



UNIQUE APPROACH

Actor Raima Sen says she loves to create new characters instead of doing method acting

LEISURE P2



QUAKE TOLL RISES TO 21K

The confirmed death toll from the deadliest quake in Turkey and Syria in decades stands at 21,000

INTERNATIONAL P10



INDIA IN COMMAND

Rohit Sharma's century and half centuries by Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel put India in control of the Nagpur Test

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

Ex-CS Bijay Patnaik joins Congress

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar: Odisha's former chief secretary (CS) Bijay Kumar Patnaik Friday joined the Congress in New Delhi and vowed to work for the 're-establishment of democracy in the state. Patnaik, who retired in 2013, joined the grand old party in the presence of AICC general secretary KC Venugopal, Odisha Congress in-charge A Chellakumar and party's state unit chief Sarat Pattanayak. "I have joined politics with an aim to cleanse the system in Odisha, where people are currently feeling helpless under the prevailing governance model," he said.

'Cow Hug Day' notice withdrawn

New Delhi: The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) Friday said it has withdrawn the appeal to celebrate February 14 as 'Cow Hug Day' following directions from the government amid widespread criticism on social media. The withdrawal of the appeal comes just a day after Union Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Parshottam Rupala said it will be good if people respond positively to the call given by the board to celebrate February 14 as 'Cow Hug Day'. February 14 is observed as Valentine's Day.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We are lucky we don't have any loans. EMIs have gone up again

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	60682.70 ↓ 123.52
NIFTY	17856.50 ↓ 36.95
DOLLAR	82.64 ↓ ₹0.11
EURO	88.13 ↓ ₹0.44
GOLD	₹56,702 ↓ ₹150
SILVER	₹66,806 ↓ ₹224

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	34.2°C	32.4°C
MAX	34.2°C	32.4°C
MIN	20.2°C	19.5°C
Humidity	83%	91%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Mainly clear sky	



PREZ IN CITY: President Droupadi Murmu, who is on a two-day visit to state, being felicitated by Jnanaprabha Mission's founder Paramahansa Prajnanananda during the foundation day celebration of the mission at Utkal Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Friday. Governor Ganeshi Lal and Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan are also seen (MORE P3)

Gehlot's budget faux pas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Feb 10: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot Friday read excerpts of the previous budget instead of Budget 2023-24. The major goof-up led to an uproar in the House and an apology from the chief minister who said it was human error. There were two adjournments with the Opposition BJP alleging that the budget had been leaked and the presentation be postponed to another date. The House was first adjourned for half-an-hour within a few minutes of the budget presentation beginning and then again for 15 minutes. When the House reassembled after the first adjournment, Speaker CP Joshi expunged the proceedings from 11am to 11.42am. He said whatever happened was unfortunate. Human errors, he said, happen and are rectified. When the House reassembled after the second adjournment, the chief minister said, "I am feeling sorry. An extra page was added by



mistake. It was human error." Incorrect figures were presented when Vasundhara Raje was chief minister and that were also rectified, he said. Raje, who was present in the House, hit back, saying what Gehlot had done was sheer carelessness. "Koi bhi CM is tarah se kaagaz nahin laate. Aisa hoga toh Rajasthan kya hoga (No chief minister comes with papers like this. What will happen to the state if the chief minister does something like this)," she said. The uproar ended after the chief minister's apologies and the budget speech began after that.

Robust mechanism must to protect investors: SC

The apex court seeks views of the Centre and SEBI on PILs alleging exploitation of investors and 'artificial crashing' of the Adani group's stock value following Hindenburg report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: Concerned over protecting the interests of Indian investors, the Supreme Court Friday favoured creating a robust mechanism to regulate the stock market and sought views of the Centre and market regulator SEBI on PILs alleging exploitation of innocent investors and 'artificial crashing' of the Adani Group's stock value. A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud allayed the apprehension and told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to convey to the officials of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) that it was not 'planning any witch hunt'.

The bench, also comprising justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala, sought inputs from the Ministry of Finance and others on various issues, including on making the regulatory mechanism robust to protect the interests of investors in the market where capital flow is seamless in modern times. "This is just an open dialogue. They have brought an issue before the court. What is of concern is how do we ensure the protection of Indian investors? What happened here was short-selling. Probably SEBI is also doing its investigation. Please tell your officers also this is no witch hunt that we are planning to do..." it said. "How do we ensure that going in future, we have robust mechanisms? Because today, capital is moving in and out of India seamlessly. How do we ensure in future that Indian investors are protected? Everybody is in the market now," it said. During the brief hearing, the court observed that the PILs say that the loss



of over Rs 10 lakh crore. "How do we ensure that they are protected? How do we ensure that this does not happen in future? What role do we envisage for SEBI? For example, in a different context, you have circuit breakers," it said. The bench suggested forming a committee of domain experts and others, besides putting in place 'robust practices to protect investors'. The Solicitor General, appearing for SEBI, said the market regulator and other statutory bodies were doing the needful. The court said it was 'just thinking aloud' and not making any observation on the merits of the case as the 'stock markets usually run on sentiments'. "We have indicated to the Solicitor General the concerns with regard to ensuring that the regulatory mechanisms within the country are duly strengthened so as to ensure that Indian investors are protected against certain

volatility, the kind of which was witnessed in the recent two weeks," it said in the order. It would require due assessment of existing regulatory framework and the need for strengthening regulatory framework in the interest of the investors and the stable operations of the securities market, the bench said. "We have also suggested to the Solicitor General if they (Centre, SEBI and others) are willing to accede to the suggestion for a committee. If the Union of India is inclined to accept the suggestion, necessary submissions can be urged on the constitution of the committee," it said. The law officer assured that SEBI was closely monitoring the situation. "We clarify that the above are not intended to be any reflection on the discharge of its statutory functions by the SEBI or any statutory authority," the bench said. It then listed the two PILs, seeking various reliefs including a probe into the Hindenburg report, for hearing February 13. One of the PILs, filed by lawyer Vishal Tiwari, sought a direction to the Centre to constitute a committee monitored by a retired apex court judge to inquire and investigate into the Hindenburg Research report which has made a slew of allegations against the business conglomerate led by industrialist Gautam Adani. Another PIL, filed by advocate ML Sharma, seeks prosecution of short-seller Nathan Anderson of the US-based Hindenburg Research and his associates in India and the US for allegedly exploiting innocent investors and the 'artificial crashing' of the Adani Group's stock value in the market. **Contd...P4**

HC stays SI recruitment



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Feb 10: The Orissa High Court Friday ordered an interim stay on the Odisha Police Recruitment Board's (OPRB) advertisement of 2021 for recruitment of sub-inspectors (SIs) of police. A division bench of the HC comprising Justices Savitri Ratho and Subhasis Talapatra gave the order while hearing a plea challenging the January 15, 2022 notification on availing age relaxation. The HC also issued a notice to the state government asking as to why the recruitment notice should not be quashed. The court scheduled the matter for hearing March 9 this year. The OPRB had invited applications for 474 SI posts in 2021 on contractual basis in Odisha Police under Home department. The minimum qualification for the SI post was graduation, while that of the constable (communication) post was Plus II with a diploma in computer ap-

29 Sambalpur lawyers get bail

CUTTACK: The Orissa HC Friday granted conditional bail to 29 lawyers of Sambalpur Bar Association, who were arrested for vandalism at the district judge court in Sambalpur in December last year. Granting them bail, the HC said the advocates shall not hold any public meeting relating to the case at hand or post any opinion, views or remarks in print and electronic media, including the social media. They have been barred from glorifying or publicising their release. The HC had heard the bail pleas of the arrested lawyers Thursday and reserved its verdict. Sources said during an agitation demanding a permanent bench of Orissa HC in the western Odisha, the lawyers allegedly barged into the Sambalpur district court complex, broke into the judge's chamber, vandalised property and threatened judicial officers December 12 last year, inviting the Supreme Court's wrath in the process. The SC had criticised the state police for its 'failure' to prevent violence at the court during the agitation. The Bar Council of India (BCI) had also suspended the 'license of practice' of many of the agitating lawyers of Sambalpur Bar Association in connection with the vandalism.

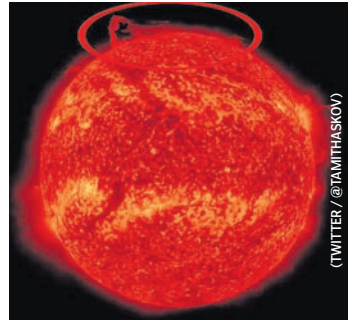
VANDALISM ON COURT PREMISES

plication. Initially, candidates of 21-25 years were allowed to apply however; later age relaxation was allowed. Although many aspirants had applied for the job, the recruitment process could not make any progress due to Covid restrictions.

Piece of sun breaks off; netizens stunned

AGENCIES

Washington, Feb 10: Scientists and netizens were left puzzled after material broke off of the sun's surface and formed a tornado-like whirl around its north pole. Tamitha Skov, a space weather forecaster, tweeted the remarkable phenomenon which was recently captured by NASA on the James Webb Space Telescope. "Talk about Polar Vortex!" she wrote. "Material from a northern prominence just broke away from the main filament & is now circulating in a massive polar vortex around the north pole of our Star. Implications for understanding the Sun's atmospheric dynamics above 55° here cannot be overstated!" Quoting



experts, the New York Post reported that such unusual activity typically occurs at the sun's 55th degree latitude once in every 11-year solar cycle. A prominence is a large, bright feature that extends outward from the sun's surface.

It's very curious. There is a big 'why' question around it. Why does it only move toward the pole one time and then disappears and then comes back, magically, three or four years later in exactly the same region? **SCOTT MCINTOSH** | **DY DIRECTOR AT NATIONAL CENTER FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH IN COLORADO**

Other filament tear-aways have been observed in the past — not like this, though. Solar physicist Scott McIntosh, the deputy director at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Colorado,

told Space.com that researchers are not sure as to what causes such a unique event. "Once every solar cycle, it forms at the 55 degree latitude and it starts to march up to the solar poles," McIntosh said. "It's very curious. There is a big 'why' question around it. Why does it only move toward the pole one time and then disappears and then comes back, magically, three or four years later in exactly the same region?" While experts admit it probably has something to do with the sun's magnetic field, the rest remains a mystery due to humanity's limited view of its star. Scientists can only view the sun from the 'ecliptic plane', or the geometric plane that contains the orbit of Earth. **Contd...P4**

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leisure



WHEN MISCHA BARTON WAS TOLD TO SLEEP WITH LEO DICAPRIO

Notting Hill actress Mischa Barton has claimed that she was told to sleep with Leonardo DiCaprio when she was 19 and he was 30. The actress had made a revelation in an old video which has now emerged from the dark depths of the Internet, reports *Mirror.co.uk*.

CARDI B SAYS SHE WANTS TO STYLE OTHER CELEBRITIES

The chart-topping rap star Cardi B, who is one of the world's best-selling music artists, has said that she'd love to style other celebrities. Cardi, who is known for having a bold fashion sense, wrote on the micro-blogging Twitter: "I really want to style other celebs."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You will understand that being generous with your knowledge is a very satisfying thing. Ganesh says when you give something, it will be returned to you nine-fold in the future. Since you have decided to be more open-minded and considerate, you will gain a lot by way of respect.

TAURUS
Ganesh promises you a bright, eventful day ahead. The day is likely to commence with a series of important meetings and conferences. Later, you will be motivated to take up something extraordinary, something challenging and rewarding. You are assured of success in whatever you take up this day.

GEMINI
You face a hectic and challenging day up ahead. You will be busy trying to complete long pending projects at the office and in trying to fulfill all your responsibilities. This will leave you feeling tired and listless. You will feel at ease during the later half of the day and will be able to indulge in some fun and frolic.

CANCER
For some reason you will remain very alert, in fact quite hyperactive, during the day. Do not pay much heed, if your colleagues find you and your approach a bit hysterical. Relax, though! The same people will applaud you and your efforts, later in the evening. And, luckily for you the excitement will not end here.

LEO
To fulfill your stated goals and aspirations you will work harder than usual today. You will take on more responsibility, and will garner praise for your business acumen. Going out to lunch or dinner with friends is a distinct possibility and you will in all probability generously offer to bear all the resulting expenses, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You will be unstoppable today, no one will be able to defeat you in any task. However, Ganesh says you will spend most of your time today running after illusions. Unknowingly, you may attract unwanted anxiety related to current work.

LIBRA
Today, it is rather unlikely that you will get whatever you wish for. Internal strife with people around you may dominate your workplace, but you shall be able to negotiate this tough state of affairs with deftness, predicts Ganesh. Patience is your key to get over psychological turmoil.

SCORPIO
Flaunt your sunny side up as the day begins on a cheerful note. Ganesh says, you will enjoy cordial relations with people around you. Overall, the day seems to be good. You spend quality time with your beloved. Passion and love may rejuvenate your love life.

SAGITTARIUS
Cash transactions will 'flow' your way. Money comes easy to itching palms, says Ganesh, and you will enjoy the green scene as you take stock of your finances with precision. Beware of people with a negative attitude as it might inflict worry on your fortunes, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
You're not somebody who would do something just for the sake of doing it. In fact, your desire to achieve your dreams will lead you towards putting your best foot forward and probably setting up a new business venture.

AQUARIUS
Your creativity will come to the fore today. Music will give an outlet to your emotions and creativity, says Ganesh. You will aim for the bull's eye, and to everyone's surprise, you'll hit it, too. The day is expected to go well; however, some unforeseen events in the evenings may spoil your mood, and may even create some confusion.

PISCES
With Ganesh's blessings you will be successful in executive meetings and appointments with high level bureaucrats. You will make contacts with the right people due to luck being on your side today. This will directly affect your capabilities and fame at work.

'Don't believe in method acting'

Kolkata: Actress Raima Sen feels there is pressure before the release of every film regardless of the platform it arrives on. While the fate of a theatrical release hinges on its box office collection, a movie launching directly on a streamer has to compete for views with global content available on the viewer's fingertips.

"On a digital platform, there is so much choice, so it has to be an incredible film to hold on to a certain audience. There is a lot of pressure. Also, people are very brutal with their opinion," said the actress whose latest Bengali web series *Roktokorobi* has been well appreciated by the audience.

Speaking about how she preps up for the diverse roles she plays onscreen, Raima said she doesn't follow a set of processes to prepare for a role. "I personally love creating characters. I do a bit of background work but it's all in the limitation of what my director wants me to do. I have realised there is no method to filmmaking as an actor. The

method is not having one and kind of discovering what you want every time you play a new character," adds the *Parineeta* actress.



Shamita: Didn't get meaningful roles

Mumbai: Shamita Shetty recently opened up about how her career didn't take off despite making her debut with YRF's *Mohabbatein*. According to her, although she wanted to explore, the industry didn't offer her meaningful roles.

In an interview with a news portal, the actress said that she started with Yash Raj Films' *Mohabbatein*. However, she revealed that after this, the industry failed to offer the kind of films that she expected to get. Shamita added that when she made her debut, she didn't know how much she loved acting. She realised this when she was shooting for *Zeher*. She became greedier for work and wanted to discover more, she said.

The actress went on to say that between each of the projects she did, there was a gap of two to three years and every project was termed as her comeback. According to her, the industry didn't give her more so her career didn't pan out the way she expected it to.

Shamita is seen in *Tenant* which hit the theatres Friday. The film was initially slated to release in 2020 but got pushed ahead owing to the pandemic.

DHAULI-KALINGA MAHOTSAV KICKS OFF Odissi, Bharatnatyam enthrall viewers

Bhubaneswar: The 19th Dhauli-Kalinga Mahotsav jointly organised by Department of Odia Language, Literature & Culture, Government of Odisha and Orissa Dance Academy in association with Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and Art Vision began at the foothill of Dhauli Shanti Stupa, Bhubaneswar Friday.

The first programme of the inaugural evening was Odissi dance by dancers of Rudrakshya Foundation led by Guru Bichitrnanda Swain.

They presented Kaali Krishna set to Raga Malika and Tala Malika.

Exploring into a deep connection between Krishna and Kali, this beautiful composition explored the similarities and contrasts between Krishna and Kali. Music for the dance was composed by Guru Ramahari Das, Rhythm Composition was done by Guru Dhaneswar Swain, dance was choreographed by Guru Bichitrnanda Swain and notation was done by Guru K. Ramarao Patra.

Second programme of the evening was Bharatnatyam dance by Parshwanath Upadhye and Group (Punjab Dance Company, Bangalore). Their first presentation was Akrti. It explored the connection between the 'Roopa' and 'Aroopa', the form and the formless, followed by an evergreen Tillana of Dr. Balamurali Krishna in Raga Kuntala Varali.

Evening's last presentation was Kalaripayattu & Mayurbhanj Chhau by Carolina Prada & Group (Kalarigram, Auroville, Puducheri). They presented Veeran, the story of a warrior, who lives a life of transformation and totality, goes beyond societal norms, to become DIVINE and a LEGEND. The dance was choreographed by Akshay Shekhar while the music was composed by Subhashree Parthasarathy. PNN



A performance by Rudrakshya Foundation



Dignitaries lighting the ceremonial lamp

Sara's gesture towards fan wins netizens' hearts

Mumbai: Sara Ali Khan was recently spotted at the airport as she returned from Udaipur with her mother Amrita Singh. While she was smiling and waving at the paps, she had little fans approach her and get pictures clicked with her.

In a paparazzo video, a little fan can be seen approaching the actress, when she informs Sara that they share a name. Sara is then seen humbly listening to her fans and clicking photos with them.

Reacting to the post, several fans appreciated her nature as well as her beauty. A fan wrote, "She is so down to earth," while another commented, "Sara is so simple yet so elegant."

The actress is loved by her fans for her cute and quirky shayaris and captions at the same time the fitness routine she shares. She manages to connect with the youth, making her the most promising actress of her generation.

