



AT THE RECEIVING END

Actor Disha Patani is being brutally trolled by the netizens for her 'zero fashion sense' at Kiara-Sidharth's reception party

LEISURE | P2



AT IT AGAIN

Governor RN Ravi says although there is a lot of talk on social justice, Dalits in Tamil Nadu face atrocities

TWO STATES | P8



BOOSTING TIES

India and Nepal agree to bolster their economic and development cooperation as Foreign Secy Kwatra meets Nepalese counterpart

INTERNATIONAL | P10

SHORT TAKES

CM inaugurates medical college

Keonjhar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday inaugurated a new medical college and hospital apart from launching and laying the foundation stone of developmental projects worth ₹4,703 crore in mineral rich Keonjhar district. Patnaik, who attended a function here, also handed over financial assistance of ₹378 crore in the form of interest-free loans to 14,372 women self-help groups (SHGs) under Mission Shakti in the district. Of the 259 projects worth ₹4,703 crore, the chief minister inaugurated 98 projects built at the cost of ₹868 crore and laid the foundation stone of 138 projects estimated to cost around ₹1,103 crore. He also announced 23 other projects worth ₹2,731 crore.

P3

Another jumbo carcass found

Athagarh: There is no let-up in elephant deaths in the state as yet another tusker was found dead at Nuaitaila cashew forest near Nuabandh village about 20 metre from the State Highway-65 under Athagarh forest division in Cuttack district, Monday. The tusker was found dead under mysterious circumstances raising serious questions over the safety of jumbos in the area. The animal within 20 years of age was found with deep injury marks on its trunk and right leg with pus and blood oozing from wounds. On being informed, Athagarh DFO Jagnyadatt Pati, forest ranger Rabindranath Nayak rushed to the spot and launched an investigation.

P5

PM's pat for AIIMS Bhubaneswar docs

Bhubaneswar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has praised the effort of AIIMS Bhubaneswar doctors for doing first ever quadruple joint replacement surgery on a crippled patient. "Compliments to our doctors for always being at the forefront of innovation and embracing new changes in the medical world. Their dexterity makes us proud!" Modi said in a tweet Monday. The surgery was conducted on a 37-year-old female patient from Aul block of Kendrapara district. This is the second case to be reported globally and first of its kind in Odisha where all four joints were replaced in one setting.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



With this I can talk, entertain, travel, find new friends and shop... This is my valentine

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	60431.84	↑ 250.86
NIFTY	17770.90	↓ 85.60
DOLLAR	82.55	↓ ₹0.09
EURO	88.48	↑ ₹0.40
GOLD	₹56,657	↓ ₹84
SILVER	₹66,312	↓ ₹352

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 33.7°C	32.2°C
	MIN 16.8°C	18.0°C
Humidity	72%	51%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Mainly clear sky	



BIRDS OF A FEATHER: Migratory birds perch at a lake in Ajmer of Rajasthan, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Cab okays ₹1,400cr for better drainage

A TOTAL OF 15 PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN APPROVED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 13: The state Cabinet led by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday approved Drainage Improvement Programme (DIP), which will be implemented with an outlay of ₹1,400 crore during next five years.

Briefing mediapersons, Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra said the programme will be executed from financial year 2023-24 to 2027-28 for excavation, improvement and renovation of 6,969 km length of various drainage channels and retrieval of water-logged area of 1,05,868 hectares in coastal areas, he said.

It helps in controlling saline ingress through the drains falling to the sea and its network and proper drainage of excess water in the affected areas in the Doabs and select urban centres through well-defined natural drainage channels, he said.

The Drainage Improvement Programme was launched in 2014-15 for a period of five years (2014-15 to 2018-19) in the ayacut area in 17 Doabs and three Non-Doab areas in nine coastal districts. Later, the programme was extended from 2019-20 to 2022-23 with an outlay of



₹500 crore, Mahapatra said.

"So, the Cabinet today approved the revised cost estimate of the scheme from ₹500 crore to ₹800 crore," he added.

Similarly, the Cabinet has approved the proposal for construction of 237 number of '100-bed boys' hostels for Odisha Adarsha Vidyalayas. The boys' hotels will be constructed with an investment of ₹1,000.14 crore.

Following the recommendations of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and Orissa High Court, the state government has also decided to provide compensation to the NOK (next of kin) on account of death of prisoners in jails of Odisha.

Similarly, the Cabinet, which has approved a total of 15 propos-

Nod to ₹2.3L-crore Budget for 23-24

The Council of Ministers Monday approved the state's annual Budget for the year 2023-24. A Budget outlay was approved by the Council during its meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here, Monday evening. According to sources, the total size of the Budget will be around ₹2.30 lakh crore, which is 15 per cent more than last year's full-fledged budget of ₹2 lakh crore. As this will be the last full-fledged Budget of the current government, some new schemes and programmes may be announced during its presentation in the Assembly, sources said.

als, decided to construct a 130 MLD water treatment plant at Mundali on river Mahanadi. A tender worth ₹286.73 crore has been approved for the project, Mahapatra said.

The government has decided to create 6,025 teacher posts to meet the requirement of teachers' unavailability due to leave, training and on medical grounds. This will address the issue of shortage of teachers in government secondary schools.

Contd...P4

‘Pirbhakaran alive and well’

Lanka has dismissed as a “joke” the claim that the LTTE supremo, who was killed in 2009 by the island nation's military, is still alive

AGENCIES

Thanjavur (TN), Feb 13: Velupillai Pirbhakaran, the leader of Eelam Tamils in Sri Lanka is doing well, a top Tamil nationalist leader claimed here Monday and said a conducive atmosphere prevails for him to appear now. However, Sri Lanka's defence ministry dismissed Nedumaran's claim as a joke.

In a press conference, Pazha Nedumaran, a noted Tamil nationalist leader, prefixed his declaration as a 'true announcement' and said the international (political) atmosphere and fierce opposition to Rajapaksa by the Sinhalese people in Sri Lanka has



created the right conditions for the leader of the Eelam Tamils, Pirbhakaran to emerge.

Asserting that the LTTE leader is doing well, Nedumaran said the announcement would end 'planned'

SMRITI COSTLIEST WITH ₹3.4 CRORE RCB DEAL

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Feb 13: India vice-captain Smriti Mandhana bagged a huge deal of ₹3.4 crore with the Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in the first set of Womens Premier League (WPL) Player Auction here Monday. Interestingly, she wears the number 18 jersey, which is the same number which Virat Kohli wears for RCB in the men's Indian Premier League (IPL). Mumbai were then in a tussle alongside RCB, Delhi Capitals (DC)

and UP Warriorz to get the services of captain Harmanpreet Kaur, which ended in them roping her in for ₹1.8 crore. New Zealand captain Sophie Devine was sold to RCB at the base price of ₹50 lakh.

Australia's off-spin all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner was being contested by MI and Warriorz, but Gujarat Giants got her in for ₹3.2 crore. RCB and DC were in contention to get premier Australia pace all-rounder Ellyse Perry, with the former taking her in for ₹1.7 crore.

MORE P12

4TH UFO DOWNED NOT RULING OUT ALIENS, SAYS US

AGENCIES

Washington, Feb 13: A top US military official said he would not rule out aliens or any other explanation as US military fighter jets Sunday shot down an octagonal object over Lake Huron, the Pentagon said.

It is the latest incident since a suspected Chinese surveillance balloon put North American security forces on high alert.

It was the fourth flying object to be shot down over North America by a US missile in a little more than a week. China's foreign ministry said it had no information on the latest three flying objects shot down by the United States.

US Air Force General Glen VanHerck, who is tasked with safeguarding US airspace, told reporters that the military has not been able to identify what the three most recent objects are, how they stay aloft, or where they are coming from.

"We're calling them objects, not balloons, for a reason," VanHerck, head of North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and Northern Command, said.

VanHerck said he would not rule out aliens or any other explanation.

Another defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity, subsequently said the military had not seen any evidence that the objects were extraterrestrial.

Ants show the way to beating traffic jams

THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 20 QUADRILLION ANTS ON EARTH THAT ARE NEARLY ALWAYS MOVING, YET SOMEHOW NEVER GET STUCK

AGENCIES

Sydney, Feb 13: Being stuck in traffic is stressful, wastes time and resources and ends up costing the world's economies trillions of dollars a year. Jams happen daily and authorities have spent decades trying to fix the problem with little success. Yet a solution may be literally under our feet. Ants.

There are an estimated 20 quadrillion ants on Earth. That's more than the number of stars in the Milky Way and possibly more.

These ants - which can live in colonies that contain billions of individuals and can span thousands of kilometres - are nearly

always moving yet somehow they never get stuck. Like humans, ants have sophisticated transportation



■ As we move towards the adoption of self-driving vehicles, the opportunities for ants to inspire traffic technologies will increase. In essence, our traffic systems may be becoming more ant-like

systems to ensure the efficient movement of individuals, resources and information. Some ant species create systems using chemical signals called pheromones. If an ant finds an attractive food source, she returns to the nest dropping invisible droplets of pheromone behind her as she walks.



■ In the early 1990s, the trail-laying behaviour of ants inspired the incredibly successful 'ant colony optimisation algorithm' which is now used to tackle tough traffic problems

This is the basis of many ant transportation systems and enables ants to quickly gather workers to new food sources, allocate workers based on the quality of the food, and find the shortest path between points. In the early 1990s, the trail-laying behaviour of ants inspired the incredibly successful 'ant colony optimisation algorithm' which is now used to tackle tough traffic problems such as determining the most

efficient route for a fleet of delivery vehicles. Ants excel at managing traffic on their trails.

On human-built roads the average speed of cars decreases as the number of cars on the road increases. You simply can't go fast when the road is crowded. Ants moving on their trails, however, do not slow down even when more ants join the trail. In some cases, traffic congestion is prevented because ants switch from using a single trail when traffic is light, to using two trails when traffic is heavy. By dividing themselves across multiple routes, ants maintain traffic speeds and prevent congestion, effectively stopping traffic jams before they start.

Contd...P4

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL \$5181*

ARIES

Do something really exciting today – perhaps you could put on your trekking boots and explore unknown territories. Ganesha advises you to keep busy but not to go overboard. In group activities today, everybody will focus their attention on you.

TAURUS

This day your mind is likely to be blissfully drawn towards your personal friends and family members. Your warm and intimate relationships will stay uppermost in your mind and fill the day, not leaving room for anything else. Hanging out together with them will give you immense pleasure and contentment.

GEMINI

You will become more emotional and sensitive today. Health, diet, career, job and such things will be on your mind and will give rise to mental stress and worry. You need to take care of your health and hygiene, says Ganesha.

CANCER

Today, you are likely to experience something life-changing. A small incident, an observation, a tragedy, a disaster, or a simple thought may change the course of your life. You, however, may not be able to take the changes well. It may have a strong bearing on your health.

LEO

You will give importance to your work and your style of functioning to get a promotion in the office. You will also increase the amount of work you put in. While the fruits of your labour may not be immediately available to you, in a very short time you can expect to make more gains than you expected to.

VIRGO

You will be really very tough today, like a man of steel, but there is enough warmth in your heart. Forbearance, positivity and extremely artistic abilities will predominate. Ganesha advises you to pursue the arts in your studies. Your deep insight into life will help you in serving society in a better way.

LIBRA

Ganesha says you will put everything aside to pay more attention to your outward appearance and your beauty as you will be more aware about it. People will get attracted to your beauty today. You will be able to share your own ideas and thoughts with people, at the same time you will learn about their views and from their experiences.

SCORPIO

Keep your eyes and ears open and believe in only what you see. Remember, believing in rumours may lead to ugly situations. Your efforts to be different and stand out would pay off well, predicts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

The day begins on a bright note and you decide to flaunt your sunny side up, foresees Ganesha. At home front, sharing of work with your partner will keep the home atmosphere peaceful and harmonious. Both of you discover a joy in cleaning and cooking together. A perfect recipe for love!

CAPRICORN

You are beaming with optimism and positive energy. Such strong vibes will penetrate through the day and maintain the energy level right till the end. Not everyone is blessed with such spirit, so will certainly have an upper hand at work, be it your profession or business, says Ganesha. You will enjoy a smooth, peaceful and beautiful married life with your spouse, blesses Ganesha.

AQUARIUS

You are an excellent team player and your performance reaches a new high when you are a part of a group. Be an active member of your group, express your opinions, share your knowledge and see how your team becomes the winning team, says Ganesha.

PISCES

You will bump into an old friend or a distant relative today. This rendezvous may be with a person who you were close to long ago and it will warm your heart with nostalgia. You might contemplate taking a break from your daily grind to spend some time to rekindle your childhood memories or visit your hometown.



JLO, AFFLECK BUYING \$34.5MN MANSION

Jennifer Lopez and her husband Ben Affleck are reportedly buying a house to settle down in after spending two years looking for a property to buy together. The luxurious seven-bedroom home in California's Pacific Palisades boasts 13 bathrooms as well as a gym, home spa and a six-car garage.

MARIAH CAREY MAKES SURPRISE APPEARANCE AT BROADWAY SHOW

Mariah Carey surprised the audience at a Broadway production of *Some Like It Hot* by making an appearance with the cast during the curtain call. The *Hero* singer, 53, is among the producers of the stage adaptation of the 1959 film that starred Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon.



31ST STATE FILM AWARDS

Jaydev Puraskar conferred on Ghanashyam Mohapatra

PITOBASH TRIPATHI RECEIVES BEST ACTOR'S AWARD WHILE SHIVANI SANGITA SARANGI BAGS BEST ACTRESS HONOUR



Ghanashyam Mohapatra received Jaydev Puraskar

Bhubaneswar: The 31st State Film Awards were presented at a function organised by Odia Language Literature and Culture Department here at Utkal Mandap, Monday.

Noted film director Ghanashyam Mohapatra was conferred with prestigious Jaydev honour, the highest cine award of Odisha. He received Rs 2

Lakh cash prize and a citation. Nila Madhab Panda went home with Best Director's award for his movie *Kalira Atita* which was also adjudged the Best Film of the year. For the same movie, Pitobash Tripathi received the Best Actor award while Shivani Sangita Sarangi got Best Actress Award for *Babu Bhaujaan*.

Late Kapileshwar Prasad got Best Story award for *Sala Budhara Badla* while late Raju Mishra was posthumously given the award for Best Music. Swayam Padhi received the

Playback Singer's award (Male) while Diptirekha Padhi got the award in Female category.

Best child artist award went to Mayank for *Ranga Barrsiba Tupur Tupur*.

Earlier, taking strong exceptions to plagiarism in the film business, Orissa High Court directed to declare the 31st Odisha State Film Award, 2019 again in one month as



A show by Lipika Senapati and troupe

previously selected Odia films were found heavily copied from other language films.

Bobby Islam, a filmmaker, had moved Orissa HC alleging that many of the films that featured in the final selection list for the 31st Odisha State Film Award, 2019 were remakes of some films made in other languages, which should not have qualified for the awards in the first place.

PNN



Mumbai: Social media influencer Kusha Kapila, who will be seen in a cameo appearance in the upcoming season of the streaming show *Minus One: New Chapter*, has shared that her career as a comic artiste on social media was born out of accident and now that she has seen what taking chances leads to in terms of new opportunities, she would like to not limit herself and explore different things.

While talking about her career and her choices, Kusha said, "As an artist, I would love to explore different things. I want to do roles that don't limit me. I do comedy online and that's

'Became social media sensation by accident'



BIG BOSS 16 FINALE

Rapper MC Stan takes home trophy

Mumbai: Rapper MC Stan was declared winner of *Bigg Boss Season 16*, in a star-studded grand finale that started Sunday night and went into the early hours of Monday.

MC Stan, whose real name is Altaf Shaikh, came into the reality show with a huge fan base, and he took home the Bigg Boss trophy along with a whopping over Rs 31 lakh.

Over 130 days of battle inside the house, Stan maintained his position all along as a strong contender for the trophy. He defeated Shiv Thakare, Archana Gautam and Shalin Bhanot in the grand finale.

Stan is an Indian rapper, lyricist, music producer and composer. He became popular after the release of his song *Khuja Mat* in 2019. He hails from Pune, Maharashtra. He was just 12 when he began singing qawwali.

He was introduced to rap music by his brother. Before getting into rapping, Stan was into B-boying and beatboxing.

His one liners such as *Shemdi, Appreciate You, Haq Se, Feel You Bro* and *Hindi Matra Bhasha and Raavas* have caught attention of all across the country.

