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IPL AUCTION

**ISHAN KISHAN** 

**HITS JACKPOT** 

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Feb 12: Jharkhand's

flamboyant wicketkeeper-batter Ishan Kishan was well on his way

to become the biggest buy of the IPL

mega auction here Saturday with

Mumbai Indians retaining him for

## Girl forced to attend classes, ends life

Malkangiri: In a shocking incident, a Class IX girl ended her life by consuming poison when her family members allegedly forced her to attend physical classes at Bhimarangi village under Sindhrimal panchayat in Malkangiri district Saturday. Ana Ray, a student of Satiguda Girl's High School, was at home for over two years as the school remained closed owing to Covid-19. As the government reopened the schools recently, her family wanted her to attend physical classes, Friday. However, she was reluctant to go to school and later consumed poison on the fateful day. Ana was admitted to the district headquarters hospital where she succumbed Saturday.



#### Industrialist Rahul Bajaj passes away

Mumbai: Former chairman of Bajaj Group Rahul Bajaj passed away in Pune Saturday, a company official said. He was 83. Bajaj was not keeping well for quite some time and passed away at around 2:30pm Saturday, the official said. His last rites will be performed Sunday. He is survived by two sons, Rajiv Bajaj and Sanjiv Bajaj, and a daughter Sunaina Kejriwal. He had resigned from his position of non-executive director and chairman at Bajaj Auto April 30 last year. Rahul Bajaj was honoured with Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian award, in 2001. P11





People perform 'Surya Namaskar' at a yoga camp organised by 'Patanjali Yoga Pitha Pariwar' at Sixth Battalion Ground near OMP Square in Cuttack, Saturday

more than ₹15 crore while his India **₹22,842cr biggest bank fraud ever** teammate Shreyas Iyer also clinched a staggering deal of over ₹12 crore from Kolkata Knight Riders. MI waited for the second session to engage in a bidding war with Sunrisers Hyderabad, eventually shelling out ₹15.25 crore (USD 2 million plus) to retain

Kishan's services. "I'm really excited to be back at MI. I know everyone has treated me there like a family so I am really happy to be there and I hope to give my best to the team. Thank you so much," said the 23-year-old MORE P12 Kishan.

**IRREGULAR** by MANJUL



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

# State submits nine witnesses in tribunal





POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Feb 12: The state has

Kumar Pradhan, former director of Institute of Economic Growth Manoj Kumar Panda and former member of National Green Tribunal PC Mishra. Significantly, a three-judge bench of the tribunal headed by Supreme Court judge Justice AM Khanwilkar and comprising Justices Indermeet Kaur and Rabi Ranjan asked both the states to collect documents from Union ministries and posted the matter for hearing March 13. Earlier, the tribunal had in December last year directed both Odisha and Chhattisgarh to submit a list of witnesses whom they propose to examine. It is to be mentioned here that Odisha and Chhattisgarh have filed petitions in the tribunal in respect of sharing of Mahanadi river water. Odisha in its petition claimed that Chhattisgarh has constructed several barrages on the river obstructing the water flow to Odisha. Odisha has sought a stay on the construction and operation of barrages being built on Mahanadi river and also for maintaining specific flow of water during the nonmonsoon months- November to May.

# **PINK, YELLOW BALLOTS FOR URBAN POLLS**

■ *The colour of ballots to be used in EVMs for* corporators and councillors will be pink and that of the mayors and civic chiefs yellow

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: The State Election Commission (SEC) has decided to use pink and yellow ballot papers during the upcoming urban local body (ULB) elections in the state.

SEC Secretary RN Sahu has issued an order in this regard Saturday. "In exercise of powers vested in it under Article 243 ZA of the Constitution, the Commission directs that the colour of ballot papers for the corporators & councillors will be pink and the Mayor & chairperson will be yellow," said the order.

The SEC has already decided that elections to the office of Mayors, chairpersons, corporators and councillors will be held by using electronic voting machines (EVMs) supplied by the Commission.

Two EVMs will be used in each booth for elections to councillor/chairperson in case of municipalities/NACs and corporator/mayor in case of municipal corporations, Sahu said.

So, the ballot papers will be pasted on the ballot unit of the EVM as well as it will be used for the purpose of Election Duty Certificate (EDC) and tendered vote, the secretary said Earlier, the SEC has also decided to provide NOTA (None of the above) option to the voters in the upcoming urban polls. The poll panel is taking steps to conduct the urban elections soon after the panchayat elections. The delimitation of wards, reservation of seats and all other formalities required to conduct the ULB elections has already been completed. The Commission has also started distribution of EVMs to the districts. Meanwhile, SEC AP Padhi dis-





(NPA) in July 2016 and fraud in 2019. In its complaint, the State Bank of India said ABG Shipyard Ltd (ABGSL) is the flagship company of the ABG Group which engaged in the business of ship building and ship-repair.



You know the issues at hand. Now, tell me, who should I complain to: Govt or Nehru?

WEATI			
	BHUB	СТК	
MAX	28.4°C	27.5°(	
<sup>₽</sup> MIN	15.7℃	15.5°(	⊂ <b>Forecast</b>
Humidity	87%	76%	Fog/mist in the
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	in the morning

New Delhi, Feb 12: In its biggest bank fraud case, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked ABG Shipyard Ltd and its former chairman and managing director Rishi Kamlesh Agarwal along with others for allegedly cheating a consortium of banks led by State Bank of India of over ₹22,842 crore, officials said Saturday.

Besides Agarwal, the agency has also named the then executive director Santhanam Muthaswamy. directors Ashwini Kumar. Sushil Kumar Agarwal and Ravi Vimal Nevetia and another company ABG International Pvt Ltd for alleged offences of criminal conspiracy, cheating, criminal breach of trust and abuse of official position under the IPC and the Prevention of

Corruption Act, they said. 'Searches were conducted Saturday at 13 locations in the premises of accused including private company, directors at Surat. Bharuch, Mumbai, Pune etc which led to recovery of incriminating documents," CBI said in a statement.



The bank had first filed a complaint November 8, 2019 on which the CBI had sought some clarifications March 12, 2020.

The bank filed a fresh complaint in August that year. After 'scrutinising' for over one and a half years, the CBI acted on the complaint filing an FIR February 7.

The company was sanctioned credit facilities from 28 banks and financial institutions led by ICICI Bank with the SBI having exposure of ₹2468.51 crore, the officials said.

The Forensic Audit by Ernst and Young has shown that between 2012-17, the accused colluded together and committed illegal activities including diversion of funds, misappropriation and criminal breach of trust, they said.

It is the biggest bank fraud case registered by the CBI. Funds were used for purposes other than for which they were released by banks, it said. The loan account was declared as non-performing asset

The ABGSL being a major player in Indian ship building industry operates from shipvards are located at Dahej and Surat in Gujarat with capacity to build vessels up to 18,000 dead weight tonnage (DWT) at Surat Shipyard and 1,20,000 dead weight tonnage (DWT) at Dahej Shipyard.

The company has constructed over 165 vessels in the last 16 years including specialised vessels like the newsprint carriers. Self-discharging and loading bulk cement carriers and floating cranes with class approval of all international classification societies like Lloyds, American Bureau of Shipping. Bureau Veritas, IRS, DNV, the complaint said.

"Global crisis has impacted the shipping industry due to fall in commodity demand and prices and subsequent fall in cargo demand. The cancellation of contracts for a few ships and vessels resulted in piling up of inventory. This has resulted in paucity of working capital and caused significant increase in the operating cycle," the complaint said.

submitted a list of witnesses in the Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal (MWDT) to examine them in connection with the river water disputes

Odisha proposed nine witnesses to examine in the tribunal during the hearing of the matter. Meanwhile, Chhattisgarh has proposed seven witnesses to examine. Former Member of Central Water Commission ME Haque will depose for assessment of water

availability in Mahanadi Basin. Former CWC Chairman Rajesh Kumar will depose for planning and regulation in Chhattisgarh for ensuring water at the interstate border. Former chief engineer of state Water Resources department Harmohan Pradhan will depose for development and operation of Hirakud Reservoir, Mahanadi Delta. Similarly, others are former engineer-in-chief DoWR RC Tripathy, Central Ground Water board former scientist Gulab Prasad, former Dean of College of Agriculture Dibakar Naik, former director of GRIDCO Prashant

cussed preparedness for the ensuing panchayat polls with district Collectors through videoconference ing. Padhi said as per the new circular issued for the panchavat elections, no outsider or political leader will be allowed to be present in poll-bound areas after campaigning ends.

Outsiders including political leaders will have to vacate pollbound areas by February 14 evening. They can't stay there as it will be a violation of the Model Code of Conduct, Padhi said. Padhi said the first phase panchayat polls are set to be held February 16.

# Wildlife Protection Bill has big loopholes: Ramesh

PETA urges Centre to remove what they termed as cruel captive elephant trade and the misnomer 'vermin' from the proposed amendments

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 12: Stating that the Wildlife Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2021 has not been based on widespread consultation. Congress leader and former Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh Saturday said, it is poorly drafted and has huge shortcomings.

Taking to Twitter, Jairam Ramesh, who heads the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology,

Environment, Forest and Climate Change, said, "The Standing Committee has a very complicated task of examining the 50 amendments proposed. We hope to complete this exercise in the next 45 days." The Committee received over

70 responses from experts and institutions on the proposed amendment. "Frankly, this is what the Ministry should have done in the first place," he said.

There has been widespread outrage against the proposed amendments and activists have been critical of the government's intention and the hurried manner in which it was set to be passed since it was introduced in the Parliament in December last year. It was a protest letter by Jairam Ramesh to Lok Sabha speaker which ensured that



the government sent the Amendment Bill to the Standing Committee. One of the stakeholders, the People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has urged the government to remove what they termed as cruel captive elephant trade and also the misnomer 'vermin' from the proposed amendments.

After submitting its proposals to be considered for the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2021, to the Parliamentary Standing Committee, appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to remove provisions from the Bill that would allow

> cruel commercial trade of captive elephants, a practice universally condemned. The PETA also demanded to remove the

provision that declares wild animals as 'vermin' - a term that denies society's understanding of the nature of wildlife - thereby allowing their killing.

"The definition of 'vermin' is archaic and declaring certain wild animals 'vermin' in order to kill them in human-wild animal conflict areas is a colonial concept which violates Articles 14, 21, 51-A(g), and 48A of the Constitution of India.' PETA India said and recommended that the government implement

the already established humane. scientific. and ef-The committe fective alternative methhas received over 70 responses from ods for preventing and experts and mitigating human-aniinstitutions on the mal conflicts. proposed PETA India, however,

welcomed the increased penal-

In a statement, it also commended the Union government for including a new chapter for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix species in the Bill. in order to confer them protection MORE P3 in the country.

# NIA raids in Odisha, 3 other states over terror funding

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Saturday carried out searches at multiple locations including Odisha, Bihar. Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh in connection with a Maoist terror funding case.

The NIA, in coordination with Bihar STF and CRPF, conducted searches at 26 locations of the accused and suspects in the districts of Jehanabad (8), Patna rural (2), Arwal (1), Nalanda (1), Gaya (8), Nawada (1) and Aurangabad (2) in Bihar, Koderma (1) district in Jharkhand, Bhubaneswar (1) and Nellore (1) in Andhra Pradesh.

The case pertains to a network

Ground Workers (OGWs) in Magadh region of Bihar, the official of the NIA said. Three country-made pistols, one .315 bore rifle, 59 live rounds, several digital devices, Naxal literature, incriminating documents and 4 kg

of terror financing being operated

by CPI (Maoist) cadres and Over

of suspected narcotics have been seized, the NIA official said, adding that further investigation in the case continues. Attempts are being made to raise funds for procurement of arms and ammunition and recruitment of new cadres in liaison with incarcerated Naxals and OGWs in order to revive andstrengthen Naxal activities in this region, the official said.







ties for wildlife related crimes.



leisure



### TOM HOLLAND HAS A LOT IN **COMMON WITH MARK WAHLBERG**

Hollywood star Tom Holland and filmmaker Mark Wahlberg joined forces to star in the new Uncharted movie, and in spite of their age difference, the actor says they're actually quite similar in a lot of ways.

### **BLADE RUNNER 2049 SEQUEL** SERIES IN DEVELOPMENT

A live-action Blade Runner sequel series is in development at Amazon. According to variety.com, titled Blade Runner 2099, the series will serve as a follow-up to the Blade Runner sequel Blade Runner 2049.

'Worked hard on

myself to play Princess Sanyogita'

Mumbai:Former beauty queen and debutante Manushi Chhillar cur-

rently awaits the release of her maiden film Prithviraj. She says she

worked harder on herself to play Princess Sanyogita in the

Prithviraj is based on the life and valour of the fearless and

Prithviraj's love Princess Sanyogita.

to the opportunity that I have got.

mighty king Prithviraj Chauhan. Actor Akshay Kumar

is essaying the role of the legendary warrior who fought

valiantly against merciless invader Muhammad of

Ghor. Manushi has been cast opposite Akshay as

Manushi says, "I'm ecstatic that we now have a

She adds, "I worked hard to get the part and I know

that I worked on myself harder to play the role of

Princess Sanyogita. It was a huge responsibility. I'm

thrilled that people are appreciating how I'm looking in

the film. I hope that they love how I have performed too be-

Prithviraj is directed by Chandraprakash Dwivedi. It will be

Badhaai Do all set

cause that's going to be my true test on screen.

released worldwide June 10.

Mumbai: The Rajkummar Rao

and Bhumi Pednekar-starrer

Badhaai Do, whose story-

years

Earlier,

when cer-

tain countries

in the Middle

East, including

of age.

line revolves around a laven-

der wedding of conven-

ience, is all set for a release

in UAE. The movie, how-

ever, will not be

screened in Sharjah.

date for Prithviraj's

release on the big

screen. It is the ulti-

mate theatrical en-

tertainer that needs

to be watched in

its full glory. I have

been fortunate

enough to have got-

ten this kind of

launchpad and I'm hop-

ing that I have done justice



FORTUNE **FORECAST** 



#### ARIES

A favourable day as any can be, says Ganesha. You are happy and content with what you have, and you've planned and are working towards what you want. A romantic date may prove interesting or throw up a controversy - decide where you want to take it.

### TAURUS

This is one of those days when not goes well, warns Ganesha. No matter how hard you try you may not be able to keep problems and difficulties at bay. You may not be pleased or comfortable doing what has been assigned, or required, and could simply sit sullenly, doing nothing. Do not, therefore, take up anything difficult or complex

#### GEMINI

Your highly competitive nature will push you to perform better and better. You don't even know what being second best means. Getting in touch with like-minded people will only make your resolve stronger. Your desire to be the best will make you take interest in everything that can help vou improve.

## CANCER

Your business acquaintances will come forward in the manner that may seem nothing short of some divine intervention. This means that they will virtually save your neck from the guillotine, predicts Ganesha. You will grow wiser in your spending ways, as you will know what to buy and what not to buy



Motivating people through your own actions is one way; the other is to let your words do the talking. Both are equally effective, says Ganesha, With a bit of help from the stars, today, it is your words that shall hold more weight than your actions, as you make optimum use of your presentation skills.

### 

In all likelihood, you will be eager to grab the monetary challenges that come your way, as they only enhance your desire for success. You will bring up new ideas and better methods of tackling the challenges on hand. Ganesha gives you an assurance that your present business views will do you a world of good.



Mumbai: Actor Alia Bhatt says she watched a lot of classic Hindi films, particularly those featuring Meena Kumari, to prepare for her role in Gangubai Kathiawadi as director Sanjay Leela Bhansali wanted her to channel the old world charm and grace that the heroines of that era had.

Alia also saw Shabana Azmistarrer Mandi, a Shyam Benegal film that featured her mother Soni Razdan, American period drama Memoirs of a Geisha and other old Indian films as part of her preparation.

The upcoming period drama features Alia in the title role of Gangubai, one of the most powerful, loved and respected madams from Mumbai's red-light area Kamathipura during the 1960s.

watch Meena Kumari's work a lot, her expressions... the way she would sing a song, although I am not going all out singing songs in the movie. There is certain sadness in her eyes, but there is a power to her face. He would say, 'See her face, which is so full'... I also watched Mandi," Alia told PTI.

director for the actor was to 'eat' and 'be happy on the sets'. "I had the most amount of food

on the sets. During the shoot of Gangubai Kathiawadi, I was eating all my favourite 'ghar ka' (homemade) food. I had a great time.'

"Being an actor is one thing films and whenever I do, I only have admiration, whether it is for Waheeda Rehman ji, Shabana Azmi ji, Madhubala ji... The way they would do these long shots, it gives you goosebumps. Somehow, we have lost that charm of presenting a heroine like that, that oldworld

Gangubai Kathiawadi, which the actor calls her 'most creatively satisfying experience', came her way after two previous collaborations with Bhansali fell through. Bhansali reportedly wanted

Alia, known for Highway, Udta Punjab, Raazi and Gully Boy, for a film titled Balika Vadh when she was just 11. Then, there was Inshallah with Salman Khan that didn't work out. The actor admits she was 'heartbroken' when Inshallah got shelved.

"But Sanjay sir, being true to his

words, said I should take a break and that he has something for me. I went on a holiday "He (Bhansali) wanted me to and when I came back, he

presented this script to me, which he had for a couple of years," said Alia. AGENCIES

Another instruction from the

and being a heroine is another. I have been referred to watch these

charm.

#### After receiving the Censor certificate, the film will be screened in only night shows in UAE Middle East. for persons above 21

to release in UAE Chloe Zhao's sci-fi adventure drama, Eternals, because of the refusal of its makers to delete certain gay-themed scenes, the UAE had allowed

the film's release. Although Badhaai Do has no obvious expressions of samesex love, as in the case of the Eternals characters Ben and Phastos kissing each other, it clearly has an LGBTQ+ theme, which is not acceptable in the



# Ananya reflects on her on-screen character 'Tia' from Gehraiyaan

Mumbai: Actress Ananya Panday is currently making heads turn with her on-screen portrayal of Tia in Gehraiyaan. The film is being well received by the audience and critics alike. Ananya has surely made a strong mark in front of experienced actors at such a young age. The actress also feels, Tia is one such character, she would keep with her for a lifetime.

Recently the actress took to her social media handle and shared some stills of *Tia* from the film, expressing her attachment to the character. In the caption, she wrote, For her, it comes as a treat in her life, and the different emotions that she imbibed in herself are something she would like to stay with.

"The many moods of TIA — she was such a treat to play — her innocence, patience, insecurity, maturity, vulnerability, loyalty, love, heartbreak — will with me forever. stav #GehraiyaanOnPrime out now

With Gehraiyaan Ananya put forward her great potential to portray such deep layered character and she has done absolute justice with it.

Meanwhile, on the work front, the actress is all set to make her pan India debut alongside Vijay Deverakonda in Liger and will also be seen in Kho Gaye

stick! Today is going to be one of those 'stick' days when it comes to dealing with your seniors, foresees Ganesha. It would be wise to delay auc tion bids or sealed tenders. Sometimes waiting patiently is the best policy, especially if you are a job aspirant. Do not expect immediate success.

Some days you get the car-

### **SCORPIO**

You shall follow all things to the dot today. Your approach will be methodical and robotic. It is likely that you shall symbolise the saying, 'Actions speak louder than words'. Your powers of persuasion will help you amass the confidences of many, predicts Ganesha

### SAGITTARIUS

A day to full of caution, warns Ganesha. There are chances that your heart will find its partner, forcing you to fall in love. You may be cupid's next prey. However, watch your steps, as the initial stages of a relationship may be fragile and need to handled with care. Also, it's time to guard your reputation.

### CAPRICORN

It will be one of those mundane days with nothing remarkable happening or any front. But don't be disheartened, advises Ganesha; planetary movements indicate there may be a change coming soon, most likely a good one.

### AOUARIUS

You do have a way with words and today, you may succeed with your gift of the gab! But Ganesha says that your confused feelings may come in the way of your triumphant achievement. Also, sentiments may lead to a disastrous outcome. Sounds familiar?