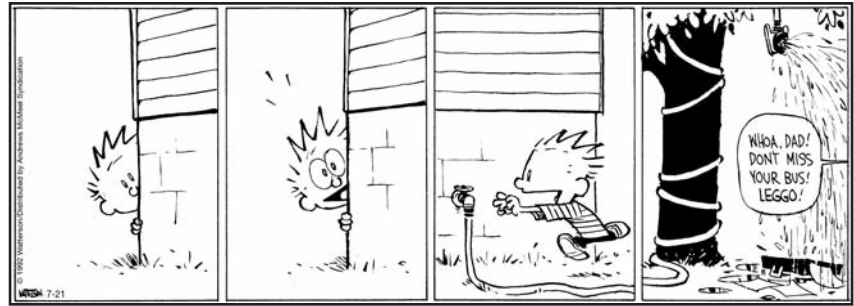
Sara will next be seen in Laxman Utekar's rom-com, the thriller *Gaslight*, Usha Mehta's biopic, *Ae Watan Mere Watan* and the action drama *Mission Eagle*.



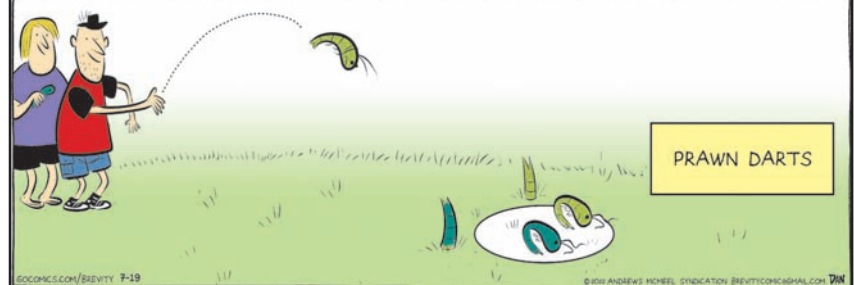
PEANUTS



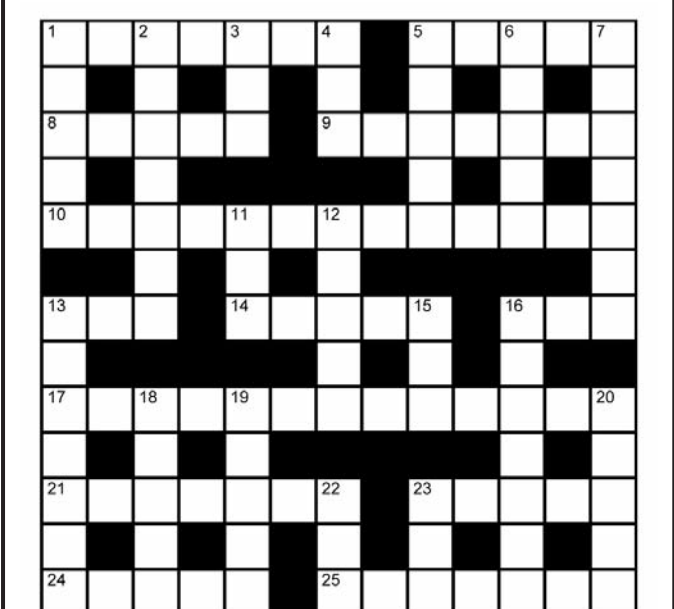
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



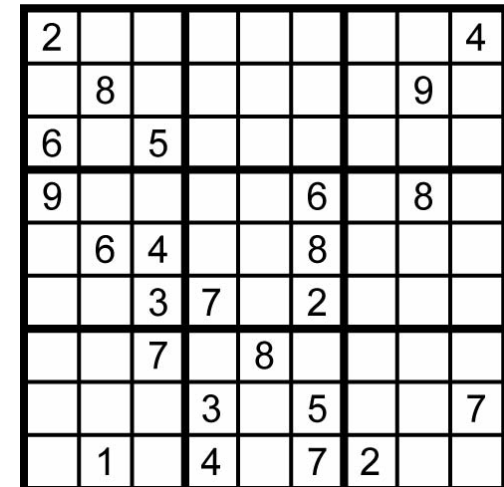
FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Words to a sad sack (5,2)
 - 5 Tightwad
 - 8 Pie or tart ingredient
 - 9 Withdraws from active participation
 - 10 Automobile alternatives (5,8)
 - 13 Beam of light
 - 14 String
 - 16 Public transport
 - 17 Donkey or ox, for example (5,2,6)
 - 21 Crisp smooth lustrous fabric
 - 23 Harmonise
 - 24 Disallows
 - 25 Shellfish
 - 6 Attend to
 - 7 Withstands
 - 11 Furrow
 - 12 Precipice
 - 13 Boast after winning (3,2,2)
 - 15 Water, in France
 - 16 Doctor's order, at times (3,4)
 - 18 Attach
 - 19 Jaunts
 - 20 Low-water mark
 - 22 Suffer
 - 23 Baby's apron
- Down**
- 1 Abyss
 - 2 Feeling one's pain
 - 3 Fish eggs
 - 4 Equality
 - 5 Slogan

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

P	A	G	E	G	A	R	M	E	N	T	S
R	A	M	A	T	E	U	R	A	O	L	
C	S	T	O	C	I	E					
I	O	D	A	E							
C	A	J	O	L	E	R	E	F	L	E	X
E	O	F	M	E							
R	U	M	O	U	R	P	A	N	I	C	
S	T	I	N	G	E						
T	I	N	G	E							
O	A	L	L	I	Y	A	E				
W	E	L	L	T	O	D	O	I	D	E	S

SUDOKU

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

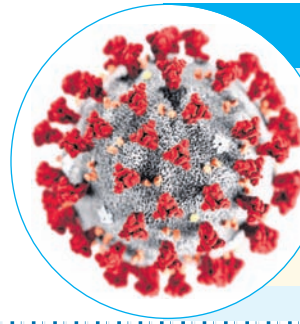
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



VISIBILITY BLUES

A thick blanket of fog enveloped the Capital city Friday morning



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	677,154,884	649,670,113	6,779,415
India	44,683,862	44,151,315	530,750
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

Gender disparity being shattered: Prez

It is a great achievement of our democracy that for the first time the number of woman parliamentarians has crossed 100, says President Droupadi Murmu



President Droupadi Murmu felicitating RD University VC Aparajita Chowdhury

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: President Droupadi Murmu Friday noted that women have excelled in every sphere of life, be it politics, space science, technology, sports, literature and music. Women have proved that they are capable of shoulder-

ing any responsibility, involving the society as well as the country as a whole, she said, addressing the second convocation ceremony of her alma mater, the Rama Devi Women's University (RDWU), here. Speaking on the occasion, the President recalled her good old days she spent in the university (erst-

while RD Women's College) as a student. She said that she had studied in this institution for four years after completing her schooling at Unit-2 Girls' High School in Bhubaneswar. The love and affection of the teachers of that time is unforgettable. She said that she is still in touch with many of her classmates. This great educational institution has always been a source of inspiration in her life. Murmu said that they should feel proud as girl students as they represent the women community that has been playing an important role since ages. From management of family to governance of the country, from literature, music and dance to leadership, women have proved their mettle in every field. "Women empowerment is no longer a slogan. It has become a reality to a large extent. Girls are not only at par with our boys, but in some fields

they are even ahead of the boys," said the President. "It is a great achievement of our democracy that for the first time the number of woman parliamentarians has crossed 100. This is a good sign for the future of our democracy," she added. She advised students to keep faith in their abilities. She said that after leaving the university campus, they would enter another university - the University of Life. To be successful in the University of Life, they must be aware of their strengths and abilities. Murmu said India aims to become a developed nation in the next 25 years. "We all believe that in 2047, when India will celebrate the centenary of its independence, it will be one of the most prosperous nations in the world. It is the responsibility of the young generation to take India to the pinnacle of development during these 25 years," she said.

DISCUSSION ON UNION BUDGET 2023-24 BJD raises concern over social sector allocations

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Feb 10: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Friday appreciated the Union budget 2023-24 presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman February 1 but raised apprehensions over the allocation to social sectors. Raja Sabha MP Sujet Kumar, during the discussion on the budget, lauded the Finance Minister for laying the blueprint to make the country a \$5 trillion economy. He also appreciated the allocation for e-courts and said that this will reduce the usage of paper in the judiciary. He applauded the announcement of a total outlay of ₹19,700 crore (\$2.3 billion) for the green hydrogen mission in the country and said that this will reduce the country's dependence on fossil fuels. Announcement of mil-

let mission and initiative of PVTG were also appreciated by Kumar. However, the party raised apprehensions over social sector allocations. Kumar said that he is very upset that education is not one of the Sapt Rishis, the FM mentioned in the beginning of her budget speech February 1. He was also not happy with the ₹1.2 lakh crore allocations made to the education sector in the budget and asserted that there is a need to pay more attention to the education sector. Meanwhile, he requested the Union government to revise the

guidelines for setting up of Eklavya Model Residential Schools. BJD MP Amar Patnaik highlighted the Odisha model of governance and said that the state economy has grown faster than national economy. He said the state government has made seven separate budgets for agricultural, climate, nutrition and child etc. He also flagged constant neglect of the Centre towards the state by not giving adequate funds for developing disaster resilient infrastructure and special focus states. Sitharaman asserted that the Centre has never neglected Odisha. She was responding to Amar Patnaik's remarks.



Yoga pulled me out of agony: Murmu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: President Droupadi Murmu Friday said yoga had helped her when she was in mental and physical agony, while asserting that its regular practice could help people achieve success in all spheres of life.

Policemen on duty sans arms



many, but sources stated the top police brass was not taking any chances after the assassination of Naba Das. President Murmu arrived at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here on a two-day state visit. She took part in an event organised by Jnanaprabha Mission at Utkal Mandap and later she graced the 11nd Convocation Ceremony of Rama Devi University. Pictures from the venues, Utkal Mandap and Rama Devi University, clearly show that none of the police officers on duty were carrying their service revolvers. Sources claimed that this happened due to instructions from the Commissionerate Police. On the other hand, police sources claimed that security arrangements were made as per the 'Blue Book' guidelines. "It is clearly mentioned as to who should carry firearms during the visit of VVIPs. Our officers were carrying arms wherever required. Normally, officers in charge of crowd control do not carry firearms," DCP Prateek Singh said.

BHUBANESWAR: In the aftermath of the shooting of former Odisha Health Minister Naba Kishore Das by dismissed ASI Gopal Krushna Das, police personnel involved in the security of President Droupadi Murmu were found conducting their duties without firearms Friday. All those in khakis were bereft of guns and revolvers while on duty at various programmes attended by the President in the City. This surprised

She also noted that empowerment of women is the 'mantra' to establish India as the "Biswa Guru" (world leader). Murmu, who arrived here earlier in the day on a two-day visit, stressed the need for practice of yoga which could help citizens grow spiritually leading to the overall development of individuals and the nation as a whole. While sharing her own experience at the foundation day function of Jnanaprabha Mission, a charitable organisation, the President said, "At one point of time, I felt completely broken both physically and mentally and embarked on yoga. I am here today standing before you and speaking to you just because of yoga."

She said it is only due to the efforts of India that the world has now realised the importance of yoga. People of all faiths are duty-bound to serve parents and elderly persons, Murmu said adding: "This is the essence of dharma. Taking care of parents instead of offering prayers to their photos is a much greater job." She said Indian traditions and cultures put mothers at the top for their endless sacrifice towards a child. "We need to ask whether today's youngsters are giving adequate love and care to their parents who have sacrificed their entire life for them," Murmu said. While highlighting the role of women in yesteryears and also today, the President said, "Be it

spirituality, politics, education or any other field, women have all along excelled. They create human beings and these human beings make a nation strong." Since half of India's population is women, the country cannot become 'Biswa Guru' by neglecting them, Murmu said. She said India has already become 5th in the world in terms of economy and the nation needs to become No. 1 in all spheres. She said Jnanaprabha, named after Paramahansa Yoganandji's mother, is an independent organisation working for the uplift of women. Governor Ganeshi Lal, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and others also spoke at the function.



DEFT HANDS: A potter at Bidanasi Kumbhar Sahi in Cuttack, Friday, busy preparing a giant earthen lamp to be lit at Sri Lokanath temple in Puri on Maha Shiv Ratri

BMC flags off anti-filariasis drive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: Mass Drug Administration campaign for the purpose of elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis was launched in the BMC office, Friday. City Mayor Sulochana Das, civic body Commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange, Urban Public Health Officer Antaryami Mishra, BMC officials along with corporators of all wards

took the anti-filariatic pill to flag off the process in the Capital city. Drug administration process began in all the 67 wards in which every person other than children below 2 years, pregnant women and seriously-ill people were asked to consume the prescribed dosage during the rounds in the presence of drug administrators. ASHA workers along with other trained health workers have been engaged

to expedite the process. "The drug administration process shall continue in phases till February 19 in which around 8 lakh denizens will be medicated. Besides using sources like conventional media and social media for informing the public regarding the activity we have had a promotional vehicle encircling the city since long," said a BMC official.



Illegal murrum lifting rampant in Khuntuni

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khuntuni, Feb 10: Rampant lifting of murrum from near the embankment of Kumaribandha reservoir by a contractor engaged by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has posed a grave threat to the wildlife inhabiting in Deulia reserve forest under Khuntuni forest division.

Minister Janaki Ballabh Patnaik in 1985. The purpose was to help wild animals quench their thirst during the scorching summer. However, the contractor, at the behest of some local leaders, has lifted murrum worth over ₹1 crore by using JCB machines. When asked, tehsildar Priyabrata Das said, "The state exchequer has not received a single penny from the extraction of the minor mineral." He, however, said that the extent of mineral extraction will be assessed by the revenue inspector and amin before imposing a penalty on the contractor. Moreover, the void created after digging the area near the embankment has emerged as a threat to elephants as they may fall into it. Locals grew skeptical as to how a contractor was engaged to dig grave/void for the elephants when the Union and state governments are taking a slew of measures to protect the jumbos. When asked, the Khuntuni DFO said, "We have informed the tehsildar and action will be taken soon."

Elephants ecologically indispensable: VFAES



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: 'Voice for Asian Elephants Society (VFAES)' in association with 'Paribartan' society, organised a media conclave-cum-workshop here on saving Asian Elephants by creating sustainable communities near elephant corridors, Friday. The conclave discussed about the recent killing of elephants in Athagarh forest division of Cuttack and the ongoing revelation of exhumed elephant carcasses as grave concerns. According to the Union Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change, nearly 250 elephants have been killed between the year 2019 and 2022, with the

year 2022 being dubbed as the 'most brutal year' witnessing 86 deaths. Sangita Iyer, Founding Executive Director of Voice for Asian Elephants Society (VFAES) and award winning nature and wildlife filmmaker said, "VFAES' mission is to protect endangered Asian Elephants of India by preserving corridors for wild elephants and restoring their habitats. Elephants are very important for the society and human civilization. They are ecologically indispensable. Their dung can be used as seeds. The seeds then sprout and grow, helping to regulate the vegetation." As forest resources rapidly dwindle in Odisha due to developmen-



tal activities, distressed and famished elephants are straying into villages/cropland in search of food and water, intensifying human-elephant-conflict in which many humans as well as elephants die. According to report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, a staggering 1,160 elephants have died in the past 10 years. Human-elephant conflict is escalating across Odisha with a whopping 947 elephant deaths in the

last 10 years. Human population growth and demand for resources, relentless diversion of elephant habitats, loss of habitat, damage to corridor due to mining, construction of canals, railway tracks and multi-lanes highways are all fragmenting the forests and driving elephants to enter into villages. Voice for Asian Elephants Society (VFAES), a California-based elephant conservation organisation, in partnership with a local or-

ganisation, 'Paribartan' is planting elephant-friendly fruit bearing saplings, and identifying water bodies in collaboration with the tribal communities and the Odisha Forest department. The programme officials stated that they have already launched a program at Kuldaha - Hadagarh corridor and Telkoi-Pallahara corridor; in which, they have planned to plant 20,000 saplings and to create eight water bodies, from June 2023. The corridor connecting Simlipal from Kuldaha - Hadagarh forest is one of its kind, as this area is one of the only remaining forests where more than 100 elephants are thriving. Iyer says, "There is an urgent need to carry out mitigation measures to save elephants, which will prevent the wake of the growing threats against the Natural Heritage Animal of India. Restoring degraded habitats and creating waterholes at their habitats is a positive step towards prevention of elephants in venturing into human habitation for food and water, and in saving people and elephants." The project's goal is to ensure availability of sufficient fodder and water in core elephant habitats by growing nurseries of elephant-friendly plants.

As per latest reports, the forest division has raided the area and stopped the illegal lifting of murrum from the water reservoir, which is dry now. Sources said on being tipped off about lifting of murrum in 8-10 hyvas, Athagarh DFO has asked his Khuntuni counterpart Nilamadhab Sahoo to stop the illegal activities. The reservoir was constructed during the tenure of former Chief

CM lauds OAS officers for their role in governance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: While shouldering the responsibility of citizen centric services effectively at the grassroots level, the OAS officers have played a pivotal role in efficient implementation of good governance & the 5T initiative of the state at the grassroots level, said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here Friday.

Addressing at the concluding session of the general body meeting of the OAS Association, Patnaik said the Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) is the nucleus of the state administration. From blocks and tehsils to the highest level of office, they are present everywhere making significant contributions to the execution of policy initiatives of the state government, he said. "Your involvement in some of our flagship programmes and initiatives like BSKY, 5T School Transformation, FIH Men's World Cup, Make In Odisha conclave in-



The administration must be active, dynamic, and energetic enough to accept changes, and work accordingly to achieve our dream of a prosperous Odisha

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

cluding the critical role during the pandemic is also appreciated," the Chief Minister told the OAS officers. Patnaik said his government has been relentlessly pursuing transformational initiatives in the state to stand out as a leader in all paradigms of development in India. The twin initiatives of 5T and Mo Sarkar have helped transform the governance mechanism, and thrust attitudinal changes among the government officials towards the common citizens, he said. "Odisha desires and deserves to be the best in everything. The hosting of the World Cup Hockey, coming forward to help the nation

during the pandemic and many other initiatives have signalled the arrival of a New Odisha; an Odisha that leads the way for making our nation a better place in every parameter of human life and dignity," the Chief Minister said.

In such a context, the administration must be active, dynamic, and energetic enough to accept changes, and work accordingly to achieve our dream of a prosperous Odisha, he added.

