



## GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Actor Ananya Panday says her performance in upcoming movie 'Gehraiyaan' will surely be a turning point in her career

LEISURE P2



## UN REPORT FLAYED

India has criticised a report of UN Secretary-General for ignoring Let and JeM militant groups despite their threats

INTERNATIONAL P10



## THIRD ODI TODAY

Shikhar Dhawan returns to the squad as India look to complete whitewash against West Indies

SPORTS P12

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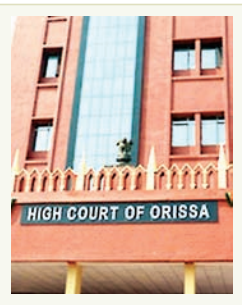
## GUIDELINES REVISED FOR INT'L TRAVEL



**New Delhi:** The Health Ministry revised Thursday the guidelines for international arrivals. It recommended that all travellers self-monitor their health for the next 14 days, instead of seven days home quarantine as was mandated earlier. The demarcation of 'at risk' countries has also been removed in the revised guidelines, which will come into effect February 14 onwards. Hence passengers arriving from 'at risk' countries will not have to undergo RT-PCR tests anymore on arrival. Only two per cent of the international arrivals will be randomly tested for Covid-19 after which they will be allowed to go home.

## 3 NEW JUDGES FOR ORISSA HC

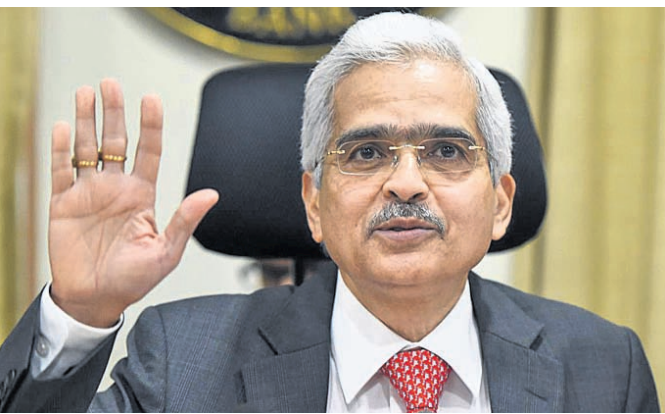
**New Delhi:** The Union Ministry of Law and Justice notified Thursday the appointment of three new judges to the Orissa High Court. The names of four advocates of the Orissa High Court were recommended for elevation as judges January 29 by the Supreme Court Collegium headed by CJI NV Ramana. Out of the four, three have been elevated as judges. The President is pleased to appoint V Narasingh, Biraja Prasanna Satapathy and Murahari Sri Raman, as judges of the Orissa High Court, a notification from the Law Ministry said.



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# CRYPTO A BIG HAZARD: DAS



RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das

■ The comments made by the RBI Governor assumes significance as it comes days after the Centre put taxes on cryptocurrencies

**Mumbai, Feb 10:** RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das made it clear Thursday that private cryptocurrencies are a threat to macroeconomic and financial stability. Cautioning investors, Das said such assets have no underlying whatsoever, 'not even a tulip'. The comments are a reiteration of institutional concerns on such assets expressed earlier but assume significance because they come days after the Union Budget put a 30 per cent tax on gains made

on such assets. The crypto stakeholders had welcomed the move. "Private cryptocurrencies or whatever name you call it are a threat to our macroeconomic and financial stability. They will undermine RBI's ability to deal with issues of financial and macroeconomic stability," Das told reporters. He added that it is his 'duty' to caution investors, and asked them to keep in mind that they are investing at their own risk. He also said that investors should think twice before taking the cryptocurrency way. The RBI pegged the economic growth rate for 2022-23 at 7.8 per cent, down from 9.2% expected in 2021-22, in view of uncertainties on account of the pandemic and elevated global commodity prices. The RBI's growth projection for next financial year is lower than 8-

## REPO RATE UNCHANGED

**Mumbai:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) held Thursday its key lending rates steady at record low levels for the 10th straight meeting to support a durable recovery of the economy from Covid-19. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided to hold the lending rate, or the repo rate, steady at 4 per cent, and the reverse repo, or the rate at which it absorbs excess cash from lenders, unchanged at 3.35 per cent. The six-member MPC, which has been on pause since August 2020, voted unanimously to maintain the status quo on the repo rate and by a majority of 5-1 to retain the accommodative policy stance as long as necessary, Das said. Monetary policy actions will be calibrated and well telegraphed, he said, indicating that there will not be any surprises.

MORE P11

8.5 per cent projected by the Finance Ministry in the recent Economic Survey which was tabled in Parliament. Unveiling the bi-monthly policy, the Das said, 'recovery in domestic economic activity is yet to be broad-based, as private consumption and contact-intensive services remain below pre-pandemic levels'. According to Das, going forward, government's thrust on capital expenditure and exports are expected to enhance productive capacity and strengthen aggregate demand.

## WOMEN POWER TO THE FORE



Even footballers of various clubs pose with R Vineel Krishna, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Sports Department, Government of Odisha during the official jersey launching ceremony at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. The women's football league will start February 12

OP PHOTO

## ODIA BONDED LABOURERS SEEK GOVT ASSISTANCE

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Nuapada, Feb 10:** Thirty four bonded labourers from this district have sought the help of the Odisha government to return to their native villages. They are currently working at a brick kiln in Telengana. In a video message they have appealed for their rescue at the earliest and have alleged inhuman torture by the owner. The labourers hail from Belgaon, Kotribahal, Malpada, Lohandopali and Thakurpali villages, under Komna block of this district. They got the job at the brick kiln under Bangiri police limits in Telengana in December 2021 through a tout. However, since joining the labourers alleged, that they have been verbally abused and physically tortured. In the video, a number of labourers, including males and females, are seen in plight. One elderly woman informed that they are not being provided with food and drinking water on a regular basis. Several children were also seen in the video. A similar video had surfaced early January, where 65 labourers had made similar allegations against the owner of another brick kiln.

## Junior classes to resume Feb 28

■ In the upcoming panchayat polls, many schools will be used as booths while teaching and non-teaching staff will be involved in the election process. So physical classes will start once the elections are over

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** The resumption of physical classes for students from KG to Class VII has been deferred to February 28, School and Mass Education Secretary Bishnupada Sethi informed here Thursday. This has happened due to the three-tier panchayat polls that are to be conducted in five phases. Classes will resume February 14, but those will be conducted online. Earlier it had been announced that physical classes for the segment will start February 14. However, since the announcement, a number of district collectors have written to the Education Department seeking more time to reopen the schools. Most of the



schools in the primary level have remained closed for more than two years now. So to clean them up and provide the right environment to the kids, more time will be needed, the collectors said. The collectors also pointed out that the panchayat polls will be conducted this month. Many of the institutions will be used as booths while most of the polling personnel comprise of teaching and non-teaching staff. As these personnel are undergoing training to conduct the polls, so it will be better to defer the resumption of classes. The collectors had also stated that a large number of people will be present in the schools used as booths. This may create health problems for many as the threat of Covid-19 has not subsided. So reopening of schools should be deferred.

## Lakhimpur Kheri violence case: Bail for minister's son

■ Initially, after the gruesome incident, the police had not taken any action against Ashish Mishra. It was only after the Supreme Court had stepped in suo motu, that Ashish was arrested

AGENCIES

**Lucknow, Feb 10:** In a development which must have stunned many, the Allahabad High Court granted bail Thursday to Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister Ajay Mishra Teni, in the Lakhimpur Kheri incident in which eight people including four farmers were killed. The Lucknow bench of the court had reserved its order January 18 on Ashish's plea after concluding the hearing through video-conferencing. Justice Rajeev Singh granted bail to him in the case. While granting bail to Ashish the



court questioned the charges against him and rejected the police investigation. The counsel appearing on behalf of the minister's son had told the court that his client was innocent. There was no evidence against him that he incited the driver of a vehicle to crush the farmers. Opposing the plea, Additional Advocate General VK Shahi had said that at the time of the incident, Ashish was in the car that mowed down the farmers. Courts in Lakhimpur Kheri have rejected bail for Ashish in the past. Ashish was allegedly driving the SUV October 3 that ran over four farmers and a journalist at Lakhimpur Kheri during a protest march against the three controversial farm laws. He was arrested days later. In the aftermath of the incident, three BJP workers were also killed also on the same day. Videos had emerged of the incident and had evoked widespread anger and criticism. The videos showed an SUV ramming farmers and crushing them without breaking speed.

MORE P7

## Ball starts rolling for urban polls

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** State Election Commissioner (SEC) Aditya Prasad Padhi held a meeting Thursday with representatives of various political parties of Odisha for smooth conduct of the upcoming urban elections. Representatives from the ruling BJD, main opposition parties, BJP and the Congress and leaders of other political outfits attended the meeting held at Gita Govinda Sadan here.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Padhi said the Housing and Urban Development Department has issued notifications on delimitation of wards and reservation of seats in 110 ULBs. So, preparations to conduct elections in 107 municipalities/NACs and three corporations, namely Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur have started in right earnest. The draft electoral roll has been published today (Thursday), informed Padhi.

MORE P4

# No 'religious things' in schools: Karnataka HC

## STUDENTS ASKED TO AVOID WEARING CLOTHES THAT WILL INSTIGATE OTHERS

AGENCIES

**Bangalore, Feb 10:** The Karnataka High Court hearing the hijab issue asked Thursday students not to insist on wearing any clothes on campuses of educational institutions which can instigate people, till the matter is resolved. Posting the matter for hearing again Monday, the HC also asked the Karnataka government to resume classes in the educational institutions. As the bench of Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi, Justice Krishna S Dixit and Justice Khaji Jaibunessa Mohiyuddin began hearing the matter, the Chief



Justice told Advocate General Prabhuling Navadagi to open schools in the state. "Closure of schools is not a good development. Take necessary action and conduct classes. See to it that no problem surfaces," the CJ said. The three-judge full bench which was formed Wednesday, also said it

wants the matter to be resolved at the earliest but till that time peace and tranquillity is to be maintained. "Till the disposal of the matter, you people should not insist on wearing all these religious things," CJ Awasthi said. "We will pass an order. Let the schools-colleges start. But till the matter is resolved, no

student should insist on wearing religious dresses," he said. The petitioner's lawyer Devadatt Kamat requested the court to consider his objection that such an order will amount to suspension of his clients' constitutional rights under Article 25. "That will be a total affront to their rights," Kamat contended. In response, the CJ said the arrangement is only for a few days till the matter is resolved. Meanwhile the Karnataka government announced Thursday that classes for high school students will start February 14. The government's decision came at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bomma with his cabinet colleagues holding the Home, Primary and Secondary Education and Higher Education portfolios, and senior officials.

MORE P9

## 'HINDU NATIONALISTS HARMING DEMOCRACY'

**London:** The Indian government's failure to crack down on the persecution of religious and other minorities by Hindu nationalists continues to weigh on the country's democracy score, which has declined significantly in recent years, as per the EIU's 2021 Democracy Index. India is ranked 46th on the global index with an overall score of 6.91. It has the lowest score of five on political culture and the highest score of 8.67 on electoral process and pluralism. It scores 6.18 on civil liberties, 7.22 on political participation and 7.50 on functioning of government. The report says that a number of religion-based incidents took place in India and the worst sufferers have been the minorities with Hindu nationalists being unaffected.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I love interviewing him. Not only he gives interesting answers, he also helps me with the questions!

## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	58926.03 ↑ 460.06
NIFTY	17605.80 ↑ 142.00
DOLLAR	75.29 ↑ ₹0.10
EURO	85.73 ↑ ₹0.32
GOLD	₹48,745 ↑ ₹85
SILVER	₹63,042 ↑ ₹354

## WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	30.9°C	31.4°C
TEMP MIN	16.6°C	17.0°C
Humidity	83%	83%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast Fog or mist in the morning

# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
No matter what you do, today you are not going to have your way. The times when you have been selfish are finished. Besides, you are likely to solicit trouble today. It may actually turn out to be good for you, says Ganesh, provided you change the focus of your actions.

**TAURUS**  
This is a productive day to deal in money matters, foresees Ganesh. You will probably enjoy both money and muscle power in the afternoon. A necklace or pendant is awaiting your sweetheart, so surprise her. Caution: There is a risk of your money being swindled.

**GEMINI**  
You will feel some measure of loneliness today. You will need the company of someone close to you for reassurance. The evening will see you plagued by rapid mood swings. Meditative techniques can help calm your mind, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
With healthy financial condition, your focus will be more on your social commitments, says Ganesh. Though till afternoon you may have only yourself to give you company, you will be central to a conversation with like-minded people.

**LEO**  
You will be so scheming and calculating today that you can even give the vixen in a soap opera a run for her money. With such stars on the horizon, it becomes imperative that you find a way to keep your temper, especially at work. You might find yourself in some risky situation towards the latter half of the day.

**VIRGO**  
You will focus on your finances today and work towards consolidating your profits, says Ganesh. You may also make provisions for any crisis that may arise in future. Ganesh strongly feels that you may sign some agreements and documents that will become milestones in your future business life.

**LIBRA**  
There is a very high probability of legal disputes receding and going your way due to out-of-court settlements that go in your favour. The afternoon may see you being unyielding when it comes to interacting with people. You will display courage and resilience when it comes to matters of relationships, or so hopes Ganesh.

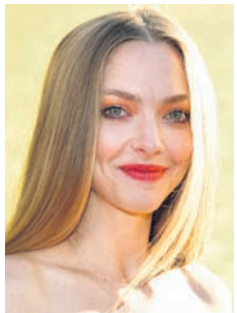
**SCORPIO**  
It is highly likely that you will be on the move today, predicts Ganesh. You will be actively shuttling from one location to the other for work or social purposes. Business meetings and conversations will be the basis of all your thoughts. Business proposals may take shape later in the day, feels Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Mysteries that have perplexed and plagued you for the past few days will unravel as the curtain draws from the clandestine, laying bare the aspects you needed an insight into. Any associations you make today will be beneficial in the long run. Your day will end with a feeling of gratitude and emotional attachment to loved ones, beyond the sweet veneer of material love.

**CAPRICORN**  
You may get bogged down with work, and experience enormous stress today, says Ganesh. But, an adept professional, you will not give up easily. Your opponents will take a beating and will start to acknowledge your potential and abilities.

**AQUARIUS**  
Today, the slump in energy will beat the daylight out of you! Yes, the day does improve later and a sudden good news will take you by surprise. But be careful about meeting deadlines, says Ganesh, as you need to maintain your niche in the scheme of things.

**PISCES**  
Indications are that you will be busy partitioning your time equally between business and family today. Make sure that means something a bit more meaningful than going home for lunch. You will encounter a little variety and excitement at the workplace today, possibly in the form of a new secretary. Keep hoping.



## WHEN AMANDA SEYFRIED 'BIT' CHANNING TATUM

Hollywood star Channing Tatum has said that his Dear John co-star Amanda Seyfried 'bit' him but he didn't give any details as to how or why. Asked if he's been bitten by a co-star before, he said: "Amanda Seyfried, I think. I'm almost positive she bit me."

## TARA REID TO ESSAY MI6 AGENT IN BRITISH SPY FILM

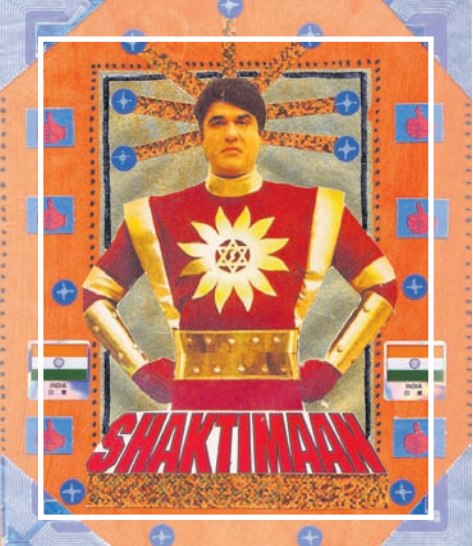
Actress Tara Reid is set to play an MI6 agent in upcoming espionage thriller *Cold Sun*. According to *variety.com*, Reid will play an inexperienced British spy called Marsha Ravencourt in the film, which has been billed as "Cagney and Lacey with a difference."



## Shaktimaan to be adapted as big screen trilogy

**Mumbai:** While there is still no word on Hrithik Roshan's *Krrish 4*, another Indian superhero is getting ready for his big-screen appearance. *Shaktimaan* is set for his comeback, but this time, on the big screen. Sony Pictures International Productions has acquired the film adaptation rights of the iconic Indian superhero. The upcoming project has been reimagined as a superhero trilogy for

the big screen. However, there is still no news about which Indian actor will slip into the red and golden suit. The makers also dropped the first teaser that sees the superhero rise to save the city from what appears to be an otherworldly being. "As darkness and evil prevail over humanity, it is time for him to return." The teaser also gives us the first glimpse of *Shaktimaan*'s new and improved superhero suit.



Fans of the franchise can expect a big-ticket director to helm the production that will be set according to global standards. *Shaktimaan*, to date, remains one of the country's most iconic superheroes. Mukesh Khanna played the role of the iconic character in the television series that ruled the small screen for over a decade. **ANS**

## Learning pole dancing was on my wishlist: Maera

**Mumbai:** *Bhagya Lakshmi* actress Maera Misshra has always been attracted to pole dancing and now she has finally been able to fulfill that wish. She had recently posted about her dancing skills on her social media handle. Talking about her love for pole dancing, Maera mentioned: "I have always been very attracted to pole dancing. I really think it looks absolutely amazing. I was watching back-to-back videos of pole dancing on social media and then one day, I decided to reach out to my friend who is a great dancer, to teach me how to pole dance." The *MTV Splitsville 11* ac-

trix shares more about her attending the pole dancing classes and appreciates those who know this dancing style as it is quite challenging. "I went for my first class in August 2021, and it was a wonderful experience. Learning pole dancing has always been on my list and I wanted to learn this before I plan on getting married. So now I have finally done it, I applaud every person who knows this art. It's a very difficult dance form and not as easy as it looks, and anyone who knows this can tell that it's one of the best ways to do the full-body workout," she adds. **ANS**



## Ananya set to surprise viewers in Gehraiyaan

**Mumbai:** In the upcoming movie *Gehraiyaan*, Ananya Pandey essays the role of Tia who comes across as a very positive and joyful person. She is engaged to Sidhant Chaturvedi's character Zain and is Deepika Padukone's character Alisha's cousin. In one of the character promo of Tia, it shows that she is too trusting and that might just be a breaking point for the character in the film. Her fiancé is having a relationship with Alisha of which she is unaware. As Tia, Ananya has presented a new side to herself as an actor with her restrained and mature performance in the film.

