



SONAM'S BOSOM FRIEND

Actor Sonam Kapoor celebrates her 20-year-long friendship with fellow star Rani Mukerji

LEISURE P2



ECONOMIC CRISIS IN LANKA

Sri Lanka's two major newspapers suspend their publication over newsprint shortage and price escalation

INTERNATIONAL P10



MUST-WIN TIE FOR EVES

With semifinal berth at stake, India face South Africa in a do-or-die match in ICC Women's World Cup today

SPORTS P12

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RITU KHANDURI 1ST WOMAN SPEAKER OF U'KHAND

Dehradun: BJP MLA Ritu Khanduri, the daughter of former chief minister BC Khanduri, was elected unopposed as the first woman speaker of the Uttarakhand Assembly Saturday. The announcement about her election was made by pro-tem speaker Banshidhar Bhagat. Her election to the post was a foregone conclusion as the main opposition Congress chose to stay out of contest. Ritu Khanduri won from Kotdwar by defeating former minister S S Negi by more than 3,000 votes. She had won her maiden assembly election from the Yamkeshwar constituency in 2017. Before taking a plunge into politics, she taught at a private university in Noida for several years. In her address to MLAs, Khanduri exhorted first-time legislators to utilise five years of their tenure in learning about legislative procedures.

FREE RATION SCHEME EXTENDED TILL SEPTEMBER

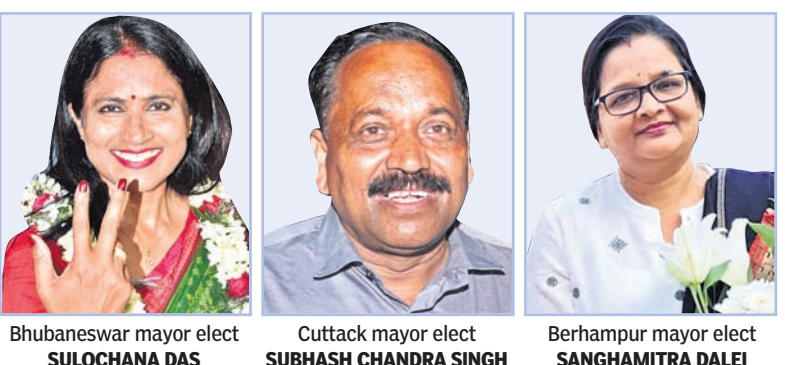
New Delhi: The Centre has extended the free foodgrain programme - Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMKAY) - for six months till September this year to provide relief to poor, Union minister Piyush Goyal said Saturday. A decision in this regard was taken in the Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Food Minister Piyush Goyal tweeted that the government has extended the scheme till September 2022. The extension of the scheme despite the end of the Covid-19 pandemic shows the Modi government's sensitivity towards poor, he tweeted. Under the PMGKAY, which is running for the past two years, the government will distribute 1,003 lakh tonne foodgrain at a cost of ₹3.4 lakh crore to the exchequer.

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BJD SWEEPS URBAN POLLS

76 16 07 09



Bhubaneswar mayor elect **SULOCHANA DAS**
Cuttack mayor elect **SUBHASH CHANDRA SINGH**
Berhampur mayor elect **SANGHAMITRA DALEI**

Thank all the people of #Odisha for the overwhelming support in #OdishaMunicipalElection. The win is a reflection of the outpouring of love for @bjd_odisha and untiring effort of thousands of party workers. #OdishaLovesBJD

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

Continuing its winning streak, the BJD bags all the three mayor posts and secures 1,175 ward councillor posts

Bhubaneswar, March 26: Like the recently concluded three-tier panchayat elections, the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) has registered a landslide victory in the urban local body polls, the results of which were declared Saturday. The results of 105 municipalities/notified area councils (NACs) and three municipal corporations of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur were announced by the State Election Commission (SEC).

As per the SEC, the BJD has won chairperson seats in 73 municipalities and NACs and crucial mayor seats of all three municipal corporations—Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur. The BJD is in the second position by winning 16 chairperson seats, Congress in 7 and independent candidates in 9. BJD candidate Sulochana Das defeated BJP's Suniti Mund with a margin of 61,143 votes and became first woman mayor of the Capital city. However, Congress candidate Madhusmita Acharya was able to get only 11,006 votes and remained in third position in the race. Similarly, BJD's mayoral candidate for Cuttack Subhash Chandra Singh trounced Congress nominee Giribala Behera with a huge margin of over 45,206 votes. In the Millennium city, BJP can-

didate Sritam Das remained in third position with 49,223 votes. BJD's mayor nominee for BeMC, Sanghamitra Dalei, too won the election with a margin of 20,296 votes from her BJP rival Sabita Suar. In the Berhampur city, Aam Aadmi Party candidate C Priyanka secured third position with 7,453 votes while Congress nominee Manju Rath remained in fourth position with 6,768 votes. Meanwhile, out of 1,716 councillor seats in 105 municipalities and NACs, the BJD has won 1,175, BJP secured 288, Congress 134, BSP 1, CPI 1 and independent 117 posts. Out of 67 corporator posts under BMC, the BJD won 48, BJP got 10 and Congress remained in third position with 9 seats. The BJD won 38 out of 59 corporator seats in CMC, followed by BJP (7), Congress (8) and independent (6). In BeMC, the BJD won 30 corporator seats while BJP candidates won 7 seats.



CM Naveen Patnaik greets victorious candidates at Naveen Niwas Victory procession of a BJD candidate in Cuttack, Saturday

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Well, nobody has time for Galwan Files. Public is busy with the Kashmir Files!

After 2 years, international flights to resume ops today

New Delhi/ Mumbai, March 26: After a Covid-induced hiatus of over two years, regular international flights are set to resume Sunday with airports and airlines getting ready for normal overseas operations. Battered by the pandemic, the airline industry is slowly coming back to normalcy and the resumption of normal overseas flights is expected to provide a fillip to the sector. The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital, which is also the country's largest airport, expects international flight departures to witness a significant jump in the first week of April after the resumption of regular international operations. While Indian carriers are prepared for normal international services, various foreign airlines, including Emirates, Virgin Atlantic and LOT Polish have also announced plans about their services to and from India. Scheduled international passenger flights have remained suspended since March 23, 2020 in the wake of the pandemic and they will now restart from Sunday. Overseas flights are being operated now under bilateral air bubble arrangements with various countries. On March 8, the Civil Aviation Ministry announced that regular overseas flights will resume from March 27 amid a decline in coronavirus cases. The government has also revised the Covid guidelines for international flight operations, including the removal of the requirement to keep three seats vacant on overseas flights for medical emergencies. IndiGo Chief Commercial Officer Willy Boulter said the airline is keen on resuming international operations back to pre-Covid levels but that will also depend on factors like arrival guidelines of various countries.

Fuel up by ₹3.20 in 4 hikes

New Delhi, March 26: Petrol and diesel prices were hiked by 80 paise a litre each Saturday, the fourth increase in five days as oil firms passed on to consumers the spike in cost of raw material. Petrol in Delhi will now cost ₹98.61 per litre as against ₹97.81 previously while diesel rates have gone up from ₹89.07 per litre to ₹89.87, according to a price notification of state fuel retailers. All the four increases since the ending of a four-and-a-half-month hiatus in rate revision March 22, have been of 80 paise a litre. These increases are the steepest single-day rise since the daily price revision was started in June 2017. In four increases, petrol and diesel prices have gone up by ₹3.20 a litre. Prices had been on a freeze since November 4 ahead of the assembly elections in states like Uttar Pradesh and Punjab - a period during which the cost of raw material (crude oil) soared by about USD 30 per barrel. The rate revision was expected soon after assembly elections ended March 10 but it was put off.

CITY FUEL PRICES

PETROL ₹105.17/litre
DIESEL ₹94.98/litre

Series trial of missiles at Chandipur from today

Balalore, March 26: As the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Balalore is all set to start a series of flight trial of some missiles, the district administration has started relocating people from the nearby areas to ward off any possible mishaps. According to sources, the series trial will be conducted from March 27 to 30 for which a meeting under the chairmanship of Balalore Collector K Sudarshan Chakraborty was held Friday. As per information, about 7,000 people residing in Khadusahi, Kusumulpahi, Bhimpur Pahi, Tundar Pahi, Jaydevkasba Pahi and Shajannagar Pani have been identified for their relocation to various temporary camps, particularly in some UP schools, cyclone shelters. The people to be affected by such trials have been alerted about their temporary relocation via public address systems. The Collector has directed the officials concerned to ensure that people get their payment for relocation, apart from necessary arrangements. The locals have been asked to produce their identity cards and Aadhaar cards while receiving their payments.

In Loving Remembrance

Late Satyabhama Nayak
Phulapatna, Baluria, Kendrapara

August 31, 1940
March 17, 2022

Your ideals, sacrifice, humility, commitment, affection, punctuality and generosity shall continue to guide us forever. We humbly pray to Lord Jagannath for the salvation of your divine soul.

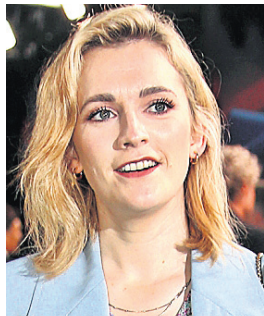
~ Friends and Family ~

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WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	36.8°C	36.8°C
TEMP MIN	26.0°C	26.0°C
Humidity	85%	83%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky	

leisure



CHARLOTTE RITCHIE JOINS YOU SEASON 4

Actress Charlotte Ritchie is set for a main role in Season 4 of Netflix's *You*. Ritchie will appear opposite series stars Penn Badgley as Kate. The character is described as fearsomely smart, independent, suspicious, misses nothing, reports *Variety*.

AMY GETS CANDID ABOUT HAIR-PULLING DISORDER

Comedienne Amy Schumer has gotten candid about her big secret. Having been struggling with a hair-pulling disorder called trichotillomania, Amy divulged that she will no longer hide her personal struggle because she is tired of carrying so much shame for years.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You will be very enterprising and industrious today. You make your plans very carefully and execute them perfectly. Despite this, your progress will be very slow. However, Ganesh advises you not to despair and showers his blessings on you.

TAURUS

This one of those ordinary days that, somehow, do not turn out too well. Unexpected expenses, that could totally upset your budget, cannot be ruled out. Something or the other is likely to give you an uncomfortable stomach upset. Ganesh urges you to take your medicines on time, and exercise moderation and discretion while deciding what and how much you should eat.

GEMINI

You had better start sharing your feelings with your family today, says Ganesh. Also, it's time to tell your family about your current financial status. It will help you feel better. Your energy levels will soar and you will approach everything with renewed vigour. Your spouse will bring good luck to you. How about a dinner extraordinaire with your loved ones?

CANCER

You may discuss certain serious issues with your beloved today, predicts Ganesh. Your time till afternoon will be spent in discussions and deliberations about the issue. However, this issue may not be enough in letting you off the hook on the work front. Think twice before you act.

LEO

After a long time, it seems as if the stars are aligning to bring something special for you. Call it your field day, but today, everything will go your way, says Ganesh. Expect to get appreciated for your hard work in office.

VIRGO

Surf's up as you enjoy an unexpected achievement! But your joy ride today may well be spent in vexing about the problems you have. Expect to gain new money for a new venture. Your business will rise atop the highest wave today, foretells Ganesh.

LIBRA

Working for the government is always a key responsibility, says Ganesh. But today of all days proves to be fabulous and phenomenal for all those in government service. Your actions will translate into accomplishment and you may rest assured that you shall be duly recognized and rewarded for your meritorious service.

SCORPIO

Your business associates will emerge as intangible assets for you today, says Ganesh. You will probably start off an innovative joint venture without any doubt or indecision. Hard work and enthusiasm are always a good combination for achieving success. Your skill and business sense will bring you positive feedback from your seniors, feels Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

The sage within you will take the lead today. You are likely to prescribe yourself to your own medication for peace of mind. Wise and content that you are today, you will spread the message of love around you. All in all, a peaceful day is in store for you today.

CAPRICORN

People may call you a busy bee, but that you admittedly will be, says Ganesh. Work will demand your undivided attention, but the good thing is you will quickly get done with pending work one by one. In fact, you will be left with plenty of time in the evening which you are likely to spend romancing with your sweetheart.

AQUARIUS

It's a busy day at work, and you're probably involved in some pending project work. It's advisable that you don't get complacent. Keep an eye on your opponents to have an edge over them, suggests Ganesh. Colleagues will be supportive, and so will family.

PISCES

Today is a day of mixed fortunes. So, while you may not win a gazillion dollars in the daily lottery, you might just end up winning a return air ticket to Timbuktu. No one has really been there, but it is better than nothing. However, the distress of those lost dollars is likely to be eased by the ecstasy awaiting you in the evening.

Sonam celebrates 20 years of friendship with Rani

Mumbai: Actress Sonam Kapoor, who recently announced her pregnancy, celebrated her 20-year-long friendship with fellow star Rani Mukerji.

Anand Ahuja will be welcoming their first child this fall. She also shared a few images in which she could be seen



The *Raanjhanaa* star took to her Instagram handle and shared a couple of pictures featuring her and Mukerji in an embrace.

Sharing a heartfelt note in the caption, she wrote, "A friendship that's lasted 20 years. Love you rani. Also belated happy birthday to my favourite actress."

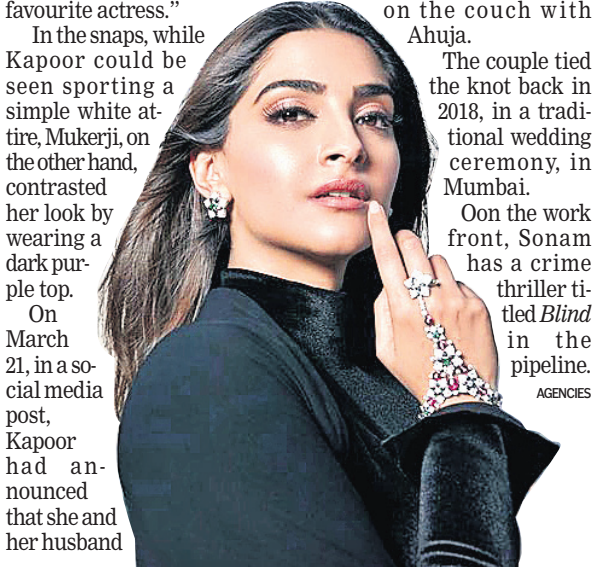
In the snaps, while Kapoor could be seen sporting a simple white attire, Mukerji, on the other hand, contrasted her look by wearing a dark purple top.

On March 21, in a social media post, Kapoor had announced that she and her husband

are cradling her baby bump while lying on the couch with Ahuja.

The couple tied the knot back in 2018, in a traditional wedding ceremony, in Mumbai.

Oon the work front, Sonam has a crime thriller titled *Blind* in the pipeline.



'We are all prepared for films like this'

Mumbai: John Abraham-starrer *Attack* is all about a cybernetic humanoid super-soldier developed to combat terrorism. The film's actress Rakul Preet Singh agrees that it is different but the audiences are prepared for new films like this.

During the promotion of the film in Noida, Rakul talked about working in the film, which has a new concept.

"The experience was great and I would just like to add that we are all prepared for films like this. We have been watching these *Spiderman* movies, we have been watching all sorts of action films. We lap it up we love them but because we haven't seen anything in our own country we think we are not ready for it but if India was not ready there wouldn't have been such a huge market for international films."

She added: "So I think my whole experience became more special because I was ready to take that risk and plunge into a genre and say 'Made in India' something that is international level and not been seen or done before. That is what *Attack* is."

Attack is directed by Lakshya Raj Anand. It is based on a story by John Abraham, who stars in the film alongside Jacqueline Fernandez and Rakul. The film is scheduled to be released April 1.



Mumbai: Tiger Shroff starrer *Heropanti 2* is releasing on Eid, April 29 this year. Interestingly, it is the same day when Ajay Devgn and Amitabh Bachchan starrer *Runway 34* is releasing. At the launch of 'DaFa Kar', a song from *Heropanti 2* today, Tiger addressed a question about the clash saying, "I can't compare with major superstars. I have way too much respect for them. I am a fan of both of them (Devgn and Bachchan). *Runway 34* is looking fantastic. I am looking forward to watch this film." Tiger also said that as cinema halls are back into action multiple films can flourish together.

Interestingly, in the past, Eid releases have been synonyms to Salman Khan and his films. The actor usually have always preferred to release his films on Eid. This year though it is *Heropanti 2* and *Runway 34* that have taken the slot.

Tiger says, "(Iss industry mein) ek hi hai Tiger aur woh hai Salman Sir. I am just a billi in front of him. I am a Simba, a tiger cub in front of him. Film is releasing on Eid and the entire credit goes to director Ahmed Khan."

The song 'DaFa Kar' features Tara Sutaria alongside Tiger and the latter feels blessed to have vocals from the Academy Award winner and music director of the film, AR Rahman.