#### PISCES

The fount of your creativity spurts today like there is no tomorrow. For lesser mortals it takes inspiration, perspiration and a lot of desperation to come up with something creative. You, on the other hand, keenly remember the lessons from your past efforts, and use them today to scale new heights, says Ganesha.

# PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBES





OF COURSE

IVAH UOY WO

TO DO YOUR

ACTUALLY, NOW

THAT MY GOOD

SIDE IS NO





CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

#### Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Jordan, banned the screening of

Hum Kahan which is again with Siddhant Chaturvedi and Adarsh Gourav. AGENCIES

### 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.

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

#### SOLUTIONS CROSSWORD WA INTERN OC M F 9 7 4 2 5 8 2 1 4 5 6 3 1 8 9





SUDOKU



DE

з



# downtown



### **RURAL POLLS**

The Cuttack district administration arranges buses to carry polling officials to various places for the three-tier panchayat elections

Wider talks a must before changes in biodiversity laws



# **COVID-19 TRACKER**

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
orld	40,96,53,894	32,99,11,851	58,23,367
lia	4,25,86,544	4,14,68,120	5,07,981
isha	12,76,114	12,53,914	8,862

# **PROBE NEEDED ON LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL RESOLUTION: PATRO**

#### AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: Seeking a probe to find out what happened to the copy of Odisha Assembly's resolution on legislative council. "sent to the Centre over four years ago", Speaker SN Patro Saturday said the state would write to the Union government again in this matter.

Patro had Friday expressed shock over Union minister Kiren Rijiju's recent assertion that the Centre had no record of any proposal for formation of the legislative council, and said that the resolution was forwarded way back in 2018, having received the Assembly's approval



The government will write two letters to the Centre again, attaching the resolution passed by the Odisha Assembly September 18, 2018, for the establishment of the legislative council SN PATRO I SPEAKER

"The government will write two letters to the Centre again, attaching the resolution passed by the Odisha Assembly September 18, 2018, for the establishment of the legislative council," Patro told reporters here.

One letter would be forwarded to Parliament by the state government and the other he would directly send to Rijiju, the Union law and justice minister, the speaker explained

"We will also urge the law minister to conduct a probe and find out who had furnished inaccurate information to him in the matter,' Patro said.

Rijiju, while replying a writ-ten question by BJD MP Prasanna Acharva on Thursday. said that as per record, no resolution was received by the Centre on the creation of a legislative council in Odisha.

WHILE THE BIOLOGICAL **DIVERSITY ACT IS RELATIVELY RECENT. THE WILDLIFE PROTECTION ACT IS AROUND FIVE DECADES OLD AND IT REQUIRES SOME CHANGES AND UPDATE** 

#### ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: The Centre, last year, introduced two Bills in Parliament to amend the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and the Wildlife Protection Act (WLPA), 1972. The two Bills were introduced in Parliament without much public consultation.

The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 regulates the use of biological resources and their accessibility and benefits while the Wildlife Protection Act (WLPA), 1972 deals with the protection of wild animals from trade, poaching or other threats

While the Biological Diversity Act is relatively recent, the Wildlife Protection Act is around five decades old and it requires some changes and update. The two Bills have been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committees for scrutiny.

Orissa POST talks to several environmentalists and experts about the two Bills and what changes would usher in if these Bills were passed by Parliament.

Water and climate change expert Ranjan Panda said these two

Acts are very important for the protection of biodiversity and wildlife. Massive public consultation and thorough scrutiny are a must before effecting any changes to these Acts. "But, the problem is that the

government is more concerned about ease of doing business than protection of environment. The issues related to biodiversity and wildlife are no more a priority area for the government. Creation of sanctuary is not enough for the conservation of wildlife. The conservation of natural resources is vital for combating climate changes and health hazards." he added.

Environmental activist Prafulla Samantara alleged that the Centre



was trying to dilute the two Acts and bring certain amendments to favour the corporate houses. "With the passing of these Bills, the corporate houses will have easy access to our natural resources. The proposed amendments are a step forward to privatise the natural resources. This will destroy the indigenous knowledge about medicinal plants of the forest," he said.

In recent times, we have seen that the government is supporting big corporate houses by compromising the life and livelihood of local communities, alleged Samantara. "The residents of Dhinkia in Jagatsinghpur district are facing brutality from the authorities due to their opposition to the transfer of large patches of land to certain corporate houses," he claimed



Gramsabha and forest dwellers

for management of sanctuaries

is a good step. The current law

management of the sanctuaries

and national parks. The proposal

excludes the locals from the

With the passing of these Bills, the corporate houses will have easy access to our natural resources. The proposed amendments are a step forward to privatise the natural resources. This will destroy the indigenous knowledge about medicinal plants of the forest

PRAFULLA SAMANTARA ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

National Green Tribunal (NGT) lawyer Sankar Prasad Pani said

on a holistic approach to the wildlife. There are many positive aspects

and forest dwellers for managesanctuaries and national parks.

to involve the local communities in the management of sanctuaries will certainly help in the conservation of wildlife through indigenous knowledge SANKAR PRASAD PANI I NGT LAWYER

regard to the protection of wildlife and biodiversity. In recent times, the government is trying to bring changes and amendments to several Acts to help the corporate houses. The Interstate River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2019 is an example in this regard.

in the proposed amendments. The proposal to consult the Gramsabha ment of sanctuaries is a good step. The current law excludes the locals from the management of the The proposal to involve the local communities in the management of sanctuaries will certainly help in the conservation of wildlife through indigenous knowledge," he added.

there is a need to strengthen the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 to check incidents of poaching and trade of wildlife species. "We have to strengthen the implementation and enforcement of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 to protect wild animals from poachers and smugglers. The law should treat the crime against humans and animals equally and the culprits should get equal punishment." he added.

Environmentalist Jaya Krushna Panigrahi said laws



JAYA KRUSHNA PANIGRA

need to withstand the scrutiny of time. The WLPA, 1972 has been amended several times since its promulgation but the BDA, 2002 is yet to see its fullest implementation.

"Many environmental activists apprehend that the provisions of the proposed amendments may weaken the potential of the Acts and they have criticised the government for not inviting suggestions from the public. Now, the two Bills have been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee and the Joint Parliamentary Committee respectively. The best option before the committees is to have wider consultations with the experts and scientists working in the fields of wildlife and biodiversity. The objective is to incorporate additional

measures for reinforcing the pro-

tection of wildlife and their habi-

40 platoons of force for Prez's security

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Feb 12: The district administration will deploy 40 platoons of police force and 200 officials for the two-day visit of President Rama Nath Kovind to the Holy City here, starting Februarv 19. A decision to this effect was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Collector Samarth Verma here Saturday. The President is scheduled to visit Srimandir and Sri Chaitanva Gaudiya mutt in the city here. He will also participate in an event at Saradhabali, sources said.

officials to repair some major roads of the city for the high-profile visit

in Puri Sadar area. We will deploy The Collector asked the of Police Kanwar Vishal Singh. Elaborating on the arrangements for President's Srimandir visit.

Spurt in unregulated street food in City adequate police force for both pur-POST NEWS NETWORK poses," said Puri Superintendent

Bhubaneswar, Feb 11: With more and more people liking street foods, the state capital is witnessing a

#### "During inspections it was found that these food stalls have been giving food that did either expire or were not being prepared under hygienic conditions. Moreover, many

roadside eateries that were found operating without trade license or indulging in unhygienic and unsafe food preparations. In fact, the BMC Friday raided Shri Krishna Sweets near DAV Chandrsekharpur and fined Rs2,000 for sale of stale food which is under gross violation of Food and Safety Standards Act. "Apart from being mindful of the surroundings where the food is being made and served one should also keep in mind that these street foods have a high level of sugar, fat and salt in it. Regular consumption

Das said the proposed amendments

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau

member Bijaya Kumar Kabi said

of them can lead to severe health complications. It can also cause food-borne diseases due to ease of contamination by pathogenic and non-pathogenic microorganisms. explained Subrat Das, a gastroenterologist here. Sources also said with invention of online food platforms, the quality check for food has gone for a toss. "Many lost their livelihood during Covid and opened small food stalls with their modest savings. However, to earn profits a few such eateries have compromised on quality," the official added.

#### will do more harm than good with year-old law. The very objective and scope of the law has been expanded from protection to conservation and management of wildlife. This is a conscious decision of the ministry to emphasize

The District Collector, meanwhile,

asked the officials concerned to repair some major roads of the city for the high-profile visit. He also directed the officials to ensure uninterrupted power supply and arrange a team of health staff to meet any eventuality. "President Ram Nath Kovind's

visit coincides with the voting for the three-tier panchayat elections

Verma said the administration would ban devotees' entry to the 12th century shrine for some time to ensure foolproof security for the

first citizen of the country. The administration has also decided to issue identity cards to the sadhus and employees of Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya mutt for their participation at the religious ceremony at Saradhabali.

rise in number of illegal and unregulated roadside eateries dishing out adulterated food.

the proposed amendment to the

Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 is a

major step to bring changes to a 50-

As per sources, the rise in demand for food through online platforms coupled with loss of livelihood has spurred increase in small scale food and snack shops here. With no permits, these eateries are reportedly said to prepare and sell food in unhygienic conditions.

have been found running without a trade license. We have sealed more than 100 shops over past three years but many more have crept up lately owing to the pandemic," said a former BMC official.

It can be mentioned that ahead of the New Year and festival celebrations, the civic authorities had collected fines of up to Rs50 lakh and ordered to seal about 50

# Post-jab workout bumps up antibodies: Study

**IN THE STUDY, THE RESEARCHERS ALSO TESTED WHETHER PARTICIPANTS COULD GET THE SAME BUMP IN ANTIBODIES WITH JUST 45-MINUTES OF EXERCISING. THEY FOUND THAT THE SHORTER WORKOUT DID NOT INCREASE THE PARTICIPANTS' ANTIBODY LEVELS** 

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New York, Feb 12: Around 90 minutes of mild-to moderate-intensity exercise directly after the flu or the Covid-19 vaccine may provide an extra immune boost, suggests a new study. The study showed that participants who cycled on a stationary bike or took a brisk walk for an hour-and-ahalf after getting a jab produced more antibodies in the following four weeks compared to participants who sat or continued with their daily routine



WORKING OUT INCREASES BLOOD AND LYMPH FLOW, WHICH HELPS IMMUNE CELLS CIRCULATE

AS THESE CELLS MOVE AROUND THE BODY, THEY'RE MORE LIKELY TO DETECT SOMETHING FOREIGN

post-immunisation.

The researchers, including lead author Marian Kohut from Iowa State University, found similar results when

they ran an experiment with mice and treadmills.

"Our preliminary results are the first to demonstrate that a specific amount of time can enhance the body's antibody response to the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine and two vaccines for influenza," said Kohut. The researchers also said the study's findings could directly benefit people with a range of fitness levels.

Nearly half of the participants in the study, published in the journal Brain, Behavior and Immunity,



Our preliminary results are the first to demonstrate that a specific amount of time can enhance the body's antibody response to the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine and two vaccines <u>for influenza</u>

RIAN KOHUT | LEAD AUTHOR & EARCHER, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY, USA

had a BMI in the overweight or obese category. During 90 minutes of exercise, they focused on maintaining a pace that kept their heart rate around 120-140 beats per minute rather than distance.

In the study, the researchers also tested whether participants could get the same bump in antibodies with just 45-minutes of exercising. They found that the shorter workout did not increase the participants' antibody levels.

As to why prolonged, mild-to moderate-intensity exercise could improve the body's immune response, Kohut said there could be multiple reasons. Working out increases blood and lymph flow, which helps immune cells circulate. As these cells move around the body, they're more likely to detect something foreign, the researcher said.



# downtown

# 21-day-old Bhadrak kid among 24 fresh **Cov deaths in state**

With the identification of 1,539 positive cases out of 62,096 samples over last 24 hours, the state's daily TPR stood at 2.48 per cent

#### PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: Odisha's Covid-19 tally rose to 12,76,114 Saturday as 1,539 more people tested positive for the infection, while the death toll mounted to 8.862 as 24 patients, including a newborn, succumbed to the infection, a Health department bulletin said. The coastal state had logged 1,572 cases and 20 deaths Friday.

Khurda district, of which state Capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the highest number of 233 cases followed by Sundargarh with 124 new infections, while 342 children were among the total new patients in the state.

Odisha reported 24 new fatalities in the last 24 hours as per a tweet by the state Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department posted Saturday morning. A 21-day-old boy from Bhadrak was among the fresh fatalities reported Saturday. Khurda reported the highest deaths at seven, out of which six patients were from Bhubaneswar, followed by Balasore (six), Jaipur (three). Bhadrak and Mavurbhani (two each) and Angul, Bargarh, Nabarangpur and Puri districts (one each). Besides, 53 other Covid patients have died due to comorbidities so far. The state had re-

ported 20 Covid-19 fatalities Friday. The state now has 13,285 active cases, while 2,483 patients have recuperated from the highly infectious disease in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of recoveries to 12,53,914

The daily test positivity rate (TPR) stood at 2.48 per cent as 62,096 samples were tested for Covid-19 in the last 24 hours.

Other districts that reported fresh Covid cases are: Angul (119), Balasore (40), Bargarh (23), Bhadrak (25), Bolangir (10), Boudh (27), Cuttack (85), Deogarh (37), Dhenkanal (11), Gajapati (44), Ganjam (55), Jagatsinghpur (35), Jajpur (50), Jharsuguda (23), Kalahandi (35), Kandhamal (20), Kendrapara (38), Keonjhar (53), Koraput (72), Malkangiri (1), Mayurbhanj (53), Nabarangpur (32), Nayagarh (36), Nuapada (26), Puri (33), Rayagada (75), Sambalpur (65) and Subarnapur (17).

The state pool reported 52 new cases. These are persons who have come from outside Odisha and have tested positive. A total of 2,83,55,937 swab samples have been cumulatively tested so far.

#### Khurda reported the highest deaths at seven, out of which six patients were from Bhubaneswar

Balasore district reported the second most daily casualties at six, followed by Jajpur (three) Bhadrak and Mavurbhani (two each) and Angul, Bargarh, Nabarangpur and Puri districts (one each)

Besides, 53 other Covid patients have died due to comorbidities so far



# ₹75L seized from 2 ganja traders BLOW TO BALIYATRA **RIVERFRONT PROJECT**

Cuttack, Feb 12: The Commissionerate Police Saturday claimed to have arrested two cannabis traders from the Link Road here and seized ₹75.20 lakh from them. Police also seized around 20 kg

cannabis and gold ornaments from Narayan Pati of Jhinkiria under 42 Mauza police limits and Abakash Swain of Kalyan Nagar under Madhupatna police limits.

A joint team of Badambadi police and the special squad detained Pati and Swain when they were about to sell the contraband to some people at Link Road Friday.

The police team later seized the cash and ornaments from Pati's



residence at Jhinkiria. "We will inform about the seizure of cash to the Enforcement Directorate

and the Income Tax department," said Cuttack Deputy Commissioner

# Accounting professional alleges ₹20 lakh fraud by conman

Bhubaneswar: An accounting professional has accused a man of duping him of around ₹20 lakh by promising high interest on loans. Chandaka police have started an investigation into the allegations. It is pertinent to mention that the accused, Prabhakar Jena of Kendrapara, was earlier arrested in two different fraud cases registered at Chandaka and Manchswar police stations. According to sources, Jena was introduced to the victim Arun Kumar Mohanty, a Certified Management Accountant, by the manager of a nationalised bank who requested Mohanty to help the accused file GST, Income Tax, balance sheet and other financial issues in August 2021. Subsequently, Jena shared his future plans with Mohanty and promised to arrange clients for him. Jena reportedly told Mohanty that he was engaged in trading of non-woven materials and planning to set up a manufacturing unit too. Meanwhile, Jena sought a loan of ₹19 lakh from the victim to procure the purchase order of ₹24 lakh from a Chennai-based firm. Accordingly, the victim gave him ₹19 lakh in different installments between September and October, 2021. Mohanty was shocked to Jena's past frauds of crores of rupees under various pretexts. He also contacted Jena and asked him to return his money. Mohanty soon deposited the post dated cheque given by the accused to him in the bank but the cheque got bounced due to insufficient balance. Finding no other way, he filed a complaint with Chandaka police in this regard.

of Police Prateek Singh.

stations is that there is

a wide range of listener

group. Then there is

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areas are not served by the

Many remote and tribal

Understanding these, we

took inputs from govern

officials to inform the

migrants about how to

etc, and help resolve a

SHAIKH MOHAMMED NIYAZ | DIRECTOR,

RADIO BULBUL & SECRETARY, COMMUNITY

in the coastal districts continued

live broadcasting on dos and don'ts.

when the situation would worsen, and

when the cyclone would make land-

fall. Similarly, when the global

quarantine facilities, testing

handle Covid crisis,

information about

number of queries

RADIO OF ODISHA

mainstream media

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 12: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has banned construction of permanent nature on the floodplain of River Mahanadi till further order.

The NGT was hearing a plea calling the Baliyatra Riverfront Improvement (BRFI) project, under which the construction was being carried out, an attempt to monetise the riverbed for commercial purposes which will reduce the waterretaining capacity of the river at Jobra barrage in Cuttack, causing damage to the environment and the riverine ecosystem. "No construction of permanent nature will be allowed in the floodplain in question pending further order," said the order issued by the bench of NGT chairperson Adarsh Kumar Goel

The petition pointed out that the works in the riverbed will also affect the supply of drinking water. and obstruct dredging which is necessary. This will also add to the floods in the city, it added.

The counsel for the applicant referred to the forming of an NGTassigned panel December 15, 2020, in which it directed the committee to lay down norms to ensure that Odisha's proposal of for construction of the medical college and riverfront development takes place in accordance with the law, without damaging the flood plains.

Flood plain zones need to be identified and demarcated in light of such norms. The committee may identify the extent of floodplain zone/active floodplain zone from the edge of the river. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) will be the nodal agency for compliance, the counsel said highlighting the earlier order.

The CPCB, October 4, 2021, had filed an affidavit which sanctioned a project called "Floodplain Zoning Study for the Identified Stretches of Mahanadi River Basin" for mapping of the river using satellite imageries, digital elevation maps, land use and a land cover map showing habitation, flood frequency analysis and demarcation of flood plain zones from the edge of the river under an expert committee.

The flood of 25 year return period is expected to affect about 38 villages in and around the Cuttack city from Mundali barrage to the downstream of Jobra barrage

to handle Covid crisis, information about quarantine facilities,

testing etc, and help resolve a

number of queries," Niyaz said.

community radio stations have

complained inadequate support

from the government towards

Moreover, Institute on

Management of Agricultural

Extension (IMAGE), an

autonomous institute of Odisha

government, suggested not to

forward any fresh proposal of set-

their expansion.

However, many of these

# Community radio seeks state support for wider reach

#### AVIRAL MISHRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: As Odisha continues to struggle through the pandemic and is prone to devastating natural calamities, the community radios have urged the government for an increased support to improve their reach, especially among rural and tribal people. Equipped with the familiarity of

hyper-local dialects and languages, and run by low-power and low-cost setups, community radios have proved themselves invaluable during such testing times.

After the public broadcaster All India Radio and commercial FM channels, the state is home to at least 20 community radio stations belonging to the third tier of radio broadcasting in India. The contributions of these radio

stations were observed earlier when cyclone Fani disrupted communications across state Capital Bhubaneswar and other parts of Odisha. While facing a similar threat during cyclone Yaas last year, at least five community radio stations

#### WORLD RADIO DAY The unique thing about community radio



pandemic clutched Odisha, several community radios proved indispensable in dissemination of information to public at grassroots levels.

Director of Radio Bulbul Shaikh Mohammed Niyaz said that he ran as many as 21 theme-based discussion episodes during the pandemic as part a show Kar Bhala Toh Ho Bhala, largely in Bhadrak and Jajpur districts.

