



GREAT APPRECIATION
Actor Deepika Padukone calls Shah Rukh Khan, a co-actor in her first film, the biggest superstar of India **LEISURE P2**



COV SURGE IN CHINA
China reports its highest daily total of coronavirus cases in two years Friday **INTERNATIONAL P10**



2ND TEST STARTS TODAY
The second Test between India and Sri Lanka, which is a Day/Night affair, begins at M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore, Saturday **SPORTS P12**

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India misfires missile into Pak

Defence ministry says a 'technical malfunction' during routine maintenance led to the incident which Pakistan warned could have 'unpleasant consequences'



PICTURE USED FOR REPRESENTATION

New Delhi, March 11: India Friday said a missile that landed in Pakistan two days back was fired 'accidentally' due to a technical malfunction and it was 'deeply regrettable'.
The defence ministry also announced ordering a 'Court of Enquiry' into the incident a day after Pakistan said a high-speed projectile launched from India entered its airspace and fell near Mian Channu in Khanewal district.
Thursday night, Pakistan summoned the Charge d'Affaires at the Indian embassy in Islamabad and conveyed its strong protest over the 'unprovoked' violation of its airspace by what it described as a supersonic 'projectile'.
"March 9, in the course of a routine maintenance, a technical malfunction led to the accidental firing of a missile.

The government of India has taken a serious view and ordered a high-level Court of Enquiry," the defence ministry said in a statement.
"It is learnt that the missile landed in an area of Pakistan. While the incident is deeply regrettable, it is also a matter of relief that there has been no loss of life due to the accident," it said.

People familiar with the matter said the probe team will investigate all possible aspects of the incident.
Maj Gen Babar Iftikhar, the Director-General of the Inter-Service Public Relations (ISPR) of Pakistan, claimed Thursday evening that the unarmed projectile launched from India entered the Pakistani airspace travelling 124 km and fell near Mian Channu.

"At 6.43 pm, a high-speed flying object was picked up inside the Indian territory by the Air Defence Operation Centre of the Pakistan Air Force. From its initial course, the object suddenly manoeuvred towards the Pakistani territory and violated Pakistan's airspace ultimately falling near Mian Channu at 6.50 pm," he said.
"It was a supersonic flying object, most probably a missile, but it was certainly unarmed," Iftikhar said.
Though Indian officials did not specify the name of the missile, the description given by the Pakistan military indicated that it could be a BrahMos missile. However, there is no confirmation of it yet.
Iftikhar said the Pakistan Air Force continuously monitored the complete flight path of the flying object from its point of origin near Sirsa in India till its point of impact near Mian Channu.
The Pakistan Foreign Office (FO) summoned the Indian Charge d'Affaires and registered its protest over what it described as 'unprovoked' violation of its airspace and that such 'irresponsible incidents' reflected India's 'disregard for air safety'.

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Matric exams from April 29

Bhubaneswar, March 11: With the decline in Covid-19 cases across the state, the Odisha government Friday announced to conduct the Summative Assessment-II examination of Class X students from April 29 in off-line mode.
Making this announcement here, Odisha Chief Secretary SC Mohapatra said the annual high school certificate (HSC) examination, Madhyama (Sanskrit) examination and state open school certificate examination will be conducted by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha from April 29 to May 6 in off-line mode. This decision was taken after holding discussions with all stakeholders, said Mohapatra.
He said it is mandatory for all Class X students to appear in Summative Assessment-II examination. The students will appear for the test in their respective schools while teachers from other schools will be deployed as invigilators.
If the examination could not be conducted in any school due to some reason, the students of the concerned school will appear for the exam in a nearby school, said the Chief Secretary.
Keeping in view the Covid-19 situation prevailing for the past two years, the BSE has decided to adopt three methods for awarding marks

FACT FILE
6,50,000
STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO APPEAR FOR ANNUAL EXAMS
Students will appear in the Summative Assessment-II in their own respective schools while teachers from other schools will be engaged as invigilators
If the conduct of the examination is not feasible in own school, then provision will be made to ensure that the students appear the exam in a nearby school

1 KILLED IN ARMY CHOPPER CRASH



Srinagar: An Army helicopter on its way to pick up sick BSF personnel crashed near the Line of Control (LoC) in north Kashmir's Gurez Sector Friday, killing its co-pilot and critically injuring the pilot, officials said. It crashed around 11:30 am with officials saying that it drifted away while descending and tumbled into a 'nahlah' flowing nearby. The 'Cheetah' helicopter was undertaking a rescue sortie to evacuate a sick Border Security Force jawan deployed in the forward area in the mountainous region. The deceased co-pilot has been identified as Major Sankalp Yadav (29), while the injured pilot, a Lieutenant Colonel-rank officer, was rescued from the crash site and rushed to the Command Hospital in Udhampur.

MANN TO TAKE OATH AS PUNJAB CM MARCH 16

Chandigarh/New Delhi, March 11: Bhagwant Mann will take oath as the Chief Minister of Punjab March 16 at Khatkar Kalan, the ancestral village of iconic freedom fighter Bhagat Singh, party sources said Friday after he met the party's national convener Arvind Kejriwal in Delhi.
March 13, the party will take out a roadshow in Amritsar. Both



the events will be attended by Kejriwal, the sources said.
A day after the Aam Aadmi Party's stupendous victory, Mann met Delhi CM Kejriwal at his residence Friday and extended an invitation to him to attend both the events. The meet was also attended by Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia and AAP in-charge of political affairs in Punjab Raghav Chadha.
"My younger brother Bhagwant Mann will take oath as the chief minister of Punjab. Today he came to my house to extend invitation for the oath-taking ceremony. I am sure that as a chief minister, Bhagwant will fulfil every expectation of the people of Punjab," Kejriwal tweeted in Hindi.

Positive shifts in talks: Putin



A Ukrainian soldier hides from a helicopter airstrike amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine, near Demydiv

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said Friday some progress had been made in Moscow's talks with Ukraine, while the Kremlin said the conflict would end when the West took action to address Moscow concerns. At a Kremlin meeting with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, Putin said Western sanctions would not

hinder Russian development and that Russia would end up stronger. He then said Ukrainian negotiations were taking place practically every day. "There are certain positive shifts, negotiators on our side tell me," Putin said. "I will talk about all of this later." Russia's invasion of Ukraine has killed thousands, displaced more than 2 million people, and raised fears of a wider confrontation between Russia and the United States. US intelligence agents say Russia has been surprised by the strength of Ukrainian resistance and by the severity of the economic sanctions imposed by the West. Russia has so far shown no sign that it is changing course. **MORE P10**

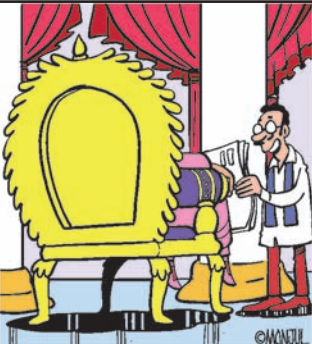
CBSE TERM-II BOARD EXAMS FOR CLASS X, XII FROM APRIL 26

NEW DELHI: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Friday announced that the term-II board exams for Class X and XII will commence from April 26. Last year, the CBSE had announced that board examinations for 2022 will be conducted in two terms. Term I exams have already been held, while the term-II exams will commence from April 26 for both classes. While releasing the date sheets for term-II exams, the Board said Friday that it has given a considerable gap between two exams keeping in mind that the schools were closed due to the pandemic. "The schools were closed due to pandemic which has led to learning losses. Therefore, more gap has been given between the two examinations in almost all the subjects in both the classes," it said.

HM held over obscene messages to student

Bhawani Patna: The headmaster of a school was arrested for allegedly sending obscene messages to a 14-year-old girl student in Kalahandi district, the police said Friday. The headmaster had been constantly sending vulgar messages to the teenager through WhatsApp and other media platforms. The accused also threatened the girl that she would be rusticated from the school and murdered if she informed anyone about his overtures. The student finally informed a woman teacher, following which the headmaster was arrested Thursday night, the police official said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



As pollsters predicted you have emerged a kingmaker. Your entire vote bank has shifted to the winner

PANGS OF POVERTY

Couple loses daughter while walking back from Ch'garh

Malkangiri, March 11: In a heart-wrenching incident, a migrant couple of Malkangiri who reached home by walking several hundreds of kms from Chhattisgarh lost their minor daughter on the way. Her death had taken place some days back, but it came to the fore Friday as they narrated their ordeal before the people at the district headquarters.
According to reports, poverty stricken Laxman Pujari and his wife along with their two minor daughters of Pollur village had gone to Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh in search of jobs months back. But the couple was exploited by a middleman. They were harassed and faced a lot of difficulties unable to get wages. Broke, the couple along with their two daughters started walking back home, without food for



days together. Sadly, one of their daughters gave up life on the way. The couple was deeply shocked, but managed to conduct the last rites of the deceased daughter. After waking for days, they reached Malkangiri district headquarters.
On learning about the incident, local BJD leader Manoj Barik and some of his supporters provided the couple food and other essentials. They also made arrangements for their conveyance to their village.

India's Covid toll 8 times higher than reported: Lancet

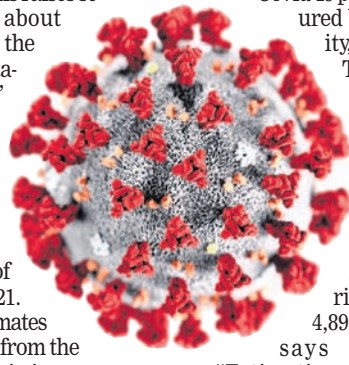
The paper estimates that 18.2 million people died worldwide because of Covid-19, around three times higher than previously estimated

London/New Delhi, March 11: India's estimated cumulative excess deaths due to Covid-19 between January 2020 and December 2021 were the highest in the world at 4.07 million, around eight times higher than reported, according to a new analysis in the Lancet.
Responding to the findings, the Union Health ministry Friday termed the analysis 'speculative and misinformed' and said the authors had themselves admitted to several methodology flaws and inconsistencies.
The study takes into account different methodologies for different countries, the ministry said in a statement. For India, for example, data sources used by the study appear to have been taken

from newspaper reports and non-peer reviewed studies, it said.
"This model uses data of all cause excess mortality (created by another non-peer reviewed model) as an input and this raises serious concerns about the accuracy of the results of this statistical exercise," the ministry said.
The Lancet reported that India accounted for around 22.3 per cent of global excess deaths as of December 31, 2021.
The paper estimates excess mortality from the Covid-19 pandemic in 191 countries and territories from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2021.

Although reported Covid-19 deaths in that period totalled 5.94 million worldwide, the Lancet paper estimates that 18.2 million people died worldwide because of the Covid-19 pandemic, as measured by excess mortality over that period. This is around three times higher than previously estimated.
The documented deaths due to Covid in India over that period stood at around 4.89 million, the journal says in the paper.
"Estimating excess mortality due to the Covid-19 pandemic: a systematic analysis of Covid-19

related mortality, 2020-21".
Excess mortality measures the additional deaths in a given time period compared to the number usually expected and is not dependent on how Covid-19 deaths are recorded.
"For India, empirical assessment of excess mortality for 12 states used data from the civil registration system. For different months during the first and second waves of the Covid-19 epidemic in the 12 states in India, total numbers of deaths for those states during the corresponding months were made available," the peer-reviewed paper reports.
"At the country level, the highest numbers of cumulative excess deaths due to Covid-19 were estimated in India (4.07 million [3.71-4.36])," the paper says.



MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VIATION
SENSEX	55550.30	↑ 85.91
NIFTY	16630.50	↑ 35.60
DOLLAR	76.90	↓ ₹0.01
EURO	83.95	↑ ₹0.16
GOLD	₹52,557	↓ ₹682
SILVER	₹70,007	↓ ₹464

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	35.9°C	35.2°C
MIN	21.6°C	21.5°C
Humidity	76%	80%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Clear sky mainly	

leisure



AUSTIN BUTLER IN TALKS TO JOIN *DUNE: PART 2*

Elvis star Austin Butler is in talks to join the cast of Denis Villeneuve's *Dune: Part 2* as the antagonist Feyd-Rautha, the sadistic nephew of Baron Vladimir Harkonnen and the heir to the Harkonnen empire.

KATY PERRY WINS APPEAL IN *DARK HORSE* COPYRIGHT SUIT

A federal appeals court ruled in singer Katy Perry's favour in the *Dark Horse* copyright lawsuit against Christian rapper Marcus Gray. Gray, whose stage name is Flame, first sued Perry in 2014, claiming her hit *Dark Horse* was substantially similar to his song *Joyful Noise*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Interactive sessions with people who think like you are on the cards. At last you may have an intimate talk with your beloved and you will get a chance to confide your commitment to the relationship, says Ganesh. You may even express your long-term dreams.

TAURUS
Today, you are likely to be more reckless than ever in splurging your hard earned money. Ganesh strongly advises you to leave your credit card at home today. Using it for making purchases will only make matters worse. Money wise, be very careful in your business dealings, about the commitments you make.

GEMINI
You will feel physical and mental excitement and emotions today. You may take part in some competition and will seek to improve your self-esteem by performing physically in it. Your intellectual capacity will be on display in the work that you do, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Today is a day for taking things slowly, especially on the business front. This applies the most to the stockbrokers and also others who invest in stocks or shares on the side. Stars are not so bright today and haste will only worsen the matters. People involved in speculation, chance games and shifty markets may feel frustrated.

LEO
You want to make your personal relationships conflict free and hence will attempt to resolve the conflicts which are within you. You will need to adopt a compromising attitude in life. It is best to stay away from risky financial investments today. An event which will make you happy will occur at the end of the day, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Take time off all by yourself and introspect today, says Ganesh. Office cubicle looks set to be a war front and pay due attention there, lest things turn to be more difficult, advises Ganesh. New love may just blossom today, and you may even enjoy a nice quiet evening with friends.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will showcase your ability and skills today in your work field and impress people. You will develop and express your inner love for art and artistic things and you will purchase a new work of art today. Ganesh showers you with all his blessings.

SCORPIO
Your account balance may suffer suddenly as you decide to loosen your purse strings. You are all set to splurge on your loved ones today, according to Ganesh. However, it is important to remember that the value of money is precious, and once spent it never returns; spend wisely.

SAGITTARIUS
A la phoenix from the ashes, find yourself reborn as the perfect family person. You are bound to shower love and care on your betrothed. Children, too, will receive your share of love, and they will love it. Enjoy spending quality time with your loved one, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
Like you weren't already overworked, new responsibilities will keep you occupied throughout the day, says Ganesh. The excitement with which you work every day will weaken, and eventually die down by the end of the day. This is mainly because you will burn your energy and resources in helping others. But there is a good side to this too. Your social standing will improve dramatically because of your kind nature.

AQUARIUS
You have your head on your shoulders and feet on the ground. Congratulations! You've covered the first step to success. Step two, says Ganesh, involves an inquisitive mind and a questioning attitude. Later, you may resort to shortcuts and compromise a tad in quality.

PISCES
Your fount of creativity spouts everyday like there is no tomorrow. However, you need to be organised and in position to implement all those revolutionary ideas that occur to you in a jiffy, that lesser mortals take aeons to dream up. Your oratory will win you many admirers today, so let go of your inhibitions, says Ganesh.

DEEPIKA calls Shah Rukh India's biggest superstar

Mumbai: Actress Deepika Padukone is currently shooting in Spain with Shah Rukh Khan for *Pathaan*. The duo is reportedly shooting for a song in the scenic locations of Spain. Recently, Deepika spoke about her co-star and called him 'India's biggest superstar'.

In an interview with an international magazine, Deepika recalled her early days as an actor and her first encounter with SRK. She made her big debut alongside Shah Rukh in *Om Shanti Om*.

Deepika shared, "I was almost in a daze when I met SRK, India's biggest Super Star." She further added that she was sitting at the edge of the sofa, being so nervous and couldn't process what was happening.

The actress also said that her first experience was 'almost served to her on a platter'. She said that she was so well presented and so well taken care of that she thought that's just the way it's going to be and the directors would always make sure that I act well, and that my diction is on point and that she is looking amazing. DP said that it took her many films to realize that's not always the case.

AGENCIES



RANGA SANGAM- DAY 3 Generational conflict forms crux of Sambalpuri play *Thip Thip Pani*



A scene from the play staged by Adrushya Natya Ashram, Sambalpur

BHUBANESWAR: Artistes of Adrushya Natya Ashram, Sambalpur presented the play *Thip Thip Pani* here at Rabintra Mandap, on the third evening of *Ranga Sangam*, a five-day state level drama festival.

The event is being organised by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi(OSNA) in collaboration with Odia Language, Literature and Culture department, Government of Odisha.

The play was written and directed by Atish Kumar Sapaty while Girija Shankar Mishra scored the music.

The director, through this Sambalpuri play, sent a message that the gap between older and

younger younger generations get only widened if people overlook the larger picture. At times, an easy solution to a complex problem, which comes from experience, when the youths disrespect the understanding and knowledge of the seniors, the play said. Narendra Behera, Shubham Meher, Aditya Saha, Rahul Gupta, Dadhibaman Panda, Mrutyunjay Panigrahi, Sumitra Mahakud and Pankajini Meher were among the actors who performed on the stage.

OSNA secretary Prabodh Rath, theatre director Abhinna Routray and Odisha Natya Sangh PRO Prakash Maharana were among the dignitaries who were present at the show.

KISS MISS TO MAKE SIVANI'S DREAM COME TRUE

Actress Sivani Sangeeta who will be seen in a challenging character in *Kiss Miss* is over the moon because working with director Sushant Mani was a dream come true for her.

Talking about Mani, Sivani says "Since I made my debut in Odia film-dom, I had a dream to work with Sushant Sir. I was on cloud nine when I was offered the female protagonist's role in *Kiss Miss*. Working with him is no less than a dream for me. He is simply the best at what he does. I am overwhelmed and happy that I am part of the movie."

Not divulging much about her character, Sivani says, "*Kiss Miss* is a sweet love story with a realistic approach towards life. I am playing an aspiring model in the movie who is the love interest of Swaraj."

Produced by Jhillik Bhattacharya, music of the movie is scored by Abhijeet Majumdar. Dialogues have been penned by Sanjeet Rath. Mahurat of the movie



was recently held at Sandy's Tower February 27.

The Kashmir Files: Lending a voice to broken souls

Based on actual incidents and narrated from the Kashmiri Pandit's point of view, director Vivek Agnihotri's *The Kashmir Files* is a dramatised version of events that occurred in 1989.