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I enjoy relationship dramas: Vidya

Mumbai: Actor Vidya Balan says relationship dramas are her favourite genre as an actor, and she is thrilled to be part of one such project with *Scam 1992* star Pratik Gandhi. The untitled movie is directed by noted ad filmmaker Shirsha Guha Thakurta. Balan, who is credited for content-driven films in Hindi cinema such as *The Dirty Picture*, *Kahaani*, *Timhari Sulu*, *Shakuntala Devi*, *Sherni* and her latest release *Jalsa*, said she is glad to have had the opportunity to dabble with the romance genre through this movie.

"I love relationship stories and this one is so...it is about modern marriage, modern affairs. And I enjoy that space. I was looking to do something like that for a long time. But what I got was even better than what I had imagined," Balan told PTI.

The 43-year-old actor praised Thakurta for the way she handled the subject of the movie.

"I have worked with Shirsha for the first time, she is an ad filmmaker and this is her debut feature and what a director she is. She treated it as a relationship between human beings," Balan added.

The film also stars Ileana D'Cruz and Indian-American actor Sendhil Ramamurthy in pivotal roles.

The team finished shooting for this untitled movie film in December 2021. The actor is currently receiving accolades for her nuanced performance in recently released *Jalsa*, which premiered on Prime Video March 18.

Her previous releases *Shakuntala Devi* and *Sherni* opted for an on OTT release amid the pandemic, but the actor is hopeful that her next two projects, including a murder-mystery movie, will be released theatres.

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FUN post

PEANUTS



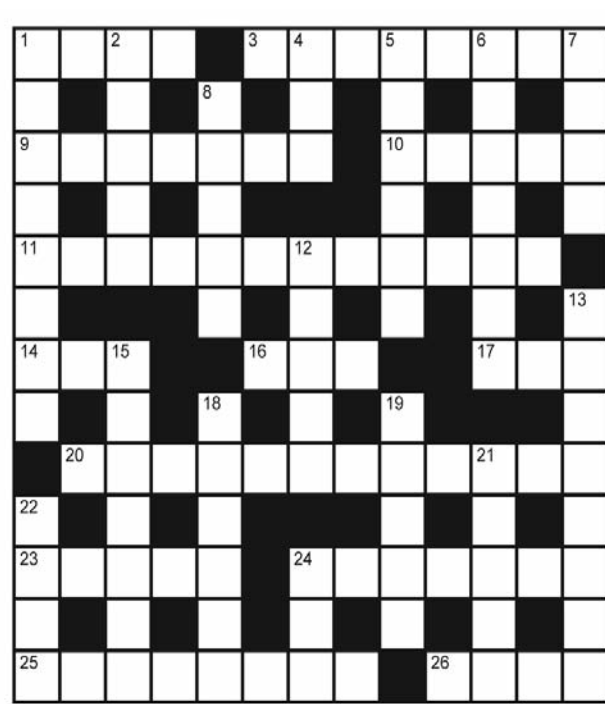
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



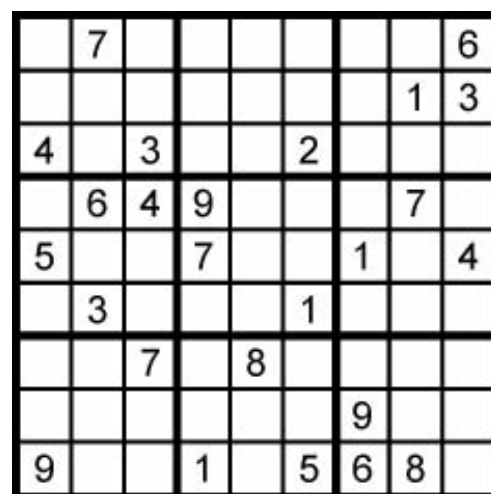
CROSSWORD



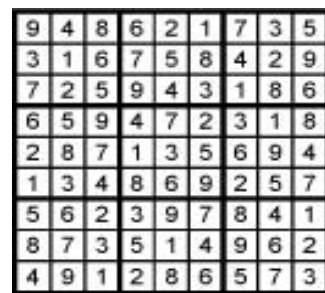
- Across
- 1 Priestly garb
 - 3 Imperil
 - 9 Nature's alarm clock
 - 10 Track event
 - 11 Leavening agent (6,6)
 - 14 Kind of dance
 - 16 Toast topping
 - 17 Zippo
 - 20 Yield (7,5)
 - 23 Willow twig
 - 24 Greek letter
 - 25 Halloween costume
 - 26 Brewer's kiln
 - Down
 - 1 Circus performers
 - 2 Small stream
 - 4 Neither's partner
 - 5 Cupid's projectiles
 - 6 Old Spanish vessel
 - 7 Some stingers
 - 8 Do penance
 - 12 Necklace item
 - 13 Single-reed woodwind
 - 15 Thoughtful
 - 18 Hard to find
 - 19 Witch's spell
 - 21 River feature
 - 22 Forest growth
 - 24 Sense of self

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



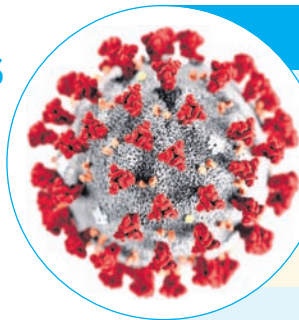
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Collector Samarth Verma and other dignitaries at the conclusion of the centenary celebration of Gandhiji's visit to Puri, organised by Puri Vikash Parishad, Saturday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	48,01,93,155	41,46,38,487	61,44,269
India	4,30,18,032	4,24,80,436	5,20,855
Odisha	12,87,421	12,77,819	9,118

'Youths should launch startups for economic prosperity'

Education is one of the basic needs of human beings. Good education is the key to development of a country and the society as a whole. In an interview to **Orissa POST**, St. Xavier's Group of Schools director **Prabhu Charan Mohanty** speaks about his journey, future plans and the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on education. Excerpts:



How did you begin your career as a businessman?

I had completed my graduation from Ravenshaw College and enrolled myself for post graduation in Political Science in Khallikote College. While doing my post graduation, I developed a desire to become a businessman due to the influence of my maternal uncle Madhusudan Pattanaik, a renowned entrepreneur of Berhampur. But, my father Dambarudhar Mohanty was a government employee. So, it was not easy for me to launch a business venture as per my own desire. Anyway, I entered into the real estate business under the guidance of my uncle.



What prompted you to become an entrepreneur and open schools?

I did well in ceramic tiles and real estate business. Our business was expanded to several places across the state. But, the idea to set up a school struck me only when I met my friend and educationist GS Pattanaik. We planned to open St. Xavier's School in Cuttack and formed a close-knit group with some like-minded people. During those days, a few organisations were controlling the English medium schools in Odisha. We decided to open a school with new ideas.

Why parents are choosing St. Xavier's Schools for their kids?

We have transport facility for our students and we are frequently consulting the parents for the overall development of their kids. We are organising parent-teacher meetings monthly and implementing their suggestions. Teachers have been asked to give special attention towards weak students. We are also encouraging our students for extra-curricular activities like art, music, dance and debate.

What are the reasons behind opening so many schools one after another?

Education for all is the motto of St. Xavier's Group of Schools. We have been trying hard to provide English medium education to the students of backward regions, including the Left-Wing Extremism affected areas. Our group has altogether 64 schools in Odisha, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

What was the motive behind opening 'Krishnamurty' school?

'Krishnamurty World School' has been set up to preserve our tradition and culture. This school promotes the ideas of service to parents, thriftiness, environment protection and nationalism. We are constantly soliciting the guidance of Jagadguru Shankaracharya and the Gajapati king for this school. We are also following the path shown by Gandhiji.

Your future plans?

We have plans to open English medium schools at all prominent places in all 30 districts of Odisha. Our aim is to inculcate moral values in our students.

How did you overcome the challenges posed by Covid-19 pandemic?

We incurred huge financial losses due to the closure of schools for several months during the pandemic. It was not easy to maintain our school buildings, laboratories and equipment during the pandemic. There were also difficulties in paying salaries to our teachers and staff and insurance premiums for our school buses and other vehicles. We were also forced to spend money for arranging facilities and equipment for on-line classes. My two sons—Samyak and Samarth—played a key role in establishing a lab for online education.

Any advice for youngsters?

Youths should launch startups by utilising their talent and pave the way for the socio-economic development of our nation. Our youths should not go abroad for well-paid jobs. They should aspire to become entrepreneurs and create employment opportunities for others.

4kg pangolin scales seized, 1 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 26: The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Crime Branch Friday seized huge quantities of pangolin scales from a place on the outskirts of the capital city and arrested a wildlife criminal.

The accused has been identified as Biswajit Pattanaik of Ghatwarpur under Delanga police limit in Puri district.

Pattanaik was reportedly waiting for another person at

an isolated place near Dhauli heritage site to sell pangolin scales. On a tip-off, a team of the STF along with Forest department officials rushed to the spot and arrested the accused, sources said.

"Around 4kg pangolin scales and other incriminating materials were recovered from Pattanaik's possession. The accused could not produce any legal documents authorising him to possess pangolin scales. He has been detained and handed over to the Forest de-



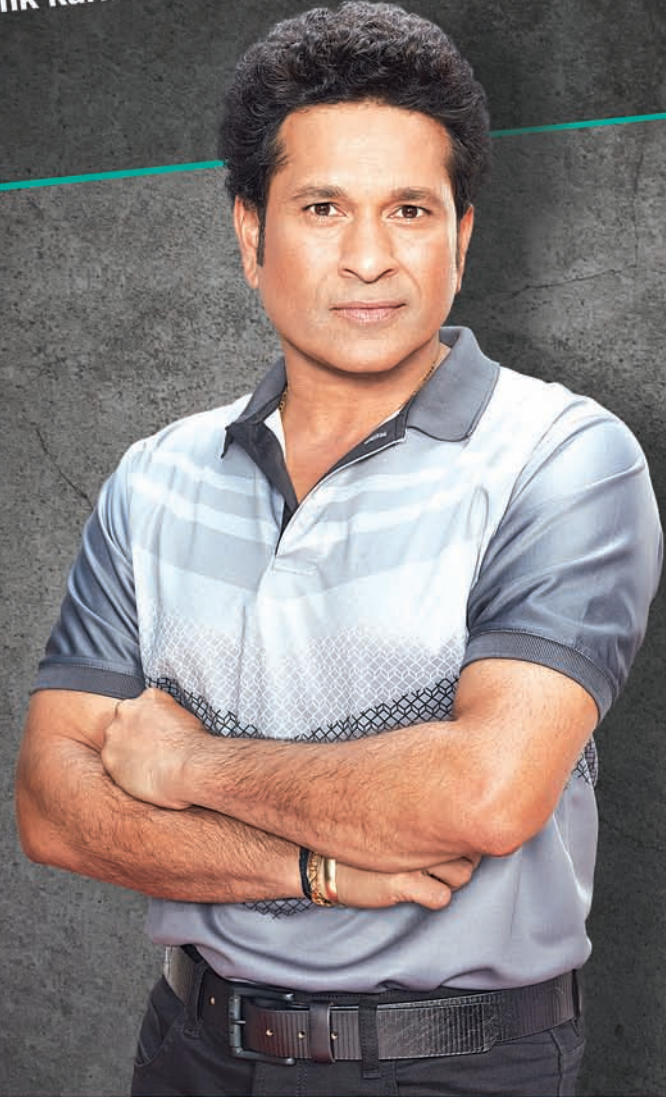
partment for necessary action," informed the STF in a press note.

The STF claimed that it has so far seized as many as 26 leopard skins, 15 elephant tusks, seven deer skins, 11 live pangolins, 23.5kg pangolin scales,

two leopard teeth, 29 leopard claws, 46 live wild parrots under a special drive against the wildlife criminals and poachers. As many as 61 wildlife criminals have been arrested by the STF during the drive.

The pangolin is a protected animal under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. It is also listed under Appendix I of the International Convention of Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which prohibits its commercial trade.

Jald se jald apne PAN aur Aadhaar Card ko link karna zaroori hai.
Link karne ki aakhri tareekh hai, March 31, 2022.



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Oppn slams govt over paddy procurement



Congress MLA Narasingha Mishra and BJP MLA Mohan Majhi speak in the Assembly, Saturday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 26: Opposition Congress and BJP Saturday criticised the state government alleging gross irregularities in paddy procurement at mandis across the state.

The BJD government during its 22 years rule had failed to formulate a procurement policy for the state, the Opposition said while participating in a debate on the admissibility of an adjournment motion in the Assembly Saturday on large scale irregularities in paddy procurement.

They alleged that farmers are being exploited due to the system of katni and chatni (Deduction) of paddy during procurement.

Congress Legislature leader Narasingha Mishra said the state government is silent on the recommendations of the Standing Committee on paddy procurement and not spelling

out whether it accepted or rejected the recommendations. The distribution of money through the Kalia scheme will not yield any result, unless the real cause of concerns of the farmers is not addressed, he said.

Mishra demanded the government to take steps to stop the exploitation of farmers, protect their interests and ensure how the income of farmers could be increased.

He further alleged that the government was busy in elections and did not prioritise farmers' interests.

Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati alleged that around 10kg of paddy is being deducted per quintal while procuring, and farmers are forced to distress sell their produce as they are not getting the MSP. The Congress leader demanded the government to stop the deduction of paddy and to take action against people involved in this illegal act.

State observes Earth Hour

Bhubaneswar: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and a host of political leaders joined people of the state in turning off their lights to observe Earth Hour Saturday night. Patnaik turned off all electrical equipment at his home Naveen Nivas in Bhubaneswar at 8.30 pm for one hour. Governor Ganeshi Lal and BJD MP Anubhav Mohanty were among other leaders, who took part in the global movement. Earlier in the day, Patnaik appealed to everyone to join the movement to nurture nature and keep our shared planet healthy for future generations.

BJP chief whip Mohan Majhi alleged that the entire paddy procurement process is under the control of mill owners. The deduction (katni chatni) of paddy is being done jointly in a nexus between government officials, mill owners and agents. Majhi also alleged that the state government has failed to provide basic amenities like drinking water and toilets in the mandis.

In his reply, Food Supply and Consumer Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain refuted the allegations made by the Opposition and said the government has brought transparency and impartiality by introducing a token system in paddy procurement. It has prevented the irregularities in paddy procurement at the grassroots level, he claimed.

The minister also said that the procurement of paddy from small and marginal farmers had increased by 29 per cent during the 2019-20 Kharif season. The Aadhar based biometric authentication has been introduced in 2019-20 to keep ghost farmers away, Swain said.

He further said during 2021-22 Kharif, a total of 15.43 lakh farmers have been found eligible to sell their paddy to the government. The number of farmers is 5 per cent more this year in comparison to farmers who registered their names during the Kharif last year to sell their paddy, he added.

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With 43 new nCoV cases, TPR at 0.1%

Currently, there are 431 active Covid cases in Odisha while 69 patients recuperated in the last 24 hours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 26: Odisha registered 43 more coronavirus cases Saturday, while there was another fatality, the state Health department said in a bulletin.

Out of the 43 new infections, 13 are in the age group of newborn to 18 years. While 26 cases were reported from quarantine centres, 17 persons contracted the virus locally. Kendrapara district registered the highest number of new cases at seven, followed by Gajapati with six new infections.

Other districts that reported fresh cases are: Balasore (3), Bolangir (1), Boudh (2), Cuttack (1), Ganjam (2), Jajpur (3), Jharsuguda (2), Kandhamal (1), Khurda (5), Koraput (1), Mayurbhanj (1), Nuapada (1), Sambalpur (2) and Sundargarh (4).

The State Pool reported only one new case. The pool logs persons who come from outside Odisha and test positive.

Currently, there are 431 active cases, while 69 Covid-19 patients recuperated in the last 24 hours, according to the Health bulletin. The state had registered 55 cases of coronavirus infections and zero Covid fatality Friday.

The coastal state's daily test positivity rate (TPR) was 0.1 per cent and the infections were detected out of 44,882 sample tests.

The toll rose to 9,118 as a 73-year-old man died in the Ganjam district. In all, the state has logged 12,87,421 cases, out of which 12,77,819 people have recovered so far.

A total of 3,04,51,013 swab samples have been cumulatively tested so far.



Members of Bhubaneswar Bar Association cast their votes to elect the office bearers of the lawyers' body, Saturday

OP PHOTO

₹99.75cr for Paradip fishing jetty facelift

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paradip, March 26: The Union government has sanctioned Rs 99.75 crore for the development of the fishing jetty in this port town, a report said.

The amount will be spent on the construction of a second auction hall, a cold storage and mechanisation of the fishing jetty among others, port sources said.

Construction of the riverine port is underway at about two km from the Mahanadi river mouth. The Paradip Fishery Harbour is located on the right

bank of Mahanadi, about 2 km off stream of the river mouth. The fishing harbour spreads over an area of 39 acres, of which the basin area spreads over 21 acres.

