



BHUMI'S SCRUTINY

Actor Bhumi Pednekar says 'Badhai Do' would have made big bucks at box office if it was released now

LEISURE P2



IRAN MARKS REVOLUTION ANNIV

Iran celebrates the 44th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution amid nationwide anti-govt protests

INTERNATIONAL P10



INDIA FACE PAK TODAY

Harmanpreet Kaur-led India look to hit the straps in their T20 World Cup campaign opener against arch-rivals Pakistan

SPORTS P12

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 312 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12 | 2023

12 PAGES + SUNDAY POST | ₹5.00

SHORT TAKES

Af activist shortlisted for Nobel Peace Prize



Kabul: When the Taliban seized power in August 2021, hundreds of women's rights activists fled Afghanistan, fearing reprisals from the militant group. But Mahbouba Seraj, one of the most prominent rights campaigners in the country, refused to leave, even though she holds a US passport, the media reported. Despite intimidation from the Taliban, the 75-year-old has continued to advocate for the rights of women and girls and operate a network of shelters for women fleeing domestic abuse. Radio Free Europe (RFE)/Radio Liberty (RL) reported. Seraj's work and courage were recognised when she was shortlisted for the Nobel Peace Prize earlier this month. She was nominated jointly with Narges Mohammadi, the jailed Iranian human rights activist and lawyer.

Cuttack man among 4 AQIS ultras convicted

New Delhi: A Delhi court has convicted four operatives of Al-Qaida in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), including Abdul Rehman, who was arrested from Paschimachhcha village in Jagatpur area of Cuttack for hatching conspiracy to commit terror acts across the country and recruiting members for the terror group. Special judge Sanjay Khanagwal convicted Rehman, Mohd Asif, Zafar Masood and Abdul Sami, saying the prosecution was able to prove its charges against them under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. The court may hear the argument on quantum of sentence February 14.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The nation wants to know who has inspired you to use these recycled apparels?

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX	37.4°C	35.0°C
	MIN	17.8°C	19.0°C
Humidity		72%	81%
Rainfall		Nil	Nil
	Forecast	Mainly clear sky	



ENTHRALLING DAREDEVILRY: Indian Air Force's aerobatic team 'Sarang' performed during the full dress rehearsal of Aero India 2023 at Yelahanka air base in Bangalore, Saturday

2 HAL staffers in CBI net over 'data leak'

Nasik team of the Central investigating agency takes the accused duo to an undisclosed location where they are being interrogated

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Feb 11: Two officials of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) at Sunabeda in this district were reportedly picked up by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials Saturday, on alleged charge of leaking classified data of the Centre-owned agency. It is suspected that they leaked the information after allegedly being honeytrapped. The incident came to the fore during a raid by CBI sleuths from Nasik at HAL's Sunabeda unit. According to sources in the know of the development, the accused include a senior official of the aerospace and defence establishment. A laptop and hard disk were reportedly seized from their possession. The two have been taken to an undisclosed location where they are being interrogated. The development has spread panic among the HAL employees. However, Sunabeda HAL's deputy general manager (DGM) Bhawani Shankar Shah said this is a rumour and nothing of this sort has happened. Reports said that HAL is currently involved in designing and

HONEYTRAPPING CASE



manufacturing of fighter jets, helicopters, jet engines and marine gas turbine engines, avionics, software development, spares supply, overhauling and upgrading of Indian military aircraft. Notably, September 15, 2021, a special squad of the Balasore Police led by the Eastern Range IG picked up five contractual employees at Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) from the main gate of its integrated test range (ITR) for questioning over espionage charges. Out of them, four accused were working at the launch pad-3 of ITR, Chandipur. The intelligence reports then stated that the accused were honey-trapped and receiving international calls mostly from Pakistan-

- It is suspected that the two employees leaked the information after allegedly being honeytrapped
- Sunabeda HAL's DGM Bhawani Shankar Shah, however, said this is a rumour and nothing of this sort has happened

Rajasthan border areas and they had passed secret information to foreign agents. The woman had honey-trapped them after promising to marry two of the accused and assured another to visit his Chandipur residence. After befriending one of the accused, the Pakistani woman had expressed her interest to visit the DRDO's ITR for which she had sought more information. The accused was sharing vital information regarding defence installation with the woman via Whatsapp, informed police. The arrested contractual employees included two AC operators, one diesel generator operator and one gate-keeper besides the permanent staff, a driver of the ITR Director.

RICE KEY TO FOOD SECURITY: MURMU



Prez Droupadi Murmu inaugurating the 2nd Indian Rice Congress at CRRI

The President underscores the need for preserving traditional varieties of rice and saving soil from excessive use of chemical fertilisers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Feb 11: President Droupadi Murmu Saturday said that rice is the cornerstone of food security in the country and a key factor of the nation's economy. The President said this while inaugurating the Second Indian Rice Congress at ICAR-National Rice Research Institute, here in Odisha. "Though India is the lead-

ing consumer and exporter of rice today, the situation was different when the nation got Independence... those days, we were dependent on imports to meet our food requirements," she said. Praising the National Rice Research Institute (NRRI), the President said: "If the nation could overcome that dependency and has become the largest exporter, a lot of credit goes to the NRRI. It has contributed immensely to India's food security and also in improving farmers' lives." She also said that in the last century, as irrigation facilities expanded, rice came to be grown in new places and found new consumers. **Contd...P4**

₹22.52cr fine on pvt firm for illegal mining

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 11: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has slapped a penalty of ₹22.52 crore on a private firm engaged in National Highway-16 expansion project for illegally extracting minor minerals in Balasore district. The firm was alleged to have violated several environmental guidelines while extracting minor minerals for widening of Bhadrak-Balasore stretch of the National Highway. The State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) has been asked by the apex green body to recover the amount and utilise the same in restoration of environment in the district. "Further action may be taken for recovery of assessed compensation in accordance with law. The recovered amount may be utilised for restoration of environment in accordance with the District Environment Plan of the area, supplemented by such other plan as may be found necessary, with the approval of the State PCB," ordered NGT. Following the directions of the NGT, the Regional Officer of SPCB at Balasore inspected the spot to check compliance of rules by the private firm and suppliers of minor minerals for the project. On December 22, 2022, the SPCB submitted its report along with the assessment of environmental compensation which stood at ₹22.51 crore. Notably, complainant Alaya Samantary had alleged that the firm procured huge quantities of different minor minerals like soil/earth/murram, sand and stone aggregates from suppliers who don't have any official approval to lift minor minerals. The contractor firms had reportedly not obtained any Consent to Establish (CTE), and Consent to Operate (CTO) certificate from the SPCB for the mining.

US DOWNS OBJECT FLYING OVER ALASKA

REUTERS

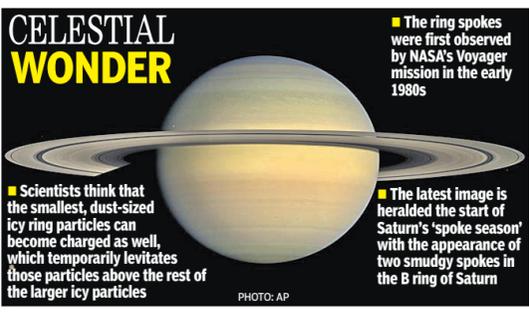
Washington, Feb 11: A US F-22 fighter jet Friday shot down an unidentified object flying high over Alaska, US officials said, less than a week after the military brought down a Chinese balloon that had flown across the United States. A Sidewinder missile downed the latest craft, which was about the size of a small car, said US Brig. Gen. Patrick Ryder, the Pentagon's chief spokesperson. "We don't know who owns this object," said White House spokesperson John Kirby, adding that it was unclear where it began its flight. President Joe Biden ordered the shootdown, which was announced from the White House. **Contd...P4**

Hubble captures onset of Saturn's 'spoke season'

As the autumnal equinox of Saturn's northern hemisphere draws near, the spokes are expected to become increasingly prominent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Feb 11: In a latest image of Saturn captured by National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA's) Hubble Space Telescope, the appearance of spokes on the planet's rings heralded the start of a new 'spoke' season, according to a statement by NASA. Scientists will be looking for clues to explain the cause and nature of the spokes, the statement said. The suspected culprit for the spokes is the planet's variable magnetic field, the statement said. Planetary magnetic fields interact with the solar wind, creating an electrically charged environment. On Earth, when those charged particles hit the atmosphere this is visible in the northern hemisphere as the aurora borealis, or northern lights, NASA said. Scientists think that the small-



CELESTIAL WONDER

- The ring spokes were first observed by NASA's Voyager mission in the early 1980s
- The latest image is heralded the start of Saturn's 'spoke season' with the appearance of two smudgy spokes in the B ring of Saturn
- Scientists think that the smallest, dust-sized icy ring particles can become charged as well, which temporarily levitates those particles above the rest of the larger icy particles

PHOTO: AP

sphere of a planet, the space agency said. As the autumnal equinox of Saturn's northern hemisphere May 6, 2025, draws near, the spokes are expected to become increasingly prominent and observable, the statement said. The latest image captured by Hubble is heralded the start of Saturn's "spoke season" with the appearance of two smudgy spokes in the B ring, one of the rings, of Saturn, the statement said. The ephemeral features don't last long, but as the planet's autumnal equinox approaches, more will appear, the statement said. The ring spokes were first observed by NASA's Voyager mission in the early 1980s. The transient, mysterious features can appear dark or light depending on the illumination and viewing angles, the statement said. NASA senior planetary scientist Amy Simon, head of the Hubble

Outer Planet Atmospheres Legacy (OPAL) program said, "Thanks to Hubble's OPAL program, which is building an archive of data on the outer solar system planets, we will have longer dedicated time to study Saturn's spokes this season than ever before." NASA's Hubble Space Telescope has observation time devoted to Saturn each year, thanks to the OPAL program, and the dynamic gas giant planet always showed something new, said the space agency. Saturn's last equinox occurred in 2009, while NASA's Cassini spacecraft was orbiting the gas giant planet for close-up reconnaissance, the agency said in the statement. With Cassini's mission completed in 2017, and the Voyager spacecrafts long gone, Hubble is continuing the work of long-term monitoring of changes on Saturn and the other outer planets, the space agency said. **Contd...P4**

INDIA THUMP OZ BY AN INNINGS AND 132 RUNS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagpur, Feb 11: A wily Ravichandran Ashwin blew away a panic-stricken Australia with a fifer as India dismantled visitors' second innings in a single session to win the opening Test by a comprehensive innings and 132 run margin, here Saturday. After taking a massive 223-run first innings lead, India decimated Australia for just 91 in 32.3 overs with the Test match finishing inside three days at VCA stadium in Jamtha. It's rare that an Australian innings folds inside one session. After Axar Patel's career-best 84 and Mohammed Shami's entertaining 37 took India to a commanding first innings total of 400, Ashwin (5/37) literally mauled the Australians with the new ball, tak-



ing his 31st five-wicket haul in Test cricket. The Australian batters once again made the cardinal mistake of playing the pitch rather than the bowler and looked utterly confused on whether to defend or attack. The Indian innings showed that demons were in the minds of Australian batters and not in the 22-yard strip. **MORE P12**

leisure



CAMERON ENJOYS INDIAN FILMS FOR FAMILIAL ASPECT

Hollywood filmmaker James Cameron has said that he enjoys how Indian films focus familial relationships. Recalling his talk with SS Rajamouli, he added that watching *RRR* made him analyse what he likes about Indian films.

RAPPER KIERNAN 'AKA' FORBES KILLED IN NIGHTCLUB SHOOTING

South African rapper Kiernan Forbes (35), known professionally as AKA, has been killed in Durban, South Africa. 'Well-known rapper', believed to be AKA, was fatally shot outside a popular night spot on Durban's Florida Road.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
Someone new in your life is going to make you smile; remember, however, that it doesn't always have to be fur and diamonds. A song sung straight from the heart makes a greater impact, says Ganesh. Today's the right time to go out and do things which will make you proud later.

TAURUS
This day you will be inclined to act tough and pick up a fight with everyone whom you are likely to encounter, warns Ganesh. Those who know you well will be at a loss to make anything out of your belligerent attitude and may not be able to keep up with you for too long.

GEMINI
Today, your enthusiasm for sports and outdoor activities is palpable. According to you, variety is the spice of life. You will keep on jumping from one venture to another. You will establish a good rapport with your bosses and colleagues.

CANCER
It is likely that you will reach an important milestone in life today. Keep in mind that your success may be a cause of envy for a few people, some of whom may want to harm you. You are left with two choices: either try to help them out of their troubles and miseries, or prepare for a battle.

LEO
It is a good day to renew old acquaintances and make new relationships. Your friends and relatives will probably visit you today. A jovial feeling will pervade your home. You may throw a grand party for your guests, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Logic as well as emotions will hold sway in your relationships today. Emotionally you will feel a little confused and will swing between your feelings and what is actually expected of you. However, finally you will pay more heed to your inner voice rather than depending on the views of others. Ganesh says your gut feelings are very strong.

LIBRA
Ganesh advises you not to take stress about small issues or matters. To avoid tension and to gain mental peace it is advised you perform yoga or meditation. There will be pressure put on you regarding certain matters at the work-front. You should take decisions regarding critical matters only after carefully weighing the pros and cons.

SCORPIO
Retail therapy with your loved ones is a perfect recipe to have a good time! You will be more than willing to buy things of their choice. Hagglng will be a trait you have closed today as you go about being lavish in your expenses, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Tedious day in store for you as hectic work is likely to keep you on toes; this is not-so-good-news. And well, it's time for some good news now. You will do so much running around for your work, that you will actually shed a few kilos of weight. Celebrate by treating your taste-buds, but with low-cal food!

CAPRICORN
Normally, others, especially colleagues get jealous of one's success, but yours is a different case. They will not only motivate you, but also guide you while you take up new projects and assignments. Not everyone is blessed with such cooperative colleagues, says Ganesh. Those of you who wish to change their current job, better wait for a while as times are not favouring you, today.

AQUARIUS
God helps those who help themselves. You have experienced this plenty of times as your efforts have been paid off. While your colleagues at work may pass negative comments at your work, your boss will not have any complaints with you.

PISCES
You will be able to come up trumps against the competition today. You should be wary of hidden enemies, for they might be involved in slandering you. It is best to reach out to others and make friends before they take it upon themselves to hinder your progress. Apart from this, no other significant event is indicated today, says Ganesh.

Bhumi on *Badhai Do's* box office success

Mumbai: Rajkumar Rao and Bhumi Pednekar starrer *Badhai Do* completes one year of its release today. Besides raking in the big bucks at the box office, *Badhai Do* was a hit when it dropped into the digital space. The film reigned supreme on the No 1 spot on the top 10 most viewed releases on OTT. Bhumi swept major awards for her sensitive performance as a lesbian girl in the film. Through *Badhai Do*, the actress wanted to raise her voice for the LGBTQIA+ community and their rights in India. "I have never considered myself to be just an actor. I have great respect for the medium of cinema. I think films can have a cultural and societal impact and through most of my films, I have tried to start a conversation about the need to understand causes and issues and maybe look out for a realistic solution to it. Through my films I try to have a conversation with audiences, the people of India, about things that matter," she says. The film released at the peak of COVID-19 when major theatrical centres were shut, theatres were running at 50% capacity and there were no night shows. Yet *Badhai Do* continued to pull people to the theatres. "I think the film would have done so much more box office wise if it had released now, with COVID-19 subsided," says Bhumi. AGENCIES

Nobody knows action genre better than Anand: SRK

Mumbai: Superstar Shah Rukh Khan is elated with the blockbuster success of *Pathaan* and credits director Siddharth Anand for creating a "fun, good looking and technically forward" action film. The film which released on January 25, is inching closer to Rs 900 crore mark on the global box office. SRK credited Anand and producer Aditya Chopra for the film's record breaking success at the box office. "I think this genre of film nobody knows better than Siddharth. He knows this kind of cinema very well. I just love the world that Siddharth makes", the superstar said in a behind-the-scenes video released by the makers. "It's an action film that is close to my heart. I think it is made with a lot of goodness by a lot of good people... I think it's cinematic, which is the call of the day. It's a film you want to watch on a big screen," he added. AGENCIES

Urvashi confirms being part of *Kantara 2*

Mumbai: Actress Urvashi Rautela took to social media to announce that she will be a part of *Kantara 2* starring Rishab Shetty. Urvashi took to Instagram, where she shared a picture posing with Rishab, who also directed the film. "#KANTARA 2 @rishabshettyofficial @hombalefilms loading #RS," she wrote as the caption. *Kantara* stars Rishab as a Kambala champion who is at loggerheads with an upright forest officer Murali (played by Kishore). The story is set and filmed in Keradi in coastal Karnataka. On the work front, Urvashi was recently seen in the song *Boss Party* alongside megastar Chiranjeevi in the film *Waltair Vereyya*. Urvashi will next be seen with Ram Pothineni. She will also be Randeep Hooda's co-star in *Inspector Avinash*. IANS

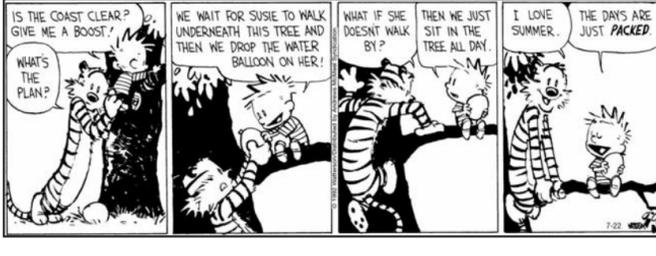
Imtiaz Ali's *Tamasha* to re-release in theatres for V-Day week

