



PRIYANKA'S CONCERN

Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas reacts to the crisis which is currently unfolding in Ukraine following Russian invasion

LEISURE P2



EVACUATION BEGINS

India begins evacuation of its citizens who have been stranded in Ukraine amid the ongoing Russian attack

NATIONAL P9



THRILLING VICTORIES

Indian men and women script fantastic wins against in FIH Pro League hockey matches at Kalinga stadium

SPORTS P12

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BJD leader dies in poll violence

BASUDEVPUR (BHADRAK): A former sarpanch and senior BJD leader of Nuagaon panchayat under Basudevpur block of Bhadrak district has succumbed to injuries he had sustained February 20 during a political violence. The deceased was identified as Bhagwan Chandra Nayak. According to reports, some Congress workers had allegedly attacked Nayak in his house over election issues. He had sustained grievous injuries. A complaint was filed against four people. Nayak was first admitted to Basudevpur CHC and later shifted to the district headquarters hospital. After treatment, he was discharged from the hospital. However, he again fell sick and was being taken to SCB Medical College and Hospital where he succumbed. As the news of his death spread, hundreds of people staged protests in front of the police station Saturday, demanding immediate arrest of the accused. They also blocked the road leading to the tehsil office, by laying the body of Nayak. However, the agitators relented after the police assured that action would be taken against the accused.



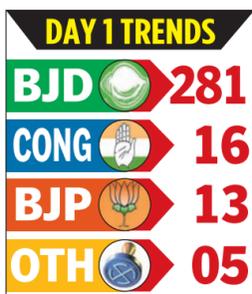
Woman trainee pilot dies in crash

HYDERABAD/NEW DELHI: A woman trainee pilot died when an aircraft belonging to a private aviation academy crashed in Nalgonda district of Telangana Saturday, police said. Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said he was shocked. A team of investigators is on its way to the mishap site. Mahima, 28, who has been training for the past four months, took off on the Cessna 152 aircraft at about 10:25am and it was flying over Tungaturthi village in the district, a police official told PTI. An eyewitness saw the plane crashing down on a field and breaking into pieces. There was no fire after the crash, the official said. By the time the eyewitness reached the plane, its pilot was dead.

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BJD sweeping rural polls

Latest trends on Day 1 of counting of votes for 315 zilla parishad seats show that the party-led by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was leading in 281 ZP seats



BJD was leading in 23 out of 26 seats in Mayurbhanj. It was also leading in all the seats of Ganjam, Angul, Bhadrak, Deogarh, Jharsuguda and Jajpur

Angul, Bhadrak, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Nuapada, Nayagarh and Puri district. The BJP was leading in four seats in Kalahandi, and in two seats each in Bolangir, Bargarh and Khurda district.

The Congress party was leading in six seats in Rayagada, five seats in Koraput, two seats each in Gajapati and Kandhamal and one seat in Cuttack, Malkangiri and Sonepur. The counting for the remaining 307 ZP seats will be conducted February 27 and 229 ZP zones February 28, they said.

The polling for the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) was held in five phases - February 16, 18, 20, 22, and 24. The overall voter turnout was 78.6 per cent this time, slightly better than 78.03 per cent in 2017. A total of 2.2 lakh candidates contested the elections. The State Election Commission (SEC) had declared 36,523 ward members, 126 sarpanchs, 326 samiti members, and one ZP member as uncontested winners.

(More P3)

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 26: The latest trends on the Day-1 of counting of votes for 315 zilla parishad (ZP) seats shows that the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) was sweeping the panchayat polls.

The counting of votes for 315 ZP seats started at 8am Saturday under strict adherence to Covid-19 guidelines and it has not been completed till the last report came in. The party-led by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was leading in 281

Gemel trounces Jani in Pottangi

KORAPUT: Independent candidate Tikai Gemel from Pottangi zilla parishad zone-1 in Kotia panchayat of Koraput district sprang a surprise by defeating her nearest rival and all-party candidate Mamata Jani with a margin of 3,720 votes, Pottangi BDO Soumya Sarthak Mishra said. Mamata got 6,644 votes while Gemel bagged 10,364 votes, he added.



IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Is it the election dates or global rates that drive our fuel prices?

20% FDI allowed in IPO-bound LIC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 26: The Centre Saturday permitted up to 20 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) under automatic route in IPO-bound LIC with an aim to facilitate disinvestment of the country's largest insurer, sources said.

The decision in this regard was taken by the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The government has approved listing of shares of LIC on the stock market through an IPO by part-sale of its stake in the insurer and raising fresh equity capital.

Since as per the present FDI pol-

icy, the foreign inflows ceiling for public sector banks is 20 per cent under government approval route, it has been decided to allow foreign investment of up to 20 per cent for LIC and such other corporate bodies.

Further, in order to expedite the capital raising process, such FDI has been kept under the automatic route, as in the case of the rest of the insurance sector, one of the sources said.

Increased FDI inflows will supplement domestic capital, technology transfer, skill development for accelerated economic growth and development across sectors.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky speaks to the nation via his smartphone at Kyiv, Saturday

198 Ukrainians, including 3 children, have been killed in Russia's operation against Ukraine

Russia's defense ministry claims the Russian military had taken full control of the southern city of Melitopol

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky refutes reports that the country's army will disarm and evacuate as Russian troops press towards Ukraine's capital Kyiv

AGENCIES

Kyiv, Feb 26: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky Saturday refuted reports that the country's army will disarm and evacuate.

"We will not lay down any weapons, we believe in our army and our country. We will protect it. Glory to Ukraine!" Zelensky said, noting that he did not leave Kyiv, which was under heavy shelling overnight, Xinhua news agency reported.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said at least 35 Kyiv residents, including two children, were injured in clashes with Russian forces or shelling.

According to Ukrainian Health Minister Viktor Liashko, 198 Ukrainians, including three children, have been killed in Russia's operation against Ukraine.

The General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces said on Facebook that Ukraine shot down a Russian transport plane IL-76 near Vasyilkiv town in Kyiv.

Russians push towards Kyiv

Meanwhile, Russian troops pressed towards Ukraine's capital Saturday after a night of explosions and street fighting sent Kyiv residents seeking shelter underground. The country's leader refused an American offer to evacuate, insisting he would stay. "The fight is here," President Volodymyr Zelensky said.

Ukrainian officials reported some success in fending off assaults. Skirmishes reported on the edge of the city suggested that small Russian units were trying to clear a path for approaching forces, which a British official said "are still some way off."

Russia claims its assault on Ukraine is aimed only at military targets, but civilians have been killed and injured during Europe's largest ground war since World War II.

A missile struck a high-rise apartment building in the city's southwestern outskirts near one of Kyiv's two passenger airports, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said.



The damaged buildings in Kyiv, Saturday, as Russia continues to wage war against Ukraine

Klitschko said, leaving a jagged hole of ravaged apartments over several floors. A rescue worker said six civilians were injured. The mayor extended a 10pm-7am curfew he imposed two days ago to run from 5pm until 8am as of Saturday.

RUSSIA LAUDS INDIA'S STAND AT UNSC

NEW DELHI: Russia Saturday 'highly' appreciated India's 'independent and balanced' position on a UN Security Council resolution on the Russian attack on Ukraine. India Friday abstained from voting on the US-sponsored resolution that sought to deplore in the "strongest terms" Russia's "aggression" against Ukraine. The Russian embassy said in the spirit of the special and privileged strategic partnership with India, Moscow is committed to maintaining close dialogue with New Delhi on the situation around Ukraine. "Highly appreciate India's independent and balanced position at the voting in the UNSC on February 25, 2022," it tweeted.

CJI rues crunch in judges, basic judicial infra

The CJI says mere allocation of funds is not enough; the challenge is to put the available resources to optimum use

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 26: Chief Justice of India (CJI) NV Ramana Saturday rued the lack of "basic minimum standards" of judicial infrastructure in the country and stressed the need of not only filling the existing vacancies but also raising the number of judges in high courts to efficiently deal with intellectual property litigations.

The CJI was speaking as the chief guest at the 'National Seminar on Adjudication of IPR Disputes in India' here organised by the Delhi High Court and attended by many judges from across the country



and Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who said India is at a stage where growth and focus on development has got to be strengthened from every side and intellectual property rights (IPR) play a very important role in it.

"Judicial infrastructure needs to be improved. Unfortunately, we are not even meeting the basic minimum standards in this area. It has been my endeavour since

assuming the office of Chief Justice of India, to put in place an institutional mechanism to coordinate and oversee the improvement of judicial infrastructure.

"More allocation of funds is not enough. The challenge is to put the available resources to optimum use. I have been pursuing the government for setting up of statutory authorities, both at the Centre and at the states. I am hoping for

a positive response soon," Justice Ramana said.

He reiterated his message to offshore investors that the Indian judicial system is investor-friendly and 'absolutely independent' to impart justice to all.

"When I visited Japan in 2016 to attend a conference on IPR, I was repeatedly asked by entrepreneurs as to how investor friendly the Indian judicial system is. In fact, whenever I travel abroad, from a cross section of hosts, I keep getting similar queries. My answer has always remained the same; that the Indian judiciary is absolutely independent and it always treats all the parties equally and equitably," he said. Sitharaman also stated that the Centre encouraged startups while protecting their IPR as the boost would not have been possible with only 'giving up restrictions'.

The FM said 28,000 patents were registered last year as opposed to 4,000 in 2013-2014.

State bags 2 gold medals in Nat'l Taxation Awards

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Feb 26: Odisha has won gold in two categories - reformist state government and tax commissionerate - in the 2nd National Taxation Awards for the year 2021, official sources said.

The award was received by Sushil Kumar Lohani, Commissioner of CT & GST, Odisha on behalf of the state in the presence of Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highway, NK Singh, Chairman of the 15th Finance Commission in an award ceremony held on Saturday at New Delhi.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has congratulated the Commissionerate of Commercial Tax & GST on this achievement. The performance of the state as a "Reformist state government" was evaluated on several factors like infrastructure for industrial and

skill development, government to citizen services through technology, ease of doing business and state incentives, stamp duty rate rationalization and automation, electricity reforms, an official statement issued by the GST directorate said.

Similarly, the performance of the State Tax Commissionerate was evaluated on the basis of several taxpayer centric delivery of services like following the process of pre-showcase notice consultations as per the policy, escalating issues of taxpayers to be resolved by GST Council, response time in resolving queries raised by taxpayers and refund process followed by the State GST Authorities.

The awardees were selected based on the feedback provided using online voting by taxpayers and citizens as well as by evaluation done by an eminent jury.

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	32.8°C	32.5°C
MIN	20.5°C	20.2°C
Humidity	79%	84%
Rainfall	NIL	NIL

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky

leisure



KENDALL KEEPS A DIARY TO HELP HER MENTAL HEALTH

Supermodel Kendall Jenner keeps an 'old-fashioned diary' which she keeps locked to put all her thoughts in as it helps to ease her anxiety and panic attacks. Kendall says having a safe space for her thoughts and fears and somewhere to 'let out your happiness' is important for her mental health.

BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL CALLS FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE

The Berlin Film Festival has called for peace over the situation in Ukraine, which is currently in a state of military conflict after Russian forces launched operation.



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ARIES
You have chosen to pay more attention to the voice of your inner self, and Ganesh approves of it. You crave for perfection in everything you do. You will be practical and rational. Ganesh says being a bit adventurous will help.

TAURUS
Though this day appears to be like all other normal days it will be a very hectic one. Ganesh sees you buried under files and papers, trying hard to cope up with the overload, getting completely drained out and, possibly and falling sick. There is nothing wrong in staying active and occupied. But overdoing is bad strategy. Try to take on tasks and responsibilities that you can handle without breaking your back or wearing yourself out.

GEMINI
There are indications that your aggressive spirit and antagonistic trait will come to the fore today, says Ganesh. You will fight for freedom of expression and will get your way. At home, you will be at your playful and imaginative best.

CANCER
Your actions will be dominated by your impulsive trait, predicts Ganesh. Later in the day, close your eyes to the negative aspects and focus only on the positives. Your action rather than thinking will yield better results. Immerse your heart and mind in light music.

LEO
Are you sure you did not marry your boss? Well, if you haven't, then you might have some problem with your spouse's bossy attitude. The best thing would be for you to try and sort out the individual differences with your partner. On the work front, the day will be satisfying, as you continue to mystify your opponents with your wits.

VIRGO
You are as free as a bird today. No strings attached - neither at home nor at work, says Ganesh. This should bode well for your confidence level. But everyone wants to chain Hercules, and the amount of expectations will make you feel so for sure, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
It's that time again when folks get together and catch up on old family stories, says Ganesh. So expect to be part of a grand reunion with your close and distant relatives whom you might not have seen in a long time. Today might just prove to you that distance can do nothing to dampen filial ties.

SCORPIO
There are strong indications that today will be a no-loss no-profit day. Family members may suffer from lack of warmth and tenderness, especially after noon or so. In the evening, get ready to be hosted by your beloved with a candlelight dinner, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Ganesh sees you being the good Samaritan, heralding better things for a brighter future. Household affairs will remain quiet and sublime. At work, however, expect smoother sailing in the latter part of the day.

CAPRICORN
You will never have paid so much attention to how presentable you look, as you will today. It could be for an important business meeting or to impress your sweetheart, but you will be exceptionally meticulous about the way you dress up, says Ganesh. The day will be enthralling, both at work and home.

AQUARIUS
Be warned! You may be the unlucky recipient of your bosses' wrath. To your disappointment, your colleagues may support you only half-heartedly. But Ganesh says you can take your evening where you want. Wine, dine and waltz away to relaxation.

PISCES
While you are likely to be swamped today by new contracts or job offers, you would do well to carefully analyse all the pros and cons of the proposals at hand before you commit to them, lest you regret your move later, says Ganesh.

Samantha completes 12 years in showbiz

Hyderabad: Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu expressed her happiness over the completion of 12 years in the movie industry. As she thanked her fans, she calls them 'the most loyal fans in the world'.

In a heartfelt note, the *Shakuntalam* actress wrote on her social media profiles, "Today marks my 12th year in the Film Industry."

"It's been 12 years of memories that revolve around lights, camera, action and incomparable moments. I am filled with gratitude for having had this blessed journey and the best, most loyal fans in the world", Samantha's note reads.

Samantha Ruth Prabhu made her acting debut in 2010 with Gautham Vasudev Menon's Telugu film *Ye Maaya Chesave*, in which she starred opposite Naga Chaitanya Akkineni.

Samantha's filmography includes super hit movies from Telugu and Tamil languages. *Atharintiki Daaredi*, *Seethamma Vakitlo Sirimalle Chettu*, *Manam*, *Aa aa, Eega*, *Oh Baby*, *Majili* and others are among Samantha's super hit movies in Telugu.

Her appearance in *Theri*, *Mersal*, and other Tamil movies brought much craze for her in Tamil as well.

Samantha's OTT debut with Manoj Bajpayee in *The Family Man* series, brought huge critical acclaim.

Her last appearance in Allu Arjun's blockbuster pan-India movie *Pushpa*, in a special song *Oo Antava*

made her one of the most happening actresses in India.



Hrithik gives shout-out to rumoured girlfriend Saba Azad

Mumbai: Actor Hrithik Roshan recently took to his Instagram and gave a shoutout to his rumored girlfriend, Saba Azad. The shoutout came ahead of Saba's gig and it marks Hrithik's first post for her.

The War actor shared a picture of Saba Azad along with Naseeruddin Shah's son Imaad Shah. The two have an electro-funk band called Madboy/Mink. Hrithik wrote on the picture, 'Kill it you guys'.

The rumours of the two dating each other have been grabbing headlines of late. Earlier, Saba was also seen at a Hrithik's family lunch in a picture shared by Hrithik's uncle Rajesh Roshan. Captioning the picture, Rajesh Roshan had written, "Happiness is always around... Especially on a Sunday, specifically at lunchtime."

Hrithik was earlier married to Sussanne Khan, they're parents to two sons, Hrehaan and Hridhaan. Sussanne had also attended Saba's gig sometime back. She posted Saba Azad's photo from the music event and wrote, "What an amazing evening. You are super cool and supremely talented." Saba Azad expressed her gratitude towards Sussanne through Instagram stories, where she wrote, "Thanks, my Suzie. So happy you were there last night." IANS



UKRAINE TENSION: PRIYANKA URGES PEOPLE TO HELP

Mumbai: Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who was appointed the UN Goodwill Ambassador in 2016, has strongly reacted to the crisis which is currently unfolding in Ukraine following the military attack launched by Russia.

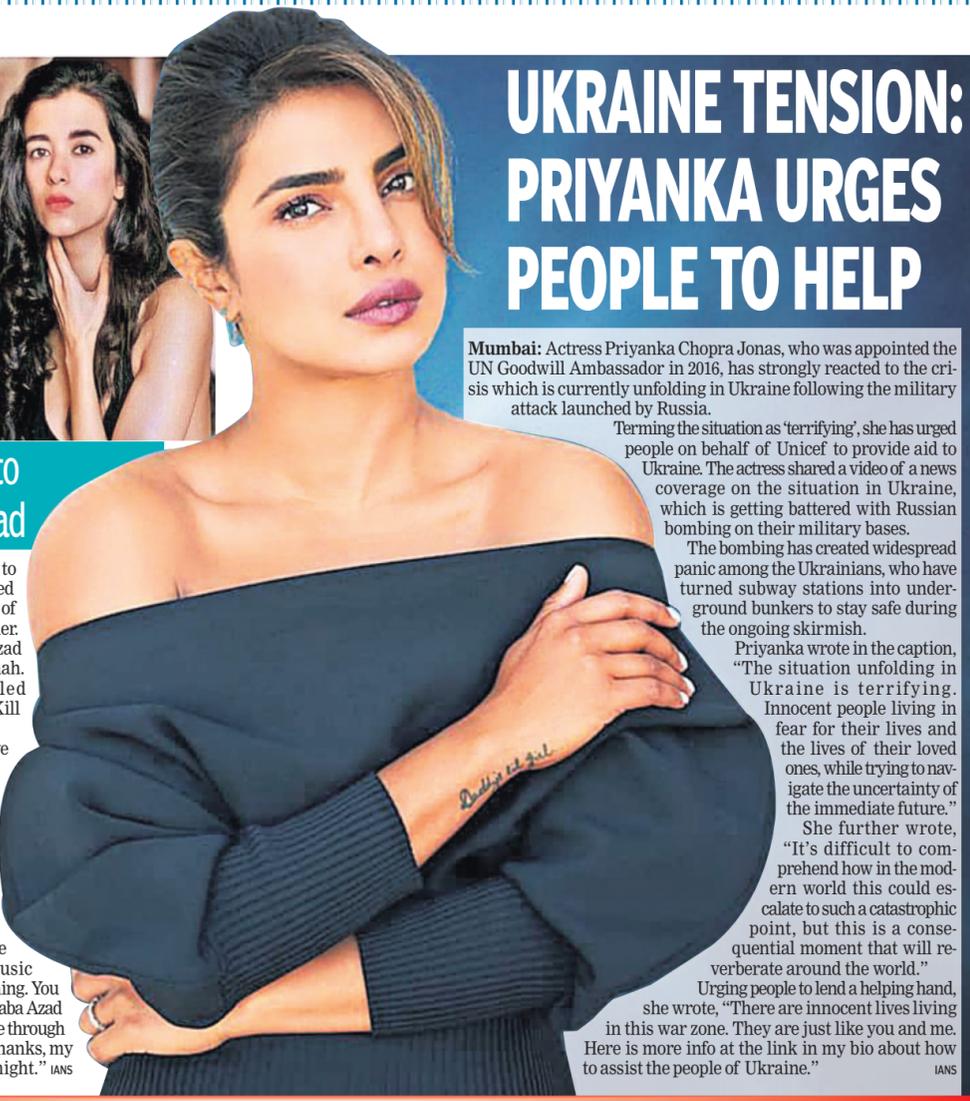
Terming the situation as 'terrifying', she has urged people on behalf of Unicef to provide aid to Ukraine. The actress shared a video of a news coverage on the situation in Ukraine, which is getting battered with Russian bombing on their military bases.

The bombing has created widespread panic among the Ukrainians, who have turned subway stations into underground bunkers to stay safe during the ongoing skirmish.

Priyanka wrote in the caption, "The situation unfolding in Ukraine is terrifying. Innocent people living in fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones, while trying to navigate the uncertainty of the immediate future."

She further wrote, "It's difficult to comprehend how in the modern world this could escalate to such a catastrophic point, but this is a consequential moment that will reverberate around the world."

Urging people to lend a helping hand, she wrote, "There are innocent lives living in this war zone. They are just like you and me. Here is more info at the link in my bio about how to assist the people of Ukraine." IANS



'WAS NERVOUS AT FIRST TO WORK WITH AJAY DEVGN'

Mumbai: Actress Rashii Khanna, who is all set to make her digital debut with *Rudra - The Edge of Darkness*, has talked about working with superstar Ajay Devgn in the stories.

Raashii said: "To be honest, I was nervous at first to work with him. But when I met him, I realised how down to earth he is. It's very easy to have a conversation with him. And whatever little that I have pulled off playing this character is all thanks to him and my director. Ajay sir was very supportive and made me feel very comfortable."

"I wouldn't have been able to pull off certain scenes if it wasn't for his support, especially my introduction. He obviously is very experienced and I learnt a lot from him in terms of camera angles, playing out certain emotions, playing it natural and the list is very long!"

A remake of the successful British series

Luther, *Rudra - The Edge of Darkness* is an engaging and dark take on a cop's journey of uncovering truths and bringing victims justice.

It will see Ajay Devgn's titular character of an intuitive and instinctive police officer fighting for the truth in darkness as he wades through a grim and complex web of crimes and criminals and corruption with a wrathful, steely grit.

Rudra - The Edge of Darkness will be available exclusively on Disney+ Hotstar from March 4, 2022 in Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, and Bengali.

