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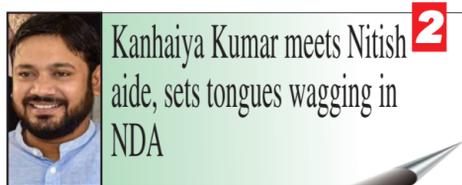
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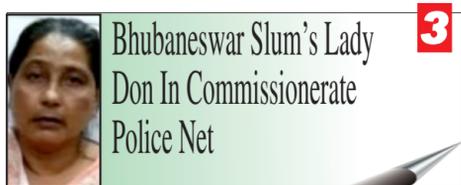
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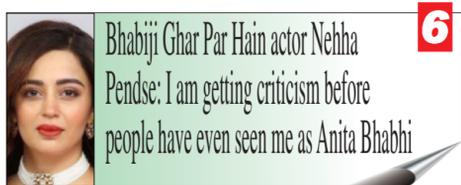
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Metro line Prime Minister Modi inaugurated to ease commute for North Chennai residents



Chennai, Feb 15: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated the Chennai Metro Rail Phase-I extension and laid the foundation stone for several other development projects. At the Nehru Indoor Stadium, PM

Modi flagged off the 9-km stretch between Washermanpet and Wimco Nagar, which has been completed at a cost of Rs 3,770 crore. The PM dedicated the Chennai Beach-Attipattu fourth line and the railway electrification of

Villupuram - Cuddalore - Mayiladuturai - Thanjavur - Mayiladuturai - Tiruvarur single line sections to the nation. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami and Deputy Chief Minister

O Panneerselvam, along with other officials, were present at the event. After the PM inaugurated the Phase-I extension, passengers were given a free ride on both Blue Line and Green Line. The stretch from Washermanpet to Wimco Nagar includes seven Metro stations, with two undergrounds. The extension will mean a big relief for the residents of North Chennai, who have been struggling for years for a good public transport system. They will now reach the airport within an hour, which otherwise takes several

hours due to traffic congestion. They can reach the CMBT and Egmore station by switching Metros at Chennai Central. Commuters who travel in the elevated section of the Metro Rail will also get to enjoy a panoramic view of the sea. Several shops, such as Aavin and Indco Tea House, dot the metro line. More are likely to be opened. The Chennai Metro Rail Limited has hired 13 transgender people to work at the Washermanpet station. They are to issue tickets and address queries of commuters.

Naveen Patnaik To Inaugurate, Lay Stones For Slew Of Projects In Sundargarh Today



Bhubaneswar, Feb 15: During his Sundargarh visit tomorrow, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will inaugurate and lay foundation stones for a slew of developmental projects for the district and also address the gathering. As per the Odisha Chief Minister's tour itinerary, he is going to depart Nivas here at 10.10 am to the

Biju Patnaik Airport and fly to Rourkela Airstrip at 10.20 am. Reaching the Rourkela meeting venue at 11.30 am, the Chief Minister will inaugurate and lay foundation stones digitally and also address the gathering there. He will depart from Rourkela to Bhubaneswar at 12.35 pm the same day. Secretary to Chief Minister

(ST) V.K. Pandian will also accompany the Chief Minister during his Sundargarh visit. The urgent message dispatched from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) has issued instructions, "Strict Bio Bubbles (COVID Protocol) to be ensured throughout the visit programme of the Chief Minister."

Odisha Bandh: Impact Of Statewide Agitation

Bhubaneswar, Feb 15: The Odisha bandh observed by the Congress today against the rising fuel prices primarily affected vehicular movement across the state as party workers resorted to road blockade. Holding party flags and banners, the Congress workers blocked roads at various junctions disrupting vehicular movement. Vehicles remained stranded on both sides of the road at such places. Emergency services including ambulance, vehicles carrying milk, media and examinees were exempted from the purview of the bandh. Passengers at

major bus stands in the state suffered as the Bus Owners' Association had decided to suspend bus services from 6 AM to 1 PM. With no other



option for travelling, they waited for resumption of bus services. Movement of trains was temporarily affected as the party leaders and workers staged rail roko at various rail-

way stations in the state. Passengers deboarding at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) in Bhubaneswar waited at the airport as they

couldn't find taxi or auto-rickshaw for reaching their destination/house/hotel. Most of the shops and business establishments remained closed during the bandh.

Withdraw NMA Heritage Bylaws For 2 More Bhubaneswar Temples; Odisha To Centre

Bhubaneswar, Feb 15: Amidst the ongoing tug of war, Odisha on Monday wrote to Centre to withdraw the National Monuments Authority's (NMA) heritage bylaws for two more temples in the State. In a letter to Raghvendra Singh, Ministry of Culture Secretary, Odisha Chief Secretary Suresh Mohapatra urged the former to withdraw the bylaws issued by NMA for Ananta Basudev and Brahmeswar temples of Ekamra Kshetra, Bhubaneswar. The letter came barely days after Odisha Chief Minister urged the Centre to withdraw



the heritage bylaws for both the temples in Bhubaneswar. Though NMA had also issued heritage bylaws for Puri Jagannath temple, it was withdrawn following serious discontentment among

sevayats, devotees and people's representatives as it was done without any consultations with any stakeholders. However, draft notification relating to Ekamra Kshetra temples are still in

force causing distress to the sevayat community, people at large and devotees, wrote Mohapatra in his letter. "There are serious apprehensions that the non-withdrawal of the bylaws will lead to

widespread agitation and disturb the day to day religious rituals in temples. This kind of atmosphere in temples is bound to hurt the religious sentiments of lakhs of devotees. The largest congregation of devotees at Ekamra Kshetra will happen on March 11 on the occasion of Maha Shiv Ratri festival," the letter read. The State government has urged Centre to ensure that there is a peaceful atmosphere and full co-operation of sevayats for conducting this annual Maha Shivratri festival in which lakhs of devotees congregate from all over the State.

IMD Issues Thunderstorm, Lightning Yellow Warning For Odisha From Feb 17 To 19

Bhubaneswar, Feb 15: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) in its weather bulletin of today has

Boudh, Dhenkanal, Ganjam, Jajpur, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj,

very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Nuapada, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Boudh,

of Nawarangpur, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Ganjam, Nayagarh, Boudh, Angul, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal, Balasore, Bhadrak and Jajpur from 18.02.2021 (8.30 am) to 19.02.2021 (8.30 am)." Following the IMD's yellow warning, the office of the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) has issued advisory to all the Collectors and concerned authorities so that steps should be taken to circulate the warning message among the public. The SRC has also advised that the situation may be closely monitored and action as deemed necessary be taken in case of any eventuality.



issued yellow warning of thunderstorm and lightning for the 18 districts of Odisha. The districts are Angul, Balasore, Bhadrak, Bolangir,

Nawarangpur, Nayagarh, Nuapada, Rayagada, Sambalpur and Sonepur. As per the IMD's weather bulletin, "Thunderstorm with lightning is

Sonepur, Sambalpur, Angul, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Balasore from 17.02.2021 to 18.02.2021 (8.30 am) and over the districts

Bhubaneswar MP Thanks Fixers Of Missing Posters, Calls Them Well-Wishers



Bhubaneswar, Feb 15: Local BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi today thanked those who had fixed posters of her going missing. "What can be more heartening a thing for a people's representative if people of her/his area remember her/him?" asked Sarangi at a press briefing held at the BJP headquarters here today. A smiling Sarangi remarked, "Those friends who had fixed those posters are my well-wishers. I heartily thank them. I

would request them from the core of my heart to fix such posters again in every nook and corner of Bhubaneswar in large numbers when I will be away for 30 days from March 8 to April 8 to attend the Parliament session". She said that this type of poster has helped her a lot. The Bhubaneswar MP clarified that till February 13 she was attending the session of the Lok Sabha. It is pertinent to mention

here that posters captioned 'nikhoj' (meaning missing) in Odia with a picture of the MP questioning her whereabouts and silence over the non-withdrawal of proposed heritage bylaws for Ekamra Kshetra framed by the National Monuments Authority (NMA) were found pasted in lanes and bylanes of Old Town area of the city on Thursday. The posters further said that the proposed bye-laws were part of a well-designed

conspiracy to destroy Odisha's prominent heritage sites. Reacting to the posters, Sarangi had then tweeted: "Am amused that these posters have come up in Bhubaneswar at a time when the budget session of Parliament is on; it is my duty to be in the Lok Sabha now. Am glad Bhubaneswar is 'missing' me. It is a great feeling, indeed! As always, I will be among my people from 15th Feb onwards". The same day Laxmisagar police arrested two persons Dhaneswar Barik and Jyoti Ranjan Panda in connection with the affixing of posters. Interestingly, arrestees were close associates of the Bhubaneswar MP. While Barik is said to be the personal assistant (PA) of Sarangi, Panda is a close associate of hers.