IANs

how I started my career, it has actually been an accidental career. Many times, you're confused about your own career trajectory and I was at a point like what next? What should I do now? This role of Nayantara (in *Minus One: New Chapter*) came at a very opportune moment when I was wondering where to go from here."

Featuring Aisha Ahmed and Ayush Mehra as the leads, *Minus One: New Chapter*, produced by Writeous Studios and created by Sidhantha Mathur and Shubham Yogi, is set to stream on Lionsgate Play from today.



Disha trolled for her 'zero fashion sense'

Mumbai: Who's who of the film industry decked up in their traditional best for Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani's reception Sunday. While netizens were praising the glittering sarees and glamorous lehengas, Disha Patani's bold choice left everyone upset.

For the celebration, Disha opted for a halter neck, backless blouse with a deep cowl neck and paired it with a risqué thigh high slit skirt (in set). While she personified hotness with her outfit, netizens trolled her for wearing such a bold dress for a wedding reception.

One user wrote, "This is not reception wear more like a club wear," while another

commented, "She needs a new stylist."

Calling out her dressing sense, one comment read, "Poor fashion sense, she really needs some good guidance." One Instagram user commented, "Why does she have zero fashion sense, the outfit looks too cheap and totally not classy."

Disha Patani has been hitting headlines for her rumoured romance with fitness trainer Aleksandar Alex Ilic.

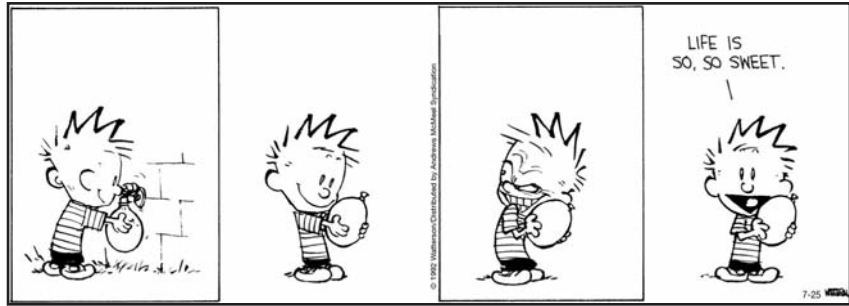
AGENCIES

FUN post

PEANUTS



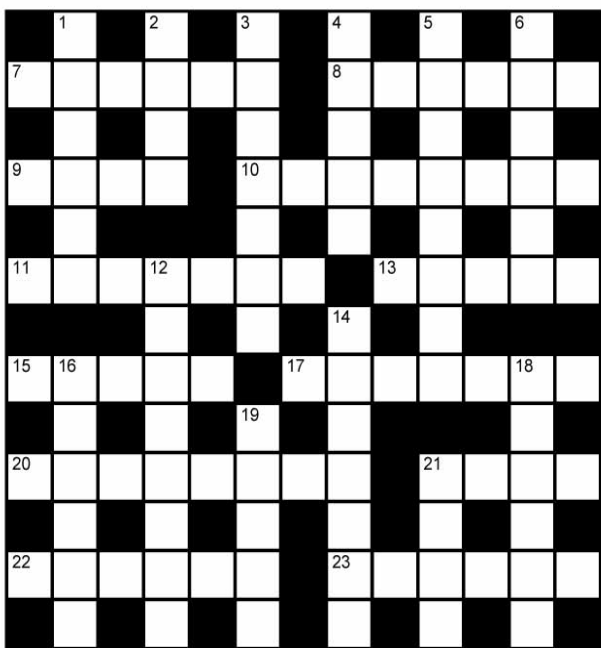
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



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Across

- 7 Virtue
8 Proper
9 Hasten
10 Brislings
11 Abnegations
13 Aquamarine
15 Claw
17 Reduces
20 Submit a query to a sick friend (3,5)

- 21 Wander
22 Hosted, as a TV show
23 Andean animals

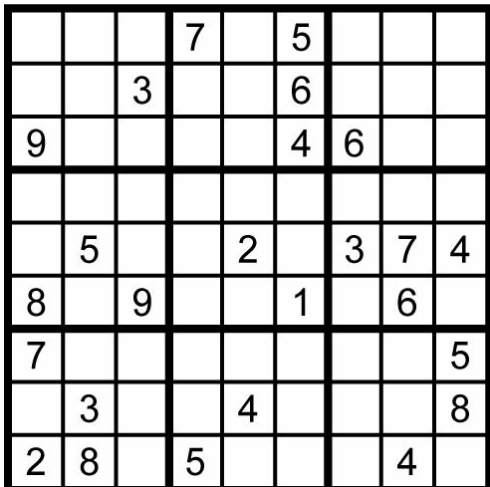
Down

- 1 Radio control
2 Sweater eater
3 Railroad bridge
4 Seize without authority

- 5 Lack of thiamine disease
6 Feeling drowsy
12 Sets apart
14 Before long
16 Take for granted
18 Australian marsupials
19 Private reading room
21 Harvest

SUDOKU

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

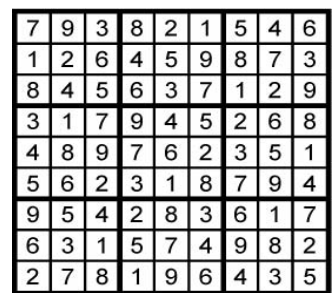


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

CM dedicates ₹4,703cr projects to Keonjhar

INAUGURATING DHARANIDHAR MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL IN THE MINERAL-RICH DISTRICT, THE CM SAYS PEOPLE OF THE DISTRICT WON'T HAVE TO VISIT BHUBANESWAR OR CUTTACK FOR TREATMENT ANYMORE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Keonjhar, Feb 13: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday inaugurated the newly-constructed medical college and hospital, and launched and laid the foundation stone of developmental projects worth ₹4,703 crore in mineral rich Keonjhar district.

Patnaik, who attended a function here, also handed over financial assistance of ₹378 crore in the form of interest-free loans to 14,372 women self-help groups (SHGs) under Mission Shakti in the district.

Of the 259 projects worth ₹4,703 crore, the Chief Minister inaugurated 98 projects built at the cost of ₹868 crore and laid the foundation stone of 138 projects estimated to



FIGURES SAY IT ALL

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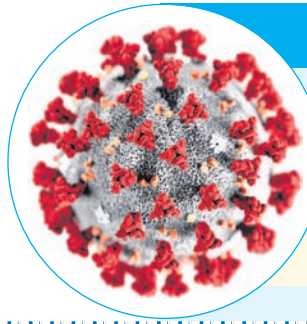
While formally inaugurating the medical college and hospital named after noted tribal freedom fighter Dharanidhar Naik at the district headquarters here, Patnaik said a new cancer centre and a nursing college would also come up along with the medical college.

Spread over an area of 44 acres and built at a cost of ₹480 crore, the medical college presently has 22



WAR OF WORDS

BJP and Congress corporators confront Cuttack mayor Subhash Singh during a civic body meeting in the Silver City, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	67,76,50,255	65,01,85,208	67,82,716
India	4,46,84,200	4,41,51,610	5,30,753
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

Krusha Odisha to focus on cutting-edge tech in agri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 13: Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment department, in association with Federation of India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), is going to organise three-day long Krushi Odisha Conclave-2023 at Biju Patnaik Play Ground in Baramunda here from February 16 to 18. The theme for this year's event is 'Emerging Technology in Agriculture.'

"Altogether 212 stalls will be set up on different agriculture and allied sectors. Various government undertakings, banks and agri entrepreneurs will participate in it. FPOs, SHGs, NGOs and input dealers will also participate in the event. Farmers will learn about recent technologies through 10 thematic seminars," said a department official familiar with the matter.

The event has its focus on production technologies, agriculture mechanisation, application of information communication technology (ICT) in agriculture, infrastructure development, marketing linkage, easy access to credit, utilisation of improved agriculture inputs and distributions and establishment of agriculture enterprises.

At an event organised here at



About 212 stalls will come up in the fair that will be participated by various government undertakings, banks and agri entrepreneurs

Krusha Bhawan auditorium here Monday, Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain said, "We have organised regional Krushi Melas in four places - Sambalpur, Baripada, Berhampur and Koraput. It has been decided to organise such types of fairs in every district. State government has decided to increase farm mechanisation and has earmarked funds for this purpose. We are ready to increase the allocation if needed. We are also planning to organise

Krusha Mela at block level."

On this occasion, department principal secretary Arabinda Padhee said, "We have plan for a special session on millet with participation of international experts. Special sessions will also be held on horticulture, fisheries and animal resources. We expect more than 1,500 farmers from across the state will get to know about the recent technology adoption in agriculture."

Fisheries and ARD department commissioner-cum-secretary Suresh Kumar Vashisth said, "We have successfully introduced cage culture at Hirakud reservoir which is considered as intensive aquaculture. Biofloc fish farming is the most popular scheme of our department. The government has shown willingness to extend subsidies to women SHGs undertaking fish farming."

Coal ministry to hold east zonal meet Feb 16

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 13: The Union Coal ministry is going to organise an east zonal conference on National Logistics Policy and PM-GatiShakti here February 16.

The conference will be organised to ensure coordination in integrated planning for infrastructure development in east zonal states - Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Bihar.

The conference will be attended by senior officials of east zonal states and different ministries like coal, department for promotion of industry and internal trade (DPIIT), railways, power, steel, fertilizers & chemicals, ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), Shipping Ports & Waterways along with industry representatives of east zone.

The aim of the conference is to have in-depth discussions on and gather suggestions for inclusive development of the region.

PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (NMP), a transformative approach for improving logistics efficiency and reducing costs, was launched for integrated infrastructure development in the country. The objective of the plan is to bring different ministries, states, departments, and industries together for integrated planning and coordinated implementation of infrastructure connectivity projects.



This is AIR: Members of voluntary outfit 'Badadanda Seva' celebrated Radio Day at Marchikote Square in Puri, Monday

OP PHOTO

'Sun didn't break off its chunk'

EXPERTS SAY A PROMINENCE LIKE THIS HAPPENS AT THE SAME 55-DEGREE LATITUDE EVERY 11 YEARS

The Sun did not shed a chunk of it as being reported and what was spotted was a normal 'solar prominence' activity on its surface.

A solar prominence (also known as a filament when viewed against the solar disk) is a large, bright feature extending outward from the Sun's surface.

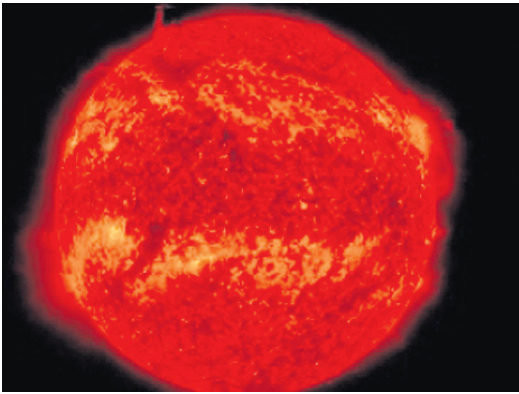
Prominences are anchored to the Sun's surface in the photosphere, and extend outwards into the Sun's hot outer atmosphere, called the corona.

Reports last week surfaced that NASA's James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) caught "a piece of Sun being broken off" from its surface.

A tweet by astronomer Tamitha Skov, accompanied by footage of the Sun captured by NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory, claimed: "Talk about Polar Vortex! Material from a northern prominence just broke away from the main filament & is now circulating in a massive polar vortex around the north pole of our Star."

However, no part of the Sun "broke off".

Solar physicist and deputy director at the National Center for



THE HUGE SOLAR FLARE WAS REGISTERED AS A POWERFUL X1.1-CLASS EVENT ON THE SCALE USED FOR SUCH SUN STORMS

Atmospheric Research in Colorado, told Space.com that a prominence like this happens at the same 55-degree latitude every 11 years.

"This vortex has now been cited in many media outlets as "a piece of the Sun breaks off", but don't believe the hype. It is all part of the perfectly normal and stunning solar ballet!" Skov wrote on her blog.

The James Webb Space Telescope is the world's largest, most powerful, and most complex space science telescope ever built. Webb will solve

mysteries in our solar system, look beyond distant worlds around other stars, and probe the mysterious structures and origins of our universe and our place in it.

Meanwhile, a major solar flare erupted from the Sun over the last weekend, "spawning a radio blackout for parts of Earth and setting the stage for more flares to come," reports Space.com.

The huge solar flare was registered as a powerful X1.1-class event on the scale used for such Sun storms.

Capital ready to celebrate V-Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 13: Several hotels, clubs and restaurant have arranged special events for Valentine's Day as the Capital city's lovebirds are all set to celebrate the day of love in a big way Tuesday.

According to sources, Pal Heights Mantra, Bhubaneswar is celebrating the Valentine's Day with special Valentine's candlelight dinner offers and a performance of romantic songs by singer Anurag Panda.

"Valentine's week is for the love couples to spend some quality time with romantic setting, which we tried to provide," said the hotel staff. Similarly, the Empires Hotel here is also providing Valentine's Day special offers - Valentine's with special Buffet Lunch and Dinner.

Meanwhile, for many singles, Comedy Highway, a local group, is organising a show titled 'Pyaar ka Punchline' where many popular comedians of the City will perform standup comedy.

Satyabrata Mohapatra, a comedian and organiser, said, "The perfect way to spend Valentine's Day is by making single people smile.

Hence, we put on a show for them so that they can laugh and get entertained."

Meanwhile, Valentine's Day is celebrated by Bakul Foundation by planting rose saplings. Sujit Mahapatra of Bakul Foundation said, "The main idea behind this is that if you want to celebrate love on V-Day, why do it with a dead rose? We should celebrate it with something that stays forever and, in fact, gets better. Hence, we have been promoting the gifting of rose plants instead of roses. We believe that planting a rose can make a person fall in love with plants."

On Valentine's Day, Sonali Mohanty, an HR professional, said, "Everyone needs acceptance and love. We get to express love in many ways. V-Day, being a reminder of love, cannot be limited to couples. If you exist, you can love and you definitely deserve to be loved."

Ankita Patnaik said, "I don't believe in special days to celebrate love and hate the gimmicky nature of Valentine's Week celebrations by boys for girls."

Meanwhile, lovebirds may not venture into the parks here fearing anti-Valentine's Day protesters.

BJD, BJP to take to streets against each other today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 13: The ruling BJD and Opposition BJP will launch three-day statewide protests against each other from Tuesday. While the BJD will hit the street over reduction of budgetary allocation on paddy procurement and closure of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) programme, the BJP will stage demonstrations over deteriorating law and order situation in the state.

Speaking to reporters here, BJD leader Arun Sahoo said that with reduction of funds for procurement of paddy by ₹20,000 crore in Centre's budget for 2023-24, lakhs of farmers especially those in western Odisha will be severely affected. Similarly, with closure of PMGKAY, paddy procurement will drastically go down and the farmers will be deprived of getting the MSP, Sahoo said.

BJD will stage a protest in front of the Raj Bhawan February 14 demanding the Centre to procure all food grains from Odisha, Sahoo said. The party will also stage dharna at panchayat offices across the state February 15. On the next day (February 16), the ruling party will stage demonstrations at block offices and submit a memorandum to the Prime Minister through the district collectors, he stated.

On the other hand, the BJP will hold demonstrations over deterioration in the law and order situation in the state from February 14 to 16.

State BJP leader Bhurugu Baxipatra said, "The law and order situation has deteriorated in the last 23 years even though the Chief Minister holds the Home department. Crimes such as dacoity, rape, murder and violence against women are on the rise."

Though a powerful Cabinet minister was murdered, no condolence motion was moved in the state Cabinet either, he added.

The Saffron party will intensify its attack on the ruling BJD party by staging a demonstration in different parts of the state Tuesday.

2 ABVP activists held for assault

Bhubaneswar: The twin city Commissionerate Police Monday arrested two Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) activists on charges of assaulting members of Citizen's Forum, an intellectual platform, during a seminar at Utkal University here Sunday. The accused were identified as Manas Kumar Sahu, 31, and Sanjay Kumar Mallik, 32, of Basudevpur area in Bhadrak district.

Mahanadi tribunal's site visit begins March 15



POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Feb 13: The Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal (MWDT) Monday said that it would begin the site visit of Mahanadi basin in Chhattisgarh and Odisha from March 15 and asked the counsels of both states to sit with assessors and draw a schedule for the visit.

The three-judge bench of the tribunal headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice AM Khanwilkar noted that it is appropriate to first undertake the site visit before commencing trial of the Mahanadi water dispute and cross-examination as well as tendering of witnesses.