Told in a non-linear manner, initially, the plot meanders on a jerky note telling about the atrocities perpetrated on Pushkar Nath Pandit (Anupam Kher) and his family. But soon, the tale takes the form of a cathartic film, when Pushkar's four friends reunite after 30 years, at the behest of Krishna (Darshan Kumar), Pushkar's younger grandson, to scatter Pushkar's ashes at his ancestral



Film Review

Together, they represent the pillars of the state, who tactfully decide not to address the elephant in the room, but then how long can one hold up pent-up feelings?

At the dining table, while discussing 'nadr' (lotus stems), Brahma recalls his time spent with Pushkar, and soon their resolution is broken.

Laying the cards on the table, mirroring what happened from the early 1990s till date, and packed with rhetorical questions, the film throws open a Pandora's box.

Pallavi Joshi plays Radhika Menon, a professor at a prestigious Delhi college where Krishna studies and vying to be a student leader. She is the perfect trouble-monger with misplaced confidence, who instigates Krishna.

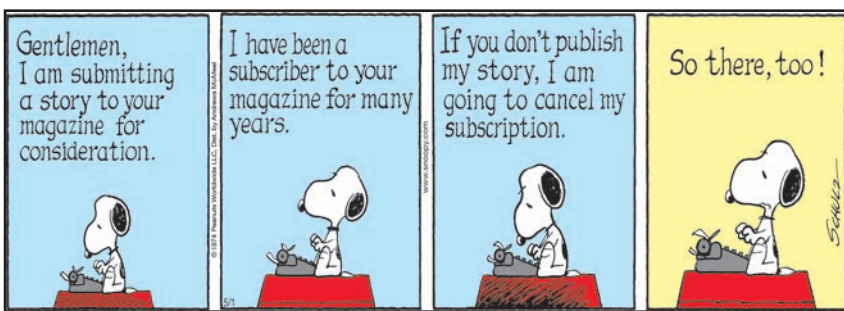
Director: Vivek Agnihotri.
Cast: Mithun Chakraborty, Aaman Iqbal, Anupam Kher, Puneet Issar, Pallavi Joshi and Darshan Kumar.

On the other hand, Anupam Kher puts his soul into his performance and delivers an impressive Pushkar Nath Pandit. Equally remarkable is Mithun Chakraborty. But the actor who leaves an indelible mark on screen is Darshan Kumar, who, as Krishna, is striking, especially during his speech in the climax.

Mounted with ace production values, the visuals, except for a few frames, do not boast of any cinematic brilliance. Nevertheless, the film is relatable, and you get sucked into the narrative.

The Kashmir Files is the voice of tens of thousands of Kashmiri Pandits who were forced to leave their homes.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

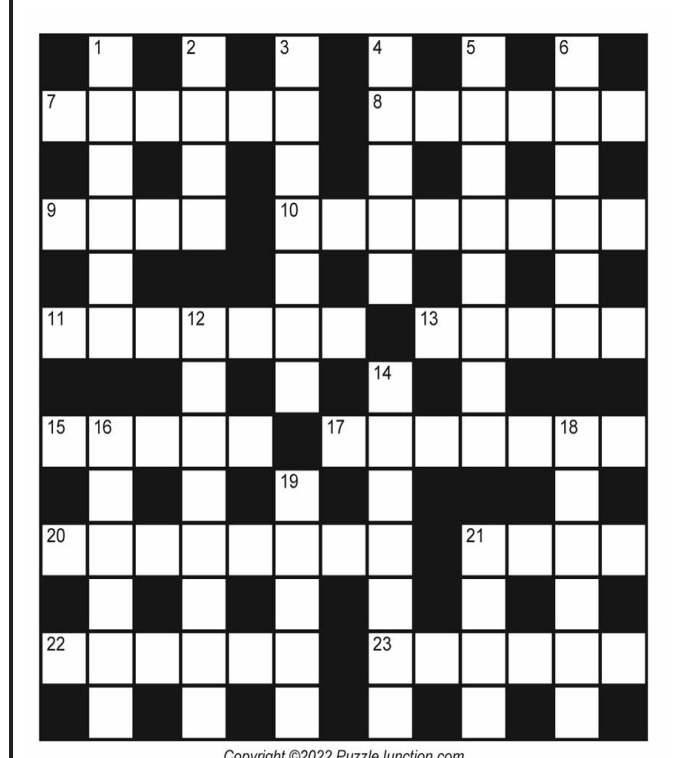


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

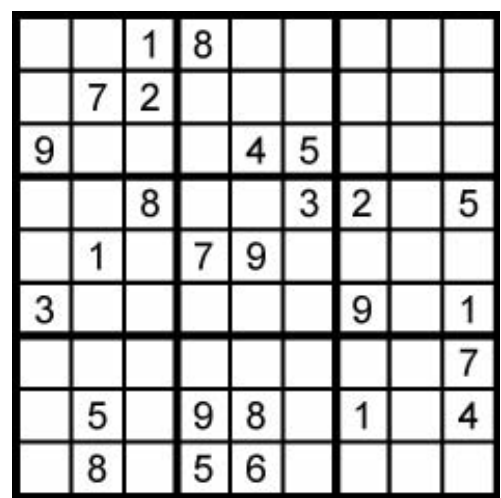


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- Across**
- 7 Acapulco locale
 - 8 January's birthstone
 - 9 Criticise harshly
 - 10 To the point
 - 11 Sleep inhibitors
 - 13 Venomous snake
 - 15 Tuxedo shirt ruffle
 - 17 Jaunt
 - 20 Barge, e.g.
 - 21 Pub features
 - 22 Root vegetable
 - 23 Off the mark
 - 5 Money earner
 - 6 Spirit-rapping session
 - 12 Some rockets
 - 14 Tax accessories (3,4)
 - 16 Not sinking
 - 18 Enlarge
 - 19 Bearded animals
 - 21 Tropical tuber
- Down**
- 1 Make bubbly
 - 2 Prosperous
 - 3 Bravery
 - 4 Light-footed

SUDOKU

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

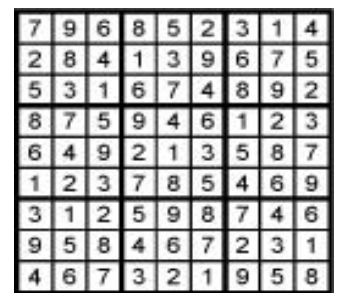


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

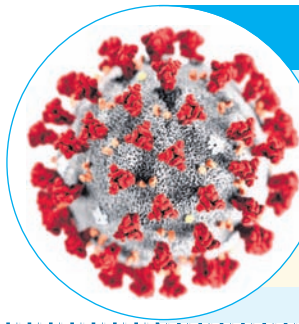
downtown

CAG REPORT

Principal Accountant General (Audit-2) Bibhudutta Basantia presents CAG report to Governor Ganeshi Lal at Raj Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Friday



COVID-19 TRACKER



	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	45,42,98,352	38,84,52,442	60,53,767
India	4,29,84,261	4,24,26,328	5,15,714
Odisha	12,86,457	12,76,402	9,105

Rise above politics, work for all: Naveen to party workers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 11: With his party having swept the recently held Zilla Parishad (ZP) polls, BJD president and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday asked his camp's leaders to work for people at large without taking their political affiliations into consideration.

The CM's diktat to his partymen came amid allegations of post-poll violence by opposition members.

The ruling BJD had last month won 766 of the 852 ZP seats in the state while the opposition BJP and the Congress secured 42 and 37 seats respectively. Independents and other parties bagged seven seats.

During a virtual interaction with panchayat representatives of Hinjili and Seragad blocks of Ganjam district, Patnaik said people have reposed faith in them by voting the BJD to power.

AKADEMI AWARD



Noted Odia poet and Odisha Sahitya Akademi president Hrusikesh Mallick being conferred with Kendra Sahitya Akademi award for his collection of poems 'Sarijathiba Opera' by Akademi president Chandrashekhar Kambara in New Delhi, Friday

Our thrust on quality, transparency & good PR have paid off: Mohanty

Priyadarshini celebrates craftsmanship. It deals in wares rich with traditional styles with contemporary touches, making it a unique brand for ethnic wear. Be it for festive occasions, daily wear or even party wear, one will find unstitched dress materials for all reasons and seasons. In an interview to **Orissa POST**, Priyadarshini's managing partner **Lalendu Mohanty** speaks about its journey, uniqueness and expansion plans. Excerpts:



■ What was the reason behind setting up of Priyadarshini and how has been its journey so far?
Priyadarshini was set up in 1989 to promote and propagate handloom products among the masses. The primary motive was to assist the weavers and fulfill the requirements of locals and tourists. We have been moving ahead on the strength of good response from customers and continuous cooperation from weavers. We hope this trend would continue in future.

■ We have business operations in Bhubaneswar and Puri, two major tourist destinations in Odisha. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused certain problems for us. We are trying to solve these issues. Reduction in the production capacity is hampering our business to some extent. We will devise the expansion plans by taking into account the pandemic situation. Plans are afoot to introduce certain special measures for tourists and domestic customers.

social outfits and fellow businessmen in Bhubaneswar. Sometimes, we also travel outside for business and other works.

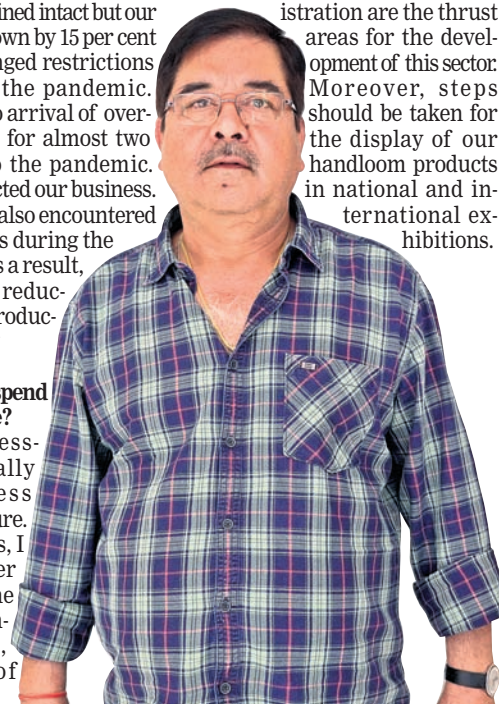
■ What measures should the state government introduce for the growth of handloom sector?

Steps should be taken for the promotion of handloom items being made in different districts of Odisha. There should be proper planning to publicise these products. The availability of modern equipment, infrastructure upgradation, and good coordination between weavers and the local administration are the thrust areas for the development of this sector. Moreover, steps should be taken for the display of our handloom products in national and international exhibitions.

■ What is the USP of Priyadarshini and why customers are drawn to its products?
Priyadarshini has become a one-stop point for handloom products. We have won the confidence of all segments of customers. Here, one can find handloom materials from Sambalpur, Bargarh, Sonepur, Nayagarh, Cuttack and Kalahandi. We have been working hard to fulfill the requirements of our customers.

■ How has been the impact of Covid-19 on your business?
The demand for handloom products has remained intact but our business is down by 15 per cent due to prolonged restrictions induced by the pandemic. There was no arrival of overseas tourists for almost two years due to the pandemic. This has affected our business. Our weavers also encountered certain issues during the pandemic. As a result, there was a reduction in our production capacity.

■ How do you spend your leisure?
As a businessman, I usually get very less time for leisure. Nevertheless, I always prefer to spend time with my family, friends, members of



STUDENTS' DROPOUT OHRC seeks report from 3 depts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has directed the school and mass education department, ST & SC development, minorities & backward classes welfare department and labour and ESI departments to submit a report by April 26, 2022 on dropping of students from schools and their engagement in child labor.

In the letter to three principal secretaries, commission chairperson BK Patel said the matter has been taken up after an application has been filed by Odisha Parents' Federation through its chairman Basudev Bhatta and advisor Manoj Kumar Jena. This is a matter related to dropout of students and they are engaged in child labour. This petition has been filed on behalf of the Odisha Parents' Federation seeking intervention of the commission for proper rehabilitation and their enrollment in government and private schools.

Let notice be issued to the principal secretary to the government,



The federation, in its complaint, said during Covid 19 pandemic, a large number of students left education due to financial problems

As per the allegation, dropout students are engaged as child labourers in hotels, lodges, construction sites, private companies and private houses

school & mass education department, principal secretary to the government, ST & SC development, minorities & backward classes welfare department and principal secretary to the government, labour & ESI department to submit their respective reports by the next date. Order be communicated through speed post/email, the commission said.

The commission's direction came after a complaint was filed by the Odisha Parents Federation chairman Basudev Bhatta and advisor Manoj Kumar Jena. The federation in its complaint to the OHRC said that during Covid 19 period a large number of students left education due to financial problems of their families. We have witnessed

dropout students are engaged as child laborer in different dhabas, hotels, lodges, construction sites, private companies and private houses.

Bhatta said family members of these students were compelled to engage them in different works. They cannot express their problems before officials as their parents are not in a position to provide education to them without the support of the government. They have expressed before us how they have been suppressed and exploited by employers' organizations. Department of school & mass education and ST & SC development, minorities & backward classes welfare department were silent to protect the rights of students during & post COVID-19 period. The labour & ESI department was not able to stop these violations. They will take strong action as per existing law but no such action had been taken or dropout students rescued by them.

The departments were urged to raid all hhabas, hotels, lodges, construction sites, private companies and rescue these students and ensure their proper rehabilitation.

Grant paid holiday to staff on poll day: Govt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: In a bid to facilitate voters to exercise their franchise in the Urban Local Body (ULB) elections, the state government Friday asked the authorities to grant paid holiday to their employees on the poll day.

Following the State Election Commission (SEC) recommendation, Labour and ESI additional secretary Niti Ranjan Sen has written to the authorities including all Revenue Divisional Commissioners (RDCs),

District Collectors, PSUs, business and industrial undertakings covered under the

URBAN POLLS

Labour Act in this regard. "All business, trade, industrial undertakings and establishments are instructed to grant paid holiday to their employees on the date of polling," Sen said, warning that any violation of the instruction will be treated as an offence. Written application by employees will be sufficient to

show their enrolment in a particular municipality/NAC/municipal corporation, he added.

Meanwhile, the training of 19 senior officers, who have been appointed as expenditure observers for the urban polls, completed Friday. The officers will discharge their duty in allotted districts from March 15 to 22, it was learnt.

Notably, elections to the 109 ULBs including 47 municipalities, 59 NACs and three municipal corporations of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur will be held from 8am to 5pm March 24.

Fake doc to undergo polygraph test

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The commissionerate police will conduct a polygraph test (lie detection test) on serial impostor and conman Ramesh Chandra Swain following an approval in this regard from a local court here.

The lie detection test will be carried out at the State Forensic Science Laboratory (SFSL) here March 16, sources said.



The Commissionerate Police had earlier sought the SDJM court's permission to conduct polygraph test on Swain, who was arrested for duping sev-

eral women of lakhs of rupees after fraudulently marrying them.

Meanwhile, the Mahila police station here registered a fresh case against Swain on the basis of a complaint lodged by a woman from Amritsar in Punjab. Swain came into contact with the woman through a matrimonial site in 2018. Later, the victim and Swain tied the nuptial knot at a Gurudwara in Amritsar.

The victim claimed that Swain duped

her of Rs 9.50 lakh on the pretext of buying a farmhouse in Odisha. He had also pocketed Rs 11 lakh from the Gurudwara committee by promising to arrange a licence for the setting up of a medical and nursing college in Punjab. Swain, impersonating as a deputy director of Union Health Ministry, cheated several people across the country. The fake doctor was also running several clinics at different places in Odisha.

'Eating several protein foods together can help lower BP'

Finding it hard to regulate your hypertension? Eating a balanced diet, including protein from a variety of sources, may help adults lower the risk of developing high blood pressure, according to new research.

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is one of the leading contributors to cardiovascular disease. When left untreated, high blood pressure damages the circulatory system and is a significant contributing factor to heart attack, stroke and other health conditions.

The study, published in the journal Hypertension, showed that those people who ate four or more protein foods which include whole grains, refined grains, processed red meat, un-

processed red meat, poultry, fish, egg and legumes, had a 66 per cent lower risk of developing high blood pressure compared to those who ate less than two.

"The heart health message is that consuming a balanced diet with proteins from various different sources, rather than focusing on a single source of dietary protein, may help to prevent the development of high blood pressure," said Xianhui Qin, from the National Clinical Research Centre for Kidney Disease at Nanfang Hospital, Southern Medical University in China. "Nutrition may be an easily accessible and effective measure to fight against hypertension. Along with fat and carbohydrates, protein

is one of the three basic macronutrients," Qin added.

There is a strong association between poor diet quality and increased risk of cardiovascular disease and death from cardiovascular disease. In its 2021 dietary guidance to improve cardiovascular health, the American Heart Association advises people eat healthy sources of protein, mostly from plants and may include seafood and low-fat or fat-free dairy products, and, if desired, lean cuts and unprocessed forms of meat or poultry.

The American Heart Association also recommends eating one to two servings, or 5.5 ounces, of protein daily

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₹119cr Nabard credit line to state's fisheries sector

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The regional office of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) Friday signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the state government under the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF). Under the agreement, the Nabard has approved loans to the tune of Rs119.80 crore for the development of fisheries and animal husbandry sector.



of the state government and Nabard.

The MoA was signed by finance department Principal Secretary Vishal Kumar Dev and Nabard Chief General Manager (CGM) Udayabhaskar in the presence of Principal Secretary AH&FRD R Raghu Prasad and senior officials

modalities of FIDF. "The FIDF will help create infrastructure in marine and inland fisheries sectors and augment the fish production in Odisha," said the Nabard CGM.

Dev opined that the MoA will bring a revolutionary change in the fisheries sector of Odisha. He also assured all cooperation in this regard from the state government.

Earlier, the Nabard had sanctioned assistance of Rs 951 crore under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) to the state for 176 rural road projects, to be implemented by Rural Development department in all the 30 districts. The road projects with a combined length of 1,434 km will improve rural road connectivity for 9.92 lakh people of 959 villages.



An artisan gives finishing touches to a mural in Unit-III area of Bhubaneswar as state celebrates Shastriya Odia Bhasa Divas Friday

Odisha sees lowest Cov cases in a year

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 11: Odisha recorded 104 new coronavirus cases Friday, the lowest single-day spike in nearly a year, while two patients, including a teenager, succumbed to the pathogen, the Health department said.

The daily positivity rate was 0.22 per cent and 24 children were among the newly infected, it said, adding that 48,294 samples were tested in the past 24 hours, a bulletin stated. On March 21 last year, the cases were lower than the current single-day count when there were 98 infections. The state had logged 108 infections and a fatality death Thursday. A 15-year-old boy was among the two deaths in Sundargarh district. The toll rose to 9,105 and these are confirmed as Covid deaths after an audit. Fifty-three other coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities so far, according to data.

There are 1,014 active Covid-19 cases and 135 patients recovered in the previous day. The Covid-19 tally rose to 12,86,457, it added.