Currently, the harbour is being used by more than 740 fishing vessels. The existing facilities are not upto international standards in terms of washing, sorting, packing and loading fish to trucks and maintaining cleanliness at the harbour.

In order to meet the international standards and thereby increase the export volume, the Union government has approved



the upgradation and modernisation of the fishery harbour at Paradip at an estimated cost of Rs 99.75 crore with 100 per cent Central financial assistance under the Central Sector Scheme Component of Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana.

The matter came to fore after Paradip Port Trust Chairman PL Haranadh and Indian Port Rail and Ropeway Corporation Ltd (IPRCL) Managing Director Anil Gupta signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in the presence of Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Friday.

The MoU was signed at Mumbai on the occasion of the seventh anniversary of the Centre's ambitious Sagarmala Project. Other ministers and senior officials were present during the signing of the MoU.

Centre plans to place Buxi statue in new Parl building: Pradhan

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, March 26: Union Education and Skill Development Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Saturday said the statue of Paika rebellion leader Buxi Jagabandhu would be placed in the new Parliament building.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of International Odisha Parba 2022, Pradhan said several MPs from Odisha had written to the Lok Sabha Speaker for installation of a statue of Buxi Jagabandhu at the Parliament. "The Union government is planning to set up the statue of the Paika warrior at the new Parliament building," he added.

Commenting on the Odisha government's plea to declare Paika rebellion as the first war of independence, Pradhan said, "No government has issued any gadget notification regarding the first war of independence. There are many such incidents in history. We should learn from them and move on."

Participating in the event, Padma Bhushan Pratibha Ray said, "We should be proud of our culture, literature and tradition." She pleaded for medical and engineering studies in Odia language.



KIIT Law School organises 1st Judges' Lecture

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 26: The first lecture under the Judges' Lecture Series organised by KIIT Law School (KLS) was delivered by Chairperson of the Lokpal of India Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose, Saturday.

Speaking on the subject 'Role and Significance of Lokpal in India', Justice Ghose said, "Public has a greater role to curb corruption. We all have to change our mindsets. Corruption is just like a termite and we have to curb it. Such moral values should be embedded in our minds. Lokpal must be empowered to act against the menace of lobbying. It should also have the authority to deal with conflict of interest and matters related to whistleblowers."

Lokpal is an anti-corruption authority that represents public interest in the country. It comprises of a chairperson and eight members, half of whom are judicial members. Justice Ghose, a retired judge of the Supreme Court of India, was appointed as the first Chairman of Lokpal of India in 2019.

Justice Ghose exuded confidence about the future of the Lokpal in delivering justice to the public and sought the support of all stakeholders in this endeavor. In interest of public and to protect them from corrupt practices, the Lokpal has to end unlawful activities in the real estate sector, especially during land mutations, and prevent bribes that run into billions of rupees in the transportation sector, he said.

H&FW dept meet held to finalise Kayakalp winners

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 26: The State Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) Friday held a meeting under the Chairmanship of state H&FW department Additional Chief Secretary to review the progress of NQAS, LaQshya and SUMAN certification and finalise the Kayakalp award winners for the year 2021-22.

A press release from the department read that over the years, the state government has put enormous amount of effort and invested resources with an objective to improve the quality of health services in all public health facilities in state. Various schemes like NQAS, LaQshya, SUMAN and Kayakalp are operational in Odisha with an aim to consistently improve quality in hospitals.

During the year 2021-22, a total of 11 health facilities have been qualified for NQAS State certification which includes categories of DHH, PHC and UPHCs. Eight hospitals after fulfilling the re-



quired criteria have been awarded with LaQshya State Certification in the year 2021-22.

'Kayakalp' aims to promote cleanliness and enhance the quality of healthcare in all public health facilities. Under this scheme, public health facilities across all levels starting from District Headquarter Hospitals (DHHs) to Sub Health Centers (SHCs) are ranked through a scientific and systematic assessment process. All recommended facilities were assessed under eight themes - hospital upkeep, sanitation & hygiene, support services, waste management, infection control, hygiene promotion, beyond hospital boundary and eco-friendly facility

Kayakalp aims to promote cleanliness and enhance the quality of healthcare in all public health facilities

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Based on the final scores, DHH-Malkangiri and DHH-Sundargarh bagged 1st and 2nd prize respectively in the category of DHH. Similarly, in the category of SDH/CHC, CHC-Bhanda of Keonjhar and CHC Kudumulguma of Malkangiri jointly bagged 1st prize and CHC

Tikabali of Kandhamal bagged 2nd prize. In the category of UPHCs, Kathagadasahi UPHC of Dhenkanal, and Bhawanipatna UPHC of Kalahandi became joint winners while UPHC MMC of Bargarh and UPHC Gandhinagar of Koraput became joint the 1st runners up. UPHC Baikunthanagar was the 2nd runners up.

Under the eco-friendly hospital category, DHH Sundargarh got the 1st prize and CHC-Chandragiri of Gajapati, CHC-Bhanda of Keonjhar, CHC-Gatagaon of Keonjhar and CHC-Kudumulguma of Malkangiri became joint winners.

In PHC category, 423 PHCs and in SHC category, 196 HWC-SHCs were selected to receive the awards out of which the top scorers of both the categories of each district became winners and the rest would receive commendation award.

In 2021-22, as many as 22 DHHs, 173 SDHs/CHCs, 73 UPHCs, 423 PHCs, 196 HWCs-SCs (total of 887 of health facilities) were qualified to receive Kayakalp Award. The number was 586 in 2020-21.

Silk India expo kicks off at The New Marrion



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 26: Silk India Exhibition, an exhibition cum sale of a range of ethnic weaves and traditional pure silk and cotton products from all over India, kicked off at The New Marrion here, Friday.

Themed 'Silk India - Wedding Collection', the exhibition saw weavers from the various states displaying a wide range of products including gorgeous Uppadas, Banarasi silks, Gadwals, Dhar mavaram, Jamdanis, Jamawars and Sambalpuris.

Apart from the ubiquitous sarees, other items included dress mate-

rials, silk and cotton items, suit & dress clothes, fashion jewelry and home furnishing designer clothes from various regions of India.

The exhibition provided shoppers with a kaleidoscope of India's color, diversity and talent. Artisans from 14 handloom weaving states including Odisha, Assam, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal and designers from many metro cities displayed more than 50,000 varieties of their work at the exhibition. The exhibition cum sale will continue till April 3.

"The primary objective of the handloom exhibition is to promote weavers and provide them a market for the handloom industry. Through these exhibitions, we have been able to create good market for the weavers and their handloom, even in places where exhibitions are not feasible," said Manas Acharya, Organiser of the Silk India-Wedding Collection.

Ayush, WHO ink pact for GCTM at Jamnagar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 26: The Ministry of Ayush has signed a Host Country Agreement with the World Health Organization (WHO) for establishing a WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (GCTM) at Jamnagar in India, with its interim office at the Institute of Training and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) in Gujarat.

The Centre will be supported by an investment of about USD 250 million from the Government of India. The primary objective of GCTM is to harness the potential of traditional medicine from across the world through modern science and technology and improve the overall health of communities across the globe.

The agreement was signed in Geneva by Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush and WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus March 25.

Ayush Minister Sarbanand Sonowal said that his Ministry was able to get this "due to the initiative and efforts of our illustri-

The WHO GCTM, the first and only Global Centre for Traditional Medicine across the world, will be established at Jamnagar, with its interim office at the Institute of Training and Research in Ayurveda in Gujarat

The centre will be supported by an investment of about USD 250 million from the Government of India

The primary objective of GCTM is to harness the potential of traditional medicine from across the world through modern science and technology and improve the overall health of communities across the globe

ous Prime Minister Narendra Modi". He added that the Centre will bring far-reaching benefits to traditional medicine systems around the world. He informed that the Centre will bring availability of a better system to connect with the latest scientific methods.



The GCTM will focus on building a solid evidence base for policies and standards on traditional medicine practices and products and help countries integrate it as appropriate into their health systems and regulate its quality and safety for optimal and sustainable impact

Highlighting the importance of the Indian government's initiative, Tedros said that harnessing the potential of traditional medicine by drawing on modern science and the principles of equity and sustainability will be a game changer for health in the 21st century.

The GCTM will be the first and only Global Centre for traditional medicine across the world. It will focus on building a solid evidence base for policies and standards on traditional medicine practices and products and help countries integrate it as appropriate into

PM: Will contribute towards making a healthier planet

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday expressed happiness over India being the home of Global Centre for Traditional Medicine as Ayush Ministry signed agreement with the WHO.

PM Modi expressed hope that the centre will contribute towards making a healthier planet and leveraging our rich traditional practices for global good.

Replying to the tweets of Ayush Ministry and WHO, the Prime Minister said, "India is honoured to be home to a state-of-the-art @WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine. This Centre will contribute towards making a healthier planet and leveraging our rich traditional practices

for global good." "Traditional medicines and wellness practices from India are very popular globally. This WHO Centre will go a long way in enhancing wellness in our society," he said in another tweet.

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya also tweeted on this occasion and said, "Welfare of the world with the knowledge of India! The traditional medicine of India, Ayurveda has carved a unique place for itself across the world. The WHO 'Global Centre for Traditional Medicine' to be set up in Jamnagar; Gujarat is going to be of great benefit to the global society and will also lead to the expansion of traditional medicine."

their health systems and regulate its quality and safety for optimal and sustainable impact.

The WHO-GCTM is designed to engage and benefit all the regions of the world.

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RESULTS OF URBAN LOCAL BODY POLLS

NAME OF CIVIC BODY	NAME OF MAYOR/CHAIERPERSON	NAME OF PARTY	NAME OF CIVIC BODY	NAME OF MAYOR/CHAIERPERSON	NAME OF PARTY	NAME OF CIVIC BODY	NAME OF MAYOR/CHAIERPERSON	NAME OF PARTY
BMC	Sulochana Das	BJD	Remuna NAC	Tanuja Giri	BJD	Dharmagarh NAC	Ashok Mohanty	BJP
CMC	Subhash Singh	BJD	Rajgangpur Municipality	Madhuri Lugun	BJD	Digapahandi NAC	Prafulla Panda	Cong
BeMC	Sanghamitra Dalei	BJD	Rayagada Municipality	P Mahesh Pattnaik	BJD	G. Udayagiri NAC	Bhanuprabha Mishra	BJD
Anandpur Municipality	Rajani Rani Khatua	BJD	Subarnapur Municipality	Tamasi Tamasmita Nayak	BJD	Ganjam NAC	Pratibha Padhi	IND
Angul Municipality	Akshay Samant	BJD	Sundargarh Municipality	Tanaya Mishra	BJP	Gopalpur NAC	A Janaki Ram	BJD
Bolangir Municipality	Lika Sahu	BJD	Talcher Municipality	Pabitra Bhutia	BJD	Gudari NAC	Sarmita Sabar	BJD
Balasure Municipality	Sabita Sahu	BJD	Vyasanagar Municipality	Sangita Pingua	BJD	Gunupur Municipality	Mamata Gouda	IND
Barbil Municipality	Laxman Mahanta	BJD	Rambha NAC	Manasi Swain	BJP	Bijepur NAC	Sita Barik	BJD
Bargarh Municipality	Kalpna Majhi	BJD	Ranpur NAC	Rangeen Mohanty	BJD	Hinjilicut Municipality	Subash Chandra Palei	BJD
Baripada Municipality	Krushnananda Mohanty	BJD	Redhakhole NAC	Sibram Sahu	BJP	Jaleswar Municipality	Pratip Kumar Pradhan	BJD
Boudh NAC	Mrutyunjay Mishra	BJD	Soro Municipality	Madhab Dhada	BJP	Junagarh NAC	Mukesh Agrawala	BJP
Belpahar Municipality	Nimai Charan Panda	Cong	Soroda NAC	Shiba Shankar Panda	BJD	Kabisuryanagar NAC	S Laxmi Sethi	BJD
Bhadrak Municipality	Gulmakki Dalawaji	IND	Sunabeda Municipality	Rajendra Kumar Patra	IND	Kamakhyanagar NAC	Dharmanand Parida	BJD
Bhawanipatna Municipality	Sanjukta Behera	BJD	Tarva NAC	Bandita Naik	BJD	Kantabanjhi NAC	Bariam Singh Saluja	Cong
Biramitrapur Municipality	Sandip Mishra	BJD	Titilagarh Municipality	Mamata Jain	BJP	Nilagiri NAC	Ambika Das	BJD
Brajarajnar Municipality	Jajnaseni Oram	BJD	Tusura NAC	Ajay Jaiswal	BJD	Nimapara NAC	Sasmita Sahoo	BJD
Choudwar Municipality	Manasi Swarnaprabha Samal	BJD	Udala NAC	Pramila Panda	BJP	Kesinga NAC	Nruparaj Jadav	BJD
Deogarh Municipality	Shanti Manjari Dei	BJD	Umerkote Municipality	Radha Bhatra	BJD	Nuapada NAC	Md. Adam	IND
Dhenkanal Municipality	Jayanti Patra	BJP	Aska NAC	Bineta Swain	BJD	Padampur NAC	Sabitri Bag	BJD
Chhatrapur NAC	Sharmishta Pradhan	BJP	Athagarh NAC	Sasmita Rout	BJD	Patnagarh NAC	Manasi Biswal	BJD
Jagatsinghpur Municipality	Archana Singh	Cong	Athamallik NAC	Asha Kumari Sahu	BJD	Pattamundai Municipality	Hemant Sahu	BJD
Jaipur Municipality	Ranjulata Hota	BJD	Chandbali NAC	Shantilata Sethi	BJD	Pipili NAC	Sheikh Babu	BJD
Jatni Municipality	Ananta Behera	BJD	Baliguda NAC	Gobinda Pradhan	BJD	Polasara NAC	Sangita Behera	BJD
Jeypore Municipality	Narendra Kumar Mohanty	Cong	Balimela NAC	Pradeep Kumar Nayak	BJP	Purusottampur NAC	Priyanka Goud	IND
Jharsuguda Municipality	Rani Hati	BJD	Balugaon NAC	Sukanti Paikray	BJD	Rairangpur Municipality	Abhishek Pattanayak	BJD
Joda Municipality	Jagdish Prasad Sahu	BJD	Banapur NAC	Mitu Nayak	BJD	Karanjia NAC	Papi Prusty	BJD
Kendrapara Municipality	Sarita Sahu	BJD	Banki NAC	Manika Sahoo	BJD	Kashinagar NAC	M Sudharani Patra	BJD
Keonjhar Municipality	Niku Sahu	BJP	Barpalli NAC	Dinesh Gahir	IND	Champua NAC	Girija Shankar Sahoo	BJD
Khurda Municipality	Kanak Lakshmi Mohanty	BJD	Basudevpur Municipality	Nibedita Behera	BJD	Khallikote NAC	Niranjan Behera	BJD
Koraput Municipality	Lalat Ranjan Sethi	BJD	Belaguntha NAC	Firoz Sethi	BJD	Khandapara NAC	Arati Pradhan	IND
Malkangiri Municipality	Manoj Barik	BJD	Bhanjanagar NAC	Gopabandhu Mohapatra	BJD	Khariar NAC	Ujjwal Gupta	Cong
Nabarangpur Municipality	Kunu Nayak	BJP	Bhuban NAC	Subhendu Sahu	BJD	Khariar Road NAC	Sonia Jain	BJP
Nayagarh Municipality	Nirupama Khatei	BJD	Binika NAC	Subash Bhue	BJD	Kodala NAC	Suryanarayan Nayak	BJP
Paradeep Municipality	Basant Biswal	BJD	Buguda NAC	Chitrasen Pradhan	BJD	Konark NAC	Sanjukta Tripathy	BJD
Paralakhemundi Municipality	Nirmala Sethi	BJD	Chikiti NAC	Deepa Kumari Sahu	BJD	Kotpad NAC	M. Shankar Rao	Cong
Phulbani Municipality	Smitarani Mohanty	BJP	Daspalla NAC	Poonam Priyadarshini	IND	Kuchinda NAC	Pradyut Kumar Mohanty	BJD

CELEBRATING VICTORY



BJD workers taking out a procession on party's victory in BMC polls



BJP workers celebrate party's victory in Dhenkanal



A percussionist plays drums on BJD's victory in Bhubaneswar



BJD workers celebrate with the newly-elected chairperson Sabita Sahu of Balasore Municipality

The ruling BJD continued its winning streak as it emerged victorious in 73 out of the 105 urban local bodies as well as the three municipal corporations -- Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur -- in the ULB polls, results of which were announced, Saturday. This, after the party's landslide victory in the recent panchayat polls, has reaffirmed the faith of the people of Odisha in the BJD. Orissa POST presents a list of the candidates who won as chairpersons of 105 ULBs and 3 mayors



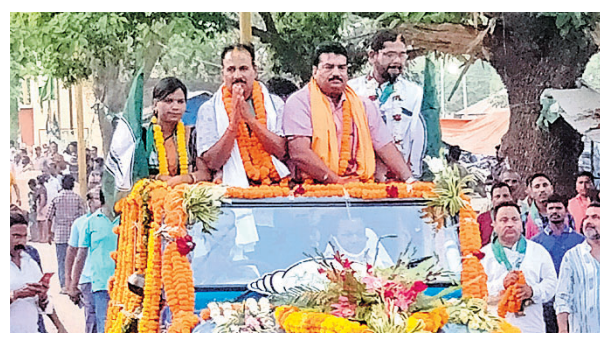
BJD workers celebrates party's win in Bhubaneswar



Congress workers celebrate with newly elected chairperson Archana Singh of Jagatsinghpur Municipality



BJP's Tanaya Mishra plays colours with party workers on her win as chairperson in Sundargarh Municipality



BJD's newly elected chairperson Mrutyunjaya Mishra participating in victory rally on his win in Boudh NAC



What you are not able to do today, you will achieve tomorrow. Persevere and you shall conquer.

