



YAMI HAS HER KITTY FULL

Yami Gautam has a busy year ahead with three films coming up. As many as five more could be on the way

LEISURE P2



T'GANA DOUBLES FARM OUTPUT

India's youngest state has achieved a turnaround in farming by almost doubling agriculture production

TWO STATES P7



DRAGON'S VISA CONDITION

China makes it must for people coming from India and 19 other nations to get Chinese-made Covid-19 vaccines

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Counter them with out party men? They are our party workers only who didn't get ticket to contest elections!

35K acres Jagannath land to be sold out

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 16: The state government has initiated a process to sell 35,272 acres of land belonging to Lord Jagannath, in Odisha and six other states, Law Minister Pratap Jena told Assembly, Tuesday.

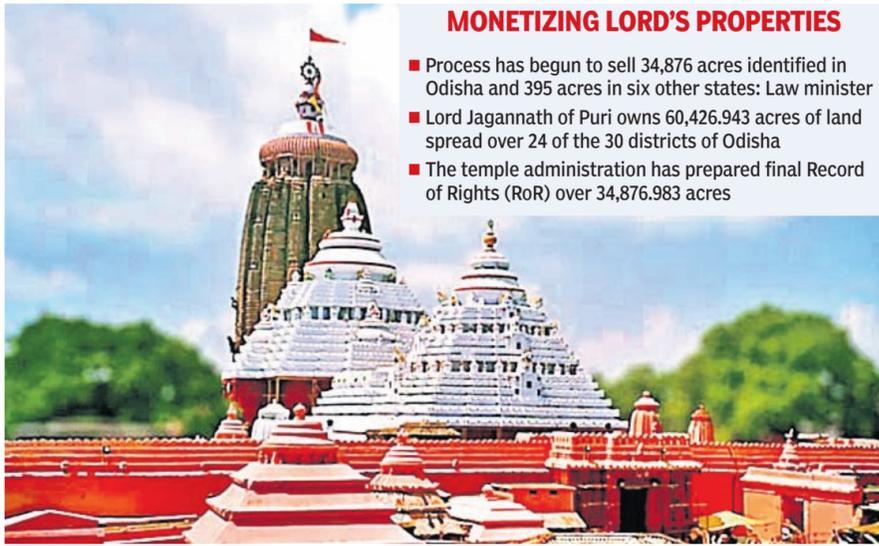
Giving a written reply to a question of BJP lawmaker Mohan Charan Majhi, Jena said as per the recommendations of a committee formed under the chairmanship of then Governor BD Sharma, the government is taking necessary steps to sell 35,272.235 acres of land properties of the temple.

Jena said Lord Jagannath owns 60,426.943 acres spread over 24 of the 30 districts of Odisha. Out of which, the temple administration could prepare final Record of Rights (RoR) over 34,876.983 acres. "In accordance with the recommendation of the commission, steps are being taken to sell out the land as per state government's approved Uniform Policy (Saman Niti)," the minister told Assembly.

Meanwhile, the government has already sold out 315.337 acres of Jagannath's land including Bharati Matha building in Cuttack city and ₹11.20 crore earned from the land sale has been deposited in the temple corpus fund, the minister said.

Similarly, steps are being taken to sell 395.252 acre of land identified in six states outside Odisha. The government has written to the concern District Collectors in this purpose, he said.

Sources said the 12th-century temple has maximum of 322,930 acre in West Bengal followed by 28,218 acre in Maharashtra, 25,110 acre in Madhya



MONETIZING LORD'S PROPERTIES

- Process has begun to sell 34,876 acres identified in Odisha and 395 acres in six other states: Law minister
- Lord Jagannath of Puri owns 60,426.943 acres of land spread over 24 of the 30 districts of Odisha
- The temple administration has prepared final Record of Rights (RoR) over 34,876.983 acres

Pradesh, 17,020 acre in Andhra Pradesh, 1,700 acre in Chhattisgarh and 0,274 acre in Bihar. The minister further said about 100 acre has been identified at Bagha area and the government is collecting share amount of paddy each year from the sharecroppers. A Khamari has been engaged at Bagha in this purpose while another Khamari has been engaged at Dochhian to take care of land properties located in the area, he said, adding, paddy collected from the Dochhian area is also sold each year.

Besides, 582.255 acres located in Khurda has been given to Odisha Cashew Development Corporation

(OCDC) on a lease basis. In return, the government is getting ₹3 lakh from the corporation each year, the minister added.

According to sources, people who have occupied Srimandir land for more than 30 years would have to pay ₹6 lakh per acre to take the temple land in possession. Those who have acquired Srimandir land for less than 30 years but more than 20 years would have to pay ₹9 lakh per acre to purchase the plots.

Besides, individuals who have occupied the temple plots for less than 20 years but more than 12 years would have to pay a hefty sum of ₹15 lakh

per acre, the source said.

The law minister further said the state government has constituted four commissions to bring reforms and probe various incidents related to the Jagannath temple. The panels are—justice BK Patra Commission, a committee headed by BD Sharma, Justice PK Mohanty Commission and Justice BP Das Commission. To implement various recommendations made by the commissions, a committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of temple chief administrator following the approval of the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee, he added.

₹10cr lost as smart signal project fails

AVIRAL MISHRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, March 16: The capital city projected itself as an ultra 'smart city' in the country ahead of the Hockey World Cup 2018. Fast forward to 2021, a slew of ambitious projects launched then are lying waste now.

Among the many projects launched by the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) in the country ahead of the Hockey World Cup 2018, the BSCL received Rs700 crore from the Centre and the state government to develop the smart city here.

With an aim to efficiently manage the rising traffic in the City, ATSCs were erected at 50 junctions to optimise the traffic flow by dynamically changing the signal timings. As per the RTI, the BSCL spent about Rs. 10 crore on the project.

"The number of vehicles has increased dramatically in the city and so have the gridlocks. ATSCs are there at selected places only. Peak rush hours see huge congestions in Rasulgarh,



Market Building and Bomikhal areas that don't have ATSCs. As it heavily relies on manpower, absences of traffic cops sees people ignoring the system," observed Smruti Ranjan Patnaik, an urban planner here.

Moreover, the project brought in about 14 pelican signals and five blinkers at different locations to ensure road safety. Pelican signals are manually-controlled signals that give pedestrians a duration of 15 seconds by turning the traffic lights red to cross the roads safely. Blinkers were to help commuters to be cautious while manoeuvring important junctions.

Thanks to poor awareness and lack of enforcement, the initiative has turned out to be a complete failure. Put up at key locations like RD College, Press Club Road, KIIT School and Sum Hospital, the riders give two hoots to traffic lights even if they turn red.

SHORT TAKES

It's official: Maha into 2nd Covid wave

New Delhi: Maharashtra is in the beginning of second Covid-19 wave, a central report has said, highlighting that there is limited active effort to track, test, isolate cases, and there is no adherence to Covid appropriate behaviour. Based on the report, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan wrote to the state government, stating "measures such as night curfews, weekend lockdowns etc. Have very limited impact on containing/suppressing the transmission" and urged the state to focus on strict containment strategies, strengthening surveillance and augmenting testing. P7

Top PM aide quits

New Delhi: Former Cabinet Secretary and Principal Advisor in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) PK Sinha, has resigned from his post on personal grounds. Sources said the retired 1977-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre put in his papers Monday evening. Sinha was appointed in the PMO in September 2019 following the general elections, after he retired as the Cabinet Secretary. The veteran former bureaucrat was earlier made the Officer on Special Duty in the PMO August 30, 2019 after Modi accepted the request of his Principal Secretary Nripendra Misra to be relieved from the post.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	50363.96 ↓ 31.12
NIFTY	14910.50 ↓ 19.00
DOLLAR	73.00 ↓ ₹0.02
EURO	87.60 ↑ ₹0.0
GOLD	₹44,830 ↓ ₹70
SILVER	₹66,991 ↓ ₹678

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	39.3°C	38.2°C
TEMP MIN	21.2°C	20.0°C
Humidity	91%	73%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Mainly clear sky	

Pipli bypoll April 17

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 16: The Election Commission of India (ECI) Tuesday announced the dates for the much anticipated Pipli Assembly bypoll besides announcing dates for byelections in several other states.

"After taking into consideration various factors like local festivals, electoral rolls, weather conditions, movement of forces and pandemic, the commission has decided to hold byelections to fill vacancies," the poll body said.

The ECI has fixed the polling date April 17 (Saturday) for the Pipli bypoll. The gazette notification of the polls will be issued March 23 while the last date of nominations has been fixed till March 30. The ECI has fixed the date of scrutiny of the nominations till March 31. Candidates can withdraw their candidatures till March 3, around two weeks before the poll day. Counting of votes is slated for May 2 (Sunday). The poll watchdog has fixed May 4 for all the poll related activities to end.

BANKS PARALYSED ON DAY 2

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar/ New Delhi, March 16: Bank strike continued for day-two Tuesday, led by nine unions of public sector banks (PSBs) in the country, opposing government's policy to privatise the lenders.

Customers will be inconvenienced to get services such as cash withdrawals, deposits, cheque clearances, remittance services. Government transactions related to treasury as well as business transactions will also be impacted.

"We have received major support from every association. A large number of youths and women officers actively participated in the strike. Another noticeable aspect was the participation of family members of our officers in the strike. Despite the threat unveiled by many banks, senior executives in SMGS IV & V participated in the strike." Soumya Datta, General Secretary of AIBOC, said. United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an umbrella body of nine unions,



Protesting bankers holding a sit-in as part of a nationwide bank strike in front of UCO Bank at Master Canteen in the city

10L STAFF PARTICIPATE

had given a strike call for March 15 and 16. Members of UFBU include All India Bank Employees Association (AIBE), All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC), National Confederation of Bank Employees (NCBE), All India Bank Officers' Association (AIBOA) and Bank Employees

Confederation of India. Others are the Indian National Bank Employees Federation, Indian National Bank Officers Congress, National Organisation of Bank Workers and National Organisation of Bank Officers.

Unions on Monday said nearly 10 lakh staffers across the country have participated in the strike, terming it a "success".

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Union Budget speech for 2021-22 said the government will privatise two more public sector banks going forward.

The government has already privatised IDBI Bank by selling its majority stake in the lender to LIC in 2019, and has merged 14 public sector banks in the last four years.

Your SMSes are up for grabs at just ₹1,160

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 16: In what could put smartphone users at a new privacy and security risk, text-messaging management services are now being misused for as little as ₹1,160 (nearly \$16) to covertly redirect text messages from users to hackers, giving cybercriminals access to two-factor codes/login SMSes.

The invisible cyber-attack on companies providing SMS redirection services is being carried out in connivance with workers at telecom companies, reports Motherboard. "The method of at-



tack, which has not been previously reported or demonstrated in detail, has implications for cybercrime, where criminals often take over target's phone numbers in order to harass them, drain their bank account, or otherwise tear through their digital lives," the report said late on Monday.

Using these services, attackers are not only able to intercept incoming text messages, but they can reply as well. "It's not hard to see the enormous threat to safety and security this kind of attack poses," US Senator Ron Wyden said in a statement. There are several other methods to exploit the SMS services and SIM swapping is one of those. But with SIM swapping, it's easy to find out that you are under attack as your device will be disconnected from the cellular network.

22 of world's 30 most polluted cities are in India: Report

DELHI RANKS THE MOST POLLUTED CAPITAL CITY GLOBALLY WHILE GHAZIABAD THE SECOND MOST POLLUTED IN THE WORLD FOLLOWED BY BULANDSHAHAR

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 16: Twenty-two of the world's 30 most polluted cities are in India, with Delhi being ranked as the most polluted capital city globally, a new report said Tuesday. The report is prepared by Swiss organisation, IQAir, in the form of the 'World Air Quality Report, 2020', which has released globally.

The report, however, shows that Delhi's air quality improved by approximately 15 per cent from 2019 to 2020. It said that despite the improvement, Delhi ranked as the 10th most polluted city and the top



polluted capital city in the world. "India continues to feature prominently at the top of the most polluted cities ranking, with 22 of the top 30

most polluted cities globally," the report said.

Besides Delhi, the 21 other Indian cities among the 30 most polluted

cities in the world are Ghaziabad, Bulandshahar, Birsakh Jalalpur, Noida, Greater Noida, Kanpur, Lucknow, Meerut, Agra and Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh, Bhiwari in Rajasthan, Faridabad, Jind, Hisar, Fatehabad, Bandhwari, Gurugram, Yamuna Nagar, Rohtak and Dharuhera in Haryana, and Muzaffarpur in Bihar.

As per the report, the top most polluted city is Xinjiang in China followed by nine Indian cities. Ghaziabad is the second most polluted city in the world followed by Bulandshahar, Birsakh Jalalpur, Noida, Greater Noida, Kanpur, Lucknow and Bhiwari.

The global cities ranking report is based on PM2.5 data from 106 countries, which is measured by ground-based monitoring stations, most of which is operated by government agencies. The report also reveals the impact of COVID-19 lockdown and behavioural changes on global particulate pollution (PM2.5) levels.

Major sources of India's air pollution include transportation, biomass burning for cooking, electricity generation, industry, construction, waste burning and episodic agricultural burning. "The transportation sector is one of the major contributors to India's lead-

ing PM2.5 emission sources across cities," the report said.

Contextualising the global IQAir report in the Indian context, Avinash Chanchal, Climate Campaigner at Greenpeace India said while many cities, including Delhi, have recorded marginal improvements in air quality due to lockdowns, the health and economic cost of air pollution remains severe.

He said it is pertinent that governments prioritise sustainable and clean energy sources, as well as the cities, need to encourage low cost, active and carbon-neutral mobility choices such as walking, cycling, and accessible public transport.



EDDIE VAN HALEN'S SON SLAMS THE GRAMMYS

Legendary American guitarist Eddie Van Halen's son Wolfgang Van Halen is not impressed by the Recording Academy's tribute to the iconic guitarist in the 'In Memoriam' segment at the recent Grammy Awards.

I GOT GOOD AT HIDING MYSELF: ORLANDO BLOOM

Hollywood star Orlando Bloom says he hated being looked at the whole time in his twenties, and quickly learned how to disappear. Bloom rose to fame in *The Lord Of The Rings* and the *Pirates Of The Caribbean* franchises in the early 2000s. There was too much media hype around him and he said that he got good at hiding himself.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES

Old, fond memories will define your mood today, which will show up in the manner in which you deal with work, where your mellow side will be visible to others. You are also circumspect with money and tend towards saving it. Ganesh says people dealing in cash and money-lenders will benefit.

TAURUS

You are likely to get into arguments today, predicts Ganesh. You should avoid any open confrontation. Legal disputes may bother you as well. Try your hand at meditation or resort to music of your preference to relax and unwind.

GEMINI

You are desirous of perfection in everything that you do, and you practice this philosophy in every aspect of your life. You make sure that all of your energies are concentrated on taking forward your efforts in the right direction.

CANCER

It is about time that you cultivated healthy eating habits. Today, you will be prone to doing everything in excess. You may overeat or get swept away by emotions. You must keep a check on your emotions, or it may lead to unwanted complications.

LEO

You sure love playing a team sport, but that does not diminish the fact that you are a tough player to compete with, says Ganesh. If only they had a rugby team at the local club! You derive a sense of completion from the fact that you have given your best effort to any endeavour.

VIRGO

Money matters will hit a major snag today, says Ganesh. Let your mind overrule your heart. Take extreme care of personal belongings, legal responsibilities and new ventures with long-term effects in mind.

LIBRA

It's a day of reaching new heights when it comes to finances. The cosmos favours money-lenders and stock marketeers. Call it the special touch that you give to all transactions monetary, but today you have the uncanny knack of raking in the moolah from all sources.

SCORPIO

Today, there are chances that you would be disturbed by continuous flow of negative thoughts in your mind. Try to divert your mind and look for positive people or friends who would cheer you up. Understanding needy people and living up to their expectations would bring some respite to your disrupted mind, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

Your days ahead are very dark, says Ganesh. Shun all luxuries and give up your ego to please the stars. Your attitude may land you in serious problems, be careful from now. You will suffer from pains and mental issues today, predicts Ganesh.

CAPRICORN

You are in hot water, but do not lose hope during these turbulent times. Maintain a calm head over your shoulders and deal with the problems, guides Ganesh. Also, do not jump to conclusions or be argumentative with the people around you, as you may end up being at the losing end.

AQUARIUS

You have already fulfilled your short-term objectives. But you are ambitious, and straightaway begin setting your long-term goals. But all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, says Ganesh. Leisure time with family will rejuvenate and prepare you for a better stint at work.

PISCES

While you like cooperating with your colleagues, there is nothing like a little competition to spice things up. You will nonchalantly take on the challenges coming your way, and thrive on the sweet smell of success today. Luck is in your favour as well.

'There was a time I had no film'

Mumbai: Actress Yami Gautam has a busy year ahead with three films coming up. As many as five more could be on the way, but official announcements are awaited. The sudden signing spree spells good news and she is happy that her time has come. She also admits that life has thrown a curve ball at her in the past but she is happy she handled it well.

"I really waited for this opportunity," Yami tells IANS,

adding: "I really waited for this time when I could pick and be part of scripts that I want to do, versus I have to do for the lack of a better option. That was a very different time for me. So, if someone asks me, 'how do you feel that you are doing so many films this year?' I'll say I have also seen a year when I was doing no film or may be one-odd film. So, it came after a lot of patience,

thought and I have waited for this time."

The actress, who made her Bollywood debut with *Vicky Donor* (2012), will be seen playing a cop in upcoming film *Dasvi* and is currently shooting in Agra Central Jail for the film. She has also signed the thriller *A Thursday* and will be seen in *Bhoot Police*.

Yami reveals that diversity in what she does is her priority.

"Whatever I am choosing to be a part of right now is a very conscious decision. Having said that, I am an actor and I am looking at substance. I am not looking at genre. I started in the middle of a pandemic with a film like *Bhoot Police* and that's a very different genre. The idea was to be as diverse as possible and whatever role I have, that should be substantial," she says. IANS

Gauahar issued Non-cooperation Directive by FWICE

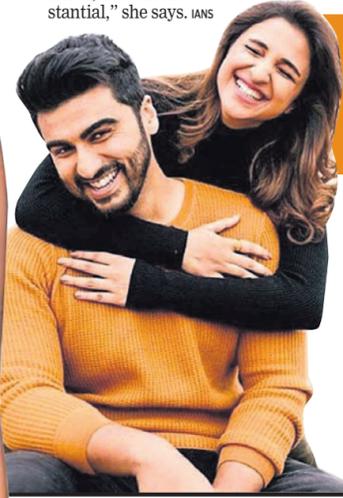
Mumbai: The Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE) has issued a Non-cooperation Directive against actress Gauahar Khan for two months for allegedly flouting Covid-19 rules by continuing to shoot despite being testing positive for the virus.

A press release issued by the FWICE, informs about the stringent action taken by the body against the actress.

It reads: "The FWICE highly condemns the act of Ms. Gauahar Khan for resuming shooting after being tested positive for covid-19 infection even though she was advised to be quarantined. Her act is highly irresponsible and is against the strict guidelines laid down by the Government of India and Maharashtra issued for the media and entertainment industry post resumption of

shootings in Maharashtra."

"It is indeed a serious offence and that she has not only breached the rules issued by the government but also endangered the lives of the entire crew members working with her on the respective shoot. Such ignorance will not be tolerated by the FWICE and it thanks the BMC and Mumbai Police for the FIR lodged against Ms. Gauahar Khan for her inhuman, disrespectful act towards the other crew members as well as the government." IANS



Arjun and Parineeti go slapstick again

Mumbai: Actor Arjun Kapoor has been slapped yet again by Parineeti Chopra! Strictly on screen, of course, and in their upcoming film *Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar*, after their 2012 co-starrer *Ishaqzaade*.

On a serious note, Arjun opens up on how Dibakar Banerjee's upcoming film trains focus on violence against women. "Violence against women is taken seriously by someone like me who has grown up in an environment surrounded by women. I firmly believe when you are doing a character you have to step out of

being your personal self and believe that you have signed up to play a character because people like that exist in society," said Arjun.

"Having said that, Pinky (his character in the film) does not raise his hand on Sandeep (played by Parineeti Chopra). The physical violence that is there is circumstantial. It is more about helping one another and protecting one another. There is also a feeling of angst and frustration that Sandeep feels towards Pinky, where she literally wants to cry and hit me and at the same time it is just me pro-

tecting myself in that sequence," he added. Arjun says the situation is "real because that is what the director wanted."

"I have been slapped yet again by Parineeti like I was in *Ishaqzaade* and that trend continues! But it was not pressuring because you have read a script and you have understood the demand of the character and circumstances, and it comes in a moment of emotional chaos in both their lives, so it is not like I am beating her up. I don't think I would play a character like that," he added. IANS

Alli Alok Albert high on entertainment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Bidyakanak Srujanusthan, a city-based theatre group, staged comedy play *Alli Alok Albert* on the third day of a state-level drama festival at Bhanja Kala Mandap here, Tuesday.