State level training on deaf blindness

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: Aaina in collaboration with Sense International India organised a state level training programme on deaf blindness at Center for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) Bhubaneswar Friday.

The programme was attended by 30 teachers working under Samagra Sikhya Abhiyan from Khurda and Cuttack districts. They were trained on deaf blindness and curriculum adaptation in an inclusive set up.

The inaugural function was attended by Ashok Kumar Mohapatra, state IED coordinator, OSEPA, Sanyas Kumar Behera, DSSO headquarters, Khurda, Jitendra Kumar Bishwal, activist and film personality Sneha Mishra, secretary, Aaina, and others.

The guests inaugurated the training program and reflected on how children with deaf blindness can be educated, how they can be made independent.

Awareness programme for women entrepreneurs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The World Trade Center, Bhubaneswar in association with MSME DI, Cuttack under the Ministry of MSME Friday organised a programme for women entrepreneurs at IDCO Tower here.

The motive of the programme was to provide an effective platform to women entrepreneurs to speak about their products/services before a captive audience of prospective clients including PSUs and corporate houses.

This apart, it provided them an opportunity to gain understanding on various schemes of the ministry of MSME and modalities for availing finance from banks.

WTC, Bhubaneswar Women



Forum convener Jyoshna Das, Mahila Atmanibhar Abhiyan chairperson and advisor to WTC Women Forum Dr Rina Routray, IEDS Joint Director PK Gupta, AGM of SBI, Bhubaneswar Manoranjan Pradhan and Batol Systems Private Limited CEO

Ashwini Rath were present on the occasion.

WTC, Bhubaneswar has been actively involved as a trade facilitation body to promote the state globally and provide hand-holding facilities to local MSMEs.

RTOs to accept medical certificate for DLs online

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The State Transport Authority (STA) Friday asked the Regional Transport Offices (RTOs) to accept medical certificates from Driving License (DL) applicants online.

According to the STA, the decision to accept medical certificate from persons applying for DLs or its renewal electronically has been taken under the 5T policy of the state government. The move aims at improving the ease of getting DLs, getting better user experience and reducing footfall at RTOs.

Necessary facility has been developed in Sarathi portal where license applicants can directly get medical certificates hassle free.

"Doctors will be provided with the portal's login credentials so that they can upload the applicant's certificate on Sarathi portal directly. The move will also ensure that no one upload a fake medical certificate to get a DL," said an official.

KVK Khurda gets tech demo facility



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: A state-of-the-art Technology Demonstration Facility was inaugurated at the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) in Khurda Friday.

Inaugurated by Department of Agricultural Research and Education Secretary and ICAR Director General Trilochan Mohapatra, the facility has demonstration units for mushroom production, food processing and poultry production. Built with financial support from Remunerative Approach for Agriculture and Allied Sector Rejuvenation, the facility will be used for imparting skill training to farmers and farmwomen as well.

Earlier in the day, Mohapatra visited an exhibition at the KVK Khurda where value-added agriculture products, vegetables, fishes, honey, vermi-compost, handicrafts and applique items were on display by 25 women selfhelp groups (SHGs) from different blocks of Khurda.

During interaction with farmers and farmwomen, Mohapatra urged the KVK to help the SHGs in improving their marketing skills and organise them to form as collectives

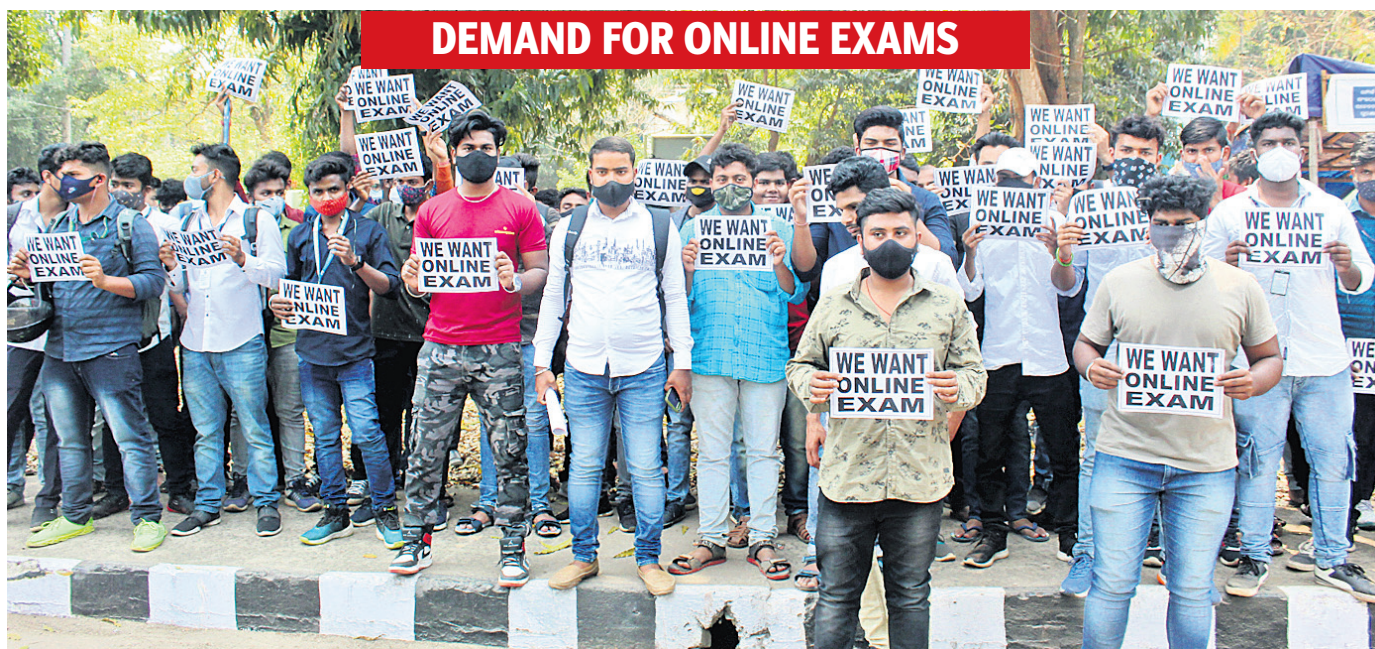
The Centre has set a target of creating 10,000 FPOs by 2025 and KVKs would play a key role in mobilizing farmers and providing technical support as well

such as farmer producer organisations (FPOs) in order to boost their operations.

He said the Centre has set a target of creating 10,000 FPOs by 2025 and KVKs would play a key role in mobilizing farmers and providing technical support as well.

Two award winning farmers—Batakrushna Sahoo who got Padmashree (2020) and Surendra Bhol who bagged IARI Innovative Farmer (2020)—were felicitated on the occasion.

Deputy Director General (Fisheries Science) JK Jena, ADG (Inland Fisheries) BP Mohanty, ICAR- CIFA Director SK Swain and other senior officials of ICAR-CIFA and KVK Khurda were also present on the occasion.



Members of BPUT Students' Association stage a demonstration in PMG area of Bhubaneswar, Friday, demanding online examinations

OP PHOTO

Need to reorient incentives to promote trees outside forests: WRI India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Growing trees outside forests (ToF) presents a significant environment and economic opportunity in India, but there is a need for shifting of incentives to protect existing trees outside forests besides improving research around native tree species, according to a latest study by WRI India.

The study, which analysed 16 national and 30 state-level policies and schemes for expansion of ToF in six states, suggested developing landscape-level restoration strategies and plans, improving the enabling environment to motivate farmers and other practitioners to protect and expand ToF systems.

The study analysed incentives implementation in Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha,

Punjab, and Telangana to identify enabling conditions that can spur ToF expansion as well as barriers that impede implementation.

After unveiling the study, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajive Kumar said in a statement that around 29.38 million hectares of land in India has potential for scaling ToF systems, as estimated by the Forest Survey of India in 2019.

While incentives on their own cannot achieve ToF goals, they are instruments that can play a pivotal role as a powerful policy lever, he said.

According to the study Farmers highlighted the lack of incentives for protecting existing ToF systems and promoting traditional ToF practices with native tree species.

Such native systems are prioritized by women and other marginalized people who are de-



pendent on these multipurpose trees for food, fuelwood, fodder, and non-timber forest produce (NTFP), it said.

Lack of quality planting material, continuing ambiguities regarding permits for harvest and transit of farm-grown timber across

state lines, and poorly developed value chains were highlighted by stakeholders as disincentives preventing farmers from taking up ToF systems.

Moreover, lack of attention to tree tenure dissuaded tenant farmers and women from practicing

ToF interventions, the study said. "Based on our study, we recommend reorienting incentives to protect existing ToF, promoting traditional ToF models, and improving research and extensions services around native tree species," it said.

The reoriented incentives can include targeted provisions for women and marginalized groups (e.g., Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe) that are often the primary practitioners and beneficiaries of traditional ToF systems.

Implementing certification standards for farm-grown timber can address transit-related challenges. Promoting participation of NGOs and research organizations through grants or inclusive governance models can provide farmers with the necessary technical assistance for successfully implementing ToF systems.

Strengthening the role of the private sector, establishing value chains, and fostering ToF entrepreneurs can also inspire farmers to take up tree-based interventions, it said.

According to the study, India's ToF policies/schemes offer at least seven types of monetary and three types of non-monetary incentives to spur ToF.

Monetary incentives include input subsidies, performance-based payments, grants, credit, benefit sharing, minimum support price, and insurance, while the non-monetary incentives are supply chain infrastructure, regulatory incentives, and technical assistance.

Agroforestry, which includes trees on bunds or boundaries, farm forestry, fruit orchards, and agri-horti forestry, emerged as the most common ToF system promoted by the policies/schemes.

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Dhenkanal: 7 reserve forests put in red zone

The fear assumes significance as Odisha reported 51,968 forest fires, the highest in the country, from November 2020 to June 2021, according to a report prepared by the MoEFCC

ment is mobilising every resource to ensure that the forest areas in the district do not see a recurrence of last year's inferno.

The fear assumes significance as Odisha reported 51,968 forest fires from November 2020 to June 2021. The number was also the highest in the country for the period. The startling facts emerged from a report prepared by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

Reports said that eight forest ranges - the Kamakhyanager east and west ranges, Ranjagad reserve forest, Anantapur reserve forest under Mahabirod range, Kandhra reserve forest, Bampha reserve forest, Nandinia reserve forest under Hindol range, Kapilash reserve forest under Kapilash range and the Saptasajya reserve forest under Sadar forest range - catch fire as soon as summer starts.

The forest department has earmarked 17 reserve forest areas under the above forest ranges as highly sensitive areas. Among them, seven reserve forests have been included in the red zone. Similarly, 10 jungles like Sunajhari, Maulabhanja, Sundarakhola, Aswakhola, Matiamunda, and the forest on the fringes of Talcher have been in-



A wildfire spread in Kuliha reserve forest in Balasore, Friday OP PHOTO

cluded in pink zones.

This apart, forest officials are also keeping an eye on 152 villages adjoining these 17 reserve forests as fire is likely to spread to these villages. Last year, many houses were burnt due to spread of fire from these jungles.

This year, the district administration and forest department have already started preparing to avoid the loss arising out of forest fire. District Collector Saroj Kumar Sethi has directed to prepare a blueprint to contain forest fire.

The forest officials have started conducting awareness drives in every village through public ad-

dress systems. One dedicated vehicle has been engaged in every zone while the forests vulnerable to wildfire are under watch through the use of satellites.

The forest officials are also taking the help of three drone cameras to collect information on wildlife and biological diversity in Kapilash sanctuary. As many as 58 blowers costing ₹51,000 each have been purchased to contain forest fire.

When contacted, Divisional Forest Officer Prakash Chand Gogineni said a special action plan has been prepared to contain wildfire this year. Seven reserve forests have been kept in the red zone and 10

COUNTERMEASURES

The forest officials have started conducting awareness drives in every village through public address systems

The forest officials are also taking the help of three drone cameras to collect information on wildlife and biological diversity in Kapilash sanctuary

As many as 58 blowers costing ₹51,000 each have been purchased to contain forest fire

TPWODL GM under vig lens



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, March 11: Vigilance sleuths Friday conducted simultaneous raids on the properties of Santosh Kumar Darjee, General Manager of Tata Power Western Odisha Distribution Limited (TPWODL), Burla Corporate Office in Sambalpur on charges of accumulating disproportionate assets.

The State Vigilance team conducting the searches is being led by a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), six Inspectors, two Assistant Sub Inspectors (ASIs) and other staff.

On the strength of search warrants issued by Vigilance Special Judge, Sambalpur, the sleuths conducted raids at three places including Darjee's residential building at Pradhanpara,

office at Burla Corporate Office and native village at Attabira, Bargharh.

The sleuths have unearthed cash over ₹7,20,360 from his residence which is likely to increase. It is suspected that Darjee has purchased assets outside the state as well. Other assets unearthed so far include: a duplex house in his wife's name in the prime area of Raipur at Sector 12, Atal Nagar; a palatial double-storied building at Sambalpur; 2 plots in prime area of Ainthapali, Sambalpur; two four-wheelers (Volkswagen and Hyundai Verna) worth approx ₹20.59 lakh and two two-wheelers (Yamaha R-3, Suzuki Burgman Street) worth approx ₹4.61 lakh.

Meanwhile, two lockers at Axis and HDFC banks including deposits are under verification, sources said.

Poll to naib sarpanch: Locals attack police; cop breaks hand

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patana, March 11: Two groups in Raidiha panchayat under Patana block in Keonjhar clashed while election for the post of naib sarpanch was on. Enraged people attacked a cop of Saharapada police outpost, leaving him critically injured. OIC Shibaprasad Aicha broke his right hand in the attack, and was later admitted to Karanjia sub-divisional hospital. This apart, four other policemen were injured.

Tension flared up when over 200 people from 11 villages opposed the



candidature of Namita Mohant for naib sarpanch. As police came to intervene, angry people hurled stones and chips at police officials.

Following the incident, police have registered a case in this regard, arrested 13 people including three women and seized many bikes.

4 WARD MEMBERS ABDUCTED

BOLANGIR/JAJPUR/BHADRAK: Four ward members have been allegedly kidnapped before the election of Naib Sarpanchs in three separate incidents in Bolangir, Jajpur and Bhadrak districts, Friday. In the first incident, two ward members of Sahajbahal panchayat under Deogaon police limits in Bolangir district have been allegedly kidnapped. A complaint has been lodged in this connection by a local Nirupama Mahanand and the probe is on. As per the complaint, two ward members Yudhishtir Dang and Narayan Bhoi have been kidnapped by four persons Pradyumna Hota, Sudhir Hota, Lochan Joshi and Mahendra Bhoi. In another incident from Bhadrak, Congress workers gheraoed a police station over the alleged kidnapping of a ward member in Bansada panchayat under Chandbali block, demanding immediate rescue of ward member Chandan Mahalik and action against the kidnappers. Later, Chandan's wife lodged an FIR in this regard.

Phenyl-laced food leaves 17 students ill

RUPSA: As many as 17 girl students of a private college at Rupsa in Balasore district were taken ill minutes after they allegedly consumed phenyl-laced food, Friday. Condition of six of them is stated to be critical. The critically ill students were first rushed to the Community Health Centre at Rupsa and later shifted to the district headquarters hospital. Reports said while preparing food for the students at Jodendra Anchalika College in Rupsa, the cook had mistakenly added phenyl to the daal.



OP PHOTO



SPORTS MEET

Students took out a 'marsh rally' on the inaugural day of the state-level inter-university sports competition organised by Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University in Baripada, Friday OP PHOTO

SHORT TAKES

Minor girl raped in forest; accused held

Sundargarh: A minor girl was allegedly raped in a forest under Kinjirikela police limits in Sundargarh district. The incident took place Wednesday, but the matter came to the fore Friday following a complaint. According to reports, the minor girl had gone to the forest to collect firewood when a man raped her. The victim narrated the incident before her parents and the villagers. A complaint was filed with the police station. Police registered a case and arrested the accused Anil Tirkey of Nuadihi village. The victim and the accused were medically examined.

Six bogies of goods train derailed

Koraput: Six bogies of a goods train derailed at Bheja near Padua station in Koraput in the wee hours Friday. Train services between Koraput and Visakhapatnam were disrupted for over 11 hours. The train was carrying iron ore from Kirandul to Visakhapatnam when the mishap took place at around 3am. A few trains running on the route were cancelled and rescheduled following the mishap. A team of railway staff from Koraput was pressed into service for restoration.

Kendrapara tomato farmers forced to go for distress sale



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, March 11: A sharp drop in price of tomatoes has hit the farmers hard in this district, a report said.

The vegetable was being sold at very high price of ₹50 to ₹60 per kg two months back. However, farmers are now selling tomato to traders at ₹3 per kg as the price has dropped significantly.

Things have come to such a pass that heaps of tomatoes are lying unsold at the local haats as supply exceeds the demand. Even vegetable sellers are finding it difficult to clear off their stocks. Farmers alleged that this has happened due to lack of cold storage and government mandis in the district and they are forced to resort to distress sale. Excess stocks could be sold to sauce and ketchup manufacturing units.

Ratikanta Sahu, a farmer of Nahang under Derabish block, said this year there has been a bumper harvest. However, the farmers are facing trouble in selling the produce due to lack of proper mar-

keting facilities.

The vegetable is now being sold at ₹6 per kg in the market but traders are only paying them ₹300 per quintal. They are forced to resort to distress sale as there is no provision of conservation for their harvest. He apprehended he will incur a loss of around ₹10,000 this year.

Biren Kumar Das of Pattamundai said several migrants returned to the district due to spread of Covid-19. Tomato price was then rising for which the local farmers as well as migrants cultivated the crop in 30,000 hectare of land.

The farmers reaped a bumper harvest but have failed to conserve it due to lack of cold storages. The tomato price has fallen as the government is unable to provide marketing facilities.

Ratanlal Samal, a local entrepreneur, said, "Farmers resort to distress sale after harvest of tomato and potato for lack of marketing facilities." He contacted several banks and the district industries centre (DIC) for a loan to establish a sauce and potato chips manufacturing unit, but failed to avail a loan.

Farmer leader Gayadhar Dhal said, "There is very little help available from the government. The problem can be resolved if the government establishes cold storages, food processing units and government mandis in the district."

Sub-Collector Niranjan Behera said, "The state government is laying stress on construction of rural cold storages and recently a solar powered cold storage was inaugurated at Chandanpur in Kendrapara block. Moreover, 50 per cent subsidy is being provided to the farmers if they construct a cold storage at their residences."

EAST COAST RAILWAY

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Dy. Chief Engineer/TP, Bhubaneswar

Union Bank of India REGIONAL OFFICE: CUTTACK M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar- 751003

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property) (RULE 8(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES - 2002) Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India, CDA BIDANASI BRANCH, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (second) Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower/Guarantor in loan A/c mentioned below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrower/Guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Union Bank of India, CDA BIDANASI BRANCH for an amount mentioned below with interest thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to the Borrower to redeem the secured assets.