## Badhaai Do: A family entertainer that addresses a social issue

Marriages are made in heaven, or so they say. Interestingly, a huge number of these 'heavenly marriages' appear all shiny and bright owing to the compromises made by couples on various levels. In *Badhaai Do*, this matrimonial compromise is of a different kind - one that is not often spoken about but has been in existence all along.

For those unversed, it's called a lavender marriage - which is a heterosexual marriage between two homosexual persons, who agree to this arrangement of convenience for various reasons like trying to fit into society, avoiding social stigma emanating from their single status, and using it as a cover so that they can live their lives with some semblance of freedom. Harshvardhan Kulkarni's film depicts this complicated arrangement with humour and wit - but not at the expense of the characters - and handles the protagonists' dilemma with a great



deal of sensitivity. A sequel to the multiple National Award-winning movie *Badhaai Ho*, the film is an entertaining family watch. **Film Review**

In the film, newly-weds Sumi and Shardul (Bhumi Pednekar and Rajkumar Rao) live like roommates. What follows Sumi and Shardul's wedding is their journey of walking on eggshells to keep their secret from their families, friends, and neighbours, while trying to stay true to who they are. In the process, they find themselves running from one chaotic situation into another. *Badhaai Do* attempts to normalise the big-screen depiction of the gay and lesbian community and their romantic relationships. The complexities of marriages, middle-class traditional families and their demands from individuals have also been shown with sensitivity and realism. The beauty of the narrative

lies in the fact that there is no judgment - the characters are not treated differently because they're gay. From the word go, the film treats the lead pair's sexual orientation as matter-of-factly as possible. Rajkumar Rao's portrayal of

Shardul is spot-on. He has a firm grip on his character, which he plays with absolute grace and honesty. Bhumi Pednekar's portrayal of Sumi is sensitive, nuanced, and on point. **Cast: Bhumi Pednekar, Rajkumar Rao, Chum Darang and others** **Director: Harshvardhan Kulkarni**

Chum Darang makes a fine debut with a role that takes courage for a newcomer to go along with. The film has been shot well, capturing the beauty and the simplicity of Uttarakhand. In the music department, *Badhaai Do*'s title track by Tanishk Bagchi and Bandi Tot by Ankit Tiwari stand out. Hum 'Thay Seedhe Saadhe by Amit Trivedi is also a beautiful love track that lingers long after the film is over. **AGENCIES**

## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

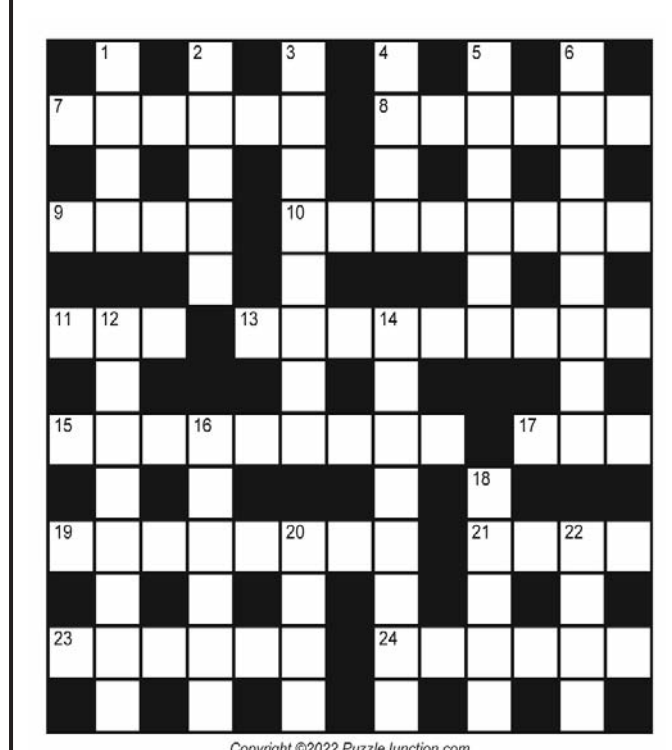


## BREVITY



## FUN post

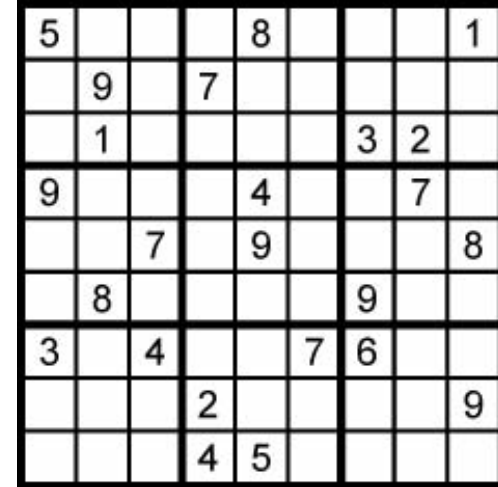
## CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Game bird
  - 8 Flabbergasted
  - 9 Kind of collar
  - 10 Having creative skill
  - 11 Shoot the breeze
  - 13 Deception
  - 15 "Not included" items
  - 17 Small number
  - 19 Aperitif wine brand
  - 21 Precious stone
  - 23 Hunters' aids, briefly
  - 24 Showerhead
  - 4 Unbalanced
  - 5 Conan Doyle character
  - 6 Line of descent
  - 12 Mexican resort
  - 14 Exam no-no, e.g.
  - 16 Minstrel show, e.g.
  - 18 Mania
  - 20 Famed loch
  - 22 Hotel desk item
- Down**
- 1 Seed covering
  - 2 Persian Gulf port
  - 3 Figure of speech

## 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



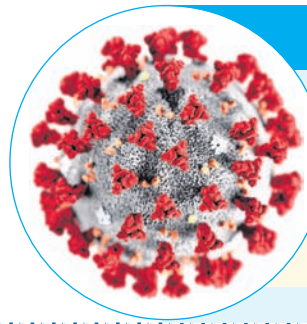
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## MEGA PROJECT

Work in progress for the renovation of Taladanda canal in Cuttack, Thursday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	40,45,50,122	32,44,60,614	57,98,707
India	4,24,78,060	4,11,80,751	5,06,520
Odisha	12,73,003	12,48,152	8,818

# 137 of 154 posts at CUO vacant



The campus of Central University of Odisha in Koraput

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** Expressing concern over the huge number of vacancies at the Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Sujeet Kumar Thursday urged the Centre to take up steps to fill up the vacant posts at the earliest.

Speaking during the Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha, the BJD MP said the sorry state of affairs at CUO is a matter of concern as the varsity is located in the tribal region of Odisha. In order to highlight the gravity of the matter, the BJD MP apprised the house about the vacancies at various departments of CUO.

"All the 23 sanctioned posts of Professor are lying vacant. As many as 42 posts of Associate Professor out of the sanctioned 43 posts are also lying vacant. Besides, 72 of the 88 sanctioned posts of Assistant Professor are yet to be filled up. At least 137 of the 154 posts at the CUO are lying vacant. The university has 89 per cent va-

**The Central University of Odisha has 89 per cent vacancies as compared to the national average of 28 per cent**

SUJEET KUMAR | BJD MP

cancies as compared to the national average of 28 per cent," elaborated the BJD MP. The BJD MP also claimed that the university has one teacher for 14 departments. He urged the Centre to fill up these vacancies and appoint a permanent Vice Chancellor for the varsity at the earliest. "The vacancies at CUO have severe consequences on the education of students from the tribal belt. As of now, the university has 70 contractual and guest lecturers. How do we aspire to reach the goals of the New Education Policy if we have this kind of vacancies at the CUO," asked the BJD MP.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



# Class X & XII exams: CHSE, BSE to consult stakeholders

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** The Board of Secondary Education and the Council of Higher Secondary Education, Odisha will hold extensive discussions with stakeholders like parents, teachers and experts and then will come out with a suitable proposal on the format of the examination for.



summe teaching, increase attendance and address the learning gaps, he said.

Earlier, the school and mass education department had announced timings for physicals classes of schools that were reopened from February 7. Teaching hours are fixed from 10 am to 4 pm for students for Class-IX to Class XII in all educational institutions under the S&ME department. For students from Class I to Class VIII, teaching hours are from 9 am to 1 pm.

Physical classes for students of Class VIII and above resumed from February 7 while classes for KG to Class VII students will resume from February 28.

# Not aware of Odisha's 2nd House resolution: Centre

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** The Centre Thursday claimed that it had not received any resolution from Odisha for creation of a Legislative Council in the state.

Replying to a query of Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Prasanna Acharya in the Rajya Sabha, Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said no resolution regarding the Legislative Council have been received by the Centre.

"As per record, no such resolution has been received by the Union Government. However, information is being collected from the state government with regard to the adoption of a resolution," the Union Minister said.

At present, six states—Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh—have Legislative Councils. Three states—Assam, Rajasthan and West Bengal—had adopted resolutions for creation of Legislative Councils, added the Union Minister.

Notably, the Odisha Assembly had in September 2018 passed a resolution for creation of a Legislative Council in the state. The BJD MPs have raised the issue in the Parliament several times.



PIC FOR REPRESENTATION

**At present, six states—Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh—have Legislative Councils**

**Three states—Assam, Rajasthan and West Bengal—had adopted resolutions for creation of Legislative Councils, said Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju**

If sources are to be believed, the regional party had supported the contentious Citizenship Amendment Bill (now Act) in the Rajya Sabha in December 2019 following a closed door meeting with

the Union Home Minister Amit Shah, in which the latter had given assurance to the BJD for creation of a Legislative Council in Odisha. During an all-party meeting ahead of the Monsoon Session in 2021, the BJD had reiterated its demand for the creation of a Legislative Council in Odisha. In the meeting, Senior BJD MP Pinaki Misra said Home Minister Amit Shah had given an assurance to the party MPs regarding the Centre's readiness to introduce a Constitutional Amendment Bill for the formation of a Legislative Council in Odisha. He had reminded the Centre that no step has been taken in this regard.

# Murder accused lands on STF net after 8 yrs

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** The Special Task Force (STF) of the Crime Branch Thursday claimed to have arrested a murder accused who was on the run soon after committing a crime at Jajpur's Chandikhole in 2014.

Kishore Kumar Moharana alias Dhandua of Cuttack, who was wanted in connection with the sensational murder of Deepak Naik at Jajpur's Chandikhole Bazar in 2014, has been taken into custody early Thursday morning, said an STF official.

A 9mm pistol and a few incriminating materials were recovered from his possession. A case (4/22) in this regard has been registered with the STF police under Sections 25 and 27 of the Arms Act, added the official.

About the sensational murder, the official said Kishore, along with a few of his aides, opened fire at Deepak at Chandikhole Bazar in 2014, leading to his instantaneous death. A case (06/2014) was registered with the STF police. The investigating agency submitted a chargesheet against three persons including Kishore, who was on the run, the official pointed out.



The seized items

Kishore was also wanted in connection with an STF case (06/2014) registered under Sections 302 and 34 of the IPC and 25 and 27 of the Arms Act. Besides, a case (137/2015) under Sections 341, 294, 323, 506, 307 and 34 of the IPC and 25 and 27 of the Arms Act was also pending against him with Kendrapara police. The STF has recovered 68 firearms and 146 rounds of live ammunition since 2020, it was learnt.

# UNIT-I MARKET TO SHIFT TO BHAGABANPUR

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** With an aim to decongest market places in the centre of the city, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Thursday said it will shift the Unit-I wholesale market to the outskirts of the capital city.

**Raw Vegetable Business Association president Kabiraj Swain has welcomed the decision**

**The new market place at Bhagabanpur will be developed in an area spanning over 10 acres**



dition for shifting the market. The market will be shifted as early as possible," said a senior BMC official.

It can be mentioned here that the Unit-I vegetable wholesale market has been running on four acres

since 1957. With more than 49 wholesale vegetable vendors doing business in the market, more than 200 trucks transport vegetables from the market to various places in the state. Many people have been pleading for relocation of the market since 2007, sources said.

Welcoming the move, Raw Vegetable Business Association president Kabiraj Swain said, "All vegetable vendors are happy with the BMC's decision. However, the BMC must ensure that there should be proper facilities like water, electricity and road connectivity to the new market place. We have no prob-

lem in shifting to the new place if we are provided with the facilities."

The BMC sources, meanwhile, claimed that the proposed market place is located along the National Highway. So, there would not be any difficulty in transportation of vegetables.

"There will be proper arrangements for loading and unloading of the vegetables. A cold storage and other facilities at Bhagabanpur will also be helpful for the wholesale vegetable market. We will consult the vendors to know about their requirements at the new market place," added the official.

# Rural poll: Tehsildars to issue permission for sound system

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** The State Election Commission (SEC) has authorised all Tehsildars to grant permission to candidates for use of sound system for campaigning during the three-tier panchayat polls.

SEC secretary RN Sahu Thursday sent a letter in this regard to all District Collectors. The Collectors have been asked to authorise all Tehsildars, apart from the concerned sub-collectors in the district to issue such permits, the letter stated.

The Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs) will issue such permissions for the blocks coming under the jurisdiction of the Commissionerate Police.

This instruction was issued after several candidates lodged complaints with the SEC regarding the inconvenience faced by them while obtaining permission for the use of loudspeaker/mikes for campaigning.

Sahu asked the Collectors to issue permission for the use of sound system for the election campaign only.

## BEAUTIFICATION DRIVE



Murals being drawn on the walls of Madhupatna railway bridge in Cuttack as part of a beautification drive, Thursday

# Elderly suffer prolonged post-Covid ailments

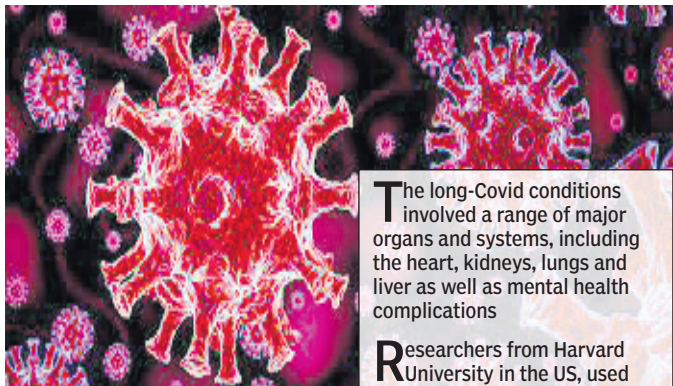
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New York, Feb 10:** Almost a third (32 of every 100) of older adults aged above 65 infected with Covid-19 in 2020 developed at least one new condition that required medical attention in the months after initial infection, 11 more than those who did not have Covid-19, finds a study.

The long-Covid conditions involved a range of major organs and systems, including the heart, kidneys, lungs and liver as well as mental health complications, revealed the findings published in The BMJ.

Researchers from Harvard University in the US, used health insurance plan records to identify 1,33,366 individuals aged 65 or above in 2020 who were diagnosed with Covid-19 before 1 April 2020.

The researchers then recorded any persistent or new conditions starting 21 days after a Covid-19 diagnosis (the post-acute period). The results show that compared with the 2020 comparison group,



Covid-19 patients were at increased risk of developing a range of conditions including respiratory failure, fatigue, high blood pressure, and mental health diagnoses.

However, compared with the group with viral lower respiratory tract illness, only respiratory failure, dementia, and fatigue showed increased risk differences of 2.39, 0.71, and 0.18 per 100 people with Covid-19, respectively. Individuals admitted to hospital with Covid-19 had a markedly in-

**The long-Covid conditions involved a range of major organs and systems, including the heart, kidneys, lungs and liver as well as mental health complications**

**Researchers from Harvard University in the US, used health insurance plan records to identify 1,33,366 individuals aged 65 or above, who were diagnosed with Covid-19 before 1 April 2020**

**The results show that compared with the 2020 comparison group, Covid-19 patients were at increased risk of developing a range of conditions including respiratory failure, fatigue, high blood pressure, and mental health diagnoses**

creased risk for most but not all conditions.

The risk of several conditions was also increased for men, for people of colour, and for those aged 75 and older.

This is an observational study so cannot establish the cause, and the researchers acknowledge some limitations, including the fact that some diagnoses might not truly represent a new condition triggered by Covid-19 infection.

However, "The number of survivors with sequelae after the acute infection will continue to grow", warned Marc Lipsitch, Professor at Harvard T H Chan School of Public Health.

"These findings further highlight the wide range of important sequelae after acute infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Understanding the magnitude of risk for the most important clinical sequelae might enhance their diagnosis and the management of individuals with sequelae after acute SARS-CoV-2 infection," Lipsitch said.

## ₹1cr worth brown sugar seized in Balasore; 1 held

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** The Special Task Force (STF) of the Crime Branch Thursday arrested a drug peddler from Balasore after recovering around a kilogram of brown sugar, valued at more than Rs 1 crore, from his possession.

## Since 2020, the STF has seized more than 48kg brown sugar and over 89 quintals of ganja

Acting on a tipoff, an STF team conducted a raid on NH-16 under Soro police limits in Balasore and seized brown sugar weighing around 1.1 kilograms from the possession of Babu alias Kalim. In this connection, the STF has registered a case under relevant Sections of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, and further investigation is on, said an official. Since 2020, the STF, in its special drive against narcotic drugs, has seized more than 48 kilograms of brown sugar and over 89 quintals of ganja.