Mumbai: Ranbir Kapoor and Deepika Padukone starring 2015 romantic drama *Tamasha*, directed by Imtiaz Ali, is all set for a re-release in cinemas to celebrate Valentine's week. *Tamasha* is a film that portrayed the essence of love in modern times from a whole new perspective. It is all set to hit the theatres across the nation with its release in all the PVR cinemas. Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment took to their social media and shared the poster of *Tamasha* while announcing the re-release of the film in the caption with: "This Valentine's week, celebrate their love story with your loved one! *Tamasha* re-releases in all @pvr cinemas official near you!" Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment was established by Sajid Nadiadwala in 2005. The production house currently has *Bawaal* and *Satyaprem Ki Katha*. IANS

PEANUTS



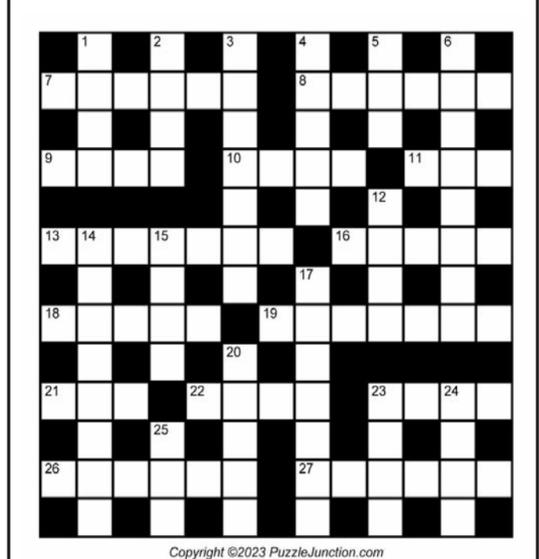
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Hollow wood
 - 8 Aircraft locale
 - 9 Spoof
 - 10 Nimble
 - 11 Weep
 - 13 Salutation
 - 16 Malevolence
 - 18 Brood hen
 - 19 Theatrical poster
 - 21 Peruke
 - 22 Ambush
 - 23 Disconnect
 - 26 Man of the cloth
 - 27 Golf scores
 - Down**
 - 1 Boxing decision
 - 2 Wild goat
 - 3 Eat a meal
 - 4 Word after eye or pie
 - 5 Roadhouse
 - 6 Documentary storyteller
 - 12 Heroic
 - 14 Qualified
 - 15 Secret message, perhaps
 - 17 Passed on
 - 20 Dress
 - 23 Exhort
 - 24 Human action
 - 25 Globe or eyeball

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

C	H	E	E	R	U	P	M	I	S	E	R	
H	M	O	A	O	E	E						
A	P	P	L	E	R	E	T	I	R	E	S	
S	A				T	V	I					
M	O	T	O	R	S	C	O	O	T	E	R	S
H	U	L	I	N	E							
R	A	T	W	I	N	E	B	U	S			
U			F	A	E							
B	E	A	S	T	O	F	B	U	R	D	E	N
I	F	F	E	R								
T	A	F	F	E	T	A	B	L	E	N	D	
I	N	I	K	I								
N	I	X	E	S								
L	O	B	S	T	E	R						

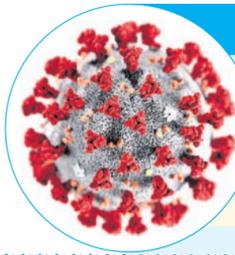
SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

National Lok Adalat being organised in Puri, Saturday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	67,73,78,151	64,99,14,743	67,81,126
India	4,46,83,994	4,41,51,424	5,30,750
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

Cuttack's Abdur Rehman among 4 operatives of AQIS convicted



The Special Cell of Delhi Police had arrested Abdur Rehman, a resident of Cuttack, on charges of radicalising youths for terror activities December 16, 2015

Delhi Police claimed that Rehman was suspected to have international links in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Dubai

The court is likely to hear argument on quantum of sentence February 14 and the convicts face a maximum punishment of life imprisonment

by advocates MS Khan and Qausar Khan, that the prosecution failed to prove the case against them.

The court directed their release on a personal bond of Rs 10,000 each. The court had in 2017 framed charges against the accused, while it discharged another accused Syed Anzar Shah in the case.

The Special Cell of Delhi Police had claimed that Rehman, a resident of Paschimkacha in Cuttack, ran a madrasa in Uttar Pradesh where several students were enrolled and he allegedly tried to radicalise them for terror activities.

It had also claimed that Masood was propagating terror agenda of AQIS among the youths and trying to attract them towards the group.

While Asif was held from Seelampur in northeast Delhi, Rehman was arrested from Jagatpur area of Cuttack December 16, 2015, police had said.

The police had claimed that Rehman was suspected to have international links in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Dubai.

It had alleged that the other co-accused were also trying to radicalise youths and propagating the terror agenda of AQIS in India.

The police had quizzed the accused persons in its custody about the conspiracy and funding of AQIS and also to ascertain the identity of their associates.

Prez pays obeisance at Lingaraj Temple

At Lord's abode

Accompanied by daughter Itishree Murmu, the President made her way to the revered shrine amid tight security arrangements, as a large crowd gathered outside to have a glimpse of the First Citizen of the country

Before entering the sanctum sanctorum, Murmu offered prayers at different temples within its premises, including Maa Bhubaneswari, Maa Parvati, and Siddhi Binayak

The temple trust gifted a photograph of the 'Damodar Beshha' of Lord Lingaraj to the President



President Droupadi Murmu, along with others, returns after paying obeisance to Lord Lingaraj in Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar, Feb 11: President Droupadi Murmu Saturday paid obeisance at the 11th century Lingaraj Temple here on the second day of her Odisha visit.

Accompanied by daughter Itishree Murmu, the President made her way to the revered shrine amid tight security arrangements, as a large crowd gathered outside to have a glimpse of the First Citizen of the country.

Before entering the sanctum sanctorum, Murmu offered prayers at different temples within its premises, including Maa Bhubaneswari, Maa Parvati, and Siddhi Binayak.

"President Droupadi Murmu paid obeisance to Lingaraj Mahaprabhu in Bhubaneswar.

The President greeted the people while walking to the Lingaraj temple, considered a masterpiece of Indian architecture," a post on her official Twitter handle said.

She spent around 40 minutes at the Lingaraj Temple.

In the visitor's book, Murmu wrote in Odia how she was delighted after offering prayers to Lord Lingaraj, and wished for the well-being of the world.

Governor Ganeshi Lal and senior officials of the state government were also present at the

temple. The temple trust gifted a photograph of the 'Damodar Beshha' of Lord Lingaraj to the President.

She then proceeded to Cuttack to inaugurate the 2nd Indian Rice Congress at the ICAR-National Rice Research Institute.

New Delhi, Feb 11: Abdur Rehman of Cuttack, who was arrested in December 2015, was among the four operatives of Al-Qaida in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) who were convicted by a court here for conspiracy to commit terror acts across the country and recruiting members for the terror group.

Special judge Sanjay Khanagwal convicted Abdur Rehman, Mohd Asif, Zafar Masood and Abdul Sami, saying the prosecution was able to prove its charges against them under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

The court is likely to hear argument on quantum of sentence February 14 and the convicts face a maximum punishment of life imprisonment.

Mohd Asif, Zafar Masood, Mohd Abdur Rehman and Abdul Sami are held guilty for commission of offence punishable under Section 18 (conspiracy for terror act) and 18B (recruiting persons for terrorist act) of UAPA and are convicted thereunder, the judge said.

The court, meanwhile, acquitted two suspected AQIS operatives Syed Mohd Zishan Ali and Sabeel Ahmed in the case. The court accepted the submissions of both the accused, who were represented

Gopal undergoes narco-analysis

Bhubaneswar, Feb 11: Gopal Das, accused of murdering Health Minister Naba Kishore Das, underwent narco-analysis at Gandhinagar in Gujarat Saturday, sources said.

The narco-analysis test was conducted on the dismissed police ASI after a thorough medical examination and polygraph test at the Directorate of Forensic Science in Gandhinagar.

After the narco-analysis, the ex-ASI was kept under observation. It takes some time to regain complete consciousness after the complex test, sources said.

The Crime Branch (CB) had taken Gopal to Gujarat February 8. It has taken him on remand for five days for detailed investigation and tests following permission from the court.

Although Gopal has reportedly confessed to have killed the minister, the CB is yet to ascertain the motive behind the assassination. In order to ascertain the motive behind the crime, the investigating agency is conducting the tests.

Earlier, a team from the Central Forensic Science Laboratory of New Delhi had conducted forensic psychological assessment and layered voice analysis test on Gopal at Jharsuguda. A special medical board, comprising psychiatry doctors, also conducted a detailed study of the mental health of the accused in Jharsuguda and the report is awaited.

CM nod to Padampur CHC

Bhubaneswar, Feb 11: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday approved a Community Health Centre (CHC) at Paikmal in Bargarh district, a statement said.

Stating that it was another step towards qualitative universal health care, the statement said that the existing primary health centre (PHC) at Paikmal would be upgraded to CHC.

With this upgradation, people of the area would get the services of medical specialists along with better pathological test facilities. The health centre would

also have better infrastructure and allied facilities, Health Secretary Shalini Pandit said.

During the Padampur bypoll, the CM promised a CHC in Paikmal and district status to Padampur.



The President, Governor Ganeshi Lal, CM Naveen Patnaik and Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra at BPIA in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

Murmu leaves for Delhi after 2-day Odisha visit

BHUBANESWAR: President Droupadi Murmu left for New Delhi by a special Indian Air Force aircraft Saturday after the end of her two-day visit to Odisha.

Governor Ganeshi Lal, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik saw her off at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here. Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra was also among others present at BPIA.

Murmu arrived here Friday. On the first day of her two-day visit to the state, she addressed a function organised to observe the found-

ation day of Jnanaprabha Mission and graced the second convocation of the Rama Devi Women's University in the Capital city.

She also inaugurated the new Abhisek Hall on the Raj Bhawan premises.

On Saturday, she offered prayers at the Lingaraj temple in the temple city of Bhubaneswar and later addressed the second Indian Rice Congress at ICAR-National Rice Research Institute at Bidyadharpur in Cuttack before leaving for New Delhi.

Odissi enthral audience



Bhubaneswar, Feb 11: The second evening of 19th Dhauli-Kalinga Mahotsav at Dhauli here witnessed a beautiful blend of Indian classical and folkdance forms with renowned artists showcasing Odissi music, dance and traditional martial art form.

The mega event is being organised jointly by Odia Language, Literature and Culture department, Orissa Dance Academy, Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and Art Vision.

'Musical extravaganza' by

Guru Dhaneswar Swain, Agnimitra Behera and group of Vadya Vani Gurukul and Shivagni of Bhubaneswar, which marked the opening performance of the second evening, and mesmerising Odissi performance by Orissa Dance Academy, Nrutya Naivedya and Odissi Dance Creations enthralled the audience.

Traditional martial art form by Binash Mishra and group of AOMAA Gurukul in Malkangiri marked the concluding performance of the mega event's second evening.

Tiny California mouse in Guinness record

A tiny California mouse now has a big title after winning a Guinness World record for longevity.

A Pacific pocket mouse named Pat — after "Star Trek" actor Patrick Stewart — received the Guinness approval Wednesday as the oldest living mouse in human care at the ripe age of 9 years and 209 days, the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance announced after a certification ceremony.

Pat was born at the at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park on July 14, 2013, under a conservation breeding program, the alliance said.

The Pacific pocket mouse, which weighs as much as three pennies, is the smallest mouse species in North America and gets its name from cheek pouches the animals use to carry food and nesting materials, the wildlife alliance said.

The mouse once had a range stretching from Los Angeles south to the Tijuana River Valley but the population plunged after 1932 because of human encroachment and habitat destruction, the alliance said.

The mouse was thought to be extinct for 20 years until tiny, isolated popu-



lations were rediscovered in 1994 in Dana Point in Orange County but the species remains endangered, the alliance said.

In 2012, the alliance began a breeding program to help save the mouse from extinction. Last year, the alliance recorded 117 pups born in a record 31 litters. Many of the mice will be reintroduced to the wild this spring, the alliance said.

A new population of Pacific pocket mice was established in Orange

County's Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and the mice began breeding without human assistance in 2017, the alliance said.

Though it doesn't receive the publicity of larger and more charismatic species, the Pacific pocket mouse is critical to its ecosystem because the mice disperse the seeds of native plants and their digging encourages plant growth, the alliance said.

"This recognition is so special for our team, and is significant for the

species," said Debra Shier, who established and oversees the conservation programme. "It's indicative of the dedication and incredible care we as an organization provide for each species, from the largest to the very smallest."

Sabse Pehle Life Insurance

Plan Your **LIFETIME** GUARANTEED MONTHLY INCOME NOW with our Enhanced Annuity Rates

Annuity can start after minimum deferral period of One Year.

2 YEARS, 4 YEARS, 6 YEARS, 12 YEARS

LIC'S NEW JEEVAN SHANTI

A Non-Linked, Non-Participating, Individual, Single Premium, Deferred Annuity Plan

12 YEARS MAXIMUM DEFERMENT PERIOD for Annuity plan

Also Available Online

Fixed Annuity Rates from inception of Policy | Multiple Annuity options | Increasing Death Benefit during deferral period

Our WhatsApp No. **8976862090** Say 'Hi'

Download LIC Mobile App 'LIC Customer' | Visit: licindia.in | Call Centre Services (022) 6827 6827

For details, contact your Agent/Nearest LIC Branch/visit www.licindia.in or SMS YOUR CITY NAME to 56767474

Follow us: [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/licindia) | [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1m31111111111111111111) | [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/licindia) | LIC India Forever | IRDAI Regn No.: 512

LIC भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Har Pal Apke Saath

BEWARE OF SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND FICTITIOUS / FRAUDULENT OFFERS. IRDAI is not involved in activities like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums. Public receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.

DISTRICT JUDGES' CONFERENCE

Odisha a gem in the crown of India's culture: Justice Khanna

Justice Muralidhar informed that the District Judiciary delivered 1,61,263 judgments in 2022 compared to 72,806 in 2021

emphasized on proactive approach of the Judges and said neutrality should not result in indifference towards the weaker pitted against the stronger.

Justice Muralidhar, said it was due to the suggestions of the District Judges in the last year's Conference that prompted the High Court to take steps for rationalization of case loads among the trial courts across the state resulting in disposal of 5,50,392 cases by the District Judiciary in 2022 - an increase of 116.02 per cent on the disposal of 2,38,588 cases in 2021.

He also informed that the District Judiciary has delivered 1,61,263 judgments in 2022 compared to 72,806 in 2021. Speaking about the Annual Report he said it was an attempt to make the report card of the judiciary available to the public to ensure accountability and transparency.

The Chief Justice announced that Bolangir, Nayagarh and Deogarh were found to be the Best Performing Districts in Zone 'A', 'B' and 'C' respectively for 2022.

In his address, Justice Subhasis Talapatra, Chairman of the District Judges' Conference Committee said the district judiciary is the bedrock of judicial institution. He said frivolous litigations contribute in the arrears of cases to a large extent and the judiciary is to be vigilant to check such litigations at the entry level.

Authority (OSLSA) and Odisha Judicial Academy (OJA) attended the inauguration. Annual Report, 2022 of Orissa High Court was released on the occasion.

Delivering the inaugural address Justice Sanjiv Khanna described Odisha as a gem in the crown of India's culture. Discussing various aspects of justice administration with special reference to the criminal justice administration Justice Khanna referred to the constitutional provisions namely Articles 14, 21, 22(1), 38 and 39(A) as the mainstay of criminal justice in India. Justice Khanna



ANNUAL FEST: Chief Guest Satyakam Mishra lighting the lamp to inaugurate the Annual Function of Raghunathjew Degree College at Deulasahi in Cuttack, Saturday

Quadruple joint replacement surgery by City AIIMS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 11: In a first-of-its-kind surgery in the state, AIIMS Bhubaneswar has conducted successful quadruple joint replacement surgery in a crippled patient, the institute said Saturday.

A 37-year old female from Aul block of Kendrapara district, with impaired movements in the hip joints and knees due to rheumatoid arthritis, had been admitted to



City AIIMS recently. After evaluating the patient, the team of doctors planned for

the challenging task of conducting surgeries of both the hip and knee joints in one setting. Orthopedic surgeons Sujit Kumar Tripathy and Mantu Jain assisted by Sritam Swarup Jena led anesthesia team performed the surgery in which replacements of the hips were performed first followed by the knees.

The surgery was completed in three hours with the patient being able to walk after two days' rest.

AIIMS sources claimed that previously only one case has been reported from AIIMS Delhi in which an Odia patient was operated with all four joint replacements in one setting.

AIIMS Bhubaneswar executive director Ashutosh Biswas said, "I congratulate the team for managing such a complex case and providing mobility to the patient. Such surgeries are rare and must be carried out with extreme caution."

CONTINUED FROM P1

Rice key to food...

Speaking about the challenges faced for cultivation of rice, the President said: "Even as rice has broken new ground, there are places where traditional varieties are facing challenges. Thus, the task before us today is to find the middle path - preserving and conserving traditional varieties on one hand, and maintaining ecological balance on the other."

Another challenge is to save the soil from excessive use of chemical fertilisers, which are considered necessary for modern rice cultivation, she added.

Murmu further said: "As rice forms the bedrock of our food security, we must consider its nutritional aspects too. Large sections of low-income groups depend on rice, which is often the only source of daily nutrition for them."

Murmu said: "ICAR-NRRI has developed India's first high protein rice, called CR Dhan 310 and released a high-zinc rice variety, called CR Dhan 315."

Development of such bio-fortified varieties is an ideal example of science in the service of society. More and more of such efforts would be needed to support the increasing population amid a changing climate, she said.

Earlier, Saturday morning, the President along with her daughter, Itishree Murmu, visited Shree Lingaraj Temple here on the second day of her Odisha visit.

She first visited the Bindu Sagar lake before proceeding to the temple. After visiting different temples in the premises of the Lingaraj temple complex, Murmu signed the visitors' book and wished for the well-being of the world. After completing her two-day tour, the President returned to Delhi. Governor Ganesh Lal and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik were there to see her off at the airport.

Hubble captures...