CDA BIDANASI BRANCH/ Name of Borrower/Guarantor	Liabilities due as per Notice (in ₹)	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession	Description of Immovable Property
Borrower: M/s. Ambika Mobiles, Prop.: M/s. Smruti Sangeeta Mohapatra, Guarantor: Mr. Asutosh Mohapatra, S/o.: Krishnananda Mohapatra	₹45,20,298.08 as on 30.04.2018 with further interest, cost & expenses	14.05.2018/ 09.03.2022	All that piece and parcel of Residential Land at Plot No.: 1333/2142, Khata No.: 417/336, Mouza: Dholapasi, Dhenkanal Sadar, Dist.: Dhenkanal, State: Odisha, Area: Ac. 0.17 Dec., standing in the name of Mr. Asutosh Mohapatra, Bounded by North: Pravat Sahoo, South: Road, East: Canal, West: Bhagabat Prusty

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 11.03.2022 Sd/- Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India

Chola Enter a better life CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED Corporate Office : 1st Floor, 'Dare House', No. 2, N. S. C. Bose Road, Chennai - 600 001 Branch Office : Annapurna Complex, 559, Lewis Road, Cuttack-Puri Road, Bhubaneswar - 751014

WHEREAS the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 hereinafter called the Act and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest [Enforcement] Rules, 2002 issued demand notices on the dates mentioned against each account calling upon the respective borrowers, to repay the outstanding amount with interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers in particular and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties mortgaged with the Company described herein below on the respective dates mentioned against each account in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 9 of the Rules made there under. The borrowers in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties mentioned herein below and any such dealings will be subject to the charge of Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited for an amount mentioned against each account along with interest and other charges. Under section 13 [8] of the Securitisation Act, the borrowers can redeem the secured asset by payment of the entire outstanding including all costs, charges and expenses before notification of sale.

Sl. No.	NAME AND ADDRESS OF BORROWER & LOAN ACCOUNT NUMBER	DETAILS OF PROPERTY POSSESSED	A) DATE OF DEMAND NOTICE B) OUTSTANDING AMOUNT C) DATE OF POSSESSION
1.	Loan Account Nos :XOHEBHU00002100844, XHOCEUK00002508251 & HE02CUK00000002241 1. Sujata Pattanaik 2. Debdas Pattanaik Both are residing at : Aurnodaya Nagar Arunodaya Market, Cuttack Sadar, Cuttack Cuttack Sadar - 753012 3. Smariton Laboratories Private Limited Plot No. 52/B/103, Lalbahadur Lane, Arunodaya Nagar, Cuttack Sadar - 753012	Khata No. 527/201, Plot No. 1291/1601, Mouza - Cuttack Sahar Unit No. 38 Arunodaya Nagar, Tahasil - Cuttack & No. 229, P. S. - Madhupatana & 05, District - Cuttack measuring an Area of Ac. 0.034 Decimal having KISSAM Gharabari - II, Bounded by Property Having Plot No. 447/2150 North : Road, South : Pratima Mohapatra & Swadhinbala Mohanty, East : Swadhinbala Mohanty, West : Gunee Pradhan.	A) 16.11.2021 B) Rs. 76,75,343.02 (Rupees Seventy Six Lakhs Seventy Five Thousand Three Hundred Forty Three and Two Paisa Only) as on 15.11.2021 and interest thereon C) 08.03.2022
2.	Loan Account Nos :XOHECUK00003066709 1. Basant Kumar Ojha 2. Ranjeeta Ojha Both are residing at : Plot No. 778, Tala Sahi, Jagamara, Bhubaneswar - 751030 3. M/s. Sindoor Shoes Shop Plot No. 543, Jagamara, Bhubaneswar Bhubaneswar - 751030	All that piece and parcel of the property situated at District - Kurda, Tahasil - Bhubaneswar, SRO - Khandagiri, P. S. New Capital, P. S. No. 38 Mouza - Bhubaneswar, Sahara Unit No. 20 Jagamara, Settlement Khata No. 514, Plot No. 778 area Ac.0.036 Dec. out of area Ac. 0.108 Dec. with Status - Stitiban, KISSAM - Gharabari - 2 (Homestead) bounded on the North by Sarath Chandra Ojha, South by Road, East by Sarath Chandra Ojha, West by Plot Nos. 2662 and 2663.	A) 09.07.2021 B) Rs. 31,32,458.26 (Rupees Thirty One Lakhs Thirty Two Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Eight and Twenty Six Paisa Only) as on 09.07.2021 respectively and interest thereon. C) 09.03.2022

Date : 12.03.2022 Place : Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Authorised Officer Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited



Do not belong to the past
dawns, but to the noons
of future



SRI AUROBINDO

Too Many Chiefs

Whistleblower Haryana IAS officer Ashok Khemka, who has the dubious distinction of being one of the most transferred babus in the country (54 times), has been promoted to the apex scale of chief secretary after 30 years of service. This is remarkable considering that he has constantly been at odds with practically every political dispensation in the state.

But there is something even more remarkable going on in Haryana. Khemka is not alone to get promoted to the apex scale – six other IAS officers of the 1991 batch too were promoted, raising the total number of such officers to 20! Besides Khemka, the officers are Vineet Garg, Anil Malik, Ms G Anupama, AK Singh, Shrikant Walgad and Abhilash Likhli.

Given that Haryana has a total cadre strength of 205 posts, including 44 posts earmarked for central deputation, the concentration of so many babus at the top of the state hierarchy should raise questions.

The Indian bureaucracy has often been called 'top-heavy', and not without reason. The Haryana example is not unique – apparently, this trend has become more pronounced throughout the country. Observers point out that this is a distortion – going by the book, the state government cannot have more than six IAS officers in the apex scale. But clearly, it suits governments to ignore the rules.

Centre changes deputation rules for DIG-level officers

The proposal to amend the All India Service Rules which allow the Centre to summon any IAS, IPS or IFS officer on Central deputation, with or without the state's consent, has already riled up the governments in Opposition-ruled states.



BABUDOM BYTES

Dilip Cherian

Undeterred, the Centre has now dropped the empanelment rule for central deputation of DIG-level IPS officers.

The rule was changed apparently to widen the pool of DIG-level police officers for central deputation and try and fill the many vacancies in the central police organisations and the Central Armed Police Forces. The situation is indeed grave – nearly half of all DIG-level posts reserved for IPS officers at the Centre are vacant. Against 252 sanctioned posts of DIGs for IPS cadre, there are 118 vacancies.

Sources have informed DKB that while the states will have to relieve such officers before they can join the Centre, some fear that this is another attempt by the Centre to increase its own powers over officers serving in the state at the cost of the state governments. The earlier proposal on amending deputation rules for IAS officers drew the expected flak from some states who have claimed that the move would weaken the federal structure of the Constitution. This too may face similar resistance.

Winds of change in Rail Bhavan

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has kickstarted the much-awaited reorganisation of Indian Railways to improve efficiency and remove the silos within the management structure. Two years after the Centre sanctioned the merger of the eight existing services of Indian Railways into a single entity, Vaishnaw has announced the creation of the Indian Railways Management Service (IRMS).

The IRMS proposal had been pending alongside other key reforms including the introduction of a corporate accounting system and the creation of an independent rail regulator to determine passenger and freight tariffs, among others.

For IRMS, recruitment will be conducted through a common examination conducted by the UPSC along with other All India Service officers, where candidates will indicate their preferred area of expertise. So far, recruitment to the Railways was either through UPSC for traffic and administrative staff, through joint engineering services examination, or directly through the Indian Railways Institute in Jamalpur.

However, sources say that there are still some details that have yet to emerge. There is no clarity as of now on how the seniority, pay and promotions of existing Class A officers will be determined in the new system. That is what Vaishnaw, Railway Board Chairman and CEO VK Tripathi, and senior Railway officials will have to spell out now, even as they finalise a policy to promote private sector R&D in railways.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

- Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference. **WINSTON CHURCHILL**
- Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value. **ALBERT EINSTEIN**
- Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. **NELSON MANDELA**

WORDSWORTH

Activistat

Several recently reported research findings suggest that there's a setting in the brain that determines how active each of us is going to be or wants to be. The EarlyBird project at the Peninsula Medical School in Devon, led by Professor Terence Wilkin, is following the progress of a group of 300 British children from age 5 to age 16, monitoring their activity levels and metabolism as they grow up. Although children vary a lot in how active they are (Prof Wilkin's group found a four-fold variation between children in their test subjects), each child is consistent in how active he or she is day-to-day. This doesn't depend on how much organised physical activity there is at school, or on daily routine, socio-economic status or background. If children are more active at school, they're less so at home and vice versa. In particular, confounding a popular view, how much TV a child watches didn't affect how much exercise he or she takes. One implication is that you can't necessarily assume that obese children are that way because they're sedentary. Professor Wilkin coined activistat for the mechanism in the brain – probably in the hypothalamus – that sets energy expenditure and hence physical activity for an individual. The word comes from activity plus thermostat, a parallel formation to appetite, a known brain mechanism that controls appetite. Activistat is first recorded in print in The Journal of Diabetes Nursing in 2005. This activistat, like a thermostat, will adjust your energy expenditure down when it thinks you have been too active, and up when you haven't been active enough, says The Guardian. The activistat hypothesis emerged after trials suggested that no matter how much or how little exercise children were offered, they found their own level. "Like horses brought to water," says Professor Wilkin.

LOL

The preacher buys a parrot

A preacher is buying a parrot. "Are you sure it doesn't scream, yell, or swear?" asked the preacher. "Oh absolutely. It's a religious parrot," the storekeeper assures him. "Do you see those strings on his legs? When you



pull the right one, he recites the lord's prayer, and when you pull on the left he recites the 23rd Psalm." "Wonderful!" says the preacher, "but what happens if you pull both strings?" "I fall off my perch, you stupid fool!" screeched the parrot.

FOCUS UKRAINE INVASION

PUTIN & RISK OF WW-III

Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24 was the beginning of a third world war that has the potential to destroy our civilization. The invasion was preceded by a long meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping on February 4 – the beginning of the Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations and the Beijing Winter Olympic Games. At the end of that meeting, the two men released a 5,000-word, carefully drafted document announcing a close partnership between their countries. The document is stronger than any treaty and must have required detailed negotiations in advance.

I was surprised that Xi appeared to have given Putin carte blanche to invade and wage war against Ukraine. He must be very confident that his confirmation as China's ruler for life later this year will be a mere formality. Having concentrated all power in his own hands, Xi has carefully scripted the scenario by which he will be elevated to the level of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping.

Having obtained Xi's backing, Putin set about realizing his life's dream with incredible brutality. Approaching the age of 70, Putin feels that if he is going to make his mark on Russian history it is now or never. But his concept of Russia's role in the world is warped. He seems to believe that the Russian people need a Czar whom they can follow blindly. That is the direct opposite of a democratic society, and it is a vision that distorts the Russian 'soul,' which is emotional to the point of sentimentality.

As a child, I had many encounters with Russian soldiers when they occupied Hungary in 1945. I learned that they would share their last piece of bread with you if you appealed to them. Later, at the beginning of the 1980s, I embarked on what I call my political philanthropy.

First, I set up a foundation in my native Hungary, and then I actively participated in the disintegration of the Soviet empire. When Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985, the disintegration had already begun. I set up a foundation in Russia, and then did the same in each of the successor states. In Ukraine, I established a foundation even before it became an independent



Vladimir Putin used to be a canny KGB operator, but he seems to have changed recently. Having developed an idée fixe, he appears to have lost touch with reality. He certainly misjudged the situation in Ukraine.

country. I also visited China in 1984, where I was the first foreigner allowed to set up a foundation (which I closed in 1989, just before the Tiananmen Square massacre).

I don't know Putin personally, but I have watched his rise very closely, aware of his ruthlessness. He reduced the capital of Chechnya, Grozny, to rubble, just as he is currently threatening to do to the capital of Ukraine, Kyiv.

Putin used to be a canny KGB operator, but he seems to have changed recently. Having developed an idée fixe, he appears to have lost touch with reality. He certainly misjudged the situation in Ukraine. He expected Russian-speaking Ukrainians to welcome Russian soldiers with open arms, but they turned out to be no different from the Ukrainian-speaking population. Ukrainians have put up an incredibly brave resistance against seemingly overwhelming odds.

In July 2021, Putin published a long essay arguing that Russians and Ukrainians are really one people, and that the Ukrainians have been misled by neo-Nazi agitators. The first part of his argument is not without some historical justification,

given that Kyiv was the original seat of the Russian Orthodox Church. But in the second part, it was Putin who was misled. He ought to have known better. Many Ukrainians fought valiantly during the Euromaidan protests in 2014.

The events of 2014 made him very angry. But the Russian army performed poorly when it was ordered to attack its Ukrainian brothers. Ingrained corruption in the awarding of defence contracts also has played an important role in its underperformance. Yet rather than blaming himself, Putin seems to have gone literally mad. He has decided to punish Ukraine for standing up to him, and he appears to be acting without any constraint. He is throwing the entire Russian army into the battle and ignoring all the rules of war, not least by indiscriminately bombing the civilian population. Many hospitals have been hit, and the electrical grid supplying the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (currently occupied by Russian troops) has been damaged. In besieged Mariupol, 400,000 people have been without water and food for nearly a week.

Russia may well lose the war: The

United States and the European Union are both sending defensive weapons to Ukraine, and there are efforts to buy Russian-made MIG fighters that Ukrainian pilots know how to fly. These could make all the difference. Regardless of the outcome, Putin has already worked wonders when it comes to strengthening the EU's resolve and unity.

Meanwhile, Xi seems to have realized that Putin has gone rogue. On March 8, one day after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi had insisted that the friendship between China and Russia remained 'rock solid,' Xi called French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to say that he supported their peacemaking efforts. He wanted maximum restraint in the war in order to avert a humanitarian crisis.

It is far from certain that Putin will accede to Xi's wishes. We can only hope that Putin and Xi will be removed from power before they can destroy our civilization.

The Author is the Founder and Chair of the Open Society Foundations and In Defense of Open Society (Public Affairs, 2019).

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SPECTRUM ECONOMY

Ukraine crisis threat to energy security



Bharat Jhunjhunwala

THE ONLY WAY OUT IS TO REDUCE OUR ENERGY CONSUMPTION SO THAT WE HAVE TO IMPORT LESS QUANTITIES OF COAL, OIL AND URANIUM AND WE CAN ENSURE THE ENERGY SECURITY OF THE COUNTRY

The price of crude oil is expected to shoot up from US Dollars 80 per barrel a few months ago to USD 150 in the next few months if the war in Ukraine continues. Correspondingly the price of petrol in India will increase from about ₹90 per litre presently to about ₹130 per litre. We will have to pay higher amounts for the purchase of crude oil. Remember we are dependent on imports of coal, oil as well as uranium for meeting our energy needs at present. Our entire economy will be disrupted if we cannot obtain supplies of crude oil due to global insecurities. There is not much scope for increasing domestic production of energy. Our coal reserves are depleting. We do not have large uranium deposits. Hydropower leads to environmental destruction.

The only way out is to reduce our energy consumption so that we have to import less quantities of coal, oil and uranium and we can ensure the energy security

of the country. A report in the journal Nature says that the upper 10 percent population of the world consumes 50 percent of the global energy. For example, they use drying machines to dry washed clothes—a work that could easily be done by the sun without any expenditure of energy. Thus, the total consumption energy will reduce substantially if we can reduce the consumption of energy by the upper sections of the society. Another article in the same journal says that one major source of energy consumption by the upper classes is in the use of personal means of transport such as cars. Therefore, we can increase the price of electricity and fuel oil so steeply that the upper sections are encouraged to reduce their energy consumption in drying machines and cars. Let us say if we impose an "energy security tax" of ₹100 per liter on oil, it will lead to an increase the price of petrol to ₹200 per liter. The upper sections will have to pay higher and

also encouraged to use less of personal cars. The higher taxes collected from oil can be used to develop a robust public transport system of buses and metros. My personal experience is that it is more convenient to travel in public transport because the time can be used to read newspapers or do other work.

Driving the car involves expenditure of much mental as well as physical energy. The impact on the poor of such a price increase will be reduced since they will be compensated by the improved provision of public transport even though they will face some increase in cost due to the increase in price of all commodities because of the increase in price of petrol.

On the whole, they may not be much affected. Similarly, we must impose an "energy security tax" of, say, ₹20 per unit on electricity consumption above 300 units per person. The price of electricity for upper classes will then in-

crease to say ₹25 per unit which will encourage them to reduce electricity consumption and that will help us establish our energy security.

The second step we should take is to change the focus of economic growth from 'Make in India' to 'Served from India'. The consumption of electricity in manufacturing sector is about 10 times the consumption in services sector such as software, movies, translations, and the like. By shifting the thrust of our economic growth to services sector, we can produce higher GDP with less consumption of energy. It is time that we take the steps to reduce energy consumption so that we are prepared for any eventualities when global instability arises due to conflicts such as that underway in Ukraine.

The author is a former Professor of Economics at IIM, Bangalore. Views are personal

The Big Loser

Sir, Punjab was looking for an alternative for SAD, which resulted in Congress grabbing power, last time. Now AAP is given a chance as an alternative to Congress, perhaps because it did not want to consider BJP due to Farm Law. 'Delhi Model' is unlikely to be the reason given its poor performance on all fronts and failure of Kejriwal as an honest leader. In-fighting in Congress helped AAP as each faction tried to pull down the other. The alliance of the BJP-Punjab Lok Congress-Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt) and an amalgamation of 22 Punjab-based farmer outfits that actively participated against the farm laws – also couldn't leave any impact on the state's electoral politics. In the Tsunami, Congress party was decimated and AAP gained at the expense of the age old party's incapability. The drubbing faced by the ruling Congress makes it evident that it has paid a heavy cost for its internal infighting besides the anti-incumbency factor. The party, ahead of the polls, had bet its fortune surrounding the 'Dalit' politics, which also have failed to pay the dividend. Now, the next question comes whether AAP as a forerunner and a national party for the 2024 Parliamentary Elections. The party took a huge step towards becoming a national party after recording a thumping victory in Punjab's assembly elections 2022 but it is too early to predict its future.