## BPIA CHOSEN FOR VOICE CUSTOMER TAG



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** The Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) Thursday was chosen as Voice Customer recognition 2021 among six other airports by the Airports Council International (ACI) for introducing customer friendly initiatives especially during pandemic.

According to the Civil Aviation Ministry seven AAI airports namely Chennai, Kolkata, Goa, Pune, Patna, Bhubaneswar and Chandigarh that participated in ACI-ASQ survey in 2021 were chosen for Voice of Customer recognition under ACI's

World's Voice of the Customer initiative. Airport Service Quality (ASQ) survey is the world-renowned and internationally established global benchmarking programme measuring passengers' satisfaction while they travel through an airport. The ASQ Awards recognize those airports around the world that deliver the best customer experience in the opinion of their own passengers.

The ACI has initiated the 'Voice of the Customer' initiative to acknowledge and recognize airports that continued to prioritize their customers and are committed to ensuring their voice was heard, even during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The ASQ programme provides the research tool and management information to better understand passengers' views and what they want from an airport from the products and services standpoint.

## SCB EXPANSION



An excavator pulls down a multi-storied structure as part of the expansion of SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, Thursday

OP PHOTO

## NITI urged to rework on SDG assessment index

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** The state government has urged Niti Aayog to rework on the sustainable development goals (SDG) assessment index taking into consideration the ground level developmental outcomes of all the state and central government schemes.

Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra revealed this while addressing a consultative workshop on sustainable development goals (SDGs), held between the state government and Niti Aayog here Thursday, for looking into the indicators of SDG India Index 4.0 for the year 2021-22.

Mahapatra said the ultimate goal is to achieve the 2030 agenda more inclusively and not to assess the outcomes of one scheme or other alone. He said the state government is committed to bring improvement in people's quality of living through various schemes and programmes aligned to the human development index (HDI) for achieving the 2030 agenda.

The developmental strategy of



**Odisha has been a state of reforms and innovations, and the Niti Aayog team has always got valuable inputs from Odisha in making the SDG framework more accurate and robust**

SANYUKTA SAMADDAR | NITI AAYOG ADVISOR

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY SAID THE STATE GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO BRING IMPROVEMENT IN PEOPLE'S QUALITY OF LIVING THROUGH VARIOUS SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES ALIGNED TO THE HDI FOR ACHIEVING THE 2030 AGENDA**

**THE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER CLAIMED THAT THE STATE'S PERFORMANCE AGAINST MANY INDICATORS WAS NOT COMPUTED APPROPRIATELY AS ACHIEVEMENTS IN STATE-SPECIFIC SCHEMES WERE NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT**

the state is to leave no one behind and reach all poor and vulnerable sections, he said.

The Chief Secretary asked all departments of the state government to give their views and updated data inputs against 115 indicators pertaining to 16 goals for SDG India Index 4.0. He thanked Niti Aayog for taking inputs from the state as per its earlier request.

Outlining objectives of the workshop, Development Commissioner PK Jena said the score of Odisha in achievement of the SDGs has improved from 58 in 2018 to 61 in 2021.

"The state government is committed towards continuous improvement in service delivery and furthering of inclusive development by aligning its schemes and programmes with the 2030

Agenda," Jena said.

In the SDG Index of 2020-21, the state was ranked No-1 in SDG-13 (climate action), and SDG 14 (life below water). Out of the 16 goals evaluated for the said year, Odisha was a frontrunner in nine indicators and performer in one indicator, Jena added. The state government has operationalised a dedicated PMU for expeditious achievement

## 1,480 fresh Covid cases jack up tally to 12,73,003

AGENCIES

of the SDGs, he mentioned.

The Development Commissioner claimed that the state's performance against many indicators was not appropriately computed as achievements in state-specific schemes were not taken into account. In some other indicators the old data were used while in some other cases there was no clarity on the sources of data, Jena said.

He put emphasis on making the SDG India Index 4.0 more inclusive by taking into account the state's developmental efforts and outcomes in all schemes and programmes.

Niti Aayog advisor Sanyukta Samaddar and Niti Aayog SDG officer Saumya Guha gave a presentation on different indicators taken up for SDG Index 4.0.

"Odisha has been a state of reforms and innovations, and the Niti Aayog team has always got valuable inputs from Odisha in making the SDG framework more accurate and robust," Samaddar said, while adding that SDG Index 4.0 would be finalised by the end of March.

**Bhubaneswar, Feb 10:** The state's Covid-19 death toll climbed to 8,818 Thursday as 21 more patients succumbed to the virus, while 1,480 fresh cases pushed the state's Covid positive tally to 12,73,003, the health department said.

The state had logged 1,712 cases and 22 deaths Wednesday.

Of the new fatalities, 12 were registered in Sundargarh while Khurda district, of which Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the highest number of fresh infections at 163, the department said in a bulletin.

Odisha now has 15,980 active cases, while 12,48,152 people have recovered from the disease so far, including 3,126 in the last 24 hours, it said.

The coastal state conducted 58,816 sample tests for COVID-19 since Wednesday, the bulletin said, adding, the daily positivity rate declined to 2.52 per cent from 2.59 per cent the previous day.

## CLASSIFIED

### AFFIDAVIT

By affidavit before Notary Public, Cuttack, I Punam Pattanaik, D/o Damodar Prasad Pattnaik, Bypass, Bhadrak Rural, Dist. Bhadrak declare that in passport my name is mentioned as Poonam Pattnaik. Hence, Punam Pattanaik and Poonam Pattnaik is one and same person for all purposes.

### LOST

By this time one Sunita Rout (39), W/o Prakash Chandra Rout of Irrigation Colony Lane No. 15, Bhawanipatana, PS. Town, Bhawanipatana, Dist. Kalahandi appeared at PS and reported that on 27.12.2021 at 10.30 A.M. while she was going to Tahasil Office lost her sale deed No. 881003815 of Plot No. 209, Khata No.55/3, Mouza Bhawanipatana which she was purchased from Smt. Pankajini Biswal on Dt.20.09.2021 some where. She searched for the same but could not trace out. She also produced an affidavit in the name of Smt. Sunita Rout being executed by Afzal Khan, Notary Govt. of Odisha, Bhawanipatana. Entered the fact in GD for future reference.

I Sri Gunanidhi Meher age about 37 years, S/o Late Jagabandhu Meher Resident of At/P.O.-Gopaipali Thana- Barpali, Dist.-Bargarh state that my father Late Jagabandhu Meher, S/o-Laxman Meher who is purchased the property which is mention below details in front of Sub-Registrar, Barpali on date 08.07.1996. That the above said documents of property has been eaten by White Ant and fully damaged. Mouza-Gadgaddala, Mejr Khata No.-6, Plot No.-88 (pat), 0.10 Decmil and Plot No.-88, 0.7 decmil, Total=0.17 decmil, Regd Sale Deed No.- R.S.D. No. -501/Dated-08.07.1996. This declaration is for all purpose and public attention.

## UP FOR SALE



A roadside vendor roasts groundnut in Baramunda area of Bhubaneswar, Thursday

PHOTO: MAUSAM NANDA

## SEC seeks co-op of all political parties

Continued from P1

"We informed the political parties about direct elections to the post of mayor and chairpersons during the upcoming urban elections. We also talked about use of EVMs in the poll and modifications made on submission of affidavits by contesting candidates during the meeting," Padhi added.

As per new norms, the candidates will have to inform about their educational qualifications,

criminal cases (if any) and asset details in the affidavit. If any affidavit with false information is found, nomination can be rejected, sources said.

The SEC informed that the political parties also gave their suggestions and recommendations for smooth and peaceful conduct of the ULB elections. It stated that all steps are being taken to conduct the elections soon after the panchayat polls.

During the meeting, the BJP proposed a single-window system at ground level for providing all permissions to candidates during the election time. The party has also requested the SEC to simplify the appointment of agents, said BJP leader Surath Biswal.

However, the Congress raised objection for conveying the meeting at a time, when all political parties are busy preparing for the panchayat polls. All political parties

## 3-point seatbelts must for all front-facing passengers in car

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** The government has made it mandatory for automakers to provide three-point seat belts for all front-facing passengers in a car.

The norm will also be applicable for the middle seat in the rear row of a car, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said at a press conference Thursday.

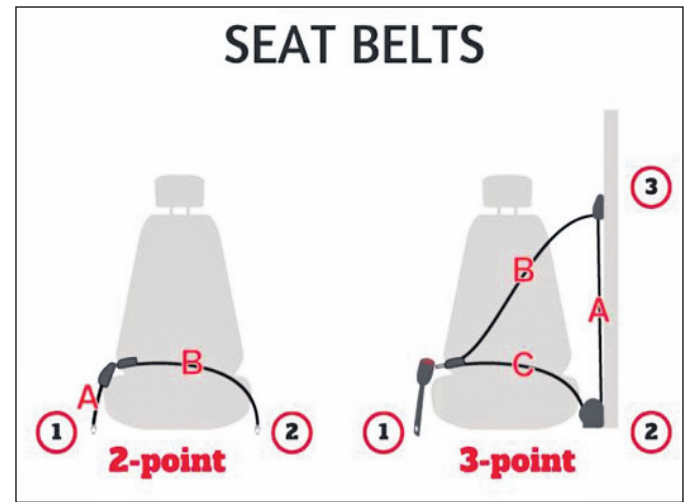
"I have signed a file yesterday to make it mandatory for automakers to provide three-point seat belts for all the front-facing passengers in a car," the Union Road Transport and Highways Minister said. He did not mention the date from which the new requirement will come into force.

At present, only the front seats and two rear seats in most cars produced in the country have three-point seat belts. However, no car has three-point seatbelts for the passenger seated in the rear middle. They come equipped with only a two-point or lap seat belt, similar to the ones provided in aircraft seats.

The 3-point seatbelt is scientifically proven to be far safer than the two-point one as it evenly spreads out the energy of a moving body over the chest, shoulders and pelvis at the time of a collision resulting in lesser injuries.

Last month, the ministry said it will make it mandatory for car-makers to provide a minimum of six airbags in motor vehicles that can carry up to 8 passengers for enhanced safety of occupants from October this year.

As many as 1.5 lakh people die



### SAFETY FOR ALL

**A**t present, only the front seats and two rear seats in most cars produced in the country have three-point seat belts

**H**owever, no car has three-point seatbelts for the passenger seated in the rear middle. They come equipped with only a two-point or lap seat belt, similar to the ones provided in aircraft seats

**T**he 3-point seatbelt is scientifically proven to be far safer than the 2-point one as it evenly spreads out the energy of a moving body over the chest, shoulders and pelvis at the time of a collision resulting in lesser injuries

every year in 5 lakh road accidents in the country and need of the

hour is to create mass awareness for road safety measures by information dissemination, Gadkari said Thursday.

According to him, a system is being proposed for star rating of vehicles based on the standards and protocol to improve safety.

Electronic Stability Control, Advanced Emergency Braking Systems, ease of mobility for Divyangjan, Driver Drowsiness Attention Warning System (DDAWS), Blind Spot Information System, Advanced Driver Assisting system and Lane Departure Warning System, are among the safety initiatives being implemented, he said.

Further, Gadkari emphasised the importance of reducing sound pollution and use of electric vehicles.

The minister also said that he will launch Toyota's vehicle that will run on green hydrogen March 15.

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SHORT TAKES

No road, no vote: Nilagiri villagers

Balasure: Upset over poor road connectivity for Sinduria village under Nilagiri block of Balasure, the residents have resolved to boycott the upcoming panchayat elections.

72-year-old rape convict dies

Berhampur: A septuagenarian prisoner convicted of raping a minor girl died at MKCG Medical College and Hospital here while undergoing treatment for respiratory problems, police said Thursday.

PANCHAYAT POLLS IN GANJAM

Everything is not right in the Left

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Feb 10: Rift between two Left parties is wide open as the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM) is taking on the CPI in a zilla parishad (ZP) zone under Chhatrapur Assembly segment in Ganjam district.



Gobardhan Pahan of CPM is contesting from ZP zone-15 while Raghunath Behera of CPI is also in the fray from the same zone

party has many pocket votes in this region. Similarly, Sasmita Swain from BJD, Prabhassini Nayak from BJP and Sasmita Moharana from Congress are also in the fray from the zone. All the four women candidates have intensified their campaigning.

Dhinkia in grip of fear as 4 more held for clash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paradip, Feb 10: Police arrested four persons from seaside Dhinkia village, the site of JSW's mega steel project in Jagatsinghpur district, on charge of attacking the police force during land acquisition triggering fear among the locals.

The tehsildar has issued a notice cautioning the people that action would be initiated if villagers reclaim the betel vines after receiving compensation

vines of 272 villagers is in Dhinkia village. Altogether 261 vines in the village have been demolished and 218 villagers have already been paid compensation by the company.

FEMALE JUMBO ELECTROCUTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawaniapatna/Narla, Feb 10: A female elephant died after coming in contact with a high-tension wire under Narla forest range in Kalahandi district, sources said Thursday.

The matter came to the fore after locals spotted the carcass of the elephant and informed the forest officials Thursday. Forest officials and Narla police reached the spot and started an investigation into the incident.



Locals suspect that the animal might have died after coming in contact with a high-tension live wire while returning from a banana orchard at Burdipada under Bhimkela panchayat near Narla.

When contacted, Narla ranger Giridhari Nag said the reason behind the animal death could be ascertained after the post-mortem report comes.

Meanwhile, sources said death of elephants due to electrocution is not new in the state. Several jumbos have also died earlier after coming in contact with live wire in various parts of the state.

भारत का राजपत्र The Gazette of India. Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. Notification dated 25th January, 2022. S.O. 338(E).-In exercise of powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 3A of the National Highways Act, 1956...

Table with 7 columns: S.No., Area, Land, Land, Land, Land, Land. Contains land acquisition details for various villages like Gourpara-121, Jamjhadi-150, Kaniari, Kapura-106, etc.

Table with 7 columns: S.No., Area, Land, Land, Land, Land, Land. Contains land acquisition details for various villages like Maitapur-138, Markona-125, Muruna-136, etc.

Table with 7 columns: S.No., Area, Land, Land, Land, Land, Land. Contains land acquisition details for various villages like Ria-104, Sanamaitapur-141, Similia-137, etc.

**“The happiness you give makes you happier than the happiness you receive.”**

THE MOTHER



## Competitive Capitalism

Not every sitting US president invites comparisons with a Roosevelt, let alone two members of that storied family. Since taking office just over a year ago, Joe Biden has frequently been likened to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who introduced the New Deal in the 1930s, because of the boldness and scope of his economic agenda. But Biden may have more in common with America's first President Roosevelt – Theodore, or “Teddy” – whose economic agenda is remembered for its embrace of the then-novel tool of competition law in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Biden's most recent Teddy Roosevelt moment came at the start of this year, when his administration announced that it would spend \$1 billion in post-pandemic economic recovery funds to boost competition in the US meatpacking sector – an industry in which the White House says four firms control 85% of all beef processing and 70% of the pork market. The administration's move against the industry's giants comes against the backdrop of soaring food prices and a rapid rise in overall US inflation, and is aimed at bringing new players into the meat-processing chain in the hope that stiffer competition will help to tame price increases.

Whatever the outcome, it was an audacious move that should be understood less as overweening intervention against capitalist market mechanisms and more as an attempt to support those mechanisms. Such interventions to correct market failures have become bolder and more frequent during the COVID-19 pandemic, with governments everywhere adopting a “whatever it takes” attitude and spending almost \$17 trillion so far to get through the crisis.

The bill for this unavoidable largesse will inevitably come due, requiring razor-sharp policymaking to mitigate adverse effects. But if a greater role for the state is the price to pay for saving the economy, it will have been worth it if governments use this moment to restore the competitive energy that has been sapped from the economy in recent decades.

During the pandemic, as under Teddy Roosevelt's presidency, a robust defence of market competition has required decisive government action. In Roosevelt's day, this paved the way for the emergence of a large middle class in the United States. Over the past year, as the pandemic has exposed inefficiencies throughout the economy, a renewed appreciation of the links between competition, wealth generation and distribution, and economic performance has rapidly gained traction among US and other global policymakers.

Notably, Biden appointed competition law experts (and Big Tech critics) Lina Khan and Tim Wu to chair the Federal Trade Commission and serve on the president's National Economic Council, respectively. And last July, the president issued an executive order to promote competition, mandating 72 initiatives, involving a dozen federal agencies, to tackle a range of challenges. Some say competition problems have manifested themselves partly through higher inflation, some of which has been attributed to companies taking advantage of their dominance of highly concentrated markets. But, as the pandemic has demonstrated, insufficient competition has also increased the fragility of supply chains – an issue that Biden's recent meat-industry initiative is designed to address.

Without assertive competition policy and enforcement, such market failures – in the US and elsewhere – will persist and potentially get worse as the post-pandemic recovery takes hold and the much-hoped-for green economic transition gathers pace. And, despite battling the longstanding assumption that competition occurs spontaneously, antitrust authorities in America and around the world have been dogged in their pursuit of anti-competitive conduct. But competition policy can and must play a more decisive role in the way that economies are run and markets are managed.

The Biden administration's intervention in the meat industry points to a possible way forward. Far from going it alone, the FTC – which, along with the Department of Justice, traditionally oversees US competition policy – is working closely with the US Department of Agriculture on fostering competition and the entry of new players into the sector.

More generally, competition authorities, with their in-depth understanding of market dynamics, must have a place at the policymaking table. And they must be granted genuine opportunities – at least as many as industry lobbyists often receive – to share their expertise.

Competition policy is not the only foil against the outside power of market-dominant enterprises; trade policy also has a vital role to play. But actively promoting and preserving robust competition is critical to ensuring that markets deliver on their promise of lower prices, expanded choice, increasingly innovative products and services, and, ultimately, greater prosperity.