The CM also expected that the OAS officers will work dedicatedly in all endeavours, and be the fulcrum of initiatives of state government.



NOBLE CAUSE: A blood donation camp organised by Youth Red Cross at Kusum Devi Satsang Women's College in Cuttack, Friday

OP PHOTO

CONTINUED FROM P1

Robust...

Sharma has sought directions for declaring short selling an offence of fraud against the investors, to be prosecutable under section 420 (cheating) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), read with provisions of the SEBI Act. Adani Group stocks have taken a beating on the bourses after the Hindenburg Research made a litany of allegations, including fraudulent transactions and share-price manipulation, against the business conglomerate. The Adani Group has dismissed the charges as lies, saying it complies with all laws and disclosure requirements.

Piece of...

The European Space Agency's

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AFFIDAVIT

By Virtue of an affidavit Before the Notary, Purushottampur, Ganjam, I, D.Krishna Chandra Reddy, S/o. D.Bhagaban Reddy of Village Kamanlinakhyapur, PO-Khajipalli, PS.-Purushottampur, Ganjam. My actual surname is REDDY. That in my all relevant documents in my surname is mentioned as PRADHAN. That I want to correction of my all relevant documents from PRADHAN to REDDY. I shall be known as D.KRISHNA CHANDRA REDDY for all purpose.

Affidavit before Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar, I, Dipti Mohanty, W/o-Swarupananda Mishra, At-D2 Indrapuri, Plot No.86/2519 Amrapalli, PO-Sailashree Vihar, PS-Chandrasekharapur, Bhubaneswar-751021, Dist-Khordha change my name from Diptee Mohanty to Dipti Mohanty for my son Shreyansh Mishra Class 10 mark certificate of CBSE Board and all purpose.

I, Shiba@Shiva Prasad Patnaik, S/o- Late Koteswar Patnaik, R/O-C7/4, J.K.P.M. Campus, J.K.Pur, Rayagada-765017 have changed my name to Shiva Prasad Patnaik for all future purposes vide affidavit dt.10.02.2023 sworn before Notary, J.R.Devi, Rayagada.

Solar Orbiter mission — which is taking photos of the sun while raising its orbit beyond the ecliptic plane — might provide answers, but until then, researchers are left scratching their heads. Experts have observed solar projections fairly often, such as last year's solar flares that threatened to impact Earth. Such projections could disrupt GPS systems, power grids and even radio signals, researchers warned at the time — although there's no way to precisely predict how this solar vortex would affect our planet.

Just this month, the sun projected multiple "powerful" flares that disrupted communication on Earth, according to Space.com, although it appeared to be otherwise harmless. The sun is en route to reaching its peak of activity during the current 11-year cycle in 2025.

The incident's video went viral on social media. "Sun's really acting up with some beautiful loops and flares," said a user, whose tweet was retweeted by McIntosh.

Man dies at police station: 2 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: In a tragic incident, a 42-year-old man died inside the police station in the City after his escape from a failed kidnapping bid here Thursday evening. The deceased was identified as Bichitra Palei of Gadakana area under Mancheswar police limits.

Yesterday night at around 9:30pm, the staff present at Saheed Nagar police station heard loud screams and came out of the station. They spotted a person lying unconscious on the ground while few others were standing near the spot. They tried to bring him back to his senses but failed. Later, the person was rushed to capital hospital where the doctors declared him brought dead.

We identified the person through the voter ID card recovered from his pocket and informed his family members about his death. We also came to know that Palei was a sweet-shop owner.

His wife, Monali informed the police that the accused persons, Netramani Behera and Batakrushna Behera, had lent some money to the deceased. They were asking Palei to pay the pending amount for the last couple of days.

Thursday, the accused again called him and asked to come to Patia square from where they forcefully kidnapped him in a car (OD-02-CD-4601). When the vehicle slowed down near Vani Vihar square, the deceased managed to jump out of the car. Based on the complaint lodged by the deceased's wife, Police arrested the accused Netramani and Batakrushna Friday. Police have been collecting CCTV footage and taking steps to record the statements of the eyewitnesses.

"As the incident took place in the police station's compound, we are following all the procedures under the guidelines of National Human Rights Commission like inquest in presence of an executive magistrate and family members.

Nat'l convention on mining organised

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: A national convention on "Development of mineral bearing areas: Odisha shows the way" was organised through digital platform in the City Friday. Justice Ananga Patnaik, former judge of Supreme Court chaired the programme which was attended by more than 30 organisations, government officials, industry captains and NGOs.

In his address, Justice Patnaik said that minerals could bring more wealth to the society but mining of mineral need to be done with human face. Local people in and around mineral bearing areas should get the benefit of growth and development.

While listening to the appraisals of developmental initiatives taken



by various corporates and institutional bodies, he appreciated Vedanta Aluminium & Power and its CEO, Rahul Sharma for bringing transformational change in Jharsuguda and Kalahandi.

Minister of Steel & Mines, Prafulla Mallick participated in the meet as chief guest and informed the gathering on plans & programmes of the government in driving the growth and develop-

ment in mineral bearing areas.

He appreciated the efforts of Vedanta and industry bodies for organising the discussion at national level through digital platform.

Asit Tripathy, Principal Advisor to Chief Minister and Chairman WODC said that in mineral bearing areas, focus has been given on supply of safe drinking water, health, education and employment. CJ Venugopal, Addl. Chief Secretary and Chief Administrator KBK area, described his experiences in taking the community on board during land acquisition.

Sharma informed that Vedanta has made the single largest investment of 80,000 crore in Jharsuguda and lanjigarh and the company would be making further investment of 25,000 crore.

IIT students visit wealth centre at TTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: 23 students from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bhubaneswar made their exposure visit to the Wealth Centre at The Techno School (TTS), near Sainik School, Friday. Two Assistant Commissioners and Sanitation Experts from Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) guided the visit. Three faculties from IIT Bhubaneswar were also present on the occasion.

"The team visited two Material Recovery Facility (MRF) points where the students learned about segregation of dry waste using conveyor belt and Belling machine. They were also exposed to the process of selling of dry & electronic wastes and refused derived fuel (RDF) to cement factories," said a BMC official.



Implementation of Solid Waste Management Rule 2016, in line with National Green Tribunal, has delivered an encouraging result in the city. Involvement of community workforce known as 'Swachha Sathis' has improved people's participation in 'decentralised waste management'. The students were briefed about source segregation, home visits, door to door collection, processing of wet biodegradable waste 'MO Khata' at Micro Composting Centre (MCC). Team BMC also delivered a presentation on quality check of 'Mo Khata' and its increasing demand across the state.

Patient with multiple myeloma treated through SCT at SUM Hosp



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: The doctors at the Institute of Medical Sciences and SUM Hospital here have successfully treated a 52-year-old woman suffering from Multiple Myeloma, a type of blood cancer, through Stem Cell Transplantation (SCT).

The patient had been diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma about 18 months ago following which she was under chemotherapy treatment in another private hospital from where she was referred to IMS and SUM Hospital for SCT. The patient was treated with a different regimen as she had not responded favourably to the earlier one prior to undergoing SCT. Priyanka Samal, Head of the Department of Hematology, informed Friday.

SCT was one of the options open to the patient which was discussed with her and her family members before deciding on the procedure.

The doctors had to be extra careful as she had been diagnosed

with kidney failure when the disease was first detected in her. This was because the patient had to undergo high dose chemotherapy prior to SCT, Samal said.

"We took all necessary precaution to ensure that the delicate procedure could be taken up after obtaining the patient's best response to the therapy and with optimal control of all co-morbidities," she said. All the parameters post-SCT were good and the patient was discharged in a stable condition, Samal said.

Along with Samal, Puspapaj Samantasinha, Medical Superintendent of the hospital, Girijanandini Kanungo, Head of Department of Transfusion Medicine and Pritish Chandra Patra, Associate Professor in the Department of Hematology, gave briefing to the media.

The patient, Snehalata Sahu, who was present during the press conference, said she was doing fine after six months of the procedure and her condition was being monitored by the doctors on a regular basis.

Genetic mechanism behind some children falling ill suddenly

Scientists have discovered details about the genetic predispositions of children who tended to fall ill suddenly and dramatically during the Covid pandemic.

"The patients are sick not because of the virus," said Jean-Laurent Casanova, a geneticist at Rockefeller University, US. "They're sick because they excessively respond to the virus."

Rockefeller scientists and affiliates of the Covid Human Genetic Effort (CHGE) described how a trio of faulty genes fails to put the brakes on the immune system's all-out assault on SARS-CoV-2, leading to the inflammatory overload characteristic of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children, or MIS-C.

Children with MIS-C, who end up in the hospital, are characterised

by inflamed hearts, lungs, kidneys, and brains, spiked temperatures, skin rashes, and abdominal pain.

The CHGE is an international consortium of researchers seeking the human genetic and immunological bases of all the different ways a SARS-CoV-2 infection can manifest. The study said that the findings constituted the first mechanistic explanation of any Kawasaki disease and that they were reported in a paper published in the journal Science.

According to the study, in February 2020, Casanova and his collaborators in the CHGE began searching for inborn errors, or genetic mutations, of immunity among healthy people who had severe forms of Covid. Among their targets were children with MIS-C, the study said.

Casanova and his team assembled



an ever-growing database of hundreds of fully sequenced genomes of Covid victims from hospitals across North America, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Oceania, and the Middle East, the study said.

They have since made several discoveries about the genetic predispositions of individuals who

develop severe Covid, the study said.

For the current study, the researchers hypothesized that in some children, MIS-C could be caused by a gene defect that rendered them vulnerable to an inflammatory condition provoked by a SARS-CoV-2 infection, said Casanova.

Children with MIS-C, who end up in the hospital, are characterised by inflamed hearts, lungs, kidneys, and brains, spiked temperatures, skin rashes, and abdominal pain

The researchers hypothesized that in some children, MIS-C could be caused by a gene defect that rendered them vulnerable to an inflammatory condition provoked by a SARS-CoV-2 infection

To find out, they analyzed the genomes of 558 children who had had MIS-C, the study said.

Five unrelated kids from four countries - Turkey, Spain, the Philippines, and Canada - shared mutations in three closely related genes controlling the OAS-RNase L pathway, which is involved in

viral response, the study said.

Normally, this pathway is induced by type 1 interferons and activated by viral infection, which induce OAS1, OAS2 and OAS3 molecules. These in turn activate RNase L, an antiviral enzyme that chops up single-strand viral and cellular RNA, shutting down the cell.

When a cell goes dark, the virus cannot hijack its replication machinery to spread disease.

But in the five children with these mutations, the pathway failed to activate in response to the presence of SARS-CoV-2, the study said.

According to the study, the cell instead sensed the viral RNA using another pathway known as MAVS, which provokes an army of dendritic cells, phagocytes, monocytes, and macrophages to attack the viral invaders en masse.

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Biological, adoptive parents fight over compensation after minor girl's death

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, Feb 10: Three months after the drowning of a 16-year-old girl, her biological and adoptive parents are fighting for the ex-gratia amount of ₹4 lakh announced by the Odisha government.

The deceased, Namita, was the biological daughter of Ranjan Mai and Rupali Mai of Ostia village. She was later legally adopted by Ratnakar Das and Mamata Das of Gopaljwapatana village.

As both sides are demanding that amount, it was not given to anybody. Even the death certificate could not be issued.

"We will provide the money to the legally eligible parents," Rajnagar Tehsildar Ashiwini Kumar Bhuyan said.

Namita is mentioned as the daughter of Ratnakar and Mamata - her adoptive parents - in her Aadhaar card and the school admission register.



However, her biological parents Ranjan and Rupali went on hunger strike in front of the Community Health Center (CHC) at Rajnagar Thursday demanding the death certificate of their daughter.

The medical officer of that CHC will issue Namita's death certificate which will bear the names of her parents. On the basis of the death certificate, the ex-gratia money will be given, according to officials. "After examining rele-

vant documents and consulting government officials and pleaders, we will issue the death certificate of Namita," said Rashmi Ranjan Mohanty, the medical officer of the CHC.

"My name figures as the father on the birth certificate of my daughter. Therefore, I am entitled to get the compensatory allowance," claimed Ranjan Mai, the biological father.

Ratnakar Das, the adoptive father, contested this assertion. "As per the Aadhaar card and school admission register, I am her father. Thus I have legal rights over the claim," he said.

The fight between the two sides over the compensation money is unfortunate, the medical officer said.

"If the adoption is legal, the biological parents have no legal ties with the child. Thus, they are not entitled to get the compensation amount," said Subash Das, a lawyer of Kendrapara.



FUN & FROLIC: Girls performed Sambalpur folk dance at the 58th district-level sports meet held at Veer Surendra Sai Stadium in Sambalpur, Friday

Potato mission fails to achieve goal in Bhadrak

WHILE FARMERS LAST YEAR CULTIVATED POTATOES ON 88 HECTARE, THIS YEAR THE TUBER FARMING HAS BEEN TAKEN UP ON ONLY 59 HECTARE OF LAND IN THE DISTRICT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Feb 10: Despite the state government sponsoring the cultivation of potatoes in Bhadrak, farmers in the district are turning away from potato farming. In a bid to encourage potato cultivation, the state government has been providing potato seeds to the interested farmers and subsidy of ₹58,000 per hectare of land. However, cultivation of the tuber is declining in the district allegedly due to lack of adequate storage facilities and delayed harvest of paddy for the kharif season.

It is being alleged that potato mission has failed in the district. Allegedly farmers are not interested to take up potato farming in the area as they do not know where to store their produce. Unable to store their cultivated potato, farmers are usually compelled to sell it at extremely low prices. However, instead of increase in number of cold storages in the state, the number of existing functional cold storages in the state is going down due to lack of proper maintenance.



Reports said that every year consumers in Odisha suffer due to extreme spike in potato price. Odisha has no control over fluctuation of potato prices as it depends on other states like West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar to meet its potato demand.

The fall in the tuber's cultivation is glaring if we take a look at this year's cultivation data in comparison with that of last year. Last year, farmers undertook cul-

tivation of the tuber on 88 hectare of land but this year the cultivation has been done on only 59 hectare of land.

Among the seven blocks, the cultivation of tuber has only been undertaken in five blocks while not a single farmer in Tihidi and Dhamnagar blocks has grown potatoes.

Potato cultivation has been carried out on 13 hectare of land in Chandbali block, 9.96 hectare in

In view of the serious potato shortage that plagued the state, the state government launched potato mission in 2015-16 to become self-reliant in tuber production and ensure food security

Bhadrak block, 3.33 hectare in Bhandaripokhari block and 6.66 hectare each in Basudevpur and Bant blocks.

Sources said that this year the state government has provided 899 quintal of potato seeds for the farmers in Bhadrak district and targeted a harvest of 10,000 metric tonne.

According to survey done by a private marketing agency, potato production in Bhadrak district is quite disappointing. The district requires 3.50 lakh metric tonne potato

per year but it has to depend on neighbouring state to meet its requirement due to disappointing production of the tuber.

In view of the serious potato crisis that plagued the state, the state government launched potato mission in 2015-16 to achieve self-sufficiency and become self-reliant in tuber production.

It encouraged the farmers in the state with incentives to take up potato cultivation. It also made efforts to establish more cold storage to store the harvested potatoes. However, despite the government sponsorship farmers are not inclined to take up the farming.

When contacted, assistant horticulture director Kanda Jena said that potato is mainly cultivated in October or November and harvested in the month of January or February. However, delay in harvest of paddy in the district in the kharif season has hit the tuber cultivation. As a result, farmers are not inclined to take up tuber cultivation and potato harvest is declining in the district, he added.

Pollution threat for Kuldiha sanctuary



Illegal brick kilns in and around the protected area harming environment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nilagiri, Feb 10: Functioning of several brick kilns inside the eco-sensitive zone of Kuldiha wildlife sanctuary under Nilagiri sub-division in Balasore district has sparked fear of environmental pollution and threat to the green cover and wildlife, sources said Friday. Thick black fumes billowing out of the chimneys of the brick kilns are polluting the sanctuary but the administration has failed to take any preventive measures.

The Kuldiha wildlife sanctuary is spread over 272.75 sq km area and is home to many precious trees, plants and wild animals. In view of its importance, the Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Ministry published a notification aimed at protecting the green cover and the wild animals in the sanctuary, August 9, 2017. The notification demarcated 219.18 sq

km of area in the sanctuary as eco-sensitive zone.

Later, the Forest department came to know that 14 brick kilns are operating inside the eco-sensitive zone and are a huge threat to the environment and wildlife. Some brick kilns were also found operating just outside the sanctuary but the Forest department failed in taking action against those.

The district administration decided to demolish the brick kilns after Nilagiri MLA Sukant Kumar Nayak raised questions in this regard in the state Assembly a year back, the then district collector and the divisional forest officer of the directed the local administration to demolish the brick kilns. The local administration twice made attempts to demolish the brick kilns but failed.

When contacted, Nilagiri sub-collector Mandardhar Mahalik said that he will take steps after having a discussion with the local tehsildar in this regard.

Balasore DFO Sumit Kumar Kar however, assured that action will be taken against the kilns within a week.

Man gets 20-yr jail for raping mentally challenged

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasore, Feb 10: A 28-year-old man was sentenced to 20 years in jail by a court in Balasore district Friday for raping a mentally challenged girl.

A fine of ₹10,000 was also imposed on the man by the POCSO court of special judge Ranjan Kumar Sutar.

The man was arrested in March last year after a police complaint was filed by an NGO, which got to know about the 14-year-old girl

after she got pregnant.

The complaint was lodged after the girl narrated the horror to activists of the NGO during counselling sessions. The accused is a neighbour of the girl. "The court pronounced the verdict on the basis of 10 witnesses and 20 exhibits," said special public prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda. The court also directed the district legal services authority (DLSA) to give the survivor ₹4 lakh as compensation, Panda said.

₹18L cash seized during drug raid; one detained

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Feb 10: A person was detained Thursday after unaccounted cash of around ₹18 lakh was recovered from his possession during a search operation against drug smuggling in Ganjam district.