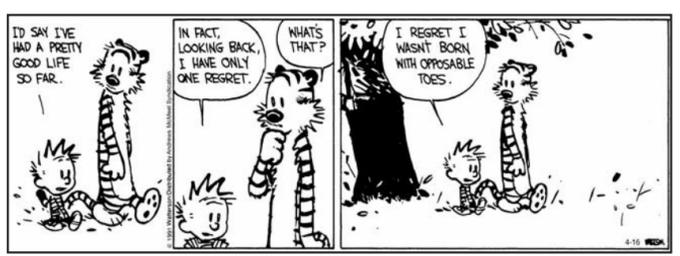
Helmed by ace director Rajesh Mapuskar, spanning across six episodes, the series has been shot across multiple unique locations in Mumbai.

The crime drama features a stellar cast including Raashi Khanna, Esha Deol, Atul Kulkarni, Ashwini Kalsekar, Tarun Gahlot, Ashish Vidarthi, and Satyadeep Misra in pivotal roles. IANS

PEANUTS



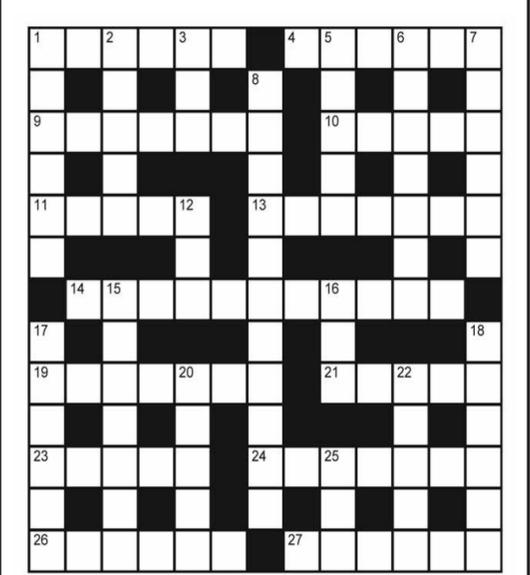
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



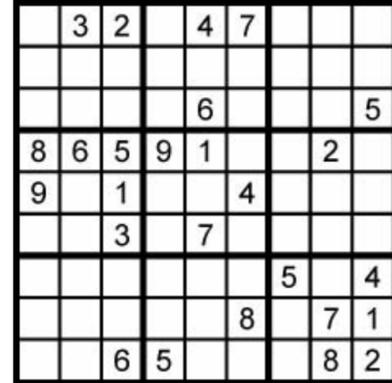
FUN post CROSSWORD



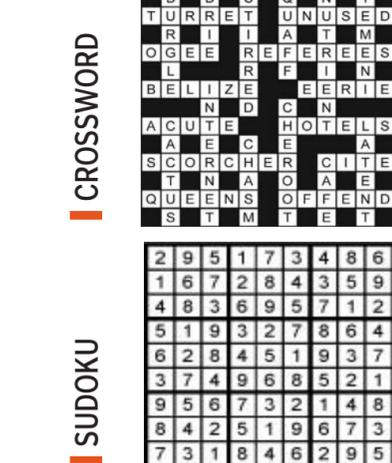
- Across
- 1 Sleep
 - 4 Wiped out
 - 9 Sporting dog
 - 10 Jottings
 - 11 Inside info
 - 13 Poltroons
 - 14 Riddle (5-6)
 - 19 Spa offering (3,4)
 - 21 Pillow filler
 - 23 Scale
 - 24 Cote d'Azur locale
 - 26 Fume (3,3)
 - 27 Blackcurrant liqueur
 - 7 Stop
 - 8 Tyrant birds
 - 12 Luau paste
 - 15 Merlot, e.g. (3,4)
 - 16 Copycat
 - 17 Hits
 - 18 Picks up the tab
 - 20 Stroll
 - 22 Gown
 - 25 Appia
- Down
- 1 Stand firm
 - 2 Baby grand, e.g.
 - 3 Hit the slopes
 - 5 Extend, in a way
 - 6 Liberate (3,4)

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



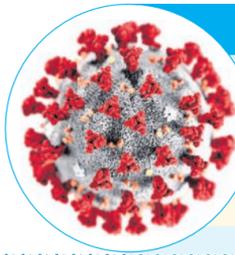
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



DIRTY SITE

Sewage flows into Mahanadi river near railway bridge in Cuttack, Saturday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	43,39,08,197	36,36,95,182	59,59,362
India	4,29,05,844	4,22,70,482	5,13,481
Odisha	12,84,616	12,72,428	9,056

ZILLA PARISHAD POLL RESULTS (By 11.30PM)

DISTRICT	TOTAL ZONES	COUNTED ZONES	BJD WIN/LEAD	BJP WIN/LEAD	INC WIN/LEAD	OTH WIN/LEAD
Angul	28	08	0/7	0/0	0/0	0/0
Balasore	45	13	0/12	0/1	0/0	0/0
Bargarh	34	12	2/8	0/2	0/0	0/0
Bhadrak	28	07	0/7	0/0	0/0	0/0
Bolangir	34	14	1/11	0/2	0/0	0/0
Boudh	09	03	0/2	0/1	0/0	0/0
Cuttack	46	14	0/13	0/1	0/0	0/0
Debagarh	07	03	0/3	0/0	0/0	0/0
Dhenkanal	27	08	0/4	0/4	0/0	0/0
Gajapati	14	07	0/5	0/0	0/2	0/0
Ganjam	68	22	1/21	0/0	0/0	0/0
Jagatsinghpur	26	08	0/8	0/0	0/0	0/0
Jajpur	39	10	1/9	0/0	0/0	0/0
Jharsuguda	09	05	0/5	0/0	0/0	0/0
Kalahandi	36	13	0/9	0/4	0/0	0/0
Kandhamal	18	12	0/10	0/1	0/2	0/0
Kendrapara	32	09	1/8	0/0	0/0	0/0
Keonjhar	37	13	0/12	1/0	0/0	0/0
Khurda	30	10	0/9	0/1	0/0	0/0
Koraput	29	14	0/8	0/0	0/5	1/0
Malkangiri	15	07	0/6	0/0	1/0	0/0
Mayurbhanj	56	26	0/24	0/0	0/0	0/2
Nabarangpur	26	10	0/9	0/0	0/0	0/1
Nayagarh	24	08	0/8	0/0	0/0	0/0
Nuapada	14	05	1/3	0/1	0/0	0/0
Puri	33	11	0/11	0/0	0/0	0/0
Rayagada	22	11	0/7	0/0	0/4	0/0
Sambalpur	18	09	1/8	0/1	0/0	0/0
Subarnapur	13	06	0/5	0/0	0/1	0/0
Sundargarh	35	17	0/15	0/1	0/0	0/1
TOTAL	853	315	7/269	1/18	1/14	1/4

PANCHAYAT POLLS

BJD heading for massive victory



Counting of votes underway at Bhubaneswar block, Saturday

BJD wins Ambabhona, Sohela, Sorada ZP seats

Bargarh: The BJD has won ZP zone-32 in Sohela and zone-5 in Ambabhona of Bargarh district, Saturday. BJD ZP candidate in Sohela Jaiphula Majhi has polled 19,931 votes while her nearest rival BJP's Bhumisuta Sabat has got only 7396 votes. In Ambahona, BJD's Nilkumari Naik has defeated her nearest rival BJP's Prafulla Pradhan by 6,446 votes. Nilkumari got 13,687 votes while Prafulla secured 7241 votes. Besides, BJD candidate Samarendra Kumar Sahu has won in Sorada ZP zone 63 in Ganjam by defeating his rival from the BJP.

Bhubaneswar, Feb 26: The counting of votes for the three-tier panchayat elections in state has given enough indication that the Naveen Patnaik-led Biju Janata Dal (BJD) will sweep the polls. BJD candidates have secured lead over their rivals in around 280 zilla parishad (ZP) zones out of the 315 went for counting Saturday. The ruling party has left Opposition BJP and Congress far behind. The BJD has also done well in coastal, south and western regions of the state. The regional party has established its lead over principal opposition BJP in districts like Balasore, Bolangir, Mayurbhanj,

Sambalpur, Kalahandi and Sundargarh. The party has also left its rivals far behind in districts like Angul, Bhadrak, Bargarh, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Kalahandi, Kendrapara, Keonjhar, Khurda and Koraput. "The early trend in the panchayat elections has given enough indication that the BJD will sweep the polls. The party is moving towards a massive victory in the ZP polls. The developmental policies of Naveen Patnaik-led government have fetched votes for the BJD," said a political observer. The BJD had won 473 ZP seats in 2017 rural polls while BJP secured 297 seats and Congress was the distant

third with 60 seats. "The early trend in the rural polls has disappointed us. The voting pattern has revealed that people have voted for the establishment a dictatorship in state. A strong opposition is needed for the survival of democracy," said senior Congress leader Narasingha Mishra. BJP state unit president Samir Mohanty said, "We will wait till the counting ends to give any opinion on the issue. We will respect people's verdict and find out our weak points," he said.

UKRAINE CRISIS CONTROL ROOM GETS 550 CALLS FROM STUDENTS, PARENTS

New Delhi, Feb 26: Over 550 calls were received from the students from Odisha stranded in Ukraine and their parents by the special cell of the state government, setup in New Delhi for the evacuation of Odisha people from the war-torn Ukraine. According to an official from Odisha Bhawan, the special cell has been making a list of students who are stranded in Ukraine and submitting it to the ministry of External Affairs so that these students can be traced and evacuated from the warzone. The official said that over 550 calls were received from students and from their parents in last 24 hours. The Special Cell is in contact with the Ministry of External Affairs as well as Ukraine Embassy, the official added. The Odisha Bhawan has also deployed a four-member team at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here to assist Odias evacuated from Ukraine. The team would bring the returnees to Odisha Bhawan where they would be accommodated till the further arrangements are made for their transportation to Odisha. Significantly, the state government has opened a special cell at New Delhi and appointed a nodal officer for safe return of Odias from Ukraine.

UNION BANK OF INDIA
REGIONAL OFFICE: CUTTACK
M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar-751003

DEMAND NOTICE

Notice under Section 13 (2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 for Enforcement of Security Interest

A Demand Notice under Sec. 13 (2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 was issued and sent by Regd. Post with A.D. by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India, CDA Bidanasi Branch against the following Borrowers/ Guarantors, which could not be served to the below mentioned parties. Therefore, the contents of the same including the outstanding, Loan amount and details of the secured assets are herein furnished below.

CDA BIDANASI BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrowers/ Guarantors	Nature / Limit	Date of Demand Notice/Outstanding	Details of Property Mortgaged
Borrowers: 1) M/s. D P Polymer, Prop.: Ms. Rekha Bhawsinka, Unit Address-At: Matamatha, Cantonment Road, P.O.: Buxi Bazaar, Cuttack-753001, 2) Ms. Rekha Bhawsinka, W/o.: Mr. Om Prakash Bhawsinka, Address-At: Matamatha, Cantonment Road, P.O.: Buxi Bazaar, Cuttack-753001 / Guarantors: 1) Mr. Om Prakash Bhawsinka, S/o.: Late Dwarika Prasad Bhawsinka, Address-At: Matamatha, Cantonment Road, P.O.: Buxi Bazaar, Cuttack-753001, 2) Legal heirs of the deceased Dwarika Prasad Bhawsinka are: A) Mrs. Uma Modi, D/o.: Late Dwarika Prasad Bhawsinka (Daughter), W/o.: Narendra Kishore Todi, At: SHK Prasad Matha Residency, Flat No.: 401, 50-50-35/2, B S Layout, Vishakhapatnam-530013, B) Mrs. Parvati Agarwal, D/o.: Late Dwarika Prasad Bhawsinka (Daughter), At: Old Post Office Road, Karanjia, Dist.: Mayurbhanj, C) Mr. Om Prakash Bhawsinka, S/o.: Late Dwarika Prasad Bhawsinka (Son), At: Matamatha, Cantonment Road, P.O.: BuxiBazaar, Cuttack-753001, D) Mrs. Binita Modi, D/o.: Late Dwarika Prasad Bhawsinka (Daughter), W/o.: Kishan Kumar Modi, At: Nayasarak, P.O.: Chandini Chowk, PS.: Purigat, Dist.: Cuttack-753009, E) Mrs. Anita Saraogi, D/o.: Late Dwarika Prasad Bhawsinka (Daughter), W/o.: Ranjit Kumar Saraogi, At: Ranchi Road, Purulia, Municipality Ward No.: 3, Taxi Stand, Purulia, West Bengal, PIN-723101	CCL / ₹19,00,000/- CVPTL / ₹1,90,93,164.60 Total: ₹2,09,93,164.60	10.02.2022 / ₹2,39,15,573.87 as on 30.09.2021 together with further interest & charges from 01.10.2021 Ac.0.152Dec., Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha-753001	Land and Building- belonging in the name of Late Dwarika Prasad Bhawsinka, situated at Mouza: Cuttack Town, Unit No.: 17, Machhua Bazaar Mutation Khata No.: 38/10 of Plot No.: 24, Area: Ac.0.152Dec., Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha-753001

As the above mentioned Borrowers of the CDA Bidanasi Branch have defaulted in repayment of the principal loan/ facility in installments/ interest/ both, the account has been classified as NPA and all of you are jointly and severally liable to pay the above mentioned amount as mentioned against the respective account with subsequent interest as per the agreement. You are hereby called upon to pay the said outstanding amount together with up to date interest within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which, the Bank shall be constrained to take any one or more of the following measures against the properties hypothecated / mortgaged to the Bank detailed above, to recover the amount without the intervention of the court as provided under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act (54 of 2002) i.e.

1. Take possession of the secured assets including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realizing the secured assets.
2. Take over the management of the secured assets of the borrower including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale and realize the secured assets.
3. Appoint any person (hereafter referred to as the manager) to manage the secured assets the possession of which has been taken over by the secured creditor.
4. Require at any time by notice in writing any person who has acquired any of the secured assets from the borrower and from whom any money is due or may become due to the borrower, to pay the bank, so much of the money as is sufficient to pay the secured debt. Please take notice that after receipt of this notice, you shall not transfer by the way of sale, lease or otherwise any of the secured assets referred to in the notice, without prior written consent of the Bank. The charges, expenses incurred for taking the aforesaid actions shall be met out of the sale proceeds and if the sale proceeds are found insufficient to satisfy the entire amount due to the bank, for the balance amount appropriate legal action as provided in the SARFAESI Act 54 of 2002 or any other Act as deemed necessary will be taken against you, holding all of you jointly and severally liable to all costs and consequences thereof. It may be noted that under the provisions of the section 13(8) of the Act, right of redemption is available to you, by paying the dues of the Bank together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank, at any time, before the date of publication of notice for public auction or inviting quotations or tender from public or private treaty for transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale of the secured assets. This notice is issued without prejudice to the rights of the Bank available under any other law.

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 25.02.2022 Sd/- Chief Manager & Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India

UNION BANK OF INDIA
REGIONAL OFFICE: CUTTACK
M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar-751003

MEGA E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE / IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable /Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described movable /immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/ symbolic/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 30.03.2022 between 11.00 AM to 5.00 PM for recovery of outstanding dues to the Union Bank of India from the Borrowers and Guarantors mentioned below. The reserve price and the earnest money deposit is stated in the column respectively.

Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrowers / Guarantors / Mortgagors / Co-Applicants / Co-Obligants / Outstanding Dues	Description of Properties to be Auctioned	Reserve Price/ EMD / Bid Increment	Account Details for EMD Submission
1.	MADHUPATNA BRANCH, Mob.: 9522221112/ 1) Shri Arabinda Sahoo, S/o.: Shri Alekha Chandra Sahoo, Prop. of M/s. Shri Arabinda Traders, At: Commission Road, Mangalabagh, Buxi Bazaar, Cuttack -753001, 2) Sri Chandra Kumar Sahoo, S/o.: Shri Arabinda Sahoo, At: Commission Road, Mangalabagh, Buxi Bazaar, Cuttack- 753001/ Outstanding: ₹20,25,802/- with further interest, cost & Expenses	All that piece and parcel of Land and Building at Khata No.: 1068/101, Plot No.: 1025/2162, Mouza: Mirkamalpatna, Cuttack Sahar, Unit-22, Tahasil: Cuttack, PS.: Mangalabagh, Cuttack-753001, Area: Ac.0.027 Dec., Bounded by North: Plot No.: 1024, South: Plot No.: 1025 (Part), East: Road, West: Plot No.: 1024 & 1017	₹31,56,000/- / ₹3,16,000/- / ₹10,000/-	Account No.: 514201980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0551422
2.	SALIPUR BRANCH, Mob.: 9090587336/ 1) M/s. Shree Ganesh Jewellery (Prop: Kamalakanta Sahoo), 2) Shri Kamalakanta Sahoo, At: Dhunasahi, Sunguda, Salipur, Cuttack-754221, 3) Mr. Pratap Chandra Sahoo, S/o.: Late Babaji Charan Sahoo, 4) Ms. Jharana Sahoo, W/o.: Late Babaji Charan Sahoo, 5) Mr. Raj Kishor Sahoo, S/o.: Late Durga Charan Sahoo, All are At: Kusambi, PO.: Sunguda, Salipur, Cuttack-754221/ Outstanding: ₹11,53,640.49 with further interest, cost & Expenses	Land and Residential Building belonging to Mr. Babaji Charan Sahoo, Mr. Raj Kishor Sahoo, S/o.: Late Durga Charan Sahoo, At: Kusambi, PO.: Sunguda, Salipur, Cuttack-754221, over Plot No.: 416/2899, Khata No.: 987/208, Mouza: Kusambi, Tahasil: Salipur, Dist.: Cuttack	₹13,12,000/- / ₹1,32,000/- / ₹10,000/-	Account No.: 301011980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0830101
3.	OSBC BRANCH, CUTTACK, Mob.: 9763541231/ Borrower: Mr. Kashinath Biswal, S/o.: Late Kamal Kanta Biswal, At: Paikana, Kisan Nagar, PS.: Kisan Nagar, Dist.: Cuttack, State: Odisha, PIN - 754130/ Guarantor: Annapurna Biswal, W/o.: Late Kamal Kanta Biswal, At: Paikana, Kisan Nagar, PS.: Kisan Nagar, Dist.: Cuttack, State: Odisha, PIN - 754130/ Outstanding: ₹5,30,037.33 with further interest, cost & Expenses	All that piece and parcel of Land and Building at Khata No.: 3, Plot No.: 415, (Area: Ac.0.030 Dec., Gharabari), Mouza: Paikana, Dist.: Cuttack, Bounded by North: Plot No.: 417, South: Road, East: Plot No.: 416, West: Plot No.: 413 & 414	₹38,65,000/- / ₹3,87,000/- / ₹10,000/-	Account No.: 208021980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0920801
4.	MALGODOWN BRANCH, Mob.: 9398263799/ 1) M/s. Montessori Agrotech, Prop.: Manas Kumar Lenka, S/o.: Mr. Batakushna Lenka, 2) Mr. Manas Kumar Lenka, S/o.: Mr. Batakushna Lenka, Both are At: Biswalpara, PO./PS.: Kishorenagar, Cuttack-754131, 3) Mrs. Urmila Nayak, W/o.: Mr. Niranjan Nayak, At/PO.: Jankoli, PS.: Benupur, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack-754114, 4) Mr. Ashok Kumar Rout, S/o.: Mr. Subash Chandra Rout, At: Bhalukipatoshri Vihar, Near DAV Public School, Keonjhar-758001/ Outstanding: ₹7,16,57,093.45 with further interest, cost & Expenses	a) Land & Building (Cold Storage) at Plot No.: 270, Khata No.: 33, Mouza: Biswalpara, P.S.: Kishorenagar, Cuttack, Extent of Area Ac.2.27 Dec. in the name of Mr. Manas Kumar Lenka & Smt. Urmila Nayak, W/o.: Mr. Niranjan Nayak, Bounded by North: Plot No.: 371, South: Ismaili Road, West: Rest of this Plot b) EMD of the Rural Homestead Land and Building thereon over 13 No. of Plots, under Khata No.: 33 in a Total Area: Ac. 1.980 Dec. as mentioned below at Mouza: Biswalpara, P.S.: Kishorenagar, Cuttack, Tahasil: Kishorenagar in the name of Manas Kumar Lenka, S/o.: Batakushna Lenka and Mrs. Urmila Nayak, W/o.: Niranjan Nayak, The details of the Plot No. and the Khata No. are Khata No.: 33, Plot No.: 333, Area: Ac.0.130 Dec., Plot No.: 334, Area: Ac.0.120 Dec., Plot No.: 335, Area: Ac.0.150 Dec., Plot No.: 337, Area: Ac.0.160 Dec., Plot No.: 338, Area: Ac.0.200 Dec., Plot No.: 341, Area: Ac.0.200 Dec., Plot No.: 342, Area: Ac.0.180 Dec., Plot No.: 343, Area: Ac.0.060 Dec., Plot No.: 346, Area: Ac.0.080 Dec., Plot No.: 347, Area: Ac.0.050 Dec., Plot No.: 351, Area: Ac.0.220 Dec., Plot No.: 352, Area: Ac.0.180 Dec., Plot No.: 349/1055, Area: Ac.0.250 Dec., Bounded by North: Plot No.: 371, South: Ismaili Road, West: Rest of this Plot	₹8,95,00,000/- / ₹89,50,000/- / ₹10,000/- ₹1,65,00,000/- / ₹16,50,000/- / ₹10,000/-	Account No.: 022811980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0802280
5.	SOMPUR BRANCH, Mob.: 7873301333 / 1) Smt. Ranjana Sethi, W/o.: Late Rabindra Kumar Sethy, 2) Shri Rashmi Ranjan Sethy, 3) Smt. Benga Bewa, 4) Shri Subash Chandra Sethy (No. 1 to 4 are the Legal Heir of Late Rabindra Kumar Sethy), Prop. of M/s. Shiv Shakti Stores, 5) Smt. Sapani Sethy, 6) Hemanta Sethy, 7) Shri Sarat Sethy, (No. 5-7 are Legal heir of Guarantor Late Govinda Sethy), At: Kamarpada, PO.: Jaspada, Dist.: Cuttack - 754130/ Outstanding: 1 to 4 jointly and severally liable for ₹ 84,65,142.43 & 5 to 7 jointly and severally liable for ₹ 20,90,587/- with further interest, cost & Expenses	Land & Building belonging to Late Rabindra Kumar Sethy over Plot No.: 1388, 1389/1598 and 1389 (Chaka No.: 398), Khata No.: 493/29 and 259, Area: Ac.0.61 Dec., at Kamarpada Mouza, PS/Tahasil: Kishannagar, Dist.: Cuttack	₹1,28,77,000/- / ₹12,88,000/- / ₹10,000/-	Account No.: 025311980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0802531
6.	PARADEEP PORT BRANCH, Mob.: 9925185123/ Borrower: Mr. Sanuja Das, S/o.: Late Sricharan Das, At/ PO.: Garjanga, Via: Marsagahi, PS.: Patkura, Kendrapara-754213/ Guarantor: Mr. Yubaraj Das, S/o.: Late Sricharan Das, At/ PO.: Garjanga, Via: Marsagahi, PS.: Patkura, Kendrapara - 754213/ Outstanding: ₹10,09,178.65 with further interest, cost & Expenses	All that piece and parcel of Homestead Land and Building belonging to Mr. Sanuja Das over Plot No.: 215/3280 and 215/3281, Khata No.: 777/ 571, KISSAM: Gharabari, Area: Ac.0.18 Dec. situated at Mouza: Garjanga, SRO: Kendrapara, PS.: Patkura, Kendrapara - 754213, Bounded by North: PWD river embankment, South: Mr. Daitari Behera, East: Mr. Daitari Behera, West: Mr. Maheswar Behera	₹19,54,000/- / ₹1,96,000/- / ₹10,000/-	Account No.: 480601980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0548065

Date & Time of Inspection of Properties for intending purchasers: Before 28.03.2022 on any working day during banking hours

DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION: 30.03.2022 between 11.00 AM to 5.00 PM

Last Date & Time of EMD submission : On or before the Commencement of E-Auction

Details of encumbrances if any : NIL

For registration and login and bidding rules visit
<https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/bapi/index.jsp>, www.unionbankofindia.co.in.
For further detailed any query please contact: Mr. Rishikant Prasad, Mob.: 9769987208

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6)/ RULE 9(1) OF STATUTORY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002

This may also be treated as notice u/r 8(6) / Rule 9(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to the borrower/s and guarantor/s of the said loan about the holding of E-Auction Sale on the above mentioned date.