The show provided platform for experts to discuss topics such as homelessness, health, and farming among others.

"The unique thing about community radio stations is that there is a wide range of listener group. Then there is also the case of spreading no or almost zero fake news or misinformation through us. Many remote and tribal areas are not served by the mainstream media. Understanding these, we took inputs from government officials to inform the migrants about how

ting up community radio stations in the state, thereby threatening their growth. Niyaz, who is also the Secretary of Community Radio of Odisha said, "We are aiming to reach at least 314 blocks and cover all districts in the state in future. However, we need state govern-

ment's complete support in this.' "If the district administrations join hands with community radios, our reach will increase to a far greater extent. consequently helping spread correct information at ground level," he added.

# RACE AGAINST TIME

'Simultaneous droughts across globe can threaten food security'

mode Saturday for the students to expose the generation to issues related to parliamentary democracy. Founderchairman of ODM Educational Group Satvabrata Minaketan said the youth parliament will give students a chance to improve their leadership qualities.

Youth parl held at ODM

Bhubaneswar: The ODM Public school organised a youth parliament on virtual

# **ASSIFIED**

### 

I Mamata Das, W/o-Kailash Ch. Das, At/PO-Arjunpur, P.S.- Khaira, Dist.- Balasore, my Plot No. 566/1531, 566/1531/1544, Khata No. 216/472 the original previously sale deed No. -10111301297 of Adhikari Das which I had bought. But now this sale deed is missed. If anybody find it then please contact us on Mob. No.- 7609904221.

I Yamin Ahemad Khan own Plot No. 2248/3448, Mouza: Jajarsingh, P.S.: Bux Lane, Village: Nayakothi, Khordha -752055, RSD No. 397 dated on 17.02.2006 in favour of Mryutunjay Das has lost, if anyone find kindly contact Adv. N.C. Pattnaik, M.- 9853311189.

roughts occurring simultaneously across different regions of the world could place an unprecedented strain on the global agricultural systems, threatening the water and food security of millions of people, a recent collabo-

rative research has found out. Continuing fossil fuel dependence will increase the probability of co-occurring droughts upto 40 per cent by the mid-21st century and by 60 per cent upto the late 21st century, relative to the late-20th century. That comes out to an approximately nine-fold increase in agricultural and human population exposure to severe co-occurring droughts unless steps are taken to lower carbon emissions, said the study carried out by researchers from the Washington State University. Vancouver, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, the Columbia

University, and the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar. "There could be around 120 million people across the globe simultaneously exposed to severe compound droughts each year by the end of the century. Many of the regions that our analysis shows will be most affected are already vulnerable, and so the potential for droughts to become disasters is high," said lead author Jitendra Singh, a former postdoctoral researcher at the WSU School of the Environment, now at ETH Zurich, Switzerland

The elevated risk of compound droughts estimated by the research team is a result of a warming climate coupled with a projected 22 per cent increase in the frequency of El Nino and La Nina events - the two opposite phases of the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

La Nina refers to the large-scale cooling of the ocean surface temperatures in the Central and Eastern Equatorial Pacific Ocean. coupled with changes in the tropical atmospheric circulation. It usually has the opposite impacts on weather and climate as El Nino.

The researchers' projections show that nearly 75 per cent of compound droughts in the future will coincide with these irregular but recurring periods of climatic variation in the world's oceans, which have played a large role in some of the greatest environmental disasters in world history.

The research team analysed climate, agricultural and population growth data for the research study that was recently published in Nature Climate Change, an international high-impact journal.

"While technology and other circumstances today are a lot different than they were in the late 19th cen-



School of the Environment.

The study results also indicated

that areas of North and South

America are more likely to expe-

rience compound droughts in a fu-

ture, warmer climate than regions

of Asia, where much of the agri-

cultural land is projected to be-

come wetter.

tury, crop failures in multiple breadbasket regions still have the potential to affect global food availability. This could in turn increase volatility in global food prices, affecting food access, and exacerbate food insecurity, particularly in regions that are already vulnerable to environmental shocks such as droughts," said study co-author Deepti Singh,

There could be around **120 million people** across the globe simultaneously exposed to severe compound droughts each year by the end of the century. Many of the regions that our analysis shows will be most affected are already vulnerable, and so the potential for droughts to become disasters is high JITENDRA SINGH | POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER, WSU SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT & ETH ZURICH

Gandhinagar, and co-author of the

study, said, "Our study estimated

the probability and risk of co-oc-

currence of drought in multiple re-

gions during the observed and pro-

jected future climate, which is

likely to increase under the warmer

climate. Simultaneous droughts

in major agricultural areas pose

food security risks and raise food

prices. ENSO remains one of the

prominent drivers of drought oc-

Our study estimated the probability and risk of cooccurrence of drought in multiple regions during the observed and projected future climate, which is likely to increase under the

warmer climate. Simultaneous droughts in major agricultural areas pose food security risks and raise food prices. ENSO remains one of the prominent drivers of drought occurrence in both observed and future climates

VIMAL MISHRA | CO-AUTHOR, DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERING, INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, GANDHINAGAR

Sharing insights from the recurrence in both observed and search study and its estimated imfuture climates. pact on India and South Asia. "The potential for a food security Vimal Mishra from the Department crisis increases even if these of Civil Engineering at Indian droughts aren't affecting major Institute of Technology, food-producing regions but rather

> many regions that are already vulnerable to food insecurity," he said. Moving forward, the researchers plan to take a closer look at how cooccurring droughts will affect various aspects of the global food network, how vulnerable communities are affected by and adapting to such climate extremes, as well as how society can be better prepared to manage the risk of increasing simultaneous disasters.

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# Ambulance-trailer collision kills two



Bahanaga: At least two persons died after an ambulance and a trailer truck had a head-on collision near Dandakali temple on NH-16 under Khantapada police limits in Balasore district Saturday. Some others were injured in the accident. According to reports, the ambulance was returning from Cuttack to Kolkata. The driver of the ambulance lost control over the vehicle which hit the divider near Dandakali temple and collided with an upcoming trailer truck. The driver died on the spot while its helper was critically injured. However, he died on way to the Balasore DHH. The trailer driver, critically injured, has been identified as Upendra Nayak (25) of Mangalpur in Jajpur district. The deceased ambulance driver and helper are yet to be identified.

# **BJD MP turns Good** Samaritan for injured

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, Feb 12: Jajpur's ruling BJD MP Sarmistha Sethy turned a Good Samaritan by rescuing a woman seriously injured in a road accident and admitting her to a hospital, officials said Saturday.



also stayed for around 30 minutes to take stock of the treatment. The injured woman's condition is critical and she has been put under 48-hour observation in the hospital, treating doctors said. The accident took place when



The incident took place Friday when Sethy was going to the district headquarters to attend an official meeting. On the way, she saw the middle-aged woman lying on the road in Gokhana area with griev-

ous injuries, they said. The lawmaker took the woman in her vehicle and admitted her to

the woman and her brother from Kendrapara were travelling on a two-wheeler to Jajpur to attend a wedding ceremony, locals said. However, she somehow fell down

the district hospital, where she

from the motorcycle and sustained grievous injuries but her brother was unaware of it and moved ahead, they added.



Divisional Railway Manager Anup Satpathy of Waltair Railways Division reviewing the expansion works of Koraput- Rayagada rail route and various amenities and facilities enroute in Koraput. Saturday

# **PANCHAYAT POLLS Candidates take 'test' by voters**

EIGHT OUT OF TOTAL NINE CANDIDATES APPEARED FOR THE TEST WHILE ONLY THREE MANAGED TO PASS

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Kutra, Feb 12: As the days of voting draw closer for the panchayat polls in state, candidates, independent or with backing from various political parties, have intensified their campaign leaving no stones unturned to woo voters.

In a one-of-its-kind incident, residents of Malupada village under Kutra panchayat in Sundargarh district got united and made the sarpanch candidates appear for a written test to prove their mettle for the post, Thursday evening. As a result, as many as eight sarpanch candidates contesting from Kutra panchavat had to appear in a written examination in order to win the confidence of the residents.

It is probably the first-of-its-kind incident where villagers organised a written test of sarpanch candidates ahead of the panchayat polls in the state. In the test, eight out of nine candidates appeared for the test while only three managed to clear the test.

Reports said that the locals in-

Villagers invited all the nine candidates to the village Thursday evening and asked them to appear for a written test comprising seven questions related to the development of the village and the gram panchayat

Aim behind holding such Aan unusual test is to gain an idea on the candidates whether they will be able to work for the village and the gram panchayat, said the villagers

vited all the nine candidates to the village Thursday evening. They asked them to appear for a written test comprising seven questions related to the development of the village and the gram panchayat.

The aim behind holding such an unusual test is to gain an idea on the candidates if they will be able to work for the village and the panchayat. They also informed them that they will vote for that candidate who will be able to answer the questions and pass the test.

POLL BOYCOTT THREA



The candidates appearing for the test were identified as Ajit Haro, Amrutlal Toppo, Chanchala Ekka, Jeetendra Toppo, Dillip Kulu, Nuas Dang, Feroje Dungdung, Bhuban Kujur and Lalita Barua.

The questions were based on their purpose behind becoming a sarpanch candidate, welfare activities to be undertaken by them, will they visit from door-to-door to solve the issues of the locality if they are elected as a sarpanch, number of wards, villages and people in

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, Feb 12: Hard on the heels of two persons being killed in a spree in two districts within less than a week, the Maoists have again put up posters in Kandhamal Saturday morning, thereby threatening local villagers to boycott the upcoming three-tier rural polls.

"However, the Red rebels have gone a step further this time and put up banners and posters inside Radhigumma government high school premises under Kotagad police limits in the district. As the three-tier rural polls get nearer, the ultras seem to have intensified their violence in a bid to disrupt the democratic process," a senior official stated.

Apart from Kandhamal district, the faction of outlawed CPI has also put up posters in Bhawanipur and Laxmipur villages of Kalahandi with an intention to warn locals to shun elections, the official added.

It is pertinent to mention that a youth named Priyaranjan Kanhar was killed as a landmine laid by the Maoists blasted Wednesday near Sadingia-Kiamunda area under

**BEAUTIFICATION DRIVE** 

125-year-old cow shelter



Going a step further this Gtime, the Red Rebels have put up banners and posters inside Radhigumma government high school premises under Kotagad police limits in the district

Kandhamal: Red threat

casts shadow on polls

hey have also put up posters in Bhawanipur and Laxmipur villages of Kalahandi district with an intention to warn locals to shun elections

Phiringia police limits of Kandhamal district. Similarly, a reporter of leading ver-

nacular daily 'Dharitri' named Rohit Kumar Biswal was killed February 5 due to a massive explosion near Karlakhunta bridge in Mohangiri area under Madanpur-Rampur police limits of Kalahandi. The scribe unknowingly went closer to the site, where high-intensity IED was planted, to cover news on the Ultras' warning to locals to boycott the upcoming three-tier panchayat polls.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police (southern range) Satyabrata Bhoi Tuesday assured the local villagers residing in Red corridors of the state not to get panicked by the poll boycott call given by Ultras.

### **Tusker carcass** recovered

BHAWANIPATNA: Forest officials recovered the carcass of a tusker near the Bagnur-Jampadar road village under Narla forest range in this district.

Saturday. It is suspected that the tusker might have died due to fight among the

animals in herds as the carcass of the tusker bore several injury marks. Locals of the area spotted the carcass of an ele-

phant and informed the forest officials.

Giridhari Nag said that the actual reason behind the animal death could be ascer-

tained after the post-mortem report is

available. Further investigation in this

Pink booths for

women voters

regard is underway by the forest official.

When contacted, Narla forest ranger

the panchayat etc and the goals for the next five year if they get elected as a sarpanch, five selfless services they have fulfilled, the gram panchayat of their dream and explain about the former sarpanch. The villagers said only three cleared the test while the rest were unsuccessful. The villagers said that they decided to hold the test as scores of candidates and political leaders roam around the villages



Villagers of ward no-13 in Damanda under Tikarpada panchayat in Boudh warned to boycott upcoming panchayat polls over lack of development

# being shifted in Sambalpur

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sambalpur, Feb 12: A 125-year-old cow shelter in front of Samaleswari temple here is being shifted for the beautification and development of the 16th century shrine.

seeking votes but shun them once

they become successful

The shifting of Sri Krushna Goshala (cow shelter) began Friday to pave way for the implementation of the state government's Samaleswari Temple Area Management and Local Economy Initiatives (SAMALEI) scheme, Sambalpur Municipal Corporation commissioner Pradeep Kumar Sahu said.

The goshala was set up in 1896 by a group of philanthropists to look after and provide care to cows. Cows were then donated by some people and the goshala authorities



had purchased some and milk was sold from there to meet expenses.

The shifting of the shelter which now houses 500 cows will take around four days and the new one will be set up at Putapali area of Sambalpur town, Sahu said.

The land at Putapali measuring 50 acres was donated to the Goshala The goshala was set up in 1896 by a group of philanthropists to look after and provide care to cows

JAJPUR: The district administration here has planned to establish two special pink by a person many years ago. booths in each of the 10 blocks of Jaipur We have requested the district administration to provide a small piece of land near the Samaleswari temple so that a counter can be set

district for the upcoming three-tier panchayat polls, a report said. These booths will be manned by women presiding officers and polling officers where women voters will exercise their franchise. This arrangement has been made so that more and women voters will come forward and vote in a cordial atmosphere.

# Stray dogs campaign for woman sarpanch candidate

the Covid-19 safety protocols for

ther Kalu Charan who believes that

his daughter will bring about trans-

formation in Maulabhanja pan-

"I am also accompanied by my fa-

the polls, she said.

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Feb 12: With the battle field for the upcoming threetier rural polls in Odisha becoming warmer, the aspiring candidates have started adopting innovative ideas to woo local voters.

In a similar vein, a 23-year-old woman sarpanch candidate Rojalini Behera has befriended three stray dogs who are seen accompanying and campaigning for her every day in Maulabhanja panchayat under Sanakhemundi block of Ganjam.

The sarpanch candidate has named the three animals as Sweety Chandramukhi and Odisha Tiger. The trio has proven to be a good support to her poll campaign.

The canines carry danglers hanging around their necks with 'Satya', 'Dharma' and 'Nyaya' prominently written on them. Interestingly, the



dogs can be seen with masks on their faces. When contacted, Rojalini said that she does not have the resources to arrange enough people for a lavish campaign. Furthermore, her idea also strictly adheres to

he canines carry danglers hanging around their necks with 'Satya', 'Dharma' and 'Nyaya' prominently written on them. Interestingly, the dogs can be seen with masks on their faces

he candidate said that she does not have the resources to arrange enough people for a lavish campaign. Her idea also strictly adheres to the Covid-19 safety protocols for the polls, she said

chayat if elected as a sarpanch. I am a nurse by profession," Behera said.

"I feed and take care of the animals regularly as if they are my family members. I was previously working as a nurse at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar and a government run health facility in Sankhemundi.

I have closely witnessed the deadly disease which claimed hundreds of lives over the last two years," the candidate shared.

Coming to her own election promises, Behera said that she aims at improving village roads, water supply and healthcare infra in her panchayat. Residents of Maulabhanja have appreciated her idea.

Interestingly a number of candidates across the state are being seen these days campaigning with their respective election symbols such as kettle, open book, plough, fish and the like.

Candidates in some places have been seeking votes by assuring people that they will not marry in future and remain bachelor to serve the people of their areas, while some others are seen meeting local voters door to door with a written promise to obtain votes.

# ALLEGED MISBEHAVIOUR TOWARDS MEDIAPERSONS Probe ordered against 2 IICs

POST NEWS NETWORK

up to sell the milk produced at the

goshala and people can buy pure

milk," said Gobind Agrawal, who

is associated with the cow shelter.

Nischintakoili, Feb 12: The SP (Rural) of Cuttack has been directed to conduct an impartial investigation into the alleged misbehaviour to some mediapersons by the IICs of Mahanga and Nischintakoili police stations in Cuttack district. The SP has also been told to take action in this connection after the investigation.

One of the two police officials has allegedly slapped a fake case against a mediaperson. Members of local journalists' associations had taken up the issue with the State Election Commission (SEC) and the Director General of Police.

In their complaint to the State Election Commission, the media persons alleged that the two police officials have been working at the behest of the some ruling party

leaders in their respective areas and there is question of impartial conduct of the upcoming panchayat elections in the two areas.

Acting on the complaint, a letter (5127, dated February 10, 2022) has been issued from the police headquarter to the Cuttack (Rural) SP to look into the matter.

A copy of the order has been sent to the State Election Commission. Various quarters have condemned such act of police.

It may be noted here that Mahanga IIC Niharranjan Mohanty had misbehaved with some reporters of electronic media while Nischintakoili IIC Chinmayi Sahu had filed a case against a reporter. However, the IIC had not registered a case in connection with a complaint filed by a mediapersonover alleged misbehavior of the police official.









To smile at an enemy is to disarm him

THE MOTHER

**Freedom on Paper** 

ret another issue of fundamental rights of individuals versus the rights

of the State has reached the Supreme Court. As is almost routine in

our time, it concerns minorities. At issue is whether Article 25 al-

lows the government some room to prohibit the wearing of a headscarf.

The Article reads: "Subject to public order, morality and health and to the

other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom

of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate reli-

gion." The straightforward reading of this is that individual rights must

be given primacy. The young women say that covering their head is a re-

ligious practice for them and the Constitution guarantees them this as a

But the State as it has always done, insists that it has the greater say in

what individuals can and cannot do. One hopes the judiciary sees otherwise

but the record has not been good and most often the justice system backs the

State. For this reason Indians have freedoms on paper that they cannot re-

ally exercise in reality. Even Fundamental Rights, which are supposed to enjoy

a high degree of freedom from encroachment by the State, are undermined

regularly. For instance, Indians have the right to freedom of expression but

the State has multiple laws which criminalise free speech. There is no real

freedom of peaceful assembly or freedom of

association and both have been criminalised also.

and practising any profession exists but when

butchers moved court against cow slaughter laws,

the Supreme Court admitted that it had to take

religious sentiments into consideration and

Again, Christians asked for and were given

the right to propagate their religion (the sub-

continent's Muslims do not proselytise but

Christians do). But this right was taken away

from them through laws and today propaga-

tion is a crime. The hijab issue has again brought

what India is doing to its minorities to the no-

tice of the world. The United States' Ambassador

at Large for International Religious Freedom

tweeted Friday that "Religious freedom in-

cludes the ability to choose one's religious at-

tire. The Indian state of Karnataka should

not determine permissibility of religious

clothing. Hijab bans in schools violate religious

freedom and stigmatize and marginalize

One hopes that this wise counsel is taken

but it is unlikely to be. The judiciary wants

to determine whether hijab is "essential re-

ligious practice" or not. It has previously

told Indian Muslims, as part of the Ayodhya

hearings, that mosques are not essential to

their religion. There is a political and social

angle also to the current matter, other than

the religious one. I do not claim to speak for

the young women but they are being bullied

Constitutionally, the freedom of occupation

Fundamental Right.

curtailed the rights.

women and girls.

### FOCUS POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

# **WOOING THE WORKING CLASS**

few victories by center-left parties in large countries hardly makes for an international trend. Nonetheless, wins by the US Democrats in 2020 and the German Social Democrats (SPD) in 2021 not to mention a strong socialist performance in Portugal's recent election - suggest that the muchdiscussed crisis of social democracy has not been fatal.