"Technical teams of both states will interact with assessors and draw a schedule for site visit as proposed by the state parties. The visit can commence from March 15. The details regarding the travel plan and other aspects will be worked on by the assessors after interacting with technical teams of the states," the tribunal said, adding that if required then it will also take an aerial survey of the Mahanadi basin.

The tribunal will visit various irrigation and power projects running on Mahanadi river basin in Chhattisgarh and Odisha to inspect ground situation to adjudicate the dispute over water sharing between both the states.

Noting that the tenure of Mahanadi tribunal is ending March 8, the bench also asked the counsels of all states to take up the matter with the respective governments for further extension of the tribunal. The

WATER DISPUTE

Technical teams of both states will interact with assessors and draw a schedule for site visit as proposed by the state parties

The tribunal team will visit various irrigation and power projects running on Mahanadi river basin in Chhattisgarh and Odisha to inspect ground situation

Delineation of Mahanadi basin has been completed up to Mundali barrage in Odisha

ENSURE FLOW OF WATER TO ODISHA, CENTRE TOLD

New Delhi: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Bhartruhari Mahtab Monday raised the Mahanadi water dispute between Odisha and Chhattisgarh in the Lok Sabha and requested the Centre to ensure flow water to Odisha as per the guidelines of Ministry of Environment and Forests.

The BJD MP raised the issue under Rule 377 in the Lower House. Citing a letter of Chhattisgarh dated August 2016, Mahtab said Chhattisgarh unilaterally planned illegal abstraction of 24.50 million acre feet (MAF) of Mahanadi water.

"As per the 1947 report of Central Waterway Irrigation and Navigation Commission on the Mahanadi Valley Development: Hirakud Dam Project, the minimum flow of 20.61 MAF of water was apportioned, and Odisha was permitted to use 12.28 MAF of water and the rest for the upstream states. Even after much persuasion, the Union government did not act. Ultimately, Odisha government went to the

apex court, the court asked the Centre to form a tribunal. The tribunal was supposed to give its report within a specified period of time. They have not done it," Mahtab said.

He asked the Centre to find out whether Chhattisgarh, during its project planning, has considered the MoEF guidelines for minimum water flow. He said the water level at Hirakud dam is 622.97 ft and every day 10,000 cusecs of water has to flow to Odisha for irrigation and power generation.

"How many water arresting structures have been constructed by Chhattisgarh across Mahanadi, whether dams inside Mahanadi basin of Chhattisgarh are being operated by any Standard Operating Procedure, and whether Chhattisgarh has kept any provision in their reservoirs to absorb flood waters temporarily for the safety of Hirakud dam in Odisha? The answer is a big no. Should the Centre not intervene?" Mahtab asked.

next hearing of the case is March 25.

During the hearing, the state of Chhattisgarh submitted that delineation of Mahanadi basin has been completed up to Mundali bar-

rage in Odisha and given suggestions with respect to delineation of the Mahanadi sub-basin in downstream. The tribunal has referred the suggestions to assessors for scrutiny.



SALARY WOES: Members of Odisha State Non-government Lecturers and Employees Association took out a rally near PMG Square demanding remunerations for staffers appointed after 2008 in Bhubaneswar, Monday

Exempt handlooms from GST: BJD BJP seeks action against sand mafia

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Feb 13: BJD MP Bhartruhari Mahtab Monday urged the Centre to exempt the handloom sector from Goods and Services Tax (GST) as it is having an adverse impact on people dependent on it for livelihood.

Speaking on the issue during Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha, he said the GST is raising the cost of the products and placing barriers on the expansion of the industry. The Cuttack MP said the handloom industry plays a key role in the Indian economy for providing employment to rural population. "In Odisha, it is an ancient industry which has been the primary source of income in rural and semi-urban areas for women and other economically disadvantaged people, for centuries. This industry has a large capacity to absorb labour which is essentially beneficial for Odisha which is a labour surplus state or economy," Mahtab said.



ODISHA IN PARLIAMENT

New Delhi: BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi Monday demanded action against sand mafia allegedly involved in sand mining under Jayadev constituency. She alleged that the sand mafia are operating in connivance with the state government in the area.

Speaking during the Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha, Sarangi said the people of the area are adversely affected by the sand mining and the roads and bridges are also getting damaged. She requested the Union Ministry of Environment and Forest to send a team and inquire about the matter. BJD MP Anubhav Mohanty protested when Sarangi made her zero hour submission on the issue and said that it is a state subject.

Odias are being exploited in their own state: Patnaik



POST NEW NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 13: Days after joining the Congress, bureaucrat-turned politician Bijay Kumar Patnaik Monday alleged that Odias are being exploited in their own state.

After joining the party in New Delhi, Patnaik returned to the state, where Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) leaders gave him a rousing welcome at the Congress Bhawan.

Speaking to media persons, he said, "Odia people are being exploited in their own state. Perhaps it is the only state where conspiracy has been made to exploit its own people." Odia contractors are not getting any contracts, as tenders for even small works are framed in such a way that they are not able to qualify it, he said. "If small and C class contractors from other states will get all the work here, what will happen to Odia contractors?" asked the Congress leader.

Stating that unemployment is a big problem, he said, professional graduates are moving outside to get a job while daily wage labourers are also emigrating in a similar way in search of livelihood.

Refraining from making any direct attack on Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, he said, "He was my boss. So, I don't want to criticise him. However, I can say that the Naveen Patnaik of now is not

the same one I served under."

The former Chief Secretary said he joined politics because he couldn't bear the style of functioning of the current government.

"The people of the state don't know who to approach to get their grievances redressed. Be it a MLA or minister, they claim that they do not have powers and everything is being controlled by the 'third floor' (Chief Minister's Office)," he alleged. Neither common man nor journalists have any access to the 'third floor'.

Forget about the third floor, the journalists are restricted from entering into the State Secretariat, Patnaik alleged.

Commenting on the 5T model of governance, the Congress leader said, "It is just a slogan. Everybody knows how much transparency is there in the system. If each department functions efficiently there is absolutely no need for a separate department like the 5T."

Patnaik also alleged that the senior capable officers are not allowed to function independently in the state.

Reacting to the statements made by the Congress leader, BJD spokesperson Lenin Mohanty said Patnaik wanted to go to Rajya Sabha after joining the BJD. As this could not happen, he joined the Congress, but now he is making statements like a BJP spokesperson, Mohanty said.

Continued from P1

Retail inflation spurts to 3-month...

Last week, the RBI -- which has been mandated to ensure inflation remains below 6 per cent -- had

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Shiba@Shiva Prasad Patnaik, S/o-Late K.Koteswar @ Koteswar Patnaik, R/O-C7/4, J.K.P.M. Campus, J.K.Pur, Rayagada-765017 have changed my name to Shiva Prasad Patnaik, S/o- Koteswar Patnaik for all future purposes vide affidavit dt.13.02.2023 sworn before Notary Maheswar Mahapatra, Rayagada.

By the virtue of the affidavit, before the Notary Public, Jajpur I, Dillip Kumar Kar, At/Po-Bainsiria, P.S.- Bari, Ramchandrapur, Dist-Jajpur, Pin-755017, NRS-Cuttack. My mother, Bhanumati Kar date of birth has wrongly declared on 11.08.1969 instead of 8.04.1970 and Father Gopal Chandra Kar, date of birth also wrongly recorded on 16.11.1967 instead of 25.04.1965 as per Aadhaar Card.

raised the key short-term rate (repo) by 25 basis points to 6.5 per cent with an aim to check price rise.

The Reserve Bank has projected the retail inflation at 6.5 per cent in 2022-23, with January-December quarter at 5.7 per cent.

Headline CPI inflation moderated by 105 basis points during November-December 2022 from its level of 6.77 per cent in October 2022. This was due to a softening in food inflation on the back of a sharp deflation in vegetable prices, which more than offset the inflationary pressures from cereals, protein-based food items and spices, the RBI had said last week.

Cab okays ₹1,400cr for better ...

The state Cabinet has approved the proposal for leasing out 40 acres of land in Jatni for establishment of Shri Vile Parle Kelavani Mandal (SVKM) University. Based on merit, the trust will keep 30 percent of seats reserved for the underprivileged students of Odisha.

Further, 5 acres of government land in Pandaripali under Sambalpur tehsil will be provided for establishment of eye hospital on free of premium.

The government has also decided to amend the Odisha MSME Development Policy and Food Processing Policies of 2013 and 2016 to extend the timeline for claim submission by MSME units from the present limit of 1 year to 2 years for all types of incentives.

As a one-time relaxation meas-

Ants show the way to beating traffic jams...

Some ants also respond to increased traffic by leaving less pheromone, which decreases the attractiveness of a trail and may encourage ants to find alternate routes. Other ants appear to adjust their walking speed to avoid time-consuming collisions when ant trails become crowded.

Some ants manage traffic by travelling along their trails in small groups called platoons. Platooning is thought to increase the efficiency of ant trail systems by reducing the gaps between individuals. This concept is being investigated for self-driving cars as it reduces the need for sudden braking and helps prevent congestion.

It's clear, ants are masters at managing traffic on their trails but the billion-dollar question is whether we can apply what we learn from ants to our own traffic management systems.

There is one issue -- humans are not ants.

Where ants on a trail share a common goal, human drivers are motivated by individual goals that may conflict with other road users. Ants communicate to one another through their trails systems, whereas communication between human drivers is limited.

However, as we move toward the adoption of self-driving vehicles, the opportunities for ants

to inspire traffic technologies will increase. Self-driving cars can communicate with each other to find the best route and avoid congestion, similar to ants using chemical signals to communicate and navigate their trail systems.

Like ants in a colony, self-driving vehicles may be able to work together to minimise traffic times for everyone. In essence, our traffic systems may be becoming more ant-like. And as our traffic systems continue to adapt, we would be wise to look to the animals whose traffic management prowess has been shaped by millions of years of evolution.

CIPET holds workshop on sustainable plastics

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 13: School for Advanced Research in Petrochemicals (SARP)-LARPM, Bhubaneswar, with support from Chemicals & Petrochemicals department, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, organised two days technical workshop on "Green Chemistry: Creating Circular Economy for Sustainable Plastics" at CIPET, Bhubaneswar.

The workshop combined the principles of green chemistry with sustainable circular economy of plastics manufacturing—use, re-use and recycling—in context of dealing with plastics' end of life. The programme also highlighted policy interventions for achieving circular economy in plastic waste management (PWM).



The key stakeholders in the workshop were academic institutions, industry associations, policy makers from pollution controls boards, and start-ups and entrepreneurs from the field. Speakers from Reliance Industries, Centre for Environment Education (CEE),

MoEF&CC, GoI, TERI University, Central Pollution Control Board, ITC Limited, M/s Ecowise Waste Management, Natur-Tec India Pvt.Ltd, Central Electrochemical Research Institute (CECRI) & M/s. Apchemi Pvt Ltd addressed the gathering. Also key members from DCPC,

GoI, graced the occasion. All the faculties, UG/PG and PhD students from CIPET as well as from several other universities, institutions and start-ups and members of Odisha Plastics Manufacturers Association (OPMA) participated in the workshop.

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Never grumble. All sorts of forces enter you when you grumble and they pull you down.
THE MOTHER

Mr Justice-Governor

The office of the Governor has for quite some time become a place for political intrigue and the appointees are often tasked with furthering the interests of the ruling party at the Centre. The Raj Bhavans are more often than not stacked with either ruling party leaders or those seemingly rewarded for their actions that leave no one in doubt about their intent to serve the party in power with an ulterior motive.

It would not be wrong to view the appointment of former Supreme Court judge S Abdul Nazeer as the Governor of Andhra Pradesh February 12 in this light. What strengthens the suspicion that he is but a political appointee is the fact that he got the post within 40 days of his retirement from the apex court. There is no cooling off period for a judge so this intervening period is too short to prompt one to take a charitable view. It is being seen, not without justification, as a quid pro quo for his series of judgements in favour of the BJP government at the Centre in the recent past on some of the most controversial issues involving the entire nation. Starting from 3 Talaq, Ayodhya temple land issue and culminating in the Demonetization judgement, Nazeer has consistently shown his dark side to the observer. He is one of the three apex court judges who have been appointed to the plum posts of Governor or nominated as member of the Rajya Sabha by the current dispensation. This is a record of sorts and a matter of grave concern since the Constitutional distinction between the executive and the judiciary gets blurred in the process. These are two pillars of democracy and the separation of powers embodied in them is essential for the healthy functioning of the system of checks and balances guaranteeing the survival and incorruptibility of democracy.

Technically, there is nothing amiss in the appointment of Justice Nazeer. For, there is no provision in the Constitution that bars retired judges from accepting from the government offers of jobs in which their legal acumen will stand in good stead. But, it is a question of the legal principle of justice being seen to be done. It is this principle which runs the risk of being compromised if a retired judge gets government favours after retirement notably for verdicts he or she had given during their judicial tenure that suited the interests of the government.

This is precisely what a former legal luminary and a key BJP minister Arun Jaitley once stated inside and outside the Parliament condemning in unequivocal terms the practice of appointing retired judges in government positions. His words in the House on September 5, 2013, were emphatic and bear repetition: "The desire of a post-retirement job influences pre-retirement judgements. It is a threat to the independence of the judiciary."

Arun Jaitley was one of the triumvirate that ran the Narendra Modi-government since its installation in 2014 till his death. That his words can be turned upside down by the same government shows the latter's desperation and dire political necessity.

Justice Nazeer was part of the five-judge Bench that decided the disputed Ram Janmabhoomi case in November 2019 handing over the Ayodhya land to the Ramjanambhoomi Trust. The verdict was virtually a reward for criminals belonging to the saffron brigade who had pulled down the historic Babri Masjid. Close to his retirement on January 4 Justice Nazeer headed the Bench that upheld the Centre's Demonetization policy of November 2016. He was also part of a Constitution Bench that held that no further restriction can be added to the right to free speech under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.

Before Justice Nazeer the Modi-government appointed former Chief Justice of India P Sathasivam as Governor of Kerala. Former CJI, Ranjan Gogoi, who presided over the Bench for the Ayodhya Ram Mandir dispute, was made a Rajya Sabha member soon after his retirement.

This action takes further the process of making the judiciary pliant to the executive by dangling carrots so as to foist autocratic rule with impunity. Nazeer exemplifies the real danger to the country's democratic system.



Jagdish Rattanani

THE POINT TO NOTE IS THAT THE ADANI SAGA IS NOT OF ADANI FAILING BUT OF INDIA FAILING, EVEN IF THE STOCK MARKET HOLDS OUT IN THE NEAR TERM

FOCUS CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

A CASE FOR ACTION



Businesses that bring reforms a bad name and further reduce the already weak trust that Indians have in the private sector cannot be the future of a resurgent India

It would be a mistake to think that the sudden fall in market cap by as much as USD 100 billion since the Hindenburg allegations brought the Adani stocks tumbling, can be managed with government backing, or the perception that he remains in the good books of the political leadership.

The point to note is that the Adani saga is not of Adani failing but of India failing, even if the stock market holds out in the near term. This is the story of a liberalisation programme that has gone haywire, of a post-1991 era that has hit its limits because the road is hijacked by those who redefine entrepreneurship from risk-taking and gut instinct to safe bets under the patronage of fail-safe deals for the chosen few, marking the crony capitalists of our times.

This is not the India that can sustain economic reforms. Businesses that bring reforms a bad name and further reduce the already weak trust that Indians have in the private sector cannot be the future of a resurgent India. It bears repetition that a good deal of the agitation against farm laws was the inherent lack of faith in the poli-

cymaking institutions and private sector to which the business was being handed. An illustration of this was the way in which the BJP leader and former Governor Satya Pal Malik spoke against the farm laws and raised questions on how Adani came to acquire land for warehouses just when the farm laws arrived.

As it is, India at this stage of development does not appear to believe in the private sector. The Economic Survey of India for 2016-17 pointed out: "The ambivalence in India (about the private sector and property rights) seems to be greater than elsewhere...It appears that India has distinct anti-market beliefs."

In short, whatever Adani has done for the powers that be, the powers that be will have to take the call that this is the time to clean up the mess and dump some of the rogue players. There will be too much of a national price to pay if such passengers are carried for long.

It is true that India is not alone in having its share of scams. The US economy is known for bigger ones – Theranos, Madoff, Enron are

a few from a long list. And just as the Indian media handled Adani, the US media treated Enron – first a red carpet, and then the kitchen sink. In the Adani case, the would-be media baron is now under attack from a media that steered clear of him and even went out of its way to heap praise ("Self-made billionaire Gautam Adani had an exceptional 2022 even by his own standards," according to one cover story) while those who did raise questions paid the price. He obliquely made light of Rahul Gandhi in a friendly TV interview, had a book on himself published and arranged a book tour; the unveiling at no less a space than the venerable IIM-Ahmedabad. Now, the entire national media is engaged in disrobing the man who could do no wrong until very recently. To put it mildly, Adani has many problems and a bad press and an explosive Opposition are just two of the many thorns giving him sleepless nights.