THE MOTHER



Transparency Lacking

The strength of democracies is transparency. When the people know of the difficulty a nation faces, they can combat it together. They become closer, knowing that they face a threat jointly. This spirit, though possible, is not easy to achieve in nations that do not have democracy because authoritarian leadership is secretive.

An example of what is meant is visible today in the war being fought in Europe. Ukraine has come together and the world sees its spirit in the face of adversity. There is of course a dispute over the manner in which Ukraine arrived at its present democracy and that is part of the reason Russia has invaded it. But there is no dispute about how the two nations today differ in terms of transparency. Ukrainians know what they face and have come together to face it. This month Russia blocked access to Facebook for its citizens because Vladimir Putin doesn't want the people to know what is going on. He has also introduced a law that punishes media outlets with 15 years in jail for reporting on the military. This will produce anxiety and alarm in many Russians and will be damaging in the long term for the nation.

Sunlight is the best disinfectant is a saying and it alludes to transparency in organisations and in government.

March 25, the Foreign Minister of China came to India. The government said it was an "unannounced" visit though media was aware Wang Yi was coming. He met with our Foreign Minister and also met the National Security Advisor so the subject of his visit was not a secret: it is the situation in Ladakh. Wang asked to meet the Prime Minister but this was not allowed, with the excuse that Modi was away in Uttar Pradesh for Adityanath's swearing-in. This is the second clue we have and it indicates to us that India is displeased with the situation. What is the situation? This is the problem. Indians have been told by the Prime Minister himself that there is no problem and that nobody is on our territory. The Defence Minister has said that nobody is stopping India's soldiers from patrolling in the spaces that they have been historically patrolling.

If this is the case then what is there to discuss with the Chinese? This the government is not telling us. What is called the 'Godi media' reported that it was the Chinese side that wanted disengagement and this was because "the present situation was not in mutual interest." Disengagement from what? If they are on their side, then there is no real problem. March 11, generals from the Indian Army and Chinese army met for the 15th round of talks since the clash of 2020. What do they talk about if there is no intrusion? Our government has not said.

The Indian Express reported the following day that "both sides have a platoon-sized strength of soldiers in Hot Springs, but the Chinese troops are on the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control." The government did not deny this report and did not comment on it. Most experts including retired generals, who write, are of the opinion that Indian land has been intruded on and China is refusing to vacate and that is the problem. Some have written that this may escalate and it will be the Chinese who will escalate it. There has also been news of their encroachment into fresh areas in Arunachal Pradesh (which the Chinese claim because the sixth Dalai Lama of Tibet was born in Tawang in 1683).

China is a dictatorship like Russia and doesn't like transparency. India is a democracy but we have chosen to not be transparent on this issue (among others), for whatever reason. I don't want to speculate about why though it is quite clear to me what the reason is.

We should consider that India is not a dictatorship and should be using her natural strength as a democracy. For some reason we are not, and in fact we appear to be misleading ourselves. The foreign policy experts in Beijing will have noticed the confusion that has been produced by the Indian government. It is unlikely that they will not have assessed how it can be used to their advantage. What is it that China seeks and why has the Ladakh border become and remained hot for two years and what is going on in Arunachal Pradesh? What does this all have to do with the road that China has built in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, which connects western China to Balochistan?

China controls a port in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh newspapers are full of positive reports about joining China's Belt and Road Initiative. Nepal is also a part of this plan. In South Asia, India and Bhutan alone have refused to join. What does this mean for the long term future of India and what are the threats and challenges we may face in the future? Democracies can negotiate their ways through difficult problems because they have transparency and the strength of the entire polity, the people and the Opposition and civil society can come behind the government. For this to happen, however, there must be honesty and transparency. It is clear that here, on this issue with China which continues, unfortunately that has not been the case.

WISDOM CORNER

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.

Love takes off masks that we fear we cannot live without and know we cannot live within.

Give a little love to a child, and you get a great deal back.

WORDSWORTH

Silver bullet

Americans frequently use it to refer to some simple and seemingly magical solution to a complicated problem. In that sense, it seems to be a conflation of, or perhaps a confusion between, an older sense of silver bullet and the very similar magic bullet. We have to look into European folklore to find out where silver bullet comes from. There are lots of stories in which they are the only way to kill some supernatural enemy. Werewolves were believed to have been given the power to change form by the Devil in return for acting as his servants. Nothing ordinary could kill one — only a silver bullet would do it. Basically, what a stake through the heart was to a vampire, a silver bullet was to a werewolf. Later, the same idea was applied to other supernatural entities. Some of the legends say that a hare, who was either a witch in disguise or the familiar of a witch, could only be killed in this way. Others refer to any man who had sold himself to the Devil, or sometimes to the Devil himself, who could be scared off by such means. Another legend says that a silver bullet would never miss its target. Obviously, these legends couldn't appear before guns were invented, but the first examples are actually rather late even so. The legends are common to many European countries, but the figurative sense is characteristically American. Magic bullet is rather more recent. It's a direct translation of the German word Zauberkugel, which is said to have been created by the medical scientist Dr Paul Ehrlich in reference to his search, much opposed by the medical establishment of the time, for a cure for syphilis. The term is recorded in English from about 1938 to mean some drug, usually as yet undiscovered, that will be the perfect cure for a specific disease.

FOCUS SOCIETY

WOMEN FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

The world is well aware that the climate crisis is one of the main stumbling blocks to sustainable development. And yet, despite the dramatic evidence of the lethal consequences of climate change, and despite possessing the knowledge, technologies, and resources to fix it, we continue on the same high-carbon path that threatens our survival.

We also know that climate stabilisation depends on a whole-of-society response, and thus on all citizens' equal and fair participation in governance. That has not happened, either: Women have been underrepresented in climate decision-making. And while this trend has slowly been reversed, much more needs to be done to advance a gender-sensitive response to climate change. Three imperatives stand out: women's leadership, indigenous rights, and education.

Efforts to improve gender parity in climate governance have been ongoing for nearly a decade. In 2014, delegates to COP20 adopted the Lima Work Programme on Gender to encourage the inclusion of more women in climate-change negotiations. But five years later, at COP25 in Madrid, 60 per cent of government delegates and 73 per cent of heads and deputy heads of delegations were men.

This imbalance led to the adoption of the Enhanced Lima Work Programme and Action Plan on Gender. Under the enhanced plan, the parties to global climate talks pledged to appoint and provide support for national gender and climate-change focal points for climate negotiations, and for project implementation and monitoring. Even so, from 2019 to 2021, women occupied only 33 per cent of all leadership positions in climate-change negotiations and expert mechanisms.

But efforts to include women in these discussions continue.



Only a third of leadership positions in climate-change negotiations are held by women, even though women are the most vulnerable to the worst effects of global warming. Absent the active participation of women and girls in local, national, and global climate strategies, a carbon-neutral future will remain out of reach

The final agreement issued at the close of last November's COP26 in Glasgow included gender equality and women's leadership as central components of climate policy and action strategies. This represents clear recognition that the transition to net zero will be possible only through active citizenship, with women playing a vital role.

Women are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, but they are also important agents of change. Giving women a seat at the decision-making table and using a gender lens to shape low-carbon development strategies will go a long way toward making progress on efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The transition to carbon neutrality requires a radical change in production systems and consumption patterns across all sectors.

Women must be part of the process to develop effective policies. The task is daunting, but there are examples to follow.

Costa Rica, for one, has set a clear path toward net-zero carbon dioxide emissions. Since 2014, more than 98 per cent of the energy generated in Costa Rica has come from renewable sources. And in 2021, the country was awarded the Earthshot Prize for its conservation model, according to which local citizens are paid to preserve and restore natural ecosystems, including rainforests. Costa Rica's success can be attributed largely to the commitment of its citizens to sustainable development and the involvement of indigenous and rural women in climate adaptation, knowledge production, and efforts to strengthen resilience.

Indigenous and rural women in particular are the most vul-

nerable to climate change and environmental degradation. The inclusion of these women in creating sustainable practices is thus central to ensuring the effectiveness of climate-related decisions. Initiatives such as Club de Madrid's Shared Societies approach emphasise that indigenous communities have the right to be involved in these discussions, and acknowledge that local communities are more likely to support and implement conservation plans when they are fully invested in their development.

Education is also a crucial component of inclusive climate decision-making. In 2021, UNESCO called for environmental education to be a core curriculum component in all countries by 2025. The Berlin Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development states that environmental education must be available to girls and boys alike from an early age to ensure that future generations have sufficient knowledge to respond to climate change. Emphasising gender equality and non-discrimination in access to climate knowledge and skills will boost the ability of young people to effect change.

The recent all-male "CEO lunch" convened at the Munich Security Conference shows that women are still missing from the highest levels of global decision-making. Yet women's leadership is needed to respond effectively to shared global challenges. Without the active and meaningful participation of women and girls in local, national, and global climate strategies, a carbon-neutral future will remain out of reach.

Laura Chinchilla, a former President of Costa Rica, is Vice President of Club de Madrid. Maria Fernanda Espinosa is a former President of the UN General Assembly.

PROJECT SYNDICATE



Laura Chinchilla & Maria Fernanda Espinosa

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IS NEEDED TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO SHARED GLOBAL CHALLENGES



Aakar Patel

We should consider that India is not a dictatorship and should be using her natural strength as a democracy. For some reason we are not, and in fact we appear to be misleading ourselves

SPECTRUM HEALTH

Reinforcing tobacco control regime

Tobacco kills approximately 8 million people annually. Approximately one person dies every six seconds due to tobacco, accounting for one in 10 adult deaths. According to the WHO, more than 80% of such deaths occur in the developing world. India is the second largest country in the world in terms of tobacco consumption and therefore faces a substantial tobacco-related mortality and morbidity encumbrance. Odisha is one of the leading tobacco consuming states, especially smokeless tobacco.

Enacting Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act (COTPA) in 2003 and ratification of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) in 2004 laid the foundation of legal framework to regulate tobacco consumption in India. The COTPA in last 18 years attempted to defy the tobacco industry's tactics to advertise and promote tobacco. Yet, the industry has been able to target, especially children, through its indirect promotion tactics. Considering these escape routes, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has proposed an amendment in COTPA which is awaiting Parliament's approval.

However, Consumer Protection Act (CPA) 2019 has given a new ray of hope in the fight against to-

bacco. India did not have a specific legal regime for fixing product liability prior to 2020. In absence of a specific regime governing product liability, such claims were founded and derived from legislations viz. the Sale of Goods Act, 1930; the Consumer Protection Act, 1986; and the Indian Contract Act, 1872. These claims were also based on case laws, both in the civil and criminal aspects leading to a complex process. Certain sector-specific laws touching upon principles of product liability viz. the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1945 and the erstwhile Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 (replaced by the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006) were also used in some cases. This has now been addressed to a large extent by CPA 2019. Sections 82 to 87, (Chapter VI of CPA 2019) offer a comprehensive scheme which would apply to every claim for compensation under a product liability action. A product liability action can be filed against a 'product manufacturer' or a 'product service provider' or a 'product seller', as the case may be. Manufacturers, distributor and sellers of any kind of tobacco product owe both a legal and moral duty against their customers to warn clearly and in unequivocal terms about the fatal consequences of tobacco use. The defence of volenti non fit injuria or contributory negligence does not arise because most of these tobacco

products include toxic chemicals and also as majority of the long term tobacco users start using tobacco when they are minors. Since, the incubation period for tobacco related diseases may vary from 10 to 20 years, the adverse effects are diagnosed and reported when the tobacco user has attained majority. Therefore, the defence of volenti non fit injuria must not apply to those who start using tobacco as minors and grow as addicted adults. The COTPA squarely puts an obligation on every tobacco manufacturer, producer, distributor and seller to prevent minor's access to tobacco products. The CPA 2020 explicitly includes food under the definition of goods as defined in Food Safety and Standard Act 2006 [Section 2(21)]. So, every food vendor, including food delivery platforms also come under its ambit. The new CPA also ensures liability of endorsers i.e. an endorser of a product/service (for instance a celebrity) is under obligation to not to participate in false/misleading advertisements (Section 21). Section 2(47) while widening the scope of 'unfair trade practices' expounds on such practices and includes, for instance, misleading advertising, refusal to take back defective goods, refusal to refund consideration for such goods within period specified.

There are countries where criminal law has been invoked for instance in western Australia by the

Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare under State Legislation following complaints by employees of a gambling casino that they were subjected to passive smoke. The maximum penalty under statute is \$50,000. In the USA, the states of Mississippi, Minnesota, Florida and West Virginia are suing the American tobacco companies claiming punitive damages, reimbursement of past healthcare of victims of smoking related disease, compensation for future cost of healthcare for current and future victims and injunctions forbidding the promotion of cigarettes to minors. The aim is to recover the enormous and increasing outlay of individual states on treating tobacco-related disease.

The new CPA is a welcome step but successful enforcement of it to control tobacco industry interference would require active engagement of civil society as an important stakeholder; in particular, to increase people's awareness, solicit their support for law and involve them in monitoring enforcement and reporting violations. Such a mechanism will facilitate regular consultations among major stakeholders and facilitate concerted action by multiple implementing agencies to ensure comprehensive tobacco control in India.

The writer is Professor of Law, National Law University Odisha. Views are personal.



Yogesh Pratap Singh

THE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT 2019 HAS GIVEN A NEW RAY OF HOPE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TOBACCO

Wang in India

Sir, This refers to 'Peace must for normal ties: India to China', Orissa Post, March 26. All speculation about the Chinese Foreign Minister delivering a special message to the Indian leadership or a breakthrough on the border issue remained just that. In his talks with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, Wang Yi reiterated the oft-repeated Chinese position that the LAC standoff should be placed in its 'appropriate position' in the broader scheme of bilateral relations. Given that India has never bought into this proposition, it is to the credit of Doval and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar that they made it clear to Wang that progress in disengagement and de-escalation alone can lead to normal bilateral relations. India and China have had 15 rounds of military talks and eight rounds of diplomatic discussions, and the message sent out from the Indian side to Wang made it clear that the progress made so far in these meetings must be extended to all the friction points in the Ladakh sector before the two sides can move on to other issues. It would appear the Chinese side believed the geopolitical realignments and the turmoil created by the Ukraine war had created an opening for exploratory talks with the Indian side. Wang spoke with Doval about China not pursuing a 'unipolar Asia' and respecting India's traditional role in the region. If that were truly the case, the Chinese foreign minister could have proved his country's intentions by agreeing on some measures to help end the standoff and restore the status quo as it existed on the LAC in April 2020.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Alarming situation

Sir, Delhi has emerged as the most polluted capital city in the world for the fourth time in a row, according to the World Air Quality Report 2021. Perhaps, Delhi needs to take some cue from countries where alert networks have already been established that spread information through television and social media. For example, in Beijing there are sirens placed to inform the public when the air quality reaches harmful levels. The campaign against air-pollution in India's capital needs the participation of all institutions. The Delhi government can do the following to fix the problem: stop trucks from plying within city limits between 6 am and 6 pm; all construction activities in Delhi should be done with draping to ensure dust and dirt don't fly; ban firecrackers for the next 5 years; and move brick kilns out of Delhi for 3 years.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

national



With the massive seizure of drugs worth over 9 crores in international market under 'War on Drugs,' the fight against drugs will further get intensified now. I strongly urge all illicit drug traffickers to surrender or face consequences

N. BIREN SINGH | MANIPUR CM

WELCOME MOVE

In his first decision after taking over the reins of Uttar Pradesh for the second time in a row, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Saturday announced to extend the free ration scheme by three more months



Cong to run campaign against price rise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 26: The Congress Saturday announced a three-phased campaign, "Mehngai-mukt Bharat Abhiyaan", against price rise under which it will organise rallies and marches across the country from March 31 to April 7.

Congress general secretary and chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala told a press conference here that in the first phase of the campaign, Congress workers and common people will protest outside their houses and at public places on March 31.

He said people will garland LPG cylinders, beat drums and ring bells to highlight the issue of inflation and seek to draw the attention of the 'deaf' BJP government against the insurmountable increase in the prices of cooking gas, petrol and diesel.