According to some center-left

strategists, political renewal re-

quires a turn away from anything

that smacks of identity politics. The

fact that German Chancellor Olaf

Scholz's successful campaign theme

was 'respect' supposedly proves

this. The implication appears to be

that the 'working class' deserves

priority over the recognition of

ever-more assertive self-identified

minorities. And from this premise

follows another argument that

pundits have been making for

years: the center left must win

back votes from the far right, not

only by refocusing on bread-and-

butter issues, but also by making

concessions to nationalist and

But this premise is wrong, both

empirically and morally, and parties

that pursue such a strategy not only

will fail to secure future majorities:

they also will betray the core com-

mitments that define the center left,

and that younger voters take espe-

cially seriously. To be sure, Scholz's

triumph last year seemed to vindi-

cate former SPD leader Sigmar

Gabriel, who warned in 2016 that "if

you lose the workers of the Rust

Belt, hipsters in California won't save

you." Scholz also took advice from

Harvard political philosopher

Michael Sandel, who has been urg-

ing the center left to abandon its

The idea is that political leaders

should stop telling the proverbial

"losers of globalisation" that their

failures are their own fault (or pa-

tronisingly suggesting that dis-

placed blue-collar workers just

need to move on and "learn to

code"). The mega-credentialed

should acknowledge that their suc-

cess is often the result of existing

privileges and sheer luck, and that

the less educated are owed more re-

fixation on meritocracy.

anti-immigration sentiment.



Jan-Werner Mueller

**PLENTY OF OBSERVERS ARE CONFIDENT THAT WORKERS** WHO FEEL **IGNORED WILL INEVITABLY BECOME A** 

**FAR-RIGHT** CONSTITUENCY

The best thing we can pray for is that the courts give a

quick judgment in favour of fundamental rights so that the government can worry about other things than what it will not let young women wear

as part of a systematic campaign against Muslims in India. They are being blocked from praying at sites allocated to them by the government to being blocked from cooking meat or sent to jail for selling bangles. The laws that have been passed against them on the issue of citizenship and in Kashmir are all also recent. It is likely that the young women are standing up for more than just their own rights. They are standing up for their faith and their community and that is why that one young woman stood up to that ugly mob in those famous visuals that should shame all Indians but will not

So the question then is, if this is the motivation they are coming from, if they are asked to give up their scarves and hijab, what happens next. Already the indication is clear. Friday, CNN had a headline which said: 'Hijab protests spread in India as girls refuse to be told what not to wear' The women will continue to come wearing a headscarf and the State will then have to decide whether or not it wants to use force on them and whether it is sensible to deny them education and entry into examination halls.

It is not difficult to predict this and we have seen what happens when large numbers of citizens stand up to laws that they think are unjust. The government has to back down as it did in the matter of both the citizenship laws (which were passed but have not been implemented) and the farm laws which were withdrawn. In both the instances, the courts were not sympathetic to the protesters but that did not matter.

By making concessions to the far right, center-left parties will only alienate the current and future demographic cohorts they need to win

spect than they have received.

This approach aligns neatly with the insights of another famous academic: French economist Thomas Piketty, who argues that political competition in Western party systems now primarily plays out between two different elites: the "Brahmin Left" (highly educated "knowledge workers") and the "Merchant Right" (business leaders and wealthy donors who support conservative parties and causes). In this account, the working class is nowhere to be found. Plenty of observers are confi dent that workers who feel ignored will inevitably become a far-right

constituency – sometimes dubbed "working class parties 2.0." The lesson for the center left, then, is that it should become both post-neoliberal and post-meritocratic, sometimes offering tactical concessions to workers with authoritarian and anti-immigrant attitudes.

Yet as the social scientists Tarik Abou-Chadi, Reto Mitteregger, and Cas Mudde show, the assumptions underpinning this seductively simple formula are mistaken. After all, there have always been authoritarian-leaning workers, and they have rarely if ever voted for center-left parties – not even during social democracy's post-World War II heyday. The working class has never been homogenous, and it has become even more diverse over time. The archetypal white male steel worker is no longer remotely representative of this broader cohort. The

majority of service workers are female, and a significant share of them are women of colour.

But even more striking, Abou-Chadi, Mitteregger, and Mudde point out that the majority of working-class voters in Western Europe - both in traditional production settings and in services – are not hostile to immigration. While the far right has been doing better among workers in recent years reaching beyond its traditional constituency of small-business owners and the self-employed - it still commands only around 15% of the total worker vote in Western European elections. According to Abou-Chadi, Mitteregger, and Mudde, the far right has done much better with the low-educated voters who previously supported mainstream conservative parties or did not vote at all.

True, center-left parties have been losing ground in many democracies in recent decades. But the main beneficiaries have been center-right and green parties, and it is the highly educated who are more likely to defect from traditional working-class parties. With populations across the West becoming more educated and - gradually - more open-minded, appealing to an apocryphal white man who resents woke neoliberals is not a winning strategy.

Moreover, it is a mistake to view politics as being either about recognition of people's dignity or material redistribution. This is a false choice, and it is fanciful to think

that politics in the past was purely about finding rational compromises among groups with competing economic interests. Oldschool socialists did not just lobby for higher pay; they also struggled for the affirmation of working people's dignity.

Critics of identity politics claim that it is leading to a new form of feudalism, with the polity being sliced into 'discrete subsets.' And yet, their standard examples of identity politics – Black Lives Matter, #MeToo - are not really about separating society into groups whose lived experience is completely obscure to members of other groups. After all, there is a strong emphasis on distribution: rights that many citizens take for granted – such as not being shot by police or raped by powerful people need to be secured for everyone. Young people are more sensitive to these challenges, and it is among younger cohorts, not older workers, that social democrats have been doing poorly in recent years.

According to Scholz's advisers, he succeeded by insisting that no one should be considered 'deplorable'-the now-infamous term that Hillary Clinton used to describe Donald Trump's supporters in 2016. True, equal respect is a basic element of democracy. But that doesn't mean far-right figures - the self-appointed representatives of the 'deplorables' - are correct in suggesting that highly educated professionals spend most of their time sneering at the left-behind. Reaching out to everyone is one thing; framing politics as a culture war between less-educated folks and supposedly disdainful elites is another thing entirely.

German Social Democrats did not 'win back' voters from the far right, because their voters had never moved en masse in that direction. By making concessions to the far right, center-left parties will only alienate the current and future demographic cohorts they need to win.

The writer, Professor of Politics at Princeton University, is a fellow at The New Institute, Hamburg. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

### SPECTRUM CLIMATE CHANGE

Righting the injustice of water crisis

in your home, workplace, or fronted a food crisis that left 1.3

magine that a crisis emerges in four decades, Madagascar con- growing fast. The United Nations African Ministers' Council on Environment Programme's latest million people facing severe hunger, Adaptation Gap Report estimates that adaptation in developing countries will cost some \$70 billion each year, with costs potentially rising to \$140-300 billion in 2030 and \$280-500 billion in 2050. The UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow last November offered Africa some reason for hope, as developed economies pledged at least to double their collective provision of adaptation finance to developing countries from 2019 levels by 2025. But even if they fulfill these commitments – no sure thing – more must be done to deliver water security to Africa. The African Development Bank (AfDB) estimates that \$64 billion will be needed annually to meet the continent's water-related needs. Yet, as it stands, only \$10-19 billion is being invested in water infrastructure in Africa each year. To close this gap, African Union (AU) leaders last year adopted the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme, focused on accelerating investment in climate-resilient regional, transboundary, and national water infrastructure, such as dams, irrigation systems, water-manfor mitigation. Africa's funding agement information systems, and needs are now much larger - and sanitation facilities. Moreover, the

Water has co-convened a H Level Panel on Water Investments, together with the UNDP, UNICEF, the AU Development Agency, the AfDB, the Global Center on Adaptation, and the Global Water Partnership (GWP). At its inaugural meeting last September, the panel adopted a roadmap for mobilising international financing for water investments and accelerating policies to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. But, as with all these initiatives, success depends significantly on funding. That is why African countries and their international partners have developed the Water Investment Scorecard, a data-driven approach that, by tracking progress, will help to sustain pressure on decision-makers. Africa did not cause the climate crisis, but African leaders are taking the initiative in developing strategies for coping with it, including its impact on the continent's water security and sanitation. The question is whether those who are most responsible for climate change will put their money where their mouth is before it is too late.



One suspects that something similar will happen here and it is hard to see any other outcome except one in which the State again folds and lets the young women exercise their freedom.

I hope this happens without friction and without a standoff. The best thing we can pray for is that the courts give a quick judgment in favour of fundamental rights so that the government can worry about other things than what it will not let young women wear.

The author is Chair of Amnesty International India.

#### WISDOM CORNER

- Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly. LANGSTON HUGHES
- The past, the present and the future are really one: they are today. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE
- We have to stop and be humble enough to understand that there is mething called mystery.

PAULO COELHO

#### WORDS**WORTH**

#### Salad days

Unlike so many words and phrases, we know for certain where this one comes from. It appears in Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra of 1606, in the speech at the end of Act One in which Cleopatra is regretting her youthful dalliances with Julius Caesar: "My salad days, When I was green in judgment". So the phrase came to mean "a period of youthful inexperience or indiscretion", though it only became popular from the middle of the nineteenth century on. The link here is green, which had already had a meaning for a couple of centuries at least before Shakespeare's day of someone youthful, just like the young green shoots of spring, and also of somebody who was as yet inexperienced or immature. Incidentally, for Shakespeare a salad wasn't just lettuce with some dressing, but a much more complicated dish of chopped, mixed and seasoned vegetables (its name comes from the Latin word for salt); the word was also used for any vegetable that could be included in that dish. However, Jan Freeman pointed out in one of her word columns for the Boston Globe back in April 2001 that the expression has shifted sense in the US in the past twenty years or so. It now often refers to a period in the past when somebody was at the peak of their abilities or earning power, in their heyday, not necessarily when they were young. The shift isn't so hard to understand when you think how few people actually know their Shakespeare.



**THE QUESTION IS** WHETHER THOSE WHO ARE MOST **RESPONSIBLE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE** WILL PUT THEIR **MONEY WHERE THEIR MOUTH IS BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE** 

community. You neither created it nor benefited from it. And yet, you are bearing the brunt of the consequences, while those who did create and benefit from it continue to make the problem worse. For Africa, such an egregious injustice has become all too real.

Though Africa contributes only 4% of global greenhouse-gas emissions annually, it is among the regions most vulnerable to climate change and climate variability. Already, climate disruptions and crises are severely undermining human wellbeing and economic development, and water-related disruptions pose some of the most serious risks.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 2021 report confirmed that global warming intensifies and accelerates the water cycle. Climate change will not only continue to fuel ruinous rainfall and flooding but will also cause more frequent and extreme drought in many areas. This means reduced access to drinking water in a region where one in every three people already faces water scarcity daily. It also means more hunger, malnutrition, and even famine.

The first climate change-induced famine has already occurred. Last year, following the worst drought

with tens of thousands enduring life-threatening conditions. But the plight of Madagascar's people received precious little attention in international media. Madagascar is not alone. In the Horn of Africa, a drought is destroying crops and livestock in Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia. But while those who have benefited the least from the activities that have fueled climate change could lose their homes, health, and livelihoods, those who bear the most responsibility for this outcome have not provided nearly enough funding to enable Africa to adapt. In 2009, rich countries pledged to mobilise \$100 billion per year by 2020 to help developing countries cope with climate change. But they fell well short, and the lion's share of the funding was allocated for mitigation, rather than urgently needed adaptation measures. Whereas African governments estimated that they needed \$7.4 billion per year by 2020, Africa received less than \$5.5 billion (roughly \$5 per person) per year between 2014 and 2018, and funding for adaptation amounted to just \$16.5 billion – barely half the total

The writer is Executive Secretary and Global Head of Climate Resilience for the Global Water Partnership. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

#### Corruption in India

Sir, India is ranked 85th in the Corruption Perceptions Index in public sector with a score of 40. The Transparency International (TI) ranked 180 countries from 0 to 100 (highly corrupt to very clean) in its latest study. TI's report is widely acknowledged because it collects data through inputs from experts and business persons. Bribery, public funds diversion, use of official position for private gain, governmental ability to control public sector corruption, public sector red-tapism that breeds corruption, laws governing disclosure of conflicts of interest by public servants, protection to whistle blowers through laws of the land are the major aspects covered by the TI while ranking countries for CPI. The only solace for India is that it fared 'better' this time -- it had ranked 86 in 2020. As per the TI, democratic status of India is on the downhill. There are meagre institutional checks and balances to control corruption. Journalists and social activists are intimidated and browbeaten when they raise their voice against corruption. TI's report is another warning to all stakeholders who are in a position to control corruption to get their acts together. Generally, however, countries of the world have come to a 'standstill' in the fight against graft. That is why the global average CPI has remained the same in the last 10 years. The TI has spoken about the 'deterioration of democracy' in India.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

#### Major setback

Sir, The onslaught of the coronavirus has had a drastic impact on the global as well as the Indian garment industry. Even though several sectors like industrial, medical, education have been subjected to a major setback during the pandemic, the garment industry has been massively affected in terms of productivity, functioning and employee relations. In the last two years, the industry has witnessed a huge downfall in the domestic market with plenty of cancellations in orders, and no fresh orders were coming through either. This has resulted in the workforce getting hugely affected,  $\rightarrow$ leaving millions of skilled and unskilled labourers with no option but to migrate to their natives. One really hopes that the Union government will support this industry to the maximum and revive it soon to get back to its halcyon days, as after all, 'cloth' is one of the three immediate and fundamental basic needs for – human life

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

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

Orissapost B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

etters

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TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST





# national



The state will not implement power reforms being pushed by the Centre K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO TELANGANA CM

### INDIA TO SHOWCASE TEJAS

India will showcase its indigenously developed Tejas light combat aircraft at the four-day Singapore Air Show next week

Man jumps under moving

Bhopal, Feb 12: In an act of tremen-

dous courage a 37-year-old man

jumped in front of a moving goods

train to save a woman who had

fallen on the railway track in

Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal, an of-

on February 5, a video of the oc-

currence went viral on social media

Friday, garnering praise from all

quarters. The incident took place

in Barkhedi around 8 pm on

February 5, when Mohammed

Mehboob, a carpenter, was walking

near the scene after offering namaz.

backpack was crossing the rail-

way track at the time, when a goods

train started approaching, said

Shoaib Hashmi, friend of Mehboob

The woman got scared and

tripped on the tracks and could

not get up and move away from

the train's path, he said. When on-

lookers started shouting in panic,

Mehboob acted on impulse and

jumped on the track and ran up to

the woman, dragged her to the

middle of the track bed and kept

her from lifting her head as the

train passed over them, Hashmi

People kept cautioning the duo

In a video of the incident,

told PTI on Saturday.

said.

A woman in her 20s carrying a

While the incident took place

train to rescue woman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ficial said on Saturday.





BJP is the only party which is faithful to its ideas and believes in collectiveness. Except BJP, all parties have become familyrun parties JP NADDA BJP PRESIDENT

Some leaders are not happy that a party worker like me has reached this post. They feel only specific people should occupy this post. That is the reason they are spreading such

PRAMOD SAWANT GOA CM

rumours

Before Independence, the word 'durbar' was connected to royalty, while in the present times, it is associated with democracy. The modern concept of 'durbar' promotes transparency, which is the most important aspect of good governance in a democratic system RAM NATH KOVIND PRESIDENT

### SHORT TAKES

### CRPF officer killed

Raipur: A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officer was killed and a constable was injured in an exchange of fire with Naxals in Chhattisgarh's Left Wing Extremism-affected Bijapur district Saturday, a senior official said. Naxals also looted the AK-47 rifle and bullet-proof jacket of the slain officer while five motorcycles of the security personnel were also missing, he added.

#### Retd Armyman held

New Delhi: Delhi Police have arrested a retired Armyman for allegedly raping a 19-yearold girl and extorting money from the victim's friend in the national capital. The accused, who has been identified as Rajesh Kumar (38), a retired Subedar (sports quota), was presently working as a wrestling coach on Haryana government in Gurugram. Furnishing details about the case, DCP (Dwarka) Shankar Chowdhary said that on February 4, a complaint was received regarding the sexual assault of a young lady at a park on January 28 by a man, allegedly posing as a policeman

### **HIJAB ROW**

# **Motivated comments** not welcome: India

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 12: India Saturday rejected criticism by some countries over the simmering dress code row in certain educational institutions in Karnataka and said that "motivated comments" on the country's internal issues are not welcomed.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said that those who know India well would have a proper appreciation of the realities."A matter regarding dress code in some educational institutions in the State of Karnataka is under judicial examination by the High Court of Karnataka," he said.

"Our constitutional framework and mechanisms, as well as our democratic ethos and polity, are the context in which issues are considered and resolved. Those

# PIL in SC seeks common dress code

New Delhi: Amid the ongoing hijab row, a plea has been moved in the Supreme Court seeking direction to the Centre and states to implement a "common dress code" in registered and state recognised educational institutions in order to secure social equality assure dignity and promote national integration. The plea filed by Nikhil Upadhyay, a resident of Ghaziabad, said that the role of universal education for strengthening the social fabric of democracy through provisions of equal opportunity to all has been accepted since the inception of our republic. "Thus, a common dress code is not only necessary to enhance the values of equality, social justice, democracy and to create a just and humane society but also essential to curtail the biggest menace of casteism communalism classism radicalism separatism and fundamentalism," said the plea filed through advocate Ashwani Kumar Dubey.

# NCB busts narco network operating on 'darknet'

Four cases have been lodged in the matter and 17 seizures were made during this country-wide operation, officials said

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: The NCB has e including software

for northern region Gyaneshwar Singh at a press conference here.

"The network was busted after a long operation that was initiated after a drug parcel was intercepted by us in Kolkata." "Our special investigation team that conducts cyber patrolling to check the usage of darknet has busted three big networks being run in the country using the darknet, anonymous cryptocurrency transactions and pseudonymous social media pro-



# Mamata forms new panel to stem rift



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Feb 12: In a significant development, Trinamool Congress Chairperson and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Saturday dissolved all the existing posts in the party and formed a 20member national working committee after holding a meeting with some senior party leaders at her Kalighat residence.

The name of the new officebearers will later be announced by Mamata Banerjee herself.

The significant announcement came at a time when there were rumours that the party's All-India General Secretary, Abhishek Banerjee, is likely to step down from all organisational responsibilities allegedly because of differences with some senior party leaders.

"Mamata Banerjee was reelected as the Chairperson of the party recently where she announced a small committee to look after party affairs. Today (Saturday), a meeting of that committee was held where she announced our new national working committee," said senior Trinamool leader Partha Chatterjee.

He added that Mamata Banerjee will later appoint the new officebearers and accordingly it would be sent to the Election Commission of India.

Among the leaders who found a place in the national working committee are Amit Mitra, Partha Chatterjee, Subrata Bakshi, Sudip Bandopadhyay, Abhishek Banerjee, Anubrata Mondal, Aroop Biswas, Firhad Hakim, Yashwant Sinha, Asima Patra, Chandrima Bhattacharjee, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay, Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, Moloy Ghatak, Jyotipriya Mallick, Goutam Deb, Buluchik Baraik and Rajesh Tripathi.

Interestingly, most of the members of the national working committee belong to Mamata camp, indicative enough that the Chief Minister is keen to establish her control over the party.

# NCB, Navy seize drugs worth ₹2K cr

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 12: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the Indian Navy, in a joint operation have busted a drug trafficking racket and have seized around 529 kg of very high quality of hashish, 234 kg of finest quality of crystal Methamphetamine and some quantity of Heroin, valued at ₹2.000 crore.

This is the first such operation on high seas. The present seizure has dealt a blow to drug syndicates



Muslim women hold placards and shout slogans, while wearing burga in a protest, in support of female Muslim students in Kolkata PTI PHOTO

#### who know India well would have a proper appreciation of these

realities. Motivated comments asked by the media about comon our internal issues are not ments by some countries on dress code in some educational institu-

#### welcome," he said. Bagchi's response came when

tions in Karnataka. US

#### Two arrested

New Delhi: Two persons have been arrested for allegedly snatching the bag of a woman in Anand Vihar that led her to fall off a moving e-rickshaw in the Anand Vihar area and iniure her head severely. police said Saturday. The police scanned CCTV footage and spotted the accused. Manish (41) and Mohit Gupta (34), both residents of Patparganj. It was noticed that the duo travelled in a motorbike and usually took the Delhi-Meerut Expressway to travel to different areas.

engineers, a financial analyst, an MBA graduate and one of their own personnel as it busted a pan-India drug trafficking network that uses the 'darknet' and cryptocurrency to courier narcotics at home.

