



VAANI ON A HIGH

Actor Vaani Kapoor has three big films coming up, and is keen to present herself in new avatars

LEISURE **P2**



STATE GETS 4 WEEKS

SC grants four weeks' time to Odisha to reply on a contempt plea filed against Andhra Pradesh on Kotia issue

DOWNTOWN **P3**



2 COPS KILLED BY TERRORISTS

Two policemen injured Friday in a militant hit and run attack in Srinagar city have succumbed to their injuries

TWO STATES **P7**

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 319 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20 | 2021

12 PAGES | ₹4.00

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Not ideology, I am defecting to your party for an early jab

OIL ON THE BOIL

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 19: Petrol and diesel prices maintained their northward rally Friday, the eleventh consecutive day when retail prices rose across the country.

Oil marketing companies raised the pump price of petrol by 31 paise and diesel by another 33 paise per litre in Delhi. With this increase, petrol is now priced at ₹90.19 a litre and diesel ₹80.60 a litre in the national capital.

FUEL PRICES IN CITY

PETROL ₹90.89 (+0.31)

DIESEL ₹87.82 (+0.36)

The retail price of petrol has crossed ₹100 a litre-mark in several cities in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Across the country petrol and diesel price increased in the range of 30-35 paise per litre depending on the level of local taxes on the two petroleum products. Petrol and diesel prices have increased 23 times in 2021. Prices of the two fuels increased by ₹6.48 and ₹6.73 per litre respectively so far this year.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX		variation
SENSEX	50889.76	↓ 434.93
NIFTY	14981.80	↓ 137.20
DOLLAR	72.93	↓ ₹0.19
EURO	87.94	↑ ₹0.20
GOLD	₹46,375	↑ ₹249
SILVER	₹69,506	↑ ₹1012

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	32.7°C	32.4°C
MIN	20.0°C	19.5°C
Humidity	79%	63%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy	Partly cloudy

Ensure no media leaks: HC to cops

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 19: The Delhi High Court Friday said certain media coverage of investigation in the FIR against climate activist Disha Ravi for her alleged involvement in sharing a toolkit backing farmers' protest indicates "sensationalism and prejudicial reporting," but declined to order removal of any such content at this stage.

DISHA RAVI CASE

Justice Prathiba M Singh said the interim plea for removal of such news content and tweets by Delhi Police would be considered at a later stage. The court, however, asked media houses to ensure that no leaked investigation material is broadcast as it could affect the probe and directed Delhi Police to abide by its stand on affidavit that it has not leaked nor intends to leak any probe details to the press.

The court also said that police would be entitled to hold press briefings in the matter in accordance with the law and the agency's 2010 office memorandum with regard to media coverage of cases.

To media houses, the court said they should ensure the information received from their sources is authentic and only verified content ought to be publicised as also that



Climate activist Disha Ravi being produced at the Patiala Court in connection with Greta Thunberg toolkit case, in New Delhi, Friday

'MEDIA TRIAL'

- Disha Ravi, in her plea, has said she is "severely aggrieved and prejudiced by the media trial surrounding her arrest and the ongoing investigation, where she is being viscerally attacked by the respondent 1 (police) and several media houses"
- She has contended that in the present circumstances, it was "highly likely" that the general public will perceive the news items "as being conclusive as to the guilt of the petitioner (Ravi)"
- Her petition has alleged that investigative matters have been leaked to the media and the press briefings by the police are "prejudicial" and "grossly violative of her right to a fair trial and presumption of innocence"

3-DAY JUDICIAL CUSTODY

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court Friday sent climate activist Disha Ravi, arrested for allegedly being involved in sharing a 'toolkit' on social media related to the farmers' protest, to three-day judicial custody. Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Akash Jain sent Ravi, 21, to jail after Delhi Police produced her before the court on expiry of her five-day custody.

GRETA TWEETS

Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg has extended support to Disha Ravi. "Freedom of speech and the right to peaceful protest and assembly are non-negotiable human rights. These must be a fundamental part of any democracy. #StandWithDishaRavi," Thunberg tweeted Friday.

China admits 4 soldiers killed in Galwan clash



AGENCIES

Beijing, Feb 19: China said for the first time Friday four Chinese soldiers died during a bloody Himalayan border clash with Indian troops in June 2020, adding that the men were given posthumous awards.

Chen Hongjun, Chen Xiangrong, Xiao Siyuan and Wang Zhuoran died during what Chinese state media described as a "fierce struggle" against "foreign troops" that violated an agreement and crossed into the Chinese side.

China and India have blamed each other for the skirmish in the western Himalayas, during which soldiers fought each other with nail-studded clubs and stones. India has previously said 20 of its soldiers died in the clash, while Beijing had acknowledged casualties but had not disclosed details.

Disengagement complete

NEW DELHI: After completing the withdrawal of troops and weapons from the north and south banks of Pangong lake, India and China will hold a fresh round of high-level military talks Saturday to take forward the disengagement process in Hot Springs, Gogra and Depsang in eastern Ladakh, official sources said Friday. The tenth round of Corps Commander-level talks are scheduled to start at 10 am at Moldo border point on the Chinese side of the LAC, and will be the first engagement between the two sides at a senior level after conclusion of the disengagement process in Pangong lake areas. Pulling back of troops, weapons and other military hardware as well as dismantling of bunkers, tents and temporary structures in north and south banks of Pangong lake were completed Thursday.

Chen was posthumously awarded the title of "Guardian of the Frontier Hero," while the other three men were also given first-class merit citations.

The two countries have sought to de-escalate the situation at the border, though there was another "minor face-off" between Indian and Chinese troops in January along the disputed borders.

Oz PM speaks to Modi, Trudeau amid Facebook row

AGENCIES

Sydney, Feb 19: Australia and Facebook held high-stakes talks Friday after the social media giant sparked global outrage by blacking out news for its Australian users, as Canberra insisted it wouldn't back down on a new law that would force the tech firm to pay for journalistic content.

From Thursday, Facebook has blanked out the pages of media outlets for Australian users and blocked them from sharing any news content, rather than submit to the proposed legislation.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison urged Facebook to "move quickly past" what he called threatening behaviour and "come back to the table." He said his government's world-first legislation to force



Facebook and Google to pay Australian media for news content published on their platforms was garnering interest from leaders around the world. "People are looking at what Australia is doing," he said, noting that he had already discussed the situation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Canada's leader Justin Trudeau. The legislation, called the News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code, was approved this week by the lower house of parliament and will be debated beginning Monday by the Senate, which is expected

to adopt the law by the end of the week. Facebook has defended its dramatic response to the law, saying the legislation "fundamentally misunderstands" the platform's relationship with media organisations and that it had no choice but to bar news content from its services in Australia.

Despite earlier threats to pull its services from Australia over the legislation, Google softened its stance and instead brokered several deals with large media companies, including Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. Billions of people around the world rely on Facebook for essential information — not just news, but charity and government pages, emergency announcements and other channels. Facebook's news blackout swept up many of these, including humani-

CANADA VOWS TO BE NEXT

OTTAWA: Canada has vowed to make Facebook Inc pay for news content, seeking allies in the media battle with tech giants and pledging not to back down if the social media platform shuts off the country's news as it did in Australia. Canadian Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault, in charge of crafting similar legislation to be unveiled in coming months, condemned Facebook's action and said it would not deter Ottawa. "Canada is at the forefront of this battle... we are really among the first group of countries around the world that are doing this," he told reporters.

tarian organisations like Foodbank Australia and Doctors without Borders in Australia, who found their pages temporarily disabled.

Silver Sponsor

SBI

Organised by

G S MARKETING ASSOCIATES

CREDAI BHUBANESWAR

Presents

17th Home & Decor

Exclusive Exhibition on Real Estate, Housing Finance & Allied Industry

Grand Gala Opening Today

Janta Maidan in Bhubaneswar at 6.00 p.m.
by
The Chief Guest

Shri Pratap Jena

Hon'ble Minister-In-Charge
Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water, Law, Housing & Urban Development, Govt. of Odisha

19th Feb ▶ 1st Mar, 21
12 Noon - 8 PM
Janta Maidan

For Entry to the Home & Decor & IIMTF at Janta Maidan-
* For cars, the entry & exit is through **Gate No.1 only (Opp. Sandy Towers Hotel)**
* For walking visitors, the Entry & exit is through **Gate No.2 only (on Jaidev Vihar Road)**

17th India International Mega Trade Fair
Visit the original IIMTF and Home & Decor in Bhubaneswar since 2003
TWO FAIRS...ONE DESTINATION
LEADING FAIRS IN BHUBANESWAR

Buy E-Tickets from BookMyShow or BookMyFair app.
For any query, kindly contact: +918336819959.

- International Standard
- Many AC Pavilions
- 3 Lakh Sq.ft.
- Over 50 Thousand Unique products
- 9 Countries
- 19 States

Segments:

- International • Lifestyle
- Electronics • Food Products
- Health & Beauty
- Government & PSU
- Handicrafts & Handlooms

Partner Country : **Bangladesh**
Focus Countries : **Afghanistan & Iran**
Partner State : **Bihar**
Host State : **Odisha**

FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES

Today you will land up in a tricky or hazardous situation. You will feel compelled to wade against the tide, which may not be such a productive thing, says Ganesha. Nothing seems to be going your way. Take some time off for yourself to relieve the stress.

TAURUS

Today you are going to focus on enhancing your looks and appearances, says Ganesha. Instead of trying to seek satisfaction from within yourself you will be flaunting your fine clothes, your hairstyles. A visit to a beauty parlour cannot be ruled out.

GEMINI

You will feel out of sorts today. This could result in distances between you and your loved ones. You may fall into the wrong sorts of debates on account of your ill-temper. You need to keep a curb on your emotions to perform better, says Ganesha.

CANCER

You are most likely to appear edgy and hyper-critical to others, says Ganesha. Remain your typical poised self. Try not to be harsh to others, if you wish to save your relationships and sustain a reputable image.

LEO

You will pay more attention to matters at home. You may take up home renovation projects. You may end up replacing the entire furniture at your place even. You will spend the day enjoying with your family members and friends, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

Avoid all kinds of prejudice and do not allow intolerance to enter your mind today, advises Ganesha. In all likelihood, you will look around yourself in search of love and affection. You will do well to keep negativity at bay as otherwise it may cow you down.

LIBRA

Ganesha says that you will be busy in your work field today and will be able to attain your goals in your work field today. Your level of enthusiasm will be at its peak. Today you may be able to meet with a person from the opposite sex who will be your future partner. Ganesha showers you with his blessings always.

SCORPIO

Being a workaholic may divert your attention from your family and you may have to bear the consequences. It's time to sort differences with your spouse. But, all this while, you need to be calm and patient. Watch your words in case of any arguments, warns Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

You need to increase your tolerance power as you may have to face criticism from close ones. However, it is not feasible to please everyone around. You may just be happy doing basic favours for your loved ones. Ganesha asks you to be patient.

CAPRICORN

Not everyday is the same day. And, today is one of those days when you feel extremely confused, feels Ganesha. While you won't be able to get rid off negative emotions, your hard work will be paid off and lay a strong foundation for future. You'll not understand whether to feel good about your achievements or experience sadness of confusion.

AQUARIUS

You are already overloaded with work. On the top of it, people around you will conveniently put their share of load on your back, and you will take it most of the times. You, however, will not get bogged down by the additional responsibilities.

PISCES

Are you fretting over the obstacles you are facing on the business front? Ganesha tackles the root of your problem and advises you to be patient and have faith in your undertakings. Good things will come your way, in good time.

MIRANDA FINDS WORK-LIFE BALANCE AS PARENT A TOUGH DEAL

Model Miranda Kerr is a mother of three, and she finds it tough maintaining a work-life balance as a parent. "Sometimes I have to just stop and pinch myself because we have three healthy children, we're both doing what we love," said Miranda.

YOUTUBE REMOVES PEWDIEPIE'S VIDEO ATTACKING TOP KIDS' CHANNEL

YouTube has removed a video posted by popular Swedish YouTuber PewDiePie for violating its guidelines around child safety. In the video, the popular YouTuber attacked popular children's channel Cocomelon's content and poked fun at kids who watch the videos, reports *The Verge*.

LAUGHTER IS MY EVERYDAY THERAPY: RAKULPREET

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Rakulpreet Singh has shared the therapy she effectively uses everyday.

Rakul posted a picture on Instagram from her Madivian getaway. She is seen in over-water hammock.

"Laughter is my everyday therapy!", she wrote alongside the image. Rakul is all set to star alongside Amitabh Bachchan and Ajay Devgn in the thriller drama *MayDay*. The film is directed and produced by Ajay Devgn. The actress will be seen in the role of a pilot. This is her second film with Ajay after *De De Pyaar De*.

The actress will also be seen in *Doctor G* and a cross-border love story featuring Arjun Kapoor, John Abraham and Aditi Rao Hydari. IANS

Kajol's birthday message for her 'partner in crime'

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Kajol Friday shared a special birthday message for her mother-in-law Veena, whom she lovingly called her partner-in-crime and crab.

"Happy birthday to my partner in crime and crab for the last 22 years. *Aapki hansi kabhi kam na ho*. #motherbylaw #mominspirit," she wrote as the caption of her Instagram post.

Kajol loves to share witty posts with fans on social media. Her sense of humour and sarcasm has won her a ready fan following.

The actress was recently seen in the OTT-released film *Tribhanga: Tedhi Medhi Crazy*, directed by actress Renuka Shahane.

The film narrates the story of three generations of women. Kajol plays an actress-dancer who shares a strained relationship with her mother (Tanvi Azmi), a noted author. The film also stars Mithila Palkar as Kajol's on-screen daughter. IANS

'Want to take as many plunges as possible'

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Vaani Kapoor has three big films coming up, and is keen to constantly explore and present herself in new avatars each time her film hits the theatres.

Vaani will be seen with Ranbir Kapoor in *Shamshera*, in the Akshay Kumar-starrer *Bell-Bottom*, and in Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui with Ayushmann Khurrana. She says she doesn't want to be bracketed as an actress who can do just a particular thing or look a certain way on screen.

"As an actor, I want to try my hands at everything. I'm lucky that I have mass entertainers as well as high-concept content films this year that will enable me to present myself distinctly to audiences and the industry," Vaani said.

She added: "I'm someone who wants to explore every genre possible in my career

and want to undertake as many risks as possible too. I don't want to be bracketed as an actress who can do just a particular thing or look a certain way on

screen." The actress wants to take plunges.

"In fact, I want to take as many plunges as possible and explore myself to constantly discover and rediscover. I have always wanted to pick films that allow me to do something interesting and leave a mark onscreen." Vaani dubs 2021 a huge moment in her cinematic career: "I'm really excited about how 2021 is looking like. It's a watershed moment for me and I want to continue on this path of choosing interesting roles that enable me to express," she said. IANS

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan launches Navras

Mumbai: Sarod maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan is launching his new album titled *Navras*. He says that the title refers to the nine expressions that human beings are empowered with.

"My latest offering *Navras* refers to the nine expressions that human beings are empowered with. It is a celebration of music and how it makes you feel," Ustad Amjad Ali Khan said.

"Through *Navras*, I hope that music lovers across the globe can

listen to this performance live and feel all these emotions especially in these challenging times," he added.

Talking about his music journey, he said: "I cannot remember a particular day that I was initiated into the world of music. It was a part of me from as early as I can remember. Life itself was music and music was life and its celebration. I believe that the 12 notes of music are actually 'alphabets' of a universal 'language' that musicians and connoisseurs have been communicating with since time immemorial. Music has many faces and instrumental music,

such as what I play on the Sarod, is pure sound that needs to be experienced and felt."

He added that since there are no lyrics, there is no language barrier between the performer and the listener, and that is why instrumental music transcends all barriers.

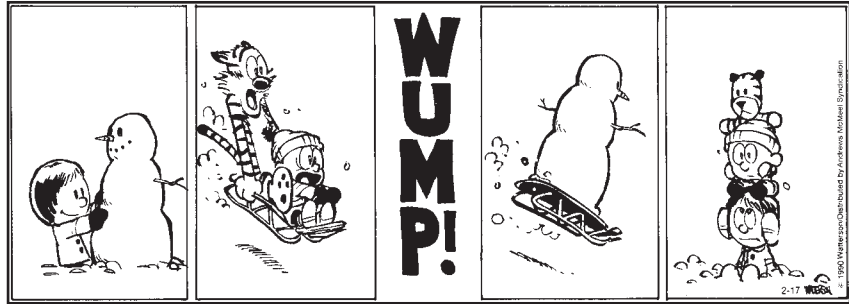
"A wonderful mystery of Indian classical music is the fact that one can spend a lifetime trying to attain knowledge and perfection and still feel that they have only skimmed the surface. There is an old saying '*Suvara hi Eshwar hai*' which is absolutely apt as music has its roots in spirituality and has always been an integral part of the worship of God," he said.