Coronavirus wrap, Feb 15: About 18-19 vaccines in pipeline; Gujarat CM tests positive and more Kanhaiya Kumar meets Nitish aide, sets tongues wagging in NDA



New Delhi, Feb 15: Coronavirus news, Coronavirus latest news, covid-19 in india, covid-19 vaccine news, coronavirus news india, Vijay Rupani Second dose of Covid-19 vaccine being administered at the Civil Hospital in Sector-6, Panchkula. With 11,649 new cases of Covid-19 detected on Monday, India's tally for the coronavirus infection rose to 1,09,16,589, while fatalities were recorded below 100 for the ninth time this month, as per the Union Health Ministry data. The death toll also increased to 1,55,732, the data showed. There are

1,39,637 active cases of infections in the country, which comprise 1.28 per cent of the total caseload. As per ICMR, as many as 20,67,16,634 samples have been tested up to February 14, with 4,86,122 samples tested Sunday. Globally, at least 25,05,769 people have died from Covid-19 and 108,924,185 have been infected, following an outbreak that started in Wuhan, China, in early December 2020. As per a Reuters tally, there are nearly 35,000,000 active cases of Covid-19 around the world. With 27,641,135 active cases and 4,85,337 deaths, the

United States continue to be the worst-affected country. Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan Monday said that there are about 18-19 Covid-19 vaccine candidates in the pipeline and in different clinical trial stages. Addressing the media, Vardhan said that in the next 2-3 weeks, vaccinations against Covid-19 will be started for people above 50 years of age. "About 18-20 vaccine candidates against COVID-19 are in the pipeline and are in preclinical, clinical and advanced stages," Vardhan said. He further said that India will be supplying vaccines to 20-25 other

countries. Dispelling rumours, Vardhan reiterated that vaccines in the public domain are safe and effective. He also said no new cases of COVID-19 have been reported in 188 districts of the country in the last 7 days, while no new cases have been reported in 21 districts in 21 days. The ministry said that 18 states and UTs have not reported any deaths in a span of 24 hours. These are Assam, Rajasthan, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, J h a r k h a n d , Uttarakhand, Manipur, N a g a l a n d , L a k s h a d w e e p , Meghalaya, Sikkim, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli, PTI reported. Also, ten states and UTs have reported no deaths in the last week. These are Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Daman and Diu and

Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Ladakh, L a k s h a d w e e p , Manipur, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. On Sunday, Rupani, who was campaigning for the Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) elections, fell unconscious at the third venue of his rally, while addressing the gathering. BJP leader and former mayor of Vadodara, Dr Jigeesha Seth, rushed to Rupani's aid and helped stabilise him, while a medical team rushed him to UN Mehta Hospital in Ahmedabad from Vadodara airport. BJP state president CR Patil told reporters that Rupani had been running a fever for the past few days and campaigning despite requests from party leaders to take a break. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 10 had assured his Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau that India would do its best to facilitate supplies of COVID vaccines sought by Canada.

Patna, Feb 15: Many eyebrows were raised in Bihar on Monday as news broke of a meeting between CPI's rising star Kanhaiya Kumar and Ashok Choudhary, a minister and key aide of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. A fiery former JNU student leader, Kanhaiya has been soft toward Nitish Kumar despite their parties rarely getting on the same page on most issues. Kanhaiya met Choudhary on Sunday. During his failed bid for the Lok Sabha in 2019, the former student leader had avoided attacking Kumar. Kumar had come out in support of Kanhaiya when the JNU controversy erupted in 2016. The JD(U) was then not a part of the BJP-led NDA. The two retained the soft spot for each other even after Nitish Kumar returned to the NDA in 2017. Choudhary had headed the state unit of the JD(U) during the assembly elections and played an instrumental role recently in enlisting the support of the sole BSP MLA Zama Khan and independent legislator Sumit Singh,

both of whom were inducted into the cabinet last week. He had also caused jitters in the LJP, an ally turned adversary, by inviting its sole MLA Raj Kumar Singh to his residence for a book launch function a few weeks back. Choudhary's meeting

a part of money he had raised through crowd-funding. Kanhaiya had fought from his home constituency Begusarai, where he lost to Union minister and BJP leader Giriraj Singh by a massive margin. Nonetheless, the contest had created a lot of buzz and brought many



with Kanhaiya, a staunch communist, came at a time when the charismatic young politician is said to have been left mortified by a censure motion that the CPI recently passed against him. The party action had followed alleged manhandling of a key CPI official attached to the state headquarters here. Earlier, there had been tensions between the aspiring leader and his party during the Lok Sabha elections when the CPI reportedly insisted that he share

celebrities from far-off places to the dusty town in support of the young leader who has been slapped with a sedition case for allegedly raising anti-national slogans at JNU. Sources close to Kanhaiya as well as Choudhary insisted that it was a "non-political" meeting and that both have known each other for long. It has, nonetheless, evoked reactions from those holding strong views on nationalism and against the so-called "tukde tukde gang".

Uttarakhand disaster: Three more bodies recovered from tunnel, toll climbs to 54

Dehradun, Feb 15: Three more bodies were recovered Monday from the Tapovan tunnel, taking the toll in the Uttarakhand flash flood to 54 as hopes of finding survivors there over a week after the disaster dimmed. So far nine bodies have been pulled out from Adit tunnel at the National Thermal Power Corporation's 's Tapovan-Vishnugad project site, choked by

other approach at reaching the trapped workers — by widening a hole drilled into the tunnel system — does not appear to be working. A camera or tube cannot be inserted as the hole is choked with sludge. Rescuing the trapped people is now possible only with the help of excavators, Chamoli District Magistrate Swati S Bhadauria told PTI. They continue

areas of Tapovan and Joshimath for four days in search of Jitendra until his body was brought out of the tunnel on Sunday. It's tragic," he said. Alam Singh Pundir's body, the first to be pulled out of the tunnel on Sunday, has also been handed over to his relatives who arrived in Tapovan just a day after the flash flood. Twenty-nine of the 54 bodies found so far — in the tunnel and elsewhere along the river — have been identified. The father and the father-in-law of Sateshwar Purohit, a resident of Soni village in Chamoli, have not given up hope of seeing their son alive. "We have absolute faith in God. Our son will definitely return," the electrician's father said. The last rites of those pulled out dead are being carried out after samples are taken for DNA tests to help establish their identities. Kits with foodgrain and other essentials have been distributed among residents of over a dozen villages that were cut off from the district headquarters after the disaster, possibly triggered by an avalanche. Electricity supply has been restored in all affected villages except Pang, where solar lanterns have been provided to residents for the time being, the district magistrate said. The agencies involved in the Tapovan rescue work include the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, the National Disaster Response Force and the State Disaster Response Force.



debris after the February 7 flood which ripped into two hydel plants in the Alaknanda river system. Apart from the confirmed 54 dead, 150 others are still missing. The multi-agency rescue effort in Chamoli district is focusing on the Tapovan tunnel where about 30 workers were feared trapped. The body of Satyapal Singh Bartwal from Masoli village in Chamoli district was among those found in the tunnel on Monday. "We had hoped Satyapal would return alive. But now we will have to return home with my brother's body. It's unbearable," said his elder brother. His other relatives, who have been camping at Tapovan village since the day the tragedy struck, also broke down after identifying the body. Officials said the

to dredge out the sludge from the tunnel, making slow progress. Asked about the chances of survival of those missing or trapped, the district magistrate said, "We must always try to be hopeful when the circumstances are adverse." Families of some of the missing people continue their vigil near the tunnel, plucking up the courage to take a look every time a body is brought out. But many are beginning now to return to their homes. The relatives of Jitendra, a resident of Jammu brought out dead from the tunnel on Sunday, are also packing up to leave. His younger brother Pawan said seven of them had come from Jammu after hearing about the disaster. Jitendra's phone was switched off. "We had been scouring different

Bird flu detected at poultry farm in Tapi district, neighbouring Maharashtra's Navapur

Surat, Feb 15: As many as 17,000 poultry birds will be culled after avian flu traces were detected at a 35-year-old farm in Uchhal town of Tapi district, located adjacent to Maharashtra's Navapur taluka that had witnessed a spurt in H5N1 cases a few days ago. A total of 5.78 lakh poultry birds were culled and 25.13 lakh eggs were destroyed from 22 poultry farms in Navapur last week, following which Tapi Collector R J Halani had issued a notification to ban the transportation of eggs, chicken and poultry farm products to and from the border areas adjoining Navapur for two months. According to officials, the poultry farms in Navapur taluka, where bird flu cases were detected, are located less



than one kilometre from Uchhal town. The samples collected from the National Poultry Farm of Uchhal town during a checking drive, following the spurt in cases in nearby areas, were sent to Bhopal for laboratory testing — RT-PCR test was conducted on three samples. After the test reports, which were returned Monday, confirmed the presence of H5N1 influenza, the

Animal Husbandry department deployed police teams at the National Poultry Farm, owned by Mohammed Harun Timol, and stopped transportation of birds, poultry feeds, and eggs from it. Tapi district Animal Husbandry department deputy director Dr Akshay Shah said, "We have deployed police teams and intimated the staffers over there restricting their movements. The poul-

try feed supply has also been stopped. Soon after the culling activities started in Navapur, we stopped the entry of poultry birds and eggs from Navapur to Gujarat." The National Poultry Farm, Shah said, is the first in the entire area including Navapur. "There are 17,000 poultry birds in the farm and all of them will be culled. We have called a team, which will arrive late Monday evening and

from Tuesday morning the culling activities will be started." On Monday, Navapur Mamlatdar Mandar Kulkarni said, "There are 26 poultry farms in Navapur, and between February 7 and 13, a total of 5.78 lakh poultry birds were culled and over 25.13 lakh eggs destroyed at 22 poultry farms. At the remaining four poultry farms, the tests report had come negative for H5N1 flu. In February 2006, when bird flu cases were reported in Navapur area, over 3.50 lakh birds were culled. This time, more birds have been culled." Kulkarni said he had met the poultry farm association representatives and found that maximum birds and eggs from poultry farms in the taluka were supplied to different parts of Gujarat.

Kerala CM unveils route, terminal buildings of Kochi Water Metro project



Kochi, Feb 15: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Monday inaugurated the first route and terminal buildings of the ambitious Kochi Water Metro project, a Rs 747-crore plan to connect the islands around the city using

state-of-the-art boats. The route from Vyttila, one of the busiest traffic hubs in the city, to Kakkanad, the IT hub, was inaugurated by the Chief Minister through video-conferencing from Thiruvananthapuram. Commercial op-

erations are likely to start next month after obtaining the statutory clearance certificate. The timing of the inauguration seemed to be ideal as the state government might have wanted to hold the programme before March, when the Election

Commission is expected to notify the dates of the Assembly election which will bring the model code of conduct into effect. According to the proposal, the Water Metro project, which is funded partly by the state government and the German financing agency KfW, will have a total of 16 routes, connecting 38 terminals using 78 AC and non-AC boats. The first phase of the project, which is currently underway, will have 16 terminals with boats with carrying capacities of 50 and 100 people being put to use.