"The Congress president, in consultation with the party general secretaries and state in-charges, has decided to champion the people's cause in a three-phased programme -- Mehngai-Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan," Surjewala said.

From March 2 to April 4, the Congress,



along with NGOs, religious, social organisations and resident welfare bodies, will organise dharnas and marches at the district level across the country, he added.

April 7, the party will organise "Mehngai-mukt Bharat" dharnas and marches at all state headquarters with the help of social and religious organisations, NGOs and people, Surjewala said. "The people of India have been betrayed, duped and deceived by the (Narendra) Modi government. After keeping the prices of petrol, diesel, gas cylinders, piped nat-

ural gas (PNG) and CNG unchanged for 137 days to secure the votes of people, the last one week has been a nightmare for every household," he added.

Surjewala pointed out that the Centre again hiked the petrol and diesel prices by 80 paise per litre on Saturday -- the fourth hike in five days -- totalling Rs 3.2 per litre. "The everyday increase in the prices of petrol and diesel as also the cumbersome increase in the prices of gas cylinders, PNG and CNG have proved the dictum for the Modi government -- 'fleece the people, fill coffers,'" he alleged.

The everyday increase in the prices of petrol and diesel as also the cumbersome increase in the prices of gas cylinders, PNG and CNG have proved the dictum for the Modi government -- fleece the people, fill coffers

RANDEEP SURJEWALA | CONGRESS LEADER

The decision to launch the agitation was taken at a meeting of Congress general secretaries and state in-charges here on Saturday. The meeting also discussed the membership drive of the party and the current political situation in the country.

Congress general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal chaired the meeting at the party headquarters here. Among the prominent leaders of the party who attended the meeting were Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Oomen Chandoy, Mukul Wasnik, Tariq Anwar, Surjewala, Ajay Maken and treasurer Pawan Kumar Bansal. The meeting comes in the wake of the party's humiliating defeat in the recent Assembly polls in five states.

Akhilesh to lead Oppn charge in UP

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav was appointed the leader of opposition in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly Saturday, hours after he was unanimously elected as the leader of the SP legislature party. Yadav, who won from Karhal in Mainpuri in his maiden assembly contest and chose to quit his Lok Sabha membership to focus on the state politics, will come face-to-face with his principal opponent and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in the Assembly for the first time as he looks at future electoral battles.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PROTECTION OF PLANT VARIETIES AND FARMERS' RIGHTS AUTHORITY
 Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
 Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
 Website: www.plantauthority.gov.in

PLANT GENOME SAVIOUR AWARDS - 2020-21 & 2021-22
 Under Section 39(1)(ii) of PPV&FR Act, 2001 read with PPV&FR (Recognition and Reward from Gene Fund) Rules, 2012 and PPV&FR (Community Award from Gene Fund) Rules, 2018.

INDIA'S HIGHEST AWARD/REWARD/RECOGNITION FOR FARMER(S) AND FARMING COMMUNITIES
 A unique aspect of Farmers' Rights in PPV&FR Act, 2001 which provides the facility to award, reward and recognize the farmers engaged in conservation of genetic resources of land races and wild relatives of economic plants and their improvement through selection.

1. PLANT GENOMIC SAVIOUR COMMUNITY AWARD
THE AWARD:- A maximum of five awards in a year, each consisting of cash of Rs.10,00,000/- (Rupees Ten Lakhs Only), a citation and a memento.
WHO CAN APPLY:- A community of farmers who are engaged in the conservation of genetic resources of landraces and wild relatives of economic plants and their improvement through selection and preservation and the material so selected and preserved has been shared with others for varietal improvement.

2. PLANT GENOME SAVIOUR FARMER AWARD/RECOGNITION
THE REWARD:- A maximum of 10 rewards comprising of citation, memento and cash amount of Rs.1,50,000/- (Rupees one lakh fifty thousand only).
THE RECOGNITION:- A maximum of 20 recognitions comprising of citation, memento and cash amount of Rs.1,00,000/- (Rupees one lakh only).
WHO CAN APPLY:- Farmers application engaged in the conservation of genetic resources of landraces and wild relatives of economic plants and their improvement through selection and preservation and the materials so selected and preserved has been used as donors of genes in varieties registerable under the PPV&FR Act, 2001 (Duly to be forwarded by specified authorities and certificate from concerned institute to be attached).
HOW TO APPLY:- Application form and detailed guidelines may be downloaded from the website of the Authority www.plantauthority.gov.in or may be obtained in person or by Post on any working day from the office of PPV&FR Authority, New Delhi or its offices at Ranchi, Guwahati, Palampur, Pune and Shivamogga (Please see the address from website) between 9.00 A.M. to 5.30 P.M. Applications may be submitted either in Hindi or English. There is no application fee. Only complete form with supporting document(s) is to be submitted.

APPLICATIONS TO BE FORWARDED THROUGH: Chairperson/Secretary of the concerned Panchayat, Biodiversity Management Committee or concerned District Agricultural Officer or Director of Research of concerned Central/State/Agriculture University or concerned District Tribal Development Office. However in case of applications for Plant Genome Saviour Community Awards it can also be forwarded through concerned Zonal Project Director, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (Now Director - Agriculture Technology Application Research Institute (ATARI) - ICAR with official seal.

Last Date of Submission: The duly filled in application form along with supportive information, evidence/documents/details/proof of the claims made should reach the following address within 3 (three) months from the date of publication of the advertisement.

(Uma Kant Dubey)
 Deputy Registrar
 Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority
 Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare,
 Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer Welfare, Govt. of India,
 S-2, 'A' Block, NASC, DPS Marg, Opp. Todapur, New Delhi - 110 012.
 Contact No.: 011-25842846; E-mail: uk.dubey@gov.in

davp 01146/11/0006/2122

Sl. No.	Survey/Plot Number	Type of Land	Nature of Land	Area (in Local Unit)	Area (in Hectare)	Sl. No.	Survey/Plot Number	Type of Land	Nature of Land	Area (in Local Unit)	Area (in Hectare)
Village: Basulipur-49											
1	234	Private	Gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	4	414	Government	Gochar	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
2	237	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-I	0.0800000(Acre)	0.0323756	5	415	Government	Gochar	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
3	238	Private	Gharabari-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	6	416	Government	Gochar	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
4	239	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-I	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	7	417	Government	Gochar	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
5	240	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-I	0.0900000(Acre)	0.0364225	8	429	Government	Gochar	0.0700000(Acre)	0.0283286
Village: Begunia-40											
1	74	Private	gharabari-II	0.0500000(Acre)	0.0202347	9	430	Government	Gochar	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
2	75	Government	nala	0.0600000(Acre)	0.0242817	10	431	Government	Gochar	0.1500000(Acre)	0.0607042
Village: Chitapada-22											
1	620	Private	sarad anajalasechita-II	0.0800000(Acre)	0.0323756	11	472	Government	Gochar	0.0800000(Acre)	0.0323756
2	628	Private	sarad anajalasechita-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	12	481	Government	Rasta	0.0050000(Acre)	0.0020235
3	628/832	Private	sarad anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	13	494	Government	Gochar	0.2000000(Acre)	0.0809389
4	629	Private	gharabari	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878	14	495	Government	Gochar	0.0600000(Acre)	0.0242817
5	631	Private	sarad anajalasechita-II	0.0580000(Acre)	0.0234723	15	501	Government	Gochar	0.2000000(Acre)	0.0809389
6	631/809	Private	sarad anajalasechita-II	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878	Village: Patharapentha-276					
7	640	Government	gramya jungle	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	1	1397	Government	School	0.0500000(Acre)	0.0202347
8	641	Private	sarad anajalasechita-II	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878	2	1404	Private	gharabari-II	0.1000000(Acre)	0.0404695
9	642	Government	gramya jungle	0.0050000(Acre)	0.0020235	3	1410	Private	gharabari-I	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878
10	643	Private	sarad anajalasechita-II	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878	4	1411	Private	sarad-II/11	0.1000000(Acre)	0.0404695
Village: Dahisada-106											
1	1786	Private	sarad-I	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	5	1411/2093	Private	sarad-I	0.0150000(Acre)	0.0060704
2	1787	Private	sarad-I	0.0500000(Acre)	0.0202347	6	1411/2094	Private	gharabari-II	0.0150000(Acre)	0.0060704
3	1788	Private	sarad-I	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	7	1411/2095	Private	sarad-I	0.0150000(Acre)	0.0060704
4	1789	Private	sarad-I	0.1000000(Acre)	0.0404695	8	1411/2105	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
5	1792	Private	sarad-II/5	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878	9	1412	Private	gharabari	0.0050000(Acre)	0.0020235
6	1793	Private	sarad-I	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	10	1413	Private	sarad-II/14	0.0500000(Acre)	0.0202347
7	1793/2729	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	11	1416	Government	sarad-II	0.0500000(Acre)	0.0202347
8	1797	Private	sarad-II/7	0.0350000(Acre)	0.0141643	12	1417	Private	sarad-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
9	1798	Private	sarad-I/7	0.0250000(Acre)	0.0101174	13	1420	Private	gharabari-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040695
10	1799	Private	sarad-I/3	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	14	1423	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
11	1814	Private	sarad-II/7	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	15	1423/2135	Private	gharabari	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
12	1815	Private	sarad-I/7	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	16	1423/2137	Private	gharabari	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
13	1821	Private	sarad-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	17	1438/2424	Private	gharabari-II	0.0250000(Acre)	0.0101174
14	1822	Private	sarad-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	18	1439	Private	sarad-I	0.0250000(Acre)	0.0101174
15	1827	Private	sarad-II/5	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	19	1440	Private	sarad-II	0.0150000(Acre)	0.0060704
16	1828	Private	sarad-I/11	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	20	1455	Private	sarad-II/2	0.0150000(Acre)	0.0060704
17	1829	Private	gharabari	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	21	1457	Private	sarad-I	0.0150000(Acre)	0.0060704
18	1902	Private	puratan patita	0.2000000(Acre)	0.0809389	22	1458	Private	sarad-II/5	0.1600000(Acre)	0.0647511
19	1907	Government	rasta	0.0050000(Acre)	0.0020235	23	1459	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
20	1908	Government	nala	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	24	1467	Private	gharabari	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
21	1909	Government	Puratan Patita	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878	25	1468	Private	sarad-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
22	1910	Government	nala	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	26	2059	Private	sarad-I	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878
23	1911	Government	Puratan Patita	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878	Village: Sadampur-104					
24	1916	Government	Puratan Patita	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	1	316	Private	Jalasya-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
Village: Bahanaga-51											
1	100	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0900000(Acre)	0.0364225	2	317	Private	Gharabari	0.0250000(Acre)	0.0101174
2	103	Private	Gharabari-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	3	336	Government	Nala	0.0050000(Acre)	0.0020235
3	106	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	4	338	Private	Gharabari	0.0450000(Acre)	0.0182112
4	106/301	Private	Gharabari-II	0.0900000(Acre)	0.0080939	Village: Suthanga-10					
5	106/303	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	1	1298	Government	gharabari	0.0800000(Acre)	0.0323756
6	106/307	Private	Gharabari	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	2	1299	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
7	106/315	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	3	1300	Private	gharabari	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469
8	106/341	Private	Gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	4	1301	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
9	107	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	5	1302	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
10	107/339	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	6	1303	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
11	107/351	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	7	1303/2569	Private	gharabari	0.0150000(Acre)	0.0060704
12	107/367	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	8	1304	Government	rasta	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
13	107/383	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	9	1307	Private	sarad anajalasechita-II	0.0900000(Acre)	0.0364225
14	121	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408	10	1307/3328	Private	gharabari	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
15	122	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	11	1306	Private	gharabari	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
16	122/309	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	12	1337	Private	gharabari	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040695
17	122/316	Private	Gharabari	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	13	1338	Private	gharabari	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878
18	122/338	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939	14	1340	Private	gharabari	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878
19	122/344	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	15	1346	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
20	122/344/347	Private	Gharabari	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	16	1346/1474	Private	gharabari	0.0300000(Acre)	0.0121408
21	122/350	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	17	1352	Private	gharabari	0.0200000(Acre)	0.0080939
22	122/350/361	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	18	1353	Private	gharabari	0.0400000(Acre)	0.0161878
23	122/363	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040469	19	1354	Private	gharabari	0.0100000(Acre)	0.0040695
24	123	Private	Sarad Anajalasechita-II	0.0500000(Acre)	0.0202347	20	1364	Private	gharabari	0.032500	

Exams: After Covid, its hijab challenge for K'taka edu dept

Against the backdrop of verdict by the special bench of the Karnataka High Court, the state government has decided not to allow students wearing hijab to take up exams



Crucial SSLC (Class 10) exams start from March 28 and will continue till April 11. Total 8,73,846 students have enrolled for SSLC exams this year

Covid-related work and many had lost their lives in the process. Now, its the hijab issue which is equally stressful for them, sources in the education department say.

However, the High Court order on hijab is being challenged in the Supreme Court by petitioner students. Opposition Congress is vehemently demanding ruling BJP to allow students to write exams with wearing hijab.

Opposition leader Siddaramaiah has demanded that the Muslim students with dupatta matching with the uniform be allowed inside the examination halls.

Later, he went on to say that if Hindu, Jain women and religious leaders can wear cloth around their faces, why Muslim students can't. The statement stirred a controversy and later, Siddaramaiah clarified that he has great respect for religious leaders and he didn't mean to insult them.

Sources in the police department said that even after govern-

ment order following the court verdict, the students will attempt to write exams wearing hijab and when they will be stopped, there will be chaos near the examination centers. The situation needs to be handled properly to ensure that students attending exams are not disturbed, they say.

BC Nagesh, Minister for Education has clarified that students wearing hijab are not allowed to take exams and there is no second thought about it. We will not allow students with hijab to any exams including board examinations, he said.

Education department is conducting separate exams for all subjects similar to the pre-Covid pattern. The students will have to obtain minimum passing marks this time. The government has clarified that it won't pass the students just like that as it was done in the last two years.

Covid regulations for students have been relaxed and wearing of mask is not mandatory in examination halls. However, the examination halls would be sanitised and social distance will be maintained. Earlier, the Special bench of Karnataka High Court has dismissed the petitions seeking permission to wear hijab in classrooms. It also stated that wearing of hijab is not an essential part of Islam.

Now, AAP eyes hills of Himachal

TO MARK ITS PRESENCE, AAP IS LAUNCHING ITS POLL CAMPAIGN APRIL 6 FROM MANDI TOWN, THE HOME TURF OF CM JAI RAM THAKUR TO CHALLENGE THE BJP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, March 26: After demolishing the citadels of all major political parties in Punjab, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is now preparing to conquer the hills of Himachal Pradesh in the November Assembly polls.

The conditions, on the face of it, are not averse for the party that swept away the traditional political outfits of the Akalis, the BJP and the Congress in Punjab.

A strong anti-incumbency wave against the state ruling BJP - evident from the loss of three Assembly and one parliamentary seat in the October 2021 bypolls - and the absence of the veteran Chief Minister faces may work for the party that is already ruling in two states.

Both the conventional game changers - Virbhadr Singh of the Congress and Prem Kumar Dhumal of the BJP - are out of the scene. Singh is dead, while Dhumal is virtually in political exile after his defeat in the previous Assembly polls.

Political observers told IANS the pitch is more or less clear for AAP, which is yet to mark its presence even in state civic body polls, to sweep away the traditional political outfits in the hill state where both the Congress and the BJP ruled the state alternatively from 1985.

Himachal Pradesh was traditionally dominated by the Congress and saw its first non-Congress chief minister, Shanta Kumar, in 1977, when the Janata Party came to the helm.

The state has been seeing a two-party system. A handful of rebels from both the Congress and the BJP have been emerging from time to time, but after failing to mark their presence on the larger political landscape, they either merged with the previous party or joined



the other party, senior BJP minister Suresh Bhardwaj told IANS.

He said AAP is not active for the first time in the state. It had contested the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. After Punjab win, they are hyperactive. But as far as Himachal is concerned, only disgruntled elements will join AAP.

As far as the BJP is concerned, Urban Development Minister Bhardwaj said, "We are focused on the agenda of development and welfare of all sections of society. As far as I know the Congress is worst hit by AAP's activity. They fear exodus."

It is a small state where the traditional parties have deep roots and the new one is yet to establish its credibility, leave aside its base, he added.

Among the prominent opponents, former Union minister Sukh Ram, who had to resign as the communications minister in the Narasimha Rao government in 1996 in the wake of a financial scandal, floated the Himachal Vikas Congress (HVC) in the 1998 Assembly polls and won five seats. The HVC extended support to

The absence of the veteran Chief Minister faces and a strong anti-incumbency wave against the ruling BJP may work for the party that is already ruling two states

the BJP and joined the government. In the next Assembly polls, the HVC got one seat and finally merged with the Congress.

