



CROWNING GLORY

Poland's Karolina Bielawska wins the Miss Universe title for 2021 besting rivals from 96 other countries

LEISURE P2



HEATWAVE WARNING

The IMD Thursday issued yellow warning for seven Odisha districts in view of the ongoing heatwave conditions

DOWNTOWN P3



STUNNING FORM

Shuttler Lakshya Sen continues his stunning form to defeat World No.3 Anton Andersen at All England tourney

SPORTS P12

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HOLIDAY NOTICE
The offices & press of Orissa POST will remain closed March 18 & 19 on the occasion of Dola Purnima and Holi. Hence, there will be no edition of the paper on March 19 & 20.

— EDITOR

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Nobody played Holi with me, I am pale because of prices

Russian shells kill 21 civilians

Exact number of casualties yet to be ascertained as many still remain under the debris of the destroyed Mariupol theatre shelter

AGENCIES

Kyiv, March 17: Twenty-one people have been killed by Russian artillery that destroyed a school and a community centre in Merefya, near the northeast city of Kharkiv, officials said Thursday. Merefya Mayor Veniamin Sitov said the attack occurred just before dawn. The Kharkiv region has seen heavy bombardment as stalled Russian forces try to advance in the area.

In the city of Chernihiv, northeast of the Ukrainian capital, emergency service said a hostel was shelled, killing a mother, father and three of their children, including three-year-old twins.

A Russian air strike Wednesday destroyed a theatre hall in Mariupol where more than 1,000 people had taken shelter. A large number of them are now feared dead, but the exact numbers could not be ascertained as rescue operations are still on, officials said Thursday.

Mariupol's Deputy Mayor Serhiy Orlov has been quoted as saying by the 'BBC' that between 1,000 and 1,200 people were inside the cultural landmark when it was bombed. This incidentally, is not the first time that Russia has targeted civilian locations during its



The Mariupol theatre hall where hundreds had taken refuge, before and after the Russian air strikes

invasion of Ukraine.

Ukrainian MP Roman Hryshchuk accused the Russians of knowing that the theatre was full of children and other civilians. Posting a drone shot of the theatre before the bombing to Twitter, he wrote: "Giant white inscriptions on the ground say: 'CHILDREN'. Russians knew there are civilians in the theatre."

Pavlo Kyrylenko, head of the Donetsk regional administration, said on Telegram that Russian airstrikes also hit a municipal swimming pool complex in Mariupol where civilians, including women and children, had taken shelter. "Now there are pregnant women and women with children under the rubble there," he wrote.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr

Zelenskyy called for more help for his country in a video address to German lawmakers Thursday. He said thousands of civilians have been killed in the war that started almost a month ago, including 108 children. The Russian defence ministry denied Wednesday bombing the theatre or anywhere else in Mariupol and called it a 'hoax' by Ukraine to derive sympathy.

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Fake doc's driver held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: Commissionerate Police detained Thursday the absconding driver of 'fake doctor' Ramesh Chandra Swain. The accused Pappu had allegedly aided Swain in defrauding multiple women of lakhs of rupees after marrying them. Pappu was detained from Rampur locality of Nayagarh district.

Sources revealed that the cops have taken Pappu to an undisclosed location and are interrogating him. The sleuths are trying to elicit details about the frauds committed by Swain and Pappu's role in the crimes. Police hope to get some vital clues against Swain as Pappu is a close confidante and associate of the fake doctor.

Sources said that Pappu will be produced in the

SDJM court here Friday and police will seek his remand. Police however, are yet to confirm Pappu's arrest and have said that he can be officially arrested Friday after the interrogation.

Commissionerate Police meanwhile, have also written to various matrimonial sites, including Shadi.com to delete the accounts of Swain. He used to target single ladies in the age group of 35 to 45 years on the sites identifying himself as a doctor and senior official of the Union Health ministry.

Commissionerate Police had Wednesday conducted a polygraph test on Swain at the State Forensic Science Laboratory. Sources informed that sleuths asked him around 50 questions during the test. Swain reportedly cried multiple times during the session.

Plus-II exams begin April 28

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: The Odisha government Thursday announced that the annual Class XII board examinations for Arts, Science, Commerce and Vocational streams will be held in offline mode from April 28.

The Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) will conduct the examination and it is mandatory for all Class-XII students to appear for the tests, which will continue till May 24. More than 3.2 lakh students in Arts, Science, Commerce and Vocational streams will appear for the examinations.

In view of the heatwave conditions, the examinations will be conducted in one sitting starting at 9.00am. The practical exams will be conducted internally by the

More than 3.2 lakh students will appear in the tests that will be held in offline mode

respective higher secondary schools under the supervision of their own teachers, the CHSE said in a statement.

As the students are facing difficult situations due to Covid-19 pandemic, the Council has adopted a new format for the annual Higher Secondary examination and its evaluation after holding discussion with all stakeholders including teachers, students and parents, it said.

The Council has adopted two schemes for evaluation

of marks of the students. Under the first scheme, 20 per cent weightage will be given to the marks obtained by a student in the internal examinations conducted by the concerned school. For this, out of three internal examinations, two tests where the student has secured higher marks will be taken into account. Remaining 80 per cent weightage will be given to the final examination to be conducted by the Council from April 28.

The Council further said it will give 100 per cent weightage to the upcoming annual Higher Secondary examinations under the second scheme of evaluation. Highest of the marks obtained by the student in above two schemes shall be counted as the final tally in that particular paper.

Gandhis reach out to 'rebels'

The dissidents have clarified that they do not want to split the party, but would want those responsible for electoral losses removed



Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi during the recent CWC meeting

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 17: After issuing a statement on 'collective' and 'inclusive' leadership, Congress dissidents in the G-23 group have stated that they are not averse to Sonia Gandhi's leadership but removal of those responsible for party's loss in elections is a must. Amid this development, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi had a 40-minute meeting with one of the main

dissidents, former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda. However, what transpired in the meeting is yet to be known.

A number of rebel leaders ruled out for now splitting the party, but called for the Gandhis to remove their loyalists from key posts to enable a resurrection of India's oldest party, sources said Thursday.

The party is 'too weak' to survive the split, the dissidents reportedly discussed

at the meeting held Wednesday night at the home of Ghulam Nabi Azad, a leading member of the G-23. The dissidents had written to Sonia two years ago demanding big changes in the Congress, including a leadership overhaul.

Azad is likely to meet Sonia Friday to deliver the message from the meeting and the concerns of the 'rebels', sources said. Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra are expected to be present at the meeting.

After the meeting Wednesday, many of the members of the group had pointed out that they were not 'rebelling' against the party. However, they would want an 'amicable solution' to the issues they have raised.

The dissident leaders again met Thursday where Hooda briefed them about his meeting with Rahul. During the discussions it was decided that such meetings would be held on a regular basis to keep the top leadership of the party on its toes.

Servitor killers to be arrested soon: Puri SP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, March 17: A day after the murder of Srimandir servitor Krishna Chandra Pratihari, Puri SP Kanwar Vishal Singh said Thursday that those associated with the killing have been identified. Singh asserted that they will be detained soon. He informed that police have given top priority to the case and are leaving no stone unturned to complete the investigation as quickly as possible.

The SP also said that four special teams have been formed for investigations and they are working round the clock. Singh informed that the teams have already raided a number of places including Pipili, Satapada, Brahmagiri and Krishnaprasad. "Raids are also taking place in Ganjam, Balasore and Bhadrak," Singh said.

"The persons who are involved in the murder have been identified. We expect they will be detained soon," the SP added. He informed that once detained the accused will confess the motive behind the murder. Pratihari was shot dead Wednesday morning by unidentified assailants near Barabati Jagaghar in this town.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	57863.93	↑ 1047.28
NIFTY	17287.00	↑ 311.70
DOLLAR	76.42	↓ ₹0.43
EURO	84.08	↑ ₹0.03
GOLD	₹51,734	↑ ₹587
SILVER	₹68,610	↑ ₹1306

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	36.2°C	37.8°C
TEMP MIN	22.6°C	23.6°C
Humidity	86%	83%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Dry weather most likely

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KRISTEN STEWART NOW OWNS PRINCESS DIANA'S WARDROBE!

Actress Kristen Stewart was gifted all of the clothes she got to wear as Princess Diana for *Spencer* by costume designer Jacqueline Durran. When shooting had wrapped, Stewart was allowed to keep all of the clothes which were recreations of the garments worn in real-life by Diana.

TOP RUSSIAN BALLERINA OLGA QUILTS BOLSHOI BALLET OVER UKRAINE WAR

Olga Smirnova, one of Russia's top dancers, made a huge decision and revealed that she quit the prestigious Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow over the war in Ukraine. Smirnova will now join the Dutch National Ballet, reports aceshowbiz.com.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You will delight in romantic pursuits today. You would like to spend the whole day with your friends and loved ones, indulging in activities that appeal to you. But Ganesh says your peers may not approve, as they may think you are trying to shirk work.

TAURUS

You will be in a mood to dominate and boss over your subordinates and assistants as soon as you land at your work place. Ganesh urges you to get rid of this idea instantly. Otherwise you are likely to lose a lot of money in store for you. You are likely to feel bored and listless later in the day. Take a break and go for a small pleasure trip to some attractive and picturesque spot. That should pep you up.

GEMINI

You will feel the need to break free from the shackles of your daily routine. You will try to complete all your work in one go and this will give rise to mental stress and worry. You will be able to concentrate on your personal matters only later on in the day, busy as you will be with work related matters in the afternoon. Make sure that you do not end up neglecting your family in pursuit of your career goals, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Today, your loved ones will prove again how much they love you. It's high time you stopped doubting the intentions of your family members. It's time to start over, start afresh and start giving back the love and trust that your loved ones give you.

LEO

Resist that urge to pop a pill and call in sick, because no matter how much you wish, escaping from reality is not the way to go, says Ganesh. Yes, there are chances that you shall remain in a pensive mood today with a multitude of thoughts fighting to occupy space inside your head. Work shall be a constant feel-good area as you share valuable moments with your peers, and progress as expected. Ganesh portends a pleasant evening in the company of the opposite sex. So cheer up, there is lots to look forward to.

VIRGO

Signs are that the day will be bright, rewarding and thoughtful as well. Keep in mind that doomsday is still a long way off. Planetary motions indicate better things to come with each new day. Keep the banners of hope flying, says Ganesh.

LIBRA

For every matter, there is a particular solution unique to it. With your systematic approach to things, you are a firm believer of this statement. And it is a good thing too, since today, this habit shall help you grab the limelight at work, says Ganesh. In the second-half of the day, your eye for detail will go a long way in enhancing your insight. You will spend the evening buying electronic gadgets: the latest cellphone or music player, you have your eyes set on something along those lines today.

SCORPIO

You will radiate kindness and care today, says Ganesh. Quarantine yourself from worries at work. Open your heart to loved ones today. Ganesh expects your social skills to set the ball rolling at some social-do today.

SAGITTARIUS

Your nerves are taut, and you are more aware than ever of things around you. Your spiritual side gets a major boost today. On the career front, expect it to be busy day giving interviews for better prospects. In the evening, your charm might just have a few women dangling by your side at places you party.

CAPRICORN

The profundity of relationships will intrigue you, luring you to delve deeper into them, says Ganesh. Your strong persuasive power will help clear many misunderstandings that may have cut a rift in your relationship with your sweetheart in the past. At work, you will garner the support of your colleagues and subordinates for mutual goals, but at the same time, be wary of your competitors who may try to outdo you, warns Ganesh.

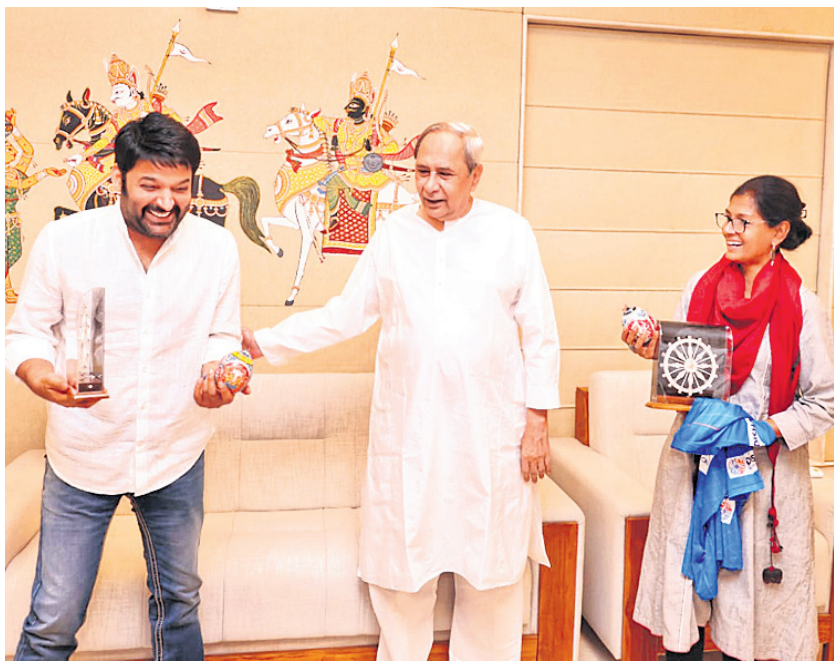
AQUARIUS

Today is just not your day. Accept that nothing will work perfectly, and get on. Any bickering at your workplace can be sorted out with tact. And patience will help you tide over difficult situations. Ganesh wishes you all the best!

PISCES

The focus today is on your spouse. You may mutually give and receive pleasant surprises today. You are likely to take stock of your present and prepare for the future today, but be sure to do so in conjunction with your better half. Your business partners may bring you some good news, says Ganesh.

COURTESY VISIT



Stand-up comedian Kapil Sharma and filmmaker Nandita Das shared some light moments with Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at his residence, Thursday. Kapil was in Bhubaneswar to shoot Nandita's upcoming directorial in which he plays a food delivery rider.

NATIONAL CLASSICAL DANCE MUSICAL SAMAROHA - DAY 4

Graceful Odissi, Bharatanatyam regale audience

Bhubaneswar: The fluency of eminent Odissi danseuse Padma Shri Ileana Citaristi and an awesome Bharatanatyam recital by Parshwanath Upadhye and his troupe from Bangalore held the audience spellbound on the fourth day of five-day long National Classical Dance and Musical Samaroha here at the

Eastern Railway Auditorium, Mancheswar, Thursday. The festival is being jointly organised by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi (OSNA) and the Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre (EZCC) under the Union Ministry of Culture. The event of the fourth day kicked off with a breathtaking performance by musical artiste and tabla player

Ojas Adhiya from Mumbai. In the second performance of the evening, Bharatanatyam artiste Parshwanath Upadhye of Bangalore showcased traditional style of the form creating an ambience of spirituality on the stage. The main attraction of the evening, however, came at the end with veteran Odissi

dancer Padma Shri Ileana Citaristi wielding magic with her fluent 'mudras' and iconic expressions. On the fifth and concluding day the audience will be treated with the performances by Kuchipudi dancer Veernala Jayarama Rao of Chennai, Manipuri dancer Priti Patel of Kolkata and Odissi vocalist Rupak Parida.



An Odissi recital by Ileana Citaristi and her troupe



A presentation by Parshwanath Upadhye and others

Karolina Bielawska crowned Miss World

Los Angeles: Poland's Karolina Bielawska has been crowned Miss Universe for the year 2021, besting contestants from 96 other countries, including Miss India Manasa Varanasi, who stood 11th at the international beauty pageant.

The 70th edition of the event was held on Wednesday night at the Coca-Cola Music Hall in San Juan, Puerto Rico. According to the official Miss World website, Bielawska was crowned by her predecessor Toni-Ann Singh of Jamaica, who won the pageant in 2020. "When I heard my name I was shocked. I still can't believe it. I am honoured to wear the Miss World crown and can't wait to get to work. I will remember this amazing chapter in Puerto Rico for the rest of my life," Bielawska said after being crowned Miss World 2021.

Miss USA Shree Saini, an Indian-American, emerged the first runner-up, followed by Côte D'Ivoire's Olivia Yace.

The official Instagram account of Femina Miss India expressed gratitude towards Varanasi, an engineer from Telangana, for representing the country. "You may have not won the crown but you have won millions of hearts, @manasa5varanasi," it said.



Vrindaban Mahotsav in City March 19

Bhubaneswar: The Sixth Vrindaban Mahotsav organised by Vrindaban Gurukul of Pt Hariprasad Chaurasia in association with Tourism department, Govt of Odisha will be held at Rabindra Mandap March 19, 2022.

In a Press meet here at Vrindaban Gurukul premises Thursday Pt Chaurasia said multiple talented artistes from classical music will come in one platform that includes Hindustani classical singer Padma Bhushan Begum Parween Sultana, tabla player Pt Abhijeet Banerjee, sitar player Shubendra Rao, harmonium player Jyoti Goho and others.

The programme will be started with the flute recital by the students of Gurukul.

On the occasion Tourism department joint secretary Puja Mishra said such event helps in expanding the classical music world and also encourages the aspiring musicians.

The 'Antardhwani' actress has been celebrating eco-friendly Holi for over a decade to sensitise people about the harmful effects of synthetic colours

Celebs to join Swapna's herbal Holi in Punjab

Bhubaneswar: Odisha-born actress and producer Swapna Pati, who mostly works in Mumbai film industry, had been promoting eco-

friendly Holi for over a decade in Odisha. But the Covid curbs of the last couple of years have made her turn towards the north to celebrate the festival of colours.