The first of the ferries to be used on the Vyttila-Kakkanad route is nearing completion. "Our rivers, canals and backwaters must be made fit for passenger and cargo transport. The outlook of the Water Metro project is maintaining steady development through environmental sustainability. This will be a green transport model for safe and comfortable journeys. There will be air-conditioned boats. The terminals and boats will also be disabled-friendly, which is a first in the country," Vijayan said.

Congress Enforces Six hours Shut down in Khordha



(A.O. Bureau) Khordha, Feb 15: Congress party is observing a six hour Odisha shut down today to protest against the rising prices of petrol and diesel. Khordha town Congress Committee picketing near bank Chhak, new bus stand, in front of block office, Collector office and central and state government offices of Khordha under the

leadership of town Congress Committee President Ranjit Mohapatra, PCC spokesman Amit Mohanty, PCC, Member Sisir Kumar Parida, Former Khordha Block Congress President Padma Charan Ray, Youth Congress President Plaban Pattnaik, Siladitya Pattnaik, Halim Khan, Dwarika Mohanty, Manash Kumar Mishra,

Jitendra Champati, Md. Raja, Girija Bhusan Mohapatra, Prakash Behera, Biswabhusan Sahoo, Hemant Nayak, Md. Rijuan are actively participated the protest. Vehicles will stay off the roads, Shop's and other business establishment, central and state government offices remain closed till 1pm. Above all the strike is peacefully end in Khordha.

The Shrigundicha, Spiritual Trust Odisha established a news horizon for the upliftment of the Jagannath Culture

(A.O. Bureau) Puri, Feb 15: The organisation arranged A National seminar on occasion of Padmukha Vesa where the chief guest was Justice Manas Ranjan Mishra inaugurating the Function told that Jagannath is the universal lord for the welfare of whole humanity. The VC of Shri Jagannath University prof Harihar hota joining as special guest of honour told that Indian culture taking the name of Jagannath leading to universal brotherhood. Senior Dr. of Odisha Ravi narayan samanta as honourable guest told that Lord Jagannath is the



creator of all human being with an unified cultural based human beings. The senior advisor of the Trust expressed his gratitude to his devotional bent of mind was motivated while he was the collector of Puri and said about his personal feeling to lord. A research person sri Anil Dhir (research fellow of Sri Jagannath Sadak) join as as honourable guest. The organizing committee chairman Dr Muri Sarma

told that the universal unit can be established with the Jagannath culture with its devotional activities the other Honorable guest were Dr Ramakant Kar, Founder of Bharat Masala Surendra nath Panda Pradip ku Satpathy, Daitapati Raghu nath Dashmohapatra, Binod ku Panda santilata pradhan were present. In second session Prof Harihar kanoongo, Dr sakuntala baliarsingh, Dr

Abhaya natak Sevak of Lord Jagannath Bhagaban suar, Dr chandra sekhar Dash, Dr Abhimanu bhuian Prof haraprasad Mishra, Dr Dharmachda Bijaya laxmi Dash, Bijaylaxmi sahu Er Brajakeshir Parida joined and discussed the greatness of Lord Jagannath in the meantime the book History and Haritage of puri was inaugurated by the guest as the being Historian Madan Mohan Mohapatra gave the

introduction speech and secy of the trust identify the guest the founder of Bharat Masala Mr Surendra Nath Panda got The Utkal Nidhi Sanman among others Mr badri mishra, Bhavani prasad Baliarsingh, Mrs jayanti Mohapatra Basant ku Mishra, lect Sarbeswar Sadangi, Tapan Sethi, Krishna Mohapatra coordinated the hole program lecture Minaketan Patajosi gave vote of thanks.

Multiple Jumbo Deaths In Odisha: CM Naveen Expresses Concern

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 15: The Forest and Environment department and the Animal Resources department were directed to take steps to check further elephant deaths in Karlapat sanctuary in Kalahandi district. During a review meeting through video conferencing today here, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik expressed concern over the six elephant deaths in two weeks in the sanctuary. The two departments were asked to consult experts both from the State and outside over the matter. Patnaik also directed the district administra-



tion and DFO to ensure vaccination of cattle in the villages close to the sanctuary. All the water bodies in the sanctuary should be disinfected and water samples should be sent to labs for test, the Chief Minister asked the authori-

ties. Experts said the elephants died in the sanctuary due to Hemorrhagic Septicemia after getting infected with the Pasteurella Multocida. Forest Department sources said out of eight elephants of a herd in the sanctu-

ary, six have already died due to the Hemorrhagic Septicemia. The sources further stated measures have been taken to track the remaining two elephants of the herd and ensure that they do not get infected. A total of 10

teams of the Forest personnel has been formed to keep a track on the movement of the elephants. Also, the IG of the Project Elephant and the Director of Wildlife Institute of India have been requested to send a team to vaccinate the jumbos and suggest measures. Out of 43 water bodies in the sanctuary, 25 have been disinfected so far. Work is on to disinfect the remaining water bodies. Among others, the Development Commissioner, Additional Chief Secretary of the Forest and Environment Department, 5T Secretary and other senior officials were present in the meeting.

Cuttack Bus Terminal: Decks Cleared For Project As HC Quashes PILs



(A.O. Bureau) Cuttack, Feb 15: The Orissa High Court today quashed two Public Interest Litigations (PILs) that had challenged the State Government's proposed Cuttack Netaji Bus Terminal (CNBT) project at Khan Nagar in the city. The two PILs were filed in the High

Court seeking relocation of the project site while another PIL was filed challenging the inclusion of the Kali temple land in the project. Hearing the three PILs, the High Court today rejected the two PILs seeking relocation and posted the PIL related to the Kali temple land for next

hearing on May 17. The High Court had earlier directed the administration to maintain status quo of all movable and immovable properties of the Kali temple. Notably, the bus terminal is proposed to be developed on around 12 acres of land at Khan Nagar here at a cost of Rs 65 crore.

Operation Of Commercial Flights From Rourkela Soon!



(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 15: The operation of commercial flights from Rourkela is expected to begin soon following a high-level meeting between Civil Aviation Joint Secretary Usha Padhee and Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) CEO in Odisha's Steel City. Padhee held the meeting with the RSP authority after visiting Rourkela today paving the way for operationalisation of the airport under UDAN scheme. Earlier, a high-level team headed by State Commerce & Transport Principal Secretary Madhusudan

Padhi had visited the Rourkela Airstrip twice to review the infrastructure. But, the operationalisation of the airport was delayed. Despite being included under UDAN scheme of the Central Government, the operation of flight services from Rourkela Airport has not yet been possible due to some technical issues. Developed by the Airport Authority of India (AAI) for operation under Regional Connectivity Scheme - Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagarik (RCS-UDAN), the airport was initially planned for 19-seater aircraft. Now,

ATR 72 aircraft has been allowed to operate following licence upgradation and further development of Rourkela airport. "The ECS routes from Rourkela to Bhubaneswar and Raipur with ATR-72 type aircraft have been awarded to Alliance Air and Turbo Aviation. However, the operations are yet to commence due to lack of readiness of Rourkela airport for Code 3C operations," Union Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri had said in a reply to Rajya Sabha member from Delhi Sanjay Singh recently.

Bhubaneswar Slum's Lady Don In Commissionerate Police Net

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 15: Self-proclaimed lady don Asmaa Bibi alias Bano landed in jail today for allegedly manhandling the PCR staff and thrusting diktats at her slum kangaroo in the smart city. The 45 years old lady don of Azad Nagar Abhiram Basti under the Airfield Police Station (PS) limits of Bhubaneswar Urban

Police Department (UPD) not only manhandled the PCR van staff, but also tied up two goat thieves in public and enforced her own ways and means of punishment with impunity, the Commissionerate Police sources said. She was arrested by the Airfield police, forwarded to court and sent behind the bars today.



Odisha Budget Session To Go Paperless: Two-Day Workshop For Officials Begins



(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 14: The Odisha Legislative Assembly is all set to go paperless during the upcoming budget session, beginning on February 18. Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro inaugurated a two-day orientation workshop to train Assembly officials on the implementation of the National E-Vidhan Application (NeVA), on Monday. The training would be imparted on February 15 and 16 from 10.30 am at the New Conference Hall in the premises of the Odisha Assembly in Bhubaneswar. Talking to reporters on the

sidelines of the inauguration of the Workshop on 'National E-Vidhan Application (NeVA)', Patro said, "All the proceedings of the house, Governor's speech, State budget, CAG Report, Economic Survey will be done through NeVA, which can be accessed by anyone easily. Besides, starred/unstarred questions and answers will also be made available in the public domain through the app," the speaker stated. However, the MLAs will be provided papers during the upcoming budget session as they are yet to be trained on the use of the app. "The MLAs

will be given training on the app by the end of the assembly session. They will have to use computers and iPads from the next session," added Patro. Two senior IT experts, officials of National Informatics Centre (NIC) and Central representatives have arrived in Bhubaneswar from Delhi to impart training to the officials of the State Assembly on NeVA, which aims at bringing all legislatures of the country together in one platform, thereby creating a massive data depository without having the complexity of multiple applications.