Established in 2002 by a few committed artistes, Bhubaneswar-based Panchamaveda is organising the five-day event in collaboration with Shristi Theatre of the same city.

Every human being longs for wealth and wants to lead a luxurious life. Some people accomplish them with hard work and honesty while there are others who resort to unethical means to reach the destina-

PANCHAMA VEDA'S COMEDY PLAY FEST - DAY 3



A scene from the play *Alli Alok Albert* staged at Bhanja Kala Mandap, Tuesday

tion. The latter may manage to play hide-and-seek with the law for some time but ultimately prison's dark cells become their destiny.

This was the message the director intended to deliver with generous doses of humour. The production was full of mystery, thrill and high on en-

tainment. Written by Dilip Balabantaray, the drama was directed by Jagadish Prasad Maharana. The artistes who performed on stage include Nabin Parida, Shubhakanta, Sunanda, Sonika and Sai.

OSHB Chairman Priyadarshi Mishra, Odisha Bhasa Pratisthan Director Bhagyalipi Malla and Steel and Mines Special Secretary Sangram Keshari Swain were amongst the guests who graced the occasion.

Srasta of Balasore will present *Mun Hata Bahuda*, a dramatised version of poetry written by Vyasakabi Fakir Mohan Senapati, on the fourth day of the festival, informed Panchamaveda's secretary Prakash Maharana.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

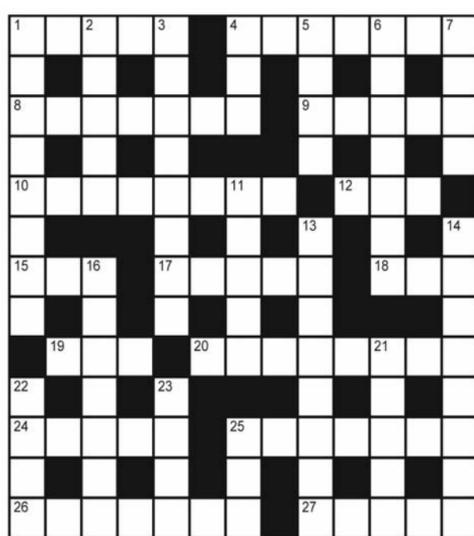


BREVITY



FUN post

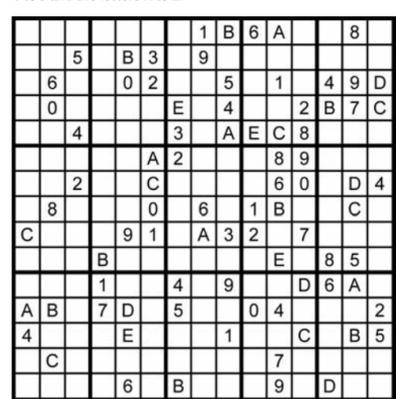
CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2021 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Rhymes
 - 4 Llama relatives
 - 8 Reykjavik locale
 - 9 Salaries
 - 10 Australian state
 - 12 New Zealand parrot
 - 15 Fishing aid
 - 17 Hard wood
 - 18 Perceive
 - 19 Kimono tie
 - 20 Explosive compound
 - 24 One of the senses
 - 25 Buddies
 - 26 Fuel type
 - 27 Young haddock
 - 5 Chess piece
 - 6 Young swans
 - 7 Just O.K. (2-2)
 - 11 Tusk material
 - 13 Egypt's attraction
 - 14 Set free
 - 16 Hot sauce
 - 21 Kind of tube
 - 22 Escalator part
 - 23 Star in Lyra
 - 25 Doctor's charge

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.

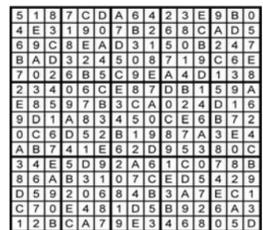


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



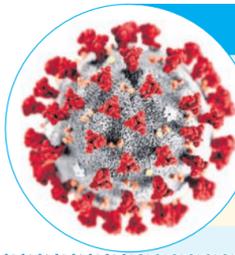
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



MYRIAD HUES

A vendor displays a variety of colours in Jhola Sahi area of Cuttack ahead of the Holi festival, Tuesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	12,09,13,582	9,75,07,348	26,74,895
India	1,14,09,831	1,10,27,543	1,58,856
Odisha	3,38,323	3,35,796	1,918

Din over paddy continues for 4th day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 16: Even after an all-party meeting convened by the Speaker twice, stalemate continued in the Assembly for the fourth consecutive day Tuesday. The House witnessed several adjournments and no business could take place throughout the day.

As soon as the House assembled for the Question Hour at 10:30am, both opposition and treasury bench members trooped into the well of the House and raised slogans against each other.

The treasury bench members demanded an apology from BJP MLA Subash Panigrahi for his at-

tempt to commit suicide inside the Assembly while the opposition pitched for procurement of paddy from farmers. Speaker SN Patro adjourned the proceedings till 11:30am. As the situation saw no improvement at 11:30am too, the Speaker adjourned proceedings till 12pm and convened an all-party meeting to end the deadlock.

However, the meeting remained inconclusive after Opposition BJP and Congress staged walk-out as the paddy procurement issue was allegedly ignored at the meeting. Meanwhile, the adjournment lasted till 4pm. The post-lunch session also witnessed three adjournments including



AS SOON AS THE HOUSE ASSEMBLED FOR THE QUESTION HOUR AT 10:30AM, BOTH OPPOSITION AND TREASURY BENCH MEMBERS TROOPED INTO THE WELL OF THE HOUSE AND RAISED SLOGANS AGAINST EACH OTHER

THOUGH THE SPEAKER CONVENED ALL-PARTY MEETINGS TWICE IN THE DAY, THEY REMAINED INCONCLUSIVE

the last one—till Wednesday.

In a bid to bring back normalcy in the House, Patro again called an all-party meeting Tuesday, but it too remained inconclusive.

Janla case: Cops receive sketch of dead lady's face

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 16: The Commissionerate Police Tuesday received a preliminary sketch of the face of an unknown woman whose skeleton was recovered from a seized SUV on the premises of Janla police outpost in February. Speaking to the media, Bhubaneswar DCP Umashankar Dash said that a software firm in Hyderabad has sent a rough sketch which will be examined by the cops before making it public. The human skeleton's images had been sent to Hyderabad for skull mapping. Experts of a software company will reconstruct the face of the lady using artificial intelli-

gence (AI) for identification of the deceased. He also said that after finalization, the sketch will be pasted outside all the police stations in the city urging the public to verify the identity of the dead woman.

Similarly, the police Tuesday recorded the statements of several people including the doctor who conducted autopsy of the skeleton and suspended OIC of Janla outpost, Satyabrata Grahacharya. Dash also revealed that the police will interrogate the persons who have visited the outpost since November 2019. He assured that police have been taking all the steps to get the identity of the lady and the circumstances that led her to get into the vehicle.

On the Occasion of **WEDDING** Presenting

New Crafts

Silk India

Exhibition & Sale

Silk Saree | Suits | Dress Material | Stoles | Dupattas | Kurtas
Kurties | Pure & Probable Silk | Tussar Silk | Shanthipur Silk

Pure Silk Products directly Purchase by Weavers from Across India

THE NEW MARRION 10 Days Only

Janpath, Opp. Ram Mandir, Bhubaneswar

From : 19th to 28th Mar. 2021

Products on Display - Orissa : Sambhalpuri Ikkat Silk Saree, Bihar : Oragnic Tassar Silk Sarees, Suit & Stoles, Assam : Muga & Eri Silk Sarees, Karnataka : Creap Silk, Georgette Silk, Arini Silk & Printed Sarees, Tamilnadu : Kanjeevaram Silk Sarees & Designer Fancy Sarees, Andra Pradesh : Dharmavara, Uppada, Gadwal, Mangalagiri & Pochampalli Sarees, Uttar Pradesh : Mulbari Silk, Jamdani, Jamawar Silk Sarees & Chiffon Silk, Maharashtra : Designer Dress materials, Chhattisgarh : Exclusive Raw Silk Sarees, Kosa Silk, Tassar Suit & Dupatta, Madhya Pradesh : Maheswari, Chandori Silk Sarees & Suit, West Bengal : Baluchari, Dhaka Masli, Gicha Sarees, Boutique Sarees, Kantha Sarees, Zordoshi, Jammu & Kashmir : Chiloni Silk, Tady Silk Printed Sarees, Pashmina Shawls & Suit, Rajasthan : Kota Silk, Hand Block Print Dress & Sarees, Punjab : Fulkari Dress and many more...

Call: 08850902824

Times 10:30am - 8:30pm

All Credit & Debit Cards Accepted

Entry & Parking Free

Org. by : O.A & C.

Re By : MINISTRY OF TEXTILES GOVT. OF INDIA

Over 9L tourists visit wildlife sanctuaries

Bhubaneswar: Over 9 lakh tourists are visiting 14 wildlife sanctuaries in Odisha every year, Forest and Environment Minister BK Arukha told the Assembly, Tuesday. In a written reply to the House, the minister said 19 wildlife sanctuaries are there in the state. However, tourists are visiting 14 sanctuaries. Entry of tourists to Nalabana in Chilika has been restricted while tourists are not visiting to another four wildlife sanctuaries, he said.

OHRC to probe Bheden gangrape & murder

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has asked its investigation wing to probe the alleged gangrape of three tribal girls and murder of two of them by seven people including two police officials at Bheden in 2016. The rights body expressed its displeasure over the investigation report submitted by Barghar SDPO. The OHRC has directed the ADG of Police-Cum-Director of Investigation for OHRC to initiate probe the matter. It has asked to submit the report within three months. As per the FIR, seven persons allegedly raped three women and killed two of them.

Dr. Ranjaya Kumar Mohanty



1956 - 2021

OBITUARY

Dr. Ranjaya Kumar Mohanty, 65, passed away at his home in Kalyani Nagar, Cuttack on March 15, 2021. A veterinary doctor by training and a veteran of the insurance industry, Dr. Mohanty retired as Senior Divisional Manager of New India Assurance in 2015. Born in 1956 in Basandara, Dr. Mohanty is survived by his wife Pritisudha and daughters Soumya and Pragyan.

In accordance to his wishes, his mortal remains were donated for medical research on March 16, 2021.

HONDA
The Power of Dreams

सच कर देगे सपने

AMAZING SHINE

With amazing comfort, technology and feeling.

The all-new Shine with the amazing eSP Technology and eco-friendly BS-VI Engine.
Its ACG Starter Motor helps start the engine smoothly.

NEW

Shine

NOW WITH NEW FEATURES

DC Headlamp with Elegant Visor Chrome Garnish

5-Speed Transmission

Silent Start with ACG

Integrated Headlamp Beam and Passing Switch

Engine Start/Stop Switch

Low ROI
6.5% #

Finance up to
100% #

CLICK BOOK RELAX
Honda 2Wheeler

A QUIET REVOLUTION

Other Honda Shield Products**
Annual Maintenance Contract
Road Side Assistance
Engine Health Assurance

Honda is HONDA

Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt. Ltd., Registered Office: Commercial Complex II, Sector - 49-50, Golf Course Extension Road, Gurugram - 122018 (Haryana), India; Website: www.honda2wheelerindia.com; Customer Care: customercare@honda2wheelerindia.com

Product shown in the picture may vary from actual product available in the market. Accessories shown in the picture are not part of standard equipment. All features may not be part of all variants. *Finance Scheme facility is subject to Finance Company Policy and is available through preferred finance partners at their sole discretion. Finance Scheme is available on select models for select profile of customers as per financier policy. No two offers can be clubbed together. All schemes are available for the limited time period & can be withdrawn from the market without any prior notice. **Conditions apply. *As Per SIAM data.

Honda Exclusive Authorized Dealerships: **ANGUL:** Laxmi Honda - 8908010431, 8908025000; **ATTABIRA:** TS Motors - 06682-221001, 9178653139; **ATHAGARH:** Sidhivayak Honda - 9124260000, 9658080060; **BALASORE:** Yours Honda - 06782-268060, 7873029603/04/09; **GADGADIA:** Yours Honda - 7873029606, 7873029658; **BALIAPAL:** Baba Honda - 8260233121, 06781-253788; **SORO:** Sadhana Honda - 06788-222423, 985329766, 9437169336; **KHAIRA:** Sakhi Honda - 9439341988, 7873348398; **CHANDANESWAR:** Tarini Honda - 7008084081; **BASTA:** Jain Honda - 9437055136; **BALUGOAN:** Khimji Honda - 7735734881, 7077726329; **BANKI:** Shree Honda - 06723-240099, 9658201234; **BARIPADA:** Sun Honda - 9437126999, 0679-2256999; **BASTA:** Jain Honda - 9437055136; **BELPAHAR:** Bharat Honda - 8018157547; **BRAJRAJNAGAR:** Jaiswal Honda - 97747788; **BHANJNAGAR:** Omkar Honda - 9437382104, 06821-240140; **BHADRAK:** Das Honda - 9937508791, 06784-240962; **AGARAPADA:** Pal Honda - 9337604884; **BASUDEVPUR:** Laxmi Honda - 9937475386; **BHAWANIPATNA:** Mahesh Honda - 8456818116, 06670-235633; **BHUBANESWAR:** Shivam Honda - 0674-2546296, 7873024320; Gugnani Honda - 0674-2313716, 06742313812, 7852930865, 9778611111; PGL Honda - 0674-2354418, 9090912345; Khimji Honda - 7735734884, 9090067366; MO Honda - 0674-2964289, 7008990541; **BERHAMPUR:** Om Honda - 9937229933, 0680-2229933; Svyam Honda - 0680-2271555, 7608008385; **BUGUDA:** Ayam Honda - 06818-251775, 9668022339; **ASKA:** Dev Honda - 06822-273363, 8280114044; **PURUSHOTTAMPUR:** ABS Honda - 06811-275800, 9937375589; **BARGARH:** Aashirbad Honda - 06646-246066, 9438024339; **BOLANGIR:** Amarnath Honda - 8895255855, 8895255855; **BALICHANDRAPUR:** Mahavir Honda - 9438673737; **CUTTACK:** Durga Honda - 9114800102/171819; SGBL Honda - 0671-2364000, 9040433000, 8093090200; Utkal Honda - 8093033120, 9437029811; **CHANDBAL:** Banaja Honda - 9437297772; **DHAMNAGAR:** Padmanav Honda - 09437271165; **DHENKANAL:** Ganpati Honda - 7852949320, 7852949310; **JAJPUR ROAD:** TEZ Honda - 7504994444, 7504991301; **JAJPUR TOWN:** Agasti Honda - 9437518600; **KUAKHIA:** Sai Honda - 9938906077; **SINGHPUR:** Ramachandri Honda - 7377688445; **CHANDIKHOL:** Basanti Honda - 06725-227011, 9853066000; **JAGATSINGHPUR:** Kanchan Murali Honda - 06724-222122, 223112, 7809568988, 9090876483; **JALESWAR:** Radhagobinda Honda - 07325864023, 06781-222950; **JAGATPUR:** Durga Honda - 9114800118, 0671-2490462; **JATNI:** PGL Honda - 0674-2492419, 7788001027; **JEYPORE:** Kesar Honda - 06854-230492, 8895321212; **JHARSUGUDA:** Gajraj Honda - 9337645411; **JUNAGARH:** Jaga Janani Honda - 9583794900; **KARANAJA:** Krishiv Honda - 06796221222, 0977774222; **KHURDA:** Sai Honda - 07852930002, 06755-223555; **KHARIAR ROAD (NUAPADA):** Ambika Honda - 9938061333, 9737643030; **KEONJHAR:** Pritam Honda - 06766-254138, 8908881717; **ANANDPUR:** Pritam Honda - 7504045272; **BARBIL:** Royal Motors - 7008712784; **KUCHINDA:** Krishna Honda - 06642-220346, 7894271470; **NABRANGPUR:** Vardmaan Honda - 06858-223929, 8260020009; **NAYAGRAH:** Pattnaik Honda - 7205028044, 9937083142; **NIALI:** Hindustan Honda - 9937075187, 0671-2803355; **PATTAMUNDI:** Satya Honda - 9937711139; **PURI:** Shivam Honda - 06752-225555, 9040088747; **PARADIP:** Anil Honda - 06722-220909, 9438523425; **RAJANGAPUR:** Naisha Honda - 7008614081, 06624220051; **RAHAMA:** Navijoti Honda - 9938339189; **RAJKHARAR:** Shree Shyamji Honda - 9178999977; **RAYGADA:** Aditya Honda - 8280096999, 9969245511, 8093331029; **MUNGUDA:** Laxmi Honda - 0958352467; **RENGALI:** BP Honda - 737777362; **ROURKELA:** Koshala Honda - 0661-3290770, 9337749281; Aditya Motors - 9437403482; Harshel Honda - 9337408180, 0661-2665533; **SAMBALPUR:** Jas Honda - 0663-2115817, 9238364199; **SALEPUR:** S.N.Honda - 9437439076; **SIMLIGUDA:** SS Honda - 06853225397, 0779882597; **SORO:** Sadhana Honda - 06788-222423, 985329766, 9437169336; **KHAIRA:** Sakhi Honda - 9439341988, 7873348398; **SUNDARGARH:** MaaSamalasarani Honda - 9938198641, 8984873500; **SONEPUR:** Meher Honda - 0993771704, 06654220200; **TALCHER:** Anupama Honda - 06760-242181, 7852930592; **PHULBANI:** Manas Honda - 06842253452, 9437063452; **TITLAGARH:** Tanishtha Honda - 09437037314; **UTTARA:** Gugnani Honda - 0674-3272244, 7852930844; **GAREJ CHACK:** Gugnani Honda - 7008342169, 8144286965; **ATTABIRA:** T.S. Honda - 9178653139, 9438771477; **KANTABANJ:** Ajay Honda - 8260211111; **DHARAMGARH:** Bharat Honda - 7008606855; **KESINGA:** Jagadamba Honda - 9787851295; **CHARBHALL:** Maa Mangala Honda - 7609991840; **BIDHARPUR:** Salvinayak Honda - 9937060477, 7894446899; **NARSINGH PUR:** Baba Honda - 9438057701; **KULJANG:** Kanchan Murali Honda - 0672236122; **KENDRAPARA:** Saisudha Honda - 9178455081/2/3/4; **KANDARPUR:** Jay Pee Honda - 9861007679; **PARJANG:** Hari Omm Honda - 8917420998.

For Bulk/Institutional enquiries, please write us at: institutionalsales@honda2wheelerindia.com

Open FTCs for speedy trial of crimes: BJD to Centre

PADDY PROCUREMENT ROW

BJP team meets Goyal, flays token system

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, March 16: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Prasanna Acharya Tuesday urged the Union government to set up fast track courts (FTCs) for speedy trial of crimes against women and children.

Speaking during Zero Hour in Rajya Sabha, the BJD Parliamentary party leader in the Upper House said the Union and the state governments are taking steps to prevent crimes against women and children but unfortunately in spite of all the steps taken, such horrific incidents are increasing in the country.

Acharya cited the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data highlighting the gravity of the matter and said on an average, 87 rape cases were occurring every day in 2020 - a 7 per cent rise in the crime against women as compared to 2019.

"In 2019 alone, altogether 4,05,861 cases of crimes against women had been reported. These are all re-

ported cases. There are many cases which are not being reported because people and concerned families are very much concerned about their social prestige and social stigma. The total number of child pornography and child rape incidences is 13,244 from March to September 2020, within six months' time," Acharya said.

He said the Parliament enacted POCSO Act which mandates authorities to register FIR in crime against children and complete trial within six months.

"For speedy trial, the act has provision of setting up of FTCs in all the districts of the country. But, unfortunately, in many of the districts of the country, FTCs are yet to be set up. Therefore, many cases are pending for a longer time in the respective courts," Acharya said.

The senior BJD MP appealed to the Union government to ask the respective High Courts and the respective state governments to set up FTCs as quickly as possible.



ODISHA IN PARLIAMENT

Acharya cited NCRB data highlighting the gravity of the matter and said on an average, 87 rape cases were occurring every day in 2020 - a 7 per cent rise in the crime against women as compared to 2019

He said the Parliament enacted POCSO Act which mandates authorities to register FIR in crime against children and complete trial within six months

Samanta thrust on investment in edu

Highlighting the need of investment in education sector, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Tuesday pointed out that the education sector would always need reforms as it is ever-evolving in nature.

Speaking during a discussion on Demand for Grants under the Ministry of Education for 2021-22, BJD MP from Kandhamal, Achyuta Samanta praised the Union government for the steps it had taken during the pandemic for the education sector and also expressed the need of investment in health and education sectors.