The album will be launched with two live concerts on PayTM Insider February 20 and 27. The virtual concerts will indulge classical music lovers the globe. The Padma Shree awardee has partnered with Teacher's Glasses for his latest album. IANS

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

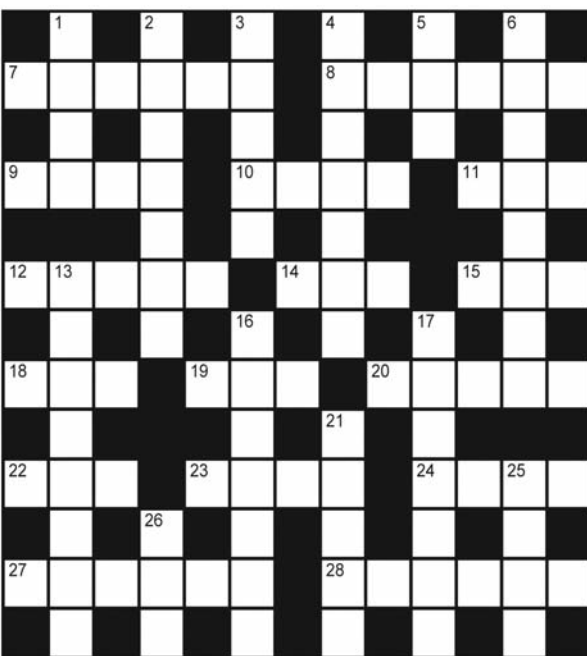


BREVITY



FUN post

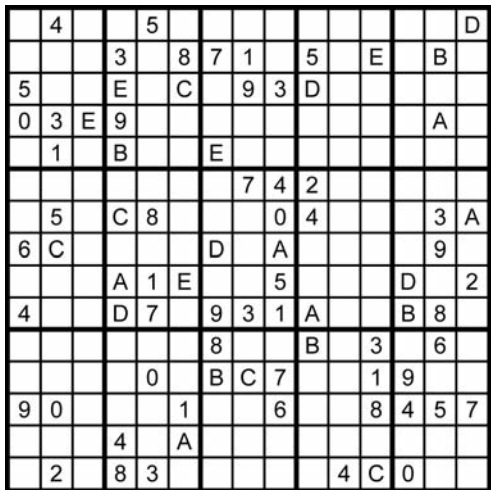
CROSSWORD



- Across
- 7 Boring movie
 - 8 Vinegary
 - 9 Mongolian desert
 - 10 Greek letter
 - 11 Little lie
 - 12 Reporter's wish
 - 14 Darjeeling or oolong
 - 15 Compete
 - 18 Morse E
 - 19 Cricket club
 - 20 Caravan beast
 - 22 Tasseled cap
 - 23 Clarified butter
 - 24 "Fine by me"
 - 27 Split
 - 28 Archipelago off Scotland
 - 2 Fireplace piece
 - 3 Elliptical path
 - 4 Noisy snake
 - 5 Dowel
 - 6 Lessen
 - 13 Hot-tempered
 - 16 Large heavy jungle knife
 - 17 Rocket launcher
 - 21 Train stop
 - 25 Summit
 - 26 Lion's home
- Down
- 1 Mexican sandwich

SUDOKU

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

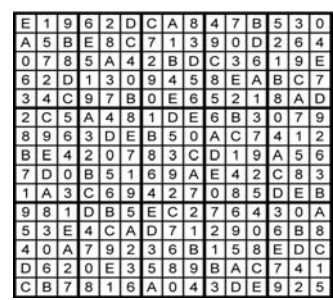


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

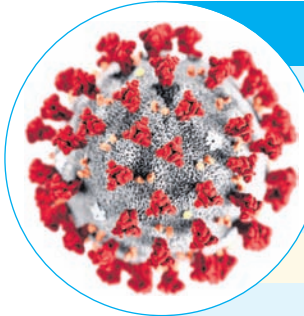


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



LAWYERS' DEMO

Odisha Administrative Tribunal Bar Association, Bhubaneswar members hold a demonstration to protest the shifting of case records of the tribunal, Friday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	11,10,01,465	8,59,21,358	24,56,189
India	1,09,63,394	1,06,67,741	1,56,111
Odisha	3,36,513	3,33,880	1,914

Paddy issue sets House on boil

Cooperation minister to make statement on paddy procurement today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: The second day of the ongoing Budget session of Assembly witnessed pandemonium as the members of opposition BJP and Congress created ruckus over paddy procurement issue Friday. The House adjourned for several times throughout the day.

As soon as the House assembled at 10:30am, the BJP MLAs started raising slogans against the BJD government alleging that the government did not procure paddy from farmers who have incurred huge losses.

Joining BJP, Congress legislators led by party's chief whip Taraprasad Bahinipati rushed to the well of the House over the procurement issues and attempted to climb the speaker's podium.

The opposition MLAs went to the Speaker's podium and raised slogans. The saffron party legislators were seen holding banners on the farmers' issue while Congress members removed the glass shield of the Speaker. The op-



position members were demanding a thorough discussion on paddy procurement issues by suspending all businesses of the day.

Unable to run the House, Speaker SN Patro adjourned the proceedings till 11:30am. As the Opposition members continued their protest inside the House till 11:30am, the House was then adjourned till 4 pm.

The situation remained the same during the post-lunch session too and the House was adjourned for seven times. The Speaker held an all-party meeting for smooth functioning of the House. After the meeting, Patro directed Cooperation Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain to make a detailed statement on

paddy procurement status in the House, Saturday. However, the ruckus continued in the Assembly. Leader of Opposition PK Naik said, "The Speaker should direct the minister concerned to lift all paddy lying in various mandis and paddy fields. About 20 lakh metric tonne of paddy is yet to be procured by the government in various parts of the state."

Congress legislature party leader Narasingha Mishra said his party has given an adjournment motion on the issue. If the minister will make a statement, as per rules, the issue cannot be discussed in the House, Mishra said, adding, "If the Speaker will give us time for discussion, we will cooperate in functioning of the House. Otherwise, we will not."

"The Speaker has asked the minister to make a statement on the paddy procurement issue and there is scope for discussion of the issue on later stage also. Therefore, the Opposition members should not disturb the proceedings, said senior BJD MLA Amar Prasad Satpathy.

State gets 4 weeks to reply on Kotia

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Feb 19: The Supreme Court Friday granted four weeks' time to Odisha to file a rejoinder affidavit in the contempt petition filed against Andhra Pradesh (AP) for holding elections in three villages of Kotia panchayat in tribal-dominated Koraput district.

Vikas Singh, senior counsel appearing for Odisha, submitted to the court that Odisha's claim

over three disputed villages in Kotia panchayat is based on the national Census of 2011 while AP is relying on its self-survey.

A two-judge bench of the apex court, comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar and Dinesh Maheshwari, adjourned the matter for four weeks after Singh sought time to file a response to the affidavit filed by AP in the contempt petition.

AP had earlier termed the con-

tempt petition filed by Odisha against it as grossly misconceived and non-maintainable.

In an affidavit filed in the SC, AP had submitted that there was no direction passed by the apex court in 2006. The apex court had recorded the statement of both states after it dismissed the original suit filed by Odisha on the ground that the said suit was not maintainable under Article 131 of the Constitution of India.

JP DIDWANIA

'MONEY NEVER DROVE ME TO BECOME A MANUFACTURER'

OMJAY EV Ltd is the first Odisha-based company to set up a manufacturing unit for electric vehicles (EVs) in the state. The company decided to introduce EVs in 2018 under the brand name EeVe. Now, the brand is present across 11 states including in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Uttarakhand. Despite challenges thrown up by the Covid-19 pandemic, the company never failed to offer its services to its customers. In a tete-a-tete with OP, founder of the company **Jay Prakash Didwania** spoke about the firm's EV journey. **Excerpts**



■ When did you think of entering into manufacturing of EVs?

■ We are now promoting pollution-free environment. State and central governments are also working aggressively to promote electric vehicles (EVs). Therefore, we thought to launch EVs in our state and other parts of the country. We have set up a state-of-the-art manufacturing plant, the first in Odisha, at Badachana in Jajpur district. Our present capacity is 7.5 lakh units in Odisha. We now manufacture six two-wheeler models. Also, we are planning to manufacture electric three-wheelers in future. We have 104 networks and we are present in 11 states.

■ You have been in the business of dealership but now you have switched to manufacturing. Why was this switchover?

■ Yes, I am in the business of dealership for the last 40 years. But I really wanted to see a change because dealership didn't offer fun. You can't create an indigenous thought or idea when you are in dealership. I had a passion to do something or build something for my satisfaction. It is a fact that money never drove me to become a manufacturer.

■ What were the challenges EeVe faced during the pandemic?

■ Well, Odisha has always

been prone to natural calamities. In fact, facing challenges is certain in our business. So, the pandemic is like any other challenge. But, during the crisis we took care of all our employees. It is almost a year since the pandemic broke out in our country. I hope better days are ahead.

■ Did you face any challenges during promotion of EVs?

■ There was a myth about how EVs will run without good infrastructure and charging stations. But we thought it in a different way. We took this as an opportunity and entered the mar-

ket. Also, riders are now aware of latest electronic technologies. As people are free to move, it's easier to conduct business. We ensure to provide better post-sale services. We were the first to offer five years of warranty.

■ When do you expect a government policy on EVs?

■ It was supposed to come up but I think the pandemic has delayed the process. The government is taking every step to bring up the EV policy as early as possible. I am sure the policy will boost sales.

■ What is the mantra of your company?

■ It is very simple. We treat our employees and dealers as family members.

■ Suggestions to young entrepreneurs

■ Young entrepreneurs should be sincere in their vision. They should give their 100 per cent to achieve their goals. Work hard and be committed.





FOUNDATION CEREMONY
OF ESTABLISHMENT OF
"INDIAN INSTITUTE OF LAW (IIL)"
By
Bar Council of India through its Trust (BCIT)
With the support of
Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT)
Deemed to be University

Programme:
On 20th February, 2021
at Patia, Bhubaneswar, Odisha in the premises of KIIT

In Presence of:-



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Uday Umesh Lalit
Judge,
Supreme Court of India



Hon'ble Mr. Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai
Judge,
Supreme Court of India



Hon'ble Mr. Justice V. Ramasubramanian
Judge,
Supreme Court of India

&

Mr. Manan Kumar Mishra, Sr. Advocate
Chairman, Bar Council of India & Bar Council of India Trust

Mr. Ashok Parija, Advocate General, Odisha
Chairman, Special Committee, Odisha State Bar Council

Dr. Achyuta Samanta
Associate Managing Trustee, B.C.I.T.

Mr. Debi Prasad Dhal, Sr. Advocate
Executive Chairman, Bar Council of India Trust

Watch Live on Kalinga TV, Zee Odisha, Nandighosh TV, Kanak News
Time: 11.00 a.m.

Distinguished Dignitaries

Mr. Satish Abarao Deshmukh
Vice-Chairman, Bar Council of India &
Bar Council of India Trust

Mr. Apurba Kumar Sharma
Sr. Advocate, Chairman,
Executive Committee,
Bar Council of India

Mr. Y.R. Sadasiva Reddy
Sr. Advocate, Co-Chairman,
Bar Council of India

Mr. Ashok Kumar Deb, M.L.A
Member, Bar Council of India
Former, Managing Trustee.
Bar Council of India Trust

Mr. Manoj Kumar N
Vice-Chairman,
Executive Committee,
Bar Council of India

Mr. Tushar Mehta
Solicitor General of India
Ex-officio Member
Bar Council of India

Mr. Prashant Kumar Singh
Member, Bar Council of India
Chairman, Co-ordination Committee
of State Bar Council's

Mr. P. Vishnuvardhana Reddy
Chairman, Rules Committee
Bar Council of India

Mr. Partap Singh
Chairman, Oversees Committee
Bar Council of India

Mr. Desh Raj Sharma
Chairman,
Seminar Symposium Committee
Bar Council of India

Mr. Ajay Kumar Baral
Vice-Chairman,
Special Committee,
Odisha State Bar Council

Mr. Srimanto Sen
Officiating Secretary,
Bar Council of India Trust

Mr. S. Prabakaran
Sr. Advocate, Co-Chairman,
Bar Council of India

Mr. Ved Prakash Sharma
Co-Chairman,
Bar Council of India

Mr. Suresh Chand Shrimali
Co-Chairman,
Bar Council of India

Mr. A. Rami Reddy
Executive Vice-Chairman,
Bar Council of India Trust (I.I.L)

Mr. K.K. Venugopal
Attorney General for India,
Ex-officio Member,
Bar Council of India

Mr. Dilip K. Patel
Chairman,
Advocate Welfare Committee
Bar Council of India

Mr. Shailendra Dubey
Member, Bar Council of India
Member, Press Council of India

Mr. Shreenath Tripathi
Chairman,
Legal Aid Committee
Bar Council of India

Mr. Sunil Gupta
Member,
Bar Council of India

Mr. D. K. Sharma
Sr. Advocate
Chairman, Building Committee
Bar Council of India

Mr. Manas Ranjan Mohapatra
Sr. Advocate
Member, Special Committee,
Odisha State Bar Council

Mr. Ashok Kumar Pandey
Officiating Joint Secretary,
Bar Council of India Trust

Mr. Anil Kumar Parida
Advocate
Additional Secretary,
Indian Institute of Law

Govt slashes hostel fees for students of IIT-Bhub

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: In view of Covid-19 pandemic, the state government has reduced the hostel fees of International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Bhubaneswar students to Rs 3,000 per semester.

The decision was taken at a meeting of Board of Governors (BoG) held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra through virtual mode, Friday.

Considering the impact of the pandemic on financial condition of the students, the BoG has reduced the hostel fees. Previously the fees varied from Rs 12,000 to Rs 24,000 per semester depending on the type of accommodation provided to the students.


A discount of Rs 1,500 per semester on library services for the current academic year was also approved by the Board.

Further, the BoG also waived student welfare fee and power back-up charges for the current session. The proposal for constituting a committee to look into the grievances of non-teaching staff was also approved by the BoG.

the Chief Secretary asked the IIIT officials to improve the quality of teaching, learning, research and incubation to match with other advanced institutes in the sector.

Issues relating to allotment of four acres of land at Gothpatana

PANDEMIC TIME



CHIEF SECY DIRECTS TO ENHANCE QUALITY OF EDUCATION TO MATCH WITH OTHER ADVANCED INSTITUTES

THE BOARD ALSO WAIVED STUDENT WELFARE FEE AND POWER BACK-UP CHARGES FOR THE CURRENT SESSION

THE IIIT HAS ACHIEVED AROUND 77% PLACEMENT WITH MAXIMUM SALARY OFFER OF RS 15 LAKH AND AVERAGE SALARY OFFER OF AROUND RS 5 LAKH PER ANNUM

in favor of the institute were resolved at the meeting. The land would be utilised for construction of auditorium, hotel for students, accommodation for staff and playing facility. The state government has given a grant of around Rs 16 crore during last three years for development of modern infrastructure facilities.

Institute director Gopal Nayak said, "IIIT, Bhubaneswar has joined JoSAA/CSAB counselling conducted for NITs and IIITs from OTA ranked students. All seats for the current academic session have been filled up. This year the average quality of the students at

entry stage has improved significantly."

IIIT, Bhubaneswar has maintained a high placement record of around 95 per cent during last five years.

Beating the adversities of the global pandemic during the current academic session, the institute has already achieved around 77 per cent of placement with maximum salary offer of Rs 15 lakh and average salary offer of around Rs 5 lakh per annum.

This year around 39 companies have visited the campus. The recruitment process of 9 more companies is going on.

Kangana visits Srimandir

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: Actor Kangana Ranaut sought blessings of the deities at Srimandir in Puri, Friday. The actor offered prayers to Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra in the sanctum sanctorum of the 12th century shrine following Pratipada darshan. She visited the Bimala temple, Laxmi temple and Kalpa Bata as well.

"We always see Krishna with Radha or Rukmani (Laxmi) but in Puri Jagannath Lord Krishna is placed with his siblings, Balrama n Subhadra (Arjun's wife, Abhimanyu's mom). Pulsating with the energy of his heart chakra whole place has a healing and soothing sweetness to it, enchanted (sic)," Kangana tweeted.

The 'Tanu Weds Manu' actor also shared photographs from outside the temple where she can be seen walking with a garland in her hand amid security. The actress wore a cream-coloured salwar kurta and dupatta, teaming it with ethnic jewellery.

Kangana had taken to Twitter late Thursday to express her excitement for early morning visit to the temple Friday. The actor wrote, "Oh I am so excited.... almost shivering with excitement... 6am Darshan but how will I spend this night ... this night seems like a yug (sic)."

Lady realtor held for ₹25.5L fraud

Bhubaneswar: The Economic Offence Wing (EOW) of the Crime Branch Friday arrested an agent of a real estate firm for allegedly duping two depositors of Rs 25.5 lakh on the pretext of providing flats at Bhanpur in Cuttack. The accused has been identified as Geetanjali Acharya who works as an agent in Raghupatee Estate & Holding Pvt. Ltd. Earlier, the EOW sleuths have arrested the managing director of the firm, Prabhat Kumar Nanda. Acharya along with Nanda received Rs 25.5 lakh from complainants Debajyoti Dutta and Mamata Barik promising them to provide residential flats in "Pristine Park" at Bhanpur mouza in Cuttack. However, they neither handed over the flat to the complainant nor returned their money.

HC penalises lawyer for violating dress code

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Feb 19: Asserting that the court is duty bound to restore the dignity of the profession, the Orissa High Court has imposed Rs 500 penalty on a lawyer who was not wearing a neck band at the time of argument.

A bench of Justice SK Panigrahi asked the advocate to deposit Rs 500 as cost with the Welfare Fund of High Court Bar Association and observed that being an advocate, the counsel is expected to appear before the court in a dignified manner with proper dress, even if it is a virtual hearing.

Justice Panigrahi said that every profession has certain dress code and people belonging to particular pro-



The counsel is expected to appear before the court in a dignified manner with proper dress, even if it is a virtual hearing, observed the HC bench

fession are recognised by their attire.

"The lawyers' dress code is governed by the rules prescribed under the Advocates Act, 1961, making it mandatory for lawyers to wear black robe or coat with white shirt and white neck band. The Rule framed under Section 49(1)(g) of the

Advocates Act, 1961 prescribes the dress code for Advocates irrespective of designated Senior Advocates or other Advocates," Justice Panigrahi said.

Notably, during Covid-19 outbreak, while following the video-conferencing mode, the Supreme Court has directed the advocates that

they may wear plain white shirt, plain saree with white neck band since they were appearing through virtual court.

Justice Panigrahi said that some high courts across the country also welcomed the change of new dress code for lawyers to appear through virtual court. The court said that such changes were allowed because of medical exigencies, especially during pandemic.

"However, the etiquette, courtier and attire are subtle indicators of erudition and professionalism especially for lawyers and this strongly influences people's perception on the profession. The profession is solemn in nature and its profundity is complemented by its attire," the HC observed.

HITTING THE STREETS



Women under the banner of 'Akhila Bharat Ganatantrika Mahila Samiti' demonstrate at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Friday, condemning the skyrocketing fuel prices

OP PHOTO

BMC mulls to open day care centre for elderly

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) is mulling to open a day care centre for senior citizens at Integrated Public Service Centre (IPSC) at Sahid Nagar here.



Following resumption of commercial and other activities after about nine-month of lockdowns, the civic authority began its citizen connect initiatives to review the situation, redress the grievances and take stock of development initiatives. BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary visited Sahid Nagar this week and discussed opening of a day care centre for senior citizens.

"We discussed on opening a day care centre for senior citizens along with a vocational training centre

for female volunteers at the IPSC in Sahid Nagar. The day care centre will enable seniors to socialize and enjoy planned activities in a group setting, while availing the required health services. Moreover, vocational centre for females will foster women empowerment and create employment opportunities," the Commissioner said.

Furthermore, the BMC Commissioner also said that the playground near Sahid Nagar Upper Primary School will be developed to cater to the needs of children.

Security system at Sahid Nagar Smart Park was also stated to be streamlined with required resource and enforcement along with lighting of watch towers.

Meanwhile, several regions in the City also requested the BMC Commissioner to facilitate an eatery market similar to that of 'Khau Galli' in front of the Exhibition Ground. The denizens were of the opinion to provide a designated market to the roadside vendors that have been witnessing huge footfall leading to traffic snarls and congestion.

NAYAGARH MURDER CASE

BJP, BJD spar over 'confessional video'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: A war of words ensued between the BJP and the BJD Friday after a video, purportedly showing the confessional statements of the prime accused in the murder of a minor girl from Nayagarh, came to the fore recently.