EDITORIAL

Halfway through

Round one of first-phase COVID-19 vaccination drive over, India gets its act together to accolades. India has begun the second round of its phase one COVID-19 vaccination drive. The first round that began on January 16 saw 58,65,813 healthcare workers and 19,00,506 frontline workers being inoculated till February 12. Once India administers both the shots, the vaccination process for the first lot of chosen people will be complete. Thankfully, from the time the venture got underway, the number of infections and casualties has seen a downward spiral. According to the Union Health Ministry, on February 11 the country reported 12,923 new infections in 24 hours, taking the number of those infected to 10,871,294. There are 142,562 active cases and 10,573,372 recoveries as India's death toll stood at 155,360 with 108 deaths during the same period. India is witnessing a consistent decline in the number of infections reported daily since the peak in mid-September 2020. This has earned the Government a pat on the back from the World Health Organisation (WHO), as has the fact that over seven million people have been inoculated since the world's largest vaccination drive began in January. "It's the fastest rate of vaccination happening," Roderico Ofrin, the WHO's India representative, has said. However, despite its relative success, the first round was not without challenges. For instance, there was the issue of procuring enough vaccines, which still remains. AstraZeneca's Covishield, which is the main vaccine being administered, is given in two doses, four weeks apart. This means that India needs 60 crore shots for the first phase. The Serum Institute of India (SII), which makes Covishield, has said it has a stockpile of five-seven crore doses and aims to produce 50 crore shots by July 2021. So, by the SII's own admission, there will be shortages in the first half of 2021. However, this shortage will ease when other vaccines are cleared for use. But other issues like inadequate cold storage facilities will continue to haunt the system in the second round too. The fact that more than 52 per cent of the country's 29,000 cold chain points and 40 per cent of the equipment are concentrated in just six States doesn't help. As the drive speeds up, the Government will have to increase the number of cold chain facilities, keeping in focus the States without an adequate infrastructure. Plus, Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, the other approved vaccine, can be kept at room temperature for at least a week. So the Government needs to ensure that going forward the campaign has a healthy mix of both the vaccines. But, for that to happen, the people's hesitation in using Covaxin needs to be overcome by releasing its efficacy data. Also, with the registration process being mostly electronic till now, the Government should ensure some amount of "on-the-spot" registration as not everyone has a mobile phone and internet connection in a poor country like ours. With Indians developing antibodies faster than the Government can get the jabs, there is hope for the country. But for a lot of people, as for the economy, it would have come a bit too late.

Upper House: To be, or not to be?

Political parties need to realise and decide whether they wish to make serious use of the Upper House or exploit it for their convenience. As expressed in this journal, others have voiced, from time to time, doubts about the utility of the Upper House of legislature whether in the States or at the Centre. The cause of these doubts is the not-so-infrequent misuse of the Rajya Sabha as well as the Vidhan Parishads. As Sanjay Gandhi's influence grew in the 1970s, many of his friends were lifted into the Rajya Sabha. Fortunately for them, the election rule-framers prescribed the minimum age for such candidates as 30. Hence, like the minimum age of 25 years for the Lok Sabha, anyone who was over 30 years was eligible for the Upper House. In many ways, this was the first reason of misuse. The Upper House was never meant for the young woman or man to get into. They, being young and fit, should cultivate the common folk, broaden the party base and, in due course, contest a Lok Sabha seat. The young and raw individuals reflected on the House discipline as well as the quality of debates and their contribution to Parliament. The purpose of the Upper House, whether at the Centre or in States, was the exact opposite: Older, mature individuals, preferably well educated who could devote time to study issues and then speak on them in an informed manner. They may or may not relate to the common folk of a constituency, nor perhaps may the mass voters relate to such members. The Upper



House should be used to accommodate leaders who made competent Ministers and had to get elected within six months of their appointment by the Prime Minister or a Chief Minister. One recent example is that of Yogi Adityanath. He was in the Lok Sabha when the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections were held in 2017 and he had not contested from any constituency. Yet he was selected to be the Chief Minister and, therefore, had to enter the Assembly. He could have requested an MLA to give up his seat. But instead of doing that, he chose not to disturb anyone; there was a Vidhan Parishad seat vacant which he used to become an Assembly member. In 2001, when Narendra Modi was in a similar situation in Gujarat, he could not do the same. There being no Vidhan Parishad in his State, Modi had to get elected from an Assembly seat vacated by an MLA. Having been a member of the Rajya Sabha, I found that the level of debates and discussions was,

on the whole, more sober and mature than in the Lok Sabha. Generally, the speakers in the Upper House ensured that they had studied and reflected on the subject they spoke on whereas, in the Lok Sabha, more members spoke off the cuff; most of them had spent time in their constituencies over the weekend. Many of them regularly left Delhi on Friday afternoons, if not on Thursday evenings, to return on Monday mornings. The Rajya Sabha members could afford to spend the weekends in Delhi and read up before speaking the following week. The Communist parties had a commendable system; most of their Upper House members spent the weekends in Delhi. They not only studied the contemporary subjects but also collected the Bills coming up for debate and passed on their notes to their Lok Sabha colleagues. I offered to organise a small secretariat at my cost for all my party members so that all of us could be better prepared for discussions. Be-

ing in power after long and with a lenient leadership, the general mood in the party was one of overconfidence. Little wonder then that the 2004 general election was lost on a manifesto which projected "India shining". To every Indian shining, there were citizens not shining. In India, our constituencies are large and the voters are much more varied than, say, in western countries. Moreover, our diversity makes it useful for the Members of Parliament and even Assemblies to know other parts of the country. The Upper House members would have the leisure to do this kind of work during the weeks when the House does not sit. The Lower House members cannot normally have much leisure; their focus has to be on their own voters. If the legislators do not take their knowledge side seriously, they would yield helplessly to the dominance of the Executive or the Ministers. It is for the political parties to realise and decide whether they wish to make serious use of the Upper House or exploit it for their convenience. But, truly, these chambers can be useful as knowledge-cum-wisdom banks for the parties as well as for the country. They can help raise the quality of politics. Getting elected by lakhs of people is related to popularity or, at least, acceptability whereas knowledge depends on education and experience. Both are necessary virtues; the Lower House more for the party while the Upper House more for the country in the long run, if used wisely.

Prafull Goradia

Finance Commission dips into states' share for Centre's expenditure, makes system more discretionary

The Fifteenth Finance Commission's substantive award is status quoist, its design is regressive even though its obiter dicta is reformist. The structural change from production to consumption will make a significant difference to inter se distribution as well as the need, nature and distribution of equalising grants. In the fireworks of the Union budget, little attention has been paid to the recommendation of the Fifteenth Finance Commission (XVFC). The report was laid before the Parliament and the finance minister announced the acceptance of its recommendation of retaining the share of states in central taxes at 42 per cent. She also stated that on its recommendation revenue deficit grants of Rs 1.18 lakh crore to the states have been provided for in the budget. To its credit, by retaining the existing share of states in taxes, the XVFC has been principled and pragmatic. It has done so despite serious prodding by the Centre (through the terms of reference) to revise it downwards. Having said that, though, there is much more to a finance commission report than the vertical distribution. Some of the recommendations, and even the obiter dicta, have far-reaching implications on government finances, both of the Centre and the states. Which is why it is strange that in an otherwise trendsetting transparent budget, the recommendations of the XVFC have been obfuscated. Sample this from the budget documents: "Keeping in view the extant strategic requirements for national defence in a global con-

text, XVFC has, in its approach, recalibrated the relative shares of the Union and the states in gross revenues receipts." As it turns out, "recalibration" is actually a 1 per cent reduction in the grants to states, which enables the Union to set aside resources for special funding on defence. The states have been made to pay Rs 7,000 crore to "bridge [the] Centre's gap between projected budgetary requirements and budget allocation for defence and internal security defence" — an expenditure that the Centre is obliged to fund. For the first time, a finance commission has carved out resources meant for distributable statutory grants and dipped into the states' revenue share, as against the tax share, in order to finance the Centre's exclusive expenditure obligation. What has been done is not in line with the system envisaged in the Constitution. The Constitution is very clear on the charge of revenues collected: The first charge on taxes collected is devolution and statutory commitments, not the Centre's expenditure. While the amount is just about 0.5 per cent of the total transfers of Rs 14 lakh crore to the states, it is really the thin edge of the wedge that will eventually put the fiscal federal system under systemic strain. In operational terms, too, this move is a significant departure. So far, the Centre has been used to pre-empting resources from the kitty to be distributed among the states but only to finance expenditures in areas earmarked for states. This was done through the centrally-sponsored schemes, but at least the states' money was be-

ing used in the states, even if on a discretionary rather than a criteria basis. Now, with this move of earmarking and financing of funds for sectors, it is the states' money that is being used to finance the Centre's expenditure. This is certainly not cooperative federalism. If anything, it is heading towards partisan federalism. Consider the issue of horizontal distribution. The criteria used by successive finance commissions for devolving taxes across states have always been linked to need — based on equity, tempered by efficiency. The XVFC has moved the balance sharply: From 92.5 per cent of funds to a state being devolved based on need and equity, the XVFC has reduced these two components to 75 per cent. The remaining 25 per cent are to be devolved on considerations of efficiency and performance. This is the lowest weightage for equity, making the XVFC transfers potentially the least progressive ever. Apart from these issues arising from what the XVFC has done, there are equally severe problems arising out of what it has not done. While the report is comprehensive in diagnosing and understanding the issues, it has made no effort to prescribe solutions. Far from it, it has not even made any serious effort to review the existing scheme of transfers in light of the changed federal landscape. For instance, the existing criteria have evolved in, and for, a production-based tax system. The XVFC should have reformulated the distributional criteria for a consumption-based tax system. The structural change from production to

consumption will make a significant difference to inter se distribution as well as the need, nature and distribution of equalising grants. Instead, what does the report offer? It merely notes: "Such structural issues may be required to be identified and readjustment may be done to minimise the fiscal and economic impact of GST." Who is to identify these structural issues? And who is to make the readjustment? The only institution that is constitutionally empowered to do it and ideally positioned to take a technically correct and operationally practical view is the Finance Commission. By rolling the can down the road, the XVFC has abdicated its responsibility. This is the same manner in which the revenue deficit grants have been carried forward. Ideally, the "gap-filling" approach should have been redesigned in light of the compensation law providing a minimum-guaranteed revenue of 14 per cent to every state. The result of not doing so is that the total grants, statutory and non-statutory, account for almost 55 per cent of the total transfers — up from less than 50 per cent in recent years. The share of tax devolution in aggregate transfers has dropped to 45 per cent, making the system more discretionary. To conclude, the XVFC's substantive award is status quoist, its design is regressive even though its obiter dicta is reformist. In not being aligned with the new landscape of federalism, it is like a red herring prospectus, which contains most of the information pertaining to the operations, but does not address the key issues.