The unaccounted cash was recovered during the raid at a Jajpur-bound bus on Lanjipalli bypass road, he said. In a crackdown against

ganja smuggling, sleuths of the intelligence and enforcement bureau wing of the Excise department, Berhampur conducted the search operation at the Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) bus and recovered the cash from the person who is a resident of Jajpur.

One personnel seized around ₹18 lakh in cash from the passenger's bag. He was detained, said Damburudhar Khanda, Excise

deputy commissioner, Berhampur.

During the interrogation, the person claimed that he received the money from his groundnut business, the official said. "We have handed over the investigation to the income tax authorities as the Excise department does not deal with such financial matters," he said, adding that the special drive against smuggling of narcotics and drug peddling would continue.

Erosion, fishermen threaten existence of Madali island

THE ISLAND, A FAVOURITE DESTINATION FOR OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLES TO NEST, IS SHRINKING IN SIZE RAPIDLY



POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalapara, Feb 10: Madali island, a favoured nesting site of Olive Ridley turtles in Gahirmatha marine sanctuary under this block of Kendrapara district, is facing extinction threat due to large scale erosion.

With land being gobbled up by the sea at a rapid pace, the nesting place of the turtles is decreasing. Such has been the devastating effect of erosion, that the shape and size of the island have undergone a distinct change.

Environmentalists said that earlier huge number of turtles would arrive at

Madali island to lay eggs. However, the numbers are decreasing rapidly as the area for nesting has shrunk considerably. They feared that if emergency measures are not adopted immediately, then Madali will meet the same fate as that of Agarnasi island in the sanctuary.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Agarnasi island was completely engulfed by the sea last year. Despite Forest department officials planting casuarina trees to prevent erosion, they could not save Agarnasi island from the sea. Constant lashing of tidal waves and the cyclonic storms in 1971, 1982, 1999, 2013, 2014, 2018 and 2019 spelt disaster for

Agarnasi island.

The Forest department has set up two camps at Madali island and its officials are trying to implement preventive measures against erosion. However, other than the constant lashing of the waves, they have another problem to contain.

A number of fishermen are anchoring their boats and trawlers close to the island eroding the sand bed of the island in the process. Despite instructions not to do so, the fishermen are not paying any heed.

This has sparked resentment among the local intelligentsia and environmentalists. They questioned how the fishermen can anchor at the island which is a nesting site of the Olive Ridley turtles. They blamed the ineptness of forest officials on this issue.

Local environmentalist Biranchi Narayan Das alleged that increase in human activities on the island has led to its shrinking. Fishermen and traders are illegally camping on the island and smuggling fish and crabs abroad. Das said this is not possible without the help of Forest department officials.

When contacted, divisional forest officer (DFO) Sudarshan Gopinath Yadav said two camps have been set up on Madali island for constant patrolling. He assured that security measures will be intensified if there is any report of illegal activities and intrusion on the island. "All measures to protect the island will be taken," Yadav stated.

Berhampur MP threatens sit-in

Berhampur: Berhampur's BJD MP Chandra Sekhar Sahu has threatened to stage a sit-in demonstration at the railway station here if long-standing demands of the people of his constituency were not met by the end of February. In a five-page letter to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Sahu demanded higher allocation for the Berhampur-Sambalpur railway line, implementation of the proposed Sitalapalli wagon factory, improvement of facilities in Berhampur railway station, and construction of rail-over-bridge at Ambapua and Jagannathpur junctions.

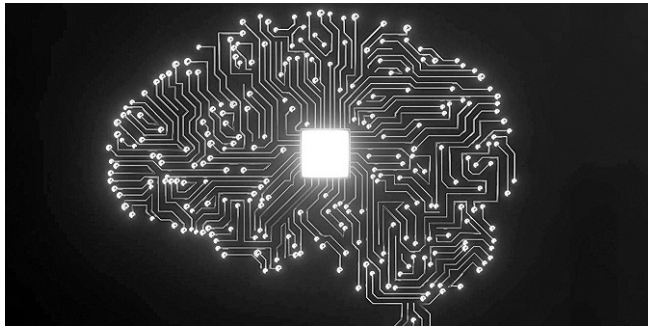
EAST COAST RAILWAY	
Tender Notice No. eT-44-KUR-CTC-WR-210-2023	
NAME OF WORK : WAGON MAINTENANCE WORKS LIKE WELDING, CUTTING, FITTING, LIFTING, ETC. AT CUTTACK YARD UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (CARRIAGE & WAGON) / CUTTACK FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.	
Advertised Value (₹)	₹ 1,02,62,989.70, EMD (₹) : 2,01,300/-, Cost of Tender Document : ₹ 5,900/-, Completion Period of the work : 24 Months.
Bidding Start Date	16.02.2023, Date and time of closing of tender : At 1500 hrs of 02.03.2023.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.	
Complete details including e-tender documents are available at http://www.ireps.gov.in .	
Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer PR-993/N/22-23 Khurda Road	

WORKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RAIRANGPUR (R&B), DIVISION	
e-mail: - eerbrairangpur@yahoo.co.in	
Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice No.B-1253: Bid Identification No.SE 65 of 2022-23	
1. Nature of work	- CD work
2. Number of works	- 2 (Two)
3. Amount put to Tender	- Rs. 24,15,000.00 & Rs. 23,19,300.00
4. Class of Contractor	- C & B Class
5. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	- Dt.20.02.2023 at 10:00 AM
6. Last Date / Time of receipt of bid in the portal	- Dt. 27.02.2023 up to 04:00 PM
7. Date of opening of bid	- Dt.28.02.2023 at 11:00 AM
8. Name & address of the Office inviting bid	- Superintending Engineer, Rairangpur (R&B)Division
The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "http://tendersodisha.gov.in." All future corrigendum will be available on ONLINE mode only.	
Sd./- Superintending Engineer Rairangpur (R&B) Division OIPR-34041/11/0028/2223	

UCO BANK		Zonal Office, UCO Bank Building, 2nd Floor, C-2, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751009, Tel: 0674-2620423		POSSESSION NOTICE For Immovable Property	
(Under Section 13(4) of the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 for Immovable Property)					
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of UCO Bank, Cuttack Main Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the Borrower/Guarantor to repay the amount with interest at the contractual rate together with incidental expenses and costs within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken POSSESSION of the property described here-in below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrower/Guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the UCO Bank, Cuttack Main Branch for an amount plus interest & expenses thereon.					
CUTTACK MAIN BRANCH/ Name and Address of the Borrower/ Guarantor		Amount Outstanding as on Specified Date	Date of Demand / Possession Notice	Description of the Immovable Property	
Borrower : Mrs. Sasmita Mohapatra, W/o.: Mr. Anam Charan Nayak / Guarantor: Mr. Anam Charan Nayak, S/o.: Kanganli Charan Nayak, Both are At: Nuagarh, Telengapentha, P.O.: Gopalpur, Dist.: Cuttack - 753011		₹2,52,119.45 as on 31.08.2022 + further interest & other charges thereon	28.10.2022 / 07.02.2023	All that part and parcel of the Land and Building Standing in the name of Mrs. Sasmita Mohapatra, W/o.: Mr. Anam Charan Nayak, Situated at Mouza: Pratap Nagari, P.S.: Cuttack Sadar, Tahasil: Cuttack, Dist.: Cuttack, Khata No.: 146-D1, Plot No.: 2386/3635, Area: Ac.0.015 Dec and Plot No.: 2390/3636, Area: Ac.0.025 Dec, Total Area: Ac.0.040 Dec	
Place : Bhubaneswar, Date: 10.02.2023			Authorised Officer, UCO Bank		

FOCUS INNOVATION

KNOWLEDGE MISMATCH



Technologies, traditions, and ideas that work well in one setting may not when they are adopted elsewhere or maintained after conditions change

with slave traders developed a deep mistrust of outsiders, leaving them with a cultural inclination that is counterproductive for developing a flourishing market economy in today's world. Similarly, Americans' aversion to redistribution appears to reflect the country's high degree of economic mobility in the past, rather than current realities.

Whether they take the form of inappropriate technologies or cultural practices, such mismatches need to be addressed if knowledge is going to benefit a society. One strategy is consciousness raising. That is how the environmentalist movement helped steer consumer demand away from fossil fuels and mobilise support for the development of renewables. A similar "technology for workers" movement could redirect innovation in a more labour-friendly direction. Enhancing the voice of relevant stakeholders – such as workers or poor countries – in decisions about innovation and technology would guard against the adoption of inappropriate technologies.

Public policies are also critical. The Green Revolution in the twentieth century was motivated by the explicit recognition that enhancing agricultural productivity in low-income countries would require developing high-yield seed varieties suited to tropical environments. Though we lack a similar multi-lateral effort to close global technology gaps today, Moscona points to several middle-income countries (India, Brazil, South Africa) that have the capacity to develop technologies more appropriate to developing economies.

But even in those countries, innovation tends to follow the norms and preferences of Silicon Valley, rather than local needs. Policymakers and innovators alike would do well to remember that it is not knowledge, but rather useful knowledge, that empowers us.

The writer, Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard Kennedy School, is President of the International Economic Association.
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Knowledge holds the key to economic prosperity. Technology, innovation, and know-how all come from learning new ways to produce the goods and services that enrich us. Knowledge is also the archetypal "public good": new ideas can benefit everyone; and unless governments or monopolies restrict their dissemination, usage does not diminish availability. This is especially important for poor countries, because it means that they do not have to reinvent the wheel. They can simply adopt technologies and methods created by richer countries to drive their own economic development.

While economists and policymakers have long appreciated the economic significance of knowledge, they have not paid sufficient attention to the conditions that make it useful. Context matters: any mismatch between the conditions under which ideas are generated and the specificities of the environment where they are applied can significantly reduce the value of acquiring knowledge.

For example, corn is grown all over the world, but it is subject to different environmental threats, depending on the local ecology. Research and development efforts have naturally focused on developing resistance to pests that are most common in North America and Europe. As a result, thousands of biotech patents are geared toward the European corn worm, but only five unique patents are for innovations protecting against the maize stalk borer, which predominantly affects Sub-Saharan Africa.

Having studied these and many other examples, economists Jacob Moscona and Karthik Sastry of Harvard University argue that the inappropriateness of technologies developed in advanced economies can pose a significant obstacle to agricultural-productivity growth in low-income areas. According to their analysis, the technology mismatch in crop-specific pests and pathogens alone can account for 15% of the global disparity in agricultural productivity.

In a recent panel discussion organised by the International Economic Association, Moscona

and other experts provided a wide range of illustrations of inappropriate technologies at work. Mireille Kamariza, a bioengineer at UCLA, described how the development of diagnostic technologies for tuberculosis and other infectious diseases that chiefly affect low-income countries has lagged far behind diagnostic technologies for rich-country diseases.

When COVID-19 hit rich countries, hundreds of diagnostic tests became available within months. By contrast, it took more than a century to achieve comparable progress with respect to tuberculosis. Moreover, advanced tuberculosis-diagnostics techniques still rely on trained technicians and a steady supply of electricity, which may not be available in low-income settings.

Mismatch can also occur within countries when technologies tailored to the interests of certain groups are deployed more widely. Automation and digital technologies, for example, can be inappropriate if they produce undesirable effects for many workers. As Anton Korinek of the University of Virginia notes, all innovations are double-edged: they can enhance productivity in the aggregate, but they can also generate sharp redistributive effects favouring capital owners over workers. And when the overall productivity gains are not very large, they can easily be outweighed (from a societal perspective) by the negative redistributive effects – a phenomenon

that economists Daron Acemoglu and Pascual Restrepo call "so-so" innovation.

Robots provide the clearest example of this adverse shift against workers, and artificial intelligence is expanding the range of domains where distributional conflicts can become significant. As Korinek points out, chatbot software that replaces human workers enhances the returns to AI engineers and firm owners, while displacing workers with less than a college education. The impact is magnified in developing countries where low-cost labour is the sole source of comparative advantage.

Moreover, knowledge is embedded not only in seeds or software but also in cultural norms. At the same IEA panel, economist Nathan Nunn talked about a different, temporal kind of mismatch where knowledge and practices that were appropriate for a society at one time can later become dysfunctional. Cultural traditions pass on useful knowledge to future generations. Religious rituals, for example, can help to coordinate crop planting, and particular cooking techniques imparted by a family's elders can protect against dietary toxins. But since cultural norms evolve slowly, rapid changes in society can produce an "evolutionary mismatch."

Drawing on his work with Leonard Wantchekon, Nunn gives the example of Africa's traumatic experience with transcontinental slavery. Communities in Africa that had the most extensive contact



Dani Rodrik

KNOWLEDGE IS EMBEDDED NOT ONLY IN SEEDS OR SOFTWARE BUT ALSO IN CULTURAL NORMS

Officers in Limbo

Senior babus in Maharashtra are fretting due to the state government delaying postings. The most likely reason is the continuous tussle between Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his Deputy Devendra Fadnavis. Though they firmed up an "unnatural" political alliance to gain power, the two have not yet settled down in their respective roles. Fadnavis may be the second in command but is clearly the one who calls the shots. Delayed appointments is just one result of this constant one-upmanship.

Sources informed DKB that a delegation of IAS officers met serially with Chief Secretary Manu Kumar Srivastava, Fadnavis and Shinde before six IAS officers from the 1992 batch were promoted to additional chief secretary rank last week. The delegation had to pressure the netas to urgently promote these officers since their batchmates in other states had already been promoted.

Meanwhile, things are yet to look up for five senior IPS officers in the state who do not have a post since mid-December as they were not assigned a position while being transferred. They have been idling since then waiting to be summoned for duty once the government makes up its mind on their next postings. Sources add that with the approaching budget session of the Maharashtra Assembly, and rumours circulating about a possible state Cabinet expansion, these postings may be delayed further.

Digital divide nixes AP's push for efficiency

It is proving to be an uphill task for governments to popularise app-based attendance. The Centre is discovering this after introducing the mandatory attendance of MGNREGA labourers. The mobile app was launched in May last year as a voluntary service. But last month, it was made mandatory for officials managing MGNREGA schemes at the panchayat level to upload photos of labourers at the worksites twice a day.

The aim is worthy – to ensure more transparency, accountability, and efficiency, and to root out corruption. But glitches in the implementation of the plan apart, some people fear that this is the Centre's attempt to drive down payouts.

Now, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is facing similar protests from state government employees after deciding to introduce an app using facial recognition software to track staff attendance and location. At present, babus in Andhra Pradesh use an Aadhaar-enabled biometric attendance system to mark their attendance. Last year, the Reddy government introduced a facial recognition-based system in schools to track teachers' attendance but met with backlash. Some of the concerns about the plan are of a practical nature: many babus do not own smartphones and do not know how to use them. The threat to privacy is yet another worry.

Clearly, there is a big gulf between the government's intentions and the ground reality. Plugging the digital divide is the question that the government needs to address before initiating reforms.

Whose land is it, anyway?

Whose land is it, anyway? A small piece of land in the table tennis stadium complex in Jalandhar has pitted a senior Punjab IPS officer against a 2015-batch IAS officer.

The disputed land is part of the stadium but Additional Director General of Police, Punjab Armed Police-cum-Administrator of Punjab Waqf Board MF Farooqui claimed that it is Waqf land, and got a wall constructed to mark out the perimeter.

However, the same day municipal corporation workers arrived and demolished the wall, claiming it was an encroachment. The MC Commissioner Abhijeet Kaplish however defended the action, claiming there was no order of the tehsildar or the SDM to allow the Waqf Board to acquire the land.

The issue has escalated to the Punjab Sports Minister Gurmeet Singh, and now babus are pouring over the records to sort out the battle between the IAS and IPS officers.

Share a babu experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@twitter.com](https://twitter.com/dilipthecherian). Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

- Life lived for tomorrow will always be just a day away from being realized. **LEO BUSCAGLIA**
- Keep your face always toward the sunshine - and shadows will fall behind you. **WALT WHITMAN**
- Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves. **CARL JUNG**

WORDSWORTH

Frontispiece

There's nothing in frontispiece to suggest a piece of anything, other than what confused English speakers have put there. The original sense in English was of the façade of a building, the decorated front that was designed to be imposing. It came from the French frontispice or the late Latin word frontispicium, both meaning a façade. The Latin word was made up of frons, forehead, plus specere, to look at, and so originally meant a view of the forehead. You might think that this referred to the forehead being a clearly visible part of a person's head, but it seems instead to have been connected with yet another of those weird methods of divination so common in classical times. It has another name, metoposcopy (from Greek words meaning "observe the forehead"); it's the art of telling people's character or fortune from their foreheads (another related term is physiognomy, judging character from characteristics of the face, which is also from Greek). The association of ideas seems to be that the façade of a building is as expressive as a person's forehead. The word was borrowed into English around the end of the sixteenth century in the French form frontispice but no later than 1607 was also being used for the title page of a book. This may seem a large shift in sense, but the link lies in the practice of engraving a highly illustrated title page with all sorts of architectural detailing, such as columns and pediments. And it was at the front of the book, which helped the idea. By 1682, the word had taken on its modern sense of an illustration facing the title page of a book. And by then the folk etymologists had had their evil way with it, making a totally unwarranted association between front and piece and turning frontispice into our modern frontispiece.

LOL

A prisoner with skills

Several years ago, Andy was sentenced to prison. During his stay, he got along well with the guards and all his fellow inmates. The warden saw that deep down, Andy was a good person and made arrangements for Andy to learn a trade while doing his time. After three years, Andy was recognised as one of the best carpenters in the local area. Often he would be given a weekend pass to do odd jobs for the citizens of the community.... and he always reported back to prison before Sunday night was over. The warden was thinking of remodeling his kitchen and in fact had done much of the work himself. But he lacked the skills to build a set of kitchen cupboards and a large counter top which he had promised his wife. So he called Andy into his office and asked him to complete the job for him. But, alas, Andy refused. He told the warden, "Gosh, I'd really like to help you but counter fitting is what got me into prison in the first place."

SPECTRUM PANCHAYATS

The path to rural rejuvenation

The recent decision of the Ministry of Cooperation and the National Dairy Development Board to establish a primary dairy in every panchayat in the country in the next three years is undoubtedly significant. This would go a long way in not just revitalising the panchayats, but also help the process of integrated rural development and employment generation, which is much needed.