"Despite years of excellent observations by the Cassini mission, the precise beginning and duration of the spoke season is still unpredictable, rather like predicting the first storm during hurricane season," Simon said. While our solar system's other three gas giant planets also have ring systems, nothing compares to Saturn's prominent rings, making them a laboratory for studying spoke phenomena, the statement said.

Whether spokes could or do occur at other ringed planets is currently unknown, NASA said. "It's a fascinating magic trick

of nature we only see on Saturn - for now at least," Simon said.

Hubble's OPAL program will add both visual and spectroscopic data, in wavelengths of light from ultraviolet to near-infrared, to the archive of Cassini observations, NASA said.

Scientists are anticipating putting these pieces together to get a more complete picture of the spoke phenomenon, and what it reveals about ring physics in general, the statement said.

US downs object...

Another US F-22 fighter jet February 4 brought down what the US government called a Chinese surveillance balloon off the coast of South Carolina following its week-long journey across the United States and portions of Canada. China's government has said it was a civilian research vessel.

Some lawmakers criticised the president for not shooting down the Chinese balloon sooner. The US military had recommended waiting until it was over the ocean out of fear of injuries from falling debris.

The Pentagon and the White House declined to give a detailed description of the latest object, saying only that it was far smaller than the Chinese balloon.

US officials declined to speculate about what the object might be, even after a day of observation, raising questions about what kind of object could be so difficult to identify by experienced US pilots and intelligence officials.

The Pentagon said it was first detected Thursday using ground radars. F-35 aircraft were then sent to investigate. The UFO was flying at about 40,000 feet (12,190 meters) in a northeasterly direction, posing a risk to civilian air traffic.

The object was shot down off the coast of northeastern Alaska over frozen US territorial waters near the Canadian border. Officials said it would be far easier to retrieve pieces of the object from the ice than it was with the Chinese balloon, pieces of which sank in the ocean when it was shot down.

Ryder said American pilots who flew alongside the latest object before it was downed determined that no human was aboard. He added it was incapable of maneuvering and did not resemble an airplane. Ryder and other officials would not say whether it could simply be a weather balloon or another type of balloon. "It wasn't an aircraft per se," Ryder told a news briefing.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE

'Building capacity of women in space technology'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar Feb 11: On the occasion of International Day of Women and Girls in Science, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik asked people to celebrate immense contributions of women scientists of the nation. In his Twitter account he said Odisha is working for propagation of science education and capacity building of women & girls in space technology application and biotech.

On the occasion, the City Regional Science Center Saturday organized a programme 'Meet the Women Scientists' at the institute premises. In the event Shikha Verma, Prof. Institute of Physics and Ira Praharaj, Scientist, 'E',



ICMR, Regional Medical Research Centre were present.

As many as 100 girl students from various institutions of Bhubaneswar participated in the programme. The event was aimed at showcasing the thriving participation as well as contribution of

women in the field of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. The event started with a welcome address delivered by Soumen Ghosh, Project Coordinator, Regional Science Centre. It was followed by a brief talk by Ira Praharaj where she talked

about various aspects of science and briefed the significance of the event and inspired the participants to take up Science and Technology as their career path to meet the future aspirations of the nation.

Shikha Verma echoed similar kind of views. It was followed by a question answer session where the participants asked questions to the experts from a wide range of Science and Technology. The participants were elated to be able to participate in such kind of an event.

Regional Science Centre, Bhubaneswar will continue to conduct such kind of programmes to propagate science at the grass-root level of the society and keeping in mind the greater benefit of the student community.

Emissions from fertilisers could be cut down by 80 pc

Emissions from manure and synthetic fertilisers could be reduced by as much as 80 per cent, to one-fifth of current levels, according to a new study.

Researchers have quantified that two thirds of emissions from fertilisers take place after they are spread on fields, with one third of emissions coming from production processes, the study said.

The researchers, from University of Cambridge, UK, have calculated the carbon footprint for the full life cycle of fertilisers, the study said.

Fertilisers are responsible for approximately five percent of total greenhouse gas emissions, the first time this has been accurately quantified, and found that carbon emissions could be reduced to one-fifth of current levels by 2050, the study said.

Although nitrogen-based fertilisers are already known to be a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, this is the first time that their overall contribution, from production to deployment, has been fully quantified, the study said.

Their analysis found that manure and synthetic fertilisers emit the equivalent of 2.6 gigatonnes of carbon per year - more than global aviation and shipping combined, the study said.

Carbon emissions from fertilisers urgently need to be reduced; however, this must be balanced against the need for global



food security, the study said. According to the study, earlier research has estimated that 48 per cent of the global population is fed with crops grown with synthetic fertilisers, and the world's population is expected to grow by 20 per cent until 2050.

The Cambridge researchers said that a combination of scalable technological and policy solutions are needed to reduce fertiliser emissions while maintaining food security.

However, they estimate that if such solutions could be implemented at scale, the emissions from manure and synthetic fertilisers could be reduced by as much as 80 per cent, to one-fifth of current levels, without a loss of productivity.

The results are reported in the journal Nature Food.

"Incredibly, we don't actually know how many chemicals we produce globally, where they end up, where and how they accumulate, how many emissions they produce, and how much waste they generate," said co-author Dr Andre Cabreza Serrenho from Cambridge's Department of Engineering.

Serrenho and his co-author Yunhu Gao undertook a project to accurately measure the total impacts of fertilisers, one of the two main products of the petrochemical industry, the study said.

Of all the products made by the petrochemical industry, the vast majority, as much as 74 per cent, are either plastics or fertilisers, the study said.

"In order to reduce emissions, it's important for us to identify and prioritise any interventions we can make to make fertilisers less

harmful to the environment," said Serrenho. "But if we're going to do that, we first need to have a clear picture of the whole lifecycle of these products. It sounds obvious, but we actually know very little about these things," said Serrenho.

The researchers mapped the global flows of manure and synthetic fertilisers and their emissions for 2019, along all stages of the lifecycle, by reconciling the production and consumption of nitrogen fertilisers and regional emission factors across nine world regions, the study said.

After completing their analysis, the researchers found that unlike many other products, the majority of emissions for fertilisers occur not during production, but during their use. "It was surprising that this was the major source of emissions," said Serrenho.

Researchers have quantified that two thirds of emissions from fertilisers take place after they are spread on fields

Fertilisers are responsible for approximately five percent of total greenhouse gas emissions

Manure and synthetic fertilisers emit the equivalent of 2.6 gigatonnes of carbon per year - more than global aviation and shipping combined, the study said

"But only after quantifying all emissions, at every point of the lifecycle, can we then start looking at different mitigation methods to reduce emissions without a loss of productivity," said Serrenho.

The researchers listed and quantified the maximum theoretical impact of different mitigation methods - most of these are already known, but their maximum potential effect had not been quantified.

Emissions from the production of synthetic fertilisers are mostly from ammonia synthesis, partly due to chemical reactions used in the production process.

The most effective mitigation at the production stage would be for the industry to decarbonise heating and hydrogen production.

Fertilisers could also be mixed with chemicals called nitrification inhibitors, which prevent bacteria from forming nitrous oxide.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jagdev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri-Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemana-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-977682449, 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.

VULNERABLE BHITARKANIKA

Will NCM, MISHTI be able to save mangrove forests?

Miniscule fund allocation under the schemes has raised question marks on the safety and preservation of mangroves leaving environmentalists concerned



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Feb 11: Absence of special allocation of funds under the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Income (MISHTI) scheme announced in the Union Budget for the 2023-24 financial year and reduction in National Coastal Mission (NCM) fund allocation in Budget will do more harm than good for the mangrove forests which are known as the protective wall against calamities.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman while presenting the Budget February 1, spoke about the benefits and utility of mangrove forests and announced the MISHTI scheme. However, the miniscule fund allocation under the scheme has raised question marks.

Researchers Kshitish Kumar Singh, Devi Prasad Sahu, Sarat Kumar Sahu, environmentalists Hemant Kumar Rout and Ashok Kumar Swain apprehend that if sufficient funds are not made available under the scheme then the mangrove forests in Kendrapara district would face destruction and

and the new MISHTI scheme has been launched, February 6. However, the budget in NCM has been reduced. Moreover, no special allocation has been made under MISHTI scheme which is likely to impact protection of the mangrove forests.

The Centre had allocated ₹27 crore in the 2021-22 FY for the NCM. According to Indian State of Forest Report-2021 these funds will be used in protection of mangrove forests spread over 4,992 sq km area and create more mangrove forests on 7,500 km-long coastline.

However, the budgetary allocation for the NCM was reduced to ₹25 crore in 2022-23 FY while this year it has been reduced to ₹12.50 crore.

While the centre is reducing the budgetary allocation for the NCM, it is also doing the same for MGNREGS. The survival rate of mangroves when grown by sowing seeds is 50 per cent while it is 60 per cent if done through plantation of saplings. A mangrove tree takes three years to achieve full growth.

Protection of mangrove forests has come under question mark as the MGNREGS and CAMPA funds are released annually. Moreover, the Bhitarkanika wetland is facing acute shortage of freshwater and the mushrooming of prawn gheries, industries and intrusion by Bangladeshi nationals has led to pollution, hindering the growth of new forests and destroying the existing forest cover.

The coastal erosion has remained unchecked and the low budgetary allocation is all the more likely to impact the existence of Bhitarkanika.

When contacted, DFO Sudarshan Gopinath Yadav said that special nursery has been established for preparation of mangrove saplings and plantation of saplings and their maintenance is being given the highest priority.

subsequently natural calamities will bring extensive damage.

They said that the Budget will impact the protection of mangrove forest in Bhitarkanika wetland. This wetland, spread in an area of 672 sq km, has 209.25 sq km of mangrove forest cover by 2019.

The mangrove forest here is deemed as a protective wall for Kendrapara district and a sanctuary for scores of wild and marine animals. The mangroves house rich bio-diversity and protect the land mass from natural calamities like cyclonic storms, floods and tsunamis.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the scheme will be implemented by converging Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) funds, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and other sources.

In reply to question on protection of mangrove forests, the Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Aswini Kumar Choubey said that a budget will be prepared under the NCM



ANNUAL FUNCTION: Girl students performed a dance at the annual function of Narayan Sobhaniya Sikshashram at Brundadeipur in Jenapur of Jajpur district, Saturday

Collector reviews Rangeilunda airstrip expansion works

POST NEWS NETWORK

Gopalpur, Feb 11: Flight services from the Rangeilunda airstrip situated at close proximity to the Berhampur University has been a long standing demand of the residents of the locality. Regarding this, Ganjam district Collector Dibyajyoti Parida along with the departmental officials reviewed the air strip development works, Friday.

Currently the air strip is only 975 metre long with 150 metre width and the run way is only 750 metre in length making it difficult for commencement of flight operation. For the expansion of the air strip, government and private land has been identified.

Land from the boundary up to 90 metre towards the hostel, 40 metre towards the University administrative block and 250 metre towards the Berhampur main road and nearly 30 metre from the Monarch Chowk boundary will be taken up for the expansion of the airstrip.



A letter had been sent to the Higher Education department regarding the requirement of 15 acres of the University's land for the project. The department has identified the land and replied to the Registrar of the varsity.

During the review, discussions were held regarding the development of Rangeilunda airstrip with improvements, the tender process for which has been completed and the need for surveying the technical aspects. The government will decide on operationalisation of the air strip as soon as its construction gets completed, the Collector said.

With the Collector, Berhampur sub-collector Ashutosh Kulkarni, land acquisition officer Umakanta Barik, DFO Amlan Naik, Works department superintendent engineer Tapan Panigrahi, India One airport official Rahul Kumar, NCC group commandant Sachin Gupta, engineer Nirmal Naik, assistant engineer Chinmaya Tripathy, junior engineer Laxman Marandi, Kanisi additional tehsildar Kuldeep Kumar, Karapalli revenue inspector Nirakar Sethi were present during the review visit.

Villagers snub construction of hydro-power project in Kotia

Residents of seven villages recently marched to the project site with weapons to oppose its construction

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pottangi, Feb 11: With Odisha and Andhra Pradesh caught up in an ugly imbroglio over their claim over Kotia panchayat under this block in Koraput district, a fresh row has erupted over the construction of a hydro-power project at Talaganjeipadar village in the panchayat, a report said Saturday.

Controversy broke out as residents of seven villages armed with sharp-edged weapons recently marched to the work site and opposed the construction of the hydro-power project at Talaganjeipadar village in the panchayat.

All the villagers -- starting from children and youths to the elderly -- were seen carrying sharp-edged weapons in their hands opposing the project, Friday.

Sources said that six persons from Tamil Nadu arrived with earth moving equipment last Sunday at Talaganjeipadar village. They pitched tents and started excavating the area under the hill with earth movers, Thursday. They were busy in their works when villagers reached the spot and questioned who had sent them and enquired on the purpose of their visit to



the area. They questioned whether it is Odisha government or the Andhra Pradesh government that has sent them to the area. Fearing backlash, the workers did not reply and instead stopped the works.

Notably, an Andhra team had visited the area December 28, 2021 and was identifying land for the hydro-power project. Some officials from Odisha also visited the place after learning about their arrival. Both the groups had had a heated exchange of words before the Andhra team abandoned the place and dispersed.

The villagers have alleged that seven villages in the area would be submerged and their forest land destroyed if the project comes up in the area. They have warned that they will not allow work on the project under

any circumstances. They demanded the district administration and the block officials to first talk to them before making any further move with the project. "We should be explained first on the benefits and losses arising out of the project," they said.

When contacted, Kotia sarpanch Liu Gemel said she is unaware of the development. She, however, said that no palisabha or gramsabha has been conducted before taking up the construction of the project. On the other hand, BDO Soumya Sarthak Mishra, despite being present at Kotia during the period, chose not to visit the spot and held talks with the aggrieved villagers. This raised question marks on the veracity of the project which has given rise to speculations in the area.

12 injured as bus carrying pilgrims rams into truck

Bhadrak: As many as 12 persons were injured, two of them critically, after a bus carrying pilgrims to Puri from Kolkata rammed a cargo truck plying in front of it on National Highway-16 near Juragadia under Bhandaripokhari tehsil in Bhadrak district late Friday night. The front portion of the bus which was carrying over 40 passengers was damaged as it hit the truck. Locals rushed to the spot and shifted the injured passengers to the district headquarters hospital in Bhadrak. On being informed, Bhadrak Rural police and Simulia police rushed to the spot and launched an investigation. Local police have registered a case in this connection. All the passengers in the bus are from West Bengal.

Miscreants loot ₹32 lakh from Balda SBI

Koraput: A gang of four miscreants reportedly looted a State Bank of India ATM at Balda and decamped with more than 32 lakh in cash Friday night, Nandapur sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) Sanjay Mohapatra said Saturday. The primary investigation suggests that four miscreants arrived at the ATM in two cars late Friday night and started cutting the machine using a gas cutter. After extracting cash from the machine, they tried to destroy evidence by burning the ATM machine. Sources revealed that the SBI officials had refilled the machine, Friday. According to the SDPO, police have already started investigation by deploying a special team in that area.

2 elephant tusks recovered; one arrested

Keonjhar: Eight pieces of elephant tusks weighing 10.16 kg were recovered from a smuggler near National Highway-20 near Melana village in Keonjhar forest range under Ghatagaon police limits, Saturday. The smuggler from Kendumundi area of Mayurbhanj has reportedly been arrested with seizure of eight pieces of two full-sized tusks. However, the police are still unaware about the source of the recovered items and have directed a probe into the matter. Sources revealed that the rapid uptick in death of elephants in recent years is now a matter of concern in Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts.

Rising appeal of traditionally produced brown rice

ITDA Sundargarh is incentivising women from local tribal communities to produce traditional husk lever pounded rice as part of the 'Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, Feb 11: A steady rise is seen in the demand for traditional and healthy food among informed citizens. Husk lever pounded rice, referred to as 'Dhinki Kuta Chaula' in Odia, is one of the most preferred grains by the connoisseurs.

Responding to the trend, the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Sundargarh is incentivising women from local tribal communities to produce traditional husk lever pounded rice, or brown rice (whole grain rice) with an aim to enhance their income avenues.

The programme is part of the 'Van Dhan Vikas Karyakram' (VDVK) which aims at creating substantial livelihood opportunity for members of various tribal communities by using their traditional knowledge and expertise.

Fiber-rich brown rice is sold at a premium in the market for its health benefits. ITDA is incentivising tribal women self-help groups (WSHGs) by providing them husk lever pounds, and weighing and packaging machines



to promote production of high value brown rice.

Eighteen VDVK units have been set up by ITDA Sundargarh in 9 blocks of the district. 300 women from 30 WSHGs each have been associated with every unit. So far, 600 husk lever pounds have been distributed among 4 VDVK units, benefitting 1,200 women. It is worth mentioning that the red outer layer of lever pounded rice is rich in nutrients like fiber, protein and iron. It also helps maintain cholesterol level in body.

"We are producing brown

rice by using the husk lever pound given to us by ITDA under the VDVK programme. The produce is giving us good returns and helping us cover household bills and children's education expenses," said Chanchala Naik, a beneficiary from Sahebdera village under Lephripara block.

The brown rice produced by VDVK members is weighed and packaged using machines before being dispatched for sale. The nutrition-rich rice is fetching three times the price of mill rice available in the local market. A steady rise in the demand for brown

rice has been witnessed due to its increasing preference by health conscious citizens.

"We have been given training by ITDA to produce brown rice from paddy using husk lever pound, and provided with machines required for weighing and packaging. We are getting good returns by selling the produce in the market and at fairs," said Pushpa Majhi, another beneficiary.

The proceeds from the sale of brown rice is not only helping tribal women in Sundargarh district become self-reliant, the income is also

helping them cover household expenses and children's education, apart from maintaining decent savings in banks. ITDA Sundargarh has been helpful in uplifting the living standards of tribal women in the district through this programme.