The BJP alleged that the special investigation team (SIT), probing the case, has leaked the video to create a false narrative. BJP leader Lekhashree Samantsinghar Friday held a press conference to fire salvos at the SIT and the state government.

"The confessional video shows that the SIT does not have any proof in the case. Now, it is trying to create a false narrative. The forensic labs from other states have failed to establish the involvement of the prime accused in the case," Samantsinghar said.



"The state government is trying to save the persons against whom the family members of the deceased have made allegations. The SIT has tried to fabricate a story to save the mastermind," she added.

The BJD, on the other hand, alleged that the BJP is trying to save the prime accused. "Lekhashree is trying to teach the methods to investigate serious crimes. The SIT

has presented all facts and evidence in front of the police. The BJP is trying to save the accused in the case. The party is setting a bad example in the sensitive case," BJD leader Ipsitaa Sahoo said.

She also added, "If the BJP has any evidence, let them produce it before the SIT and the court. But they are indulged in a campaign against the SIT and the government."

AB'S BEGINS SEAFEAST IN CAPITAL CITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: Leading barbecue restaurant chain, Absolute Barbecues (AB's), Friday commenced its 'SeaFeast' in City offering delicate seafood under one roof. The event will continue till March 5, 2021.

The festival will feature the best of seafood from around the world, and the signature dishes include Baracuda, Crispy Fried Anchovy, Snapper, Shark, Stingray, Eel, Bombay Duck, Malabar Tawa Mackerel, Seafood Paturi, Red Snapper, Nellore Fish curry, Butter Garlic Prawns, Seafood Bisque, Bombil, Fish Roe, Octopus, Seafood Paella, Malabar Tawa Mackerel apart from the regular options in desserts and mains.

Shubham Shukla, (DGM, Sales & Marketing) said, "With SeaFeast, we endeavour to take its customers on a gastronomic tour of the finest treasures of the sea. SeaFeast will feature dishes that have been crafted by our expert chefs and are sure to delight all seafood lovers. Our menu sports an array of lip-smacking dishes and we are excited to treat our guests to an unforgettable culinary experience."

Nila Madhab's 'Kalira Atita' in Oscar race

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: Odia film 'Kalira Atita' (Yesterday's Past), directed by Nila Madhab Panda, has made its entry into the Oscar nomination race in general entry category for best picture, best actor, best director and many other categories.

The film is about the disappearing villages of India's eastern coastline in Odisha because of climate change and rising sea level. The movie is made available at the Academy Screening Room and will be viewed by the academy members for votes and nominations.

"It is a difficult year to get qualified for nomination as all theatres are shut in Los Angeles and New York. We have started a publicity campaign and reaching out to juries to show the film," Panda said.



The movie was also selected for screening at the 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) held in Goa.

If prophecies are to be believed, the global warming and subsequent rise in the water level in the Bay of Bengal will submerge the

The movie revolves around a man from Satabhaya village in Kendrapara district which is being swallowed up by the sea

Holy city of Puri.

Achyutananda Das, a 16th century saint from Odisha, had written about doomsday in his famous book titled Achyutananda Malika.

National Award-winning director Nila Madhab Panda's first Odia film, Kalira Atita, is inspired by the prophecies of Achyutnanda. The movie revolves around a man from the Satabhaya village in east coast of Odisha which is being swallowed up by the sea.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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

Another iron ore smuggling racket busted in Keonjhar

5 dumpers carrying iron ores worth lakhs of rupees to Jharkhand seized



POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, Feb 19: Notwithstanding routine raids by the mines and forest departments and police officials on iron ore smuggling, such activities have not been curbed yet in Keonjhar.

Amid repeated seizures of illegal iron ores in the recent past, the forest department busted another major iron ore smuggling racket near Anseikala under Barbil range in Keonjhar district late Thursday night. The racket has been supplying minerals to parts of Jharkhand, a report said.

Acting on a tip-off, the forest officials of Joda, Barbil, Bileipada

and Champua ranges conducted raids in the area at 1.30 am and seized five dumpers carrying iron ores. However, the drivers and helpers of the vehicles fled the scene after seeing the forest officials.

Joda forester Annirudha Panda and Bileipada forester Pradip Behera said the seized dumpers were laden with illegally mined iron ores worth lakhs of rupees.

The iron ore was being smuggled to Jharkhand. In the last few days, the forest department has carried out multiple raids at various places and seized minerals and assets worth millions of rupees.

Joda forester Annirudha Panda said the seized dumpers belong to

people in Joda area. Their owners have been informed of the seizure.

The forest department and the RTO will issue letters to them after availing details of the seized vehicles. It may be noted that the state government is implementing Integrated Mining Mineral Management System (IMMS) to check illegal mining and illegal mineral transportation.

Besides, a squad of Joda joint director of mines office and a state level enforcement squad have been working to curb illegal mining, but all this has failed to check it, it was alleged. When contacted, Salil Kumar Behera, the joint director of Joda mining circle, said the mines department is carrying out raids at different places.

However, he admitted that illegal mineral transportation was being carried out with the help of forged transit passes. More cases of mineral smuggling have been detected in 2019-20.

A few weeks ago, the officials of the mines department seized 30 tonne of illegally extracted iron ore at Antaramantara Chak under Bamebari police limits.



Cadets of 4th Naval NCC unit, Bhawanipatana, receive firing training at a camp, Friday

OP PHOTO

AP's land grab bid in Rayagada foiled

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Feb 19: Amid the raging border row between Odisha and Andhra Pradesh over Kotia villages in Koraput district and other fringe villages, the neighbouring state has made another encroaching bid at Badalukuti village under Rayagada block.

It was trying to construct a pucca road under PMGSY near Badalukuti

village Thursday. The district administration foiled the attempt of encroachment. Lada village of Andhra Pradesh is just 1 km from this village. To access Lada village, one has to go through Badalakudi village. As AP started road construction, Badalakuti villagers opposed it.

Being informed over such development, tehsildar Umashakar Behera, BDO Rajendra Majhi and the RI rushed to the village and

talked to villagers in this regard.

After land measurement, it was found that AP had encroached upon a 200-metre patch of land on the borders. A creek is nearby. It was mutually decided by both sides that a bridge will be built across the creek by AP while a road will be built by the Odisha government.

Situation on the border villagers was reviewed, the tehsildar said.

Cattle immunisation in Karlapat sanctuary begins

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, Feb 19: As a precautionary measure to prevent probable spread of hemorrhagic septicemia (called Sahana in local parlance), the district administration started immunisation of cattle in 33 villages within Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary in Kalahandi.

The step was initiated Thursday afternoon to safeguard wildlife inside the sanctuary area, a senior official of the state Fisheries and Animal Resources Development (FARD) department informed.

Notably, six elephants had died in the sanctuary in the last fortnight. Post-mortem reports had revealed that the animals had died after being infected by hemorrhagic septicemia.

“Post-mortem reports have con-



cluded that it is a bacterial disease known as 'sahana' found in cattle and other domesticated animals. It is believed that the infection has directly or indirectly spread to elephants,” Additional director of the department Pratap Keshari Khamari expressed.

Cattle in other villages near the sanctuary will also be vaccinated against hemorrhagic septicemia soon. Twenty teams comprising 10

veterinary doctors and 50 supporting staff are tracking domesticated animals for vaccination against the disease, Khamari added.

Meanwhile, a central team will start a probe into the death of six elephants in Karlapat wildlife sanctuary in Kalahandi district. The team is arriving Friday.

The death of six elephants over last two weeks due to alleged septicemia has raised concerns among animal lovers and environmentalists. The matter came to the fore after an announcement in this regard was made Wednesday. The team consisting of four members and comprising Padma Shri KK Sharma, Dr Karikalan, Dr Prangya Panda and Dr Niranjana Sahoo arrived at the sanctuary, Thursday. The team will tour the sanctuary for four days starting from

Thermal scanning drone camera for elephants

BHAWANIPATANA: Amid concerns over back-to-back deaths of six elephants in Karlapat sanctuary, forest officials have made use of trap and drone cameras on the activities of the elephants and their health. The later addition is a thermal scanning drone cameras to know the health of elephants.

Forest officials have been asked to ensure that elephants are not disturbed by the sound of thermal scanning drone camera, said DFO T Ashok Kumar.

February 19 and will end it February 22. The team during their visit will take stock of the reasons that contributed to the elephant deaths.

KINGPIN OF BIKE LIFTING GANG HELD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Feb 19: The kingpin of a bike lifting racket was arrested and nine bikes recovered from his possession, said Ganjam police Friday.

The man has been identified as L. Shiva Reddy, a native of Gokarnapur under Digapahandi police limits in Ganjam district.

Additional Superintendent of Police, Berhampur, Prabhakar Kumar Routray said, “L. Shiva and aides lifted many bikes from different places including MKCG campus, Gosainnuaogaon and Baidyanathpur areas. Our efforts are on to nab L. Shiva's associates.” A team conducted raids to bust the bike lifters' gang.

Fishing harbour on the verge of closure

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paradip, Feb 19: Allocation of Rs 1220.84 crore for development of five fishing harbours including in Paradip in the recent Union Budget was welcomed by people while the issue raised equal concerns among the fishermen, a report said.

The budgetary allocation would benefit 50,000 people associated with the fishing industry in the port town. However, fishermen have expressed fear over 'lack' of infrastructure, the report said.

The deplorable condition of the fishing harbour has pushed it to the brink of closure. Reports said the budgetary allocation has been made for development of fishing harbours of Kochi in Kerala, Chennai in Tamil Nadu, Vishakhapatnam in Andhra



Pradesh, Paradip in Odisha and Penuaghat in West Bengal.

The budget mentions that 142 lakh tonne of fish has been produced in the country from the sea in 2019-20 fiscal. The development plan for the five fishing harbour includes modern arrangement for fish sale, construction of berths, cold storage dredging of the river mouths and others.

Sumant Kumar Biswal, president

of Odisha Marine Fish Producers Association (OMFPA) alleged that there are no special policies for the development of fishermen. He said there are over 650 fishing trawlers and 200 boats in the Paradip fishing harbour. However, only 30 per cent of the trawlers and fishing boats go for fishing while the rest are lying idle due to a sharp drop in fish catch.

The fish caught in Paradip is exported to foreign countries through Visakhapatnam port. This apart, restrictions on fishing in sea remains valid for seven months which has made it difficult for the fishermen.

Over 30 lakh families of fishermen depend on fishing. He alleged that their state and national associations have been demanding a reduction in excise duty on fuel for the last 10 years, but nothing was done.

Life encircled by forest, Pilasalunki dam

A RICKETY BOAT IS THE ONLY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION FOR RANJAKUMPA VILLAGERS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khajuripada/Balaskuma, Feb 19: Life has been rather hard for people of Ranjakumpa under Khajuripada block of Kandhamal district. Almost every day, they risk their lives while the crossing Pilasalunki water reservoir in rickety boats. For them, all basic facilities – road, drinking water, and education, healthcare – are a dream when they have been facing commuting problems throughout the year in the absence of a bridge, report said.

Locals say, the government spends crores of rupees for development of rural pockets in the name of Ama Gaon, Ama Bikash, but their village is deprived of it. There are several other villages in the area that have been suffering from lack of basic facilities.

According to the report, Ranjakumpa village is 20 km from Phulbani and 8 km from the block office. The village surrounded by a forest on one side and the Pilasalunki reservoir on the other, leaves no space for communication.

The village is inhabited by 10 families, but life is always fraught with risk in this treacherous region as dreaming development is a difficult proposition, they lamented.



Villagers say: “Taking the small kids to the Anganwadi centre in boats across the dam is a risky job. We always fear for mishaps. No one can say what will happen here”

A county boat is the only means of communication for the villagers to move out and into the village on a daily basis.

The village has no school. Their kids have to go to Pipal Sahi primary school in Nuagaon panchayat.

The school has been closed for poor students' strength.

Across the dam is Chhandurupadar Anganwadi centre. “Taking the small kids to the Anganwadi centre in boats across the dam is a risky job. We always fear for mishaps. No one can say what will happen here,” the villagers rued.

In case of medical emergency or fire mishaps, ambulance and fire tenders are unable to get access to the village in the absence of a road.

“Patients or expectant mothers are carried on cots to the reservoir and then in boats across the dam. If ambulance is available across the dam, it is easy to take the patients to nearby hospital. If it is not avail-

able, patients are carried on cots to the hospital,” said villagers like Ranjulata Nayak, Mamata Nayak and Ushrani Nayak.

The only source of drinking water in the village is a well, which goes dry in summer, leaving us in difficulty, they added. In that case, the only option is to feed on the dam water.

Though the villagers have taken up their issues with people's representatives and the administration, no step had been taken to sort out the issues, they added.

“Without basic facilities like road, and drinking water and education (for our kids), we are living a cursed life surrounded by forest and reservoir,” they bemoaned.

WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
ROURKELA (R&B) DIVISION, UDITNAGAR, ROURKELA
email id: eepwrkl@gmail.com
Government of Orissa “e” Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. 59/2020-21 Dated: 08.02.2021
1. Number of works : Total 10 (Ten) number of works
2. Estimated Cost : Rs.9.61 lakhs to Rs.39.55 lakhs
3. Period of Completion : Three (03) to Five (05) Calendar months each
4. Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal : 22.02.2021 at 11.00 A.M.
5. Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal : 08.03.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.
6. Date of Opening of Bid : 10.03.2021 at 11.30 A.M.
7. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Executive Engineer, (R&B) Division, Rourkela, Uditnagar
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal “http://tendersodisha.gov.in”.

Sd./- Executive Engineer
R & B Division, Rourkela
OIPR-34068/11/0031/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
KENDRAPARA (R&B) DIVISION-I, KENDRAPARA
E-Mail I.D.:- eernbkdp@gmail.com
No. B-764 Tel. (06727)-220268, Fax No. (06727)-220862
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA “e” Procurement Notice
e-Procurement Notice for ROAD and Building Works
Bid Identification No. E.E., R n B KDP- 20/ 2020-21
1. No of work : 03 Nos. of Road & 2 Nos building works
2. Estimated Cost : Rs.7.50,278/- to Rs.35.65,204/-
3. Period of completion : 01 (one) to 04 (four) Calendar Months
4. Date & time of sale & receipt of bid document : From 10.00 A.M. of 19.02.2021 to of 5 P.M. of 01.03.2021
5. Last date / time of receipt of bids : 5 P.M. of 01.03.2021
6. Date & time of Opening of Bids: 11.00 A.M. of 02.03.2021
7. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Executive Engineer, Kendrapara (R&B) Division-I, Kendrapara
Further details with any addendum, corrigendum, cancellation can be seen from the State Govt. portal “https://tendersorissa.gov.in”.

Sd./- (Er. P.K.Mohanty)
Executive Engineer,
Kendrapara (R&B) Division-I
OIPR-34097/11/0015/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
UPPER INDRAVATI LEFT CANAL DIVISION NO. - II, DHARAMGARH, KALAHANDI, ODISHA
email: eeulcdii@gmail.com
No. A-599 e-Procurement Notice No. EE/UILCD-II-05/2020-21 (01)
1. Type of the Work : Road & Bridges
2. No. of works : 01 (One)
3. Class of Contractor : 'D' & 'C' Class
4. Bid Identification No. : EE/UILCD-II-05/2020-21 (01)
5. Estimated Cost : Rs. 10.35 lakh
6. Period of Completion : 60 days
7. Other details as follows

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Bid Online	Submission of Bid Online	Date & Time of opening of Tender
Executive Engineer, UI Left Canal Division No. II, Dharamgarh, Dist.-Kalahandi	EE/UILCD-II-05/2020-21 (01)	From 20.02.2021 11.00 A.M. to 01.03.2021 5.00 P.M.	From 20.02.2021 11.00 A.M. to 01.03.2021 5.00 P.M.	02.03.2021 at 12.00 Noon in the O/o. Executive Engineer, UI Left Canal Division No.-II, Dharamgarh, Dist.-Kalahandi

Further details can be seen from the Government website https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
Sd./- Executive Engineer, UI Left Canal Division No. II, Dharamgarh
OIPR-32261/11/0004/2021

100 AWCs to be set up in Nabarangpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, Feb 19: About 100 Anganwadi centres (AWCs) will be opened in Nabarangpur under the Integrated Child Development Scheme. The centres were approved by the state government. This was revealed at a review meeting at the Collectorate. Construction work of these Anganwadi centres will be expedited by March 15. Officials of the woman and child welfare department have been directed to take up necessary steps.

Besides, sattu making units will be made functional while nodal officers will visit the sattu making units March 23. In another development, officials were directed to make provision of necessary arrangements for smart classrooms to be executed in 10 schools in the district.

Ore-laden truck skids off flyover; close shave for bus

POST NEWS NETWORK

Anandapur, Feb 19: About 30 passengers travelling in a bus got a miraculous escape when a truck came crashing down from a flyover near Shalapada under Anandpur police limits in the district Friday. The truck came down 20-ft below a highway.

Reports said, the driver of the truck lost control of the vehicle on the flyover. The vehicle skidded off the highway and crash-landed on the bus which was on a service road along the highway.


According to eye-witnesses, a major accident was averted due to the presence of mind of the bus driver who managed to apply brakes at the right time thereby allowing the truck to slip by while scraping the front part of the bus. No casualties have been reported in the accident. The conductor sustained injuries.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEM
The following tender has been uploaded on website www.ireps.gov.in
Tender Notice No. Sr.DMM/KUR/EP/2020-21/99 Dtd.: 15.02.2021
TENDER NO.:- 81205498A, BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS: SET OF SPARES FOR AAL MAKE STATIC INVERTER OF WAG-7 LOCOMOTIVES OF ELECTRIC LOGO SHED/ANGUL AS PER ANNEXURE-TO-X. QUANTITY: 10 SETS.
Tender closing date & time :- at 1500 hrs. of 17.03.2021.
Sr. Divisional Materials Manager/PR-562/L/20-21 Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY
File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/20-21/ E-Tender/56 Dtd.: 11.02.2021
(1) Tender No. e-Tender-CENT-KUR-267-2020 Dtd.: 09.02.2021
Description:- PROPOSED REPAIRS TO BANK SLOPES, CESS REPAIRS, TROLLEY REFUGES, TOE WALLS AND OTHER ALLIED WORKS BETWEEN KM 435.00 TO 442.00 OF DHENKANAL-JORANDA ROAD SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (DHENKANAL) OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx cost of the work: ₹ 159.96 Lakhs
(2) Tender No. e-Tender-ESTATE-KUR-270-2020 Dtd.: 09.02.2021
Description:- CONSULTANCY FOR SOIL EXPLORATION AND ENGINEERING DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL ELEVATION AND PLAN OF STRUCTURE/ BUILDING FOR THE WORK PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OFFICER'S REST HOUSE BLOCK (06 SUITES) AT RAIL KUNJ, BHUBANESWAR (FROM THE ANNEXED EMPANELLED CONSULTANTS ONLY).
Approx cost of the work: ₹ 1.31 Lakhs
(3) Tender No. e-Tender-CENT-KUR-271-2020 Dtd.: 09.02.2021
Description:- PROPOSED RECONDITIONING OF WHEEL BURN/IS/CAB RAILS/CUPPED WELDING ETC. UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (CENTRAL) OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx cost of the work: ₹ 50.30 Lakhs
Completion period: 08 months (for Sl. No. 1), 02 months (for Sl. No. 2), 10 months (for Sl. No. 3).
Tender closing date & time :- at 1500 hrs. of 03.03.2021 (for all tenders).
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: http://www.ireps.gov.in
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), Khurda Road PR-564/L/20-21

Turn your mind completely away from your difficulty, concentrate exclusively on the Light and the Force coming from above; let the Lord do for your body whatever He pleases. Hand over to Him totally the entire responsibility of your physical being.