Union Minister for Cooperation Amit Shah while inaugurating one such dairy said that a complete action plan has been prepared and two lakh primary dairies will be established at village level across the country in three years, making India a big exporter in the dairy sector by connecting farmers of the country with the White Revolution. It is understood that in Gujarat, the White Revolution has changed the fortunes of farmers and ₹60,000 crore is deposited into bank accounts of about 36 lakh women annually through Amul. Such activities would go a long way in reviving the village economy as also the incomes of farmers. Added to this is the fact that availability of milk at affordable cost would help children get this vital drink in villages. Similarly, Prime Minister Modi

has rightly envisaged a greater role for the panchayats at the recent Water Vision@2027 and asked states to adopt ways where the 'water budget' is prepared at panchayat level based on how much water is required in which village and what work can be done for it. Stating that there was need for conservation of all local sources of water, he urged panchayats to prepare an action plan for five years, where a roadmap ranging from water supply to cleanliness and water management should be considered.

In fact, he stressed that it was the responsibility of every state to make water a subject of cooperation and coordination. Well thought out, but perhaps more needs to be done, given the additional emphasis being given by the government to skilling, reskilling and upskilling. In this connection, training of farmers to increase production and productivity as also to concentrate on value-added crops, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research would be of great help to small farmers. Further, where there is a problem of availability of water, training could be given to shift to water resistant technologies in farming. The whole purpose would be to implement the oft-repeated slogan

of 'lab to land approach' while ensuring that overall yields go up.

The government should contemplate setting up a panel and become agents of change to explore widening the activities of panchayats to gear up the process of rural rejuvenation. The panel should identify panchayats that have their own buildings and could take up the responsibility of carrying out additional work as outlined above, preferably in collaboration with voluntary organisations and educational institutions. One may mention here that like post offices, which have started banking activities, panchayats should also carry out multi-faceted work.

To start with around 100 to 200 panchayats all over the country should be identified who could take up the additional work. All this is imperative if the rural sector has to be revitalised as the country cannot prosper without a vibrant countryside. Resources are vital for strengthening panchayats and the 15th Finance Commission provided ₹2.97 lakh crore to states for distribution to panchayats during 2020-2026 compared to ₹2.00 lakh crore by the 14th Finance Commission. Apart from resources, sufficient manpower has to be provided by

states and Union Territories for effective functioning by panchayats as an earlier report pointed out that support staff and personnel in the latter are lacking.

In expanding activities, panchayats can create their own fund. A few months back, the Union government stated that, in terms of Article 243-1, the Governor shall constitute State Finance Commission to review the financial position of panchayats and make recommendations regarding distribution between the state and the panchayats of the net proceeds of taxes, duties, tolls leviable by the former; which may be divided between them and improve the financial position of panchayats.

The whole objective of strengthening panchayats is to gear up the process of rural development, which is vital for economic and social revitalisation. Unless grassroots level institutions are strengthened, inclusive growth will not occur. One needs to recall Mahatma Gandhi's objective of making villages self-sufficient. It goes without saying panchayats must become active agents of socio-economic change and the government ensure that their plans are put into action, proactively.

The writer is a maxillofacial surgeon. ©INFA



Dr Oishee Mukherjee

UNLESS GRASSROOTS LEVEL INSTITUTIONS ARE STRENGTHENED, INCLUSIVE GROWTH WILL NOT OCCUR

Don't blame the past

Sir, This refers to "PM thumps chest, says he alone is enough for Oppn" Orissa POST, Feb 10. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has enumerated his achievements in both Houses of the Parliament during the motion of thanks to the President's speech. A common refrain in his speech is that true development began only in 2014, when he became the Prime Minister. But the so-called progress he brought about was often based on the foundation laid in the past. When the country became Independent in 1947, there was hardly any infrastructure, other than the railways and the hill stations developed by the British for their own selfish interests. Independence saw India making great strides in industrial, agricultural, scientific and technological sectors so much so that by 2014, the country had become a giant in information technology, self-sufficient in foodgrains, and had the largest pool of scientists and technologists, who could plan a manned mission to the moon. These are the collective achievements of the people, led by successive governments. It is pointless to blame the past when the present and the future are in the control of the government. In another year, Modi will complete his second term. When he repudiates the past to claim originality in development, he is also repudiating the achievements of leaders like Morarji Desai and AB Vajpayee. He should not consider every speech as an election speech, as he is not just the leader of a party but the leader of the country. It is time he saw himself as a statesman, who is in most respects the opposite of a politician.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Population control

Sir, The state health department's innovative initiative to hold conferences between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law in order to control population is praiseworthy. Sometimes mothers-in-law mould and influence daughters-in-law to reproduce more male children in the family. Nowadays, girls outclass boys in many fields. To wish for a male child is itself a wrong thought. Soon, India is set to become the most populous country. This initiative will be a milestone in the achievements of the state's health and family welfare department. One-child norm should be accepted as a principle nowadays. Population explosion will destroy our natural resources and reduce per capita income. The initiative is a step in the right direction.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

national

of the day quote

Should there not be an inquiry into the Adani scam? Shouldn't the falling value of LIC's money, invested in Adani's companies, be questioned? Shouldn't questions be asked about the ₹82,000 crore loan given to Adani by SBI and other banks

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONG PRESIDENT

The cost of PM Gareeb Kalyan Yojana and public distribution system is being fully borne by the Centre

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

Investment won't come by staging drama or media events

KAMAL NATH | MADHYA PRADESH CONGRESS PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

J&K: 2 rescued from avalanche

Srinagar: Two women were rescued Friday from a snow avalanche in the Gurez border area of J&K's Bandipora district. Officials said the two women, identified as Tabassum and Shahzada, were collecting water when a medium level avalanche hit Mazgund village of Tulai area in Gurez tehsil this morning. People living in the higher reaches of J&K, especially avalanche prone areas, have been advised to exercise caution and avoid movement in such areas unless absolutely necessary.

Stones pelted at Vande Bharat train

Hyderabad: Unidentified persons pelted stones at a coach of the Secunderabad-Vishakhapatnam Vande Bharat train while it was passing through Mahabubabad district of Telangana Friday, railway officials said. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) noticed it and an investigation is underway, they said. Asked if there was any damage or cracks to window panes, the officials told PTI: "It (damage) will be assessed after the train reaches Vishakhapatnam". It is suspected that some children may have pelted stones at the train, however, investigations were on, they said based on preliminary investigation. The probe is on and the railway police will file a case on its own, the official further said.

NEET-PG to be held March 5

New Delhi: The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test-Postgraduate (NEET PG 2023) will be conducted as per the schedule date March 5, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya informed the Lok Sabha Friday. Mandaviya said that the decision to not postpone NEET PG 2023 has been taken to streamline the process to avoid further delay in the exam and counselling process caused due to Covid-19. The Minister was replying to a question by Congress member Gaurav Gogoi.

Maoist surrenders

Ranchi: A Maoist, carrying a bounty of ₹15 lakh on his head, surrendered before security forces in Jharkhand's Ranchi district on Friday, police said. Mithilesh Singh alias Duryodhan Mahto, "regional commander" of the CPI (Maoist), was wanted in 104 cases in different districts of the state, IG (Operations) Amol V Homkar said. "He was a pillar for the CPI (Maoist) in Jharkhand's Luga, Jhumra and Parsnath areas," Homkar said.



The victory in the Erode East bypoll will resound in the Lok Sabha polls as well

EDAPPADI K. PALANISWAMI | AIADMK'S INTERIM GENERAL SECRETARY

TRIBAL BODY CALLS FOR ROAD, RAIL BLOCKADES

Tribal body Adivasi Sengel Abhiyan (ASA) Friday called for a blockade in five eastern states of the country February 11 over a host of issues, including asserting its rights over 'Marang Buru' or Parsnath Hills in Jharkhand's Giridih and recognition of Sarna as a religion in the next census. The dawn-to-dusk road and rail blockades will be held in Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, Assam and West Bengal, ASA president Salkhan Murmu said in Jamshedpur



Farmers' body to hold mahapanchayat in Delhi

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 10: The farmers' movement is likely to gain momentum again as the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella organisation of various farmers' unions, has announced that it will hold a 'mahapanchayat' in Delhi regarding their unfulfilled demands on March 20.

The decision of organising the mahapanchayat was taken in a meeting of the SKM, held in Haryana's Kurukshetra Thursday, where office-bearers of the farmers' organisations from many states including Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab participated.

According to sources, the government has not yet fulfilled the promises made to the farmers dur-

ing the farmers' movement in 2020. Earlier, the farmers had agitated for a long time and had raised some demands in front of the government.

The government had then pacified them. Office-bearers of the SKM said that they have been forced to agitate again as their demands remain unmet.

They added that farmers from all over the country will organise the mahapanchayat in the national capital to remind the government of its unkept promises.



Skiers during the inaugural function of Khelo India Winter Games at Gulmarg in Baramulla District of North Kashmir

PTI PHOTO

PM Inaugurates Global Investors Summit 2023

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Feb 10: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday said the guarantee to world prosperity lies with India, as he urged investors to bet on the country - and on Uttar Pradesh where a large "aspirational society" waited for them.

He was inaugurating a three-day Uttar Pradesh Global Investors Summit, which the state government claimed has already attracted investment proposals worth about ₹33 lakh crore.

Welcoming foreign delegates and Indian industry leaders to the summit, Modi linked the world's economic well-being to that of India. He pointed at the state's "double-engine" government - with the BJP in power both at the Centre and in Lucknow - and said UP is full of possibilities.

Every Indian citizen now wants to see more development, as quickly as possible, he said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath attended the summit launch. More Union ministers were slated to participate later in panel discussions.

The Prime Minister talked about India offering new physical and digital infrastructure, seamless markets and simplified bureaucratic procedures. He said reforms in India are being carried out not because of compulsion, but because of conviction.

"India today is truly on the path of pace and scale. We have fulfilled the basic needs of a large section - and that is why it is thinking of the next level, thinking of the future," he said.

Modi said Uttar Pradesh was once known as a "BIMARU" state, a reference to an old acronym for Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. In Hindi, "Bimaru" also means "sick".

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said the roadshows ahead of the summit had attracted investment proposals worth about ₹33 lakh crore.

Top court gets 2 more judges

Once they take the oath, the apex court will achieve its full strength of 34 judges, including the Chief Justice of India. Their names were recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium January 31

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: The government Friday elevated two high court chief justices to the Supreme Court, taking it to its full strength of 34 judges after a gap of nine months.

Law Minister Kiren Rijju took to Twitter to announce the fresh appointments to the top court and extended his best wishes to them. Justice Rajesh Bindal, Chief Justice, Allahabad HC and Justice Aravind Kumar, Chief Justice, Gujarat HC are likely to take oath as judges of the Supreme Court in the next two days, sources familiar with the process of appointing judges to the higher judiciary said.

The Department of Justice in the Union law ministry issued separate notifications announcing their appointments. While all six members of the Collegium, led by CJI D.Y. Chandrachud, were unanimous in recommending the name of Justice Bindal, Justice K M Joseph had a reservation about the name of Justice Kumar, ac-



ording to a resolution uploaded on the apex court website.

After the elevation of these judges, acting chief justices -- Pritinker Diwaker and Sonia Giridhar Gokani - were appointed to the Allahabad and the Gujarat High Courts respectively. Both are senior-most judges in their respective high courts.

Born April 16, 1961, Justice Bindal was to demit office in April this year on attaining the age of 62 years. But following his elevation to the

Supreme Court, he now has three more years. HC judges retire at 62 while SC judges retire at 65 years. Justice Kumar was born July 14, 1962, and would turn 61 in July this year.

Earlier this week, Rajasthan High Court Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal, Patna High Court Chief Justice Sanjay Karol, Manipur High Court Chief Justice PV Sanjay Kumar, Patna High Court judge Ahsanuddin Amanullah, and Allahabad High Court judge Manoj

SC declines to modify order on Google's plea

In January, the apex court had declined to entertain a plea by Google challenging an NCLAT order, which refused to stay operation of the Competition Commission of India (CCI) order imposing ₹1,337.76 crore fine on the tech giant

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 10: The Supreme Court Friday refused to entertain a plea by Google seeking modification of the court's January 19

order, and asked the tech giant to raise its objections before the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT).

In January, the apex court had declined to entertain a plea by Google challenging an NCLAT order, which refused to stay operation of the Competition Commission of India (CCI) order imposing ₹1,337.76 crore fine on the tech giant. During the hearing Friday, a bench headed by Chief Justice of India, D.Y. Chandrachud, made it clear to senior advocate Maninder Singh, representing Google, that no clarification is required in this matter: Singh pressed that there is a need to add or clar-



ify the January order. The bench, also comprising justices P.S. Narasimha and J.B. Pardiwala, said the court would not make any changes and he can "go and argue everything before the

National Company Law Appellate Tribunal". The counsel for the Competition Commission of India (CCI) also opposed any changes to the order, saying there must be no interference with its operative part. The bench said the order was dictated in an open court and there was no point in modifying it. The bench told Singh, "Sorry, it can't be done. We will not do it."

The CCI counsel said the appeal of Google LLC is listed for hearing next week before the NCLAT and they can raise these issues before it. In its January 19 order, the top court had granted a week's time to Google

to deposit 10 per cent of ₹1,337 crore penalty imposed on it by the CCI. The top court had said that the findings of the CCI cannot be regarded as contrary to the weight of the record, at the interlocutory stage. In the January 19 order, the top court had added that at the present stage, since the appeal is pending before NCLAT, "we are desisting from entering a finding on the merits of the rival submissions which have been urged on behalf of the contesting parties". "Any expression of opinion of this court on the merits would affect the proceedings which are pending before the NCLAT."

JOSHIMATH SINKING

Mental health issues add to trauma of displaced

With no end in sight to the crisis, hundreds of others in Uttarakhand's fragile mountain town still lucky enough to be at home are frantic with worry about when - not if - they too will have to move into government-run shelters, hotels or just leave town

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: Insomnia, anxiety, depression and crippling uncertainty about the future. As days pass into weeks and the cracks in their town widen and deepen, hundreds of people displaced by land subsidence in Joshimath and forced into relief camps are battling a range of mental health problems, say residents and experts.

"The land subsidence event last month has had an impact on everyone. The major symptoms among affected people are insomnia and anxiety," Dr Jyotsana Naithwal, a

psychiatrist from AIIMS Rishikesh deployed at the community health centre (CHC) in Joshimath, told PTI in a phone interview.

She is part of the team of three trained psychiatrists and one clinical psychologist deployed in the town of over 20,000 people to help people battle mental trauma. Naithwal's own home in Singhdhar area has developed cracks and she has been living in a hotel with her family.

Studies have found natural tragedies such as landslides, earthquakes and floods are traumatic and may result in a wide range of mental health problems, includ-



ing depression, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Effective screening and aware-

ness programmes among survivors should be strengthened for the prevention and treatment of psychiatric morbidity among the sur-

vivors of landslides, said experts. According to Atul Sati, convener of the Joshimath Bachao Sangharsh Samiti (JBSS), fewer people are coming forward to report their problems because mental health is still a taboo topic.

Being forced to part from their damaged homes and the fear that they may never be able to return to their childhood homes is leading to a spectrum of problems.

The number of structures, according to the government, which have developed cracks so far stands at 868, an increase since January 20, when the number was 863, Sati said. Authorities estimate that present 878 members of 243 disaster-affected families are in relief camps.

"Basic facilities like food, drinking water, medicine etc. Are being made available to the affected people in the relief camps," according to the Twitter handle of DM

Chamoli. "In Joshimath, an amount of ₹505.80 lakh has been distributed so far for damaged buildings, special rehabilitation package, one-time special grant for transportation of goods and immediate needs and purchase of household materials as advance relief to the affected families," another tweet on Thursday said.

However, Sati alleged there are serious discrepancies in the official survey of damages and compensation.

The warning was not heeded. Over the decades, the place exploded into a busy gateway for thousands of pilgrims and tourists.

Joshimath is a gateway to several Himalayan mountain climbing expeditions, trekking trails, and pilgrim centres like Badrinath and Hemkund Sahib, and the Valley of Flowers, a UNESCO world heritage site.

Can Kerala CPI(M) do no wrong? Confusion prevails over BJP CM face in Karnataka

OVER THE YEARS, THE PARTY HAS REALISED THAT WHAT IT CONSIDERED AS 'DETRIMENTAL' TO THE INTERESTS OF THE STATE IS ACTUALLY THE 'NEED OF THE HOUR'



Present circumstances are totally different and there is no other way out," said Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Thursday when reminded that once he had asked the people of the state not to pay the increased charges when the Congress-led UDF raised taxes.

A media critic on condition of anonymity said the CPI(M) thrives on rhetoric and what they fail to realise is it has badly let them down first in West Bengal where they ruled for over three decades at a stretch and now in Tripura also. "Their biggest advantage is their

disciplined cadres, who have no other way but to just follow their leaders on issues and take the message to the people. There is not a word of discontentment from any levels. Can this phenomenon ever happen in parties like the Congress and the gullible masses believe, just see there are no issues in the CPI(M). Whereas in the Congress, it's just chaos and there is no unanimity on any issues, leaving many to think that things will not be good for them. This is what the CPI(M) exploits and does it well," said the critic.

And the latest being the ₹2 fuel cess introduced none other than by Finance Minister KN Balagopal, who as a student was always at the forefront of the protests.

Asked about the party drumming up support for something it has been opposing tooth and nail, he said, "All what we do is just for the people and they know that very well." Hence, the party feels that Vijayan and the other leaders take divergent positions on the same issue just for the people.

To a pertinent question, "can the Kerala CPI(M) do no wrong?" one can only wonder and ask "what went wrong in West Bengal and Tripura?"



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Raichur, Feb 10: Confusion continued over the BJP's chief ministerial candidate for the assembly elections in Karnataka with former CM BS Yediyurappa stating that the final decision would be taken by the party high command. Speaking to reporters

Yediyurappa stated that the party, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the high command will take a call on who is going to be the CM candidate.