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସ୍ଥାବର ସମ୍ପତ୍ତି ନିୟାମକ ପ୍ରାଧିକରଣ

Odisha Real Estate Regulatory Authority

DSPL-447

NOTICE

In keeping with the provision enshrined under Section 11(2) of the Real Estate (Regulation & Development) Act, 2016 and also in the interest of the general public, it is mandatory on the part of all real estate promoters/developers to mention the website address of Odisha RERA (www.rera.odisha.gov.in) and registration number granted to the project in every advertisement for sale including billboards/hoardings etc.

Any violation of the above statutory provision shall invite penal action under Sec 61 of the Act with a fine up to five percent of the estimated project cost.

OIPR-13223/13/0008/2223

BLOCK-A1, 3rd Floor, Toshali Bhawan, Satya Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007

Bank of India
Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015

POSSESSION NOTICE
(Rule-8(1)) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Gopalpur Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower/ Guarantor/Mortgagor/Legal Heirs in the loan account given 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 Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor/Legal Heirs and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **possession** of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor/Legal Heirs in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **Bank of India, Gopalpur Branch** for an amount mentioned below with interest & expenses 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 redeem the secured assets.**

GOPALPUR BRANCH/ Name & Address of Borrower/ Guarantors/Mortgagor/Legal Heirs	Liabilities due as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice/ Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Property
Borrower: Mr. Sukanta Charan Sethy (Borrower of Home Loan), S/o: Late Santilata Sethy / Guarantor: Mr. Basanta Kumar Sethy (Guarantor of Home Loan) / Legal Heirs of Late Santilata Sethy (Mortgagor of Home Loan) are: 1) Mr. Sukanta Charan Sethy, 2) Mr. Basanta Kumar Sethy, 3) Mr. Bisanta Charan Sethy, 4) Mr. Hemant Kumar Sethy, 5) Mrs. Mamita Sethy, 6) Miss Meghana Priyadarshini Sethy (Grand Daughter of Late Santilata Sethy), 7) Mr. Soumya Ranjan Sethy (Grandson of Late Santilata Sethy), At: Elampur, PO.: Ramakrishnapur, PS.: Salipur, Dist.: Cuttack	₹ 22,80,927.13 + interest & expenses thereon	29.11.2022 / 09.02.2023	All that part and parcel of Land and Building situated over Khata No.: 355/78, Plot No.: 810, Area: Ac.0.135Dec., KISSAM: Gharabari at Mouza: Elampur, SRO: Salipur, Tahasil: Salipur, Tahasil No.: 451, PS.: Salipur, Dist.: Cuttack, standing in the name of Late Santilata Sethy , Bounded by North: Road, South: Ramachandra Bhoi, East: Road, West: Late Santilata Sethy

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 12.02.2023

Authorised Officer, Bank of India

FOCUS SELF-HELP GROUPS

BLUEPRINT FOR EMPOWERMENT



Women's self-help groups have contributed to India's extraordinarily sharp reduction in poverty, from 55.1% to 16.4% over the last 15 years

cate this success. The goals should be clear: In this case, to make credit accessible and affordable, build women's financial skills and credit history, and strengthen their financial security. And the various players must be resolute in their support. The closer you look at the details of the self-help groups in India, the more you see the dedication it took from all stakeholders – across economic sectors, states, and organised interest groups – to bring together the people, resources, and tools needed to succeed at this scale. Government agencies at both the federal and state levels were involved, along with banks and other financial institutions, researchers, and an extensive network of non-government and voluntary organisation partners working at the grassroots level in communities across India.

This formula of determination, collaboration, and political will can be applied to other stubborn barriers to gender equality. One of the more persistent challenges I hear from women, most recently during a visit to Dakar, Senegal, is that entrepreneurs also need business development services, skills-building, and access to markets and value chains. India's programme shows that this is feasible: Currently about 20% of self-help group members have these additional supports, and efforts are underway to promote women-owned cooperatives and businesses.

Everyone deserves the chance to live a healthy and productive life. My resolution for this year is to remain inspired by the determined efforts of individuals and by our collective capacity – as India's self-help groups' remarkable success have demonstrated – to innovate as we strive for a healthier, happier, more equitable world.

The writer is President of the Gender Equality Division at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

As we embark on a new year, I have been reflecting on "resolutions," and more specifically, what it takes for an individual or a society to be resolute in a world of endless challenges and obstacles. Throughout my career, I have seen many examples of triumph against the odds – extraordinary accomplishments that often begin with a small group of individuals seeking to solve a problem. In the best cases, local communities, government, and the private sector align and invest in programmes and policies that create more opportunities for these groups to flourish.

The extraordinary success of women's self-help groups in India represents one of the best-case outcomes. Established by women determined to build a brighter future for themselves and their families, these groups have thrived thanks to innovative financial and infrastructure support from the Indian government. With over 80 million women participating in 7.5 million such groups, India is fostering the world's largest community development programme, which is now a key component of the country's economy.

Women, especially in rural areas, face gender-based barriers to participating fully in their communities and building a livelihood. Many, unable to open a bank account or access credit, are dependent on informal loans from relatives, friends, or money lenders. Moreover, traditional family structures and social norms may constrain women from engaging in activities necessary to start or expand a small business.

Self-help groups were first formed in the mid-1980s to address these barriers by providing access to savings and credit so that women could earn a livelihood and lift themselves and their families out of poverty. The results speak for themselves: women's self-help groups have contributed to India's extraordinarily sharp reduction in poverty, from 55.1% to 16.4% (415 million people), over

the last 15 years.

Initially, new groups were dependent on members, though often impoverished, pooling what little money they had to get started. The Indian government stepped in to alleviate this hardship by providing unsecured loans without the need for a formal, registered business entity. Importantly, these loans are offered at a very competitive interest rate of 12%, which drops to 7% if a group repays its loans within 30 days of the due date. With this support, the average self-help group was able to borrow around ₹200,000 (\$2,500) each, and in 2021 the limit for collateral-free loans was increased from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

Over the past decade, more than \$60 billion has been made available to self-help groups in India and, cumulatively, women in these groups have saved an estimated \$6 billion. Access to low-interest loans continues to help an increasing number of women create sustainable sources of income, accumulate assets and savings, and build financial security. And individual group members are building more than their financial skills; they are also raising their self-confidence and influence within the community.

For example, a self-help group in Chak Singar Barari village in Bihar state was able to structure their enterprise so that each member is sent home with ₹3,000-4,000 per month. And each woman has her own story: Sunila Devi enrolled her children in private schools, Chitrekha Devi is working toward a bachelor's degree, and Pushpa Devi has started her own ambitious business renting mobile sound systems, which allows her to employ others.

Now multiply those stories by millions, and you can begin to grasp the full effects of these groups. As each woman contributes more to the household income, she gains more say in household decisions. And collectively they show what is possible when one of the most essential challenges to gender equality – increasing women's economic power – is addressed.

Ultimately, we know that increasing a woman's economic power bolsters her personal agency and empowers her to play a greater role in her family and in her community. India's government-supported self-help groups demonstrate the transformative effects of policy initiatives that are designed to meet the needs of marginalised women. The task now is to repli-



Anita Zaidi

THE EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS OF WOMEN'S SELF-HELP GROUPS IN INDIA REPRESENTS ONE OF THE BEST-CASE OUTCOMES



Aakar Patel

If we write up and pass laws specifically to harass then we must not be surprised by the results they produce

We find in others what is in us. If we always find mud around us, it proves that there is mud somewhere in us.

THE MOTHER



No Longer News

News is defined as "information about a recent event or recently changed situation." There is something missing in the definition and that is the filter that is applied to news. Things that are more important, more interesting, more relevant tend to get picked by news editors and news producers over things that are either seen as less interesting, less important or less relevant. Stories move from the front page to the inside pages and then, if similar incidents keep coming, they no longer become "news".

In the second part of the BBC documentary that this government is upset with I said something about the category of violence we call beef lynching. In all of my decades in journalism I had not come across a story of a beef lynching, and almost all of the violence on this issue has come to us after 2015. It was triggered by speeches made by the Prime Minister against what he called the 'pink revolution' and then the criminalisation of the possession of beef by BJP states, starting with Maharashtra and Haryana, triggering the violence.

The question is has that spate of violence ended? On 6 February a headline read "Many lynched by mob in Assam, locals protest arrests". The dead man, a Muslim, was accused of stealing a cow. This story did not make it to the news channels and there were no debates on it. There is no point in trying to convince them to do this. One can assume this is because media no longer thinks lynching of this sort is important or interesting or relevant.

The same day another story was reported with the headline "94% acquittal rate under Haryana's cow slaughter law in Muslim-dominated Nuh". One need not get into the details except to say that it is clear that the police is being used to victimise minorities. Another story, this time from Gujarat, came into prominence recently though it is from an event three months ago. A 22-year-old man was given life in jail because he was transporting cattle. Stories reporting this carried headlines which were quotes from the judge who gave the sentence. One was: "Religion is born out of Cow; Problems on Earth will be solved the day cow slaughter is stopped: Gujarat court".

The reason it took so long for the story to come out in English was that the judgement was passed in Gujarati and the local media for whatever reason did not take interest in the story. If reported it was likely on the inside pages because, once again, such things are no longer important, interesting or relevant. The interesting thing about all of these cases is the laws in which the burden of proof is reversed and the State presumes guilt rather than innocence. In the case of the 22-year-old, the law says that anyone found transporting a cow without a certificate from the government would be considered as guilty and carrying it for slaughter, "unless the contrary is proved thereto to the satisfaction of the concerned authority of officer".

The important thing here is not the judge's observations but the fact that on the face of it the judgement appears to be valid. If we write up and pass laws specifically to harass then we must not be surprised by the results they produce.

In 2019, a man in Gujarat, a Muslim again, was accused of slaughtering a calf and serving it at his daughter's wedding. The police could not prove that this had happened but they did not have to prove it. The law requires the accused to show that the meat consumed days or weeks or months earlier was not beef. This of course he could not do, and so the judge sentenced him to 10 years.

This was later reversed by the high court, which did not give any reason other than to say that it was using "judicial discretion". It is possible that the high court was embarrassed or uncomfortable by what was being done. But again, the fact is that the judge who sentenced the man was only following the law.

Now let us move past the incidents, if we can, and look at the larger picture. Are we, are the media having a debate on these laws themselves, which are absurd and designed to target and harm? This is a rhetorical question of course. There is no interest in such things and they have been going on now for far too long for us to assume that any interest will come. We are all right with inflicting cruelty on others and inflicting absurdity on all of ourselves.

What does this say about our society and our democracy? This is a deeper question but it doesn't have easy answers. Not many modern democracies have gone down this path before, setting it upon themselves to use law and media to target citizens.

It cannot be that there is no damage to our social fabric, and because of social media one is aware of the anxiety and trauma of the minorities as they face this onslaught.

The end-state that we are heading towards with this ideology, as I have written often before, is only more of the same. What has been happening over the last few years will continue to happen, but we will hear less and less of it because it is no longer news.

WISDOM CORNER

- Love and work are the cornerstones of our humanness. **SIGMUND FREUD**
- The time you enjoy wasting is not wasted time. **BERTRAND RUSSELL**
- It is more difficult to rule yourself than to rule a city. **JORDAN PETERSON**

WORDSWORTH

Forward

It's not a mistake for forward, though a typing error in an e-mail brought it to mind. The first part of this archaic word could at one time stand alone. Fro is based on Old Norse frá, from which we also get from. We now know it only in to and fro, which is a scaled-down form of the Middle English come toward and go froward. Froward means leading away. Old English also had forward in the same sense, though they later diverged. Forward retained its literal sense of direction – until it died out in the eighteenth century – whilst froward moved to the metaphorical. By the fourteenth century, froward was attached in particular to a person who figuratively moved away from others by doing the opposite of what was asked of them or what other people thought reasonable. A froward person was hard to deal with – obstinate, peevish, perverse or childish. Indeed, a difficult child was often said to be froward: *Human Life is, at the greatest and the best, but like a froward Child, that must be play'd with and humour'd a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep (An Essay on Poetry by Sir William Temple, 1690)*. That sense remained until froward slipped out of daily use in the latter part of the nineteenth century. If you read it today in a newspaper it's either in a quotation from an old work or a misprint for forward.

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Troubling trends in education

The NEP 2020 rightly recognises that education is fundamental in achieving full human potential and development of an equitable and just society. Five years earlier the SDG 4 had flagged that all countries must "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life long learning opportunity for all." PRATHAM, a well-known NGO, has been bringing out the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), a comprehensive report highlighting the achievements of different states in terms of enrolment, learning outcomes and facilities as against the various milestones earmarked by the RTE 2009 Act. The recently released ASER takes into account 616 districts, 1.9 lakh villages and around 7 lakh children. Some of the interesting findings have been that in terms of enrolment there has been hardly any reduction. In terms of attendance there are interesting inter-regional differences, with southern and western states having attendance of 80%, central and north-central states 50-60% and eastern states 60-70%.

There has been a dramatic drop in percentage of children going to private schools. As against 30.9%

in 2018, it has come down to 25% in 2022 clearly showing that due to the economic distress during the pandemic, many parents from low-income categories have shifted their children from private to government schools.

Despite supply of textbooks to government schools and complete involvement of parents to help out children, learning outcomes show distressing trends. In terms of the ability of reading by a grade III student of a grade I book the percentage has dropped from 27.2% to 20.5%. In terms of a grade III child's ability to subtract, the percentage has gone down from 28.1% in 2018 to 25.9% in 2022. This clearly shows the sharp dip in learning outcomes which was already at very low levels.

In terms of facilities, the percentage of usable toilets has gone up from 74% to 76% in 2022, while 56% of schools still don't have a proper library and 92% don't have access to computers. In Kerala, 20% of schools have computers, while in Odisha only 5% of schools have. Mid-day meal shows a robust trend of around 89% students being provided with hot, hygienic food.

The NEP 2020 had suggested that there is a need to integrate pre-

school education in Anganwadis with school education in public schools, with age 3 to 8 being considered as an integrated foundation stage for every child. The report noted with concern that the 27 lakh Anganwadi workers working in 14 lakh centres have to render 6 different services to children including nutrition, basic healthcare and preschool education. It notes with dismay that only 40% of these children are actually enrolled in Anganwadis for early childhood education. The quality of learning leaves a lot to be desired.

From the Kothari Committee recommendation in 1968 that 6% of GDP should be allocated to education, and Prof Amartya Sen's fervent calls to earmark a significant allocation for capability development, the current spending by the Centre and states shows a disturbing fixation at around 3.5% of GDP. On an average only 10% of total expenditure is earmarked by most states for education. Kerala and Delhi are outliers in this regard and spend close to 17-18% on improving school infrastructure and quality of training of teachers. Prof Lekha Chakravarty empirically shows that allocation to education has a better positive cor-

relation with Human Development Index than focusing on GDP growth.

Unless informal learning seamlessly segues into formal learning and the child by the age of 8 has basic foundational literacy and numeracy skills, the concept of demographic dividend is likely to degenerate into a demographic disaster. Many discerning observers believe that there are deep structural issues in our school education. The curriculum is often over ambitious and teachers ill-equipped to ensure that most children are in sync with the curriculum and the learning expectations. Given the fact that nearly 75% of children are getting left behind in our govt schools, there is a necessity to introduce catch up interventions in our public schools on an urgent basis.

The ASER 2022 report is a timely warning to the government to allocate enough for school education, rev up its quality to achieve universal foundation in literacy and numeracy and pave the path for a just and equitable India.

The writer is Professor Emeritus, KIIT University. Views are personal.



SN Misra

ON AN AVERAGE ONLY 10% OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE IS EARMARKED BY MOST STATES FOR EDUCATION

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Space tech boost

Sir, ISRO has successfully launched three satellites with the help of SSLV D2 (Small Satellite Launch Vehicle). The three satellites – EOS 07, Janus-1, and Azaadi SAT-2 – were launched into their intended orbits. Most importantly the Azaadi SAT-2 was designed by 750 girls guided by space kids. This was the first launch mission by ISRO in 2023. The success of this mission will also boost the confidence of the scientific community in the country. The launch took place in the Satish Dhawan space centre, Sriharikota. It only took 15 minutes to inject the satellites. ISRO has always set up new heights in terms of scientific achievements. The premier space organisation has planned several big projects in the coming years. Hopefully, this success will pave the way for the success of ISRO in the future which will bring a revolution in the Indian science arena and allow our country to reach new heights in space technology.

Deba Prasad Nayak, CUTTACK

Booming gig economy

Sir, It's remarkable to observe how swiftly the gig economy has expanded in India in recent years. As the workforce of today becomes more mobile, there has been a boom in the gig economy India currently has 7.7 million gig workers, according to NITI Aayog, and that number is expected to rise to 23.5 million by 2029-2030. 'Gig workers' are persons who carry out labour outside of the traditional employer-employee relationship, according to the NITI Aayog. The two subgroups of gig workers are platform workers and non-platform workers. When they interact with customers via online algorithmic matching platforms, such as websites or applications like Amazon or Uber, they are referred to as platform employees. Non-platform employees are the ones who work elsewhere than on these platforms. Construction workers, regular employees, and temporary workers without a technical focus are mainly included in this group. The government has also been considering methods to expand and assist the gig economy in the nation, and there may soon be a programme to provide loans to gig workers and budding businesses. As more people want to work flexibly, the gig economy is constantly growing. The entire ecosystem can benefit from the government's policies. To safeguard gig workers and guarantee that businesses are held accountable, the government should develop clear regulations and policies for the gig economy.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

national

of the day quote

Some day, they will say wind up LIC, banks and post offices; so where will the people go?



MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

The water of rivers of the Krishna Valley flowing west into the sea will be diverted to parched Marathwada after diversion through the Godavari valley



DEVENDRA FADNIS | MAHARASHTRA DEPUTY CM

The Delhi government will increase power generation capacity in the city by 6,000 MW in the next three years using renewable energy sources through various initiatives



MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

Karnataka HC stays CBI probe

Bangalore: In a relief to Karnataka Congress chief D.K. Shivakumar, the Karnataka High Court Friday issued a stay on the investigation against him in connection with a disproportionate assets (DA) case by the CBI. Shivakumar, who has recently expressed his displeasure over the notice to appear in the DA case to him by the Enforcement Directorate and to his daughter by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The High Court has issued a temporary stay till February 24 and directed the investigating agency to halt the investigation till then.