The alternative is diminished choice and greater inefficiency. As incumbent heavyweights, with their focus on short-term shareholder returns, squeeze out smaller challengers, they will stifle innovation – potentially fuelling higher inflation.

The media frequently refers to competition authorities, like other regulators, as “watchdogs.” If governments are to ensure that capitalism functions properly – as they must, given that market economies are neither self-sustaining nor self-policing – those authorities must also become “guide dogs,” ensuring that policymaking remains geared toward pragmatic competition and increased prosperity.

After all, as Teddy Roosevelt knew, and as Biden also recognises, capitalism without competition is not capitalism.

*The writer is a senior competition expert at the OECD.*  
@PROJECT SYNDICATE



Ruben Maximiano

**Competition policy can and must play a more decisive role in the way that economies are run and markets are managed**



Dani Rodrik

**A MORE PROMISING, IF MORE CHALLENGING, TASK WOULD BE TO REORIENT GLOBAL INNOVATION ITSELF IN A MORE LABOUR-FRIENDLY DIRECTION**

In 1973, the British economist EF Schumacher published a book with the captivating title *Small Is Beautiful*, advocating the use in poor countries of human-scale, less capital-intensive technologies more suited to local conditions. The book sparked vigorous debate among economists in the 1970s and 1980s on “appropriate technology.”

For developing countries, the ability to adopt new technologies created in the rich world is surely an important advantage. But technologies developed in advanced economies, where skills and capital are abundant, might constitute at best a mixed blessing. A recent panel discussion involving distinguished economists, convened by the International Economic Association (IEA), suggests there may be even more ground for concern today about the appropriateness of imported technologies.

As Frances Stewart, the University of Oxford economist who was at the center of the earlier round of “appropriate technology” debates, pointed out during the panel, East Asia's success with export-oriented industrialisation seemed to belie the worry that manufacturing would fail to create enough jobs and improve living standards in poorer countries. South Korea, Taiwan, and eventually China all charted a route out of poverty and grew at unprecedented rates as modern industrial factories absorbed rural labour into more productive employment.

But today, export-oriented industrialisation no longer works the same way. Manufacturing technologies have become increasingly skill-intensive, and automation and other forms of innovation have reduced labour's share of manufacturing value added. As MIT's Daron Acemoglu pointed out during the IEA panel, global competition, the growing power of corporations relative to workers, and tax subsidies to capital have all encouraged labor-displacing innovation.

This is bad news for developing countries, because their comparative advantage lies in labour-intensive goods. The consequences



**Bending the arc of technology to society's needs, rather than expecting society to adjust to technology's demands, should be as much a priority for advanced economies as it is a challenge for developing countries**

are already visible in the statistics. Many low- and middle-income economies have been hit by “premature de-industrialisation” – the plateauing and decline of manufacturing's share of employment at low-income levels, relative to historical antecedents. Even where industrialisation continues apace, employment growth in modern, large-scale firms has been anaemic.

Moreover, Acemoglu presented data showing that new technologies are biased toward not just the more educated, but toward those with post-graduate degrees, who are the primary beneficiaries. The scarcity of such workers in low-income countries limits these economies' ability to absorb frontier technologies. And, as the Yale economist Fabrizio Zilibotti emphasised in his comments at the panel, it also creates a tension between the imperatives of technology transfer and labour-market equality.

One of the central points of contention in the earlier debate on appropriate technology was the degree to which producers have the flexibility to adopt techniques that may be more suited to local conditions. Globalisation and the spread of cross-border supply chains may have diminished whatever scope for adaptation the physical technology affords. As Columbia University's Eric Verhoogen pointed out during the

IEA panel, higher-quality products are typically associated with more capital- and skill-intensive techniques. Firms in developing countries cannot shift to more labour-intensive methods and still meet the requirements of major international companies or consumers.

Verhoogen also warned that, even where there is room for flexibility, departing from global norms could condemn local firms to inferior technological paths. A recent doctoral dissertation by Gustavo de Souza at the University of Chicago provides some evidence regarding the downsides. De Souza found that a Brazilian programme that taxed the leasing of international technology did lower the share of skilled workers in affected firms, but also reduced employment overall.

Although Brazil is an upper-middle-income country with considerable technological capabilities, it stands to reason that there are limits to how much domestic technology can substitute for frontier technology from abroad. A more promising, if more challenging, task would be to reorient global innovation itself in a more labour-friendly direction.

After all, there is plenty of evidence from other domains that the direction of innovation responds to prevailing incentives. For ex-

ample, recent work by Jacob Moscona of Harvard University and MIT, together with MIT's Karthik Sastry, shows how biotechnology improvements in agriculture have focused on addressing specific local pathogens, making these innovations less transferable across climatic zones. Acemoglu pointed to the significant increase in US renewable-energy research once government programmes and social pressures combined to alter private-sector incentives. And encouraging the development of new military technologies has always been part of governments' policy arsenal.

The question is whether it is possible to mount a similar effort to encourage more labour-friendly global innovation. Whether it is “collaborative” robots in manufacturing that work with humans rather than replace them, or artificial-intelligence tools that allow teachers or nurses to perform more skilled, specialised tasks, proof of concept already exists in diverse forms. The challenge is to build on these examples and embody this new orientation in innovation policies.

It may be too much to ask governments of technologically advanced countries to reimagine their approach to innovation with poorer economies' interests in mind. But self-interest should push them in the same direction. Developed countries also suffer from economic insecurity, labour-market polarisation, the disappearance of good jobs, and the attendant social and political ills.

The implication seems clear: Bending the arc of technology to society's needs, rather than expecting society to adjust to technology's demands, should be as much a priority for advanced economies as it is a challenge for developing countries.

*The writer, Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, is President of the International Economic Association.*  
@PROJECT SYNDICATE

### SPECTRUM UNION BUDGET

## Big push for digital education



Bhaskar Nath Biswal

**IMPROVEMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE LIKE AFFORDABLE NETWORK, GADGETS, ELECTRICITY AND A CHANGE IN THE MINDSET OF PEOPLE ARE REQUIRED TO EMBRACE THE SWEEPING CHANGES**

Like other countries during the pandemic, India also faced the challenge to sustain the learning outcomes in schools and colleges, building skills and reskilling population, providing employment and continuity of livelihood to one of the largest labour forces in the world. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the education system of the country affecting lakhs of academic institutions. The major problem before the Budget makers was the non-availability of up to date data since the data from Ministry of Education is only available up to 2019-20. Without reliable data, the impact of pandemic on enrolment and dropout rates during 2020 and 2021 could not be assessed. However, policymakers have taken into account alternate sources like smaller surveys by the government, and by citizen-led non-government agencies, such as the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2021, to access the impact.

Some of the major digital initiatives for students adopted by the government during the pandemic are the DIKSHA platform, One Class One TV Channel through Swayam Prabha TV Channels. Extensive use of radio, community radio, podcasts, one DTH chan-

nel specifically for hearing impaired students in sign language, National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR), Vidyanjali, Samagra Siksha Scheme, NIPUN Bharat Mission, National Apprenticeship Training Programme, Academic Bank of Credit, Unnatbharat Abhiyan, and e-PGPathshala.

Due to the COVID digital education became the need of the hour and the Budget 2022 rightly aimed at giving a big push to the virtual education. Digital university, increased TV channels under PMeVIDYA, 750 virtual labs in science and mathematics, and 75 skilling e-labs for simulated learning environment, a competitive mechanism for development of quality e-content by the teachers are some of the major steps suggested by the current Budget proposed by the Finance Minister. Some other important announcements for the educational sector are setting up a Central university in Leh, 100 new Sainik schools, Higher Education Commission of India, increasing collaboration with foreign institutions and strengthening over 15,000 schools as per new the New Education Policy (NEP).

According to the 2021-22 Economic Survey, there are 7,78,842

primary schools, 4,43,643 upper primary schools, 1,51,489 secondary schools and 1,33,734 institutions offering education up to higher secondary level in the country. Similarly, the AISHE Report says that in the higher education sector there are 42,343 colleges, 1043 universities and university level institutions, 3,805 polytechnics, 3,264 nursing institutions, 3,846 teacher training institutes, 321 institutions offering PGDM and 108 institutes working under ministries. To keep going such a huge academic system during the pandemic, push towards digitalisation is the only alternative available for the nation.

The present initiatives of the Budget look minuscule before the tremendous academic system of the country but it is the right beginning. The announcement to start a digital university is a far-sighted step to increase the reach of higher education in the country. Allowing foreign universities in India to offer courses is also a step in the right direction.

Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan hailed the budgetary allocation of ₹1,04,277.72 crore for education of which ₹63,449.37 crore is earmarked for Department of School Education and Literacy and ₹40,828.35 crore

for Department of Higher Education. In 2020-21, the Ministry of Education was allocated ₹99,311.52 crore whereas it has received a total of ₹93,224.31 crore.

But for a state like Odisha much more is to be done to reap the benefits of digital education. Out of 67 lakh students from class 1 to 12, over 40 lakh do not have access to smartphones and network facilities in the rural areas. Lack of proper mobile network has become a major election issue in many gram panchayats in the state.

A timely initiative has been taken by the government in the Budget as everything is becoming digital and education cannot be an exception to this. Moreover, digital education has become the saviour for the students during the calamities and more innovations are necessary to make it amicable to all. Improvement in infrastructure like affordable network, gadgets, electricity and a change in the mindset of people are required to embrace the sweeping changes. Or else the careers of our youths will be jeopardised.

*The writer is Head, Department of Commerce, Nourangpur College, Nourangpur. Views are personal.*

### WISDOM CORNER

**“Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently.”** HENRY FORD

**“Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith.”** STEVE JOBS

**“I love Mickey Mouse more than any woman I have ever known.”** WALT DISNEY

### WORDSWORTH

#### ■ Saggars

In large-scale pottery manufacture years ago, the furnaces (called bottle kilns from their shape) were heated by coal or coke furnaces. Flames, ashes and corrosive gases would have damaged the pottery if it wasn't protected by being put into protective boxes called saggars, a word that seems to be a contraction of safeguard. They were hollow squat cylinders with flat tops and bottoms so they could be stacked in the kiln, often in piles 30 feet high or more. Saggars were made from a type of fireclay that was mixed with a proportion of ground-up reused saggar called grog; they only lasted for about 40 firings, so every large works had its own saggar-makers: Cups, saucers or even lavatory bowls or sinks are placed in saggars to protect them from dirt and slag. The saggars are placed in a pile known as a bung in a kiln as big as a living room, only higher. The top flat saggar is called a hiller. The saggars are made to match the shape of the porcelain inside. A saggar can hold about 15-20 plates. Saggars are still used in the industry for specialist items such as insulators for power stations in the electro-porcelain industry but the Clean Air Acts closed down coal-fuelled ovens (The People, 23 Feb. 1997).

#### Diplomatic boycott

Sir, India decided to boycott the Winter Olympics hosted by China diplomatically when it was reported that a PLA soldier involved in the clashes with Indian troops in the Galwan Valley would participate in the opening ceremony. When India did not send any diplomats to participate in the Winter Olympics opening ceremony, China responded that New Delhi should not make a “politicised interpretation” of the participation of a Chinese soldier involved in the clashes with Indian troops at the Galwan Valley as a torchbearer. India had announced that its top diplomat in China would participate neither in the opening nor the closing ceremonies of the Winter Olympics. India took the decision in the wake of Chinese state media report that a PLA regiment commander who was injured in the clashes in the Galwan Valley was part of the Winter Olympics torch relay. India strongly criticised the decision taken by China and pointed out that it was an attempt by China to politicise an event like Olympics. However, in China's view, the torchbearers of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics are broadly representative and met the selection standards. A Chinese official said that India should not misinterpret the situation. It must be remembered that India had lost 20 soldiers in the clashes in the Galwan Valley in the standoff between the two militaries at Eastern Ladakh. China had lost 40 soldiers in the clashes but it has not admitted it yet. In spite of disengagement at a few points, the standoff continues in many areas along the LAC in Ladakh. Despite several rounds of military and diplomatic talks, the conflicts between the two armies continue.  
Venu GS, KOLLAM

#### Tall promises

Sir, The ruling BJP and the Samajwadi Party (SP) enticing Uttar Pradesh voters ahead of the Assembly polls by making tall promises is not surprising. The primary targets include farmers, women, and the marginalised class. Both parties courted farmers in a big way, offering free power for cultivation, the minimum support price regime and payment to cane farmers within a fortnight. The SP went one step ahead to promise to make farmers debt-free by 2025. Other freebies offered by both parties included two free LPG cylinders for each connection every year. The saffron party also promised three crore jobs, including a job to a member of each family in the next five years. Knowing that most promises go down the drain, the voters would do well to make pragmatic choices.  
NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

## Letters

### 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

**OrissaPOST**  
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

## of the day quote

Beti bachao Beti padhao has turned into Beti darao Beti dhakao under BJP rule

KT RAMA RAO | TRS WORKING PRESIDENT

The people of Goa have witnessed both governments. The Congress rule was marked by instability and anarchy. BJP's government was about stability and development. This time all BJP workers are working for a hat trick in Goa

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

New Englishmen come in the form of BJP in the country. PM Narendra Modi does not talk on inflation, unemployment, poverty and other issues. He always talks about temple-mosque (Mandir-Masjid), riots and religions. The people of the country are tired of the propaganda of BJP and Narendra Modi

LALU PRASAD | RJD NATIONAL PRESIDENT

### SHORT TAKES

#### School bands to perform at NWM

**New Delhi:** School bands will now perform at the National War Memorial (NWM) in New Delhi on a regular rotation basis, the Defence Ministry said Thursday. A decision in this regard has been jointly taken by Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education has directed the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to prepare a schedule of school bands in consultation with the Ministry of Education and Delhi government so that school bands can perform at the NWM.

#### Guj: BSF seizes 9 Pak fishing boats

**Ahmedabad:** The Border Security Force (BSF) seized nine Pakistani fishing boats in Harami Nala creek area along the Indo-Pak maritime border near Kutuch district of Gujarat Thursday morning, officials said. After the seizure, the security agency launched a search operation in the creek area to find out if any more such boats from the neighbouring country have entered Indian waters, they said. "During a routine patrolling, BSF personnel had released a camera-mounted UAV in the sky to get a bird's eye view of the area. During one such UAV mission, we found nine fishing boats in Harami Nala," G S Malik, Inspector General of the BSF's Gujarat Frontier, told PTI.

#### Quake hits J&K

**Srinagar:** A light intensity earthquake, measuring 3.8 on the Richter scale, occurred in J&K Thursday. No report of any casualty or damage to property has been received from anywhere so far, officials of the disaster management authority said.

## 257 police stations don't have vehicles: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** As many as 257 police stations in the country do not have vehicles while 638 are without telephones, a Parliamentary Standing Committee report on Ministry of Home Affairs submitted to Parliament revealed Thursday.

The panel, headed by Congress leader Anand Sharma, noted that as per the date, it may be seen that out of 16,833 police stations in the country, 257 police stations don't have vehicles, 638 police stations don't have telephones and 143 police stations are not having wireless or mobiles as on January 1, 2020.

The committee said it was of the view that modern policing requires strong communication support, state-of-the-art modern weapons, and a high degree of mobility for quick response.

### LAKHIMPUR KHERI CASE

## Oppn renews demand for Mishra's resignation

Eight people were killed in Lakhimpur Kheri during violence that erupted October 3, when farmers were protesting against Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya's visit to the area



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow/Noida, Feb 10:** The Allahabad High Court Thursday granted bail to Ashish Mishra, the son of Union minister Ajay Mishra, who was arrested in connection with the Lakhimpur Kheri violence that killed eight people including four farmers.

The Bharatiya Kisan Union and the Rashtriya Lok Dal expressed displeasure over Mishra's bail. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra renewed her demand for the minister's resignation.

The Lucknow bench of the court had reserved its order January 18 on Ashish Mishra's plea after concluding the hearing through video-conferencing.

On Thursday, Justice Rajeev Singh delivered the order, granting bail to Mishra who had spent four months in custody. The counsel appearing on behalf of the minis-

ter's son had told the court that his client was innocent and there was no evidence against him that he incited the driver of a vehicle to crush the farmers.

Oposing the plea, Additional Advocate General V K Shahi had said that at the time of the incident, Ashish Mishra was in the car that mowed down the farmers.

On October 3, eight people were killed in Lakhimpur Kheri. Four farmers were moved down by an SUV. A driver and two BJP workers were then allegedly lynched by angry farmers.

A journalist also died in the violence that triggered outrage among opposition parties and farmer groups agitating over the Centre's now-repealed agri laws.

RJD chief Jayant Chaudhary Thursday hit out at the "system" that granted bail to Mishra. "What a system! Mowed down four farmers, got bail in four months," Chaudhary tweeted in Hindi.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra renewed the opposition demand that the accused's father should resign.

"Everyone says our Prime Minister is a good man, then why did he not ask his minister to resign? Does he not have any moral responsibility towards the country?" she said at a poll meeting in Rampur.

### TN: Petrol bomb hurled at BJP HQ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, Feb 10:** Seeking to show his 'opposition' to the BJP's PRO-NEET stand, a 38-year old man on Thursday hurled petrol 'bombs' at the Tamil Nadu headquarters of the BJP here, police said. Demanding a National Investigation Agency probe, the state unit of the BJP dismissed as a 'film dialogue', the police tagging the test issue being the likely motive.

The principal opposition AIADMK alleged that the attack showed deterioration of law and order. The government has the duty to probe the case in all the angles and bring the true culprits to book, AIADMK coordinator, O Panneerselvam said. Saffron party TN president, K Annamalai, speaking to reporters said that anti-national forces and fundamentalists should be arrested and condemned the attack. He demanded that the ruling DMK do 'self-introspection' and he alleged deterioration of law and order in the state. The BJP chief underscored a 'pattern' by listing out crimes targeted at party functionaries and offices in other places of the state since February 9 evening. Annamalai said that in Nagapattinam, a car of an office-bearer was burnt and offices set up to coordinate urban civic polls related work were vandalised in Chennai, Tirupur and Vellore. Such attacks showed a clear pattern and a larger criminal conspiracy as well, he claimed.