"Their decision is final. We do not have any objections if the high command decides to make any leader as the CM. The BJP is going to win 140 seats in the upcoming as-

sembly elections and we will form the government," he said.

Commenting on the statements of former CM and JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy naming the BJP as the party of Brahmins, Yediyurappa stated that earlier the BJP was called the party of Lingayats. Now, it is being called the party of Brahmins. "90 per cent of Lingayats are still with the BJP and we are with them," he underlined.

Asked about naming Shivamogga airport after him, Yediyurappa clarified that he had told the party not to go ahead with the plans and it is not correct. Union Minister for Home

Amit Shah announced in public rallies that the upcoming elections would be fought under the leadership of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai. Karnataka state in-charge Arun Singh also repeated the statement on multiple occasions.

THE PARTY HAS STATED THAT VOTES WOULD BE SOUGHT IN THE NAME OF PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI

SC stays Kerala HC's condition on screening 'Kantara'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: The Supreme Court Friday stayed the Kerala High Court's condition directing the producer and director of the Kannada superhit movie 'Kantara' to not exhibit the film with the song 'Varaharoopam' till a final order in the copyright infringement case.

A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala also issued notice to the Kerala government and sought its reply in two weeks. The bench modified one of the conditions of the high court and directed that producer Vijay Kirgandur and director Ramesh Shetty be released on bail immediately if arrested.

The top court took note of the sub-

missions of senior advocate Ranjit Kumar, appearing for Kirgandur and Shetty, challenging some conditions in the high court order and passed an interim order.

February 8, the high court granted anticipatory bail to the director and producer in the case registered in a Kozhikode police station alleging plagiarism in the song. The allegation was that 'Varaharoopam' was an unauthorised copy of the song 'Navarasam' shown on the Malayalam music channel Kappa TV owned by Mathrubhumi Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.

The high court laid out five conditions and asked Kirgandur and Shetty to surrender before the investigating officer for two days February 12 and 13 between 10 am



and 1 pm for interrogation.

"The Investigating Officer can interrogate them and on completion of interrogation within the above time specified, if they will be arrested, they shall be produced be-

fore the jurisdictional court. On such production, the jurisdictional court shall release the petitioners on bail on their executing bonds for ₹50,000 each with two solvent sureties each for the like amount

to the satisfaction of the jurisdictional court concerned," the high court had said.

It said the accused shall not intimidate the witnesses or tamper with evidence and they shall cooperate with the investigation and shall be available for trial. It also said that the accused/petitioners should not leave India without prior permission of the jurisdictional court.

Condition number five, which is stayed by the top court, said, "The specific condition further is that the petitioners shall not exhibit the film 'Kantara' along with the music 'Varaharoopam' in the film till an interim order or final order after addressing infringement of copyright in this matter will be passed by a competent civil court..."

Kerala Cong asks people not to pay new cess on fuel

The Left government had justified the decision to levy ₹2 on fuel saying it was due to the BJP-led Union government's revengeful approach towards the state



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb 10: KPCC president K Sudhakaran Friday said his party will intensify the protest against the Kerala Left government's budget decisions to levy cess on fuel prices and asked the people not to pay the increased amount.

Addressing the media in New Delhi, Sudhakaran said the Congress party will protect those who may face any issues for not paying the increased cess amount.

"The state is being stifled due to the adamant attitude of the Chief Minister. All sectors of the society have been affected due to this budget," Sudhakaran said, adding that Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will have to withdraw the excess liability imposed on the people.

"Congress will intensify the protest against the budget decisions...I urge the people not to pay the increased fuel cess amount. We will protect those who face issues due to non-payment of cess," the Congress leader said.

Sudhakaran claimed that

Vijayan, when he was in the opposition, had earlier called for not paying the tax imposed by the then UDF regime.

The Kannur MP also alleged that the new tax was being implemented by the government, for the party workers. He alleged that such a measure was being taken due to the corruption and extravagance of the Left government.

He also urged the state government to take stringent action against officials who have failed to collect taxes in the state.

He said the responsibility of the mismanagement of tax collection solely rests on the government itself. The opposition Congress and the BJP has been protesting against the budgetary proposal to increase fuel cess in Kerala.

The Left government had justified the decision to levy ₹2 on fuel saying it was due to the BJP-led Union government's revengeful approach towards the state.

When asked about Sudhakaran's announcement calling for non-payment of cess, Leader of Opposition Congress, VD Satheesan said he was not aware of such a statement.

Agarwood threatened by illegal harvesting

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb 10: India is home to three species of agarwood and this most expensive wood is threatened by illegal harvesting and trade, according to a factsheet prepared by two global conservation agencies.

"The illegal trade of agarwood and its derivatives has continued in India, with more than 1.25 tonnes and 6 litres of oil/derivatives reportedly seized in six states including Assam, Delhi and Kerala between 2017 and 2021," says the newly released communique by TRAFFIC and WWF-India titled "AGARWOOD: Factsheet on India's Agarwood in illegal wildlife trade."

Assam, Delhi, Kerala, Maharashtra, Telangana, and West Bengal have reported incidents of agarwood smuggling to Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates, it says. The communique, which provides information about the species, interesting facts, legal status and threats from the illegal wildlife trade, says agarwood has been overexploited throughout its range for its fragrant heartwood, threatening its population.

It continues to be traded in significant quantities to and from India. The species is exploited for its valuable aromatic heartwood, a source of 'agaru' and agar oil, the most preferred raw materials in perfumery and traditional medicines, says the communique.

It is used in treating ailments like

asthma, colic, chest congestion, diarrhoea, body ache, and rheumatism and is also known for its anti-cancer properties.

Agarwood is the common name for the resinous aromatic resin formed in the heartwood of the genera Aquilaria trees.

Of the 21 known Aquilaria species found across the globe, about 13 are known to generate the resin in agarwood in response to injury and infection by a specific fungus. India is home to three species, of which Aquilaria khasiana and Aquilaria malaccensis are agarwood-producing species. According to the CITES Trade Database, from 2017 to 2021, India exported over 141 tonnes (exporter-reported quantity) of agarwood to the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, and Thailand.

The United Arab Emirates imported more than half of the overall reported quantities.

India imported more than 142 tonnes of agarwood simultaneously (importer reported quantity) from Australia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Lao People's Democratic Republic, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Bhutan, Switzerland, France, and Viet Nam, it says.

Over one-third of the agarwood was imported from Indonesia and Singapore. The large quantity of derivatives in trade highlights agarwood demand in international markets and India's position in the trade, says the communique.

Shah's roadshow in communally sensitive Karnataka dist cancelled

About 3,500 police personnel have been deputed for the security of Amit Shah, during his visit to Dakshina Kannada district, which had witnessed revenge killings in the recent past

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dakshina Kannada, Feb 10: The roadshow of Union Home Minister Amit Shah in the communally sensitive Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka Saturday has been cancelled owing to security reasons, a senior BJP leader said.

Shah, who will be reaching Karnataka Saturday morning from Kerala, will participate in various programmes and address a public gathering in Puttur town.



About 3,500 police personnel have been deputed for the security of Amit Shah, during his visit to the district, which had witnessed revenge killings in the recent past. The disturbing development stirred a debate at the national level. The cancelled roadshow was to be held at Mangaluru city in the evening.

K'taka showcases ecotourism hotspots to G20 delegates

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Feb 10: G20 summit delegates from 30 countries visited the Bannerghatta Biological Park, Kalkere Arboretum, and the Jungle Lodges and Resorts as part of the series of events organised by the Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG).

During this excursion, curated by the Department of Tourism, Government of Karnataka, the state showcased its models for the restoration of forest ecosystems and the different types of forests curated at the arboretum, stated in its official release.

At Bannerghatta, the delegates visited the famous butterfly park and a short animal safari curated for them, where they were able to learn about the state's sustainable ecotourism model. The Globally acclaimed 'Wild Karnataka' movie was screened for the delegates at



Jungle Lodges and Resorts. The visit is part of India's ef-

forts to shift focus to the climate-change challenges and towards

sustainable models of development such as eco-tourism, which

can play a vital role, and will balance the needs of the growing economy with necessary measures for protecting the environment.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr V Ram Prasath Manohar, IAS, Director, Karnataka Tourism said, "Karnataka has an abundance of natural beauty, including the Western Ghats, a site listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This mountain range is renowned for its great diversity of flora and fauna. The state has 35 wildlife sanctuaries and five national parks. It is also home to over 100 species of animals, and 600 species of birds, including 524 tigers and over 6000 elephants, making Karnataka, truly India's wildlife capital."

"Thursday, the G20 delegates were given a short insight into the state's rich biodiversity and stunning wildlife during the excursion."



national

of the day quote

A book on the life and struggles of former Chief Minister Kengal Hanumanthaiah will be released this year

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | K'TAKA CM

The firing incidents at Behbal Kalan and Kotakpura in 2015 along with the sacrifice of Guru Granth Sahib in Bargari had bruised the psyche of every human being especially the Sikh community

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

The NCC makes our youth disciplined and inculcates spirit of patriotism in them. I have instructed the officials to solve all the problems here within 15 days so that the cadets do not face any issues during training

MANISH SIDOSIA | DELHI DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

14 officers transferred

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration Friday transferred seven IAS officers and seven JKAS officers and posted them in different departments. Among the IAS officers, Dheeraj Gupta of the 1993-batch was transferred from the post of principal secretary, housing and urban development department, and posted as principal secretary, department of forest, ecology and environment, as per an order issued by Secretary, General Administrative Department (GAD), Piyush Singla.

17 injured in road mishap

Jammu: Total 17 persons suffered injuries when a passenger bus turned turtle and skidded off the road in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district Friday, officials said. The accident took place at the Gallawan-Panchari area of the district.

Gang of snatchers busted in Dwarka

New Delhi: Delhi Police have busted a gang of snatchers and nabbed five including two juveniles in Delhi's Dwarka area, said an official Friday. With these arrests, the police have also solved 30 cases of snatching and theft and recovered 23 snatched mobile phones, several Aadhaar cards, pan cards, debit cards, four two-wheelers and metro cards from the possession of the gang members.

Shibu Soren hospitalised

Ranchi: Jharkhand Mukti Morcha patriarch Shibu Soren was hospitalised with breathing difficulties but his condition is "stable now", an official of the hospital, where he is undergoing treatment, said Friday. The 79-year-old former chief minister of Jharkhand has been diagnosed with a lower tract respiratory infection.

Kwatra to visit Nepal

New Delhi: Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra will pay a two-day visit to Nepal beginning Monday to advance overall cooperation between the two countries. It is expected that Kwatra will also discuss with his Nepalese interlocutors the possibility of a visit to India by Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'. In December, the former Maoist leader became Nepal's Prime Minister for a third time. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Kwatra will visit Nepal from February 13 to 14 at the invitation of his Nepalese counterpart Bharat Raj Paudyal.



J&K government has changed the situation in 3 years which could not be done in 75 years

ANURAG THAKUR | UNION MINISTER OF SPORTS AND YOUTH AFFAIRS

AIR PASSENGERS FACE TOUGH TIME

As many as 170 passengers of an Air India Express flight to Dubai had a tough time at the airport in Mumbai as the flight was delayed by 13 hours due to a technical snag. The flight, which was scheduled to take off for Dubai at 3 pm on Thursday, finally left at 4 am Friday



SC junks Hindu Sena plea for ban on BBC

Alleging that the BBC has been biased against India and the Indian government, the plea alleged that its documentary on Modi is a "result of deep conspiracy against global rise of India and its Prime Minister"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: The Supreme Court Friday dismissed a plea seeking to impose a complete ban on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in India in wake of a controversial documentary regarding the 2002 Gujarat riots, terming it "entirely misconceived" and "absolutely meritless".

A bench comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna and M M Sundresh passed the order while hearing a plea filed by Vishnu Gupta, president of the Hindu Sena, and Beerendra Kumar Singh, a farmer. "The writ petition is entirely misconceived and has no merit and is accordingly dismissed," the bench said.

At the outset, Justice Khanna observed, "It is completely misconceived, absolutely meritless. How can you even argue this. I feel it is absolutely misconceived". Senior advocate Pinky Anand, appearing for the petitioners, urged the apex court to see the background when the documentary came out and said today, there is a position when you have an Indian as the prime minister of the United Kingdom. She said India is rising as an economic power and there is ascendancy in it as India is the fifth largest economy in the world.

"Do you think the documentary will make a difference to that," the bench observed, adding, "What is this? Do you want us to put a complete censorship?" Anand argued that same thing had happened in the Nirbhaya case, Kashmir issue and during the Mumbai riots also. "Let us not waste any more time," the bench said while dismissing the plea.

The Centre has banned the documentary on social media and online channels though it has been screened in various colleges and universities across the country

"The documentary film by BBC relating to Gujarat violence 2002 implicating Prime Minister Narendra Modi is not only reflective of anti-Narendra Modi cold propaganda broadcast to tarnish his image alone but this is anti-Hinduism propaganda by the BBC to destroy the social fabric of India," the plea had alleged. It had also sought a direction to initiate investigation against the alleged "anti-India and anti-Indian Government reporting/documentary films/short forms including its employee journalist in India and to submit inquiry report before this court and also to prosecute them if they are found guilty of offences under the IPC and Information Technology Act, 2000".

On February 3, the apex court had sought responses from the Centre and others on the separate petitions challenging its decision to block the documentary.

The pleas, on which notice was issued by the top court, have been filed by veteran journalist N Ram, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, activist lawyer Prashant Bhushan and lawyer M L Sharma. The top court had February 3 also directed the central government to produce original records relating to its decision to block the BBC documentary.



Devotees take holy dip in the Hooghly river during 'Bango Kumbha Mela' at Kalyani in Nadia district, West Bengal

PTI PHOTO

SSLV-D2 ROCKET INJECTS 3 SATELLITES INTO ORBIT

The payloads launched by SSLV D2 rocket Friday included ISRO's earth observation satellite EOS-07

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Sriharikota (Andhra Pradesh), Feb 10: India Friday got one more rocket to launch satellites. SSLV-D2 successfully orbited three satellites with its new rocket - Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV).

On its second developmental flight the SSLV-D2 put into orbit an earth observation satellite-07 (EOS-07) weighing about 156.3 kg and two others - 10.2 kg, Janus-1 belonging to ANTARIS of the US and 8.7 kg AzaadiSat-2 belonging to Space Kidz India, Chennai.

Speaking after the successful launch S. Somanath, Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation said the country has one more rocket to launch satellites. In 2023, ISRO will launch a navigation satellite with its GSLV rocket.

"The SSLV-D2 rocket has launched the three satellites successfully. The orbit achieved was good. "All the rocket systems worked well," said the Chairman. Recalling the failed maiden SSLV-D1 mis-



sion last year, Somanath said: "We had a narrow miss. We have implemented corrective measures." S. Vinod, Mission Director said India has a new satellite launch vehicle. "It all started in 2018 and the rocket has reached the intended destination today (Friday)."

He said last year's SSLV-D1 mission had a small problem. Detailed analysis was carried out and corrective actions were taken. "In the shortest period we came out with a new satellite separation system

and guidance system," Vinod added.

Looking forward, Somanath said the space agency is gearing up for a commercial satellite launch with its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) by the end of March. Somanath also said, ISRO will launch 36-satellites of the UK based OneWeb. According to him, the landing experiment for ISRO's reusable launch vehicle will be carried out and the year end will see the launch of NISAR satellite, a joint project of India and the US.

India's newest rocket, the 34-metre tall and weighing 120 ton SSLV-D2 flew upwards first launch pad at the Sriharikota rocket port. The rocket's total carrying capacity was 500 kg to Low Earth Orbit (LEO). But the SSLV-D2 had a total payload of 175.2 kg.

The three staged SSLV-D2 is primarily powered by solid fuel (total 99.2 ton) and also has a velocity trimming module (VTM) powered by 0.05 ton of liquid fuel for precise injection of satellites.

About 13 minutes into its flight, the SSLV rocket orbited EOS-07 and soon after that the other two satellites Janus-1 and AzaadiSAT-2 followed suit. According to ISRO, the EOS-07 rocket has a mission life of one year.

Arms, drugs airdropped by Pak drone seized

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Feb 10: A Chinese pistol, five cartridges, a magazine and three kilogram heroin airdropped by a Pakistani drone near the international border in Punjab's Tarn Taran district were seized in a joint operation by BSF and police personnel, officials said Friday.

Director General of Punjab Police Gaurav Yadav said the consignment was airdropped by Pakistan-based smugglers using a drone from across the border.

BSF detected the drone attempting to intrude into Indian territory from the Pak side on the night of February 9

A civilian alerted police on hearing the sound of a drone near the India-Pakistan border in the Khemkaran area on the intervening night of Thursday and Friday, he said, adding that the inputs were shared with the Border Security Force (BSF) and a joint combing operation was launched within a radius of one kilometre from the border.

"On deep checking of the surrounding fields, the police and the BSF teams successfully recovered the consignment of three kilogram heroin and a 30-bore pistol along with ammunition from the area of Mianwal village in Tarn Taran," the official said.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Tarn Taran, Gurmeet Chauhan said investigations were on to ascertain the identity of the smugglers who sent the consignment via the drone and also their Indian associates.

The development came a day after the Punjab Police apprehended a juvenile in Amritsar who had in his possession 15 kg heroin and ₹8.40 lakh cash.

This consignment too was airdropped by Pakistan-based smugglers using a drone and the accused was going to deliver it after retrieving the parcel from the border area of Kakkar village in Amritsar, the officials said in a statement.

WB SCHOOL JOBS SCAM

HC orders WBBSE to cancel jobs of 1911 illegally appointed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Feb 10: The Calcutta High Court Friday directed the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education to cancel jobs of 1,911 Group D employees, who were given appointment in state government-sponsored and aided schools illegally, following manipulation of their recruitment examination results.

The order came after the court found that the 1,911 candidates had got the recommendation owing to manipulation of their OMR sheets for the recruitment examination in 2016 for Group D employees. Their names were recommended by the School Service Commission to WBBSE.

India's defence production in 3 yrs worth ₹2.58L cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: India's indigenous defence production in the last three financial years was worth ₹2.58 lakh crore, according to details provided by the government on Friday.