The federal anti-narcotics agency unearthed three major drug markets -- DNM India, DRED, and The Orient Express - running on the hidden web world after a four-month operation in Delhi-NCR, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Assam, Punjab, Jharkhand, West Bengal

and Rajasthan. Four cases have been lodged in the matter and 17 seizures were made during this country-wide operation, officials said. The recreational drugs were being sourced from countries like the USA. UK. Netherlands and Poland using courier services and also the India Post network, said Narcotics Control Bureau deputy director-general

files," Singh said. Darknet denotes the hidden

Internet platforms that can only be accessed using specialised software and pre-configured communication protocols for anonymous communication. Drugs cartels and syndicates are known to use this to stay under the radar of law enforcement agencies.

Singh claimed that the use of courier parcels for drugs delivery has increased following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Twenty-two people, including four women, have been arrested and they are in judicial custody. One person has been granted interim bail to attend an exam, Singh said. The accused are in the age group

of 20-35 years. They include engineers, software experts, a doctor, financial consultants, businessmen, an MBA, a musician and some school dropouts.

Samajwadi Party supporters hold party flags during a public meeting of SP president Akhilesh Yadav, ahead of the second phase of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, at Loda Baheri village in Budaun PTI PHOTO

# Election campaign time limits eased

tion campaign can now be con-

ducted between 6 am and 10 pm

instead of earlier 8 am to 8 pm.

This will give candidates and par-

ties four more hours to campaign

Citing the rise in COVID-19 cases,

the poll panel had imposed a ban

on physical rallies, roadshows and

padayatras when it announced the

assembly poll schedule for Uttar

Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Punjab

in a day.

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: The Election Commission Saturday further relaxed COVID-19-induced restrictions on the assembly poll campaign in five states, allowing padayatras with a limited number of people and increasing the number of hours campaigning can take place in a day.

According to the poll panel, elec-

and Manipur on January 8.

The commission has been reviewing the pandemic situation periodically and allowing some relaxations. According to an EC statement, political parties and candidates can campaign outdoor with a maximum of 50 per cent of the capacity of the designated open spaces or the limit prescribed by state disaster management authorities, whichever is less.

based out of our neighbouring country and using maritime route for trafficking drugs in India and other countries

A senior NCB official said that the seized drugs are valued at Rs 2,000 crore in international market, however the official didn't reveal the names of those behind the racket.

"The input regarding trafficking of drugs on high seas was developed by the NCB and was shared with Naval Intelligence Unit, leading to a joint operation. This was carried out under the supervision of seniors and we recovered huge cache of drugs," said an NCB official.

The official said that special unit of the NCB Headquarters have been continuously working on var ious such intelligence inputs and it will be our endeavour to carry out more such operations in future in collaboration with the naval forces.

# It's not all love and roses as Goa braces for Valentine's Day polls

### TN eases curbs

Chennai: With the number of Covid-19 cases coming down, the Tamil Nadu government has eased the lockdown restrictions in the state, officials said, adding primary schools, play-schools, and nursery schools will open from Wednesday, on February 16. This was announced by the state government in a statement on Saturday. The primary schools, playschools, and nursery schools are set open in the state after two years. The government also allowed trade fairs while political, social, and cultural programmes will not be allowed to be conducted till March 2. The number of persons allowed for marriage functions is increased from 100 to 200 while for funerals 100 people are allowed to participate.

In the 2017 Assembly polls, the BJP ended up with just 13 seats, despite winning 32.48 per cent vote share, more than four per cent of the share cornered by the Congress which won 17 seats

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, Feb 12: Love and roses will not form the backdrop for this Valentine's Day in Goa, which is headed for a tough electoral contest, where the ruling BJP and the Congress, continue to be the focal point in state politics, even as newer, more aggressive parties appear to have been relegated to the margins. A total of 11,56,464 voters are eligible to cast ballot in the February 14 assembly polls, where the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party is looking to fight off severe anti-incumbency accumulated over its successive governments headed by former Chief Minister late Manohar Parrikar and his successor Pramod Sawant.

The BJP is, however, confident of victory, with its leaders claiming that the party's pitch of a "double-engine government" winning favour with the electorate, especially with nearly Rs. 25,000 crore in central funds pumped into the state since Prime Minister Narendra Modi assumed power in

the national capital in 2014. "Goa has been in a position to get unprecedented central government funding for the last eight years because of the double engine government with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Centre and



a BJP government in the state. Goa has witnessed development as never before in that period," according to state BJP president Sadanand Shet Tanavade.

In the 2017 assembly polls, the BJP ended up with just 13 seats, despite winning 32.48 per cent vote share. more than four per cent of the share cornered by the Congress which won 17 seats

This time round though, controversy-ridden tenures led by Sawant and Parrikar -- the latter ruled from a hospital bed before he died in March 2019, may impact the party's fortunes The absence of Parrikar, who

shepherded and strategised the party's rise to power, high profile internal rebellions led by Parrikar's own son Utpal and ex Chief Minister Laxmikant Parsekar as well as the party's inability to seal a pre-poll alliance with the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party - BJP and the MGP share the traditional Hindu conservative vote base -- may also cost the ruling party dear.

The Congress on the other hand, which had lost both face and MLAs -- 15 of the party's legislators quit since 2017 out of which 13 joined the BJP - has fielded 80 per cent new faces in the elections.

The party has departed from its almost ritualistic tradition of allotting tickets to established heavy weights and habitual defectors. In order to regain popular traction, the opposition party also put up a 'grand' show of its candidates pledging before gods and on affidavits over not switching parties in their term as MLAs, if they are elected.

"In this election, the old Congress is actually the BJP, TMC and the AAP. They have taken away all the old Congress leaders who have destroyed the party. The new Congress going to the elections has 80 percent new faces. We are confident of winning a majority this time," state Congress president Girish Chodankar said.

Both parties initially appeared to be in shock at the initial volleys served by the AAP and the TMC, who had aggressively heckled the primary players, with promises of freebies, jobs. The impact of the freebies promised by the two new players have also rubbed off on the two major players.

The Congress has now promised Rs 6,000 to each economically backward family, while the-BJP has promised three free LPG gas cylinders.



# SSM on sticky wicket in hotbed of farmers' stir

The opposition to the Morcha's move to contest the Punjab Assembly polls has come from some of the most influential farmer unions, especially the Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta-Ugrahan)

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sangrur, Feb 12: The Sanyukt Samaj Morcha--the political front of 22 farmer unions which had taken part in the stir against the Centre's farm laws--is finding it hard to woo voters here, with many questioning their foray into politics. The opposition to the Morcha's

move to contest the Punjab assembly polls has come from some of the most influential farmer unions, especially the Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta-Ugrahan).

The union is the state's largest farmer outfit holding considerable influence in Sangrur, which was a hotbed of the struggle against the central laws. The union's head, Joginder Singh Ugrahan, says they

can't compromise on principles. "We had come together to fight

against the central laws on the basis of a common minimum programme, which bars unions from undertaking any such adventure," says Ugrahan, whose union has presence in around 1,600 village. He says as soon as 22 farmer unions decided to contest the polls, they stopped to be the part of the

Sanvukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella body of farmer unions that led the stir against the laws. Krantikari Kisan Union chief Dr Darshan Pal echoes similar

views. He rejects the farmer bodies political plunge, saying history tells that any party formed out of a movement like the farmers' agitation can't survive. Pal claims that a majority of the outfits that joined the SSM have already left it.

Randeep Kaur, vice-president of the Sunam block for the Ugrahan faction of the BKU, says they stand with their leadership against the Morcha. "They should have acted as a pressure group instead of forming an outfit to contest the polls," says Rupinder, who actively participated in the year-long stir against the central laws at Delhi borders.



Not only farmer leaders, people too seem upset.

They should have waited at least till the Lok Sabha polls, says Bhagwan Das, an arhtiya and a resident of Sangrur's Dirba Assembly segment. Das says the outfits should have first got farmers' issues resolved. Contesting elections or even getting a few seats won't help farmers much, he opines.

"Everything is being controlled by the Centre. They should have acted as a pressure group, holding agitations if required to get farmers' issues resolved. They will lose deposits," he says

Gurshagandeep Singh, a 32-yearold farmer and a resident of Sangrur's Ratol Kalan village, is also disappointed. He says the issue of getting the minimum support price (MSP) for crops still lingers.

"This can't be done unless farmer unions act as a pressure group and the political plunge by some of them weakens the movement," he says pointing to rising production cost and hidden unemployment in the farming sector.

Rupinder Singh, 33, says they don't have any hope from farmers' political front or any other party.

A resident of Sangrur's Kamalpur village, he says farmers did not fear the laws as much as they feared the "system" prevailing in the country.

'We did not want cartelisation, where a few people dominate the procurement process," he says, adding that the farmers' front doesn't seems offering any solution to it.

But does he has any hope from any party? Rupinder responds in negative. Even the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which is projecting itself as an alternative in Punjab, fails to excite him.

People are fed up with the governments, which sit idle for larger part of their term and try to do some work only in the last few months of their tenure, he says.

"People want change not because they have faith in AAP or any other party, they don't want that political parties carry the impression that everything can be managed by performing in the last months," Rupinder adds.

# U'khand CM promises UCC; Cong says don't embarrass your party

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, Feb 12: The BJP if re-elected to power in Uttarakhand will constitute a committee to prepare a draft Uniform Civil Code soon after its new government is sworn in, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami promised Saturday.

The panel will comprise legal experts, retired people, intellectuals and other stakeholders, the chief minister announced on the last day of campaigning for the 70 assembly seats in the state going to polls February 14.

The ambit of the committee will cover issues related to marriage, divorce, landed property and succession, he said in a video statement.

"It will be a significant step towards fulfilling the dreams of India's Constitution makers and will realise the spirit of the Constitution. It will also be an effective step towards Article 44 of the Indian Constitution which presents the concept of equitable law for all citizens of society regardless of their religion," Dhami said in Hindi.

From time to time, the Supreme Court, too, has underscored the need for a Uniform Civil Code and also expressed concern over no steps being taken in this direction, he said. He said the BJP government in Uttarakhand will derive inspiration for the decision from Goa which has set an example before the country by implementing a common civil code. A common civil code will pro-



mote social amity and gender equality besides strengthening women empowerment, Dhami added.

Senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal Saturday attacked Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami over his remarks that the BJP will constitute a committee to prepare a draft Uniform Civil Code if re-elected, saying this shows the BJP is losing the polls in the hill state and he needs some legal advice.

Sibal asked Dhami not to 'embarrass' his party and himself by making such announcements.

Reacting to the remarks, Sibal tweeted, "Pushkar S Dhami, Please don't embarrass your party and yourself when you make announcements about implementing the Uniform Civil Code in Uttarakhand if BJP comes to power."

"This shows your party is losing in Uttarakhand and that You need some legal advice," the former Union minister said.

Channi banks on -

development work

The Punjab CM, who has BA, LLB, MBA, MA degrees

and is now doing a PhD, has cultivated the image of a

commoner and has remained accessible to people

# reservation to Punjab youths in govt jobs INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE Dehradun, Feb 12: Uttarakhand



#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Feb 12: The BJPled NDA released its manifesto for the February 20 Punjab polls Saturday, promising a slew of sops for various sections, including 75 per cent reservation in all government jobs for youngsters from the state, an unemployment allowance, 35 per cent reservation for women in government jobs and massive infrastructure development

The highlight of the manifesto is the promise of 75 per cent reservation in government jobs and 50 per cent reservation in private jobs for the youngsters of Punjab. The BJP-JJP government in neighbouring Haryana had earlier passed a law giving 75 per cent reservation in private sector jobs to youngsters domiciled in the state. The BJP manifesto for the Punjab polls says a dope test will be mandatory before filing nominations for elections

# **BJP promises 75%** Uttarakhand Kranti Dal hoping for revival of political fortunes

Kranti Dal (UKD), the party which had initiated and led the struggle for the formation of a separate hill state from Uttar Pradesh, is hoping to revive its political fortunes in this vear's assembly elections.

The UKD believes that the entry of Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and anti-incumbency against the state government will help the party. In the last assembly polls in 2017, the UKD failed to win even one seat.

UKD national spokesperson Vijay Kumar Bauri told IANS that the party is strongly placed in over a dozen seats and will make re-entry into the Uttarakhand assembly.

"In this election, the UKD is strongly placed in around 12-15 assembly seats. Some of our candidates are all set to win as there is strong anti-incumbency and people's anger against Congress will also benefit," Bauri said.

In this year's Uttarakhand assembly polls, the UKD has fielded

# instrumental in carving out

from Delhi. "AAP is from outside.. only regional party in Uttarakhand. PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chamkaur Sahib, Feb 12: Seeking re-election from Chamkaur Sahib seat for the fourth time, Charanjit Singh Channi is banking on the development work he undertook in his constituency as an MLA and during his 111-day tenure as Punjab chief minister.

commoner and has remained accessible to people.

While campaigning in Ludhiana, Channi stopped at a dhaba to have dinner and mingled with some truck drivers. Earlier, at a public gathering in Ludhiana, he got down from the stage to freely mingle with the audience.

While campaigning in Bhadaur, the chief minister took time off

with the elderly.

mining in Punjab.

to play cricket with locals and cards

geted Channi's 'common man'

image over the recent arrest of his

nephew by the Enforcement

Directorate in a money laundering

case linked to alleged illegal sand

Besides talking about the work

done by his government, the chief

minister has also been attacking the

rival parties, particularly the Aam

Aadmi Party (AAP), saying that

people will not be misled by their

However, opponents have tar-

उत्तराखण्ड क्रोति दल

ready to accept AAP as the party of Uttarakhand and call it the party

trying to fill the space for regional parties in the state but we are the People are saying what they (AAP) know about Uttarakhand. With Channi recently made the entry of AAP, people have started looking at UKD as an alternative to Congress and BJP instead of new entrants," Bauri said. When asked about UKD's failure to emerge as a force to reckon with in the state despite only being a regional party and who fought for creation of separate state, Bauri mentioned that some political decision which went against the party, lack of proper resource to contest the polls and BJP getting stronger as reasons for it.

क्रांति भवन

POOR SHOW

### he UKD was formed in July 1979 at Mussoorie and was

Uttarakhand from Uttar Pradesh in 2000

An unemployment allowance of ₹4,000 per month will be given to all

The BJP is contesting the Punjab polls in an alliance with former chief minister Amarinder Singh's Punjab Lok Congress and the Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa-led Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt).

graduates for two years after the

completion of their degrees, it

cent reservation for women in all

government jobs, including con-

tractual ones

festo savs.

The manifesto promises 35 per

It also says fast-track courts will

A special law will be enacted to

be established to deal with any

kind of violence, harassment and

deal with the cases of brides aban-

doned by NRI grooms, the mani-

oppression against women.

The "Sankalp" document of the saffron party was released in Jalandhar in the presence of Union ministers Hardeep Singh Puri and Som Parkash, BJP leaders Dushyant Gautam and Tarun Chugh and Amarinder Singh's son Raninder Singh, among others.

candidates in 49 assembly constituencies and extended support to candidates in two assembly seats. The UKD believes that regional sentiments like other states of the country are increasing among people in Uttarakhand.

'There is a strong regional sentiment in Uttarakhand like Jharkhand, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana or Maharashtra. People are angry against both the parties - BJP and Congress, and are

ut the party was never Dclose to winning a majority in the 22-year-old history of Uttarakhand

t has helped both BJP and Congress to form the government in the state from time to time

looking at UKD as a regional alternative which will also benefit us in polls," he said. He claims that people are not passioned speech telling the people of his long-time constituency that it would not be a victory if he wins by less than 50,000 votes.

With the poll campaigning in Punjab entering its last phase, Channi, whom the Congress recently declared as its chief ministerial candidate, has been crisscrossing the state holding poll meetings in Malwa, Majha and Doaba regions.

During his visits, he talks about the pro-people initiatives his government took during its short tenure of 111 days

The Congress has also fielded Channi, who replaced Amarinder Singh last year and is the first chief minister of Punjab from the Scheduled Caste community, from Bhadaur (SC) in Barnala district. A few days ago, Channi asked

people here to ensure his victory for the fourth consecutive time as he listed several development projects carried out in his home constituency.

"If we win (from Chamkaur Sahib) by less than 50,000 votes, then it will not be a victory," Channi had said.

"I am your son and your brother. I have been with you for 15 years and never went away for even a day. I am nothing without you,' he said.

Channi, who has BA, LLB, MBA, MA degrees and is now doing a PhD, has cultivated the image of a

'false claims' On the development work carried out here, residents said a theme park was completed in November last year, construction of a skill institute has begun and foundation stones of two bridges were laid by Channi.

In the main market outside Katalgarh Sahib gurdwara here, shopkeepers are happy with the development work.

Harjit, who owns a gifts and toys shop, says the area has seen development under Channi. On the possibility that Channi will have to give up one of the two seats he is contesting from if he wins from both, Harjit said, "Chamkaur Sahib is CM sahab's life, he cannot give up this seat.

Amrit Pal, who runs a utensil shop, said Channi's first tenure was only for 111 days. When he gets a full tenure of five years, entire Punjab will see development.



# Countless trees thrive in protected green memorials

### **THESE BRICK STRUCTURES, BIG OR SMALL. ARE ALWAYS ACCOMPANIED BY AT LEAST ONE TREE - A REFLECTION OF HOW** SOME TRADITIONS **ARE ROOTED IN** THE ENVIRONMENT

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bathinda, Feb 12: You see them peppered across villages in Punjab, often standing conspicuous amongst the farmlands, an oasis of stone and wood and green trees. Some madhis are small, sitting in secret nooks, known only to the people who worship them. They have all been created to honour the memories of ancestors, installed in the fields to remember those family members who died without a progeny.

These brick structures, big or small, are always accompanied by at least one tree - a reflection of how some traditions are rooted in the environment, claimed Teja Singh Taggad, a retired government school teacher from Burj village in Bathinda.

"The madhis are always protected by the shadow of a tree," he



said, adding: "At some places, you will find three or more trees over one madhi." These madhis are peppered across the Malwa region that includes Bathinda, Mansa, Barnala, Faridkot, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Moga, Muktsar, Patiala, Sangrur and Fazilka. They are mostly accompanied by the Indian Jujube tree, also known as Ber in Hindi. But, there are many places where Shisham, Peepal, banyan and neem

trees have also matured, providing a safe haven to birds and critters. "The tradition of making a madhi

in the memory of ancestors is centuries old," Amritpal Singh Taggad, the principal of Bhakt Namdev High School in Maur Mandi said. In Burj, where he lives, each of the 300 households in the village has a madhi. "But, many consider the building of madhis to be a superstition. They fail to realise that these madhis have benefitted the environment by raising thousands of trees." he said.

#### **PROTECTED BY FAITH**

Cutting a tree that shrouds a madhi is considered sacrilege. Nikka Singh Purba, a resident of Chak Janisar village in Ferozepur district, said: "We have never seen or heard of a tree on a madhi being hacked.

Satinder Singh Brar, a farmer from Bajidpur Bhoma village of Fazilka district, said that people respect the trees that grow around a

The tradition of making a madhi in the memory of ancestors is centuries old AMRITPAL SINGH TAGGAD

madhi. "People may cut trees around it, but the trees on the madhis face no such danger. No one can even think of cutting down the trees here due to fear of bad luck." he said.

Such is the reverence for a tree on the madhi that even when it dies or is uprooted following a cantankerous storm, the wood is not taken away for personal use.

"It is given to a needy person or donated to a gurdwara," said Amritpal Kular, a farmer from Sangaria town that borders Rajasthan. "Then, either a new tree is planted over the madhi or the madhi itself is relocated under another tree.

The fruits from the trees on the madhis are never plucked. "Whenever they fall on the ground, they are taken for prasad," he added.