The 'Antardhwani' actress, through her non-profit organisation Swapna Pati Foundation, last year organised a road show in Pune during Holi. This year the organisation, in collaboration with GK Entertainment, is all set to celebrate it with herbal colours in Punjab. Not just the star couple

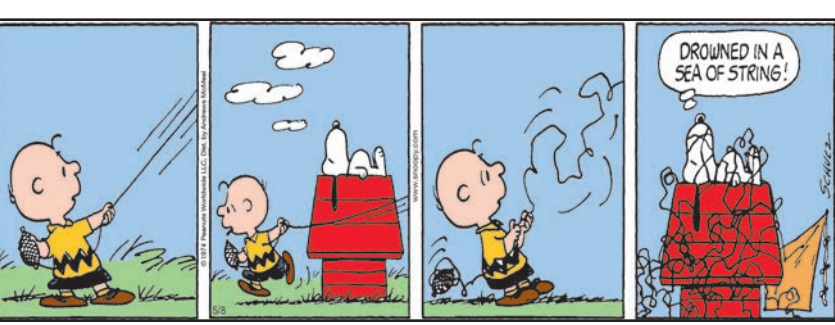


ashyammann Khurrana and Tahira Kashyap, several other celebrities too have joined their hands for the cause. "The best way to celebrate Holi is going organic. This year, Punjab is celebrating herbal Holi for the first

time. Please go there and celebrate," says Tahira in her video message. Swapna, talking about the Punjab event, says, "We have been organising herbal Holi for the last 11 years to sensitise people about the harmful effects of synthetic colours. As the Govt. of Odisha has banned celebrations at public places, we have decided to celebrate it in Punjab March 18 with stars like Rochak Kohli, Gurpreet Saini, top bands and DJs joining the event. Rochak Kohli will perform live and the event is expected to witness a footfall of over 3,000." She goes on to add: "The foundation has been using herbal colours made from extracts of rose, marigold, hibiscus, bougainvillea, sandalwood, henna, tesu, turmeric, multani mitti, and various vegetables and minerals which are skin-friendly." PNN

FUN post

PEANUTS



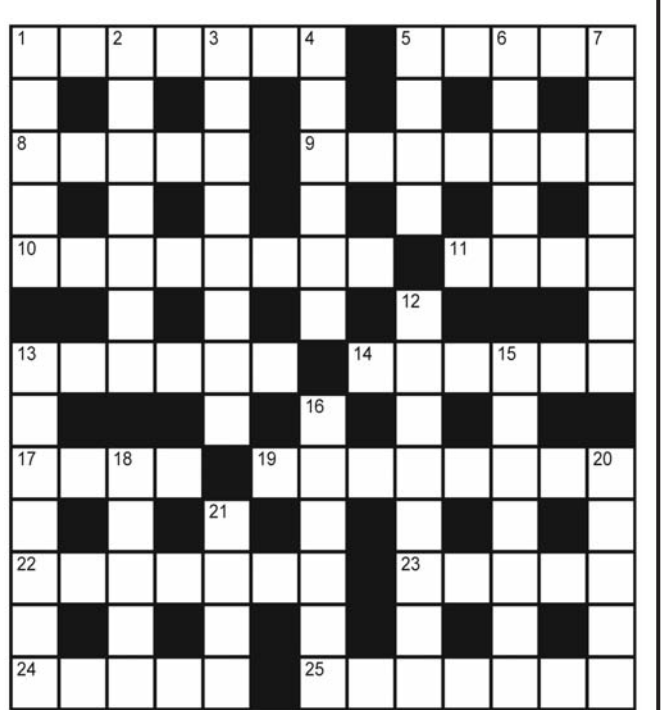
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



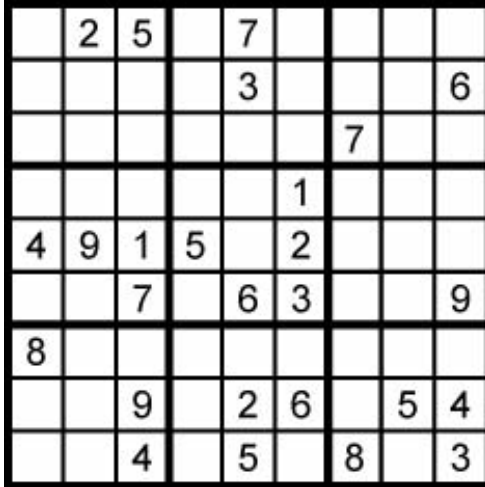
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Arabian Nights name
 - 5 Beguile
 - 8 Dutch export
 - 9 Fall back
 - 10 Coherent
 - 11 Zig or zag
 - 13 Pretense
 - 14 Loving cup
 - 17 Silent assents
 - 19 Wins over, as a fear
 - 22 Give-up the ghost
 - 23 Double birdie
 - 24 Aswan High Dam locale
 - 25 Loathes
 - Down**
 - 1 Strong emotion
 - 2 Like some plants
 - 3 Precious stones
 - 4 Trondheim locale
 - 5 Zoo feature
 - 6 Sharp narrow ridge
 - 7 Penny-pinching
 - 12 On a regular basis
 - 13 Polish
 - 15 Vows
 - 16 Ghoulish
 - 18 Duck hunter's tool
 - 20 Dance manoeuvres
 - 21 Equitable

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



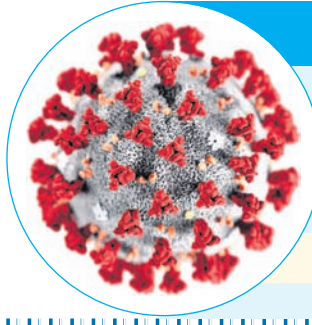
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



NOISE POLLUTION

The traffic police seized several bikes fitted with modified silencers from different places in Cuttack, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	46,49,26,800	39,70,49,482	60,83,323
India	4,30,01,477	4,24,54,546	5,16,132
Odisha	12,86,957	12,77,153	9,116

It's encouraging to deal in multiple brands: GRC Garments MD

He was a meritorious student but he came forward to look after his family business instead of running after government jobs. He matured into a young entrepreneur within a short span of time and played a key role in the wholesale trade of branded garments in Odisha. In a tête-à-tête with **Orissa POST**, GRC Garments Private Limited Managing Director **Avinash Chhapolia** speaks about his journey, the market for branded garments in Odisha and his future plans. Excerpts:



How has been your journey so far?

Immediately after completing my BCom, I entered our family business. My grandfather Gangaram Chhaporia was involved in suiting-shirting business in Cuttack even in the pre-independence era. Our business entity has been named after my grandfather.

Your thoughts about branded garments market in Odisha?

We have been into wholesale trade of branded garments since 2001. We are dealing in brands like Killer, Blackberry, Monte Carlo, Twills, Being Human, W, Aurelia, BIBA and Deal since the beginning. The demand for branded garments in Odisha is much encouraging than in neighbouring states. Many international brands are also doing well in Odisha market in recent years.

How did you tackle the challenges posed by Covid-19?

The Covid-19 pandemic struck us when the market was just recovering from a slowdown. Restrictions on the public celebration of festivals discouraged people to buy new clothes. As a result, we were left with overstocks. Subsequently, the supply side also saw a decline due to closure of some production units. However, the demand for branded garments saw an upward trend only when many of our youngsters returned to Odisha from their workplaces, thanks to work from home culture.

Cuttack was once the hub for wholesale trade of garments. Now, Bhubaneswar is an emerging market. Your take?

Cuttack is still the capital of wholesale trade in garments in Odisha.

Wholesale trading has just begun in Bhubaneswar but Cuttack still enjoys a lot of advantage in this business. It is somehow easy to supply garments to the retailers across the state from Cuttack. It is important for a wholesaler to maintain his supply chain with the retailers.

What is the secret behind running a wholesale business with so many renowned brands?

It is really very encouraging to deal in garments of multiple brands. The business tips we receive from the garments companies often help us a lot. This apart, we are enjoying some financial and managerial advantage in our wholesale business. We have retained a strong retailer base by selling garments of different brands under one roof.

Your future plans?

GRC Garments is planning to deal in some new international brands in the coming days. We have plans to open a few mega stores of some renowned brands. We will give more focus on small towns and rural areas of our state.

What about the demand for branded garments in rural areas?

The garments business is slowly picking up in rural areas in the wake of improvement in Covid-19 situation. Multi-brand outlets are witnessing a rise in the footfall. The wedding season also played a key role in boosting garments business.

Do mushrooming malls pose threat to wholesale trade of garments?

Shopping malls will have adverse

impact on small businessmen. A few people will control the business and there is every possibility of exploitation of customers. We should take into account the business environment and the prevailing condition in our surroundings while promoting mall culture in our society.

IMD issues heatwave alert for 7 districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Thursday issued yellow warning for at least seven districts in Odisha in view of the ongoing heatwave conditions.

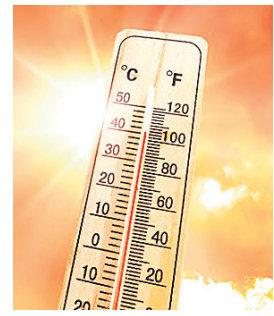
As per a bulletin issued by the IMD, the heatwave condition is likely to prevail over some districts till March 18. The yellow warning has been issued for Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Subarnapur, Boudh, Bolangir, Angul and Nayagarh districts.

While maximum temperature (daytime temperature) is very likely to rise by 2 degree Celsius during the next 24 hours. No large change during subsequent two days over the districts of Odisha is likely to be observed, said the IMD.

The temperature is expected to fall by 2-3 degree Celsius thereafter over the districts of Odisha, it added.

Meanwhile, Special Relief Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena Thursday issued a warning in this regard to the district collectors. In a letter to the Collectors of Angul, Boudh, Bolangir, Jharsuguda, Nayagarh, Sambalpur and Sonepur, Jena stated that preparatory and precautionary measures should be in place to meet any eventuality.

"The sick, elderly and children should stay indoors.



The yellow warning has been issued for Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Subarnapur, Boudh, Bolangir, Angul and Nayagarh

The people are advised to take precautionary measures while moving out during noon and afternoon. The situation should be closely monitored and action, as deemed fit, may be initiated," Jena stated.

Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra, meanwhile, reviewed the situation and directed the officials to make necessary arrangements to deal with heatwave condition in state.

Mahapatra asked the officials to raise check dams in small streams by using sand packs and put up water pots near tube wells and wells to quench the thirst of animals and birds. He urged all house-

holds, both in rural and urban areas, to keep water pots in front of their houses to satiate parched animals.

The Chief Secretary also directed the officials to create awareness on various measures to tackle the possible heatwave condition in state. He asked the officials to involve NGOs, people's committees, SHGs, Panchayati Raj bodies, and community leaders in the awareness drive.

The Development Commissioner PK Jena further revealed that an action plan has been prepared and specific guidelines have been issued to the concerned departments.

Jena asked the departments to ensure proper implementation of the action plan and keep the SRC office informed about the progress.

The issues pertaining to changes in school timings, arrangements for labourers, water and first aid provision in buses and uninterrupted power supply were discussed in the meeting.

Similarly, the officials also discussed various issues related to the repair and maintenance of tube wells, advance storing of heatstroke medicines in hospitals, appropriate arrangement for treatment of heatstroke patients, supply of water in canals, advance dissemination of information regarding heatwave, ground level vigil and action for prevention of forest fire.

Urban polls: Paid holidays for govt employees

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: The state government Thursday announced paid holidays for its employees, who want to cast their vote during the upcoming election to urban local bodies (ULBs) in their respective areas.

Revenue department joint secretary Susamarani Devi has written to all departments, heads of departments, revenue divisional commissioners and district collectors in this regard.

The government employees who desire to exercise their franchise at a place away from their headquarters on the date of poll will be allowed special casual leave for a maximum of three days—the day preceding the poll, the polling day and a day after the poll.

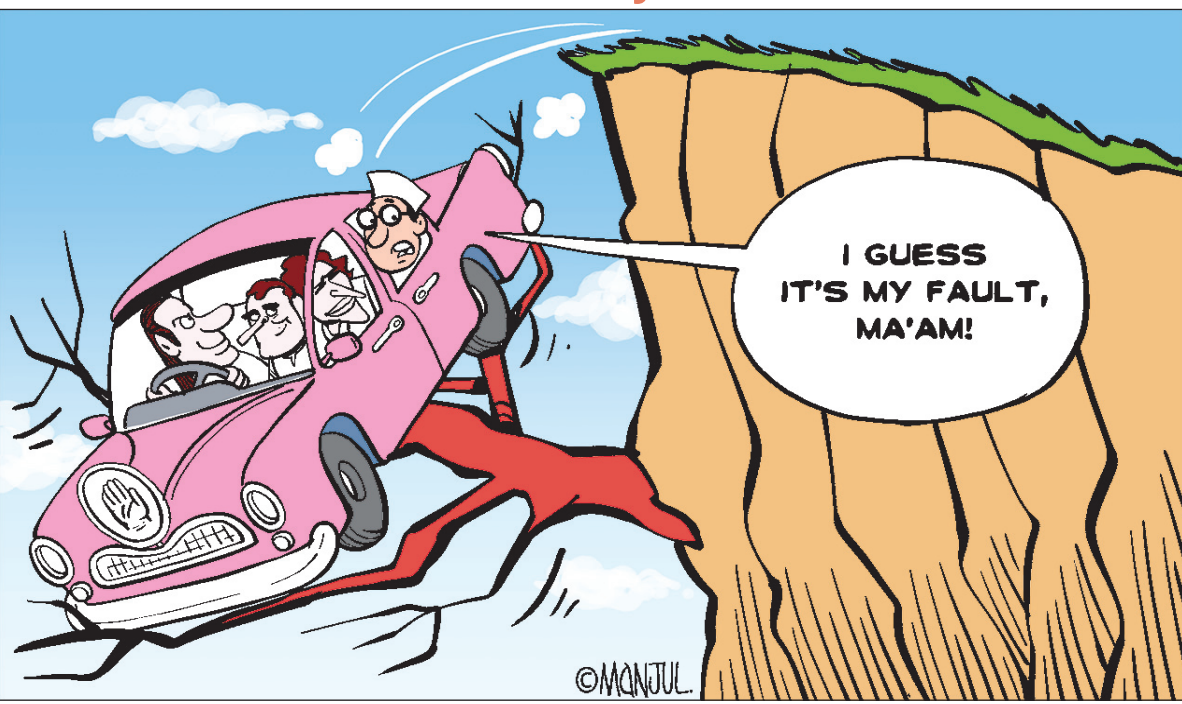
The leaves will be treated as special casual leave in addition to normal casual leave admissible to them during the calendar year—2022, said the letter.

The state government has also declared holiday for the employees of the executive magisterial courts (except treasury and sub-treasury) on the polling day located within the 109 ULBs in order to enable the employees to exercise their franchise.

The election to the three municipal corporations of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur and 106 municipalities/notified area councils will be held March 24 (Thursday).

The result of the urban polls will be announced March 26. Over 41 lakh voters, including government employees, are eligible to cast their votes in the ensuing polls.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



IRRIGATION SCHEMES

DMs told to hold monthly review meet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: In a bid to ensure better monitoring and coordination for early execution of irrigation projects, the state government has asked the district Collectors to hold Secha Samikshya—a monthly district-level meeting to review irrigation schemes.

Water Resources department Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg has written to the district Collectors requesting them to fix a particular day in a month to review the projects or schemes of the department. "On the particular day, the Collectors can review all projects or schemes of the department with officials in the district, including engineers of major or medium projects," Garg said. The Collectors have also been asked to invite the concerned officers of related




Water Resources dept Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg has written to the district Collectors requesting them to fix a particular day in a month to review the projects

departments like energy, agriculture, and forest to these meetings to resolve inter-departmental issues.

The Secha Samikshya would definitely lead to enhanced coordination, better maintenance of existing projects and timely completion of ongoing works apart from bringing transformation in irrigation sector, added Garg. Meanwhile, senior officers of the

Water Resources department have been nominated as Jal Prabharis for dedicated districts in order to monitor all the activities of the department in coordination with the respective district administrations.

Some of the Jal Prabharis have already attended the Secha Samikshya meetings and also visited the allotted districts, Garg pointed out.



Indian Overseas Bank
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
Regional Office : B/2 West, Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007
Phone - 0674-2540032, E-mail: 0815samd@iob.in

E-AUCTION / SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Movable & Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) & 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 .

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable/movable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical/symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Bank / Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" basis on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank / Secured Creditor from the respective borrower(s) and guarantor(s). The reserve price & the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties .

Sl. No.	Branch Name/ Name of Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagee(s)	Description of Movable / Immovable Properties
1.	CHANDRASEKHARPUR BRANCH, PH. 0674- 2303446 / 21, Mob: 8249333742 Borrower/Mortgagor: M/s Amiya Enterprises, Prop.: Sri Subrat Kumar Mohanty, S/o: Chakradhar Mohanty, N-1/14, IRC Village, Nayapalli, Dist: Khurda, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751017, Present Residence Address: At Flat No.202, 1st Floor, Pratima Enclave, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar-751003, Odisha. Guarantors: (1) Mr Sanat Mohanty, Prop.- Laxmi Seeds, S/o: Chakradhar Mohanty, At/PO: Barghar, Near RTO Office, Barghar, N.H-6, Dist: Barghar-768028, Odisha, (2) Mrs Itishree Mohanty, W/o: Subrat Kumar Mohanty, At Flat No.202, 1st Floor, Pratima Enclave, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar-751003, Odisha.	Residential Property: All that part and parcel of Residential, Freehold vacant Land at Mouza: Bada Raghunathpur, Thana: Jatani No.65, Tahasil: Jatani, Dist: Khurda, Odisha, Khata No. 270/1114, Plot No. 547/1967, Area: Ac.0.058 dec., near Aditya Hyundai Car Showroom Tamando, Bhubaneswar, Bounded by: East- Sub Plot No. 62, West- 23ft Wide Road, North- Sub Plot No. 72, South- Sub Plot No. 74 . Property recorded in the name of Sri Subrat Kumar Mohanty .
2.	CUTTACK BRANCH, Mob: 8667627876 Borrower: M/s Right Choice, Prop.: Md Wakeel, At: Pithapur, Buxi Bazar, Cuttack, & Borrowers: Md Wakeel, S/o: Mohammed Musilim & Mrs Shadatul Nisha, W/o: Md Wakeel, (Housing Loan), Plot No. 2083, Sabar Sahi Lane, Unit No.30, Laxmisagar, Kalpana Square, PS: Laxmisagar, Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khurda, Odisha .	Land & multi storied residential Building situated at Unit No.30, Sabar Sahi Lane, Laxmisagar, Kalpana Square, Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khurda, Odisha, over Plot No. 2083, Khata No. 1593/1744, Area: Ac.0.133 decimal (5793 Sqft) standing in the name of Md Wakeel , Boundaries of the Property: North- Plot No.2109 & 2110, South- Road, East- Plot No.2081 & 2082, West- Plot No.2084 .

Sl. No.	Reserve Price	EMD	Demand Notice Amount	Date of Demand / Possession Notice	Date of Inspection of Property Documents	Date & Time for submission of BID/request letter of participation, KYC document s & proof of EMD to the Officer / Service Provider	Date & Time of E - Auction with Unlimited 10 minutes Auto Extension if someone bids at the last 5 minutes
1.	Rs.26,60,000/-	Rs.2,66,000/-	Rs.32,01,371/- +Interest, Cost & expenses thereon (Less Recovery if any)	10.12.2019 & (By paper Publication on 17.12.2019) / 12.11.2020	upto 25.03.2022	05.04.2022 upto 5.00pm	06.04.2022 11.00AM to 2.00PM
2.	Rs.2,30,00,000/-	Rs.23,00,000/-	Rs.1,26,31,285/- +Interest, Cost & expenses thereon (Less Recovery if any)	16.11.2017 / 01.02.2018	upto 25.03.2022	05.04.2022 upto 5.00pm	06.04.2022 11.00AM to 2.00PM

TERMS & CONDITIONS :

(1) The property(ies) will be sold by e-Auction through the Bank's approved service Provider <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auCTIONhome/ibapi/index.jsp> under the supervision of the Auction Authorised Officer of the Bank . (2) The intending Bidders/Purchasers are requested to register on portal: <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auCTIONhome/ibapi/index.jsp> using their mobile number and email-id. Further they are requested to upload requisite KYC documents . (3) Bids in the prescribed formats shall be submitted "online" through the portal <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auCTIONhome/ibapi/index.jsp> along with the EMD & scanned copy of KYC documents including photo, PAN Card, Adhar Card & address proof to the service provider and the Authorised Officer before the date mentioned above . (4) The EMD and other deposits shall be remitted through EFT/NEFT/RTGS to the wallet provided by M/s MSTC Ltd. on its e-auction site <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auCTIONhome/ibapi/index.jsp> as specified above and the amount of EMD paid by the interested bidders shall carry no interest . The amount of EMD paid by the successful bidder shall be adjusted towards the sale price . Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) to be transferred deposited by bidders in his/her own wallet provided by M/s MSTC Ltd. on its e-auction site <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auCTIONhome/ibapi/index.jsp> by means of EFT/RTGS/NEFT for the bid . (5) Bids without EMD shall be rejected summarily . (6) Online auction sale will start automatically on and at the time as mentioned above . Auction/bidding will initially be for a period of 180 minutes with auto extension time of 10 minutes each till the sale is concluded . (7) The e-auction/bidding of above properties will be conducted exactly on the scheduled Date & Time as mentioned against each Property by way of inter-se bidding amongst bidders. The bidder shall improve their offer in the multiples of the bid increment amount of Rs.30,000/- for each property . In case bid is placed in the last 5 minutes of the closing time of the e-auction, the closing time will automatically get extended for 10 minutes . (8) The property shall be sold to the successful bidder. The successful/highest bidder (purchaser) as declared by the Authorised Officer shall deposit 25% of the bid amount (inclusive of the EMD) immediately on the same day and not later than the next working day. The balance of the sale price must be paid within 15 days from the date of confirmation of auction sale. Failure to remit the entire amount of sale price within the stipulated period will result in forfeiture of deposit of 25% of the bid amount to the secured creditor and forfeiture of all claims over the property by the prospective bidder/purchaser and the property will be resold . (9) The sale certificate will be issued in the name of the purchaser(s) only, after payment of the entire sale price/bid amount and other taxes/charges, if any. (10) The purchaser shall bear the charges / fee payable for conveyance such as registration fee, stamp duty etc., as applicable as per law. (11) The Authorised Officer/Bank has the absolute right to accept or reject any bid or postpone or cancel the sale, as the case may be without assigning any reason whatsoever. (12) Known Encumbrance of all the above mentioned Properties is Nil . (13) The properties to be sold as "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" without recourse basis. The Bank has disclosed the known encumbrances, statutory liabilities, if any, as above and it is for the purchaser to make their own independent/discreet enquiries at their own costs before participating in the auction . (14) As regards the statutory dues stated above, Bank dues will have priority over statutory dues, without prejudice to the above, statutory liability, if any, shall be borne by the purchaser and the Bank assumes no responsibility in this regard . (15) Sale is Subject to Confirmation by the secured creditor . (16) The e-auction advertisement does not constitute and will not be deemed to constitute any commitment or any representation by the bank. The authorised Officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/dues etc. (17) In compliance with section 194 of the Income Tax Act, 1961 income tax @ 1% on the Reserve Price shall be deducted and paid under the PAN Number of the purchaser. Since the Tax has been calculated only on the Reserve Price, the bidder shall bear the 1% income tax on the bid multiplier amount and the bank shall not take any responsibility for the same . * In case of any sale/transfer of immovable property of Rupees Fifty lakhs and above, the transferee has to pay an amount equal to 1% of the consideration as Income Tax . (18) For further details regarding inspection of property / e-auction, the intending bidders may contact the Authorised Officer, Indian Overseas Bank, Regional Office, Bhubaneswar, Phone No. : 0674-2540032, E-mail: 0815samd@iob.in or visit website : <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auCTIONhome/ibapi/index.jsp> and with concerned Branch . (19) This publication is also 15 days notice required under section 8(6) of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to the Borrowers/Guarantors of the said loan mentioned in Sl.No. 1 & 2 and under holding of E-Auction cum Sale on the above mentioned date. (20) The Properties mentioned Sl. No. 1 & 2 are under the Symbolic / Constructive Possession of the Bank and is being offered for sale on "as is where is" and "as is what is basis" only, the conveyancing/transfer of the property and handing over the physical possession of the secured asset / property to the successful bidder will be made by the Bank only after getting the physical possession through due procedure of law and by the order of the competent authority / court / tribunal till such date or delay, the successful bidder has to wait for the same and till such date . Bank will not pay any interest/claim/compensation etc. in whatsoever manner on the EMD/Final BID amount to the Prospective/Successful Bidders . (21) If the above E-auction cum Sale is challenged before any competent court/forum/tribunal etc. then the finalization of the Sale/Auction will be subject to the final disposal by the aforesaid competent court/forum/tribunal only and till such final disposal on the case by the competent court / tribunal, forum, Bank will not pay any interest/claim/compensation etc in whatsoever manner on the EMD/Final Bid amount to the Bidders .