THE MOTHER



Gymkhana Club blues

The capital's Gymkhana Club, the 107-year-old watering hole favoured by the high and mighty of, currently beleaguered, Lutyens' Delhi, is back in the news. With its seemingly endless saga of mismanagement and irregularities, the club has been in the limelight a lot, unfortunately. The present crisis has emerged after the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) dissolved the club's governing council and appointed MM Juneja, director general of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, as "administrator" to oversee the club's functioning even as the legal case continues. Among Juneja's first actions after his appointment sent a notice to all members to clear pending dues amounting to Rs 1.2 crore!

This is the first time in the club's history that an administrator has been appointed to run its affairs. Juneja has been given the mandate to introduce "the best practices that can bring the club to the 21st-century norms".

The current imbroglio dates back four years when the Ministry of Corporate Affairs decided to open an inquiry into the club's management after the growing number of complaints and court cases against the club. The petition was filed early last year at the NCLAT in which the ministry sought to take over the club management. It seems to have got its way, for now. Other clubs in Lutyens' Delhi are trembling now that serious action has begun. Any guesses about who's next? DKB is listening to your chatter.. so send it in..

ED ON AN EXPANSION SPREE

As it seeks to become nimbler as well as to strengthen its reach due to growing responsibilities, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) is on an expansion spree. This requires more officers for new zonal and sub-zonal offices.

The agency, a part of the Revenue Department of the Union Finance Ministry, is responsible for enforcing economic laws and fighting economic crime. But with a wider jurisdiction now with new responsibilities under the FEMA, PMLA and FEO acts, it will need to expand its footprint.

According to sources, the expansion will involve a considerable restructuring of its cadre strength. At present, ED has a sanctioned strength of 2,064 posts including five special directors and 27 joint directors. Since there is a shortage of officers for even the sanctioned posts, there is a greater urgency for selecting more officers to fill existing vacancies as well as for the new offices. Apparently, there is a move to create new posts of additional/joint directors and deputy directors for the new zonal and sub-zonal offices.

Recently, ED promoted 10 assistant directors as deputy directors of enforcement. They include P Radhakrishnan, P Vinod Kumar, Ms P Nandini, Rajes Kumar M Nair, Shubhendu Parthi, Diptesh Mondal, Benjamin SN Chhattai, Ms Padma, VG Thomas and Ms Krishna Jain. The agency has also recently opened two new zonal offices in Bhopal and Gurugram and raised the status of sub-zonal offices in Raipur and Bhubaneswar to zonal offices. It has also opened several sub-zonal offices across the country.

BIHAR EX-DGP'S POLITICAL CAREER YET TO TAKE OFF

The political ambitions of the high-profile former DGP of Bihar Gupteshwar Pandey have been thwarted, yet again.

Though Pandey waited patiently for his hoped for induction into the NDA government, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has instead appointed another former IPS officer, Sunil Kumar, as a Cabinet minister in the state with the Excise and Prohibition portfolio, barely a few months after his retirement.

Pandey shot into the headline with his comments during the furore over actor Sushant Singh's suicide. Even as the controversy raged, Pandey took voluntary retirement and joined the Janata Dal (United) party hoping to get a party ticket. However, the ticket went to the BJP candidate under the seat-sharing agreement within the NDA.

This denied, many were certain that Pandey would be inducted into the Nitish Cabinet sooner than later. But Sunil Kumar has pipped him to that. Neither has Pandey been made an MLC.

Curiously, this was Pandey's second attempt at a career in politics. In 2009, he had taken voluntary retirement in the hope of getting a BJP ticket, which he was denied. Luckily for him, Nitish Kumar allowed him to withdraw his resignation from the IPS and subsequently even elevated him as state police chief.

Will Pandey's patient wait fructify or has he run out of options? We'll wait and see.

Share a babu experience! Follow [dilupthecherian@twitter.com](#). Let's multiply the effect.

WISDOM CORNER

- Hustle in silence and let your success make the noise.

UNKNOWN
- We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.

ARISTOTLE
- If you're offered a seat on a rocket ship, don't ask what seat! Just get on.

SHERYL SANDBERG

WORDSWORTH

Budget

The origin of our word budget is the Latin bulga, a little pouch or knapsack, which may have come from a Gaulish source that's related to the Irish bolg, "bag". The word turned up in English in the fifteenth century, having travelled via the French bougette, a diminutive form of bouge, "leather bag". Its first meaning in English indeed was "pouch, wallet, bag", and followed its French original in usually implying something made of leather. By the end of the sixteenth century, the word could refer to the contents of one's budget as well as to the container itself. People frequently used this in the figurative sense of a bundle of news, or of a long letter full of news, and the word formed part of the name of several defunct British newspapers. The allusion was that the government minister responsible for financial affairs opened his budget, or wallet, to reveal his proposals. It probably also echoed the idiom to open one's budget, "to speak one's mind."

LOL

SHOW YOUR PASSPORT

An elderly Canadian gentleman of 83 arrived in Paris by plane. At the French customs desk, the man took a few minutes to locate his passport in his carry-on bag. "You have been to France before, monsieur?" the customs officer asked, sarcastically. The elderly gentleman admitted he had been to France previously. "Then you should know enough to



have your passport ready."

The Canadian said, "The last time I was here, I didn't have to show it." "Impossible, Canadians always have to show your passports on arrival in France!"

The Canadian senior gave the Frenchman a long hard look, then he quietly explained, "Well, when I came ashore at Juno Beach on D Day in 1944 to help liberate this country, I couldn't find any Frenchmen to show it to."

FOCUS PANDEMIC

VACCINE SOLIDARITY NOW

The arrival of the first COVID-19 vaccines in late 2020 brought fresh hope that the end of the pandemic was within sight. As G7 leaders, from North America and Europe to Japan, gather for a virtual meeting on February 19, their top priority will be to discuss precisely how to achieve this goal.

While this won't be the first time that global leaders have addressed the pandemic, I welcome the fact that UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the G7's current chair, has called this summit specifically in order to focus on vaccination. Having represented the European Union at these gatherings for ten years, I know how they can spur a broader movement to find solutions.

With US President Joe Biden renewing America's spirit of multilateralism, this G7 meeting offers genuine hope of becoming a true inflection point in overcoming the COVID-19 crisis. Moreover, a solution is already on the table, with vaccines ready to be rolled out to the world's poorest countries.

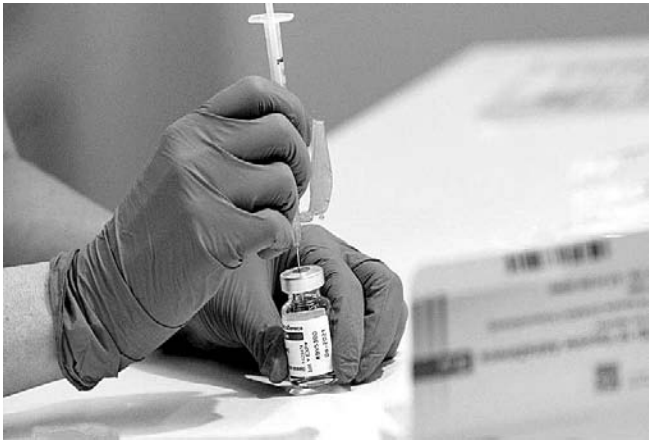
It is now clear that vaccines are having a more powerful impact during this pandemic than any fiscal or monetary stimulus, not only in terms of saving lives and protecting people, but also in laying a path to economic recovery. This is so because, as long as the coronavirus circulates, re-infection will continue and efforts to resume trade, travel, and commerce will stall.

But the vaccines' potential impact is entirely contingent on ensuring rapid, fair, and equitable access to them to people in all countries. So, more than ever before, we need global solidarity in support of the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX), the international initiative that aims to make the vaccines available everywhere in the world.

COVAX represents the only viable way to achieve an international economic recovery and

José Manuel Barroso

IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT VACCINES ARE HAVING A MORE POWERFUL IMPACT DURING THIS PANDEMIC THAN ANY FISCAL OR MONETARY STIMULUS, NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF SAVING LIVES AND PROTECTING PEOPLE, BUT ALSO IN LAYING A PATH TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY



With US President Joe Biden renewing America's spirit of multilateralism, this G7 meeting offers genuine hope of becoming a true inflection point in overcoming the COVID-19 crisis. Moreover, a solution is already on the table, with vaccines ready to be rolled out to the world's poorest countries

avoid a global vaccine divide. With 190 participating governments, the initiative has already secured an initial 2.3 billion COVID-19 vaccine doses for 2021. Next week, it will start to distribute the first 1.3 billion doses to people in 92 lower-income countries that otherwise would be unable to afford them.

Given current global supply constraints, COVAX expects to distribute around 120 million doses by the end of March, and 340 million by mid-2021. This means that even in a supply-constrained world, COVAX remains on track to meet its original vaccine-delivery schedule.

But while this is good news, speed of access is key – and the world could act even faster. In particular, higher-income countries can help accelerate the equitable distribution of vaccines by donating any surplus doses they have to COVAX. French President Emmanuel Macron and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

have already committed to do just that. The generosity of G7 donors, from the United Kingdom and the United States to Japan, is also most welcome. And Germany, under Chancellor Angela Merkel, has shown true leadership in this struggle both within the EU and at a global level.

By working together instead of seeking bilateral deals with pharmaceutical companies, governments can reduce the immediate pressure on global supplies of new doses. This will allow those most in need of a vaccine to be prioritized accordingly, and prevent a repeat of what happened in the 2009 H1N1 swine flu pandemic, when vaccines went to the highest bidder.

Vaccine nationalism in any form must cease. By constraining already limited global supplies, such practices put doses further out of reach for those who need them most, and thus place everyone at risk by allowing the virus

to continue to spread and mutate. Global vaccine solidarity is the only solution.

The EU, represented at G7 summits by the presidents of the European Commission and the European Council, offers a prime example of why this is the case. Like all buyers in a supply-constrained marketplace, the EU has experienced delays in procuring vaccines, and has been criticized for the speed at which it has made them available to member states. But the Union's solidarity-based model works, because without it countries would be competing to outbid each other for doses. This would have resulted in costly chaos, almost certainly prolonging the pandemic and creating dramatic disruption in Europe and beyond.

The same is true globally, which is why we now need international solidarity in order to work through COVAX. This week, the G7 has an opportunity to demonstrate leadership by making this initiative's success its top priority. And the G20, under Italy's presidency, should continue this effort. I am sure that new Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi, who has vast experience of dealing with crises, will show the global leadership that the COVID-19 challenge requires.

With governments under immense pressure to secure COVID-19 vaccines for all their citizens, taking a global stance may not always be the easiest or most popular choice. Nevertheless, ensuring that people in all countries have rapid and equitable access to the vaccines is not only morally right, but also offers the quickest way to end this crisis and put our economies on the road to recovery.

The author a former president of the European Commission (2004-14) and Prime Minister of Portugal (2002-04), is Chair of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM INFORMATION

How to save local news

The COVID-19 crisis has confirmed, yet again, the importance of broad access to clear, reliable, and accurate information. Throughout the pandemic, people all over the world have depended on reliable news sources to help them understand not only the virus itself, but also its impact on their economies and societies. And yet the people gathering, verifying, and delivering that information have been under unprecedented strain – raising the risk that, when the next crisis comes, we will have few trusted news sources to which to turn.

Unlike other industries that have suffered during the pandemic, journalism is not facing a drop in demand. On the contrary, Nielsen estimates that staying home – such as during crises – can lead to an almost 60% increase in media consumption. And, indeed, in the United States, media consumption reached historic highs in 2020; news programming comprised a major component of the increase.

The same trend can be seen around the world. A study of media consumption across North Asia during the pandemic found a sharp increase in use of digital news sources in Japan as worries about COVID-19 spread. And in Taiwan and South Korea, news channels were the primary beneficiaries of growth in television viewership.

On guard

Sir, During a pandemic, and until the last affected person, it is preposterous to lower one's guard. Lifting of lockdown, downward trend in newly diagnosed patients and the beginning of the much awaited vaccination drive pushed the people into a state of complacency. Half-baked knowledge about "herd immunity" was another factor that brought an unnecessary feeling of smugness among the people. But clusters of new Covid-19 infections in different parts of the country have unnerved the authorities. Reports have it that three new strains from abroad were carried into the country by travellers. Is India witnessing a second wave? Experts are of the opinion that it is premature to come to such a conclusion before waiting for some time. Mere new clusters cannot form a wave: the country. Fortunately, is yet to see severe clusters in a quick time. However, it is imperative for the state governments to act in fast forward mode. The affected states like Maharashtra have taken firm steps towards ensuring the cases do not snowball into alarming proportions. Restrictions are back in districts that have seen an unexpected surge in the number of patients. Punitive measures for not wearing masks in public places are a move in the right direction. It is time to meticulously go about reintroducing targeted tests. Random testing should also be undertaken in right earnest.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Sowing scientific seeds

Sir, Mars has long been the most sought-after in the scientific arena only next to other beautiful natural creatures like Earth, Sun and Moon has been proved true once again. The current NASA Mars Mission has got more attention from all. In particular, the landing of the so-called Perseverance Rover has been the talking point. Conversations make it clear that a lot of great efforts have gone into this project aimed to know about the possible life existence, rock samples and the atmosphere on Mars. Such scientific endeavours not only kindle the learning curve of science but also disseminate the knowledge quotient in the long run. Even though we have been routinely attached to the technological advances, each day in our life unfolds only through the scientific activities. It is expected that the NASA is going to achieve the desired results from the current mission. Also, it is time to expand the science knowledge through proper means.

Senthil Saravana Durai, MUMBAI

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

Why COVID cases are climbing in Maharashtra

Several cases of coronavirus mutation have been observed in Maharashtra, a senior scientist said Friday, underscoring that they are yet to observe behaviour

AGENCIES

Mumbai: Several cases of coronavirus mutation have been observed in Maharashtra, a senior scientist told the media Friday, underscoring that they are yet to observe behaviour - including how fast or slow it infects people - and pointed out that it is "too early to call it a strain".

Dr TP Lahane, the Director of Medical Education and Research, Maharashtra, said that it is early days yet and more sequencing and study needs to be carried out to know about the "infectiveness" of the mutant variety.

The scientists, he said, are doing gene sequencing for this and the results will be available in 10 to 15 days. A detailed study has to be conducted, he said. The mutations are detected as Maharashtra - which saw the maximum number of COVID cases and deaths in the country - is witnessing a surge in cases after a two-month lull. Maharashtra logged more than 5,000 cases Thursday - a new high after a gap of 75 days. Mumbai recorded more than 700 cases for a second straight day, pushing the authorities to issue fresh restrictions.

Pointing out that there much laxity lately when it comes to observing safety measures, Dr Lahane said, "I think the spike is because of this and not because it is a new strain and it is too early to say that it is a new strain."

The sequencing tests were con-



ducted in Amaravati, Akola and Yavatmal districts of the state. The mutations have been found in three samples in Amaravati, three in Yavatmal and two in Akola. The results came in Tuesday, amid the country's efforts to counter the new strains of virus that have come from abroad. So far, the South African strain of the virus has been detected in four people and the Brazil variant seen in one, the Indian Council of Medical Research - the nodal body in the country's battle against coronavirus - has said. There are 187 cases of the UK strain. The results of the sequencing, Dr Lahane said, came out on Tuesday and the tests were started 15 days before. "It takes near about eight to 10 days to do the sequencing and in that, we have seen a change in sequence of the spike protein," he

told the media.

Asked if this feature was not consistent with the UK strain of the virus, he said, "You can say a few things are consistent with the United Kingdom (strain), but it is not an actual United Kingdom variety".

"It is some different mutation that we have seen in the cases in the three districts, and for that (to figure out its characteristics) we have to do more sequencing," he said.

The scientists now need to observe the mutation, calculate its "infectivity" and if it is more, figure out precautions - surveillance and other things, he said. Maharashtra reported a jump of 5,427 cases Thursday and Mumbai reported 736 cases. Amravati and Yavatmal have been placed under restrictions. There will be a lockdown from Saturday evening to Monday

Politicians panic

Mumbai: Sending alarm bells ringing, several Maharashtra leaders across political parties have been infected by COVID-19, including two who have tested positive for the second time, officials said here Friday. The infected dignitaries include Nationalist Congress Party state president and Water Resources Minister Jayant Patil, Health Minister Rajesh Tope, Food & Drugs Administration Minister Dr Rajendra Shingne, Minister of State for Labour and Prahar Janshakti leader Bachchu Kadu. Maharashtra Congress President Nana F Patole has gone into isolation after two of his staffers tested positive and his test reports are awaited, said a party source. Besides, Home Minister Anil Deshmukh is also in isolation at his Nagpur residence after testing positive earlier this week, and senior NCP leader Eknath Khadse is also infected. Both Kadu and Khadse have tested positive for the second time, while the latter's daughter-in-law and BJP MP from Raver Raksha Khadse has also been infected.

morning in Amravati. In Yavatmal, schools and colleges will remain closed till February 28. Restaurants and wedding halls will operate but with less than 50 per cent capacity. Assembly of five or more people will not be allowed.

India slams UN experts over Kashmir concerns

REUTERS

New Delhi, Feb 19: India has criticised UN rights experts for their concerns about constitutional changes made in the Muslim-majority territory of Kashmir, where militants have been fighting for independence for three decades, and said the officials lacked neutrality.

Two Special Rapporteurs on minority issues and freedom of religion or belief said in a statement Thursday that the Indian government's decision last year to end Jammu and Kashmir state's autonomy and enact new laws could curtail the political participation of Muslims.

Muslims and other minority groups also stood to lose on issues such as employment and land ownership, they said.

Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman Anurag Srivastava said that Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of India and the changes made in its status were enacted by parliament.