The data from 2019-20 to 2021-22 was presented in the Lok Sabha by Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt in response to a question. "The value of indigenous defence production in the last three financial years 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-2022 are ₹79,071 crore, ₹84,643 crore and ₹94,846 crore respectively," he said. The total comes to ₹2,58,560 crore.

"In order to give a boost to the defence manufacturing ecosystem in the country, the government of India has established two defence industrial corridors (DICs), one

The government has been focusing on reducing dependence on imported military platforms and has decided to support domestic defence manufacturing

in Uttar Pradesh and the other in Tamil Nadu," he said.

According to estimates, the Indian armed forces are projected to spend around USD 130 billion (one billion is equal to ₹100 crore) in capital procurement over the next five years.

The government has been focusing on reducing dependence on imported military platforms



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

and has decided to support domestic defence manufacturing.

The defence ministry has set a goal of a turnover of USD 25 billion (Rs 1.75 lakh crore) in defence manufacturing in the next five years which includes an export target of USD 5 billion worth of military

hardware. To a separate question, he said the export value of authorisations issued in 2021-22 was ₹12,815 crore while it was ₹8,435 crore in 2020-21, ₹9,116 crore in 2019-20 and ₹10,746 crore in 2018-19. The amount in the current fiscal till February 6 was ₹10,642 crore.

India needs 30mn digitally skilled professionals by '26: Report

CURRENTLY, INDIA HAS ABOUT 500 MILLION PEOPLE OF WORKING AGE, AND INDUSTRY DATA SUGGESTS THAT ONLY 49 PER CENT OF TOTAL YOUTH (AGE GROUP OF 22-25 YEARS) IN THE COUNTRY IS EMPLOYABLE, ACCORDING TO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROVIDER TEAMLEASE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 10: India will need 30 million digitally skilled professionals by 2026, and about 50 per cent of the current workforce would require to re-skill themselves in areas of emerging technologies, a new report said Friday.

Currently, India has about 500 million people of working age, and industry data suggests that only 49 per cent of total youth (age group of 22-25 years) in the country is employable, according to employment services provider TeamLease.

"Our own survey have indicated that 75 per cent of companies face a skill gap in the industry. Even among people, who can stay in their current jobs, 40 per cent of fundamental abilities are likely to change and thus realigning the skill strategy will be crucial for companies," said Rituparna Chakraborty, Co-Founder & Executive Director, TeamLease Services.

Moreover, the report suggests that developing a skills matrix, conducting skill audits to target specific learning journeys and in-



termingling upskilling within the company culture; a comprehensive skill development strategy

will lead to a more sustainable future of work. The proposed suggestion also in-

cludes having an effective outcome-focused learning approach with structured impact evaluation metrics.

"Over 2 million jobs in AI, Cyber Security, and blockchain are expected to remain unfilled in 2023. Additionally, the workplace is evolving so rapidly that 76 per cent of the global workforce is not equipped with the requisite skills to function in the new digitally focused workplaces," mentioned Chakraborty.

"The long-term goal of all skill development programs must focus on the creation of a future-ready

and future-proof workforce for that is the only way we can tackle the fluctuations in the world of work and infuse a sense of greater stability. The adoption of sustainable skill development thereby creating a healthy talent pipeline in any country is the only way to address the vagaries of talent inequity."

According to the World Economic Forum, investing in upskilling could boost India's economy by \$570 billion by creating 2.3 million new jobs by 2030, the report said.

international



China is strongly dissatisfied with this and firmly opposes it. The resolution by the U.S. Congress was purely political manipulation and hyping up

PUTIN TO LOSE FRANCE'S TOP HONOUR French President Emmanuel Macron said he might strip his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin of France's top honour, but is waiting for the "right moment" to do so.



of the day quote

The threat posed by Islamic State extremists remains high and has increased in and around conflict zones. The group's expansion is particularly worrying in Africa's centre, south and Sahel regions

This voice always says: Follow in the footsteps of Nelson Mandela, because he made great sacrifices. He didn't have to do what he did for this country but he made great sacrifices

We are making significant investments in our defence ties with India to uphold a favourable balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region

Moldovan govt falls as PM quits

Chisinau, Feb 10: Moldova's government collapsed Friday as pro-Western Prime Minister Natalia Gavrilita resigned, adding to a series of crises that have gripped the small nation since Russia invaded its neighbour, Ukraine.

Gavrilita told a news conference that the "time has come for me to announce my resignation" and said no one expected her government, elected in the summer of 2021, "would have to manage so many crises caused by Russian aggression in Ukraine."

"I took over the government with an anti-corruption, pro-development and pro-European mandate at a time when corruption schemes had captured all the institutions and the oligarchs felt untouchable," Gavrilita said. "We were immediately faced with energy blackmail, and those who did this hoped that we would give in."

"The bet of the enemies of our country was that we would act like previous governments, who gave up energy interests, who betrayed the national interest in exchange for short-term benefits," she added.

Gavrilita, a 41-year-old economist, was appointed prime minister in August 2021 after her pro-Western Party of Action and Solidarity, or PAS, won a parliamentary election on a pro-EU, reformist ticket in the former Soviet republic.

The former Soviet republic country of 2.5 million has suffered from soaring inflation and was strained last year by an influx of Ukrainian refugees.

Antakya /Jandaris, Feb 10: Rescue crews pulled several people from the rubble of collapsed buildings during the night, including a 10-year-old boy saved with his mother, four days after a huge earthquake wrought death and destruction across southern Turkey and northwest Syria.

The confirmed death toll from the deadliest quake in the region in decades stood at 21,000 in both countries Friday morning. Hundreds of thousands more people have been left homeless and short of food in bleak winter conditions, desperate for a multi-national relief effort to alleviate their suffering.

RUINS AND PAIN

Rescues dwindle; death toll tops 21K

Turkey-Syria earthquake now ranks as seventh most deadly natural disaster this century, ahead of Japan's 2011 tremor and tsunami and approaching the 31,000 killed by a quake in neighbouring Iran in 2003



- DEATH TOLL OVER 18,000 IN TURKEY, MORE THAN 3,000 IN SYRIA
HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS HOMELESS IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER
SYRIA'S ASSAD MAKES FIRST REPORTED TRIP TO AFFECTED AREA

REUTERS response to the catastrophe was slow and poorly organised - accusations he rejects as he bids for re-election in May. That election may now be postponed due to the disaster.

Rescuers, including specialist teams from dozens of countries, toiled through the night in the ruins of thousands of wrecked buildings in Turkey. In freezing temperatures, they regularly called for silence as they listened for any sound of life from mangled concrete mounds.

The death toll from the 7.8 magnitude earthquake and several powerful aftershocks across both countries has surpassed the more than 17,000 killed in 1999 when a similarly powerful earthquake hit northwest Turkey.

The death toll in Turkey rose to 18,342 by Friday morning and the number injured rose to 74,242, the disaster management authority AFAD said.

In Syria, more than 3,300 have been killed, though rescuers have said many more people remain under rubble.

Some 24.4 million people in Syria and Turkey have been affected, according to Turkish officials and the United Nations, in an area spanning roughly 450 km (280 miles) from Adana in the west to Diyarbakir in the east. In Syria, people were killed as far south as Hama, 250 km from the epicentre.

Missile-wave rips through Ukraine

UKRAINE IS UNDER NEW RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE AFTER MONTHS OF REVERSES. PUTIN WANTS TO BE ABLE TO TOUT A BATTLEFIELD SUCCESS BEFORE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE INVASION HE LAUNCHED FEBRUARY 24



- RUSSIA CARRIES OUT NEW MISSILE AND DRONE STRIKES
ATTACKS FOLLOWS TRIP ABROAD BY UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT
ENERGY FACILITIES DAMAGED IN LATEST STRIKES

Kyiv, Feb 10: Russia unleashed a new wave of missile strikes on energy infrastructure across Ukraine Friday, causing emergency power outages for millions of people and prompting new calls by Kyiv for Western arms.

Ukraine's air force said Russia had fired 71 cruise missiles, of which 61 were shot down, and explosions were reported by local officials around the country including in the capital Kyiv.

At least 17 missiles hit the southeastern city of Zaporizhzhia in an hour in the heaviest attack since Russia invaded Ukraine in February last year, local officials said.

Energy Minister German Galushchenko said thermal and hydro power generation facilities and high-voltage infrastructure had been hit in six regions, forcing emergency electricity shutdowns across most of the country.

KYIV WANTS QUICK DECISIONS The new Russian attacks followed a rare trip abroad this week by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that included talks with European Union leaders in Brussels aimed at securing more weapons for Ukraine including fighter jets.

"Russia has been striking at Ukrainian cities all night & morning," presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak wrote on Twitter. "Enough talk & political hesitation. Only fast key decisions: long-range missiles, fighter jets, operational supplies logistics for Ukraine."

SHORT TAKES

Pak troubles spiral

Islamabad: Cash-strapped Pakistan and the IMF have failed to reach a staff-level agreement on a much-needed \$1.1 billion bailout package aimed at preventing the country from going bankrupt.

Power crisis in SA

Johannesburg: South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has announced a "State of Disaster" due to the country's electricity crisis during his annual State of the Nation address in Cape Town.

Belarus, Poland: Border fallout

Minsk: Belarus Friday slammed a decision by Poland to close a border checkpoint between the two countries as "catastrophic", saying it could lead to a "collapse" on both sides of the border.

Brazil bows down to US pressure

Rio De Janeiro: Brazil bowed to US pressure and declined an Iranian request for two of its warships to dock in Rio de Janeiro at a time when Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was planning his trip to Washington to meet US leader Joe Biden.

US plans new move on H-1B visa

THE PROPOSED PLAN WOULD BE A BIG RELIEF TO THOUSANDS OF INDIAN TECH PROFESSIONALS IN US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Feb 10: In a move that could benefit tens of thousands of foreign tech workers on H-1B and L1 visas, the US is planning to resume "domestic visa revalidation" in certain categories on a pilot basis with the goal of scaling it up in the next few years.

Until 2004, certain categories of non-immigrant visas, particularly the H-1B, could be renewed or stamped inside the US. After that, for renewal of these visas, in particular, those on H-1B, the foreign tech workers have to go out of the country, mostly to their own country to get the H-1B extension stamped on their passport.

For all the H-1B visa holders, when their visa is renewed, they need to get their passports stamped with renewal dates. This is required if they wish to travel outside of the US and re-enter the US. As data showed, a historic turn that is expected to mark the start of a long period of decline.



FRIDAYS FOR FUTURE: Demonstrators wear costumes as they take part in the Fridays for Future climate strike, ahead of the upcoming state elections, in Berlin, Germany

In aging China, a call for 'bold' steps to cut cost of having babies

DEMOGRAPHERS WARN THAT CHINA MIGHT GET OLD BEFORE IT GETS RICH

REUTERS

Hong Kong, Feb 10: A Chinese health official has urged local governments to take "bold" steps to lower the cost of having babies and raising children to reduce the burden on families and boost fertility, a state-backed publication reported Friday.

China was for decades preoccupied with the prospect of runaway population growth and imposed a strict one-child policy from 1980 to 2015 to keep numbers in check. But now the population has started shrinking and India is about to become the world's most populous country.

business

of the day quote

The economy contracted sharply in December meaning, overall, there was no growth in the economy over the last three months of 2022

Milk prices in the country have risen due to increase in the feed and fodder cost

Improving subtropical horticulture in the state offers a lot of economic opportunities to farmer households. Supporting horticulture value chains will also boost the subsector's contribution to the country's development and food security

SHORT TAKES

Nalco net profit drops 69% in Q3

New Delhi: State-owned National Aluminum Company Ltd (Nalco) Friday posted a 69.1 per cent decline in consolidated profit at ₹256.32 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2022. The company had posted a consolidated profit of ₹830.67 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal, Nalco said in a filing to BSE. Its consolidated income dropped to ₹3,356.30 crore from ₹3,845.25 crore in the year-ago period. In a statement, the PSU said lower sales volume of alumina during the quarter, higher input costs coupled with global challenging business scenario and volatility have affected the profit margins despite the company registering robust growth in production.

M&M Q3 profit sees 14% growth

New Delhi: Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) Friday reported a 14 per cent rise in its profit after tax to Rs 1,528 crore for the third quarter ended December 2022, driven by robust sales across automobile and farm segments. The Mumbai-based automaker had reported a net profit of Rs 1,335 crore for the October-December period of the previous fiscal. Its revenue surged 41 per cent to Rs 21,654 crore for the third quarter compared to Rs 15,349 crore in the year-ago period. The company said it has sold a total of 1,76,094 vehicles during the period under review, up 45 per cent from 1,21,167 units a year ago.

JOLT TO MARKET

As Russia navigates the maze of restrictions which the West has imposed in an attempt to choke off its revenue from oil, the output cut indicates that the price cap on Russian oil has had some impact

REUTERS

Moscow, Feb 10: Russia will cut oil production by 500,000 barrels per day, or around 5% of output, in March, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said Friday, after the West imposed price caps on Russian oil and oil products.

The price of Brent crude rose on the news of the output cut from Russia, the world's second-largest oil exporter after Saudi Arabia, increasing by more than 2.5% on the day to \$86.6 per barrel.

RUSSIA TO REDUCE OIL OUTPUT BY 5%



Russia believes that the price cap mechanism in the sale of Russian oil and oil products is an interference in market relations and a continuation of the destructive energy policy of the countries of the collective West

ALEXANDER NOVAK | DEPUTY PM, RUSSIA

group regarding its decision to cut output. The G7, the European Union and Australia agreed to ban

the use of Western-supplied maritime insurance, finance and brokering for seaborne Russian oil

priced above \$60 per barrel from Dec. 5 as part of Western sanctions on Moscow over the conflict in Ukraine.

The EU also imposed a ban on purchases of Russian oil products and set price caps from February 5. In turn, Russia has banned deals involving any application of the price cap mechanisms.

PRODUCTION CUT

The last big fall in Russian oil output was in April when it collapsed by nearly 9% following the introduction of Western sanctions over Ukraine. Since then, Russia has managed to set up logistic chains for its oil sales, mostly in Asia.

Russia's decision to cut oil production was announced only nine days after an OPEC+ panel, in

which Russia is a member, endorsed the oil producer group's current output policy, leaving production cuts agreed last year in place.

Russia's oil output last year defied numerous predictions of a decline, rising by 2% to 535 million tonnes thanks to a jump in sales to Asia, especially to India and China.

However, following a raft of new sanctions from the West, Russia is facing more challenges in selling oil, a key source of revenue for the state budget, which posted a \$25 billion deficit in January.

Lower export volumes shrank Russia's current account surplus by 58.2% to \$8 billion in January, squeezing Russia's capital buffers at a time when Moscow is ramping up budget spending.

ADDING TO THE PAIN

Moody's downgrades 4 Adani firms

The market capitalisation of Adani group is now down by 51% after the Hindenburg report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: Moody's downgraded Friday the ratings outlook for some Adani Group companies, while MSCI said it would cut the weightings of some in its stock indexes, the latest blows for the Indian conglomerate plunged into crisis.

Moody's Investor Service revised downwards the rating outlook on four Adani Group companies to 'negative' from 'stable' after a significant and rapid decline in market value following a report by US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research.

In a statement, Moody's said the rating outlook for Adani Green Energy Ltd, Adani Green Energy Restricted Group, Adani Transmission Step-One Ltd and Adani Electricity Mumbai Ltd has been changed to 'negative' from 'stable'.

"These rating actions follow the significant and rapid decline in the market equity values of the Adani Group companies following the re-



MSCI REDUCES WEIGHTINGS FOR SOME ADANI COMPANIES

ADANI GROUP FIRMS HAVE LOST \$100BN IN MARKET VALUE

The rating outlook for Adani Green Energy Ltd, Adani Green Energy Restricted Group, Adani Transmission Step-One Ltd and Adani Electricity Mumbai Ltd has been changed to 'negative' from 'stable'

cent release of a report from a short-seller highlighting governance concerns in the Group," it said.

Adani group companies have lost \$100 billion in market value since the US short-seller Hindenburg Research came out with a damning report alleging fraud at the conglomerate helmed by Gautam Adani. Adani Group has denied all allegations and threatened to sue Hindenburg.

Moody's said it has affirmed the ratings on eight Adani Group companies.

"At the same time, Moody's has changed the outlook on four issuers to negative from stable, while maintaining the stable outlook on

other four companies," the statement said.

The rating outlook was downgraded for the group's renewable energy firms Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) and Adani Green Energy Restricted Group (AGEL RG-1) comprising Adani Green Energy (UP), Parampuja Solar Energy Pvt Ltd and Prayatna Developers Private Ltd.

Its transmission unit Adani Transmission Step-One Ltd (ATSOL) and Adani Electricity Mumbai Ltd (AEML) too faced similar action.

However, the outlook for Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) and Adani

International Container Terminal Pvt Ltd was unchanged at stable. It further added that the negative outlook also factors in the company's significant refinancing needs of around \$2.7 billion in fiscal year ending March 2025 and limited headroom in its credit metrics to manage any material increase in funding costs.

Moody's said given the negative outlook, an upgrade in the ratings of the four firms was unlikely in the near term.

Meanwhile MSCI said that, in addition to the group's flagship firm Adani Enterprises, it planned to cut index weightings for Adani Total Gas - a venture with France's TotalEnergies - and Adani Transmission, a power transmission company.

It will also reduce the weighting of ACC, a major Indian cement company acquired from Switzerland's Holcim last year but which is not one of the Adani group's main seven listed firms. The four companies had a combined weighting of 0.4% in the MSCI emerging markets index as of January 30.

MSCI reassessed the size of some Adani companies' free floats, having determined there was "sufficient uncertainty" surrounding some investors in Adani companies. It embarked on the review after feedback from market participants.

Industrial production growth slides to 4.3%

MANUFACTURING SECTOR WITNESSED SUBDUED PERFORMANCE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 10: India's industrial production growth slipped to 4.3 per cent in December from 7.3 per cent in November 2022, mainly due to subdued performance of the manufacturing sector, according to official data released Friday.

However, there was improvement on an annual basis as the factory output growth measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) stood at 1 per cent in December 2021.