Place : Bhubaneswar, Date : 17.03.2022 Sd/- Authorised Officer, Indian Overseas Bank

WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE CHANGE

CS: Must fight harder to keep global warming below 1.5°C

The workshop was organised collaboratively by The Energy and Resources Institute, New Delhi, and the India office of Konrad-Adenauer- Stiftung, a Germany-based foundation



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: As the effects of climate change are becoming too obvious to be ignored, there is an urgent need to act by setting aggressive targets in order to keep global warming below 1.5°C.

State Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra said this while addressing the valedictory session of the two-day national workshop on 'Climate Change-New Age Revolution' here Wednesday evening.

The workshop was organised collaboratively by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), New Delhi, and the India office of Konrad-Adenauer- Stiftung (KAS), a Germany-based foundation.

"Life on earth is now under the

threat of an all-out catastrophe because of the fast increasing carbon and other greenhouse emissions. We have to act urgently with aggressive targets for keeping global warming below 1.5°C, failing which, life on earth will face catastrophe soon," the Chief Secretary said.

Stating the effect of climate change was already visible in a bigger degree, he said the increasing frequency and intensity of summer and winter cyclones, erratic ways of nature, rapidly melting glaciers etc are the distinct indications. Odisha has already begun combating climate change for the last ten years, he added.

He assured that the state government would provide all possible support for implementation of action plan that would be pre-

Life on earth is now under the threat of an all-out catastrophe because of the fast increasing carbon and other greenhouse emissions. We have to act urgently with aggressive targets for keeping global warming below 1.5°C, failing which, life on earth will face catastrophe soon

SC MAHAPATRA | CHIEF SECRETARY, ODISHA

pared with expert inputs from this workshop.

The workshop deliberated on critical issues relating to climate change. Experts also spoke on how India could help raise capital for financing clean energy initiatives, develop measures for boosting adaptation and mitigation pathways, reduce coastal vulnerability, and integrate eco-sustainability in all policy decisions.

Civil society activists from Delhi, Bhopal, Bangalore, Mumbai, Chennai, Meghalaya, Shillong along with senior professors from Indian Institute of Technology, and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) participated in the deliberation.



Governor Ganeshi Lal felicitates a winner at the valedictory ceremony of Odisha Inter-University Competitions in Extracurricular Activities at Utkal University in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

EOW nabs conman for duping banker of ₹1.18 crore

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of state Crime Branch has arrested a person for duping a retired bank official of ₹1.18 crore on the pretext of providing a commercial plot at Hadiapatha in Cuttack under the discretionary quota of The Cuttack Development Authority (CDA).

The accused identified as Rashmi Ranjan Dash is the proprietor of RD Group of Company located at Maitri Vihar here. The EOW arrested Dash in a case (6/22) registered on the basis of the complaint lodged by Antaryami Nayak of CDA.

EOW sources revealed that Nayak came into contact with Dash through the latter's younger brother Samarendra Nayak in 2021. Dash offered him to facilitate him buy a commercial plot measuring 4,000 sqft at Hadiapatha under the discretionary quota of CDA by leveraging his links with Ananya Das, the Commissioner of Cuttack Municipality Corporation and Secretary in Charge of CDA. Nayak paid ₹1,18,50,000 to Dash through various installments during the period from April to November-2021.

After receiving ₹10 lakh in cash to process for the Discretionary Quota, the accused obtained the signatures of complainant's wife (the proposed buyer) on blank papers including a stamp paper and later handed over the complainant an agreement purportedly executed between his wife as buyer and Ananya dated April 15, 2021, with the purported seal of CMC, which on verification was found to be fake and forged, revealed EOW sources. Nayak smelt a rat when the accused did not turn up at the CDA Office on the date, November 15, fixed for the final registration of the scheduled landed plot.

During a raid at Dash's office, police found fake documents and fake ID cards showing him as a gynaecologist of SCB Medical College & Hospital, BHMS doctor etc.

AADHAAR ENROLMENT OF NEWBORNS IN HOSPS SOON

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 17: The state government, in its bid to ensure 100 per cent Aadhaar coverage, has decided to enrol newborns, right after they are born in hospitals.

The idea was mooted after it was noticed that Aadhaar enrolment for children in the age group of 0-5 years was "minimal", and this initiative, if implemented, could ensure they get immediately enlisted.

"Though Baal (children) Aadhaar coverage was introduced across the country earlier, Odisha will be



the first state to introduce such facility in hospitals," Manoj Mishra, the secretary of the Electronics and Information Technology Department, told PTI.

As per the government decision, the newborns will be enrolled without biometrics.

The Baal Aadhaar, too, will have

a 12-digit unique identification number, just like the ones issued to adults.

The unique identification number of the newborns will be processed on the basis of demographic information and facial photographs, which would also be linked to the Aadhaar card of their parents.

"When they turn 5 and then 15, they need to update their biometrics (fingers, iris and facial photograph)," the official said, adding that around 14.83 lakh of 40.36 lakh children in the age bracket of 0-5 years have been enrolled in the state thus far

Vigilance glare on Soro asst engineer

CUTTACK: Vigilance sleuths Thursday carried out simultaneous raids at five premises belonging to assistant engineer Pramoth Behuria, who works with the Rural Works division at Soro in Balasore, on charges of possessing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. The raided were conducted at Behuria's house at Upper Bagurai in Bhadrak, ancestral house at Madhusudanpur in Bhadrak, a market complex at Arnapal and his in-law's house at Basudevpur, also in Bhadrak. Sources said the total cash recovered from Behuria's possession was ₹1.65 lakh apart from other properties worth ₹1.16 crore. While checking his bank accounts, a locker registered in his name has also been found by the sleuths.

CB nabs Mumbai man for selling data to cybercrooks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: The state Crime Branch has arrested a 32-year-old man from Mumbai on charges of selling details like phone numbers of lakhs of people to cybercriminals, who had been arrested from Rasulgarh area of the City here January 29 this year.

The accused Sundaram Charan, who hails from Bihar's Bhagalpur district, was residing in Mumbai's Andheri East area. Charan's company (360) Marketing Private Limited) was providing services like bulk SMSes, emails, WhatsApp messages, Facebook promotions, voice calls for advertising purpose, business and real estate promotions. "His company had tied up with Just Dial, Indiamart, Sulekha and Tedindia. By paying money to these companies, Charan was receiving details, including phone numbers of lakhs of people and was in turn selling the data to cybercriminals," an official said.

An official said, following the



raid at Rasulgarh January 29 this year, police found the exchange of excel sheets containing details of lakhs of people between cybercriminals and Charan over WhatsApp.

Subsequently, Odisha Police sought help from its Maharashtra counterpart and managed to nab Charan, a data management professional, from Mumbai.

Charan has received Rs 17,29,200 from various cyber crooks in exchange of the data. The accused used to receive the money in his personal account maintained with Mumbai's Sakinaka branch of SBI, said the official.

Ashok Basa elected WFEO executive VP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: Ashok Basa, the maker of Odisha's first and famous suspension bridge (pedestrian) at Dhableswar, has been elected as the Executive Vice President of the World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO) which happens to be the largest professional body in the world having 100 countries as its members representing 30 million engineers.

The result was declared recently in the General Assembly (GA) of WFEO held in Costa Rica which Basa attended as a member of Indian delegation.

WFEO was established in 1968 at the behest of UNESCO as a foresight of the engineers from all the regions of the world to be the international voice for engineering. He was also President of the Institution of Engineers (IEI), India in 2014.

Basa happens to be the first Odia and the second Indian since 1968 to be elected to this coveted position.

His nomination for the election was recommended by IEI, following which he got elected as

BACKGROUND IN BRIEF

- An alumnus of MKC high school, MPC collage - Baripada and REC (presently NIT) Rourkela, Basa had topped the list in Civil Engineering in 1980
- He was selected for Indian Railway Service in 1981 for securing high rank in Combined Engineering Services Examination
- He rather joined as a director of a company formed by two of his batchmates
- A well-known structural engineer in India, he has constructed more than 100 bridges not just in the state or country, but abroad as well
- As a designer, he has designed and reviewed approximately over 500 bridges till now

the Executive Vice President, WFEO after securing the highest vote in a triangularly fought election. As Executive Vice President, he will be a member of the Executive Board, the apex body of WFEO.

An alumnus of MKC high school, MPC collage - Baripada and REC (presently NIT) Rourkela, Basa had topped the list in Civil Engineering in 1980. He was selected for Indian Railway Service in 1981 for securing high rank in Combined Engineering Services Examination. He rather joined as a director of a company formed

by two of his batchmates. A well-known structural engineer in India, he has constructed more than 100 bridges not just in the state or country, but abroad as well. As a designer, he has designed and reviewed approximately over 500 bridges till now.

Some of the popular structures in which Basa was deeply involved are the first flyover of Odisha - the Cuttack flyover near railway station; a 2,000m long bridge in Mahanadi barrage near Jobra, a 1,400m long third railway bridge on the river Brahmani near Jenapur (Odisha).

What explains the heatwave in March this year?

Starting March 12, maximum temperatures have increased over central India resulting in a heatwave to severe heatwave conditions in some parts of Saurashtra-Kutch, Konkan and west Rajasthan and heatwave conditions over west Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, east Rajasthan, and Odisha.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted continuation of the heatwave and severe heatwave over these regions. Heatwave conditions to severe heatwave conditions are very likely to prevail in some parts of west Rajasthan till March 17 and heat wave conditions in isolated pockets are likely over the region March 18.

The IMD also predicted heatwave conditions to heatwave conditions are very likely to prevail in isolated pockets over Konkan and Saurashtra-Kutch on March 16 while heat wave conditions is very

likely to prevail in isolated pockets over Gujarat region, west Madhya Pradesh till March 17, over east Rajasthan March 16 and 17, and over Odisha during March 16-18.

As the sun marches northwards and according to the climatology, the month of March is when the region extending from Maharashtra to Odisha is a heat zone. In its March to May seasonal forecast issued March 1, the IMD had already predicted that it was expecting above normal maximum temperatures most likely over many parts of western and central India and hence a heat wave can be expected extending from south Gujarat to Maharashtra to Odisha.

On the reasons for the heatwave, IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said the higher than normal temperatures are because of the wind flow pattern in these areas. The lower level winds in these areas are from south towards



north and that brings hotter air from land (as against when north to south winds bring colder air).

The winds are southeasterly over southern peninsular area, mainly Karnataka, Telangana with

some feeble circulation which is favouring the advent of heat from south to north Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka and up to Vidarbha area of Maharashtra. Mohapatra said even for

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The lower level winds in these areas are from south towards north and that brings hotter air from land as against when north to south winds bring colder air

Saurashtra, Kutch and Rajasthan, the reason for heatwave conditions is southerly winds.

The IMD records show that the maximum temperatures recorded March 14 were around 39-41 de-

grees Celsius over many parts of Gujarat and west Rajasthan, and 38-40 degrees Celsius over some parts of southeast Rajasthan, Vidarbha, Konkan, and Goa.

Heatwave conditions in some pockets with severe heatwave conditions in isolated pockets was observed over Saurashtra-Kutch, heatwave to severe heatwave conditions was observed in some pockets over Konkan-Goa and west Rajasthan and heat wave conditions in isolated pockets over Gujarat region.

The maximum temperatures were above normal by 3-6 degrees Celsius at most places over Punjab and Uttarakhand, at many places over Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad, at a few places over Himachal Pradesh, west Rajasthan and Saurashtra and Kutch, at isolated places over east Rajasthan and Gujarat region, IMD data showed.

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BJD candidates win unopposed

POST NEWS NETWORK
Chhatrapur, March 17: BJD candidates in 41 wards of 18 civic bodies including Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) in Ganjam have won uncontested. There are altogether 282 wards including 42 wards under BeMC. BJD candidates have no rivals in three wards each in BeMC, Aska NAC and Kabisuryanagar NAC, nine wards in Belaguntha NAC, six wards in Bhanjanagar NAC, one each in Buguda, Chhatrapur, Ganjam, Gopalpur and Kodala NACs, five wards in Chikiti NAC and seven wards in Hinjili municipality.
Meanwhile, the administration has identified 155 out of total 250 booths in BeMC as sensitive. 14 pink booths have been set up in various civic body areas – five in BeMC, three in Hinjili and one each in 16 other civic body areas.



The summer is yet to set in fully, but the Naringijihola reserve forest near Chakapada in Kandhamal district caught fire Thursday. The blaze was doused after locals informed the forest officials
OP PHOTO

Man beaten to death in post-poll violence

POST NEWS NETWORK
Balasure, March 17: In yet another incident of post-poll violence, a man was beaten to death at Badajapur village under Khaira block of Balasure district Wednesday night.
The deceased was identified as Upendra Sethi, 65. The incident sparked tension in the area as Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders traded charges against each other over the death. BJD leaders alleged that some BJD workers dragged Upendra out of his betel shop and beat him to death over the recently concluded panchayat polls. Family members rushed Sethi to a nearby hospital but doctors declared him dead on arrival.
The BJP workers led by former MLA and minister Padmalochan



Panda Thursday staged a demonstration outside Simulia police station demanding arrest of the culprits. They relented after Simulia IIC Jayant Kumar Behera and sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) Padarbinda Tripathy assured to take action against the culprits. Simulia police sent the body for post-mortem and registered a case against six persons over a complaint filed by the deceased's son Raju Prasad Sethi. An investigation was launched to nab the culprits. BJD leaders, however, rejected the charges terming it as an attempt to malign the ruling party image.

BSF IG vows to end Maoism in Malkangiri dist

POST NEWS NETWORK
Malkangiri, March 17: Inspector General (IG) of Border Security Force (BSF) Satish Chandra Budakati Thursday said that the BSF is committed to completely eliminating Maoism in Malkangiri where developmental initiatives have gained momentum. "By eliminating the red menace, development can be achieved in the larger interests of the people," he added.
Addressing a presser at BSF head office in MV-3 village here, the BSF IG said prior to 2010, the undivided Koraput district was affected by Left-wing extremism (LWE).
"The Maoists used to trigger violence, carry out attacks on police, loot arms and kidnap people. Locals used to keep themselves indoors out of fear. People were living in fear while development work had come to a halt. The BSF was deployed in the undivided district at a critical time," he observed.
He asserted that in the last 11 years, the BSF has achieved great success by eliminating Maoists with help of people. In 10 years, the district has been put on the track of development and the credit is given to our security forces, he added.

Slum dwellers can turn the tide in Baripada polls

POST NEWS NETWORK
Baripada, March 17: With Baripada municipality elections in Mayurbhanj district round the corner, the votes of the slum dwellers, who have been the victims of neglect for years, are said to be crucial.
Riding on the wave of stupendous victory in the recently held panchayat elections, the enthused Biju Janta Dal (BJD) members have started the campaign in full swing. Candidates of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress are also leaving no stone unturned to grab maximum number of seats while many leaders are seen touring from one area to another to woo voters.
However, slum settlements having more than 18,000 voters constitute a major vote bank and can be a game-changer at any point of time.
For long it is alleged that no political party has reached out to the slum dwellers. No one has come forward to aggressively champion for the slum dwellers' cause. Benefits under numerous government schemes continue to elude them.

VICTIMS OF NEGLECT



With more than 18,000 voters, slum settlements constitute a major vote bank and can be a game-changer at any point of time
If reports are to be believed, out of 7,891 families in 43 slums, at least 5,673 are landless
With no land of their own, the slum dwellers have been deprived of all the government benefits

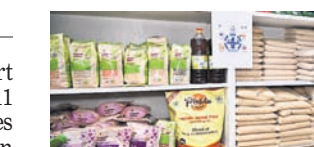
As most of the slums are filled with garbage and filth, people here are leading a miserable life. Most of the people here either work as labourers or small vendors. But, the pandemic hit them all equally sources of income reduced significantly.
With too much suffering, the slum dwellers have decided to cast their votes for someone who can understand their plight. Now, candidates of all the parties are reaching out to the slum dwellers with loads of promises. The parties have been assuring them of pucca houses, electricity, road connectivity and drinking water facilities under various schemes.

Man gets 20-yr RI for raping minor

POST NEWS NETWORK
Jeyapore, March 17: The fast-track special court at Jeyapore Thursday sentenced a man to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) for abducting and raping a minor girl in May 2014.
Ad hoc additional sessions judge of Jeyapore Pradip Kumar Sasmal convicted Santosh Majhi of Kenduguda under Borigumma police limits of Koraput of abducting and raping a minor girl.
The judge sentenced Santosh on two counts – 17 years RI under Section 6 of the POCSO Act and imposed a fine of ₹10,000 and three years of RI under Section 366 of IPC and slapped ₹5,000 penalty.
The court ruled that in case of defaulting on fine, the convict has to undergo an additional nine months of RI.
The court also convicted a co-accused in the case – Somnath Challan and awarded him three years of rigorous imprisonment apart from imposing a fine of ₹5,000. The court ruled that on failure to pay the fine, Somnath has to undergo an additional three months of RI.
The court ordered the District Legal Services Authority to pay ₹2 lakh ex gratia to the victim. The court further ordered to pay the fine recovered from the convicts to the victim.

Rourkela wins EatSmart Cities Challenge

POST NEWS NETWORK
Rourkela, March 17: Rourkela Smart City has secured its position in top 11 award-winning cities in EatSmart Cities Challenge conducted by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), a report said.
The steel city has bagged the award as it is establishing an economic approach to food system transformation. The city is supporting solar-powered cold storage and women entrepreneurship to reduce waste.
The winning cities will be awarded ₹50 lakh each from MoHUA and engaged in implementation of Eat Right India initiatives for over a period of 12 months to scale up their plan. The ministry announced the name of the winners in the presence of MoHUA secretary Manoj Joshi.
Other winners are: Chandigarh, Indore, Jammu, Jabalpur, Panaji, Rajkot, Sagar, Surat, Tumakuru and Ujjain. The 11 cities will now enter the deep en-



gagement stage of the challenge wherein projects undertaken in pilot stage will be scaled up in a sustainable manner.
The EatSmart Cities Challenge was launched by Smart Cities Mission being undertaken by MoHUA in collaboration with the FSSAI to enhance the health & wellbeing of the citizens and integrate sustainable food safety & nutrition systems within the smart city design, April 15, 2021. Rourkela has worked extensively in various thematic areas related to food including; reshaping market for farmers resorting to distress sales, food for all, community participation in program planning related to Food interventions, redeveloping city food infrastructure, food & nutrition for early childhood development, Purnanjali Program and others.