CK Subramaniam, NAVI MUMBAI

BJP's hat-trick in Goa

Sir, Overcoming anti-incumbency, the BJP emerged as the single largest party in Goa by winning 20 assembly seats, just one shy of the halfway mark, and quickly enlisted the support of regional outfit MGP and three Independent MLAs to form its government for a third consecutive term in the State. Chief Minister Pramod Sawant is the kingpin of this favourable outcome and Devendra Fadnis is the man behind all actions deserves all praise. BJP will discuss the leadership issue in the state during a meeting of its newly-elected MLAs and it is going to be a smooth sailing affair as of now. Congress on the other hand played petty politics and joined hands with small parties and provided seats to defectors and that put paid to the age old party's hopes in the end. P Chidambaram playing the mentor role failed to inspire the voters and proved a failure once again. From the ministerial days he was just a failure and now proved it. BJP played a positive role in bringing new ideas and schemes and that proved as a plus point in the election race. Thus, the saffron party made it for the third time and achieved a hat-trick of victories.

MR Jayanthi, MUMBAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

ORISSA POST

B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

national

of the day quote

Vice Chancellors of universities have a duty to inculcate scientific temperament in students
MK STALIN | TN CM

The NCRB data should be used by all states for preparing their annual strategy for crime control. It should be used in a multi-dimensional and multi-purpose way in crime control
AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

The @INCIndia leadership will never learn! Who is responsible for the humiliating defeat of Congress in UP? What about Manipur, Goa, Uttarakhand? The answer is written in BOLD LETTERS on the wall but as always I presume they will avoid reading it
AMARINDER SINGH | FORMER PUNJAB CM



The party (BJP) should not raise its voice much just because they have won in a few states. This victory is not a true reflection of the people's mandate. This verdict is because of the blatant use of the election machinery to loot votes
MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

DRONE MONITORING AHEAD OF HOLI IN BIHAR

The Bihar police will take all possible measures, including using drones, to prevent hooligans from creating law and order problems in the state in the run-up to Holi



Emotions run high as students return from Sumy

An Air India flight from Poland's Rzeszow carrying the 240 students landed in Delhi Friday morning

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Emotions ran high as Indian students, evacuated from the embattled Ukrainian city of Sumy, came out of the Delhi airport Friday and hugged their parents, who had been waiting there for over five-six hours to see their children.

Tears of joy rolled out of the eyes of parents and family members, some of whom distributed sweets and garlanded their children while others welcomed them with bouquets and hugs after their arrival at gate number 4 and 5 of the Indira Gandhi International airport.

Slogans of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Modi hai to Mumkin Hai" were also raised by some family members of students who returned from war-hit Ukraine.

An Air India flight from Poland's Rzeszow carrying the 240 students landed in Delhi Friday morning. The flight had taken off from Rzeszow around 11.30 pm (IST) on Thursday and landed in Delhi at 5.45 am on Friday, officials said. The evacuees from Sumy were



from different states, including Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Punjab and Haryana. Lalit Kumar travelled over 600 km from Chamba in Himachal Pradesh to reach IGI airport to receive his son Dheeraj Kumar, who was stuck in Ukraine's Sumy following the fierce Russian military offensive.

As soon as Dheeraj came out of the airport, his parents and sister hugged him and started crying. Dheeraj's fa-

ther also distributed sweets to everyone present there and garlanded his son. "I came all the way from Chamba and have been waiting here since midnight. But now since my son has returned safely, all my pain has gone," Kumar said.

Some students also thanked the government, the Indian embassy and their university who helped them get out of Ukraine. "We thank the Indian government and the embassy which carried out this

sensitive Operation Ganga to evacuate us from Ukraine. We also thank our university in Sumy which provided us food and water during the hardship," Lavish Kalal from Banswara in Rajasthan said.

Some states such as Chhattisgarh and Gujarat have also set up their help desks for evacuees from Ukraine at the airport. Tanvi Chaudhary, one of the evacuees and a resident of Rudrapur in Uttarakhand, could not control herself and ran to hug her brother as soon as she saw him at the airport.

"I can't believe that I made it to my country and am now reunited with my family. It still feels like a dream," Chaudhary said as her eyes brimmed with tears. For Ishita Pandita, the wait of over five hours was finally over as her brother Dhruv returned to India with other evacuees in another Indigo flight.

"The flight was delayed by around four hours and we had been waiting here since morning. My joy knows no bounds today and the wait is finally over as the flight has landed. My brother will finally be with us after a long wait," she said.

INDIA, CHINA HOLD TALKS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: India and China Friday held another round of high-level military dialogue to resolve the 22-month-long standoff in certain remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh, two months after the last round of such talks failed to yield any significant outcome in resolving the row.

The 15th round of Corps-Commander level talks began at around 10 am at the Chushul-Moldo border point on the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh, people familiar with the dialogue said.

It is learnt that India pressed for early disengagement of troops in remaining friction points including resolution of pending issues in Depsang Bulge and Demchok. The main focus of the talks was the completion of the stalled disengagement process in the Hot Springs (Patrolling Point-15) areas, the people cited above said.

The Indian delegation at the talks is being led by Lt Gen Anindya Sengupta, the Commander of the Leh-based 14 Corps.

The 14th round of talks had taken place January 12 and it did not result in any significant headway in resolving the row in remaining friction points.

"The two sides agreed to stay in close contact and maintain dialogue via military and diplomatic channels and work out a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest," a joint statement issued after the 14th round of talks said.

The Chinese delegation at the talks was to be headed by Maj Gen Yang Lin, commander of the South Xinjiang Military District.

It is learnt that the talks continued till evening.

The eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi flashes the victory sign during a roadshow after BJP's victory in the Assembly polls, in Ahmedabad, Friday

Allow MCD elections: Kejriwal to PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Friday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to let MCD elections take place in the national capital, saying postponing polls weakens the democratic system.

His remarks came after the Delhi State Election Commission sought the advice of legal experts on if it can still hold polls for the three municipal corporations here following a communication from the Centre for their unification.

The Commission, after receiving the communication, had deferred the announcement of poll dates for the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, the North Delhi Municipal Corporation and the East Delhi Municipal Corporation.

"People are questioning the move. It has been seven-eight years since



With folded hands, I urge Prime Minister Narendra Modi to let the elections happen. Governments come and go. The country is important and not political parties. If we pressure the Election Commission, it weakens institutions. We should not let the institutions weaken since it weakens democracy and the country

the BJP is at the Centre, why didn't they do it (unification) earlier," Kejriwal asked. "Why did they remember it only an hour before the scheduled press conference (on Wednesday) that they have to unify the three civic bodies? The BJP knew that there is an AAP wave in Delhi and they would lose elections," the chief minister said at a briefing. Questioning the relationship be-

tween polls and unification of the three civic bodies, Kejriwal said, "What does election have to do with unification of the three civic bodies? The new councillors chosen after polls will sit in their respective offices if there are three civic bodies. If the three bodies are merged, they will sit together." Kejriwal urged the prime minister to ensure that the elections take place.

PLEA AGAINST 'UNETHICAL' MARKETING PRACTICES

SC notice to Centre



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 11: The Supreme Court Friday sought Centre's response on a plea alleging unethical marketing practices by pharmaceutical companies in their dealings with healthcare professionals resulting in the prescription of "excessive or irrational drugs".

A bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and Surya Kant issued notice to the Centre after hearing submissions by senior advocate Sanjay Parikh, who represented the petitioners - Federation of Medical, Sales Representatives Association of India and others.

The petitioners have named the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Law and Justice, and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as respondents in the petition.

The plea, filed through advocate Aparna Bhat, said: "Petitioners seek enforcement of the fundamental right to health enshrined in the Right to Life under Article 21 of the Constitution of India in view of the ever-increasing instances of unethical marketing practices by Pharmaceutical Companies in their dealings with healthcare professionals resulting in prescription of excessive and/or irrational drugs and a push for high-cost and/or over-priced brands, which are practices that directly affect citizens' health, violating their rights under Article 21 of Constitution."

The plea contended that it is high time that the lacuna in ensuring the right to health is urgently filled up by an appropriate legislation. The plea added that there are abundant examples that show how corruption in the pharmaceutical sector endangers positive health outcomes and puts pa-

THE PETITIONERS HAVE NAMED THE DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACEUTICALS, MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE, AND THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AS RESPONDENTS IN THE PETITION
THE PLEA CONTENDED THAT IT IS HIGH TIME THAT THE LACUNA IN ENSURING THE RIGHT TO HEALTH IS URGENTLY FILLED UP BY AN APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION

tients' health at risk.

"As violations of this kind have become a recurring phenomenon and are progressively becoming more pervasive, the petitioners pray that a Statutory Code of ethical marketing for the pharmaceutical industry, with penal consequences, be established to curb such practices for the enforcement of the fundamental Right to Health of the people of India," it added.

The plea argued that due to the voluntary nature of the existing code, unethical practices continue to increase and have also surfaced during the Covid-19 times.

"By contrast, numerous countries across the world, including the US, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the UK, Venezuela, Argentina, Russia, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, South Korea, Philippines, Malaysia and Taiwan, have enacted stringent laws to curb corruption in the pharmaceutical sector."

On February 22, the Supreme Court had expressed concern at freebies - including gold coins, fridges, LCD TVs, and funding international trips for vacations offered by pharmaceutical companies to manipulate doctors' prescriptions and to recommend drugs produced by them.

Sarpanch shot dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, March 11: Militants shot dead a sarpanch in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir Friday, officials said.

This is the third killing of a local elected representative by militants in Jammu and Kashmir this month. One of the officials said, "At about 8:50 pm, terrorists fired upon Shabir Ahmad Mir near his residence in Adoura in south Kashmir's Kulgam district."

They said Mir was taken to a hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival. Mir was an independent sarpanch. The area has been cordoned off and a hunt launched to nab the attackers, the officials said. The killing drew condemnations from political parties. The National Conference expressed shock over the killing. The BJP's Jammu and Kashmir spokesman Altaf Thakur termed the killing barbaric and a cowardly act.

EXISTENTIAL CRISIS

Cong faces 'real threat' from AAP for leading opposition camp

POLITICAL ANALYSTS SAY THE ROAD TO THE 2024 POLLS FOR THE CONGRESS IS GOING TO GET TOUGHER AS IT IS A PARTY THAT IS "IN THE ICU"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Virtually decimated in the assembly elections, the Congress now faces a dual challenge - an existential crisis and retaining its position as the leader of the opposition camp after the AAP's spectacular victory in Punjab.

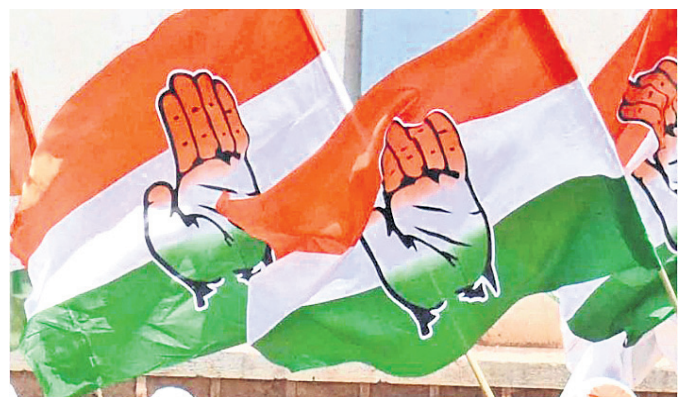
Political analysts say the road to

the 2024 polls for the Congress is going to get tougher as it is a party that is "in the ICU" and cannot be revived with quick-fix solutions.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Thursday stormed to power in Punjab, bagging a record 92 of the 117 seats by decimating the Congress and the SAD-BSP combine. The Congress, meanwhile, also suffered a crushing defeat in the assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, Uttarakhand and Goa.

The AAP's Punjab win has brought it at par with the Congress in terms of leading state governments. The Congress is now left in power only in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh on its own and is a junior player in the coalition governments in Maharashtra and Jharkhand.

Murmurs of discontent and talk



of "change" have already begun in the Congress camp with some group of 23 leaders, who wrote to party chief Sonia Gandhi seeking an organisational overhaul, voicing concern over the massive electoral defeat.

The Congress' electoral drubbing and the AAP's phenomenal success in Punjab has also had ripples in the opposition ranks and while earlier, the Congress had been clutching on to the position of the leader of the opposition

camp, it now finds itself facing threats from parties such as the AAP and the Trinamool Congress that are likely to become more assertive going forward.

Asked about what the AAP's victory means for the opposition camp and its pecking order, Shiv Sena leader Priyanka Chaturvedi said, "Firstly, the AAP victory is spectacular and it needs to be commended. At the same time, any opposition party which is giving a tough fight to the BJP should be supported."

"Whether it is going to be a challenge for the Congress party or not it is for the Congress to introspect... Opposition has to be strengthened," the Rajya Sabha member said.

Asserting that opposition forces need to align together to give a

tough fight to the BJP, Chaturvedi said the AAP has managed to speak on issues of governance and that is why they have managed to convince the people of Punjab. Any opposition party which is strengthened or can be strengthened should be welcomed, she added.

"Opposition will only be strengthened with a more empowered opposition party. Punjab results have shown that people are looking for a change and people are looking for an opposition party which can talk on governance issues," Chaturvedi said.

Sanjay Kumar, Co-Director of Lokniti, a Research Programme at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, said the AAP's rise was a "big threat" to the Congress' position as leader of the opposition camp.

BANGALORE TO GO VERTICAL

4 satellite towns, 6 integrated cities on cards

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, March 11: Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai Friday mooted the idea of building 'four new Bangalores around Bangalore' and six integrated towns in Karnataka.

Foreseeing that Bangalore's population will go up to around three to four crore in 2040 from the existing 1.3 crore, Bommai opined that the city should be developed like a planet surrounded by satellites.

"Bangalore should be, according to me, like a planet where there will be satellite towns along with the best of connectivity with rail, road, hi-tech travel systems and easy mode of transportation for the passengers," Bommai said during the Bangalore 2040 Summit.

Elaborating further, he said there was a need to create infrastructure for connecting Bangalore and develop 'a new Bangalore'.

"At least four new Bangalores have to be built around Bangalore



and in between these four, we can have different types of activities such as health city and integrated industrial township, including those related to aerospace and defence related industry," the Chief Minister said, adding that the satellite towns will have all the

amenities.

Bommai opined that the time was ripe for Bangalore to go vertical as the city has grown horizontally enough and added new localities.

Introducing a new slogan 'Nava Karnataka Dinda Nava Bharata' (New India through New

Bangalore should be, according to me, like a planet where there will be satellite towns along with the best of connectivity with rail, road, hi-tech travel systems and easy mode of transportation for the passengers

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | CHIEF MINISTER, KARNATAKA

Karnataka), Bommai said he is planning six new integrated cities in the state.

Noting that he has introduced many novel proposals and schemes in the state budget that were missing in the previous budgets, the Chief Minister said, "One of the new things is I am planning to build six new cities in the state. These will be integrated townships.

SUFFERING IN SILENCE

Welfare board a dream for silicosis-hit miners



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jodhpur, March 11: Dying a slow but sure death due to silicosis, the mine workers of Rajasthan have been fighting a battle of recognition since 2018, but in vain.

For all these years, the workers have been pushing the demand for the formation of the Mine Workers' Welfare Board. However, despite continuous deaths of their colleagues due to silicosis amid absence of safety measures in the work field, callousness of the government persists.

As per the state government's policy of October 2019, there is a provision of immediate financial aid of Rs 3 lakh to a silicosis patient and Rs 2 lakh to the dependents in case of his death, apart from Rs 1,500 monthly pension to the widow of the victim. But figures show that hardly 10 per cent of the victims have received this aid

RANA SENGUPTA | TRUSTEE, MINE LABOUR PROTECTION CAMPAIGN

In order to remind the government of its poll promise, 30 of these workers from Jodhpur, Nagaur and Bhilwara have been staging a sit-in in Jaipur since February 22 under the banner 'Khan Majdoor Ekta Sangathan'.

Abhay Singh of the sangathan said even though the Congress party accepted the outfit's demand for a welfare board and made it part of its election manifesto, nothing has happened yet.

Adding to Ramgopal from Barad Mine Labourers' Union, a part of Khan Majdoor Ekta Sangathan, several representations have also been given to the Mining Minister over the years but there has been no satisfactory action.

"On the occasion of the gov-

Silicosis is a lung disease caused by breathing in tiny particles of quartz, rocks and silica, a common mineral found in sand, and mainly affects construction and mining workers

There are 33,122 quarries in the state across 33 districts where over 25 lakh workers have been working directly or indirectly amid the threat of silicosis with no safety measures in place to protect them from this fatal occupational hazard

As per an estimate, 27,463 workers have been recognised as silicosis patients, in addition to 21,000 cases pending medical diagnosis

ernment's third anniversary, it claimed that 70 per cent of the poll promises were fulfilled. However, leaving this promise (constituting a board) out, which has a direct bearing on 25 lakh individuals, was shocking and too insensitive," he said, adding that they feel cheated.

According to the managing trustee of Mine Labour Protection Campaign Rana Sengupta, the board (if constituted) will not only provide recognition to the oppressed mine workers but will also open the gates for their welfare. "It is just a matter of the government's will. There is already a Building and Construction Workers' Welfare Board in place. Constituting a board on a similar line for mine workers is not a mammoth task," he said.

The board would mandate the registration of both mine owners as well as the workers. The owners would then be pushed to pool in safety measures for the workers, thus ensuring the gradual reduction and complete abolition of the deadly silicosis, Sengupta said.

The state government, for its part, had come up with a policy in October 2019 to bail out silicosis-affected workers and prevention of the disease. However, this policy is still awaiting implementation.

LIT UP LITFEST



Bollywood actor Manoj Bajpayee speaks at a session during the Jaipur Literature Festival 2022 in Jaipur, Friday. The 15th edition of the festival, which kicked off on ground at Hotel Clarks Amer Thursday, is being held in hybrid format for the first time since its inception in 2006. It was held virtually from March 5 to 9. Turkish bestselling novelist Elif Shafak, 2002 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction finalist Jonathan Franzen, 2021 Booker winner Damon Galgut, Australian author and 2003 Booker winner DBC Pierre, Hollywood actor-writer Rupert Everett, and eminent Jamaican poet Kei Miller are among the 250 authors participating in the JLF this year

PTI PHOTO

BJP win, Cong collapse in K'taka as true as sun rising in east: CM

Assembly elections in Karnataka are to be held in May 2023 and Bommai has just completed his first six months as the state's Chief Minister



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, March 11: Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, reacting to the BJP's victory in four out of five state Assembly elections, said that the time has come to ensure that the party emerges victorious in the state Assembly polls, due next year.

Participating in a function to celebrate the party's victory Thursday, Bommai said that the Congress has been sinking everywhere and it will sink in Karnataka too. "Time has come to ensure that the BJP's lotus blooms in the 2023 Assembly elections," he said.

"Our responsibility has increased. We have to work more actively to implement the welfare programmes

announced in the state budget. I have already instructed the officials to prepare the files before the end of this month and get the work orders issued before the month of April," he added.