6-year-old girl raped, murdered

Shivpuri (MP): A 6-year-old girl was allegedly raped and murdered in Madhya Pradesh's Shivpuri district, police said Saturday. The incident took place in Badora village under Karera police station limits on Friday night. Police station in-charge Satish Chouhan said the girl's mother had taken her to a temple where a religious programme was underway. The girl got separated and her mother thought she must have returned home. But when she was found to be missing, a police complaint was filed. Her body was found behind the village's government school on Saturday morning with a piece of cloth stuffed into her mouth.

Bizman robbed

New Delhi: The Crime Branch of Delhi Police has arrested a 19-year-old polytechnic student along with a juvenile for allegedly robbing a Faridabad-based businessman at a gunpoint, an officer said Saturday, adding that the looted amount of Rs 50 lakh has been recovered from their possession. The accused, Aakash Sharma, a resident of Baghat district in Uttar Pradesh, along with his juvenile accomplice had robbed the businessman in Delhi's Jangpura Extension area on Friday.

Delhi LG, AAP govt's tussle intensifies



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 11: Delhi's Power department has removed the Arvind Kejriwal government's four nominees, including AAP leader Jasmine Shah, from the boards of power discoms and replaced them with senior officials, on the directions of Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena.

The action triggered a fresh confrontation between the Raj Niwas and the AAP government, with Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia terming the move "illegal, unconstitutional and contrary to the procedures" and accusing the lieutenant governor of not following the Constitution and Supreme Court orders.

Sources at the Raj Niwas said on Saturday that besides Shah, a spokesperson of AAP Naveen Gupta, the son of AAP MP N D Gupta, and other private persons "illegally" appointed as "government nominees" have been removed.

The Power department of the Delhi government issued an order removing the four nominees on Friday, following directions from LG Saxena.

The lieutenant governor's directions for removal of the government nominees came as an interim measure since the issue was referred by him for approval of the President which is still pending.

The ruling Aam Aadmi Party in a statement said the lieutenant governor does not have the power to issue such orders.

The sources at the LG's office,

meanwhile, said the finance secretary, power secretary and the MD of Delhi Transco will now represent the city government on the boards of the discoms.

AAP, however, said only the elected government has powers to issue orders on the subject of electricity.

The LG had invoked "difference of opinion" provision under Article 239AA of the Constitution of India after the Kejriwal government persisted upon their continuance as government nominees, despite "proven misconduct and maleficence", by allegedly benefiting the discoms to the tune of more than Rs 8,000 crore, the sources claimed.

Sisodia asserted there was no "scam" of Rs 8,000 crore as was alleged and challenged the LG to get the matter investigated by any central agency.

The LG in his file notings observed "the matter being urgent and sensitive in nature warrants expeditious action, under Rule 51 of the TBR 1993 read with Proviso to Article 239AA (4) of the Constitution, I direct that immediate action be taken to replace these four private persons with senior government officers as government nominees...Pending decision of Hon'ble President of India."

It was also mentioned by Saxena in his notings that the Delhi Cabinet decision for nominations on October 3, 2019 was "illegal" and contrary to the observations of then LG Anil Bajjal.

Haryana bans jeans, makeup for medical staff

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Feb 11: Makeup, "funky hairstyles", and long nails are out for medical and other staff at Haryana government hospitals, and so are T-shirts, denims and skirts, as the state is going to implement a dress code for healthcare professionals. Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij said Friday the dress code being prepared by the state government is in final stages.

The move to ban certain types of dresses drew mixed reactions from the medical fraternity with a doctors' body in Ambala asserting implementing a dress code would give staff a professional outlook, while a nurses' association said the government should have taken its opinion too.

Vij said dress code must be adhered to by the on-duty staff 24 hours a day, including on weekends, evenings and night shifts, he said, asserting the erring employees will be marked absent for the day. He said a hospital requires its employees to follow certain con-

The purpose of the dress code policy, Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij said, is to maintain discipline, uniformity and equality among the staff in government healthcare centres

duct, and a dress code is an essential component which gives the organisation a "professional touch".

"Funky hairstyles, heavy jewellery, accessories, makeup, long nails during working hours are unacceptable, especially in the healthcare centres," said minister Vij, a BJP leader. He said jeans of any colour, denim skirts and denim dresses are not considered professional dresses and, therefore, will not be permitted. The employees will have to wear a name badge declaring their designation. "Sweatshirts, sweatsuits, and

Indian man's body found under rubble in Turkey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kotdwar (Uttarakhand), Feb 11: An Indian national missing in Turkey since the massive earthquake on February 6 was found dead on Saturday in the rubble of a hotel where he was staying.

Vijay Kumar Gaud, who hailed from Uttarakhand's Pauri district and was working for a Bangalore-based company, had gone to Turkey on an official assignment. With his face crushed beyond recognition, Gaud was identified with a tattoo of the word "Om" on one of his hands, his family said here quoting Indian embassy officials.

Gaud was a resident of Padampur area in Kotdwar in Pauri district. His clothes had been found on Friday. "We inform with sorrow that the mortal remains of Shri Vijay Kumar, an Indian national missing in Turkey since February 6 earthquake, have been found and identified among the debris of a hotel in Malatya, where he was on a business trip," the Indian embassy in Turkey tweeted.

Gaud's wife and son, who were



Gaud's wife and son, who were hoping against hope for some positive news, were inconsolable as their worst fears had come true

Vijay Kumar Gaud, who hailed from Uttarakhand's Pauri district and was working for a Bangalore-based company, had gone to Turkey on an official assignment

hoping against hope for some positive news, were inconsolable as their worst fears had come true. Friends and relatives flocked to Gaud's house to express their condolences to the bereaved family.

His body will first be flown to Istanbul and then taken to Delhi.

It may take three days for his body to reach Kotdwar, family sources said quoting Indian embassy officials.

"Our deepest condolences to his family and loved ones. We are making arrangements for the earliest possible transportation of his mor-

tal remains to his family," the embassy said on Twitter.

Gaud worked for Oxy Plant India Pvt Ltd and was on an official assignment, his elder brother Arun Kumar Gaud said. "His phone rings but no one responds," Arun had said after his brother went missing. His wife and six-year-old son had last talked to him on the phone on February 5 and he was to return to India on February 20, he had said.

The Ministry of External Affairs had said Wednesday that an Indian was missing and 10 others were stuck but safe in remote regions following the quake. The number of Indians residing in Turkiye was around 3,000, out of which about 1,800 live in and around Istanbul, while 250 were in Ankara and the rest were spread all over the country, according to officials.

The hotel where Gaud was staying collapsed on the morning of February 6 when the 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit Turkey leaving behind a trail of death and destruction. Over 23,000 people have died in the region due to the temblor.



Labourers work at a brick kiln in India

PTI PHOTO

ED arrests son of YSR Congress MP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 11: The Enforcement Directorate has arrested Raghav Magunta, son of YSR Congress Party MP from Ongole Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy, in connection with its money laundering investigation into alleged irregularities in the Delhi excise policy case, officials said Saturday.

Raghav Magunta was taken into custody under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) on Friday evening, they said. He is expected to be produced before a local court, where the federal probe agency will seek his custody.

This is the ninth arrest in this case by the ED, and the third this week.

Arrested Gautam Malhotra, son of former SAD MLA from Punjab Deep Malhotra, and Rajesh Joshi, the director of an advertising company called Chariot Productions Media Pvt Ltd, earlier in the week.

ment healthcare centres.

"A well-followed dress code policy in a hospital not only gives an employee his professional image but also presents an elegant image of an organisation among the public," he said. All hospital staff working in clinical roles (medics and paramedics), cleanliness and sanitation, security, transport, technical, kitchen, field and other departments should be in a proper uniform during their working hours, the minister added.

Employees looking after non-clinical administrative work in hospitals shall wear only formals, said Vij. "Every employee is expected to wear neat, clean dress and practice good hygiene."

"Hair must be clean, well-groomed and neat. Men's hair should be no longer than collar length and should not interfere with the patient's care," he said. "Unusual hairstyles and unconventional haircuts are not permitted. Nails must be clean, trimmed and well-manicured," the minister stressed.



shorts are not permitted. Slacks, dresses, skirts and palazzos shall not be permitted too. T-shirts, stretch T-shirts, stretch pants, fitting pants, leather pants, capris, sweatpants, tank tops, see-through dresses or tops, crop tops, off-shoulder dresses, sneakers, slippers etc will not be permitted. Similarly,

footwear must be black, clean, comfortable and free from funky designs," the minister added.

A formal order to ban these dresses has not been issued yet. The purpose of the dress code policy, Vij said, is to maintain discipline, uniformity and equality among the staff in govern-

Bengal gears up to increase vulture population

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Feb 11: With the vulture population in West Bengal decreasing at a very fast pace, the state Forest Department has undertaken a unique initiative to increase the population of these nature's scavengers.

According to a Forest Department official, the unique method will be applied at the state government-run vulture breeding centre at Rajabhatkhawa in Alipurduar district.

"This unique method of breeding is the double clutching system. Generally the female vulture lays one egg in a year, which is a major reason for the decline in the vulture population. But under the double clutching system, the first egg she lays will be taken away and stored in an incubator. This will prompt the female vulture to lay the second egg and in this process, the breeding count will be doubled," the official said.

He said that there is a similar artificial vulture breeding centre at

ON FRIDAY, THE STATE FOREST DEPARTMENT RELEASED 20 ENDANGERED SPECIES OF VULTURES INTO THE WILD

OUT OF THE 20 VULTURES RELEASED, 13 WERE ORIENTAL WHITE-BACKED VULTURES, WHILE REMAINING SEVEN WERE HIMALAYAN GRIFFON VULTURES



Haryana's Pinjore, which was the first to adopt this double clutching system to increase the vulture population there. "This was a great success story and inspired by them the state Forest Department has decided to adopt a similar process at the Rajabhatkhawa vulture breeding centre. Dialogues have started with the experts in the field at Pinjore to get technical

assistance on this count," the official said.

On Friday only, the state Forest Department released 20 endangered species of vultures into the wild. Out of the 20 vultures released, 13 were oriental white-backed vultures, while remaining seven were Himalayan griffon vultures. While the oriental white-backed vultures were bred at the Rajabhatkhawa vulture breeding centre, the Himalayan griffon vultures were rescued from time to time.

'India belongs to me as much as to PM'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 11: Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind president Maulana Mahmood Madani has said it is wrong to suggest that Islam came from outside and asserted that India belongs to him as much as it does to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat.

In his speech at the annual general session of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind (Mahmood Madani faction) here at the Ramlila ground, Madani said this land is the first homeland of Muslims.

"To say and believe that Islam came from outside is wrong and is historically baseless. Islam is a religion of this country and is the oldest one," he said Friday. "This is our country. As much as this country belongs to Narendra Modi and Mohan Bhagwat, it belongs to Mahmood. Neither Mahmood is one inch ahead of them nor are they one inch ahead of Mahmood," he said.

The 34th 'General Session' of Jamiat, a prominent Muslim organisation, began here at the Ram Lila ground on Friday under the presidency of Madani.



Tourists inside an igloo cafe, at Gulmarg in Baramulla district, Saturday. The igloo cafe was built by the Gulmarg Development Authority to attract tourists to the famous ski resort. PTTI PHOTO

13,500 houses connected with running water taps in Kargil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kargil/Jammu, Feb 11: More than 13,500 households have been connected with functioning water taps under the centrally-sponsored Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in Kargil district of Ladakh, an official spokesman said Saturday.

The information was given at a meeting chaired by Additional

Deputy Commissioner, Kargil, Ghulam Mohi-Ud-Din Wani as he reviewed the progress on JJM projects in the district, the spokesman said.

"Till January 2023, as many as 13,506 households have been connected with FHTCs in Kargil. In 2019, before the start of JJM, only 1,610 households in the district had tap water," the spokesman said. He said that in the meeting the

officials reviewed the status of JJM scheme and discussed strategy for "improving Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) coverage, installation of solar water heaters in schools, 100 per cent saturation of villages, and availability of material."

Wani also reviewed the physical and financial progress on all JJM projects in the district, and tap

connection in schools and anganwadi centres, the spokesman said.

The spokesman said work on 544 connections has been completed across schools, while 35 connections are pending.

The officials have been directed to restart the work on installation of solar water heaters in schools as soon as the snow recedes, he added.

'Lithium reserve found in J&K is of best quality'

PEOPLE LIVING IN THE VILLAGES AROUND THE SITE ARE EXCITED AT THE DISCOVERY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Feb 11: The country's first lithium reserve, found in Jammu and Kashmir, is of the best quality, a senior government official said here Saturday, as upbeat villagers expressed hope the discovery will bring them a bright future.

The 5.9-million tonne reserve of lithium, a crucial mineral for the manufacturing of electric vehicles and solar panels, had been discovered in Reasi district by the Geological Survey of India (GSI).

"Lithium falls in the critical resource category which was not earlier available in India and we were dependent for its 100 per cent import. The G3 (advanced) study of the GSI shows the presence of best quality lithium in abundant quantity in the foothills of Mata Vaishno Devi shrine at Salal village (Reasi)," J-K Mining Amit Secretary Sharma told PTTI.

He said against the normal grade of 220 parts per million (PPM), the lithium found in J&K is of 500 ppm-plus grading, and with a stockpile of 5.9 million tons, India will surpass China in its availability.

"India joined a select group of countries at the global level after this finding and it will fulfil the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India)," he said.

Sharma said lithium has widespread usage and its discovery at a time of India's G20 presidency provides an opportunity for J-K to showcase its rich reserves.

Asked about the possible timeline for its extraction to start, he



said every project takes its own time. "We had G3 level study and it will now be followed by G2 and G1 study before the final extraction of the metal."

"Everything will be done at the earliest and we will collaborate with the GSI and extend our full support in this historical feat," he said. The officer assured the people that the reserve will be a game-changer for them as the local youths are given preference in any project as per the government's industrial policy.

"The local youth, whether skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled, will be part of this project. People who will be affected by this project will be adequately compensated and rehabilitated under rules," he said.

People living in the villages around the site are excited at the discovery. "It is a very happy moment for all of us and we are feeling proud. After the railway projects and Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, which are major sources of employment for the locals, this project is going to be a game-changer for us," Salal Deputy Sarpanch Rajinder Singh said.

Salal is home to the Salal Hydroelectric Power Station, a run-of-the-river hydropower project on Chenab river. Salal is located on way to under-construction paradigmatic Chenab railway bridge with a height of 359 meters, 30 meters higher than the iconic Eiffel Tower in Paris.

Jaspal Singh, another villager who claimed to have worked as a labourer with the GSI survey team, said they surveyed the hills for the last two years and returned about three months back.

"We are feeling lucky to be part of this project which will generate ample employment opportunities for the locals. We salute the hard work of the survey team especially given the challenging situation during the outbreak of corona pandemic," he said, adding "one of the team members died during the survey."

Senior Democratic Azad Party leader (DAP) and former minister Jugal Kishore Sharma congratulated the people for the finding of the lithium reserve and urged the government to ensure that the local youth be given employment in the project.

"The industry for excavation of the metal should be set up in Reasi and the local people should be engaged," the former member of legislative assembly from Reasi said.

He said there is also a need for fully exploring the lower Himalayas across Jammu and Kashmir.

Mandaviya spars with DMK MPs over medical colleges issue



The high-voltage drama took place during Question Hour, when DMK MP TR Baalu sought to know from the Health Minister the number of medical colleges functioning in the country without proper infrastructure

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Feb 11: How high the political stakes are in DMK-ruled Tamil Nadu, was evident in Lok Sabha Friday when Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya entered into an argument with DMK MPs.

The high-voltage drama took place during Question Hour, when DMK MP TR Baalu sought to know from the Health Minister the number of medical colleges functioning in the country without proper infrastructure, and also the number of colleges whose foundation has been laid by the prime minister, but are yet to function.

To this, Mandaviya said that "politics can be played on any issue, but if the respected member is trying to ask about the AIIMS in Madurai, then I would like to inform that courses have already begun there, only the infrastructure re-

mains to be completed." When DMK MPs Dayanidhi Maran and K. Kanimozhi protested, the Health Minister said that as the Tamil Nadu government didn't allot land on time, the infrastructure for Madurai AIIMS couldn't be completed on time.

When DMK MPs protested, members from the treasury benches also got up from their seats and both sides could be seen arguing.

At this, Mandaviya said that as he had taken action against many medical colleges in Tamil Nadu, which were functioning without proper infrastructure, it (the protests by DMK MPs) was a reaction to that action.

The Health Minister further informed the Lok Sabha that as AIIMS Madurai was a project funded by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and their representatives could not visit India during the last two years owing to the pandemic, the project's cost had gone up to Rs 1,900 crore.

DMK MPs alleged that the minister was threatening them, to which Speaker Om Birla said that the minister had not hinted at anybody specifically, and was making a general observation.

Birla further assured an agitated Baalu that he would look into the matter regarding removing the comments by the minister from the records.

Madras HC allows RSS march in TN

CITING LAW AND ORDER SITUATION, THE POLICE HAD DENIED PERMISSION TO THE ROUTE MARCH

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Feb 11: Tamil Nadu unit of the RSS will soon be providing three suitable dates to conduct route marches in the state after the Madras High Court directed the police to allow the organisation to hold the march.

The Madras High court division bench comprising Justices R Mahadevan and Mohammed Shaffiq told the appellants to approach state authorities with three different dates of their choice for holding the route march, and directed the authorities to grant permission for holding the marches on one of these dates.

A senior functionary of the Tamil Nadu unit of the RSS, while speaking to IANS, said, "We will be holding a meeting soon to finalise three dates as necessitated by the Madras High Court regarding the conduct of the route



marches. Senior functionaries of the organisation will sit and finalise this and let you know on the dates."