Take the US. In the case of Enron, the biggest bankruptcy of its kind in 2001, the US media before the bankruptcy was among the cheer leaders for a business that was essentially a fraud. But when the fraud came to be known, the Enron biggies were convicted and jailed, never mind that Chairman Ken Lay was known to be very close to and funded the campaign of US President George Bush, and CEO Jeff Skilling was well-connected and a part of the powerful Harvard Business School network. The US regulators acted. Justice was swift. It has been so almost every time businesses have turned scandalous. In India, this has typically not happened and the damage to the system is deep – much more than the damage one Adani family can ever do.

The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR. Views are personal.

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Preserving a Palestinian refuge



Philippe Lazzarini

REFUGEE CHILDREN - ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST UNDERPRIVILEGED POPULATIONS - DESERVE BETTER

For nearly 75 years, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East has been delivering education to refugees in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Gaza, and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Beyond enabling refugees to continue learning, UNRWA provides them with a safe haven – a place where they can escape the conflict, violence, and deepening economic crises that shape their everyday reality. But our ability to meet refugee children's needs is being increasingly constrained, for a tragically simple reason: lack of money.

The only UN agency running a full-fledged school system, UNRWA offers students a chance to reach their potential. Since 1950, more than two million refugees have graduated from UNRWA schools, which, in the 1960s, were among the first schools in the Middle East to achieve gender parity. And we continue to play a vital role in the region's education system: some 550,000 Palestinian children currently learn in more than 700 UNRWA-run schools.

Refugees are often perceived as a burden. But UNRWA graduates have gone on to make invaluable contributions to their communities and economies, becoming teachers, doctors, engineers, and scientists.

One alumnus controlled a drone helicopter that skimmed the surface of Mars. Moreover, every year, our vocational and training centres provide 8,000 young people with the skills they need to become sought after in the labour market.

Simply put, UNRWA provides quality and inclusive education that enables refugees to live dignified, productive lives. And it does so under the most difficult of circumstances. In Syria, UNRWA schools have remained open, and counsellors have offered psychosocial support to children, even in the most tumultuous periods of the country's civil war.

UNRWA schools also act as refuges. In the West Bank and Lebanon, they are sanctuaries for children enduring harsh living conditions. As Jana, a ten-year-old girl living in the Al-Arroub refugee camp in the West Bank, put it, "School is like a second home. It's the only place where we can have fun, learn, and meet friends." In Gaza, schools are transformed into shelters in times of conflict.

Moreover, UNRWA schools seek to foster respect for human rights, peaceful conflict resolution, tolerance, and critical thinking. For example, in 2001, UNRWA established school parliaments. From helping to resolve conflicts between students to engaging their

community and representing students in discussions with school administration, our 28,000 student parliamentarians – including Jana – are advancing the interests and education of their peers, while gaining firsthand experience in responsible citizenship. Dozens of UNRWA schools connect every year with their counterparts on different continents to collaborate on global challenges like protecting the environment.

UNRWA is also working to modernise its curricula in line with global trends toward digitalisation and connectivity. Our Strategy on Information and Communication Technologies for Education (ICT4E), launched last year, aims to close the technology gap by providing tablets to students, increasing access to the internet, and introducing ICT/computer classes to provide the skills graduates need to compete in local, regional, and global job markets.

The value of UNRWA's work is indisputable. But chronic underfunding is restricting our ability to do it. Already, Palestinian refugee children too often learn in schools with inadequate facilities. Their classrooms are overcrowded, and they learn in double shifts. They lack access to recreational spaces or equipment, and often even to basic needs like food, clean water,

electricity, and the internet. Many cannot afford transportation to and from school. And, though trauma is widespread, the psychosocial support we offer is often insufficient.

Refugee children – one of the world's most underprivileged populations – deserve better. UNRWA needs reliable and sustained funding to cover the monthly salaries of more than 20,000 teachers and other education personnel, and invest in continuous training of teachers. We need funding to make up the learning losses from the COVID-19 pandemic, support children's psychosocial health and well-being, and provide the appropriate resources and facilities, from science labs to playgrounds. And we need funding to adapt our schools to the digital age and pioneer new programmes.

There is perhaps no worthier investment. Funding UNRWA's educational programme is tantamount to investing in a better future – for refugee children, their families, their communities, and a region in turmoil.

The writer is Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

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WISDOM CORNER

- It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop. **CONFUCIUS**
- Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. **HELEN KELLER**
- People may hear your words, but they feel your attitude. **JOHN C. MAXWELL**

WORDSWORTH

Fugleman

An obituary of Sir Rhodes Boyson, an eccentric and thoroughly conservative former headmaster who was a junior education minister under Margaret Thatcher, described him as an early fugleman for her cause. That's a rare word indeed. It tends these days to be used in the sense intended in the obituary, for a person who is a staunch advocate, a cheerleader or publicist, or – as Chambers Dictionary puts it in an odd intrusion of American slang into a Scots work – a mouthpiece. An older sense is that of a person who leads by example or an exemplar. Two decades ago, Philip Howard, a fine wordsmith and intrepid explorer of the byways of language, wrote of the famous editor of the Oxford English Dictionary: *The importance of Sir James Murray's pioneering work was recognized disgracefully late by his university, but it is now rightly recognized as fogleman for the rest of the world in lexicographical studies (The Times, 17 May 1990).* That meaning derives directly from the original German, Flügelmann, literally "wing man". He was a soldier of long experience, expert in the intensive drill of the old Prussian Army, who stood at the front and side of a company of soldiers to show how it should be done. The same technique was once used in the British Army, though an article in 1867 remarked that it had by then long since been done away with, only retained by a few old-fashioned yeomanry regiments such as the Gloucestershire Hussars. That article spelled it flugelman, but for half a century it had been appearing as fogleman, which has triumphed. Why the initial fl should have proved unattractive to British ears can't be explained: we seem happy enough with flügelhorns and flogging.

Fuliginous

The diarist John Evelyn wrote in 1661 about the dreadful smoke from coal fires in London that was so bad that "Her Inhabitants breathe nothing but an impure and thick Mist, accompanied with a fuliginous and filthy vapour ... corrupting the Lungs, and disordering the entire habit of their bodies, so that Catharrs, Phthisicks1, Coughs and Consumptions rage more in this one City than in the whole Earth besides." Fuliginous usually means sooty but it can also refer to a sooty or dusky colour ("The whole body is of a rather light fuliginous or brownish grey", which is in a description of the bird called Bonaparte's shearwater) or to some noxious vapour said in old medical texts to be formed by combustion within the body and which affected the head in particular ("It is not amiss to bore the skull with an instrument to let out the fuliginous vapours" – The Anatomy of Melancholy by Robert Burton.) The word is from Latin fuligo, soot, which has also been used in English with the same meaning. Fuligo ligni is the Latin for wood soot, a form of charcoal; it was once listed in the British Pharmacopoeia as an antispasmodic, for instance to help with the treatment of whooping cough.

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, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Political appointee

Sir, The recent appointment of Governors in six states by the Union government has uncovered the bleakness of our judiciary system. Justice S. Abdul Nazeer appointed as the Governor of Andhra Pradesh replacing Bishwa Bhushan Harichandan, is known to have favoured the current regime in many cases. His obsequiousness to protect the political masters was marked when he stood by the BJP's demonetisation move in 4:1 majority, calling it as constitutional. The reference of India as the 'world's largest democracy' would be for name-sake, if its sturdy pillar-judiciary -sucks up to power. In the past, CJI Ranjan Gogoi known for delivering a string of contentious judgements in favour of the BJP was awarded with Rajya Sabha post. Judiciary, being the last resort of civic groups needs to be independent for a vibrant democracy.

Debadurilav Harichandan, BHUBANESWAR

Self-reliant women

Sir, This refers to the article "Blueprint for empowerment", Orissa POST, Feb. 12. The Economic Survey 2022-23 presented in the Parliament last month-end has a special mention about India's little known, but high-impact banking operation – the women-led self-help groups (SHGs). Some sectors proved resilient even in the challenging times of the pandemic. Perhaps, the robust among these sectors is the SHG movement in India, which is one of the most powerful incubators of female resilience and entrepreneurship in rural areas. SHG is a powerful channel for altering the social construct of gender in the villages of India. With the emergence of SHGs, women in rural areas have become self-dependent and are able to create independent sources of income. There is little doubt that these women are breaking through the shackles of poverty, experiencing the dignity of self-reliance, and making a positive impact in their communities.

Ranganathan Sivakumar; CHENNAI

Successful chase

Sir, The women in blue kicked off their T20 World Cup campaign in style, humbling arch-rivals Pakistan by seven wickets in Cape Town. Jemimah Rodrigues (53 n.o) and Richa Ghosh (31 n.o) shone for India, stitching 58 runs for the unconquered fourth wicket as India chased down a stiff target of 150 with six balls remaining. This is India's highest successful chase in the T20 World Cup. The victory must come as a shot in the arm for Harmanpreet Kaur and company ahead of the more challenging battles.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

of the day quote

If the BJP stays in power, money sent from Delhi will reach the grassroots level, unlike what was the cause under the previous dispensation

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

I have made a new beginning in my department. If your television has a built-in satellite tuner, then there will be no need to have a separate set-top box. One can have access to more than 200 channels at the click of the remote

ANURAG THAKUR | INFORMATION & BROADCASTING MINISTER

It doesn't matter whether he (Narendra Modi) is Prime Minister of India, whether he has all the (investigating) agencies... Because the truth is not on his side. And one day, he will be forced to face his truth

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

Cop dragged on car's bonnet for 1.50km

Palghar: A traffic police constable was dragged on the bonnet of a car for nearly 1.50 km as its driver suddenly drove the vehicle after being stopped for jumping signal in Vasai town of Maharashtra's Palghar district, an official said Monday. The car driver, a 19-year-old man who did not possess a valid driving licence, was arrested after the incident Sunday evening and charged with attempt to murder among other offences, said senior inspector Sampatrao Patil of the Manickpur police station. The constable was on duty at a busy junction in Vasai on Mumbai's fringes when he spotted a car having Uttar Pradesh registration jumping traffic signal, and asked its driver to stop, Patil said.

Father-son duo killed in mishap

Jabalpur: A 45-year-old man and his 14-year-old son were killed Monday when a truck hit their motorcycle near a bypass on a national highway in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh, police said. The duo, identified as Suresh Choubey and his son Anash Choubey died on the spot, City Superintendent of Police (CSP) Tushar Singh told PTI. Sub-Divisional Magistrate Rishabh Jain said the people living around the spot of the accident near the Khajri Khiriyā bypass blocked the road demanding measures by local authorities to check frequent road accidents in the area.

Delhi: Gang forging Aadhar, PAN busted

New Delhi: With the arrest of three persons, the Delhi Police's Crime Branch said it has busted a racket involved in forging documents including Aadhaar cards, PAN card, and driving license for obtaining SIM cards, opening bank accounts and taking loans. The accused, who were operating from a cyber cafe in Jahangirpuri area, also used to sell the bank account details to other fraudsters, the official added.

Cold wave sweeps HP

Shimla: A piercing cold wave swept Himachal Pradesh Monday with the mercury plummeting to minus 13.2 degrees Celsius, 5 notches below normal, in Keylong, according to the meteorological department. Night temperatures dropped by two to six degrees despite dry weather in the state and remained below normal. Kusumseri recorded a minimum temperature of minus 12.1 degrees Celsius, almost 5 notches below normal.



They (BJP) ruled Jharkhand for 20 years but the state remained one of the most backward in the country

HEMANT SOREN | JHARKHAND CM

OVER 250 KVs RUNNING IN TEMPORARY BUILDINGS

Over 250 Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) across the country are functioning in temporary buildings, but none of them is operational in a rented accommodation, Union Minister Subhas Sarkar said Monday. The Minister of State for Education made the statement in response to a written question in the Lok Sabha



Top court dismisses plea against J&K delimitation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 13: The Supreme Court Monday dismissed a plea challenging the validity of delimitation of constituencies in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, saying there was "nothing illegal" about the exercise.

A bench of Justices S K Kaul and A S Oka, however, said it was not dealing with the validity of the matter concerning the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution as it was pending before another bench of the apex court.

Dismissing a plea filed by two Kashmir residents challenging the Centre's decision to constitute the delimitation commission for redrawing the legislative assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies in the UT, the bench referred to Articles 3, 4 and 239A of the Constitution and said Parliament was empowered by law to create a body of legislature for the UTs of Puducherry and J&K. "We have rejected the delimitation commission from the outset. It does not matter to us what the verdict is," Mehbooba told reporters.

The Congress unit of J&K said it was disappointed with the verdict.

The apex court also held there is "no illegality" associated with the establishment of the delimitation commission under the March 6, 2020 order by which the Centre had constituted a delimitation commission for redrawing the constituencies in the UT.

"There is nothing illegal about the exercise of delimitation/readjustment of the constituencies undertaken by the delimitation commission for the purposes of dividing the Union Territory into 90 constituencies on the basis of the 2011



census figures," the bench said in its 54-page verdict.

The plea was filed by Haji Abdul Gani Khan and Mohammad Ayub Mattoo. The bench, however, clarified that the findings rendered in the judgment are on the footing that the exercise of power made in 2019 under clauses

(1) and (3) of Article 370 of the Constitution is valid. "We are aware that the issue of the validity of the exercise of the said powers is the subject matter of petitions pending before this court. Therefore, we have not dealt with the issue of validity. Nothing stated in this judgment shall be construed as giving our imprimatur to the exercise of powers under clauses (1) and (3) of Article 370 of the Constitution," it said.

The top court is seized of separate petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 on August 5, 2019. Several petitions have been filed in the apex court challenging the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 and the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019, which split J&K into two Union Territories — Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. By abrogating Article 370, the Central government revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. In its verdict delivered Monday, the bench noted that during the hearing, the counsel appearing for the petitioners attempted to assail the validity of certain provisions of the J&K Reorganisation Act. It noted that initially, the counsel said the petitioners did not wish to challenge the provisions but subsequently, he argued that a challenge to relevant provisions of the J&K Reorganisation Act was implicit in this plea.

Rajya Sabha goes into month-long recess



The first part of the Budget session was marked by frequent disruptions over the demand for a JPC on the Hindenburg report's allegations of irregularities against the Adani group, which has denied the charges

The issue dominated the proceedings in Parliament as the Opposition unitedly demanded that a JPC be set up to probe the crash of stock prices of Adani group companies leading to huge loss of capital including to some PSUs like SBI and LIC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 13: Rajya Sabha, which went into a month-long recess Monday, saw the first half of the Budget session being overshadowed by the Adani issue, with proceedings disrupted on the last day also as protesting opposition MPs, some of whom were named by the Chair, pressed their demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe.

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar named around eight MPs of the Opposition who were shouting slogans in the Well but did not specify the action against them.

Asking the Opposition to maintain decorum and allow the Question Hour to continue, he said,

"Does the public expect us to be like this... It does not". "I am constrained on account of persistent obstruction and I would go to the extent of saying deliberate obstruction...", he said. The Chairman said that precious time had been lost already.

Before adjourning the House till next month, he warned. "Members, I am pleading with you for the last time. If the House is subjected to such kind of disturbance, disruption, violation of rules, I will be constrained to act as per expectations of the people." The House will now meet at 11 am March 13. On Friday, the chairman suspended Congress' Rajani Patil for the remaining part of the budget session for circulating an unauthorised video of House proceedings.



Players during the 3rd edition of Khelo India Winter Games, 2023, in Gulmarg, Jammu and Kashmir

PTI PHOTO

Dalit student death: IIT-B orders probe

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Feb 13: The IIT-Bombay Monday condoled the death by suicide of B.Tech First Year Dalit student, Darshan Solanki, terming it as "a great loss to the family and to the IITB community."

In its first reaction, the IIT-B said: "It is unfortunate that such a loss

could not be prevented despite the efforts of the Institute and Student Mentors to support our students. A committee has been constituted to investigate the incident."

The IIT-B held a condolence meeting and observed two minutes of silence in memory of the departed soul, said a spokesperson. In a shocking incident, Solanki,

18, jumped to his death from the 7th floor of his hostel building in the Powai Campus Sunday afternoon, after his first semester exams for the Chemical Engineering course a day earlier. According to certain reports, Solanki reportedly did not heed warning shouts from other co-students who noticed him just before he took the plunge to death.