"Implementation of all the programmes will be started without any delay and it is our responsibility to ensure its benefits reached the common man," Bommai asserted.

Further, he asked the party workers to aggressively publicise the government's welfare programmes at booth level and help people avail the benefit of these programmes.

"We will undertake a state tour with senior leader BS Yediyurappa and Central leaders to further strengthen the party in every part of the State. We are already on the job," he said and called upon the party workers to be ready to work hard to bring BJP to power again.

He also targeted the Opposition Congress party's dismal performance in all the five states, and said, "Congress has sunk in the rest of the country and it will sink in Karnataka too. Congress is fighting for survival. It has lost direction at the national and state level. It has lost its base all over the country."

CATCH THEM YOUNG

ISRO to pick 150 students for 'Young Scientist Programme'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, March 11: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is organising a special programme for school children called "YUva Vigyani Karyakram" (YUVIKA) or "Young Scientist Programme" to impart basic knowledge on space technology, space science and space applications to young students, especially those from rural areas.

The programme is aimed at creating awareness about the emerging trends in science and technology amongst the youngsters, who are "the future building blocks of our nation", according to the Bangalore-headquartered space agency.

"The programme aims to select 150 students across the country, who are studying in Class IX as on March 1, 2022 in a school located within the territory of India,"

the space agency said in the announcement. It also said it has chalked out the programme to 'catch them young'.

The programme is also expected to encourage more students to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) based careers and research work, it said.

The YUVIKA-2022 residential programme will run for two weeks from May 16 to May 28. The schedule will include talks, experience-sharing by eminent scientists, experimental demonstration, facility and lab visits, exclusive sessions for discussions with experts, practical and feedback sessions.

The selection of participants will be on the basis of a few parameters, including marks obtained in Class 8 examination, and participation in science fairs (school/district/state and above level) organised by the school/district/ state/Central government authority in the last three years.

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The programme is planned to be held at five ISRO centres - Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), Thiruvananthapuram; UR Rao Satellite Centre (URSC), Bangalore; Space Application Centre (SAC), Ahmedabad; National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Hyderabad; and North-East Space Application Centre (NE-SAC), Shillong.

Courts should be far more 'circumspect' in cases they take up: SC ex-judge Lokur

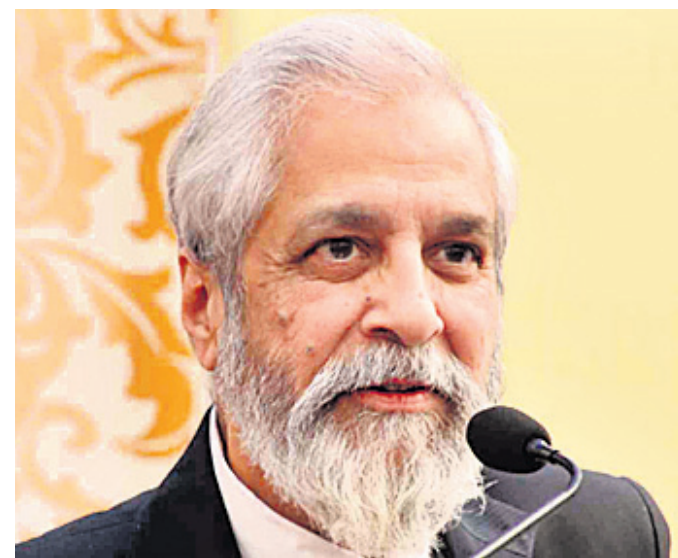
Madan B Lokur, who is currently a judge of the non-resident panel of the Supreme Court of Fiji, calls electoral bonds a 'big problem', one that he thinks will even lead to a 'complete wipe out' of smaller political parties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, March 11: With judicial decision on big issues such as electoral bonds pending since 2019, former Supreme Court Judge Madan B Lokur Friday said courts should be far more circumspect in the cases they take up and not get bogged down with "trivialities".

Speaking at the ongoing Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF), Justice (retired) Lokur, while referring to the recent Delhi High Court decision on feeding of stray dogs, said these things shouldn't take up so much of time of the courts as there are far more important things, including those dealing with "civil rights, human rights, and elections", that need the attention of the courts.

"Judiciary has got bogged down by a lot of trivialities. For example, the Delhi HC recently decided something about feeding stray dogs, now the matter has gone up to the SC to say that the decision of Delhi HC is incorrect," Lokur said, in a session titled 'The Democracy Index'.



"Now, these are things that should not take up so much of time of the courts. I think the SC and HCs have to be far more circumspect in the kind of cases they take up and make sure that whatever they do take up comes to an end quickly," he added.

The Delhi HC order recently laid down guidelines regarding feeding of stray dogs while observing that citizens have the right to feed community canines.

On the long pendency of cases, the 68-year-old retired judge said he is sad that several cases challenging the election of candidates haven't got decided until their term is over and that an important issue like electoral bonds has been pending since 2019.

In January 2018, the Modi-led government launched an electoral

bonds scheme for collection of funds by political parties. The scheme had been announced in the 2017 Union Budget.

"If the court has decided in 2019 or early 2020 that the electoral bonds scheme is perfectly constitutional and valid then there is nothing wrong with it but had they said 'it is not valid' things would have been different perhaps. But today we are going on the premise that it is constitutionally valid because there is no decision. So really, I think the important thing is that in some of these cases, the responsibility lies with the courts to see they took decisions in time," he said.

"One of the big problems I foresee in the electoral bonds is that the money comes in and you don't know who is giving that money

What disturbs me the most on the democracy index is money power and muscle power. If you have money power in combination with muscle power you are almost through this game. And that is a blot on our democracy index

NAVIN CHAWLA | FORMER CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER

Of course, it can be found out through the bank and various methods, but not for people like you and me. Some political parties have got a huge amount of money through electoral bonds and there are some political parties which are just getting a trickle. So if the electoral bonds get institutionalised in that sense, some of the smaller parties will just get completely wiped out," he added.

Echoing the sentiments of Lokur on how money power plays a significant role in elections, his co-panelist and former Chief Election Commissioner Navin Chawla said, "What disturbs me the most on the democracy index is money power and muscle power. If you have money power in combination with muscle power you are almost through this game. And that is a blot on our democracy index."

He cited the five state elections results of Thursday as a fresh example of the same, with many candidates having criminal antecedents and declared wealth running in crores of rupees.

of the day quote

I would like to congratulate AAP for their victory in the Punjab elections. I assure all possible support from the Centre for Punjab's welfare

Arvind Kejriwal is killing democracy at the very grassroots by starving local bodies of funds

Lies like the BSP contesting elections not as strongly as the SP were spread. This was widely publicised, while the truth is contrary because the BSP's fight with the BJP is political as well as ideological

SHORT TAKES

Model Code lifted

New Delhi: The Election Commission Friday lifted the model code of conduct which was in force in five states where assembly polls were held recently.

10 Naxals surrender

Sukma: As many as ten Naxals, one of them carrying a reward of Rs 1 lakh on his head, surrendered before police in the insurgency-hit Sukma district of Chhattisgarh Friday, police said.

Jumbo electrocuted

Guwahati: A 15-year-old male elephant was electrocuted at a tea estate under the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve in Assam Friday, officials said.

Poacher arrested

New Delhi: The CBI has arrested an alleged poacher, who was absconding for nearly 14 years, in connection with the killing of a tiger and a panther in 2005 and 2003 respectively in Rajasthan's Sariska, officials said Friday.



Battle for India will be fought and decided in 2024 & not in any state #elections Saheb knows this! Hence this clever attempt to create frenzy around state results to establish a decisive psychological advantage over opposition. Don't fall or be part of this false narrative

TELANGANA CM FINE: DOC

After complaining of weakness and pain in the left arm, Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao Friday underwent medical examinations, which showed he has no cardiac problem, his personal physician said

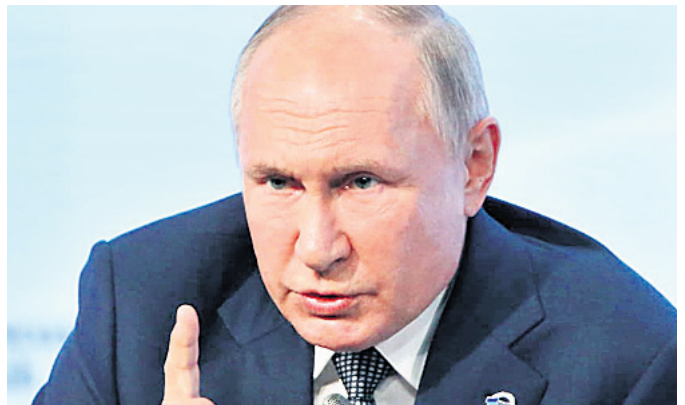


No security reasons to leave Russia: Embassy

The Russian banking services have seen some disruptions following the imposition of severe sanctions on the country by Western powers following its military aggression against Ukraine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: In the backdrop of the crisis in Ukraine, the Indian embassy in Moscow has said that it sees no security concerns at present for the Indian students in Russia to leave that country.



"The embassy would like to reassure all students that at present we see no security reasons for them to leave," it said. The embassy said it is in regular contact with relevant authorities with respect to the safety and security of the Indian nationals, including students.

Students have concerns regarding these aspects and would like to travel back to India, they may consider doing so," it said. Regarding the academic programmes, the embassy said it has been informed by a number of universities that they have already shifted to the online distance learning mode.

New govt in Goa soon, says minister

AGENCIES

Panaji, March 11: A new BJP-led government will be in place in Goa over the "next two to three days", Transport Minister Mauvin Godinho told the media on Friday after a meeting of the outgoing state cabinet.

change (in leadership) is required or not. It will be done in two to three days," Godinho said. While Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, who led the BJP in the just concluded Assembly elections, is tipped to be the front-runner to occupy the top post again, several BJP leaders, including Godinho himself and Health Minister Vishwajit Rane, according to party insiders may also be in consideration.

YOGI RESIGNS

LUCKNOW: UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Friday evening, met Governor Anandiben Patel and handed over his resignation. The Governor has asked him to continue working till the formation of the new government.

Punjab Governor dissolves 15th Vidhan Sabha Chandigarh: Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit Friday dissolved the 15th Vidhan Sabha, an official spokesperson here said, a day after results for the assembly polls were announced.

I-T dept offices to open on all Saturdays in March

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Offices of the income tax department across the country will remain open on all Saturdays this month after Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman directed them to do so in order to resolve taxpayers' issues and grievances, a senior official said Friday.

Sitharaman early this week rapped the policy-making boards of the I-T department (CBDT) and that for the Customs and GST department (CBIC) during an event in Bengaluru for allegedly not responding to the grievances of assesses.

While the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) is the apex policy-making body for the I-T department, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is the same authority for the customs, central excise and the goods and service tax department.

All offices of the I-T department up to the level of Principal Commissioner of Income Tax will remain open on all Saturdays this month. This will start from tomorrow, March 12, a senior I-T department officer said.

All the regional formations of the department have also published their respective email IDs on their official Twitter handles for taxpayers to send suggestions and seek clarifications, the officer said.

Currently, Saturdays and Sundays are off days for I-T department employees. During a budget outreach programme between finance ministry officials, the industry and trade bodies in Bengaluru on March 7, Sitharaman pulled up CBDT and CBIC officials when a participant made certain queries regarding various tax aspects.



ON WARPATH

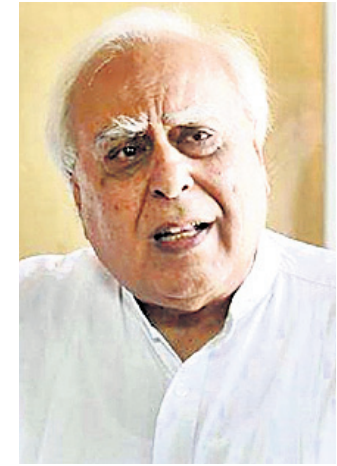
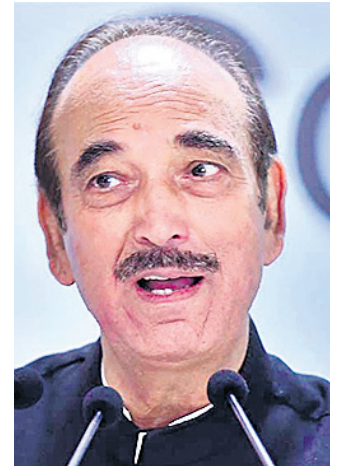


Members of ASHA Health Workers' Association raise slogans during a protest march to the Bihar Legislative Assembly demanding higher wages in Patna, Friday

G-23 seeks speedy election of new president

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 11: The Congress 'G-23' leaders, at their meeting held Friday after the party's debacle in the latest round of Assembly polls, are understood to have sought that there be no more delay in electing the new party president while an AICC session should be called to discuss the poll results, sources said.



The meeting was held at senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad's residence here, and was attended by Kapil Sibal, Manish Tewari, Anand Sharma and Akhilesh Prasad Singh while some other leaders joined virtually.

As per sources, the leaders sought accountability for the poll debacle be fixed and changes be made in the composition of the Congress Working Committee, the party's highest decision-making body.

debacle, and the G-23 leaders are reportedly miffed with the style of functioning of the party leadership. One prominent leader said that "it is time that the first family of Congress steps aside and paves the way for a new leadership or act in tandem with the party leaders and

Govt in Manipur before March 19: Biren

IMPHAL: The new government in Manipur will be formed before March 19 when the current state assembly term ends and a decision on who will lead is expected to be decided in the next couple days, outgoing Chief Minister N Biren Singh said Friday.

"Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit dissolved the 15th Punjab Vidhan Sabha with effect from the afternoon of the 11th March, 2022 in pursuance of the powers conferred upon him by Sub clause (b) of clause (2) of Article 174 of the Constitution of India," the spokesperson cited above said.

POLL DEBACLE

The meeting was held at senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad's residence and was attended by Kapil Sibal, Manish Tewari, Anand Sharma and Akhilesh Prasad Singh while some other leaders joined virtually

SC to hear plea against Ashish's bail March 15

New Delhi, March 11: The Supreme Court agreed to list for hearing March 15 a plea challenging the grant of bail by the Allahabad High Court to Ashish Mishra, son of Union minister Ajay Mishra, in connection with the Lakhimpur Kheri violence that left eight people, including four farmers, dead.

Time has come to declare tribunals defunct: SC to Centre

THE TOP COURT MADE THESE STRONG OBSERVATIONS AFTER LEARNING THAT THE TRIBUNAL COULD NOT COMPLETE THE HEARING IN THE DELHI GYMKHANA CLUB MATTER, DUE TO THE VACANCIES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 11: The Supreme Court Friday pulled up the Centre on vacancies in various tribunals during the hearing of the Delhi Gymkhana Club case, saying that there are no officers to man the tribunals, and names are recommended but no one knows why they are not cleared.

Club (DGC) matter hearing is almost concluded in National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). The bench replied that the other side is yet to argue the matter. Mehta said there would not be any delay and sought two weeks to complete the matter. Justice Khanwilkar said: "Look at the predicament of the tribunal...how can we pressurise the tribunal to do it within a month."



On several occasions, the Chief Justice N.V. Ramana had made strong observations against Centre due to delay in filling up vacancies in various tribunals. In February, a bench headed by Chief Justice said: "Some knee-jerk appointments took place and nothing happened after that. We do not know the fate of members and

many are retiring". The top court emphasized that the bureaucracy is taking the issue lightly. On February 24, the Supreme Court noted that the Attorney General (AG) K.K. Venugopal has circulated an email saying that vacancies in all tribunals across the country are almost filled.

appropriate steps for reinstating the elected committee by elections." The apex court passed an order on September 30, last year, directing the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to decide the entire matter afresh within four months' time, and if not decided within this period, then the administrator should conduct elections to install a duly elected committee. However, this time period got over in February and the NCLT has not concluded the proceedings in the matter.

international



China will have a record 16mn job seekers this year, including 10.7 million tertiary graduates, and the country has to find ways to create jobs for them
LI QIANG | CHINESE PREMIER

IS NAMES NEW LEADER

The new leader of Islamic State, whose appointment the group announced, is the brother of slain former caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, according to sources. In a recorded audio message posted online, the Islamic State named its new leader Abu al-Hassan al-Hashemi al-Quraishi



of the day quote

Based on our relations with the Russian Federation and as a member of BRICS, South Africa has been approached to play a mediation role
CYRIL RAMAPHOSA | PRESIDENT SOUTH AFRICA

Germany sees a steady rise in new Covid cases. We cannot be satisfied with a situation in which 200 to 250 people are dying every day and the prospect is that in a few weeks more people will die
KARL LAUTERBACH | GERMANY'S HEALTH MINISTER

We are thankful to all those who facilitated its objectives. Our particular gratitude to the authorities in Ukraine and Russia as well as the Red Cross for the evacuation assistance
S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Japan, SK to improve ties

Tokyo: Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and South Korea's president-elect Yoon Suk Yeol talked on the phone Friday, agreeing to cooperate toward improving their countries' ties, while signalling a thaw in icy relations strained by wartime history disputes. Kishida told reporters after the 15-minute talk that "sound relations" between Japan and South Korea are "indispensable in achieving the rules-based international order and ensuring peace, stability and prosperity in the region and the world."

Saudi oil refinery attacked by drone

Riyadh: A drone attack on an oil refinery in Saudi Arabia's capital, Riyadh, started a small fire that did not cause injuries or affect supplies, the kingdom's energy ministry said early Friday. The statement did not specify where the drone strike was launched from. Later Friday, Yemen's rebel Houthis who have been battling a Saudi-led coalition in their country since 2015 claimed responsibility for the drone strike.

US lawmakers seek sanctions against Pak

New Delhi: A US lawmaker has called to designate Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism, while two others have sought a probe into Ambassador Masood Khans alleged links with Kashmiri and Pakistani groups, Dawn reported.

Global Covid-19 cases top 453mn

Washington: The global coronavirus caseload has topped 453 million, while the deaths have surged to more than 6.02 million and vaccinations to over 10.65 billion, according to Johns Hopkins University. In its latest update Thursday morning, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed that the current global caseload and the death toll stood at 453,464,764 and 6,029,827, respectively, while the total number of vaccine doses administered has increased to 10,651,051,043.

NK may fire big missile

Seoul: North Korea has tested parts of its biggest intercontinental ballistic missile in two recent launches, the US and South Korean militaries said, a suggestion it is likely to fire that weapon soon to put a spy satellite into orbit in what would be its most significant provocation in years.



KYIV ON ALERT

Russian troops have expanded their offensive across Ukraine as they continue attempts to encircle and cut off the capital Kyiv

AGENCIES

Lviv, Ukraine, March 11: Russian forces bearing down on Kyiv are regrouping northwest of the Ukrainian capital, satellite pictures showed, in what Britain said could be preparation for an assault on the city within days.