It may be noted that the Tamil Nadu government had not given permission to the RSS route marches to be held during the Vijayadashami day celebrations.

Citing law and order situation, the police had denied permission to the route march. The police stated that after the ban of the Islamist organisation, Popular Front of India (PFI), the route march could cause some communal disturbances affecting law and order situation.

A single bench of the Madras

High court had allowed the RSS to conduct the marches but within compound walls and the organisation had filed an appeal against this before the division bench.

The court in its order Friday (February 10), said, "The state's approach towards citizens' rights can never be adversarial in a welfare state and it must be considered for granting permission for peaceful rallies, protests, meetings or processions so as to maintain a healthy democracy."

The division bench had set aside the single judge bench order of November 4, 2022, restricting the route marches within the compound premises.

Rare bird sightings after 84 years in Kashmir lake

THE RARE SIGHTING OF NEW SPECIES HAS ENTHRALLED BIRD WATCHERS, WHILE THE AUTHORITIES EXPRESSED DELIGHT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Feb 11: With conservation efforts going on in Asia's second largest freshwater lake in Kashmir's Bandipora and Baramulla districts, the Smew - scientifically known as Mergellus albellus and the Long-tailed Duck, a rare duck species found in European and American continents and assessed as highly vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red list, were among the new sightings in the lake after over 80 years.

The rare sighting of new species has enthralled bird watchers, while the authorities expressed delight.

Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA), Irfan Rasool, said: "Besides these sightings, many new migratory bird species are expected to be seen in Wular as the Wular restoration plan is bearing fruits with process going on large scale besides public



awareness playing significance role in going with the mission."

"A group of five ducks were seen foraging in Wular lake January 22 by WUCMA field officials and they recorded the details on their field book and captured camera pic-

tures of ducks," he said.

The pictures were shared with ornithologists for identification and it was discovered that the birds are, in fact, rare migrants known as "Long Tailed Duck", Rasool said. The last record of this bird was

reported from Hokersar lake, Kashmir in 1939 as mentioned by F. Ludlow in a research paper published in 'Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society'.

It is after 84 years that the bird has been spotted again in Kashmir and has been documented now. There are only a few sites in India which meet the '1 per cent criteria' necessary for the survival and propagation of this duck species, Mudasar, a local resident, said.

Much to the delight of ornithologists, the eco-restoration of Wular lake has created a ray of hope, as record number of migratory birds have visited Wular lake, this year, Mudasar said, adding that the rare sightings have been of common pochard, red crested pochard and long tailed duck apart from other common water birds normally seen in other wetlands.

Mudasir said the Smew is another species of duck and is the only

living member of the genus mergellus. A female pair of these birds was photographed by Showkat Ahmad, a staff of WUCMA along with Ansar Ahmad an avid birder from Wular Lake, he said, adding the last found record of this migratory bird in Kashmir was in 1907.

Many internationally and nationally reputed bird photographers are thronging the lake to capture these rare sightings of migratory birds. "Along with the long-tailed duck, common pochard, red-crested pochard, common shelduck, ruddy shelduck, and other birds which share Wular Lake's habitat, have been sighted after long," Ahmad added.

Recently, during the Wular Festival, the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Pandurang Kundbarao Pole said that the government is going to construct a non-motorable walkway around Asia's famed Wular Lake in Bandipora district.

of the day quote

Prime Minister Modi has said that his government has been giving free rations to the poor, but we find that the food subsidy in this year's budget has been slashed by Rs 90,000 crore... This is not Amrit kaal, it is Jahar Kaal

BRINDA KARAT | CPI(M) POLITBURO MEMBER

Those criticising the budgetary allocation for MNREGA should understand that the scheme is demand driven

GIRIRAJ SINGH | UNION RURAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER

The foothall of foreign tourists in India has reached 75 per cent level of what it was in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic broke out

G KISHAN REDDY | UNION MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND TOURISM

SHORT TAKES

NH reopened

Banihal/Jammu: The 270-km Jammu-Srinagar national highway was reopened for stranded vehicles Saturday after remaining closed for three consecutive days owing to multiple landslides in Ramban district, officials said. The highway was closed on Thursday evening after the arterial road was blocked by landslides triggered by heavy rains at several places between Panthiyal and Ramsu, leaving more than 1,000 vehicles including passenger vehicles and Kashmir-bound trucks carrying essential commodities stranded at different places.

3 youths killed

Davanagere: Three youths were killed in a hit and run case in Karnataka's Davanagere district, police said Saturday. According to the police, the unidentified vehicle hit a bike on the National Highway 48 near Anagoda late Friday night. The victims were identified as 24-year-old Parashuram, 23-year-old Sandesh and 26-year-old Shivu -- all residents of Ramnagar near Davanagere. The youth had gone to attend a religious function to Kathihalli village and were returning home when the accident occurred.

Minor sodomised

New Delhi: A minor child was allegedly sodomised by five boys living in his neighbourhood many times in last few years in North Delhi's Civil Lines area, said an official Saturday. The Deputy Commissioner of Police (North), Sagar Singh Kalsi, said that on Friday, a complaint regarding it was received in Civil Lines police station following which a police team was dispatched to the spot. "On reaching the spot, the minor reported that he had been sexually abused by some local boys. The victim's mother gave a written complaint regarding sodomy with the minor by the five boys at different times from the last few years," said the DCP.

I-T inspector ends life

Bangalore: An I-T Department inspector from Uttar Pradesh committed suicide in Bengaluru by jumping in front of a moving train, police said Saturday. The victim was identified as Devendra Dubey and according to the police, the incident took place 10 days ago and came to light only recently. Dubey had worked in the Bengaluru I-T Department. Before taking the extreme step, the victim had called his parents in Uttar Pradesh and also spoke to his wife, saying that he would return home late.



Nitish Kumar keeps saying that the unity of Mahagathbandhan is stronger but the people of Bihar and leaders are thinking that his credibility has declined. They are not keeping faith in him. A large number of JD-U leaders recently joining the LJPR in poll-bound Nagaland is a prime example of it

CHIRAG PASWAN | LOK JANSHAKTI PARTY-RAM VILAS PRESIDENT

CHANDY RECOVERS

Former Kerala Chief Minister and veteran Congress leader Oommen Chandy, presently under treatment for pneumonia at a private hospital has fully recovered and now will be taken to Bangalore Sunday for his further treatment for throat cancer



JAMIA VIOLENCE

Judge recuses himself for 'personal reasons'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 11: A Delhi court judge, who recently discharged student activists Sharjeel Imam and Asif Iqbal Tanha along with nine others in the 2019 Jamia Nagar violence case, has recused himself from hearing a similar matter citing "personal reasons".

Additional Sessions Judge Arul Varma was hearing a case regarding the violence in Jamia Nagar in December 2019 which was registered against several accused, including Tanha. "Due to personal reasons, the undersigned hereby recuses from hearing the matter. Accordingly, let the present matter be put up before the principal district and sessions judge, southeast district, Saket court, for February 13 at 12 pm with a request to transfer the matter," the judge said in an order passed on Friday.

Last Saturday, while discharging the 11 accused in the other case, the judge had said that legal proceedings were initiated in a "perfunctory and cavalier fashion" and "allowing them to undergo the rigmarole of a long-drawn trial, does not augur well for the criminal justice system of the country".

Delhi Police had registered an FIR in connection with the violence that erupted after a clash between police and people protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in December 2019.

The accused in the present case also include Meeran Haider; Ashu Khan, Qasim Usmani, Mohammad Hassan, Mohd Jamal, Mohd Sahil Muddassir, Faheem Hasmeem, Sameer Ahmad, Mohd Umar, Mohd Adil, Roohul Ameer, Chandan Kumar and Saqib Khan.

The Jamia Nagar police station had registered an FIR under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, including 353 (assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), 147 (rioting), 148 (rioting, armed with a deadly weapon), 186 (obstructing public servant in discharge of public functions) and 332 (Voluntarily causing hurt to deter public servant from his duty).



Tourists pose for photos during their visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra

PTI PHOTO

PM attacks Cong-CPI(M) alliance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Radhakishorepur/Ambassa (Tripura), Feb 11: Lashing out at the Congress-CPI(M) alliance in Tripura, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday said that the two parties fight 'kushti' (wrestling) in Kerala and have done 'dosti' (friendship) in the northeastern state.

Making a veiled reference to Tipra Motha, Modi claimed that some other parties were also helping the opposition alliance from behind but any vote for them will take Tripura several years backward.

"Old players of misgovernance have joined hands for 'chanda' (donation). Those fighting 'kushti' (wrestling) in Kerala have done 'dosti' (friendship) in Tripura," the PM said at an election rally in Radhakishorepur in Gomati district.

"The opposition wants to divide the votes. Some small 'vote-cutter' parties are waiting for the election results, hoping to get their price. Those out with dreams of horse-trading, lock them in their



homes now itself," he said. Addressing another election rally in Ambassa in Dhalai district earlier in the day, he alleged that the Left and Congress governments created division among tribals, while the BJP worked to resolve their issues, including that of the Brus.

"The BJP is working for the upliftment of tribals across India. We have rehabilitated in Tripura

over 37,000 Brus displaced from Mizoram. Our government has introduced tribal language Kokborok in higher education," he said.

In the Union budget, the BJP government at the Centre has allocated Rs 1 lakh crore for the development of tribal areas, Modi said.

Referring to the fight against COVID-19, he said, "In a Left-ruled state, a lot of people suffered of

Beware of the double-edged sword of Congress and Left, they want to stop all schemes that benefit the people

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

Was govt 'cow-ed' by jokes or was it 'cow-ardice': Tharoor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 11: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor Saturday took a swipe over the Animal Welfare Board of India withdrawing its appeal to celebrate February 14 as 'Cow Hug Day', asking whether the government was "cow-ed" by the jokes made at its expense or was it merely "cow-ardice".

Tharoor's dig came a day after the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) said it has withdrawn the appeal to celebrate February 14 as 'Cow Hug Day' following directions from the government amid widespread criticism on social media.



Reacting to the development, Tharoor said on Twitter, "Was the Government cow-ed by the jokes made at its expense or was it merely cow-ardice?"

"My guess is the original appeal was an oral instruction: 'Valentine's Day: let them hug their guy' & the last word was misheard by a Hindu Rashtravadi as gaay!", the former Union Minister said.

AirAsia fined ₹20L over lapses in pilot training

The DGCA has ordered the removal of the airline's head of training from his position for a period of three months besides imposing a fine of Rs 3 lakh each on eight Designated Examiners (DEs), as per a statement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 11: Aviation safety regulator DGCA Saturday imposed a penalty of Rs 20 lakh on Tata Group-owned budget carrier AirAsia India for violation of certain norms relating to



pilots' training.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) also ordered the removal of the airline's head of training from his position for a period of three months besides imposing a fine of Rs 3 lakh each on eight Designated Examiners (DEs), as per a statement.

PTI had on January 23 reported that AirAsia India allegedly violated aviation norms with respect to pilot proficiency checks and instrument rating tests and was likely to face enforcement action from the safety regulator.

This is the third enforcement action against a Tata Group airline in over a month.

AirAsia India, in a statement, said it is reviewing the DGCA order and considering an appeal against it.

"We acknowledge that a finding related to training exercises of pilots was observed by the DGCA following the main base inspection in November 2022. Immediate corrective action was taken in coordination with DGCA and additional simulator training sessions to address the gap were implemented," an AirAsia spokesperson said in the statement.

The enforcement action came following a surveillance inspection conducted by the DGCA on the airline during November 23-25 last year and subsequent show cause notice to the airline, its head of training, and all DEs.

Population, infrastructure 'root causes' of sinking Joshimath: IUCN

ALTHOUGH JOSHIMATH IS BUILT ON A FRAGILE MOUNTAIN SLOPE IN A REGION PRONE TO LANDSLIDES, ITS SINKING IS BEING ATTRIBUTED TO LARGE-SCALE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS BEING UNDERTAKEN THERE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 11: While India's disaster preparedness and response has improved, the fragility of the Himalayas and the increase in population and infrastructure are at the root of crises like the Joshimath incident, senior officials at the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) said.

Authorities in Uttarakhand have declared Joshimath in Chamoli

district a landslide and subsidence-hit zone. Wide cracks have appeared on residential and commercial buildings and roads and fields in the town renowned as a hiking and pilgrimage destination. A number of structures have been declared unsafe and residents shifted to safer places.

"Whether it is flash floods, cloud bursts or incidents like Joshimath, it is partly because of a combination of issues. The increase in



human population and infrastructure to cater to tourists and the fragility of the Himalayas are at the root (of it)," Yash Veer Bhatnagar, country representative of IUCN India, said in an interview. "As conservationists, we do not want to stop development everywhere. We want to make it as sustainable as

possible, knowing well that remote villages in the Himalayas need basic amenities," he asserted.

Satellite images released by the Indian Space Research Organisation showed the Himalayan town sank 5.4 cm in just 12 days following a possible subsidence event on January 2. Although Joshimath is built on

a fragile mountain slope in a region prone to landslides, its sinking is being attributed to large-scale development projects being undertaken there.

IUCN India and the TCS Foundation have launched an initiative, "Himalaya for the Future", which aims to enhance sustainability and the well-being of the people in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) and downstream communities. It involves reviewing existing initiatives, research and literature; mapping and consulting with stakeholders, building scenarios to identify possible interventions and developing a tool for quantitative and qualitative modelling.

"We are designing a tool which looks at cross-cutting areas such as forests, urbanisation, water resources, energy, infrastructure,

gender, migration, traditional knowledge, disasters among others," Archana Chatterjee, Programme Manager, IUCN India, said.

"We wanted to look at these issues in an integrated manner... And what are the challenges emerging in the region for which we have to plan now in terms of policies and programmes," she added.

It is an open and evolving model. Technical studies and mind maps of experts and communities can also be fed in it. The tool, for example, will help people know how a policy decision for the tourism sector can impact forests, water resources, waste management and other aspects, Chatterjee said.

Bhatnagar said though there has been some criticism, India has improved a lot in terms of disaster preparedness and response.

international

of the day quote

Finland and Sweden will be admitted into NATO by July
SAULI NIINISTÖ | PRESIDENT, FINLAND

The partnership between India and Sri Lanka is guided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Neighbourhood First policy
RANIL WICKREMESINGHE | PRESIDENT, SRI LANKA

It is unfortunate that women represent only 12 per cent of scientists and 30 per cent of researchers globally. We must work to address the barriers in mindsets and learning environments to allow more women and girls to excel in science
SHEIKH HASINA | PM, BANGLADESH

SHORT TAKES

Indians abused

London: A UK government investigative agency for labour exploitation has said that it has succeeded in getting a court order against five people from Kerala for suspected labour abuse of more than 50 Indian students. Investigators from the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) were granted a Slavery and Trafficking Risk Order (STRO) indefinitely against the defendants at Mold Magistrates' Court last week. The GLAA said in a release that its probe identified "more than 50 Indian students as being potential victims of modern slavery and labour abuse over the last 14 months" while working at care homes in North Wales.

Secret docu saga

Washington: The FBI found an additional classified document at the property of former vice president Mike Pence Friday, two weeks after the Republican acknowledged having a "small number" of government files at his home. Pence's spokesman Devin O'Malley said that agents had turned up the material in a "thorough and unrestricted" five-hour search of the Carmel, Indiana house, conducted with Pence's consent. The search came after Pence, who is weighing a run for the presidency in 2024, reported last month that an aide had uncovered classified papers, likely taken with other material when he left the White House in January 2021. That followed searches of the homes of President Joe Biden and former president Donald Trump that also turned up classified documents.

Man lynched in Pak

Nankana Sahib: A 35-year-old man, who was arrested on blasphemy charges, was lynched Saturday in Pakistan Punjab's Nankana Sahib district after a mob broke into the police station where the victim was being held, media reports said. According to reports, the victim was accused of desecrating the Holy Quran while the locals claimed he was involved in 'witchcraft', The Express Tribune reported. Following the accusation, he was handed over to the local police. However, a mob later gathered at the police station soon after news of the incident spread in the area, the report said.

Spy balloon drama

Beijing: The United States blacklisted six Chinese entities it said were linked to Beijing's aerospace programs as part of its retaliation over an alleged Chinese spy balloon that traversed the country's airspace. The move is likely to further escalate the diplomatic row between the US and China sparked by the balloon, which was shot down last weekend.



If there's an Olympics sport with killings and missile strikes, you know which national team would take the first place
VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

NUKE-LACE OF KIM'S WIFE

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's wife, Ri Sol Ju, was photographed wearing a missile pendant at a banquet to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Korean People's Army in Pyongyang, North Korea. The necklace was the replica of Hwasong-17 ICBM, North Korea's heaviest missile that was test-fired last year



DANCE OF DEATH

Fury, grief, questions as deaths top 25K

THE GROWING DEATH TOLL IS RAISING QUESTIONS OVER EARTHQUAKE PLANNING AND RESPONSE TIME IN TURKEY, A COUNTRY FREQUENTLY VISITED BY TREMORS



■ TOTAL DEATH TOLL HAS SURPASSED 25,000
■ 21,848 PEOPLE DEAD IN TURKEY, 3,553 IN SYRIA

The worst event in 100 years in this region
MARTIN GRIFFITHS | UN AID CHIEF

Turkey-Armenia gate opens for first time in decades
A border gate between long-feuding Turkey and Armenia has been opened for the first time in 35 years to allow aid for victims of the devastating earthquakes in southern Turkey, state-owned Anadolu news agency and a diplomat said. The crossing was last used to send aid from the Turkish Red Crescent to earthquake-hit Armenia in 1988.