On the 14th of every month, one member of the household pays the customary obeisance to their madhi. They mix milk with water and sprinkle it around the memorial. a ritual called 'Lassi Dalna' Some memorials are so old that

to remain an important part of their lives, revered during special occasions and festivals. Be it weddings, Teej or the birth of a child, people seek blessing at the madhis. On Holi and Deepawali, the madhis take on a festive look. Lamps are lit all around them and they are painted and decorated in the spirit of the festival.

families do not know who they be-

long to. Yet, the madhis continue

#### **CROSSING BOUNDARIES**

Decades ago, when water from Punjab's canals made inroads into Rajasthan, thousands of Sikh families came to Hanumangarh and Sri Ganganagar districts in the state in search of agricultural prospects. They eventually bought land around the canal and settled down. With them, they also brought the tradition of madhis

A few madhis are also seen in Haryana. Some people, who live abroad, take the soil from the madhi with them.

Former deputy sarpanch of Malarampura village in Hanumangarh district Manjit Singh said that his family arrived here from Dabdi Khana in Punjab. Singh, who does traditional farming, said he did not forget his tradition and made madhis in his land. "A madhi is a center of rev erence for us," he said.



We are not criticising him, but we saw an irony. The irony of the matter is that right next to the site of the PM's helipad, a bus stop was to be built, and it hasn't come up in 20 years ARVIND KEJRIWAL DELHI CM

### **RICH TRIBUTES**

The Indian Army Saturday paid rich tributes to the seven soldiers who died earlier this week after being trapped in an avalanche in **Arunachal Pradesh** 



# **Govt spent ₹250 cr on vaccine research**

The ministry is ready with a result-oriented action plan for the welfare and upliftment of the members of

scheduled tribes with a substantial increase in its budgetary allocations for 2022-23

uote

ARJUN MUNDA TRIBAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

The Uniform Civil Code is the need of the hour and it should be discussed both in Parliament and in the society GIRIRAJ SINGH BJP LEADER

The BJP will receive positive mandate in the five state assembly polls for its development works and welfare measures for the poor

NITIN GADKARI UNION MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### Two engineers die

Bhopal: Two railway employees died and three were injured after a section of an under-construction under bridge collapsed in Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh. At the time of the incident, several workers and some senior railway employees were carrying out construction works. Sources said railway department was carrying out construction work on an under-bridge of the railway track in Sumari village. Workers and railway engineers were carrying out digging. Around 9:30 p.m. on Friday, a train passed through the track (over underconstruction under bridge) due to which, a huge portion of soil collapsed and labourers and railway' employees got buried under the debris.

# Woman injured

New Delhi: Delhi Police has arrested two people involved in a snatching incident in Shahdara district which had left a woman grievously injured. The accused were identified as Manish, alias

# INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gandhinagar Feb 12: Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said Saturday that the Central government has spent ₹250 crore on research for developing vaccines to counter the Covid-19 virus.

Mandaviya was addressing a programme titled 'Shri Kamalam' to explain the benefits of the Union Budget 2022-23 at the Gujarat BJP headquarters here. "The Centre spent and shared ₹250 crore with private research institutes working on developing Covid vaccines. We started taking action long back as we knew that vaccination was the key to fight the global pandemic. In order to develop vaccines, research was needed. In April 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called upon the scientists of both government and private institutes and encouraged them to develop vaccines. Irrespective of whether they succeeded, the Centre supported them with funding.

'As a result, our scientists developed indigenous Corona vaccine, parallel to the other devel-



oped countries, and the nationwide vaccination drive was rolled out on January 16, 2021. We also started manufacturing rapidly and before the third wave struck, we vaccinated a large section of the population. We have achieved 96 per cent vaccination for the first dose. and 77.5 per cent for the second dose. Experts say that in India, 99.31 per cent of vaccinated people (first and second dose) were kept safe from Covid-19 due to vaccination," Mandaviva said.

Stating that India is a vast country with so many cultural, social and financial diversities, the Health Minister said, "So we have made the Budget an all inclusive and comprehensive one with a long-term vision, considering a period of 25 years. This is the vision of the Prime Minister, and that is why we are saying that the Budget is for the 'Amrit Kaal'

"We also identified 53 raw ma-

VENTING ANGER

terials essential for manufacturing, for which we were dependent on other countries. We have come out with the Product Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, where 20 per cent of what the manufacturers are losing out due to buying Indian raw materials is being provided by the government. The government spent ₹4 lakh crore on the PLI scheme in the last one-anda-half years. We are planning more such PLI schemes.

The minister said that the government is also planning to come up with a 'Land Bank', where land required for any purpose will be available on a dashboard in order to ease land availability. "We are also planning a data and analytics centre for data storage and analysis. Data is the need of the hour. The government will provide infrastructure to those who are into data analysis and data storage," added Mandaviya.

The minister also spoke about developing a national industrial corridor, which will be formed to chalk out a 25-year plan for developing industries, based on scientific assessment.

# **UNPRECEDENTED MOVE**

# Dhankhar prorogues West Bengal Assembly According to constitutional experts, there is no instance

in recent history that a Governor proroguing a session of the Assembly without the consent of the Speaker of Assembly or the Chief Minister of the state

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Feb 12: In an unprecedented move, West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar prorogued the state Legislative Assembly from February 12, implying that the state government will have to take permission from the governor for the next session and it should begin with his speech.

"In exercise of the powers conferred upon me by sub-clause (a) of clause (2) of article 174 of the Constitution, I, Jagdeep Dhankhar, Governor of the State of West Bengal, hereby prorogue the West Bengal Legislative Assembly with effect from 12 February, 2022, the Governor in his order wrote.

Prorogation is discontinuing a session of Parliament or a legislative Assembly without dissolving it.

The prorogation order before the important budget session which is likely to commence from the end of February or early March is significant because the ruling party was mulling to bring motion against Governor Dhankhar during the upcoming session, accusing him of interfering in the dayto-today activities of the state government.

According to constitutional experts, there is no instance in recent history that a Governor proroguing a session of the Assembly without the consent of the Speaker of Assembly or the Chief Minister of the state

The move came after on Friday, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sukhendu Sekhar Ray had submitted a Substantive Motion under Rule 170 in the Rajya Sabha, urging President Ram Nath Kovind to remove Jagdeep Dhankhar as West Bengal Governor.

"This is an unprecedented move. The Governor has overstepped his constitutional duties because there should be a gap of six months be-

tween two sessions of the state Assembly. No Governor of the country has ever done this before. Earlier, he was not giving his consent to several bills and now, he has prorogued the Assembly. This is completely unjust. The state government should move the court against this," Trinamool Congress MP said.

According to political experts, the order of prorogation is a result of the prolonged conflict between Dhankhar and the state government where the governor has repeatedly alleged that his letters are not replied, his queries are not answered and his constitutional authority is continuously undermined by the Speaker and the state government.

The governor had also alleged that the bureaucracy, including the chief secretary and the DGP, had failed to present themselves despite several reminders.

The rift between the governor and the chief minister reached a flashpoint after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee recently blocked the Governor on Twitter for purportedly tagging her in all of his posts, criticising her administration. The Governor has been targeting the state government over a host of issues and seeking information and reports regarding appointments to various posts.

**BSF** arrests six Pak fishermen



is believed to be the biggest operation of its kind, Andhra Pradesh police on Saturday destroyed more than two lakh kilograms of ganja (cannabis) valued at ₹500 crore.

The dried ganja was set afire at an event organised on a massive scale by the police Visakhapatnam district. Director General of Police D. Gautam Sawang lit one of the heaps of seized ganja to formally launch the event that was organised in an open area at Koduru village in Anakapalli mandal. Andhra Pradesh Police and Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB) Visakhapatnam district conducted the event.

The authorities pitched fancy tents and deployed drone cameras, speakers, sound systems for the well-organised programme. Personnel from the Disaster Response Force and fire services department were deployed besides a large number of policemen.

Print and electronic media were also invited to cover the event. This

Police detain Indian Youth Congress members who were staging a protest against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sharma, outside Assam Bhawan in New Delhi

Set up 1 all-women PS in each district: Par panel

Rishi, and Mohit Gupta, alias Kikky, both residents of Patparganj in Delhi. Of the two accused, Manish was found as a habitual and full time robber with 106 previous involvements of snatching. The incident took place around 1 p.m. on February 7, when the complainant alongwith her sister-in-law was going on an e-rickshaw to attend a marriage function.

#### Telangana cop killed

Hyderabad: A policeman was killed when a gun went off accidentally in Telangana's Bhadradri Kothagudem district Saturday, police said. The incident occurred when Santosh was engaged in a post-protection weapon drill at a police station in the early hours of the day. A police officer said that he died on the spot due to the gunshot injury in the head. The incident took place in Kachanapalle police station in Yellandu mandal. Santosh was examining weapons after the night duty when the misfire happened.

#### Two thrashed

New Delhi: Two people were brutally thrashed by four men in Delhi over an old property dispute, an official here said Saturday. The four accused have been identified as Jagat (62), Harender (41), Sumit (29) and Amit (24). The police have however only arrested Jagat so far. Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) (Northeast) Sanjay Sain said that to make everyone fear him in the area, Jagat put up fake boards of advocate and BJP on display. "The matter will be taken up with the BJP officials and bar council," he said. Sharing details of the incident, the DCP said that the incident took place on Friday evening in northeast Delhi's New Usmanpur.

is said to be the largest quantity of drugs destroyed anywhere in the country in one go.

The ganja was seized during the last two years at various places in north Andhra districts of Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam and also East Godavari. According to police, the ganja was

seized under operation Parivartan. The police registered 1,363 cases and arrested 1,500 accused including 562 from other states. As part of the operation, the po-

lice also destroyed cannabis plants spread over 8,500 acres in the region during the last 15 months.

The Andhra-Odisha border area is notorious for large-scale ganja cultivation. In recent months, police in Telangana, Maharashtra, Karnataka and other states seized huge quantities of ganja while being transported from the region to different places in the country.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: A parliamentary panel has observed that the number of women in police forces is "abysmally" low, constituting just 10.3 per cent, and suggested at least one all-women police station be established in each district in the country.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Home Affairs, headed by Congress leader Anand Sharma, also said that a roadmap should be laid out to increase their representation in the police force to 33 per cent.

"The committee is anguished to note that women are abysmally under-represented in the police force as they constitute only 10.3 percent of the police force," it said in its report submitted to Parliament this week.

The panel recommended that the MHA should advise states and



UTs to establish at least one allwomen police station in each district. Further, the committee said, the appointment of women in police may be done by creating additional posts rather than converting vacant posts of male constables as it will also help in improving the police-population ratio

in the country.

"Besides increasing the percentage of women in police, taking a cue from the defence forces where women are being assigned combative roles, the MHA may also advise the states and UTs to give them important challenging duties central to the police, and not just du-

The Parliamentary **Standing Committee on Ministry of Home Affairs** said that a roadmap should be laid out to increase their representation in the police force to 33%

ties of inconsequence," it said.

The committee noted that the MHA has advised the states and UTs that each police station should have at least three women sub-inspectors and 10 women constables so that a women's help desk is manned round the clock.

The panel recommended that the BPR&D may be tasked to assess the performance of the women's help desks.

## INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 12: Two days after the Border Security Force (BSF) seized 11 fishing boats in the Creek area, it arrested six Pakistani nationals Friday in the Harami Nalla area in Gujarat's Bhuj

The BSF said that force's Creek Crocodile Commando teams were involved in a search operation in the area to look for the intruders. The Force officials said that the inclement weather, extreme marshy area, mangroves and tidal waters are making task of the troops challenging.

Officials said that after the arrest of the fishermen, search operation has been continued as they apprehend that more intruders likely to be there

# How virtual campaign generates jobs for youth

With the focus on virtual campaigning, majority of the candidates are hiring young people who can push their campaign on social media

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Feb 12: The elections in Uttar Pradesh have created job opportunities, albeit temporary, for youth who are tech-savvy.

With the focus on virtual campaigning, majority of the candidates are hiring young people who can push their campaign on the social media. Most of the cybersmart campaigners are either in college or just out of college. Samarth Gupta, an undergraduate, has been hired on a two-month contract by a candidate in Lucknow.

"The candidate wanted to hire me for one month because polling in Lucknow will be over on February 23 but I insisted on a two-month contract and he agreed. All I have to do is to post photographs of his campaign, create some slogans and retweet the posts of top leaders," he said.

Samarth is being paid a sum of ₹40.000 per month.

Shalini Awasthi, who has done her Master's in public administration, is working for a woman candidate from the BJP and is being paid ₹50,000 for one month. 'Working for a BJP candidate is much easier because the party's IT cell provides a lot of content and I only need to retweet it or forward and share it. I also make sure that my client gets photographed well during her cam-

paign-I sometimes accompany her-

and she is projected in a favourable light. So far, we have avoided commenting on contentious issues because we are also targeting the floating voters," she explained and added that special videos are also being made for Instagram accounts of her client.

There is a greater demand for youth who are well versed in English too because that takes care of a bilingual campaign.

Shashwat Banerjee, an MBA student, has landed an assignment for social media management simply because he is a Bengali and knows the language.

'There are a large number of Bengalis in the constituency of my client and he wants all his so-

cial media posts to be posted in Bengali too. Therefore, I post the contest in English, Hindi and Bengali which endears him to Bengali voters," he said.

His numeration is also higher, ₹65,000 for a month. Candidates contesting from rural Assembly constituencies are mostly focussing on SMS.

"Since a large population in the rural interiors does not have smart phones, we are not wasting time and money on Facebook and Instagram. Instead, we are sending out catchy SMS message and are also encouraging people to reply so that we can get feedback,' said Sonu Kureel, an intermediate student who is working for a local BSP candidate in Sultanpur. Interestingly, most of the youth

working in this virtual campaign for candidates, do not necessarily subscribe to the same ideology.

The arrest of these Pakistani

fishermen came after the search operation was in progress in the areas following the seizure of 11 Pakistani fishermen boats near around the Harami Nala.

On February 9, during late afternoon, intrusion of Pakistani fishing boats and fishermen was reported. DIG BSF Bhuj immediately launched a massive search operation in the area spread over almost 300 sq km while the BSF IG Gujarat Frontier GS Malik reached Kutch from Gandhinagar and was personally monitoring the mas-

sive search operation. BSF's three groups of commandos were air dropped by Air Force helicopter from three different directions; commandos have been closing in where the Pakistanis intruders might hide.

The officials also said that after the arrest of six Pakistani fishermen, search operation has beencontinued as they apprehend that more intruders likely to be there.









REUTERS

Ukraine.

invades.

Washington, Feb 12: US President

Joe Biden and his Russian coun-

terpart Vladimir Putin will speak

Saturday as Western nations

warned a war in Ukraine could

call between the leaders to take

place Monday, a White House of-

ficial said, but Biden wanted to

conduct it sooner as Washington

detailed increasingly vivid ac-

counts of a possible attack on

Moscow has repeatedly disputed

Washington's version of events, say-

ing it has massed more than 100.000

troops near the Ukrainian border to

maintain its own security against aggression by NATO allies.

Blinken expressed hope that Putin

would choose diplomacy but said

Washington would impose swift

economic sanctions if Moscow

not choose the path of renewed

aggression and he'll chose the path

of diplomacy and dialogue,'

Blinken told reporters after a meet-

ing with Pacific leaders in Fiji.

"But if he doesn't, we're prepared."

Putin, jostling for influence in

"I continue to hope that he will

US Secretary of State Antony

Putin requested the telephone

ignite at any moment.

international



**Our expectation is that** the acute phase of this pandemic will end this year, of course with one condition, the 70 percent vaccination target is achieved by mid this year around June, July TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS DIRECTOR-GENERAL, WHO

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BORIS**

UK PM Boris Johnson has received a guestionnaire from London's Metropolitan Police as part of the investigation into parties in Downing Street during Covid lockdowns. If he is found to have broken his government's own Covid rules, the embattled PM could be fined and will face even more pressure to stand down from his position



uote

The United States will reestablish an embassy in the Solomon Islands in an effort to counter China's influence in

the politically troubled Pacific island ANTONY BLINKEN SECRETARY OF STATE, US

China believes that the socalled Quad group cobbled together by the US, Japan, India and Australia is essentially a tool for containing and besieging China to maintain US hegemony

ZHAO LIJIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN, CHINA

I'm also proud to announce todav a series of new initiatives to boost the education and cultural ties between Australia and India. The initiatives are appropriately called the Maitri

meaning friendship initiatives MARISE PAYNE FOREIGN MINISTER AUSTRALIA

### SHORT TAKES

#### Iran doubts N-talks

Tehran: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has said Iran never pins its hopes on the Vienna talks aimed at reviving the 2015 nuclear agreement, noting its reliance on its people and domestic potentials. "Counting on foreigners to do something for us has caused problems. With the efforts of our people and the service of government, great steps will be taken toward economic independence,""Raisi said Friday in a televised speech commemorating the 43rd anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution in the capital Tehran.

### **Balochs abducted**

New Delhi: Pakistani security forces have abducted dozens of individuals from Panjgur in Balochistan in the past few days after the massive attacks oc Tho for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP) held a press conference in the Quetta Press Club Friday where VBMP General Secretary Sammi Deen Baloch addressed journalists and the public on the recent alarming developments in Balochistan, Balochistan Post reported. She said that after the Panjgur and Noshki attacks, "enforced disappearances" and "killand-dumps" have seen an alarming spike in Balochistan, and the trend is frightening.

# Putin, Biden plan high-stakes phone call

### **RUSSIA-UKRAINE CRISIS**

As tensions over an imminent invasion of Ukraine escalated sharply in a few days, the two leaders are expected to find a diplomatic solution to avert the crisis amid calls from various countries to

their citizens to evacuate *Ukraine immediately* 

Two calls in December between Biden and Putin produced no breakthroughs

Four-way talks in Berlin between Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France Thursday made no progress

Washington also expressed concern that Russia and China were cooperating at the highest level

David, Maryland, has long believed that one-on-one engagement with Putin may be the best chance at a resolution

Putin also plans to speak with French President Emmanuel Macron Saturday, according to Russia's TASS news agency.

#### them jointly with Washington and **GATHERING FORCES** Still, Biden, who will join the

US intelligence believes a rapid assault on Kyiv is possible and that Putin could order an invasion before the Winter Olympics end Feb 20, Biden's national security adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters Friday, adding it remains unclear whether such a command has been given.

He said they had gathered sufficient troops near the border to invade the country and that they may initiate an aerial bombing. On Twitter, Russia's Deputy UN Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy accused Washington of fanning "hysteria" and mounting a "panic campaign."

# Ukraine's pensive message to citizens

Kyiv: Ukraine urged its citizens Saturday to keep calm and avoid panicking in the face of mounting worries that Russia is preparing to invade its neighbour. The appeal came a day after the United States and a host of European countries urged their citizens to leave Ukraine immediately because of the growing danger of a full-scale offensive by Russian forces encircling the former Soviet state. Kyiv has been trying to tone down the warnings coming out of Washington throughout the crisis The Ukrainian government fears the US statements are hurting public

morale and damaging the country's struggling economy by crimping business activity. "The the moment, it armed force of Ukraine are constantly is critically monitoring the situation and are ready to important to remain rebuff any encroachment on its calm, to consolidate territorial integrity and sovereignty," ide the country, to avoid destabilising actions and those that sow panic

the foreign ministry said. "Ukrainian diplomats are in constant contact with all its key partners, swiftly receiving the information needed to prepare a well-FOREIGN MINISTRY UKRAINE timed response.

# EVACUATION ALERTS

US: The United States is set to evacuate its embassy in Kyiv as Western intelligence officials warn that a Russian invasion of Ukraine is increasingly imminent. US State Department plans to announce that all American staff at

the Kyiv embassy will be required to

leave immediately. UK: British nationals who Ukraine should not  $\checkmark$  $\mathbf{N}$ expect a military evacuation if conflict with Russia breaks out, said junior defence minister James Heappey.

RUSSIA: Russia has decided to optimise its diplomatic staff numbers in Ukraine, fearing provocations by Kyiv or other party, a spokeswoman for the Russian foreign ministry said Saturday.