## India's first mRNA vax under final trials: Govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** India's first homegrown mRNA Covid-19 vaccine is currently under final clinical trial stages, the government said Thursday.

Responding to a question at the weekly press conference, NITI Aayog Member (Health) Dr V K Paul said a candidate vaccine by Pune-based Gennova Biopharmaceuticals, which is entirely an Indian development, is in final clinical trial stages.

"We hope that it will pass that threshold that it could be used under emergency use and regular use some day," he said.

The official noted that the vaccine can be stored in normal cold chain conditions and transported, which is a "big thing"



The official noted that the vaccine can be stored in normal cold chain conditions and transported, which is a "big thing". "So we have a great candidate. They have also tweaked it for Omicron variant that will come forward. We need the mRNA platform because it is a new plat-

form and it has been shown that vaccines developed on these platforms at least for coronavirus have been effective worldwide," Paul said. "Having an India vaccine platform is an asset in the wake of Covid-19 and Omicron, but also for other diseases for which we

are still hunting for affordable, effective and lasting vaccines, so we treasure this platform and we complement the company and the group which has gone into it. As a platform, it will be important in the near future and beyond," he added. ICMR Director General Balram Bhargava said this is another vaccine which really establishes that India is heading towards becoming a vaccine super-power and the fact that these vaccines are going to be available for other diseases. "... and because such a large proportion has been vaccinated, we are not seeing such a disastrous third surge in terms of hospitalisation and mortality," he said.

## SC ultimatum for Mallya

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** The Supreme Court Thursday gave a final opportunity to fugitive businessman Vijay Mallya, accused in bank loan default case of over Rs 9,000 crore involving his defunct Kingfisher Airlines, to appear before it personally or through his lawyer in a contempt case where he has been found guilty.

The top court said it has given multiple opportunities to Mallya to appear either personally or through a lawyer and had even given specific directions in its last order dated November 30, 2021. A bench of justices U U Lalit, S Ravindra Bhat and P S Narasimha posted the contempt case for further hearing after two weeks, saying that respondent contemnor (Mallya) is at liberty to act as per direction given in order dated November 30 last year, failing which the matter shall be taken to its "logical conclusion". At the outset, the bench told senior advocate Jaideep Gupta, who has been appointed amicus curiae in the matter, that it has found the contemnor guilty of contempt of court, and now, punishment has to be imposed.



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needful is done at the earliest," it said.

The panel said it has been given to understand by the states that limited manufacturing of non-lethal weaponry in the country is a cause for their non-availability with the states desirous to obtain them.

"Hence, it recommends that the MHA may initiate setting up of adequate manufacturing units of non-lethal weaponry in the country so as to address the issue of shortages in this regard," it said.

The committee recommended that the MHA may coordinate with the states to increase investment in the purchase of non-lethal weaponry, latest anti-riot equipment and standardise the uniform of police personnel with lightweight, easy to wear body protection gears to minimise injury or casualty during performing law and order duties.

### MANIPUR ASSEMBLY POLL RESCHEDULED

Heeding the request of political parties and various communities of the state, the Election Commission Thursday rescheduled the polling dates of Manipur Assembly elections, due on February 27 and March 3, to February 28 and March 5. Counting will be held on March 10, along with four other states



GEARING UP: Devotees prepare chapati at Guru Ravidass Janam Asthan Mandir, ahead of Ravidass Jayanti in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

## Overall Covid situation optimistic

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** The overall Covid-19 pandemic situation in the country is optimistic and improving even as some states, including Kerala and Mizoram, are still reporting high positivity rates and are of concern, the government said Thursday.

Urging people not to lower their guard, NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul said even though a consistent decline in coronavirus infections and daily positivity rate has been noted across all states, nearly 40 districts are still reporting an increase in weekly cases and thus, there is a need to maintain vigilance. "The overall Covid-19 pandemic situation in the country is optimistic and cases seem to be settling, but if we look at it closely, then at state and district levels, there are data of concern," he said at a press conference, adding that the contraction of the pandemic is apparently consistent.

The daily positivity in Kerala is 29.57 per cent, it is still enormously high, Mizoram has 26.5 per cent positivity, Himachal has 11.79 per cent positivity, 12 per cent in Arunachal Pradesh and 17 per cent in Sikkim, so these are points of concern, Paul said. "So we are clearly passing through a transition towards im-

provement, but this is not the time for us to be less vigilant. We cannot lower our guard. Covid appropriate behaviour has to be taken as the 'new normal' and that includes wearing masks, ventilated environment, social distancing and general discipline, which cannot be stopped," he asserted. "Even the World Health Organisation (WHO) has put a logic in front of everyone that going into future, this is not the end of the virus, the virus is still around in the world and in the country, and virus being under pressure will also try to emerge fitter, smarter so that it could penetrate our defenses. Our strategies for con-

tainment, surveillance, genomic surveillance, tracking international passengers - now in a more softer way, but that vigilance must go on that is the message we bring to you," he said. Warning against any lax in observing Covid-appropriate behaviour, he said 141 districts reported over 10 per cent weekly Covid positivity, while in 160 districts, it was between five to 10 per cent in the week ending February 9. There is progressive increase in districts with less than 5 per cent positivity, the number of which stands at 433 in the week ending February 9. It was 211 in the week ending January 19, he noted.

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EAST COAST RAILWAY	
Tender No. eT-M-KUR-TestWel-179-2022	
Name of Work : LOADING/UNLOADING, PAINTING, ADJUSTING & TESTING ACCURACY OF 20 KG & 10 KG CI TEST WEIGHTS, ISSUE OF VERIFICATION CERTIFICATE BY STATE LEGAL METROLOGY DEPARTMENT, ODISHA AS PER WEIGHTS MEASURE ACT & RULE INCLUDING PROVIDING LABOUR FOR CALIBRATION AND STAMPING OF TEST RAKE FOR IN-MOTION WEIGH BRIDGE AT KHURDA ROAD.	
Advertised Value : ₹ 16,50,750.86, EMD: ₹ 33,000/-, Tender document cost: ₹ 2,360/-, Period of Completion: 45 Days.	
Bidding start date : 16.02.2022, Tender closing date & time : at 1530 hrs. of 02.03.2022.	
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.	
Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.reps.gov.in	
Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer/ Khurda Road	
PR-801/M/21-22	

Union Bank of India		REGIONAL OFFICE: CUTTACK	POSSESSION NOTICE
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Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India under the SARFAESI Act, 2002 (Act No.54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices calling upon the Borrower/Guarantors loan A/c mentioned below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower/Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrower/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Union Bank of India, Sompur Branches for the amount mentioned below with interest thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to the Borrower to redeem the secured assets.			
SOMPUR BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrower/Guarantors	Liabilities due as per Notice (in ₹)	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession	Description of Immovable Properties
1) M/s. Shiva Sakti Stores, Prop.: Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy, 2) Smt. Ranjana Sethi (Guarantor), W/o.: Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy, 3) Shri Rashmi Ranjan Sethy	₹39,97,577.73 as on 30.04.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses as per agreement	08.10.2021 / 08.02.2022	Land & Building belonging to Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy over Plot No.: 1388, 1389/1598 and 1389 (Chaka No.: 398), Khata No.: 493/29 and 259, Area: Ac.0.61 Dec., Mouza: Kamarpada, PS./Tahasil: Kishan Nagar, Dist.: Cuttack
1) Smt. Ranjana Sethi, (Legal heir of Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy), 2) Rashmi Ranjan Sethy, (Legal Heir of Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy), 3) Smt. Benga Bewa (Legal Heir of Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy), 4) Shri Subash Chandra Sethy (Legal Heir of Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy), 5) Smt. Sapani Sathy (Legal Heir of Guarantor Late Govinda Sathy), 6) Hemanta Sathy, (Legal Heir of Guarantor late Govinda Sathy), 7) Shri Sarat Sathy (Legal Heir of Guarantor Late Govinda Sathy), At: Kamarpada, PO.: Jasapada, Dist.: Cuttack - 754130	₹20,90,587/- as on 30.04.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses as per agreement	08.10.2021 / 08.02.2022	1) Land & Building belonging to Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy Over Plot No 1388, 1389/1598 and 1389 (Chaka No.: 398), Khata No.: 493/29 and 259, Area: Ac.0.61 Dec., Mouza: Kamarpada, PS.: Tahasil: Kishan Nagar, Dist.: Cuttack, 2) Residential land belonging to Late Govinda Sathy, S/o.: Late Indramani Sathy, Plot No.: 867, 822, 829 and 849, Khata No.: 146 and 159, Area: Ac.0.046 Dec., Mouza: Kamarpada, PO.: Jasapada, PS./Tahasil: Kishannagar, Dist.: Cuttack 754130
1) Smt. Ranjana Sethi, (Co Applicant & LH of Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy), W/o.: Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy, 2) Rashmi Ranjan Sathy (Legal Heir of Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy), 3) Smt. Benga Bewa (Legal Heir of Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy), 4) Shri Subash Chandra Sathy (Legal Heir of Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy), 5) Mr. Rama Chandra Rout (Guarantor), S/o.: Late Ratnakar Rout, At: Archilli PO.: Jasapada, Dist.: Cuttack - 754130	₹23,76,977.70 as on 30.04.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses as per agreement	08.10.2021 / 08.02.2022	1) Land & Building belonging to Late Rabintra Kumar Sethy Over Plot No 1388, 1389/1598 (Chaka No.: 398), Khata No.: 493/29, Area: Ac.0.11 Dec., Mouza: Kamarpada, PS.: Tahasil: Kishan Nagar, Dist.: Cuttack
Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 10.02.2022 Sd/- Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India			

## TN URBAN POLLS

## Young, old enter fray

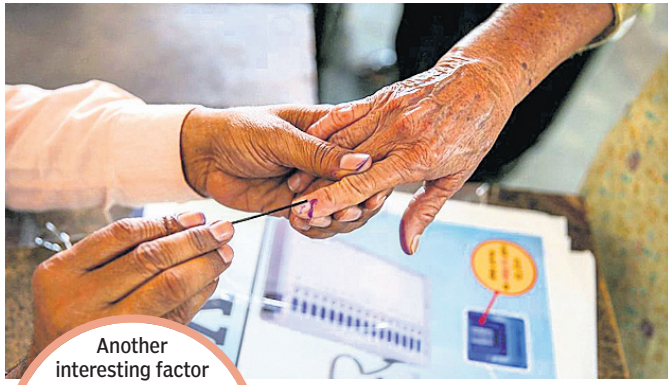
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Feb 10:** The nomination for Tamil Nadu urban local body polls includes candidates from diverse backgrounds - tech-savvy youth, veteran social activists, nomads and transgenders.

The last date on filing nominations was Wednesday (February 9). Kamakshi Subramanian (94) is contesting the elections from Besant Nagar in Chennai as an independent candidate and has been actively involved in the social firmament of the area. She was instrumental in supervising the road tarring and drainage work in the area and ensuring that the quality of work is not compromised by the contractors.

The nonagenarian said, "I am always with the people of the area and I hope that they would support me by voting for me. However even if I don't win, I will always be with the people and won't allow any corrupt officials or contractors to get pass my eagle eye."

Bharathi Kannan, a self-confessed nomad, has bicycled for 6,000 km through all the districts of the state. His motto is to create awareness among the people about the pressing environmental issues and fighting rampant consumerism.



Another interesting factor that is being witnessed during the run-up to the urban local body polls is the presence of transgender people in the elections

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ness among the people about the pressing environmental issues and fighting rampant consumerism.

He is contesting from Ward No 47 of Chennai Corporation. While speaking to IANS he said, "I am contesting the elections to be among the people and to help them understand better the rampant consumerism as well as the envi-

ronmental degradation. I will make sure that the elected representatives are serious in their work and be full-time active for the people of the ward."

Interestingly, youth are also not left behind. Preethi Vetrivel (23) is contesting as an independent candidate from Ward 132 of the Chennai Corporation.

Preethi, a social activist, has been involved in all the pressing problems being faced by the people of the area. Preethi said, "Youth are more at ease on latest technologies and are more energetic. I have been working in tandem with the corporation during floods and the pandemic. The councillor acts as a bridge between the people and government and is a very crucial post."

Another interesting factor that is being witnessed during the run-up to the urban local body polls is the presence of transgender people in the elections. While transgender people had contested in the general election and the 2021 Assembly elections as independents, the mainstream political parties have given tickets to them in this local body poll.

Ganga Nayak, Secretary, South Indian Transgender community is contesting as a DMK candidate from Ward 37 of Vellore Municipal corporation. Jayadevi is an AIADMK candidate from Teynampett in Chennai corporation while Rajamma is a BJP candidate from the posh Tiru Vi Ka Nagar ward of Chennai corporation.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Feb 10:** Reading and counting abilities of children in West Bengal have significantly reduced due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new survey carried out across several districts of the state.

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, West Bengal), a collaborative effort of the Pratham Education Foundation and the Liver Foundation, stated that 27.7 per cent children in Class 3 could read Class 2-level texts, compared to 36.6 per cent in 2018 and 32.9 per cent in 2014.

It also said about 48 per cent of students in Class 5 can read Class-2 level texts, lower than the 50.5 per cent figure in 2018, 50.2 per cent in 2016 and 51.8 per cent in 2014. The survey was conducted among 11,189 children across 17 districts of the state in December 2021.

The report was launched virtually by Nobel laureate Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee on Wednesday evening. According to the survey, the percentage of children in Class 2 who can at least read words has declined to 53 per cent in 2021



from 66.2 per cent in 2018, and 54.8 per cent in 2014.

Banerjee, who heads the Global Advisory Committee formed by the West Bengal government to combat the Covid situation, had Wednesday said that lockdowns have impeded the basic learning of students, and schools in the state should now reopen as soon as possible.

"All school campuses in Bengal should be opened as early as possible as the COVID-19 situation has improved and everyone is in its favour," the economist said.

Dr Abhijit Choudhury of the Liver Foundation, added: "In 2020, COVID-19 devastated the world. Almost two years later, it has become imperative to assess the academic and learning loss for children."

## Phone being tapped, says TN BJP president

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Feb 10:** Tamil Nadu BJP president and former IPS officer K. Annamalai Thursday said his phone is being tapped on a daily basis by the state intelligence department.

He said this while addressing the mediapersons at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) state headquarters. Annamalai said that his phone was under surveillance round the clock by the Tamil Nadu intelligence wing and that it was totally illegal.

He also said that surveillance against him has gone to the next level. The former IPS officer who had quit his service to join politics said that the intelligence wing of the Tamil Nadu police was dominating the proceedings of the police force. He said that technically, the DGP law and order was in charge of the police department. "...but the ADGP, Intelligence of Tamil Nadu police was dominating the state police department and it was an unfortunate development," he asserted.

"When the chief of the intelligence wing of the state police takes the role of the decision-maker, the department becomes politically inclined. The messing up of Lavanya suicide case was due to the involvement of the intelligence department and if this continues,

When the chief of the intelligence wing of the state police takes the role of the decision-maker, the department becomes politically inclined. The messing up of Lavanya suicide case was due to the involvement of the intelligence department and if this continues, policing in the state will get politicized," he added.

K. ANNAMALAI  
TAMIL NADU BJP PRESIDENT

When asked whether ample security was provided to the BJP state headquarters where a petrol bomb attack had taken place in the early hours of Thursday, Annamalai said: "Normally, I don't talk about my personal security and of the party office. As you asked, I will tell you that after this government assumed office in Tamil Nadu, my security was re-

duced from Y category security to X category security where only one gunman is provided." He also said that the security provided to the BJP state headquarters on both sides of the lane was withdrawn, adding he was not "aware of the reasons behind those decisions".



Trinamool Congress candidate Deepali Murmu during a door-to-door election campaign for the upcoming Municipal Elections in Balurghat

PTI PHOTO

## BENGAL POST-POLL VIOLENCE

## CBI declares reward for info on 7 more accused

BJP leader Abhijit Sarkar was murdered in Narkel Danga of Kolkata allegedly by the seven accused against which the cash reward has been declared

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has offered a cash reward of Rs 50,000 on each of the seven more absconding accused in connection



with the murder case of a BJP worker Abhijit Sarkar in the West Bengal post-poll violence case.

The CBI has declared a cash reward on Arun Dey, Sukhdeo Poddar alias Sukha, Gopal Das alias Bishal Paul, Saurav Dey alias Guddu, Rahul Dey, Biswajit Das alias Bompaa, and Amit Das. BJP leader

452, 201 and 34 IPC.

Abhijit was murdered by the accused during the post-poll violence in West Bengal and his body was not given to his family for quite a long time. Four months after his murder the family was handed over the body along with the autopsy report. Post-mortem was twice conducted on his body.

Though Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had claimed that there was no incident of post-poll violence in the state, an NHRC report has said that there were several cases of rape and murder after the announcement of Assembly election results in 2021.

The study highlighted that vaccinated people have better detectable antibody levels. Among those who took Covaxin or Covishield, more than 80 per cent had antibodies. The study also found that 68 per cent of unvaccinated people aged 11-18 had detectable levels of antibodies. The health department said that this was evidence of indirect exposure to natural infection.

Tamil Nadu health minister Ma Subramanian said, "The state public health department has taken samples from people above the age of 10 years from 1,076 clusters across all districts of the state and found that at an average 87 per cent have developed antibodies and this is a good sign."



## CBI summons TMC leader

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Feb 10:** The Central Bureau of Investigation Thursday summoned Trinamool Congress Birbhum district president Anubrata Mondal in connection with its probe into a multi-crore cattle smuggling racket operating along the India-Bangladesh border, a source in the agency said.

Mandal has been asked to depose before the CBI officials at Nizam Palace here on February 14, he said. On Wednesday, the central agency had summoned TMC MP and actor Deepak Adhikari, popularly known as Dev, in connection with the same probe. He has been asked to appear on February 15.