Earlier Monday, a student group, the Ambedkar Periyar Phule Study Circle-IITB had pointed fingers at the IIT-B for alleged discrimination prevalent on the Powai Campus against students from reserved categories, various lapses on the part of the management to address their distress, etc., and sought redressal.

Govt can't act as robber of citizens: K'taka HC

Quoting St Augustine from his 5th century book 'The City of God,' the Court said, "Without justice, what else is the State but a great band of robbers?"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Feb 13: Coming down heavily on the Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB), the High Court of Karnataka has said that the government cannot "act as robbers".

Petitioners M V Guruprasad and Nandini Guruprasad approached the HC against the acquisition of their land by KIADB in 2007. Initially, their names were missing from the acquisition notification. It took them seven years to get the government to issue a corrigendum in 2014 and include their names. However, no compensation has been paid to them ever since. "There is no plausible explanation

as to why the payment of compensation is withheld for a decade and half," Justice Krishna S Dixit said in his recent judgment.

Though the challenge to land acquisition was rejected by the Court, it ordered that the compensation should be re-fixed at the rate of 50 per cent computed under the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013. The KIADB was also directed to pay a cost of Rs 25,000 per acre to the petitioners.

Coming down heavily on the authorities, the HC in its judgment said, "The government cannot act as a robber of citizens lands; taking away private lands for the pur-



ported public purpose sans compensation militates against the spirit of constitutional guarantee

enacted under Article 300A, the fundamental right to property no longer being on the statute book,

notwithstanding."

Five acres and one gunta of land of Guruprasad and 38 guntas of land in the name of his wife Nandini were acquired by the KIADB. Sites were formed on it and the court noted that after allotment these have fetched Rs 7.5 crore to the KIADB, "that too, with the rebate rate of 50 percent of the market value."

The non-payment of compensation and the "conduct reinforces the shackles of a feudalistic attitude from which the transformative character of our constitution seeks to liberate. Their action in not paying the compensation is not only grossly violative of property rights constitutionally guaranteed under

Article 300A but gnaws at overarching objectives of a Welfare State ordained under the Constitution," the court said.

It directed the authorities to compute and pay the compensation along with an additional interest at 12 per cent per annum.

Quoting a 1904 US case (Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes in Davis Vs Mills), the HC said, "Constitutions are intended to preserve practical and substantial rights, not to maintain theories."

The court also expressed "its deep anguish against the culpable action of Respondent-KIADB and its officials in putting the petitioner-land-losers to a great hardship and misery."



Guv seeks to pick holes on DMK's social justice plank

THIS WAS THE GOVERNOR'S FRESH ATTACK ON THE RULING PARTY AFTER A GAP OF ABOUT A MONTH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Feb 13: Although there is a lot of talk on social justice, Dalits in Tamil Nadu face atrocities of some kind every other day, Governor RN Ravi has said apparently targeting the ruling DMK after a gap of about a month.

Had the nation listened to Dr BR Ambedkar, partition could have been averted or it would not have been not as traumatic as it was since millions died and several millions were displaced, he said.

Atrocities against Scheduled Castes ranged from throwing human feces in the water tank of a Dalit colony, public humiliation, assault, no entry into temples and discrimination at anganwadis, he said seeking to corner the governing party over its avowed ideals of social justice.

In his address at the release of Tamil versions of 'Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery' and 'Ambedkar and Modi—Reformer's ideals, performer's implementation' here Sunday, he said the response of the law enforcement and criminal justice system was awful when it came to crimes against Dalits in the state. The conviction rate was just 7 per cent in rape cases vis-a-vis Dalit women.

Referring to a Comptroller and Auditor General of India report, he said 30 per cent of Centre's funds for building houses for Dalits remained unspent and a major component of the rest of the fund got diverted for other purposes.



Earlier, Dr Ambedkar was used for the purpose of political mobilisation and "thanks to Prime Minister Modi we have started talking about him." Some people used to swear on Ambedkar's name either to accuse the other person over some issue or for praising oneself.

Hailing Babasaheb as a great nationalist, Ravi said when the British regime tried to create a 'separate electorate for SC/ST' and there by divide the society further, Ambedkar stood like a rock and did not allow that.

When Muslim League started demanding Pakistan, the Indian National Congress thought that they could manage the matter but Ambedkar forewarned against it.

Citing a book of the architect of the Constitution, 'Pakistan or the partition of India,' written before the nation's partition, the Governor said: "Had we listened to him, perhaps partition could have been

averted or it would not have been as traumatic (as it was), millions died and several millions were displaced and rendered homeless. But, we did not listen to him."

Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, L Murugan, Anna University Vice-Chancellor, R Velraj and Director IIT-Madras V Kamakoti and former Vice-Chancellor, TN Dr MGR Medical University, Sudha Seshayyan took part.

Last month, Ravi walked out from the state assembly following a face-off with Chief Minister MK Stalin over the former's customary address to members of the house in its first session of the year.

In his address, Ravi skipped a few portions of the draft prepared by the government, prompting Stalin to move a resolution to expunge from records all such comments made by the Governor that didn't conform to the draft.

Rahul's BJY boosts party prospects in Karnataka

Karnataka is one among the few states where land reforms were implemented in the true spirit and lakhs of beneficiaries are loyal followers of the party

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Feb 13: While the grand old party is facing a crisis like situation in all other states, the Congress is closer to the seat of power in Karnataka, according to political analysts.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra led by Rahul Gandhi has boosted the party's prospects in the assembly elections scheduled to be held in less than two months.

Rahul Gandhi covered 511 km by walking for 21 days during the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Karnataka in three stages. The yatra evoked a huge response from the public when it entered the state. It passed through seven Lok Sabha and 20 assembly constituencies.

Congress leader Sonia Gandhi came down to Karnataka during the yatra and walked along with her son Rahul in the Mandya district of the state. The yatra has reminded the people of the Congress party's contributions to the state especially the implementation of the Land Reforms Act.

Karnataka is one among the few states where land reforms were implemented in the true spirit and lakhs of beneficiaries are loyal followers of the party. The act gave the land to the tiller, making them



landowners.

More importantly, the Yatra successfully projected the candidatures of Opposition leader Siddaramaiah and Karnataka Congress president DK Shivakumar for the post of chief minister if the Congress is voted to power.

Rahul Gandhi clearly stated that the party MLAs will elect their leader and to a great extent put an end to the rivalry between the two leaders. Shivakumar and Siddaramaiah have been effectively questioning and launching attacks on the state as well as central BJP leaders. Siddaramaiah is vehemently opposing the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Hindutva, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Shivakumar has ridiculed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED). He had charged that the CBI and the ED are existent only for the opposition parties. He said that he would give a piece of his mind to the CBI to look after other important work rather than targeting him

and his family. The ruling BJP, which is trying to manage the anti-incumbency factor and return to power is making an all out effort in the state. The seriousness could be seen in Modi and Amit Shah's repeated visits to the state.

The special mention of Karnataka during the presentation of the budget, budgetary allocation for the Upper Bhadra Project, approval for Detailed Project Report of the Kalasa-Banduri Project to utilize the waters of Mahadayi river, Modi and Amit Shah underlining the importance of the double engine government of the BJP for the development of the state are all part of the strategy to counter the Congress party.

The Congress has declared that an internal survey conducted by the party has given them a comfortable majority in the state in the upcoming elections. It maintains that competition between Shivakumar and Siddaramaiah for the post of CM has helped the party to grow stronger in the state.

The BJP which is claiming that

it would fight the elections under a collective leadership and seek votes in the name of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has not been able to project a CM candidate so far. The Congress is clearly projecting Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar as its probable CM candidates.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai had ridiculed the Bharat Jodo Yatra as another attempt to relaunch a failed missile called Rahul Gandhi.

Lavanya Ballal, national social media coordinator from Karnataka, stated that the Yatra has been successful in waking up the nation to the hate narrative they are being fed. It was a timely reminder that our great nation was built on the foundation of peace. "We have a choice to treat fellow citizens with hate or build the nation with peace and love," she said. The Yatra was a very positive movement, it showed the citizens that the BJP government has been lying and cheating. "We didn't design the yatra for election purposes so we have not looked into its impact on the state election," she maintained.

KARNATAKA CASTE CENSUS

Report gathers dust as politicians fear its fallout

The politics in Karnataka is caste-driven and caste groups, caste seers, especially from Lingayat, Vokkaliga and Kuruba communities play an important role in elections

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Feb 13: The report of the Karnataka caste census has been kept under wraps because of the politics surrounding it. Leaked findings of the report indicate that Lingayats and Vokkaligas are outnumbered by Dalits and Muslims.

The leaked findings went on to become sensational news in the state and triggered a huge controversy. Lingayats and Vokkaligas who played an important role solely by the numbers, faced the challenge of politically becoming not so relevant.

The politics in Karnataka is caste-driven and caste groups, caste seers, especially from Lingayat, Vokkaliga and Kuruba communities play an important role in elections. The seers will also wield greater influence on the successive governments.

The Congress government led by Siddaramaiah in Karnataka ordered for Social and Educational



H. Kantharaj

Vokkaliga communities from all three political parties want to bury the report. Siddaramaiah, who got the survey done for the first time in the country since 1935, was not able to accept and reveal the findings of the report.

After Siddaramaiah, his successor HD Kumaraswamy of JD(S) came to power and the coalition government did not bother to look into the issue. Congress leaders started vehemently demanding for making the findings of caste survey public when BJP grabbed power.

Siddaramaiah, the Leader of Opposition, charged and challenged BJP to make the caste census pub-

lic. He also attacked Kumaraswamy. Former CM BS Yediyurappa, CM Basavaraj Bommai and Kumaraswamy chided Siddaramaiah as to why he did not do the job. Siddaramaiah in turn questioned them that he accepts that he couldn't release the report and why they are not interested?

The heated exchange of words over the issue lasted for a few months. As the state is heading to assembly elections in less than two months, all political parties are tight-lipped on the caste census. No one wants to antagonise any community, especially Lingayats and Vokkaligas in the state, sources explain.

Kota Srinivas Poojari, Minister for Social Welfare, stated that the ball is in the court of Backwards Commission. It has to submit the report first and then the ruling BJP government can decide over it.

Former Chairperson of the Commission CS Dwarakanath has demanded several times that since a huge amount of Rs 168 crore had been spent on the caste census, it should be made public. Siddaramaiah had charged ruling BJP that it is deliberately not accepting the report. BJP has maintained that the issue is being raised only to get political mileage.



A team of the Indian Air Force performs during the inauguration of the Aero India 2023, at Yelahanka air base in Bangalore, Karnataka, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Exotic pets trade continues unabated in many TN cities

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Feb 13: The sale of exotic pets continues unabated in Chennai and other cities like Tiruchi, Madurai and Coimbatore and its outskirts even after the imported pets are being seized at international airports in Tamil Nadu.

In the past fifty days, two consignments of exotic pets were seized at Chennai international airport. They included mangabeys, pythons and marmosets.

Interestingly 171-star tortoises meant for export to far eastern countries were also intercepted at Chennai airport in the last fifty days. In the first seizure of 2023, 45 varieties of ball pythons, three marmosets, and eight corn snakes were caught by customs at Chennai airport.

PR Saravanan, an animal rights activist based out of Chennai told



IANs, "The animals which are classified as exotic species are being smuggled in tight containers and the animals are stressed during travel. The sale of these exotic pets is touching lakhs and crores in Tamil Nadu and the illegal trade has to be curbed by the authorities."

However, sources in the Chennai City police told IANS that there is

a lack of coordination between the Customs department and the police and this has helped several smugglers to go scot-free.

Another issue that is plaguing the law enforcers is the failure to ascertain the exact value of the seized exotic species.

Tiruchi, Madurai and Coimbatore, the cities where international flights land, are also thriving hot spots for the sale of exotic species.

According to animal rights activists, the smuggled exotic species of animals are taken to other states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Kerala from these airports.

Customs officials told IANS that the seized smuggled species are sent back to their country of origin. The officials were tight-lipped when asked about handing over these cases to the Tamil Nadu police.

TN mahouts, cavadies train in Thailand

THAI ELEPHANT CONSERVATION CENTRE IS A REPUTED ELEPHANT CAMP KNOWN FOR ITS SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO MANAGE ELEPHANTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Feb 13: As many as 13 mahouts (elephant trainers) and cavadies (assistants) from Tamil Nadu successfully completed a training camp at Thai Elephant Conservation Centre, Lampang, on taking better care of captive elephants, the Forest Department said Monday.

These elephant trainers and assistants from the Anamalai and Mudumalai elephant camps, respectively, were sent to Thailand in November 2022 for undergoing training, capacity building and learning about the best practices on better management and maintenance of camp elephants at the Thai Elephant Conservation Centre. "It was great to interact with the mahouts and cavadies as they just returned from their highly successful first ever training at

the Thailand Elephant Conservation Centre. Way to go #TNForest," Tamil Nadu Additional Chief Secretary, Environment Climate Change & Forests, Supriya Sahu said in a tweet.

Updating their training programme, she said that the training involved exchanging knowledge on care for old elephants, preparing food, importance of nutrition, evaluation of health parameters with veterinary doctors, etc.

These 13 men were felicitated at a function held at the Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Vandalur, here Monday, upon their arrival.

"Scientific management of captive elephants is an extremely important intervention for elephant conservation. Tamil Nadu is a pioneer State in rehabilitation and maintenance of captive elephants. Mahouts and cavadies are the backbone of captive elephant care," a



release from the Forest Department said.

Considering the better conservation of elephants, it is essential that mahouts and cavadies of Tamil Nadu Forest Department were exposed to the best practices available around the world which can be adopted for the better maintenance of captive elephants being main-

tained at forest department camps, the release further said.

Thai Elephant Conservation Centre is a reputed elephant camp known for its scientific approach to manage elephants. It acts as a centre for research and is at the forefront in treating sick elephants in Thailand and also offers mahout training and homestay.

of the day quote

The government is committed to maintain a balance between improving the fishing performance and minimising its negative impacts

JATINDRA NATH SWAIN | UNION FISHERIES SECRETARY

Everyone knows the situation in Kerala. Amit Shah should tell what is wrong here... Minorities in Karnataka face widespread attacks whereas religious minorities are safe in Kerala

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CM

Uttar Pradesh is fast emerging as a new economy through its digital platform in front of the world

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Gang hacks man to death in public view

Coimbatore: A four-member gang Monday hacked a man to death near the District Court Complex here in full public view, police said. Gokul, along with his friend Manoj, has come to attend a hearing in connection with a case against him and went to the tea shop behind the court complex, they said. The gang, which was following the duo, suddenly took out lethal weapons and attacked Gokul grievously. His friend, who attempted to rescue him, was also attacked, police said. Though a majority of the people present managed to escape, a group tried to catch the gang, which managed to flee the place.

Custodial death: Two constables suspended

Bijoor: Two police constables have been suspended in connection with the custodial death of a 46-year-old man in the Dhampur area here, an official said Monday. On Sunday, the police received a complaint from one Ghasiram about his son-in-law creating a ruckus after getting drunk. Rajiv was detained at the Shivpuri police outpost where he died under mysterious circumstances, the official had said earlier. However, Rajiv died at the district hospital, the SP said.

Hutments gutted; minor boy killed

Mumbai: A 12-year-old boy was killed after a fire broke out in a structure and engulfed several hutments in Kurar village in Malad suburb of Mumbai Monday, a fire brigade official said. The blaze erupted at around 11.15 am and soon spread to "50 to 100 hutments," the official said, adding it was doused after almost three hours. Initially, it was declared as a 'level-two' (major) fire but was later scaled down to 'level 1', he said. After the incident, a boy was rushed to Shatabdi hospital where he was declared brought dead, the official said.

Babul Supriyo hospitalised

Kolkata: Singer-turned-politician and West Bengal Tourism Minister Babul Supriyo was Monday admitted to a hospital in Kolkata following complaints of severe chest pain, along with extreme uneasiness and excessive sweating. His family said that he started complaining of mild chest pain and uneasiness since Sunday evening only. However, the condition turned critical on Monday morning following which he was admitted at a private hospital in south Kolkata.