As per the IIP data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the manufacturing sector's output grew by 2.6 per cent in December 2022 from 0.6 per cent a year ago. The growth stood at 6.4 per cent in the preceding month of November 2022.

Mining output rose by 9.8 per cent during the month under review, from 2.6 per cent in December 2021. Power generation increased by 10.4 per cent in December 2022 compared to 2.8 per cent in the year-ago month. As per use-based classification, the capital goods segment recorded a growth of 7.6 per cent



in December against a decline of 3 per cent in the corresponding month of the last fiscal.

Consumer durables output declined by 10.4 per cent compared to a contraction of 1.9 per cent a year ago. Consumer non-durable goods output expanded by 7.2 per cent, as against a growth of 0.3 per cent earlier.

Infrastructure/construction goods too posted a growth of 8.2 per cent as against 2 per cent in the same month of 2021. The data also showed that the output of primary goods logged 8.3 per cent growth in the month as against 2.8 per cent in the same period a year ago.

The intermediate goods output growth declined to 0.3 per cent from 1 per cent earlier.

In the nine months of the fiscal (April-December), the growth in IIP works out to be 5.4 per cent, down from 15.3 per cent in the year-ago period.

TikTok shows the door to entire India workforce

The social media platform is banned in India since June 2020

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 10: Chinese short video-making app TikTok has sacked its entire India staff - about 40 employees - and February 28 will be their last working day.

The ByteDance-owned platform, banned in India in June 2020 over national security concerns, told its employees they would receive up to nine months of severance package. However, most of the staff will only get three-month severance.

In a statement to IANS Friday, a company spokesperson said that "we have taken the decision to close our India remote sales support hub, which was put in place at the end of 2020 to provide support to our global and regional sales teams".

"We greatly appreciate these employees and their impact on our company, and will ensure they are supported at this difficult time," the TikTok spokesperson added.

In June 2020, the government banned TikTok along with 59 other Chinese apps citing security concerns. Since then, the country has banned over 300 Chinese apps, including WeChat, Shareit, Hello, Likee, UC News, Bigo Live, UC



Browser and many more. The Centre last week blocked over 230 apps, including 138 betting and about 94 loan apps, which were traced to Chinese links. The Ministry of Electronics and

Yahoo to lay off more than 20%

Yahoo said Friday it plans to lay off more than 20% of its total workforce as part of a major restructuring of its ad tech division. The cuts will impact nearly 50% of Yahoo's ad tech employees by the end of this year, including nearly 1,000 employees this week, the company said. According to the latest data from layoffs.fyi, about 332 tech companies have laid off 1,00,746 employees in 2023 so far.

Information Technology (MeitY) was recently instructed by the MHA to ban such apps, which operate through a third party link.

All these apps were found violating Section 69 of the IT Act and contained materials which were deemed as a threat to India's sovereignty and integrity.

Meanwhile, US Senator Michael Bennett has urged Apple CEO Tim

Cook and Google CEO Sundar Pichai to immediately remove TikTok from their app stores, calling it an unacceptable risk to American national security.

The US plans to ban Chinese short video-making app TikTok nationwide, and the House Foreign Affairs Committee will hold a vote next month on a bill to completely block the platform.

Forex kitty drops \$1.49bn, breaks three-week trend

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 10: India's foreign exchange reserves dropped by \$1.494 billion to reach \$575.267 billion as of February 3, snapping a three-week rising trend, RBI data showed Friday.



In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had jumped by \$3.03 billion to \$576.76 billion.

In October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of \$645 billion. The reserves have been declining as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments.

For the week ended February 3, the foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, decreased by \$1.323 billion to \$507.695 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the RBI.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

After rising for multiple weeks, gold reserves decreased by \$246 million to \$43.781 billion, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up by \$66 million to \$18,544 billion. The country's reserve position with the IMF climbed \$9 million to \$5,247 billion in the reporting week.

LITHIUM DEPOSITS FOUND IN J&K

Is India's EV drive set to take the fast lane?

AS THE WORLD MOVES AWAY FROM GASOLINE-FUELED COMBUSTION ENGINES, DEMAND FOR LITHIUM, NICKEL, COBALT AND OTHER METALS THAT GO INTO LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES IS SOARING

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 10: India's Mines Ministry Thursday announced that 5.9 million tonne of lithium reserves have been found for the first time in the country in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Geological Survey of India for the first time established Lithium inferred resources (G3) of 5.9 million tonnes in the Salal-Haimana area of the Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir," the Ministry of Mines said Thursday.

It further said that 51 mineral blocks including Lithium and Gold were handed over to respective state governments.

"Out of these 51 mineral blocks, 5 blocks pertain to gold and other blocks pertain to commodities like potash, molybdenum, base met-

als etc. spread across 11 states of Jammu and Kashmir (UT), Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana," the ministry added.

Lithium: Catalyst to EV boom?

Lithium is a non-ferrous metal and is one of the key components in EV batteries.

Lithium-ion battery costs rose last year for the first time in the EV era, according to reports. Elon Musk bemoaned lithium's "insane" rally and said high raw material costs were among Tesla Inc's biggest headaches.

Centre has unveiled incentives of at least \$3.4 billion to expedite its lagging adoption of EVs as Prime Minister Narendra Modi



vows to reach net zero by 2070. The idea is that manufacturing the costliest component - batteries - locally will make the end product more affordable for the mass market and set the country up as a potential exporter, tapping into surging global demand.

The initiatives have piqued the interest of billionaires like Mukesh Ambani, whose Reliance Industries Ltd is building an EV battery facility as part of a broader \$76 billion push into clean energy. Reliance is among three companies, including scooter-maker Ola Electric Mobility Pvt and bullion refiner Rajesh Exports Ltd set to receive incentives under a \$2.3 billion program to support advanced battery cell development.

The world's second most pop-

ulous country has only a fraction of the raw materials needed to satisfy domestic demand for lithium-ion batteries - forecast by Crisil to grow 100-fold by 2030 - let alone produce on a global scale.

"The entry barriers are quite high," said Jasmeet Singh Kalsi, director of Manikaran Power Ltd. news agency Bloomberg. The company is setting up India's first lithium refinery and scouting for nickel, cobalt and copper assets overseas. "China has captured most of it."

India has a long way to go to catch up, and also faces competition from other countries, including the US, which is pushing to grow domestic battery production in an effort to break China's hold on the market.

TROIKA GIVES INDIA FREE REIN

Rohit hits century before unbeaten half centuries by Jadeja and Axar helps hosts take 144-run first innings lead at stumps on second day of the first Test against Australia



Rohit displayed class and composure of the highest order. While Rohit's ninth Test hundred is worth its weight in gold, Ravindra Jadeja's (66 batting, 170b, 9x4) 18th half century is also priceless. The all-rounder's knock will be equally important in the context of the game. Jadeja once again showed his true worth by adding 61 runs for the sixth wicket with Rohit and another 81 runs for the unconquered eighth-wicket with Axar Patel (52 batting, 102b, 8x4), who is also playing a fine hand. It was a battle of attrition for Indian batters, especially Rohit and Jadeja with the home team putting on board 244 runs on the second day. On a slow track where other batters found the run-scoring extremely difficult, the Indian captain was concentration-personified. It had the same class as the 161 he scored in against England in 2021 in the Chennai Test. The opener put his best foot forward against an attack, led by spinners Nathan Lyon (1/98) and Todd Murphy (5/82), who got a five-wicket haul on Test debut. In fact, both the off-break bowlers came round the wicket against right-handers to stem the flow of runs and succeeded partially. It took Rohit 171 balls to reach his hundred. The hallmark of his innings was the rotation of strike and how he traded risk for caution. Having read the nature of the pitch perfectly, Rohit curbed his natural flair and channelled his "inner Cheteshwar Pujara" and testimony to that was 82 completely out of character runs that he scored across two sessions on the day. He had scored 56 runs in half-a-session Thursday evening. Pull has been Rohit's go-to shot in every form of cricket he didn't take his opposite number Pat Cummins' (1/74) bait, save one time when he hit him for a maximum behind square. He didn't try to get to his hundred in a hurry, playing out maidens and taking singles before whipping Cummins to square leg for a boundary that took his score in



ICC CLEARS RAVINDRA JADEJA

Nagpur: A questionable moment involving Ravindra Jadeja sparked debate on social media Thursday, with former cricketers weighing in on the row. However the Indian all-rounder has been given the all-clear by the ICC for using a cream on his finger that the Indian side claimed was for pain relief. Indian team management told ICC match referee Andy Pycroft that Jadeja was applying pain-relief cream to the index finger of his bowling hand. No charge has been laid. "While the incident triggered debates on social and mainstream media, it is learned that the Australia team had not brought the matter to the attention of the match referee," an ICC report on the incident said. "According to the playing conditions, the match referee can independently probe such incidents without needing a complaint to be lodged. And under the Laws of Cricket, the bowler needs the umpire's permission to apply any sort of substance on their hands to ensure the condition of the ball remains unaffected."

KS Bharat (8) would be disappointed that they didn't score big. In the case of Kohli, bespectacled Murphy bowled a similar delivery to the former India skipper that had earlier accounted for Cheteshwar Pujara. The young spinner bowled on the fifth stump on the leg side and a faint nick was taken on the second attempt by wicket-keeper Alex Carey. Surya became Lyon's first victim as the off-break bowler breached his defence. In the morning, captain Cummins had set the bait for his opposite number with a deep fine leg and deep mid-wicket fielder but bowled fuller during his morning spell. Scott Boland also toiled manfully but once Carey stood up to the stumps, it was evident that there was no help for fast bowlers on day two.

BRIEF SCORES
Australia 177; India 321/7 (Rohit Sharma 120, Ravindra Jadeja 66 batting, Axar Patel 52 batting; Todd Murphy 5/82). Match to continue.

Murphy ecstatic after taking a fifer on debut



MEMORABLE OUTING: Todd Murphy (with glasses) was mobbed by teammates after completing his fifer in Nagpur, Friday

Nagpur, Feb 10: Todd Murphy has had a "special" couple of days and the bespectacled Australian Test debutant, who resembled more like a professor of history rather than practitioner of finger spin, couldn't be happier for his five-wicket haul against India in the on-going opening Test here. Murphy has so far picked up 5/82 in 36 overs in India's first innings, with the wickets of KL Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara and Virat Kohli in his kitty. "It's been a pretty special couple of days and to top it off with a five-wicket haul on debut is more than I ever hope for and it is going to be something that I'll look back on for the rest of my life and be proud of," Murphy said at the end of the second day's play. Murphy was all praise for the Indian batters and their ability to use their hands against spinners. "I haven't bowled to a lot of people from around the world but I think the Indian guys they use their hands really well. They get their hands out in front of their pads and they have got a lot of scoring options too. So always a really difficult challenge there. And it was quite tough," he said. Murphy started out as a medium pacer but later found off-breaks to be his calling card. "I think in all honesty my medium pace wasn't really any good anyway, so it sort of just came a time where I was tinkering in the nets with off-spin bowling and yeah, got some really good feedback that what was coming out of my hand was alright. "So, just went from there and kept working at it and it's been the best thing I've ever done. So thankful I have," he said. It has been one hell of a journey for Murphy, who wasn't even playing first-class cricket a year back and now has five-for in Tests to boast of. "I think this time last year I was still not in the state side so it sort of has been quite quick progress," he admitted. Murphy said his career changed when he toured Sri Lanka with the Australia A side last year. "But one of the biggest things for me was getting to go to Sri Lanka and being on that A tour and having a little bit of success over that probably gave me the confidence I needed going back to Australia that I could mix it with first class cricketers." He got guidance from some of the players, who have already played international cricket and that helped him understand the requirements of the top level. "Being around some of the guys who had played Test cricket, observing everything and competing in the nets and bowling to the Sri Lankans. "I took a lot of confidence out of that and reflected and went back, trusted myself a bit more and thought 'what I've got can be good enough' and believe in that," Murphy said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lucknow team to be known as UP Warriorz

LUCKNOW: The Lucknow franchise of the inaugural Women's Premier League (WPL), owned by Capri Global Holdings Private Limited, will be known as UP Warriorz. One of the five teams of this year's WPL, the UP Warriorz was bought by Capri Global Holdings Private Limited for Rs 757 crore at an auction hosted by the BCCI. UP Warriorz's logo comprises four components - a rendition of the sarus crane, a sword, wings that extend out like the rays of the sun, and a shield to hold it all together. Former England cricketer Jon Lewis has been appointed as the head coach of the team, while Arjuna awardee Anju Jain will be the assistant coach. Former Australian cricketer Ashley Noffke will be the bowling coach, while four-time world champion from Australia Lisa Sthalekar will be the mentor. The WPL is set to be played in Mumbai, March 4-26. The Player Auction for the WPL will be held in Mumbai February 13.

Indian teams reach Asian squash semis

CHENNAI: The Indian men and women teams entered the semifinals of their respective events in the 21st Asian Junior Team Squash Championship 2023 here Friday. On the final day of round-robin play, the Indian men's team, seeded second, edged out Malaysia 2-1 with Paarth Ambani and Shaurya Bawa scoring crucial wins after Krishna Mishra was beaten by Harith Danial Bin Jefri. India will take on Korea in the semifinals while Pakistan and Malaysia meet in the other last-four match. In the women's event, Anahat Singh trounced her opponent as India blanked Singapore 3-0 to advance to the semifinals. In the semifinals to be played Saturday, India will meet Malaysia while Hong Kong and Japan will clash in the other last-four game.

Messi, Mbappe, Benzema vie for FIFA Best award

ZURICH: It's Lionel Messi vs Kylian Mbappe again, this time for the FIFA Best Men's Player award for 2022. Argentina's World Cup-winning captain and France's superstar forward head the three-player shortlist announced by FIFA Friday, eight weeks after leading their teams in an epic final in Qatar. Karim Benzema completed the top three in the voting by a global panel of national team captains and coaches plus selected journalist in each of FIFA's 211 member countries, as well as fans voting online. In the Best Women's Player award, Beth Mead of England, Alex Morgan of the United States and Spain's Alexia Putellas were on the shortlist voted for by a separate global voting panel. The winners will be announced at a February 27 ceremony in Paris. Messi edged Mbappe for the Golden Ball awarded by FIFA as the best player at the World Cup. Another duel is expected for the PSG teammates with Messi favored to get a seventh win in FIFA's annual individual prize. Mbappe seeks his first. Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni, Real Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti and Man City's Pep Guardiola were shortlisted for a "best coach" award.

Odisha FC down HFC, keep play-off hopes alive



Odisha FC players celebrate a goal against Hyderabad FC at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Friday

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: Odisha FC dished out a superlative show to down Hyderabad FC 3-1 at home to keep their play-off hopes alive in the Indian Super League (ISL) at the Kalinga Stadium here Friday. Isak Ralte unleashed a curling

right side. The ball somehow bounced inside the box as Nim Dorjee dived forward and headed it home. The home team took the lead out of nowhere from a sloppy defensive work by Dorjee, who tapped the ball into his own net in the 72nd minute. OFC sealed their first win in five matches when Diego Mauricio got the reward for his hard work as he lobbed ball in the front. The forward chested it down on the right side, flicked from a very narrow angle to the back of the net in the final minute of stoppage time. The win saw the Juggernauts replace Bengaluru FC in sixth place to remain in contention for a play-off berth. A loss for the Nizams meant that if Mumbai City FC win against FC Goa Saturday, the Islanders will be crowned ISL League Shield winners. HFC were to be blamed for their poor defensive show. They will have will have to regroup from this loss, their first in eight matches.

SMRITI DOUBTFUL FOR INDIA'S MATCH AGAINST PAKISTAN

Cape Town, Feb 10: India vice captain Smriti Mandhana is likely to miss the Women's T20 World Cup opener against Pakistan Sunday as she is yet to recover from a finger injury she suffered during a warm-up game. The 26-year-old opener injured her left middle finger while fielding during the warm-up match against Australia Monday. "She suffered an injury in the practice game. We can't say she is out of World Cup yet. But she could miss the Pakistan game," an ICC source told PTI. The southpaw had batted at number three against Australia instead of her usual opening position. Her innings lasted only three balls. Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur's fitness is also a concern. She had injured her shoulder during the final of the Tri-Series against South Africa last week. "Body is fine. It will get better with rest," Kaur had said after the final.

Chandra's late strike saves Odisha the blushes



Chandra Muduli is airborne in delight after scoring the equaliser, Friday

Bhubaneswar, Feb 10: Buoyed by a vocal crowd at the Capital Ground, hosts Odisha struck late in the second half through Chandra Muduli to hold Maharashtra 1-1 in their Group A fixture of the Santosh Trophy here, Friday. Odisha started out stronger, controlling not just possession but also creating chances aplenty in an all-action first half but failed to score the opening goal. In the second-half Maharashtra made use of a bungled clearance with Armansh Ansari giving them the lead (57th) by scoring from close range. Chandra cancelled out the lead in the 83rd minute. Earlier, defending champions Kerala rode on a lucky own goal to secure a hard-fought 3-2 win over Goa in another Group A.



A medical person attends an Odisha player after a clash of heads with a Maharashtra player (lying on the ground in the left) before being stretchered off the ground

Having taken the lead, courtesy a Nijo Gilbert penalty (27th minute), Kerala looked in cruise control with Riswanali Edakkavil tapping in from close range off a corner (57th). But in space of two minutes, disaster struck as Goa pulled one back via a Mohammed Faheez penalty. Momentum soon shifted with Faheez adding a second in the 73rd minute. Both sides missed a flurry of chances in the final 10 minutes, before Asif OM tapped into his own net to give Kerala a lucky win. In the second afternoon game, Punjab were held to a 2-2 draw by a late Karnataka fightback. After a goalless first half, Punjab struck twice in four minutes via Kamaldeep (65th) and Bipul Kala (69th). Karnataka pulled one back in the 82nd minute via P Kamallesh while Robin Yadav struck the equaliser in the 90+3rd minute. The final rounds of the Santosh Trophy got underway here. Twelve teams have been divided into two groups of six each, and will play each other in a round robin format. The top two teams from each group will be the first in the history of Santosh Trophy to play on foreign soil, once they move to Riyadh for the semifinals and final.