The CBI had earlier questioned several persons, including Bikash

Mandal has been asked to depose before the CBI officials at Nizam Palace February 14

Mishra, brother of Binay Mishra, a businessman allegedly involved in the cattle smuggling racket, and considered close to West Bengal's ruling TMC.

The agency had also interrogated Enamul Haque, the prime accused in the case. Both Bikash Mishra and Haque were taken to CBI custody, and the latter was recently granted bail by the Supreme Court.

The CBI had also apprehended a former commandant of the 36 BSF Battalion for his alleged involvement in the racket.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Feb 10:** The drones of Chennai-based Garuda Aerospace played a significant supporting role in the rescue of the trekker who got trapped in a crevice of the Koormbachi hillock in Kerala's Palakkad, said a top company official.

"On Tuesday night, at about 11 pm., we received a call from an Army officer and the Kerala government wanting a rescue drone team to support the Army and the NDRF (National Disaster Response Force) in their effort to save the trekker who got trapped in a mountain crevice in Palakkad," Founder and CEO Agnishwar Jayaprakash said. While there were no flights at that

time, Garuda Aerospace's two member team drove down to the location through the night armed with the permission from the authorities, Jayaprakash added.

According to him, the initial plan was to deploy a stringing drone - a drone that carries cable - which can deliver the chord to the trapped trekker Babu. He could then hook it onto the rope, and pass on a harness so that he could be lifted up with the help of a crane.

However, later, the plan changed. "The army/NDRF officials decided to drop down the ropes and we were asked to provide drop direction guidance using our drone. We flew our drone which gave the video feed as to the lo-



IANS PHOTO

cation of the rope and the trekker. We told the rescue team to drop the rope to the right or left so that it can reach the trekker," R. Karthikeyan, drone pilot, Garuda Aerospace said from Palakkad.

He said the rescue official climbed down the mountain with the help of the rope and gave the trekker a bottle of water and took him up.

"Earlier, our drone carried water

bottles from the ground to the rescue team at the mountain top," Karthikeyan added.

Garuda stringing drones were also deployed in the Chamoli Glacier disaster in Uttarakhand and supported NDRF officials to reestablish communications, Jayaprakash said. According to him, Karthikeyan was also the drone pilot in Uttarakhand.

The Garuda stringing drone has been used extensively for wire stringing operations and connecting long high tension wires for clients such as L&T and the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board. The stringing drone is also capable of carrying upto 15 kg of weight which can also be used to provide food, water and Aessential supplies.



## of the day quote

If the students and our children succumb to their nefarious design, your future will be jeopardised at the altar of their politics. Also, the freedom and equality that the Constitution gave us would be meaningless

**RANDEEP SURJEWALA** | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY & CHIEF SPOKESPERSON

The Deep Ocean Mission aims to explore deep-oceanic resources and develop technologies for their sustainable use

**JITENDRA SINGH** | EARTH SCIENCES MINISTER

When it comes to justice, who can forget 1984 riots? For 30 years, those who lost their own family members waited for justice. They kept waiting for the punishment for those who were involved in it

**SMRITI IRANI** | UNION MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### Girl drugged, raped in car

**Firozabad:** A 19-year-old girl, travelling with her mother from Haryana to Uttar Pradesh, was allegedly drugged and raped in a car. The two were thereafter dumped on the roadside in Firozabad. On the basis of the survivor's complaint and medical examination, an FIR was registered at Narkhi police station in Firozabad Wednesday.

### Polls: Meta vows to combat hate speech

**New Delhi:** Facebook-parent Meta Thursday said it will be activating its Elections Operations Center to watch out for potential abuses that could emerge across the platform related to state elections, as the social media giant outlined its firm resolve to curb hate speech, harmful content and misinformation on its platforms.

### Youth kidnapped for cryptocurrency

**Jodhpur:** A youth was kidnapped by two of his friends here after he jokingly claimed to be in possession of cryptocurrency, police said Thursday. B.A Final year student Hiren Sharma was abducted by his friends. On February 6, his friend Ayush called him to his room. On reaching there, he was taken to Phalodi in a car and then to Jaisalmer by his friend and other youths. He was asked for details of cryptocurrency at knifepoint.

### Raj Assembly: 4 BJP MLAs suspended

**Jaipur:** Four BJP MLAs were suspended for the rest of the Rajasthan assembly session for creating ruckus in the House Thursday. Parliamentary affairs minister Shanti Dhariwal moved a proposal to suspend the BJP MLAs Ramlal, Madan Dilawar, Avinash Gehlot, and Chandrabhan Akya for the rest of the session, which was passed by the voice vote.

### Khali joins BJP

**New Delhi:** Wrestler Dalip Singh Rana, 'the Great Khali', Thursday joined BJP. Khali has joined the BJP in presence of Union Minister Jitendra Singh and party national general secretary Arun Singh and Member of Parliament Sunita Duggal at party national headquarters. Welcoming the WWE wrestler, Jitendra Singh said that like his strong physique and thoughts, Khali will work towards strengthening the party.



I ask AAP why Punjabis should trust AAP. Its convener came to Punjab five years back and his party even won 20 seats to emerge as the principal opposition party in the state. However, instead of raising the voice of people, 11 of its 20 legislators joined the Congress

**SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL** | SAD CHIEF

## LATA'S ASHES IMMERSSED

The ashes of singing icon Lata Mangeshkar were immersed in the holy Ramkund on the banks of the Godavari river in Maharashtra Thursday. A number of Nashik residents also thronged the Goda Ghat in the area to pay tributes to the melody queen



# High schools in K'taka to resume from Feb 14

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** The Karnataka government Thursday decided to resume classes for high school students up to class 10 from February 14, and for Pre-University and Degree Colleges thereafter.

The decision was arrived at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai with Ministers of Home, Primary and Secondary Education, Higher Education Departments, and senior officials.

"The three-judge bench (of the Karnataka High Court) has said that they will hear the case on a day-to-day basis and that everyone should maintain peace, and not to wear religious dress at colleges until then (order). They have also given instruction for reopening of educational institutions," Bommai said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, discussions were held at the meeting aimed at establishing peace at school and college campuses and creating an atmosphere for students to study together; and to maintain law and order.

"It has been decided that high school classes up to class 10 will start functioning from Monday and in the second stage PUC and degree colleges will start, the dates will be announced in the due course," he said. The Chief Minister said he has called a meeting of Ministers with Deputy Commissioners, Superintendent of Police, Deputy Director of Public Instruction and



Muslim women during a protest in support of wearing hijab in educational institutions, at Shaheen Bagh in New Delhi

## Pro-Hijab protests at Urdu varsity, Charminar

**Hyderabad:** Students of the Maulana Azad National Urdu University Thursday staged a protest over ban on hijab in educational institutions in Karnataka. Expressing solidarity with Muslim students of Karnataka, large number of varsity students marched on the campus. Raising slogans and holding placards in support of Hijab, students took out a huge rally. Members of civil society also staged a protest at historic Charminar in support of hijab. They expressed solidarity with students of Karnataka. Women from various walks of life and belonging to different religious groups participated in the protest. They were carrying placards with the slogan "Hijab is our right" written on them. More than 1,000 feminists, democratic groups, collectives, academicians, lawyers and individuals from various walks of life came together to condemn the "targeting and exclusion" of hijab-wearing Muslim students Thursday, while alleging that the head scarf is only the latest pretext to impose an "apartheid" on Muslim women.

CEOs of Zilla Panchayats of all districts Friday evening via video conferencing to gather information

about the ground situation in the districts and to give certain directions. "Our Ministers, Education

# UP 1st phase polls: Over 60pc turnout recorded

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, Feb 10:** Over 60 per cent voter turnout was recorded in the first phase of polling held Thursday across 58 assembly constituencies in 11 districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Polling closed at 6 pm following a one-hour extension because of COVID-19 protocols. The day passed off peacefully with minor technical snags in EVMs at some places, election officials said.

Additional Chief Election Officer (ACEO) B D Ram Tiwari said, "There were reports of a technical error in EVMs at some places." Those EVMs were being replaced as the reports came in, he added.

On the Samajwadi Party's allegation that poor voters were not allowed to exercise their franchise in Dundukhedha village in the Kairana assembly constituency, Tiwari said the district magistrate concerned was asked to look into the matter.

Agra recorded 60.33 per cent polling, Aligarh 60.49 per cent, Baghpat 61.35 per cent, Bulandshahr 60.52 per cent, Gautam Buddha Nagar 56.73 per cent, Ghaziabad 54.77 per cent, Hapur 60.50 per cent, Mathura 63.28 per cent, Meerut

60.91 per cent, Muzaffarnagar 65.34 per cent and Shamli 69.42 per cent, an EC report said.

During the 2017 assembly elections, 63.47 per cent polling was recorded in these constituencies, the report said.

A report from Ghaziabad said a minor skirmish took place between supporters of BJP leader V K Singh and Congress leader Rajan Kant, allegedly when the former addressed media persons and talked about the work done by the BJP within the premises of a polling station, and security personnel had to intervene.

In Bulandshahr, a groom reached the Char Khamba polling station in the Sadar assembly segment to cast his vote before joining his marriage procession. The groom, Balram, after performing the 'Ghuchadi' ceremony, reached the polling station on a motorcycle to cast his vote.

In Muzaffarnagar, a young man was thrashed by BJP MLA Umesh Malik and later handed over to the police for alleged fake voting at a polling centre in Shahpur under the Budhana assembly seat. A purported video of the incident was widely shared social media.



## PERFECT CLICK



A mediaperson poses for a picture at Mughal Garden, ahead of its opening for general public, at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi

# India expresses concern, seeks proactive action

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** India on Thursday expressed concern over "anti-India" activities of certain extremists and radical elements in the UK and urged the country to maintain vigil and take appropriate proactive action.

This was conveyed at the 4th India-UK Home Affairs Dialogue held in virtual mode Thursday.

"The Indian side communicated concerns on the anti-India activities of certain extremists and radical elements in the UK. The UK side was urged to maintain vigil over the activities of such elements and take appropriate proactive action," an official statement said. Both sides agreed to maintain enhanced security cooperation between the two countries.

The dialogue covered a wide range of issues, including homeland

## 'ANTI-INDIA' ACTIVITIES IN UK



security, cyber security, extradition cases, and migration and mobility. The meeting concluded with both sides agreeing to deepen security-related bilateral engagement, the statement said.

The Indian delegation was led by Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla and the UK delegation was led by Permanent Secretary, Home Office, Mathew Rycroft.

# Madras HC expresses shock over dress code row

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Feb 10:** The Madras High Court Thursday expressed shock over the dress code controversy erupting in certain parts of the country.

A bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari asked: "What is paramount? Is it the country or religion?" Questioning the intention behind such things, he asked: "Is it one country or divided by religion or by something like that. This is quite surprising."

Pointing out the fact that India was a secular country, he said: "What is found from the current affairs is nothing but an effort to divide the country by religion."

The Acting Chief Justice's observations came while hearing a batch of petitions filed by Srirangam-based activist, Rangarajan Narasimhan who wanted the court to implement a strict dress code for devotees, disallowing non-Hindus from stepping into the temples across Tamil Nadu.

The bench asked the petitioner for an illustration to show the custom of dress code followed in practice as it made it clear that the custom is for individual temples.

He asked the petitioner how the question of putting up display boards arises if there was no uniform dress code. When the petitioner sought an order, the bench



"It is really shocking, somebody is going for the 'hijab', some others for the 'topi' (cap) and a few others for other things. Is it one country or is it divided by religion or something like that. This is quite surprising," the bench said

asked him to show what part of the 'Agamas' refer to trousers and shirts. The bench also warned that he could be barred from appearing in person before the court and directed him to use appropriate words and stay away from quarrelling.

Advocate General R. Shanmugasundaram informed the court that each and every temple was following its own custom and visitors belonging to other religions are allowed only up to the 'akodi maram' (flag pole).

# India has about 21 judges per million people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** India has about 21 judges per million people, Rajya Sabha was informed Thursday.

In a written reply, Law Minister Kiren Rijju said to calculate the judge-population ratio for per million population in a particular year, the Department of Justice in the ministry uses the population as per Census 2011 and as per available information regarding sanctioned strength of judges in Supreme Court, the high court and district and subordinate courts in the particular year.

"The judge to population ratio (judge per million population) with respect to sanctioned strength of judges is 21.03 as on December 31 2021," he said. The sanctioned strength of the apex court is 34 while it is 1098 for the 25 high courts. Responding to a query on pendency of cases, he said setting up of subordinate courts including, fast track courts (FTCs) and its functioning comes within the domain of the state governments in consultation with the respective high courts.

## Pay ₹1,788cr penalty to rubber producers: Farmers' group to PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** The All India Kisan Sabha, a farmers' group aligned with Left parties, Thursday demanded Prime Minister Narendra Modi provide ₹1,788 crore, equal to the penalty amount imposed by regulator CCI on tyre corporates, as grant to rubber farmers to set up a tyre manufacturing unit.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) had imposed a penalty of ₹622.09 crore on MRF, ₹425.53 crore on Apollo Tyres, ₹252.16 crore on CEAT Ltd, ₹309.95 crore on JK Tyre and ₹178.33 crore on Birla Tyres and the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association (ATMA), after it, in August 2018, having held them guilty of contravention of the provisions of Section 3 of the Competition Act, which prohibits anti-competitive agreements including cartels, during 2011-12.

The tyre manufacturers had exchanged price sensitive data amongst themselves through ATMA and had taken collective decisions on the prices of tyres, which the CCI had termed as a gross violation with the intention of amassing profit by cheating both the rubber producers as well as the consumers.

## COVID SCARE

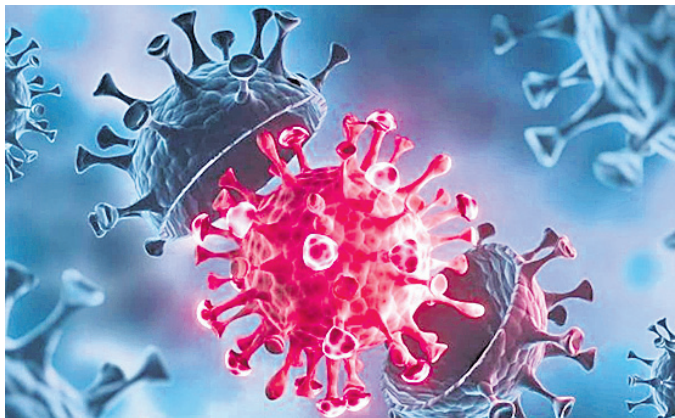
# Infection with 1 variant doesn't protect from others: ICMR

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** Infection by one variant does not provide protection from the other variants, Indian Council of Medical Research Director General Dr Balram Bhargava said Thursday

Responding to a question at a press briefing on re-infection in patients after some weeks, he said that as variants have emerged, re-infections have been seen. However, the use of vaccination prevents severe disease and hospitalisations and mortality, while the use of Covid Appropriate Behaviour prevents the infection.

"In terms of antibodies, T cell immunity and etc play a role from



individual to individual," he said. NITI Aayog's Member, Health, Dr VK Paul, said: "It is a fact that the

vaccine protection and natural immunity protection do not complete guarantee that one would not be

## 4,355 Indian expatriates died: Govt

**New Delhi:** A total of 4,355 Indian expatriates died due to Covid-19 in 88 countries, with the highest death toll of 1,237 being reported in Saudi Arabia, followed by 894 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The details were provided by Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan in the Rajya Sabha Thursday. According to him, 668 Indian expatriates died of Covid-19 in Kuwait, 555 in Oman and 203 in Bahrain. The number was five in the United States, while it was 15 in Russia. Muraleedharan said 113 Indian expatriates died of Covid-19 in Qatar, while the number was 186 in Malaysia.

infected again."

He said that the issue is being constantly discussed across the world including India and this reality has to be accepted. On the question of third doses for rest of all people as ample vaccines are available, he said that all such decisions are taken based on the scientific need.

"The first consideration is scientific need, then other considerations like programmatic consideration, epidemiological consideration are taken into the account. These decisions are being taken keeping all in the views. All such considerations are under constant scientific scrutiny," he said.

# international

## of the day quote

Iran will continue its development of missile power to deter its enemies

**MOHAMMAD BAGHERI**  
CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE IRANIAN ARMED FORCES



The reality is that vaccine mandates, and the fact that Canadians stepped up to get vaccinated to almost 90%, ensured that this pandemic didn't hit as hard here in Canada as elsewhere in the world

**JUSTIN TRUDEAU** | PM OF CANADA



As the pandemic is still ongoing, our immediate challenge is to keep the recovery well on track

**VALDIS DOMBROVSKIS**  
EU COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT



## SHORT TAKES

### Prince Charles tests Covid positive

London: Britain's Prince Charles has tested positive for COVID-19 and is self-isolating, his office said Thursday. A message on his official Twitter page said Charles tested positive on Thursday morning and was "deeply disappointed" not to be able to attend a scheduled visit in Winchester, England. Charles, 73, met dozens of people during a large reception at London's British Museum on Wednesday evening. He was accompanied by his wife Camilla, and was in close contact with Britain's Treasury chief Rishi Sunak, among others. Charles' office, Clarence House, confirmed that he is triple vaccinated.

### Philippines lifts ban on travellers

Manila (Philippines): The Philippines lifted a nearly 2-year ban on foreign travellers Thursday in a lifesaving boost for its tourism and related industries as an omicron-fuelled surge eases. Foreign travellers from 157 countries with visa-free arrangements with the Philippines who have been fully vaccinated and tested negative for the virus will no longer be required to quarantine upon arrival. The government also ended a risk classification system that banned travellers from the worst-hit countries.

### Pak agency seeks 'property details'

Lahore: Pakistan's top investigative agency has sought 'property details' of the 2008 Mumbai terror attack proclaimed offenders and their families from the Revenue Department of Punjab province, a senior official said Thursday. The Mumbai attack case has entered into the 14th year but none of its suspects in Pakistan has been punished yet, showing that the case had never been in the priority list of the country that appears to be keen to put it under the carpet. "In a letter to the senior member of the board of revenue Punjab, the Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) counter-terrorism wing has sought property details of the proclaimed offenders of the Mumbai attack and their family members," a FIA official said.