In 2017, Sukh Ram and his son Anil Sharma joined the BJP. Now the former is with the Congress, while the latter is with the BJP.

The list of politicians switching sides include Vijay Singh Mankotia, who quit the Congress ahead of the Assembly polls in 2007 and joined the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), winning a seat. Mankotia, who faced defeat, later joined the Congress. Now, he is looking for a 'credible' third alternative.

So are a handful of BJP rebels, led by four-time MP Maheshwar Singh, who formed the Himachal Lokhit Party in 2012, and made a serious dent in the saffron party's vote bank. The party then comprised former Assembly Speaker Radha Raman Shastri and two former ministers - Shyama Sharma and Mohinder Sofat.

Though the Himachal Lokhit Party won a seat, it proved to be a stumbling block for the BJP to retain the helm. Later, the Himachal Lokhit Party too split and Maheshwar Singh rejoined the BJP. However, the splinter group opted for AAP in all four Lok Sabha seats in the state for the May 2014 polls.

The leaders, who joined the AAP, were keen to contest the 2017 Assembly elections, but AAP decided not to enter the fray. In that poll, the BJP won a majority with 44 seats in the 68-member Assembly.

After winning the majority in Punjab, AAP announced new office-bearers for its expansion in nine states and announced to contest the Assembly elections in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh this year.

Ban on Muslim traders in temple fairs spreads to more Karnataka dists

AGENCIES

Bangalore, March 26: The move to ban Muslim traders from Karnataka temple fairs has spread to more districts of the state and is likely to snowball into a major crisis in the coming days.

The trend which surfaced in coastal districts and capital Bangalore has made its way into Hassan, Tumakuru, Chikkamagalur and Shivamogga districts.

Temple authorities of historical Belur Channakeshava temple, Siddalingeshwara temple in Tumakuru district, Maha Ganapathy temple in Shivamogga have been appealed to allow only Hindu traders to conduct business in fairs which are organised on large scale by these authorities.

The state government's official statement in this regard that they can't help banning of Muslim traders from temple premises and religious fairs has enabled Hindutva organisations to demand a ban on Muslim traders.

Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has urged the district authorities not to allow Muslims to participate in world famous Belur Channakeshava Rathotsava which will be held April 13 and 14.

Bajrang Dal activists have demanded that non-Hindus must not be allowed to carry out business in famous Yediyur Siddalingeshwara fair from April 1.

VHP has also urged not to allow Muslim businessmen in historical Maha Ganapathy fair sched-

uled to be held April 5.

Hindu activists have erected a banner in Gonibeedu village near Mudigere town in Chikkamagalur district saying they won't allow those to carry out trade who do not respect the judiciary, who cut and eat sacred animal cow and challenge the integrity of the nation at Subramanyeshwara temple fair set to be held March 27.

Recently, Hindu organisations banned Muslim traders in Puttur Marikamba fare, Mangaluru Maarikamba fare, Marigudi temple fare in Udupi. The memorandums have been submitted to ban Muslim traders from participating in Adda Gadde, Kigga fares near Sringeri in Chikkamagalur district.

Meanwhile, Srirama Sena Founder Pramod Muthalik has earlier stated that the ban on Muslim traders would continue until they do away with the habit of beef consumption. The movement of banning trade with Muslims has gathered steam in Karnataka. The crisis would continue until the change of mindset by Muslims, he stated. Muslim separatist mindset is dangerous to the country, he maintained.

In another important development, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad had asked the Muzrai department not to allow Muslim traders in any of the temples across the state.

Opposition Congress has slammed the ruling BJP government for the development and alleged that it is behind the crisis.



ONE STATION, ONE PRODUCT



In this undated photo, people look at Channapatna toys made of fine wood as part of One Station, One Product, at Bangalore Railway Station

India hosts world's highest Snow Marathon

With the average altitude of the marathon track being above 11,000 feet elevation, it will be the highest Snow Marathon to be organised in the world

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 26: India Saturday kicked off its first snow marathon, which will be also the world's highest event in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul & Spiti district. India's first-ever Snow Marathon was flagged off from Sissu (near the North Portal of Atal Tunnel). With the average altitude of the marathon track being above 11,000 feet elevation, it will be the highest Snow Marathon to be organised in the world.

Snow Marathon Lahaul has been conceptualised by Gaurav Schimar

and organised by Reach India. It will see the participation of around 100 runners with the eldest being a 72 years local Himachali enthusiast and the youngest being around 11 years old. The event, which will see around a dozen women runners, is being supported by Lahaul & Spiti District Administration.

The Marathon Track spread over 42 kilometers will meander across towering snow peaks, overlooking hanging glaciers, passing iced waterfalls, a semi-frozen Chandra River, frozen ice lakes with clear blue skies with ample sunshine; and all at an average elevation of above 11,000 feet.

"We are surely going to ramp up the running quotient in India with the flagging off of Snow Marathon Lahaul. It has been years in the making and while there are few established snow runs on the planet, the time is just right to introduce this format of running to India," said Gaurav Schimar; the



Event Founder of Snow Marathon Lahaul at the post-match presentation.

It is not just about running in snow and the inherent trials and

tribulations that would test the spirit of any runner. It is also about facing the elements including the high-altitude challenges, which also one will have to endure, he

K'taka: Breast milk donation campaign gains momentum

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, March 26: The campaign for breast milk donation has gained momentum in Karnataka as for the first time in the country a walkathon has been organised to spread the word with Radhika Pandit, an actress and wife of rock star Yash, pitching in for the cause.

The government has appealed to mothers to donate breast milk to save the lives of infants. The walkathon has been organised March 27 to spread the word on donation of mother's milk to save the lives of infants.

Radhika Pandit has also shared a video post on Instagram in this regard and appealed to mother's to donate breast milk. The video has gone viral.

In the four minute video, Radhika has stated that breast milk is one of the precious gifts in life and it can be compared to none other. Sometimes, mothers cannot produce milk. For those kids, who do not get mother's milk, milk banks have been started. Mothers who have excess milk and who can afford to donate milk can donate,

she appealed.

This video is a special shout out to mothers who can donate their milk. Milk banks have been established in your districts and mothers can join hands for this wonderful and noble cause, Radhika said. Dr Srikanth Manikanti, senior consultant paediatrician, who is one of the organisers of the walkathon, explained that there are 3.5 million prematurely born babies in the country and the majority of them are bereft of mother's milk.

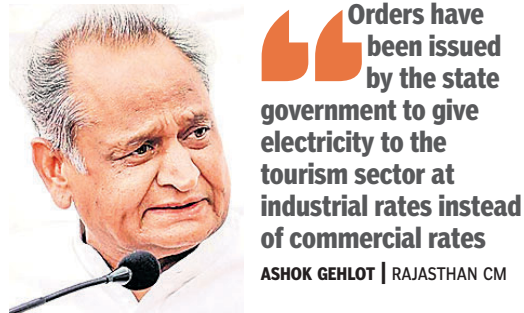
If they do not get mother's milk, they will become vulnerable to diseases and chances are that they might not survive. The demand is more than the supply and mothers should come forward to save the babies. Mother's milk is considered as liquid gold for babies, he explained.

In order to cater to the newborn kids who can't be fed by their mothers, the Karnataka government has dedicated 'Human (breast) Milk Banks' in four district headquarters including Bangalore on the eve of the International Women's Day.

While there are about ten such snow, ice or winter marathons across the planet, including the ones which take place on the Arctic Circle, the North Pole and places like Siberia, it is for the first time a Snow Marathon has been conceptualised and being put together for long-distance runners in India

COLONEL ARUN NATRAJAN I
CHIEF EVENT ADVISOR

The event is being organised under the aegis of Colonel Jodh Singh Dhillon, who is the president of the Winter Games Federation of India.



Orders have been issued by the state government to give electricity to the tourism sector at industrial rates instead of commercial rates ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

of the day quote

The Narendra Modi government has sought to give a new outlook to governance in the last seven to eight years

Timely disposal of cases in courts depends on several factors which, inter-alia, include availability of adequate number of judges and judicial officers, supporting court staff and physical infrastructure, complexity of facts involved, nature of evidence, co-operation of stakeholders -- the Bar, investigation agencies, witnesses and litigants -- and proper application of rules and procedures

Over one crore children in the age-group of 12-14 years have been administered the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine

3 Naxalites killed Ranchi: Three Naxalites were shot dead by the security forces at a forest in Jharkhand's Latehar district Saturday morning, police said.

Girl gangraped Patna: A minor girl was allegedly gangraped repeatedly for three days by five youths in Bihar's Supaul district, a police official said Saturday.

Man killed New Delhi: A man was killed and his cousin suffered injuries after a fight broke out between them in the national capital, an official said Saturday.

BIRBHUM KILLINGS

Bogtui turns ghost village as people flee



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bogtui (WB), March 26: An eerie silence encompasses Bogtui, where eight people were burnt alive earlier this week.

The sprawling hamlet near Rampurhat town in West Bengal's Birbhum has become a ghost village as many residents have fled to nearby villages fearing the cycle of violence which started with the killing of local TMC leader Bhadu Sheikh and led to petrol bombs being thrown at a group of houses setting them on fire which killed eight people including women and two children, in an apparent revenge attack which shocked the whole country.

Not only have most residents of Purbapara, where the killings took place in the early hours of Tuesday, left their houses in a hurry, even those of neighbouring Paschimpara and Mayerpara hamlets in the village have also followed suit.

The only state-run school in the locality is also nearly empty while the Anganwadi lies vacant with unbolted doors found.

Neighbouring houses of Rezaul Sheikh, Babar Alam, Pintu Sheikh, Nur Sheikh and Saddam Ali Mollah were found locked despite Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who visited the village on March 24, assuring them of full security.

The only woman seen in the vicinity cooking food is the wife of Sahe Alam Sheikh, a maternal uncle of Sonu Sheikh. "We have no idea where they have fled to. They did not have any other option. Even my sons are not here. They are staying at my relative's place outside the village," Sahe Alam Sheikh said.

An eyewitness to the carnage, Alam, however, remained tight-lipped about the incident. "I can only say that it was a revenge killing. We have seen everything from inside our houses. We ran into our dwellings on hearing a mob approaching Sonu's house and hurling bombs. After that, I don't know anything," he said.

His three sons have gone into hiding with their families and are still "unwilling to return home". Alam also welcomed the Calcutta High Court's handing over the probe into the carnage to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

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Student offers namaz in MP college, probe ordered

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, March 26: After a video of a hijab-clad Muslim girl purportedly offering namaz inside a college classroom in Madhya Pradesh went viral on social media, the university administration has ordered a probe into the matter.

As per sources, the incident occurred in Dr Harisingh Gour University (HGU), a Central varsity, in Sagar district. In the viral video, a burqa/hijab-clad girl could be seen purportedly offering namaz inside a classroom.

After the video surfaced on media, members of the Hindu Jagran Manch reached the university campus and staged a protest, raising 'Jai Shree Ram' slogans and reciting Hanuman Chalisa at a temple located on the campus.

They later handed over a memorandum to the university administration demanding action against the girl student.

Kapil Swami, a member of Hindu Jagran Manch, claimed that namaz was deliberately offered inside the classroom on Friday. "It was a deliberate act carried out on the best of some faculty members of the university. We have demanded that punitive action be taken against those who helped the girl offer namaz," Swami said.

Neelima Gupta, Vice Chancellor of HGU, has ordered an inquiry into the matter. "A five-member committee has been constituted to look into the matter. The committee will submit its report within three days, and further action will be taken based on this report. We have asked all the students to follow their religious practices outside the university campus," Gupta said.

NEPALESE PM DEUBA TO VISIT INDIA

Nepalese Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba will pay a three-day visit to India from April 1 with an aim to further strengthen bilateral ties, people familiar with the development said Saturday. Deuba will hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi April 2, they said. Besides official engagements in Delhi, the Nepalese Prime Minister is also scheduled to visit Varanasi



MEGA AUCTION SALE NOTICE. Union Bank of India. Regional Office: Cuttack. M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar - 751003, Ph: 0674-2537900. SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE / IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES. E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable /Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Indian Overseas Bank POSSESSION NOTICE (Appendix-IV) [Rule-8(1)] (For Immovable Properties). ASIKA BRANCH, Plot No.: 276, Kalinga Road, Asika, Ganjam-761110, Ph.No.: 06822-272474, E-mail: iob2218@iob.in. (Under Section 13(4) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 for Immovable Property).

The United Nations has confirmed 1,081 civilian deaths and 1,707 injuries in Ukraine since the invasion but says the real toll is likely higher. Some 136 children have been killed so far during the invasion, Ukraine's prosecutor general office said Saturday

Russia's defence ministry said 1,351 Russian soldiers had been killed and 3,825 wounded, the Interfax news agency reported Friday. Ukraine says 15,000 Russian soldiers have died



Russia shifts focus

Russia signaled it may dial back its war aims to focus on eastern Ukraine after failing to break Ukraine's resistance in a month of fighting and attacks on civilians. The possible shift came as President Joe Biden visited elite US troops serving with NATO just across the border in Poland and France's Emmanuel Macron proposed an internationally backed evacuation of civilians trapped in the bombarded city of Mariupol

'FIRST PHASE OF WAR OVER'

THREE POWERFUL BLASTS ROCK LVIV

Lviv: The mayor of Lviv said another rocket had hit the city in western Ukraine Saturday, not long after two rockets struck its outskirts in what appeared to be the first attacks within the city's limits since the start of the war with Russia.

Lviv, some 60 kilometres from the Polish border, has so far escaped the bombardment and fighting that has devastated some Ukrainian cities closer to Russia since Moscow launched its invasion. But Saturday Governor Maksym Kozlytskiy said two rockets had struck the city's eastern outskirts in the mid-afternoon and ordered residents to take shelter. Later, Mayor Andriy Sadoviy said there had been another strike. "One more rocket strike on Lviv," he said in an online post. He did not share details of the location. He said the strike had damaged infrastructure but not residential buildings.

Governor Kozlytskiy said five people had been wounded in the that attack, citing preliminary figures. "Stay in shelters! Do not go out into the streets!" he warned.

US President labels Putin a 'butcher'

WARSAW: US President Joe Biden spoke with top Ukrainian government officials in Warsaw Saturday, and branded Russian President Vladimir Putin a "butcher" during a meeting with refugees who have fled the war in Ukraine to the Polish capital. On the second day of a visit to Poland, Biden dropped in on a meeting between Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba and Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov, and Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. "President Biden said what is happening in Ukraine will change the history of the 21st century, and we will work together to ensure that this change is in our favour, in Ukraine's favour, in the favour of the democratic world," Kuleba told Ukrainian national television.



The combat potential of the Armed Forces of Ukraine has been considerably reduced, which... makes it possible to focus our core efforts on achieving the main goal, the liberation of Donbass

SERGEI RUDSKOI | HEAD OF THE RUSSIAN GENERAL STAFF'S MAIN OPERATIONAL DIRECTORATE

Mariupol, March 26: Russia has reframed its war goals in Ukraine in a way that may make it easier for President Vladimir Putin to claim a face-saving victory despite a woeful campaign in which his army has suffered humiliating setbacks, military analysts say.

A senior military official said, Friday the real objective was to "liberate" the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine, where Russian-backed separatists have been fighting the Ukrainian army for the past eight years.

"The main objectives of the first stage of the operation have generally been accomplished," said Sergei Rudskoi, head of the Russian General Staff's Main Operational Directorate.

Donbass, where Putin has accused Ukraine without evidence of waging "genocide" against ethnic Russians - has long occupied a prominent place in Moscow's litany of grievances against Ukraine.

But if capturing the whole of Donbass had been the objective from the start, Moscow could have mounted a much more limited offensive and spared itself the effort and losses involved in invading Ukraine from the north, east and south.

"Obviously they have completely failed in everything they've set out to do and so now they are redefining what the purpose is so they

RUSSIAN FORCES TAKE TOWN NEAR CHERNOBYL AT SECOND ATTEMPT

FIGHTING RAGES IN CENTRE OF MARIUPOLE

OVER 3.7 MILLION UKRAINIAN REFUGEES HAVE CROSSED BORDERS

UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT WARNS OF RUSSIA ENERGY "BLACKMAIL"

KYIV AUTHORITIES ANNOUNCE NEW 35-HOUR CURFEW

issues and the resistance has been way beyond anything they could have possibly imagined."

In an address Saturday to Qatar's Doha Forum, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy compared the destruction of Mariupol to the destruction inflicted on the Syrian city of Aleppo by combined Syrian and Russian forces in the civil war.

"They are destroying our ports," Zelenskyy said, warning of dire consequence if his country - one of the world's major grains producers - could not export its foodstuffs. "The absence of exports from Ukraine will deal a blow to countries worldwide."

Speaking via video link, he also called on energy producing countries to increase their output so that Russia cannot use its massive oil and gas wealth to "blackmail" other nations.

Russian forces have taken control of a town where workers at the defunct Chernobyl nuclear plant live, the governor of Kyiv region said Saturday, and fighting was reported in the streets of the besieged southern port of Mariupol.



Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins departs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

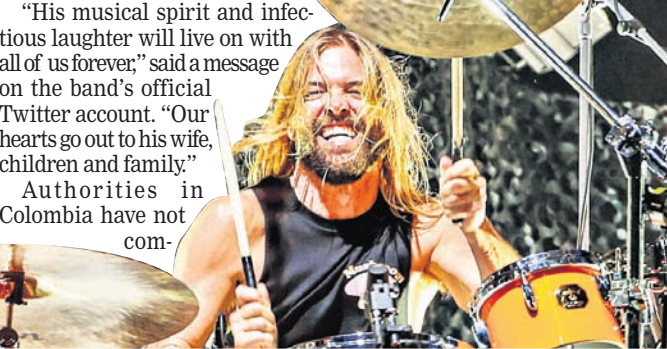
Los Angeles, March 26: Taylor Hawkins, for 25 years the drummer for Foo Fighters and best friend of frontman Dave Grohl, has died during a South American tour with the rock band. He was 50.

There were no immediate details on how Hawkins died, although the band said in a statement Friday that his death was a "tragic and untimely loss."

Foo Fighters had been scheduled to play at a festival in Bogota, Colombia, Friday night. Hawkins' final concert was Sunday at another festival in San Isidro, Argentina.

"His musical spirit and infectious laughter will live on with all of us forever," said a message on the band's official Twitter account. "Our hearts go out to his wife, children and family."

Authorities in Colombia have not com-



mented on Hawkins' death. The US Embassy in Bogota expressed its condolences in a tweet.

After Grohl, Hawkins was the most recognizable member of the group, appearing alongside the lead singer in interviews and playing prominent roles in the band's memorable videos and their recent horror-comedy film, "Studio 666".

Hawkins was Alanis Morissette's touring drummer when he joined Foo Fighters in 1997. He played on the band's biggest albums including "One by One" and "On Your Honor", and on hit singles including "My Hero" and "Best of You".

SRI LANKA ECONOMIC CRISIS

Newspapers halt publication

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, March 26: Sri Lanka's two major newspapers Saturday suspended their publication over newspaper shortage and price escalation caused by the country's all-time worst foreign exchange crisis.

The Island, an English daily along with its sister Sinhala paper Divayana, ceased to print as the newsprint scarcities and price escalations hit the media organisation.

"We regret to inform our readers that we have been compelled to suspend the publication of The Island print edition on Saturday until further notice in view of the newsprint shortage," Upali Newspapers Limited said in a statement.

The import costs of newsprint rose remarkably since the government's decision early this month to float the Sri Lankan rupee against the US dollar. The Island newspaper, which has been in print since October 1981, will now function as an e-paper.

Sri Lanka is facing an acute economic and energy crisis trig-



Sri Lanka is facing its all-time worst foreign exchange crisis after the pandemic hit the nation's earnings from tourism and remittances

gered due to shortage of foreign exchange. A sudden rise in prices of key commodities and fuel shortage forced tens of thousands of people to queue for hours outside petrol filling stations. People are also facing long hours of power cuts daily.

All essentials are in short supply due to import restrictions forced by the forex crisis.

As part of its measures to tackle the crisis, the Sri Lankan government has sought India's as-

sistance. After months of resistance, the government is preparing to approach the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for an economic bailout.

India recently announced to extend a \$1 billion line of credit to Sri Lanka as part of its financial assistance to help the country deal with the economic crisis. New Delhi had extended a \$500 million line of credit to Colombo in February to help it purchase petroleum products.

Philippines' volcano spews mile-high plume

Manila: A small but restive volcano south of the Philippine capital spewed a 1.5 km plume Saturday, prompting authorities to raise an alert level and evacuate more than a thousand residents. The alert for the Taal volcano, about 70 km (45 miles) south of central Manila, was increased to level 3 from level 2 on the 5-level scale, which the seismology and volcanology agency said meant "there is magmatic intrusion at the main crater that may further drive succeeding eruptions". Authorities evacuated more than 1,100 persons living in lakeside communities near the volcano, the disaster agency said. Taal is one of the world's smallest active volcanoes. Despite standing at only 311 metres (1,020 feet), it can be deadly and an eruption in 1911 killed more than 1,300 people. The Philippines lies on the "Ring of Fire", a belt of volcanoes circling the Pacific Ocean that is also prone to earthquakes.



Taliban bar unaccompanied women from flights



Islamabad: Afghanistan's Taliban rulers refused to allow dozens of women to board several flights, including some overseas, because they were travelling without a male guardian, two Afghan airline officials said Saturday. The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of repercussions from the Taliban, said dozens of

women who arrived at Kabul's international airport Friday to board domestic and international flights were told they couldn't do so without a male guardian. Some of the women were dual nationals returning to their homes overseas, including some from Canada, according to one of the officials. The order came from the Taliban leadership, he added. This latest assault on women's rights in Taliban-run Afghanistan comes just days after the all-male religiously driven government broke its promise to allow girls to return to school after the sixth grade.

Thinning Antarctic ice shelf finally crumbles

Washington: An East Antarctica ice shelf disintegrated this month following a period of extreme heat in the region, according to scientists. Satellite images show the 1,200 square-kilometre Conger Ice Shelf collapsed completely on or around March 15. "Possible it hit its tipping point following the #Antarctic #AtmosphericRiver and heat wave too?" asked NASA Earth and Planetary Scientist Catherine Colello Walker on Twitter Friday, sharing images of a white expanse crumbling into shards over the dark ocean. The March heat wave, with temperatures reaching 70 degrees Fahrenheit (40 degrees Celsius) above normal in parts of East Antarctica, was tied to the atmospheric river phenomenon, said Peter Neff, a glaciologist at the University of Minnesota. "The (Antarctic) climate is incredibly variable but this was off-scale," Neff said. "This was at least twice as extreme of a warming event as we would have expected."



UK Prince backs Caribbean nations' republic dream

The tour by William and Kate, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, has thrown a spotlight on the waning support for the monarchy in the Caribbean. During the trip there have been protests and calls for reparations payments by Britain and an apology for slavery

REUTERS



ties with the British monarchy. At the end of a tour with his wife Kate that has been marked by protests about the legacy of the British Empire, William, Queen Elizabeth's grandson, acknowl-

edged the relationship between the three Caribbean states and the Crown was changing.

"Next year, I know you are all looking forward to celebrating 50 years of independence - your

Jamaica celebrating 60 years of independence this year, and Belize celebrating 40 years of independence last year, I want to say this: We support with pride and respect your decisions about your future. Relationships evolve. Friendship endures

PRINCE WILLIAM | UNITED KINGDOM

Golden Anniversary," he said in a speech in the Bahamas capital Nassau.

His speech is the clearest indication the royal family would back the three nations ditching the queen as their head of state, echoing the decision taken by Barbados last November. Usually, Buckingham Palace

says such matters are for the local people and politicians to decide.

During her 70 years on the throne - a landmark that the tour was designed to mark - Elizabeth has watched as former British colonies have cut their ties, but she remains queen of 15 realms, including Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Meanwhile the Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness told William directly at a meeting Wednesday that his country wanted to be "independent".

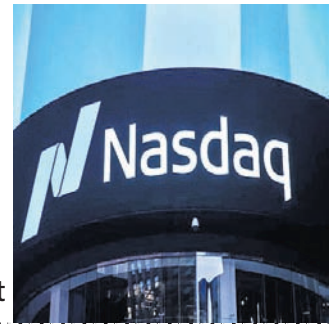
Some British media have also criticised public relations mistakes which have seen the royals shaking hands with Jamaican children through wire fences and other appearances, described as "tone-deaf" blunders by the Daily Mirror tabloid because it said they appeared to be a throwback to colonial times.



“If things remain normal, and we are not witnessing the fourth wave of the pandemic or any ghastly outcome in Ukraine then we can achieve 8 per cent growth because we have done that. If we can do it, we can achieve the doubling of the economy in about 7-8 years”
RAJIV KUMAR | VICE-CHAIRMAN, NITI AAYOG

COINCHECK TO LIST ON NASDAQ

Japanese cryptocurrency exchange Coincheck Inc said it would go public in the United States by merging with blank-check firm Thunder Bridge Capital Partners IV Inc in a \$1.25 billion deal. The deal would provide proceeds of \$237 million to the combined company from the cash held in the special-purpose acquisition company's (SPAC) trust



of the day quote

Bangalore is a focus market for Birla Estates and we are happy to be announcing our third project in a short span of time
KT JITHENDRAN | CEO, BIRLA ESTATES

The coal quality of North Eastern Coalfields is superior and it is in high demand by several of India's domestic industries
PRALHAD JOSHI | UNION COAL, MINES AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS MINISTER

We forecast intense competition for OLED displays as leading smartphone OEMs continue to seek more display suppliers to counter cost and supply challenges
STEPHEN ENTWISTLE | VICE PRESIDENT, STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGIES PRACTICE

SHORT TAKES

■ CIAL bags Covid champion award

Kochi: The Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) has bagged the 'Covid champion' award at Wings India 2022, which is Asia's largest event on civil aviation jointly organised by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and FICCI at the Begumpet airport in Hyderabad. CIAL Managing Director S Suhas IAS received the 'Covid champions' trophy from Civil Aviation Minister, Jyotiraditya Scindia. The airport operator was selected for the successful implementation of a meticulous project named 'Mission Safeguarding' during the pandemic time to ensure safe travel at Kochi Airport, CIAL said in a release. CIAL handled 4.3 million passengers during 2021 and became the third largest airport in the country in the international sector.

■ Yatra Online files papers for IPO

New Delhi: Leading travel services provider Yatra Online Ltd has filed draft papers with markets regulator Sebi for an initial public offering that includes fresh issue of shares worth up to ₹750 crore. The initial public offering (IPO) would also have an offer for sale (OFS) of up to 93,28,358 equity shares. According to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP), the company plans to utilise the net proceeds from the fresh issue for strategic investments, acquisitions and inorganic growth and investment in customer acquisition and other organic growth initiatives.

■ GAIL to consider share buyback

New Delhi: The board of state gas utility GAIL India Ltd will March 31 consider the buyback of shares - the second buyback in as many years. In a stock exchange filing, the nation's top gas transporter and distributor said its board of directors, at the meeting March 31, will also consider and approve the financial results for the quarter and the entire fiscal. "Meeting of the board of directors of the company will be held on Thursday, 31st March 2022, to inter-alia consider buyback of the fully paid-up equity shares of the company," it said. Buying back shares is considered a tax-efficient way of rewarding shareholders. The government owns a 51.80 per cent stake in the company and is likely to participate in the buyback. GAIL had done a share buyback in 2020-21. The government had received ₹747 crore from that share buyback.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY

'Growth looks consistent at 8% for next 20 yrs'

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that India has been a consumption-led economy in the past and the Prime Minister has taken a "path of faith" to increase capital investment despite reluctance from several economists



“We follow the strategy of capital investment for 5-6 years more, we can grow at 8 per cent consistently for the next 20 years. 8 per cent growth in the next 20 years means, every year close to 1-1.5 crore new employment, 30-35 million people coming out of poverty. That's the change we can bring in our society by that thought process”
ASHWINI VAISHNAW | UNION MINISTER

New Delhi, March 26: Indian economy can grow consistently at 8 per cent for the next 20 years leading to the generation of up to 1.5 crore new jobs and bringing out 3.5 crore people out of the poverty every year on the basis of the capital investment strategy of the government, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said Saturday. While addressing the annual general meeting of Assocham, he said that the government has set a target of increasing the capital investment level in the budget from 27 per cent of the GDP to 35 per cent of the GDP over the next few years. "Many of the European countries followed the prescription of the noble laureates and they are in a very bad situation. We decided to

GOVERNMENT IN THE LAST YEAR'S BUDGET MADE A CAPITAL INVESTMENT OF ₹5.5 TRILLION : GDP TARGET SURPASSED THE ₹225 TRILLION TARGET AND REACHED ₹232 TRILLION

NOMINAL GDP AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2021 WAS ₹198 TRILLION AND THE TARGET WAS TO REACH RS 225 TRILLION

choose the path which had three elements- public investment, very focussed consumption and reforms and incentives for private industries," Vaishnaw said. He said Germany, the US, Japan, China and South Korea have followed the same path of capital investments for several years. In this Rs 198 trillion economy, close to Rs 116 trillion came from consumption which is about 59 per cent of the GDP and Rs 53 trillion

"About Rs 18 trillion is the total receipt that the government of India gets on the revenue side," he said. The minister said that the result of Rs 5.5 trillion is now visible and based on the result the government has decided to increase the capital investment to ₹7.5 trillion. "This will add ₹22.5 trillion to the Indian economy," Vaishnaw said. He said that the way our economy is structured ₹13 trillion will go to the MSME sector and close to ₹10 trillion will go as wages and salaries which lead to people spending in several sectors. The minister said that people who are in the brick and mortar industry may have seen that the factory capacity utilisation was around 60-70 per cent a year ago which has now reached about 80-85 (per cent) and in some sectors it has reached 90-95 per cent where people are now planning setting up new facilities.

COMMODITY CRISIS

Toyota to raise prices by up to 4% from April

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 26: Automobile manufacturer Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) Saturday said it will realign the prices of its models, by up to 4 per cent effective from April 1, 2022. According to the company, this hike has resulted due to the rising input cost, including that of raw materials. "As a committed and customer-centric company, TKM has made all conscious efforts to minimise the impact of rising costs on consumers," said TKM Spokesperson in a statement. Friday, luxury automobile manufacturer BMW India said it will increase prices by up to 3.5 per cent across its model range effective from April 1. The price increase will be brought into effect to adjust the material and logistics costs, im-

posed of current geo-political situation and exchange rates, the company had said. Earlier, another luxury carmaker, Mercedes-Benz India had announced an upward revision in price of its entire model range effective from April 1. As per Mercedes-Benz India, the imminent price correction would be in the range of 3 per cent across the entire model range. It said that the constant increase in input prices in addition to an increase in logistics rates have been exerting significant pressure on the overall costs of the company.



Akasa Air to launch ops from June

The airline plans to have 18 aircraft on ground and expects fleet size at 72 in 5 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, March 26: Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed airline Akasa Air is all set to roll out its commercial operation from June, its CEO Vinay Dube has said here. Speaking at an interactive session on the sidelines of Wings India 2022, Dube Friday said the airline hopes to have a fleet of 72 aircraft in the next five years. "We hope to launch our first commercial flight in the month of June. We are working very closely with Ministry of Civil Aviation, DGCA (Director General of Civil Aviation) to get our licensing done," he said replying to query. He further said the airline plans to have 18 aircraft on ground as part of its fleet within 12 subsequent months of launching and then add 12 to 14 every year mak-



ing it 72 in five years. "We are very excited and serve number of people with warmth and affection and kindness," he

further said. To begin with, Akasa Air will have services from metros to Tier II and III cities. There will also be flights from metros to metros so that the aircraft is moved around the system, the CEO had earlier said. Dube had said the airline targets to start overseas flights in the second half of calendar year 2023 once there are 20 planes in its fleet. In October, the airlines got no-objection certificate (NOC) for the operations from the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

IndiGo to launch 100 local flights

New Delhi: Airline major IndiGo will launch 100 flights connecting key domestic metro cities and regional centres, starting from March 27, 2022. Accordingly, the airline will introduce flights on 20 exclusive routes effective March 27, 2022. Besides, it will commence Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) route from Prayagraj-Lucknow on the same day. Furthermore, it plans to re-commence 16 exclusive flights. According to Sanjay Kumar, Chief Strategy and Revenue Officer, IndiGo "These new and recommended routes will not only enhance our domestic connectivity across regions, but also cater to the city-specific travel demand. Reinforcing inter and intra-regional connections between north, east, south, and west, these flights will also promote trade and tourism across the regions. We will continue to offer new routes as per the travel demand on various sectors." At present, IndiGo has a fleet of over 275 aircraft. The airline operates over 1,500 daily flights connecting 73 domestic and 24 international destinations.

Higher local coal output helps reduce imports

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 26: The government Saturday said that with considerable increase in domestic coal production, India has achieved a significant reduction in the import of coal despite surge in power demand. Imports of all grades of non-coking coal has come down to 125.61 million tonne (MT) during April-January period of the on-

going from 163.845 MT during the corresponding months of the FY'20, a decline of about 23.33 per cent. The domestic coal-based power generation up to January 2022 is 815.72 billion units (BU) with an increase of 12.55 per cent over 724.746 BU during the corresponding period of FY'20, the coal ministry said. Imported coal-based power generation which was 78.07 BU during April to January 2020 has reduced by 55 per cent to 35.13 BU during cor-

responding months of current FY'22. The import of non-coking coal primarily used in power sector has decreased by 60.87 per cent from 58.09 MT to 22.73 MT up to

January 22 in comparison to the same period of FY'20. The overall import of coal has also reduced to 173.20 MT during the April-January period of the current fiscal as compared to 207.235 MT during the corresponding period of FY'20, decrease of about 16.42 per cent which has resulted in significant savings of forex reserves this year especially when the coal prices are at a high level in the international market.