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 25.02.2022 Sd/- Authorized Officer, Union Bank of India

State logs lowest daily Cov cases since Dec 31

Saturday's record of 293 Covid-19 infections is the lowest of 2022 so far, as the state had recorded 228 freshcases in December 31, 2021

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Feb 26: Odisha Saturday recorded 293 daily Covid-19 infections, the lowest in this year so far, pushing the tally to 12,84,616, the state Health department said in a bulletin. The infections are the lowest since 228 cases December 31. The state had logged 345 Covid cases and seven deaths Friday. Out of total 293 new infections, 171 were reported from quarantine centres while 122 persons contracted the virus locally. Angul district registered the highest number of new cases at 35, followed by Khurda with 29 new infections. Other districts that reported fresh Covid infections Saturday are - Balasore (9), Bargarh (3), Bhadrak (4), Bolangir (3), Boudh (1), Cuttack (3), Deogarh (2), Dhenkanal (1), Gajapati (25), Ganjam (20), Jagatsinghpur (3), Jajpur (18), Jharsuguda (13), Kalahandi (2), Kendrapara (11), Keonjhar (20), Koraput (1),

Mayurbhanj (12), Nabarangpur (4), Nayagarh (2), Nuapada (4), Puri (1), Rayagada (14), Sambalpur (25), Subarnapur (6) and Sundargarh (15). The daily test positivity rate (TPR) stood at 0.52 per cent and 86 children were among those newly infected, the Health bulletin stated, adding that 56,549 samples were tested in the past 24 hours. There are 3,079 active Covid cases in the state currently while 585 patients recuperated from the disease in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of recoveries to 12,72,428, it said. The state pool reported 7 new cases. These are persons who have come from outside Odisha and have tested positive. A total of 2,91,55,628 swab samples have been cumulatively tested so far. The coastal state's Covid-19 death toll rose to 9,056 as four more persons succumbed to the highly infectious virus. The deaths were reported from Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Bargarh and Deogarh districts, it said.



SUCI activists held a demonstration at College Square in Cuttack, Saturday, to protest against Russian invasion of Ukraine

No respite for Ray

BHUBANESWAR: The Special Court, Bhubaneswar rejected a petition filed by former Union Minister Dilip Kumar Ray who requested the court to discharge the allegations of amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income, Saturday. A disproportionate asset case was registered against Ray by the Vigilance department in 1996. The court Saturday delivered a 33-page order and asked Ray to remain present March 15 for further hearing. S Rajskhar, designated Senior Advocate of the Supreme Court, appeared for Ray.

Leading Orthopedic surgeon Smarajit Patnaik no more

BHUBANESWAR: Leading orthopedic and joint replacement surgeon Smarajit Patnaik breathed his last here Saturday. He had been ailing for last four years. Patnaik was working with Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar, as a leading consultant for complicated fracture management, hip replacement surgery, disc surgery and bone grafts. In a career spanning 23 years, Patnaik achieved multiple feats including membership at prestigious organisations such as the National Academy of Medical Sciences and American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons among others.

State issues guidelines for Mahashivratri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 26: Anticipating large gatherings at different temples on the occasion of Mahashivratri, which could in turn aggravate the Covid situation in state, the state government issued guidelines Saturday for the celebration of the occasion March 1. In the guidelines, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena said that people usually congregate to worship Lord Shiva and observe the Mahashivratri by fasting and meditation all night long. As large congregations on the festival of Mahasivaratri could lead to the spread of Covid-19 infections, the SRC advised District Collectors and Municipal Commissioners to put some restrictions in place. "While allowing for celebration of 'Mahasivaratri' March 1 and its related rituals, the Collectors/Municipal Commissioners may restrict congregations to such number as may be felt appropriate in view of the prevailing pandemic sit-



uation considering local situations/space available within such temples and its premises to enter into/gather in temples strictly adhering to the Covid-19 safety protocols," read the guidelines. Further mela and congregations outside or within the temple premises will be restricted so as to avoid mass gatherings, Jena said. The devotees in these places must have to follow Covid-19 safety protocols such as wearing of face masks, physical distancing and hand washing/hand sanitising.

Lingaraj temple servitors oppose BMC rule

BHUBANESWAR: Servitors of the Lingaraj Temple here objected to the guidelines issued by the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Friday with respect to the celebration of Mahashivratri March 1. The BMC had issued guidelines Feb 25 prohibiting Sahan Mela and Garvagruha darshan on the day of Mahashivratri. "The devotees are allowed for darshan of Lord Lingaraj from Singhadwar to Aada Katha. However, they cannot offer puja near Aada Katha during darshan," the guidelines read. Opposing to this, Sevayats of the Brahman Nijog and Pujapanda Nijog demanded the devotees should be allowed to light lamps and offer prayers inside the temple premises on the occasion. "We have no issues with BMC's decision of Lord's darshan from Aada Katha. We are against the re-

striction on puja at Aada Katha. We urge the BMC to do away with the same as Covid is on decline," Deep Ranjan Mohapatra, a servitor at the shrine said. BMC additional commissioner Laxmikant Sethi responded to the opposition saying the occasion will be observed with strict adherence to Covid-19 guidelines and no changes will be made. Commissioner Saumendra Priyadarsi Saturday reviewed the security, traffic arrangements and steps taken for maintaining law and order on the day. Issues like parking arrangements and hassle free darshan were discussed. Emphasis was laid on the raising of the Mahadeep at the pre-decided time of 10pm. There will also be arrangements for sprinkling of water and setting up of temporary sheds during the day, keeping in mind the soaring temperature.

Staff of leading PSU bank in soup for massive fraud

The Commissionerate Police arrested the prime accused Saturday after registering a case (5/22) in this regard

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 26: A shocking incident has come to fore as officials of a prominent bank have allegedly duped several account holders of more than ₹1 crore on the pretext of investing their money in various bonds and IPOs. One of the victims, Madan Mohan Swain, 64, of Rasulgarh area here lodged a complaint with the Mancheswar police Friday accusing the bank's Palasuni branch staffers of misappropriating ₹29 lakh from his account. Swain allegedly received a call from the bank who suggested him to hold the mutual fund till March 2021, to which he complied. On April 5, 2021, he again visited the branch as instructed over phone by some official. The branch manager introduced him to the main accused Subrat Kumar Mohanty assuring that he would help him redeem his money invested in mutual fund. Mohanty took all his details and instructed him to install a software MyCAMS which showed the value of his mutual funds bond as ₹26 lakh. Later, Mohanty helped Swain apply for redemption of the bond and told him that he would get the money within three days. The manager advised Swain to invest in electoral bonds instead of just saving the money. Swain gave Mohanty three cheques of ₹7 lakh, ₹6 lakh and ₹8 lakh during April. Subsequently, Mohanty allegedly deposited the cheques but Swain did not receive any SMS or call re-



garding their clearance. July 3, Mohanty gave Swain a redemption application at his house and took the original bonds along with another cheque of ₹2 lakh for mutual funds. After seven days, Mohanty handed over the electoral bonds to Swain in an envelope. Later August 18, they again took another cheque of ₹6 lakh to invest in IPO shares. But, he neither received the money invested in the mutual funds or electoral bonds. In September, the complainant again went to the branch where he came to know that Mohanty had been transferred to Kolkata. The manager told him to contact the higher officials at the head office of the bank at Kharavela Nagar. Later October 30, Mohanty met Swain in the presence of the manager and gave him a cheque of ₹30 lakh, which Swain deposited November 1, only for the cheque to bounce citing insufficient balance. Also, Swain was shocked when the mutual fund office of the bank informed him that all the documents regarding his investment in mutual fund, electoral bond and IPO possessed by him are fake. The bank later informed the complainant that Mohanty had been terminated and an enquiry had been launched in this regard. The Commissionerate Police arrested Mohanty Saturday.

CLASSIFIED

LOST

I, Rabindra Kumar Jena, S/o.Late Bharat Chandra Jena, Raghunathpur, Andhia, Bhadrak, that during my motor cycle journey from Raghunathpur to Bonth, I have lost my original Sale Deed Vide No.839, Dtd.19.07.1999 somewhere on 15.02.2022. If found by anyone please contact 9437802973.

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Bhubaneswar declare that my Son's actual name is MIVAAN AGRAWAL as for his Birth Certificate & Aadhaar Card. But in passport his name has been wrongly mentioned as Nijanand Agrawalla. I declared that Mivaan Agrawal is one and same person. Ashok Kumar Agrawalla Deponent

CP team conducts raids at house, clinics of conman Swain

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 26: A team of Commissionerate Police Saturday conducted raids at the house and clinics of infamous conman Ramesh Chandra Swain located at Kamakhyanagar in Dhenkanal and Baramba area of Cuttack district. Swain has duped several women from various parts of the country of lakhs after marrying them posing as a doctor. The officials reportedly collected incriminating documents during the raid at his



house and clinic at Kamakhyanagar. The team also enquired about Swain from his relatives, locals and the staffers at the clinic. The cops came to know while talking to

locals at Baramba area that he had not paid salary to the staffers or rent for the room where the clinic was operating before its closure in 2019. Meanwhile, sources in the

Commissionerate Police also revealed that a person has filed a case at a local police station in Ernakulam of Kerala, accusing Swain of taking more than ₹20 lakh from him to provide an MBBS seat. Notably, Swain was earlier arrested for cheating as many as 13 banks of more than Rs 1 crore back in 2006. The Commissionerate Police has constituted an all-women team to investigate into the frauds committed by Swain.

Indian team replaces sand with waste plastic in building material

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 26: A team of Indian researchers has developed and patented a unique method of replacing up to 70 per cent sand in concrete with shredded plastic, cracking two of the biggest environmental issues being faced by the world. The novel technology will not only help save the second-most used natural resource i.e. sand, but also cut down the landfills from growing taller with waste plastic bottles, the team from Sona College of Technology at Salem, Tamil Nadu, said in a statement. "Our invention successfully utilises recycled plastic waste as par-

tial replacement for fine aggregate or natural sand in making paver blocks and precast bricks," said R Malathy, Dean (R&D) and Professor, Department of Civil Engineering and lead inventor of the technology that has just been awarded a patent by India's Patent Office. India consumes nearly 70 million tonnes of sand annually to meet its infrastructure demands and this usage is growing at the rate of 7 per cent per annum. At the same time, over 5 million tonnes of plastic are consumed each year, with only about a quarter being recycled and the rest ending up in landfills. The invention converting plastic waste into useable construc-



tion material can be used to partially replace the traditional concrete ingredient. "The breakthrough invention will hopefully check depletion of global sand stock while limiting plastic waste," said Chocko Valliappa, Vice Chairman, Sona Group of Education Institutions.

The team comprising inventors R Malathy, SRR Senthil Kumar, N Karuppasamy and K Dhinesh Babu worked on the invention that earned them the patent "Effect of recycled plastic wastes as partial replacement for fine aggregate in manufacturing paver blocks" in 2019. The final patent has now been awarded to the team.

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- Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-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.

VYASANAGAR MUNICIPALITY

Parties on lookout as people want new faces



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur Road, Feb 26: Elections to the Vyasaganagar municipality in Jajpur and other civic bodies in the state will be held March 24. After announcement of poll schedules, frontline leaders of various political parties who were in hibernation for the last three years have become active again. Political activities by the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) have peaked up. The ruling party has started exercise to pick up right candidates for councilors, as voters are said to be looking forward to new faces.

With only four days left for nomination filing, some BJD leaders held a closed-door meeting in a hotel here, Saturday. Political grapevines are agog about the party leadership looking for new faces to be fielded this time.

This is because people of Vyasaganagar municipality had seen several no confidence motions between 2013 and 2018, pointing to lingering instability in the civic administration.

Interestingly, the post of chairperson in the municipality has been reserved for women belonging to the scheduled tribes where tribal population is allegedly negligible.

VYASANAGAR MUNICIPALITY HAD SEEN SEVERAL NO CONFIDENCE MOTIONS BETWEEN 2013 AND 2018, POINTING TO LINGERING INSTABILITY IN THE CIVIC ADMINISTRATION

THIS POLITICAL INSTABILITY WAS ALLEGEDLY ORCHESTRATED BY THE BJD AND CONGRESS TO FULFILL THEIR INTERESTS AND SHOW THEIR POLITICAL CLOUTS. PEOPLE HAVE NOT YET FORGOTTEN SUCH MESS

In view of this, all three political parties- BJD, BJP and Congress have been brainstorming on fielding the right candidate from tribal community.

In the last three years, denizens have suffered as garbage disposal and sanitation have been in mess. Leaders perceive that the discontent among locals may find an outlet in the elections.

Leaders of opposition parties are out to weaponise such issues against the ruling party in the 27-year-old civic body.

Many people say that instead of addressing the poor drainage, messy sanitation and bad roads, the administration has laid stress on beautification of the civic body.

People of Digisahi, Umapada and Housing board colony are perennially affected by poor drainage and pollution. Some

INTERESTINGLY, THE POST OF CHAIRPERSON IN THE MUNICIPALITY HAS BEEN RESERVED FOR WOMEN BELONGING TO THE SCHEDULED TRIBES (ST) WHERE TRIBAL POPULATION IS ALLEGEDLY NEGLIGIBLE

BJD, BJP AND CONGRESS HAVE BEEN BRAINSTORMING ON FIELDING THE RIGHT CANDIDATE FROM TRIBAL COMMUNITY

streets in the colony are always waterlogged.

In 2013, the BJD had formed council in the 26 wards of the civic body. All the councilors were backed by Korei MLA Pritiranjan Ghadei. Sabita Rout was elected as chairperson of the civic body.

However, in the last two years of her term, she had to face no confidence motion thrice. As a result, the pace of development was badly affected due to political turmoil. This political instability was allegedly orchestrated by the BJD and Congress to fulfill their interests and show their political clouts. People have not yet forgotten such mess.

Keeping these factors in view, the educated and conscious denizens of the city are in a mood to see new faces in the field, it is said.

Court sentences 70-yr-old man to 10 yrs in prison

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasure, Feb 26: A local court in Balasure district Saturday sentenced a 70-year-old man to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping a minor girl.

Special Judge of the POCSO court Jagdish Prasad Mohanty also slapped a penalty of Rs 10,000 on the convict.

According to the prosecution, the 13-year-old girl, who worked as a domestic help in the house of the elderly man, was sexually abused several times for about two years.

She was rescued by a local child-line unit and an FIR lodged in Khaira police station September 13, 2016.

TELE RIVER BRIDGE

Locals angry over tardy construction

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baunsuni, Feb 26: People in some pockets under Kantamal block of Boudh district have been suffering in the absence of bridges and road connectivity. In a case of administrative negligence, Gabajora-Bidyath bridge across Tel river has been dragging over years, leaving people sore.

"The work is moving at such a tardy pace that no one knows when its work will come to an end," locals lamented. According to reports, a notification for construction of the bridge in Similipadar panchayat was out in 2016-17. Rs 20.8 crore was sanctioned for the project. A contractor was awarded the work, which was supposed to be completed by December, 2018.

However, over three years have elapsed since its deadline, but even half of the bridge construction work has not been completed.

Locals said that after completion of the project, thousands of people living in Palsagora, Rundimahula, Similipadar, Khatakhatia and Jogindrapur panchayats would get benefits in the communication front.

Semi-urban, rural penetration is our USP: Jalan

Odyssey Motors is one of the biggest automobile dealers for Maruti Suzuki in Odisha.

In an interview to Orissa POST, Odyssey Motors' Managing Director Ashok Jalan speaks about their journey, uniqueness and future plans. Excerpt:



How has been the journey of Odyssey Motors?

Odyssey Motors began its journey as a small Maruti car dealership at Sambalpur with a small workforce 23 years ago. Initially, there was a lot of struggle for a few years. Subsequently, it gained momentum and we opened dealership outlets at Angul, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Bolangir, Boudh, Sonepur and Padampur, employing hundreds of people.

What is the USP of your company and which models are available in your showroom?

The USP of our company is semi-urban and rural penetration with effective service network. Secondly, availability of all models at our showrooms has added to our strength. We are delivering vehicles to customers in time and providing hassle-free service. Customer satisfaction is very important for us.

Who gets the credit for your success?

The credit for our success actually goes to Maruti Suzuki which introduces innovations regularly and brings new models by taking into account the requirements of cus-

tomers. The company collects feedbacks from customers and conducts market surveys. It launches new models with advanced technology and additional safety features to address to the requirements of all categories of customers.

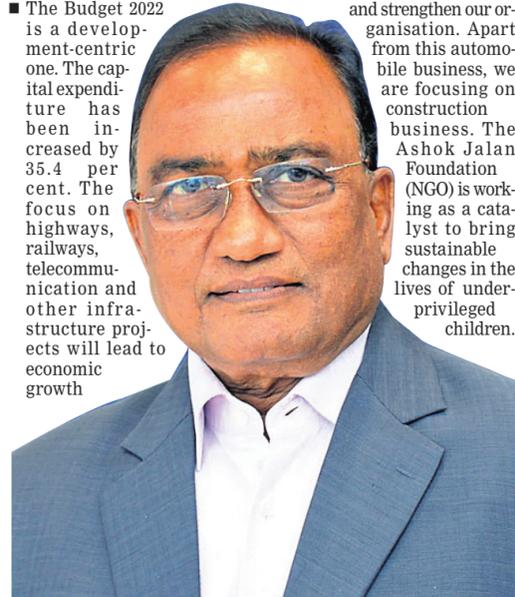
What is your opinion about the Budget 2022?

The Budget 2022 is a development-centric one. The capital expenditure has been increased by 35.4 per cent. The focus on highways, railways, telecommunication and other infrastructure projects will lead to economic growth

and generate employment. The Budget has also provisions for promoting chemical-free farming.

What are your plans for 2022-23 fiscal?

We are planning to expand our network for sales and services in small areas to reach out to the unreached and strengthen our organisation. Apart from this automobile business, we are focusing on construction business. The Ashok Jalan Foundation (NGO) is working as a catalyst to bring sustainable changes in the lives of underprivileged children.



ABDUCTION OF MINOR GIRL

NHRC seeks info on ATR, damages

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Feb 26: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought some additional information about an abducted minor girl from Keonjhar Collector and the Superintendent of Police (SP). The girl belongs to the Town police station area of Keonjhar while the abductor is a native of Khurda district.

The rights body has also directed the two officials to submit reports on what action has been taken against the accused and how much compensation has been provided to the victim. The NHRC has sought all such information by April 4, according to human rights activist Himansu Nayak.

According to reports, police have registered a case regarding abduction of a girl. Police had rescued the girl from the house of the abductor in Khurda November 3, 2021 and sent her to a rehabilitation centre after medical examination. The NHRC has sought to know if the accused has been arrested and compensation has been provided to the victim.

ELDERLY WOMAN'S MURDER

Accused arrested from Bhanjanagar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Feb 26: Hours after the murder of an elderly woman at Alakapuri under Sadar police limits in the Silk City, police cracked the case as it arrested the absconding killer from Bhanjanagar, late Friday night.

The deceased was identified as Suraja Behera, 60, wife of a retired government employee Bijay Behera of this area. She was stabbed to death by the accused late Thursday night.

The accused was working at a fabrication unit (making almirahs). But police however, refused to name him fearing impediment to the probe.

The incident occurred after Bijay left home for a walk, Thursday evening after locking up the house from outside. While walking, he called up his wife Suraja over phone but found it to be switched off. He then called his son and informed him about the development.

Later, he returned home and broke open another lock and entered the house. There he was stunned to find his wife lying in a pool of blood on a cot inside the house.

Police also recovered a mobile phone looted by the accused after the crime from a nullah near Lochapada but failed to trace the murder weapon. Police has collected some important details regarding the crime from the mobile phone.