Ukraine accused Russian forces of hitting a psychiatric hospital near its eastern town of Izyum on Friday, in what the regional governor called "a brutal attack on civilians". Emergency services said no one was hurt as the patients were already sheltering in the basement.

Reuters could not immediately verify the report and there was no immediate comment from Moscow.

Russia has been pounding Ukraine's cities while its main attack force north of Kyiv has been stalled on roads since the invasion's early days, having failed in what Western countries say was an initial plan for a lightning assault on the capital.

Images released by private US satellite firm Maxar showed armoured units manoeuvring in and through towns close to an airport on Kyiv's northwest outskirts, site

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS ON DAY 16 OF INVASION

Russian planes turned around above Ukraine, after which they struck the territory of Belarus

Lutsk and Ivano-Frankivsk in the west also hit overnight

Satellite imagery suggests new push to surround Kyiv

Southern city of Mariupol continues to be besieged

of intense fighting since Russia landed paratroops there in the first hours of the war.

Other elements had repositioned near the small settlement of Lubyanka just to the north, with towed artillery howitzers in firing positions, Maxar said.

"Russia is likely seeking to reset and re-posture its forces for renewed offensive activity in the coming days," Britain's Ministry of Defence said in an intelligence update. "This will probably include operations against the capital Kyiv." The British update said

Russian ground forces were still making only limited progress, hampered by persistent logistical issues and Ukrainian resistance.

Ukraine said Russian forces were regrouping after taking heavy losses. In its overnight statement on the battlefield situation, the Ukrainian general staff also said its forces had pushed Russians back to "unfavourable positions" in the Polyskiy district, an area near the Belarus border to the rear of the main Russian column heading towards Kyiv.

Oleh Synehubov, governor of the Kharkiv region, said 330 people had been at the psychiatric hospital when it was hit: "This is a war crime against civilians, genocide against the Ukrainian nation," he wrote on the Telegram messaging app. The reported strike came less than two days after Russia bombed a maternity hospital in the besieged southern port of Mariupol, an attack Washington has called a war crime. Ukraine said pregnant women were among those hurt there; Russia said the hospital was no longer functioning and was occupied by Ukrainian fighters when it was hit.

US slashes Russia trade status, bans alcohol & seafood

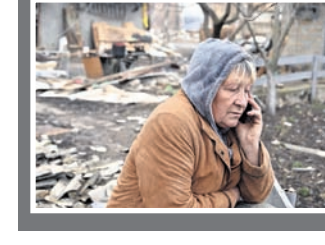
Washington: President Joe Biden announced Friday the US will dramatically downgrade its trade status with Russia as punishment for its invasion of Ukraine and also ban imports of Russian seafood, alcohol and diamonds. The broad trade shift, which revokes the "most favoured nation" status for Russia, is being taken in coordination with the European Union and Group of Seven countries. "The free world is coming together to confront Putin," Biden said from the Roosevelt Room of the White House. Stripping most favoured nation status from Russia would allow the US. And allies to impose higher tariffs on some Russian imports, increasing the isolation of the Russian economy.

FIGHTING INTENSIFIES

RUSSIAN FORCES ARE ATTEMPTING TO ENCIRCLE AND CUT OFF THE UKRAINIAN CAPITAL, WITH ITS TROOPS NOW MOVING TOWARDS THE CITY FROM MULTIPLE POSITIONS. NEW SATELLITE IMAGERY SHOWS THAT ELEMENTS OF A LARGE RUSSIAN CONVOY TO THE NORTH WEST OF THE CITY ARE NOW REDEPLOYING AROUND THE OUTSKIRTS OF KYIV.



Source: BBC Research / Institute for the Study of War (21:00 GMT, 10 March) 1 2 3



564 civilians killed so far in Ukraine: UN

Geneva: The UN human rights office (OHCHR) said Friday it has confirmed the deaths of 564 civilians in Ukraine since Feb. 24, including 41 children. The real toll is thought to be considerably higher since it has not yet been able to corroborate reports from areas where intense hostilities are ongoing, OHCHR said. Most died from the use of explosive weapons, including heavy artillery shelling, missile and air strikes, it added.

Russia strikes Dnipro for 1st time, one killed

Kyiv: One person was killed Friday after three Russian airstrikes hit Dnipro, an inland city located on the Dnieper river deemed as a major stronghold in central-eastern Ukraine, the country's State Emergency Services (SES) reported. This is the first time that the city has been struck by Russian strikes since the war began 16 days ago. In a social media post, the SES said at about 6.10 a.m., two strikes hit a kindergarten and an apartment building in the city. The third strike hit a two-storey shoe factory building at around 7.45 a.m., it added. Besides Dnipro, the city of Lutsk, located in the north-western region of Ukraine has also come under aerial bombardment for the first time. Lutsk Mayor has confirmed that the blasts took place near the city airfield.



UK sanctions 386 Russian parliamentarians

London: The UK government Friday sanctioned 386 members of the Duma, the lower house of the Russian Parliament, for their support for the Ukrainian breakaway regions of Luhansk and Donetsk as independent in the lead up to the current conflict. The new sanctions will ban all those listed from travelling to the UK, accessing assets held within the UK and doing business in the country, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) said. The latest set of sanctions follows a crackdown on key oligarchs from Russian President Vladimir Putin's inner circle, including Chelsea Football Club owner Roman Abramovich.

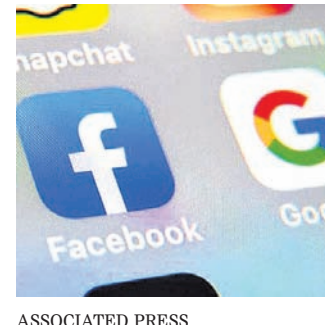


Putin approves 'volunteer fighters'

New York: Russian President Vladimir Putin has ordered that so-called volunteer fighters should be brought into Ukraine. Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said Russia knew of "more than 16,000 applications" from countries in the Middle East, many of them from people who he said helped Russia against the Islamic State group, according to a Kremlin transcript. They want "to take part in what they consider a liberation movement," Shoigu said, on the side of Russia-backed separatist regions in eastern Ukraine. Since 2015, Russian forces have backed Syrian President Bashar al-Assad against various groups opposed to his rule, including Islamic State. Putin told Shoigu that Russia should help would-be volunteers to "move to the combat zone" and contrasted them with what he called foreign "mercenaries" fighting for Ukraine.



Google, Meta face EU, UK antitrust probes



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brussels, Mar 11: British and European regulators threatened to crack down on Google and Facebook parent Meta over an agreement for online display advertising services, saying Friday that the deal may breach rules on fair competition.

The fresh scrutiny in Europe, which has pioneering efforts to rein in big technology companies, strikes at the heart of Google's business — the digital ads that generate nearly all of its revenue.

In the "ad tech" marketplace bringing together Google and a constellation of online advertisers and publishers, the company controls access to the advertisers that put ads on its dominant search platform.

Google also runs the auction process for advertisers to get ads

onto a publisher's site. The European Union's top competition watchdog opened an antitrust investigation into a 2018 pact for Meta's Audience Network to participate in Google's Open Bidding program.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, said the deal, which Google internally dubbed "Jedi Blue," may be part of efforts to exclude ad tech services that compete with Google's Open Bidding program to the detriment of publishers and consumers.

Britain's Competition and Markets Authority announced a parallel investigation into the agreement, which is also the focus of a state-led antitrust lawsuit against Google that's before US Courts.

Google said the "allegations made about the agreement are false," calling it "a publicly documented, procompetitive agreement" enabling Facebook to participate in its Open Bidding program, along with dozens of other companies.

Meta said the "non-exclusive bidding agreement with Google, and the similar agreements we have with other bidding platforms, have helped to increase competition for ad placements." Meta said it would cooperate with both the EU and UK inquiries.

'Pause' needed in Iran N-talks: EU

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, March 11: The European Union's foreign policy chief said Friday that "a pause" was needed in ongoing talks over Iran's tattered nuclear deal with world powers, blaming "external factors" for the delay.

The comments by Josep Borrell come as a roadmap appeared imminent for the US. To rejoin an accord it unilaterally withdrew from in 2018 and for Iran to again limit its rapidly advancing nuclear programme. And while Borrell didn't elaborate, it also comes as Russia last week tied the ongoing negotiations to sanctions Moscow faces over its war on Ukraine.

"A pause in (hashtag)ViennaTalks is needed, due to external factors. A final text is essentially ready and on the table," Borrell wrote on Twitter. "As coordinator, I will, with my team, continue to be in touch with all (hashtag)JCPOA participants and the US. To overcome the current situation and to close the agreement." The JCPOA, or the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, is the 2015 nuclear deal's formal name.

Responding to Borrell, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Saeed Khatibzadeh said the pause "could be a momentum for resolving any remaining issue and a final return."

MATTER OF CONCERN

CHINA'S BIGGEST COVID SURGE IN TWO YEARS

China Friday ordered a lockdown of the 9 million residents of the northeastern city of Changchun amid a new spike in Covid-19 cases in the area. Residents are required to remain home and undergo three rounds of mass testing, while non-essential businesses have been closed and transport links suspended

AGENCIES

Shanghai, March 11: China reported its highest daily total of coronavirus cases in two years Friday as authorities in Shanghai and other major cities stepped up targeted lockdowns and testing to halt the highly transmissible Omicron variant.

With public fatigue over China's strict zero-covid approach rising fast, authorities are now avoiding the implementation of mass city-wide lockdowns seen previously in favour of a more focused response.

But that has given rise to on-line images in Shanghai spotlighting students and teachers confined for up to 48 hours on campuses and patrons locked in restaurants or malls until they are re tested, as



authorities pounce on reported close-contact situations. Covid cases have soared past the 1,000 mark this week for the first time since the pandemic's early days from less than 100 just three weeks

ago. There were 1,369 cases across more than a dozen provinces, according to the latest daily official count released on Friday.

Staff at the Shanghai American School told AFP that health personnel visited the campus Friday to conduct Covid tests on teachers and students, though they were not confined.

Similar situations have been reported at other schools in Shanghai over the past week.

Shanghai mayor Gong Zheng indicated the city's more focused approach in a social media post Thursday. "It is necessary to take more accurate and effective prevention and control measures, track down the source and do screening work deeply and thoroughly, (and) scientifically and accurately (to) delimit close con-

tact," he said.

Authorities nationwide have leaned lately toward similarly softer measures in recent weeks as Covid fatigue grows and economists warn of the business impact.

LIKE 'SQUID GAME'

The drawbacks of a zero-Covid approach have been laid bare in Hong Kong, where mixed messages from the southern Chinese city's government has fuelled hoarding of food supplies and public fear that people will be taken away to isolation.

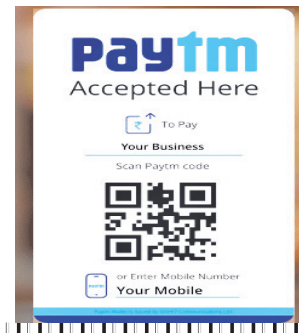
In Shanghai, some museums will be temporarily closed beginning Friday, the city government said, but there have otherwise been no broad shutdowns nor any widespread social media anger.



Barring prolonged uncertainties with respect to the oil price and geopolitical developments, the macro-fundamentals should be able to withstand the near-term shocks emanating from these developments
V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN | CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR

PAYTM PAYMENTS BANK IN SOUP

The RBI Friday asked Paytm Payments Bank to stop opening new accounts amid "material supervisory concerns" observed in the bank. The bank has also been directed to appoint an IT audit firm to conduct a comprehensive system audit of its IT system



of the day quote

In a sense, India's growth story remains as weak as it was at the time of the 2013 taper tantrum. The recent reverberations of war have in fact, tilted the balance of risks downwards

MICHAEL PATRA | DEPUTY GOVERNOR, RBI

Digital innovation is redefining industries and changing the way businesses function. Digitisation and innovative technologies are creating unprecedented disruption in the banking sector and the rate of change is accelerating

DINESH KHARA | CHAIRMAN, SBI

Women empowerment is one of the top priorities of the bank and it has been offering a unique savings account - Kotak Silk - to cater to the specific needs of the women account holders

SHANTI EKAMBARAM | PRESIDENT (CONSUMER BANKING), KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK

SHORT TAKES

Panda appointed as IRDAI chief

New Delhi: The government on Friday appointed former financial services secretary Debasish Panda as chairman of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved Panda's appointment as chairperson of the insurance regulator initially for a period of three years from the assumption of charge, sources said. The appointment of IRDAI chairman comes nearly 9 months after the vacancy was created following Subhash Chandra Khuntia completing his term in May last year.

Factory growth rises 1.3% in Jan

New Delhi: Industrial production expanded by 1.3 per cent in January on an annual basis, mainly on account of improved performance of mining and manufacturing sectors, official data showed Friday. The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) had contracted by 0.6 per cent in January 2021. As per the data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, the growth in the mining sector was 2.8 per cent against a contraction of 2.4 per cent in January 2021.

LIC posts ₹235cr profit in 3rd qtr

New Delhi: The net profit of Life Insurance Corporation of India rose to Rs 234.91 crore in the third quarter of the current financial year from Rs 0.91 crore recorded in the corresponding period of last year. For the first nine months of the current financial year, LIC has posted a net profit of Rs 1,642.78 crore as against a paltry Rs7.08 crore net profit recorded during the corresponding period of 2020-21. The sharp jump in LIC profit is largely due to the change in the surplus distribution model.

Toyota trims Japan output

Tokyo: Japan's top automaker Toyota will scale back domestic production over the next three months because of a supply crunch in chips and other parts that have slammed the global auto industry. Toyota Motor Corp will cut back vehicle production in Japan by about 20 per cent in April, by 10 per cent in May, and 5 per cent in June, compared to what was planned, spokeswoman Shiori Hashimoto said Friday.

POST PAYTM'S IPO DEBACLE

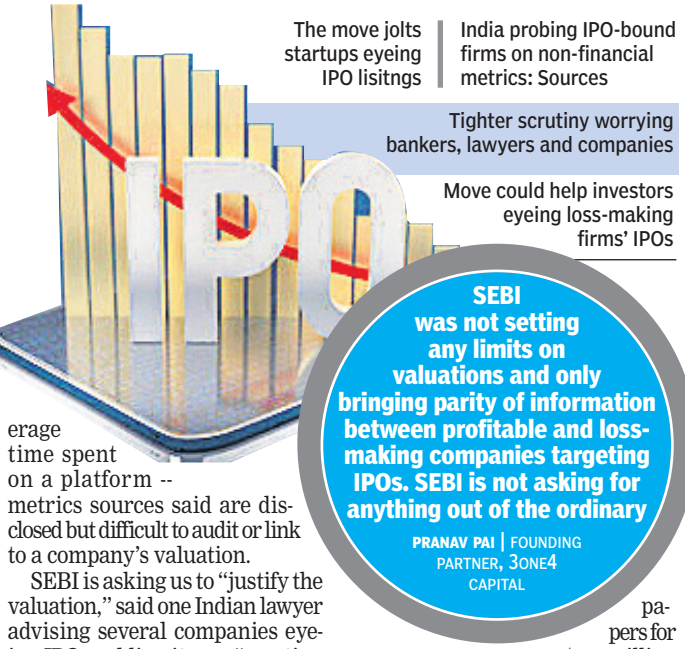
Sebi tightens IPO valuation scrutiny

Regulators in major markets including Hong Kong do follow practices that subject companies to tighter scrutiny about their business practices and financials, but they don't usually make granular checks on valuation metrics

REUTERS

New Delhi, March 11: India has tightened scrutiny of IPO-bound firms by questioning how key internal business metrics are used to arrive at valuations, unsettling bankers and companies which fear delays in listing plans, sources with direct knowledge told Reuters. India's push comes after the flop listing of SoftBank-backed payments firm Paytm's \$2.5 billion IPO (Initial Public Offering) in November which sparked criticism of lax oversight of how loss-making companies price issues at what some say are lofty valuations.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) last month flagged concerns in proposing stricter disclosures, saying more and more new-age tech firms which "generally remain loss making for a longer period" were filing for IPOs, and traditional financial disclosures "may not aid investors." But even before the proposal is finalised, SEBI has in recent weeks asked many companies to get their non-financial metrics - KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) - audited, and then explain how they were used to arrive at an IPO's valuation, five banking and legal sources said. Typically for a tech or app-based startup, KPIs could be figures like the number of downloads or av-



erage time spent on a platform -- metrics sources said are disclosed but difficult to audit or link to a company's valuation. SEBI is asking us to "justify the valuation," said one Indian lawyer advising several companies eyeing IPOs, adding it was "creating uncertainty and increasing cost of compliance." One document from February containing SEBI's remarks to an Indian IPO-bound company, seen by Reuters, asked for "explanation regarding how KPIs form basis" for arriving at the IPO issue price, adding they should be "certified by a statutory auditor."

papers for a \$818 million IPO in November, is one company which was hit by such scrutiny: one source with direct knowledge said the company raised concerns with SEBI about auditing and supplying such details, and is likely to get some relaxations. The tighter scrutiny comes when India's startups and other compa-

GROWING CONCERNS, HOT IPO MARKET

The tighter scrutiny comes when India's startups and other compa-

COAL CRISIS

Local industries need govt intervention, says Dr Chand

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The Utkal Chamber of Commercial Industries (UCCI), the Apex Body of industries, institutions and individual entrepreneurs in Odisha, has been celebrating Entrepreneurship Week to boost the entrepreneurial eco-system in the state. In the valedictory day, Governor Ganeshi Lal was the Chief Guest.

Dr Tapan Chand, a well known and successful industry professional who was NALCO Chairman and currently works as the President of Vedanta Odisha & Chattisgarh, complemented UCCI, its President and other office bearers for being ever agile to the problems of local industries of Odisha in his address as the Guest of Honour to the members of the industry body. He narrated how UCCI responded to the coal problems faced by industries in the state and expected that such response will certainly make UCCI strong. Articulating the difficulties of local industries in the state to get the required amount of coal, he requested state government's intervention.

In his analysis, he predicted that the coming time will be the time of MSMEs. Large industries will no more be the source of employment. The focus will shift to small and micro industries. In this context,



he also informed that the industry is in the threshold of fourth industrial revolution, and a cluster of technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics, internet of things (IoT), AR and VR are ushering in the revolution. Financial incentive in the form of reduced capex and opex will drive the industry managers to introduce Industry 4.0. High automation will bring in huge disruptive change in the areas of job family and many of the traditional jobs will disappear. Shop floors will operate with no man power. Machine will communicate with machine and condition based maintenance will reduce downtime. The major impact will be in reducing employment in large industries and MSMEs will emerge as the saviours.