"Pandemic has taught us that investment in health and education is the most important and urgent. The government's support to private educational institutions is commendable. But the work required in the grassroots has increased manifold as witnessed by

what happened during the pandemic," Samanta said.

He also suggested focusing on the issues of teacher training, digital development and nutritional requirements for the students.

The BJD MP pointed out the need for an industry-ready workforce and innovation in the country to tackle challenges of the ever evolving nature of education sector. He also raised concerns over the delay and controversy in appointing vice-chancellors and asked the Union government to relook into the process of appointment.

Samanta sought the Centre's attention on the aspirational districts of the country and urged the government to take educational reforms there. He pleaded the Union government to set up more Kendriya Vidyalayas, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and Sainik Schools in Kandhamal constituency.



The delegation of BJP MPs from Odisha, led by Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, meets Union Food Minister Piyush Goyal in New Delhi, Tuesday

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, March 16: A delegation of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs from Odisha, led by Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, urged the Union Food Minister Piyush Goyal to send a high-level committee to Odisha to scrutinise the alleged derailment of paddy procurement in the state.

The saffron party alleged that the state government was misleading the farmers on issues of paddy procurement and had been conveniently trying to belie its own systematic failure in governance and in providing allied agricultural services to Odisha's farmers.

In a memorandum submitted to Goyal, the BJP delegation said that despite this year's better-than-expected paddy harvest, thanks to a favourable monsoon, the state government did not revise its ceiling on paddy procurement of 19 quintals for every acre of irrigated land and 13 quintals for every acre of non-irrigated land.

"Due to this, thousands of farmers were left with unsold paddy which they had to sell at half the price of MSP fixed by the Centre i.e. Rs 1868 per quintal. There have also been many cases reported in local media where farmers have been prohibited from selling due quantities of their harvest as per their landholding so as to favour a

few political supporters of the ruling party at a heavy cost to many small and marginal farmers," BJP submitted.

Taking a pot shot at the token system of the state, the team said that tokens are becoming invalid due to delay in procurement as there is a 30-day deadline.

"Many registered farmers do not receive the token at all due to delays in verification of their plot, bank account, Aadhaar and irrigated land by the state government, while some receive tokens for dates even before the

harvest of paddy is possible," the BJP MPs said.

"The sufferings of Odisha's farmers due to lack of logistical support in storage and transport of their harvest are compounded by mandi mafia operating in guise of brokers, agents, millers and other middlemen at PPCs in connivance with state government's officials," the memorandum reads.

The delegation told Goyal that many farmers are unable to afford the transportation and storage costs, and are forced to sell their harvest at throw-away prices in the APMC mandis.

"Without getting due remuneration, these farmers fall into an inescapable vicious cycle of debt and penalty resulting in attempts to commit suicide," the BJP said.

THE BJP ALLEGED TOKENS ARE BECOMING INVALID DUE TO DELAY IN PROCUREMENT AS THERE IS A 30-DAY DEADLINE

THE SAFFRON PARTY DELEGATION URGED THE UNION FOOD MINISTER TO SEND A HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE TO ODISHA TO SCRUTINISE THE ALLEGED DERAILMENT OF PADDY PROCUREMENT IN THE STATE

Ganga Deb seeks ₹500cr for Talcher-Bimalagarh rly line

BJP MP from Sambalpur Nitesh Ganga Deb Tuesday urged the Railway Minister to allocate Rs 500 crore to Talcher-Bimalagarh railway project in supplementary Budget.

Taking part on the discussion on Demands for Grants under Ministry of Railways, the BJP MP said Deogarh in his parliamentary constituency has not been found a place in rail-

way map till date, after 73 years of Independence.

"The Talcher-Bimalagarh (154 km) new railway line goes through Deogarh district and links many villages once this project is completed. The proposed cost of this project is about Rs 1,928 crore. Only 20 km of the project is completed with Rs 839

core. The work from 20 km to 43.50 km has started but the progress is very slow indeed," the BJP MP said.

He said that the state government has to expedite the land acquisition and handing over the remaining 916 acres of land. This delay necessitated increasing the cost of the project. "Though Rs 140 crore was allocated in last year's

Budget, only Rs 10 crore has been allocated in the current year's Budget. I urge the Railway Minister to at least allocate Rs 500 crore in supplementary Budget and Ministry of Railways may take programmatic approach to complete the project for the socioeconomic development of my Parliamentary Constituency Sambalpur," Ganga Deb said.

69 GPs in Rayagada sans network: N Bhaskar Rao

BJD MP N Bhaskar Rao informed the Rajya Sabha Tuesday that as many as 69 gram panchayats in Rayagada are without network connectivity and urged the Union government to take steps in this regard. Speaking during Zero Hour in the Upper House, Rao said that around 400 villages of 11 blocks under Rayagada have not got network connectivity despite several flagship programs of the Union government. "Digital India is a flagship programme of the Centre with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. But 400 villages of Odisha are without network connectivity," the BJD MP said.

Covid norms tightened ahead of Prez visit

Bhubaneswar: Ahead of President Ram Nath Kovind's two-day visit to Odisha scheduled from March 21, the state government has made RT-PCR test mandatory for officers, employees and students connected with the visit. The Chief Secretary asked the district administrations of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Puri and Khurda to ensure strict compliance of Covid-19 norms during the President's visit. On March 21, the President will attend the convocation of NIT in Rourkela. Students who will be receiving degrees and certificates from the President will have to undergo Covid-19 test. The President will also inaugurate a super specialty hospital on IGH campus. He will visit the Sun Temple at Konark the following day. The President will also visit Srimandir.

GRACEFUL MOVES



Artistes perform Odissi at the 34th Shradhanjali Samaroh organised by Tridhara at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

WASSUP TODAY

BHUBANESWAR

- 13th Kalinga Herbal Fair, Idco Exhibition Ground, 10 am
- Rally and dharna by Shramika Ekata Manch, Railway station to Lower PMG, 10.30 am
- Demo by Samajwadi Party state committee, Lower PMG, 11 am
- Dharna by Odisha Gram Panchayat Employees' Union, Lower PMG, 12 noon
- 27th Guru Pankaj Utsav and Mahari Samman, Rabindra Mandap, 6 pm
- Staging of play 'Hata Bahuda' by Panchamveda, Bhanjakala Mandap, 6.45 pm

CUTTACK

- Unveiling of Rajendra Kumar Pradhan's poetry book, Sriramchandra Bhawan, 6.30 pm

Programmes/announcements for wassup today may be sent to opwassup@gmail.com for record, it must also carry the sender's mobile number for our verification, but not for publication.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I, Rebati Devi, spouse of Rabindra Sahoo, Resident-Keshadurapal, Keonjhar changed my name from Rebati Devi (DOB: 10.09.1966) to Rebati Sahoo (DOB: 21.05.1966) vide affidavit (10.03.2021) before District Court, Bhubaneswar.

State inks pact for CoE at Jajpur ITI

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 16: If things go well, the state-run Industrial Training Institute (ITI) in Jajpur will have a Thermal Cutting and Welding Centre of Excellence (CoE) within six months with the Directorate of Technical Education & Training and Messer Cutting Systems India Private Limited signing an MoU for the initiative, Tuesday.

Orissa Minerals Development Company will provide Rs 5.25 crore for the project. The agreement was signed by Technical Education and Training director Reghu G and Messer Cutting Systems India Private Limited director (Sales and Marketing) Uday Mukherjee in the City. Apart from meeting the needs of Jajpur industrial cluster, the centre is expected to provide requisite skills in welding and thermal cutting to the ITI students.

Vig submits report on PPE kit 'scam'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 16: The Vigilance department probing the alleged multi-crore rupees PPE kit scam Tuesday submitted a preliminary probe report before the Lokayukta here. The three-member bench of Odisha Lokayukta will go through the report on the next hearing scheduled to be held March 26.

Earlier, while hearing petitions filed by Sudarshan Das and another social activist, the Lokayukta had directed the anti-corruption wing of the state to enquire into the allegations of massive irregularities in procuring personal protective equipment (PPE) kits, masks and other equipment for fighting Covid-19 pandemic. The PPE kits were procured by the Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited

(OSMCL) December 7, 2020. The Vigilance department that was asked to submit the report by February 15, 2021 failed to submit the report in time and sought one month extension. Notably, several top bureaucrats were reportedly involved in the alleged irregularities in buying Covid-19 PPE kits and other equipment. The PPE kits were allegedly bought at exorbitant prices.

Patient succumbs to SCB fan injuries

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, March 16: A woman undergoing treatment at SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH) here succumbed to the injuries she had sustained after a ceiling fan fell on her March 8. The woman, identified as Parbati Das, 75, was initially undergoing treatment for burn injuries. She was a resident of Krushna Nagar in Jajpur district.

According to a source, Das had sustained burns and was admitted to the surgery ward of SCBMCH. Unfortunately, the ceiling fan fell on her March 8 when she was undergoing treatment. Her condition deteriorated after the accident.

She was immediately rushed to the ICU in the trauma care unit. However, all the efforts by the doctors to save her went in vain.

The relatives of the deceased had lodged a complaint with the police, the superintendent of SCBMCH and Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) after the incident.

An attendant had told the media that the fan was shaking and producing a screeching sound whenever it was switched on. The condition of the fan was brought to the notice of the hospital staff, but they took it very casually.

As the news of the septuagenarian's death spread, other patients and their relatives expressed dissatisfaction over the hospital staff not being serious.

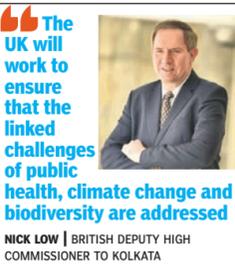
Climate change is a reality and it's happening: Panda

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 16: The UK will host the UN climate change conference 'COP26' in Glasgow in November 2021. This will provide an opportunity for the world to come together and commit to urgent action.

As part of the UK's Sustainable Future campaign, British Deputy High Commissioner to Kolkata, Nick Low chatted with environmental filmmaker from Odisha, Nila Madhab Panda, on climate change. In the chat Panda talked about the impact of climate change and how it affects people at the grassroots.

Panda said, "Our environment is no more in a state that we can take it for granted. It is affecting every one of us in some form or the other. Climate change is a reality and it's



The UK will work to ensure that the linked challenges of public health, climate change and biodiversity are addressed
NICK LOW | BRITISH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER TO KOLKATA

happening. Each of us has to be conscious about our own environment. That's how we can think of creating a sustainable future."

Panda also said that the solution to tackle climate change is to start using more and more renewable energy and reduction of carbon emission.

He said reducing the use of unavoidable CO2 emissions is a practical and immediate way to take ownership of your personal contribution to climate change.

In the online conversation, Low shared that being the COP26 Presidency, the UK will take the lead in supporting a clean, inclusive and resilient recovery building on the principles of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. "The UK will work to ensure that the linked challenges of public health, climate change and biodiversity are addressed," he said.

Panda's Odia film 'Kalira Atita' (Yesterday's Past) recently missed out of the Oscars 2021 race.

The film is about the disappearing villages of India's eastern coastline in Odisha because of climate change and rising sea level.

Plea to rename Puri VIP Road after Gandhiji

Puri: The district administration has accepted a proposal regarding renaming of the VIP Road here as Mahatma Gandhi Marg to commemorate the centenary of Gandhiji's visit to Puri. The proposal has been moved by Puri Vikash Parishad, a city-based outfit. A recommendation has also been sent to the Works department, said a press note by the outfit president Jagannath Bastia. This apart, the outfit has urged the East Coast Railway authorities to replace a controversial plaque at Puri railway station. Gandhiji along with his spouse Kasturba and youngest son Devdas had visited the Holy City for the first time March 26, 1921. He had addressed a public meeting at Saradhali on the same day which was attended by Rajendra Prasad and Pandit Gobabandhu Das. Gandhiji had also visited Srimandir during his three-day stay in Puri. He had left for Berhampur via train March 29. The Holy City is scheduled to observe the centenary of Gandhiji's visit March 26. A padyatra would be taken out from Puri railway station to Gandhi Ghat at 7 am. An all-faith prayer meeting would also be organised at Gandhi Ghat. Besides, a seminar on Gandhiji's philosophy and state-level poetry recital event would be held to mark the occasion, said the press note.

Proposal for NEET centre in each district

Bhubaneswar: Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department has written to National Testing Agency urging it for one exam centre in each district of Odisha for NEET (UG) 2021. The department's additional chief secretary PK Mohapatra, in a letter to NTA director general Vineet Joshi, said, "Odisha has got vast tribal pockets having geographically inaccessible areas and far away from the urban centers of the state for which the students of this state may be deprived of appearing the NEET UG as they will have to move long distance for appearing the test."

2 peddlers held

Cuttack: The twin city Commissionerate Police Tuesday claimed to have arrested two persons on charges of peddling drugs after recovering around 270 gram of brown sugar from their possession here late Monday night. The accused were identified as Sudhir Mohanty, 32, of Fakirpada Panda Sahi under Jagatpur police limits and Bikram Samal, 24, of Salanga Nakhara area under Choudwar police limits here.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri-Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

BRINGING TRIBAL KIDS INTO MAINSTREAM IS MY PASSION: SAMANTA

Achyuta Samanta, who was born to a poor family, is now one of the biggest social entrepreneurs globally. His life story is an inspiration to all. He dedicated himself to the cause of upliftment of the poor. He is also the founder of Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), Odisha, and has been working relentlessly for zero poverty, zero hunger and zero illiteracy. During an interaction with **Orissa POST**, KIIT-KISS founder **Achyuta Samanta** shared several glimpses of his journey. Excerpts...



■ **You say education is the third eye of a child. Can you please elaborate on this?**

■ Education is everything to all of us. In present days, a child can't do anything without education even though he/she has two eyes. I am the best example of the said statement. I was born to a very poor family but what I am now is because of education. It's because of education that the world can see me and so can I.

■ **Why are we lagging behind in educational research and innovation as compared to other parts of the world?**

■ Education is really the backbone of a society. When we see Europe and USA, there are universities that are much older like 1,000 or 700 years old. But in India, we have only 150-year-old universities. I believe the countries or states which have developed their educational facilities have developed themselves. These countries have strong facilities for research and innovation because they have established their strong education system. However, at present, our country and Odisha have been focusing on education.

■ **How was concept of KIIT and KISS born?**

■ Well, it is a long story. I started both the organisations - KIIT and KISS - in a rented house in 1992-93. So, in a sense it was a 'startup' venture with a capital of just Rs 5,000. When I started these organisations, I was much worse than a beggar. Now, they have reached milestones and garnered appreciations from across the world. This is nothing but God's blessings, for what we are now! Success of KIIT and KISS is because of my hard work and sacrifice.

■ **You lost your father at a tender age but now you're the 'father' of over 60,000 tribal kids. How do you**

express your feelings?

■ It is actually satisfying. When I lost my father, there was no one to take care, comfort, encourage or guide me. I had decided to offer that kind of support, that I never received, to poor children. And now the vision has come true. It is more satisfying and joyful experience.

■ **Have you planned for expanding KISS?**

■ See, about one-fourth of the tribal population of our state are majorly inhabited in 20 districts. I have a passion to bring tribal children into the mainstream through education. To accomplish that vision, we are opening KISS branches in the state. We have already opened branches in five districts and it is likely to be opened seven more districts this year. I wish to open such branches in these 20 districts.

■ **You hail from a remote village in Cuttack but now the world knows you. What is the mantra of your success?**

■ Many have achieved success and I'm not unique. But yes, success comes when you are focused, dedicated and embrace sacrifice in life. It is not easy to gain global popularity or achieving success in social work and education.

■ **How much time do you devote to work every day?**

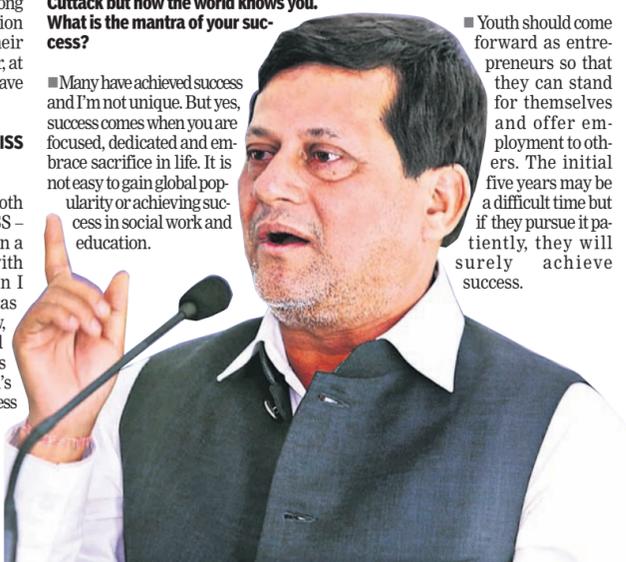
■ Well, I work for at least 17-18 hours a day. I have been working for the past 30 years otherwise the entire thing would not have come to this position, starting from the scratch. And I am not confined to only KIIT and KISS, but I have tremendous contributions to art, culture, literature, film, media and others.

■ **Now you are an MP. Do you think the position would help you in realising your vision?**

■ Yes. I am a Parliamentarian because of the blessing of our Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. I organised a job fair in Kandhamal. I invited 80 companies to participate in which around 7,000 youths received employment. I also want to eradicate poverty.

■ **Your advice to the youth?**

■ Youth should come forward as entrepreneurs so that they can stand for themselves and offer employment to others. The initial five years may be a difficult time but if they pursue it patiently, they will surely achieve success.



PANDEMIC HAS HIT ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN AUTO INDUSTRY HARD: PARIKH

The Covid-19 pandemic has hit the automobile industry hard. Now, people involved with this industry are looking forward to revival and growth. While the Centre's Scrapage Policy has given this industry a ray of hope, high taxes hinder growth. In an interview with **Orissa POST**, **Shaunak Raj Parikh**, Director of **Utkal Automobiles Private Limited**, talks about how the pandemic hit the automobile industry and what they plan to do ahead. Excerpts:



■ **What impact did COVID-19 have on your business?**

■ COVID-19 impacted all the stakeholders in the value chain, such as suppliers, OEMs, dealers/distributors, mobility & online players. The Indian automotive industry suffered losses worth more than Rs 2,300 crore per day during the prolonged lockdown period. Job loss in the sector is estimated to be about 3.45 lakh. Besides, 286 auto dealers had to shut shops. Revenue generation in Odisha dropped to 58% in motor vehicle tax collection in the first quarter of 2020. Impact on dealers was - blockage of working capital in BS-IV inventory, potential decline in BS-IV sales as it was expected to pick up in March, delay in production and availability of BS-VI models led to further decline, drop in automotive demand due to price increase for BS-VI transition.

■ **What is your view on buying behaviour of customers in Odisha?**

■ Consumer behaviour has been evolving. The number of visits to brick-and-mortar dealerships has dropped. Digital media is playing an increasingly important role in determining purchase decisions of customers. Consumers today are researching online before purchasing a vehicle, even in smaller cities and towns. Behaviour of customers in Odisha is digitally driven.

■ **How would you differentiate Utkal Hyundai in terms of service? What do you offer the customers?**

■ Our offers are always in line with Hyundai guidelines. Offers do change from month to month depending on a lot of factors like availability of stock, schemes offered by competitors etc.

■ **Automobile industry is facing various problems. Demands have also muted. What should the govt do to help the auto industry?**

■ Scrapage Policy: The Central government has been talking about the scrapage policy which I feel, if rolled out, will help generate demand. High rate of taxation: Affordability has become one of the main hindrances in

the growth of automobile sector in India. Prices have increased due to several factors like upgradation of safety and emission standards (Bharat Stage-VI emission norms), high rate of taxations like GST-28%, cess imposed on cars from 3% up to 48%, TCS-1%, state road and registration tax etc. All factors cited above are driving up the costs of automobiles which need to be addressed carefully.

■ **Automobile dealers play an important role in providing jobs as well as revenue to the government. What do you want from state government in this regard?**

■ The automobile industry is one of the largest employment providers in the country and employs close to 37 million people across the country. But due to the pandemic situation it is not only unable to generate employment, but also raising questions on the sustainability of dealership itself. State government's role has a lot more to do with the cost of operating an industry. The taxation of the state government is quite high, petrol tax for example is much higher and the affordability of a car is very much determined by the state government's policies, which in turn have much to gain or lose from how the industry



grows. There are some states like Jharkhand & Gujarat and Union Territory like Chandigarh where road taxes are calculated before GST. However, other states, including Odisha, calculate road taxes on showroom price, resulting in the increase of vehicle cost which affects the ability of customers to buy new vehicles, leading to drop in sales. In reference to above, sales were much higher in these states compared to those which didn't increase road taxes. Our state government should look into this.

■ **What motivated you to step into automobile dealership business?**

■ I was born and brought up in a family running an automobiles business. This business is inherent in my blood. Apart from that, this industry deals with an array aspects, knowledge and experience that motivated me to come in this business.