NZ: New Zealand's foreign ministry urged Saturday all New Zealanders in Ukraine to leave immedi ately as the country's government has no diplomatic represen tation in Ukraine.

ISRAEL: Israel said that it has decided to evacuate Israeli diplomats and XX embassy employees from Kyiv. The Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the country has issued a travel warning and Israeli visitors to Ukraine are advised to evacuate.



#### order, a spokesman said Friday. AUSTRALIA: Australian PM Scott Morrison called on citizens of his country to fly out of Ukraine.

Dubbing the escalating tensions between Ukraine and Russia "very dangerous".

# announces amnesty for 814 prisoners REUTERS

Junta holds parade,

Yangon, Feb 12: Myanmar's junta showed off its military strength with a parade in the capital Naypyitaw Saturday, with its leader Min Aung Hlaing defending last year's coup as necessary to protect the country from enemies, both domestic and foreign.

Celebrating Myanmar's Union Day, which marks independence from British colonial rule in 1947. the government also announced that 814 prisoners would be pardoned. Pardons are often granted on major holidays.



It was not immediately clear if Australian Sean Turnell, an economic adviser to deposed Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi and who has been detained for more than a year, was among those pardoned.

The day began with mobile internet blackouts from 4:00 am local time, with the parade of army units and civil servants taking place later in the morning. Also taking part were delegations from Myanmar's Karen, Chin, and Kayah states, where ethnic and anti-military armed conflicts rage.

Min Aung Hlaing denounced resistance to the new regime. The violence in Myanmar is causing chaos and people are suffering, he said at the televised ceremony. The junta spent at least \$5 million on the ceremony, a local media outlet re-

ported. Security forces have killed at least 1,547 people who resisted the takeover, according to a tally by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP).



Wordle comes to rescue of 80-yr-old hostage for 21 hours ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lincolnwood (US), Feb 11: Police rescued an 80-year-old suburban Chicago woman who was held hostage for nearly 21 hours in large part because she couldn't text one of her daughters her daily Wordle score during the ordeal. Denyse Holt and her oldest daughter, Meredith Holt-Caldwell, told reporters that Holt woke up about 1 am Sunday to the sight of a bloody and naked man armed with scissors in her Lincolnwood home. Holt said the man threatened her

**FREEDOM CONVOY** Police clear blocking as injunction order defied SPECTACULAR ERUPTI



#### **US order flayed**

Kabul: Demonstrators in Afghanistan's capital Saturday condemned President Joe Biden's order freeing up \$3.5 billion in Afghan assets held in the US for families of America's 9/11 victims - saving the money belongs to Afghans. Protesters who gathered outside Kabul's grand Eid Gah mosque asked America for financial compensation for the tens of thousands of Afghans killed during the last 20 years of war in Afghanistan. Biden's order, signed Friday, allocates another \$3.5 billion in Afghan assets for humanitarian aid to a trust fund to be managed by the UN to provide aid to Afghans.

#### Minor shoots family

Madrid: A 15-year-old boy has been arrested in Spain on suspicion of shooting dead his parents and 10-year-old brother following a row over bad school grades, police said Saturday. The incident occurred Tuesday evening in a rural area just outside Elche, about 20 kilometres (12 miles) from the southeastern port city of Alicante. It was not discovered until Friday night by a relative who turned up to check on them, a police spokesman said.

life. Ultimately, after grabbing two knives from the kitchen. Holt said the man led her to a bathroom in the basement, barricading her inside using a chair for the next 17 hours.

"I was trying to survive, that's all," Holt told WBBM-TV. During that time, she couldn't communicate with the outside world or update her daughter as she usually does about her score on the popular online word game. And Holt-Caldwell, who lives in Seattle, became worried that her mother wasn't reading her texts or updating her about Wordle.



post-Cold War Europe, is seek-

ing security guarantees from

Biden to block Kyiv's entry into

NATO and missile deployments

the proposals as non-starters but

has pushed the Kremlin to discuss

weekend call from the mountain-

side presidential retreat in Camp

Washington regards many of

near Russia's borders.

its European allies.

US sends 3,000 additional troops

Poland, Poland's Defence Minister said late Friday, confirming an earlier

Reuters report, as Russia held military exercises in Belarus and the Black

Reuters Friday. The deployment comes as Washington steps up warnings

that Russia could be poised to invade Ukraine. Russia denies it plans to

Washington: The United States will send 3,000 additional troops to

Sea following the buildup of its forces near Ukraine. The additional

troops will be sent to Poland in the coming days, four US officials told

REUTERS

Windsor, Feb 12: Canadian police started clearing protesters blocking a bridge linking Canada and the United States more than 12 hours after a court order to end the blockade took effect, police said. The Ambassador Bridge, North

America's busiest land border crossing, had no traffic flowing for the fifth straight day Saturday morning. About 15 trucks, cars and pickup vans blocked traffic in both directions, choking the supply chain for Detroit's carmakers.

"We urge all demonstrators to act lawfully & peacefully," Windsor Police said in a tweet, asking commuters to avoid the areas affected by the demonstrations.

Police in black uniforms with yellow vests were seen moving behind the protesters cars on the bridge. Protesters have thinned from about 200 blocking the bridge Friday night.

Canada has been rocked by protests against the government's strict pandemic measures, including vaccine mandates, which have entered a third week

The "Freedom Convoy" protests, started in the national capital Ottawa by Canadian truckers opposing a vaccinate-or-quarantine mandate for cross-border drivers, entered its 16th day Saturday

Protests have spread to three border points, including the Ambassador Bridge, strangling trade between the two countries.



Europe's highest and most active volcano erupted in spectacular fashion late Thursday, lighting up the night sky with explosions and bright red molten lava

"The entire Webb team is ecstatic

at how well the first steps of taking



"I'm across the country and I noticed this," said Holt-Caldwell. Holt-Caldwell asked Lincolnwood

police to make a well-being check and they rescued her mother from the bathroom. Officers found 32year-old James H Davis III armed with knives in an upstairs bedroom and arrested him after a SWAT team responded and used a stun

gun to subdue him, police said. "She's amazing," Holt-Caldwell told the Chicago Tribune of her mother: "She doesn't really know how she was able to remain that calm." Davis was taken to the Cook County Jail, where Friday he remained in custody.

# World's most powerful telescope sees its first star

The first picture sent back of the cosmos by the James Webb Space Telescope is far from stunning; 18 blurry white dots on a black background, all showing the same object HD 84406

#### AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, Feb 12: Star light, star bright, the James Webb Space Telescope has seen its first star (though it wasn't quite tonight) -and even taken a selfie, NASA announced Friday. The steps are part of the months-

long process of aligning the observatory's enormous golden mirror that astronomers hope will

# **PHOTONS IN, SELFIE OUT**



begin unraveling the mysteries of the early Universe by this summer. The first picture sent back of the cosmos is far from stunning: 18 blurry white dots on a black background, all showing the same object: HD 84406 a bright, isolated star in the constellation Ursa Major. But in fact it represents a major milestone. The 18 dots were captured

NASA had previously said a selfie wasn't possible, so the news comes as a welcome bonus for space fans

by the primary mirror's 18 individual segments -- and the image is now the basis for aligning and focusing those hexagonal pieces.

The light bounced off the segments to Webb's secondary mirror, a round object located at the end of long booms, and then to the Near Infrared Camera (NIRCam) instrument-Webb's main imaging device.

images and aligning the telescope are proceeding," said Marcia Rieke, principal investigator for the NIRCam instrument and regents professor of astronomy, University of Arizona, in a statement. "We were so happy to see that

light make its way into NIRCam." The image capturing process began February 2, with Webb pointing at different positions around the predicted location of the star.

Though Webb's initial search covered an area of the sky about equal to the size of the full Moon. the dots were all located near the center portion, meaning the observatory is already relatively well positioned for final alignment.

To aid the process, the team also captured a 'selfie' taken not through an externally mounted camera but through a special lens on board NIRCam. NASA had previously said a selfie wasn't possible, so the news comes as a welcome bonus for space fans.

"I think pretty much the reaction was holy cow," Lee Feinberg, Webb optical telescope element manager, told reporters in a call, explaining that the team wasn't sure it was possible to obtain such an image using starlight alone.

The \$10 billion observatory launched from French Guiana December 25 and is now in an orbit that is aligned with the Earth's around the Sun, 1.5 million kilometers away from our planet, in a region of space called the second Lagrange point.

Webb will begin its science mission by summer, which includes using its high resolution instruments to peer back in time 13.5 billion years to thefirst generation of galaxies that formed after the Big Bang.









# business

It is very satisfactory to see that India has become one of the leading manufacturers of switchgear. We intend to lend a supporting hand to the industry, ranging from setting up manufacturing units to investing in revamping the entire infrastructure VIVEK KUMAR DEWAGAN | ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF POWER

### **UP, DELHI LEAD EV RACE**

There are 9.66 lakh electric vehicles (EVs) plying on the roads in states and Union Territories, among which Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Karnataka, Bihar lead with impressive numbers, the Union government said. UP has 276,217, Delhi comes next with 132,302 whereas Arunachal Pradesh (20), Mizoram (20), Meghalaya (28) are at the bottom





Saddened by the demise of renowned industrialist and former Rajya Sabha MP, Shri Rahul Bajaj. He will always be

remembered for spearheading a revolution in the automotive industry, rooted in the spirit of 'Make in India

M VENKAIAH NAIDU VICE PRESIDENT

We have undertaken an endeavour of expanding our presence to the length and breadth of the country and will

leverage technology to its fullest potential in fulfilling our ambitions. Our internal focus coupled with a gradual up-tick in the economy positions us well to capitalise on the tremendous post pandemic opportunity

DEEP JAGGI CEO INDOSTAR CAPITAL FINANCE



medical check of insured persons of the age of 40 and above in five hospitals in Hyderabad Faridabad, Varanasi, Kolkata and Ahmedabad. The results are satisfactory

BHUPENDER YADAV UNION LABOUR MINISTER

### SHORT TAKES

### India-US goods trade up 45%

New Delhi: The bilateral trade between India and the US rose by 45 per cent to \$113 billion in 2021 compared to \$78 billion in the previous year. Both the countries have made a commitment to facilitate actions necessary for increasing the bilateral trade to \$500 billion. "India-US goods trade sets a new record! Goods trade witnessed a 45 per cent jump in 2021 from 2020 to reach a historic high of \$113 billion," saidCommerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal.



# **MORTALITY RATE DOWN TO 1%** India-based startups raised \$39bn in 2021

Notably, the report cited that the surge in activity has partially been the result of India-specific innovations. It said that confluence of startups focused on addressing the needs of the country and the opening up of this new market has further given an impetus to funding activity across various

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 12: India-based startups raise \$39 billion capital in 2021, said Grant Thornton Bharat. The report on the democratisa-

tion of India's startup ecosystem showed a total funding of \$39 billion, a rise of 255 per cent from \$11.8 billion in 2020. Besides, the startup mortality

rate came down to 1 per cent in 2021 as India witnessed a remarkable reduction in the number of dead-pooled businesses as against 16 per cent in 2016



STARTUP INDUSTRY WITNESSED A INDIA RECEIVED FDI INFLOW OF \$82 BILLION, A 10% INCREASE OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR IN 2021 THE INDUSTRY ALSO SAW AN ADDITIONAL 70% INCREASE IN FIRST-TIME ANGEL INVESTORS VC AND ANGEL FUND CORPUS GREW FROM \$10.7BN IN 2020 TO \$28.5BN IN 2021, A 266% SURGE

Last year also saw an additional 70 per cent increase in first-time angel investors. India now has around 60 angel networks. According to the Grant Thornton

report. VC and angel fund corpus grew from \$10.7 billion in 2020 to \$28.5 billion in 2021, recording a 266 per cent increase

Notably, the report cited that the surge in activity has partially been the result of India-specific innovations. It said that confluence of startups focused on addressing the

needs of Bharat and the opening up of this new market has further given an impetus to funding activity across various levels in the country.

"Investors have now shown increased trust in India, with many national and international entities directing their investments towards the economy. For FY 2021-22 (year to date), India received foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow of \$82 billion, a 10% increase over the previous year. The growth



The changing perceptions around entrepreneurship, efficient access to funding and accelerated technological growth enabled the start-up ecosystem boom across all sectors in the past decade. India has now become the third most preferred destination, after the US and and China, for technology startups

VICKY BAHL | GRANT THORNTON BHARAT

was a result of the governmenta's proactive approach to implement measures to ease business for startups," said Vicky Bahl, Partner, Growth, Grant Thornton Bharat

"From being ranked 142 on the ease of doing business scale in 2014, India quickly rose to a rank of 63 in 2021," Bahl added.

Besides, the other possible reason for the stark decline in startup mortality, as per the report, can be investors evaluating startup investments as a viable investment alternative.

# Reliance plans to turn syngas into blue hydrogen

New Delhi, Feb 12: India's Reliance Industries Ltd plans to produce blue hydrogen at a "competitive cost" of about \$1.2-\$1.5 per kg as it repurposes its \$4-billion gasification assets, the conglomerate said in a presentation.

Owned by billionaire Mukesh Ambani, Reliance has in the past year unveiled plans to reduce its dependence on its mainstay oil-tochemicals business and invested in clean energy projects to burnish its green credentials.

Reliance will initially use syngas, produced by petcoke gasifies, to make blue hydrogen for it Jamnagar complex in western Gujarat state, until green hydrogen's cost comes down, it said in the presentation released late Friday.

Hydrogen produced from natural gas and which eliminates emissions by capturing and storing the emitted carbon is called blue hydrogen. Green Hydrogen is extracted from water using electrolvsis powered by renewable energy. "In the interim, till cost of green hydrogen comes down, RIL can be the



first mover to establish a hydrogen ecosystem, with minimal incremental investment, in India," it said. Ambani, who wants to move his

group to net-zero carbon emissions by 2035, last month announced plans to invest ₹5.95 trillion (\$79 billion) to set up green energy projects including a 100 gigawatt renewable energy power plant. The company operates the world's biggest refining complex at Jamanagar.

"Subsequently, as hydrogen from syngas is replaced by green hydrogen, the entire syngas will be converted to chemicals." Ambani wants to produce green hydrogen at \$1 per kg before the turn of this decade.

# CIL to ramp up supply to non-power sectors driven by buffer stock



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: State-owned CIL on Saturday said it is currently supplying around 3.4 lakh tonnes of coal per day to non-power sector which is the company's average supply to this segment and stressed that PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi, Feb 12: State-owned Oil

> October-December 2021 rose 596.7 per cent over ₹1,258 crore net profit in the same period a year back, the company said in a statement.

The nation's top oil and gas producer got \$75.73 for every barrel of crude oil it produced and sold in the third quarter of the current fiscal year as compared to \$43.20 a barrel realisation in the same period of 2020-21.

"The production of crude oil



and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Saturday reported nearly seven-fold jump in third quarter net profit after higher oil and gas prices offset a drop in production.

Net profit of ₹8,764 crore in

#### and gas has declined during current vear mainly due to restrictive conditions created by cyclone Tauktae and Covid, delay in mobilization of

onec

mobile production unit Sagar Samrat to WO-16 Cluster project (in western offshore). modification work at Hazira and reservoir issues in S1 Vashistha fields in east-

■ Net profit of ₹8,764 crore in October-December 2021 rose 596.7% YoY

- Gas price rose to \$2.90 per million British thermal unit in October-December 2021 as against \$1.79 a year back
- Oil production fell 3.2% to 5.45 million tonne while gas output was 4.2 per cent lower at 5.5 billion cubic meters
- Revenue in the guarter under review was up 67.3 per cent to ₹28,474 crore.

ern offshore," the statement said. During the first nine months of the current fiscal year; net profit rose to ₹31,446 crore as compared to ₹4,512 crore in April-December 2020. Revenue was up 61.5 per cent to ₹75.849 crore

"During the nine months ended December 31, 2021, the company had decided to opt for a lower tax regime u/s 115BAA of the Income Tax Act, 1961, with effect from FY 2020-21. Accordingly, the company has recognized provision for tax expenses and re-measured its net deferred tax liabilities. The net impact due to availing the option has resulted in decrease in deferred tax by ₹8,689 crore and decrease in current tax by ₹2,107 crore," the statement said.

The board of the firm approved a second interim dividend of 35 per cent (Rs 1.75 per share). "The total payout on this account will be ₹2,201.55 crore.'

This dividend is in addition to the first interim dividend of ₹5.50 per share (110 per cent) declared earlier in November 2021.



firm said. Growth in supplies to non-r sector customers was at a higher rate than the supplies to the power sector during this period.

demic free FY20. For comparable

period of even FY19, when CIL

recorded the highest ever total coal

despatch since its inception, sup-

MASSIVE RISE levels in the country **OF 255% FROM** \$11.8 BILLION IN 2020

#### DIOCKCNAIN CNIP

Mumbai: Intel Corp Friday launched a new chip for blockchain applications such as Bitcoin mining and minting NFTs to cash in on the rising usage of cryptocurrencies. The chip will ship later this year and the first customers include Block Inc, the Jack Dorsey-led firm that recently changed its name from Square Inc to highlight its growing focus on the blockchain. Blockchains serve as public ledgers that keep records of transactions on a network of computers and have grown in prominence in recent years.

**UK's GDP grows** 7.5% in 2021

London: Britain's gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to have grown by 7.5 ner cent in 2021. bouncing back from a 9.4 per cent fall in 2020. according to official data. The country's GDP increased by 1 per cent in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2021, contributed by increased clinic visits. Covid-19 testing and tracing activities and vaccination program, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) announced Friday. Despite the quarterly GDP growth, the ONS said it was still 0.4 per cent below the prepandemic level seen in Q4 2019.

#### 42 coal mines auctioned: Govt

New Delhi: The government Saturday said that a total of 42 coal blocks have been auctioned till date for commercial mining. Of the said blocks, 10 coal mines were auctioned this week under the third tranche, the coal ministry said in a statement. "Under the commercial coal mining auction process, a total of 42 coal mines have successfully auctioned till date," the statement said.

it has sufficient buffer stock to increase supply to the sector.

The development assumes significance in the wake of reports of captive power plants in various sectors including steel and aluminium facing fuel shortages.

The non-power sector (NPS) imports around 170 million tonnes (MT) of coal in any given fiscal for blending with domestic coal. But in FY'22 the spiralling international coal prices proved to be a hindrance for importing requisite quantity, giving rise to scarcity of coal at their end.

Coal India's "despatch to NPS during April-January FY'22 at 101.7 million tonnes was up by 8.2 per cent compared to 94 MTs in corresponding period of a standard pan-

In dispatch during the April-January period to NPS segment at 105 MT was higher by a little over 3 MT compared to same period of FY'22. The reasons for increased despatch during the Covid ravaged year were several. "CIL has sufficient buffer stock

to increase supply to non-power sector. Coal availability is not a problem," the company said. CIL said FY'22 has witnessed

an unprecedented surge in power generation, the growth rate being the highest in a decade, necessitating the need to meet the power sector's coal demand on a national priority

# SEBI bars Anil Ambani, 3 others from market

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Friday restrained Reliance Home Finance Limited (RHFL), industrialist Anil Ambani and three other individuals from the securities market for allegedly siphoning off funds from the company.

The three other individuals are Amit Bapna, Ravindra Sudhakar and Pinkesh R Shah.

In a 100-page interim order, the regulator also restrained the individuals from "associating them-



selves with any intermediary registered with SEBI, any listed public company or acting directors or promoters of any public company which intends to raise money from the public till further orders".

There were multiple FMRs from banks alleging. among others, that funds borrowed by RHFL from different lenders were partly used towards repayment of loans

The order, pertaining to alleged siphoning off of funds from the company, has been passed against a total of 28 individuals and entities (noticees). The focus of the SEBI probe was to broadly look into the manner in which loans were disbursed by RHFL during 2018-19 to several borrowing entities.