Haseeb A Drabu

Disribition Of Cooked Food To The Needy In Paradeep Locality



(A.O. Bureau) Paradeep, Feb 15: The remarked date is celebrated as Valentine day or the day of love. To remark this day national NGO organization jan samasya nibaran santhan, paradeep has organized the disribition of cooked food to the needy in paradeep locality, the motto of this programme is to give

tribute to our late soldier who get martyr in the attack of pulbama on 14 feb 2019. This programme is conducted in the presence of district president Sri.Ramakanta jena, district general secretary Sri.Pradip Chuli, district general secretary Sri.Himanshu Bhushan Parida in coordination with paradip youth president

Sri.Richard Raman Biswal and paradip youth secretary Sri.Chinmay kumar samal. The above programme of distributing cooked food to the needy is sheduled to initiate every Sunday to remark the memorable martyr of pulbama attack stated by all the coordinators of Jan samasya Nibaran Sansthan.

Fifteen surrendered Maoist couples got married with help of CG Police

(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Feb 15: Every year on February 14, the world celebrates the Valentine's Day.

police tied up a couple of fifteen couples, not one or two. It was a strange attempt by the Dantewada district po-

tion, love and marriage are completely forbidden. Therefore, the Maoists have not captured the Naxals,



Valentine's Day is defined as bond of love and romantic's Day. Today, however, there was something different for the Dantewada police. Chhattisgarh police have shown a way to live the surrendered Maoists who have left the Maoist movement and come to the mainstream. Chhattisgarh police have tied a wedding ring with roses in a handgun. Dantewada

lice in the state of Chhattisgarh, bordering Malkangiri district. During the wedding, there was a glimpse of the tribal culture. Once upon a time there was a female Maoist who returned to the mainstream today. The new bride is adorned with a red sari on her feet. The marriage was solemnized with respect to the Chhattisgarh tribal culture and traditions. In the Maoist organiza-

whether men or women. Dantewada police, however, have fulfilled this unfulfilled dream of the Maoists who have returned to the mainstream. Police officer and employee tale groom Dragon households. The wedding pavilion was decorated at Karli in D a n t e w a d a . Dantewada SP Abhishek Pallab's efforts have been widely praised.

A 30-year-old girl Minakshi Singh suffering from Tumor for ten years

(A.O. Bureau) Kendrapara, Feb 15: A 30-year-old girl Minakshi Singh from Lokapada village in Ali block of Kendrapara district's. She has been suffering from tumor for ten years, and now helped by the Tulsikshetra Charitable Trust in Odisha. Upon

receiving the tragic news, members of the Tulsikshetra Trust provided some fruit horlicks and money donations from members. The event was attended by Bapi Gochayati, Litu Pradhan, Pradyumna Paital, Gyan Ranjan Swain, Rashmi Ranjan Lenka and others.



The forest department seized eight pieces of Teak wood & furnitures

(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Feb 15: Today, under the direction of Malkangiri DFO Pradeep Devidas Mirage, forest officials, led by Malkangiri Forest Officer Jagannath Prasad Bisoyi, reached Malkangiri under the section of Korukonda section Tumsapali Beat MV 25 Village. More than a million rupees worth of Teak timber was confiscated, eight pieces of semi-finished furniture, and a lease. The eight Teak forts re-



covered were 48 cfts and 8 Nos the boards, size 57 and total 68 cft were recovered. The valuable timber was confiscated and kept at the Malkangiri range

office, while the main accused, Prashant Mandal, escaped the seized cost more than 1.5lakhs. Foresters Rajesh Kumar Sethi, Muralidhar Angulia,

Divakar Jena, Mohan Gudia, Forest Guards H a r e k r i s h n a Panigrahi, Mantosh Deo, forest Para staff members were among those involved in the seize.

The Congress shut down Odisha in the wake of rising prices of diesel, petrol, gas and essential commodities

(A.O. Bureau) Rengali, Feb 15: The Congress shut down the Odisha shutdown in Rengali over the hike in prices of diesel, petrol, gas and essential commodities. The Rengali Block Congress, led by Subash Bishwal, blocked the Sambalpur-Rourkela Biju Expressway at Rengali tehsil junction. In view of the closure, the government has declared all colleges and schools closed beforehand. All government, private offices, banks, petrol pumps and

market shops in Rengali were closed. The rally was attended by former Anil Behera, Indramani Barik, Sankarshan Nayak, Chaturbhuja Jhankar,

other Congress workers. Similarly, a shutdown was observed at Junhadihi Chowk un-

der the leadership of Rengali Block Congress Vice President

Saroj Pujari. The shutdown was attended by Ashwini Patel, Niroj Purohit, Aniruddha Nayak and many other Congress workers.



Inter GP Volley Ball Tournament organized by Adani Foundation



Dhamra, Feb 15: With the objective to promote youth engagement, Adani Foundation, the CSR wing of Adani Dhamra Port has been organizing

different sports events in the core and rail corridor of Adani dhamra Port, Bhadrak. As the part of the initiative, the Foundation has organized an inter GP

volley ball Touranment at Samantraypur among the youth clubs focusing on Volley Ball. 08 teams such as Erada, Kolha, Sama Club Bhatapada,

ASYP Achak, TNB Chandbali, DVC Dolamandap, Kamaria Club and Guamala from the Rail Corridor GPs of Adani Dhamra Port were participated in this day and night tournament. The day long tournament was inaugurated by District Sports Officer, Bhadrak Shri Manoj Kumar Das, IPE-Rajendra Kumar Biswal and Sanatan B a r i k -

Sarapanch,Rajnagar in presence of the opinion Leaders from the locality Mr. Mukti Kanta Nayak, Mr. Sudarsan Biswal and Mr. Prasant Biswal. The event was coordinated by the authority deputed by the District Sports Office, Bhadrak. In the final match TNB Chandbali team beat Erada Club by 3:1 points and awarded with the winner and runners - up trophy.

The district congress has called for a six-hour shutdown in protest of rising oil prices

(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Feb 15: Malkangiri district headquarters sub-division, seven blocks of the district and the Balimela NAC area of the district were witnessed a six-hour shutdown by the district congress committee today. Institutions, government and private offices have been closed. All vehicles on both sides of the blocked road were found to be stuck in traffic. As a result, commuters were also found to be facing a lot of difficulties. Earlier, the Congress had called for a shutdown in

Odisha in protest of the unreasonable hike in oil and fuel prices and other commodities, while the state government and the central government have strongly condemned the rise in gas prices since last night. He called for an immediate end to the killings of central and state governments in the wake of rising petrol and gas prices. The strike was called off today in various parts of the state, while in Malkangiri, the strike was called off peacefully, said district Congress president Govind Patra. The closing



call was made by senior Congress leader from Malkangiri district, district executive president Ram Patnaik, G. Srinivasa Rao, P.

Keshu, Lachhan., Pender. Panda, Prabhakar Pala, Padma Pangi and Chhabi Das were among the prominent participants in the call for a

shutdown, and every member of the district has joined the Congress in calling for a halt to petrol diesel and LPG Gas price hikes.

Habildar Narendra nath Soren Praised for save of Two kids life

(A.O. Bureau) Kendrapara, Feb 15: Narendra Nath Soren, a Habildar working in Kendrapara, rescued two children from the vehicle of an intoxicated driver and is now in the spotlight. While drunken driving checking he detected one car with a driver heavily drunk with three little kids in back seat. Showing humanitarian gesture Narendra Nath Soren, a Habildar of Town Fandi No. 2, stopped a car at around 11.30 pm on the old bus stand at Kendrapara and



stopped the car while driving. Two children between the ages of 3 and 5 were also rescued from the vehicle. Later, the driver was taken into custody and Habildar Narendra Nath Soren drove himself and left the two children in his house safely. He was caught carrying two of his cousins in the car.

Bombay Begums trailer: Pooja Bhatt and Co. are in a battle for survival in Netflix series



New Delhi, Feb 15: Bombay Begums trailer: Written and directed by Alankrita Shrivastava, the Netflix series stars Pooja Bhatt, Shahana Goswami, Amruta Subhash, Plabita Borthakur and Aadhya Anand in main roles. Alankrita Shrivastava directed Netflix series Bombay Begums explores the dreams and desires of five women from different strata of society as they fight for survival in the Maximum City. The makers

on Monday dropped its trailer, which is intriguing and exciting. Starring Pooja Bhatt, Shahana Goswami, Amruta Subhash, Plabita Borthakur and Aadhya Anand, Bombay Begums premieres on Netflix on March 8. Going by the trailer, the series revolves centrally around Pooja Bhatt's character Rani, and how her life gets intertwined with the other four women - Lily, Fatima, Shai and Ayesha. While Rani

and Shai are trying to crack the step-mom-daughter relationship, Lily comes in the way after Rani hits her son in a road accident. Lily, a bar dancer, now asks Rani not just for money but also respect in society. In the midst of all this, Rani's colleague, Fatima is struggling to find a balance between her work and career, while her husband (played by Vivek Gomber) dreams of having a child. Ayesha, who works at Rani's office,

is also trying to make her way through the professional ladder, even if it means compromising with her beliefs. The trailer of Bombay Begums depicts how the five women shatter societal norms and patriarchy, as they set out to win in their careers, love life and relationships. Written and directed by Alankrita Shrivastava, Bombay Begums also stars Danish Husain, Rahul Bose, Imaad Shah and Nauheed Cyrusi. Talk-

ing about the series, Alankrita Shrivastava earlier said in a statement, "Bombay Begums is a story about Indian women that I hope women in India, and across the world will connect with. The series explores the complex journey of working Indian women who are ambitious for power and success, but have many other battles to fight too. It's the story of their daily hustle, the story of their dreams - sometimes buried, sometimes fulfilled." She added, "It's the story of glass ceilings shattered, and also of the hearts broken in the process. I have tried to create a world that reflects the realities of urban working women. I hope audiences relate to the characters and find pieces of their own journey reflected in the story. I am excited and proud that Bombay Begums is coming on Netflix on the occasion of International Women's Day."