4 of family sustain critical burns

Rayagada: Four members of a family sustained critical burns when their house caught fire in Sikarpai panchayat under Kalyansingpur block of Rayagada district, Thursday. The victims are Dayanidhi Behera, his wife Laxmi Behera, elder daughter-in-law Swapna Behera and younger son Anil Behera. All of them have 90 per cent burns.
Neighbours first heard their screams coming out of the house. They rescued the four and admitted them to the district headquarters hospital. Later, fire brigade doused the blaze. It is suspected that the fire might have originated from a gas cylinder. However, Kalyansingpur IIC Sukuma Hansdad said that during the preliminary investigation, petrol jars were found from the house.

यूनियन बैंक ऑफ इंडिया
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, Dhenkanal e-CB 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 under a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrowers/Guarantors 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 Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors 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 Borrowers/Guarantors 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, Dhenkanal e-CB 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.

DHENKANAL e-CB BRANCH/Name & Address of Borrowers/Guarantors	Liabilities due as per Notice (in ₹)	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession	Description of Immovable Property
1) M/s. Maa Tarini Barta Bhandar, Prop.: Mr. Babuli Das, S/o : Late Raghunath Das, 2) Mrs. Pratima Das, W/o: Babuli Das, 3) Mr. Manoj Kumar Das, S/o : Babuli Das, All are at Kumbhar Sahl, Kanchan Bazar, Dhenkanal-759001	₹42,00,818/- as on 31.03.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses	12.04.2021 / 16.03.2022	Land and Building Residential belonging to Mr. Babuli Das, S/o.: Late Raghunath Das, Plot No.: 5008, 5008/6147/21268, 5008/21267, 5008/6147, Khata No.: 3470/3455, Area: Ac.0.032 Dec., Indipur, Luni, Dhenkanal - 759025, Dhenkanal Town, Property is Bounded by North: Dayanidhi Sen, South: Bhramarabara Sahoo, East: Road, West: Road.

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 17.03.2022 Sd/- Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India

Hopes on tiger count burning bright

POST NEWS NETWORK
Baripada, March 17: In view of a slew of measures taken to ensure food chain for tigers, the Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) authorities have exuded hope that the big cat population would rise in the sanctuary.
Tiger population had declined over a decade but in the current years, their number might have increased which would reflect on the fifth phase counting report, said Samrat Gouda, deputy director of the STR, Thursday.
The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is going to publish a full-fledged report on the tiger population across the country on International Tiger Day to be celebrated July 29, 2022.
He stated that STR had taken up a slew of measures to maintain the food chain for the tigers inside the sanctuary.
People in core and buffer zones of the sanctuary have been relocated while grasslands have been created for growth of herbivorous animals on which tigers live on.
Besides, the STR has made provision of water bodies while mass hunting has been prevented, he added.
In Similipal, the black tiger/melanis-



years. The fifth round of tiger census was conducted in January 2022.
Notably, STR is home to a large variety of wild animals such as leopards, gaurs, elephants, langurs, barking and spotted deer, bears, mongoose, flying squirrels, porcupines, hill turtles, monitor lizards, pythons, king cobras, sambars, pangolins, crocodiles and four-horned antelopes.
Nearly, 55 species of mammals, 304 species of birds, 60 species of reptiles, 21 species of frogs, 38 species of fish and 164 species of butterflies are found in the sanctuary.
Similarly, about 1,078 species of plants including 94 species of orchids are found in the park.
Besides, the STR HAS MADE PROVISION OF WATER BODIES WHILE MASS HUNTING HAS BEEN PREVENTED
PEOPLE IN CORE AND BUFFER ZONES OF THE SANCTUARY HAVE BEEN RELOCATED WHILE GRASSLANDS HAVE BEEN CREATED FOR GROWTH OF HERBIVOROUS ANIMALS ON WHICH TIGERS LIVE ON

EAST COAST RAILWAY 'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS
The following tenders have been uploaded on website: www.ireps.gov.in

Tender Notice No. PC/MME/2021-22/59, Dt.16.03.2022

01. Tender No. 05225029 : Short Description of Item : PVC Insulated Railway Signalling Cable, Quantity : As per TS.
02. Tender No. 03223825 : Short Description of Item : High tensile tight lock CBC, Quantity : 29 Nos.
03. Tender No. 07211007B : Short Description of Item : PU based top coat, colour - Grey, Quantity : 34340 Set.
04. Tender No. 02221677 : Short Description of Item : 77 teeth gear wheel, Quantity : 34 Set.
05. Tender No. 08215074A : Short Description of Item : Bio-Diesel (B-100), Quantity : 200 KLTR.
06. Tender No. 04215077 : Short Description of Item : Copper contact wire, Quantity : As per TS.
07. Tender No. 03215028 : Short Description of Item : Electro-pneumatic flushing system, Quantity : 80 Set.
08. Tender No. 03221988 : Short Description of Item : Cut off angle cock, Quantity : 4776 Nos.
09. Tender No. 02221017 : Short Description of Item : High tensile C.B. coupler, Quantity : As per TS.
10. Tender No. 0221123A : Short Description of Item : AOH maintenance schedule, Quantity : 75 Set.
11. Tender No. 02221369 : Short Description of Item : Brake shoe complete normal size, Quantity : As per TS.

Tender Opening Date : 04.04.2022 (For SI. No. 01 & 02), 06.04.2022 (For SI. No. 03), 07.04.2022 (For SI. No. 04), 11.04.2022 (For SI. No. 05 & 06), 12.04.2022 (For SI. No. 07), 14.04.2022 (For SI. No. 08), 15.04.2022 (For SI. No. 09), 18.04.2022 (For SI. No. 10 & 11).

Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit Website: www.ireps.gov.in and www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Bhubaneswar, PR - 903/M/21-22

SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA POSSESSION NOTICE
(Rule-8 (1)) (For Immovable Properties)

Notice is hereby given under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, Demand Notice was issued on the date mentioned against each account and stated herein after calling upon them to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of said notice.
The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 9 of the said Act on the date mentioned against each account.
The Borrowers/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the State Bank of India for an amount and interest thereon.

Name of A/c, Borrowers & Address	Name of Proprietor / Partners / Guarantors/ Owner of property etc.	Description of the Properties mortgaged charged	Date of Demand / Possession Notice	Amount Outstanding
CC A/c No. 31903439146, Borrower: Sri Lingara Babu Dalabehera, S/o, Sri. Udeswar Dalabehera, C/o., Narsingh Patnaik, At: Sai Nibas, Peon Pada, P.O: Phulbani, Dist.: Phulbani, State: Odisha-762001,	Guarantor: Smt. Minati Burgi, W/o.: Shri Sudhakar Burgi, Residing At: Paburia, P.O.: Paburia, P.S.: Sarangada, Dist.: Kandhamal, State: Odisha-762112.	All that part and parcel of the property Land and Building in the name of Smt. Minati Burgi, bearing Sabik Khata No.: 138/623, Sabik Plot No.: 196/1061, Area: Ac. H.0.028R, Kissam: Gharabari, Mouza: Olenbathnagar, Tahasil & Dist.: Kandhamal.	10.11.2021 / 14.03.2022	₹21,24,560/- as on 09.11.2021 with further interest and exp. etc from 10.11.2021 thereon
TL A/c No. 38193302941, Borrower: Salam Khan, S/o: Abdul Nawab Khan, At: Nuapada, P.O.: Nuapada, P.S.: Nuapada, Dist.: Nuapada, Odisha, 766105	Guarantor: Nabab Khan, S/o: Gaphar Khan At: Rajpur Nuapada, P.O.: Nuapada, P.S.: Nuapada, Dist.: Dec., Kissam: Gharabari, Situated at Nuapada, Odisha, 766105	All that part and parcel of the property Land & Building standing in the name of Salam Khan, S/o: Abdul Nawab Khan, bearing Khata No.: 382/565, Plot No.: 1670/1919, Area: Ac.0.05 Dec., Kissam: Gharabari, Situated at Nuapada, Odisha, 766105.	01.11.2021 / 16.03.2022	₹45,61,213/- as on 31.10.2021 with further interest and exp. etc from 01.11.2021 thereon

Place: Sambalpur Date: 17.03.2022 Sd/- Authorised Officer, State Bank of India, SARB, Sambalpur

FOCUS SOCIETY

THE HISTORY WARS



This centralised version of a unified history ignores the many conflicts that indigenous kingdoms had with each other. Many north Indians today consider the Maratha Empire to be a glorious era of indigenous assertiveness against the "other". For VD Savarkar, it was one of India's "glorious epochs". Yet, for the people of Bengal and Odisha, the Marathas were ruthless plunderers and murderers of innocent people

on Marxist lines. On the other hand, the Chapekar brothers were motivated by a form of crude Hindu nationalism.

The ideological diversity in the revolutionary movement was evident among the residents of the India House in London. While it housed communists like MPT Acharya and Virendranath Chatterjee, it also housed Hindu nationalists like Vinayak Savarkar. These individuals may have disagreed vigorously on ideology but they were united by a shared goal and had great respect for each other. Surprisingly, not much has been written in popular history books about the different ideas of nationhood prevalent in the India House. Savarkar's associate and the revolutionary freedom fighter Lala Har Dayal, for instance, was a prominent anarchist activist who formulated a kind of anarchism compatible with religion. Savarkar's cold and arguably exclusivist idea of Hindu nationalism was partly influenced by the social Darwinism of the quasi-anarchist biologist Herbert Spencer.

This hegemony of a single historical narrative is slowly being questioned by a new generation of scholars. For instance, Vikram Sampath's exhaustively well researched and nuanced volumes of history on Savarkar has successfully elucidated nuances which most official narratives have missed till now. Similarly, Manu Pillai has challenged the popular belief of Maharajahs as simply greedy collaborators of the British.

While a national myth is necessary for the consolidation of a nation, the Indian national myth is simply not inclusive enough of its own inhabitants. We must strive for a better story, one that is nuanced and includes ignored regions like Odisha and the North-East. It is only through a more inclusive story that we can strengthen the bonds of nationalism.

The writer is an author, blogger and a student at Jindal School of International Affairs. Views are personal.

A nation needs a self-narrative which helps in forming a cohesive identity among its inhabitants. Usually this self-narrative does not have to conform to the nuances of actual history. It is nevertheless fashioned as history.

Due to the incongruous nature of ideas present in any geographical territory termed as a "nation", a form of instability is only to be expected. It is worth asking, then, what creates a national consciousness among citizens? The answer to this question is multivariate and differs from nation to nation. For people living in Islamic states, it is religion. For nations like Bangladesh, it is language. For the white nationalists, it is race.

Despite these differences, a commonality that emerges is the idea of a national myth fashioned as a narrative of the nation's past. The French philosopher Ernest Renan argued that a "spiritual principle" accompanied by memories of a glorious past and heroism of ancestors is the soul of the nation. This myth has to be carried over by future generations, sustaining continued consent, in order for the nation to survive.

It is no wonder that ruling regimes constantly attempt, often successfully, to change history textbooks to suit their narrative. In the case of India, a Nehruvian version of history has remained the official textbook narrative for the longest time. While it does impart perceived lofty values of pluralism, non-violence and inclusive nationalism, it does so at the risk of ignoring other important anti-colonial movements.

This North-centric view of history has made our public discourse so lopsided that a relatively weak empire like the Delhi Sultanate is a household name while the robust and prosperous South Malabar monarchs and the Bhoi dynasty of Odisha are completely ignored. Most people outside the East may not have even heard about the armed Paika rebellion of 1817-1818,

forty years before the 1857 rebellion.

This centralised version of a unified history ignores the many conflicts that indigenous kingdoms had with each other. Many north Indians today consider the Maratha Empire to be a glorious era of indigenous assertiveness against the "other". For VD Savarkar, it was one of India's "glorious epochs". Yet, for the people of Bengal and Odisha, the Marathas were ruthless plunderers and murderers of innocent people. Most notably, the Marathas destroyed Mayurbhanj's capital city of Hariharpur, forcing the then Bhanja rulers to flee. The ruins of this city can still be visited. The historian PJ Marshall has argued, citing contemporary native as well as foreign sources, that around 400,000 civilians were massacred by the Maratha warriors. The 18th century Bengali text "Maharashtra Purana" of Gangaram details the atrocities

of the Marathas while emphasizing on the relatively benign rule of the previous Nawabs.

Privileging suffering of one group of people while excluding others is just one of the many problems with centralised history. Another problem which is seldom talked about is the privileging of certain forms of resistance against others. Our high school textbooks are full of references to Mahatma Gandhi's pacifist movements while barely mentioning the Indian revolutionary movement.

Contrary to popular belief, the Indian revolutionary movement was not a monolith. The revolutionaries did not simply differ in terms of methods with the moderates, they differed radically in terms of their ideas about the future of the Indian nation. The likes of Bhagat Singh wrote profusely on their opposition to capitalism and their vision for a radical social reconstruction based



Anwesh Satpathy

PRIVILEGING SUFFERING OF ONE GROUP OF PEOPLE WHILE EXCLUDING OTHERS IS JUST ONE OF THE MANY PROBLEMS WITH CENTRALISED HISTORY



Bernard Haykel

When the Saudis increase their oil production, it will be because doing so is in their own interest

The Oil Games

The Divine Truth is greater than any religion or creed or scripture or idea or philosophy.

SRI AUROBINDO



America's relationship with Saudi Arabia has hit a new low. Following its ban on imports of Russian oil – part of a sweeping set of economic sanctions imposed on Russia in response to its invasion of Ukraine – the United States hopes that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates will boost production to rein in skyrocketing prices. But Saudi and Emirati leaders have reportedly been declining US President Joe Biden's calls. Biden is also looking elsewhere. A US delegation reportedly visited Venezuela – with which the US severed diplomatic relations in 2019 – to discuss the possibility of lifting oil sanctions on the country. But neither Venezuela nor Iran could realistically make up for the loss of around 2.5 million barrels per day of Russian crude. Both countries' rundown oil fields and national oil companies would need to be revitalised before production could be increased – a process that would take many months, if not years.

For now, Saudi Arabia, which leads the OPEC producers' cartel, and the UAE are the only two oil producers with significant spare capacity. Only they have the power to stabilize the market, thereby preventing prices from reaching – or even exceeding – \$150 per barrel. This puts Biden in a quandary. The Biden administration has never been on great terms with the Saudi leadership. Last year, Biden ordered the release of an intelligence report that directly implicated Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) in the murder of the dissident Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Kingdom's consulate in Istanbul. Although Biden did not directly penalise MBS – a decision that drew much criticism at home – the report's release, and Biden's description of Saudi Arabia as a "pariah" state with "no redeeming social value," was hardly welcomed by the Saudis. By criticising Saudi Arabia's human-rights record, the US appeared to be attempting to weigh in on the royal succession, thereby infringing on the Kingdom's sovereignty.

But Saudi Arabia's unwillingness to accommodate America's request to increase oil production does not reflect a mere grudge against Biden. US-Saudi relations were on a downward trajectory long before Biden became president. The relationship began to sour after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the calamitous US invasion of Iraq in 2003, which the Kingdom opposed, made matters worse.

The deterioration accelerated during Barack Obama's presidency, owing not least to his administration's much-touted "pivot to Asia," which America's Middle East allies perceived as abandonment. Add to that America's pursuit of a nuclear deal with Iran – reached in 2015 – and the Saudis came to believe that the US was rejecting their longstanding strategic alliance.

While Obama's successor, Donald Trump, maintained good personal relations with MBS, the bilateral relationship continued to decline under his leadership as well. Not only did the US decide not to defend Saudi Arabia from Iran's 2019 attack on its central oil facilities, which temporarily knocked out 50% of the Kingdom's production; it did not punish Iran. Moreover, Trump regularly insulted the Kingdom for its inability to defend itself militarily and depicted it as a cash cow for the US arms industry.

Throughout Trump's presidency, Saudi Arabia was deepening its relationship with Russia. This process began at the end of 2016, just before Trump was inaugurated, with OPEC and Russia reaching an agreement to cut oil production. Saudi Arabia and Russia continued to coordinate on production quotas through the OPEC+ pact for three years.

But in March 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic having slashed global demand for oil, OPEC+ demanded big output cuts, and Russia refused. So, Saudi Arabia flooded the market, ultimately forcing Russia back into the OPEC+ agreement.

Beyond coordination of oil-output targets, the Saudi-Russia relationship now entails financial and political arrangements. In Saudi Arabia's view, Russia is both a potential arms supplier and the one major country that can exert pressure on Iran. And, in fact, Russia has effectively turned negotiations for a new Iran nuclear deal into a hostage of the Kremlin's effort to gain sanctions relief.

Russia is not the only country Saudi Arabia hopes can act as a hedge against deteriorating relations with the US. The Kingdom has also cultivated closer relations with France and the United Kingdom, especially by increasing its arms purchases. Saudi Arabia is also pursuing joint ventures with China and others to produce weapons systems locally.

Meanwhile, the US has erected barriers to the sale of military hardware to Saudi Arabia (and the UAE), while refusing to offer intelligence and logistics support in Yemen, where the Kingdom and its allies are attempting to prevent the Iran-backed Houthis from taking control of the country. To be sure, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have perpetrated their share of violence. But the Biden administration appears not to appreciate the seriousness of the strategic threat a Houthi takeover would pose to the Gulf countries.

None of this has made Saudi Arabia particularly amenable to American entreaties. So, just as the Kingdom refused to accommodate the Biden administration's request to increase oil production last November – an apparent bid to drive down prices, thereby improving the Democrats' chances in this year's mid-term elections – it is likely to refuse Biden's request today.

When the Saudis increase output, it will be because doing so is in their own interest. They will not risk alienating Russia by taking America's side. But they will not risk their own economic future, either. Saudi Arabia's leaders have internalised the lessons of the 1970s, when high prices led to decreased demand for oil. The last thing they want is to motivate the US and its allies to accelerate the adoption of renewables. The only question is the price at which they will be motivated to act.

The writer is Professor of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

- Until you value yourself, you won't value your time. Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it. M. SCOTT PECK
- Time is the school in which we learn, time is the fire in which we burn. DELMORE SCHWARTZ
- Time changes everything except something within us which is always surprised by change. THOMAS HARDY

WORDSWORTH

Shemuzzle

A shemuzzle is a state of confusion and chaos. It might simply be a muddle, or it could be a ruckus, row, quarrel or loud commotion. "No end of a shemuzzle there's been there lately," he said. "Marina Gregg's been having hysterics most days. Said some coffee she was given was poisoned." – The Mirror Crack'd from Side to Side, by Agatha Christie, 1962. It looks Yiddish, fitting the pattern of a group of terms that are best known in American English through the influence of Yiddish-speaking immigrants: schlock, schlemiel, schmaltz, schlepper, schmuck, schlimazel. However, many of these are known earlier in the speech of German immigrants to Britain. Shemuzzle grew up as part of the slang of London's East End more than a century ago, a creation of bookmakers and racecourse touts. Jonathon Green has found early examples of shemuzzle in articles by the racing journalist Arthur Binstead, who penned "gloriously non-PC" columns in the Sporting Times at the end of the nineteenth century under the pseudonym "Morris the Mohel".

SPECTRUM GROWTH

Making the most of gender-lens investing



Christina Juhasz & Stephen O'Driscoll

INVESTING IN GENDER-DIVERSE ORGANISATIONS, WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES, AND COMPANIES CATERING TO WOMEN'S PREFERENCES AND NEEDS HAS BEEN SHOWN TO YIELD CONSIDERABLE FINANCIAL RETURNS

Over the past decade, gender-lens investing (GLI) has justifiably garnered interest among impact investors seeking to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. But such strategies are about more than advancing a social good for its own sake. Investing in gender-diverse organisations, women-owned businesses, and companies catering to women's preferences and needs has been shown to yield considerable financial returns.

This dual outcome represents a rich opportunity for all types of investors – not just those focusing on social impact. But myths and misconceptions continue to limit GLI's growth potential. Among the five most common myths, the first is that women's inclusion and empowerment is merely a social cause, rather than an economic issue. In fact, evidence from the past decade clearly shows that investing in women as clients and workforce assets is good for businesses and the economy.