The accused planning to loot senior citizens living alone in the city had sneaked into the house of Suraja after her husband went outside for evening walk. There he had a scuffle with the woman during the loot bid and killed her after failing to loot any cash or gold ornaments. Police zeroed in on the accused while verifying the case from various angles.

Regional Office: Sambalpur, 1st Floor, Balaji Midtown, Budharaja, Sambalpur, Odisha, PIN-768004

POSSESSION NOTICE (Immovable Properties)
[RULE 8(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES - 2002]

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 13(12) of the Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued demand notice calling upon the borrower(s)/guarantor(s) in loan A/c mentioned below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s)/guarantor(s) in particular and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the Possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The borrower(s)/guarantor(s) in particular and the general public are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties & any dealing with the properties will be subject to the charge of Union Bank of India, Concerned Branches for the amount mentioned below & interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of the Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to them, to redeem the secured assets.

BRANCH/ Name and Address of the Borrower(s)/ Applicant(s)/ Co-Applicant(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Liabilities due as per Demand Notice (in ₹)	Demand Notice Date / Possession Date	Description of Immovable properties
BONDAMUNDA BRANCH / Applicant: Sri Rahul Sharma, S/o- Sri Jitendra Kumar Sharma / Co-Applicants: 1) Smt. Anita Sharma, W/o- Sri Jitendra Kumar Sharma, 2) Sri Jitendra Kumar Sharma, S/o- Sri Tara Chand Sharma, All are At: Sarandamal, Padampura Road, Kuarmunda, Rourkela, Dist.: Sundergarh, Odisha-770039	₹26,57,104.22 (+ interest)	18.06.2021 / 23.02.2022	Land and Building situated at Plot No.: 2438/4803, ROR Khata No.: 378/1408, KISSAM: Gharabari, Area: Ac.0.06dec., Mouza: Kuarmunda, P.S.: Birmittapur, Tehsil: Panposh, at Kuarmunda, Dist.: Sundergarh, Odisha, in the name of Sri Rahul Sharma, Bounded by: North: Plot No. 2438/P, South: Plot No. 2438/P, East: 20'0 Wide Road, West: Plot No. 2439/P
SAMBALPUR-2 BRANCH / Borrower: Mr. Dhruva Oram, Prop. of Shree Vinayak Enterprises, S/o- Laxman Oram, Ganesh Nagar, Rengali, Sambalpur, Odisha	₹13,13,697.61 (+ interest)	13.04.2021 / 25.02.2022	Land situated at Plot No.: 1022/7549, Khata No.: 559/2667, Mouza: Sambalpur Town, Unit S/o- Laxman Oram, Ganesh Nagar, Rengali, Sambalpur, Odisha in the name of Mr. Dhruva Oram.

Date : 25.02.2022
Place : Sambalpur
Sd/- AUTHORISED OFFICER
Union Bank of India

Regional Office: Sambalpur, 1st Floor, Balaji Midtown, Budharaja, Sambalpur, Odisha, PIN-768004

DEMAND NOTICE

Enforcement of Security interest Action Notice in connection with the Credit facilities enjoyed by the following borrowers with our Jharsuguda Branch: Classified as NPA

We have to inform the below mentioned Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) that their A/C. mentioned below have been classified as NPA account on 29.11.2021 pursuant to their default in making repayment of dues/installment/interest. Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 was issued by the Authorized Officer against the following Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) of Union Bank of India, Jharsuguda Branch, but the same could not be served on the below mentioned parties because of their non-availability in the given address which was sent by Regd. Post A.D. The outstanding amount in the account is shown in the below column against their names. The details are given below.

JHARSUGUDA BRANCH / Name and Address of Borrowers / Guarantors	Nature	Date of Demand Notice/Outstanding	Details of Property Mortgaged
Borrower: Mrs. Sasmita Sahoo, At: Dalki, Near Anand Prerana School, Jharsuguda / Guarantor: Praful Kumar Das, Shanti Colony, Near Indo English School, Orampada, Rourkela, Dist.: Sundergarh, PIN-769012	TL (354006650000085)	31.01.2022 / ₹10,40,412.12 with interest and charges thereon	Land and Building situated at Khata No.: 128/539, Plot No.: 202/1734, Area: Ac.0.40dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, Mouza: Kuarmunda, P.S.: Birmittapur, Tehsil: Panposh, at Kuarmunda, Dist.: Sundergarh, Odisha, in the name of Mrs. Sasmita Sahoo, Bounded by: East: Plot No. 201, West: Plot No. 1241 (P), North: Road, South: Plot No. 1241 (P)

In spite of our repeated demands you have not paid any amount towards the amount outstanding in your account, you have not discharged your liabilities. We do hereby call upon you in terms of section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 to pay the sum mentioned above against your notice together with interest from the date mentioned above at contractual rate as per the terms and conditions of loan document executed by you and discharge your liabilities in full within 60 days from the date of receipt of this notice, failing which, we shall be constrained to enforce the following securities created by you in favour of the Bank by exercising any or all of the rights given under the said Act. 1) Please note that if you fail to remit the dues together with contractual rate of interest from the date mentioned above within 60 days as per the terms and conditions of loan documents executed by you, and if Bank exercises all its rights under this Act, and if the dues are not fully satisfied with the sale of proceeds of the secured assets, we shall be constrained to take appropriate legal action against you in a court of law/Debts Recovery Tribunal for recovery of the balance amount from you. 2) As per Sec. 13(13) of the Act, on receipt of this notice you are restrained from disposing of or dealing with the above securities except in the usual course of business without the consent of the Bank. Please note any violation of this section entails serious consequences. **Your kind attention is also invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.**

Place: Sambalpur
Date: 25.02.2022
Sd/- Authorised Officer,
Union Bank of India

CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF PETROCHEMICALS ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY (CIPET): CSTS
Dept. of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, (Govt. of India)
S-3/79, Sector - A, Zone - B, Mancheswar Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar
Website: www.cipet.gov.in

CIPET:CSTS/BBSR/PET JAR/2021-22/22 Date: 26.02.2022

INVITATION FOR QUOTATION

Sealed quotations are invited from reputed Manufacturers for the supply of 05 Kg. PET Jars along with CAP (with raw material) at CIPET: CSTS Bhubaneswar. Interested bidders may submit their quotation on or before 06.03.2022 at the above address. The other details are available at CIPET website - www.cipet.gov.in.

Principal Director & Head, CIPET: CSTS Bhubaneswar reserves right to accept or reject any/all quotations without assigning any reasons thereof.
Sd/- Principal Director & Head

REGIONAL OFFICE: CUTTACK
M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar- 751003

POSSESSION NOTICE
(For Immovable Property)

[RULE 8(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES - 2002]

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India, Concerned Branches under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices calling upon the Borrowers/Guarantor in loan A/c mentioned below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrowers/Guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties & any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Union Bank of India, Concerned Branches for an amount mentioned below with interest thereon. **The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to the Borrower to redeem the secured assets.**

BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrowers/Guarantor	Liabilities due as per Notice (in ₹)	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession	Description of Immovable Properties
DHENKANAL (e-CB) BRANCH / Borrowers: 1) Mr. Prafulla Kumar Bhola, S/o.: Late Matia Bhola, 2) Mrs. Sujata Kumari Bhola, W/o.: Mr. Prafulla Kumar Bhola, Address: Near Police Barack Lane, Khamar Sahi, Dhenkanal-759001	₹12,38,514/- as on 31.01.2022 with further interest, cost & expenses	12.04.2021 / 23.02.2022	All that part and parcel of Land and Building belonging to Mr. Prafulla Kumar Bhola, S/o.: Late Matia Bhola, Near Police Barack Lane, Khamar Sahi, Dhenkanal-759001 at Plot No.: 3502/20967, Khata No.: 3470/2687, Mouza: Dhenkanal Town, Measuring Area: Ac. 0.030 Dec., Bounded by North: B Sahoo, South: Road, East: Drainage, West: K.P Singh Deo.
DHENKANAL (e-CB) BRANCH / Borrower: M/s. Bunty Enterprises, Prop.: Mrs. Sujata Kumari Bhola, 1) Mrs. Sujata Kumari Bhola, 2) Mr. Prafulla Kumar Bhola, Address: Near Police Barack Lane, Khamar Sahi, Dhenkanal-759001	₹10,67,988.18 as on 31.01.2022 with further interest, cost & expenses	12.04.2021 / 23.02.2022	1) All that part and parcel of Land and Building belonging to Mr. Prafulla Kumar Bhola, S/o.: Late Matia Bhola, Near Police Barack Lane, Khamar Sahi, Dhenkanal-759001 at Plot No.: 3502/20967, Khata No.: 3470/2687, Mouza: Dhenkanal Town, Measuring Area: Ac. 0.030 Dec., Bounded by North: B Sahoo, South: Road, East: Drainage, West: K.P Singh Deo, 2) Vacant Land belonging to Mr. Prafulla Kumar Bhola at Plot No.: 6455/10459 & Plot No.: 7541/10493, Khata No.: 3470/2198, Mouza: Dhenkanal Town, Area Measuring Area: Ac.0.025 Dec., & Ac.0.025 Dec. Respectively. Plot No.: 6455/10459 is Bounded by North: Plot No.: 9307, South: Plot No.: 6455, East: Plot No.: 6455, West: Plot No.: 7541/10493, Plot No.: 7541/10493 is Bounded by North: Plot No.: 9307, South: Plot No.: 7541, East: Plot No.: 6455/10459, West: Plot No.: 6456
TURANGA BRANCH / Borrowers: 1) Mr. Ramakanta Das, 2) Amulya Das	₹9,16,923/- as on 31.08.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses	08.10.2021 / 23.02.2022	All that piece and parcel of Land & Building at Khata No.: 505/502, Plot No.: 2912/3896, Area: Ac.0.100 Dec., Village/Mouza: Ambamunda Sahi, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Bounded by North: Sribatasa Behera, South: Atei Sahoo, East: Road, West: Atei Sahoo.
TURANGA BRANCH / Borrower: 1) Mr. Amulya Naik	₹10,58,565/- as on 31.08.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses	28.09.2021 / 23.02.2022	All that piece and parcel of Land & Building at Khata No.: 138/108, Plot No.: 574, 575 & 578, Area: Ac.0.060 Dec., Village/Mouza: Rankasingha, PO: Kukuadanga, PS.: Angul, Dist: Angul, State: Odisha, PIN-759123 standing in the name of Mr. Amulya Naik, Bounded by North: Road & Pradip Kumar Naik, South: Banambar Naik, East: Sibaram Naik & Own, West: Bhabagrahi Naik
MANGALABAGH BRANCH / Borrowers: 1) M/s. Shree Jagannath Drug House, 2) Mr. Sabyasachi Sahu, 3) Mrs. Sunita Sahu, Address: Medical Road, Mangalabagh, Cuttack-753001	₹19,97,000/- as on 31.03.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses	22.04.2021 / 23.02.2022	Land & Building belonging to Mr. Sabyasachi Sahu & Mrs. Sunita Sahu at Shop No.: LG-33, Basement, Manorama Metro Complex, Area: Ac. 0.751 Dec., P.O.: College Square, PS.: Mangalabagh, Dist.: Cuttack-753007
DHENKANAL BRANCH / Borrowers: 1) Mr. Pravat Sahoo, S/o.: Mr. Jaya Kumar Sahoo, 2) Mrs. Purnima Sahoo (Guarantor), W/o.: Mr. Pravat Sahoo, Address - A/PO.: Korian, Dhenkanal-759013	₹77,06,395.57 as on 31.01.2022 with further interest, cost & expenses	03.06.2021 / 23.02.2022	Land and Building Residential belonging to Pravat Sahoo, Mouza: Korian bearing Plot No.: 507/2338 (GB) of mutation Khata No.: 341/1207 of Area: Ac.0.08 Dec., Tahasil: Dhenkanal Sadar, Thana: Dhenkanal Town, Dist: Dhenkanal

Place: Bhubaneswar
Date: 25.02.2022
Sd/- Authorised Officer
Union Bank of India

FOCUS UKRAINE

WHAT'S ON PUTIN'S MIND?



Putin may hope to punish NATO by destroying Ukraine's military infrastructure or to install a puppet government in the country. But his real reason for invading Ukraine is far less pragmatic and even more alarming

Chinese President Xi Jinping, divide the world among themselves. There, he and his new ally Xi would presumably join forces to reduce the West's domain – and drastically expand Russia's.

Like the dissident author and Nobel laureate Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Putin has long indicated a desire to restore the Orthodox Christian kingdom of Rus' – the basis of Russian civilization – by building a "Russian Union" encompassing Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the ethnic-Russian areas of Kazakhstan. With the invasion of Ukraine in full swing, other former Soviet republics began to worry, but, as Putin assured Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Russia does not "plan to reinstate the empire in former imperial boundaries." It is the Slavic nation, which is unduly under "third countries [rather than his] control," that he worries so much about.

Despite Putin's effort to fulfill Solzhenitsyn's vision, his military actions are a departure

from it. Even in his nationalist mania, Solzhenitsyn never lost sight of basic morality. As much as he wanted to restore historical Russia, it is impossible to imagine him supporting the slaughter of Ukrainians (and Russians) in the process. Putin, by contrast, professes to love Ukraine as he orders Russian forces to bomb its cities.

Putin apparently assumes that China will back him. But while he launched the invasion just weeks after concluding something akin to an alliance agreement with Xi in Beijing, Chinese officials' reactions have been very distant with calls for "restraint."

Given Putin's near-total reliance on China for support in challenging the US-led international order, lying to Xi would have no political or strategic advantage. That is what is so worrying: Putin no longer seems capable of the calculations that are supposed to guide a leader's decision-making. Far from an equal partner, Russia is now on track to become a kind

of Chinese vassal state.

The invasion of Ukraine has also alienated other Putin allies and supporters. Some of his most faithful acolytes in the West, from Czech President Miloš Zeman to Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, have denounced his actions. But, perhaps of far more importance, Putin's delusional rants have alienated Russians. With his barbaric assault on Ukraine, he has sacrificed decades of social and economic development and destroyed the hopes that Russians have held for the future. Russia will now be a global pariah for decades.

When I called a friend in Kyiv to find out what was going on, he told me that bomb shelters are open, and people are also hiding in subway stations. "Very World War II," he quipped, before noting how remarkable it was that "a man who speaks so much about the damage war can do would inflict war on a brotherly nation." And then he turned my question on me: "You tell me what is going on. You Russians are the ones who kept electing this fascist."

While the perception is understandable, that is not quite true. Russians elected Putin at first, but have merely surrendered to his rule in recent years, because our votes no longer matter. Likewise, the claim that 73% of Russians support Putin's actions in Ukraine is pure propaganda. Thousands are gathering in Russian cities, saying "No to War," despite detentions and police brutality. This time, Russians seem unlikely to surrender quietly. In the coming days and weeks, the world can expect many more signals that Russians do not want this war.

Stalinism didn't die until Stalin did. The same was true of Maoism. Will it be true of Putinism as well?

The writer is Professor of International Affairs at The New School.

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To love is not to possess, but to give oneself.

THE MOTHER



Our Global Standing

India has abstained on the vote in the United Nations Security Council (where we are a non-permanent member) condemning Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. India said it was deeply disturbed, called for an end to violence and for respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and "for these reasons" chose to abstain. This may appear puzzling because India is repeating the world's case against Russia's war and then refusing to condemn it.

But the reality is that India faces a difficult period in diplomacy. Russia provides more than half of India's military material. For instance 96 per cent of our main battle tanks are Russian, our only aircraft carrier and only nuclear powered submarine are Russian, 71 per cent of our fighter jets and all six of the air tankers are Russian. This is not classified information: these numbers come from the United States Congressional Research Service. War and even training in these extremely high performance machines requires constant spares and servicing and for this reason India must remain connected to Russian suppliers. Additionally, experts see Russia as the peacemaker between us and China on the issue of Ladakh. So we cannot afford to displease Putin. India's vote did not matter in the result, because as a permanent member Russia has a veto which it used and it was known the condemnation would fail. However, it was an opportunity for the world to come together against aggression and the largest democracy chose not to side with the invaded. Interestingly, China also abstained with us.

India's foreign policy under the current government has not been able to find its rhythm because it doesn't have a theme. Throughout our history as an independent nation, India has presented itself abroad as an ancient land with secular and inclusive traditions. This changed after 2014 but without an official shift in doctrine, meaning there was no written policy that proclaimed Hindutva was India's ruling ideology. Recent studies show that the government began instructing diplomats to focus on events abroad which showcased India's Hindu traditions. This made some diplomats uncomfortable, but the change was also accompanied by recruiting more diplomats who were aligned to the BJP's ideology. For the first five years of this government the change did not matter because the ideology did not show itself within India to any large extent. After 2019 our diplomats have been kept busy in a defensive posture because the ideology bared its fangs against our minorities. After the second win of 2019 came a series of internal strokes that had external repercussions. The first was the decision to undo Article 370. This was accompanied by an internet blockade on all Kashmiris for 17 months. Kashmiri children had no access to online education for all of 2020. In the United States House of Representatives (their Lok Sabha), a resolution was moved to condemn India's actions against Kashmiris. The resolution could not progress far because the Republicans were in charge and Donald Trump was our friend. Only days after the Biden administration was sworn in, India lifted the 17 month blockade and one reason was the pressure it felt was sure to come now that Trump was out.

Weeks after the 370 move, a confident BJP passed the Citizenship Amendment Act. The world was again alarmed. In the European Parliament, a resolution was moved condemning India. It was reported here that it would likely pass. India's diplomacy managed to stave off the vote but the quid pro quo was that we would not implement the CAA (which still has not been enforced). These are the sorts of things that India's diplomats have not had to deal with in the past with those who are supposed to be our friends. The contradiction — portraying ourselves as secular and pluralistic abroad while acting in the opposite fashion at home — has not been easy to resolve. To add to this issue which we have brought on ourselves is the problem of the neighbourhood, also coming after the change in Article 370: the Chinese incursion in Ladakh. We must defy China, but also be friendly with Russia (which is aligned with China against the West). We want to get closer to the United States militarily and have signed a series of agreements after 2014, but we do not know how close to get. The Quad alliance was meant to be a naval partnership but that role has now been given to something called AUKUS of which we are not part and the Quad is dealing with vaccines.

Our Foreign Minister Jaishankar says the world is multipolar and so India must be opportunistic and discard what he calls are the hesitations of the past. However, what is being exposed is that we have no real doctrine and no idea how to deal with the world. It is hard not to conclude that our standing in the world has reduced because of what we have chosen to do internally. On the other hand, we have gained no new friends or allies by going down the road we have. Fortunately, we do not have to debate this or even recognise this debacle. Our global stature is less important to us than opposing namaz, beef and hijab and we will remain focused on that.



Aakar Patel

The reality is that India faces a difficult period in diplomacy. Russia provides more than half of India's military material



Nina L. Khrushcheva

STALINISM DIDN'T DIE UNTIL STALIN DID. THE SAME WAS TRUE OF MAOISM. WILL IT BE TRUE OF PUTINISM AS WELL?

Russian President Vladimir Putin's decision to order a full-scale invasion of Ukraine defies any and all political logic, even his own hardened authoritarian reasoning. With his unprovoked assault, Putin joins a long line of irrational tyrants, not least Joseph Stalin, who believed that sustaining his power required a constant expansion of it. That logic led Stalin to commit horrific atrocities against his own people, including causing a famine that starved millions of Ukrainians to death.

Another twentieth-century mass murderer, Mao Zedong, famously declared that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun – or, it seemed, a nuclear missile. Mao demanded that my great-grandfather, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, provide China with nuclear weapons, so that Mao could effectively hold his adversaries, foreign and domestic, hostage.

Only similar thinking can explain Putin's actions in Ukraine. He says that he wants to "denazify" Ukraine, but the senselessness of that claim should be obvious, not least because Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelensky, is Jewish. So, what is Putin's endgame? Does he want to punish NATO by destroying Ukraine's military infrastructure? Does he hope to install a puppet government, whether by replacing Zelensky or by turning him into a Ukrainian Philippe Pétain, France's collaborationist leader during World War II?

The answer to these questions might be yes. But Putin's real reason for invading Ukraine is far less pragmatic, and more alarming. Putin seems to have succumbed to his ego-driven obsession with restoring Russia's status as a great power with its own clearly defined sphere of influence.

Putin dreams of a conference like Yalta and Potsdam, where he and his fellow great-power leaders, US President Joe Biden and

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

The binary of reservation

Reservation based on caste is often hemmed with scepticism, as it denies the more meritorious a pie of public employment in a fair competition. Two Supreme Court judgements recently have examined the validity of reservation in promotion for SC/ST and strongly batted for reservation. It may be recalled that in the famous Indra Sawhney case (1992), the top court had agreed with the Mandal Commission report to grant 27% reservation to OBCs. The court, however, did not allow any reservation for promotion, advised the government to exclude the creamy layer from the ambit of reservation and abide by a ceiling of 50% for total reservation. In response to this judgement, the government introduced Article 16(4A) in the Constitution in 1995 which provided for reservation on promotion to SC/ST, if their representation is not adequate. The government went one step further in 2001 by introducing Article 16(4B) which permitted the carryover vacancies to go beyond 50% and in 2000 by amending Article 335 by diluting qualifying mark for SC/ST for public employment. These amendments were challenged in the top court. In the Nagraj case (2008), the top court agreed with all these amendments introduced. However, it put a caveat that reservation in promotion will be subject to proving backwardness and adequacy of

representation.

The Supreme Court in Jarnail Singh Vs Gupta case (2022) has nullified the requirement for collecting quantifiable data for proving backwardness amongst ST/SC to consider reservation in promotion. However, it has advised the government to give effect to reservation in promotion on a prospective basis. This has understandably created consternation as its normative justification is hard to stomach.

The more contentious decision has been given by Justice DY Chandrachud in the Neil Aurelia Nunes Vs Union of India case (2021) where the judge believed that reservation would lead to substantive equality. He does not believe that reservation provided in Art 15(4) and 16(4) is an exception to equality principle of Art 15(1) & 16(1), but facets of it seek to redress historical disadvantage suffered by certain communities like SC/ST.