Sugar exports plunge on global price rally, weak ₹

REUTERS

Mumbai, March 11: Indian sugar mills signed contracts to export 550,000 tonne of the sweetener in recent days, as surging global prices and a weak rupee made overseas sales lucrative, four dealers told Reuters. Higher exports from the world's second-biggest sugar producer could check the rally in global prices, which have been buoyed by a spike in crude oil prices and lower output in top exporter Brazil. The shipments will also help India reduce its stockpile and support the local prices of the sweetener, crucial in ensuring millions of cane farmers get government-

- Export contracts for 550,000 tonne signed in recent days
- Mills contract to export 6.4mn tonne sugar so far in 2021/22
- India could export record 8mn tonne sugar in 2021/22
- Production of record 33.3 million tonne of sugar likely

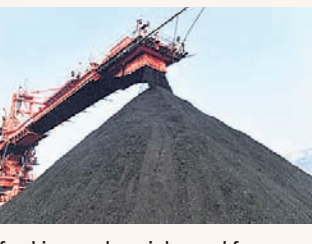


mandated prices. "In the past few days, mills from Maharashtra and Karnataka were active in the market. They were getting better realisation from exports than local sales," said Rahil Shaikh, managing director of MEIR

Commodities India. Indian mills have so far signed contracts to export 6.4 million tonne of sugar in 2021/22, dealers estimate. Out of this, nearly 5 million tonne have already been shipped. In the last few days, Indian traders mainly sold raw sugar to Asian buyers such as Indonesia and Bangladesh, which were trying to replenish their inventories ahead of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, said a Mumbai-based trader with a global trading firm. India had exported a record 7.2 million tonne of sugar in the previous season, taking advantage of government subsidy for overseas sales. But this year, mills could export 7.5 million to 8 million tonne without government incentives, said a New Delhi-based dealer with a global trading firm. "Rupee and global prices are supportive. If the government does not impose any restrictions on exports fearing inflation, then exports could rise to 8 million tonne," the dealer said.

Russian coal imports to be highest in 2 yrs

India's coal imports from Russia in March could be the highest in more than two years, data from research consultancy showed, as Indian buyers continue buying the fuel from a market that is now increasingly isolated by sanctions. Vessels carrying at least 1.06 million tonne of coking coal, mainly used for steelmaking, and thermal coal, used primarily for electricity generation, are set to deliver the fuel at Indian ports in March, the highest since January 2020, data from consultancy Kpler showed. About 870,000 tonne of Russian coal have already delivered or are expected to be delivered at Indian shores until March 20, the highest since April 2020, Indian consultancy Coalmint says. JSPL is among the importers from Russia in March, along with Tata Steel, Kalyani Steels and JSW Steel.



MORE TROUBLES AHEAD

Ukraine halts half of world's neon output for chips

THE STOPPAGE CASTS A CLOUD OVER THE WORLDWIDE OUTPUT OF CHIPS, ALREADY IN SHORT SUPPLY AFTER THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC DROVE UP DEMAND FOR CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS AND LATER CARS, FORCING SOME FIRMS TO SCALE BACK PRODUCTION

REUTERS

Washington, March 11: Ukraine's two leading suppliers of neon, which produce about half the world's supply of the key ingredient for making chips, have halted their operations as Moscow has sharpened its attack on the country, threatening to raise prices and aggravate the semiconductor shortage. Some 45%-54% of the world's

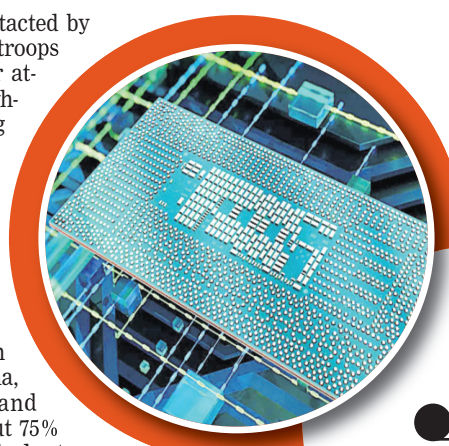
semiconductor grade neon, critical for the lasers used to make chips, comes from two Ukrainian companies, Ingas and Cryoin, according to Reuters calculations based on figures from the companies and market research firm Techcet. Global neon consumption for chip production reached about 540 metric tonne last year, Techcet estimates. Both firms have shuttered their operations, according to company

representatives contacted by Reuters, as Russian troops have escalated their attacks on cities throughout Ukraine, killing civilians and destroying key infrastructure. Before the invasion, Ingas produced 15,000 to 20,000 cubic meters of neon per month for customers in Taiwan, Korea, China, the United States and Germany, with about 75% going to the chip industry, Nikolay Avdzy, the company's chief commercial officer, said in an email to Reuters. The company is based in Mariupol, which has been under siege by Russian forces. Wednesday,

Russian forces destroyed a maternity hospital there, in what Kyiv and Western allies called a war crime. Moscow said the hospital was no longer functioning and had been occu-

pyied by Ukrainian fighters. Cryoin, which produced roughly 10,000 to 15,000 cubic meters of neon per month, and is located in Odessa, halted operations Feb 24 when the attacks began to keep

employees safe, according to business development director Larissa Bondarenko. Bondarenko said the company would be unable to fill orders for 13,000 cubic meter of neon in March unless the violence stopped. She said the company could weather at least three months with the plant closed, but warned that if equipment were damaged, that would prove a bigger drag on company finances and make it harder to restart operations quickly. Bondarenko says prices, already under pressure after the pandemic, had climbed by up to 500% from December. Neon prices rose 600% in the run-up to Russia's 2014 annexation of the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine, according to the US International Trade Commission.



If stockpiles are depleted by April and chipmakers don't have orders locked up in other regions of the world, it likely means further constraints for the broader supply chain and inability to manufacture the end-product for many key customers

ANGELO ZINO | ANALYST, CFRA

Kohli would look for his elusive 71st international century at his 'Spiritual Home' as India face Sri Lanka in the Day/Night Test at M Chinnaswamy Stadium

SEN SAILS INTO GERMAN OPEN LAST 4 STAGE



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Muelheim An Der Ruhr (Germany), March 11: World Championships bronze medallist Lakshya Sen continued his rich vein of form as he progressed to the men's singles semifinals of the German Open Super 300 tournament with a straight-game win over fellow Indian H S Prannoy here Friday.

The 20-year-old Sen, who had claimed his maiden Super 500 title at the India Open in January, saw off former top 10 player Prannoy 21-15, 21-16 in 39 minutes. The World No.14 had defeated Prannoy, currently ranked 24th, at the quarterfinals of India Open as well.

Sen will now face the winner of the other quarterfinal match between Olympic champion and top seed Viktor Axelsen and India's Kidambi Srikanth Saturday.

Thursday, Sen had notched up a stunning 21-7, 21-9 win over fourth seeded Indonesian Anthony Sinisuka Ginting in a second-round match.

Prannoy made a positive start, opening up a 4-0 lead early on but Sen caught up with him at 10-10 and zoomed ahead after the interval to take a 1-0 lead in the tie.

The second game was a tight affair initially as the duo moved neck and neck with Sen managing a slender 11-10 lead at the break. But, just like in the first game, Sen produced a five-point burst to eventually seal the contest comfortably.

Pink ball in 'Garden City'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, March 11: Chasing an elusive international hundred for 28 months now, Virat Kohli would hope for a turnaround at his 'spiritual home' when India take on an under-prepared and injury-hit Sri Lanka in the second Test, with the action unfolding under flood lights, here from Saturday.

Interestingly the last time Kohli reached a three-figure mark, it was a 'Pink Ball' game in which India thrashed Bangladesh by an innings and 46 runs in Kolkata, back in November 2019. He had scored 136 back then.

The former India skipper has taken strike in 28 innings since then but a Test hundred has remained elusive. The 33-year-old has got a 50-plus score only six times with highest being a knock of 79 against South Africa in Cape Town in January this year.

Now he is returning to the M Chinnaswamy stadium, a venue which he knows like the back of his palm as he has led his IPL side Royal Challengers Bangalore here (RCB) for a decade. That comforting familiarity with the conditions may also help.

Kohli v tough times
A colossus that he has developed into in world cricket, expectations are always high from the star Indian cricketer, who is perhaps enduring the most challenging phase of his career and not just in pure cricketing terms.

Kohli's run-in with the establishment and the subsequent removal from the leadership role in ODIs may have added pressure but he can breathe easy since in Sri Lanka he faces a bowling attack, which hardly has the wherewithal to trouble the Indian batters in their own den.

Kohli had got a start even in the Mohali Test but could not make full use of that. It's not that he is not batting well. He is still striking the ball with ease and that trademark fluency is also there but lapse of concentration at times is be-



GETTING THE TOUCH: Virat Kohli bats at the nets ahead of the second Test against Sri Lanka in Bangalore, starting Saturday

coming his undoing.
Fatigue that creeps in with a punishing schedule and age could be factors and the lack of confidence due to noise surrounding him outside the cricket grounds is also something which is perhaps affecting his batting.

Batting against a below-average Sri Lankan attack in a comparatively small ground is actually a perfect opportunity to come out of the lean patch in-front of capacity crowd that has always egged him on.

TEAM COMBINATION
Since it is a pink ball contest, either a fit-again spin all-rounder Axar Patel or pacer Mohammed Siraj could replace Jayant Yadav in the playing XI because both have the ability to cause more damage in a Day/Night game.
Jayant did not do anything spe-

cial in Mohali. Even when the Sri Lankans were struggling, he went wicket-less in his 17 overs across the two innings.
Axar, in his last Pink ball Test, had wreaked havoc with his under cutters in Ahmedabad against England, taking 11 wickets in that contest. He even opened the attack in the second England innings.

However, if grass is left on the pitch then Siraj would be a better option for skipper Rohit Sharma. Any more change to the playing XI is unlikely even though it will be interesting to see if Hanuma Vihari is given another chance to bat at No.3. Rohit had said that it is not certain that the slot would remain with Vihari.
Last Home Test for India in 2022
It will be the last Test match on home soil for team India in 2022. There are seven more Tests in the

current WTC cycle after the Lankan series. The team will travel to Bangladesh for a two-match series and then Australia will arrive for a four-Test rubber in 2023.
The one Test of the last year's England tour is still to be played away. India need to win all these matches, if the team has to qualify for the WTC final.

For both Sri Lanka and India, it will be their fourth Day-Night Test and both share similar record of two wins and a defeat each.
India squad: Rohit Sharma (C), Mayank Agarwal, Shubham Gill, Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant (wk), Hanuma Vihari, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Jayant Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, KS Bharat (wk), Umesh Yadav, Saurabh Kumar & Priyank Panchal.

Bumrah opens up on match preparations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, March 11: India vice-captain Jasprit Bumrah feels that cricketers need to make a few "mental adjustments" going into a 'Pink Ball' Test but defining one set parameter for that is not possible since all three day-night games they have played in the past were in varied conditions.

India are gearing up for their fourth day-night Test against Sri Lanka, having played against Bangladesh on a seaming Eden Gardens track, versus Australia on a bouncy Adelaide Oval surface and with England on a Motera rank turner. Bumrah said they are still learning how to approach pink ball games.

"As professional cricketers, we need to adjust as quickly as possible. The pink ball looks different while fielding. It comes earlier (travels faster) than what you perceive. In a Test match, ball swings more in the morning session.

"But in the afternoon session, the ball may not swing much. And then in the evening, it can swing more, all these small points (are being discussed)," Bumrah said during the pre-match virtual media interaction.

"We have not played many pink ball matches and whatever we have played, they were all in different conditions, so no parameter can be set (on adjustments required). So whatever little experience we have gathered and the feedback we have taken, we are trying to work on those things," the fast bowler added.

Bumrah also revealed that they had an optional practice session with pink ball even during the Mohali Test. In India's previous pink-ball games, the pitches on offer were of different of variety.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

"We are not used to fielding, bowling and batting with the pink ball. You don't play pink ball cricket. When you field under lights, what adjustments you have to make. We are still new in this format."

Bumrah said it depends on an individual how difficult or easy it is to make those mental adjustments. Asked if India will go with three spinners or seamers, Bumrah said unless they assess the pitch for one final time, he can't talk about the combination.

"We have had a look at the surface. Today is the day when we assess it and then decide what combination we need. We will make a plan and back that."

It is expected that since Axar Patel, who has been added to the squad, may replace Jayant Yadav, keeping in mind the conditions. However Bumrah did not disclose if that is being planned for the game. Bumrah stated in an assertive tone that Kuldeep Yadav, who has been released from squad, has not been kicked out.

CHELSEA THRASH NORWICH IN ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, March 11: It was a tumultuous day off the field but business as usual on it for the club that is swiftly becoming one of the most talked about teams in the soccer world — for all the wrong reasons.

Early goals from Trevor Chalobah and Mason Mount set Chelsea on its way to a 3-1 victory at bottom club Norwich in the Premier League Thursday, just hours after unprecedented British government sanctions against Russian owner Roman Abramovich.

Those included restrictions that prohibits the team from selling new tickets or merchandise, or signing new players. It meant Chelsea required a special licence to even be allowed to play, but the tough sanctions — which also halted Abramovich's planned sale of the club — didn't prevent the away fans from chanting the oligarch's name from the first whistle.
Chelsea's players showed no



Chelsea scorers Kai Havertz (L) and Mason Mount celebrate after a goal against Norwich, Thursday

sign of being affected by the turmoil as Chalobah headed in Mount's corner in the third minute and Mount then then got on the scoresheet himself 11 minutes later as he curled in a pass from Kai Havertz.

Chelsea appeared to be cruising to comfortable victory but Norwich managed to reduce the deficit with 21 minutes left as Pierre Lees-Melou's cross hit the arm of Chalobah and, after reviewing the incident on the pitchside monitor, referee Martin Atkinson pointed to the spot. Teemu Pukki stepped up and sent Edouard Mendy the wrong way to set up a nervy finale for Chelsea in Norfolk.

But Chelsea wrapped up the points in injury time when substitute N'Golo Kante dribbled into the area and squared it for Havertz to sidefoot home.

Chelsea remained third, 13 points behind Premier League leader Manchester City, but increased its advantage over fifth-place Manchester United to nine points.

Eves look to return to winning ways

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The Indian women's hockey team would look to return to winning ways against a higher-ranked but out-of-touch Germany in the two-legged tie of the FIH Pro League, starting with the first match here Saturday.

Playing their debut season in the Pro League, the Indian women made a fine start to their campaign, beating China 7-1 and 2-1 in their opening two games in Muscat. The Indians, ranked ninth in the world, then defeated world number 6 Spain 2-1 at home before slumping to a 3-4 defeat in the return leg last month.

But despite the loss, the Indian women are well placed in the FIH Pro League standings as they are currently at the third position with nine points from four games, which includes three wins and a loss.

And come Saturday, India skipper Savita, who is leading the side in place of an injured Rani Rampal, would be hoping for an improved show from her team at the Kalinga Stadium.

Having registered three consecutive wins, the Indian women were



Analytical coach Patrick Tshutshani gives has something to elaborate during the Indian team's practice session at the Kalinga Stadium

on course to continue their unbeaten run before they conceded a late goal to lose to Spain in their last FIH Pro League match. Going by momentum, India will have an edge over World No.5 Germany Saturday.

Savita said it's important to enter the match against Germany with a positive mindset. "Since we have started playing against stronger teams, we have learned the importance of mental strength. It is a skill as important as your skills with a hockey stick. How we adapt

to pressure situations can determine the results," she said in a virtual press conference.

"We are happy to be given opportunities to face off against a strong team such as Germany and we hope we can showcase the strengths that we have worked on in the training."

Vice-captain Deep Grace Ekka said the Indian players are as fit as any opponent in the world. The Germans will be a bit rusty coming into the tie against India after

making a return to the FIH Pro League after October last year.

Germany have played only two games in the competition so far but lost both the contests against Belgium 0-1 and 1-3. However, Indian women's hockey team chief coach Janneke Schopman very well knows what the Germans are capable of despite returning to the competition after a break.

Germany captain Lisa Nolte said India may have an advantage as they are playing at home. "The Indian girls are very fast and they have good skills. The weather is so hot and could be an advantage for the Indian girls. But we are optimistic we will handle the pressure and hopefully deliver a good performance," she said.

The hosts have included two new faces — defender Akshata Abaso Dhakale and striker Deepika Jr — in the 22-member squad which will take on Germany over the weekend.

India last played against Germany at the Tokyo Olympics where they suffered a 0-2 defeat in a pool match. Overall, the two teams have faced off against each other five times since 2006, and India have won only once.

Dutee to take part in Indoor Athletic Worlds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: India will field sprinter Dutee Chand, shot putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor and long jumper M Sreeshankar in the World Athletics Indoor Championships to be held in Belgrade, Serbia March 18-20.

Athletics Federation of India President Adille Sumariwalla said Toor and Sreeshankar got entries on the basis of their rankings, while Dutee was extended an invitation by World Athletics to run in the women's 60m event.

All the three Indian athletes will be seen in action on March 18. Dutee will be the first one in action in 60m heats. Later that day, Sreeshankar will be among the competitors in the long jump final. Toor will be in action March 19 evening.

CURTAINS DOWN ON OWL 2022



Odisha Police players finally got their hands on the Odisha Women's League football tournament winners' trophy after a week of their triumph as the players, including their skipper and India international Pyari Xaxa (with the trophy), celebrate at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Friday. The trophy was awarded after the final development friendly match between Odisha U-18 and Odisha Police. The match ended in Odisha Police's favour with a 5-0 scoreline, courtesy two goals by Jasmani Samad and, one goal each by Pyari, Jabamani Tudu and Satyabati Khadia



PICS: BIKASH NAYAK

Barca held to goalless draw by Galatasaray

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, March 11: Barcelona's newfound attacking verve vanished as the club was held to a 0-0 draw by Galatasaray at Camp Nou in the first leg of the round of 16 of the Europa League.

Barcelona is having a miserable season but had shown signs of recovery lately by winning four straight games in all competitions and scoring a combined 14 goals in that stretch.

But playing in Europe's second-tier competition after failing to advance to the Champions League knockout stages for the first time since 2004, the Spanish giant couldn't come closer to a goal than when Frenkie de Jong hit the post.
Barca now faces a tricky return

leg in Turkey in the only competition it still has a realistic chance of winning. Barcelona is out of the Copa del Rey and trails Spanish league leader Real Madrid by 15 points.

Earlier, Moroccan forward Munir scored in the second half to give sixth-time Europa League champion Sevilla a 1-0 win over West Ham. In other games, Rangers beat Red Star Belgrade 3-0, Atalanta recovered from a goal down to top Leverkusen 3-2, and Braga blanked Monaco 2-0.

Leipzig's meeting with Spartak Moscow was cancelled after all Russian clubs were expelled from international competitions following that country's military invasion of Ukraine. Leipzig directly qualified for the quarterfinals.