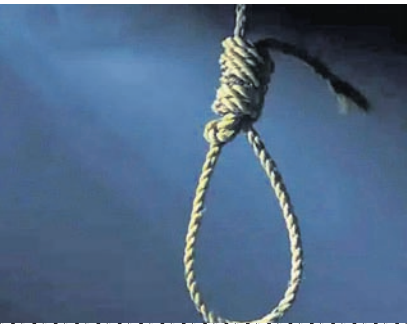


The BSF has unleashed terror in the border areas of West Bengal. Innocent people are being killed in these areas. The Centre never bothers to send a fact-finding team to look into these killings

MAMATA BANERJEE | WB CM

SHOCKING REPORT

A total of 1.12 lakh daily wage earners committed suicide in three years -- 2019 to 2021, Union Labour Minister Bhupender Yadav said in Lok Sabha Monday, quoting reports of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)



Rahul Gandhi kickstarts Wayanad constituency visit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wayanad (Kerala), Feb 13: Senior Congress leader and Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi Monday visited the house of a tribal man who was found dead near Kozhikode medical college recently. Vishwanathan (46) was found hanging near the medical college hospital at Kozhikode February 11, where his wife was admitted for delivery. Gandhi, who reached the Kozhikode airport Sunday night, visited the house of Vishwanathan in Wayanad district this morning along with party leaders after the family suspected foul play behind the tribal man's death. Gandhi, who represents Wayanad constituency in Lok Sabha, spent some



time with the family at Paravayal Colony, listening to their woes and complaints and consoled them. After visiting the family, Gandhi alleged that Vishwanathan was the victim of a mob trial and a comprehensive probe should be carried out into the incident. "Viswanathan's family should get justice," he said in a tweet in Malayalam, posted on his Lok Sabha office account.



Tulips blossom in the lawns of Shanti Path in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

Top court refuses CBI challenge to NSE ex-MD's bail

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 13: The Supreme Court Monday refused to interfere with a Delhi High Court order granting bail to Chitra Ramkrishna, a former managing director of the National Stock Exchange, in the co-location scam case being probed by the CBI. Rejecting an appeal by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) challenging the high court's September 28 last year order, a bench of justices Ajay Rastogi and Bela M Trivedi clarified that the observations made in the high court's order will be construed only for grant of default bail and not affect the merits of the trial. "We find no reasons to interfere with the bail order," the apex court said and added that all questions of law are left open.

It also refused to interfere with the high court's order granting bail to the exchange's former group operating officer (GOO), Anand Subramanian, who was arrested in the case February 24 last year.

The CBI had arrested Ramkrishna March 6 last year, a day after her anticipatory bail application was dismissed by a trial court. She was granted bail by the high court in the co-location case September 28 last year. On February 9, the high court also granted her bail in a money laundering case lodged by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) related to alleged illegal phone tapping and snooping of National Stock Exchange (NSE) employees.

She was arrested in the ED case July 14 last year. During the hearing in the apex court, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Sanjay Jain, representing the CBI, contended that the high court's order was "absolutely misconceived".



OLD BUDGET ROW Gehlot hits back at Modi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Feb 13: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot Monday called his state budget a "model" for others to follow and offered to send a copy to the Centre, a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi poked fun over a goof-up during his Budget presentation.

Gehlot said he rectified his mistake within "34 seconds", and claimed that the BJP is rattled by his government's performance in the Congress-run state that goes to the polls this year-end.

"I can send the copy of the Budget to the prime minister and he can send it to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. They will realise that our budget is a model budget," the Rajasthan CM told PTI.

"The budget we presented in Rajasthan can become a model budget for the country. We have taken care of all sections, all families. I can claim that such a budget is rare," he added. During the interview, the chief minister also played down divisions within the

At a rally in Rajasthan's Dausa Sunday, Modi had picked on a blunder at the Rajasthan Budget presentation Friday, when Gehlot mistakenly read portions of the last year's budget in the Assembly

The PM taunted that the Congress lacks vision and its announcements remain just on paper

Congress in Rajasthan, where he and his former deputy Sachin Pilot have been at loggerheads. Pilot had led a rebellion in 2020 for change of leadership in the state.

Reacting to Modi's charge at the Dausa rally that the Congress did not carry out infrastructure development in border areas fearing that the enemy might use the new roads to advance into Indian territory, the CM accused the prime minister of ignoring the work done in the past. The CM claimed that the BJP in Rajasthan is disturbed due to the performance of the state government in health, education, social security and infrastructure development.

Nominated members can't vote: Apex court

Amid a prolonged tussle between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the BJP, there have been three failed attempts to elect the Mayor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 13: Nominated members of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) cannot vote in the mayoral election and the constitutional provision is "very clear" on that, the Supreme Court observed Monday.

As a bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud posted for Friday the hearing on a plea filed by AAP mayoral candidate Shelly

Oberoi seeking early holding of the mayoral poll, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Sanjay Jain, appearing for the office of Delhi lieutenant governor, said the February 16 poll would be postponed to a date after February 17.

"Nominated members cannot go for election. The constitutional provision is very clear," the bench, also comprising Justices P S Narasimha and J B Pardiwala, orally observed. "Nominated mem-



bers should not vote. That is very well settled. It is very clear Mr Jain," the CJJ told the ASG.

However, Jain said he would argue on this aspect. Advocate Shadan Farasat, appearing for

the petitioner is seeking two directions - nominated members should not be permitted to vote and the elections of mayor, deputy mayor and standing committee be separated.

Oberoi, told the bench that the petitioner is seeking two directions - nominated members should not be permitted to vote and the elections of mayor, deputy mayor and standing committee be separated.

GOVT'S U-TURN ON 'COW HUG DAY'

"One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," said an American astronaut as he set foot on the Moon in 1969.

Decades later in far-off India near similar sentiments seemed struggling to bubble up when officialdom decreed that the country progress from thrashing courting couples on Valentine's Day to kissing cows.

Humour apart, the official appeal issued by the Animal Welfare Board of India was to observe February 14 as Cow Hug Day. It will bring emotional richness and increase individual and collective happiness.

Vedic traditions are on the verge

of extinction due to the progress of Western culture and the dazzle of Western civilisation has made our physical culture and heritage almost forgotten, the advisory noted.

The average Indian venerates the cow cutting across caste, class and even religious divides and it does not require an official advisory to teach him its virtues.

In a world where all manner of days and nights are celebrated with equal commercial aplomb-from rose day to propose day and kiss day to hug day - showering love on a selected bovine breed could never be an issue. It is however the devil in the detail that raises suspicion of intent. A cow day has the

intrinsic strength to stand on its own four feet, why inject forced religiosity to super-impose it on a day- Valentine's Day - that the young cel-



eborate with verve and joy. A tech-platform has been quoted in an American magazine as saying that Indians spent between \$100 to 200 million in Valentine Day's gifts and experiences in 2020 alone.

Romance is not alien to India and if the mere name Valentine raises the heckles of the orthodox, it would do well to remember Aryan origins.

The super-imposition tried earlier replacing Valentine's Day with 'matr-pitr diwas' in Rajasthan and subsequently overturned failed and neither did the moral policing by the right wing inspired vigilantes have more than a momentary impact for soft emotions and primal instincts, particularly among the willing, cannot be contained by blandishing carrots or brandishing sticks.

What the latest attempt and backtrack has done is fill the social media with jokes and banter.

So we have Congress leader Sashi Tharoor asking whether the government was "cow-ed" by the jokes made at its expense or was it merely "cow-ardice".

My guess is the original appeal was an oral instruction; Valentine's Day: let them hug their guy and the last word was misheard by a Hindi Rashtravadi as gaay !...numerous take-offs on the theme continue to hog social space. As for the state of the cows Union Minister Parshottam Rupala said in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha that cattle deaths due to the Lumpy skin disease in the country during 2022 stood at 1,55,366.

This viral disease transmitted by blood-feeding insects which af-

fects cattle, largely cows, took the country by storm last year though the government and a conniving section of the media sought to play down the impact, with elections in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh on the anvil.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations is on record that LSD causes grave economic losses. In India where underplaying is the norm unless politically expedient, no such calculations have been carried out. Minister Rupala has made it clear that while preventive care and symptom-specific antibiotics are there, no specific anti-viral drugs are presently available to cure the illness.

international

of the day quote

The government is delivering on its election commitment to provide a permanent visa pathway for some temporary visa holders

ANDREW GILES | AUSTRALIAN IMMIGRATION MINISTER

At the invitation of President Xi Jinping, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ebrahim Raisi will pay a state visit to China from February 14 to 16

HUA CHUNYING | SPOKESPERSON FOR CHINA'S FOREIGN MINISTRY

Today's decision of the Israeli cabinet to legalise nine illegal settlement outposts is a challenge to the Arab and international efforts and a provocation to the Palestinian people

NABIL ABU RUDEINEH | SPOKESMAN OF THE PALESTINIAN PRESIDENCY

SHORT TAKES

Palestinian killed

Ramallah: A Palestinian was killed, and five were injured early Monday by Israeli soldiers during clashes in the northern West Bank city of Nablus, Palestinian medics and eyewitnesses said. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Nablus said that Amir Bustami, 21, died in the hospital due to severe injuries after being shot by Israeli soldiers, Xinhua news agency reported. It said in a statement that the five others were moderately injured during clashes between dozens of Palestinian young men and the Israeli armed forces.

Three nabbed

Nairobi: Kenyan police said Monday that they are interrogating three suspects with 12 pieces of elephant tusks with a street value of 5.8 million shillings (46,290 U.S. dollars) in the lakeside town of Naivasha, northwest of Nairobi. National police spokesperson Resila Onyango said security forces recovered 58 kilograms of elephant tusks from the three suspects who were arrested on Sunday in Naivasha, Xinhua news agency reported. Onyango said that going by the number of recovered tusks, it shows six elephants were killed.

Quake hits NZ

Hong Kong: An earthquake with a magnitude of 6.1 jolted Kermadec Islands in New Zealand at 09:18:07 GMT on Monday, the U.S. Geological Survey said. The epicentre, with a depth of 374.033 km, was initially determined to be at 29.5218 degrees south latitude and 177.9727 degrees west longitude.

4,815 victims in Portugal church sex abuse scandal: Report

THE MAJORITY OF THE SEXUAL ABUSES TOOK PLACE WHEN THE CHILDREN WERE AGED 10-14, WITH THE YOUNGEST VICTIM BEING JUST TWO-YEAR-OLD

REUTERS

Lisbon, Feb 13: At least 4,815 children were sexually abused by members of the Portuguese Catholic Church - mostly priests - over the past 70 years, a report by the commission investigating the issue said Monday, adding the findings are the tip of the iceberg.

"(We want) to pay a sincere tribute to those who were abuse victims during their childhood and dared to give a voice to silence," said child psychiatrist Pedro Strecht, who headed the commission. "They are much more than a statistic."

Strecht said the 4,815 cases

US sent balloons more than 10 times: China

BLAME GAME

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, Feb 13: China Monday said more than 10 US high-altitude balloons have flown in its airspace during the past year without its permission, following Washington's accusation that Beijing operates a fleet of surveillance balloons around the world.

The United States denied that it operates any surveillance balloons over China. The Chinese allegation came after the US shot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon that had crossed from Alaska to South Carolina, sparking a new crisis in bilateral relations that have spiralled to their lowest level in decades.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin gave no details about the alleged US balloons, how they had been dealt with or whether they had government or military links. "It is also common for US balloons to illegally enter the airspace of other countries," Wang said at a daily briefing.

"Since last year, US high-altitude balloons have illegally flown over China's airspace more than 10 times without the approval of Chinese authorities," Wang said the US should "first reflect on itself and change course, rather

China says the balloon shot down by the US was an unmanned airship made for meteorological research that had been blown off course



Youths must fight and defeat the challenge of the blockade, sanctions and attacks of the United States

NICOLAS MADURO | VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT

The Chinese allegation came after the US shot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon that had crossed from Alaska to South Carolina, sparking a new crisis in bilateral relations that have spiralled to their lowest level in decades

than smear and instigate a confrontation".

China says the balloon shot down by the US was an unmanned airship made for meteorological research that had been blown off course. It has accused the US of overreacting by shooting it down and threatened to take unspecified action in response.

In Washington, National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said on Monday that any claim that the US government operates surveillance balloons over China is false. "It is China that has a high-altitude surveillance balloon program for intelligence collection, connected

It is also common for US balloons to illegally enter the airspace of other countries

WANG WENBIN | CHINA'S FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

to the People's Liberation Army, that it has used to violate the sovereignty of the United States and over 40 countries across five continents," Watson said.

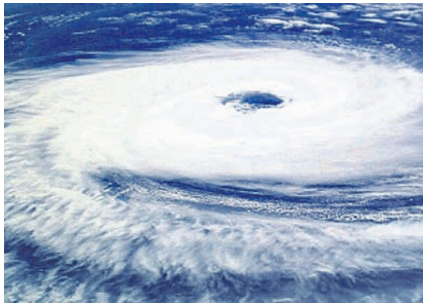
"This is the latest example of China scrambling to do damage control. It has repeatedly and



People inspect the rubble of a destroyed building hit by Israeli airstrikes in Gaza City

NZ DECLARES EMERGENCY

New Zealand declared a state of emergency Monday as Cyclone Gabrielle started to lash the North Island



DEADLY QUAKE

Victims face despair as rescue efforts wane



EXPERTS SAY GIVEN THE FREEZING TEMPERATURES — AND THE TOTAL COLLAPSE OF SO MANY BUILDINGS — THE WINDOW FOR SUCH RESCUES IS NEARLY SHUT

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Adiyaman (Turkey), Feb 13: Thousands left homeless by a massive earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria a week ago packed into crowded tents or lined up in the streets for hot meals on Monday, while the desperate search for anyone still alive likely entered its last hours.

A crew wrested a four-year-old girl from rubble in hard-hit Adiyaman, 177 hours after the 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck. The rescuers were among thousands of local and overseas teams, including Turkish coal miners and experts aided by sniffer dogs and thermal cameras, who scoured pulverized apartment blocks for signs of life.

While stories of near-miraculous rescues have flooded the airwaves in recent days — many broadcast live on Turkish television and beamed around the world — tens of thousands of dead have been found during the same period.

Experts say given the freezing temperatures — and the total col-

lapse of so many buildings — the window for such rescues is nearly shut. The quake and hundreds of aftershocks, some nearly as powerful as the first, struck south-eastern Turkey and northern Syria on February 6, killing more than 35,000 and reducing whole swaths of towns and cities inhabited by millions to fragments of concrete and twisted metal.

Some 100 kilometres (62 miles) from the epicentre, almost no houses were left standing in the village of Polat, where residents salvaged refrigerators, washing machines and other goods from wrecked homes.

Not enough tents have arrived for the homeless, said survivor Zehra Kurukafa, forcing families to share the tents that are available. "We sleep in the mud, all together with two, three, even four families," said Kurukafa.

In the city of Adiyaman, 25-year-old Musa Bozkurt waited for a vehicle to bring him and others to the city of Afyon, in western Turkey. "We're going away, but we have no idea what will happen when we get there," Bozkurt said. "We have no goal. Even if there was (a plan) what good will it be after this hour? I no longer have my father or my uncle. What do I have left?"

Fuat Ekinci, a 55-year-farmer, was reluctant to leave his home for Afyon despite the destruction, saying he didn't have the means to live elsewhere and had fields that need to be tended.

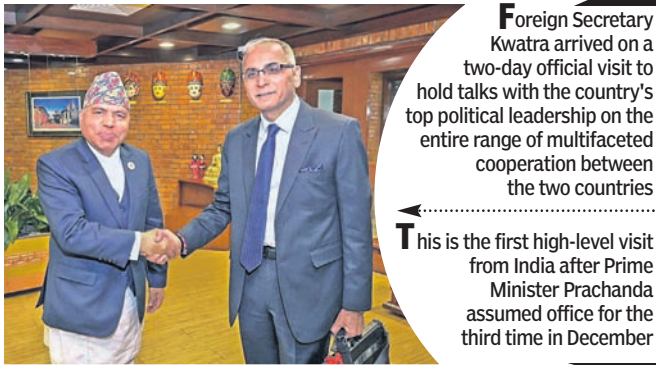
FRUITFUL CONVERSATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, Feb 13: India and Nepal agreed Monday to further bolster their economic and development cooperation as Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra met his Nepalese counterpart Bharat Raj Paudyal and also held productive discussions with the country's top leadership on strengthening the comprehensive bilateral relations.

Kwatra arrived here on a two-day official visit to hold talks with the country's top leaders on the entire range of multifaceted cooperation between the two neighbouring countries. Soon after his arrival here, Kwatra met his Nepalese counterpart Paudyal and reviewed the wide-ranging India-Nepal partnership, the Indian embassy tweeted. "Both sides agreed to further strengthen their economic

India, Nepal agree to boost ties



Indian Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra with Nepal's Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal during a meeting in Nepal

and development cooperation for benefit of the two countries and region as a whole," it said.