Prof. Mark Galanter had identified three kinds of resources required for merit – economic resources, socio-cultural resources and intrinsic ability and hard work. Justice Chandrachud believes that SC/ST communities suffer from the first two criteria and therefore it is necessary to redress them by giving reservation at all stages. He goes further by observing that high scores in examinations are not a proxy for merit.

It would be interesting to note

that several judges and scholars have brought out the perils of not considering merit and open competition for appointment to government posts. Justice Krishna Iyer had observed in 1976 "to devalue merit at the summit is to temporise with country's development in vital areas of professional expertise." In the Indra Shawy case, the court had observed that reservation should be excluded in higher echelon posts. In the Binod Kumar case (1996), the court had observed that the standards should not be loosened for public employment. Field Marshal KM Cariappa had also opposed reservation in the defence services because of which recruitment into the armed forces does not permit reservation.

The original Indian Constitution transcended caste. In a liberal democracy like India, where competition and merit should be the basis for economic efficiency, promotion of reservation and approving loosening of standards for public appointment by the government and acquiescence by the Supreme Court are really unfortunate. The General Sinho Committee (2010) has observed that nearly 18.7% in general category were below the poverty line and close to one crore families were poor and 28% illiterate. Therefore, the government initiative to provide 10% reservation to EWS in the gen-

eral caste category is fair as opposed to the Mandal Commission criteria to judge backwardness through the lens of social, economic and education deprivation.

India has a lamentable record in terms of malnutrition (38% children stunted), anaemia amongst adolescent girls (more than 50%), poor quality of education in public schools, rickety health infrastructure in government hospitals and widening digital and income divide. These transcend caste and afflict the general category as well. The quest for social justice has sadly degenerated into political opportunism in the form of caste and class reservation. The way forward for India is to ensure inclusive growth through focussed attention to development programmes and providing equal opportunities to all sections of society to have good foundational education, affordable quality healthcare, adequate nutrition and digital empowerment. The dipping condition of bottom 50% of India and soaring fortune of top 10% is not an accident of history but a fallout of public policy which pays lip service to the poor and disadvantaged. Reservation is not the right path for them to achieve substantive equality.

The writer is Dean, School of Management, KIIT Deemed to be University. Views are personal.



SN MISRA

THE QUEST FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE HAS SADLY DEGENERATED INTO POLITICAL OPPORTUNISM IN THE FORM OF CASTE AND CLASS RESERVATION

WISDOM CORNER

There is no hunting like the hunting of man, and those who have hunted armed men long enough and liked it, never care for anything else thereafter.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

War: a massacre of people who don't know each other for the profit of people who know each other but don't massacre each other.

PAUL VALERY

I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

WORDSWORTH

Scallywag or Scalawag

The word – very variably spelled – appeared first in the US. It was applied to undersized or ill-formed cattle, or to some disreputable person. After the Civil War, it became a term of abuse specifically aimed at those white Southerners who were prepared to accept the measures imposed during Reconstruction, often because they would profit from them. It shifted a little later to mean any politician who was corrupt or an intriguer. It has softened since, being a term these days of only mild reproach for a scamp, rascal or minor rogue, often combined with the gentle admiration that dotting mothers dispose on an amusingly mischievous child. Where it comes from is a matter of some dispute, though the Scots tongue seems to be an intermediary. Some authorities point to the Scots' word scoloc, the name given to the first-born son of a tenant of a monastery who was given to the church to receive an ecclesiastical education. Later, the word could refer to any monastic tenant, and got turned into scallag for a farm servant or rustic person, also latterly a way of addressing a boy. And there's also the word scurryvaig for a vagabond, lout or slattern, which might be an influence, if not the source. Either way, it looks as though Latin is involved, since scoloc is really the same word as scholar (from Latin schola) and scurryvaig may have originated in Latin scurra vagus, a wandering fool (scurra is also the source of our scurrilous). Its abbreviation, scally, is widely known in the north-west of England, especially around Liverpool, for a roguish self-assured young person – typically male – who is boisterous, disruptive, or irresponsible.

Full-fledged war

Sir, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is right in stating that Russian President Vladimir Putin is a 'dictator'. By launching a full-fledged war against Ukraine, Putin has blatantly publicised his policy of 'my way or the highway'. The whole conflict between the two nations revolves around Ukraine's desire to join NATO, to which Russia objects. Inarguably, Russia's objection and concerns are legitimate to an extent. If Ukraine acquires the membership of NATO, there will be a significant rise in the military presence of the West in the adjoining regions of Russia which may pose a threat to its territorial integrity. But this should not stop Ukraine, a sovereign nation, to join an alliance it wants. Peaceful dialogues and sensible negotiations must have been the need of the hour. But Putin by sanctioning war has taken the conflict to a different stage.

Tushar Anand, PATNA

Better late than never

Sir, India has started evacuating Indian nationals amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Four flights have been sent to evacuate Indians stranded in Ukraine, two flights will be sent to bordering Romania and one to Hungary and another has already left for the evacuation process. A few days back, the Indian embassy in Ukraine had advised the Indians to find nearby shelters to save themselves from bombings. After pressure from Opposition parties, netizens, and constant pleading from the stranded Indians, the government of India has now felt the need to save our nationals from the war-torn Ukraine. The decision has come a bit late but it will ensure the safety of more than 18,000 Indians. We should now pray for the safe evacuations of the Indians.

Deba Prasad Nayak, CUTTACK

Calls for dialogue

Sir, Russian President Vladimir Putin calling China's President Xi Jinping and stating his country's willingness to talk with Ukraine brings hope of cessation of hostilities between the two countries. The Chinese President expressed support to Moscow by urging Europe to address legitimate security concerns of all nations. The Chinese position has been similar to India's on the crisis, which has also called for a diplomatic resolution but hasn't criticised Russia's invasion. Meanwhile, Russia stepped up the offensive on Ukraine, whose cries for military aid from NATO countries fell on deaf ears.

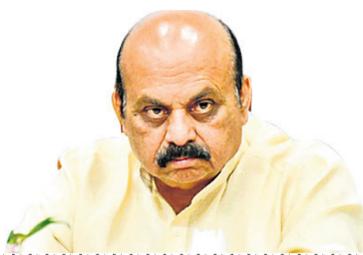
NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

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

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A master plan would be drafted for uniform development of all areas of Bangalore
BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CM

RAHUL OFFERS PRAYERS

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Saturday offered prayers at the Dwarkadhish temple in Dwarka following his arrival in Gujarat for his party's brainstorming session to chalk out a strategy for the state Assembly elections due in December this year



of the day quote

Temples are the symbol of India's culture and way of life
G KISHAN REDDY | UNION CULTURE AND TOURISM MINISTER

With the strengthening of local governance structures and harnessing the power of grassroots democracy, we can make our Panchayats the real key agents in rural areas
GIRIRAJ SINGH | UNION RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATI RAJ MINISTER

The Modi gov't's foreign policy failures have ensured that our adversaries are successfully weaning away our friends. Beijing Janata Party (BJP) gov't has committed one strategic blunder after another. They have betrayed the nation
MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN THE RS

UNSC resolution on Ukraine: Govt draws flak

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 26: Several opposition leaders criticised the government Saturday after India abstained from voting on a UN Security Council resolution on the Russian attack on Ukraine, saying it needed to stand up against the wrong and not stand aside.

Congress spokesperson Manish Tewari said "there comes a time when nations need to stand up and not stand aside." "I sincerely wish India had voted in solidarity with the people of Ukraine at UNSC who are facing an unprecedented and unjustified aggression. Friends' need to be told when they are wrong," he said.

Echoing his view, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said in an article: "Invasion is Invasion; we should tell our friend Russia." "...If friends can't speak honestly to each other, what is the friendship worth." Tharoor asked, "India's decision to abstain in the United Nations Security Council vote on Friday night, on a resolution that would have deplored Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, did not really come as a



Activists of various student organisations during a peace march for safe evacuation of Indian nationals in Ukraine, as Russia continues its military invasion, at Mandi House in New Delhi

surprise," the former Minister of State for External Affairs said.

Tharoor also said, "After our abstention, many regretted that India had placed itself on the 'wrong side of history.'" Shiv Sena leader Priyanka Chaturvedi accused the government of hypocrisy and said, "Interestingly those who can't stop abusing and criticising India's first PM, Nehru, are using the non-

alignment policy to justify their position in the UN."

"Abstain from voting against a war doesn't make your relationship better but makes your principles weaker against violence and human rights violations," the Rajya Sabha member said.

"Tomorrow it could be us not getting support against China. Today we stood on the same side as

China, that speaks loads about our foreign policy." Having said that, besides a resolution condemning Russia's action, what is the UN's role going to be to help Ukraine on ground? Ally countries are expressing words of support but have left Ukraine alone to defend and fight for itself. The UN will need to relook at its relevance in the New World Order," Chaturvedi said.

Russia used its veto power to block the US-sponsored resolution that sought to deplore in the "strongest terms" Russia's "aggression" against Ukraine.

In the 15-member UN Security Council, the resolution received 11 votes in favour of it, Russia opposed it and India, China and the United Arab Emirates abstained from the voting. By abstaining from voting on the resolution, India retained the option of reaching out to all relevant parties to find a middle ground and foster dialogue and diplomacy to defuse the crisis, official sources said on Saturday.

Though India abstained from voting on the resolution, it called for respecting "sovereignty and territorial integrity" of States and

India launches National Polio Immunization Drive

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 26: Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya Saturday launched the National Polio Immunization Drive for 2022 by administering polio drops to children below five years of age at the health ministry.

The immunisation drive will be organised across the country Sunday. India conducts one nationwide NID and two Sub-National Immunization Day (SNIDs) for polio every year to maintain population immunity against wild poliovirus and to sustain its polio-free status. During the Polio NID, over 15 crore children will be covered across all 36 states and UTs in 735 districts.

Addressing the occasion, Mandaviya said that the country's strategic fight against polio is a success story of India's public health policy against vaccine preventable diseases. "We need to continue to be vigilant and ensure that every child under five years of age must get polio drops".

"Under the leadership of our Prime Minister, Universal Immunization Programme is focusing to protect children from more diseases than ever before and has introduced several new vaccines like Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV), Rotavirus vaccine, and Measles-Rubella vaccine (MR) in the recent past.

"Further, to provide additional protection to our children, the Centre has also introduced the injectable Inactivated Polio Vaccine into its routine immunization programme. While we are making efforts to protect our children from more and more diseases, it is important that all vaccines under the programme reach every child of our country", said the minister.

Stressing on the importance of observing National Immunisation Day, he said that the aim of Swastha Bharath can only be achieved if the children are healthy. The objective of Mission Indradhanush or Polio Vaccination Drive is to protect them against such deadly diseases.

EC makes seizures worth over ₹1k-cr

PUNJAB TOPS THE LIST WITH TOTAL SEIZURES WORTH OVER ₹510 CRORE, FOLLOWED BY UTTAR PRADESH AT ₹307 CRORE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 26: The Election Commission has said the enforcement agencies have seized cash, liquor and drugs worth over ₹1,000 crore during the Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa.

"The comprehensive and advance planning, meticulous follow-ups and active participation of enforcement agencies have led to stupendous rise in seizure figures crossing the ₹1,000 crore mark in the ongoing Assembly elections in States of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa", said the poll body in a statement.

Punjab tops the list with total

seizures worth over ₹510 crore, followed by Uttar Pradesh at ₹307 crore. While Uttar Pradesh tops in liquor seizures of ₹54 crore, Punjab tops in seizure of drugs of ₹376 crore.

A total ₹12.73 crore worth of cash, liquor, drugs and other precious metals have been seized from Goa. Seizures worth ₹3.64 crore were made in these states during the 2017 Assembly elections.

In Manipur, total ₹163.87 crore worth of cash, liquor and others have been seized. In 2017 Assembly elections, only ₹6.42 crore worth of seizures were made.

In Punjab, a total of ₹510.91 crore worth of cash, liquor, drugs and others have been seized. In 2017 Assembly elections, total seizure value was only ₹89.64 crore.

A total of ₹18.81 crore worth of cash, liquor and drugs have been seized in Uttarakhand, while in 2017, it was ₹6.85 crore.

In Uttar Pradesh, total ₹307.92 crore worth of cash, liquor, drugs and other items have been seized. It also includes ₹91.30 crore cash. In 2017, it was ₹193.29 crore worth of seizure in the state.

SHORT TAKES

Chargesheet filed

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a prosecution complaint under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), before a Special Kolkata Judge, against three persons in a case related to trafficking of protected wildlife. After accepting the prosecution complaint (chargesheet) against Wasim Rahaman, Wajid Ali and Md Gulam Gaus, the court took cognisance of the matter and fixed it for the next date of hearing.

Constable ends life

Erode (TN): A policeman here allegedly died by suicide apparently after a dispute in the family. According to the police, the head constable Velusamy, aged 41, was found unconscious in a deep ditch and was taken to a hospital but he died on the way. He allegedly jumped to death, said the police.

Four cops injured

Bhopal: Four women police personnel were injured, three of them critically, after being hit by a car in Bhopal city when they were returning home after watching a movie, an official said Saturday. The incident occurred near Depot Chowk here shortly after midnight on Saturday, he said. "The four women police constables were walking down to their place after watching a movie, when the speeding car knocked them down around 12.30 am," T T Nagar police station inspector Chan Singh Raghuvanshi said.

Stones pelted

Muzaffarnagar (UP): Miffed at the arrest of a history-sheeter, people of a village here allegedly pelted stones at the police party, officials said Saturday. The police team was in Kaserwa village under Shahpur police station limits here on Friday night to arrest history-sheeter Arshad alias 'Bandar', against whom a non-bailable warrant had been issued earlier.

Student kills self

Faridabad: A Class 10 student of Delhi Public School, Greater Faridabad, committed suicide by jumping off his residential building, police said Saturday. The deceased left behind a suicide note alleging mentally harassment by his classmates over his sexuality. "You're powerful (mother), don't care what people say about my sexuality, kindly handle relative, Grandfather and niana. The school has killed me. Higher authority is also responsible," read the suicide note.

WINTER WONDERLAND



Locals and tourists walk during snowfall, at Ridge in Shimla

PTI PHOTO

Phone-tapping scam: FIR against IPS officer

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Pune, Feb 26: The Pune Police Saturday lodged an FIR against IPS officer and a former Pune Police Commissioner Rashmi Shukla in connection with the phone-tapping scandal that erupted last year, officials said here.

Following the report of a 3-member committee, the state government ordered the Bund Garden Police Station to file the FIR against Shukla, a 1988 IPS officer, who is currently the Additional DGP, CRPF.

At the relevant time of the phone-tapping episode in 2020, she was serving as the Additional DGP of Maharashtra State Intelligence Department and later shunted as Chief of Civil Defence on September 3, 2020.

In March 2021, the Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis had shared phone call records and other evidence of officers allegedly attempting to influence former home minister Anil Deshmukh for transfers or plum postings.

Rs 1,600 CRORE FOR FIVE YEARS

Cabinet okays nationwide roll-out of Ayushman Bharat

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 26: The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday approved the national rollout of Central Sector Scheme, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) of health ministry with a budget of ₹1,600 crore for five years.

The National Health Authority (NHA) will be the implementing agency of Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM). The digital health solutions across healthcare ecosystems have proven to be of immense benefit over the years, with CoWIN, Arogya Setu and eSanjeevani further demonstrating the role technology can play in enabling access to healthcare.

Based on the foundations laid down in the form of Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile (JAM) trin-



ity and other digital initiatives of the government, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) is creating an online platform through the provision of a wide-range of data, information and infrastructure services, duly leveraging open, interoperable, standards-based digital systems while ensuring the security, confidentiality and privacy of health-related personal information.

Under the ABDM, citizens will be able to create their Ayushman Bharat Health Account numbers,

The National Health Authority will be the implementing agency of Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission

to which their digital health records can be linked. The mission is expected to improve equitable access to quality healthcare by encouraging use of technologies such as telemedicine and enabling national portability of health services.

The pilot of ABDM was completed in the six Union Territories of Ladakh, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep with the technology platform developed by the NHA.

Battle for UP: 5th phase poll crucial for BJP, Cong

As the electoral battle moves towards Purvanchal (eastern UP), barbs are flying fast and thick and political leaders are sharpening their attacks against each other

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Feb 26: The fifth phase of elections in Uttar Pradesh will see the stakes getting higher for all major political parties.

As the electoral battle moves towards Purvanchal (eastern UP), barbs are flying fast and thick and political leaders are sharpening their attacks against each other.

The fifth phase will cover 61 Assembly constituencies from 12 districts.

The districts going to polls in this phase include Amethi, Rae Bareilly, Sultanpur, Chitrakoot, Pratapgarh, Kaushambhi,

Prayagraj, Barabanki, Ayodhya, Bahraich, Shravasti and Gonda.

This phase is crucial for the BJP and Congress. In 2017, the BJP had won 47 seats while its ally Apna Dal won 3 in this region. Samajwadi Party got 5, Bahujan Samaj Party got 3, Congress 2 and one independent candidate also won.

It includes Ayodhya on which the BJP has built its political inroads ever since its inception. The BJP is again trying to cash in on the Ram temple construction which began last year.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, in one of his rallies in Ayodhya, said, "Those who fired at kar sevaks



could have never allowed temple construction. It is the BJP which made it possible."

For the Congress, this phase includes Amethi and Rae Bareilly where the party needs to revive itself if it wishes to survive in the

state. The party had two legislators in Rae Bareilly and both have crossed over to the BJP. The Congress is keen to retain a toe-hold in Amethi and Rae Bareilly that were once known as its bastions. The political climate has changed for all

parties in this phase. The BJP is facing anti-incumbency while the BSP hopes to perform well and emerge as a king maker with this phase.

The Samajwadi Party is determined to improve its 2017 performance and is pushing itself towards its goal.

The Avadh and Purvanchal belt have been a strong turf of the BJP since 2017. The 2019 Lok Sabha results just reinforced the belief in the party when it won comprehensively in Uttar Pradesh despite the two strong caste parties, SP and BSP, coming together. However, if the farm laws angered farmers in west UP, it is the stray cattle issue that is troubling the BJP in the fifth phase.

The destruction of crops by stray cattle has become a major issue in the elections and the opposition parties are creating a hype over it. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his rally in Bahraich, said that

the party will come out with a new scheme to deal with the issue. Chief minister Yogi Adityanath has also promised ₹900 to those who keep the cows.

SP president Akhilesh Yadav has said that the party, if it comes to power, will give compensation of ₹5 lakh to those who lost their lives while protecting their fields.

Akhilesh Yadav has stitched together an alliance with smaller caste-based parties in this region and hopes that the consolidation of OBCs will help him gain in this phase.

Mayawati might not have been active in the early stages of campaigning, the party still holds the capability to play spoiler in many seats.

The BSP in many seats has turned the contest into a triangular fight by fielding Muslim candidates. It has fielded a total of 88 Muslim candidates this time.

OBC leadership on test in next phases

Almost all parties have put OBC leaders at the helm of their campaigns and the last three phases will test their popularity



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Feb 26: As the elections in Uttar Pradesh move towards the last three phases, it is now the prestige of OBC leaders in all parties that is at stake. Almost all parties have put OBC leaders at the helm of their campaigns and the last three phases will test their popularity. Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya has been playing an important role in the BJP campaign. He has been vigorously campaigning for his party candidates, flitting from one constituency to another. Maurya is contesting from his Sirathu seat in Kaushambi district and is pitted against Pallavi Patel of Samajwadi Party. Pallavi is a first-time contestant but is confident that the caste arithmetic of the constituency will take her to the victory stand. Though Keshav Maurya has got Anupriya Patel - who is Pallavi Patel's estranged sister - to campaign against her but Maurya is facing voters' resentment in his

constituency. "Since he became deputy chief minister and a member of the Vidhan Parishad, he has not looked after the constituency. Now that he is contesting, he is back seeking votes," said Arvind Patel, a local resident. Another prominent leader whose fate depends on the coming phases is Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP) president and MLA Om Prakash Rajbhar. Rajbhar is contesting from Zahooraabad constituency in Ghazipur. The BJP has pitted another Rajbhar - Kalicharan Rajbhar - who will cut into the SBSP president's base vote of the community. However, Rajbhar is facing the biggest challenge from BSP that has fielded a rebel SP candidate Shadab Fatima. A former MLA, Shadab Fatima, is popular in the constituency and is confident of wresting the seat this time. Om Prakash Rajbhar prides himself as the architect of the SP-led alliance since he was among the first to break ties with the

BJP in UP. His claims of defeating the BJP in UP may come a cropper if he does not do well on his seat. Union minister Anupriya Patel also faces a test in the next phases of election for her party Apna Dal which has, so far, seen a high success rate in election. The Apna Dal is a Kurmi-centric party that was founded by Dr Sonelal Patel, Anupriya's father. Though Anupriya is not contesting the election, her party candidates are reportedly feeling the heat of anti-incumbency in their constituencies. Anupriya is campaigning vigorously for her party and hopes to overcome the hurdles to maintain her success rate which will also decide her future. For Sanjay Nishad, president of the Nishad Party, these elections are a make-or-break affair. He is testing waters in the election for his party in alliance with the BJP and his performance will decide the future of his relationship with the party. The Nishad community has

UP POLLS
Union minister Anupriya Patel also faces a test in the next phases of election for her party Apna Dal which has, so far, seen a high success rate in election

been demanding reservation in the scheduled caste category and Sanjay Nishad, despite promises, has failed to convince the BJP to announce the same. If his party fares poorly in the elections, it could mean rough weather for his relationship with the BJP in the long term.