■ **What is your view on success? Any advice to the youth?**

■ The meaning of success varies from one person to another. It could be career, title, money, big house, stable relationships, social status etc. Success doesn't come overnight. It needs a dream that won't let you sleep, a clear vision that you have to focus on, hard work that you have to do even if you feel exhausted, consistency that takes courage & honesty that should last forever even if everyone is against you. What matters in the end is how happy you are. My message to the youth is choose a career that makes you happy and for which you can devote yourself for the rest of your life. Don't avoid something because it is seen as unacceptable. Do whatever pleases you.

Technology, awareness key to tackling fires: Task force

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, March 16: The task force formed by the state government to review incidents of forest fire on a daily basis and improve the SOPs to prevent as well as restrain such wildfires is currently taking stock of the situation in Similipal Wildlife Sanctuary of Mayurbhanj district.

The task force headed by former Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) Sandeep Tripathi along with two members, Jaykrushna Panigrahi and Dr Bijay Agrawal, said that wildfires can be controlled with help of technology, public awareness and government incentives to people.

The team held discussion with field director of Similipal Tiger Project M Yagojayanand and Baripada DFO Santosh Joshi regarding chronology of fires, fire-fighting exercises, their causes, prevention, existing fire-fighting protocols and geometric-based fire warnings. They are likely to brainstorm on fire management, prevention, effective plan to encourage



community participation and assessment of damage to wildlife and biodiversity in the affected area. "Fires have been controlled. In the coming days, fires can be prevented and contained with help of technology, public awareness and financial support to communities," said Jaykrushna Panigrahi.

The task force is looking into issues related to extent of damage caused by wildfires, their impact on wildlife and forest and livelihood of tribal communities

The team held discussion with field director of Similipal Tiger Project M Yagojayanand and Baripada DFO Santosh Joshi regarding chronology of fires, fire-fighting exercises, their causes, prevention, existing fire-fighting protocols and geometric-based fire warnings

The team is also looking into issues related to extent of damage caused by wildfires, their impact on wildlife and forest and livelihood of tribal communities

The task force is looking into issues related to extent of damage caused by wildfires, their impact on

wildlife and forest and livelihood of tribal communities. The task force said that it has proposed that the government provides fiscal support to tribals inhabiting the fire-prone areas. More forest protection committees, Vana Surakhya Samitis, voluntary organisations, people's representatives, members of SHGs and NGOs will be roped in to protect the forests and prevent as well as control forest fires.

It is expected that the task force, in his report, will suggest measures for augmentation of existing fire management protocols, including a Geomatics-based fire alert system, and recommend suggestions for improved community participation in fire management and prevention. It is conducting a post-assessment of forest fire-affected areas, loss to wildlife, biodiversity and will suggest appropriate measures for augmentation.

Maoists issue death warrant to villagers in Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, March 16: Terror has gripped the inhabitants of Andrapalli village in Swabhimana Anchal (earlier known as cut-off area) of Malkangiri district after Maoists issued death threats to 10 villagers.

The ultras issued the death warrants Sunday to the villagers for persuading people not to join the outlawed group. Fearing for their lives, the threatened villagers, initially did not disclose the development to others. However, the matter came to the fore Tuesday.

People who have received death threats include Trinath, Raju Hantal, Sarba, Raju Khara, Andha, Damuru Lade, Jageshwar, Mana Hantal, Shyam Hantal and Pitu. They have received the threats through letters. According to a



source, the Maoists are trying to regain their hold on the locality. They are reportedly conducting meetings and forcibly inducting locals into their outfit. The red rebels are issuing death warrants to those who are not attending their meetings and refusing to join them.

The Maoists have also blamed the 10 villagers for convincing others not to join the ultras. Since the letters have been issued, the 10 villagers and their family members are spending sleepless nights. They are apprehensive that Maoists will attack them any moment.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Villagers draw lots to get drinking water

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, March 16: Have you ever heard of lots being drawn to decide who will go home with a pitcher full of drinking water? Strange as it may sound, it does happen. This rule is followed at Station Road Sahi village in Chhatrapur of Ganjam district. It is bizarre as Chhatrapur town is the district headquarters.

There are 20 to 25 families residing in Station Road Sahi village, which suffers from lack of drinking water with the advent of every summer.

For the residents, it is a matter of great regret that their village has only tap delivering water. What is more appalling is that water is supplied only for 15 minutes in an entire day.



Initially, the villagers would fight with each other to get a pitcher full of drinking water. This constant quarrelling led to the involvement of the lottery system.

Every day the lots are drawn. When the tap delivers water, the person with the No.1 token gets the first chance to fill up his vessel.

Then tokens 2, 3, 4 and 5 follow in sequence to get water. By the time the fifth person reaches the tap, the flow of water turns into a trickle and finally stops. So the others have to return empty-handed.

Sushama Padhy, a local resident, narrated the ordeal of the villagers. "No one realises our problem. One

has to experience the hardship to believe it. We have repeatedly informed the RWSS junior engineer about our problems, but to no avail," she stated.

Echoing the same grievances, R Laxmi, who is Sushama's neighbour, alleged that she managed to take two pitchers of drinking water back to her house. Now she has been without drinking water for the last couple of days.

When contacted, NAC, executive officer, N Ganesh Babu said the problems faced by residents of Station Road Sahi village have already been brought to the notice of the higher officials. "I hope, their problems will soon be addressed," he said.

Till then, amid the gruelling heat, the locals and their kids have to suffer.

FOCUS JUDICIARY

'MY LORD' VS 'YOUR HONOUR'



It is high time a democratic republic like India whose Constitution champions the cause of liberty, equality and dignity of the individual, gave up the disgraceful colonial address of "My Lord" and replaced it with "Your Honour" or "Respected Sir/Madam"

addressed by the British lawyers as "My Lord" or "My Lady". The mannerism and address of the Britishers were accepted by the subject-people of India during pre-independence era. However, after independence also this disgraceful and ludicrous colonial legacy continued for quite long, as perhaps old habits die hard.

The sanctity or dignity of the Courts is directly proportional to the respect the judges command from the Bar and the common people. So the lawyers must display their highest respect to the judges. However, there is no rhyme or reason behind demanding to be addressed as "My Lord". Firstly, this British custom has its root in its conservative feudal tradition which has till today preserved the Monarchy even though it prides itself to be the mother of modern democracy. The Upper House of the British Parliament is known as House of Lords.

Secondly, people out of respect and reverence provide judges the status of divinity. But judges are certainly not omnipotent or omniscient gods. They are also mortals like any human being and are also fallible, and that's why there are multiple layers of courts of appeals to reconsider erroneous judgments.

The address of "My Lord" is only retained by the ex-colonies of the British Empire like India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Canada and a few other countries. Even the former colony Australia and New Zealand have given up such colonial addresses. In many of the European countries like France, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Russia, and the US the Judges of their respected Apex Courts are being addressed as "Your Honour", "Honorable Judge" or simply "Sir".

It is high time a democratic republic like India whose Constitution champions the cause of liberty, equality and dignity of the individual, gave up the disgraceful colonial address of "My Lord" and replaced it with "Your Honour" or "Respected Sir/Madam". A large portion of both the Bench and the Bar have already done it spontaneously and willingly, and that has never reduced the prestige, dignity, majesty, sanctity or sublimity of judges.

The writer is a senior advocate. Views are personal.

On 23 January, this year the dormant but never ending national discourse over the manner of address to judges of the higher judiciary was sparked off once again when a law student appearing before the Supreme Court (SC) Bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) SA Bobde and Justice AS Bopanna as a party-in-person addressed the Bench as "Your Honour". There was a sharp reaction from the CJI who retorted, "When you call us Your Honour, you either have the Supreme Court of the United States or the Magistrate in your mind. We are neither." When the petitioner quickly apologised and started addressing the Court as 'My Lord', the CJI lightened the issue and said, "Whatever, we are not particularly what you call us, but don't use incorrect terms."

However, this happened not for the first time. In another similar exchange in the CJI's Court in August, 2020, when a lawyer used the term 'Your Honour', CJI Bobde had reprimanded him, "Are you appearing before the United States Supreme Court? The use of 'Your Honour' is in the US and not in Indian Supreme Court." When the concerned lawyer explained that there was nothing in the Law that prescribed such an address by the lawyers, the CJI said, "May not be in Law, but it is about practice of the Court."

Surprisingly, what CJI Bobde terms as 'incorrect terms', was held correct by him in 2014 when he was a puisne justice in the SC. On 6 January, 2014 an SC Bench comprising the then CJI HL Dattu and Justice SA Bobde heard a PIL filed by a lawyer named Shiv Sagar Tiwari who prayed for banning the use of the terms 'My Lord' and 'Your Lordship'. Tiwari's contention was that these terms were the symbols of slavery of the colonial era and should be strictly prohibited in Indian Courts as it was against the dignity of the country.

The PIL was dismissed by the Bench without citing any specific reason, but the Bench held that calling the SC judges 'My Lord' was not mandatory for lawyers and held, "When did we say it is compulsory? You can only call us in any dignified manner. To address the Court what do we want? Only a respectable way of addressing. You call (the judges) 'Sir', it is accepted.

You call 'Lordship', it is accepted. There are some of the appropriate ways of expression which are accepted."

On 6 May, 2006 the Bar Council of India (BCI) published its resolution in the Gazette of India mentioning: "Consistent with the obligation of the Bar to show a respectful attitude towards the Court and bearing in mind the dignity of Judicial Office, in form of address to be adopted whether in the Supreme Court or High Courts or Subordinate Courts should be as follows: "Your Honor" and "Hon'ble Court" in Supreme Court and High Courts and in the Subordinate Courts and Tribunals it is open to the lawyers to address the Court as "Sir" or the equivalent words in respective regional languages." An explanation was also provided as - "My Lord" and "Your Lordship" are relics of colonial past, it is proposed to incorporate the above rule showing respectful attitude to the Court.

This resolution by the BCI was taken after considering the observations made by the SC while hearing a PIL filed by the Progressive and Vigilant Lawyers' Forum for abolishing the terms

"My Lord" and "Your Lordship". The SC dismissed the PIL on the ground that the matter relating to the manner in which the Bar would address the Bench was a matter to be decided by the BCI. The BCI has incorporated this resolution into the Bar Council of India Rules, as Chapter- III-A, Part VI. Following the above BCI resolution and BCI Rules, many SC and HC justices have from time to time conveyed the Bar not to address them as "My Lord". In 2009 Justice K Chandru of Madras HC, in 2020 the Rajasthan HC, earlier this year (2021) Justice S Muralidhar of the SC, the Chief Justice of Calcutta HC Justice TB Nair Radhakrishnan and very recently, on March 3, 2021 Justice Arun Kumar Tyagi of Punjab & Haryana HC notified to the members of the Bar not to address them as "My Lord" or "Your Lordship", and instead use the terms "Your Honour" or just "Sir".

The origin of the address "My Lord" certainly goes back to the disgraceful colonial era. Since the judges of the Supreme Court of England were holding Lordship, which was a typical feudal title of the British system, they were



Jayakrishna Sahu

THE ORIGIN OF THE ADDRESS "MY LORD" CERTAINLY GOES BACK TO THE DISGRACEFUL COLONIAL ERA

Messing With Banks

The two-day national strike called by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an umbrella body of nine bank unions, to register their protest against the Centre's proposed privatisation and disinvestment plan, entered the second day on March 16 causing widespread hardships to customers across the country. The dislocation of services is severe as the nation's 12 public sector banks employ 1.3 million-strong workforce with about 1 lakh branches spread over the country. The nationwide strike comes in the wake of the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's announcement during the Budget presentation in February that the government would privatise two more public sector banks.

The decision is yet another evidence of the government's bankruptcy of ideas to improve the country's financial health. The disinvestment route to fix the economy has been repeatedly failing. Yet, the government is persisting with this policy. The grandiose plan to privatise government units with the ostensible goal of rejuvenating the economy has simply fallen flat. The government could not get the large sums it expected the disinvestment would bring in.

The bank unions fear the privatisation of banks, like the insurance sector, would not only lead to massive job losses, but would only help private players those that are close to the ruling party earn windfall profits. They are gearing up to launch an even greater movement on lines of the ongoing farmers' agitation.

On the first day of the protest, thousands of bank employees took to the streets across several states. Nearly a million bank staff joined the protest as claimed by the unions. The managers participating in the strike head 80 to 90 per cent of the branches. This shows the scale of disruption affecting key services, including cash withdrawals, deposits, cheque clearances, and remittances across public sector banks. According to one report, 2.01 crore cheque instruments worth ₹16,500 crore could not be processed at the three national grids in Chennai, Mumbai and Delhi. Clearing of cheques could not be done as branches did not accept cheques.

The fear of the agitators that the government's policies are going to worsen the economy further is not misplaced. The government's intention seems to compromise the country's financial security in order to placate private players who are keen on maximising profits.

The striking unions got support from former Reserve Bank of India Governor Raghuram Rajan who remarked it would be a colossal mistake to sell the banks to industrial houses. The government has already privatised IDBI Bank by selling its majority stake in the lender to LIC in 2019 and has merged 14 public sector banks in the last four years.

As the government is handing over public sector banks to private players, the irony is it was able to implement its own schemes like zero-balance Jan Dhan accounts only on the back of the public sector banks, though it is doubtful in whose interests the accounts were opened. There were reports these accounts were used to turn black money into white during the ill-conceived demonetization.

Moreover, India was largely untouched by the 2008 global financial meltdown as it had strong public sector banks. These banks as well as public sector units are the only ones that give strength to public policy initiatives. For instance, the government has been insisting on digitisation of virtually every mode of financial transaction. With privatisation of banks, one can very easily foresee a situation where the private owners would prefer and will definitely try to shrink the number of branches, eliminating those in the rural belt that are not profitable as standalone units. This would lead to the creation of more compact and efficient operations for the new owners but would also entail banks moving away from a large section of the public. This is bound to happen sooner than later, no matter what counter arguments are put up at present. When cash has already been sucked away from the system and banks will not be physically available, the bulk of the country will be again pushed into the old Indian system of money lenders playing a crucial financial role. Lest some forget, it is this money lending activity that had created bonded laborers. Apart from this, the disappearance of banks will lead to people depending more on chit funds and micro finance of which, barring a very few, most are rogues. This has been especially proven in Orissa and West Bengal.

While it is undoubtedly preferable if government gets itself out of commercial activities, it must also be kept in mind that the corporate sector of India has never demonstrated any innovation except trying to achieve super-normal profits for itself. Banking is a very core public utility service which can be equated with drinking water or electricity supply. It is required for survival of every individual. Handing such critical services over to untrustworthy companies with dark pasts can never be considered as a decision favorable to the national interest.

WISDOM CORNER

- When you've seen beyond yourself, then you may find, peace of mind is waiting there. **GEORGE HARRISON**
- You don't need anybody to tell you who you are or what you are. You are what you are! **JOHN LENNON**
- Don't gain the world and lose your soul; wisdom is better than silver or gold. **BOB MARLEY**

WORDSWORTH

Methinks

The Australian-born humorist, broadcaster and poet Clive James wrote in the Guardian "I save time on the web by reading nobody's opinion that contains the word 'methinks'." His dislike is understandable. The Oxford English Dictionary describes it as archaic, poetical and regional. It might have added "pretentious" because that's surely the quality of online writing that James finds unattractive and likely to waste what little time he has left in this world. He would presumably have passed over an appearance in the Guardian: "So, where will the steel be purchased? Methinks from George Osborne's new friends in China." Luckily for the reputation of the paper in James's eyes, that was in a reader's letter. Methinks has long ago fallen out of spoken usage, except in expressions such as "Methinks the witness doth protest too much", a misquotation from Hamlet. Style guides mostly don't bother to include it, not even to tell readers to avoid it, which would be good advice. Bryan Garner does provide an entry in his guide, without castigation but calling it "an ever-popular archaism". I would have contested that, had I not found more than a thousand examples in a database of British newspapers from the past 20 years. Many appearances of methinks suggest that the OED should have added "humorous" to its list of likely contexts, though the jocularity can be so ponderous that the eyelids droop in sympathy. Some journalists do seem to believe it marks prose as elevated or serious, as in the down-market Sun in July 2015: "Time, methinks, for author John O'Farrell to republish his excellent memoirs", and in May in the mid-market Daily Telegraph: "Methinks that a bit more modestly about how 'rich' we are, and accordingly about our ability to dish out largesse, might not go amiss." Methinks isn't only archaic but also ancient. It's in one of the oldest works in English, King Alfred's translation before 899 of Boethius' De Consolatione Philosophiae, the Consolations of Philosophy. It was then two words, me thyncth (but then written me þincō, using the old characters thorn and eth). The word looks like a thrusting together of me and think, meaning "it seems to me", and as though it comes directly from the Old English equivalent of think. But at that time there were two closely similar verbs, in modern spelling thencan, to think, and thyncan, to seem or appear. The source of methinks is actually the second one. In Middle English the two became confused and coalesced into one form that evolved into our modern verb to think. Methinks followed. If you're ever tempted to use the past tense, it's methought. But please don't.

IN JEST THIS

Don't be afraid to get the Covid vax



Melvin Durai

FEAR OF THE NEEDLE IS JUST ONE OF A NUMBER OF REASONS THAT MANY PEOPLE ARE RELUCTANT TO GET THE COVID VACCINE, EVEN IF THEY'RE ELIGIBLE FOR IT

If you've been vaccinated against Covid-19, please accept my sincere congratulations. You have not only protected yourself from the virus, you have also shown concern for those around you: your family members, your neighbours, your dog and cats.

Your pets may not get Covid from you, but if you get the virus and are hospitalised, who is going to feed them?

Millions of Covid vaccine doses are being distributed around the world, made by pharmaceutical companies such as Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca. In most countries, priority for the vaccine has been given to people considered most vulnerable. This includes people with certain underlying medical conditions, such as cancer and heart disease, as well as frontline workers and healthcare professionals.

Old people also have priority, because if you do not keep the old people alive, who is going to force the young people to get vaccinated?

Old people and young people do not have the same fears about the virus.

Grandfather: "If I get Covid, I might end up in the hospital and possibly die."

Grandson: "If I get Covid, I might give it to my grandpa and he might die."

Nobody enjoys getting vaccinated, but considering everything we've been through for the past year, everyone should be excited to get the Covid vaccine. But many people are like my teenage daughter, Divya, who does not like any type of vaccination whatsoever. If there was a vaccine to protect her against school teachers, she wouldn't get it.

Divya is not yet eligible to get the Covid vaccine, but I'm sure she is already having nightmares about it—picturing a nurse approaching her with a syringe and a needle as long as a fishing pole.

Nurse: "Divya, do you want it in your left arm or your right arm?"

Divya: "Can you put it in my dad's arm?"

Fear of the needle is just one of

a number of reasons that many people are reluctant to get the Covid vaccine, even if they're eligible for it. A few of them are just plain lazy. It takes a little effort to get vaccinated. You can't just click a button on your phone. Healthcare professionals do not generally visit your home to vaccinate you. If someone came to our door holding a syringe and needle, Divya would hand over all our possessions. "Take everything we own," she would say, "but please do not vaccinate me."

Some people are reluctant to get the vaccine because they've received either misinformation or disinformation about it. Misinformation comes through the internet; disinformation comes through Donald Trump.

As a result of this false information, people have started to believe some of the myths about the Covid vaccine. Here are just three examples of these myths:

Myth 1: The Covid vaccine causes infertility. This is not true. If you want to have a baby, one of the best things

you can do is get vaccinated against Covid. Ask any medical professional and they will tell you that in order to have a baby, it's absolutely necessary that you stay alive.

Myth 2: The Covid vaccine will give you the Covid virus. Some people actually believe this—that you might get Covid from the vaccine that was created to protect you from Covid. These are the same people who will avoid going to the police station to report a robbery, because they're afraid that the police might rob them.

Myth 3: The Covid vaccine will alter your DNA, turning you into another person altogether. People who are happy with their lives do not want to get vaccinated and find that they've suddenly turned into someone else. But others may be willing to take the risk, hoping that they will suddenly find themselves writing like Salman Rushdie or batting like Virat Kohli. Of course, if the vaccine actually alters their DNA, they're far more likely to find themselves writing like Kohli and batting like Rushdie.

Yemeni crisis

Sir, It is unfortunate to know that the humanitarian crisis in Yemen has been going on unabated with no strong solutions in sight. The recent exclusive reports on CNN have just highlighted the sorry state of Yemen and also the poor plight of numerous malnourished children in the region. There have been plenty of newborn children facing acute malnutrition. Heartrending pictures and their treatment-related difficulties in hospitals have been shocking to the core. Meanwhile, the World Food Programme has warned of malnutrition-related child deaths in great numbers in Yemen. All these disturbing things cannot be brushed aside by pointing the finger at others. All stakeholders including the world community must be held accountable to the ongoing Yemeni crisis. Right now famine has also been projected to raise its ugly head across the region. The international community should not think twice to help out Yemen through strong food assistance and other financial backup programmes. Given that the Asian continent has been home to beautiful natural world and farming activities for longer time, it is also high time to analyse the possible chances to create and encourage farming activities in Yemen to a greater extent possible. Such well-planned green activities will surely help fight Yemeni crises like food shortfall and malnutrition.