Major aviation players join hands for study on SAF

SUSTAINABLE AVIATION FUEL IS A CLEAN SUBSTITUTE FOR FOSSIL JET FUELS. RATHER THAN BEING REFINED FROM PETROLEUM, IT IS PRODUCED FROM SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES SUCH AS WASTE OILS FROM A BIOLOGICAL ORIGIN, AGRI RESIDUES, MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTES, OR ALGAE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, March 26: Airport operators Groupe ADP and GMR Airports, together with Airbus, Axens and Safran, Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to conduct a joint study on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) and its potential in India. The objective of the study, conducted under the lead and coordination of Groupe ADP and GMR Airports and with the expertise of all partners, is to understand and evaluate the demand, the challenges and opportunities of supply, infrastructure and fuelling, as well as to prepare a business case for SAF production and use in India for all kind of aviation pur-

poses. Considering the crucial role of SAF, the aviation players felt the need to evaluate and map the requirements of SAF feedstock availability, fuel production technologies, logistics systems, and airport infrastructural planning at Indian Airports and make it future ready. The joint study on SAF will help the Indian aviation sector in assessing all these critical factors and help them gear up for the future. The study will also review the regulations in place and what could be the necessary evolutions to permit the SAF to take off in the operations. It will also evaluate the business model and feasibility of the implementation of a pilot project in an appropriate location



in India, which could be taken up in a second phase by the partners. The aviation sector globally contributes to 2-3 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions as com-

pared to other sectors. In 2009, the aviation industry collectively agreed under the frame of ATAG (Air Transport Action Group) to the world's first set of sector-specific climate change targets. These targets include carbon neutral

growth from 2020 and achieving 50 per cent reduction in carbon emission by 2050 relative to a 2005 baseline. In 2021, the ATAG commitments have been modified to aim at Net Zero in 2050, in order to be coherent with current global roadmaps defined in the Paris Agreement with the 1.5 degrees Celsius temperature limit scenario. To realise this ambitious goal for the aviation sector, ATAG has identified SAF as one of the most promising options. The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) also stressed the need for massive deployment of SAF in its work dedicated to LTAG (Long Term Aspirational Goals) recently adopted.

KKR OUTPLAY CSK Semis berth at stake for India



Olympians honoured
MUMBAI: The BCCI Saturday felicitated Tokyo Olympians, including gold medallist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, with cash awards ahead of the IPL opener between CSK and KKR here. The Board handed Chopra a cheque of Rs 1 crore while Tokyo Games bronze medal winning boxer Lovlina Borgohain was given Rs 25 lakh for her achievement. The men's hockey team, which had also won a historic bronze medal at the quadrennial multi-sport event in Tokyo, was also handed a combined cheque of Rs 1 crore. Captain Manpreet Singh picked up the cheque from BCCI chief Sourav Ganguly in the presence of secretary Jay Shah. The BCCI had earlier announced cash awards for the medal winners at the Tokyo Olympics.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

CSK opener Ruturaj Gaikwad (0) perished cheaply off pacer Umesh Yadav (2/20). The typical Wankede track, which had a good amount of bounce, did aid the KKR bowlers and they took maximum advantage. Devon Conway (3) and Robin Uthappa (28) then tried to revive the CSK innings, but managed to add only 28 runs for the second wicket. Conway became Yadav's second scalp. Uthappa's stay was cut short, stumped by Sheldon Jackson off Varun Chakravarthy (1/23) in the eighth over as CSK found themselves in a spot of bother at 49/3. They further slipped to 52/4, as a horrible mix-up between Ambati Rayudu (15) and Jadeja led to the former's dismissal. CSK lost half of their side for 61 after Shivam Dube (3) gave a sitter to Sunil Narine at short-midwicket off pacer Andre Russell. Then, Jadeja and Dhoni added 70 runs for the sixth wicket to take CSK to a respectable total.

Christchurch, March 26: India will go all out to brush off an inconsistent run and seal a semifinal berth in the Women's World Cup when they play South Africa in a do-or-die match here Sunday. So far in the tournament, the 2017 runners-up haven't fired in the manner they would have like to. With three wins and as many losses India, who are in the fifth spot with six points in the overall standings, find themselves in a must-win situation heading into their final league match. Their semifinal chances were dented when West Indies, who are also vying to advance to the knockout stage, and South Africa's match was washed out with the former moving up to seven points earlier this week. A win Sunday will see India advance to the last four, and a point from the game will also work for the Mithali Raj-led side, as they have a superior NRR (+0.768) than West Indies (-0.890). In case India lose to South Africa, their only hope of advancing to the semifinals will be if England, who have a better NRR (+0.778), also lose their last league stage

match to Bangladesh and finish on a lower NRR. That seems unlikely, though. But the 'Women in Blue' would want to hold all the cards and also get a two-match winning momentum going into the semifinals. India's inconsistent batting came to the fore yet again in an otherwise 110-run win against Bangladesh, and skipper Raj would be keen to improve on that aspect against a challenging South African bowling attack. "Tomorrow is a crucial game and everyone knows that. They are all ready to give their 100 per cent. Whoever goes out to bat goes out thinking we have to get partnerships and back each other," Shafali Verma said at the pre-match press conference. "We want good partnerships in tomorrow's match as a batting unit. The bowling and fielding has become quite good. We have improved as a team," she added. Raj herself has been struggling with the willow. She has four single digit scores in the tournament. Potentially playing her last game for India should they not make the semis, the 39-year-old veteran would be eager to get some runs under her belt, and ensure that her team makes the cut.

Smriti Mandhana, barring the century against West Indies, has also looked scratchy. Shafali got some much-needed runs against Bangladesh while Yastika Bhatia has slotted herself perfectly at No.3. Vice-captain Harmanpreet Kaur has been India's most consistent performer with the bat while all-rounders Pooja Vastrakar and Sneha Rana have shown they can be counted on to score quick runs down the order. The batters will need to fire as a group to get the better of South Africa who have only lost one match in the tournament. The bowling department, which has looked lacklustre at times, put up a much-improved show against Bangladesh. The move to bring in spinner Poonam Yadav in place of pacer Meghna Singh paid off for India. However, it remains to be seen if India persist with two pacers, three spinners strategy at the Hagley Oval, which has a balanced track where the bowlers will have to be disciplined with their line and lengths. South Africa, on the other hand, have already qualified for the semifinals. They sit second in the overall standings, behind Australia.

TODAY'S MATCHES

DC v MI
Time: 03:30 pm

PBKs v RCB
Time: 07:30 pm

Telecast: Star Sports channels & Hotstar

Earlier, KKR dished out a clinical bowling show to restrict CSK to 131/5. CSK crossed the 100-run mark thanks to Dhoni and skipper Ravindra Jadeja (26 n o). Dhoni's last IPL fifty was 84 not out versus Royal Challengers Bangalore April 21, 2019.

Mumbai, March 26: A clinically all-round Kolkata Knight Riders beat defending champions Chennai Super Kings by six wickets as MS Dhoni's first tournament fifty (50 n o, 38b, 7x4, 1x6) in three years went in vain in the IPL lung opener here Saturday. KKR, who lost to CSK in the last season summit clash, chased down the target with nine balls to spare, with out of favour India batter Ajinkya Rahane top-scoring with a 34-ball 44 (6x4, 1x6). Rahane was in good touch as he hit six fours and one six during

his knock. He shared 43 runs for the opening wicket with Venkatesh Iyer (16) and that was the highest partnership for KKR in the end. Nitish Rana (21), new captain Shreyas Iyer (20 n o) and Sam Billings (25) made useful contributions to give KKR a winning start to the tournament. Iyer thus started his KKR captaincy with a win while his counterpart Ravindra Jadeja, who took the place of the iconic Dhoni as CSK skipper, began his stint with a loss. The skipper hit the winning runs, a boundary, as KKR reached 133/4 in 18.3 overs. Dwayne Bravo (3/20) was the pick of the bowlers for CSK.

F1 race on despite attack Swiatek claims top rank among women

Jeddah (Saudi Arabia), March 26: Formula One said its race in Saudi Arabia will go ahead as scheduled Sunday despite attacks on the kingdom by Yemen's Houthi rebels. The announcement came a day after the rebels attacked an oil depot located about 11 kilometers (seven miles) from the F1 circuit. The attack happened while the first practice was taking place, and the 20 drivers later met Friday night in talks that stretched well past 2 a.m. To discuss safety concerns. In a statement, F1 and governing body FIA confirmed Saturday that "following discussions with all the teams and drivers," the grand prix "will continue as scheduled." "Following the widely reported incident that took place in Jeddah on Friday, there has been extensive discussion between all stakeholders, the Saudi government authorities and security agencies who have given full and detailed assurances that the event is secure," the statement said. F1 added that it has been agreed "with all stakeholders to maintain a clear and open dialogue throughout the event and for the future." There was a third and final practice session last Saturday scheduled to start at 5 pm Local time with qualifying set to start under



floorlights at 8 pm. The top three drivers speak to the media after qualifying and team principals were set for their media duties as scheduled in the early afternoon. The Houthis acknowledged the attacks Friday evening and Saudi Arabia state TV called it a "hostile operation." The Jeddah oil depot erupted in flames when attacked during Friday's first practice session. It caused a raging fire that rattled the drivers enough to hold extraordinary talks regarding F1's presence in Saudi Arabia. Many drivers expressed their

concerns about racing in the region and Saudi Arabia's human rights record when F1 ran its inaugural event at the circuit last December. Now back at the track a little over three months later, tensions are heightened amidst the attacks. Conversations between drivers, team principals and F1 chief executive Stefano Domenicali late into Friday night centered on safety and security conditions. Friday's second practice was delayed 15 minutes because of an earlier driver meeting that included Mohammed Ben Sulayem, the newly-elected FIA president.

Miami Gardens (US), March 26: Iga Swiatek started her week by deciding that she wanted to set her sights on becoming the No.1 player in the world, without knowing how long that quest would take. A few days and one surprising retirement later, mission accomplished. Women's tennis has a new name atop its rankings, a 20-year-old who — now that Ashleigh Barty has retired and asked to vacate her No. 1 spot on the world list — becomes the first Polish player to hold that distinction. Swiatek's ascension was clinched Friday night with a 6-2, 6-0 win over Viktorija Golubic of Switzerland in the second round of the Miami Open. When the tournament ends and the rankings are updated, Barty will be removed and Swiatek officially will move into the top spot no matter what happens the rest of the way in Miami. Swiatek becomes the 28th different woman to hold the No.1 ranking since the computerized system debuted in November 1975. Her rise has been steady and constant; she ended 2016 ranked No.903, cracked the top 500 for the first time in 2018, ended 2020 ranked No.17, then was No.9 when last year ended. Barty revealed her retirement decision Wednesday, and as part of that said she wanted to be removed



from the rankings. She's held the top spot for 113 consecutive weeks, tying Chris Evert for the fourth-longest such streak ever. And Barty, the two-time defending champion in Miami, would have kept the top spot after this tournament ended even if Swiatek won the title. But her decision to retire and step out of the rankings opened the door for either Swiatek or Paula Badosa, the No.5 seed in Miami and the only other player who had a mathematical chance of getting the top spot. Badosa won her second-round in Miami Friday, topping Marie Bouzkova 7-5, 7-5 in a match that

ended shortly before Swiatek took the court. Coco Gauff is one of the few exceptions. The 14th-seeded American, whose home is about a 45-minute drive north from where she's playing this event, got past Wang Qiang of China 7-5, 6-4 Friday — avenging a first-round loss to her in the Australian Open earlier this year. No.16 Jessica Pegula felt right at home too, even though the tournament is held on the grounds where the NFL's Miami Dolphins practice and play — and her parents, Terry and Kim Pegula, just happen to own the Dolphins' AFC East rival Buffalo Bills. Pegula had little trouble beating 2018 Miami

Open winner Sloane Stephens 6-1, 6-4. No.4 Maria Sakkari of Greece, No.10 Jelena Ostapenko of Latvia, No.20 Elise Mertens of Belgium, No.24 Sorana Cirstea of Romania, and No.29 Liudmila Samsonova of Russia all lost second-round matches Friday. Their defeats meant 16 seeded women have now lost their opening matches at the tournament. Another four seeded women have withdrawn with either injuries or ailments, meaning no more than 12 of the original 32 seeds will get to the third round that starts Saturday. Shelby Rogers of the US used 15 aces — and saved nine of the 10 break points she faced — to beat Ostapenko, 6-3, 7-6(7-0). It was Rogers' second win over Ostapenko this month, after also topping her in a second-round matchup at Indian Wells. In men's second-round play, a pair of seeded American men were ousted. No.16 Reilly Opelka retired from his match against Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo with a shoulder injury, and Hugo Gaston knocked out No. 20 John Isner 7-6(7-5), 6-4. No.2 seed Alexander Zverev was tested but topped 166th-ranked Borna Coric 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, and said getting more aggressive as the match went along was key. Fan favorite Nick Kyrgios rolled past No.5 Andrey Rublev 6-3, 6-0, and No.9 Jannik Sinner dug way deep to hold off Emil Ruusuvuori 6-4, 3-6, 7-6(10-8).

Sindhu, Prannoy enter Swiss Open title clash

Miami, March 26: Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy dished out scintillating performances to make their way to the women's and men's singles finals respectively at the Swiss Open Super 300 badminton tournament here Saturday. World No.7 Sindhu prevailed 21-18, 15-21, 21-19 over Thailand's Supanida Katethong in a 79-minute women's singles semifinal to make her second successive final after Prannoy eked out a hard-fought 21-19, 19-21, 21-18 win over Indonesia's World No.5 Anthony Sinisuka Ginting for his first summit clash in five years. "Yesssss! Finals of the Swiss Open! Quite a tough one against

Ginting tonight! Happy to get that win today. One more to go. Let's get it," Prannoy tweeted after the match. Sindhu, seeded second, will face another Thai player and fourth seed Busanan Ongbamrunphan in the summit clash on Sunday, while Prannoy, who had last won the US Open in 2017, will take on either compatriot Kidambi Srikanth or Indonesia's Jonatan Christie in the men's singles final, also Sunday. The 26-year-old from Hyderabad will start as favourite against Busanan, whom she has beaten an overwhelming 15 times in 16 meetings so far. Sindhu and World No.29 Supanida had shared the spoils in the two meetings this year and the Indian showed great nerves against the fighting Thai to come out unscathed Saturday.

Bhubaneswar hosts Nat'l Para Athletics C'ships

Bhubaneswar, March 26: The capital city of Odisha gears up for one of the biggest para-sports events ever to be held in India as the 20th National Para Athletics Championships begins March 28 at two different venues — Kalinga Stadium and KIT Stadium — here. The three-day event, which will conclude March 30, will see a total of 1120 athletes from across the country competing in a total of 176 events. Twenty seven athletes, including four in the wheelchair categories, will represent the host state. Uttar Pradesh has the highest representation with 147 athletes while Rajasthan and Gujarat take the joint second slot with 107 athletes each. Interestingly, more than 25 per cent of the athletes expected to compete in the event are women.



Deepa Malik (C) speaks during the pre-event press conference in Bhubaneswar

The President of the Paralympics Committee of India (PCI) Deepa Malik, who hogged the limelight when she won silver in shotput at 2016 Paralympics, was delighted with the number of participants. "We have close to 1200 athletes

flying down to Bhubaneswar for the event. What is pleasing to note is the fact that about 25-30 per cent of these athletes are female," said the Padma Shri awardee. The event will also see a whopping 138 wheelchair athletes in ac-

tion. "We are also expecting more than 130 wheelchair athletes in action during the course of the event. Arranging for the travel of close to 130 wheelchair-bound people and ensuring complete accessibility is not easy and I believe we have managed to pull off something wonderful," the first Indian woman to win a Paralympics medal said. Besides the 138 wheelchair athletes, the 20th National Para Athletics Championships will also see a total of 758 physically disabled athletes, 153 visually impaired athletes, 44 athletes affected by cerebral palsy, 7 athletes with intellectual disabilities and 20 athletes of short stature. The National Championships will also witness the presence of 9 National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) officials, to keep a check on all the top athletes during the course of the four-day event.

Tvesa, Drall make cut at Joburg meet

Johannesburg, March 26: India's Tvesa Malik went one shot better than her first round with an even par 73 at the Joburg Ladies Open here. Alongside Amandeep Drall, Tvesa was one of the only two Indians to make the cut as she was 1-over 147 and in tied 16th place. Amandeep (78-73) fought back well after a disappointing first round. Amandeep, a multiple winner on the domestic Tour in India, was tied 48th. The other Indians in the field — Vani Kapoor (76-78), Diksha Dagar (79-77) and Siddhi Kapoor (84-78) — missed the cut, which fell at 7-over. Tvesa had one birdie and one bogey on either side of the course.