For example, in 2015, McKinsey & Company estimated that if women were to "play an identical role in labour markets to that of men," \$12 trillion could be added to annual global GDP by 2025. Similarly, in 2018, BNY Mellon and the UN Foundation projected that closing the global gender gap in women's access to financial prod-

ucts and services could unlock \$330 billion in annual revenues. And in 2020, Women's World Banking found that, among its portfolio companies, those with the most women borrowers experienced 6% higher growth in earnings and assets and 3% higher returns on equity, on average, relative to those with the fewest female borrowers.

The second myth is that a GLI strategy will not return market rates to private investors. Again, a growing body of evidence points to a direct correlation between greater gender diversity and financial out-performance. Even though the average female entrepreneur receives investment capital of \$935,000, compared to \$2.1 million for the average man, female-founded companies deliver twice as much revenue per dollar invested as male-founded firms. Moreover, companies with strong female representation on their boards are 28% more likely to outperform their peers, and gender diversity in executive teams increases the chance of out-performance by 25%.

The third myth is that there are not enough suitable projects to make GLI a compelling investment strategy. This reflects a lack of visibility, rather than a lack of supply. Fortunately, industry initiatives are emerging to shine a spotlight on gender-focused investment opportunities worldwide. In 2018, for

example, G7 development-finance institutions launched the 2X Challenge to mobilize \$3 billion to help empower women in developing countries.

The fourth myth is that focusing on gender is not operationally important to a firm's success. This claim is belied by the fact that female customers comprise an enormous potential market – one that could account for approximately \$15 trillion of global consumer spending by 2028. A 2018 Credit Suisse report estimates that women account for approximately 40% of global wealth, representing a largely untapped opportunity to generate financial and social returns.

A strong internal commitment to female employees and leaders also can create value for women customers. According to the think tank Coqual, teams are up to 158% more likely to understand target customers when their members represent those cohorts. The same study also found that companies with a diverse workforce and leadership are 45% more likely to have expanded their market share and 70% more likely to have captured a new market in the past year.

Finally, it is a myth that GLI is too narrow to be scalable. By definition, GLI lends itself to a variety of funding strategies, because gender considerations can be integrated into all aspects of an investment process

and layered onto existing strategies. That is why more and more impact-focused investors are helping to build the business case for GLI. The success of the European Investment Bank's SheInvest initiative further illustrates the transformative potential of GLI. As a 2X Challenge member, the EIB mobilised €1 billion in GLI in the programme's first year, providing African women with better access to finance, as well as tailored services and products.

Despite GLI's increasing appeal and popularity, and despite the growing evidence in support of its social and economic benefits, the field remains small relative to other impact strategies. But there are major opportunities to build on GLI's financial and social potential. By debunking myths and misconceptions, we can encourage even more social-impact investors – and conventional investors – to integrate gender considerations into their allocations of funding.

Christina Juhasz is Chief Investment Officer of Women's World Banking Asset Management. Stephen O'Driscoll is Head of Environment, Climate, and Social Policy at the European Investment Bank. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Congress needs revival

Sir, Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi has asked the party chiefs of all five states that recently went into polls to resign from their respective posts. The grand old party is facing an existential crisis and having a really tough time. The party needs structural change in the organisation and a strong leadership. This move will lead them to take other strong and bold steps. The decline of the Congress has given other parties like the Aam Admi Party (AAP) a chance to rise but the Congress is the party that was once associated with the freedom struggle and many freedom fighters like Mahatma Gandhi, Netaji Subash Chandra Bose were part of this grand old institution. The core leaders of the party need to introspect and start working for the revival of the party as soon as possible. This will also strengthen our democracy.

Deba Prasad Nayak, CUTTACK

Welcome verdict

Sir, This refers to "HC upholds hijab ban", Orissa POST. In a welcome verdict, the Karnataka High Court upheld the state government's ban on the wearing of the hijab in educational institutions and has concluded that the hijab is not an essential religious practice in Islam, and that educational institutions have the right to prescribe uniforms for students. A three-member Bench of the High Court also observed that the way the 'hijab imbroglio unfolded' suggests that 'some unseen hands are at work to engineer social unrest and disharmony.' Quoting Dr BR Ambedkar, the judgment notes that 'there is a lot of scope for the argument that insistence on wearing of purdah, veil or headgear in any community may hinder the process of emancipation of women in general and Muslim women in particular.' It cites court judgments from the past and opinions of religious scholars to reach the conclusion that 'wearing of hijab by Muslim women does not form a part of essential religious practice in Islamic faith.' A blanket ban on modes of clothing, however, would violate the right of individuals to dress as they please. In the case of educational institutions, though, it makes sense for all students to wear uniform clothing; indeed, that's the purpose of uniforms in schools – to inculcate the idea of parity of all, irrespective of creed, ideology or financial status.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

Orissa POST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

of the day quote

Next time, if someone asks you for a bribe. Don't refuse. Just take out your phone and record the incident and share it on the number that will be released. It will be his (Mann's) personal WhatsApp number. We will initiate strict action against that official

We never indulged in any illegal phone tapping. If the government purchased the spyware, there would be a record of it

The Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI) should make a roadmap for the next 25 years to plan what will be the objective of our trade with our neighbouring countries through land routes

SHORT TAKES

J&K: 175 ultras killed in last 1 yr

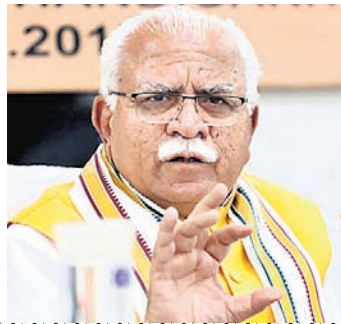
New Delhi: Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Director General Kuldeep Singh Thursday said as many as 175 terrorists have been killed while 183 have been apprehended in Jammu and Kashmir since March 2021 till date. The CRPF has also killed 19 Maoists and arrested 699 in various operations in Left Wing Extremism (LWE)-affected states during the same period, he said, adding that two terrorists have surrendered in J&K while 598 Maoist cadre or supporters have surrendered in Chhattisgarh, and 287 in the Northeast region.

Abducted girl rescued, 1 held

Jammu: A 17-year-old girl, who was abducted, was rescued in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said Thursday. A man from Batote lodged a complaint at police post Patnitop claiming that his minor daughter went missing March 3 when she had gone to Higher Secondary School Sanasar, a police official said. He said a case was registered and during investigation, it came to light that the girl was kidnapped by one Ranjeet Singh of the Nagrota area of Jammu district.

5-year jail term to ex-PNB manager

New Delhi: A Special CBI Court in Uttarakhand has awarded jail terms to seven persons including an ex-Punjab National Bank manager in connection with a loan fraud case of Rs 1.34 crore. The court awarded five years jail term to Ashok Bhardwaj, the then Branch Manager, PNB, Manglaur Branch and also imposed a fine of Rs four lakh on him for committing the offence.

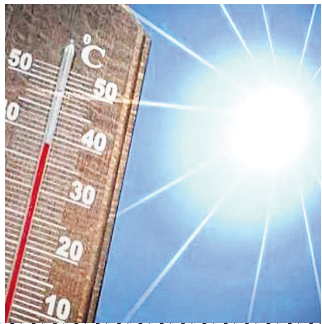


We are working with zero tolerance towards corruption. We are making dedicated efforts to take the drive against corruption to the grassroots level

M L KHATTAR
HARYANA CHIEF MINISTER

YELLOW ALERT IN MP

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Thursday issued a yellow alert warning of heat wave conditions in nine districts of Madhya Pradesh for the next two days. Severe heat wave conditions prevailed in Narmadapuram, with mercury rising to 43 degrees Celsius, the highest maximum temperature in Madhya Pradesh, on Thursday, senior meteorologist PK Saha of IMD Bhopal said



HIJAB BAN

Fresh plea in top court challenges HC verdict



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: A fresh plea was filed in the Supreme Court Thursday challenging the Karnataka High Court verdict which dismissed the petitions seeking permission to wear a Hijab inside the classroom saying Hijab is not a part of the essential religious practice in the Islamic faith.

The petition has been filed by one Sajeeda Begum, who had also sought to get herself impleaded as a party in the proceedings related to Hijab ban before the Karnataka High Court.

The top court Wednesday said that it would list other pleas on the issue for hearing after Holi vacation.

When senior lawyer Sanjay Hedge, appearing for a student, mentioned the plea for urgent listing March 16, Chief Justice of India NV Ramana had said "Others also mentioned, let us see... We will list (the petitions) after the vacation. Give us time."

Begum, in her fresh appeal filed through lawyer Talha Abdul Rahman and others, said that the teenage girls covering themselves modestly while going to receive education pose no threat to "public order."

"In fact, the threat to law and order is manufactured by hecklers who are to be controlled by the State. The impugned government order would affect young girls' minds forever," the appeal said.

The apex court Wednesday said that it would list other pleas on the issue for hearing after Holi vacation

The plea said that the high court failed to apply the tests applicable to restrictions on the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression and the fundamental right of privacy without reasons.

The high court treated dress code or uniform prescribed as not involving the issue of breach of the fundamental right, without appreciating that no such uniform has yet been prescribed that takes away the right to wear hijab.

Prior to this, several other pleas including a Muslim student, who was one of the petitioners before the high court, had moved the apex court against the full bench high court verdict on the case in which it was held that wearing hijab is not a part of essential religious practice in Islamic faith under Article 25 of the Constitution.

The high court had dismissed the petitions filed by a section of Muslim students from the Government Pre-University Girls College in Udupi, seeking permission to wear Hijab inside the classroom.

BARC resumes ratings for TV channels

AS PER THE REVISED APPROVED STANDARDS, AUDIENCE ESTIMATES FOR THESE GENRES WILL ONLY BE RELEASED EVERY WEEK BASED ON A FOUR-WEEK ROLLING AVERAGE, SAYS THE OFFICIAL

AGENCIES

Mumbai, March 17: Nearly 17 months after the mega TRP manipulation scam erupted in Mumbai, the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) of India has resumed the ratings for individual news channels, an official said here Thursday.

The BARC released data for Week 10 for the current year (2022) on Thursday as per its new 'Augmented Data Reporting Standards for News & Special Interest Genres' after conducting a nationwide consultative process with all the stakeholders.

The BARC said that a level playing field has been ensured for all channels within the ecosystem



with a single YUMI login access to the audience estimates.

Sensitive to the industry's need for past data for informed and equitable decision making, and as advised by the Centre, BARC will also release data for the previous 13 weeks - for the period of Week 49, 2021 to Week 9, 2022 - only for the

channels that have not chosen to opt out from receiving this data.

It may be recalled that after the TRP rigging scam broke out with a complaint lodged by the Kandivali police station in October 2020, the BARC had suspended release of the data, which has now resumed.

Following an industry-wide con-

sultative process, the BARC team developed the augmented data reporting standards for news and special interest genres.

According to the revised approved standards, audience estimates for these genres will only be released based on a four-week rolling average every week, BARC said in a statement releasing the first weekly data.

The statement further said the agency will release the data for the previous 13 weeks - week 49, 2021 to week 9, 2022 -- for those channels which have not opted out of the rating system.

This will also be based on a four-week rolling average and the data will be released over the next three working days.

RISKY JOURNEY



Commuters travel in a crowded train in Patna

PTI PHOTO

Japanese PM to visit India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida will hold summit talks Saturday with a focus on strengthening bilateral ties in diverse areas and advancing cooperation for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said the Japanese prime minister will pay a two-day visit to India beginning Saturday for the 14th India-Japan summit.

"At the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida will be undertaking an official visit to New Delhi from March 19-20 for the 14th India-Japan annual summit," Bagchi said at a media briefing. The summit would be the first meeting of the two leaders.

Cong's internal conflict heading towards truce?

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 17: The Congress' internal battle seems heading towards a truce as Gandhis have been proactively reaching out to the dissenters with senior party leader Rahul Gandhi, who has been not having a good equation with former Haryana Chief Minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda, met him

Thursday and listened to his grievances. It is likely that the Hoodas may be given free hand in the affairs of Haryana.

Similarly, the Gandhi family is reaching out each person in the 'G-23' group, who have been demanding a drastic overhaul of the party's functioning, either personally or through an emissary.

The former CM, a popular

leader in Haryana, is one of the key figures in the G-23 and has been one of the regular attendees of the meetings, but the meeting with Rahul Gandhi is said to be for grievance redressal of the group and particularly for Hooda who is likely to be appointed as party's Haryana chief, a key demand of his supporters.

However, the Congress leaders

have called the expulsion of Kapil Sibal, who had spoken out against the Gandhis, saying that he has gone against the CWC resolution.

The G-23 met Wednesday and issued a statement calling for the Congress organisation to be revamped and there should be accountability of the people involved in the election process.

TIDBITS

Parkash Badal to not accept pension as former-MLA

Chandigarh: SAD patriarch Parkash Singh Badal Thursday announced that he will not accept pension as an ex-MLA. The five-term chief minister was defeated from his home constituency Lambi in the recently-concluded Punjab assembly polls by AAP's Gurmeet Singh Khuddian. The nonagenarian asked the Punjab government and the Punjab assembly speaker to divert his pension towards social work, "preferably to help some needy girl students in their education as girls' education has always remained very close to my heart". "They have a right over me as they have always enriched my life with warmth which only daughters can offer," said Badal in a statement here.

India releases its Arctic Policy

New Delhi: Joining an elite group of countries working on various aspects of Arctic, India Thursday released its Arctic policy "India and the Arctic: building a partnership for sustainable development". "India's Arctic policy would play an essential role in preparing the country for a future where humankind's biggest challenges, such as climate change, can be addressed through collective will and effort. India's Arctic policy shall be implemented through an action plan, and an effective governance and review mechanism involving the interministerial Empowered Arctic Policy Group," Union Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Minister Jitendra Singh said while releasing the Policy document.

India, Oz leaders to hold virtual summit March 21

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison will participate in the second India-Australia virtual summit March 21, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Thursday. External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said India and Australia virtual summit will be held March 21 where Indian and Australian leaders will hold the summit. "This summit follows the historic first virtual summit which was held on June 4, 2020 when our bilateral relationship was elevated to comprehensive strategic partnership," Bagchi said.

AAP MOVES SC FOR FREE, FAIR, TIMELY POLLS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 17: Delhi's ruling Aam Aadmi Party has moved the Supreme Court challenging the State Election Commission's (SEC) decision to postpone the municipal elections without any reasonable ground.

DELHI CIVIC POLLS



The plea contended that the decision has been taken solely on the basis of unofficial communication by the Central government. "The brazen influence of the Government of India over the State Election Commission and its flagrant meddling with the conduct of municipal elections forms the subject matter of this writ petition," said the plea. The plea sought a direction to the SEC to conduct the municipal elections in Delhi, according to the initially conceived schedule, before the expiry of the tenure of the Municipal Corporations of Delhi, in May 2022, in a free and fair manner. The petition contended that the SEC, March 9, issued a press note for holding the polls in April. "However, precisely half an hour later, by way of a press note, it conveyed that it had received some communication from the Lt. Governor of Delhi, conveying that the Government of India was intending to pass a legislation to merge the trifurcated Municipal Corporations of Delhi," said the plea.

Climate change to be part of school curriculum

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 17: The concept of climate change has been incorporated in the curriculum and in the textbooks developed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

This curriculum is a part for the subjects like Social Sciences and Geography for classes 7 and 11. Topics on climate change have also been incorporated in the NCERT's Science Textbooks for classes 8 and 9 and Biology Textbook for class 12.

Minister of State for Education, Annpurna Devi said, "NCERT has been organizing in-service teachers' capacity building programmes in Geography as well as in Social Sciences where teachers are sensitized over the issues related to climate change."

Live interactive sessions have



also been conducted on Swayam Prabha, PM eVidya Channel on climate change. National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) learning modules for elementary stage also includes Environmental Science (EVS) concerns related to environmental protection in the module on EVS. Approximately, 42 lakh teachers have already com-

pleted NISHTHA learning modules through offline and online mode, the minister added. Annpurna Devi said that it has taken into account the concerns of the Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) which includes female and transgender individuals, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, minorities and other categories.

DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY (DOSEL), MINISTRY OF EDUCATION IS IMPLEMENTING SAMAGRA SHIKSHA SCHEME, EFFECTIVE FROM 2018-19

BRIDGING GENDER AND SOCIAL CATEGORY GAPS AT ALL LEVELS OF SCHOOL EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME

The NEP aims at bridging the social category gaps in access, participation, and learning outcomes in school education.

Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education is implementing Samagra Shiksha scheme, effective from 2018-19. Bridging gender and social category gaps at all levels of school education is one of the major objectives of the scheme.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
No.A-900: INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
"e" Procurement Notice-4 / 2021-22
BID IDENTIFICATION NO.SAL-BDK-4-P1 OF 2021-22

- Name of work :- Maintenance of Canal and Embankment (River & Saline) works
- Class of Contractor :- Varies from "D" Class to "B" Class
- No. of works :- 5 Nos (Details as per NIT available in website)
- Value of Work :- Rs. 12.37 Lakhs to 32.73 lakhs
- Time of Completion :- 3 Calendar Months.
- Type of Bid :- Percentage Bid.
- Summary for key dates is provided below.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No	Availability of tender for online bidding		Date & time of opening Bid
		From	To	
Superintending Engineer, Salandi Canal Division Bhadrak	SAL-BDK-4 P1 OF 2021-22	22.03.22 at 11.00 A.M.	05.04.22 upto 5.00 P.M.	06.04.2022 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website <http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in> / www.dowrodisha.gov.in / www.addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation to the above notice will be published in this website only.

Sd./Superintending Engineer,
Salandi Canal Division, Bhadrak
OIPR-32005/11/0004/2122

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF (CIVIL), ODISHA
NIRMAN SOUDHA, UNIT-V, BHUBANESWAR
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)
E-mail ID: cebbuildings_orissa@yahoo.co.in
cebbuildings@rediffmail.com, Tel. (0674)-2391523
File No-B-I-V-(NHM)-17/2022 Lr.No.10595 Bhubaneswar, the 16th Mar.2022

No.B-1056: Invitation for Bids
Bid Identification No. C.E. (B) - 40 / 2021-22

- The Chief Engineer (Buildings) Odisha, Bhubaneswar, on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in double cover system in ONLINE MODE only. (1) "Construction of 50 bedded Critical Care Covid Hospital Block at SDH Athagarh, Cuttack, Odisha" amounting to Rs.14.30 Lakhs (Approximate), (2) "Construction of 50 bedded Critical Care Covid Hospital Block at SDH Pattamunda, Kendrapara, Odisha" amounting to Rs. 14.12 Lakhs (Approximate) & (3) "Construction of 50 bedded Critical Care Covid Hospital Block at DHH Malkangiri, Malkangiri, Odisha" amounting to Rs. 14.03 Lakhs (Approximate) as detailed below.
- Nature of Work :- Building Works
- No. of Work :- 3 Nos.
- Bid Cost :- Rs.10,000 (each)
- Class of Contractor :- Special/Super Class
- Availability of Bid document in the website :- From dt.23.03.2022 to 17.00 hours of dt.06.04.2022
- Date of Opening of Bid :- Dt.07.04.2022 at 11.30 A.M.
- The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.

Sd./ Chief Engineer (Buildings), Odisha
OIPR-34117/11/0123/2122



After state win, Goa BJP preparing for '24 LS polls

The name of the state's new Chief Minister could be announced after Holi, even as party sources claim that Pramod Sawant, who served as the CM from 2019-22 and is the current caretaker CM, had already made the cut



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, March 17: The BJP may not have been able to appoint its Chief Minister or even swear-in ministers after the February 14 assembly polls in Goa, but the party has already started preparing for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, according to state party president Sadanand Shet Tanavade. Speaking to reporters, Tanavade also said that the state unit had already submitted profiles of winning candidates to the central BJP leaders and added that it was the central leaders who would take a call on whom to pick as Chief Minister. He also added that the name of the state's new Chief Minister could be announced after Holi, even as party sources claim that Pramod Sawant, who served as chief minister from 2019-22 and is the current caretaker CM, had already made the cut. "BJP will win both MP seats in

North Goa and South Goa constituencies. Before that we will win panchayat elections too. We have started planning for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and panchayat polls too. Hundred percent we will win," Tanavade told reporters, when asked about the party's preparations for both the electoral events on the horizon. Explaining in detail about the purpose of his visit, along with Sawant, state BJP organising secretary Satish Dhond and the party's national general secretary in-charge of Goa CT Ravi to the national capital, Tanavade said they met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP national president JP Nadda among other central BJP leaders in Delhi Wednesday. "After the Goa assembly polls, we have to submit an overall report to the central leadership. How many constituencies we won, where all we fell short.