P Senthil Saravana Durai, MUMBAI

Fighting failure

Sir, When you are down and feeling very low on your confidence some people will take extreme measures of ending their lives much to the discomfort of people dependent on them. At this juncture what that person has to do is to seek the guidance of the right person and act accordingly till the situation improves. Here are some instances when prominent sporting personalities benefitted from the advices of suitable persons. When Virat Kohli was facing consecutive failures recently he had a chat with AB De Villiers. When Prithvi Shaw was faced with repeated failures and Surya Kumar Yadav was not selected in the Indian cricket team, they took the advice from Sachin Tendulkar and the results are there to see. Sachin himself wanted to retire from International cricket after a series of low scores in 2007 World Cup. Then he had a long chat with Sir Vivian Richards, who guided him not to take the hasty decision of quitting cricket. Eventually Sachin was part of Indian cricket team that lifted the Cricket World Cup in 2011.

V Nagendra Kumar, HYDERABAD

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

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Beginning of Covid 2nd wave: Centre warns Maha

In a letter to Maharashtra Chief Secretary Sitaram Kunte, which is based on the assessment of a central team, the Union health ministry has urged the state to bring down its positivity rate and step up contact-tracing

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 16: The Centre warned Maharashtra Tuesday that the state is witnessing a beginning of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic and asked the state government to focus on containment strategies and scale up the pace of vaccination campaign, especially in districts witnessing a sharp increase in infections.

Issuing a letter to Maharashtra's Chief Secretary Sitaram Kunte, which is based on the assessment of the central govt team, the Union health ministry has urged the state to bring down its positivity rate and step up contact-tracing.

The letter enclosed the analysis of the pandemic in Maharashtra by a central team which was deputed there to assess the situation on the ground. The team noted the lack of Covid-19 appropriate behaviour and tracking and testing of cases as the prime reason behind the infection surge, apart from the apathy of the district administration to implement already prescribed measures for transmission control.

"Maharashtra is at the beginning of the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic. There is very limited active effort to track, test, isolate cases and quarantine contacts. There is no adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour among people both in rural and urban areas," Union Health Secretary, Rajesh Bhushan, warned in the letter.

He also pointed out that eight of the top 10 districts of India in terms of active Covid-19 infections are in Maharashtra and the only way to curb the spread is to increase the pace of vaccination.



Burdi flyover wears a deserted look during a complete lockdown, imposed by authorities due to surge in coronavirus cases, in Nagpur, Tuesday. PTI PHOTO

"Covid-19 pandemic in the recent past has shown a rising trend in Maharashtra where the number of active cases has increased by 171.5% over the last one month from 36,917 cases February 11, 2021, to 1,00,240 cases March 11, 2021," Bhushan wrote to Kunte.

The letter also noted that the number of people testing positive was high, ranging from 5.1% in Mumbai to 30% in Aurangabad, implying that many cases were not being tested and "there is high transmission in the community".

The report by the central team revealed that the main concept of contact tracing was not clearly understood by the field level staff. Due to limited contact tracing, a large pool of asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic people was not being tracked and tested, said the letter, suggesting that testing be considerably enhanced according to protocol laid down by the Indian Council of Medical Research.

The team observed no adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour among people, both in rural and urban areas. "This was conspicuous both for physical distancing and for use of masks/face covers. There should be persuasive communication to sustain adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour," the report said.

The central team also pointed to the lack of human resource to implement test, track, isolate and treat policy for Covid positive cases. "As the health staff too is pre-occupied with vaccine administration, there is the limited human resource for the surveillance and contact tracing activities," it reported.

Besides, the team also found a lackadaisical approach of the district administrations to manage the situation on the ground. "The district administrations are not much worried about the evolving situation. We could sense a feeling that enough has been done already. This complacency may take its toll," it concluded.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, March 16: India's youngest state Telangana has achieved a turnaround in agriculture by almost doubling the agriculture production and the area under cultivation during the last seven years.

Officials say this could be possible due to completion of several irrigation projects, revival of tanks, 24X7 free power to farmers and Rs 10,000 financial assistance to farmers towards input costs per acre annually.

In 2014, when Telangana was carved out of Andhra Pradesh, the area under cultivation was 1.41 crore acres. The same has now gone up to 2.10 crore acres during the combined period of Vaanakalam (Kharif) and Yasangi (Rabi) seasons. The agriculture yield has doubled from 2.05 crore tonne to 4.11 crore tonne during the same period.

According to official figures, paddy was cultivated in 34.97 lakh acres in 2013-14, and this has gone to 1.04 crore acres in 2020-21. The procurement of paddy by the government has gone up from 24.30 lakh tonnes in 2014 to 1.11 crore tonnes last year.

The government claims that state has become the rice bowl of the country. The fact was highlighted during Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan's customary address to the joint session of both the houses of state legislature Monday, the first day of the budget session. She said Telangana has become Annapurna or food provider to the country.

Last summer, the Food Corporation of India (FCI) procured 1.15 crore tonne of paddy all over the country. Of this, 64 lakh tonne, that is about 56 per cent was procured from Telangana alone.

Paddy production during Vaanakalam was around 1.3 crore tonne and during Yasangi it is expected to be 1.25 crore tonne, the highest for any state in the country during Rabi season. Thus the paddy



production for the year is estimated to be 2.55 crore tonne.

The area under cotton cultivation has also gone up from 41.83 lakh acres to 60.54 lakh acres. The cotton crop then accounted for only 18.45 lakh tonne annually, whereas now, it accounts for 37.62 lakh tonne annually.

To cater to the growing requirements of the state, the state also expanded marketing and godown facilities. The number of markets has gone up from 150 to 192. The capacity of godowns today stands at 24.73 lakh tonne against 4.17 lakh tonne in 2014.

The state is also on course to cross another milestone with the gross production value of agriculture and horticulture crops for 2020-21 crop year expected to touch the Rs 1 lakh crore. The figure for 2019-20 figure was Rs 89,058 crore.

Agriculture department attributes the increase in cultivation area and production to improved irrigation facilities with completion of new irrigation projects, revival of tanks under Mission Kakatiya and other measures like round-the-clock free electricity and Rythu Bandhu scheme under which every farmer is being paid Rs.10,000 per

acre every year towards input costs.

The total crop sown area has increased by 21 lakh acre compared to 2019-20.

An official said the increase in sown area and production over last one year could also be because of Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown as people who own agriculture lands shifted back to their primary occupation after losing other sources of income.

To prevent farmers from losses due to glut in the market, the authorities are encouraging them to go for alternative crops rather than relying totally on paddy, cotton or other traditional crops. The department has set a target to increase the cultivation of horticulture crops from existing 12.5 lakh acres to 66 lakh acres over the next five years.

Officials say Mission Kakatiya played a key role in augmenting irrigation facilities. Under this programme, the government took up revival of 45,000 tanks constructed during Kakatiya dynasty. This has resulted in the raise in the ground

COUNTRY'S RICE BOWL

THE FIGURES OF LAST SEVEN YEARS SHOW THAT THE STATE HAS MADE TREMENDOUS STRIDES IN BOTH AREA UNDER CULTIVATION AND PRODUCTION

AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT ATTRIBUTES THE INCREASE IN CULTIVATION AREA AND PRODUCTION TO IMPROVED IRRIGATION FACILITIES WITH COMPLETION OF NEW IRRIGATION PROJECTS, REVIVAL OF TANKS, ROUND-THE-CLOCK FREE ELECTRICITY AND RYTHU BANDHU SCHEME UNDER WHICH EVERY FARMER IS BEING PAID RS 10,000 PER ACRE EVERY YEAR TOWARDS INPUT COSTS

THE GOVERNMENT CLAIMS THAT STATE HAS BECOME THE RICE BOWL OF THE COUNTRY

water levels.

According to data released by the Centre recently, out of 549 wells analysed in the state, ground water increased by 91 per cent in 498 wells.

The government embarked upon construction of major and medium irrigation projects. Kaluwakurty, Nettekpadu, Bhima, Koil Sagar, Devadula, Mid Manair, Yellampally, Singur, Kinnerasani, Palem Vagu, Kumaram Bhim, Mattadi Vagu, Neelavayi, Jagannathpur and other projects works were completed on a fast track. Kaleshwaram, Palamuru-Rangareddy, Dindi, Salarama Lift Irrigation project are nearing completion.

The government claims that Telangana region which was once a permanent address for famine and drought is now transformed and shaped as an excellent agriculture-based state.

Border row: Shiv Sena wants Belgaum to be declared UT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 16: The Shiv Sena Tuesday said Belgaum should be declared as a Union Territory, alleging that atrocities on Marathi-speaking people by pro-Kannada outfits were continuing there.

An editorial in the Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana' alleged that a pro-Kannada organisation recently beat up Marathi people in Belgaum, removed Marathi boards from shops there and also targeted pro-Marathi social media users.

The Karnataka police were also

The dispute between the two states over Belgaum and other border areas is pending before the Supreme Court for many years

harassing Marathi people, it claimed.

"If the atrocities are not going to stop, then the Centre should declare Belgaum as a Union Territory," it said.

Maharashtra claims certain areas,

including Belgaum, Karwar and Nippani which are part of Karnataka, contending the majority of population in these areas is Marathi-speaking.

The dispute between the two states over Belgaum and other border areas is pending before the Supreme Court for many years.

The editorial in 'Saamana' requested Maharashtra BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis to up take the issue with the Centre and Karnataka chief minister.

There are Marathi people in Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and Vadodara (Gujarat) also. But, they never had

any clashes with locals, the publication said.

It also said people speaking different languages have been residing in Maharashtra for so many years and that Marathi people never treated them badly.

"The way the BJP government in Karnataka is handling the atrocities committed on the Marathi community by locals, it seems to be encouraging such miscreants," the Sena alleged. It is "illegal" to treat Marathi-speaking people in such a way when the boundary dispute issue is pending before the Supreme Court, the editorial said.

Sunday picnic unearths centuries-old mystery cave



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jalgaon, March 16: A casual Sunday outing in the forests near the Maharashtra-Madhya Pradesh border by an archaeologist resulted in a major discovery - a 2,000-plus year old mystery cave dating back to the Satavahana dynasty era.

The cave is hidden and obviously in a secret location, 9 km from the nearest human habitat - Chaugav village in Jalgaon district, said proud discoverer Bhujang R. Bobade, also a history scholar.

"We had actually gone to visit the ruins of the fort built there by Gavli kings, deep in the forested hills. Outside the main entrance of the fort, on the left side, there is a large cave with two entry points leading to different directions. This is where we made the new discovery," Bobade told IANS.

The entry to the large cave is through a water tank measuring 8 by two feet, after which there are rock cut pillars, said Bobade, 38, the Director of

Archives & Museum Department at the Deccan Archaeological and Cultural Research Institute, Hyderabad. Since the entry is very narrow and low, he said one can approach only in a kneeling position from the fresh water, at least two feet high level, in the tank.

The path opens up into a massive cave measuring 30 by 30 feet, which is also filled with water round the year, fed from four other bigger water tanks above, serving as a watering hole for the wild animals.

"This cave is barren. There are no symbols, carvings or statues of any gods or goddesses. It is filled with murky water, with a slippery floor and the possibility of several dangerous reptiles lurking beneath," Bobade revealed.

"I sent the pictures for identification to an expert, Dr. E. Sivanagi Reddy, the former Assistant Director of Archaeology, Andhra Pradesh. He immediately identified

these as belonging to the Satavahana era, and carved out around 2,000-2,200 years ago," Bobade said, on his crowning achievement after having explored more than 850 caves or cave complexes around the country. Explaining the unique aspects, he said that these caves are approachable only through a watery route, which is unseen anywhere in India, and are carved out on an erstwhile ancient trade route going from Maharashtra via MP to the north.

"It is possible that the wealthy traders of those times may have lived there for days or months for business purposes and could have used these secret caves for depositing their valuable goods or money," Bobade speculates.

Another probability is these caves, invisible due to the water and greenery, might have served as some kind of a 'safe house' for the royal families during wars or calamities. "All these and other aspects need to be examined in great detail by proper expeditions, I feel this is just the beginning and there are more such ancient hidden caves waiting to be dug out in that region," Bobade said.

He has shared the details of the discovery with Dr. Tejas Garge, Director of Archaeology & Museums, Maharashtra and Jalgaon Collector Abhijit Raut for further action.

BJP delegation meets Guv over Bhainsa violence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, March 16: The BJP in Telangana has urged Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan to instruct the state government to take stringent action against those behind the March 7 communal violence at Bhainsa town.

A BJP delegation which met the Governor, submitted a memorandum, requesting that a high level police inquiry be conducted "into the series of communal incidents at Bhainsa to identify alleged habitual offenders who incite riots."

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. B-823
"e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
PURI (R&B) DIVISION, PURI
Phone/Fax: (06752) 223433, E-mail: eerbipuri@yahoo.co.in
INVITATION FOR BIDS
Bid Identification No. E.E. (R&B) Puri - 61/2020-21

1	The Executive Engineer, Purī (R&B) Division, Purī, on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in Single Cover System in ONLINE MODE only.
2	Nature of work : Building
3	No. of work : 4 Nos.
4	Tender Paper Cost : Rs. 6,000/- each to be remit online only.
5	Class of Contractor : "C" & "B" for Sl. No. 1 to 4
6	Availability of Bid Documents in the website : From Dt. 15.03.2021 at 10.00 hours to Dt. 22.03.2021 at 17.00
7	Date of Opening of Bid : Dt. 23.03.2021 at 11.30 A.M.
8	EMD/Bid Security : As specified in the notice to be remitted online only.

The bidders shall have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason therefor.

Sd./- Executive Engineer
Puri (R&B) Division, Puri
OIPR-34064/11/0014/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. O-1257
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, NIMAPARA
Mail I.D.- ee_nimapara@yahoo.co.in Date: 12.03.2021
e-Procurement NOTICE
Road Works for the year 2020-21.

1.	Name of the work	: Road Works for the year 2020-21.
2.	Total No. of Projects	: 02 (One) Nos. of project.
3.	Estimated cost of projects	: Varies from Rs. 3.23 lakh to Rs. 32.70 lakh
4.	Class of contractor	: "B" Class & "A" Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant Class of other licensing authorities.
	A) Estimated Cost more than Rs. 40.00 lakhs and upto Rs. 300.00 lakhs.	: "C" Class & "B" Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant Class of other licensing authorities.
	B) Estimated Cost more than Rs. 20.00 lakhs and upto Rs. 40.00 lakhs.	: "D" Class & "C" Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant Class of other licensing authorities.
	C) Estimated Cost upto Rs. 20.00 lakhs	: As per TCN
5.	Mode of Submission of tender	: Tender should be submitted online only in website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in .
6.	Period of Completion	: As per TCN
7.	Other details.	

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender Online for bidding	Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date, time & venue of opening of tender	Date of Lottery
1	2	3	4	5	6
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Nimapara	Tender Online - Divn. NPR-12/2020-21	24.03.2021 at 11.00 A.M.	08.04.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.	07.04.2021 upto 5.00 P.M. at 11.00 A.M. Office of the E.E., R.W. Division, Nimapara	12.04.2021 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Nimapara
OIPR-25099/11/0013/2021

OFFICE OF THE No. C-675
NOTIFIED AERA COUNCIL, BOUDHGARH
"e" Procurement Notice
Tender Call Notice No. 1138/NAC/6/2020-21 Date: 15.03.2021

1.	Name of work	: Civil works as mentioned in website
2.	No. of works	: 1 No. of Civil works
3.	Bid Value	: Rs. 19,18,226.00
4.	Date and time of availability, received of the bid documents in the portal	: From 10.00 A.M. of Dt. 17.03.2021 to Dt. 24.03.2021 upto 5.00 P.M. only.
5.	Bids received online shall be opened on	: Dt. 26.03.2021 at 11.00 A.M.
6.	Submission of Original documents	: On or before 10.00 A.M. of Dt. 26.3.2021
7.	Name & address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Executive Officer, Boudhgarh NAC

Further details can be seen from the procurement portal: www.tendersorissa.gov.in.

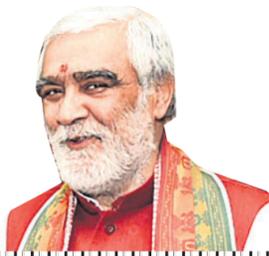
Sd./- Executive Officer
Boudhgarh NAC
OIPR-13143/11/0003/2021

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC AT LARGE that M/s Bhargavi Enterprises Private Limited, a Company having its registered Office at B-5, Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar- 751007, State-Odisha ("the Mortgagor") proposes to mortgage its Immovable property, more particularly mentioned in Schedule A together with all existing buildings and structures thereon and buildings and structures as may be erected/constructed there upon any time from/after the date of respective mortgages and all additions thereto and all fixtures and furniture's and plant and machinery attached to the earth or permanently fastened to anything attached to the earth, both present and future ("said Property") as Security in favour of my client i.e. Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. to secure the loan to be availed by the Borrower i.e. M/s Orissa Stevedores Limited, A Company having its registered office at Link Road, P.O.- Arunodaya Nagar, P.S.- Madhupatana, Dist.- Cuttack, State-Odisha, Pin- 753012, and the Mortgagor has represented to my client that the Mortgagor is not in possession of its original title deed as mentioned in Schedule B, as the said original title deed has been lost/misplaced and not traceable.

ANY AND ALL persons including but not limited to any individual, a Hindu undivided family, firm, company, banks, financial institution/s, non-banking financial institution/s, government authorities, firm, association of persons or a body of individuals whether incorporated or not, lenders and/or creditors having any claim or rights in respect of the said Property, having objection to the said transaction or claiming any interest in the said property or any part thereof by way of sale, gift, lease, inheritance, exchange, share, right, interest, mortgage, hypothecation, charge, lien, trust, possession, easement, attachment, encumbrance or holding the originals of Said Document or any other claim or right of any nature are hereby required to write to the undersigned at his office within 7 days from the date hereof along with documentary evidence, failing which my clients shall proceed with the proposed mortgage, without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, shall be considered as waived and thereafter no dispute, complaints, or objections will be considered by Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. and this may be noted by all concerned.

Schedule A
Property owned by Bhargavi Enterprises Private Limited
ALL THAT piece and parcel of land and building situated at Dist.- Khurda, P.S.- New Capital, Tahasil- Bhubaneswar, Mouza- Bhubaneswar Sahar, Unit No. 11, Sahed Nagar, drawing Plot No. B/5, measuring an area of 125 ft. x 140 ft., under Drawing No. C-7453, Drawing Plot No. B/5/1, measuring an area of 125 ft. x 20 ft., under Drawing No. C-7453 AND Drawing Plot No. B/5/1, measuring an area of 125 ft. x 45 ft., under Drawing No. C-7453 and building having built up area 26,192 Sq.ft. constructed over the said plot. The above Plots area contiguous having total area 25,625 Sq.ft. Bounded By: North-Drawing Plot No. B/4, South-Road, East-Road, West- Road.

Schedule B
List of Document lost/misplaced by the Mortgagor
Registered Supplementary Lease Deed dtd. 21.07.1988 registered No. 6958, dtd. 26.07.1988 executed by Govt. of Odisha in favour of M/s. Bhargavi Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. for allotment of additional plot on southern side of Plot B-5/1 adm. 125 sq.ft. x 45 sq.ft.
Date: _____
Place : BBSR
Sd./- Authorized Signatory
BASUDHA CONSULTANCY & SOLICITORS
PLOT No.339/4894, GOUTAM NAGAR, BHUBANESWAR-751014
Phone- Mobile- 9437024302, 9438670857,
E-mail: basudha_bijay@yahoo.com



There is no conclusive data available to establish a direct correlation of death/disease exclusively due to air pollution

E-COPYING SOFTWARE

The Supreme Court has launched a web-based e-copying software to facilitate "doorstep and contactless" delivery of certified copies of its judgments and proceedings



of the day quote

Whether it is JNU, Jamia Millia or Aligarh or so many others, in the last few years, our campuses have no longer remained inclusive spaces that safeguard freedom of expression and individual liberties.