Critics' Choice Awards 2021 winners: Manoj Bajpayee, Pankaj Tripathi, Sushmita Sen win big

New Delhi, Feb 15: Critics' Choice Awards 2020-2021: While Hansal Mehta's Scam 1992 bagged the Best Series award, its lead actor Pratik Gandhi received the Best Actor award. bhonsle aarya scam 1992 gunjan saxena Critics Choice Award winners were announced on February 14. The winners of Critics' Choice Awards 2021

Am delighted to be in the company of these luminous women @taapsee @swastika24 @aishu_dil @ShilpiMarwaha. I wish we could have all met. Manoj Bajpayee, who won an award for Bhonsle, dedicated his award to the film's team. Here's the full list of winners: Short films: Best Short Film - Bebaak. Best Director -

Kargil Girl. Best Supporting Actress - Sai Pallavi for Paava Kadhaigal. Best Writing - Sachy for Ayyappanum Koshiyum. Best Cinematography - Siddharth Diwan for Bulbul. Best Editing - Mahesh Narayanan for CU Soon. Gender Sensitivity Award - Thappad. Series: Best Series - Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story.



were announced on Sunday. From Manoj Bajpayee to Pratik Gandhi, many of the films, web series and actors were honoured with an award under various categories. Tillotama Shome, who bagged Best Actor award for Sir, tweeted, "Thank you @CCSSAwards for this honour. @RohenaGera thank you for Ratna, #VivekGomber and @getkul thank you for being incredible co-interpreters.

Shazia Iqbal for Bebaak. Best Actor - Adil Hussain for Meal. Best Actress - Amruta Subhash for The Booth. Best Writing - Shazia Iqbal for Bebaak (Dying Wind In Her Hair). Feature films: Best Film - Eeb Allay Ooo. Best Director - Prateek Vats for Eeb Allay Ooo. Best Actor - Manoj Bajpayee for Bhonsle. Best Actress - Tillotama Shome for Sir. Best Supporting Actor - Pankaj Tripathi for Gunjan Saxena: The

Best Actor - Pratik Gandhi for Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story. Best Actress - Sushmita Sen for Aarya. Best Supporting Actor - Abhishek Banerjee for Paatal Lok. Best Supporting Actress - Swastika Mukherjee for Paatal Lok. Best Writing - Sumit Purohit, Saurav Dey, Vaibhav Vishal, Karan Vyas for Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story. Critics' Choice Awards 2021 winners:

Bhabiji Ghar Par Hain actor Nehha Pendse: I am getting criticism before people have even seen me as Anita Bhabhi

Mumbai, Feb 15: Bhabiji Ghar Par Hain will see actor Nehha Pendse play Anita bhabhi on the show from Monday night. The actor speaks about the show which also stars Rohitashv Gaud, Shubhangi Atre and Aasif Sheikh. You do have your fans, but are you also prepared for the criticism that might come your way?

skin of Anita Bhabhi. Did it happen instantly or did you take time? Obviously I took time. The first two days, I was really trying hard to understand how I was to move ahead. Anita is very different from me as a person, and hence certain mannerisms and reactions had to be tamed down. I think after the third day, the tuning happened, and I got a bet-

ter understanding of the character. I won't say I am entirely into it but I have pretty much found a grip, which I keep making stronger every single day. What would you bring to the table as Anita? I cannot do something too drastic as there is a boundary to the character. As an artist, I can only get a new perspective to the part, I can't change it completely. And that's where my talent lies as Nehha Pendse, of what different I can bring to an already existing



It's already coming my way even when people haven't seen my work as Anita. However, I understand that the criticism comes from an emotional space. People have been emotionally connected to Saumya, and it's like letting a new person come in your inner group. Just like any other new relationship, this too would take some time. And I want to give that space to my audience to find that connectivity, and I know then, they will accept me wholeheartedly. Tell us something about getting into the

character, by staying within the parameters. And how's the mood on set? Have you managed to bond with the cast? It's great, everyone is so easy-going and supportive. They keep on telling me how to go about things. It's very casual and there is no resistance to a new person coming in. I think as much as I am trying to tune into Anita bhabhi, they are also tuning into me. Everything is just very beautiful on the set. Did you manage to have a word with Saumya Tandon on stepping into her shoes? I could not chat with her, however, it was really sweet of her to personally message me. She told me that I was the right choice, and that she is really happy I took up the show. Saumya added that she feels the character is in capable hands. It was really kind of her to do that and it really made everything special. Does comedy come naturally or do you have to work hard on it? I think every actor has to do hard work on every character. As for comedy, I don't think it's natural. However, this is a sitcom, where the situation is funny, I don't need to do comedy. Honestly, I am not a Bharti Singh or Kapil Sharma who can crack jokes and make people laugh. A situational comedy set up works much better for me.

Dia Mirza wedding with Vaibhav Rekhi: Actor glows at her bridal shower and mehendi

Mumbai, Feb 15: Dia Mirza is a happy bride in the clicks from her pre-wedding ceremonies. The actor is expected to tie the knot with Vaibhav Rekhi in an intimate ceremony on Monday. Actor Dia Mirza is all set to tie the knot with her businessman boyfriend, Vaibhav Rekhi on Monday. Dia took to her Instagram account to share a picture of her mehendi and wrote, "pyar" along with flaunting her dark henna. A source close to Dia Mirza, exclusively told indianexpress.com, "The wedding is happening at Vaibhav's house in Bandra and the two will exchange vows in presence of their family members. A couple of very close friends will be attending the intimate ceremony. Vaibhav's



daughter might also be there for the ceremony as she is very close to her father. Dia has started preparing, and the ceremony will begin shortly." A source further told indianexpress.com that the wedding is scheduled to take place on Monday evening at Belair building in Pali

Hill, Bandra. "It will happen in the building's garden," the source shared. "The couple will get their marriage registered today. A registrar will be attending the wedding ceremony today," the source added. Check out some more clicks shared by Dia Mirza's friends in their

Instagram stories: While Dia and Vaibhav continue to stay quiet about their relationship and the nuptial, pictures from their pre-wedding bash have been doing the rounds of social media ever since Saturday. Shah Rukh Khan's manager Pooja Dadlani, who seems to be related

to Vaibhav, shared two pictures from the party, welcoming Dia to the family. As per reports, Dia Mirza and Vaibhav Rekhi met during the coronavirus induced lockdown and got along pretty well. After spending a couple of months getting to know each other, the two moved in together.

Here are Some Foods That are Good for Your Brain Power

New Delhi, Feb 15: We are what we eat. Eating a brain-boosting diet is highly recommended as it enables you to have a sound memory, remarkable cognitive functioning and lets you enjoy a healthy life. Brain requires a lot of fuel as it uses 20% of the body's calories. Walnuts - Treated as a super food for brain, walnuts are an excellent nutrient-rich food that benefit your brain in ways more than one. Walnuts are rich in alpha-linolenic acid (a plant-based omega-3 fatty acid), polyphenolic compounds. Both omega-3 fatty acids and polypheno-

nols are considered critical brain foods as they fight oxidative stress and inflammation; both of which are causes of cognitive decline. Almonds - These elevate acetylcholine levels in the brain. Due to the presence of vitamin B6, E, zinc, protein you get improved cognitive function - repaired cells, higher neurotransmitter chemical production. Cashew - It is a great memory booster. The poly-saturated and mono-saturated fats make it very essential for the production of brain cells and thereby increasing its



power. Seeds - Pumpkin seeds, flaxseeds are excellent for brain health. Zinc, magnesium, vitamin B present in these seeds develop thinking skills, enhances memory. Sage - Consumption of sage has shown to bring

about enhanced memory, improved brain function; ensure alertness and concentration power. Sage are rich in antioxidants containing vitamin K, A, C, B6, E, calcium, manganese, iron, zinc, copper-making it an indispensable dietary choice to re-

vamp your memory power. Blueberries - Blueberries are excellent providers of anthocyanin, antioxidants that look after brain health leading to the delay in short-term memory loss. Citrus fruits - Oranges, grapes, lemons, blackcurrants are rich in vitamin C. And the latter is key to maintaining your brain agility. Stress, anxiety, depression and age-related brain degeneration ailments such as dementia, Alzheimer's can be prevented by the sufficient consumption of vitamin C, hence.

Rahul climbs to second spot, Kohli remains at 7th in ICC T20I rankings for batsmen

Dubai, Feb 15: India's KL Rahul moved up a place to second, while his captain Virat Kohli retained the seventh spot in the latest ICC men's T20I rankings for batsmen released on Monday. With 816 rating points, Rahul is behind leader Dawid Malan (915) of England, while Kohli has 697 points in his kitty. Australia white-ball skipper Aaron Finch (808) also improved a rung to be placed third while Pakistan captain Babar Azam (801) slipped to fourth place. Rahul and Kohli are the only two Indians to feature in

Australia's Adam Zampa, England's Adil Rashid and Afghanistan's Mujeeb Ur Rahman to within three points of top-ranked Rashid Khan of Afghanistan. Pakistan's Haider Ali moved up 13 places to 137th position while fast bowlers Shaheen Afridi (up five places to 11th) and Hasan Ali (up 14 places to 82nd), and spinners Mohammad Nawaz (re-entered at 64th) and Usman Qadir (up 129 places to 92nd) also progressed. For South Africa, Reeza Hendricks's 98 runs in the series have lifted him seven places to 17th



the top-10 among batsmen. No Indian also featured in the top-10 among bowlers and all-rounders in the latest T20I rankings. Among bowlers, South Africa spinner Tabraiz Shamsi grabbed a career-best second position while Pakistan wicketkeeper-batsman Mohammad Rizwan has raced to 42nd place after standout performances in the three-match series that Pakistan won 2-1 against the Proteas. Shamsi's series-topping six wickets, which included a haul of four for 25 in the final match, helped the left-arm wrist-spinner overtake

and David Miller's 116 runs, which included a 45-ball 85 not out in the second match, saw him gain seven places to 22nd position in the batsmen's list. Fast bowler Dwaine Pretorius moved up from 121st place to 51st, a huge gain considering his previous best was only a 107th rank. There is no change of positions in the team rankings after the series between Pakistan and South Africa. Pakistan have gained one point but remained in fourth position with 260 points while South Africa have lost one point but remained fifth with 251 points.