### Drone attack bid injures 12

Riyadh: The Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen said Thursday that 12 people were injured by falling debris from an attempted drone attack on an airport in the southern Saudi region of Abha near the kingdom's border with Yemen. The people who were hurt included travellers and workers at the airport. Two of the injured were Saudi citizens, 4 were Bangladeshis and 3 were Nepali residents.



The US government is watching the protests staged by truckers in Canada very closely

**JEN PSAKI**  
WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

### 1 MN AFGHAN KIDS MAY DIE: UNICEF

The UNICEF has warned that 1 million children in Afghanistan may die of acute malnutrition if urgent action is not taken, the media reported



# Diplomats meet as Russia holds drills

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moscow, Feb 10: Britain's top diplomat urged Russia Thursday to defuse tensions over Ukraine and take the path of diplomacy even as thousands of Russian troops engaged in sweeping maneuvers in Belarus as part of a military buildup near Ukraine that has fueled Western fears of an invasion.

UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss again warned Russia that attacking its neighbour would "have massive consequences and carry severe costs," urging Moscow to abide by its international agreements that commit it to respecting Ukraine's independence and sovereignty.

Seated across a table from Truss with a grim face, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov set a stern tone for the talks, emphasizing that Moscow won't accept Western lecturing.

"Ideological approaches, ultimatums and moralizing is a road to nowhere," Lavrov said, noting that his talks with Truss marked the first meeting of the two countries' top diplomats in more than four years.

Russia-UK ties have been badly strained by the March 2018 poisoning of former Russian spy



Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov and British foreign secretary Liz Truss arrive to attend the talks in Moscow, Russia

Sergei Skripal in England and other sources of tension.

Russia has concentrated more than 100,000 troops near Ukraine's border and launched a series of military maneuvers in the re-

gion, but says it has no plans to invade the nation. Moscow wants guarantees from the West that NATO won't allow Ukraine and other former Soviet countries to join as members, and for the al-

UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss warned Russia that attacking its neighbour will have massive consequences, urging Moscow to de-escalate tensions and abide by its international agreements that commit it to respecting Ukraine's independence and sovereignty

Facing Truss across the table, the grim-faced Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov set a stern tone for the talks, emphasising that Moscow won't accept Western lecturing

Russian troops from the Russian territory cause regret," Lavrov said. "We don't want to threaten anyone. It's us who are facing threats." He alleged that Western politicians were fanning tensions over Ukraine for domestic political purposes. Russia planned from the start to move its troops back after conducting maneuvers, Lavrov said, and once it does, "the West will likely claim that it has forced Russia to deescalate."

"It's selling hot air," he snapped. Russia's military buildup includes the deployment of troops on the territory of its ally Belarus for sweeping joint drills that entered a decisive phase Thursday. The Ukrainian capital is located about 75 miles south of the border with Belarus, and Western nations voiced worry that Russia could use Belarusian territory to invade Ukraine.

Russia and Ukraine have been locked in a bitter conflict since 2014, when protests drove Ukraine's Kremlin-friendly leader from office, Moscow annexed Crimea and then backed a separatist insurgency in eastern Ukraine. The fighting between Russia-backed rebels and Ukrainian forces has killed over 14,000 people.

## Pak summons India's envoy in Islamabad over K'taka hijab row

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 10: The Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has summoned the Indian Charge d' Affaires, Suresh Kumar to convey the government's grave concern and condemnation of the "deeply reprehensible act of banning Muslim girl students from wearing hijab" in the state of Karnataka, Geo News reported.

According to a statement issued by the MoFA, the Charge d' Affaires was urged to convey Pakistan's "extreme concern" to the government of India over the "anti-hijab campaign being spearheaded by RSS-BJP combine in Karnataka, which is part of its larger exclusionist and majoritarian agenda aimed at dehumanising and demonising Muslim women", the report said.

The Indian diplomat was further told that "religious intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatisation, and discrimination against Muslims continue unabated even after almost two years of the horrific Delhi riots which claimed the lives of 50 innocent Muslims in February 2020", Geo News quoted the Ministry statement as further saying.

## 'Century will be shaped by Indo-Pacific region'

Blinken's trip is designed to reinforce America's interests in Asia and its intent to push back against increasing Chinese assertiveness in the region

The Indo-Pacific is the fastest growing region in the world, accounting for two-thirds of global economic growth over the past five years and home to half the world's population

ANTHONY BLINKEN | US SECRETARY OF STATE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canberra, Feb 10: The United States remains focused long-term on the Indo-Pacific region despite concerns over Russian aggression toward the Ukraine, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Thursday.

Blinken is in the Australian city of Melbourne for a meeting on Friday with his counterparts from Australia, India and Japan.

The four nations form the so-called "Quad," a bloc of Indo-Pacific democracies that was created to

going to be shaped by what happens here in the Indo-Pacific region," he added.

The Indo-Pacific is the fastest growing region in the world, accounting for two-thirds of global economic growth over the past five years and home to half the world's population, Blinken said.

What matters in the region matters around the world and challenges like climate change and COVID-19 can't be tackled by any nation alone, he said. "More than ever before, we need partnerships, we need alliances, we need coalitions of countries willing to put their efforts, their resources, their minds into tackling these problems," Blinken said.

"What really drives us is a shared vision" of a "free and open society," he added.

Blinken's trip is designed to reinforce America's interests in Asia and its intent to push back against increasing Chinese assertiveness in the region. He will also visit Fiji and discuss pressing concerns about North Korea with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts in Hawaii.

Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne, who will chair the Quad meeting, said the agenda would include COVID-19 vaccine distribution, cyber and critical technologies, countering malicious and dangerous disinformation, terrorism, maritime security and climate change.



ANTHONY BLINKEN

counter China's regional influence.

"There are a few other things going on in the world right now, some of you may have noticed. We have a bit of a challenge with Ukraine and Russian aggression. We're working 24/7 on that," Blinken said in his first public address since arriving in Australia on Wednesday.

"But we know, the president knows better than anyone else, that so much of this century is

## MAKING A POINT



Britain's Prince William talks to British School Al-Khubairat students Amaan Haider, 13, left, and Lilly-Rose Mayall, 12, at the Al-Jubail Mangrove Park in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

## India slams UN terror report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

United Nations, Feb 10: India has criticised a report of the UN Secretary-General on terrorism for ignoring the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) militant groups despite drawing attention to them.

While silent on the terrorist groups like the JeM and the LeT that pose threats to India, the report mentions the anti-Beijing Uyghur separatist groups, the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) and the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) in its sparse coverage of South Asia.



Representative T.S. Tirumurti told the Security Council on Wednesday: "We have been reiterating the close links between proscribed terrorist entities under the 1267 Sanctions regime such as LeT and other terrorist groups including the JeM. "However inspite of repeatedly

flagging these concerns, the SG's (Secretary-General's) report has failed to take notice of these linkages."

Stressing the reason to pay attention to them, he said: "It is essential that we don't lose sight of the ease with which the proscribed Haqqani Network, with support from their patron state, have worked along with prominent terrorist organisations like Al Qaeda, IS-K, etc. in South Asia.

"We hope that in future iterations of such reports, inputs from all member states would be treated on an equal footing and an evidence based and credible yardstick be applied by its authors."

## SpaceX satellites falling out of orbit after solar storm

SPACEX SAYS A GEOMAGNETIC STORM LAST FRIDAY MADE THE ATMOSPHERE DENSER, WHICH INCREASED THE DRAG ON THE STARLINK SATELLITES, EFFECTIVELY DOOMING THEM

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape Canaveral, Feb 10: SpaceX's newest fleet of satellites is tumbling out of orbit after being struck by a solar storm.

Up to 40 of the 49 small satellites launched last week have either reentered the atmosphere and burned up, or are on the verge of doing so, the company said in an online update Tuesday night.

SpaceX said a geomagnetic storm last Friday made the atmosphere denser, which increased the drag on the Starlink satellites, effectively dooming them.

Ground controllers tried to save the compact, flat-panel satellites by putting them into a type of hibernation and flying them in a way to minimize drag. But the at-



mospheric pull was too great, and the satellites failed to awaken and climb to a higher, more stable orbit,

according to the company. SpaceX still has close to 2,000 Starlink satellites orbiting Earth

and providing internet service to remote corners of the world. They circle the globe more than 340 miles up (550 kilometers).

The satellites hit by the solar storm were in a temporary position. SpaceX deliberately launches them into this unusually low orbit so that any duds can quickly reenter the atmosphere and pose no threat to other spacecraft.

There is no danger from these newly falling satellites, either in orbit or on the ground, according to the company. Each satellite weighs less than 575 pounds (260 kilograms).

SpaceX described the lost satellites as a "unique situation." Such geomagnetic storms are caused by intense solar activity like flares, which can send streams of plasma

from the sun's corona hurtling out into space and toward Earth.

Since launching the first Starlink satellites in 2019, Elon Musk envisions a constellation of thousands more satellites to increase internet service. SpaceX is trying to help restore internet service to Tonga through this network following the devastating volcanic eruption and tsunami.

London-based OneWeb has its own internet satellites up there. And Amazon plans to start launching its satellites later this year. Astronomers are distressed that these mega constellations will ruin nighttime observations from Earth. The International Astronomical Union is forming a new center for the protection of dark skies.

## Portugal: Church sex abuse panel unearths over 200 cases

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lisbon, Feb 10: A lay committee looking into historic child sex abuse in the Portuguese Catholic Church said Thursday that during its first month of work it received allegations from 214 people.

The allegations are from people born between 1933 and 2006 and tell of psychological torment kept secret for decades, the Independent Committee for the Study of Child Abuse in the Church said.

"This suffering is associated with feelings of shame, fear, guilt and self-exclusion, reinforcing the idea of lives where the sensation of standing on the sidelines" was always present," the committee said in a statement.

Portuguese church officials said two years ago that authorities had investigated only about a dozen allegations of sexual abuse involving Portuguese priests since 2001. More than half of those cases were dropped because church investigators decided there wasn't enough evidence to pursue them.

The six-person committee, which includes psychiatrists, a former Supreme Court judge and a social worker, promises anonymity for anyone who comes forward. It officially began its work on Jan. 1.

The committee, which will report to the Portuguese Bishops' Conference at the end of the year, says its task is to study what child sex abuse has occurred, not launch formal investigations. Many of the allegations suggest a strong possibility that other children may have been victims of the same abuser, the statement said.

## of the day quote

It is surprising that on the one side, the government is doing away with its ownership in the public sector and, at the same time, investing sizable capital to support the Vodafone Idea venture in the private sector

ANIL DESAI | MP, SHIV SENA

The export of the Volkswagen T-Cross is a momentous event in the Group's endeavour to engineer cars in India to be driven by the world! Developing India as an export hub for the VW Group globally, is an integral part of our India strategy

CHRISTIAN CAHN VON SEELEN | CHAIRMAN, SKODA AUTO VOLKSWAGEN

Uber for Business also reached a milestone during the quarter with managed U4B gross bookings surpassing its previous high from 2019 with well over \$1 billion in annual run-rate GBS

DARA KHOSROWSHAHI | CEO, UBER

## SHORT TAKES

### Markets dart up for third day

**Mumbai:** Equity benchmarks defied gravity for the third session on the trot Thursday after the RBI left interest rates unchanged but retained its accommodative policy stance to support the post-pandemic economic recovery. A positive trend in global stocks also supported the domestic markets, traders said. Overcoming a wobbly start, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 460.06 points or 0.79 per cent higher at 58,926.03. Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty jumped 142.05 points or 0.81 per cent to end at 17,605.85.

### RIL acquires 40% stake in SWREL

**New Delhi:** Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) Thursday said it has completed the acquisition of a 40 per cent stake in Shapoorji Pallonji Group's Sterling & Wilson Renewable Energy Ltd (SWREL) for ₹2,845 crore. Reliance had in October 2021 announced two back-to-back acquisitions -- a \$771 million buyout of Norway-based solar panel manufacturer REC Solar Holdings and purchase of a 40 per cent stake in solar Engineering, Procurement, Construction (EPC) firm SWREL, formerly known as Sterling and Wilson Solar Limited, in a multi-stage transaction for about ₹2,845 crore.

### Airtel launches Xstream Premium

**New Delhi:** Telecom operator Bharti Airtel Thursday announced a new video streaming service, Airtel Xstream Premium, that brings together content from 15 popular video apps, with single subscription at an introductory price of ₹149 a month. Airtel is eyeing 20 million new users for this paid offering, according to Adarsh Nair, CEO of Airtel Digital. The Airtel Xstream Premium offering aggregates content from 15 Indian and global video OTTs in one app.

### Thums Up now a \$1bn brand

**New Delhi:** Desi soft drink brand Thums Up has become a billion-dollar brand in 2021, global soft drinks major The Coca-Cola Company, which owns the brand, said. "Our local Thums Up brand became a USD one billion brand in India, driven by focussed marketing and execution plans," said The Coca-Cola Company Chairman and CEO James Quincey Thursday evening during a post-earnings call.



RBI has received public comments, and we will frame the guidelines (on digital lending) based on those comments. The work is in progress, and soon it will be launched

M RAJESHWAR RAO | DEPUTY GOVERNOR, RBI

### ASSANGE'S NFT AUCTION

An online auction of digital art to raise money towards WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange's legal defence saw bids reach more than \$50 million Wednesday. Assange collaborated with a crypto artist known as Pak to sell a collection of NFTs (non-fungible tokens) called Censored in an online auction from February 7-9 to help raise funds to support his case



# RBI maintains status quo for 10th time

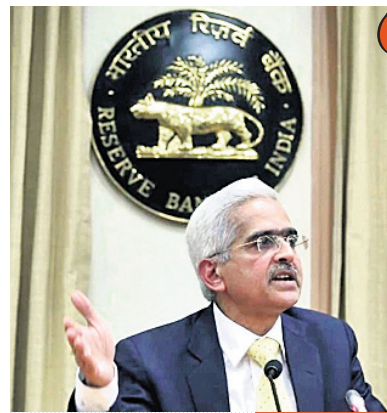
While a status quo on repo rate was expected, some economists had expected a hike in the reverse repo to re-align it with short-term money market rates. MPC continuing with the accommodative policy stance was one of the prime reasons Das cited for not hiking the reverse repo rate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Feb 10:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Thursday held its key lending rates steady at record low levels for the 10th straight meeting to support a durable recovery of the economy from the Covid-19 pandemic.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided to hold the lending rate, or the repo rate, steady at 4 per cent, and the reverse repo, or the rate at which it absorbs excess cash from lenders, unchanged at 3.35 per cent.

The six-member MPC, which has been on pause since August 2020, voted unanimously to main-



tain the status quo on the repo rate and by a majority of 5-1 to retain the accommodative policy stance as long as necessary, he said.

"Monetary policy actions will be calibrated and well telegraphed," he said, indicating that there will not be any surprises.

The decision comes days after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed to up spending to support the economy's world-beating recovery.

"The government's thrust on capital expenditure and exports are expected to enhance productive capacity and strengthen aggregate demand. This would also crowd in private investment," the RBI Governor said.

RBI projected a 7.8 per cent economic growth in the coming fiscal

Overall, taking into consideration the outlook for inflation and growth, in particular the comfort provided by improving inflation outlook, the uncertainties related to Omicron and global spillovers, the MPC was of the view that continued policy support is warranted for a durable and broad-based recovery

SHAKTIKANTA DAS | GOVERNOR, RBI

starting April 1, down from 9.2 per cent expected in 2021-22, in view of uncertainties on account of pandemic and elevated global commodity prices.

GDP growth is marginally below the lower limit of the band of 8-8.5 per cent given in the Economic Survey of 2021-22 and well below the IMF's forecast of 9 per cent.

The central bank also lowered the inflation outlook to 4.5 per cent for the next fiscal, from 5.3 per cent in the current year, on the assumption of a normal monsoon during the year.

Retail inflation accelerated to a five-month high of 5.59 per cent in December from a year earlier, while wholesale price-based inflation eased marginally to 13.56 per cent, but remained in double-digits for nine straight months.

## REACTIONS

This was the first policy of the calendar year and perhaps sets the tone for the rest of the year. Were that indeed the case, the RBI is likely to follow a gentle approach to the normalisation and ultimately withdrawal of monetary support unlike Western central banks that have switched to a hyper-aggressive mode

ABHEEK BARUA | CHIEF ECONOMIST, HDFC BANK

The surprise element in the credit policy is the very dovish stance taken by the MPC which in a way supports the expected large government borrowing programme as well as the corporates that will be borrowing funds this year

MADAN SABNAVIS | CHIEF ECONOMIST, BANK OF BARODA

The concern today is that the low interest rates and enormous liquidity available in the system could potentially disrupt financial stability. It happens because if there is too much money going around in the system and people do not have opportunities to get appropriate returns

D SUBBARAO | FORMER GOVERNOR, RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

# RE addition zooms 80% during Dec qtr

Solar energy comprised 92 per cent of the total RE capacity added during the quarter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** Renewable energy capacity addition increased 80 per cent to 3.4 gigawatts (GW) during the December 2021 quarter compared to a year ago, according to CEEW-CEF.

New capacity addition of non-hydro renewable energy increased to 3.4 GW during the third quarter of FY22, compared to just 1.9 GW installed in the same period last year (October-December 2020), according to the latest edition of the CEEW Centre for Energy Finance (CEEW-CEF) Market Handbook, according to a statement.

This is nearly an 80 per cent jump in new renewable energy (RE) capacity addition on a year-on-year basis. However, it stated that compared to the preceding quarter (July-September), new non-hydro RE capacity additions fell 27 per cent on account of intensifying supply chain constraints.