SHASHI THAROOR | CONGRESS LEADER

Trinamool Congress goons attacked the BJP's which was in honour of Bhim Rao Ambedkar. This is an insult to democracy and Ambedkar. CM Mamata Banerjee is squarely responsible for whatever is happening in West Bengal, this spate of violence

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR | UNION MINISTER

When BJP leaders were making claims of their victory in the next state Assembly polls from the dais during the party's working committee meeting, several office-bearers and leaders were raising their voice against the misgovernance under the party's rule

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY (SP) PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Chhota Rajan gets 10 yrs in jail

Mumbai: A special MCOCA court in Mumbai Tuesday sentenced gangster Chhota Rajan to 10 years in jail for a firing incident in suburban Malad in 2013. A bookie-turned-builder Ajay Gosalia was shot at and injured when he was coming out of a local mall. Special Judge AT Wankhede convicted Rajan and five others under sections 307 (attempt to murder), 120 B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC as well as MCOCA provisions. Special public prosecutor Pradeep Gharat said 50-60 witnesses were examined, including Gosalia and an accused who turned approver.

NIA searches Waze's office

Mumbai: The NIA which is probing the case related to the recovery of an SUV with explosives near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's house Tuesday searched arrested police official Sachin Waze's office here. A court, meanwhile, rejected Waze's plea contending that the manner of his arrest by the agency was illegal. Waze, arrested in the case March 13, was attached to the Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) of city police's crime branch till recently.

Sukhbir Badal tests nCoV positive

Chandigarh: Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal Tuesday said he has tested positive for coronavirus. He made the announcement a day after addressing a rally in Tarn Taran. Badal said he is fine and has isolated himself. "I would like to inform everyone that I have tested COVID positive. My health is fine & as per protocol I have isolated myself. I request those who came in contact with me during the last few days to isolate themselves & get tested for COVID-19," said Badal in his tweet.

Night curfew in Indore, Bhopal city

Bhopal: In view of rising coronavirus cases in the state, the Madhya Pradesh government Tuesday decided to impose night curfew in Bhopal and Indore municipal areas and also ordered closure of shops at 10 PM in eight other cities. The restrictions would come into force from Wednesday, an official said.

Govt should open doors for dialogue: SKM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 16: The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella body of the farmer unions protesting against the Centre's new agriculture laws at Delhi's borders, Tuesday said the government should remove "obstacles" and open the doors for dialogue, over a month and a half since the talks between the two sides hit a roadblock.

The government and the farmers have held 11 rounds of talks, the last one being on January 22, to break the deadlock and end the protests at different border points of the national capital that began in November last year. "The Samyukta Kisan Morcha has always been in favour of dialogue. The government should remove various obstacles and open the way for dialogue," a statement issued by the SKM said.

The farmers have already rejected the old proposal of the gov-



ernment, it said. Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar had last month said the government was ready to resume the talks with the protesting farmers, but first they should respond to its offer to put the three contentious farm laws on hold for a year and a half

and set up a joint committee to find solutions.

The talks between the two sides have not resumed following the widespread violence during a tractor rally by the protesting farmers January 26. The protesters have been demanding a repeal of the

BKU calls on Noida youth to join March 26 strike

NOIDA (UP): The Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) has called on youth of Noida adjoining Delhi in western Uttar Pradesh to join a proposed strike on March 26 over issues like unemployment, an office-bearer of the farmers' union said on Tuesday. The BKU supporters are camping at Ghazipur on the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border since November 2020 over demand for repeal of the contentious farm laws and a legal guarantee on the minimum support price (MSP) for crops. "BKU spokesperson Rakesh Tikait has called on the youth in Noida to join the 'chakka jam' on March 26. The BKU members won't put up any blockade in Noida but we have extended support to the 'chakka jam'," BKU's media in-charge Dharmendra Malik told PTI. Tikait has called on the youth to join the protest over issues like unemployment, Malik added.

three farm laws and a legal guarantee to the minimum support price (MSP) for their crops. It has been more than three months since the protests began at Delhi's borders and the government is not even showing basic humanity towards the protesters, the SKM alleged.

It also condemned and "opposed" the Haryana Recovery of Damages to Property During Disturbance to

Public Order Bill, 2021, claiming that it will suppress the voice of people. "This effort is being made to suppress the current farmers' movement and engage the farmers in false cases," the SKM said.

In order to strengthen the movement nationwide, a joint session of trade unions, transport unions and rights organisations will be held on Wednesday, it added.

The money spinning monkey business

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, March 16: The Railways in Lucknow has hired two brothers, belonging to the Kalandar community, to shoo away monkeys by mimicking the voice of langur.

The Kalandar community is known for its expertise in training bears and monkeys.

The brothers - Aslam, 29, and Rashid, 27, - mimic the sounds made by langurs to scare off monkeys at the Charbagh railway station. The brothers have been employed on a contract basis for six months.

According to railway officials, there are over 100 monkeys which roam around Charbagh railway station and snatch food from vendors and passengers and even damage CCTVs and electricity wires.

According to Jagtosh Shukla, senior divisional commercial manager, Lucknow division,



"Hiring a langur would have amounted to cruelty to animals, hence professionals have been hired to get rid of simian trouble from railway station."

The two brothers remain at the platforms from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and mimic the sound of langur when they see the monkeys.

The brothers say that they have been taught how to mimic the langurs and have studied monkey behaviour in detail.

In 2019, Kismat, a 42-year-old monkey handler, possessing similar skills, had been hired by the railways to take care of the simian menace.

Hindu man buried in Saudi due to consulate 'mistake'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 16: A peculiar case came up before the Delhi High Court Tuesday wherein the body of a Hindu man, an Indian citizen, was wrongly buried in Saudi Arabia as per Muslim rites due to incorrect translation of his religion on the death certificate by Indian Consulate officials in Jeddah.

The wife, who has been running from pillar to post to get the body, has approached the high court seeking direction to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to take steps to urgently exhume the remains and repatriate them to India in a time-bound manner.

Justice Prathiba M Singh said the woman has been approaching the authorities since January, after the death of her husband, and adequate steps ought to have been taken to bring back the body of the man to India to conduct the last rites.

"Accordingly, the concerned officer from the MEA not below the rank of deputy secretary shall join



the proceedings on March 18 to apprise this court about the update on steps taken and status on transportation of mortal remains of the deceased," the judge said, adding that it was an "unfortunate" case.

The Indian man Sanjeev Kumar had died January 24 in Saudi Arabia, where he was working, due to cardiac arrest, and his body was kept at a hospital there.

Petitioner Anju Sharma said in the plea that on getting the news of her husband's death, the family requested the authorities to repatriate the body. Shockingly, February 18, the

Petitioner was informed that the body of her husband has been buried in Saudi Arabia while the family members were waiting for the body in India.

"The officials in Indian Consulate explained that it was due to a mistake committed by the official translator of Indian Consulate, Jeddah, who wrongly mentioned his religion as 'Muslim' in the death certificate. They also shared a letter of apology tendered by the official translating agency of Indian Consulate in Jeddah with the petitioner herein," said the petitioner, filed through advocate Subhash Chandran K R and Yogamaya M G.

It also said that neither the woman nor any of the family members gave consent to bury Sanjeev Kumar's body in Saudi Arabia.

Thereafter, the woman requested the officials of the Indian Consulate in Jeddah to ask the local authorities there to exhume the body of her husband so that it can be transported to India for performing last rites as per the faith of the family.

EX-CONG LEADER CHACKO JOINS NCP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 16: Former Congress leader PC Chacko Tuesday joined the Nationalist Congress Party after meeting its supreme Sharad Pawar.

Ahead of joining the NCP, he had met Communist Party of India-Marxist General Secretary Sitaram Yechury. The NCP is part of the CPI-M-led Left Democratic Front in Kerala where Assembly elections are approaching.

Chacko said: "The need today is for unity in the opposition parties. A united opposition should emerge as an alternative to the BJP. I don't see that initiative in the party which I was a member of earlier." A former MP and Delhi in-charge, Chacko quit the Congress on March 10. He said he sent his resignation letter to party interim chief Sonia Gandhi, saying that "it had become difficult to continue in Congress". Chacko was miffed over ticket distribution in his home state Kerala.

FESTIVAL OF COLOURS



Women smear dry colours on each other during Holi celebrations in Nadia district

PTI PHOTO

BILL PASSED TO RAISE LIMIT FOR ABORTIONS TO 24 WEEKS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 16: Rajya Sabha Tuesday passed a bill to raise the upper limit for permitting abortions from the present 20 weeks to 24 for "special categories of women" including rape survivors, victims of incest, minors and differently-abled.

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to amend the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 was passed by voice vote. The bill was passed by Lok Sabha about a year ago. A resolution moved by Congress leader Pratap Singh Bajwa to send the bill to a select committee of Rajya Sabha was defeated by voice vote, along with some other amendments proposed by members. "The bill as amended is passed," Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Hariwansh Narayan Singh said. Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said the amendments in the bill have been made after studying global practices and wide consultation within the

country. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we will not frame any law which harms women. This is to preserve and protect the dignity of women," he said. Besides Congress, members of various parties including Shiv Sena, AITC, CPI, CPI-M and Samajwadi Party had demanded to send the bill to the select committee.

The bill amends the act passed in 1971 to Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Act, 2020.

Under the new act, pregnancy in special can be terminated "where the length of the pregnancy exceeds 20 weeks but does not exceed 24 weeks" if no less than two registered medical practitioner are of the opinion that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve a risk to the life of the pregnant woman or of grave injury to her physical or mental health or there is substantial risk that if the child were born, it would suffer from any serious physical or mental abnormality.

ISRO taking space ties with US, Japan & Oz to a higher orbit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, March 16: As Quad takes a leap forward, India is deepening space ties with the US, Japan and Australia - the other three member nations of the group.

Known as the "Quadrilateral Security Dialogue", the Quad grouping held its first virtual summit last week. The four countries plan to establish a series of working groups that will focus on climate change; critical and emerging technologies, including working to set technology standards and norms and jointly developing some of the critical technologies of the future, officials said.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) last week shipped the S-band Synthetic Aperture Radar

(SAR) to US space agency NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory as the joint NASA-ISRO SAR (NISAR) mission moved forward.

NISAR is a joint collaboration for a dual-frequency L and S-band SAR for earth observation. "NISAR will be the first satellite mission to use two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in our planet's surface less than a centimetre across", according to NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration).

The mission is targeted for launch in 2022 from ISRO's Sriharikota spaceport in Andhra Pradesh's Nellore district, about 100 kms north of Chennai. NASA is providing the mission's L-band SAR, a high-rate communication subsystem for science



data, GPS receivers, a solid-state recorder and payload data subsystem. ISRO is providing the spacecraft bus, the S-band radar, the launch vehicle and associated launch serv-

ices for the mission, whose goal is to make global measurements of the causes and consequences of land surface changes using advanced radar imaging. On March 11,

Bangalore-headquartered ISRO and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) reviewed the ongoing cooperation in earth observation, lunar cooperation and satellite navigation.

"Both sides have agreed to explore opportunities for cooperation in space situational awareness (SSA) and professional exchange programme", according to ISRO.

On the occasion, ISRO and JAXA signed an 'Implementing Arrangement' for collaborative activities on rice crop area and air quality monitoring, using satellite data". ISRO and JAXA have planned a joint mission - Lunar Polar Exploration (LUPEX) - to explore the Moon's south pole in 2023.

LUPEX received a boost as Japan reportedly earmarked 2.8 billion

Yen (USD 26 million) for it for the fiscal 2021. In February, ISRO and Australian Space Agency (ASA) inked an Amendment of the 2012 India Australia Inter-Governmental MoU for cooperation in Civil Space Science, Technology and Education'. This Amendment makes India's Department of Space and ASA as the Executive Organisations and provides scope for other related entities to conclude implementing arrangements for specific cooperation activities.

The two agencies reviewed the status of ongoing cooperation activities in earth observation, satellite navigation, space situational awareness and establishment of transportable terminal in Australia to support India's Gaganyaan programme.

of the day quote

A century-old Congress party that got 63 seats (in 2011), 41 (in 2016), now has 25

K PALANISWAMI
TAMIL NADU CHIEF MINISTER

I am told that Mamata Banerjee is now doing Chandi Path. But in the last 10 years, you have been engaged in minority appeasement. You have stopped Saraswati Puja in the state and immersion of idols of goddess Durga

J P NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

There is no provision in the law as per which the government can direct any private school for waiving the fees for a particular period but since it is the general sentiments of parents, so the government will look into the issue and see what can be done in this regard

VIJAY KUMAR CHAUDHARY
CABINET MINISTER OF BIHAR

SHORT TAKES

4 Maoists killed in gun battle

Gaya (Bihar): Four Maoists, including a zonal commander and three sub-zonal commanders, were killed in Bihar's Gaya district Tuesday in a gun battle with security forces. The gun battle began in the morning when the 205 CoBRA unit of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) along with a local unit of the paramilitary wing and state police force carried out an operation in Maunbar area under the Dumaria police station in Gaya district.

Swapan Dasgupta resigns from RS

New Delhi: Swapan Dasgupta, the BJP candidate from Tarakeswar Assembly constituency in West Bengal, Tuesday resigned from the Rajya Sabha after the Trinamool Congress (TMC) pointed out that a nominated member can not join a political party. It is learnt that the journalist-turned-politician has sent his resignation with the request that it can be accepted by Wednesday. His term as Rajya Sabha member will end in April 2021.

More CBI raids in Bengal

Kolkata: Amid the election campaigning in poll-bound West Bengal, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Tuesday carried out searches at several locations in the state, including the premises of Amit Agarwal, a close aide of key accused Anup Majhi aka Lala in connection with illegal coal smuggling case. A CBI source related to the probe told IANS, "Multiple agency sleuths are carrying out searches at the premises of Agarwal in Durgapur and Kolkata."

CA shot dead

New Delhi: A 45-year-old chartered accountant was shot dead Tuesday morning allegedly by unidentified men in northwest Delhi's Adarsh Nagar area, police said here. The deceased, Anil Aggarwal, was a resident of Majlis Park, they said. "On Tuesday around 10 am, a PCR call was received regarding the incident of firing in which one person got injured. A police team reached the spot. The injured was shifted to the Fortis Hospital, Shalimar Bagh, where he was declared brought dead," Deputy Commissioner of Police (northwest) Usha Rangnani said.

'Shah conspiring to harass TMC'

REFERRING TO THE LAST WEEK'S 'ATTACK' ON HER IN NANDIGRAM, BANERJEE SAID NO INJURY CAN STOP HER FROM ENSURING HER PARTY'S VICTORY IN THE POLLS

AGENCIES

Mejia/Chhatna/Raypur (WB), March 16: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Tuesday accused Union Home Minister Amit Shah of 'hatching a conspiracy' to harass TMC leaders ahead of the assembly polls, and sought to know if the Election Commission (EC) is taking instructions from him. The CM also said that she would be forced to stage a protest outside the poll panel's office, if the BJP continues to "interfere" in its day-to-day functioning.

Contending that Shah is "frustrated" over the poor turnout at his rallies, Banerjee, who addressed three public meetings in Bankura during the day, accused the BJP of plotting to kill her, and claimed that her director of security, Vivek Sahay, was removed from the post by the poll panel, following her injury in Nandigram, for this reason.

"Amit Shah is frustrated as his rallies have registered poor turnout. Instead of running the country, he is sitting in Kolkata and hatching conspiracies to harass TMC leaders. What do they want? Do they want to kill me? Do they think they can win elections by killing me? If they think so, they are wrong," she said.

Urging the EC to take note of Shah's "antics", Banerjee wondered whether the EC has been reduced to a political tool of the saffron party. "Is Amit Shah running the EC? (It seems) he is giving instructions to the EC. What happened to their



independence? My director security (Vivek Sahay) was removed (by EC) under his instructions," she said.

Banerjee claimed Shah, who held a series of meetings with the state leadership Monday night, has understood well that his party is still miles away from the seat of power. "Will the home minister run the country or spend time harassing senior government officials, politicians? Will he harass the home secretary? Send CBI notice?"

"They are booking all hotels. They are planning to frame cases against TMC candidates, send CBI, ED teams to harass political rivals? They are sending notices to those behind the Nandigram land movement. Bankura and Bengal should show others the way to defeat these

Irregularities in the Municipal Corporation of Faridabad relating to LED streetlights and other issues would be investigated by a high-level committee
ANIL YU
HARYANA URBAN LOCAL BODIES MINISTER

PM HOLDS VIRTUAL SUMMIT WITH FINNISH COUNTERPART

India has taken care of the needs of the world along with its domestic struggle during the coronavirus pandemic, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Tuesday at a virtual summit with his Finnish counterpart Sanna Marin



SEDITION CASES

Cong, govt engage in war of words in LS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 16: A war of words erupted between the Congress and the government in Lok Sabha Tuesday over registration of sedition cases with the opposition party alleging that the stringent law is being misused, drawing a sharp retort from Union Minister G Kishan Reddy who asked it not to lecture others on democracy.

During the Question Hour, Congress member from Telangana Anumula Revanth Reddy sought the number of cases registered under the offence of sedition across the country during the last 10 years, the conviction rate and the steps taken for their speedy trial.

The focus of his question was on climate activist Disha Ravi who was arrested in the farmer protest toolkit case earlier this year and later granted bail, and cases registered against farmer union leaders after the January 26 violence in the national capital.

Reddy, the Minister of State for Home, tabled a written response to the question in the House.

According to the data, 47 cases of sedition were registered in 2014; 30 in 2015; 35 in 2016; 51 in 2017; 70 in 2018 and 93 in 2019.

The highest 54 cases of sedition were registered in Assam between 2014 and 2019, 36 in Jharkhand, 31 in Haryana, 30 in Karnataka, 25 in Jammu and Kashmir and 17 in Uttar Pradesh. The minister also made it clear that "there is no direct involvement of the Centre in sedition cases". However, Anumula was not satisfied with the response. He said he had sought details for 10 years but the information was provided only from 2014-2019. Anumula said, "Giving half information is taking the house towards a wrong direction." He also asked whether there is a proposal to drop the "false charges" against farmer union leaders protesting against the Centre's three farm laws. In response, the minister said the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data is based on the information received from all the states. The minister added that after the Modi government took charge, it started presenting a separate data on the sedition charges.



Summer shock: Prices of veggies on the rise



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 16: With the onset of the Summer season, prices of potatoes and other vegetables have started shooting up. Pointed gourd, cucumber, ridged gourd and lady's finger have gone out of the reach of the common man across the country.

Prices of cauliflower, radish, brinjal, spinach, peas and tomatoes have surged in March. Prices of potatoes, which was expected to have a bumper yield this year, have also started increasing.

Noida vegetable seller Pappu Kumar said that now the potatoes entering the market have little moisture. As a result the traders have started storing the vegetable which has led to the increase in prices.

At the same time, new vegetables like lady's finger, cucumber and pointed gourd are yet to find a profitable market. The retail prices of these veggies have in-

creased to Rs 20 from Rs 10 per kg this month.

The consumer price index (CPI)-based retail inflation was at 4.06 per cent in January.

The rate of price rise in the food basket accelerated to 3.87 per cent in February, as against 1.89 per cent in the preceding month, according to the National Statistical Office (NSO).

A major reason for the rise in retail and wholesale inflation rates has been the rise in the prices of food and beverages.

The prices of pulses and edible oil was already on the rise and now the prices of vegetables have also started rising this month. Vegetable wholesale traders say that the consumption of vegetables has increased due to the fact that lentils are expensive, so prices of cabbage, tomato and other vegetables have started to rise, while the wholesale price of potatoes has increased marginally.

AAP TO PROTEST AT JANTAR MANTAR

INDO-ASIAN NEW SERVICE

New Delhi, March 16: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Tuesday announced that it will protest against the Centre's move to amend the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill-2021, at the Jantar Mantar Wednesday.

"AAP will hold a massive protest against (the) BJP's anti-Constitution

move of trying to curtail the powers of Delhi's elected govt by amending the GNCTD Act," the party said in a tweet.

Senior AAP MLA and chief spokesperson Saurav Bharadwaj told IANS that the party will oppose the Centre's unconditional and undemocratic move to derail the elected government of the national capital. "We will protest in and outside Parliament

against this Bill. AAP will expose the BJP's hidden agenda to rule in Delhi by giving more power to the Lieutenant-Governor.

If the Centre succeeds in its plan, the Delhi government will have to wait for the L-G's approval on every development issue and the elected Government will run on mercy his office for public service," he added. On Monday, the Centre tabled the new Bill in the

Lok Sabha, which is an amendment to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991, and also seeks to better define the role of the Council of Ministers and the L-G in Delhi.

The Bill gives discretionary powers to the L-G even in matters where the Legislative Assembly of Delhi is empowered to make laws.

NO COVID 'FEAR'



An artiste performs at a play during the Chamaria Satra Mahotsav at Boko in Kamrup district

PTI PHOTO

Suspended Zomato delivery boy lodges counter complaint

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, March 16: Nearly week after Bangalore-based model-turned-make-up artiste complained that a Zomato delivery boy had attacked her, the accused filed a counter complaint against her Monday, police said.

In his complaint filed at the Electronic City Police Station here, Kamaraj accused Hitesh Chandrani of abusing and slapping him, falsely accusing him of assault, and defaming him.