One of the changes was that laws that were in force in the rest of India would also apply to the people of Kashmir, allowing them the same legal rights as the rest of India, he said.

"This press release calls into question the larger principles of objectivity and neutrality that the SRs (Special Rapporteurs) are mandated by the Human Rights Council



Envoys of 24 countries in Srinagar on a trip sponsored by the Government of India "to witness the Union Territory's march to development"

to adhere to," he said in a statement late on Thursday night.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has maintained it revoked Kashmir's special status in an effort to integrate the revolt-torn region in India and open it up for faster economic growth.

Srivastava said the experts had issued their statement just when India was hosting a group of ambassadors in Kashmir to show them the ground situation and did not wait for a response from the Indian government to their questionnaire.

"Instead, they chose to release their inaccurate assumptions to the media. The press release has also

been deliberately timed to coincide with the visit of a group of ambassadors to Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

More than 50,000 people have died in an uprising against New Delhi's rule in Kashmir that began in 1989, by government count. Others put the toll at well over 100,000. Arch rival Pakistan claims Kashmir to be its own and has twice gone to war with India over the territory.

The UN experts said that the new laws could pave the way for outsiders to settle in Kashmir and alter the demographics of the region.

Farmers firm on holding Tikait's 'Maha Panchayat'

The Yavatmal district administration Thursday ordered curbs on gatherings and also closure of schools for ten days in view of the rising cases of coronavirus

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagpur, Feb 19: Even as the district administration in Maharashtra's Yavatmal has denied permission to the February 20 "Maha Panchayat" of farmer leader Rakesh Tikait due to rising COVID-19 cases, its organiser-Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM)-on Friday said it is firm on holding the public meeting there.

The SKM said that if Tikait and other leaders are stopped in Yavatmal, then a sit-in protest would be held.

The administration in Yavatmal district Thursday ordered curbs on gatherings and also closure of schools (which had reopened for select classes) for ten days in view of the rising cases of coronavirus.

Tikait, one of the leaders of farmers' agitation against the new farm laws on Delhi borders, was scheduled to address the rally at Azad Maidan ground in Yavatmal city on Saturday. However, the dis-

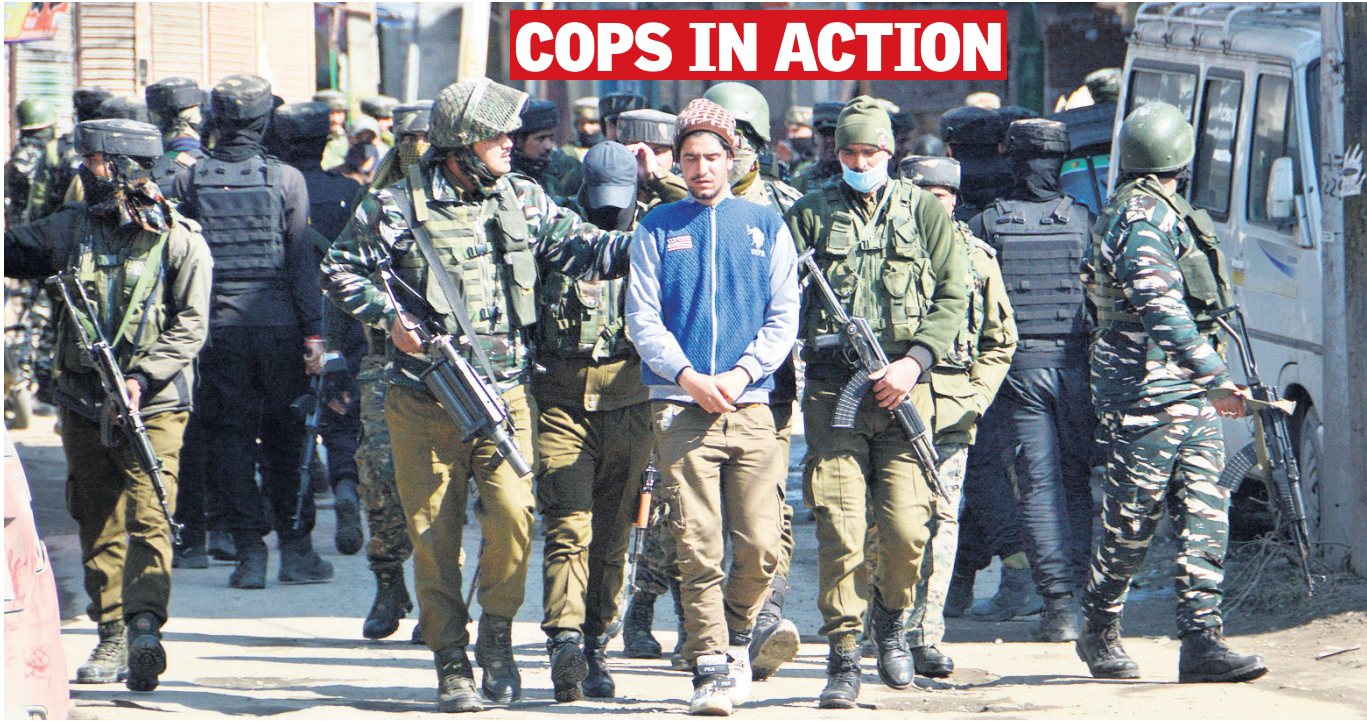
trict administration had denied permission for it.

The organisers said that they have submitted a fresh application to the administration seeking its permission for the public meeting. However, response to it is still awaited.

Talking to PTI, SKM's Maharashtra co-ordinator Sandip Gidde said, "We are firm on holding the Maha Panchayat in Yavatmal tomorrow. Rakesh Tikait along with several other leaders of the Sanyukt Kisan Morcha will address the public meeting. He will arrive in Nagpur tonight and will address the event at Yavatmal tomorrow."

"But, if Tikait and other leaders are stopped, we will hold a 'thiyya andolan' (sit-in) at the very place where they are stopped," he said.

The SKM is an umbrella body of farmers' unions which is spearheading the protest on Delhi borders.



Police personnel detain a suspected youth while cordoning off the area, at Baghat Chowk in Srinagar, Friday. Two policemen were killed by militants in the Baghat area on high security airport road, Friday.

'No economic activity in J&K post abrogation of Article 370'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Feb 19: No major economic activity has taken place in Jammu and Kashmir since after the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, the Jammu Chamber of Commerce and Industries (JCCI) said Friday, demanding immediate lifting of curbs on the movement of people to and from the Union Territory.

The traders' body also opposed the proposed property tax and said it would not hesitate to launch an agitation if it is imposed.



"The business community suffered economic losses due to strict restrictions in the wake of August 5, 2019 events followed by a prolonged coronavirus-induced lockdown. No major economic activity has taken place (in Jammu and Kashmir) after

the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A," JCCI president Arun Gupta told reporters here.

Voicing his concern over the continued restrictions on the movement of people at Lakhanpur, the gateway to Jammu and Kashmir, Gupta said 40 per cent of the businesses, including hotel and transport industries, depend on pilgrims and tourists but due to the continued restrictions, people are reluctant to visit the UT.

"The COVID-19 restrictions were eased across India in January this year but the J&K government has

kept Lakhanpur in the red zone category and not allowing inter-state bus services, besides subjecting people coming from outside to COVID testing," he said. Gupta said the people are suffering immensely due to the "harsh restrictions" and are affecting the business in the UT, which has already suffered a lot due to the prolonged lockdown.

"The governments outside J&K are coming to the rescue of their residents by reducing existing taxes but the J&K government is planning to impose property tax to further weaken the people economically."

Maha's caravan policy aims to promote tourism, generate jobs

'CARAVAN TOURISM' POLICY AIMS NOT ONLY TO PROVIDE A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE TO TRAVEL ENTHUSIASTS, BUT ALSO PROMOTE TOURISM IN THE STATE'S REMOTE AREAS AND CREATE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 19: The Maharashtra government's 'caravan tourism' policy aims not only to provide a different experience to travel enthusiasts, but also promote tourism in the state's remote areas and create job opportunities, an official has said.

The Maharashtra Cabinet has approved the caravan tourism policy that seeks to give incentives to tour operators and at the same time boost employment opportunities in the pandemic-battered sector.

Valsa Nair Singh, principal secretary of the state tourism department, said in a statement Thursday, "The policy is expected to provide a different experience other than the traditional stays to the people who love to travel. It will promote tourism in remote areas

and also create job opportunities."

Travel enthusiasts can explore Maharashtra, which has an array of colourful shrines, historic caves, golden beaches lined with swaying palm trees, forests, heritage sites and hill stations, she said.

The caravan policy allows private players to get vehicles for tourism and set up caravan parks at public and private places. It is an attempt to make the state even more popular in terms of tourism, she said.

A caravan is a specially-built vehicle used for the purpose of travel, leisure and accommodation.

These caravans will be equipped with facilities like beds for stay at night, kitchen, toilet, sofa and table for comfort of the travellers.

A caravan park is a place where such vehicles can stay overnight, where basic or advanced ameni-



ties and facilities, such as water refill, battery charging and disposal of sewage, are provided.

These caravan parks will be set up in the buffer zone of a forest, near a dam or the base of a hill fort.

Food courts will be available there and information regarding

local sightseeing spots will be provided.

As per the caravan policy, the state government has allowed the use different sets of caravans like single-axle and twin-axle caravans, folding caravan, camper trailer; the statement said.

"We will set up caravan parking bays across the state. The land available from irrigation, forest or revenue departments or the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) will be identified and developed for this purpose. These places will have basic facilities like electricity, water, security, safety. A memorandum of understanding will be signed with private tour operators for its use," she added.

Talking about the initiative, Dhananjay Sawalkar, director of directorate of tourism, said, "The caravan policy will also cater to the seasonal and the festive demands, particularly when there is a Kumbh Mela in Nashik or Pandharpur Yatra (annual pilgrimage), etc."

There is a lot of demand from travellers for accommodation, es-

pecially in small towns. So this caravan facility will cater to the demand, he added. "We have allowed setting up caravan parks along the major highways in Maharashtra. So, for overnight stay also these caravans will be useful," he said.

According to Sawalkar, the transport department has given an incentive on the vehicle taxes, particularly those who are going to invest in caravans. On the similar line, the tourism department is also giving incentives in the form of state GST, electricity duty, stamp duty, and commercial water charges.

All these benefits will be given to the caravan parks. Apart from that, the tourism department will facilitate them to purchase land and also provide training and help for the marketing of these caravans, he said.

The militant attack took place a day after the 24-member diplomatic delegation concluded its two-day visit to the Union Territory

One SPO, Altaf Ahmad was killed and a policeman identified as Manzoor Ahmad was injured during the encounter that took place at Beerwah area Thursday night. The police followed the blood trail of the injured terrorists and started a search operation in a second village.

"It was a group of two terrorists who were injured, their blood trail has been followed to a second village where searches are underway," Inspector General Police Vijay Kumar said.

"Operations were underway and the terrorists will soon be neutralised," he said.

The encounter had started after security forces had a specific input about the presence of terrorists at Beerwah. As the joint team of security forces reached the spot where the terrorists were hiding, they came under a heavy volume of fire that triggered the encounter.

of the day quote

If the fuel prices are to be reduced, then taxes imposed by the Centre and state governments will have to come down. Hence both central and state government can come together to think on formulating a way in interest of the common man

SURESH PRABHU | FORMER UNION MINISTER

The ongoing infrastructure projects in the state are beneficial for the industrial and tourism growth and they are not meant to facilitate coal transportation

PRAMOD SAWANT | CHIEF MINISTER, GOA

There is a pro-incumbency wave in Assam as BJP fulfilled all expectations. Our party workers are very enthused and we will win more seats this time

NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR | UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

U'khand floods: 1 body recovered

Gopeshwar (Uttarakhand): One more body has been recovered from a flood-hit area in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, taking the toll in the glacial disaster to 62, even as search and rescue operations continued for the 13th day at the NTPC's Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project site. One body was recovered late Thursday night from the banks of the Alaknanda at Helang between Joshimath and Pipalkoti, Chamoli district police said Friday. 142 people are still missing.

7 Pak migrants get citizenship

Jaipur: Seven migrants from Pakistan, including three couples, who have been living in Rajasthan, were Friday granted Indian citizenship by Jaipur's District Collector Antar Singh Nehra in his office. Those who received the certificates included Jawahar Ram, Sonari Mai, Gojar Mai, Gordan Das, Ganesh Chand, Basan Mai and Arjan Singh. Gordan Das, who has been living as a Pakistani migrant for 9 years in Mansarovar, said that he came here from Punjab province's Rahim Yar Khan situated in Pakistan.

10 kg heroin seized by BSF

Chandigarh: The Border Security Force (BSF) Friday seized 10 kgs of heroin from the Indo-Pakistan border in Mamdot area of Ferozepur district in Punjab, officials said. BSF personnel spotted the movement of suspects along the border near Gatti Hayat village early Friday. When they asked them to stop, the intruders fired shots and ran away into the Pakistani territory said a senior BSF official.

ED arrests 3 in Nashik

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested three people in a money laundering case linked to alleged black marketing of food grain worth ₹177 crore issued under PDS and other government schemes meant for the under-privileged in Nashik district in Maharashtra. In a statement, the central agency said it has arrested Sampat Namdeo Ghorpade, Arun Namdeo Ghorpade and Vishwas Namdeo Ghorpade under various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), February 17.



Efforts were made to ensure Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is forgotten but failed. His legacy of courage, patriotism, sacrifice and selfless service to the nation will continue to inspire generations to come

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

India becomes 2nd fastest country to achieve 1cr jabs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 19: India took 34 days to achieve the landmark feat of one crore Covid-19 vaccinations, the second fastest in the world, the health ministry said Friday.

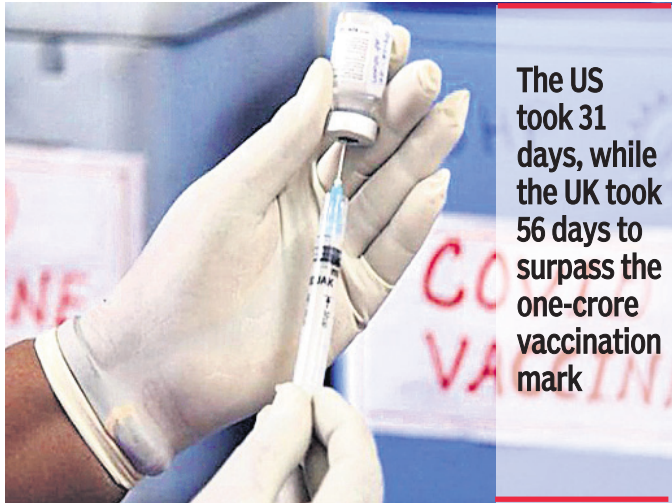
The US took 31 days, while the UK took 56 days to surpass the one-crore vaccination mark.

Till 8 am Friday, the cumulative number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered to healthcare workers (HCWs) and frontline workers (FLWs) in the country was 1,01,88,007.

"A total of 1,01,88,007 vaccine doses have been administered through 2,11,462 sessions, as per the provisional report till 8 am. These include 62,60,242 HCWs (1st dose), 6,10,899 HCWs (2nd dose) and 33,16,866 FLWs (1st dose)," the ministry said.

The second dose of the Covid-19 vaccination started being administered to those who have completed 28 days since the receipt of the first dose from February 13. The vaccination of the FLWs started February 2.

As on the 34th day of the vaccination drive (February 18), a total of 6,58,674 vaccine doses were administered, of which 4,16,942 beneficiaries were inoculated across 10,812 sessions for the first dose (HCWs and FLWs), while 2,41,732 HCWs received the second dose, the



ministry stated.

The country is witnessing a progressive increase in the number of vaccinations day by day, it underlined.

Eight states account for 57.47 per cent of the total vaccine doses administered in the country. Uttar Pradesh alone accounts for 10.5 per cent (10,70,895).

Seven states account for 60.85 per cent of the second vaccine doses administered. Telangana leads the chart with a 12-per cent (73,281) share of the second doses administered in the country.

Sixteen states and Union territories have not reported any Covid-19 death in a span of 24 hours.

These are Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Puducherry, Chandigarh, Manipur, Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Tripura, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

The number of fatalities reported was between one and five in 15 states and Union territories, while it was between six and ten in three states and Union territories.

The number of active Covid-19 cases in India currently stands at 1,39,542, accounting for only 1.27 per cent of its total caseload.

COVID LESSON

New treatment protocol in private hospitals

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Feb 19: Learning lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic, leading private healthcare providers have started introducing changes in their treatment protocols.

Drawing on the experience of tackling the pandemic during last one year, the hospitals are pre-screening patients not just for Covid-19 but also other potential infectious diseases. For this, some of the hospitals have allocated separate infrastructure and manpower within the premises.

They say this will help them in providing right treatment and ensuring that other patients in the hospital and the staff are not put to risk of infection.

From creating isolation wards to providing emergency services, making intensive care units available and beds for treatment of Covid-19, the managements of hospitals learnt to deal with the pandemic and the whole experience helped them to improve the service delivery. It was a big learning for doctors, nurses and support staff of the healthcare institutions who contributed to tackling the situation, though the initial stage saw problems leading to intervention by the government authorities to streamline the process.

"All hospitals are now geared up to admitting patients with other infectious diseases. The experience gained while tackling Covid-19 menace, the staff has had immense learning through various in-house trainings in infection prevention and control practices," Dr Riyaz Khan, CEO, Continental Hospitals, told IANS.

DAYS AFTER VACCINE JAB, WOMAN SUCCUMBS TO FEVER

A 58-year-old anganwadi teacher, T Narayanamma, died Thursday night; a fortnight after taking the Covid-19 vaccine shot at Pulivendula in Kadapa district in Andhra Pradesh. On the second day after receiving the vaccine, Narayanamma developed fever and got admitted to a private hospital for treatment.



YOU GO GIRL



Students participate in a sack race during the annual sports meet of Patna Women's College, in Patna

UNI PHOTO

2 held in Unnao deaths case: Police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Unnao (UP), Feb 19: The Uttar Pradesh Police Friday held two people in connection with the deaths of two teenage girls at an Unnao village, accusing them of murder over a one-sided love affair.

The third victim in the case is battling for life at a hospital. One of the accused held in the case is a teenager, according to police. "Vinay Kumar, alias Lambu, and a teenager have been held in connection with the case. The matter is a fallout of a one-side love affair. The accused gave some pesticide with water to the three girls," Lucknow Range IG Laxmi Singh told reporters here.

Both accused are residents of Pathakpur village in the Ashoha area and were held on a tip-off, the IG said. During interrogation, Vinay told police that he was involved in agriculture and owned a piece of land at Baburaha village, near the spot where girls were found on Wednesday night.

According to police, Vinay told them that the girls used to go to the fields for fodder and they became friends during the coronavirus lockdown. He had a one-sided love affair with one of the girls.