Five days of grief and anguish have been slowly building into rage at the poor quality of buildings as well as the Turkish government's response to the country's worst disaster in nearly a century. Officials in the country say 12,141 buildings were either destroyed or seriously damaged in the earthquake. Damage was to be expected, but not the type of damage that you are seeing now, said Mustafa Erdik, a

professor at Istanbul-based Bogazici University. Authorities in Kahramanmaraş and Osmaniye have launched investigations into the buildings that have collapsed, according to the Anadolu state news agency. The tremor was the most powerful and deadliest since 33,000 people died in a 7.8-magnitude tremor in 1939. Monday's 7.8 magnitude quake, with several powerful aftershocks

Erdogan in vulnerable spot before elections

Simmering anger over the delays in aid delivery and in the launch of rescue efforts is likely to play into the election

The disaster hit as Erdogan prepares for national elections scheduled to be held by June, and at a time when his popularity was already eroding amid the soaring cost of living and a slumping Turkish currency. Even before the quake, the vote was seen as Erdogan's toughest challenge in two decades in power. Since the disaster he has called for solidarity and condemned what he called "negative campaigns for political interest". People in the quake zone and opposition politicians have accused the government of a slow and in-



adequate relief early on and critics have said the army, which played a main role after a 1999 earthquake, was not involved fast enough. "The earthquake was huge, but what was much bigger than the earthquake was the lack of coordination, lack of planning and incompetence," said Kemal Kilicdaroglu, head of opposition party.

5.3mn in Syria may be homeless

Beirut: Up to 5.3 million people in Syria may have been made homeless by the devastating earthquake which rocked the region this week, a United Nations official said Friday. "As many as 5.3 million people in Syria may have been left homeless by the earthquake," the Syria representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sivanka Dhanapala, told a press briefing. He said the UN estimated that 5.37 million people affected by the quake will need shelter assistance across the country. "That is a huge number and comes to a population already suffering mass displacement," he said. "For Syria, this is a crisis within a crisis. We've had economic shocks, Covid and are now in the depths of winter." Quake survivors have flocked to camps set up for people displaced by nearly 12 years of war from other parts of Syria.

across Turkey and Syria, ranks as the world's seventh-deadliest natural disaster this century, exceeding Japan's 2011 tremor and tsunami, and approaching the 31,000 killed by a quake in neighbouring Iran in 2003.

A similarly powerful earthquake in northwest Turkey in 1999 killed more than 17,000 killed in 1999. Monday's earthquake, with a death toll so far of 20,665 people inside Turkey, is the country's deadliest since 1939.

Crucial \$1.1bn IMF deal eludes Pakistan for now

Pakistan is in desperate need of financial assistance and a bailout package from the IMF to prevent it from economic collapse



REUTERS

Karachi, Feb 11: Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund are to resume talks online next week they said Friday, after ten days of face-to-face discussions in Islamabad on how to keep the country afloat ended without a deal. With the nuclear-armed nation in the grip of a full-blown economic crisis, the IMF talks are aimed at unlocking at least \$1.1 billion of stalled funding as part of a \$6.5 billion bailout signed in 2019. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar told reporters Pakistan had agreed with the IMF on the conditions to re-

lease the funds, which have been delayed since last December. Talks would resume virtually Monday, he added, citing "routine procedures" for the delay. "We will implement whatever has been agreed upon between our teams," Dar said. Pakistan is in dire need of a successful outcome. The \$350-billion economy is still reeling from devastating floods last year, and the government estimates rebuilding efforts will cost \$16 billion. The heavily-indebted nation only has enough foreign reserves to cover less than three weeks of crucial imports. The longer it takes for the IMF tranche to be paid out, the

higher the risk of default, analysts say, especially with elections also looming.

WEAK ECONOMIC INDICATORS

FOREX RESERVES: Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have fallen to the lowest level in 10 years and cover only three weeks' worth of imports. In the week ending February 3, the central bank's foreign currency reserves shrank to \$2.917 billion, down \$170 million from the previous week.

INFLATION: Inflation has averaged a record 25.4% in the seven months of the current fiscal year starting July versus 10.3% in the same period of the previous year. The consumer price index rose 27.5% year-on-year in January, its highest in nearly half a century.

CURRENT ACCOUNT DEFICIT: Pakistan's current account deficit shrank to around \$400 million in December 2022 from \$1.9 billion a year earlier, as the government slashed imports in a bid to avert an external payments crisis.

PAKISTANI RUPEE: The rupee reached a record low of 276.58 to the dollar in the interbank market on February 3. The rupee has dropped more than 35% in the last 12 months.



UNUSUAL PROTEST: An Indigenous woman smokes during a protest demanding a better health care system be made available in her region, including the hiring of more doctors and nurses as well as the building of more clinics, outside the Ministry of Health in Brasilia, Brazil
PT PHOTO

'Ukraine war could drag on for years'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, Feb 11: The owner of the Russian Wagner Group private military contractor actively involved in the fighting in Ukraine has predicted that the war could drag on for years.

Yevgeny Prigozhin said in a video interview released late Friday

that it could take 18 months to two years for Russia to fully secure control of Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland of Donbas. He added that the war could go on for three years if Moscow decides to capture broader territories east of the Dnieper River.

The statement from Prigozhin, a millionaire who has close links

to Russian President Vladimir Putin and was dubbed "Putin's chef" for his lucrative Kremlin catering contracts, marked a recognition of the difficulties that the Kremlin has faced in the campaign, which it initially expected to wrap up within weeks when Russian troops invaded Ukraine February 24.

Iran marks anniv of Islamic Revolution amid protests

THE DEMONSTRATIONS, INITIALLY FOCUSED ON IRAN'S MANDATORY HEADSCARF, OR HIJAB, HAVE MORPHED INTO CALLS FOR A NEW REVOLUTION

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, Feb 11: Iran Saturday celebrated the 44th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution amid nationwide anti-government protests and heightened tensions with the West.

Thousands of Iranians marched through major streets and squares decorated with flags, balloons and placards with revolutionary and religious slogans. The military put on display its Emad and Sejil ballistic missiles and cruise missiles as well as its Shahed-136 and Mohajer drones.

Protesters began pouring into the streets in September after the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, an Iranian-Kurdish woman detained by the country's morality police. In a speech at Azadi Square in the capital Tehran, President Ebrahim Raisi referred to the protests as a project by Iran's ene-

mies aimed at stopping the nation from continuing its achievements. Raisi called the celebration "epic" and a show of "national integrity" while praising post-revolution achievements in the country.

The anniversary comes after two years in which celebrations were largely limited to vehicles due to the pandemic that killed more than 140,000 people, in Iran according to official numbers—the highest national death toll in the Middle East. Processions in Tehran Saturday started out from several points and converged at Azadi Square. TV showed crowds in many cities and towns and said hundreds of thousands of people participated.

The celebration was a show of power to the protesters. State television refers to the demonstrations as a "foreign-backed riot" rather than homegrown frustration over the death of Amini.



Anger also has spread over the collapse of the Iranian rial against the US dollar and Tehran's arming Russia with bomb-carrying drones in its war on Ukraine, which has also angered the West. Iran says it

gave the drones to Russia before the war.

The Iranian government has not offered an overall death toll or number of individuals it has arrested. However, activists outside

of the country say at least 528 people have been killed and 19,600 people detained in the crackdown that followed.

Last week, Iran's state media said the supreme leader ordered an amnesty or reduction in prison sentences for "tens of thousands" of people detained during the protests, acknowledging for the first time the scale of the crackdown.

The decree by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, part of a yearly pardoning the supreme leader does before the anniversary, came as authorities have yet to say how

many people they detained in the demonstrations.

Crowds waved Iranian flags, chanted slogans and carried placards with traditional anti-West slogans like "Death to America" and "Death to Israel." Some burned flags of the US and Israel, a ritual in pro-government rallies.

The Islamic Revolution began with widespread unrest in Iran over the rule of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The Shah, terminally and secretly ill with cancer, fled Iran in January 1979. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini then returned from exile and the government fell February 11, 1979, after days of mass demonstrations and confrontations between protesters and security forces.

Those who have been deceived by the enemy now know that the enemy's issue is neither woman nor life or freedom or human rights, but it wants to take away the independence and the tranquil life of the Iranian nation
EBRAHIM RAISI | PRESIDENT, IRAN

of the day quote

We will start Digital Philately Exhibition where information about one stamp per week will be shown on reels

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | COMMUNICATIONS AND IT MINISTER

Apparel exports to Japan are expected to grow by 20-25 per cent year on year. Garment industry in both countries have geared up to increase this trade taking advantage of duty-free access for Indian RMG (ready-made garments) post Indo-Japan trade pact

NAREN GOENKA | CHAIRMAN, APEC

Our target is not to fall below ₹10,000 crore order book where we reached today. We will keep the momentum of ₹10,000 crore order book in 2023

SAJEEV SHARMA | COUNTRY HEAD & MD, ABB INDIA

SHORT TAKES

IMC gets ₹661.52cr under green bonds

Indore: In a first-of-its-kind initiative in India, the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) has garnered ₹661.52 crore on the first day of a public issue of green bonds to raise capital for setting up a ₹244 crore solar power plant. The green bond was oversubscribed by 5.42 times against the base price of ₹122 crore, an official said. The public issue will close Tuesday. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan tweeted, "Congratulations to Indore again! The investors and commoners have overwhelmingly responded to the green bonds of Indore which has bagged India's cleanest city award for the six consecutive times, and made it number one."

DishTV posts Q3 net loss at ₹2.85cr

New Delhi: Direct-to-home firm DishTV India has reported a consolidated net loss of ₹2.85 crore in the third quarter that ended December 2022, mainly due to a decline in revenue and promotion of its OTT platform. The company had reported a net profit of ₹80.21 crore in the October-December quarter a year ago, DishTV said in a BSE filing. Its revenue from the operation fell 22.31 per cent to ₹552.09 crore during the quarter under review as against ₹710.67 crore of the corresponding quarter a year ago.

SHOCK OF WAR

World economy at crossroads

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ON MOSCOW CAME AS HURDLES TO WORLD TRADE WERE MOUNTING AFTER AN ERA OF RAPID GLOBALISATION

REUTERS

Washington, Feb 11: A year of war in Ukraine has already made a dent in world prosperity. But its deeper impact will be felt in how the conflict plays into shifts that were already reshaping the global economy before Russia's tanks rolled in.

Most immediately, the war added new uncertainties to the economic trauma of a Covid-19 pandemic that had already led to record rises in public debt, inflation-fuelled cost-of-living crises, and labour shortages in essential sectors.

Russia's weaponisation of its gas and oil exports bolstered the case for an energy transition already made urgent by climate change.

The war has devastated Ukraine's economy, shrinking it by a third, while sanctions are now starting to starve Russia of revenues from energy and other exports. But it is harder to quantify its impact on the rest of the world.

European neighbours have so far avoided the mass energy rationing and wave of bankruptcies that were feared, thanks to efforts to build up fuel stocks and rein in energy demand, and - not least - to an unusually mild winter.

Global food and energy prices were already surging as the world emerged from the pandemic lockdowns of 2020 and spiked higher after the outbreak of war, but many indices are now below their levels of a year ago.

"We find that energy prices increased more in 2021 than in 2022, suggesting that the war and the sanctions were not the most important drivers," analysts Zsolt Darvas and Catarina Martins found



- Direct hit to world GDP has been limited
- Impact on trade, energy trends still unclear
- Escalation, tougher sanctions push among risks

The shock of war on demand and prices has cascaded through the global economy and, in conjunction with Covid and other policy decisions, has created these headwinds to growth. And I think we are not done yet

ROBERT KAHN | DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL MACRO-GEOECONOMICS, EURASIA GROUP CONSULTANCY

in a December study for European think tank Bruegel.

NO ENDGAME IN SIGHT

Some might conclude that means the world economy has taken the conflict in its stride. Optimism prevailed at this year's World Economic Forum in Davos, while financial markets are betting that advanced economies can avoid all-out recession.

The International Monetary Fund now estimates the global economy grew 3.4% last year - barely one percentage point lower than it had forecast before the war started, and before the world's central banks took aim at inflation

with big interest rate hikes.

Whether world growth can now match the Fund's 2023 forecast of 2.9% remains to be seen. That newly upgraded estimate is well above the more downbeat 2.1% consensus forecast of private economists polled by Reuters last month. And there are other high-stakes unknowns.

With no end to the war in sight, the chief threat remains escalation, including the use by Russia of battle-ground nuclear weapons. That would take the outlook for both the global economy and wider peace into uncharted territory.

The war's impact on the power sources driving the global economy evolved through 2022, with

3 Adani companies vow shares to flagship firm

REUTERS

New Delhi, Feb 11: Three Adani group companies have pledged shares for lenders to the Indian conglomerate's flagship Adani Enterprises, which pulled a \$2.5 billion share sale during a recent market rout, the debt trustee firm said.

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone, Adani Transmission Ltd and Adani Green Energy Ltd pledged shares to SBI-CAP Trustee Co, the firm said in Friday filings to the Bombay Stock Exchange.

The trustee, a unit of India's biggest state lender, State Bank of India, said it had pledged for shares worth 1% of Adani Ports, up from 0.65%, for 0.55% of Adani Transmission, up from 0.44%, and for 1.06% of Adani Green, up from 0.68%.

SBICAP Trustee said it had received the pledges in its capacity as "security trustee" of the lenders of Adani Enterprises.

Group companies controlled by



billionaire Gautam Adani have lost more than \$100 billion in market value since January 24, when a US short seller issued a scathing report on the apples-to-airports conglomerate.

Hindenburg Research accused the group of stock manipulation and improper use of offshore tax havens. The group has rejected the firm's findings and denied any wrongdoing.

Fitch estimates that loans to all Adani group entities account for 0.8% to 1.2% of total lending by Indian banks rated by the agency.

The Adani exposure of Indian banks is not enough to affect their credit profiles, two global rating agencies have said.

Air India bags mother of all deals with Airbus

RECORD ORDER FOR ABOUT 500 JETS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore/Paris, Feb 11: Air India has sealed a jumbo deal for about 500 new planes worth more than \$100 billion at list prices, in what could become the single largest order by any airline as it seeks to reinvent itself under its new owners, industry sources told Reuters.

The deal, split equally between France's Airbus and rival plane-maker Boeing, was first reported by Reuters in December and could finally be announced as early as next week, the sources said.

Air India has agreed to purchase 250 Airbus planes, split between 210 single-aisle A320neos and 40 widebody A350s, and 220 Boeing aircraft including 190 of its 737 MAX narrowbody jets, 20 787 widebodies and 10 777Xs.

While Airbus and Air India signed the agreement Friday,



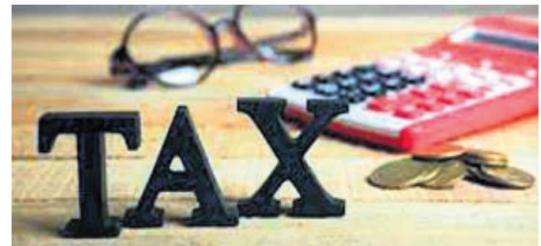
The order reflects Air India's strategy to modernise its ageing fleet and re-capture a solid share of trips between India's large overseas diaspora and cities such as Delhi and Mumbai, dominated mainly by Gulf rivals such as Emirates with its young planes

Boeing agreed its deal with the airline January 27, a date that marks a year since Tata regained ownership of the former state-run carrier, sources told Reuters.

In a note to employees January 27, the airline said it was "finalising a historic order for new aircraft".

The deal for 400 narrowbodies

Gross direct tax collection grows 24% to ₹15.67L-cr



NET COLLECTION TOUCHES 79% OF REVISED ESTIMATES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 11: Gross direct tax collections grew 24 per cent to ₹15.67 lakh crore so far this fiscal, the finance ministry said Saturday.

After adjusting for refunds, the net direct tax collection stood at ₹12.98 lakh crore, a growth of 18.40 per cent.

The net collections are about 79 per cent of Revised Estimates (RE) of direct tax collection for current fiscal, the CBDT said.

The revised estimates for the current fiscal pegged direct tax revenues at ₹16.50 lakh crore, higher than the budget estimates of ₹14.20 lakh crore.

"The provisional figures of direct tax collections up to 10th February, 2023 continue to register steady growth. Direct tax collections up to 10th February, 2023

show that gross collections are at ₹15.67 lakh crore which is 24.09 per cent higher than the gross collections for the corresponding period of last year," Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement.

In the current fiscal (2022-23), the revenues from direct tax (which includes income and corporate taxes) are projected to grow by over 17 per cent compared to 2021-22 fiscal when the collection was ₹14.08 lakh crore.

Between April to February 10, the growth rate for gross Corporate Income Tax (CIT) and gross Personal Income Tax (PIT) collections was 19.33 per cent and 29.63 per cent respectively.

After adjustment of refunds, the net growth in CIT collections is 15.84 per cent and that in PIT collections is 21.23 per cent (PIT including STT).

Refunds amounting to ₹2.69 lakh crore have been issued during April 1, 2022 to February 10, 2023, which are 61.58 per cent higher than refunds issued during the same period in the preceding year.

India topples France as UK's largest Scotch whisky market

60% HIKE IN IMPORTS IN 2022 OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Feb 11: India has overtaken France to become the UK's largest market of Scotch whisky in terms of volume with a 60 per cent hike in imports in 2022 over the previous year, according to the latest figures released by Scotland's leading industry body.

The Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) revealed Friday that India imported 219 million 70cl bottles of Scotch compared to France's 205 million last year - representing growth of the Indian Scotch market of more than 200 per cent in the past decade.

As one of the key sectors of focus for the UK in the free trade agreement (FTA) talks with India, now in their seventh round of negotiations, SWA pointed out that the hike in volume still makes up only a fraction of the Indian whisky market due to high tariffs.

"Despite double-digit growth, Scotch whisky still only comprises 2 per cent of the Indian whisky market," the association said.

"SWA analysis shows that a UK-India FTA deal which eases the



150 per cent tariff burden on Scotch whisky in India could boost market access for Scotland's whisky companies, allowing for an additional GBP 1 billion of growth over the next five years," it noted.