'Chennai pitch is incredibly challenging'

Chennai, Feb 15: It is an incredibly challenging surface, said England assistant coach Graham Thorpe as India took upper hand after dismissing England for 134 in their first innings on Sunday. "It is a very challenging surface that is what I am going to say. In terms of

me commenting on the pitch I think that is for someone above me to look at. "It was incredibly challenging on that surface for us on day two. There is obviously a very skilled spin attack as well on their own conditions. And it was a very good toss to win,"

Thorpe said at press conference. Decisions by the third umpire have come in for criticism in the match so far and on Sunday there was an issue over Rohit Sharma being ruled not out on review after he was ruled out by the on-field umpire.

India in command after setting England 482-run target following Ashwin's ton

Chennai, Feb 15: India marched towards a big series-levelling victory in the second Test against England after Ravichandran Ashwin underlined his status as an all-rounder of repute with his fifth Test hundred here on Monday. Set an imposing target of 482, England were tottering at 53 for three at stumps on the third day, requiring 429 more runs to go 2-0 up in the four-match series. A day before his magnificent effort with the willow (106 off 148 balls) on a pitch that has tested the skill and temperament of the best of batsmen from both sides, Ashwin returned excellent figures of 5/43 for his 29th five-wicket haul in the format. India's second innings ended at 286,

shortly after Ashwin reached his three-figure mark. Enjoying a brilliant all-round outing, the seasoned off-spinner showed how to get the job done on a treacherous surface, with his exemplary knock. Earlier, captain Virat Kohli struck 62 off 149 balls and added 96 runs for the seventh wicket with Ashwin, helping India extend their overall lead after they were reduced to 106 for six at one stage. While Kohli showed his class before falling to Moeen Ali for the second time in the game, Ashwin also displayed remarkable skills on a challenging surface to prop up the home team. Kohli struck seven boundaries during his stay in the middle while Ashwin found



the fence 14 times and cleared it once at the MA Chidambaram Stadium. Ashwin has now scored a century and taken a five-for in a Test match thrice in his career, standing only behind English

great Ian Botham, who has achieved the feat on five occasions. For the visitors, senior spinner Moeen Ali registered figures of 4/98, while Jake Leach picked up 4/100. Brief Scores: England:

134 and 53/3 in 19 overs (Rory Burns 25; Axar Patel 2/15) India: 329 and 286 all out in 86.5 overs (Virat Kohli 62, Ravichandran Ashwin 106; Moeen Ali 4/98, Jack Leach 4/100).

Australian Open 2021, Day 8: Barty, Nadal, Medvedev advance; Svitolina suffers upset

New Delhi, Feb 15: The high-octane action of Australia continues on the eighth day of the tournament and the third day of Victoria's snap five-day coronavirus lockdown, which has resulted in fans being shut out of Melbourne Park. TOP SEED BARTY EASES PAST ROGERS - World number one Ash Barty sealed a comfortable 6-3 6-4 win over American Shelby Rogers to set up a quarter-final meeting with Czech Karolina Muchova. MUCHOVA BEATS MERTENS IN STRAIGHT SETS - Czech 25th seed Karolina Muchova recovered from a slow start to beat Belgian 18th seed Elise Mertens 7-6(5) 7-5. TSITSIPAS ADVANCES AFTER BERRETTINI WITH-DRAWS - Italian ninth seed Matteo Berrettini

withdrew from his fourth-round match against Greek fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas due to an abdominal strain. Tsitsipas will face Spanish second seed Rafa Nadal in the quarter-finals. NADAL DOWNS FOGNINI IN STRAIGHT SETS - Spanish second seed Rafa Nadal sealed a dominant 6-3 6-4 6-2 win over Italian 16th seed Fabio Fognini to reach the quarter-finals for the 13th time. Nadal, who is chasing a record 21st Grand Slam title, will face Greek fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas in the last eight. RUBLEV THROUGH AFTER RUUD RETIREMENT - Seventh seed Andrey Rublev advanced after his opponent Casper Ruud retired while trailing 6-2 7-6(3). The Norwegian received treatment for an abdominal

injury early in the second set. Rublev joins Russian world number four Daniil Medvedev and qualifier Aslan Karatsev in the last-eight, making it the first time in the Open era that three Russian men have reached the quarter-finals in the same Grand Slam. BRADY BOOKS QUARTER-FINAL BERTH - American Jennifer Brady eased into the quarter-finals with a 6-1 7-5 victory over Croatia's Donna Vekic. Brady sent

down nine aces and won 85% of her first-serve points in a dominant performance against Vekic, who had

forced errors as he wrapped up the one-sided contest in 90 minutes. PEGULA UPSETS



Karatsev in the last-eight, making it the first time in the Open era that three Russian men have reached the quarter-finals in the same Grand Slam. BRADY BOOKS QUARTER-FINAL BERTH - American Jennifer Brady eased into the quarter-finals with a 6-1 7-5 victory over Croatia's Donna Vekic. Brady sent

heavy strapping on her right leg. Brady faces compatriot Jessica Pegula next. MEDVEDEV MARCHES ON - Fourth seed Daniil Medvedev raced into the quarter-finals with a clinical 6-4 6-2 6-3 victory over American Mackenzie McDonald. Medvedev sent down seven aces, 29 winners and made just 15 un-

SVITOLINA - American Jessica Pegula continued her dream run with a 6-4 3-6 6-3 win over Ukrainian fifth seed Elina Svitolina to reach the quarter-finals at a Grand Slam for the first time. Pegula was far more effective at the net than her opponent, and also struck 31 winners compared to 19 from Svitolina.

From the paddy fields of Shoranur to the sand dunes of Dakar, Noah charts an upward arc

New Delhi, Feb 15: Excited on getting a bike for his 16th birthday, Harith Noah, on a lark, had entered a local amateur race for beginners in the paddy fields close to his home in Shornur, a town in Kerala's Palakkad district. He would finish last. Now 28, Noah is back with his bike on the same patch of land on the banks of the river Bharathappuzha, planning to negotiate slippery sandy terrain. A lot has changed in the last 12 years. Once the worst among the beginners is among the best in the world now. Last month, he completed the Dakar Rally in Saudi Arabia, a feat so arduous that bikers compare it to scaling Mt Everest. He rode more than 7,500 kilometres, in less than

a fortnight over sand dunes, rocky roads and valleys for nearly 55 hours for a 20th-place finish, the best by an Indian. Happy happenstances have defined the life of this accidental biker. Years back, his German mother, Susanne KV, had landed at Kalamandalam in Cheruthuruthy to learn Carnatic music. One fine day, she would step out to buy bread. In a coincidence mostly seen in rom-coms, she would meet her soulmate, baker Mohammad Rafi KV. The two would get married and settle in Germany. "My father owns a bakery in Shornur town. My parents met for the first time when my mother visited the bakery opposite the bus

stand for a loaf of bread. They moved to Germany for a while but we returned to Kerala when I was about two years old," says Noah, who is looking forward to riding along the banks of the river behind his home since he fully recovered from surgery needed to remove a metal plate that had been holding his fractured collarbone. In contrast to the rough and tumble of Noah's life in the fast lane, his parents inhabit an idyllic world. "My mother is a painter and also a farmer. She takes care of cows, the paddy fields, banana and coconut plantations and vegetables. We don't sell them. It is for us and the people who work on the farm," Noah says. If not for the roar of the bike



engines he heard as a teenager, the daredevil would have settled for a less adventurous life. "When my father gifted me a bike, I still didn't know how to ride well. I was studying in a boarding school in Kodaikanal. I was down for the holidays. I could hear the sound of bikes in a paddy field nearby. Bikers were training for



a race. They asked me if I wanted to ride. I said 'ok'. Next week, I entered in the 'beginners class' at a race held over paddy fields and finished last." His journey from the backwaters to the Dakar has seen him risk life and limb. Before making a name at the Dakar this year, Noah, a TVS Racing rider, won seven supercross na-

tional championships. In his first attempt at the Dakar last year, he had to retire during the third stage. This year, there was a setback when TVS Racing decided not to participate in the Dakar. The racing arm of the Indian manufacturer, however, sponsored him as a privateer with the Sherco Rally Factory team. "This year,

compared to last year, the navigation difficulty increased tremendously. Last year, I got lost once in a place where everybody got lost. This year, I got lost so many times," Noah says. He has lost count of the number of times he crashed or tipped over the Sherco TVS RTR 450 rally motorcycle over the two editions of the Dakar. Last year, he rode with a swollen left eye after a crash. This year, during Stage 4, full of high-speed corners, he hit a rock and busted his rear fuel tank. He continued to ride with a torn quadriceps muscle and a sore knee. When he ran out of fuel, he borrowed some from other riders, to complete the stage. He lost

his way in Stage 11 and went round and round mountains before spotting local camel-herders. Thankfully for him, they pointed in the direction other participants went. "I think in the Dakar, you need the skills, fitness, mental toughness and navigational skills. It is about the days where you have to get up early and some days ride for 200 kilometres," he says. But after the back-breaking hours on the two-wheeler negotiating deadly curves, Noah looks forward to his parents and comfort zone. "After the Dakar, you start to appreciate life much more. Even things like a soft bed to sleep on and sleeping as long as I want."