What are the reasons and what we need to do in those areas where we lost. Such meetings are held in relation to all states where polls are held. Reasons behind victory and loss are assessed," Tanavade said. When asked if names of potential chief minister for Goa were discussed at the meet, Tanavade said that a profile of all winners with their achievements had been submitted to the BJP's central leadership, which would now take a final call. Tanavade also said that the BJP's central emissaries led by Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar was expected to arrive in Goa and the party's decision related to chief ministership would be known in a couple of days. Tomar is expected to chaperone a meeting of the newly elected BJP legislators, where they would be informed about the name of the state's new Chief Minister.

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY IN GOVT SCHOOLS

Tamil Nadu lags behind Kerala, Puducherry

Activists working for education rights said that the report of the Union education ministry is almost true and that the state is woefully inadequate in terms of internet connectivity in government schools

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, March 17: Tamil Nadu lags behind Puducherry and Kerala with only 18 per cent internet connectivity in government schools, says a report released by the Union Education ministry.

While Puducherry has 94.79 per cent connectivity, Kerala has 87.21 per cent in government schools, the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) report 2021-22 report said.

Tamil Nadu, however, has around 80 per cent of functional computers but the poor internet connectivity in government schools, will, according to education experts create a major divide in the system.

R Damodaran, a retired teacher from a government school in Kanniyakumari while speaking to IANS said: "Tamil Nadu has one of the highest literacy rates in the country. If government schools are not equipped for online education during these pandemic times, then it means there is something lacking in the planning and the government of the day is answerable."

There is, however, a difference of opinion on the report and the correctness of the data provided with teacher associations in the state having divergent views.

Tamil Nadu Teachers association president PK Ilamaran while speak-



ing to IANS said: "The students in government schools have faced learning losses in the last two years as there is no internet connectivity in most of the schools. Teachers are imparting knowledge to students mostly they are providing this through their personal internet data."

Kalavathi, a student of class 8 of a government school in Kanniyakumari, said: "There are no internet connections in our school and we are lagging behind in classes. I have not studied school classes properly since the pandemic has begun and even online classes were poor."

However, Tamil Nadu Graduate Teacher Federation General Secretary, P Patrick Raymond said

that he doubts the authenticity of the report.

While all the government schools don't have an internet connection, the connectivity is much more than what is mentioned in the study report.

Activists working for education rights said that the report of the Union education ministry is almost true and that the state is woefully inadequate in terms of internet connectivity in government schools.

Joseph Raj, an activist working for Edurights, a social organisation working among the government school students on analytical skill development while speaking to IANS said: "The report of Department of Education is al-

most true. I doubt whether there is 18 per cent internet connectivity in the state government schools. We could not find internet connections in most of the government schools that we travelled to. With online mode of education a reality, the Tamil Nadu government must undertake a proper study on its own and plug the loopholes and provide students of all government schools with high-end internet connectivity that opens a window of opportunity to these students."

Joseph said that state government had in the budget for 2021-22 categorically mentioned equipping government schools with smart classrooms, equipping government schools with internet connectivity, and also training teachers to handle online classes but in practice, nothing was implemented at the ground level.

The education rights activist said: "All these are tall claims by the government in successive budgets and we can find more announcements in the coming budget also. But how far has the government education department taken this forward is the million-dollar question and if they take this up and increase the internet connectivity in government schools to nearly 100 percent things will change. Otherwise, everything will be in white and black in paper."

JABBED



A healthworker administers COVID-19 vaccine to a student at Nagercoil in Kanyakumari district, Thursday. 21.2 lakh children in the age group of 12-15 years will be vaccinated in Tamil Nadu

Do not ask 'faltu' questions, Goa CM hopeful tells media

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, March 17: A day after BJP central leaders reportedly gave an informal nod to Goa's caretaker Chief Minister Pramod Sawant to prepare for a second stint, another contender to the post and former Health Minister Vishwajit Rane lost his cool Thursday when he was questioned about the chief ministership issue, which was a subject of heated political speculation.

Rane, who was in Panaji to pay homage to former Chief Minister late Manohar Parrikar on the occasion of the latter's death anniversary, told media persons not to ask him faltu (useless) questions, when he was asked to comment on developments related to the race for the chief minister's post.

Rane, a former Congress leader, and Sawant are both traditional political rivals and have had run-ins in the past in a cabinet led by the latter from 2019-2022.

While Sawant, who led the party to its best ever electoral tally of 20 seats without the benefit of coalition allies, was tipped to be Chief Minister this time round too. But Rane allegedly also tried to stake his claim for the top post.

The former Health Minister has formally denied any attempt on his part to bid for the top chair, after a sudden meeting with Goa Governor PS Sreedharan Pillai



Do not ask me faltu questions. Media's job is to create sensation. Don't ask me anything faltu. I have come to offer condolences to my leader. You ask these questions to the central leadership
VISHWAJIT RANE | GOA CM CONTENDER

last week which set the political circles abuzz about a contest for the top post between Rane and Sawant.

On Tuesday, his wife Deviya Rane, a newly elected MLA from the Poriem assembly constituency, also created a flutter when she said that like all elected legislators, her husband too was ready to accept the top political seat.

Of course any elected representative can be ready and he is a very experienced politician for the last 15 years. But the final decision is of the central leadership, Deviya Rane had told reporters.

She however said that there was no dissent over the choice of chief minister within the BJP, adding that the decision was left to the party high command.

Sawant's credentials for chief ministership were reportedly endorsed after his visit to the national capital Wednesday when he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP national president JP Nadda among other central BJP leaders.

Sawant however maintains that the final decision on the issue would be taken by the party's central leadership, while adding that his visit to the national capital was related to the post election formalities of the party.

"Me, the state party president and senior party officials went to Delhi to submit election reports. We went to say thanks to the party leaders," Sawant said.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CRISIS

Shipment of N-reactor components a concern for Kudankulam plants

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, March 17: Officials of Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) are wondering about the impact of Russia-Ukraine conflict on the delivery of atomic power plant components from Russia's Rosatom for four plants being set up at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu.

Russia's integrated nuclear power player Rosatom is supplying four 1,000 MW reactor components to NPCIL that is setting up four atomic power plants in Kudankulam.

The NPCIL has to arrange ships for bringing the reactor components from Russia to India.

Following the Russian military operation in Ukraine, the US, the UK and other Western countries have imposed economic sanctions on Russia. Speaking to IANS, a senior NPCIL official preferring anonymity said the shipping sector is affected because of the conflict. The official also said Rosatom will inform about the items that can be lifted from Russia and ships will be arranged accordingly.

Sources close to NPCIL told IANS that Western ships may not be available to lift the cargo from Russia to India and the option is to

Russia's Rosatom is supplying four reactor components to NPCIL that is setting up four atomic power plants in Kudankulam

look for Chinese or ships from other countries.

Questions from IANS sent to Rosatom South Asia Marketing (India) on the issue remained unanswered.

India's atomic power plant operator NPCIL is currently building four nuclear power plants (Units 3, 4, 5 & 6) of 1,000 MW capacity each at Kudankulam.

Already, two 1,000 MW plants (Units 1 and 2) are operational at Kudankulam.

All the six units are built with Russian technology and equipment supplied by Rosatom.

Major equipment for building the 3rd and 4th units have reached Kudankulam from Russia. A sizable number of component supplies for 5th & 6th units are to come from Russia.



Shadow of Ukraine war looms over Sunshine State

Goa was looking to cash in on the dropping Covid cases this tourism season. But the war between Russia and Ukraine has cast another shadow of uncertainty over the state's tourism prospects

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, March 17: It's been almost a month since a Russian tourist walked into Shashank Servaia's retail alcohol store 'Liquor Universe', located near a busy intersection along the buzzing Calangute-Candolim coastal stretch.

Foreign tourists were around till a while back, but for the last month, ever since the military escalation between Russia and Ukraine, there has not been a single Russian walk-in into the store, Servaia claims.

Not that budget-constrained Russian and Ukrainian tourists who travel on modest charter packages to Goa were known to be big spenders. The popular Indian dark rum, Old Monk, according to

Servaia, was their favourite, but the mix of international and domestic tourists is what makes up for Goa's successful tourism story, he says.

In the midst of its conventional tourism season - from October to March - Goa was looking to cash in on the dropping Covid cases. But the war between Russia and Ukraine appears to have cast another shadow of uncertainty over the state's tourism prospects.

The significance of tourist footfalls from Russia, even Ukraine, to Goa can be understood in official government statistics over the last four years.

In 2018, 2,94,569 tourists from the United Kingdom and 3,33,565 from Russia landed in Goa, while in 2019, 2,71,684 and 3,41,730 tourists



from the UK and Russia, respectively, arrived in the state. In 2018 and 2019, 46,826 and 39,585 Ukrainians landed in Goa, respectively.

In 2019, just as the Covid pandemic was leaving its footprint across the globe, the footfalls dropped considerably with 1,07,353 tourists from the UK, 83,565 from Russia and 2,487 from Ukraine arriving in Goa.

In 2020, with the pandemic grind-

ing down the global economy, tourist footfalls faced a steep drop with 2,695, 1,164 and a mere 22 tourists arriving from the UK, Russia and Ukraine, respectively.

Goa's conventional tourist season starts in October and winds up in March, when the mild winter sun works as a good break for travellers from Russia, the UK, Germany, Ukraine and other European countries from the harsh winter there.

Russians topped the number of foreign tourists visiting Goa every year, before the advent of the Covid pandemic. Nearly eight million tourists arrived in Goa ahead of the pandemic, out of which half a million were foreigners.

Charter tourists form the backbone of the resort, entertainment and beach sub-economies in Goa's tourism sector.

According to the state Tourism Director Menino D'Souza, Goa's tourism prospects would be marred by the war in Europe.

Prior to this war also, charter flights had to be cancelled because of this disturbance. It will not only impact the tourism trade, but also the economy. Russians are the main foreigner tourists who come to Goa, and if flights are cancelled, it will definitely impact us, D'Souza said.

The next best bet for the tourism industry stakeholders is domestic tourists, who, according to Gaurish Dhond from the All Goa Hotel and Restaurant Owners Association, could help keep the state's tourism flag flying in the face of a glut in foreign tourist arrivals.



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, March 17: The Madras High Court's Madurai Bench has directed the Tamil Nadu government to regulate the use of mobile phones of government employees during office hours.

It asked the government to frame rules and regulations for the use of mobile phones and cameras inside office premises during office hours.

A bench of Justice SM Subramaniam said that usage of mobile phones during office hours was gross misconduct and employees must not be allowed to use these during office hours for personal reasons.

He said that if there was emergency permission must be taken from the higher officials before the phone is used.

The court directed that in all circumstances, the mobile phones should be either switched off or in silent mode to prevent any discomfort to people who are ap-

proaching the government offices as well as other staff in the office while they were engaged in office work.

Justice Subramaniam also said that using mobile cameras during office hours was causing discomfort and would disrupt the functioning of offices.

He directed the state government to take serious note of the subject and to issue a circular or note to the employees to store all mobile phones in a cloakroom during office hours in switched off or silent mode.

The court was hearing a petition filed by DS Radhika, a government employee from Tiruchi, challenged the suspension order issued against her for frequently using mobile phones during office hours and shooting videos of co-workers.

The court disposed of the petition and directed the officials to conduct an inquiry and conclude the same with immediate effect.

of the day quote

The world is looking towards India at this juncture of the 21st century. In this new world order, India has to increase its role and develop itself at a fast pace

Matches are won or lost but it is the team spirit which matters. Our prime concern should be to make our state as real Punjab not London, California or Paris

Congress is a big party, so these problems occur. There is democracy in our party, unlike the rest. We always raise questions here, which is not possible in other parties. Is it? Therefore, it is common to have conflict within groups where different people bring different approaches to the table

SHORT TAKES

Rabri Devi demands apology from Nitish

Patna: Despite Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Assembly Speaker Vijay Sinha reaching a "compromise", RJD demanded an apology from the former in both the Assembly and the Legislative Council. Proceedings in both houses were disrupted several times Wednesday, and Leader of Opposition in the Council and former Chief Minister Rabri Devi saying that an apology and clarification is needed from the Chief Minister, and no one could give clarification on behalf of him. "There is complete Jungle Raj in Bihar," she said. She pointed to a JD-U member, while mocking the party for suffering anything to stay in power and called them "touts".

Rape accused opens fire at cops

New Delhi: A rape accused Thursday opened fire at the police party in Outer North Delhi's Khera Prahlapur road after he was asked to surrender. The police launched a counter attack in which he suffered a gun wound in his left leg's knee and was caught. Brijendra Kumar Yadav, DCP, Outer North Delhi, said that the accused was identified as Mohammed Akhtar. A pistol, empty cartridges and a stolen cell phone was recovered from him.

Nizamuddin Markaz reopens

New Delhi: Two years after it was shut due to alleged violation of Covid norms, the Nizamuddin Markaz here reopened Thursday for two days to allow devotees to offer prayers on Shab-e-Barat. The Delhi High Court had Wednesday allowed the reopening of three floors of the markaz, saying the management of the mosque will ensure that Covid-19 protocols are followed by the visitors. According to police, the doors of the Markaz were opened at around 12.30 pm.

Minor raped

Lucknow: A seven-year-old girl was allegedly raped in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya district, police said Thursday. The accused was arrested within a few hours, they said. According to the Superintendent of Police, Ayodhya, Shailesh Pandey, the girl was playing hide-and-seek with her friends Wednesday evening when she went missing. At around 9.30 pm, her family members found her at an abandoned place, a short distance away from their house.



I extend my warm greetings and good wishes to the people of our country on the auspicious occasion of Holi - the festival of colours

M VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE-PRESIDENT

BOOSTING TIES

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with South Korean President-elect Yoon Suk-yeol Thursday with the two leaders agreeing to further broaden and deepen the India-Korea special strategic partnership, especially in the present global context



Corruption affects happiness of 43.2% Indians: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: Corruption affects the happiness of 43.2 per cent Indians with men having lower perception of corruption than women, according to a new study. HappyPlus Consulting's India-focused 'State of Happiness' report has found that Indians are happier than before and the country's life-evaluation score is 6.84. A key indicator for subjective well-being, the score reflects that India is doing better than the average life-evaluation scores in other happiness studies, it said. The report found that Himachal Pradesh,

Punjab, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Chandigarh, Delhi and Goa are among the places with high happiness ranking in the country. The study had a sample size of 20,073 interviewees across 28 states and eight Union Territories in India. It highlighted that 87.8 per cent Indians felt they have social support that can protect their mental well-

being during negative outcomes. Better social support is associated with greater well-being and translates into a happier state of mind and pro-social behaviour. Another aspect that the report reveals is the prevalence of negative emotions that alters life satisfaction and leads to drastic decline in fulfil-

ment. Emotions of worry, sadness and anger are felt by 32.9 per cent Indians regularly, the study showed. Also it's been observed that approximately over 65 per cent Indians feel nervous and stressed often and the major reasons are Covid-related uncertainties, health, financial empowerment, family and friends, and workplace pressures. "Seven out of 10 Indians feel nervous and stressed on regular basis. This is alarming. However, till the time individuals are not taking a step forward to understand what emotional well-being means for them and do not act towards it, it would continue to be a concern-



area," said Shyamasree Chakrabarty, Senior Director, HappyPlus Consulting. "Having awareness and acting wisely for better well-being would be the key going forward," Chakrabarty said. Apart from subjective well-being in-

dicators such as life evaluations, positive and negative emotions, the study included questions on social support, freedom to make life choices, perception of corruption, along with state-level per capita net State Domestic Product, literacy rate, healthy-life expectancy at birth and Health Index. The perception of the state of happiness also differed between women and men. Despite the current times, it was seen that the younger generation expresses and feels greater levels of happiness, laughter and are highly positive when compared to older people, the study said.

Around 43.2% Indians believe corruption is rampant in government, businesses and it depresses people which affects the evaluations used to measure happiness

Was offered Pegasus for ₹25cr: Mamata

AGENCIES

Kolkata/Amaravati, March 17: A day after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee revealed that the controversial Pegasus spyware was offered to her government, she provided Thursday more details, stating the state police was approached at least four to five years back with an offer to sell the controversial Israeli spyware for just ₹25 crore.

The Chief Minister said she had turned it down when she came to know of it.

Banerjee also alleged that instead of using the spyware for the security of the country, it was used by the central government which she claimed purchased it, for "political" reasons against judges and officials.

However, the Telugu Desam party denied assertions made by her Wednesday that the then chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, Chandrababu Naidu, had purchased the spyware during his tenure. "They (NSO, the company which developed Pegasus) had approached everybody to sell their ware. They had approached our police too, four-five years ago and offered to sell it for ₹25 crore. I had the information, but I said that we did not require it," Banerjee said



They (NSO) came to our police department to sell their machines. They demanded ₹25 crore for it, five years back. It came to me, I said no we don't want to buy such machines

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

at the state secretariat. "If it was used for the benefit of the country or for security reasons then it was a different matter altogether, but it has been used for political purposes, against judges, officers which is not at all welcomed," she alleged. The Bengal Chief Minister had Wednesday disclosed in the

Naidu government purchased the Pegasus Spyware, Lokesh who was the then Minister for Information Technology in his father Chandrababu's Cabinet, said "I don't know whether she has indeed said this, and where and in which context. If she did say this, she is certainly misinformed."

However, he said the software was offered to the state government. "Yes, Pegasus offered to sell its spyware to the AP government as well but we rejected it," Lokesh said.

Had the government purchased the spyware, there would be a record of it, he pointed out. An international media consortium had reported last year that over 300 verified Indian mobile phone numbers were on the list of potential targets for surveillance using Pegasus spyware.

A New York Times report earlier this year claiming India bought Pegasus spyware as part of a \$2 billion defence deal with Israel in 2017 had triggered a major controversy with the Opposition alleging that the government had indulged in illegal snooping that amounted to "treason".

The Supreme Court is currently hearing a batch of pleas on the allegations of misuse of this spyware in India.

20 Indians yet to be evacuated from Ukraine, says MEA



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: There are 15-20 Indians in war-hit Ukraine who want to leave and are being provided all help, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday, asserting that "Operation Ganga" is still on.

At a media briefing here, MEA Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said it is a war situation but "we will keep doing what we can to evacuate those who want to come".

"Till about three days ago, there were about 50 Indians who were there. Our assessment is that there are 15-20 people who want to leave that country, the others who are there do not want to leave right now. We are providing as much help as possible to them," Bagchi

said. Noting that over 22,500 Indians have been brought back from the east European country, he said there are people in isolated pockets and "this is an evolving situation". "We are in contact with all the Indians who are there," he added. The Indian embassy is providing as much help as possible to them, Bagchi said.

Asked about the three Indians stranded in Ukraine's southern region of Kherson, he said the focus is to evacuate them and any route could be taken.

"Many people have said 'Operation Ganga' has come to an end. It is not so. Those who want to be evacuated, we are helping them through our embassy operating from Warsaw (in Poland)," the MEA spokesperson said.

ED SUMMONS ABHISHEK BANERJEE, WIFE

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 17: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Thursday summoned Abhishek Banerjee, the nephew of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, and his wife Rujira to join an investigation in connection with a coal scam case.

The agency has asked Banerjee and his wife to join the investigation March 21-22.

Abhishek Banerjee had September 6, 2021, recorded his statement before the ED officials. He was interrogated for around six hours. But the probe agency was not satisfied and hence summoned him again along with his wife.



In September 2021, the couple, via their counsel, had moved a plea before the Delhi High Court against the ED's summons. But their plea was dismissed by the court March 11. The couple said in their plea that they were residence of West Bengal and had sought relief on that ground. Their contention was challenged by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who was appearing for the ED. He told the court that ED was not confined by any area under PMLA. This case is being probed by the CBI and the ED. Both the agencies are doing parallel probe.