Solar energy comprised 92 per cent of the total RE capacity added during the quarter, driven partly by a 142 per cent rise in installations of rooftop solar to 700 megawatts (MW). This growth in new capac-



ity was registered despite a 40 per cent jump in the prices of solar PV modules to ₹21 per watt-peak, over the last year, it stated.

Overall, in terms of net capacity additions, renewable energy formed 75 per cent of the total 4.5 GW capacities added (net of 900 MW, which were converted to captive mode) in the power sector during the period, it stated.

During the quarter, coal-based power generation capacities of 2,095 MW were added in Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Bihar, it said.

The surge in petrol prices, the introduction of new models along with incentives under the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric and Hybrid vehicle (FAME-II) scheme contributed to the growth in sales of zero-emission vehicles, especially electric two-wheelers.

# ₹1,600 CRORE FOR FLOATING PLANT PROJECT IN ODISHA

## Petronet outlines ₹40K cr investment plan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** Petronet LNG Ltd, the operator of the world's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal, will invest ₹40,000 crore over next 4-5 years, including in overseas supply sources, its CEO AK Singh said Thursday.

Petronet plans to make foray into the petrochemical business by investing ₹12,500 crore in a Propane Dehydrogenation Plant that will convert imported feedstock into propylene, as well as set up a floating LNG import facility at Gopalpur in Odisha at a cost of ₹1,600 crore, he told reporters here.

The firm, which had last year allowed an initial non-binding agreement to invest \$2.5 billion in US energy upstart Tellurian's LNG project



in Louisiana in return for gas supplies for 40 years lapse, will look at investing in overseas projects such as gas fields that feed into plants turning the fuel into liquid (LNG) and liquefaction plants.

"We always evaluate good opportunities for overseas investment. If it is beneficial for the country (and) if we find it

a better option, definitely we will go for it," Singh said without elaborating.

LNG is natural gas cooled to -162 degrees Celsius to turn it into liquid for ease of transportation via ships. India's domestic natural gas production barely meets half the demand of power, fertilizer and CNG sector and the rest is im-

ported in form of LNG.

Singh said Petronet will invest ₹17,000 crore in domestic LNG import capacity addition and petrochemical foray. The investment includes ₹600 crore in raising the capacity of the Dahej LNG import terminal in Gujarat to 22.5 million tonne per annum from the current 17.5 million tonne, ₹1,245 crore in building an additional storage tank and bays for truck loading of LNG.

Petronet, which operates a 5 million tonne a year import facility at Kochi in Kerala, will set up a 4 million tonne a year floating storage & regasification (FSRU)-based LNG import facility off the Gopalpur port that later will be turned into a land-based terminal with a higher 5 million tonne capacity, with scope for raising it in future, he said.

### AcrcelMittal net income up three-fold in Q4

**New Delhi:** The world's leading integrated steel and mining company ArcelorMittal Thursday reported three-fold rise in net income at \$4,045 million (around ₹30,100 crore) for the fourth quarter ended December 31, 2021. The company had posted a net income of \$1,207 million in the year-ago period. Sales rose to \$20,806 million in October-December 2021, over \$14,184 million in the year-ago period. The company follows January-December fiscal year.



### M&M posts over two-fold increase in Q3 PAT

**New Delhi:** Homegrown auto major Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) Thursday reported over two-fold increase in its standalone profit after tax (PAT) at ₹1,353 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2021. The Mumbai-based company had posted a standalone PAT of ₹531 crore in the October-December period of previous fiscal. Revenue for the third quarter rose by 8 per cent to ₹15,239 crore, as against ₹14,057 crore in the year-ago period, M&M said in a regulatory filing.



# Higher oil prices to undermine fragile recovery in Asia

Although the oil demand outlook for top consumers China and India looks resilient following a lengthy period of pandemic-hit uneven growth, keeping the oil import bill in check is one of the biggest priorities in Asia at a time when governments are desperate to allocate funds for economic revival, analysts said

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Feb 10:** The dramatic sprint of crude oil toward \$100/b is prompting Asian importers to rethink supply strategy as well as their fiscal roadmap, which could result in an aggressive recourse to strategic reserves, changes to fuel subsidies and taxes, and a much bigger push toward new energy alternatives, S&P Global Platts Analytics said.

Although the oil demand outlook for top consumers China and India looks resilient following a lengthy period of pandemic-hit uneven growth, keeping the oil import bill in check is one of the biggest priorities in Asia at a time when governments are desperate to allocate funds for economic revival, analysts said.

## CRUDE RACES TOWARD \$100BN



"High oil prices will dampen demand and will undermine the fragile economic recovery if they continue to rise," said Lim Jit Yang,

advisor for oil markets at S&P Global Platts Analytics.

Platts Analytics expects Asian oil demand to grow by 1.5 million

Platts Analytics expects Asian oil demand to grow by 1.5 million b/d year on year in 2022, up from 1.2 million b/d in 2021

Asian refiners have continued to call for OPEC plus to raise supply by at least 800,000 b/d

b/d year on year in 2022, up from 1.2 million b/d in 2021, as the impact of the omicron coronavirus variant on Asian oil demand is expected to be relatively less severe than the delta strain, and with many countries moving toward reopening economies due to higher vaccination rates.

Asian refiners have continued to call for OPEC plus to raise supply by at least 800,000 b/d. The group's decision to increase output by 400,000 b/d for March may not ease tight supplies and cool

overheated prices in the region, according to a S&P Global Platts survey of analysts.

Following the White House announcement in November that the US would release 50 million barrels from its SPR in early 2022, India, China, South Korea and Japan followed suit and announced plans to release SPRs in an effort to boost supplies and battle rising prices. But Asian countries have so far been reluctant to release huge volumes from SPRs just as a cushion for high prices.

"In addition to SPR releases earlier, a few Asian countries have taken various measures to ease the impact of high prices on consumers, including introducing fuel subsidies in Japan and a reduction of fuel taxes in South Korea and India," Lim said.

# RAHANE RECALLS OZ SUCCESS

# Dhull sets sights on senior debut

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: Yash Dhull has lost count of the number of flights he has taken in the past 48 hours. He had spent the previous day in Ahmedabad where the entire team was felicitated a following tiring journey in which the squad had to take as many as four flights to reach India from the Caribbean.

Having lived out of suitcase for the past two months, which could potentially be life-changing, when Dhull finally met his parents, it was just a mere 30 minutes of reunion for the sleep-deprived captain of the World Cup winning India U-19 team.

Dhull arrived in Delhi early morning and went straight to his alma mater Bal Bhawan in West Delhi to meet the people who played a big role in him becoming the cricketer he has become.

Two hours later, he had a flight to catch and next destination was Guwahati, where he is set to make his Ranji debut for Delhi next week. So between the school visit and ride back to the airport, Dhull got just enough time to go home for a shower.

He has no time to rest as the real journey into the men's world started with the flight that he took to Guwahati to join the Delhi Ranji Trophy squad.

Having hardly slept since lifting that trophy in Antigua last week, Dhull has no complaints though. He knows it is only the start of his life as a professional cricketer.

"I have hardly slept the last few days but it is not something I can complain about. What I have done till now is done, I need to focus on what lies in the immediate future," Dhull told this agency referring to his Ranji Trophy call-up.

Most of the World Cup winning squad members won't go on and play for India but Dhull showed in the Caribbean that he could move up the ladder and play at the highest level. He has set himself an



18-month target to play for India. "That is my target but if I am not able to do that in the 18 month time frame, I will keep working hard till I attain my goal," said the soft-spoken cricketer.

The 19-year-old is third captain from Delhi to win the title after Virat Kohli and Unmukt Chand, who both had contrasting career graphs post their exploits in the U-19 World Cup.

He is inspired by Kohli and his achievements but there is also the story of Chand, who succumbed to pressure of expectations he set with his performance in the 2012 edition.

Does Dhull have fear of failure after a high he just experienced in the Caribbean? "The names you have taken (Kohli and Chand), I am not thinking on those lines. I want to remain humble and not think about the future too much."

"Virat bhai shared his experience with me on what happened with

him post the U-19 World Cup (in 2008). I got to know a lot from approaching my career from here on, the chat with him has helped me understand things I need to focus on going forward and things I need to avoid," he said referring to the conversation with Kohli on the eve of the World Cup final Saturday.

The switch from U-19 to first-class is a big one but Dhull believes it is something he can handle. "I will have to change my mindset for the red ball game, preparation will be different. I don't think it will be a lot different and tougher than white ball. The red ball does a bit early on but and if you can see that initial period batting becomes easier."

"It is all about the mindset from here on. Physically how fit you are. It is not one specific area, I will have to work on all my shots to become a better player," said Dhull when asked about areas of improvement.



ily depleted team in one of the most difficult situations, not just at the MCG but through the remainder of the four-match series.

India missed three front-line players at MCG, and continued to lose key players through the series to injuries but still emerged triumphant at the end of it all.

"After that, the reactions from people or those who took credit or what was said on the media, 'I did this' or 'This was my decision', or 'This was my call', it was for them to talk about," Rahane said.

"From my end, I knew what decisions I took on the field and what decisions I took on my instincts.

Yes, we talked with the management too but I used to laugh about it, that is what I did on the field, I never talk much about myself or praise myself. But what I did there, I knew."

However, Rahane suffered a prolonged slump after leading India to that historic series win in Australia, and it continued on the tour of South Africa. His shot selection came under the scanner too, leading to the senior batter being stripped of vice-captaincy last December.

But he remains unruffled by the criticism that has followed his run of poor scores. "I just smile at it. People who generally know the sport

will not talk like that. I don't want to get too deep into that. Everyone knows it, you know it, what happened in Australia," he said.

"Even after and before Australia, the contributions I made, especially in red-ball cricket, I don't want to talk about it but Australia was really. As I said, people who know the sport, love the sport they'll talk sensibly," he said.

He has full faith in his ability and remains confident about rediscovering his touch. "Yes, I am confident about my own ability, I am batting really well and I believe in my ability. And I still believe I have good cricket left in me," Rahane said.

## SHORT TAKES

### Giroud props Milan

MILAN: Olivier Giroud's brace made it four goals in two games for the striker as AC Milan routed Lazio 4-0 to reach the semifinals of the Italian Cup. After scoring two late goals to help Milan beat league leader Inter 2-1 Saturday, the France veteran struck twice in the first half. Five-time cup winner Milan took the lead midway through the half at San Siro through Portugal winger Rafael Leao. Center half Alessio Romagnoli launched a long pass and Leao latched onto it for his second goal of the competition and ninth overall this season for the Rossoneri. Giroud turned in Leao's cross in the 41st then another from countryman Theo Hernandez moments before the break. Midfielder Franck Kessie added the fourth goal 10 minutes from time for Milan.

### Chelsea in CWC final

ABU DHABI: Chelsea will get another chance to win the Club World Cup for the first time after beating Al Hilal 1-0 to set up a meeting with Palmeiras in the final. Romelu Lukaku's close-range goal in the 32nd minute settled a match between the European and Asian champions Wednesday. A European team has won 13 of the last 14 finals in the intercontinental competition. The last to lose was Chelsea, beaten by Corinthians in 2012. Another Brazilian team in Palmeiras, the south American champion, awaits Saturday and Chelsea manager Thomas Tuchel should be in Abu Dhabi for that. Tuchel missed the game against Al Hilal because he is isolating after contracting the coronavirus, and is hoping to be able to travel out for the final.

### Pranavi impresses

HYDERABAD: Pranavi Urs, who spent almost a year waiting for her wrist to mend, showed that she will be a big factor this season by shooting a brilliant personal best bogey free 7-under 65 in the second round of Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour here Thursday. Pranavi, who had a modest 75 in the first round, is now 4-under 140 but still trails first round leader Gaurika Bishnoi (66-71) by three shots. Gaurika was also going great guns before a double bogey on the Par-4 10th set her back at the Boulder Hills Golf & Country Club. Amateur Sneha Singh, a local, shot 70 on the heels of her first round 71. At 3-under 141 she is sole third, while Hitaashee Bakshi (74-70) is even par 144 and placed fourth.

# Dhawan returns as India eye whitewash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Feb 10: The returning Shikhar Dhawan will add more firepower to a ruthless India, who are faced with the problem of plenty, as they eye a clean sweep of West Indies in an inconsequential third ODI here Friday.

Hosts India head into the final match of the series after having ticked almost all the boxes in the first two games, which they won comfortably.

Senior opener Dhawan was among the four players, including a reserve bowler, who had tested positive for COVID-19 just four days ahead of the start of the ODI leg.

But now that the southpaw is back, the Indian team could be forced to make few changes to its winning combination. In his absence, the team management opened with Ishan Kishan in the first game and the flamboyant Rishabh Pant in the second.

After his side's 44-run win in the second game on Wednesday, India skipper Rohit Sharma made it clear that Dhawan will be back for the last match of the ODI series.

This means that vice-captain KL Rahul would continue to bat in the middle-order along with former skipper Virat Kohli, whose search for his 71st international hundred continues.



Skipper Rohit failed in the last game but it is common knowledge that he can take on any attack on his day, and so is the case with Dhawan.

Pant will go back to the middle-order alongside Suryakumar Yadav,

who is likely to retain his place after emerging as the team's highest scorer in the second match following a top-order collapse.

In all probability, all-rounder Deepak Hooda would have to make way for Dhawan in the playing XI.

All the middle-order batters – be it Pant, Suryakumar, Kohli or KL – would be keen to get some more runs under their belt and end the ODI leg on a high.

And with the series sealed, the Indian team management can afford to make few changes and give opportunities to new players. So, either left-arm orthodox spinner Kuldeep Yadav, who is making a comeback after recovering from an injury, or young leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi could get a look-in.

This means that either Yuzvendra Chahal or Washington Sundar could be rested to make way for one of their teammates. Also, Madhya Pradesh pacer Avesh Khan has been waiting in the wings, and the team management might also give him a game.

With pacer Prasidh Krishna taking four wickets in an excellent second game and Shardul Thakur also among the wickets, it is highly unlikely that the duo would be dropped. So if Avesh is included, probably Mohammed Siraj would have to make way.

Meanwhile, the West Indies, who have already conceded the series, would be looking to put up an improvised show with the bat and regain some lost ground. The second ODI was the 11th time in the last 17 games that the West Indies have failed to bat their quota of 50 overs.

# Manchester City stay serene in title charge



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, Feb 10: The quickest goal of the season. A six-goal thriller featuring a sprinkle of Brazilian magic. A stunning late comeback. It was a wild night of action in the Premier League. Except, that is, at Manchester City, whose march to the defense of its title couldn't be more serene.

City never lost control in a routine 2-0 win over Brentford that saw the champions open up a 12-point lead in the title race. Control was what Tottenham lacked in conceding two late goals in a chaotic 2-3 loss at home to Southampton that damaged its top-four ambitions.

It was even more frantic and end-to-end in the 3-3 draw between Aston Villa and Leeds in which Philippe Coutinho took center stage. The Brazil playmaker scored one goal and set up two others to push Villa 3-1 ahead, only for Leeds to fight back for a draw to keep the team clear of relegation danger.

The other match of the night wasn't without incident, either, as Norwich scored inside 39 seconds — through Teemu Pukki — for the fastest goal scored this season in the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games, respectively, will make his debut in the prestigious league.

"Extremely happy to share that I have signed up with JURA MOREZ TENNIS DE TABLE club in the French top tier league PRO A for 2022-23 season," Sathiyian said.

The World No.33 will start playing in the league after the Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. "It is one of the best leagues in the world and looking forward to make my debut in France. Most likely would join the club after Asian Games."

game in the league, were the scorers for the champions.

Mahrez converted a penalty in the 40th after Raheem Sterling was brought down, and De Bruyne stroked home a low finish into an unguarded net in the 69th after Sterling had a shot saved.

Southampton appeared to be driven by a sense of injustice in its comeback at Spurs after Son Heung-min's goal in the 70th minute that put the hosts ahead. In the build-up, Emerson Royal looked to have fouled Armando Broja in the air and it led to some heated exchanges among players and coaches.

The visitors poured forward and after Mohamed Elyounoussi equalized in the 79th, Che Adams headed in an almost identical goal for the winner in the 82nd.

Broja had earlier canceled out Tottenham's opening goal that was scored by a Southampton player, as Jan Bednarek slid in deflect a cross into his own net under pressure from Son. Tottenham stayed seventh, four points off the Champions League places. West Ham occupies fourth place but has played three more games than Tottenham.

Coutinho masterclass Fresh off scoring a brilliant long-range goal for Brazil last week, Coutinho pulled the strings for Villa in a whirlwind first half against Leeds where he cancelled out Dan James' ninth-minute opener by scoring off his own low finish in the 30th.

The playmaker then provided the passes for goals by fellow midfielder Jacob Ramsey in the 38th and 43rd minutes, one of them a stunning defense-splitting through-ball after spinning free in the middle of the field.

# Odisha leave for Ranji Trophy



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Feb 10: Odisha senior men's team departed to Ahmedabad Thursday morning where they will play their Elite Group D matches of the Ranji Trophy cricket tournament, starting February 17.

The team, led by Subhranshu Senapati, is clubbed with former champions Mumbai and Saurashtra alongside Goa. Prior to their opening game against Goa (Feb 17-20), Wasim Jaffer's men will undergo a quarantine from February 10 to

14 as part of BCCI's Covid-19 protocol. Post isolation, they will have a couple of scheduled practice days, February 15-16.

In their second match, Odisha will meet Saurashtra February 24-27, before facing a stern challenge in Mumbai, who will be led by Prithvi Shaw.

Cheteshwar Pujara is a part of the Saurashtra, while Ajinkya Rahane will be with Mumbai. The duo is trying to resurrect their international career after facing criticism

following their poor performances for past couple of years.

### EVES IN KNOCKOUTS

Odisha women's team registered their fourth consecutive victory Thursday to seal a berth in the knockout stage of the ongoing Senior National Volleyball (men & women) Championship at the Biju Patnaik Indoor Stadium in Campus 13, KIIT Deemed to be University. The state eves defeated Haryana 3-0 (25-20, 25-22 & 25-16) to finish on the top of their pool.