"We used to play and eat together in the field. I had a one-sided love affair with her. When I proposed her,



she rejected. When I asked her this month to give me her phone number, she did not give due to which I was angry and decided to kill her," Vinay told police.

"On Wednesday, I mixed pesticide in a water bottle and asked my friend to bring snacks. The three had it and when they asked for water, I gave them the water bottle in which pesticide was mixed and they drank it. I had left their bodies in the field," the IG said quoting Vinay's confession.

Apart from Section 302 (murder) of the IPC, police have slapped Section 201 against the accused for causing disappearance of evidence. Earlier in the day, the last rites of the two teenage girls were performed amid tight security arrange-

ments, officials said.

Komal (15) and Kajal (14) were buried in their agriculture fields in the presence of senior officials and police personnel. The district officials had made elaborate arrangements with heavy deployment of security personnel and barricades installed.

The security personnel covered about one kilometre on the four paths reaching the village with a magistrate-level official posted at every barricade to check people.

Personnel from six police stations were deployed. The bodies were brought to their village after a post-mortem was done on Thursday but the last rites could not be performed on the day, police said.

UP panchayat orders 4 slaps, ₹1 lakh for sodomy

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bijnor (UP), Feb 19: A village Panchayat in Bijnor district has announced four slaps and ₹1 lakh fine as punishment to a 16-year-old boy, for allegedly sodomizing his eight-year-old cousin.

The matter has been 'settled' and the family members of the victim have not filed a complaint with the police.

The victim, meanwhile, has been recuperating in a private hospital since Sunday evening when the alleged assault took place.

According to villagers, the boy lured the victim, a neighbour, to a field on the outskirts of his village and allegedly sexually assaulted him. The boy was rescued after some

passers-by heard his cries and brought him to the village. From there, the child was taken to a private hospital in Noorpur town.

The villagers convened a Panchayat Wednesday and in the presence of the accused, announced a quick punishment - four tight slaps and ₹1 lakh as compensation to the victim's family.

When contacted, Station House Officer (SHO) of Nahtaur, Jai Kumar, said, "The matter pertains to the same family. We had gone to the village but the victim's family refused to file a complaint. We do not know about Panchayat and its decision. It is not legal."

When contacted, a senior police officer assured action in the case.

Congress loses more leaders to SP in UP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Feb 19: The Congress suffered a jolt in Uttar Pradesh Friday when it lost another batch of senior leaders - this time to the Samajwadi Party.

Two former ministers, R.K. Chaudhary (Lucknow) and Jai Narain Tiwari (Sultanpur) left the party to join the Samajwadi Party.

R.K. Chaudhary was a cabinet minister in the Bahujan Samaj Party government and had later joined the Congress.

Jai Narain Tiwari was a minister in the Kalyan Singh government and member of the break-away BSP group called Jantantrik BSP.

Talking to reporters, the former ministers said that the Congress had become directionless and 'delusional'. They said they were feeling 'suffocated' in the party.

Hackers can infiltrate into your devices via Clubhouse

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 19: As invite-only audio conversation app Clubhouse gains popularity, cyber security experts warned Friday that hackers can distribute malicious codes under the guise of fake applications to join the platform.

There are privacy concerns because Clubhouse works with a Shanghai-based company called Agora to provide real-time audio technology support. The firm is headquartered in Shanghai and Silicon Valley.

Denis Legezo, security expert at cyber-security firm Kaspersky, said that there are two main concerns

here - the sale of invites and fake applications. "Both scenarios are united by one thing - the desire to exploit users' interest in the social platform," he said in a statement.

The first scenario is simply monetisation on a small scale. "However, the second scenario is more serious. Cyber attackers can distribute malicious codes under the guise of popular software - for instance, a fake version of Clubhouse for Android," Legezo emphasised.

"A fake malicious application can do exactly what you allow it to do in the security settings of your Android - to get a rough or accurate location of the device, record audio and video, attain access to mes-



sengers etc.," he warned. Melissa Chan, a Hong Kong-

American broadcast journalist, gave a talk on Clubhouse February

4 about Beijing's overseas influence campaigns.

According to The Star, she found out that "the conversation was surreptitiously recorded by individuals who sympathised with Chinese Communist Party actions".

"The security repercussions could be as benign as nothing happening to users, to police in their country detaining a Clubhouse user because of something they said. Even if absolutely nothing happens to a user living in an authoritarian country, keep in mind that that person lives with the uncertainty of not knowing if something might happen in the future," Chan was quoted as saying in the report.

Some more unusual tricks are also possible on Clubhouse.

"For instance, if attackers implement the capacity to record audio, and this function is allowed on the device, they would be able to use high quality recordings to train their machine algorithms, to create more sophisticated deep fakes," Legezo commented.

In an interview with the South China Morning Post, Agora has said it does not "store any end-user data".

In its last blog post late last month, Clubhouse which has seen over 8 million users on Apple devices, said user safety has always been a top priority for them.

of the day quote

I hope that attempts will be made to put an end to the atmosphere of violence so that the people of West Bengal can live in peace, and the state moves forward in the path of development



PIYUSH GOYAL | UNION MINISTER

The country is entering the 75th year of independence in 2021 and there should be change. West Bengal should reach the pinnacle of development



JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | WB GOVERNOR

On February 21, 2021, I would be in Salem to address the youth of Tamil Nadu at the state BJP yuva morcha convention and look forward to my Salem visit this Sunday



RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Over 200 dogs found dead in WB

Bishnupur (WB): Over 200 stray dogs have died in the last three days in Bishnupur town in West Bengal's Bankura district, triggering panic among the people, officials said Friday. While 60 dogs died Tuesday, 97 were found dead Wednesday and 45 Thursday, they said. Bishnupur's civic body chief Divyendu Bandyopadhyay said the matter has been informed to the district authorities.

Oppn walks out from UP Assembly

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said in the state Assembly on Friday that only the "brokers" who had betrayed farmers were unhappy over the new farm laws, prompting a sharp reaction from the Opposition benches who staged a walkout in protest. The issue had also come up when the House assembled in the morning, leading to the adjournment of the proceedings for an hour in two phases.

Counter-terrorism drill in desert

Mahajan Field Firing Range (Rajasthan): India and US soldiers are carrying out a joint tactical level exercise in the Thar desert, aimed at enhancing cooperation and interoperability. The 16th edition of bilateral exercise Yudh Abhyas is being conducted at the foreign training node at the Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan's Bikaner. The drill is named Zorawar, in honour of mid 19th-century Dogra military commander General Zorawar Singh, who is renowned as the "Conqueror of Ladakh".



I want to appeal to all healthcare and frontline workers to get inoculated with COVID-19 vaccine doses as per schedule. The vaccines are safe. Don't believe any rumour and misinformation

HARSH VARDHAN | UNION MINISTER

13 TURTLES FOUND DEAD IN SARSAI NAWAR LAKE

Around 13 turtles, belonging to an endangered species, have been found dead in the Sarsai Nawar lake of Etawah district, which was declared a Ramsar site last year



India successfully test fires anti-tank guided missiles



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 19: India on Friday successfully test fired indigenously-developed anti-tank guided missile systems 'Helina' and 'Dhruvastra', paving their induction into the Army and the Indian Air Force respectively, officials said.

The defence ministry described the missiles as one of the most-advanced anti-tank weapons in the world. The missiles were test fired at Pokhran deserts in Rajasthan.

"The system has all-weather day-and-night capability and can defeat battle tanks with conventional armour as well as with explosive reactive armour. It is one of the most-advanced anti-tank weapons in the world," the ministry said. It said five missions were carried out for evaluating the capabilities of the missiles in minimum and maximum range.

"The missiles were fired in hover and max forward flight against realistic static and moving targets. Some missions were carried out with warheads against derelict tanks. A mission was carried out against a moving target from a forward flying helicopter," the ministry said in a statement.

The 'Helina' and 'Dhruvastra' are third generation anti-tank guided missiles that can engage targets both in direct hit mode as well as top attack mode.

Vehicles displaying caste identities to face action in Gurugram

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gurugram, Feb 19: Vehicles displaying caste identities in Gurugram will now invite traffic police action, according to an official order.

The order issued Thursday by Ramesh Kumar, Assistant Commissioner of Police Traffic (East) said that "all vehicles displaying caste identities will be penalised".

"As per the court directions, we have directed all the traffic officials to take action against vehicles displaying caste identities, specially on number plates," said the ACP. "According to the traffic police, every 20th vehicle is found carrying such a sticker. So in compliance with the court orders we will ensure action against such vehicle owners," he added.

Stickers on cars, motorcycles and other vehicles, exhibiting castes like Yadav, Jat, Gurjar, Brahmin, Saini, Thakur and Raghav are used to assert social status. "Such stickers should not be pasted on the vehicle number plates. Necessary action will be initiated as per the traffic norms against those guilty of this offence," he added.

"First time the offending vehicles will be warned and if they again are found disobeying traffic norms. They will be fined," Kumar said.

THE DELHI POLICE SAID THAT NEPAL HAS ACTIVE ISI CELLS AND USES THE POROUS BORDERS FOR TERROR OPERATIONS

‘Pak chief exporter of Jihadi terror’

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 19: Pakistan is the chief exporter of Jihadi terrorism, host of Al Qaeda leadership, D-Company and runs a network of Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN), Delhi Police said in its annual press conference Friday.

Mentioning seven neighbouring countries - Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Myanmar, and Bangladesh -, the Delhi Police told reporters how India faces consistent terror threat from elements present in these countries.

For Myanmar, the Delhi Police said that it has an active Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) cell-network engaged in Rohingya radicalization. The China and the ISI also supported the Northeast insurgent groups. The Delhi Police said that Nepal has active ISI cells and uses the porous borders for terror operations and also for pushing FICN within India. The police said that Maldives has active ISI cells and active foreign fighters.

For Afghanistan, the Delhi Police



said that India faces terror threat in the form of Islamic State Khorasan, Taliban and Haqqani Network (HQN), narcotics trafficking and the use of Afghan passports by ISI to infiltrate terror operatives. For Bangladesh, the police said that it has active ISI cells using open borders for terror operations and also for pushing FICN within India. For Sri Lanka, the Delhi Police said India faces terror threat

from Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) remnants in the country. Active ISI cells and FICN along with narcotics trafficking is also used. Pakistan was placed on the FATF 'grey' list in June 2018 and given a timeline to address global concerns by implementing 27 action points.

Pakistan has launched an aggressive diplomatic effort in a desperate move to try and exit the

grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global watchdog to combat financing of terrorism.

According to the Express Tribune, a Pakistani newspaper, Pakistan has reached out to member countries of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in an effort to garner their support for exiting from the grey list, just days ahead of a meeting which is set to

J&K leaders condemn killing of cops by terrorist

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Feb 19: Jammu and Kashmir political leaders, including former chief ministers Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti, condemned the killing of two unarmed policemen by a terrorist in an upmarket Srinagar area Friday.

Abdullah, who is also the National Conference vice president, said the attack was "reprehensible" as the two

policemen were unarmed and shot from behind. "I condemn this act of militant violence & send my condolences to the families of these brave men," he tweeted.

"What makes this attack even more reprehensible is that SgCT Mohammad Yousuf of Zurhama and Ct Suhail Ahmad of Logripora were unarmed & shot in the back. Senseless & cowardly at the same time," he added. PDP president

Mehbooba condemned the attack saying the cycle of violence only begets misery.

"Condemn the killing of two policemen in the Baghat attack. My heart goes out to their families & loved ones. This cycle of violence serves no cause & begets only misery," she tweeted. People's Conference led by Sajad Lone also condemned the killing of the policemen.

"We strongly condemn the killing of two policemen in a dastardly and savage act of senseless violence at Baghat today. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of Suhail Ahmad and Mohd Yusuf in this hour of grief," the party said. Local leaders of the BJP and the Congress also condemned the killings.

BJP leader Altaf Thakur termed the attack an act of cowardice.

"There is no place for such cowardly acts and the attackers must be brought to book," he said. The two constables were on duty at Baghat on the high-security airport road when they were attacked. The terrorist, identified as Saqib, can be seen pulling out an assault rifle hidden inside his 'pheran', a loose overgarment worn during winters, and pumping bullets at them at close range.

‘Metroman’ says he is ready to be Kerala Chief Minister if BJP wins

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 19: Set to enter the political fray by joining the BJP next week, technocrat E Sreedharan Friday said his main aim is to help the party come to power in Kerala and that he will be open to chief ministership.

He also said that the focus will be on developing infrastructure in a big way and bring the state out of the debt trap if the BJP wins the assembly polls that are likely to be held in April-May this year.

Known as 'Metroman' as well as for the efficiency in completing big infrastructure projects, Sreedharan told PTI that he will contest the assembly elections if the party wants and will also be open to chief ministership if the party asks.

The 88-year-old technocrat also made it clear that he will not be interested in governorship, saying that it is purely a "constitutional position and no powers at all" and that he won't be able to make any positive contribution to the state being in such a position.

"My main idea is to bring BJP to power in Kerala. If BJP comes to power in Kerala, there will be three to four major areas we want to focus. One is infrastructure development in a big way and another



is to bring industry to the state," he said. Speaking over phone from Ponnani in Kerala where he is based now, Sreedharan said that a finance commission could also be formed for the purpose of improving the finances of the state, which is in a "debt trap today". His entry into the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is being seen as a major boost for the party in election-bound Kerala. The state is being ruled by the Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) alternately for the past many years. "If BJP wants, I will contest (the assembly elections)," he said.

Sreedharan said that he is "certainly" ready to be the chief minister if the party wants him to be after coming to power. When asked about whether he will be open to

chief ministership, he said, "If they (BJP) want, certainly. To tell you very frankly, unless I am the chief minister these (priorities) cannot be achieved."

He is likely to formally join the BJP February 25 and said that he was entering the "political fray". On the reasons for deciding to join the BJP which is in power at the Centre, Sreedharan said that he wanted to do things for the benefit of Kerala as the UDF and the LDF have not been able to bring any tangible progress to the state.

"Why I chose BJP is for a different reason. The two others in Kerala - UDF and LDF - have been ruling Kerala alternately... They have not been able to bring any tangible progress to the state, not even one industry has come to the state in the last 20 years," he said.

nCoV variants spreading more in some states: Study

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

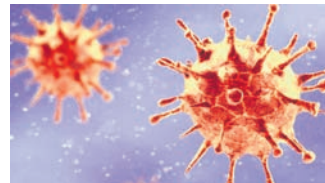
Hyderabad, Feb 19: A few novel variants of coronavirus are spreading more in some states in India and there is emerging evidence that the N440K mutation is spreading a lot more in southern states, says a study by the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB).

CCMB Director Dr Rakesh Mishra said Friday that closer surveillance is needed to properly understand the spread of N440K.

In a recent publication, scientists from CSIR-CCMB presented an exhaustive analysis of over 5,000 coronavirus variants in India and how they have evolved over the course of the pandemic

"The novel variants that are worrying many countries globally have been identified with only a low prevalence in India so far. These include the variants with immune-escape E484K mutation and the N501Y mutation with higher transmission rate. However, their apparent low prevalence might be simply because not enough sequencing has been done," said Dr Mishra, who is corresponding author on the study.

He believes that more coronavirus genomes need to be sequenced across the country to accurately identify the emergence



In a recent publication, scientists from CSIR-CCMB presented an exhaustive analysis of over 5,000 coronavirus variants in India and how they have evolved over the course of the pandemic

of these and other new variants. The study also finds that a few novel variants are spreading more in some states of India. "We now have emerging evidence that N440K is spreading a lot more in southern states. Closer surveillance is needed to understand its spread properly. Accurate and timely detection of new variants that may show greater infectivity or worse clinical symptoms, including immune escape, will be extremely important to prevent disastrous consequences," said Dr. Mishra.

Mangalyaan-2 will be an orbiter mission: ISRO chief

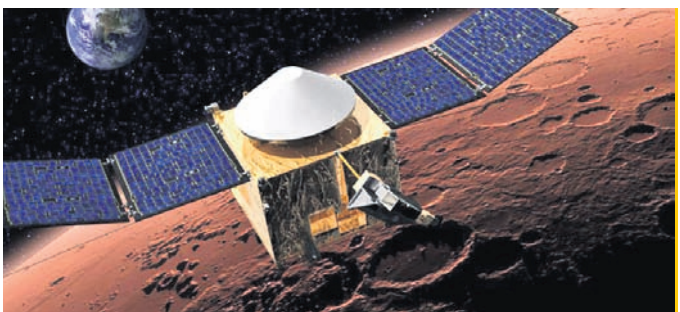
MANGALYAAN-1 OR MARS ORBITER MISSION WAS INDIA'S FIRST ENDEAVOUR TO SUCCESSFULLY REACH ANOTHER PLANET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 19: As NASA's Perseverance rover landed on Mars in the early hours of Friday to look for signs of past life, ISRO chief K Sivan said India's next mission to the Red Planet is likely to be an orbiter.

He, however, did not provide an exact time frame for the mission - Mangalyaan-2. The second mission to Mars will be undertaken only after the launch of Chandrayaan-3, he said.

The third mission to the Moon or Chandrayaan-3, under which ISRO aims to land a rover on the satellite, has been delayed due to the coronavirus-induced pandemic and is now likely to lift off in 2022.



Landing on Mars is "more tough", Sivan said, adding that Chandrayaan-3 will demonstrate ISRO's landing capabilities. After its first Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) was successful, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) called for 'Announcement of Opportunities'

on MOM-2. Sivan said Mangalyaan-1 is "still working good" and sending data. "It is now planned to have the next orbiter mission around Mars for a future launch opportunity," according to the Announcement of Opportunities. Sivan said the space agency had

asked the scientific community for suggestions on possible experiments and it is in the process of receiving these.

"Once we get these suggestions, we will prepare a project report and have discussion in (an expert) committee. Then we will go to Space Commission," Sivan told PTI. The Space Commission is the highest body that takes policy decisions on activities related to space.

Asked whether the mission will be an orbiter or a rover, Sivan said, "Right now, we are thinking about the orbiter mission only. Rover, lander... We are at least not thinking in this process." "Mangalyaan-2 will only be an orbiter mission," he said. Mangalyaan-1 was launched in November 2013 and entered the

Martian orbit in September 2014. Designed to work for six months, the mission is in its seventh year now.

The Mars orbiter has sent thousands of pictures totalling more than two terabytes. ISRO has other major projects lined up. After the Mars Orbiter Mission's success, it also decided to explore Venus.

However, the immediate priorities of ISRO remain to be Chandrayaan-3 and Gaganyaan - both projects have been delayed due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown. ISRO plans to send three humans to space by 2022 under the Gaganyaan (human space) mission. Under Chandrayaan-3, ISRO will once again try to land a rover on the Moon. The mission was to be launched late last year.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 19: Slamming those criticising the arrest of activist Disha Ravi in the toolkit case, a group of former members of the judiciary and law-enforcement agencies has written to President Ram Nath Kovind, alleging that those with "vested interests" are doing so to hide their "anti-national" activities and indulging in "slander" against Delhi Police.