The markets regulator noted that the root of the present proceedings can be traced to multiple sources, inter alia, a letter of Price Waterhouse & Co addressed to RHFL intimating their resignation as the statutory auditor of the company; and complaints received by SEBI alleging siphoning off/diversion of funds of RHFL by promoters and management of the company.

# Reminiscing Rahul Bajaj: The man who called a spade a spade

STRAIGHTFORWARD AND OUTSPOKEN, BAJAJ NOT JUST HAD THE GUTS TO CREATE A TWO AND THREE-WHEELER BRAND DURING PERMIT RAJ BUT ALSO HAD THE COURAGE THAT FEW INDUSTRIALISTS OF THE PRESENT DAY COULD TALK OF

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 12: 'Hamara Bajaj' was the iconic jingle that resonated with aspirations of the middle class in a pre-liberalised India. And the man behind that brand was one of the biggest and brave industrialists - Rahul Bajaj.

Bajaj, 83, who was the Chairman Emeritus of the Bajaj Group when he breathed his last Saturday, was starkly different from his usually diplomatic peers, with his ability to call a spade a spade, even if it meant ruffling feathers in the government or even confronting his own son

And this is perhaps what made him ask a group of ministers, including Home Minister Amit Shah, a few pointed questions about mob lynching, Pragya Thakur and the government's 'stifling of criticism' in late November 2019.

Born in Calcutta June 10, 1938,

his grandfather Jamnalal Bajaj founded the Bajaj Group in 1926. A graduate from the St Stephen's College in Delhi and an MBA from Harvard Business School in the US, Rahul started off as deputy general manager as part of his father Kamalnayan Bajaj's team and went on to become the CEO in 1968 at the age of 30.

After taking charge, Rahul Bajaj led the group to a growth path, diversifying it into general and life insurance, investment and consumer finance, home appliances, electric lamps, wind energy, special alloy and stainless steel, material

handling equipment and travel. He steered the diversified entity during India's transition from a closed economy to a liberalised one and drove the company to expand its product portfolio with the Bajaj brand finding foothold in global markets while warding off emerging competition

from Japanese motorcycle makers that challenged the Bajaj Auto's scooters in the late 1990s.

Under his stew ardship, Bajaj Auto, the group's flag ship company, saw its turnover grow to ₹12,000 crore from just ₹7.2 crore with the firm's scooters becoming the mainstay. He later split Bajaj Auto into

three

units in 2008 -- Bajaj Auto, Bajaj Finserv and a holding company. Rahul Bajaj's sons Rajiv Bajaj and

Sanjiv Bajaj are now managing the auto and finance companies, respectively.

The company's Bajaj Chetak scooter became an aspirational symbol for the middle class Indian families then, with the 'Hamara Bajaj' tune becoming synonymous with their hopes of a better future, and the pic-

ture of a strong nation. In 2005, he had started passing the baton of the company to son Rajiv Bajaj, who became the managing director of Bajaj Auto and led the company to become a truly global automobile player.

A stalwart of Indian industry passes away. Shri. #RahulBajaj was passionate about his work. He spoke for the entire industry and mentored many budding entrepreneurs. **Condolences to his family** and friends

#### NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

However, when Rajiv decided to do away with scooters and shift Bajaj Auto's focus on motorcycles in 2009, the senior Bajaj did not hide his disappointment, publicly saying "I feel bad, I feel hurt". Although, Rajiv opined that solutions should come more from logic than emotions.

Similarly, his outspokenness came to the fore in November 2019,

at an event organised by the Economic Times in Mumbai, where Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and Commerce Minister Piyush Goval were present, when the veteran industrialist spoke about the government's 'stifling of criticism', among other things.

"This environment of fear, it's definitely on our minds. You (the government) are doing good work; and despite that, we don't have the confidence that you'll appreciate criticism," he had said.

One of the most successful business leaders of India, Bajaj was elected to Rajya Sabha in June 2006 🛁 and remained a member till 2010. He was recipient of many awards, including the Padma Bhushan and honorary doctorates from many universities. Till date, he remains the only person to be industrychamber CII's president for two terms -- 1979-80 and 1999-2000.







# **IPL AUCTION SEES 'BIG PAY DAY'**



**ISHAN KISHAN TEAM: MUMBAI INDIANS** BASE PRICE: ₹2 CRORE **PAID: ₹15.25 CRORE** 

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS						
	ATIONALITY	BASE	PAID			
Deepak Chahar	Indian	2 crore	14 crore			
Ambati Rayudu	Indian	2 crore	6.75 crore			
Dwayne Bravo	Overseas	2 crore	4.40 crore			
Robin Uthappa	Indian	2 crore	2 crore			
KM Asif	Indian	20 lakh	20 lakh			
Tushar Deshpande	Indian	20 lakh	20 lakh			
D	ELHI CAPIT/	ALS				
Shardul Thakur	Indian	2 crore	10.75 crore			
Mitchell Marsh	Overseas	2 crore	6.50 crore			
David Warner	Overseas	2 crore	6.25 crore			
Kuldeep Yadav	Indian	2 crore	2 crore			
KS Bharat	Indian	20 lakh	2 crore			
Mustafizur Rahman	Overseas	2 crore	2 crore			
Kamlesh Nagarkoti	Indian	40 lakh	1.10 crore			
Sarfaraz Khan	Indian	20 lakh	20 lakh			
Ashwin Hebbar	Indian	20 lakh	20 lakh			
<b>GUJARAT TITANS</b>						
Lockie Ferguson	Overseas	2 crore	10 crore			
Mohammad Shami	Indian	2 crore	6.25 crore			
Rahul Tewatia	Indian	40 lakh	9 crore			
R Sai Kishore	Indian	20 lakh	3 crore			
Abhinav Sadarangani	Indian	20 lakh	2.60 crore			
Jason Roy	Overseas	2 crore	2 crore			
Noor Ahmad	Overseas	30 lakh	30 lakh			
<b>KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS</b>						
Shreyas Iyer	Indian	2 crore	12.25 crore			
Nitish Rana	Indian	1 crore	8 crore			
Shivam Mavi	Indian	40 lakh	7.25 crore			

Overseas

Indian

2 crore

30 lakh



**DEEPAK CHAHAR TEAM: CHENNAI SUPER KINGS BASE PRICE: ₹2 CRORE** PAID: ₹14 CRORE

7.25 crore

60 lakh

LUCI	KNOW SUPER	R GIANTS
PLAYER	NATIONALITY	BASE
Avesh Khan	Indian	20 lakh
Jason Holder	Overseas	1.5 crore
Krunal Pandya	Indian	2 crore
Mark Wood	Overseas	2 crore
Quinton de Kock	Overseas	2 crore
Deepak Hooda	Indian	75 lakh
Manish Pandey	Indian	1 crore
Ankit Rajpoot	Indian	20 lakh
SUN	<b>IRISERS HYD</b>	ERABAD
Nicholas Pooran	Overseas	1.5 crore
Jagadeesha Suchith	Indian	20 lakh
Shreyas Gopal	Indian	20 lakh
Kartik Tyagi	Indian	20 lakh
Washington Sundar	Indian	1.5 crore
Bhuvneshwar Kuma	r Indian	2 crore
T Natarajan	Indian	1 crore
Priyam Garg	Indian	20 lakh
Abhishek Sharma	Indian	20 lakh
Rahul Tripathi	Indian	40 lakh
	<b>PUNJAB KIN</b>	IGS
Kagiso Rabada	Overseas	2 crore
Shahrukh Khan	Indian	40 lakh
Shikhar Dhawan	Indian	2 crore
Jonny Bairstow	Overseas	2 crore
Rahul Chahar	Indian	75 lakh
Harpreet Brar	Indian	20 lakh
Prabhsimran Singh	Indian	20 lakh
Ishan Porel	Indian	20 lakh
Jitesh Sharma	Indian	20 lakh



SHREYAS IYER **TEAM: KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS** BASE PRICE: ₹2 CRORE PAID: ₹14 CRORE

6.75 crore

5.25 crore

3.80 crore

60 lakh

25 lakh

20 lakh

	IVIAL SPENT: 13,00,10,000				
	MUMBAI INDIANS				
PAID 10 crore 8.75 crore 8.25 crore 7.50 crore 6.75 crore 5.75 crore 4.60 crore 50 lakh 10.75 crore 20 lakh 75 lakh 4 crore 8.75 crore 4.20 crore 20 lakh 6.50 crore 8.50 crore 8.50 crore	Ishan Kishan Dewald Brevis Murugan Ashwin Basil Thampi RAJ	Indian Overseas Indian Indian	2 crore 20 lakh 20 lakh 30 lakh <b>0YALS</b>	15.25 crore 3 crore 1.60 crore 30 lakh	
	Prasidh Krishna Shimron Hetmyer Trent Boult Devdutt Padikkal Yuzvendra Chahal R Ashwin Riyan Parag	Indian Overseas Overseas Indian Indian Indian Indian	1 crore 1.5 crore 2 crore 2 crore 2 crore 2 crore 30 lakh	10 crore 8.50 crore 8 crore 7.75 crore 6.50 crore 5 crore 3.80 crore	
	KC Cariappa Indian 20 lakh 30 lakh ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE				
	Harshal Patel Wanindu Hasaranga Josh Hazlewood Faf Du Plessis Dinesh Karthik Anuj Rawat Shahbaz Ahmed Akash Deep	Indian Overseas Overseas Overseas Indian Indian Indian Indian	2 crore 1 crore 2 crore 2 crore 2 crore 20 lakh 30 lakh 20 lakh	10.75 crore 10.75 crore 7.75 crore 5.50 crore 3.40 crore 2.40 crore 20 lakh	
9 crore 8.25 crore	Suresh Raina (₹2 crore), Steve Smith				

(₹2 crore), David Miller (₹1 crore), Umesh Yadav (₹2 crore), Shakib Al Hasan (₹2 crore) and Matthew Wade (₹2 crore) were some of the big names who went unsold.

**FUNDS REMAINING** CSK: ₹20.45 cr DC: ₹16.50 cr KKR: ₹12.65 cr GT: ₹18.85 cr LSG: ₹6.90 cr MI: ₹27.85 cr PBKS: ₹28.65 cr RR: ₹12.15 cr RCB: ₹9.25 cr SRH: ₹20.15 cr

PLAYERS SOLD: 74 (OVERSEAS: 20) TOTAL SPENT: 3.88.10.00.000

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# FOES TURN INTO TEAMMATES

Ishan Kishan and Deepak Chahar clinched the most eye-popping deals as India's battle-hardened T20 exponents laughed their way to the bank on the opening day of IPL mega-auction where the franchises saved their highest bids for home-grown talent. Shreyas Iyer had also an amazing day having the third highest bid. Orissa POST gives an overview of the opening day of the IPL 2022 Auction ...

> BANGALORE: In his own words, all-rounder Deepak Hooda was left "demoralised, depressed and under pressure" after a well documented spat with his Baroda state team captain. Krunal Pandya. England's swashbuckling batter Jos Buttler and India's premier spinner Ravichandran Ashwin had not seen eye to eye for a long time owing to a controversial run out episode during the 2019 edition of the lucrative league. However, the



2022 IPL mega auction, besides forcing the 10 franchises to break the banks in order to get their favourite players, has done another thing: turn these foes into teammates. Twitter went berserk when Ashwin joined Buttler in Rajasthan Royals, who spent Rs 5 crore to get the services of the seasoned off-spinner. Ashwin, who had appeared for the Delhi Capitals in the 2020 and 2021 editions of the tournament, will thus have a reunion with Buttler. The incident involving Ashwin and Buttler made headlines during RR's home match against Kings XI Punjab (now Puniab Kings) in Jaipur March 25, when the former ran out the Englishman at the non-strikers end after the batter had backed up too far. Same will be the case with Hooda and Krunal. Last year, Baroda Cricket Association (BCA) received a setback before the Sved Mushtag Ali Trophy as their all-rounder Hooda left the bio-bubble after a spat with Baroda captain Krunal. In a mail sent to BCA, Hooda made a series of allegations against Krunal, including trying to pull him down and warning him that he would ensure he did not play for Baroda again.

### AUCTIONEER EDMEADES STABLE AFTER FALL

BANGALORE: Veteran auctioneer Hugh Edmeades collapsed while conducting the IPL players' auction here on Saturday and was replaced by sports presenter Charu Sharma for the remainder of the event as he received medical care after a preliminary check-up that found him "stable". Sharma was handed the auction duties as Edmeades recovered following the fall that was blamed on low blood pressure. "Hugh Edmeades, the IPL Auctioneer, had an unfortunate fall due to Postural Hypotension during the IPL Auction this afternoon. The medical team attended to him immediately after the incident & he is stable," read a statement from IPL. "Mr. Charu Sharma will continue with the Auction proceedings today," it added. The 60-year-old Edmeades' collapse midway into proceedings led to an early lunch amid commotion inside the auction room.

# Odisha, Mumbai aim for top-4 berth WHITE FERNS THRASH INDIA EVES

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pat Cummins

Sheldon Jackson

Margao, Feb 12: Back to winning ways, reigning champions Mumbai City FC will hope to continue their momentum and storm back into the top-four when they take on fellow aspirants Odisha FC in the Indian Super League here Sunday.

Mumbai claimed a 1-0 win over Chennaiyin FC to snap their sevengame winless run and are currently in sixth position with 22 points from 14 games. Another victory could hurtle them back into the mix with the added advantage of



#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Queenstown, Feb 11: Skipper Mithali Raj's well-crafted half century went in vain as Indian batting flopped once again with the visitors losing the first WODI against New Zealand by 62 runs here Saturday.

Opting to bowl, the White Ferns rode on Suzie Bates' century (106, 111b, 10x4) to score a challenging 275 and India were all-out in the last over for 213 in 49.4 overs and never for once looked like being in the chase. The 39-year-old Mithali, playing



for 213 in 49.4 overs to trail the five match ODI series 0-1.

Earlier, New Zealand were eyeing a score of 300-plus with veteran opener Bates' sparkling 11th ODI century, but India bounced back strongly taking last five wickets for 25 runs to bundle them out for 275 in 48.1 overs.

Suzie made full of the reprieve\_ she got on 14 when Rajeshwari Gayakwad dropped her at point off Pooja Vastrakar's bowling to score a sublime knock. Suzie got to her 38th fifty in 66 balls, her first ODI half century since January 2020 to draw level with fellow White Ferns legend Debbie Hockley. She was ably supported by Amy Satterthwaite (63, 37b, 4x4).

having more games in hand than the likes of Hyderabad FC and Bengaluru FC.

In Odisha, Mumbai will face an opponents brimming with confidence after their win against SC East Bengal. They are seventh in the table having 21 points from 15 outings and a win for them too will bring them back in the top four.

Mourtada Fall and Ahmed Jahouh extended their contracts for Mumbai in this period, and Buckingham was asked about team captain Fall and what he brings to the table.

Odisha players during their practice session ahead of their match against MCFC

Odisha's defence will have to particularly be wary of the service from out wide from Bipin. Bipin's two assists have come from crosses and he also put in a cross that Pritam Kotal headed into his own net against ATK Mohun Bagan.

Odisha have conceded a goal from a cross in two of their last three engagements. "Both teams need three points if you want to be

in the semifinals. So for both teams, it's an important match. The schedule is also tight. We play a game in two days' time. We have five matches to go so we need to be focused and perform well match after match," Odisha head coach Kino Garcia said.

The last time the two sides met Odisha beat Mumbai 4-2 in one of their best results this season.

er 221st ODI. continued her dream form in the format - seven fifties in the last 11 innings in ODIs-to keep India in the hunt with a 73-ball 59 (6x4).

Indian women's team in their last ODI recorded their highest ever run chase of 265 set by Australia women in September last year, a win that had ended their rivals 26-match winning streak.

Mithali also joined Charlotte Edwards in making 1,000 runs against four different teams -Australia, England, Sri Lanka and New Zealand - in ODI cricket. She also became the first Indian to reach 1000 women's ODI runs

against New Zealand.

Mithali got a fine support from lefthander Yastika Bhatia, who dropped down to her usual No.3 spot, to stroke a 63-ball 41 as the duo added 88 runs in their recovery act.

She later notched her triple in 107 balls, with a single off Poonam Yadav and in the next over she made her intention clear with back foot pull for a boundary against Deepti Sharma.

Brief scores: New Zealand Women 275 (Suzie Bates 106, Amy Satterthwaite 63; Rajeshwari Gayakwad 2/28) beat India Women 213 (Mithali Raj 59, Yastika Bhatia 41; Jess Kerr 4/35) by 62 runs.

# Red Devils held 1-1 by Saints at Old Trafford



#### AGENCIES

Manchester, Feb 12: Manchester United's frustrating season continued when they were held to a disappointing 1-1 draw at home to Southampton in the Premier League Saturday.

United started brightly at Old Trafford before Jadon Sancho got on the end of Marcus Rashford's low cross to fire the hosts in front in the 21st minute.

However, the Red Devils, just as they did against Burnley in midweek, dropped off after scoring

and again conceded early in the second half, when Scotland international Che Adams slotted home in the 48th minute to equalise.

The Saints wasted two great chances to complete the turnaround as the Old Trafford fans grew more and more frustrated about another  $\operatorname{game}$  that was slipping out of their team's hands.

The draw means United remain fifth in the standings on 40 points from 24 matches, 20 points adrift of leaders Man City, while Saints stretched their unbeaten run to four in all competitions to stay 10th.

# Pyari hat-trick lights up (

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 12: India international Pyari Xaxa bagged a hattrick during Odisha Police's 5-0 rout over Sports Odisha in their match of the Odisha Women's League at the Kalinga Stadium here, Saturday.

In the other match on the opening day of the tournament. East Coast Railway handed OGP Club a 5-0 thrashing at the Capital Ground here.

At the Kalinga Stadium, Odisha Police rushed to 2-0 with four minutes through Jabamani Tudu (43rd & 45+2 minutes). After missing out on a few scoring opportunities, Jabamani first converted in the 43rd minute before doubling the advantage in the first half addedon time.

However, it was all Pyari after the change of ends. Pyari made it 3-0 seven minutes into the second half. Sports Odisha tried their best to find some momentum, but ended up conceding twice in the last 10 minutes. Pyari struck her second in the 82nd minute before completing her hat-trick in the second minute of the stoppage time.

At the Capital Ground, a brace from Lahari Mangaraj and a goal

each by Purnima Rao, Tara Khaton and Manisha Panna helped E.Co. Railway blank OGP Club.

E.Co. Railway were 4-0 up before the change of ends to erase OGP Club's comeback hopes. Lahari put her side up front in the 25th minute before Purnima made it 2-0 in the 36th minute.

Lahari was yet again found the back of the net three minutes later. Tara then piled more miserv on OGP Club scoring a minute before the end of the first half. Manisha then completed the rout scoring in the 70th minute.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Feb 12: Kylian Mbappe came through yet again for French league leader Paris Saint-Germain when he scored in the third minute of injury time to scrape a 1-0 home win against Rennes Friday.

But she perished to a short ball

from Hayley Jensen (2/36), some-

thing that triggered the Indian col-

lapse before Jess Kerr sealed the

issue for the hosts with a match-

winning 4/35 as India collapsed

Mbappe was set up by Lionel Messi in the 93rd minute for his 12th league goal. The victory moved PSG 16 points ahead of second-placed Marseille, which has a game in hand.

PSG coach Mauricio Pochettino picked a full-strength team against Rennes, the only side to beat him in the league this season, but PSG was as lackluster as it has been several times in this campaign.

PSG's ultras displayed banners critical of the club directors, in particular sporting director Leonardo. "Leonardo, Time to Get Lost?" one banner read.

Mbappe hit the post in the 40th, and one minute into the second half Santamaria fired just over from Bourigeaud's pass.

Nice needs only a draw at Lyon to move above Marseille and into second place on goal difference for the automatic Champions League spot.



Kylian Mbappe celebrates the goal – against Rennes at Parc des Princes

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match at the Capital Ground in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

Players of East Coast Railway (in orange) and OGP Club in action during their





