scandal has hit Johnson's ratings
Johnson to make statement to parliament

London, Jan 31: An inquiry into COVID-19 lockdown-breaking parties at Prime Minister Boris Johnson's office and residence said Monday some of these should not have taken place, and serious failures of leadership and judgment occurred at the heart of the British government.
Johnson is facing the gravest threat to his premiership over the parties at Number 10 Downing Street, and the report by senior civil servant Sue Gray had the potential to trigger an end to his premiership. However, parts of the report were not published due to an ongoing police investigation, which may allow Johnson to survive. He has so far weathered calls from opponents and some in his own party to resign by saying people need to wait for the report.
At least some of the gatherings in question represent a serious failure to observe not just the high standards expected of those working at the heart of government but also of the standards expected of the entire British population at the time, Gray's report said.
She also said the excessive consumption of alcohol at Downing Street was not appropriate. Gray was tasked with looking

into what has become weeks of a steady drip of stories about events in Downing Street during the COVID-19 lockdown, with reports of aides stuffing a suitcase full of supermarket alcohol and dancing until the early hours.
Accounts of more than a dozen gatherings - including a bring your own booze party in the Downing Street garden - have provoked widespread public anger. Millions were kept apart from loved ones for months because of the restrictions and many were not able to say their final goodbyes to dying family members.
Her report said of 16 allegations of rule-breaking gatherings at Downing Street or other government offices, 12 were under investigation by police. As I have noted, a number of these gatherings should not have been allowed to take place or to develop in the way that they did, she said in the report, entitled Investigation into Alleged Gatherings on Government Premises during COVID-19 Restrictions - Update.
Opponents were critical of the limited nature of the report.
This watered down update is utterly pointless, said Ed Davey, leader of the opposition Liberal Democrat party. Everyone knows Boris Johnson broke the rules and lied to the country.

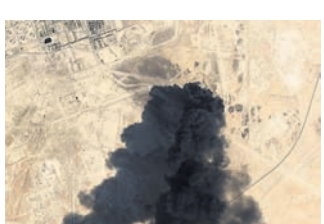
Russia, US square off at UNSC



United Nations, Jan 31: The United States and Russia are squaring off at the UN Security Council over Ukraine, with Washington calling Moscow's actions a threat to international peace and security, while a Kremlin envoy ridiculed Monday's meeting as a "PR stunt."
The session kicks off more high-level diplomacy this week, although talks between the US and Russia have so far failed to ease tensions in the crisis. Russia has amassed an estimated 100,000 troops near Ukraine's borders, stoking fears in the West of an invasion.
Russia denies it intends to launch an attack but demanded that NATO promise never to allow Ukraine to join the alliance, halt the deployment of NATO weapons near Russian borders, and roll back its forces from Eastern Europe. NATO and the US call those demands impossible.
Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken are expected to speak by phone Tuesday, according to the Russian Foreign Ministry.
British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will visit Ukraine Tuesday for talks with Zelenskyy, and will speak with Russian President Vladimir Putin later Monday, to urge him to "step back," Johnson's

UAE intercepts Houthi missile amidst Israeli president's visit

The missile attack came hours after Israel's President Herzog met Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, Jan 31: The UAE's air defence forces Monday intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by Yemen's Houthi terrorist group towards it, the country's Ministry of Defence said, amidst a historic visit by Israel's President Isaac Herzog.
There were no casualties resulting from the attack and the

fragments of the ballistic missile fell outside of populated areas, the ministry said in a statement to the country's official WAM news agency.
"The UAE air defence forces and the Coalition Command had succeeded in destroying the missile launcher in Yemen after identifying locations of the sites," it said.
In a tweet, the ministry said that the platform for ballistic missile launch at Al Jawf in Yemen was destroyed at 12:50 AM (local time). A video of the destruction was also shared.
The ministry also affirmed its "full readiness to deal with any threats," adding that it will "take all necessary measures to protect the UAE from any attacks."
It also called on the public to follow the news on the latest missile attack from the UAE's official authorities.
Meanwhile, the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) said that the air traffic movement is normal and all flights are operating as usual as there was "no impact on air traffic."
In a statement to WAM, the GCAA said that "there is no impact on flights and airports resulting from the interception of the ballistic missile launched by the Houthi terrorist militia on the country."
Abu Dhabi and Dubai are important global aviation hubs in the region.

Rogan apologises on row over Covid



San Francisco: Popular US podcaster Joe Rogan has apologised amid a backlash against COVID-19 misinformation in his programme, while his platform, Spotify Technology SA, said it would add a content advisory to any episode with discussion of Covid. Rogan, a prominent vaccine skeptic, has stirred controversy with his views on the pandemic and on vaccines and government mandates to control the spread of the virus. Singer-songwriters Neil Young and Joni Mitchell announced last week that they were removing their music from Spotify in protest at coronavirus misinformation broadcast on the platform.