India, Indonesia hold security dialogue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: India and Indonesia Thursday held extensive talks in Jakarta focusing shared priorities such as combating terrorism and violent extremism, and explored ways to enhance defence and cyber security cooperation.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Indonesia's Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Mohammad Mahfud MD held the talks at the second India-Indonesia Security Dialogue (IISD). "At the 2nd IISD, Minister Mahfud and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval discussed several shared priorities, including review of the current global and security issues, countering

terrorism and violent extremism, and enhancing maritime, defence, and cyber security cooperation," the MEA said. It said Mahfud and Doval mentioned the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries and expressed confidence that the IISD would strengthen the cooperation to overcome common challenges and "identified opportunities" for further close collaboration in the field of political and security issues.

The IISD is a forum that brings the coordinating minister for political, legal, and security affairs of Indonesia and the NSA of India together to discuss and enhance cooperation between the two countries on political and security issues.



COLOURS OF HAPPINESS: Students smear colour on each others' faces, during celebration of Holi at Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar

Daughter not entitled to father's money if she breaks ties: Top court

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 17: The Supreme Court has held that a daughter who is not willing to maintain any relationship with her father, is not entitled to any money either for education or marriage.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and MM Sundresh said: "In so far as the daughter's expenses for education and marriage are concerned, it appears from her approach that she does not want to maintain any relationship with the appellant and is about 20 years of age." "She is entitled to choose her own path but then cannot demand from the appellant the amount towards the education. We, thus, hold that the daughter is not entitled to any amount." The top court order came on a divorce



plea filed by the husband and turned down by the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

Granting divorce, the bench said: "There remains no doubt about irrevocable breakdown of marriage in the facts of the present case. Thus, we are inclined to exercise our jurisdiction under Article 142 of the Constitution of India by granting a decree of divorce on the said ground." It noted that nothing really subsists in this mar-

riage except mutual acrimony and it is not even possible for the parties to sit across the table or to even talk over telephone to come to a reasonable understanding. The bench noted that the wife has practically no money and means, and lives with her brother who is supporting her and her daughter's education. Determining the amount to be paid as permanent alimony to the mother, the bench said: "We con-

sider it appropriate to fix the permanent alimony of the respondent, at present being paid at ₹8,000 per month as interim maintenance, at ₹10,00,000 in full and final settlement of all claims."

The top court added if the mother so desires to support the daughter, funds are available. The daughter has been living with her mother since birth. The husband had filed a plea before a district judge seeking dissolution of marriage, after his plea for restitution of conjugal rights, was dismissed. The district judge allowed the plea, which was challenged by the wife before the high court. The husband moved the top court, after the high court set aside the lower court order.

The Supreme Court mediation centre attempted for reconciliation proceedings, but it was not successful.

Season's first cyclonic storm set to hit near Andaman & Nicobar

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 17: Light to moderate rainfall, thunder-shower at most places with heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places is very likely over Nicobar Islands Friday as a Low Pressure Area (LPA) in south-east Bay of Bengal is likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm by March 21.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has introduced pre-genesis track and intensity forecast experimentally at the stage of the LPA over southeast Bay of Bengal. It is the first centre to initiate pre-genesis forecast worldwide.

The LPA over central parts of south Bay of Bengal moved east-north-eastwards and lay centred over southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining east Equatorial Indian Ocean Thursday morning.

international

FOUR KILLED, 107 INJURED IN JAPAN QUAKE

Residents in Fukushima and Miyagi were cleaning their homes after a sleepless night following a powerful 7.4-magnitude earthquake that struck off the northern Japanese coasts, smashing furniture, knocking out power and killing four people. The region is part of an area devastated by a deadly 9.0 quake and tsunami 11 years ago that caused nuclear reactor meltdowns, spewing massive radiation that still makes some parts uninhabitable



Biden calls Putin 'war criminal'

Washington/Moscow: US President Joe Biden has called his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin a "war criminal", prompting an angry response from the Kremlin which denounced it as "unforgivable rhetoric" from a head of state.

Biden's off-the-cuff remarks on Wednesday were the harshest condemnation of Putin's actions from any US official since Russia launched a 'special military operation' in Ukraine three weeks ago. Previously, President Biden had stopped short of labelling atrocities being documented on the ground in Ukraine as "war crimes," citing ongoing international and US investigations.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki later defended Biden and said the president had been speaking from his heart after seeing "barbaric" images of the violence in Ukraine.

"I think the President's remarks

the State Department, to determine war crimes - and that was ongoing separately.

In Moscow, Kremlin described Biden's "war criminal" remarks as "unforgivable rhetoric". "We consider such rhetoric from a head of the state, whose bombs killed hundreds of thousands of people around the world, to be unacceptable and unforgivable," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted as saying by Russian state news agency TASS.

Earlier on Wednesday Biden announced another USD 800 million security assistance to Ukraine, taking the total to USD 1 billion in less than a week. Biden's announcement came hours after Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy pleaded for more military aid in a historic address to the US Congress.

Zelenskyy urged the US politicians to remember their country coming under attack in the past -

CAUGHT IN CHAOS



Ukrainian refugees hope for peace

PRZEMYSL, POLAND/BUDAPEST: Thousands more refugees crossed into Eastern Europe Thursday, many hoping that ongoing peace talks between Moscow and Kyiv may end the war soon, though more people were expected to flee in the days ahead. As the war in Ukraine entered its fourth week, about 3.2 million have fled abroad, United Nations data showed on Thursday in what has become Europe's fastest growing refugee crisis since World War Two.

While the numbers arriving in the frontline states - Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova - have slowed in recent days, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said he expected a "bigger wave" next week.

"The war is not subsiding, but spreading; and as it spreads, there is the risk that next week will see the arrival of more people in Hungary, presenting us with a huge challenge," he said in a video posted on his Facebook page late Wednesday.

"They are not only fleeing from areas threatened by war, but also from war zones themselves." One of them was Alla Klochko from Mirnograd in Donetsk, the region in eastern Ukraine that separatists



have declared an independent republic but is contested by Kyiv and is at the centre of fierce fighting between Ukraine and Russia.

The 31-year-old was hoping she could stay near Warsaw, find work and enrol her eight-year-old daughter Alisa, who loves playing the piano, in a Polish school.

"I hope that, if our delegation reaches an agreement and at the end there will be peace, I hope that Ukraine will not lose our part of the territory, our Donetsk, because Donetsk region is

Ukrainian," she said. "We are a part of Ukraine, have always been and hope that this will stay like that," she said from Przemysl train station, a transit hub near the Ukrainian border. "We speak Russian, but we are Ukrainians."

MOVING WEST
The majority of European countries have offered to take in refugees in the past few weeks to alleviate the pressure on Ukraine's neighbours. German police have recorded 187,428 refugees - mostly women and children - as of Thursday, the

interior ministry said while Spain has registered about 4,500 so far.

Amid the unrelenting fighting, both Ukraine and Russia have spoken of progress in their bilateral talks. Ukrainian officials have said they think Russia is running out of troops to keep fighting and could soon come to terms with its failure to topple the Ukrainian government. Moscow has said it is close to agreeing a formula that would keep Ukraine neutral, long one of its demands.

"I hope that this will end soon. Everybody says that it has to ... I don't know," said Ekaterina Herman, 27, who arrived in Poland late on Wednesday with her two-year-old. "I am planning to come back to Ukraine."

Meanwhile, refugees across the region were trying to establish some kind of normalcy. At a supermarket-turned-shelter in Rzeszow, south-eastern Poland, volunteers and children played tug-of-war, drew tattoos and made drawings, with the Beverly Hills Cop movie soundtrack blasting on the speakers.

In Romania, at the Siret border crossing with Ukraine, women with babies, toddlers and older children continued to arrive, while Romanian firefighters and volun-

Russia is prepared to continue high-level trilateral negotiations with Ukraine mediated by Turkey

SERGEI LAVROV
RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

China would face consequences if it backs Russia's war on Ukraine

SCOTT MORRISON
AUSTRALIAN PM



I think the President's remarks speak for themselves. He was speaking from his heart and speaking from what we've seen on television, which are barbaric actions by a brutal dictator through his invasion of a foreign country

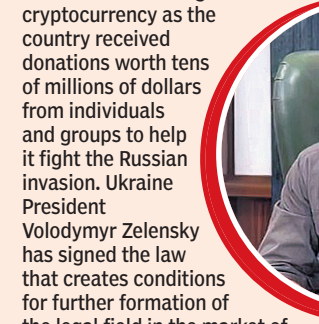
JEN PSAKI | WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

at Pearl Harbour in 1941 and on 11 September 2001 - saying Ukrainians were experiencing the same thing every day. "In your great history, you have pages that would allow you to understand the Ukrainian history. Understand us now," he said.

Russia warns US
LONDON: Russia warned the United States Thursday that Moscow had the might to put the world's pre-eminent superpower in its place and accused the West of stoking a wild Russophobic plot to tear Russia apart. Dmitry Medvedev, who served as president from 2008 to 2012 and is now deputy secretary of Russia's Security Council, said the United States had stoked "disturbing" Russophobia in an attempt to force Russia to its knees. "It will not work - Russia has the might to put all of our brash enemies in their place," Medvedev said.

Ukraine legalises cryptocurrency

Kiev: Ukraine has legalised cryptocurrency as the country received donations worth tens of millions of dollars from individuals and groups to help it fight the Russian invasion. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has signed the law that creates conditions for further formation of the legal field in the market of virtual assets. The new market will be regulated by the National Commission on Securities and Stock Market. The signed law determines the legal status, classification and virtual assets ownership rights and determines the list of providers of virtual assets and conditions of their registration. Until now, the Ministry of Digital Transformation has been developing the legal framework in this area. "The Ministry of Digital Transformation is also actively working to amend the tax and civil codes of Ukraine to fully launch the virtual assets market," the government said in a statement.



Ukrainian Mayor released

Kiev: Ivan Fedorov, the Mayor of Melitopol who was allegedly abducted by Russian forces on March 11, has been released from captivity, according to Ukrainian government officials. The development was confirmed Wednesday by Kyrylo Tymoshenko, Deputy Head of the Office of the President, reports the Ukrayinska Pravda. Tymoshenko said that a "special operation" to release Fedorov from Russian captivity had concluded. Meanwhile, Andriy Yermak, Head of the Office of the President, said after Fedorov was released, he held talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. But Yermak did not provide any details of the conversation. Citing media reports, the BBC report said that Fedorov was "exchanged for nine Russian prisoners".



Invasion largely stalled: UK

LONDON: Russia's offensives in Ukraine have "largely stalled on all fronts", the UK's Defence Ministry said in its latest assessment of the ongoing Moscow-Kiev war. The assessment said that Russian forces have "made minimal progress on land, sea or air in recent days, and they continue to suffer heavy losses", the BBC reported. According to Ukraine's military, Russia's efforts have now switched to aerial attacks, bombing and shelling civilian populations, because they've been "unsuccessful" in their ground operations. Moscow has only recorded about 500 troop deaths so far, but US intelligence estimates it to be closer to 7,000 personnel, said the BBC report. Russian bombs continue to fall on civilian populations in Ukraine, according to the General Staff of Ukraine's Armed Forces. In a Facebook post, Ukraine's armed forces say Russia's "unsuccessful" military operations on the ground mean that it is focusing on the battle in the air - targeting infrastructure and densely populated areas of Ukrainian cities.



Increase in Covid-19 cases globally: WHO

Geneva/United Nations, March 17: Fresh cases of Covid-19 are again spiking globally, especially in parts of Asia, after several weeks of decline and this rise is "just the tip of the iceberg", World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has warned. With each country facing a different situation with different challenges, Ghebreyesus cautioned that the pandemic is not over. "We call on all countries to remain vigilant. Continue to vaccinate, test, sequence, provide early care for patients, and apply common-sense public health measures to protect health workers and the public," he said Wednesday in Geneva. "After several weeks of declines, reported cases of Covid-19 are once again increasing globally, especially in parts of Asia. These increases are occurring despite reductions in testing in some countries, which means the cases we are seeing are just the tip of the iceberg," Ghebreyesus said. As of March 13, 2022, over 455 million confirmed Covid-19 cases and over 6 million related deaths have been reported globally. More than 10 billion vaccine doses have been administered. The WHO chief said that when cases increase, so do deaths. "Continued local outbreaks and surges are to be expected, particularly in areas where measures to prevent transmission have been lifted," he said.

OLDER UKRAINIANS STAY PUT AMID WAR-ZONE EXODUS

REUTERS

Lviv: When Russian jets roared low over her town and the bombing grew unbearable, Liudmila Kravtsova packed a small bag and fled by train to safer western Ukraine.

The carriage was packed with women and children. But men of fighting age, who remained behind to halt the Russian advance, were largely absent. So was another segment of Ukrainian society.

Kravtsova, a 67-year-old retired accountant, said she was one of only three older passengers. "Old people are staying put with only the war for company," she said.

One in four people in Ukraine are 60 or older, according to government statistics, and many of them

were already poor and vulnerable before Russia launched its invasion on February 24, according to U.N. and other experts.

Since then about 3 million Ukrainians have fled the country, but many older people have been too sick or immobile to make the same arduous journey. Others have refused to leave cherished homes, even as the conflict enveloped them.

Ukraine has the largest percentage of older people affected by conflict of any single country, said HelpAge International, a global network of support groups that has worked in the former Soviet republic since 2014.

It said older people were often overlooked during humanitarian crises, or their specific nutritional or medical needs not factored in.

Particularly in rural areas of Ukraine, the majority of those staying put are older people, and helping them as the fighting has escalated will be challenging, said Justin Derbyshire, HelpAge International's chief executive.

"There will be a huge amount of need. We're going to see massive problems in terms of hunger and medical supplies."

Many older people, already in fragile health, have arrived in Lviv in western Ukraine - where Russian forces have not ventured to date - after harrowing escapes.

Kravtsova spent days sheltering in terror in a basement in the small town of Barvinkove in eastern Ukraine as shells and rockets exploded outside. "We had such a beautiful life before the war," she said.

PILLOWS AGAINST BOMBS

A little over 24 hours later, she was sitting on a bench outside Lviv station, waiting for her daughter Oksana.

Asked why she seemed so cheerful, Kravtsova said she had just met an injured soldier who had returned from the

front. "He told me, 'We will win this war'. And I believe him."

She said she will live with her daughter in Ternopil, a nearby city, and won't go abroad. "If I was younger, maybe I'd think about going abroad. But this is my land."

'SO EXHAUSTED'
Boris Mosyir, who is 79 and



walks with a cane, sat quietly in a nearby waiting hall with his grown-up son Ihor. They had lived together in Izyum, another war-torn eastern town.

Their apartment block had no shelter or basement. During the near-constant Russian bombardment, they hid in the bathroom with pillows clutched over their heads. "I can't believe we survived," said Mosyir, his face crumpling with emotion. "We're so exhausted. We just want to sit and catch our breath."

Mosyir has prostate cancer but said he had run out of medicine to treat it. He had an upcoming appointment at a hospital in nearby Kharkiv, but that city - Ukraine's second largest - has been devastated by Russian bombing.

"I don't know if my doctor is

alive or dead," he said. The war had also posed new challenges for wheelchair-bound Yuriy Vasko, 78. He and his son-in-law Serhii Krylov had escaped Mykolaiv, a port city on the Black Sea and scene of intense fighting.

Vasko now wanted to join his daughter Raisa in neighbouring Poland, but his son-in-law couldn't take him there because men of fighting age weren't allowed to leave Ukraine. So Vasko slept in a Lviv church for three days, waiting for Raisa to arrive and take him to Poland.

Vasko, who suffered a stroke a few years ago, said he felt betrayed by Russia and let down by his own country. "Old people aren't needed at all," he said, tugging down the brim of his cap to hide his tears.

REUTERS PHOTOS

business

of the day quote

India has more than 200 million e-gamers playing across more than 200 platforms. E-sports and e-gaming, under the umbrella of digital economy growth, are going to play an important role in the Indian economy

PK MISHRA | PRESIDENT, ALL INDIA GAMING FEDERATION

Our engagement with startups over the previous cohorts has been very fruitful. Undertaking PoCs with 19 of the startups, we were able to bring about agility in working, by bringing forth new technologies

KENICHI AYUKAWA | MD & CEO, MSI

India is going to play a key role in this transformation journey as Volvo Group's largest R&D site outside Sweden, along with our other global support functions, is located here

JAN GURANDER | DEPUTY CEO, VOLVO GROUP

SHORT TAKES

BSE reaches 10cr investors mark

Mumbai: Stock exchange major BSE has reached the landmark of having 10 crore registered investor accounts Wednesday. The rise in the number of accounts has been attributed to new investors who have recently joined Indian capital markets. "BSE has reached a landmark of 10 crore registered investor accounts today, on March 16, 2022. BSE has always focused on acting as a catalyst for nation building and capital formation for the country during its 147 years history," MD & CEO Ashishkumar Chauhan said.

BoE raises key interest rates

London: The Bank of England (BoE) raised its key interest rate Thursday for the third time since December as it pushes ahead faster than other central banks in combating a global wave of inflation that is set to accelerate following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The bank boosted its key rate to 0.75 per cent after the war pushed oil prices to a 13-year high earlier this month. It comes a day after the US Federal Reserve raised its benchmark short-term rate to 0.25 per cent to tame the worst inflation since the early 1980s.

Sugar exports jump more than 2.5-fold

New Delhi: Sugar exports have jumped over 2.5 fold between October 2021 and February this year to 47 lakh tonne on higher production and better demand of the Indian sweetener in the global market, according to industry body ISMA. Sugar marketing year runs from October to September. Sugar exports stood at 17.75 lakh tonne in the year-ago period. According to ISMA data, sugar production rose 9 per cent between October 2021 and March 15 this year to 283.26 lakh tonne on higher cane output and better yield.

Britannia eyes 50% women staff by '24

New Delhi: FMCG major Britannia Industries said Wednesday it aims to achieve a diversity ratio of 50 per cent by 2024 by increasing the participation of women in its workforce. Britannia Industries Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) Amit Doshi said that at present 38 per cent of the company's workforce is women. "We want to promote gender equality in the company," he said. For empowering women, the company has already launched a start-up challenge among woman entrepreneurs, Doshi said.



India's merchandise exports have reached almost \$390 billion as of March 14 and will cross \$400 billion in the current financial year

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

MERCEDES DECLARES 3% HIKE

Mercedes-Benz India Thursday said it will increase prices of entire model range by up to 3 per cent from April 1 in order to partially offset the impact of increase in input costs. The prices of the cars retailed by the Pune-based firm would go up in the range of ₹50,000-Rs 5 lakh from next month onwards



Be ready to lose all your money in crypto: EU

REUTERS

London, March 17: Consumers risk losing all their money invested in cryptoassets and could fall prey to scams, the European Union's securities, banking and insurance watchdogs said in a joint statement Thursday.

"Consumers face the very real possibility of losing all their invested money if they buy these assets," the three EU authorities said. It marks a ratcheting up of direct warnings to consumers about cryp-

Global cryptocurrency market-capitalisation jumped 3.85 percent to \$1.83 trillion, Thursday



toassets by EU authorities, spelling out that consumers have no protections or recourse to compensation under existing EU financial services law. Regulators are increasingly wor-

EU regulators are increasingly worried that more consumers are buying 17,000 different cryptoassets without being fully aware of the risks

ried that more consumers are buying 17,000 different cryptoassets, including bitcoin and ether, which account for 60% of the market,

without being fully aware of the risks, the regulators said.

"Consumers should be alert to the risks of misleading advertisements, including via social media and influencers. Consumers should be particularly wary of promised fast or high returns, especially those that look too good to be true," the statement said.

Consumers should also be aware of that energy consumption for producing some cryptoassets is high and the environmental impact this has, the statement said.

Direct tax mop-up soars 48%

Direct tax collections exceeded the budgeted ₹11.08 lakh crore before the start of the fiscal and ₹12.50 lakh crore revised estimates in Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget for 2022-23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: India's collection from tax on personal and corporate income jumped over 48 per cent in the current fiscal after a 41 per cent surge in advance tax payments, mirroring sustained economic recovery in a year that witnessed two waves of coronavirus infections.

Net collections of direct taxes until March 16, 2022, in the fiscal year that started April 1, 2021, stood at ₹13.63 lakh crore compared to ₹9.18 lakh crore in the same period a year back, an official statement said.

The net collections in direct taxes, which is made up of income tax on individual income, corporation tax on profits of companies, property tax, inheritance tax and gift tax, in the current fiscal is 35 per cent higher than the collection of ₹9.56 lakh crore in the pre-pandemic year of 2019-20 (April 2019 to March 2020).