Defending the police action, they said information available on open sources clearly establish that the toolkit document contains the list of persons or groups to be followed having "linkages with ISI and

Khalistani groups".

The 47 signatories to the representation to the President include former Rajasthan chief justice and governor V S Kokje, former Delhi and Patna high courts' chief justice Rajendra Menon, former Punjab DGP P C Dogra, former CBI director

Nageshwar Rao and former Kerala DGP R Padmanabhan. Several opposition parties and organisation have slammed Disha's arrest, alleging that it is an attack on democracy and accusing the government of trying to silence its critics. Many of them have also cited her young age to attack the police.

DISHA RAVI ARREST



Violence is an attack on democracy and the government will take a stand against any form of violence to ensure people's safety

PEDRO SÁNCHEZ |
PRIME MINISTER, SPAIN

PRINCE HARRY TO LOSE ALL TITLES

Britain's Prince Harry will relinquish his honorary military appointments and patronages after confirming to Queen Elizabeth II that he and his wife Meghan Markle will not return as working royals, Buckingham Palace announced



of the day quote

The cooperative program between the two countries illustrates US' commitment to assisting the government of Israel in upgrading its national missile defence capability to defend the State of Israel from emerging threats

JOHN HILL |
DIRECTOR, US MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY

There is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan and that a negotiated political settlement is the only way forward

IMRAN KHAN | PRIME MINISTER, PAKISTAN

Germany may be heading toward another turning point in the pandemic after weeks of falling infections. The decline of recent weeks doesn't appear to be continuing

LOTHAR WIELER |
PRESIDENT, ROBERT KOCH INSTITUTE

SHORT TAKES

Baby whale found dead

Tel Aviv: Israeli officials have said that a dead whale has washed up on a beach south of Tel Aviv. David Halfon of the Nature and Parks Authority said Thursday that the animal was a fin whale calf about half the size of an adult, which can grow to more than 20 meters (about 66 feet) long. He and other officials said it wasn't clear what caused the death, but they said the water nearby is polluted, including with tar.

'SL to procure 10mn doses'

Colombo: Sri Lanka will purchase 10 million doses of Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine from India, officials here have said. In January, under India's neighbourhood first policy, Sri Lanka received 500,000 doses of free vaccines. They were administered as a priority to frontline health workers and members of the Armed forces. The State Pharmaceutical Corporation has signed the order with Serum Institute of India (SII) for 10 million doses, officials said. This agreement has been approved by the Attorney General Monday.

Health workers receive vaccine

Wellington: A total of 25 health workers Friday became the first people to receive the Covid-19 vaccine in New Zealand. The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines were administered at an Auckland quarantine facility. These health workers got vaccinated while practicing administering the vaccine, the Xinhua news reported. Border workers are to take shots on Saturday as part of a national vaccination roll-out.

Uber loses UK SC fight

London: Taxi ride-hailing giant Uber must classify its drivers as workers with minimum wage, holiday and sick pay rights, rather than be categorised as self-employed, the UK Supreme Court ruled Friday. The decision follows a long-running legal dispute which the American company had taken right up to the highest court in Britain. A group of drivers had launched the claim to contest that they should be classified as workers, rather than independent third-party contractors, which means they are entitled to all the basic employment protections under the UK law.

ITS OFFICIAL! US REJOINS PARIS CLIMATE DEAL

REUTERS

Washington, Feb 19: The United States officially rejoined the Paris climate agreement Friday, reinvigorating the global fight against climate change as the Biden administration plans drastic emissions cuts over the next three decades.

Scientists and foreign diplomats have welcomed the U.S. return to the treaty, which became official here 30 days after President Joe Biden ordered the move on his first day in office. Since nearly 200 countries signed the 2015 pact to prevent catastrophic climate change, the United States was the only country to exit. Former President Donald Trump took the step, claiming climate action would cost too much.

US climate envoy John Kerry will take part in virtual events on Friday to mark US' re-entry, in-



cluding appearances with the ambassadors to the UK and Italy, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and UN climate ambition envoy Michael Bloomberg.

Biden has promised to chart a path toward net-zero US emissions by 2050. Scientists have said that goal

is in line with what is needed, while also stressing that global emissions need to drop by half by 2030 to prevent the most devastating impacts of global warming.

Kerry along with Biden's domestic climate adviser, Gina McCarthy, are crafting new regu-

Biden admin introduces Immigration Bill in Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Feb 19: In a major move that will benefit hundreds and thousands of Indian IT professionals in America, the Biden administration has introduced an ambitious immigration bill in Congress which among other things proposes to eliminate the per-country cap for employment-based green cards.

The US Citizenship Act of 2021 proposes a pathway to citizenship to 11 million undocumented workers, elimination of per country quota for employment-based green cards and work authorisation for dependents of H-1B foreign workers.

The bicameral immigration bill, if passed by both the chambers of the Congress: House of Representatives and the Senate—and signed into law by President Joe Biden, would bring citizenship to millions of foreign nationals, including undocumented workers and those who came to the country legally. The legislation would also benefit hundreds and thousands of Indian IT professionals and their families. Those waiting for a Green Card for more than 10 years, would get the legal permanent residency immediately as they would be exempted from the visa cap.

Indian IT professionals, waiting



AMBITIOUS MOVE

Indian IT professionals, waiting for more than a decade now, and whose number runs into thousands, are likely to be the biggest beneficiary of this provision of the bill

The US Citizenship Act of 2021 proposes a pathway to citizenship to 11 million undocumented workers

Those waiting for a Green Card for more than 10 years, would get the legal permanent residency immediately

for more than a decade now, and whose number runs into thousands, are likely to be the biggest beneficiary of this provision of the bill.

Authors of the bill—Senator Bob Menendez and Congresswoman Linda Sanchez—told reporters that the US Citizenship Act of 2021 establishes a moral and economic imperative and a vision of immi-

gration reform that is expansive and inclusive.

It grows the economy by making changes to the employment-based immigration system, eliminating per-country caps, making it easier for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) advanced degree holders to stay in the US.

Pak rejects India's concerns about Sikh pilgrims

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, Feb 19: The Foreign Office Thursday rejected Indian concerns about Sikh Yatris visiting Pakistan for pilgrimage and said that they were fully facilitated during the trips.

"Pakistan provides maximum facilitation to the Sikh Yatris from all over the world, including India, for visiting their religious sites in Pakistan," Foreign Office Spokesman Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri said at the weekly media briefing, the Dawn reported Friday.

India had disallowed around 600 Sikhs intending to visit Pakistan from February 18 to 25 for the 100th



anniversary of Saka Nankana Sahib. The group was expected to visit five gurdwaras in Pakistan.

Indian Ministry of Home Affairs had in a letter denying Sikhs permission to undertake the trip said that keeping in view the "capacity

of health infrastructure in Pakistan" it could not allow such a large group to tour the country for a week.

The Indian home ministry also expressed concerns about the "safety" of the group because of what it said "considerable threat".

Chaudhri recalled that Pakistan had opened the largest and the holiest Sikh shrine in Kartarpur Sahib to facilitate Sikh Yatris.

"The Sikh as well as the international community, including UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who while visiting Kartarpur described it as 'Corridor of Hope', have immensely appreciated this landmark initiative of Pakistan," he maintained.

WORLD LEADERS APPLAUD RETURN

Washington: The United States is back in the Paris climate accord, just 107 days after it left. While Friday's return is heavily symbolic, world leaders say they expect America to prove its seriousness after four years of being pretty much absent. They are especially anticipating an announcement from the US in coming months on its goal for cutting emissions of heat-trapping gases by 2030. The US return to the Paris agreement became official Friday, almost a month after President Joe Biden told the United Nations that America wants back in. "A cry for survival comes from the planet itself," Biden said in his inaugural address. "A cry that can't be any more desperate or any more clear now." Biden signed an executive order on his first day in office reversing the pullout ordered by his predecessor, President Donald Trump. The Trump administration had announced its withdrawal from the Paris accord in 2019. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Thursday that the official American re-entry "is itself very important," as is Biden's announcement that the US will return to providing climate aid to poorer nations, as promised in 2009.

lations and incentives aimed at speeding the deployment of clean energy and transitioning from fossil fuels. Those measures will form the backbone of Washington's next emissions reduction goal, or

Nationally Determined Contribution, to be announced before a global climate leaders summit Biden will host April 22. The next UN climate conference is in November in Glasgow.

US, European allies call on Iran not to limit IAEA access

AGENCIES

Washington, Feb 19: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his counterparts from Britain, Germany, and France (E3) discussed the Iran nuclear issue on Thursday, calling on Tehran not to limit the verification of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"The E3 and the US called on Iran not to take any additional steps, in particular with respect to the suspension of the Additional Protocol and to any limitations on IAEA verification activities in Iran," according to a joint statement issued after their meeting.

The US and its European allies in the statement urged Iran to "consider the consequences of such action, particularly at this time of renewed diplomatic opportunity", the Xinhua news agency reported.

The four foreign policy chiefs expressed concerns over Iran's recent actions to produce both uranium enriched up to 20 percent



and uranium metal.

The statement also signalled that Washington is ready to engage with Tehran over the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"The E3 welcomed the US' stated intention to return to diplomacy with Iran as well as the resumption of a confident and in-depth dialogue between the E3 and the US," said the statement.

"If Tehran comes back into strict compliance with its commitments under the JCPOA, the US will do the same," Blinken reaffirmed in the statement; adding that Washington "is prepared to engage in discussions with Iran toward that end."



NOBLE SIGHT

A general view of Jerusalem's Old City shows the Western Wall, Judaism's holiest prayer site, in the foreground and the Dome of the Rock, located on the compound known to Muslims as Noble Sanctuary and to Jews as Temple Mount, in the background, as the snow starts to fall in Jerusalem

REUTERS

Meet Swati Mohan, the Indian-American scientist behind the mission

AGENCIES

Washington, Feb 19: As Perseverance, the NASA rover, landed on the Martian surface Friday, millions of miles away in the US space agency's control room, a woman's voice rang out: "Touchdown confirmed!"

The announcement was from Indian-American scientist Swati Mohan who leads the guidance, navigation, and control operations of NASA's Mars 2020 mission. In her role as flight controller, Mohan played a pivotal role in the landing of the historic craft.

Mohan was the first to confirm that the rover had successfully touched down on the Martian surface after surviving a particularly tricky plunge through the atmosphere of the Red Planet.

"Touchdown confirmed! Perseverance safely on the surface

of Mars, ready to begin seeking signs of past life," Mohan announced, prompting her colleagues at NASA to fist-bump and break into celebrations.

Mohan, who emigrated from India to the US when she was only a year old, said the Guidance, Navigation, and Controls Operations (GN&C) are the "eyes and ears" of the spacecraft. Commenting on her team's role in the current mission, Mohan said their job during the cruise phase heading towards Mars was to figure out how the spacecraft is oriented, and make sure it is pointed correctly in space—solar arrays to sun, antenna to Earth, and maneuver the spacecraft to get it where we want to go", she is quoted as saying in her bio page on the NASA website.

There were "seven minutes of terror" leading to the entry, descent, and landing on Mars, she

NASA'S ROVER LANDING ON MARS



said. GN&C determines the position of the spacecraft and commands the maneuvers to help it land safely.

"As the team's operations lead, I am the primary point of communication between the GN&C subsystem and the rest of the project.

"I am responsible for the train-

ing of the GN&C team, scheduling the mission control staffing for GN&C, as well as the policies/procedures the GN&C uses in the mission control room," Mohan noted.

Raised in the Northern Virginia-Washington DC metro area, she completed her bachelor's degree

Mohan was the first to confirm that the rover had successfully touched down on the Martian surface after surviving a particularly tricky plunge through the atmosphere of the Red Planet

from Cornell University in Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering, and her M.S. and Ph.D from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Aeronautics/Astronautics. It's not clear how old she is.

Over the course of her career with NASA, Mohan has worked on the Cassini mission to Saturn and GRAIL, a pair of formation flown

spacecraft to the Moon, and has been a mainstay with the Mars 2020 mission since its beginning in 2013. Mohan said she got interested in space after watching the popular TV show "Star Trek" when she was nine.

"Seeing the beautiful depictions of the new regions of the universe that they were exploring. I remember thinking I want to do that. I want to find new and beautiful places in the universe." The vastness of space holds so much knowledge that we have only begun to learn," she had told NASA.

Mohan said her passion for space increased further when she took her first physics class at the age of 16.

"I was lucky enough to have a great teacher, and everything was so understandable and easy. That was when I really considered engineering, as a way to pursue space," she added.

of the day quote

I am going to build a house that is the future of Honda on the foundation of businesses that Mr Hachigo has worked so hard to create. And this building must have resilience, to withstand this once in a hundred years transformation

TOSHIHIRO MIBE | RESEARCH EXPERT

When we look at trust, there's a bunch of things related to data and how you engage with the user who's engaging with technology. Second, are you able to build associations of trust? You are making a distinction between the internet world and the real world

AJIT MOHAN | INDIA MD, FACEBOOK

The inflations based on CPI-AL and CPI-RL have dipped to 2.17% and 2.35%, respectively, driven by lower food inflation mainly on account of decline in prices of pulses, onion, potato, cauliflower, and brinjal, etc

SANTOSH GANGWAR | LABOUR MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Sony launches G Master series

Bhubaneswar: Sony India launched the FE 35mm F1.4 GM (model SEL35F14GM) – the newest addition to its acclaimed G Master full-frame lens series delivering first-class image quality for broad expressive capability in an extremely compact and lightweight design. The FE 35mm F1.4 GM is a must-have for Sony's E-mount users as it boasts advanced focusing capabilities combined with Sony's camera bodies. It is a perfect solution for a wide range of uses like shooting landscapes and portraits.

Inox Air to invest ₹2,000 cr

Mumbai: Inox Air Products, the industrial and medical gases business division of the diversified Inox Group, is investing ₹2,000 crore to augment capacity by 50%, with eight new air separation units across the country over the next 36 months. This is the largest greenfield investment coming to the industrial gases sector in the country, the company said. It also said the expansion of adding to the present 44 plants will ramp up its liquid medical oxygen capacity by 50%.

'Coronil receives certification'

New Delhi: Yoga guru Baba Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurved on Friday said its Coronil tablet has received certification from the Ayush Ministry as a medicine supporting Covid-19 treatment as per the World Health Organization's certification scheme. Patanjali also released what it claimed was research work supporting Coronil's efficacy in Covid-19 treatment. The Union Ayush Ministry had earlier categorised ayurvedic Coronil tablets as an 'Immuno-booster'.

Karnataka Bank reports ₹34cr fraud

New Delhi: Private sector lender Karnataka Bank Friday said it has reported to the RBI a fraud of about ₹34.16 crore in credit facilities extended to IL&FS Transportation Networks, which is a dud account now. "The bank has reported to RBI a fraud in the credit facilities extended earlier to IL&FS Transportation Networks Ltd with an outstanding balance of ₹34.16 crore (defaulted entity)," Karnataka Bank said in a regulatory filing.



The Ayurveda economy has witnessed up to 90% growth after the Covid-19 pandemic, as Ayurveda has gained global acceptance

HARSH VARDHAN | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

BITCOIN NEARS \$1TN M-CAP

Bitcoin hit yet another record high Friday, and moved within sight of a market capitalisation of \$1 trillion, blithely shrugging off analyst warnings that it is an "economic side show" and a poor hedge against a fall in stock prices



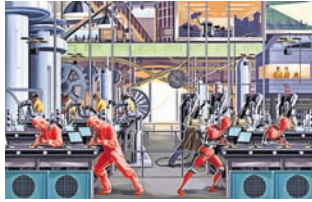
'Automation to create policies for humans to work with robots'

I think it is almost certain that a lot of manufacturing, especially the hazardous part of manufacturing, will go to automation and then be completely different. You will see robots, you will see all kinds of things at the workplace

SHIV SHIVAKUMAR | PRESIDENT, CORPORATE STRATEGY & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, ADITYA BIRLA GROUP

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Feb 19: Manufacturing, especially the hazardous kinds, will be completely automated in the future, which will lead to "hybrid human resources departments" in companies, a senior official from Aditya Birla Group said Friday. The hybrid HR department will evolve strategies for human beings to work together with robots on shop floors to complete a given task, Shiv Shivakumar, the group's president for corporate strategy and business development, said. "I think it is almost certain that a lot of manufacturing, especially the hazardous part of manufacturing, will go to automation and then be completely different. You will



see robots, you will see all kinds of things at the workplace," Shivakumar said, speaking at the annual NTLF here. For the services sector, a greater thrust will be on to make a given set of work 'contactless' like a hotel chain adopting an e-commerce model for delivering food, he said. Regardless of the nature of activity a business is engaged with,

digital will be the centrepiece for all the industries going forward, he said, warning that the middleman will be disrupted wherever he does not add value. In the changing scenario, the onus is on the employee to take efforts to upskill or reskill, he said, adding that the workplaces can only create a conducive atmosphere for it and if an employee chooses not to adopt, he will be left behind. He said technology is a very important part of our lives and reminisced how a two-decade old decision by President Bill Clinton is now helping us now. He pointed out that 80 per cent of the data accumulated rests on location services.

Govt to appeal against Cairn arbitration award



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 19: The government is likely to file an appeal against the Cairn arbitration award contesting its sovereign rights to tax, sources said.

An international tribunal in December, had unanimously ruled that India violated its obligations under the UK-India Bilateral Investment Treaty in 2014, when the income tax department had slapped a ₹10,247-crore tax assessment using legislation that gave it powers to levy taxes retroactively.

Soon after seeking ₹10,247 crore in taxes over alleged capital gains made by the company over a 2006-07 reorganisation of India business before its listing, the tax department seized Cairn's residual 10 per cent stake in Cairn India.

In a ruling, which Cairn had previously described as "final and binding", the tribunal had ordered New Delhi to pay USD 1.2 billion in damages, plus interest and costs, to compensate Cairn for the shares — long sold off by the tax department — as well as confiscated dividends and withheld tax refunds. This totals to \$1.4 billion.

Its shareholders have been egging the management to take action to get the money back.

Cairn chief executive Simon Thomson had met Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey on Thursday to discuss the arbitration award.

Sources said the government is planning to file an appeal against the tribunal order and it believes the arbitration tribunal cannot question a nation's sovereign right to tax.

Vedanta Jharsuguda supports Filariasis Elimination campaign



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: Vedanta, India's largest producer of aluminium extended its support to the District Health Administration (DHA) in Lymphatic Filariasis Elimination Awareness campaign at Jharsuguda.