Vedanta accelerates its digital footprint, aligned to Start up India, a key initiative of Digital India

(A.O. Bureau) New Delhi, Feb 15: Vedanta Group today announced that its latest initiative "Vedanta SPARK"; the global corporate and innovation and ventures program, has received more than 1190 entries from start-ups across the globe in a span of just around three months since its launch. "Vedanta Spark" was launched on October 30, 2020 (www.vedantaspark.com) with the objective of triggering a tech-revolution, by partnering with early-stage, growth stage, and venture stage Digital Tech start-ups to build and grow technology capabilities for achieving strategic goals in operational excellence, new product development and 360-degree sustainability, contributing to India's journey of sustainable development and self-reliance. The company received entries from 19 countries across the world, including UK, USA, Canada, Australia, Singapore at a lightning pace. Out of the total 1190 entries, over Indian 882 start-ups have enrolled themselves for this program. Vedanta aims to reimagine the role of entrepreneurship to catalyse innovation by enabling the technology talent and

entrepreneurial ambitions of India's youth by seeding world-class technology ventures through the Vedanta Spark program. Speaking about the Group's innovative initiative, Mr. Akarsh Hebbar, Digital Alchemist and Anchor, 'Vedanta Spark' said "Through Vedanta Spark, our effort is to trigger a tech-revolution by empowering the global start-up ecosystem. Through this strategic partnership, the budding high-potential startups can bring immense value to the global marketplace through progressive and sustainable solutions. It is indeed exciting to see the tremendous interest from start-ups, and we look forward to partnering with them while encouraging and enhancing them with industry exposure" Start-ups are equally excited to join hands with Vedanta in this journey. According to R. Ramanan, Mission Director - Atal Innovation Mission: "Becoming the world leader in the digital future of the global energy & resources sector will require Indian multinationals to harness the speed and scale of delivering innovation and driving transformation on offer from start-ups, both domestic and foreign. Vedanta Spark

has the potential to deeply catalyse India's start-up sector in the above areas, accelerating the realisation of PM's vision for Digital India & Atmanirbhar Bharat." "We are very excited about the Vedanta Spark program! It is great to see established miners, like Vedanta actively engaging with start-ups to transform their business. The focus on commercializing developing technology through a proof-of-concept pathway is excellent. We will continue to work with Vedanta as they develop this partnership program for strategic innovation, says Bibhrajit Halder, Founder & CEO - SafeAI, Inc. (USA & Australia). According to Daniel Raj, Founder, and CEO of Detect Technologies (India & US): "At Detect Technology, our vision is to revolutionise safety, operations and asset integrity through the infusion of latest technologies, thereby helping our clients uncover new areas of growth and facilitate accelerated competency development. Vedanta SPARK is an exciting opportunity and a perfect breeding ground for start-ups. The widespread presence of Vedanta across various

Key Highlights

- Innovative & Ventures program - "Vedanta Spark" welcomes over 1190 entries from around the world in three months of launch
- Entries received from 19 countries across the world
- Global program covers 16 opportunity themes and over 75 innovation challenges
- Focus on Sustainability and ESG, Business Excellence, Exploration and Mining Practices
- Programme partner: Forge (Strategic Partner Incubator for Managing Corporate Innovation & Start-up Accelerator Services that has worked with Ministry of Defence, NITI Aayog)

sectors provides a unique opportunity to collaborate with users of our applications and therefore shape our products across industrial sectors." Over 100 start-ups have been shortlisted for the next level of interaction with Vedanta. 20 plus Global and National Partners have been brought on board. The key national partners for Vedanta Spark are Start-up India, AIM, Agni (Invest India), while the key global partners include Core Hub and World Start-up. Top 20 start-ups will get a chance to work with the different entities of Vedanta following a thorough evaluation process by expert panels consisting of Vedanta's professionals, domain experts, and external

mentors from reputed govt. ministries and industry. The ecosystem partners will be mentored in the fields of tech, strategy and venture development by global experts from Vedanta group and Forge. The company plans to make Investments of about INR 100 Cr towards the start-ups with promising outcomes. The program roadmap is towards scaling up the engagement models with Innovative start-ups, whose partnership provide Vedanta with the potential to combine the speed, cost, scale, and scope advantages of Start-ups in Innovation with the scale reach, production, distribution, financial, and commercial capacity of Vedanta Limited.

NTPC Talcher Kaniha lights up villages with solar power



(A.O. Bureau) Talcher, Feb 15: With the objective of improving the lives of communities in villages, NTPC Talcher Kaniha has taken up the novel initiative of installing solar power street lights. NTPC Talcher Kaniha in collaboration with Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) has

installed 150 solar powered street lights in peripheral villages. Under its CSR initiative, this effort will illuminate the streets of over 37 villages including Bijigol, Rangabada, Derang, Gadasila, Takua, Masunihat, Ambapal, etc. NTPC Talcher Kaniha's initiative will ensure more safety on the

streets, paving way for enhanced social and economic activities and ease in commuting during late evening hours. As solar lights do not consume any conventional energy, their carbon emissions during use are zero. This step is taken by NTPC Talcher Kaniha as a push towards ensuring cleaner energy in rural India.

Agitation disrupted train services

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 15: In view of agitation "Bandh" called by a political party, train services in East Coast Railway have been affected partially. As a result, few trains have been controlled at different Stations for a few minutes. Agitation has started at Talcher Station at about

0600hrs to 1300hrs, at Bhubaneswar from 0700hrs to 0755hrs, at Dhenkanal from 0730hrs to 0820hrs, at Chhatrapur from 0850hrs to 0855hrs and at Puri from 1050hrs to 1115hrs. 02880 Bhubaneswar-LTT Special detained at Bhubaneswar Station from 0720hrs to 0800hrs. 08493

Bhubaneswar - Balangir Special was detained at Dhenkanal from 0748hrs to 0820hrs. 08448 Koraput-Bhubaneswar Special was detained at Dhenkanal from 0747hrs to 0820hrs. 02815 Puri-Anand Vihar Special left Puri at 1120hrs instead of its scheduled time at 1100hrs.

SC grants interim bail to journalist Siddique Kappan to visit his ailing mother



New Delhi, Feb 15: The Supreme Court on Monday granted five-day interim bail to journalist Siddique Kappan to meet his ailing mother. In its order, the court said that the Uttar Pradesh Police will take Kappan

to meet his mother in Kerala. It further ordered Kappan not to interact with the media and public, except relatives, doctors, and close family members. Kappan was arrested by UP Police on October 5 last year.

According to the Kerala Union of Working Journalists (KUWJ), he was on his way to meet the family of the Hathras victim when he was picked up and charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. During the hearing of the matter on January 22, the counsel for the petitioner had urged the court to allow Kappan's mother, Kadlaja Kutty, who is in her 90s, to see the journalist via video conferencing, and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for UP, had assured to get it done.

Nikita, Shantanu, Disha created toolkit doc, aim was to tarnish India's image: Delhi Police

New Delhi, Feb 15: The Delhi Police on Monday claimed that Nikita Jacob, her associate Shantanu and Disha Ravi, who was arrested on Sunday, created the toolkit doc on farmers' protest which was shared by climate activist Greta Thunberg on social media. Disha then sent the "toolkit" to Thunberg via Telegram app. Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, Prem Nath, Joint CP (Cyber Cell), alleged that their aim was to tarnish the image of India. The police claimed Disha, who was arrested by the force on Saturday from Bengaluru, sent the "toolkit" to teen climate activist Greta Thunberg via Telegram app. Nath claimed that Disha deleted a WhatsApp group she created to spread the



"toolkit". "Disha, Shantanu and Nikita created and edited the toolkit. Disha sent the toolkit to Greta Thunberg through the Telegram app. Disha deleted a whatsapp group which she created to spread the toolkit. Due procedure was followed during Disha's arrest," Nath said. He added that the police had conducted raid at Nikita's house on Feb-

ruary 11, and she fled the next day. Divulging more details, he said, a woman named Puneet who is based in Canada connected these people to the Pro-Khalistani Poetic Justice Foundation. Police said on January 11, Nikita and Shantanu attended a Zoom meeting organised by Poetic Justice Foundation in which modalities were chalked out. Following

Disha Ravi's arrest from Bengaluru, the Delhi Police issued non-bailable warrants against two activists, Nikita and Shantanu, in connection with the toolkit case. Earlier in the day, a Delhi Police spokesperson said, "We issued NBWs against Nikita Jacob and Shantanu. The Cyber Unit of Special Cell found their involvement in the toolkit case. We'll

soon make arrests." Jacob, an advocate, has moved a plea before the Bombay High Court seeking transit anticipatory bail for four weeks. She has also sought interim protection from any coercive steps by the police and a copy of the FIR filed against her. The matter will be heard tomorrow. "The applicant has no religious, political or financial motive or agenda for researching, discussing, editing and circulating communication packs/toolkits for raising awareness, let alone to incite violence, riots or/and cause other physical harms," Jacob's plea stated. She also said that some trolls and bots are circulating her personal information including pictures on social media.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPALITY, PATTAMUNDAI
NO. 644 DT. 12.02.2021

"e" Procurement Notice

Bid Identification No. PM-02/2020-21 and PM-03/2020-21
E tender Id No. 2021_ORULB_66429_1 and 2021_ORBLB-66431_1

The Executive Officer, Pattamundai Municipality, Invites percentage wise rate bids for execution of civil works as detailed in the DTCN from Govt. Registered Contractors having valid license and should have similar work experience in same or similar organization with project cost more than 1 crore or above. The bidders should submit bids as per their eligibility criteria shown in DTCN.

1. total No. of work for which tender invited - 2 Nos.
2. Place of execution - In Pattamundai Municipal Area.
3. Estimated cost of Work - Rs. 12197721.87/- to Rs.18553796.64/-
4. Eligible class of contractor - Govt. registered contractors as per OPWD code.
5. The bid documents will be available in the website from 11.00 AM on dt. 17.02.2021 to 5 PM Dt. 08.03.2021 for online bidding
6. The bid documents will be opened at 11.00 AM on Dt. 09.03.2021.
7. The bidder has to participate in online bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in>.

Sd/- Executive Officer
Pattamundai Municipality

Badruddin Ajmal is not anti-Hindu, BJP is more communal: Assam Cong chief

(A.O. Bureau) Guwahati, Feb 15: The Assam Congress on Monday said the chief of its ally AIUDF, Badruddin Ajmal, is not anti-Hindu and the BJP, which accuses him of being communal, had in fact joined hands with his party to run

three district councils in the state. Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president Ripun Bora also exuded confidence that the Congress-led alliance will oust the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from power and form the next govern-



ment in the northeastern state. The Congress has formed an alliance with the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF), the Left and a regional party to fight the Assam Assembly polls that are likely to be held in April.