The value of the Indian market for Scotch exports comes in at fifth worth GBP 282 million, up 93 per cent in 2021 and behind France, Singapore and Taiwan. The 2022 trend also saw the Asia-Pacific region overtake the European Union (EU) as the industry's largest regional market, with double-digit

post-pandemic growth also seen in Taiwan, Singapore and China besides India.

"During a year of significant economic headwinds and global supply chain disruption, the Scotch Whisky industry continued to be an anchor of growth, supporting investment and job creation across Scotland and the UK," said SWA Chief Executive Mark Kent.

"By reducing tariffs through the UK-India free trade agreement, continuing the duty freeze in the March budget, and ensuring the indus-

try's continued ability to advertise our world-class product in our home market, the Scottish and UK governments can count on the Scotch Whisky industry to reinvest its success across the UK," he said.

Overall, the year 2022 saw solid growth in Scotch exports around the world, with the US holding on to its topmost position as the largest market by value at GBP 1,053 million. The total export value of Scotch whisky - one of the UK's biggest exporters - was up 37 per cent by value to GBP 6.2 billion.

UK Trade Minister Nigel Huddleston said: "Scotch whisky is one of the UK's great exporting success stories, contributing billions of pounds to the economy and supporting thousands of jobs, so I'm pleased to see these export figures showing a growing global demand.

According to SWA data, on average the equivalent of 53 bottles of Scotch Whisky are exported every second - up from 44 per second in 2021. Bottled Blended Scotch Whisky accounts for 59 per cent of value exports, with Single Malt 32 per cent of all Scotch whisky



It's essential we continue to support the industry as it expands into new markets thanks to our new trade agreements around the world such as CPTPP [Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership] and in India

NIGEL HUDDLESTON | UK TRADE MINISTER

exports by value.

"The whisky industry alone employs 11,000 people directly in Scotland, over 7,000 of whom work in rural areas and a further 42,000 jobs across the UK. We will continue to engage with and listen to the whisky industry to understand how we can improve export opportunities and remove barriers to trade," added Mairi Gougeon, Scottish government's Rural Affairs and Islands Cabinet Secretary.

UNION BANK LAUNCHES VOICE BANKING SOLUTION



Lucknow: Union Bank of India launches voice banking solution "UVA" at "Uttar Pradesh Global Investors Summit-2023" February 10. It was unveiled by A Manimekhalai, Managing Director and CEO of the bank. Union Bank's Voice Assistant (UVA) is an innovative way for customers to access banking services through voice commands. It is now available through Alexa and can be used 24/7 to inquire about balance and transaction history. Currently UVA services are available in English language over Alexa channel and will be enabled in most of the Indian languages over different channels like Google Assistant, Website, WhatsApp, Mobile Banking. UVA also has the unique feature of informing bank's customers about the latest schemes and offers launched by the bank. Presently customers can access UVA services by enabling "Union Bank of India UVA" skill on their Amazon Alexa account. More banking services like Cheque Book Request, Cheque Status, Locker Rent Due, Block Debit Card, Unblock Debit Card, and Credit Card Bill Due will shortly be rolled out to customers through UVA. Speaking on the initiative, Manimekhalai, said that, "It has always been our continuous endeavour to provide improved digital convenience to our customers. Already our existing WhatsApp Banking (UVConn) allows lakhs of customers to perform their banking digitally from a remote location without visiting a bank branch. Now our voice banking solution will provide immense convenience, allowing our customers to receive a fast and personalized banking experience whenever and wherever they need it."

INDIA DRAW FIRST BLOOD

Ashwin wreaks havoc with a five-wicket haul as India thump Australia by an innings and 132 runs in the first Test at Nagpur

Rohit stunned by Aussies' collapse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagpur, Feb 11: A wily Ravichandran Ashwin blew away a panic-stricken Australia with a fifer (5/37) as India dismantled visitors' second innings in a single session to win the opening Test by a comprehensive innings and 132 run-margin, here Saturday.

After taking a massive 223-run first innings lead, India decimated Australia for just 91 in 32.3 overs with the Test match finishing inside three days at VCA stadium in Jamtha. It's rare that an Australian innings folds inside one session.

After Axar Patel's career-best 84 (174, 10x4, 1x6) and Mohammed Shami's entertaining 37 (47b, 2x4, 3x6) took India to a commanding first innings total of 400, Ashwin literally mauled the Australians with the new ball, taking his 31st five-wicket haul in Test cricket.

The Australian batters once again made the cardinal mistake of playing the pitch rather than the bowler and looked utterly confused on whether to defend or attack. The Indian innings showed that demons were in the minds of Australian batters and not in the 22-yard strip.

The intent was to be positive but even with all the simulated training sessions, it was always going to be difficult to read Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja (2/34), latter playing the second fiddle this time. They didn't have slightest clue which one was turning and which one was coming straight.

Usman Khawaja (5)



after hitting a boundary was lured with a tossed up off-break outside his off-stump and his half slash-half drive effort went into Virat Kohli's hands in the slips.

Marnus Labuschagne (17) hit a few boundaries but when Jadeja flighted one which turned a shade after pitching, the right-hander premeditatedly rocked on to the back-foot rather than coming on the front-foot. The result was an easy leg-before decision.

David Warner's (10) stay was struggle and after he charged Ashwin to get two boundaries, Ashwin bowled a slider and he wasn't half forward this time and got rapped on the pads.

Matt Renshaw was then trapped on the backfoot and Peter Handscomb got a classical off-break which would have disturbed the timber anyway. Alex Carey for the second time went for a non-existent sweep shot and perished.

Steve Smith (25 n o) could only helplessly watch as wickets fell like nine pins at the other end. He tried delaying the inevitable without much success. Shami (2/13) put the final nail in the Australian coffin by trapping Scott Boland.

Earlier, Axar's resolute innings and Shami's entertaining knock gave India a massive 223-run first innings lead. The hosts posted 400 by third day lunch session after

resuming the day at 321 for seven.

They wouldn't have envisaged that Australia had lost it in their minds even before they came out to bat for the second time. India had practically out-batted Australia on a track which the visiting media alleged was 'doctored'.

Jadeja (70, 185b, 9x4) and Patel began the proceedings but the former did not last long as he shouldered arms to a Murphy delivery that was fired in from an angle and crashed on to the stumps.

The pitch didn't change its character much and it remained a slow turner where any batter, ready to grind, would get runs. Lunch was taken when Indian innings ended.

While Todd Murphy (7/124) has been impressive on debut, Lyon's (1/126) performance has been disappointing to say the least as his bowling lacked the bite.

BRIEF SCORES
Australia 177 & 91 (Steve Smith

91 Australia's second-innings total in Nagpur was their lowest in Tests in India. Their previous lowest in India was 93 in Mumbai in 2004. The 91 was also Australia's second-lowest Test total against India, behind the 83 in Melbourne in 1981

268 Australia's match aggregate in the Nagpur Test was their lowest in a Test against India when bowled out twice. Their previous lowest aggregate was 296 (203 & 93) in Mumbai in 2004. The aggregate of 268 was also the second-lowest by Australia in a Test in Asia, behind the 267 against Pakistan in Karachi in 1956

25 Five-wicket hauls for R Ashwin in Tests in India, the joint-highest with Anil Kumble. Only two players have claimed more fifters at home in Tests - 45 by Muthiah Muralidaran and 26 by Rangana Herath (both Sri Lanka)

10 The total lbw dismissals for Australia in Nagpur, the most for them in a Test. Australia's previous highest was nine - against India in Kolkata in 2001 and against Sri Lanka in last year's Galle Test. These are also the joint-highest lbw dismissals effected by India in a Test. Six of the 10 dismissals came in the second innings, the joint-highest for Australia and the joint-highest for any team against India in a Test innings

49 Marnus Labuschagne's score in the first innings, the highest individual score for Australia in this Test match. It was the first instance when no batter scored a fifty for Australia in a Test in India. It was also only the second completed Test where India did not concede an individual fifty against Australia

25 n o; R Ashwin 5/37, Mohammed Shami 2/13, Ravindra Jadeja 2/34 lost to India 400 (Axar Patel 84, Ravindra Jadeja 70, Mohammed Shami 37; Todd Murphy 7/124) by an innings & 132 runs.

JADEJA PENALISED 25% OF HIS MATCH FEE

NAGPUR: India's hero in the opening Test victory over Australia here, Ravindra Jadeja was Saturday fined 25 per cent of his match fee for applying cream on the swollen index finger of his bowling hand without taking permission from the on-field umpires on the first day of the match. Jadeja was seen in a video receiving something from pace bowler Mohammed Siraj and rubbing it on his left index finger. The ICC Friday said the cream was applied to the finger purely for medical purposes and it did not change the condition of the ball. However, Jadeja's action was deemed to have breached "Article 2.20 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to displaying conduct that is contrary to the spirit of the game". "In addition to this (fine of 25 per cent match fee), one demerit point has been added to Jadeja's disciplinary record, for whom it was the first offence in a 24-month period." Jadeja admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by Andy Pycroft of the ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, so there was no need for a formal hearing.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagpur, Feb 11: India captain Rohit Sharma won't comment on the mental fortitude of the Australian team but certainly didn't expect them to get bowled out in just one session on the third day of the opening Test, here Saturday.

"No, I didn't," is what the skipper said when asked if he expected the match to end well inside three days. "We were prepared to have hard day's bowling, spending session after session. We never thought they would get bowled out in a session."

"As you saw, the pitch became slower and slower and there was no bounce on the pitch, so it was a bit of surprise for me," the Indian skipper said at the post-match press conference.

There was a lot of pre-match talk from the Australian media with one leading newspaper terming the Jamtha track as "systematically doctored" while other termed it "doggy" even before a ball was bowled.

The calm Indian skipper in his own inimitable manner rubbed it in when asked if he found his team to be mentally tougher than Australia.

"I don't know the mental status of the Australian team. I can vouch for our team and we are the ones who want to play on pitches like these and not just from now, we have been playing on pitches like these for last 3-4 years," the skipper said.

He continued with his sarcastic way of saying things. "Because we have all grown up playing on pitches like these, so there is no talk about pitches anymore in the changing room."

PRAISING SPIN TROIKA
Rohit also said that the Indian pair of R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja always aims to "reach the next level" while playing Tests. "He (Ashwin) looks a different bowler. I wouldn't say an improved bowler as he was always a good bowler but he looks a different bowler every time he plays Test cricket. That's what good cricketers do. They try and up their game and try to reach the next level," said Rohit.

Asked about the feeling of captaining a side that has Ashwin, Jadeja and Axar Patel in its ranks,

"We want to play the cricket we are playing and we would continue to do that in three games that we have. As captain, I need to focus on what we have in Delhi and then move on from there"

ROHIT SHARMA

OTHER REACTIONS

PAT CUMMINS

Hard to know (what went wrong). That will be the review the next few days. I think everyone came with pretty clear plans. The challenge is under the furnace to be brave enough to be proactive at the time.



Playing in India, the game really speeds up. It's a good thing if you are on top. But if you are behind, it can be really challenging. I thought all their bowlers bowled really well. They really put the pressure on us and next time we've got to find a way to manage that.

We've had a really good run the last 12 months. There hasn't been many losses in that change room. I don't think we need to reinvent the wheel, it's just tweaking different approaches as to how we play and maybe particular methods

VENKATESH PRASAD

KL Rahul's selection is not based on performance but favouritism. (He) has been consistently inconsistent and for someone who has been around for 8 years not converted potential into performances. A Test average of 34 after 46 Tests and more than 8 years in international cricket is ordinary. Can't think of many who have been given so many chances.

When there are so many waiting in the wings & in top form. Shubman Gill is in sublime form, Sarfaraz (Khan) has been scoring tons in FC (first-class) cricket and many who deserve a chance ahead of Rahul. Some are just lucky to be given chances endlessly till they succeed while some aren't allowed to.

One of the reasons why many ex-cricketers aren't vocal despite seeing such favouritism is the chances of losing out on potential IPL gigs

Rohit replied, "It's like captaining (Pat) Cummins, (Josh) Hazlewood and (Mitchell) Starc in Australia. Pretty similar. When you have the quality of Axar, Jadeja, and Ash, having played in India for so many years, playing on pitches like these, it's always a blessing."

Pakistan test awaits eyes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cape Town, Feb 11: Searching for a long overdue ICC title, India will look to hit the straps in their Women's T20 World Cup opener against arch-rivals Pakistan here Sunday.

An Indo-Pak contest always creates excitement but with India being a much superior side, the quality of cricket might not meet the high expectations. Having said that, Pakistan had got the better of India their last meeting in the Asia Cup last year with the latter making too many experiments.

In the last five years, the gulf between the two teams has widened with India challenging the supremacy of Australia and England on a consistent basis. Women's cricket in Pakistan, on the other hand, has stagnated.

With the game scheduled a day ahead of the inaugural Women's Premier League auction, there will be added motivation for the Indian players. For some, it could be a distraction.

India are fretting over the fitness of their skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (shoulder) and Smriti Mandhana (finger) ahead of the opening game. A call will be taken on their participation after the practice session on Saturday.

India come into the World Cup having lost the recent tri-series final to South Africa, a match they should have won. They also lost the warm-up game to Australia before beating Bangladesh.

India are expected to reach the semifinals of the ICC event again but if they are to beat the mighty Australia, they will need to up their game in all departments.

Barring Renuka Singh, the bowling unit doesn't inspire a lot of confidence. Veteran Shikha Pandey is yet to pick a wicket since her comeback last month and will be fired up to provide

early breakthroughs in the show-piece. The performance of the spinners has also been below expectations of late.

In the batting department, Harmanpreet and Mandhana need all the support. Shafali Verma, fresh from leading India to the inaugural U-19 World Cup title, will be keen to prove her doubters wrong with a consistent showing. Pressure will be on Jemimah Rodrigues to perform as she has not been able to play an impactful knock since her comeback.

The role of pace bowling all-rounder Pooja Vastrakar will also be critical to India's chances in the tournament. Richa Ghosh is among the few players in the team with the X-factor and she would be relied upon heavily for big hitting in the death overs.

On Pakistan's front, Nida Dar will be the player to watch out for. Pakistan go into the competition having played a series against Australia. They beat Bangladesh in their opening warm-up match before losing to South Africa.



INDIA CAPTAIN HARMANPREET KAUR HAS RECOVERED FULLY FROM THE SHOULDER NIGGLE SHE PICKED UP DURING THE TRI-SERIES AGAINST WEST INDIES AND SOUTH AFRICA



SMRITI MANDHANA WAS SATURDAY RULED OUT OF THE TEAM'S OPENING T20 WORLD CUP GAME AGAINST PAKISTAN SUNDAY AS SHE IS 'STILL RECOVERING' FROM A FINGER INJURY



ICC WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP SOUTH AFRICA 2023

Vergne clinches Hyderabad E-Prix title

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Feb 11: The seasoned Jean Eric Vergne of DS Penske won an action-packed Hyderabad E-Prix here on Saturday, marking a successful return of a high-profile motorsport event in India. The 33-lap electric race had thrills both on and off the track.

The organisers raced against time to get the Hyderabad Street Circuit ready for Formula E's debut in India but in the end, they pulled off the event amid a lot of fanfare.

Vergne held off a strong challenge from Envision Racing's Nick Cassidy to cross the chequered flag in the first place despite having less than 0.5 percent energy left in the car.

Antonio Felix Da Costa of Porsche gained from a 17-second penalty handed out to Sebastian



Buemi for 'over power' to secure the final spot on the podium.

Mahindra Racing, in their first home race, recovered from an ordinary qualifying session earlier in

the day to seal a point finish via Oliver Rowland. Rowland finished sixth from 10th on the grid while Di Grassi came 14th from 17th on the grid. Loss of energy in the final

moments of the race cost Mahindra a double points finish.

Jake Hughes' crash on lap on Lap 23 brought out the safety car, contributing to a thrilling finish. Mitch Evans of Jaguar Racing bagged the pole position but a collision with his teammate Sam Bird on Lap 13 effectively ends the race for the Tata Group-owned team.

A sizeable crowd turned up to watch the electric cars vrooming around the heart of the city, covering Hussain Sagar Lake, NTR Gardens and NTR Park.

FIA president Mohammed Ben Sulayem made a statement by turning up for the first World Championship status race in India in 10 years. The other special guests included Sachin Tendulkar, Shikhar Dhawan, Yuzvendra Chahal and Sports Minister Anurag Thakur.

NEWS IN BRIEF

India men face Pak in Asian squash final

CHENNAI: India will take on Pakistan in the men's final of the 21st Asian Junior Team Championship 2023 here Sunday. In the semifinals played Saturday, the second-seeded Indian team edged out Korea 2-1, while top-seeded Pakistan blanked Malaysia. However, the Indian women's team went down 1-2 to top-ranked Malaysia in the semifinals. **Results:** (Men) India beat Korea 2-1 (Krishna Mishra lost to Jooyoung Na 10-12, 9-11, 8-11; Shaurya Bawa beat Kun Kim 10-12, 8-11, 11-8, 11-1, 11-6; Paarth Ambani beat Seojin Oh 11-9, 11-5, 11-4).



THRILLING CONTEST: Players are in action during the Santosh Trophy match between Services and Meghalaya (in white) at the Capital Ground in Bhubaneswar, Saturday. Services won the match 2-0. PHOTO: BIKASH NAYAK

Rakesh century helps BSNL down Elite Colts

BHUBANESWAR: Rakesh Biswal scored a brilliant 101 (8x4, 5x6) to help three-time champions BSNL beat Elite Colts by 126 runs in their E-League cricket tournament match at the IDCO Cricket Ground here, Saturday. After being invited into bat by the Colts, BSNL rode on Rakesh's knock to post 244 in their allotted 40 overs. Bikash Pati (45) ably supported Rakesh. Anshuman Bej (4/54) bowled well for the Colts. In response, Elite Colts were bundled out for 118 with Sudarshan Swain (28) being the top scorer. Niranjana Behera (3/11) was the most successful bowler for BSNL.