The company conducted a rathayatra for Lymphatic Filariasis Elimination Awareness from February 9-13, 2021 covering 80 villages of the district.

The campaign was flagged off by Dr Lal Mohan Routray, Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO), in the presence of DM Patel, ADM and PHO, and Bulunath Sahu, District Programme Manager (DPM), NHM at District Health Headquarter, Jharsuguda.

The company also ensured the administration of drugs to employees and families by implementing DHA's Mass Drug Administration (MDA) programme at its township.

CN Singh, CEO, Vedanta Ltd., Jharsuguda, said, "We are conscious of our social responsibilities and strive to fulfil them through structured interventions in various public domains."

'Look forward to Russian investment for Make-in-India'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, Feb 19: India is looking forward to substantial Russian investments in the Make-in-India projects, including in defence, railways and petrochemical sector, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla has said.

Shringla was on an official visit to Moscow from February 17-18 for the India-Russia Foreign Office Consultations. It was his first foreign trip this year.

In an interview to Russian newspaper Kommersant Thursday, Shringla said India and Russia are looking at substantial investments in each other's energy sectors, including looking at new opportunities for supply of Russian Coking Coal for Indian steel sector.

"We are also looking forward to major substantial Russian investments in the Make-in-India projects in India including in defence, railways, inland waterways, highways and petrochemical sector," he said.

According to the website of the Indian embassy in Russia, the total bilateral trade between the two countries from January-September 2019 stood at USD 7.55 billion.

"Intensifying the trade and economic relations has been identified as a priority area by the lead-



India and Russia are looking at substantial investments in each other's energy sectors, including looking at new opportunities for supply of Russian Coking Coal for Indian steel sector, said the Foreign Secretary

ers on both sides as is clear by the revised targets of increasing bilateral investment to USD 50 billion and bilateral trade to USD 30 billion by 2025," it noted.

Shringla said his discussions in Moscow confirmed the vitality of India's relations with Russia.

"We have an active agenda to carry forward the decisions of the last Summit during Prime Minister Modi's highly successful visit to Vladivostok in September 2019 at the Eastern Economic Forum where he was also the Chief Guest," the foreign secretary said.

Fourteen MoUs in the fields of trade and investments, defence co-operation, road transport and co-operation in oil and gas sectors were signed during the visit of the prime minister in 2019.

Annual summits, regular con-

sultations between the Foreign Ministries, cooperation in Defence, Nuclear and Space sectors, Energy, Science & Technology are the key facets of the India-Russia relationship, Shringla noted.

India has longstanding and wide-ranging cooperation with Russia in the field of defence. In March 2019 in Uttar Pradesh's Amethi, Modi had announced the JV – Indo-Russian Rifles Pvt Ltd for production of AK Series Assault Rifles at Ordnance Factory Korwa under the 'Make-in-India' programme.

"Our people-to-people contacts are also evolving. We intend to have a special programme for cooperation with the Buddhist regions of Russia. We would be opening an Indian Energy Centre in Moscow and a Tourism Office by summer this year," Shringla said.

INDIA'S FOREX RESERVES SLIP BY \$249MN

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Feb 19: India's foreign exchange reserves declined by \$249 million during the week ended February 12.

According to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) weekly statistical supplement, the reserves increased to \$583.697 billion from \$583.945 billion reported for the week ended February 5.

India's forex reserves comprise of foreign currency assets (FCAs), gold reserves, special drawing rights (SDRs), and the country's reserve position with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

On a weekly basis, FCAs, the largest component of the forex reserves, edged lower by \$1.387 billion to \$540.951 billion. However, the value of the country's gold reserves increased by \$1.260 billion to \$36.227 billion. Besides, the SDR value stood higher by \$10 million at \$1.513 billion. Nonetheless, the country's reserve position with the IMF decreased by \$132 million to \$5.006 billion.

However, this is being tested on twin counts of increasing digitalisation of the Indian economy and globalisation of Indian companies, which are bringing in rapid sophistication in operations and engagement.

"In India, corporate banking has remained undelivered during the last couple of years, but going forward, the scenario might change as the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic dwindles and the prospect of India playing a key role in the revival of global supply chain environments gain momentum," said Ganesh Vasudevan, Research Director, IDC Financial Insights Asia/Pacific. The pandemic has forced CFO

PSFPO project improves 'market access' for farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: To increase the profitability and sustainability of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Market Facing Companies (MFCs) in Odisha, Tanager and Palladium have announced the launch of the Promotion and Stabilization of Farmer Producer Organizations (PSFPO) project.

This three-year project will work with farmers, Government of Odisha, and FPOs and MFCs to develop FPO ecosystem in the state, to better implement policies and interventions for FPO strengthening, to streamline access to markets and to prepare farmers to interact with the private sector.

Tanager will work to improve FPO management, support market linkages between FPOs and the private sector, and improve gender equity.

Palladium will work closely with the Government of Odisha as technical support unit to catalyse engagement among key FPO ecosystem stakeholders and support the



Government to implement their FPO Policy. Palladium will also work to synchronise existing digital systems to better serve FPOs in Odisha and assist Government entities to implement digital governance and results measurement in the FPO ecosystem.

"In India, Farmer Producer Organisations are a key entry point to increase smallholder farmer incomes and improve gender equity at the farm level. Through partnerships, anything is possible, and

Tanager is grateful that the Government of Odisha, Palladium, and our funding partners on the PSFPO project share our resolve and passion to improve the lives and livelihoods of smallholder farmers in India," Amit Kumar Singh, Tanager Country Representative.

"Palladium brings its market systems development thinking and government advisory expertise into this forward-looking project in Odisha," Shivani Manaktala, Director, The Palladium.

Corporate banking has remained undelivered during the last couple of years, but going forward, the scenario might change as the threat of pandemic dwindles and the prospect of India playing a key role in the revival of global supply chain environments gain momentum

GANESH VASUDEVAN | RESEARCH DIRECTOR, IDC FINANCIAL INSIGHTS ASIA/PACIFIC

grade data and connectivity capabilities by 2024 in the country.

"Traditional brick-and-mortar businesses are increasingly mov-

ing to B2B sales online, and corporates expect their bankers to understand the workflow to provide value-added solutions like seamless counter-party onboarding, provide a credit assessment, and finalize the settlement terms without using the traditional invoicing and collection process," Vasudevan explained.

With the prospect of a sharp recovery in economic activities in 2021, corporate banking in India is expected to witness a significant evolution in the path to recovery as banks redesign their corporate customer experience (CX) on a digitalised scale by leveraging technology and innovations.

'80% Indian corporate banks to leverage Cloud by 2024'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 19: Nearly 80% of corporate banks in India are forecast to run their trade finance and treasury workloads on Cloud by 2024, said a new IDC report Friday.

By 2023, to counter the uncertainty of the pandemic, 60% of corporate banks will be revisiting credit scoring models and prioritising an open data strategy to improve loan portfolio health, according to the report.

Compared with developed economies, India's corporate banking sector is still in its nascent stage in terms of product and service offerings.



focus on liquidity. In response, 55 per cent of corporate banks will invest

in supporting predictive liquidity management and 60 per cent will up-

MEDVEDEV SETS UP DJOKO DATE



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Melbourne, Feb 19: Daniil Medvedev simply does not lose right now. Not to top 10 opponents. Not to anyone, really. Certainly not to a drained Stefanos Tsitsipas in the Australian Open semifinals. Now let's see what happens against Novak Djokovic in Rod Laver Arena.

Medvedev made it to his second Grand Slam final as he pursues his first major championship, overwhelming fifth-seeded Tsitsipas 6-4, 6-2, 7-5 Friday at Melbourne Park to run his winning streak to 20 matches. That includes a dozen victories against members of the Top 10.

Tsitsipas, a 22-year-old from

Greece, came out flat, looking drained after an epic four-hour victory over Rafa Nadal in the quarterfinals Wednesday, coming back from a two-set deficit. Still, Medvedev was terrific, getting broken just once and accruing 17 aces among his 46 winners.

That latter total featured a backhand pass he flipped down the line after sprinting into a slide for a break in the next-to-last game, a spectacular effort Medvedev celebrated by raising both arms and waving his hands in a gesture that told the world, "Check me out!"

In Sunday's final, the No.4-seeded Medvedev will take on No.1 Djokovic, who already owns eight Australian Open titles among his 17 Grand

Slam trophies as he tries to gain on the men's record of 20 shared by Nadal and Roger Federer.

Djokovic, who won his semifinal against 114th-ranked qualifier Aslan Karatsev Thursday, is a combined 17-0 in semifinals and finals at Melbourne Park.

"It's him that has all the pressure, getting (closer) to Roger or Rafa in the Grand Slams," Medvedev said. "So I just hope that I'm going to get out here, show my best tennis. As we see, I can win (against) some big names if I play good. That's the main part. He has, for sure, more experience, but more things to lose than me."

Medvedev was the runner-up to Nadal at the 2019 US Open. "It was

my first Grand Slam final against one of the greatest," said Medvedev, a 25-year-old from Russia. "Sunday, I'm going to come (up) against one of the other greatest."

It took just 75 minutes for Medvedev to grab a two-set lead against Tsitsipas. He went up 3-1 in the third before Tsitsipas made things a tad more interesting, if only briefly, by taking three games in a row, including his only break of the match.

But Medvedev, his baseline defense exquisite, proved too tough. "I'm happy that I managed to change my focus and change the momentum," Medvedev said.

Earlier, down a set and a break in the second, Tsitsipas sat down at

Ankita wins maiden WTA title in doubles



Ankita Raina (R), with her partner Kamilla Rakhimova, poses with the winners' trophy in Melbourne

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Feb 19: India's Ankita Raina Friday claimed her maiden WTA title by lifting the Phillip Island Trophy along with Russian partner Kamilla Rakhimova, a feat which will catapult her into the top 100 in the doubles for the first time in her career.

Ankita and Kamilla erased a one-set deficit to beat the Russian combination of Anna Blinkova and Anastasia Potapova 2-6, 6-4, 10-7 in the summit clash here.

The 28-year-old Indian shared the USD 8000 prize money with her partner and earned 280 ranking points, which will take her to 94 from the current 115 when the WTA doubles chart is updated next week.

Ankita will become only the second player to crack the doubles top 100 since Sania Mirza, who is a six-time Grand Slam champion.

The past two weeks have been extremely memorable for the gritty Indian, who made her Grand Slam debut at the Australian Open in the doubles, and also won a round in the main draw of a WTA singles tournament.

Elated at her performance and the result, Ankita says the singles top 100 is also just around the corner. "It's been a great week. Kamilla and I played together for the first time. We signed up just 20 minutes before the draw because there was a lot of confusion with the entry list.

"Kamilla plays very aggressive, has good strokes and I just had to ask her to be aggressive at the net, which she did," Ankita told this agency.

"It was not that draw was easy, we beat some good players who were tough not only in doubles but in singles, too. Kamilla has great fighting spirit. It's great... First WTA titles and doubles top 100, too. I am looking forward to crack singles top 100," she added.

"We were 7-9 down by two match points in the semis. I had some great volleys. I was working on that and when I could do that (execute) in match nothing is more exciting."

Indian tennis players have always struggled to get finances and enough support to survive on the demanding tour but Ankita did not make any such complaint. Instead, she thanked all who supported her:

Dias interim head coach of OFC



STEVEN DIAS (L) & GERALD PEYTON

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 19: Steven Dias is set to be new interim head coach of Odisha FC for last two matches of their Indian Super League (ISL) campaign this season after Gerald Peyton decided to leave for his home due to personal reasons.

The match against FC Goa was Peyton's last match as interim head

CII BEACH SOCCER TO BE PLAYED FEB 22-23

Bhubaneswar: The first of its kind beach soccer festival in Odisha 'Beach Soccer 2021' will be played February 22-23 at Chandrabhaga Beach, Konark. The event will be organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in association with Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha. Odisha Football Club (OFC) will be Technical Partner of the event. This is a maiden Initiative to integrate football and the mesmerizing coast line of Konark. Ten teams – Jindal Steel and Power, Nalco, Tata Steel, Gupta Power, Indian Oil, CSM, Paradeep Phosphates Limited, Paradeep Port Trust, GRIDCO and Capgemini will be playing and have been divided into two groups. The matches will be of 12 minutes each with 3 minutes break and under lights.

coach. He had replaced Stuart Baxter after the Englishman's rape remark post Odisha FC's 0-1 loss to Jamshedpur FC earlier this month. Dias will guide the side in their matches against Mumbai City FC and SC East Bengal.

"I have to return to Japan for personal family reasons. I have en-

joyed coaching in India with Odisha FC and the players and staff have made the bio bubble warm and comfortable. To all the Odisha fans, thank you for your patience and support through this pandemic. Maybe, I will come back to India in the future and enjoy a normal life without COVID-19," said Peyton.

Cricket's Shahrukh: A Rajnikanth fan who wasn't nervous during IPL auction

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Feb 19: Just like the Bollywood superstar he is named after, success wasn't instant for Shahrukh Khan the cricketer – a Rajnikanth fan from Chennai's IT hub of Velachery who made heads turn by landing an IPL deal worth Rs 5.25 crore with Punjab Kings.

His full name is M Shahrukh Khan and he loved his cricket and movies too from a very young age. It helped that his father Masood, a former club cricketer and owner of a leather business, and mother Lubna were supportive of his aspirations.

"I was not nervous when my name came up in the auction. I was overjoyed. My teammates in the bus were very happy, especially captain Dinesh Karthik," he told this agency, Friday.

The joy had come after the agony of going unsold the previous year and he said it was a 'good feeling after the long wait'.

Away in Indore with the Tamil Nadu team for the Vijay Hazare Trophy 50-overs tournament, the 25-year old power-hitter recalled the days when he was a tennis ball cricketer at the school level.

"I played tennis ball cricket and then did very well in school cricket. I did my schooling in Don Bosco and then St Bede's and shone in age-group cricket," Shahrukh, who is a resident of the Kilpauk area in the upscale area of the city, said.

Both Don Bosco and St Bede's are known for their cricket culture and have produced numerous cricketers like R Ashwin, Dinesh Karthik and K Srikanth among others. Shahrukh also trained at the St Bede's academy.

Now that he has landed a lucrative IPL contract, the Tamil Nadu all-rounder said he would not be bogged down by the price tag. He is, instead, focussed on the Vijay Hazare Trophy one-day event which begins Saturday.

"I won't think too much about the IPL now and put pressure on myself as it is some two months away. My focus now is the Vijay Hazare (Trophy)," he said.

He is also looking forward to playing under coach Anil Kumble and the Punjab franchise captain KL Rahul. "Also, it would be good to join my Tamil Nadu teammate – leg-spinner M Ashwin," he added.

Another Tamil Nadu cricketer C



Hari Nishaanth, who was bought at his base price of Rs 20 lakh by the Chennai Super Kings, said his mind went blank when he was told CSK had picked him.

"I was a little disappointed when I went unsold in the first round and tried to put it behind me. I went for dinner when my father called to say that my name had come up again.

"Within a few minutes a team-mate called to break the news of CSK buying me. I simply went blank when I was told it was CSK," Nishaanth said from Indore.

The left-handed opener had performed well in the recent Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, which Tamil Nadu won, and said being roped in by CSK was a big moment for him and it took a while for the realisation to sink in.

"To be in the franchise which has 'Thala' MS Dhoni is something one can only dream of. It is going to be a lot of learning for me," he added.

Nishaanth, who hails from Coimbatore, said he was looking forward to the IPL where the standard will be several notches higher. "Coming from Coimbatore where initially we used to play on mat pitches and then having to adjust to turf pitches, the jump to domestic cricket was challenging," he recalled.

"The level in the IPL will be several notches higher. I have to be prepared for it and work harder. Being around with the legends of the game and playing against many others will be a huge learning curve for me," Nishaanth, who will join his city mate N Jagadeesan at CSK, said.

ATKMB down East Bengal in Kolkata derby

AGENCIES

Goa, Feb 19: ATK Mohun Bagan (ATKMB) were yet again came on top of their arch rivals SC East Bengal (SCEB) with a 3-1 win in their second leg of the Indian Super League (ISL) season at the Fatorda Stadium, Friday. It was ATKMB's fifth win on trot.

It was their second meeting this season, after Mohun Bagan, who merged with ATK before the season, and SCEB began their journey in ISL.

Their first meeting had ended 2-0 in favour of the table-toppers ATKMB, who are now five points clear of second-placed Mumbai City FC. However, Mumbai have a game in hand.

They started this match with a bang and went ahead thanks to Roy Krishna's well-taken goal in the 15th minute.

They restored parity with one such set-piece, as Raju Gaikwad's long throw-in was headed by Tiri into his own net in the 41st minute. With the tie levelled at the break, the Mariners slowed the proceedings down in the second stanza.

However, the goals from David Williams in the 72nd minute and a strike from Javi Hernandez in the 89th sealed ATKMB victory.



Bruno Fernandes, Manchester United

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Berlin, Feb 19: Bruno Fernandes scored twice as Manchester United took a big step toward the last 16 of the Europa League with a 4-0 away win over Spanish team Real Sociedad in Italy. Marcus Rashford and Daniel James scored the other two goals for the Red Devils.

The first leg was played Thursday in Turin, one of a number of games relocated away from their original venues due to coronavirus-related travel restrictions from certain countries affecting teams from Britain.

Tottenham defeated Austrian team Wolfsberg 4-1 in Budapest, Hungary. Son Heung-min, Gareth Bale, Lucas Moura put the Spurs 3-0 up before Michael Lendle pulling

one back for Wolfsberg from the spot. However, Carlos Vinicius put the final nail in the coffin.

Portugal's Benfica had to host Arsenal in Rome, where Bukayo Saka's away goal put the Premier League side in a good position with a 1-1 draw.

Germany's Hoffenheim was also affected by pandemic-related travel restrictions. Hoffenheim's game with Norwegian side Molde was played at Villarreal's stadium in Spain, while Villarreal beat Salzburg 2-0 in Austria. Ajax left it late to beat Lille 2-1 in France.

A last-minute penalty from Borna Barisic, his second of the game, gave Rangers a 4-3 win at Belgian team Antwerp. AC Milan Pavkov scored in injury time for Red Star Belgrade to draw 2-2 against visiting AC Milan.

Two goals in two minutes from Brazilian forward Kenedy and Venezuelan midfielder Yangel Herrera gave Spanish side Granada a surprising 2-0 win over Napoli.

Shakhtar Donetsk won 2-0 at Maccabi Tel Aviv, Dynamo Kyiv drew 1-1 with Club Brugge, Leicester drew 0-0 at Slavia Prague, Roma won 2-0 at Sporting Braga, Dinamo Zagreb beat Russian team Krasnodar 3-2 away, and Olympiakos earned a 4-2 win at home over PSV Eindhoven.