Foreign Secretary Kwatra called on Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" and held productive discussions on bilateral is-

sues across various sectors, including economic and development cooperation, the embassy tweeted.

Kwatra also paid a courtesy call on Nepal President Bidya Devi Bhandari at Sheetal Niwas and conveyed the greetings on behalf of

President of India Droupadi Murmu. Earlier, he called on Foreign Minister of Nepal Bimala Rai Paudyal and had a fruitful exchange on strengthening the comprehensive India-Nepal relations.

Kwatra called on Paudyal and had a fruitful exchange on strengthening the comprehensive India-Nepal relations, the Indian mission tweeted. "Various aspects of Nepal-India relations including the power sector cooperation, trade, transit, education, culture, health-care and connectivity infrastructure were discussed during the meeting," Nepal's foreign ministry tweeted. During their discussions, Paudyal urged the Indian foreign secretary to provide an international air route for the effective operation of the newly opened Gautam Buddha International Airport and Pokhara International Airport, sources close to Paudyal said.

RISING TENSION

Thousands march in Israel as Netanyahu allies push overhaul

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, Feb 13: Tens of thousands of Israelis — hoisting flags, blowing on horns and chanting "democracy" and "no to dictatorship" — protested outside the parliament building on Monday as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government formally launched a contentious plan to overhaul the country's legal system.

It was the largest protest outside the Knesset in years and reflected the deep divisions over the plan. The proposed changes have triggered weeks of mass demonstrations, drawn cries of protests from influential business leaders and former military men and even prompted a statement of concern from President Joe Biden.

Despite a plea from the nation's figurehead president to put the legislation on hold, Netanyahu's allies approved a series of legislative changes during a stormy committee meeting on Tuesday. The vote now sends the legislation to the full parliament for a series of votes — an opening salvo in a battle expected to stretch on for weeks.

"They hear our cry. They hear the strong voice of truth," opposition leader Yair Lapid said from the stage outside parliament. "They hear it and they're afraid." Netanyahu and his supporters say the proposed changes are needed to rein in a judiciary that wields too much power. But his critics say the judicial overhaul is tantamount to a coup and will destroy Israeli democracy.

They also say that Netanyahu, who is on trial for a series of corruption charges, has a conflict of interest. The protesters came from across the country.



appropriate measures".

The Portuguese Catholic Church was rocked last year by

cases of alleged cover-up of sexual abuse including by bishops who remain active in church roles.

The commission said it was preparing a list of accused priests still working.

The Portuguese commission started its work in January 2022 after a report in France revealed around 3,000 priests and religious officials sexually abused over 200,000 children. The abuse allegations have come from people from various backgrounds, from every region of the country and also from Portuguese nationals living in other countries in Europe, Africa and the Americas.

The commission spoke with over 500 victims, analysed historical church documents and interviewed bishops and other clergy members. A total of 25 of

the testimonies heard by the commission were sent to the public prosecutors' office for investigation as all others were committed over 20 years ago and legal proceedings can no longer be initiated.

The commission said the law should be changed so legal proceedings can be initiated for historic crimes committed 30 years ago. The commission, which says it is independent, was financed by the Catholic Church. Asked by Reuters in December 2021 if that could be a threat to the commission's independence, Strecht said he would be the first to walk out and denounce it if the church intervened in the process.

of the day quote

Dak Ghar Niryat Kendras are expected to give a boost to small traders to further promote the country's exports

VINEET PANDEY | SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF POSTS

Real estate business achieved one of the highest ever sales and continued to be the primary growth driver, with good contributions from the retail, hospitality and office verticals

PAVITRA SHANKAR | MD, BRIGADE ENTERPRISES

For the record, the 2023 production is already sold out in India. We are selling (for) 2024 now. And what surprises us is that the daily order book remains so high

FRANCESCO SCARDAONI | DIRECTOR (ASIA-PACIFIC), LAMBORGHINI

SHORT TAKES

Yamaha to bring bikes with E20

New Delhi: Japanese two-wheeler major Yamaha Monday said its entire motorcycle range in India would be compliant with E20 fuel by the end of this year. The company also announced that its 149cc-155 cc bike range in the country would now come with Traction Control System (TCS) as a standard feature. The company stated that the 2023 motorcycle line-up now comes equipped with on-board diagnostics (OBD-II) system, a requirement for the upcoming stricter emission norms which will kick-in from April 1 this year. The E20 fuel comprises 20 per cent ethanol blended with gasoline.

Essar Oil & Gas sees record profit

New Delhi: Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Ltd (EOGEL) Monday reported record net profit and revenues for the third quarter ended December 31, 2022 after production doubled and company cut operating cost. Net profit at Rs 97 crore in October-December was a massive 273 per cent higher than Rs 26 crore net profit in the same period a year back, the company said. Revenue soared 54 per cent to Rs 219 crore while EBITDA almost doubled to Rs 171 crore.

RIL, ONGC seek CBM investment

New Delhi: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd and state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) are separately auctioning natural gas extracted from coal seams at prices linked to Brent crude oil price. Reliance is seeking a minimum \$12.75 per million British thermal unit for coal bed methane (CBM) from a block in Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh, while ONGC wants \$9.35 for the same kind of fuel from North Karanpura in Jharkhand.

Renault, Nissan to invest \$600mn

Tokyo: Nissan Motor Co and Renault SA said Monday they would invest \$600 million to make six new models in India. The Japanese and French automakers will work on the projects from their base in Chennai, turning it into an export hub, they said in a statement. The six models, with each automaker making three, will be built on joint platforms and will also be exported, they said. The new models will consist of two electric vehicles, the first EVs to be rolled out by the automakers in India, and four sports utility vehicles (SUVs).



GST compensation to some states is delayed due to non-availability of AG's authenticated certificate. Kerala has not sent even a single such certificate since 2017-18

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

ISB TOP INDIAN B-SCHOOL

Indian School of Business (ISB) and Indian Institutes of Management at Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Calcutta Indore and Lucknow figure in the Financial Times (FT) Global MBA 2023 ranking. While ISB slipped to 39th rank from 32nd in 2023, IIMs at Indore and Lucknow secured their place in the chart. IIM Ahmedabad improved its position to 51 from 62 in 2022



Total exposure of 5 state-run general insurers in Adani group at ₹347.64cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 13: Five state-run general insurance companies have a total exposure of Rs 347.64 crore, or 0.14 per cent of their total assets under management (AUM), in Adani group of companies, Finance Ministry said Monday.

In reply to a question on details of money lent by banks and financial institutions to the Adani group, the Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha that the RBI Act prohibits disclosure of credit information submitted by a bank.

With regard to exposure by insurance companies, Karad said the state-run Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), January 30, said that LIC's total holding under equity and debt is Rs 35,917.31 crore as December 31, 2022, in Adani group of companies.

The exposure in the Adani group is 0.975 per cent of LIC's total AUM at book value of Rs 41.66 lakh crore.

Shares of Adani group companies settled lower Monday, with flagship company Adani Enterprises witnessing a 7 per cent slump after credit rating firm Moody's revised the rating outlook on four companies of the conglomerate to 'negative' from 'stable'.

LARGEST AEROSPACE EXHIBITION IN ASIA

India aims to triple defence exports

The export ambitions are a sign of India's growing clout as it uses the leverage of huge imports to attract investment in its domestic industry

AGENCIES

Bangalore, Feb 13: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday set out ambitions to more than triple annual defence exports to \$5 billion over the next two years, as arms firms flocked to a major air show for a slice of the nation's massive import budget.

The country is looking to sign defence deals worth Rs 750 billion (\$9 billion) at the biennial five-day Aero India event, its biggest ever, as its airlines try to complete jetliner purchases to meet civilian demand and press global aircraft manufacturers to produce more locally, mainly through partnerships.

India has been one of the world's biggest importers of defence equipment for decades, but it has punched below its weight in the global arms export market. The prime minister said the country's defence ex-



India will now move fast to join the world's largest defence manufacturing countries. Today, India is not just a market for defence companies, it is also a potential defence partner. I call on India's private sector to invest more and more in the country's defence sector

NARENDRA MODI | PM

INDIA TARGETS DEFENCE EXPORTS TO RISE FROM \$1.5BN TO \$5BN

THE COUNTRY LOOKING TO SIGN DEFENCE DEALS WORTH RS 750 BILLION

EXPORTS HAVE INCREASED SIX TIMES IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

EXPORTING DEFENCE EQUIPMENT TO 75 COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD

ports have increased six times in the last five years and India exported more than 1.5 billion dollars worth of defence equipment in 2021-22. Exhibitors at the show include Airbus, Boeing, Dassault Aviation, Lockheed Martin, Israel Aerospace Industry, BrahMos,

RISING DEMAND

PV sees highest ever sales in Jan

In a first, 3mn sales mark breached in 10 months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 13: Passenger vehicle wholesales rose 17 per cent in January to 2,98,093 units driven by robust off take of utility vehicles, including the fast-growing sports utility vehicles, industry body SIAM said Monday.

The overall passenger vehicle dispatch from companies to dealers was 2,54,287 units in January 2022.

Utility vehicle sales rose to 1,49,328 units last month from 1,16,962 units in January last year. Similarly, passenger car dispatches grew to 1,36,931 units from 1,16,962 units. Wholesales of vans also increased to 11,834 units from 10,632 units in the year-ago period.

Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) President Vinod Aggarwal noted that better consumer sentiment is driving demand for passenger vehicles.

Elaborating further on sales, SIAM Director General Rajesh Menon said: "Passenger vehicles again saw highest ever sales in the month of January and for the first time, it has crossed 3 million sales mark in 10 months, from April to January period."

In the April-January period of this fiscal, the total passenger vehicle dispatches stood at 31,69,788 units, up 32 per cent from 24,03,125 units in the same period of last fiscal.



Total two-wheeler wholesales in January rose 4 per cent to 11,84,379 units from 11,40,888 units in the same month last year. "The rate of growth of two-wheelers in the recent year has not kept pace with the growth in the other segments," Aggarwal stated.

Scooter dispatches grew to 3,76,035 units last month from 3,61,299 units in January 2022. Motorcycle wholesales were higher at 7,71,621 units as compared with 7,43,804 units in the same month last year.

Moped sales rose to 36,723 units from 35,785 units in the year-ago period. Three-wheeler dispatches last month surged over two-fold to 48,903 units from 24,178 units in January 2022.

"Three-wheeler segment has gained traction compared to the past two years, though they are still to reach the pre-Covid levels," Aggarwal said.

The passenger carrier segment witnessed the biggest growth at 37,061 units last month from 16,592 units in the year-ago period. Total wholesales across passenger vehicles, two-wheelers and three-wheelers rose to 15,31,447 units last month from 14,19,354 units in January 2022.

BIZ BUZZ

Elina's Dream Diamond Tour of Odisha at Reliance Jewels ends

Bhubaneswar: Reliance Jewels, India's leading fine jewellery brand, concluded the grand event 'Elina's Dream Diamond Tour of Odisha' at their showroom at Kacheri Road, Chandrapur, Rourkela, with enthusiastic participation and excitement amongst the patrons. This tour celebrated the brand's bond with Odisha and its patrons. Through 'Elina's Dream Diamond Tour of Odisha', Reliance Jewels offered its patrons a special experience of adorning exquisite pieces of diamond jewellery and an opportunity to sparkle and share the ramp with Odisha's very own Elina Samantary and interact with the beautiful actress across 5 select showrooms in Odisha. The event started at Chadrashekharpur showroom at Bhubaneswar last week February 3, where Elina & Sunil Nayak, CEO, Reliance Jewels were present at the showroom to inaugurate the event. The tour continued to showrooms in Cuttack, Angul & Barhampur too, where marvelous diamond jewellery was showcased and customers enjoyed their Meet and Greet time with Elina. Sunil Nayak, CEO, said, "Odisha as a market has been very close to us with 17 stores across 12 cities, which is one of the largest network amongst the jewellery retailers in Odisha. We are extremely happy that we were able to offer our customers in Odisha this magical experience as a token of gratitude for the enormous trust, loyalty, and patronage that our customers have instilled in us over the years."



IMFA hosts 40th Odisha Metalliferous Mines Safety Week



Bhubaneswar: The final day function of 40th Odisha Metalliferous Mines Safety Week 2022-23 was hosted by IMFA at Mahagiri Enclave, Kaliapani, Jajpur where Pravat Kumar, DGMS attended as the Chief Guest along with Krishnendu Mandal, DMS (Bhubaneswar Region); CR Ray, Nominated Owner & WTD of IMFA; Sandeep B Narade, Head (Mining BU) and other dignitaries. In the programme around 50 mines and 15 contractor's representatives participated and shared their best practices. Sukinda and Mahagiri Mines received multiple 1st prizes in different categories such as best mock drill, training, health & welfare, safety compliance & swechhata, general working and maintenance.

RBI observes Financial Literacy Week

Bhubaneswar: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been conducting Financial Literacy Week (FLW) every year since 2016 to propagate financial education messages on relevant themes.

The theme for this year's FLW is "Good Financial Behaviour, Your Saviour", with emphasis on "saving, planning, and budgeting" and "prudent use of digital financial services" which aligns with over-all strategic objectives of the National Strategy for Financial Education: 2020-2025. RBI shall be undertaking a centralised mass media campaign during the month of February this year to broadcast essential financial awareness messages on the theme and the regional offices of RBI will also be spearheading financial literacy camps. Towards this end, efforts from various stakeholders in encouraging circulation of the theme and messages are also solicited. The inauguration function of the FLW 2023 was held today at RBI, Bhubaneswar, which was attended by senior officials of RBI, Govt of Odisha, NABARD, SBI and other banks. The matter and ways of spreading financial awareness among the public was discussed in detail in the function. RBI Bhubaneswar will conduct various financial awareness programmes throughout the state during the week.



M&A deals jump 40% in 2022, aided by \$57bn HDFC merger

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 13: The \$57-billion HDFC-HDFC Bank deal helped the overall merger and acquisition activity in the country rise by 40 per cent to reach \$163 billion in 2022, a report said Monday.

Strategic deals like the one involving the HDFC twins accounted for a bulk \$126 billion of the overall quantum, while transactions involving private equity funds stood at \$37 billion, the report by Deloitte, a consultancy firm, said.

Despite global headwinds like rising interest rates and elevated inflation levels leading to increased margin pressures for companies, the firm expects the overall activity to remain "strong" in the ongoing 2023.

The overall M&A (merger and acquisition) deals were much higher when compared with \$69 billion in 2019, or \$88 billion in 2020 amid



Covid, and \$116 billion in 2021, it said.

Going by the number of deals, the figure rose to 911 in 2022, up from 826 in 2021 and 505 in 2020, the firm said. Mega deals valued at over \$1 billion more than doubled as the financial services, medical and pharma and construction sectors witnessed some of the largest ever M&A transactions in 2022, it said.

Cross-border transactions fell to \$50 billion in the overall deal activity, down from \$74 billion, due to a steep decline in inbound deals.

The firm attributed the fall in inbound deals to problems in the US and UK, where investors focused on conserving cash amid the record high inflation.

Lexi: India's first ChatGPT-powered AI chatbot

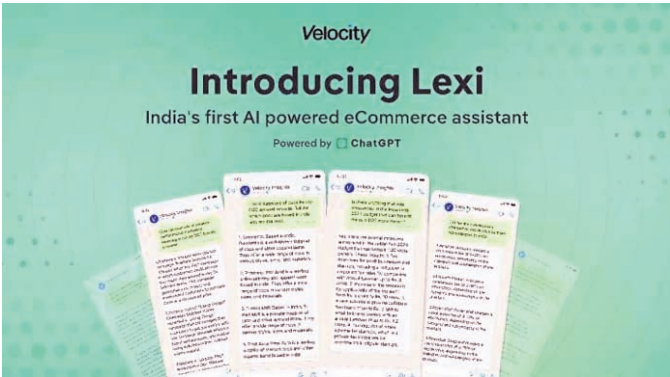
ACCORDING TO SEVERAL REPORTS, CHATGPT HAS REACHED 100 MILLION USERS WITHIN TWO MONTHS AND HAS CLOCKED OVER 590 MILLION VISITS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Feb 13: Homegrown financial technology firm Velocity Monday launched India's first AI chatbot integrated with OpenAI's ChatGPT, called "Lexi".

Velocity has integrated this latest advancement in artificial intelligence with its existing analytics tool, Velocity Insights.