Temple an issue, but voters seek development

The BJP, for which the temple town sharpened its Hindutva plank, is facing a challenge particularly from the Samajwadi Party in the ongoing state polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ayodhya, Feb 26: The construction of Ram temple seems to have been relegated to "one of the poll issues" in Ayodhya this time as competing parties are raking up development topics and also relying on caste arithmetic for victory. The BJP, for which the temple town sharpened its Hindutva plank, is facing a challenge particularly from the Samajwadi Party (SP) in the ongoing state polls. With 10 candidates in fray, the Ayodhya Assembly segment will go to vote in the fifth phase February 27. After it became clear that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath would not contest from Ayodhya, the party reposed faith in sitting MLA Ved Prakash Gupta, while the SP has fielded former minister Tej Narayan alias Pawan Pandey. The BSP, Congress and AAP, too, have fielded their candidates in Ayodhya, thereby making it a multi-cornered contest. "It is going to be a close contest in the Ayodhya Assembly constituency. As far as the issue of Ram temple is concerned, the BJP was not able to derive optimum mileage during this election initially. The issue started cropping up only after the third phase of the polls," Mahant Raju Das of Hanumangarhi temple told PTI. He said while the distribution of ration to the poor has benefitted people in rural areas, a number of party leaders, on the other hand, were of the view that they will be able to garner enough votes only with Modi and Adityanath's credentials. They did not want to mingle with the people and connect with them, he said. On whether the scene would have been different if Adityanath were to contest from Ayodhya, the mahant said, "There is no opposi-



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

tion to the BJP, there was an opposition only towards the candidate." SP candidate Pawan Pandey told PTI, "Lord Ram and the Ram temple are not the fiefdom of the BJP. Prabhu Shri Ram belongs to all of us. Even when the BJP did not exist, Lord Ram did." When asked whether he had heaved a sigh of relief after Adityanath decided not to contest from the Ayodhya seat, Pandey said it would have made no difference "even if Prime Minister Narendra Modi was named the candidate" (from Ayodhya). A firebrand student leader from Lucknow University, Pandey had trounced the saffron party's local giant and incumbent MP from

As far as the issue of Ram temple is concerned, the BJP was not able to derive optimum mileage during this election initially. The issue started cropping up only after the third phase of the polls

MAHANT RAJU DAS OF HANUMANGARHI TEMPLE

Ayodhya Lallu Singh in the 2012 Assembly elections. He had, however, lost to Gupta in 2017. Pandey also alleged that the BJP has indulged in exploiting farmers, harassing traders and the Ayodhya Municipal Corporation has also significantly increased the tax.

"We will roll it back," he said. He said cows in cow shelters had allegedly died due to shortage of fodder and water. "They (BJP) claim to be Ram bhakts' (devotees of Lord Ram), but Adityanath and his government are killers of the cows," he said. BJP nominee Gupta, when asked about a section of the people being miffed at his candidature, said, "You cannot satisfy each and every person in politics. I have not been able to please my family. However, I can say that work for the people has been done and development has taken place. Yogi has done a lot of development in Ayodhya." By fielding a Brahmin, the SP is trying to exploit the upper caste displeasure with the BJP government. Out of about 3.81 lakh electors in Ayodhya seat, Brahmins account for over 62,000 while Vaishya voters number 51,000, Muslims 55,000 and Yadavs 37,000. Iqbal Ansari, who was an independent litigant and son of one of the oldest litigants in the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri mosque dispute case, Mohammad Hashim Ansari, said, "People now want development and jobs." "People of Ayodhya are now drifting away from the 'mandir-masjid issue', and talking about development and only development. It has already been two years since the Supreme Court gave its judgement. However, some people try to make the temple-mosque an election issue. The temple-mosque may remain one of the issues in this election, but not the biggest among the poll issues. "Earlier, the Hindus and Muslims used to fight over it, but now there is nothing as such. The main issues in this election is price rise, which has affected almost each and every household," he said.

T'gana financially on a firm footing

With a higher growth rate and per capita income than many bigger states, India's youngest state has become the fourth largest contributor to national GDP in a short span of less than eight years

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Feb 26: Despite the dent in revenues during the last two years due to Covid pandemic and lack of help from the Centre, Telangana financially appears to be on a firm footing. With a higher growth rate and per capita income than many bigger states, India's youngest state has become the fourth largest contributor to national GDP in a short span of less than eight years and claims to be a model for the entire country in welfare and development. According to 2020-21 budget estimates, Telangana's estimated outstanding public debt will be over Rs 2.86 lakh crore. However, the economists say the state has the capacity to manage debts. According to a study paper released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) last month, Telangana's debt-to-GSDP ratio is the lowest in the country, indicating the fiscal health of the state. Based on the annual data be-

tween 2014-15 and 2018-19, the study paper revealed that the State Performance Composite Index (SPCI) of Telangana has improved. SPCI measures both the fiscal performance and market development of states. The average debt to Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Telangana from 2014-15 to 2018-19 was 16.1 per cent, which is the lowest among the states in the country. According to state finance minister T. Harish Rao, Telangana is among the states having the lowest debt burden in the country, dismissing the claim by the opposition parties that the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) government has pushed the state into a debt trap. Harish Rao had told the state Assembly last year that Telangana's debt burden is only 22.8 per cent of GSDP, which is well within the permissible limits under the FRBM Act. Telangana was then at the third place from the bottom in the country. "The Centre's debt burden is 62.2 per cent of GDP while Telangana's



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debt burden is just 22.8 per cent of GSDP," he had stated. The RBI also revealed recently that Telangana is the fourth largest contributor to the country's economy. According to "Handbook of Statistics on the Indian Economy 2020-21" the Net State Value Added (NSVA) by Telangana at current prices to the country increased from Rs 4,16,930 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 8,10,503 crore in 2020-21. Leaders of ruling TRS say this contribution is significant con-

sidering the fact that Telangana is the 11th largest state in terms of geographical area and 12th in terms of population. According to Telangana State Statistical Abstract Report released this week, provisional estimates show the GSDP of Telangana at current prices in 2020-21 was Rs 9,80,407 crore. Between 2012-13 and 2020-21, the average annual GSDP growth of Telangana was 6.8 per cent and GDP of India was 5.1 per cent.

UP's debt shot up by nearly 39% in 5 yrs

The full support given to the Yogi Adityanath government by the Narendra Modi government -- the so-called 'double engine' advantage -- also does not seem to have helped, either in terms of finances or in planning

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Feb 26: The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has been borrowing so heavily from the market that its total outstanding debt has shot up by almost 39 per cent in five years. However, spending on education declined while spending on health increased only marginally during this period. What is even more surprising is the fact that in four out of five years, the state government was unable to spend even the full budgeted amount, leading to a revenue surplus. The full support given to the



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Yogi Adityanath government by the Narendra Modi government - the so-called 'double engine' advantage -- also does not seem to have helped, either in terms of finances or in planning. According to the latest data available with the Reserve Bank of India, which compiles state government finances, the UP government has outstanding liabilities worth as much as Rs 6.5 lakh crore, as estimated in the state budget for 2021-22. This is 38.3 per cent more than the Rs 4.7 lakh crore debt it inherited when it took over in 2017. The bulk of this debt mountain is owed to financial institutions, such as banks. These are called market borrowings and are taken at hefty rates of interest. According

to sources in the state finance department, a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on UP government's finances, released last month, pointed out that of the total public debt at the end of 2019-20, Rs 1.99 lakh crore (or 47.7 per cent of the total) would be payable after seven years. The state government transferred a princely sum of Rs 71,000 crore from a sinking fund illegitimately to its 'non-tax revenue' head in its books in March 2020. By rules, this should have been invested elsewhere. The CAG roundly criticised this brazen violation, recommending that "the transfers out of the fund (Sinking Fund) are not to be treated as Revenue Receipts and the amount equivalent to loan repaid should be transferred from Sinking Fund to Major Head 8680 (Miscellaneous Government Account) on redemption of debt." The effect of this 'creative' book-keeping was that revenue receipts were boosted in the books only, there was no cash actually transferred. This is what caused the next year's revenue surplus. It is a common feature for some states to end the year with huge unspent amounts from their budgetary allocations.

Investment in Telangana's life sciences sector up by 200%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Feb 26: The Life Sciences sector in Telangana has attracted investments worth more than Rs 6,400 crore from about 215 companies and created additional employment for more than 34,000 people in the last one year, state Industries Minister K T Rama Rao said. The investment received was almost 200 per cent more than the investment attracted by the sector in the previous year, he said. He was speaking at the inaugural session of 19th edition of BioAsia 2022, the flagship annual biotech life sciences convention of Telangana, a virtual event. It is a matter of immense pride that two out of the three indigenously developed vaccines - Covaxin



and Corbevax - are from Hyderabad, Rama Rao said. Also, both the vaccines which are approved in India for children are also from Hyderabad, he said. Genome Valley in Hyderabad,

said to be the country's first systematically developed R&D cluster, continues to witness expansion of several pharmaceutical companies, he said. On the pharmaceutical front, the state government is inching closer to the launch of the world's largest pharmaceutical cluster, Hyderabad Pharma City, he said. He congratulated the recipient of the 'Genome Valley Excellence Award' for the year 2022, Drew Weissman, Department of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, who did pioneering work on mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. Later, in an interaction with Sangita Reddy of Apollo Hospitals, Weissman, said he is working on a "pancoronavirus" vaccine.

BJP aims to sweep eastern UP like 2017

In the 2017 Assembly polls, the BJP had won 115 of the 164 seats in eastern Uttar Pradesh

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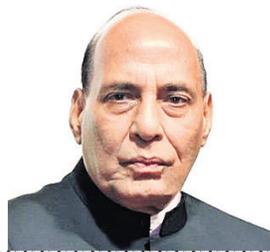
New Delhi, Feb 26: Realising that sweeping eastern Uttar Pradesh is important to form the next government in the state, the BJP is now putting all its efforts to repeat its 2017 performance in the region. In the 2017 Assembly polls, the BJP had won 115 of the 164 seats in eastern Uttar Pradesh. In an effort to repeat or further improve its previous tally, the BJP has combined development with its core agenda of Hindutva and nationalism. Polling in these seats is being held in the last three phases of Assembly polls. This time, the BJP is facing challenges on the caste equation after OBC leaders like Swami Prasad Maurya and others left the party and joined rival camps.



Another major challenge for the BJP is that its former alliance party, Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) of OP Rajbhar, has joined hands with Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party (SP) this time. A senior BJP functionary from Uttar Pradesh said that some leaders or regional parties with influence over their respective caste

have left them, but that would not have any impact on BJP's chances in eastern Uttar Pradesh. "We are not only going to repeat our previous performance, but we are all set to better it. Our top leadership is on the ground seeking people's blessing to serve them for the next five years in order to continue the pace of development the

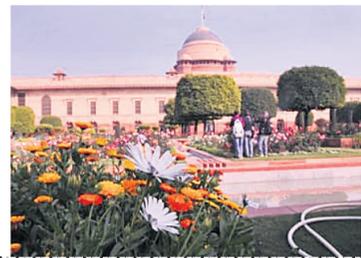
region and the state witnessed in the last five years," he said. Now the top BJP leadership is aggressively raising issues related to Hindutva and nationalism, while mentioning the development and welfare initiatives of Narendra Modi and Yogi Adityanath in the region. However, the saffron camp blames SP chief Akhilesh Yadav for 'polarising' the polls by invoking Jinnah (Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founder) to appease a particular community. "It was Akhilesh Yadav who invoked Jinnah in a public meeting. Akhilesh was not participating in an academic conference, but he was addressing an election rally. He raised Jinnah's name with a clear intention to polarise the voters on religious lines," Uttar Pradesh BJP spokesperson Harish Chandra Srivastava said.



The Defence Ministry will create a panel with representatives from all three services to monitor its budget spending so that it is fully utilised in time
RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

VISITOR CAP RAISED

The Mughal Gardens at the Rashtrapati Bhavan can accommodate 300 persons per slot till the time it remains open for general public (except Mondays) till March 16



of the day quote

The roads in the national capital will be made pothole-free within a month and if any defects are found, action would be initiated against the engineers concerned
MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CM

Inclusive, equitable and quality education is every child's right. Schools must include community service in their curriculum so that children develop an attitude of giving back to society at a young age
M. VENKAIKHA NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

Dacoity reduced by 72 per cent, loot went down by 62 per cent, murders by 31 per cent, kidnapping by 29 per cent, while rape cases went down by 50 per cent. This has been done by the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh
AMIT SHAH | HOME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Woman held

New Delhi: A 40-year-old woman was arrested by the Delhi Police for supplying approximately 60 gms of Heroin worth Rs 60 lakh in the international market, an official said Saturday. The accused, identified as Sunita, a resident of Delhi's Uttam Nagar, was nabbed by the staff of CAIFAN (Cell Against Illegal Foreigner And Narcotics). According to the police, the accused woman was recently active in Uttam Nagar, Mohan Garden and West Delhi - the areas having dense population of foreign nationals.

Woman arrested

New Delhi: The Economic Offences Wing of Delhi Police has arrested a 48-year-old woman for misappropriating the funds of the people and cheating them to the tune of over Rs 4 crore, an official said Saturday. The accused was identified as Sunita Saini, a resident of Surat, Gujarat. Furnishing details, Joint Commissioner of Police (Economic Offences Wing) Chhaya Sharma said the complainant had levelled allegations against one Vashundhara Group, allegedly a financial institution functioning in Azadpur, Delhi for misappropriating their funds on false representation of doubling invested money in 4 years.

NH closed

Srinagar: The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway has been closed for vehicular traffic due to landslides and shooting stones triggered by rains at multiple places and snow accumulated around the NAVYUG tunnel, officials said Saturday. "Jammu-Srinagar NHW closed for vehicular movement due to landslides, shooting stones at many places on NHW and snow accumulation around the NAVYUG Tunnel," Jammu and Kashmir Traffic police said.

Russia-Ukraine war: Evacuation begins



More batches of Indian students enter Hungary from Ukrainian side at Zahony crossing, travelling onward to Budapest for return to India by Air India flight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Mumbai, Feb 26: India began the evacuation of its nationals who are leaving Ukraine after the Russian military offensive, with an Air India flight bringing back 219 people from Bucharest while one flight each from the Romanian capital and Hungarian capital Budapest are scheduled to arrive Sunday.

"Welcome back. First step of Operation Ganga," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar tweeted after Union Minister Piyush Goyal received the passengers of AI1944 that arrived in Mumbai from Bucharest at 7.50 PM on Saturday. The airline posted a short video showing the first batch of 219 evacuees clapping with joy as the plane landed. The Ukrainian airspace has been closed for civil aircraft operations since February 24 morning when the Russian military offensive began and the Indian evacuation flights are operating out of Bucharest and Budapest.

The other two flights - AI1942 from Bucharest and AI1940 from Budapest - are scheduled to arrive with rescued citizens in Delhi on Sunday morning, senior government officials said, adding all three flights were sent from India on Saturday.

AI1942 departed from Bucharest at 9.30 pm on Saturday and is expected to land in Delhi at around 4.30 am Sunday.

Jaishankar said it is bringing 250 Indian nationals. Indian nationals who reached the Ukraine-Romania border and Ukraine-Hungary border have been taken to Bucharest and Budapest by road, respectively, by Indian government officials so that they can be evacuated in these Air India flights, they said.

The government is not charging the rescued passengers for the evacuation flights, the officials said. Around 16,000 Indians, mainly students, were stranded in Ukraine, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan

Shringla had said February 24.

The Indian Embassy in Ukraine said on Twitter on Saturday morning that Indian citizens in Ukraine should not move to any of the border posts without prior coordination with the Indian government officials at the border posts using the helpline numbers.

"The situation at various border checkpoints is sensitive and the Embassy is working continuously with our Embassies in our neighbouring countries for coordinated evacuation of our citizens," it mentioned.

The Indian Embassy in Ukraine said it is finding it increasingly difficult to help the crossing of those Indian nationals who reach border checkpoints without prior intimation.

It said that staying in western cities of Ukraine with access to water, food, accommodation and basic amenities is relatively safer and advisable compared to reaching border checkpoints without being fully abreast of the situation.

"All those currently in the eastern sector are requested to continue to remain in their current places of residence until further instructions, maintain calm, and stay indoors or in shelters as much as possible, with whatever food, water and amenities available and remain patient," it stated.

Jaishankar said on Twitter that India is making progress regarding the evacuation of Indian nationals from Ukraine.

"Our teams are working on the ground round the clock. I am personally monitoring," he added.

The Indian embassy in Hungary also said more batches of Indian students were entering Hungary from the Ukrainian side at Zahony crossing, travelling onward to Budapest for return to India by AI flight. They posted pictures and videos of relieved students waving the Tricolour and shouting slogans of 'Bharat Mata ki jai' and 'Vande Mataram'.

IAF exits from Exercise Cobra Warrior in UK

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 26: Amidst ongoing Russia-Ukraine War, the Indian Air Force has decided not to deploy its aircraft for Exercise Cobra Warrior 2022 in the United Kingdom.

Indian made Light Combat Aircraft Tejas was expected to participate in the military exercise, its debut in overseas war games.

In a statement, Indian Air Force said: "In light of the recent events, IAF has decided not to deploy its aircraft for Exercise Cobra Warrior 2022 in UK."

The multi nation air exercise 'Ex Cobra Warrior 22' at Waddington, UK was planned from March 6 to March 22.

The exercise was aimed at providing operational exposure and to share best practices amongst the participating Air Forces, thereby enhancing combat capability and forging bonds of friendship.

The exercise is one of the largest annual Royal Air Force exercises and aims to train both pilots and other air specialists in planning and executing complex airborne missions.

These exercises are, as per the RAF, "the most challenging training for aircrew and the final step for those seeking to qualify as Qualified Weapons Instructors (QWI), Qualified Multi-engine Tactics Instructors, QWI Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance and [for the] Qualified Space Instructors Course".

Bengal Governor sticks to his stand

"In the matter of summoning of West Bengal Assembly the Governor acts only on the recommendation of the State Cabinet and no other authority. In such matters none can be 'face' or 'representative' of the Cabinet," the statement signed by Dhankhar's OSD said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Feb 26: West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar Saturday stuck to his stand that a cabinet recommendation is required for him to consider the change in the timing of the as-



sembly session from 2 am to 2 pm on March 7.

The recommendation will be promptly addressed and no one else can be a representative of the cabinet, a statement issued by the Raj Bhavan said.

Chief Secretary H K Dwivedi had written to the Governor, who convenes an Assembly session, on February 24 stating that the state cabinet's recommendation letter mentioning 2 am as the time for

summoning the assembly was an "inadvertent typographical error".

He had requested that the time of summoning of the House be changed to 2 pm on the same day. Ruling out the request, the statement said "Cabinet decision is essential for the Governor to consider change of timing of the assembly session from presently 2 AM to 2 PM on March 07. The issue will be addressed once there is such recommendation of the cabinet."

"In the matter of summoning of West Bengal Assembly the Governor acts only on the recommendation of the State Cabinet and no other authority. In such matters none can be 'face' or 'representative' of the Cabinet," the statement signed by Dhankhar's OSD said.

Quoting Article 163 of the Constitution, it said that the council of ministers with the Chief Minister as the head aids and advises the Governor.

"This comes into play when Governor is required to summon the assembly under article 174(1) of the Constitution. A recommendation of the Cabinet is liable to be varied or changed only by the Cabinet and no other authority.

Onlooker run over by govt vehicle

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Golaghat (Assam), Feb 26: An onlooker was run over by a government vehicle while the presidential cavalcade was travelling on the same route at Bokakhat in Golaghat district of Assam and died on the spot Saturday.

Police is, however, yet to confirm the incident. Rameswar Rabidas, who hails from Milanpur of Bokakhat, was waiting along NH-37 when Kovind's convoy was on way to Kohora range of Kaziranga National Park from a temporary helipad at Bokakhat.

Later, locals called an ambulance and sent the body to a nearby hospital for necessary formalities. Local TV channels showed gory visuals of a man lying in a pool of blood on the road and then being taken away in an ambulance.

Assam Agriculture Minister and Bokakhat MLA Atul Bora, who received Kovind at the helipad and was travelling in the convoy, confirmed the accident. "Yes, I have heard about the accident in which one person was killed. But I do not know whose escort vehicles hit him. I did not have any escort today and my vehicle did not hit him," Bora said over phone.

He later tweeted, "Anguished to learn that a person succumbed to injuries sustained in a road mishap involving a vehicle of Govt administration in the Kaziranga area today. My deepest condolences to the deceased's family. The authorities are helping the affected family in this hour of grief. No confirmation on the incident could be got from the police despite a number of attempts.

The President had reached Bokakhat Saturday to visit the famous Kaziranga National Park and Tiger reserve and take a jeep safari at its Bagori range after attending the 19th convocation of Tezpur University.

During his overnight stay in the Park, he will view a photo and archival exhibition on conservation there, besides discussing various government initiatives to protect the forest, which is famous the world over as a habitat of one-horned rhinos. He will spend Saturday night at the Assam Police Guest House in Kaziranga National Park and go on an elephant safari along with his family on Sunday morning. He will leave Assam later in the day, officials said.

First shipment of wheat reaches Jalalabad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 26: The first shipment of 2,500 metric tonnes of wheat sent by India for Afghan people via Pakistan land route as part of its humanitarian aid reached Jalalabad in Afghanistan on Saturday.

Afghanistan's Ambassador to India Farid Mamundzay said the convoy of 50 trucks carrying the wheat arrived in the Afghan city and that the aid would now be distributed by the World Food Programme (WFP) among the people.

The shipment was part of the commitment made by the government of India to supply 50,000 metric tonnes of wheat for the people of Afghanistan. Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, along with Mamundzay and WFP Country Director Bishaw Parajuli, flagged off the convoy of trucks at a ceremony at Amritsar's Attari border crossing on Tuesday.

"The first convoy of 2500 MT of wheat assistance reached Jalalabad this morning," the Afghan envoy said on Twitter. He said the WFP in "Afghanistan would now be distributing this aid to thousands of needy families across Afghanistan".

India had sent a proposal to Pakistan on October 7 last year, seeking the transit facility to send 50,000 tonnes of wheat to the people of Afghanistan via Pakistan and it received a positive response from Islamabad on November 24.