Ottawa: Demonstrators remain stubborn

Ottawa, Jan 31: Police and officials in the Canadian capital Ottawa say some of the trucks blocking the city center as part of an anti-vaccine demonstration should start leaving Monday, even as some protesters insist they will stay.
Dozens of trucks and other vehicles have been jamming up central Ottawa since Friday and thousands descended upon Parliament Hill to complain about Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and COVID-19 vaccine mandates.
Parliament resumes Monday after a six-week winter break and Trudeau is set to address reporters at 11:15 am Eastern Time (16:15 GMT). "Demonstrations are expected to become smaller after today. However, it will take some time to clear vehicles from the downtown core," Ottawa city council said late Sunday.
There were few signs of activity



among the protesters early Monday, with many huddling in their cabs as temperatures hovered around 16 Celsius.
"This is still a very tenuous exercise, it's fluid in nature. Negotiations are indicating that some people are leaving the city from a demonstrations standpoint, that's a good thing," police chief Peter Sloyly told reporters late Sunday. Canada Unity, one of the groups involved, said it wanted to gather 1,000 people to go into a mall and shop without masks. The Rideau Centre, a large nearby mall, said it would be shut for a second day on Monday.

Trudeau COVID +ve

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Monday he had tested positive for COVID-19 but was feeling fine and would continue to work remotely while following public health guidelines. Trudeau went into isolation last week after one of his children tested positive but at the time a rapid test for him came back negative, he told the Canadian Press.

Police said Friday they would start towing trucks Monday if necessary. But by late Sunday it said they had avoided ticketing and towing vehicles to avoid provoking confrontations with demonstrators. The announcement spurred frustration among local residents who said they were fed up with the non-stop blaring of truck horns and demonstrators using the streets as an open-air toilet.

Pregnant reporter in Af fights NZ govt to come home

SHE SAID SHE TRIES TO STAY CALM AS SHE WAGES A PAPER WAR WITH NEW ZEALAND'S QUARANTINE SYSTEM, BUT THAT SHE WORRIES ABOUT HOW THE STRESS SHE HAS BEEN UNDER WILL IMPACT HER BABY

ASSOCIATED PRESS

desperate Afghanistan. Now, a pregnant New Zealand reporter has chosen Kabul as a temporary base for her uphill fight to return home because of her country's strict COVID-19 entry rules.
Charlotte Bellis, 35, is expecting her first child with her partner, freelance photographer Jim Huylebroek, a Belgium native who has lived in Afghanistan for two years. Bellis, who is 25 weeks pregnant with a daughter, told The Associated Press Sunday that each day is a battle.
She said she has been vaccinated three times and is ready to isolate herself upon her return to New Zealand. "This is ridiculous. It is my legal right to go to New Zealand, where I have health care, where I have family. All my support is there," she said.
Bellis first wrote about her difficulties in a column published in The New Zealand Herald on

Thousands of New Zealand citizens wanting to return home have faced delays due to a bottleneck of people in the country's border quarantine system

Saturday. She had tried without success to enter New Zealand via a lottery-style system and then applied for an emergency return, but was rejected.
On Monday, New Zealand's



COVID-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins said officials had suggested Bellis amend her application or try again under different criteria.
"I want to be clear, there is a

place in Managed Isolation and Quarantine for people with special circumstances like Ms Bellis. No one's saying there is not," Hipkins said. He said while officials had needed to make some difficult choices, the quarantine system had worked well overall by saving lives and preventing the health system from getting swamped.
However, Bellis insists the decisions have been arbitrary. She said she sent dozens of documents to the New Zealand authorities, including ultrasounds and physicians' letters specifying her due date is around May 19. Yet she said she was rejected because she was told her pregnancy didn't meet the criteria of "threshold of critical time threat."
"If I don't meet the threshold as a pregnant woman, then who does?" she asked.
Bellis had worked as an Afghanistan correspondent for Al

Jazeera, the Qatar-based news network. In November, she resigned, because it is illegal to be pregnant and unmarried in Qatar. Al Jazeera did not immediately respond to a request for comment.
Bellis then flew to Belgium, trying to get residency there, but said the length of the process would have left her in the country with an expired visa. In the end, she and her partner returned to Afghanistan because they had a visa, felt welcome and from there could wage her battle to return to her home. They have a house in Afghanistan and after "evaluating all of our options," returned to Kabul, she said.
Bellis said that prior to returning to Afghanistan, she sought permission from the Taliban. She said she had feared arriving "with a little bump and not married" could be problematic.
Instead, the Taliban response was immediate and positive.