Indian eCommerce brands that



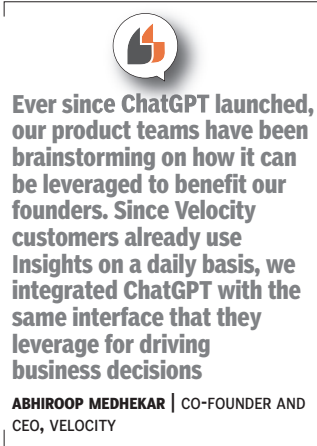
utilise Velocity Insights receive a daily business report on Whatsapp, which led the company also integrate ChatGPT in the same Whatsapp interface.

The integration of ChatGPT with Velocity Insights empowers eCommerce founders by providing them with AI-powered business insights in a conversational

manner, freeing up time for critical business functions, said the company.

"Since its launch Velocity Insights has helped my brand monitor revenue and marketing spends," Mohit Mohapatra, CEO and Founder of Naturepro, said in a statement.

"Now with the ChatGPT inte-



Ever since ChatGPT launched, our product teams have been brainstorming on how it can be leveraged to benefit our founders. Since Velocity customers already use Insights on a daily basis, we integrated ChatGPT with the same interface that they leverage for driving business decisions

ABHIROOP MEDHEKAR | CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, VELOCITY

gration, I am also able to leverage AI as a personal assistant whenever I need help with my business. For example, I have been leveraging the integration for writing copy as well as collating answers to questions related to performance marketing on a daily basis," he added.

MUMBAI INDIANS GET HARMANPREET CHEAPLY AS NINE INDIAN WOMEN GET CRORE-PLUS DEALS IN THE PLAYER AUCTION FOR INAUGURAL WOMEN’S PREMIER LEAGUE SEASON

SMRITI HITS PAY DIRT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 13: Smriti Mandhana stole the thunder in the inaugural Women’s Premier League (WPL) auctions as Royal Challengers Bangalore pipped Mumbai Indians in a bidding war to buy the India vice-captain for ₹3.40 crore (USD 410,000) here Monday.

India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur came much cheaper for Mumbai Indians at nearly half the price of Mandhana at ₹1.80 crore. Harman is also not the highest paid in her team where England’s Nat Sciver-Brunt got way more at ₹3.20 crore.

In fact, Harmanpreet was the seventh highest among Indian buys

as the second costliest player from the country is all-rounder Deepti Sharma, who was bought by UP Warriorz for ₹2.6 crore.

The hard-hitting Shafali Verma and star of the T20 World Cup game against Pakistan Sunday, Jemimah Rodrigues were picked by Delhi Capitals for ₹2 crore and ₹2.20 crore respectively. All-rounders Pooja Vastrakar and Richa Ghosh laughed their way to the bank with ₹1.90 crore deals offered by MI and RCB respectively.

However, Delhi Capitals pulled off a coup by roping in one of contemporary women’s cricket’s best leaders Meg Lanning of Australia for ₹1.10 crore.

Deepti, who watched the auction with her team cheering each bid, said: “We waited for this opportunity and since I am from UP, it is a great feeling. I want to contribute as much as possible for UP Warriorz.”

One of the prominent picks during the first round of auction was Australia’s off-spin all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner, who was bought by Gautam Adani-owned Gujarat Giants for ₹3.20 crore. Gardner and Sciver-Brunt are the two highest-

paid overseas players.

Gujarat primarily bought foreign players before getting Harleen Deol for ₹40 lakh. Star Australian all-rounder Ellyse Perry received a cool ₹1.70 crore (USD 205,000) winning bid from RCB, who also got New Zealand skipper Devine dirt cheap at a base price of ₹50 lakh. UP Warriorz also got England left-arm spinner Sophie

Ecclestone on board for ₹1.80 crore.

The five potential captains are Mandhana (RCB), Harmanpreet (MI), Lanning (DC), Beth Mooney (Gujarat Giants) and Deepti Sharma (UP Warriorz).



SMRITI MANDHANA
Team: RCB
₹3.40 cr
Base: ₹50 lakh

Eves’ cricket set to turn new corner with WPL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 13: India women’s cricket team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana becoming ecstatic after being picked by Royal Challengers Bangalore for ₹3.4 crore during the WPL auction was a moment that exemplified the excitement among players for the big day.

After all, the women were seeing the occasion as the beginning of a new dawn where they would also be able to call themselves millionaires like their male counterparts in the IPL.

For long, there had been talk about a T20 league for women in India, with several veterans like Mithali Raj, Jhulan Goswami and Harmanpreet Kaur; among others, waiting for this seminal moment in country’s cricketing landscape.

But all that will change March 4 this year when the inaugural match of the five-franchise tournament begins. While it will most likely continue to be the precursor to the ‘big event’, the IPL, women cricketers will finally have a niche window, which they will be able to call their own in a milieu overcrowded with men’s



T20 leagues.

While in terms of money and clout, the WPL and IPL, will never be comparable, the new baby of Indian cricket will at least add a lot of glamour to women’s cricket, which was so far lacking, and also bring in hordes of fresh Indian and foreign faces, hoping to make big bucks through WPL.

As India women cricketer set foot into hitherto uncharted territory, it would be fair to say the auction has gone way beyond expectation for several of them if one compares it with the IPL.

Players getting big deals certainly bodes well for the women cricketer in the country, given that the salary cap for each of the five WPL franchises was just ₹12 crore compared to the IPL mega auction last year where the total budget per franchise was increased from ₹90 crore to ₹95 crore.

Comparing the inaugural WPL auction to the first IPL auction ahead of the 2008 season, there is just a three-fold difference between what CSK dished out for MS Dhoni (Rs 9.5 crore) and what Mandhana got Monday.

Over the years, IPL has become



the biggest and best domestic T20 tournament in the world, thanks to the multi-fold increase in telecast, broadcast and online revenue, which has translated into huge monetary gains for the players as well.

When compared to the mega-bucks being earned by male cricketers, Mandhana’s three crore-plus pay packet certainly pales

in front of these celebrated IPL icons.

But, come to think of it, the inaugural IPL auction too had a ‘humble’ start and gradually over the years, more money started flowing into the environment.

As the WPL brand takes baby steps towards creating a niche for itself, it’s just a matter of time before more TV money gets pumped into the league and the salary caps of franchises are revised.

Ten years down the line, who knows, a new woman cricketer could be laughing her way to the bank with a ₹20-plus crore purse. By then, the IPL would be touching astronomical figures.

While not getting into the debate of who gets what, women’s cricket was certainly the winner Monday and with WPL, it’ll turn a new corner.



WE HAVE BEEN WATCHING AUCTION OF MEN’S (PLAYERS). IT IS SUCH A BIG MOMENT FOR WOMEN TO HAVE AN AUCTION OF THIS SORT. THE WHOLE THING IS EXACTING. RCB’S LEGACY IS BIG, THEY HAVE BUILT A BIG FAN-BASE. HOPE WE BOTH CAN TOGETHER BUILD A BIG TEAM

SMRITI MANDHANA

TOP 5 INDIAN BUYS (besides Mandhana)



Deepti Sharma
UP Warriorz
₹2.60 cr



Jemimah Rodrigues
Delhi Capitals
₹2.20 cr



Shafali Verma
Delhi Capitals
₹2.00 cr



Pooja Vastrakar
Mumbai Indians
₹1.90 cr



Richa Ghosh
RCB
₹1.90 cr

TOP 5 FOREIGN BUYS



Ashleigh Gardner (AUS)
Gujarat Giants
₹3.20 cr



Nat Sciver-Brunt (ENG)
Mumbai Indians
₹3.20 cr



Beth Mooney (AUS)
Gujarat Giants
₹2.00 cr



Sophie Ecclestone (ENG)
UP Warriorz
₹1.80 cr



Ellyse Perry (AUS)
RCB
₹1.70 cr

MUMBAI INDIANS				
Player	Nationality	Type	Price Paid	
Natalie Sciver	England	All-Rounder	₹3,20,00,000	
Pooja Vastrakar	India	All-Rounder	₹1,90,00,000	
Harmanpreet Kaur	India	All-Rounder	₹1,80,00,000	
Yastika Bhatia	India	Wicket-Keeper	₹1,50,00,000	
Amelia Kerr	New Zealand	All-Rounder	₹1,00,00,000	
Amanjot Kaur	India	All-Rounder	₹50,00,000	
Heather Graham	Australia	All-Rounder	₹30,00,000	
Isabelle Wang	England	All-Rounder	₹30,00,000	
Dhara Guljar	India	Batter	₹10,00,000	
Saika Ishaque	India	Bowler	₹10,00,000	

GUJARAT GIANTS				
Player	Nationality	Type	Price Paid	
Ashleigh Gardner	Australia	All-Rounder	₹3,20,00,000	
Beth Mooney	Australia	Wicket-Keeper	₹2,00,00,000	
Georgia Wareham	Australia	All-Rounder	₹75,00,000	
Sneha Rana	India	All-Rounder	₹75,00,000	
Annabel Sutherland	Australia	All-Rounder	₹70,00,000	
Deandra Dottin	West Indies	All-Rounder	₹60,00,000	
Sophia Dunkley	England	Batter	₹60,00,000	
Tanuja Kanwar	India	All-Rounder	₹50,00,000	
Harleen Deol	India	All-Rounder	₹40,00,000	
Dayanara Hemalatha	India	All-Rounder	₹30,00,000	
Manal Joshi	India	All-Rounder	₹30,00,000	
Monika Patel	India	Bowler	₹30,00,000	
Subhmini Meghana	India	Batter	₹30,00,000	

DELHI CAPITALS				
Player	Nationality	Type	Price Paid	
Jemimah Rodrigues	India	Batter	₹2,20,00,000	
Shafali Verma	India	Batter	₹2,00,00,000	
Marizanne Kapp	South Africa	All-Rounder	₹1,50,00,000	
Meg Lanning	Australia	Batter	₹1,10,00,000	
Alice Capsey	England	All-Rounder	₹75,00,000	
Shikha Pandey	India	All-Rounder	₹60,00,000	
Laura Harris	Australia	Batter	₹45,00,000	
Rodha Yadav	India	All-Rounder	₹40,00,000	
Minnu Mani	India	All-Rounder	₹30,00,000	
Titas Gadhi	India	Bowler	₹25,00,000	
Jasika Akhter	India	Batter	₹20,00,000	
Tara Norris	USA	Bowler	₹10,00,000	

UP WARRIORZ				
Player	Nationality	Type	Price Paid	
Deepti Sharma	India	All-Rounder	₹2,60,00,000	
Sophie Ecclestone	England	All-Rounder	₹1,80,00,000	
Devika Vaidya	India	All-Rounder	₹1,40,00,000	
Tahira Mograth	Australia	All-Rounder	₹1,40,00,000	
Shabnim Tameel	South Africa	Bowler	₹1,00,00,000	
Grace Harris	Australia	All-Rounder	₹75,00,000	
Alyssa Healy	Australia	Wicket-Keeper	₹70,00,000	
Arjati Sarvani	India	Bowler	₹55,00,000	
Rajeshwari Gayakar	India	Bowler	₹40,00,000	
Shweta Selvarwat	India	Batter	₹40,00,000	
Kiran Nayir	India	Batter	₹30,00,000	
Lauren Bell	England	Bowler	₹30,00,000	
Launi Yadav	India	Wicket-Keeper	₹10,00,000	
Parvathi Chopra	India	All-Rounder	₹10,00,000	
S. Vasthant	India	All-Rounder	₹10,00,000	

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE				
Player	Nationality	Type	Price Paid	
Smriti Mandhana	India	Batter	₹3,40,00,000	
Richa Ghosh	India	Wicket-Keeper	₹1,90,00,000	
Ellyse Perry	Australia	All-Rounder	₹1,70,00,000	
Renuka Singh	India	Bowler	₹1,50,00,000	
Sophie Devine	New Zealand	All-Rounder	₹50,00,000	
Kanika Ahuja	India	All-Rounder	₹35,00,000	
Erin Burns	Australia	All-Rounder	₹30,00,000	
Asha Shobana	India	All-Rounder	₹10,00,000	
Disha Kasat	India	Batter	₹10,00,000	
Indrani Roy	India	Wicket-Keeper	₹10,00,000	
Shreyanka Patil	India	All-Rounder	₹10,00,000	

NEWS IN BRIEF



GOING ACROBATIC: A Services player goes for an overhead kick during their 2-1 victory over West Bengal in their Santosh Trophy Group B match at the Capital Ground in Bhubaneswar, Monday.

Medals galore

BHUBANESWAR: Odisha taekwondo athletes had an impressive outing as they secured 30 medals, including 3 gold, 12 silver and 15 bronze, at the Senior National Taekwondo Championship in Nashik, Maharashtra. The three-day event concluded Sunday. Poomsae athlete Dr Neelima Katti bagged gold in U-50 female category, Chinmaya Behera won gold in U-40 male individual category and Satya Prakash Mohanty secured the yellow metal in the individual U-30 male category.

Rourkela to play host

ROURKELA: Four age-group national hockey tournaments will be organised at the newly-built Birsu Munda Stadium here this year to give the domestic players a feel of the state-of-the-art facility. The four tournaments are the Junior Women National Championship (April 13-23), Junior Men National Championship (April 28-May 8), Sub-junior Women National Championship (May 13-23) and Sub-junior Men National Championship (May 28-June 7).

Barca beat Villarreal

MADRID: Barcelona keep on winning at the top of the Spanish league and moving further away from Real Madrid. Barcelona beat Villarreal 1-0 on the road Sunday to extend their winning streak to 11 matches in all competitions and their lead over second-placed Madrid to 11 points. Madrid have played a game less than their rivals. It was the 16th clean sheet for Barcelona in 21 league matches this season. Pedri scored in the 18th minute for Barcelona.

Double threat

MANCHESTER: If Arsenal are to win their first Premier League title in 19 years, they will have to hold off a growing double threat from Manchester. The battle to be crowned English champions looks set to come down to just three clubs after wins for Manchester City and Manchester United Sunday tightened the gap at the top of the table. City beat Aston Villa 3-1 and has the chance to move above leader Arsenal on goal difference with a win when the sides meet Wednesday. United are now five points off the top after beating Leeds 2-0.

JADEJA TRAINS AT JAMTHA, BUMRAH UNLIKELY TO BE RUSHED FOR ODIS vs AUSTRALIA

Shreyas unlikely to play second Oz Test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 13: Star batter Shreyas Iyer, who was ruled out of the first Test due to a lower back injury is still doing rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) and it is unlikely the team management will risk playing him directly in a Test match.

India and Australia will play the second Test at the Peroshah Kotla from Friday and it is to be seen if Iyer is able to join the team. Iyer had posted a few videos of his intense rehab programme at the NCA in Bangalore under trainer S Rajnikanth.

Iyer is doing his strength and conditioning routines but the norm for return to play in international arena is to at least play a domestic game of some form before donning national colours again.

Hence Iyer, who hasn’t played any competitive cricket for a month now, might not be directly thrown into a Test match where he might have to field for 90 overs, crouch and stand close-in and then bat for long hours.

It will be interesting to see if the Chetan Sharma-led selection



committee names Iyer in the Rest of India squad for the Irani Cup match against Madhya Pradesh from March 1-5 to prove his fitness just like they asked Ravindra Jadeja to play a Ranji Trophy game against Tamil Nadu.

Jasprit Bumrah’s recovery from stress fracture has been a slow one and the Indian team management is unlikely to risk playing him in

the three ODIs against Australia just after the end of the four-match Test series.

Bumrah will be needed for the potential World Test Championship final at the Oval in London from June 7-11 and also for the big ODI World Cup in India at the end of the year.

Therefore, there is a possibility that Bumrah will return to play

during Mumbai Indians’ campaign at the IPL this year where his workload will be monitored.

In less than 48 hours after he had won the ‘Player of the Match’ award in the opening Test, Ravindra Jadeja was back in the nets at the VCA Stadium in Jamtha for an optional training session ahead of the second Test in Delhi starting Friday.

Jadeja did bat and bowl at the nets and was accompanied by senior batter Cheteshwar Pujara, who will play his 100th Test at the Peroshah Kotla.

The Australian team, who couldn’t train at the centre wicket after the Nagpur Test as the groundsmen had watered the track, had a lengthy session on the match strip on the day. A few social media pictures featured Marnus Labuschagne keeping wickets to the spinners.

While the Australian team will be reaching Delhi Tuesday morning, Mitchell Starc, who missed the first Test due to an injury, is already up and running as he had his first nets session at the Kotla on the day. While he bowled at the nets, he also invited the local net bowlers and had a knock for about 20 minutes.