Following the Pakistani response, both sides were in touch to finalise the modalities for the transportation of the shipments. Each of the bags was stamped with the text: "Gift from the people of India to the people of Afghanistan" in English, Pashto and Dari.

February 12, the Indian government had inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the WFP for the distribution of wheat within Afghanistan.

Manipur polls: Campaign ends

In the first phase, 173 candidates, including 15 women, are contesting the elections and 12, 22,713 voters including 6, 29,276 women electorates would decide their electoral fate

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Imphal, Feb 26: The hectic poll campaign for the first phase of Manipur Assembly elections came to an end Saturday afternoon as the voting in the state would be held on Monday for 38 of the 60 seats in the five districts.

Election Officials said that the Central Armed Police Forces personnel took position in the entire 38 poll bound assembly constituencies and the 9,895 polling personnel either reached or were on the way to their designated 1,721

polling stations.

The officials said that as part of a series of measures implemented to execute a Covid-safe election, mandatory sanitisation of the polling stations was done in different parts of the state.

In the first phase, 173 candidates, including 15 women, are contesting the elections and 12, 22,713 voters including 6, 29,276 women electorates would decide their electoral fate.

In the over two-months long campaign, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister



Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, BJP President J.P. Nadda, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, his Tripura counterpart Biplab Kumar Deb, National People's Party (NPP) supreme Conrad K. Sangma, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, party General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Rajya Sabha Member Jairam Ramesh took part for their respective party candidates.

2020 DELHI RIOTS

Court fines six accused for false claim

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 26: A court here, in a case related to 2020 Delhi riots, has imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 each on six accused persons for a false statement related to their acknowledgment of the supply of copies of pen drives along with the charge sheet.

Hearing the case, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Arun Kumar Garg, observed, "Copy of acknowledgment regarding supply of a copy of CCTV footage along with a copy of charge sheet has been placed on record by the Investigating Officer (IO) qua all the accused. Besides, it is sub-

mitted by him that he had supplied the fresh pen drives to the accused on 17 February 2022 also against the proper acknowledgment also."

However, noting the false statement of the accused, who had informed the court that the IO has not supplied them the copies, the judge asked the accused persons - Firoz Khan, Iqbal, Zakhir, Shakir, Sirajuddin, and Anas to deposit the fine by the next hearing.

The IO was asked to furnish the acknowledgment of the supply of copies within two days, failing which, he shall deposit an adjournment cost of Rs. 10,000 in the court.

Healthy adults died from Covid due to ECMO shortage: Study

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/New York, Feb 26: Nearly 90 per cent of Covid-19 patients who qualified for, but did not receive, ECMO (extracorporeal membrane oxygenation) due to a shortage of resources during the height of the pandemic died in the hospital, despite being young with few other health issues, says a new study.

The study indicated that approximately 90 per cent of patients for whom health system capacity to provide ECMO was unavailable

died in the hospital, compared to 43 per cent mortality for patients who received ECMO, despite both groups having young age and limited comorbidities.

"Even when saving ECMO for the youngest, healthiest and sickest patients, we could only provide it to a fraction of patients who qualified for it," said researcher Whitney Gannon from Vanderbilt University.

"I hope these data encourage hospitals and federal authorities to invest in the capacity to provide ECMO to more patients," Gannon added. For the study, published in



the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, the team analyzed the total number of patients referred for ECMO in one referral region between January 1, 2021, to August 31, 2021.

Once a patient was determined to be medically eligible to receive ECMO, a separate assessment was performed of the health system's resources to provide ECMO. Among 240 patients with Covid-19 referred for ECMO, 90 patients (37.5 per cent) were determined to be medically eligible to receive ECMO

and were included in the study. The median age was 40 years and 25 (27.8 per cent) were female.

For 35 patients (38.9 per cent), the health system capacity to provide ECMO at a specialized center was available; for 55 patients (61.1 per cent), the health system capacity to provide ECMO at a specialized center was unavailable.

Death before hospital discharge occurred in 15 of the 35 patients (42.9 per cent) who received ECMO, compared with 49 of the 55 patients (89.1 per cent) who did not receive ECMO.

PROTESTS AROUND THE WORLD DECRY UKRAINE ATTACK

From Tokyo to London to Taipei, thousands of protesters worldwide have turned out on the streets to join anti-war rallies chanting "Stop war!" and "Peace for Ukraine" as Russia's troops pressed toward Ukraine's capital. Several hundred Ukrainians living in Japan gathered outside of Tokyo's main train stations Saturday. They held up signs including "No war," "Stop Putin, Stop Russia," while others waved Ukrainian flags. At a separate rally reportedly organised by Russian residents in Japan, several dozen people chanted "Hands off Ukraine!"



international



UKRAINE INVASION DAY-3

1ST CITY FALLS; KYIV RESISTS

Russia said its forces had captured Melitopol, a city of 150,000 in southeastern Ukraine. Ukrainian officials were not immediately available to comment and Britain cast doubt on the report

on social media that new Western sanctions had helped unite Russians and hinted at a severing of diplomatic ties with Western nations, saying it was time to padlock the embassies. He said Moscow might also restore the death penalty.

After a night of airstrikes, there were some signs of panic in centre of Kyiv. Reuters' reporters saw Ukrainian soldiers with guns and a group of women running along the street. Nearby, Ukrainian soldiers forced a man in civilian clothes to lie down on the pavement.

Kyiv's mayor Vitali Klitschko said there was currently no major Russian military presence in Kyiv, but added

Russian forces meet resistance in Ukrainian cities
Moscow could 'padlock' Western embassies - Medvedev
Ukraine's president defiant but some panic in Kyiv
Authorities in Kyiv extend a curfew until early Monday

that saboteur groups were active. The metro system is now serving only as a shelter for citizens and trains have stopped running, he said.

Klitschko said 35 people, including two children, had been wounded overnight.

Britain said the bulk of Russian forces were now 30 km from the centre of Kyiv and said Russia had yet to gain control of Ukraine's airspace.

RESISTANCE

Western intelligence sources say Russian forces have encountered far stronger Ukrainian resistance to their invasion than they had expected to their invasion.

Russia's Defence Ministry said its forces had captured Melitopol, a city of 150,000 in southeastern

Ukraine. Ukrainian officials were not immediately available to comment and Britain cast doubt on the report.

If confirmed, it would be the first significant population centre the Russians have seized.

Putin has said he must eliminate what he calls a serious threat to his country from its smaller neighbour and has cited the need to denazify Ukraine's leadership, accusing it of genocide against Russian-speakers in eastern Ukraine - a charge dismissed by Kyiv and its Western allies as baseless propaganda.

Zelenskiy signalled on Friday a readiness to discuss a ceasefire and peace talks, as did the Kremlin, but tentative diplomatic contacts have so far produced no results.

About 100,000 people have crossed into Poland from Ukraine since Thursday, including 9,000 who have entered since 7 am Saturday, Polish Deputy Interior Minister Pawel Szefernaker told a news conference.

At Medyka in southern Poland, refugees described a 30-km line at the border. Ukrainians were also crossing the borders into Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.

REALITIES OF WAR

Baby born in Kyiv bomb shelter

As Putin's bombs rained down on Kyiv, a tiny miracle was brought into the world amid the chaos, Daily Mail reported. While invading, Russian forces bombarded terrified families, one woman, 23, had reason to be perhaps more fearful than others. Her baby was due as she hid protected from the onslaught in a shelter in the city as gunfire raged outside. But Friday, tiny 'Mia' was brought into the world in what must have been some of the most stressful circumstances to give birth and her arrival was being hailed as a miracle as her story prompted one woman to declare "Your birth is hope in this dismal time", the report said.



First marriage after invasion

Ukrainian citizens Yaryna Arieva and Sviatoslav Fursin got married just hours after Russia launched its invasion of their country. The marriage was supposed to be a May wedding, but the couple were no longer sure of what their future holds. "Right now, we are here and we are doing everything we can. So there is a lot of work to do, but still, I hope everything will be OK," Arieva said. They spent their first day as a married couple collecting their rifles and getting ready to defend Ukraine.

'Ghost of Kyiv' & 'Ukrainian Reaper'

At a time when Ukraine is in dire need of new heroes, a video is making rounds on internet about an extremely talented pilot - 'Ghost of Kyiv'. A Ukraine Air Force pilot who Thursday downed 6 Russian planes and he possibly downed another 5 Friday, as per report.



According to reports online, a member of the Ukrainian army is being dubbed as 'The Ukrainian Reaper' due to his unusually high number of kills so far. When the reports started appearing online, he already had 20 kills in the bag. According to these reports, this new hero made his 20 kills in the span of just two days.

Woman MP takes up arms

Ukrainian Member of Parliament Kira Rudik said that Ukrainians who fled the city are now coming back with arms, to protect it. "There is no way Putin can have our capital," she said. "Every single Ukrainian man and woman is ready to fight. We did not start this war. We were peaceful people living our lives in our country," she added.

Ukrainian soldier blows himself up

A Ukrainian soldier blew himself up to destroy a bridge in the southern province of Kherson to stop invading Russian tanks from marching ahead. His sacrifice to stop a column of Russian tanks is now being praised by the Ukrainian military, who has described Vitaly Skakun Volodymyrovych as a 'hero'. Marine battalion engineer Volodymyrovych was deployed to the Henichesk bridge when the Russian tanks entered the area, the Ukrainian military wrote on Facebook.



INVASION AFTERMATH

MILITARY AID

The United States is providing Ukraine with \$350 million in additional military equipment to fight off Russia

The NATO alliance is deploying, 40,000 troop strong NATO Response Force, for the first time ever

Germany to send anti-tank weapons to Ukraine

The Netherlands will supply 200 air defence rockets to Ukraine as quickly as possible

France to deploy 500 soldiers in Romania within the NATO framework

The Czech Republic's government has approved a plan to send more arms to Ukraine worth \$8.6 million

DEATHS, REFUGEES

Russia has lost 14 planes, 8 helicopters, 102 tanks, 536 BBM, 15 heavy machine guns, and 1 BUK missile since February 24. The Kremlin also lost over 3,500 soldiers

As many as 198 Ukrainian civilians have been killed, including 3 children and 1,115 wounded, including 33 children

The UN refugee agency says that over 120,000 Ukrainian refugees have left the country since Russia began its attack on its neighboring country this week

BOYCOTTS

Facebook bans Russia state media from running ads, monetising

Thousands of people in Moscow and St Petersburg hit the streets raising anti-war protests. Over 1,700 protesters were detained

The UK government is leading the charge in Europe to exclude Russia from the worldwide SWIFT banking network

US sanctions Putin, top officials

POLITICAL IMPOTENCE: RUSSIA

A senior Russian official has warned that Moscow could react to Western sanctions over its attack on Ukraine by opting out of the last remaining nuclear arms pact and freezing Western assets. Dmitry Medvedev, the deputy head of Russia's Security Council chaired by President Vladimir Putin, shrugged off a set of crippling sanctions that the US, the European Union and other allies slapped on Russia as a reflection of Western "political impotence." Medvedev also raised the prospect of cutting diplomatic ties with Western countries, saying "there is no particular need in maintaining diplomatic relations" and adding that "we may look at each other in binoculars and sunspots." He pointed at the possibility of freezing Western assets in the country if the West proceeds with threats to freeze Russian assets.

- The sanctions put Putin on a short list that include the leaders of North Korea, Syria and Belarus
EU states and Britain agreed to freeze any European assets of Putin and Lavrov

The US government Friday joined European countries in slapping sanctions on Russian President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov as Western nations sought to increase pressure on Moscow to halt its invasion of Ukraine.

The rare but not unprecedented US imposition of sanctions on a head of state came just a day after Russian forces

invaded Ukraine, assaulting by land, sea and air in the biggest attack by one state against another in Europe since World War Two.

"President Putin and Minister Lavrov are directly responsible for Russia's unprovoked and unlawful further invasion of Ukraine, a democratic sovereign state," the Treasury Department said in a statement late on Friday announcing the sanctions.

White House spokesperson Jen Psaki told reporters that President Joe Biden decided to target Putin, Lavrov and other officials after speaking by phone with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen earlier Friday.

Treasury said the moves built on a raft of other sanctions imposed this week that targeted Russian banks and rich oligarchs, cut Russia off from access to critical technologies, and restricted its ability to raise capital.

A Treasury spokesperson said the action against the Russian Direct Investment Fund would be taken in the coming days.



A TV comedian Prez finds his role as wartime leader

AGENCIES

He may be among the least likely wartime leaders the world has known, yet Volodymyr Zelensky, a Russian-speaking former television comic of Jewish background, is garnering applause in the role just when his political fortunes hit the skids.

Zelenskiy was elected as Ukraine's president three years ago on a promise to bring in peace. He was at war Friday in capital Kyiv, accused by Putin of leading a fascist regime guilty of "genocide" in the east of the country.

Western leaders dismiss those claims as fabrications but with Russian troops fighting their way into Kyiv, there was little sugar-coating the desperate situation for Zelenskiy and an independent Ukraine. Putin has declared he wants Zelenskiy gone.

The Defense Ministry appealed Ukrainian citizens to make Molotov cocktails for self-defence in case of a urban warfare. It said "thousands" of volunteers were signing up to fight, with 18,000 rifles handed out in Kyiv alone.

Unshaven and in khaki, Zelenskiy addressed the nation in a video, warning that "saboteurs" tasked with his assassination were closing in. The "enemy has marked me down as the number one target" as they seek Ukraine's political destruction, Zelenskiy said. "I will stay in the capital."

As Ukrainian forces battle to slow the Russian advance with overwhelming advantages on land, sea and in air, Zelenskiy has seemed to reflect that spirit. "And we are not afraid of anything," he said Friday. "We are not afraid to defend our state. We are not afraid of Russia. We are not afraid to talk to Russia." Since Zelenskiy accepted that con-

'Need ammo, not a ride'

Ukrainian President Zelenskiy was asked to evacuate Kyiv at the behest of the US government but turned down the offer. Zelenskiy said in response: "The fight is here; I need ammunition, not a ride," according to a senior American intelligence official with direct knowledge of the conversation, who described Zelenskiy as "upbeat". He also released a self-shot video from central Kyiv Friday vowing alongside key aides to stay and defend the capital against the Russian invasion. "We're all here. Our military is here. Citizens in society are here. We're all here defending our independence, our country, and it will stay this way," Zelenskiy said, standing outside the presidency building.

lict was imminent, his response has resonated with many Ukrainians, including a Feb 19 speech at the Munich Security Conference in which he thanked western allies for their aid and support, but also berated them for not doing more for a country fighting on behalf of their security and values, too.

That directness struck a chord among Ukrainians left to fight a vastly more powerful neighbor alone.

Zelenskiy's speeches, aimed at Russia as well as Ukraine, have won fans for their human touch, too, especially when compared with the angry historical lectures Putin delivered to his people as he prepared them for war.

"Try to keep life normal, as far as life can be normal," Zelenskiy told his nation Feb 24, even as he called on them to take up arms and fight. "Take care of your neighbors and your friends."



of the day quote

Today, the taxpayer's contribution to the country's national reconstruction is very, very remarkable and historical. At the same time, the people who are using the loopholes of the system, we need to find them

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

Supply of sunflower oil has got disrupted because of conflict between Russia and Ukraine. India imports 25 lakh tonne of sunflower oil annually, of which 70 per cent comes from Ukraine, 20 per cent from Russia and 10 per cent from Argentina

BV MEHTA | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SEA

We do not currently enjoy a cost advantage against many countries of Asia and Africa, which means we should focus on increasing the exports of value-added spices products

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

VIL realigns digital function

Delhi: Telecom operator Vodafone Idea (VIL) is realigning and streamlining its consumer digital resources to sharpen focus on driving operational scale and pace of delivery. VIL is proposing to bring all digital resources from different functions under a more 'holistic and integrated' consumer digital product curation and delivery organisation, according to an internal communication by the telco to its employees. The realigned digital set up will comprise three verticals of Consumer Digital Products and Partnerships, Consumer Digital Marketing and Digital Delivery. These functions will report into CMO and CTO, according to the mailer.

Terms of usage of mkt data revised

New Delhi: With an aim to enhance the ease of accessibility and usability of data disseminated in public by various data sources in securities market, Sebi has asked market intermediaries to make available such data to users, 'free of charge' both for 'viewing' and for download. Financial markets are traditionally data-rich and data-driven and with ever growing financial markets, the volume and variety of data have also increased manifold over the years and will continue to do so. "With increasing size and complexity of financial markets, addressing information asymmetry and having adequately informed investors and multiple stakeholders in the market cannot be overemphasised," Sebi said in a circular.

E-invoice for biz with over ₹20cr

New Delhi: Businesses with turnover of over ₹20 crore will have to generate electronic invoice for B2B transactions from April 1, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs has said. Under Goods and Services Tax (GST) law, e-invoicing for business-to-business (B2B) transactions was made mandatory for companies with turnover of over ₹500 crore from October 1, 2020, which was then extended to those with turnover of over ₹100 crore from January 1, 2021. From April 1 last year, companies with turnover of more than ₹50 crore were generating B2B e-invoices. This is now being extended to companies with turnover of over ₹20 crore.



India is at a stage where growth and the focus on development have got to be strengthened from every side and intellectual property rights (IPRs) have an important role in it

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

AHMAD APPOINTED WORLD BANK'S VP, OPS

The World Bank's India head Junaid Kamal Ahmad has been appointed as a Vice President of the international lending institution. Ahmad, who as Vice President, Operations would head the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), is only the 2nd Bangladeshi national to be appointed to such a high position in the history of the bank



AMID RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Govt assures fuel price stability

While supply routes remain open, prices are likely to pinch. Petrol, diesel and cooking gas (LPG) rates continue to be on the election-related freeze for nearly four months now but PSU oil firms are expected to pass on the elevated global oil prices to consumers soon after elections in Uttar Pradesh end next month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 26: India, the world's third largest energy importing and consuming nation, Saturday said it is closely monitoring the global energy markets to track any supply disruptions following the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and will support release of oil from strategic storages to cool prices.

■ INDIA IS ALSO COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING INITIATIVES FOR RELEASES FROM STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVES

■ INTERNATIONAL OIL PRICES CLIMBED TO AN OVER SEVEN-YEAR HIGH OF \$105.58 FEBRUARY 24 OVER SUPPLY CONCERNS

■ THE RATES HAVE COOLED TO BELOW \$100 AS WESTERN SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA KEPT OUT ENERGY SUPPLIES

"The Government of India is closely monitoring global energy markets as well as potential energy supply disruptions as a fall out of the evolving geopolitical situation," an oil ministry statement said.

"With a view to ensuring energy justice for its citizens and for just energy transition towards a net zero future, India stands ready to take appropriate action for ensuring ongoing supplies at stable prices," the statement said



High crude prices can spike petrol, diesel prices: ICRA

New Delhi: High crude oil prices, due to geo-political concerns, can spike petrol, and diesel prices by ₹6 to ₹8 per litre, ratings agency ICRA said. According to the ratings agency, the lagged revision in RSPs (retail selling prices) of MS (motor spirit) and HSD (high speed diesel) is warranted by current surge in crude prices at ₹6-8 per litre. "The impact of the latter on RSPs and the CPI inflation can be absorbed by a roll back in excise duties on these fuels to pre-pandemic levels," ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said. "If excise duty on MS and HSD is reduced to pre-pandemic rates, the total revenue loss to the Centre in FY2023 is estimated at ₹920 billion." The monthly average RSPs of MS and HSD have been unchanged at ₹102.9 per litre and ₹90.5 per litre, respectively, till Friday, despite the recent rise in crude oil prices.

without elaborating.

It did not make any direct reference to consumer prices following the spike in international rates.

Asia's third largest economy had in November last year agreed to release about 5 million barrels of crude oil from its emergency

HUGE SETBACK FOR EXPORTERS

New Delhi: The Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) has decided to withdraw coverage for shipments to Russia with effect from February 25, which is a huge setback for exporters, industry body FIEO said Saturday. Amid the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, ECGC in a communication said "based on the near-term commercial outlook, it has been decided to modify the country risk classification of Russia under the short-term and medium-and-long term with effect from February 25." Revising its underwriting policy on Russia, ECGC, a government-owned entity, has now put that country in the Restricted Cover Category (RCC-I) from the earlier 'open cover' category.

stockpile in tandem with the US, Japan and other major economies to cool international oil prices.

This was the first time ever that India, which stores 5.33 million tonne or about 39 million barrels of crude oil in underground caverns at three locations on the east and west coasts, had agreed to release stocks for such purpose. That was when crude was at \$82-84 per barrel. Now, it is much higher than that. The US is trying to do a coordinated release with other consuming nations to cool rates again. The statement did not say how much oil India will release.

Indian founder of crypto firm indicted for \$2.4billion fraud

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Feb 26: The founder of cryptocurrency investment platform BitConnect, an Indian national, has been indicted on charges of orchestrating a global Ponzi scheme worth \$2.4 billion, federal prosecutors said.

According to court documents, Satish Kumbhani (36) of Hemal in Gujarat misled investors about BitConnect's "Lending Program". BitConnect reached a peak market capitalisation of \$3.4 billion, the Department of Justice said.

"This indictment alleges a massive cryptocurrency scheme that defrauded investors of more than \$2 billion," US Attorney Randy Grossman for the Southern District of California said Friday. Kumbhani is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and price manipulation, operation of an unlicensed money transmitting business and conspiracy to commit international money laundering. If convicted of all counts, he faces a maximum total penalty of 70 years in prison.

Under the "Lending Program", Kumbhani, who is at large, and his co-conspirators touted BitConnect's purported proprietary technology, "BitConnect Trading Bot" and "Volatility Software", as being able to generate substantial profits. They guaranteed returns by using investors' money to trade on the volatility of cryptocurrency exchange markets.

CCEA okays clubbing all coal e-auctions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 26: The government Saturday approved offering of dry-fuel by coal companies, including state-owned CIL, through a common e-auction window instead of sector specific auctions. The approval was given during a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In a statement, the coal ministry said CCEA has approved "offering of all the non-linkage coal by coal companies through one e-auction window of CIL (CIL)/Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL)."