Chandrani had shared a video clip on Instagram and Twitter alleging that a Zomato delivery boy had hit her and run away after a heated argument with her.



She claimed that a delay in delivery of food was the reason for their argument.

Acting on her complaint, police acted against the food delivery boy and arrested him. After Chandrani's video went viral, Zomato apologised to her for the incident and promised necessary action.

However, the issue took a local vs outsider angle with a section of Kannada activists siding with Kamaraj, who had not only lost his job but also in police custody.

He added that she had hit him with "slippers".

"After I arrived at the door of her apartment, I gave her food and I was expecting her to pay me (as she chose cash as payment mode)," Kamaraj said, adding that he also apologised for delay in delivery due to traffic and bad roads but Chandrani was very rude to him. Police have registered a case and are investigating.

India saw air quality improve in 2020: Report

IN 2020, AROUND 84 % OF ALL MONITORED COUNTRIES OBSERVED AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS, LARGELY DUE TO GLOBAL MEASURES TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 16: All Indian cities showed air quality improvements in 2020 owing to the Covid-19 impact compared to 2018, while 63 per cent saw improvements compared to 2019, said the 2020 World Air Quality Report Tuesday that is based on PM2.5

data from 106 countries.

Air quality improvements across major cities in 2020 compared to 2019 include Beijing (minus 11 per cent) Chicago (minus 13 per cent), Delhi (minus 15 per cent), London (minus 16 per cent), Paris (minus 17 per cent) and Seoul (minus 16 per cent). However, India continues to feature prominently at the top of the most polluted cities ranking, with 22 of the top 30 most polluted cities globally. The report by IQAir said in 2020, 86 per cent of the cities in China experienced cleaner air than the previous year.

Despite this, Chinese residents are still exposed to PM2.5 levels more than three times the World Health Organization (WHO) annual guidelines. Hotan in northwestern China ranks as the world's most polluted city, largely due to sandstorms ex-



acerbated by climate change.

Only 24 out of 106 monitored countries met the WHO annual guidelines for PM2.5 in 2020.

The report says climate change continues to affect air quality. The year 2020 is tied with 2016 as the hottest year on record. Wildfires

and sandstorms fueled by the warming climate led to extremely high pollution levels in California, South America, Siberia and Australia.

South Asia is the most polluted region of the world with Bangladesh, India and Pakistan sharing 42 of the 50 most polluted cities worldwide.

In 2020, about half of all European cities exceed the WHO's target for annual PM2.5 pollution. The highest levels of PM2.5 pollution was found in Eastern and Southern Europe, with Bosnia Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Bulgaria taking the lead.

"The year 2020 brought an unexpected dip in air pollution. In 2021, we will likely see an increase in air pollution due to human activity, again," said Frank Hammes, CEO of IQAir.

"Many parts of the world experienced unprecedented, but short-lived, improvements in air quality in 2020, as restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic caused a steep drop in fossil fuel consumption," said Lauri Myllyvirta, lead analyst at the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), who also contributed to the report.



It's not just Canada that is experiencing turbulence. The entire globe is undertaking the largest mass vaccination campaign in its history with completely new supply chains

BAHRAIN PRINCE TO SUMMIT EVEREST

A mountaineering expedition team consisting of Bahrain's Prince Sheikh Mohamed Hamad Mohamed Al Khalifa arrived in Nepal to summit Mt Everest this spring season



of the day quote

Ultimately, we must drive out violence against women and girls and make every part of the criminal justice system work to better protect and defend them

BORIS JOHNSON | PRIME MINISTER OF THE UK

The 10-year long Syrian conflict has brought untold suffering to the Syrian people. There is an urgent need to increase humanitarian assistance to all Syrians throughout the country without discrimination, politicisation, and any preconditions

T S TIRUMURTI | INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN

It's a historic event for Bangladesh as five heads of state and government never (without any summit) visited here within a time span of 10 days

AK ABDUL MOMEN | FOREIGN MINISTER, BANGLADESH

SHORT TAKES

Bolsonaro names 4th Health Min

Sao Paulo: With COVID-19 still raging in Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro picked his fourth health minister since the pandemic began, this time the head of the country's cardiology society who in the past has spoken favorably of the country's conservative leader.

Houthis attack Saudi airbase

Sanaa: Yemen's Houthi militia said they launched a new attack Tuesday at the King Khalid Airbase in Saudi Arabia's Khamis Mushait city.

Israel to allow all flights

Tel Aviv: Starting Tuesday, flights to Israel will be allowed from all destinations, following a decision by the cabinet to enable nationals to arrive ahead of the March 23 general elections.

Maldives approves Sinopharm vax

Male: The Covid-19 vaccine developed by China's Sinopharm has been approved for emergency use in the Maldives, the Maldives Food and Drug Administration (MFDA) announced at a press conference Monday.

FOREIGNERS RETURN ONLY IF JABBED WITH CHINESE VAX: CHINA

The Chinese Embassy notice did not specify how Indians can access the Chinese-made vaccines in India as they are not available here

AGENCIES

Beijing/New Delhi, March 16: China has made it mandatory for people coming from India and 19 other nations to get Chinese-made COVID-19 vaccines if they want to travel to this country.

For the purpose of resuming people-to-people exchanges in an orderly manner, starting from 15 March, 2021, the Chinese Embassies and Consulates in India will provide the persons having taken Chinese-made COVID-19 vaccine and holding the Certificates of Vaccination, a notice posted on the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi said.

The announcement makes little difference for thousands of Indian students besides professionals working in China and their family members who are stuck in India awaiting Beijing to permit their return as there are no Chinese vaccines available in India.

The Chinese Embassy notice did not specify how Indians can access the Chinese-made vaccines in India as they are not available in the country.

Over 23,000 Indian students, most of them medical students, besides hundreds of professionals working in China are stuck in India since last year due to coronavirus travel restrictions.

Despite repeated representations from the Indian embassy and appeals by the students, China is yet to respond positively.

State-run Global Times reported that such notices were put up by Chinese embassies in 20 countries.

Asked about the rationale of the regulation to have Chinese vaccines in countries like India where China made vaccines are not available, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing here Tuesday that many



China approves 4th COVID vax

TAIPEI: China has approved a new COVID-19 vaccine for emergency use, one that was developed by the head of its Center for Disease Control, adding to its arsenal. Gao Fu, the head of China's CDC, led the development of a protein subunit vaccine that was approved by regulators last week for emergency use.

countries have floated the idea of linking vaccination status with opening up international travels.

Our proposal to facilitate the travel of those who have been inoculated with Chinese vaccines is made after thoroughly considering the safety and efficacy of Chinese vaccines, he said.

We believe this is a meaningful exploration of facilitating international travel once mass vaccination has been achieved. It is not linked to the recognition of Chinese vaccines, he said.

UK peers debate 'freedoms' in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, March 16: Peers in Britain's House of Lords held a debate on the issue of freedoms of non-governmental organisations, academics and other groups in India and called on Prime Minister Boris Johnson to take up the issues directly with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi during his visit to New Delhi next month.

The India Restrictions on Freedom debate in the Upper House of the Parliament was called by crossbench peer Lord Richard Harries Monday and, as is customary, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) minister Lord Zac Goldsmith responded on behalf of the government.

He pointed to a very deep and broad relationship with the world's largest democracy, with which the UK's trade and investment partnership is thriving and collabora-



tion on defence and security mean the two countries a force for good in the world.

Our approach has always been to raise any concerns directly with the Indian government. We will continue to engage India on the full range of human rights matters and raise our concerns where we have them — as we do — including at ministerial level, said Lord Goldsmith.

The Prime Minister will visit India shortly. That will be an opportunity to discuss a very wide range of bilateral and multilateral issues directly with the Indian government. Of course, where we have specific concerns, the Prime Minister will raise them directly with the government of India, as you would expect of a close friend and partner, he said.

The Lords debate comes a week

They called on Prime Minister Boris Johnson to take up the issues directly with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi during his visit to New Delhi next month

after a debate in a House of Commons committee room on the issue of farmers' protests in India over agricultural reforms.

India has firmly told Britain that the country's MPs should refrain from practising vote bank politics by misrepresenting events, especially in relation to another fellow democracy. The Indian government took strong exception over the Commons debate as gross interference in the politics of another democratic country.

India has also consistently asserted that protests by farmers must be seen in the context of India's democratic ethos and polity.

PURPLE RAIN



Staffs of teamLab wearing swimsuits walk inside digital artwork combined with light, water and sound during a demonstration of TikTok teamLab Reconnect, digital artwork combined with sauna, ahead of its opening to the public this month in Tokyo, Japan

Pakistan arrests 11 Indian fishermen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, March 16: Pakistan authorities said Tuesday that they have apprehended 11 Indian fishermen and confiscated their two boats for allegedly straying into the country's territorial waters.

"After initial investigation, the apprehended fishermen were handed over to Docks Police Karachi for further legal formalities," the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) said in a statement.

It said two Indian fishing boats along with 11 crew members were located in eastern maritime exclusive economic zone of Pakistan during routine surveillance.

The PMSA ships, aircraft and fast boats regularly undertake patrolling and monitoring of the maritime zone because in the recent past, a number of unwarranted intrusions into Pakistani waters have been observed, it said.

EU regulator 'convinced' Astra benefit outweighs risk

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brussels, March 16: With coronavirus cases rising in many places, governments faced the grimmest of dilemmas Tuesday: push on with a vaccine that is known to save lives or suspend use of AstraZeneca over reports of dangerous blood clots in a few recipients, even as the European regulator said there was "no indication" the shot was responsible.

It has created a jagged divide across the globe, forcing politicians to assess the health risks of halting the shots at a time when many countries, especially in Europe, are already struggling to overcome logistical hurdles and vaccine hesitancy among their populations.

Sweden was the latest to join a swelling group of European Union nations choosing caution over speed, even as the head of the European Medicines Agency said the agency



is "firmly convinced" that the benefits of the AstraZeneca shot outweigh the risks.

Emer Cooke noted Tuesday that thousands of people across the EU develop thromboses every year for a variety of reasons and that there were no reports of increased blood clots in the clinical studies of the AstraZeneca vaccine. Still, experts would undertake a "very rigorous analysis" and make a recommendation Thursday, she said.

Europe has the luxury to be able to pick from several vaccine candidates — but the decision is still not an easy one on the continent,

where the virus is again surging and where the vaccination campaign has repeatedly stumbled.

The choice may be even more fraught elsewhere because many countries are relying heavily on AstraZeneca, which is cheaper and easier to handle than some other shots. The vaccine has so far played a huge role in the global initiative to ensure vaccines get to poorer countries known as COVAX.

The difficulty of the decision was clear in Thailand, the first country outside Europe to temporarily suspend use of the AstraZeneca vaccine, only to recant on Tuesday — when its prime minister received a dose.

Many other countries in Asia have likewise shrugged off concerns, though Indonesia halted use of the shot this week, saying it would wait for a World Health Organization report on the issue.

N Korea warns US not to 'cause a stink'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, March 16: In North Korea's first comments directed at the Biden administration, Kim Jong Un's powerful sister Tuesday warned the United States to "refrain from causing a stink" if it wants to "sleep in peace" for the next four years.

Kim Yo Jong's statement was issued as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin arrived in Asia to talk with US allies Japan and South Korea about North Korea and other regional issues. They have meetings in Tokyo Tuesday before speaking to officials in Seoul Wednesday.

"We take this opportunity to warn the new US administration trying hard to give off (gun) powder smell in our land," she said. "If it wants to sleep in peace for coming



four years, it had better refrain from causing a stink at its first step."

Kim Yo Jong, a senior official who handles inter-Korean affairs, also criticized the U.S. and South Korea for holding military exercises. She also said the North would consider abandoning a 2018 bilateral agreement on reducing military tensions and abolish a decades-old ruling party unit tasked to handle inter-Korean relations if it no longer had to cooperate with the South.

New piece of Dead Sea Scrolls jigsaw discovered after 60 years

The scroll is one of a trove of ancient Jewish texts called the Dead Sea Scrolls that were found in 1947 by local Bedouin in the caves of Qumran

REUTERS

Jerusalem, March 16: Israeli archaeologists racing against treasure hunters to search caves near the Dead Sea have discovered a trove of artefacts, including fragments of a biblical text, the like of which has not been seen for decades.

The finds, preserved by the hot, dry air of the Judean desert, also include the 6,000-year-old partly mummified skeleton of a child, and a perfectly intact, finely woven basket dating back 10,500 years that the Israel Antiquities Authority said on Tuesday was likely to be the oldest in the world.

The Authority has overseen a survey of more than 100 km of cliffs and the caves carved or eroded into

them. The fragments of parchment, about 2,000 years old, bear biblical verse, written in Greek, and match a scroll discovered about 60 years ago called the "Book of the 12 Minor Prophets".

That scroll is one of a trove of ancient Jewish texts called the Dead Sea Scrolls that were found in 1947 by local Bedouin in the caves of Qumran, about 20 km east of Jerusalem.

The collection, which has come to include texts discovered elsewhere along the western shore of the Dead Sea, provided a window into Jewish society and religion before and after the time of Jesus.

A flurry of exploration followed their discovery but the search eventually petered out — until recently,



when new pieces of scrolls and parchment appeared on the black market. The likelihood that antiquities

robbers had found a new trove spurred the Authority into action. Since 2017, crews have been ab-

seiling down marl and limestone cliffs and using drones to map hundreds of caves and hollows.

Many were filled with centuries of sand and debris, and about a

dozen thought to be likely hiding places were excavated fully.

The new fragments of manuscript were found in the "Cave of Horror", which years ago yielded up the 1,900-year-old skeletons of Jewish rebels who had fought against the Roman Empire.

"These are new pieces of the puzzle and we can add them to our greater picture of the period and of the text," said Oren Ableman of the Antiquities Authority's Dead Sea Scrolls Unit.

"Even though these pieces are small, they did give us some new information that we did not know before." The fragments allowed the reconstruction of 11 lines of text, and provided insight into the parchment the text is written on.



Overall, inflation has remained low in the last seven years. But in some items, there was a rise in prices due to supply constraints because of COVID-19 and a rise in demand
ANURAG SINGH THAKUR | MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE

NEWS CORP INKS AUSTRALIA FACEBOOK DEAL

Rupert Murdoch's News Corp reached a content-supply deal with Facebook Inc in Australia, the companies said on Tuesday, a step toward settling a dispute that saw the social media giant briefly shut down thousands of pages in the country



of the day quote

The government always makes efforts to revive public sector undertakings that can be revived. The effort always is to utilise full capacity of PSUs

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR | UNION MINISTER FOR HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

The economic attractiveness of electric vehicles has been on the rise with respect to the ICE engine due to falling battery prices and rising cost of ICE engine vehicles with respect to increase in regulations

GIRISH WAGH | PRESIDENT, COMMERCIAL VEHICLE BUSINESS UNIT, TATA MOTORS

The balance of trade in alcoholic beverages is highly skewed in favour of the UK and any reduction in BCD will further worsen it

VINOD GIRI | CIABC DIRECTOR GENERAL

Cabinet approves setting up DFI

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 16: The Union Cabinet Tuesday approved a bill to set up a Development Finance Institution (DFI) to generate funds for investment in the infrastructure sector, as the government moves to increase spending on roads, ports and energy.

The proposed legislation will give effect to the Budget announcement made by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman February 1. The government has proposed ₹20,000 crore to capitalise the institution.

"The Cabinet has cleared this Bill, through which we will have an institution and institutional arrangement, which will help in increasing long term funds," she said after the meeting of the Cabinet.

The proposed DFI will have 50 per cent non-official directors, Sitharaman added. In her Budget 2019-20 speech, Sitharaman had proposed a study for setting up DFIs for promoting infrastructure funding. About 7,000 projects have been identified under the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) with a projected investment of a whopping ₹111 lakh crore during 2020-25.

"During Budget, we had mentioned that we will be setting up a national bank to fund infrastructure and developmental activities. Past

attempts to have alternative investment funds were taken up, but for various reasons, we ended up with no bank which could take up long-term risk (which is very high) and fund development," said Sitharaman.

She said DFI will start with 100% government ownership and will gradually be brought down to 26%.

"I expect the institution to raise up to ₹3 trillion in the next few years," Sitharaman told reporters after a Cabinet meeting.

The DFI would seek

to raise funds from global pension and insurance sectors for investment in new projects, carrying certain tax benefits, she added.

In the last five years, India has added more than 45,000 km of national highways to link major industrial hubs, while doubling capacity at ports and adding nearly 100 GW of power generation capacity for a total of 374 GW.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FINANCE INSTITUTION

THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROPOSED ₹20,000 CRORE TO CAPITALISE THE INSTITUTION

DFI WILL START WITH 100% GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP AND WILL GRADUALLY BE BROUGHT DOWN TO 26%

THE DFI WOULD SEEK TO RAISE FUNDS FROM GLOBAL PENSION AND INSURANCE SECTORS FOR INVESTMENT IN NEW PROJECTS



IOC plans to sell hydrogen plants

To begin with, the company will sell its hydrogen generating unit at its Gujarat refinery and based on the experience, may take up units at other refineries

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 16: State-run Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) plans to sell hydrogen generating plants at its oil refineries to monetise non-core assets and leverage operational efficiencies by bringing in domain experts, its chairman Shrikant Madhav Vaidya said Tuesday.

To begin with, the company will sell its hydrogen generating unit at its Gujarat refinery and based on the experience, may take up units at other refineries, he said.

The sale is part of the asset monetisation agenda of the government aimed at generating revenue from selling to private investors unutilised or part utilised assets.

"These (hydrogen generating units) are already operating units. Now we are trying to leverage the efficiency of operations by handing it over to the licensor of the unit," he said.

Hydrogen is mostly produced from natural gas and naphtha and is used in the processing of intermediate oil products and for the removal of sulphur from refined fuels to meet emission standards.

The sale consideration will be the asset value and the operation and maintenance (O&M) charge that the new operator will charge from IOC, Vaidya said.

"These units are located within the refinery complex and I will be the only buyer, consumer (of hydrogen)," he said.

IOC will sell 100 per cent stake in the 70,000 tonnes per annum hydrogen generating unit at Gujarat refinery.

"The idea is to get somebody who can operate the unit better. All other units of the refinery are my core business but hydrogen is a utility," he said.

The government has identified assets across sectors that can be monetised for as much as ₹2.5 lakh crore.



SHORT TAKES

RBI imposes ₹2cr penalty on SBI

Mumbai: Reserve Bank of India Tuesday imposed a penalty of ₹2 crore on State Bank of India (SBI) for contravention of norms, including specific directions to the lender on remuneration to its employees in the form of commission. The penalty has been imposed for contravention of certain sections of Banking Regulation Act and its specific directions of RBI issued to the bank on payment of remuneration to employees in the form of commission.

TCS launches new platform

New Delhi: India's largest IT services company Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Tuesday announced its 'Automated Vulnerability Remediation platform' aimed at helping enterprises to efficiently mitigate cyber risks. The SaaS-based platform would enable enterprises to safeguard themselves from malicious attacks by identifying and prioritising vulnerabilities in their software libraries and proactively fixing them. "The Automated Vulnerability Remediation platform helps enterprises build and execute a contextual, risk-focused and effective vulnerability management programme, helping them decide on the right remediation approach across assets, across common vulnerabilities and patching," TCS release said.

L&T bags orders across segments

New Delhi: Infrastructure company Larsen & Toubro (L&T) Tuesday said it has received multiple orders across its business segments in the domestic market. The company did not provide the value of the contracts but said the orders fall under the "significant" category, which ranges between ₹1,000 crore and ₹2,500 crore according to the classification of contracts.

PhonePe cements position

Mumbai: PhonePe processed the most transactions in the last three months to continue as India's top Unified Payments Interface (UPI) app and WhatsApp, the messaging platform used by millions in India, failed to live up to expectations that it will grow rapidly, data showed. In February, WhatsApp processed 0.55 million transactions amounting to ₹32.41 crore.

MG launches new ZS EV in City



Officials of MG Motor and other dignitaries, including Odia actors Sabyasachi Mishra and Archita Sahu, at the launch of MG ZS EV in the City, Tuesday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 16: MG Motor India Tuesday launched the new ZS EV 2021 in the capital city at ₹22.99 lakh (ex-showroom, Bhubaneswar). The updated version comes with a best-in-class 44.5kWh hi-tech battery and has a certified range of 419 km.

Having expanded the charging ecosystem across the country with its partners, the ZS EV 2021 is now available for bookings in 31 cities.

The MG ZS EV comes with 143PS power and 350Nm torque and can reach from 0 to 100km/h in 8.5 seconds. New model is also India's first pure electric internet SUV. It is available in two variants Excite

& Exclusive. Abinash Samal, Managing Director, MG Bhubaneswar, said, "We are proud to introduce the evolution of the ZS EV in a short span of a year, reiterating our commitment to the EV space. To extend our customers a superior ownership experience, we are building robust charging infrastructure in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack along with our ecosystem partners."