Advance tax collections, the fourth instalment of which was due March 15, rose to ₹6.62 lakh crore,



up 40.75 per cent, the statement said, adding refunds aggregating to ₹1.87 lakh crore have been issued in the current fiscal.

"The figures of direct tax collections for the financial year 2021-22, as on March 16, 2022 show that net collections are at ₹13,63,038.3 crore compared to ₹9,18,430.5 crore over the corresponding period of the preceding financial year i.e FY 2020-21, representing an increase of 48.41 per cent," the statement.

The net collection in the current fiscal registered a growth of 42.50 per cent over the corresponding period of FY 2019-20 when the net collection was ₹9,56,550.3 crore, and a growth of 34.96 per cent over the same period of FY 2018-19 when the net collection was ₹10,09,982.9 crore.

The net direct tax collections include corporate income tax (CIT) of ₹7,19,035.0 crore (net of refund) and personal income tax (PIT) in-

cluding STT of ₹6,40,588.3 crore (net of refund).

The gross collection of direct taxes (before adjusting for refunds) for the FY 2021-22 (as March 16, 2022) stood at ₹15,50,364.2 crore compared to ₹11,20,638.6 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding financial year.

"Minor head wise collection (as on March 16, 2022), comprises advance tax of ₹6,62,896.3 crore, tax deducted at source of ₹6,86,798.7 crore, self-assessment tax of ₹1,34,391.1 crore; regular assessment tax of ₹55,249.5 crore; dividend distribution tax of ₹7,486.6 crore and tax under other minor heads of ₹3,542.1 crore," the statement said.

The cumulative advance tax collections for the current 2021-22 fiscal stood at ₹6,62,896.3 crore as on March 16, 2022, as compared to ₹4,70,984.4 crore for the corresponding period of the immediately preceding financial year.

51st National Safety Week celebrated at AM/NS India



Bhubaneswar: With an aim to create awareness on Health & safety among its workforce, ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India), Odisha Facility celebrated 51st Safety Week under the guidance of National Safety Council (NSC) at its Pellet Plant in Paradeep. The weeklong celebration started with the hoisting of safety flag by G Suresha, Executive Director, Odisha Facility. On the occasion, G Suresha said, "AM/NS India always gives importance on health and safety of the workers and is committed to enhancing safety at workplace. Our aim is to create and strengthen the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) culture in the workplace". Sanjeev Muduli, Head Health and Safety highlighted the importance of Health and Safety and urged the employees to take responsibilities in making the workplace healthier and safer. USR Raju, Head-Pellet Plant, Shailendra Sah, Head- Power Plant, Sanjeev Kumar Muduli, Head-Health & Safety and other officials were present. A mini marathon "DASH-A-THLON" was organised at the sea beach among other activities.

\$2.4BN BATTERY SCHEME

REUTERS

New Delhi, March 17: Reliance Industries and Softbank Group-backed Ola Electric will receive incentives under India's \$2.4 billion programme to boost local battery cell production after winning a tender, four sources told Reuters.

The winning bidders also include Hyundai Global Motors Company and Indian jewellery maker Rajesh Exports, the sources said on condition of anonymity.

The Indian government last year finalised a programme to encourage companies to make battery cells locally as it seeks to establish a domestic supply chain for clean transport and renewable energy storage to meet its decarbonisation goals.

Ola Electric and Hyundai will get incentives for 20 gigawatt hours

RIL, Ola win incentives



capacity while Reliance and Rajesh Exports have won incentives for 5 Gwh, the sources said. They did not give a financial value.

An Ola spokesperson did not comment on whether it has won the bid but referred Reuters to an announcement made Wednesday on its local battery manufacturing plans. Ola Electric said yesterday it has appointed Prabhakar Patil, the former chief of LG Chem Power,

to its board, and has plans to set up 50 Gwh of storage capacity.

Ten companies submitted bids to manufacture a total of about 130 Gwh of storage capacity. These include automaker Mahindra & Mahindra, battery makers Amara Raja and Exide Industries, and engineering conglomerate Larsen & Toubro.

Some of the companies are already ramping up their plans.

Refining giant Reliance has acquired two battery companies for about \$200 million - UK-based Faradion, which makes sodium-ion batteries, and Lithium Werks, which manufactures lithium iron phosphate batteries.

Exide has entered into a long-term technical collaboration with China's SVOLT Energy to set up a plant to manufacture lithium-ion battery cells.

Gold output could zoom multifold if hurdles removed: WGC

The report has highlighted that India has a rich heritage of gold mining, but industry's growth has been hampered by legacy processes and under-investments. It has listed regulatory challenges, taxation policies and infrastructure as major problem areas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 17: India's annual gold production could surge to 20 tonne from a mere 1.6 tonne if the government removes bureaucratic

hurdles and encourages investment in the sector, the World Gold Council (WGC) said in a report published Thursday.

The World Gold Council (WGC) launched a report titled 'Gold Mining in India', as part of a series of in-depth analysis on the Indian gold market.

"Despite India being one of the world's largest consumers of gold, the mining market operates on a small scale and is not an easy one to enter. In 2020 gold mine production was just 1.6 tonne. India's current resources, when compared to production and resource levels in other countries, could reasonably be expected to support annual output of approximately 20 tonne per year in the longer-term," the council said.

Somasundaram PR, Regional CEO, India, World Gold Council, said: "Given that India is one of the



world's largest gold consuming countries, it makes sense for it to develop mining capacity. But change is needed for this to happen, legacy hurdles must be reduced considerably, and investments encouraged."

He noted that there have been

has the potential to provide significant sustainable socio-economic development for India, not just through investment in exploration and mining for gold, but also through the legacy of training a skilled workforce.

It is only when investors can see real evidence of India managing its gold mining assets more efficiently that we can expect inward investment to emerge. And at that point, the country's gold mining sector will enjoy a much brighter future

SOMASUNDARAM PR | REGIONAL CEO, WORLD GOLD COUNCIL

On the three problem areas: regulatory challenges, taxation poli-

LOWER CAPEX

Moody's slashes '22 growth hope to 9.1%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: Moody's Thursday slashed India's growth estimate for the current year to 9.1 per cent, from 9.5 per cent earlier, saying high fuel and fertilizer import bill could limit the government's capital expenditure.

In its 'Global Macro Outlook 2022-23 (March 2022 Update): Economic Growth will suffer as fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine builds' report, the rating agency said Russia's invasion of Ukraine has significantly altered the global economic backdrop through three main channels -- spike in commodities prices, risks to global economy from financial and business disruption and dent in sentiment due to heightened geopolitical risks.

It said Russia is the only G-20 economy that will contract this year and forecast that its economy will shrink 7 per cent in 2022, and 3 per cent in 2023, down from projected growth of 2 per cent and 1.5 per cent respectively, before the invasion of Ukraine.

With regard to India, it said the country is particularly vulnerable to high oil prices, given that it is a large importer of crude oil. Because India is a surplus producer of grain, agricultural exports will benefit in the short-term from high prevailing prices.

"High fuel and potentially fertilizer costs would weigh on government finances down the road, potentially limiting planned capital spending. For all of these reasons, we have lowered our 2022 growth forecasts for India by 0.4 percentage point. We now expect the economy to grow by 9.1 pc this year," Moody's Investors Service said.

War poses risks to economy, says RBI

REUTERS

Mumbai, March 17: India's macro-economic fundamentals remain strong but the unfolding global developments pose downside risks in terms of spillover, the Reserve Bank of India said in its monthly bulletin Thursday.

"The ongoing geopolitical crisis has heightened the uncertainty clouding the global macroeconomic and financial landscape even as the world economy struggles to recover from the pandemic," the RBI wrote, adding that the uncertain economic outlook has increased risks to emerging economies.

Even though India is making steady progress on the domestic front, the spiralling oil and gas prices and unsettled financial market conditions also pose fresh headwinds to the still incomplete global recovery, it observed.

The RBI also said that a rapid and large withdrawal of fiscal support risks pushing the economy over the cliff into a sharp downturn. "Exiting policy makers have to contend with the razor's edge trade-off between cliffs and ramps," RBI added.

It has continued with the accommodative stance even as inflation has inched up and had left the key lending rate unchanged, keeping it at record lows in the last central bank policy announcement held in February.

VILLARREAL STUN JUVE



Chelsea reach CL quarters

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lille (France), March 17: Much remains uncertain about Chelsea's future, but for now the reigning champion is through to the Champions League quarterfinals.

US international Christian Pulisic converted one of Chelsea's rare chances and Cesar Azpilicueta added another goal Wednesday to help the embattled Premier League club progress with a 2-1 win at Lille, and 4-1 on aggregate.

Chelsea, whose future has been left in doubt after Britain and the European Union froze the assets of owner Roman Abramovich, did not create much but was clinical against the French league champion.

Pulisic canceled out a penalty from Burak Yilmaz with a goal at the stroke of halftime and Azpilicueta scored the winner in the 71st minute. Chelsea had won the opening leg 2-0 at Stamford Bridge last month.

Looking for an early goal, Lille started the game with a spell of intense pressure and camped in Chelsea's half. The hosts won duels in midfield and their dominance materialized with a first scoring chance after seven minutes when Burak Yilmaz had an effort from 20 meters blocked.

With a comfortable lead from the first leg, Chelsea did not take any risk and was content to patiently wait for an opening with a fluid passing game. The visitors gradually grew into the match and Mateo Kovacic caused real problems to the Lille backline with his bursting runs and quick dribbles.

There was a change in dynamics soon after the half-hour mark when Andreas Christensen had to leave the pitch injured. He was replaced by Trevoh Chalobah, who was immediately nutmegged by Jonathan David on the side of the area and conceded a free-kick.

Lille's opener came from the subsequent move as Jorginho involuntarily blocked the ball with his arm in the area, prompting Lille players to shout for a penalty that was awarded following a VAR check. Yilmaz took it and fired the ball into the top corner past Chelsea

Chicago Cubs owners bid to buy Chelsea

London: The owners of the Chicago Cubs said that they will make a bid to buy Premier League club Chelsea. The Ricketts family went public with its interest in the buyout with Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich forced to sell up after he was sanctioned by the British government and banned by the Premier League over his links to Russian President Vladimir Putin amid the war on Ukraine. In a statement released by a London-based communications firm, the Ricketts family said it was leading an investment group that will make its formal bid for the reigning world and European champions Friday. "As long-time operators of an iconic professional sports team, the Ricketts family and their partners understand the importance of investing for success on the pitch, while respecting the traditions of the club, the fans and the community," the statement said. "We look forward to sharing further details of our plans in due course."

goalkeeper Edouard Mendy in the 38th minute.

Lille could not hang onto the lead for long, though. The hosts were punished after Jorginho picked out Pulisic in the box with a perfectly weighted pass that the American forward slotted into the net at the far post from a tight angle.

After the break, Lille threatened again with a fine header from Yilmaz that sailed just inches wide. Portuguese midfielder Xeka came even closer in the 64th minute with a powerful header from Yilmaz's pinpointed cross that crashed onto the post.

Lille's hopes were dashed for good when Azpilicueta beat goalkeeper Leo Jardim at the end of a good spell of possession. Left unmarked, the former Marseille player connected with a cross from Mount and sent the ball into the net with his right knee.



Chelsea players, including goal scorers Christian Pulisic (R) and Cesar Azpilicueta (2nd from R), rejoice after one of their goals against Lille, Wednesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Turin, March 17: With three different coaches in three seasons, the result remains the same for Juventus: three straight eliminations at home in the Champions League round of 16.

Europa League champion Villarreal scored three second-half goals in a 3-0 win Wednesday to advance to the quarterfinals for the first time in 13 years.

Substitute Gerard Moreno converted a penalty in the 78th minute to break the deadlock following a 1-1 draw in the first leg. Then Pau Torres was left unmarked to redirect in a corner before Arnaut Danjuma added another spot kick as Villarreal advanced 4-1 on aggregate.

"For 75 minutes the squad did well," Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri said. "Then a single episode changed the match. These things happen in soccer and we have to accept this heavy loss."

Allegri returned to Juventus this season after Maurizio Sarri and Andrea Pirlo coached the Bianconeri during defeats to Lyon and Porto at this stage over the last two seasons, respectively.

Including a quarterfinal defeat to Ajax in 2019, it's the fourth straight time that Juventus has been knocked out after a home second-leg match.

"We have to improve in scoring goals when we are dominating games like tonight," Juventus defender Danilo said. "We made another

mistake after their first goal. We still had time to equalize and bring the game to extra time but we all went forward and they punished us."

Juventus sorely missed captain Giorgio Chiellini, who never left the bench following an injury layoff, and fellow center back Leonardo Bonucci, who was still out injured.

The Bianconeri were eliminated by Lyon and Porto at Allianz Stadium the last two years under Maurizio Sarri and Andrea Pirlo, respectively. With Massimiliano Allegri having returned as coach this season, the trend was expected to be broken. But after a strong first half, Juventus was broken down midway through the second half.

The penalty was awarded after

a VAR ruling determined that Juventus defender Daniele Rugani fouled Francis Coquelin. Juventus goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny has saved three straight penalties in Serie A and got his gloves on Moreno's kick but couldn't stop it.

"We're here at Juve's stadium, we were always going to suffer," Villarreal goalkeeper Gerónimo Rulli said. "We defended incredibly and we have to applaud that. We're happy to still be in the competition."

Torres netted from close range in the 85th after a corner was flicked on. Then a handball from Matthijs de Ligt in stoppage time set up Danjuma's spot-kick.

"That's the script. We wanted to make it a long game for them,"

Torres said. "We had a number of important lads on the bench and Gerard changed the side completely when he came on because he's a top player."

With the away goals rule no longer in use, both teams needed to win to advance. Juventus had several chances early on, including when Dusan Vlahovic hit the crossbar with one touch following a cross from Mattia De Sciglio, and a header from Álvaro Morata. Giovanni Lo Celso curled wide in Villarreal's best chance of the first half.

At the start of the second half, it appeared that Villarreal was content to sit back and defend and try to get take the game to extra time and a shootout. But when Moreno came on, the momentum shifted.

LIVERPOOL GUN DOWN GUNNERS



STUNNING STRIKE: Diogo Jota reacts after scoring a splendid goal to open Liverpool's account against Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium, Wednesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, March 17: Liverpool reignited the Premier League title race and came within a point of the top spot with a 2-0 win over Arsenal after scoring two second-half goals to extend their winning streak to nine games.

Diogo Jota and substitute Roberto Firmino found the net within eight minutes of each other after a flat first-half performance from the visitors at Emirates Stadium.

Liverpool now has 69 points, one behind Manchester City, which slipped up with a 0-0 draw against Crystal Palace on Monday. If Liverpool can win its remaining nine matches, including against City April 10, the Reds will win the league.

Jurgen Klopp's team is trying to reclaim the Premier League title from City, which lifted the trophy last season. Liverpool won it in 2020, its 19th league title overall.

Jota beat Arsenal goalkeeper

Kane helps Spurs beat Brighton in EPL

BRIGHTON: Tottenham striker Harry Kane scored for the fourth straight Premier League game in a 2-0 win at Brighton that kept his team in the hunt for Champions League qualification. The England captain ran onto Rodrigo Bentancur's through-ball and delivered a low finish inside the near post for Tottenham's second goal in the 57th minute at the Amex Stadium Wednesday. Cristian Romero put Spurs into the lead in the 37th in slightly fortuitous circumstances, with Dejan Kulusevski's long-range effort deflecting in off the defender for his first goal for the club. Tottenham moved above Wolverhampton into seventh place and to within two points of fifth-place Manchester United, as they battle with fourth-place Arsenal for the final Champions League qualification spot.

Aaron Ramsdale at the near post in the 54th minute after the Liverpool forward latched onto a throughball from midfielder Thiago Alcantara. Ramsdale got a hand to Jota's shot, but the keeper should have done better to keep the ball out.

The goal sparked wild celebrations in the away end as the Liverpool players ran over to their fans in the corner. That was Jota's last action on the field as Klopp made a double substitution, bringing on Mohamed Salah, who had recovered from

a foot injury, and Firmino.

It didn't take long for Firmino to repay his manager's faith. Robertson drove to the byline before cutting it back for the Brazilian, who flicked the ball past Ramsdale for Liverpool's second in the 62nd. Firmino jumped over the advertising boards and was hugged by the ecstatic Liverpool fans.

After the match, Klopp marched over to the cheering Liverpool supporters and pumped his fist in the air several times, with the fans responding in kind.

Maxwell warns rivals of Kohli



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: Virat Kohli captaining after last year's IPL, has also resigned from T20 and Test

captaincy while being removed from ODI leadership role. Maxwell feels that Kohli now is no longer the "in-your face" aggressive cricketer that he used to be and that has been pleasantly surprising.

"He knows he's handing the captaincy over, which I think is potentially a big burden for him. It might have been something that's been weighing him down for a while and now that he's been able to release it, it might be dangerous

news for opposition teams," Maxwell told RCB Podcast.

The flamboyant Australian is happy that Kohli is in that phase when he would actually be enjoying being out there in thick of things.

"It is amazing for him to be relaxed a bit and actually enjoy the next few years of his career without any of that sort of external pressure. I think playing against him in earlier days, he was a fiery competitor, getting in your face. He's always trying to impose himself on the game. Impose himself on the opposition."

The Australian all-rounder is loving the cricketing conversations he is having with Kohli and is himself surprised that the former India skipper has become a close friend.

"Something I've noticed more from him this year is he's been really measured with his emotions. He's actually been really measured with his decision-making. He's certainly really surprised me and probably how close we've both gotten to each other as well this year. Being able to talk about the game in a calm manner," Maxwell said.

"Because you do see that over-excited, in your face style when you play against him. But to play with him and have really good conversations about the game, I've really enjoyed that."

Triple crown for Aradhya Verma



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: Odisha Aradhya Verma came out on top in three categories she participated in at the AITA Championship Series-7 in Rohtak.

She defeated Haryana's Khushi Gaur 6-3, 6-4 in the girls' singles final in the U-14 category. However, she had to toil hard in the title clash in the U-16 category against the same opposition as the match went into tie-breaker. The Odisha eve came from a set down to finally secure the title with a 4-6, 6-1, 10-3 victory.

In the U-14 doubles final, Aradhya and her partner Agrima Jaiswal outplayed the pair of Haryana's Avika and Delhi girl Vaishnavi Singh 6-1, 6-4.

SEN STUNS WORLD NO.3 TO ENTER LAST-8 STAGE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, March 17: World Championships bronze medallist Lakshya Sen stunned World No.3 Anton Andersen in straight games to progress to the men's singles quarterfinals of the All England Championships here Thursday.

The 20-year-old from Almora, who had claimed his maiden Super 500 title at India Open in January and then reached the finals of German Open last week, notched up an upset 21-16, 21-18 win over third seed Antensen, a two-time medallist at World Championships in 2019 Basel and 2021 Huelva.

It was their first meeting at the

international stage. Sen will face either Hong Kong's eighth seed Ng Ka Long Angus or China's Lu Guang Zu next.

Earlier, India ace Saina Nehwal produced a gallant fight before going down to second seed Japanese Akane Yamaguchi in a thrilling three-game match in the second round. Former World No.1 Saina, the London Olympics bronze medallist, lost 14-21, 21-17, 17-21 World No.2 Yamaguchi in a 50-minute women's singles clash.

It was a much improved performance from the Indian, who had lost in straight games to Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon at German Open last week.



India to host Netherlands April 8 and 9

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: The Indian women's team will take on Olympic champions The Netherlands in a double-header of the FIH Pro League April 8 and 9 in Bhubaneswar, Hockey India said Thursday.

India and the defending champions Netherlands were originally scheduled to play February 19 and 20 but the matches had to be postponed following the visiting team's concern over rise in COVID-19 cases in their country, especially the highly contagious omicron variant of the infection.

India has played six matches so far in the FIH Pro League. They beat China 7-1 and 2-1 in Muscat, followed by a 2-1 win and a 3-4 loss against Spain in February.

They recently beat Germany 1-1 (3-0 SO) after the visitors gained an extra point having won the shootout 1-1 (2-1 SO) in the first match.

India had previously played the Netherlands at the Olympic Games in their group stage match where they lost 1-5. Netherlands went on to win the Olympic Gold medal.