Besides, the discretion presently vested in coal companies for allocating coal to different end use sectors will be eliminated. Further, the coal companies will be able to establish coal gasification plants by availing coal from their own mines. It shall help in developing clean coal technology in the country, it added. This e-auction will cater to all the sectors, namely power sector and non regulated sector (NRS), including traders. Coal would be offered through this auction in place of the present system of sector specific auctions.

"The above will be subject to CIL/SCCL meeting the coal linkage requirements against existing linkages and do not impact the cur-



Due to the move, market distortions would be removed and single rate for all the consumers will evolve in the e-auction market

It will increase operational efficiencies and lead to an increase in domestic coal demand

Clubbing of the e-auction windows would not involve any additional cost to the coal companies

rent linkages to power and non-power consumers at contracted prices," it said.

"Coal offered through the single e-auction window shall be transport mode agnostic with default option being through rail mode," it added.

However, coal may be lifted by the consumers through the road mode/other modes depending upon their choice and suitability without paying any additional charges or discount to the coal companies.

Long-term allotment of coal by CIL/SCCL, without affecting the supplies against existing coal linkages, to their own gasification plants will be allowed at prices as may be decided by the coal company. However, the taxes, duties, royalty etc shall be paid by the coal companies on the notified prices of coal for power sector. CIL also has ambitious coal production plans for the future with an aim of producing 1BT of the dry fuel by 2023-24.

Nepal-India agree to inject more money in energy sector

NEPAL IS CURRENTLY ALLOWED TO EXPORT ONLY 39 MW OF PROJECT POWER TO THE INDIAN ENERGY EXCHANGE MARKET. NEPAL ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY (NEA) HAS ALSO PROPOSED TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL 814 MW PROJECT ELECTRICITY TO ENTER THE MARKET

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kathmandu, Feb 26: Nepal and India have agreed to build new projects by injecting joint investment in the hydropower sector. As per the agreement reached at Nepal-India Energy Joint Meeting, a joint technical team will be formed to carry out the study as per the proposal made by India.

In the meeting that started in Kathmandu Wednesday and ended Thursday, the two countries agreed to build more transmission lines, complete the transmission lines that are under construction and proposed new cross-country trans-

mission lines, completion of Arun 3 hydropower project and energy export and import.

According to a press release issued by the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Nepal and India have agreed to form a joint technical team consisting of three members from each country to construct a large hydropower project.

An official who participated in the meeting said that the same committee will give necessary suggestions on the joint investment that Nepal and India can make in hydropower and transmission lines. The committee will submit a re-



port on which hydropower projects will be jointly invested and which transmission lines will be constructed and expanded to suit them.

During the meeting, Nepal had requested for approval of various proposals submitted by Nepal Electricity Authority to export

FUTURE-AMAZON DISPUTE

Reliance takes over Future Retail stores

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 26: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd has taken over the operations of at least 200 stores of Future Retail and has offered jobs to its employees after the Kishore Biyani-led group failed to make lease payments to landlords, sources said Saturday.

Reliance Retail, the retail arm of the oil-to-telecom conglomerate, had in August 2020 agreed to take over the retail and logistics business of the Future Group for ₹24,713 crore but the deal could not be closed as Future's warring partner Amazon went to courts citing violation of some contracts. Future denies any wrongdoing.

Future has more than 1,700 outlets, including the popular Big Bazaar stores, and has not made lease payments for some of its outlets. Facing closure, Reliance transferred the leases of some stores to its step-down subsidiary, RRVL and sublet them to Future to operate the stores, the sources said.

In addition, a majority of inventory at these stores was being supplied by Reliance Jiomart as a cash-strapped FRL could not clear dues to existing suppliers. Reliance will likely replace Big Bazaar signages and branding from these stores with its own brand.

Amazon has argued that Future violated the terms of a 2019 deal the companies signed when the US e-commerce giant invested \$200 million in a Future Group unit.



Sources said several landlords had approached Reliance as Future Retail Ltd (FRL), which is neck deep in losses, was unable to pay rent

Amazon's position has been backed by a Singapore arbitrator.

Without confirming or denying the takeover of its stores, Future Retail Ltd in a stock exchange filing said, "The shareholders are aware that FRL is going through an acute financial crisis. The company has defaulted on its loan servicing and as already informed, the account of the company has been classified as NPA by the banks."

Future Group's 19 companies operating in retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing would be consolidated into one entity - FEL - and then transferred to Reliance.

BIZ BUZZ

UCO Bank MD & CEO visited Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar: Soma Shankara Prasad, MD & CEO of UCO Bank, made his maiden two-day visit to Bhubaneswar Zone February 23. During his visit he met the state Chief Secretary & Additional Chief Secretary cum Development Commissioner the same day. He presided over the 165th & 166th SLBC meeting the next day i.e. February 24. In the meeting, he expressed his sincere thanks to the Odisha Government for the initiatives taken in vaccination of the people of Odisha in general & bankers in particular. He urged the bankers to ensure achievement under Annual Credit Plan. He also requested the State government to instruct their Line Department to assist bankers in NPA recovery. He also made a visit to Puri Main Branch, Ashoka Market Branch, Odisha Secretariat Branch and Rasulgah Branch. He visited business units of some existing & potential customers. In a press meet, he informed that UCO Bank is planning to open around 200 new branches pan India during the financial year 2022-23.



SGB's next series at ₹5,109/gram



New Delhi: The issue price for Sovereign Gold Bonds' (SGB) next series has been fixed at ₹5,109 per gram of gold. According to the Finance Ministry, the Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme 2021-22 (Series X) will be opened for subscription during the period February 28-March 4, with settlement date of March 8. "The Government of India in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India has decided to allow discount of ₹50 (rupees fifty only) per gram from the issue price to those investors who apply online and the payment is made through digital mode," the ministry said Friday. "For such investors the issue price of Gold Bond will be ₹5,059 per gram of gold."

electricity to India before the coming rainy season. "There has been consensus between the two sides that India would give approval for Nepal's proposal to export power to India from various hydropower projects in Nepal at the earliest as per India's

Indian officials agreed that they would accelerate the approval process before the wet season to help Nepal export power to India

CHIRANJEEVI CHATAUT | JOINT SECRETARY AT THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY, WATER RESOURCES AND IRRIGATION, NEPAL

existing rules on power trade," the ministry said in a press statement Thursday.

Exporting more power to India in the upcoming monsoon season was one of the agenda items of the joint secretary-level Joint Working Group and secretary-level Joint Steering Committee meetings between the two countries held Wednesday and Thursday, respectively, in Kathmandu. The meeting was chaired by Devendra Karki, Secretary, Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation and Alok Kumar, Secretary, Ministry of Power, Government of India.

INDIA CLINCH T20I SERIES

IYER, JADEJA SIZZLE AS HOSTS ROMP HOME IN STYLE BEATING SRI LANKA BY 7 WICKETS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dharamsala, Feb 26: The in-form Shreyas Iyer (74 n o, 44b, 6x4, 4x6) continued to impress with his dazzling strokeplay and powered India to a series-clinching seven-wicket victory over Sri Lanka in the second T20 International on a chilly Saturday evening here. Ravindra Jadeja (45 n o, 18b, 7x4, 1x6) also played his part as he blasted the opposition bowling to all parts of the park. The two put on an unbeaten stand of 58 runs in just 4.1 overs to take India home in an emphatic manner.

Earlier Sanju Samson (39, 25b, 2x4, 3x6) also played his part to put India in strong position. He and Iyer put on 84 runs for the third wicket to set up the platform for an Indian victory.

India lost skipper Rohit Sharma (1) and Ishan Kishan (16) early on, but that did not prevent Iyer from leading India to their 11th consecutive T20I victory. Sri Lanka had earlier scored 183 for five in their 20 overs.

The early departure of Rohit gave an ideal opportunity to Iyer to showcase his talent and he did not disappoint. He played shots all round the wicket treating the Sri Lankan bowlers with contempt.

Earlier Sri Lankan skipper Dasun Shanaka (47 n o, 19b, 2x4, 5x6) played a blazing knock to take his side to an imposing total. However, in the end it was not sufficient enough as India romped home with 17 deliveries to spare to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

Shanaka's knock gave the Sri



Shreyas Iyer played a match-winning knock for India



Ravindra Jadeja hammered the Sri Lankan bowlers

PTI PHOTOS

Lankan innings momentum after opener Pathum Nissanka's (75, 53b, 11x4) knock had set up the platform for the assault. Nissanka's partner Danushka Gunathilaka (38, 29b, 4x4, 2x6) also batted well and the two put on 57 runs for the opening stand.

However, Sri Lanka wouldn't have got to what they eventually

managed had it not been for Shanaka's blitzkrieg. Such was the assault that the Indian bowlers conceded 72 runs in the last four overs.

However, Lankan openers got their acts together as the innings progressed with Gunathilaka, especially taking on the Indian bowlers. Gunathilaka's first authoritative shot of the match came when

he played Bumrah though the covers for a boundary in the third over. Nissanka welcomed Yuzvendra Chahal (1/27) with a boundary, rocking back to cut the leg-spinner through the cover point region, but the visitors were still not able to get the run rate they were looking for.

However, from a poor 32 for no

loss after the six power play overs, Sri Lanka got a move-on with Gunathilaka clobbering Ravindra Jadeja (1/37) for 18 runs in an eventful ninth over. Jadeja was hit for two sixes and a four as the floodgates opened. But Jadeja had the last laugh when, trying to go for one too many, Gunathilaka played one high up in the air towards long-on was caught by and Venkatesh Iyer.

Using his resources well, skipper Rohit got another breakthrough

BRIEF SCORES

Sri Lanka 183 for 5 (Pathum Nissanka 75, Dasun Shanaka 47 n o, Jasprit Bumrah 1/24, Yuzvendra Chahal 1/27) lost to India 186 for 3 in 17.1 overs (Shreyas Iyer 74 n o, Ravindra Jadeja 45 n o) by seven wickets.

when Charith Asalanka (2) was trapped in front of the wicket by Chahal. Kamil Mishara (1) too got out cheaply, falling to Harshal Patel's slow off-cutter. But Nissanka found an able ally in Shanaka, adding 58 quick runs for the fifth wicket to prop up their team.

Rohit was all praise for the baters. "I think it was pleasing to see for us the middle-order coming out and performing. It is good to see those guys taking the responsibility and finishing off games. To finish the way they did was really good," Rohit said after the match. In spite of India leaking runs in the death overs, Rohit said he did not want to be harsh on the bowlers. "We restricted the opposition for the major part of the innings. It was a good pitch to bat on," Rohit said.

Raj banking on youth, experience

TEAM COMPOSITION FOR WC DONE, SAYS SKIPPER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Christchurch, Feb 26: Captain of the Indian women's cricket team Mithali Raj feels youngsters like Shafali Verma and Richa Ghosh have shown that they have the ability to compete at the highest level. She said that the last few ODI series have helped the team figure out their composition ahead of women's ODI World Cup next month.

India tried out some new talents in the series against South Africa, England, Australia and New Zealand ahead of the World Cup beginning March 4 in New Zealand.

"The talent that we got last year, we've tried some of them in the squad. Most of them have shown that they have the ability to play at this level like Richa (Ghosh), Shafali (Verma). Then there are pace bowlers like Meghna Singh and Pooja Vastrakar," Mithali said on the second day of the captains' opening media conferences.

"They all have been given good game time and those series have really helped them and me as a captain to find out where they fit into the composition of the team. I definitely know my playing composition for the first couple of games. I look forward to giving game time to all the core players during the warm-up games and also to those players who will get opportunity at some point in the World Cup," added the Indian skipper.

The veteran batter said that the team need to have a mix of experience and youth to do well in tournaments.



I tell all the young players to go out and enjoy the big stage. I do not want them to feel the pressure. The World Cup is new start for them"

MITHALI RAJ

"We do have an experienced core group from last edition. Most of them, even the youngsters who recently got into the side, had the opportunity of playing in leagues. That gives them exposure other than bilateral series," Mithali pointed out. "When you go into big events you depend on experience and not just youth. Having both together is a good mix," Mithali added.

Preparing for a record sixth appearance at an ICC event, Mithali said she is looking to continue her rich vein of form. "As far as me personally, I am happy with the way that I've been scoring runs. I would love to continue the form into the World Cup," she said.

India will begin their World Cup campaign March 6 against arch rivals Pakistan.

SHORT TAKES

BCCI disappointed, may question Saha

New Delhi: The BCCI may seek an explanation from veteran keeper-batter Wriddhiman Saha about his recent outburst targeting president Sourav Ganguly and head coach Rahul Dravid after being dropped from the Indian team. The BCCI feels he violated the protocols for centrally-contracted players. It has been learnt that Saha, who is Group B of central contracts with an annual retainer of ₹3 crore, is in violation of clause 6.3. "A player shall not make any comments about the game, officials, incidents that happened in the game," the clause states.

Bronze for Nandini

New Delhi: Indian boxer Nandini (+81kg) finished with a bronze medal in the 73rd Strandja Memorial Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria. She went down 0-5 to former World Champion Lazzat Kungeibayeva of Kazakhstan in the semifinals played late Friday night. India are guaranteed of two more medals as former youth World Champion Nikhat Zareen (52kg) and Nitu (48kg) have reached the finals of their respective categories.

Kiwis in trouble

Christchurch: New Zealand were 157 for the loss of five wickets in reply to South Africa's first innings score of 364 at stumps on the second day of the second Test here Saturday. There position would have been worse had it not been for a sixth wicket unbeaten stand of 66 runs between Colin de Grandhomme (54 batting) and Daryll Mitchell (29 batting). Pacers Kagiso Rabada (3/27) and Marco Jansen (2/48) shared the five wickets between them. Earlier the South Africa innings was propped by a ninth wicket stand of 62 runs between Jansen (37) and Keshav Maharaj (36).

Emphatic triumph

Vasco: Kerala Blasters FC (KBFC) kept their semifinal hopes alive with a clinical 3-0 win over struggling Chennaiyin FC in their ISL match here Saturday. Jorge Pereyra Diaz (52nd, 55th), returning to the side after serving a one-match suspension, scored a brace in the space of three minutes before Adrian Luna (90th) sealed the issue for Kerala with a world-class goal from a free-kick.

ODISHA STARE AT INNINGS DEFEAT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 26: Odisha were staring at an innings defeat Saturday in their Elite Group D Ranji Trophy encounter against Saurashtra at stumps on the third day. After being bowled out for 165 in their first innings in reply to Saurashtra's mammoth total of 501 at the Sardar Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad, Odisha were asked to follow on. When the day ended, Odisha were 38 for two, still 298 runs behind with eight wickets in hand. Only a miracle can save them from a defeat when the game resumes Sunday.

In the second innings, Odisha have lost the wickets of Anurag Sarangi (7) and Debashis Samantray (9). At stumps Shantanu Mishra (19 batting) and skipper Subhranshu Senapati (2 batting) were at the crease.

They will really have to come up with something special if Odisha have to save the game. Mishra got a century in the last match, so he

again has to produce the goods.

Earlier in Odisha's first innings, Saurashtra fast bowlers Dharmendrasinh Jadeja (4/48) and Jaydev Unadkat (4/50) wreaked havoc. The two bowled in tandem for long spells, not allowing the opposition batters to settle down.

BRIEF SCORES: Saurashtra 501; Odisha 165 (Rajesh Dhupar 51, Dharmendrasinh Jadeja 4/48, Jaydev Unadkat 4/50) and 38 for 2 (Shantanu Mishra 19 batting). Match to continue.

The two reduced Odisha to 78 for six before a seventh-wicket stand of 66 runs between Rajesh Dhupar (51, 76b, 7x4, 2x6) and Abhishek Raut (29) gave some form of respectability to the team's total. However, once Raut was dismissed by Unadkat, the remaining wickets fell in a heap.

Dhupar tried to put on as many runs with the tail-enders, but then he also fell to Jadeja, caught by Chetan Sakariya in the deep.

Eves, men script exciting wins

HOSTS FASHION MAGICAL TURNAROUND IN BOTH MATCHES AGAINST SPAIN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 26: The Indian women's hockey team continued their unbeaten run at the FIH Pro League by registering a hard-fought 2-1 win over Spain at the Kalinga Stadium here Saturday. The men's team on the other hand scripted an exhilarating turnaround to defeat their Spanish counterparts 5-4 after being 1-3 down at half time and 1-4 down with 20 minutes to go for the game.

Harmanpreet Singh (15th-penalty corner and 60th-penalty stroke), Shilanand Lakra (41st-field goal), Shamsher Singh (43rd-penalty corner), Kumar Varun (55th-penalty corner) were the architects of the Indian victory. Spain scored through Pau Cunill (14th) and Marc Miralles (20th, 23rd, 40th minutes). In the women's game, World No. 6 Spain took the lead in the 18th minute through a field goal from Marta Segu. However, India, ranked ninth in the world, responded immediately through a field strike from Jyoti before Neha Goyal stunned the Spaniards in the 52nd



Indian players celebrate after Neha Goyal's winning goal against Spain at the Kalinga Stadium, Saturday

PHOTO BIKASH NAYAK

minute with another field goal.

Spain dominated proceedings early and earned a couple of penalty corners that were well defended by the Indian eves. The hosts managed to breach the Spanish defence on a few occasions, but failed to score.

Three minutes into the second quarter, Spain stunned the Indians when Segu scored through a counter-attack after sending India captain Savita on the wrong foot from a one-on-one situation.

Two minutes later the Indian eves were back on level terms. Jyoti made a solo run from a counter-attack, dribbled past a couple of defenders and scored from a difficult angle to get her maiden international goal.

The Indians came out with more purpose after the change of ends. Eight minutes from the final hooter, Neha found herself at the right place at the right time inside the circle to score and help India win.

Rafa performs an encore

SPANIARD CONTINUES HIS DOMINATION OVER WORLD NO.1 MEDVEDEV



JOB WELL DONE: Rafa Nadal throws up his hands in delight after beating Daniil Medvedev at the Mexico Open, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

AGENCIES

Acapulco, Feb 26: Rafael Nadal beat Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 6-3 here Friday to reach the final of the ATP Mexico Open tennis tournament. It was Nadal's second successive win over the World No. 1 after having defeated the Russian in the final of the Australian Open. Nadal pushed his perfect 2022 record to 14-0, but it wasn't as simple as the scoreline might suggest. The Spaniard powered through

the first set without facing a breakpoint and broke Medvedev in the opening game of the second. However, in the fourth and sixth games of the set, Nadal had to save 11 breakpoints on his serve.

"I played some amazing tennis on the breakpoints," said Nadal. "The second set was very emotional. Daniil was playing very aggressive - drop shots, winners. It was a very difficult set. I feel lucky to win that set, because he had a lot of chances," Nadal added.

Russian players plead for peace

LONDON: Two of Russia's top-10 tennis players - World No. 1 Daniil Medvedev and No. 7 Andrey Rublev have expressed their despair with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. They have said that they want peace. "In this moment, you understand that tennis sometimes is not that important. Being a tennis player, I want to promote peace all over the world. It's just not easy to hear all this news," the 26-year-old Medvedev said. Rublev also pleaded for peace, writing, "No war please" on the camera after defeating Hubert Hurkacz of Poland to reach the final of the Dubai Tennis Championships Friday night.

Nadal will face Cameron Norrie in the final. Norrie pushed his winning streak to eight straight matches with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece.

Nadal has won all three of his career meetings with Norrie - at the Australian Open, Barcelona and Roland Garros in 2021. But he said Norrie has made big strides since then. "His level of tennis is huge," Nadal said. "He improved a lot at the beginning of last year, and this year he continues. It's going to be a big challenge," the Spaniard added.

Poland opt out of WC Qualifiers against Russia

AGENCIES

Warsaw, Feb 26: Polish and Bayern Munich footballer, Robert Lewandowski has backed the Polish FA's decision to not play their 2022 FIFA World Cup play-off with Russia in Moscow March 24. The winners of that match would have either played Sweden or the Czech Republic for a place in the finals. Cezary Kulesz, the president of the Polish football federation said Saturday on Twitter: "No more words, it's time to act. Due to the escalation of the aggression of the Russian Federation towards Ukraine, the Polish national team do not intend to play the play-off match against Russia."

It was a decision supported by Lewandowski. "It is the right decision! I can't imagine playing a match with the Russian national team in a situation when armed aggression in Ukraine continues. Russian footballers and fans are not responsible for this, but we can't pretend that nothing is happening," the captain of the Polish football team said.

The executive board of the IOC had Friday urged all international sports federations to relocate or cancel their sports events currently planned in Russia or Belarus.

UEFA has shifted the men's Champions League final from Russia to Paris and Formula 1 has cancelled the Russian Grand Prix.

Spurs hammer Leeds

AGENCIES

London, Feb 26: The beautiful madness that once fuelled the Leeds United of Marcelo Bielsa has gone. Its conviction, defiance and intoxication - all has disappeared into thin air. Those qualities have been replaced by something that flits between ordinariness and alarming fragility and it is carrying the maverick Argentine manager and his team on a trajectory that appears to be leading them back down to the Championship.

Tottenham Hotspur notched up an emphatic 4-0 win Saturday over Leeds United, but the margin could have been in double digits also if one takes into account the number of chances they created. The goals were scored by Matt Dogerty (10th), Dejan Kulusevski (15th) Harry Kane (27th) and the talismanic Son Heung-min (85th). In between the

third and fourth goals, Spurs had at least five gilt-edged opportunities to put the ball into the opposition goal, but failed to utilise those.

The victory took Spurs to seventh position on the points table with 42 points from 25 games. But more importantly it enabled them to overcome the rough ride that they have been going through at present.

Leeds, who were trounced 0-6 by Liverpool last Wednesday, have now conceded 20 goals in their last five games.

Kane, just as he was against City, was breathtakingly good. He scored one - a beautifully assured and technically accomplished volley - and created one for Son.

In another match played on the day, Manchester United were held to a goalless draw by lowly-placed Watford. Cristiano Ronaldo had a goal turned down.

Son Heung-min (left) and Harry Kane are happiness personified after the former's goal against Leeds United, Saturday