The Chairman of Empre Group Gangadhar Samal and Odia film actors Sabyasachi Mishra and Archita were also present.

MGZSEV2021 is covered under MG eShield, wherein the automaker provides a free-of-charge 5-year warranty for unlimited KMs, 8yrs/1.5 lakh KM warranty on the battery pack system, round-the-clock Road side Assistance (RSA) for 5 years, and 5Labour-free Services.

India's diesel sales rise 7.4%

REUTERS

New Delhi, March 16: Indian state fuel retailers' diesel sales rose 7.4% to 2.84 million tonnes in the first fortnight of March from a year earlier, preliminary industry data showed Tuesday.

This is the first annual rise in gasoil sales in the country since October. Fuel sales in India took a hit in March last year as the government imposed a nationwide

lockdown to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus.

India's economy returned to growth in the three months to December and the recovery is expected to gather pace as consumers and investors shake off the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The rise in gasoil sales, which account for about two-fifths of the country's overall fuel demand, comes despite record-high local retail prices and points to rising industrial

production in the country. State companies Indian Oil Corp, Hindustan Petroleum Corp and Bharat Petroleum own about 90% of India's retail fuel outlets.

State retailers sold 3.3% less cooking gas in the first half of March than a year ago to 1.01 million tonnes as a significant reduction in subsidies curtailed demand for the fuel, the data showed.

Jet fuel sales were down 36.5% to 204,000 tonnes.

SC shuts back-door arrangement for defaulting promoters

The impact of this judgment could be felt in many IBC cases where a resolution plan falls through and a company ends up in liquidation

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 16: Defaulting promoters, who are barred from a resolution plan under Section 29A of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), cannot use the scheme of arrangement and compromise to gain control of a company while it is in liquidation, the Supreme Court said Monday.

As such, the scheme of arrangement under Section 230 of the Companies Act does not stop anybody from proposing a plan. However, if this provision is used to revive a company which is facing liquidation under IBC, the rules of 29A will apply in keeping with the intent of the law, the top court clarified.

Specifically in this case, the SC order barred promoters of Gujarat NRE Coke, a defaulting company, from proposing a revival plan in the event of liquidation under IBC. "The stages of submitting a res-



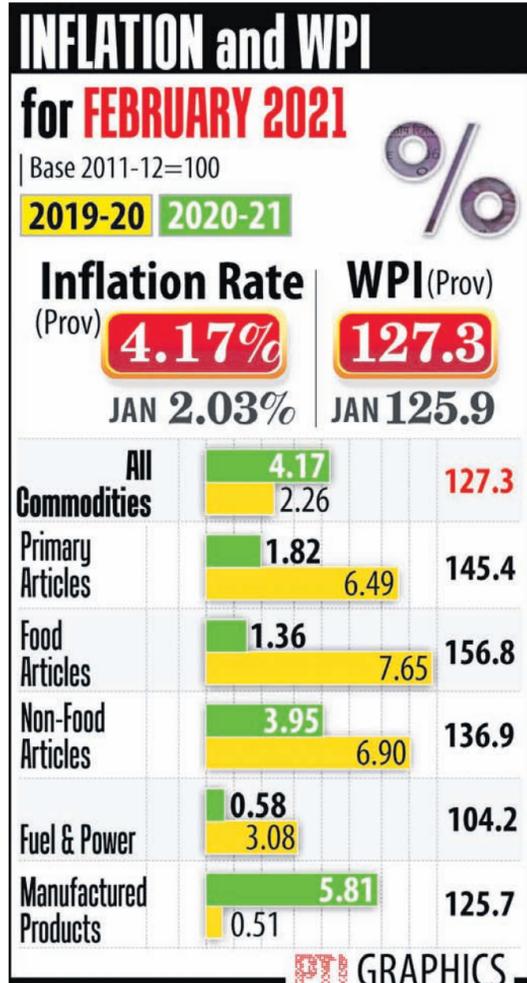
olution plan, selling assets of a company in liquidation and selling the company as a going concern during liquidation, all indicate that the promoter or those in the management of the company must not be allowed a back-door entry in the company... Proposing a scheme of compromise or arrangement under Section 230 of the Act of 2013, while the company is undergoing liquidation under the provisions of the IBC lies in a similar continuum," the

SC judgment by bench comprising Justices Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud and MR Shah said.

The court was hearing the petition of Gujarat NRE Coke promoter Arun Kumar Jagatramka, who challenged the provision 2B introduced by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI). The provision says that that parties ineligible to propose a resolution plan under the IBC cannot be a party to a compromise or arrangement.

"Any other interpretation would have left a gaping hole in the scheme of IBC and defeated the very object of Section 29A bar introduced both for resolution and liquidation processes under the IBC," said Misha (who only uses her first name), Partner at Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co.

Legal experts said the latest order had settled the two conflicting positions of IBC, ensuring revival of the corporate debtor versus protecting the cor-



Rlys will never be privatised: Piyush Goyal

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 16: Railways Minister Piyush Goyal Tuesday asserted that Indian Railways will never be privatised but said private investment should be encouraged for more efficient functioning.

Replying to a discussion on Demands for Grants for Railways, Goyal said there has been no death of any passenger due to a rail accident in two years and the railways has been putting enormous focus on passenger safety.

He said the country can progress towards high growth and create more employment opportunities only when the public and private sectors work together.

"Indian Railways will never be privatised. It is a property of every Indian and will remain so," the minister said, adding that it will remain with the government of India. Goyal said the Modi government has hiked investment in railways to ₹2.15 lakh crore in 2021-22 fiscal, from ₹1.5 lakh crore in 2019-20 fiscal.

"We are focusing on passenger safety. I am happy to say that there has been no passenger death in past two years. The last death due to train accident happened in March 2019," the minister said.

"People criticised lockdown, but had it not been done, continuation of train services would have spread Covid-19 across the country," added Goyal.

BIZBUZZ RETAILERS SEE FULL RECOVERY

NEW DELHI: The quantum of de-growth in Retail sales has reduced as most segments in it have started to show significant improvement. The 13th edition of the Retail Business Survey by the Retailers Association of India (RAI) indicates sales in February 2021 were at -7 per cent of last year's sales on a Y-o-Y comparison and at -18 per cent in Q3FY21 on a Y-o-Y comparison. Consumer Durables & Quick Service Restaurants (QSR) categories have shown positive growth of 15 per cent and 18 per cent (Y-o-Y) respectively in the month of February 2021. Categories like Footwear, Beauty, Wellness & Personal Care, Sports Goods and Food & Grocery are showing steady month-on-month recovery on a Y-o-Y comparison, signalling growth from the month of March 2021.



Tata Motors to roll out small e-vehicles

NEW DELHI: After buses and passenger cars, automobile giant Tata Motors might soon roll-out an electric variant of its small commercial vehicle. In a conversation with IANS, Girish Wagh, President, Commercial Vehicle Business Unit of Tata Motors said the company has participated in 'FAME Phase I' scheme for electrification of buses. Centre had introduced the 'Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid & Electric Vehicles in India' (FAME India) scheme to promote the manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology. "We have supplied more than 200 buses and cumulatively they have now covered more than seven and a half million kilometres, which has given us a very good experience. We are also keeping track of other segments to see what the customers are looking for, where it makes economic sense and therefore we are engaging with them, especially in the E-commerce sector to understand their needs," Wagh said.



English wicketkeeper-batsman nullifies Kohli's effort propelling his side to 8-wicket win over India as visitors take 2-1 lead in 5-T20I series

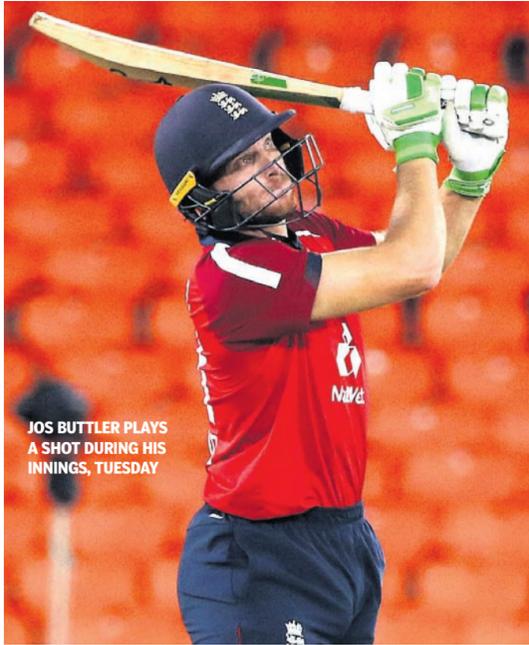
BUTTLER LIFTS ENGLAND



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, March 16: Virat Kohli's (77 n o, 46b, 8x4, 4x6) brilliance wasn't good enough to paper over an otherwise inept Indian batting performance as England humbled the hosts by eight wickets in the third T20I to take a 2-1 lead in the five-match series here, Tuesday.

Eoin Morgan unleashed his fast bowlers Mark Wood (3/31) and Chris Jordan (2/35) to restrict the hosts to 156/6, which the visitors surpassed easily in 18.2 overs, riding on Jos Buttler's unbeaten 83 off 52 balls (5x4, 4x6). Buttler was ably supported by Jonny Bairstow (40 n o, 28b,



JOS BUTTLER PLAYS A SHOT DURING HIS INNINGS, TUESDAY

5x4) as the duo added an unbeaten 77 runs to take the visitors home.

Skipper Kohli had mistakenly said at the toss that his team led 2-1 but Morgan, in his 100th T20I appearance, made sure that opposite happened. Buttler showed his mastery in white ball format after Kohli single-handedly carried the team to a reasonable score.

More than the Buttler's blade, the difference between two sides was the sheer pace generated by England pacers after Morgan won another good toss. Wood rocked the Indian

top order during the Powerplay overs and even Kohli's magnificence wasn't good enough to save the night for the 'Men in Blue'.

Save Kohli, other Indian batters found it difficult to put bat to ball as pace and bounce off the pitch worked wonders for English speed merchants. The Indian skipper with his near perfect technique fought fire with fire, playing pull shots and the lofted hits, shuffling towards leg stump to make room for himself.

His partnership with Hardik Pandya (17) fetched 70 runs off just

5.3 overs but it was all about Kohli for the better part as the Baroda all-rounder was struggling to time the ball. But others were not so lucky with Wood making life miserable for them.

KL Rahul (0) was once again in the midst of a forgettable patch where all the good deliveries were being earmarked for him. Wood bowled one at 91 mph, that pitched on length and nipped back enough to breach through the opener's defence before he could bring his bat down.

Rohit Sharma (15) was playing his first game of the series but Wood's well directed bouncer got him as he was holed out in the deep.

Ishan Kishan (4), after a dream debut, got a hostile welcome from Wood, who managed to soften the Jharkhand dasher. The result was Jordan extracting extra bounce and the ill-timed pull shot bringing Kishan's downfall as the hosts looked in complete disarray.

BRIEF SCORES: India 156/6 (Virat Kohli 77 n o, Rishabh Pant 25, Hardik Pandya 17; Mark Wood 3/31, Chris Jordan 2/35) lost to England 158/2 (Jos Buttler 83 n o, Jonny Bairstow 40 n o; Washington Sundar 1/26, Yuzvendra Chahal 1/41) by 8 wickets.



MARK WOOD

Pride on line for eves



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, March 16: The series already out of their grasp, the Indian women cricketers, who are struggling to put together a cohesive team show, will have pride at stake when they clash with South Africa women in the fifth and final ODI here, Wednesday.

Barring the convincing nine-wicket win in the second match, the Indian women have barely fired in unison while the South Africans, who have already clinched the series 3-1, have excelled as a team.

To be fair to the home side players, they were a bit rusty as they are playing their first international series after more than a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic while South Africa recently beat Pakistan 3-0 at home.

The Indian team also missed the flair of young Shafali Verma at the top of the order and the experience of Shikha Pandey in bowling department.

Indian spinners, save Rajeshwari

Gayakwad (5 wickets from 4 matches), were a big let down on the slow tracks and that has played a big part in India's series loss when the South Africans chased down 249 and 267 in the third and fourth matches.

Senior leg-spinner Poonam Yadav could not get a single batter out in the four matches she has played so far. It remains to be seen if she keeps her place in the playing XI Wednesday.

Veteran pacer Jhulan Goswami continued to be the pick of Indian bowlers as she topped the bowling charts with eight wickets from the three matches she has played but she did not get much support from her colleagues except for spinner Gayakwad. Goswami did not play in the fourth match.

Top-order batter Punam Raut has been in sensational form with scores of 10, 62 not out, 77 and 104 not out in the four games. The 31-year-old top run getter among the Indians would like to continue from where she left in the fourth match

where she hit an unbeaten century, though, in a losing cause.

Captain Mithali Raj and her deputy Harmapreet Kaur were the other two consistent batters while star opener Smriti Mandhana shone only in the second match.

Opener Jemimah Rodrigues was also disappointing and she was left out of the fourth match after scores of 1, 9 and 0. Raj, who became the first Indian woman cricketer and second internationally to reach 10,000 runs during the series, had scores of 50, 36 and 45 in the three innings she has played so far. She did not bat in the second match.

The same is for Kaur who had scores of 40, 36, 54. She also did not bat in the second match. After smashing a match-winning 80 not out in the second match, Mandhana has not done much in the other three matches with scores of 14, 25 and 10. With pressure off in the inconsequential match, the 24-year-old left hander is due for a big innings.

Jota helps Reds beat Wolves

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wolverhampton (UK), March 16: Diogo Jota scored the winner against his former club as Liverpool beat Wolverhampton 1-0 in an English Premier League match that ended with Wolves goalkeeper Rui Patricio being carried off with a head injury.

Jota, who spent three years at Wolves before joining Liverpool in September, drove in a low, first-time shot that squirmed into the corner in the second minute of first-half stoppage time. Patricio got a hand to the ball but failed to keep it out at his near post.

The goalkeeper didn't finish the game after being struck on the head

in the 87th minute by the knee of teammate Conor Coady, who was running back into his area.

Coady looked particularly concerned as medical staff attended to Patricio with caution for 10 minutes before he was taken off on a stretcher.

Wolves manager Nuno Espirito Santo gave a positive update on Patricio's condition after the game, saying: "He's OK. He is conscious, he remembers what happened, he is aware. He is OK."

In November, Wolves striker Raul Jimenez fractured his skull in a clash of heads during a league match at Arsenal. Jimenez was in the empty stands at Molineux Monday.

"Football becomes irrelevant when someone is down that long and the doctors have to come on," Liverpool defender Andrew Robertson said of Patricio.

"I know how it can affect the lads and that's two (incidents) they've had this season. I hope to see him in front of the goals again soon because he's a fantastic goal-keeper."

It was only Liverpool's second win in its last eight league games of a title defense that has imploded in the second half of the season.

The Reds climbed two places to sixth, but was still five points behind fourth-placed Chelsea with nine games remaining in the race for Champions League qualification. Chelsea along with three other teams in the race for the top four — Everton, West Ham and Tottenham — all failed to win over the weekend.

Aided by the return of Jota to spark the attack and Fabinho in the holding midfield role, there are small signs of a revival for the Reds, who also beat Leipzig last midweek to reach the Champions League quarterfinals and have kept two straight clean sheets.

But there was little between Liverpool and Wolves in a low-quality match. "Three dirty points," Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said. "We are completely fine with that."

Jota, who cost Liverpool about USD 52 million, was playing his fourth straight game since returning from three months out with a knee injury. He again stepped in place of Roberto Firmino, who is still out injured.

"It's a special game, I worked here for over three years," Jota said. "I know almost everyone in that dressing room. I just wish the fans could be here to make it even more special."

Messi masterclass outclasses Huesca

Argentine talisman ties Xavi's record as Barcelona cut Atletico Madrid's lead in La Liga standings with a comprehensive victory

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, March 16: Lionel Messi scored twice as he tied Xavi Hernandez's record of most appearances for Barcelona, putting them within four points of the Spanish league lead after beating last-placed Huesca 4-1.

For his 767th match, Messi was honored by Barcelona with a large image behind one of the goals showing him embracing Xavi as the players looked forward and pointed upward. The banner included the words '767 matches' and 'touching the sky'.

"It's incredible," Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman said. "His impact on this team is enormous. It's amazing what he has done for this club up until now."

Antoine Griezmann and Oscar Mingueza also scored at the Camp Nou Stadium as the Catalan club won their fourth straight league match to increase the pressure on leader Atletico Madrid.

Atletico, seeking their first league title since 2014, had a comfortable lead until recently, having won only two of their last six league games. They were held to 0-0 at Getafe Saturday. Diego Simeone's team will visit Barcelona in May.

"We always said we wouldn't give up," Barcelona midfielder Pedri Gonzalez said. "We have a good squad that can keep fighting for this title and we have momentum on our side."

Barcelona, coming off elimination by Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League last 16, was in control from the start Monday.

Messi scored in each half for his 130th double in the league. He



- 767** Appearances by Messi for Barcelona, joint most with club great and former teammate Xavi Hernandez
- 21** Goals for Messi this season in La Liga, most in the league, followed by his former teammate and friend Luis Suarez (18) of Atletico
- 13** No. of seasons in succession where Messi reach 20-goal mark in a single season of La Liga
- 130** No. of braces (two goals in a match) for Messi in the Spanish League, including the double against Huesca Monday
- 660** Goals for Messi for Barcelona, 428 more than second-placed Cesar Rodriguez (232)

opened the scoring with a shot into the top corner after a nifty one-touch to clear a defender just outside the area in the 13th minute, then closed the scoring with another

shot from outside the area in the 90th.

The Argentine playmaker has 21 league goals, three more than Atletico's Luis Suarez at the top of

the scoring list.

Barcelona kept pressing and nearly added to the lead when Jordi Alba hit the crossbar in the 33rd, and a couple of minutes later Griezmann added his goal with a well-struck curling shot into the top corner past Huesca goalkeeper Alvaro Fernandez.

Huesca pulled one back through a penalty kick earned after a breakaway in first-half stoppage time, converted by forward Rafa Mir. Then Mingueza scored his first goal for Barcelona with a header off a cross by Messi in the 53rd. Huesca, who have won only one of their last six matches, stayed four points from safety.

Sindhu and Co. chase elusive title at All England Championships

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, March 16: World Champion PV Sindhu will look to shrug off her demoralising Swiss Open final defeat and take advantage of a depleted field when she spearheads India's challenge at the prestigious All England Open Badminton Championships, beginning here Wednesday.

Sindhu looked a pale shadow of herself in her defeat against Carolina Marin, going down without much fight as she struggled to contain errors.

Carolina, the three-time World Champion from Spain, though has

pulled out of the prestigious tournament due to an injury, taking some shine off of the event.

Also missing in action will be the Chinese, Koreans and Chinese Taipei shuttlers, who decided not to compete in the Super 1000 event as it is not part of the Tokyo Olympic qualification period.

It affects the quality of the competition but also provides the 19-member Indian contingent an opportunity to go deep in the draw and recapture the trophy which has been won by just two Indians so far — the legendary Prakash Padukone (1980) and P Gopichand (2001).

While former World No.1 Saina



Nehwal had a runner-up finish in 2015. Sindhu's best finish was a semi-final in 2018 but none of the other Indian shuttlers have been able to go deep in the tournament till now.

Olympic silver medalist Sindhu will again be one of the top contenders but Saina is nowhere near her best with just two quarterfinal finishes to show in the last two years.

Among other Indians, former No.1 Kidambi Srikanth and young men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, currently ranked 10 in the world, had a good run in Swiss Open and will look to put their best foot forward.

Fifth seed Sindhu will kick off her

campaign with a clash against Malaysia's Soniia Cheah and is likely to face Japan's Akane Yamaguchi in the quarterfinals, provided she wins her initial rounds.

London Olympics bronze medalist Saina has drawn in-form seventh seed Mia Blichfeldt of Denmark in her first round and might meet Scotland's Kristy Gilmour next.

In men's singles, Srikanth will open against Tommy Sugiarto of Indonesia, while World Championships bronze medalist B Sai Praneeth will take on France's Toma Junior Popov and is likely to clash next with second seed Viktor Axelsen, who has won the two Super

1000 titles in Thailand, and the Swiss Open.

Commonwealth Games gold medalist Parupalli Kashyap will open against World No.1 Japanese Kento Momota, who is returning to international circuit after a horrific car accident last year that saw him undergo an eye surgery.

Among others in fray, former top-10 player HS Prannoy will meet Malaysia's Daren Liew. Sameer Verma will be up against Ygor Coelho of Brazil in opening round and may face third seed Anders Antonsen of Denmark next. Young Lakshya Sen will meet Thailand's Kantaphon Wangcharoen.