

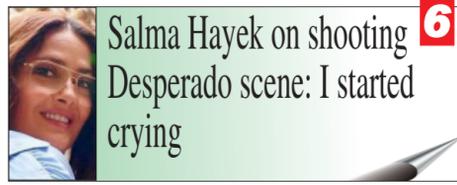
Previous govts ignored deserving leaders: PM Modi

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Medical Seat For Rs 20 Lakh, Fraudster Arrested For Cheating MBBS Aspirant

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Salma Hayek on shooting Desperado scene: I started crying

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Novak Djokovic edges out Alexander Zverev to reach Australian Open semi-final

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Kotia Row: Odisha Gears Up For Legal Battle With Andhra

Bhubaneswar, Feb 16: Odisha Government geared up for legal battle with Andhra Pradesh over Kotia Panchayat election with the Revenue and Disaster Management Department writing a

ditional Secretary Sailendra Dwivedi said, "I am directed to request you to arrange all relevant documents pertaining to G a n j a i p a d a r (G a n j a i b a d r a), P h a t u s i n e r i

liament Constituency, Assembly Constituency and Panchayat Elections) in these villages prior to December 2, 1968." The Collector was also asked to arrange other documents on various development programmes as will be required by Advocate-on-Record (AOR) to defend the state of Odisha. "The state Government desires that optimum efforts should be given in to defend the interest of the State," the letter reads. Earlier on February 12, while hearing a contempt petition filled by the Odisha, Supreme Court directed Andhra Pradesh Government to file a response and the matter was next posted for hearing on February 19.



letter to Koraput Collector seeking all relevant documents to support the case. In the letter to Koraput Collector Mohammed Abdaal Akhtar, Revenue and Disaster Management Addi-

(Pattuchennuru) and Phagunasinery (Paguluchinnuru) under Kotiya Gram Panchayat to prove beyond sustainable doubt that Odisha has been continuously holding elections (Par-

60 More Test COVID-19 Positive In Odisha; 1 Succumbs To Virus

Bhubaneswar, Feb 16: With detection of 60 fresh cases in the last 24 hours, Odisha's COVID-19 caseload today further surged to 3,36,322. However, one patient from Keonjhar district succumbed to the deadly

virus. Regret to inform the demise of 73 years old female Covid positive patient of Keonjhar District who was also suffering from Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension & Hypothyroidism. Of the total fresh cases de-

tected from 15 districts, 36 have been reported from different quarantine centres while 24 are local contact cases. Currently, the number of total active cases in the state stands at 720 and recovered cases at 3,33,637.

CM Naveen Lays Foundation Stone Of India's Largest Hockey Stadium At Rourkela

Bhubaneswar, Feb 16: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday laid the foundation stone of the country's biggest hockey stadium, Bisra Munda International Hockey Stadium, at Rourkela in Sundergarh district. Beginning his address to the masses by paying tribute to tribal freedom fighter Birsamunda, the Chief Minister said that he remembers Biju Babu during his every visit to Rourkela, who was had laid the foundation stone of industrial development in Odisha. "Rourkela is the city of hope, the first industrial city of Odisha. People from neighbouring states also visit Rourkela to earn a livelihood. Rourkela has an important role not only in the development of Sundergarh but also Odisha," he added. "Hockey is the identity of Sundergarh. The hockey players have earned fame for the nation. Hockey spirit is in the air and water of Sundergarh," said



CM Naveen Patnaik lays foundation stone for hockey stadium in Rourkela, names it after Birsamunda

the Chief Minister. "It is a matter of pride that India has been selected to host 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup leaving behind countries like Belgium and Australia, he added. The Chief Minister further said, "Odisha is the sponsor of the Indian hockey team. Rourkela came to my mind when FIH approached me with a proposal to host the World Cup. It is a matter of pleasure that Rourkela has been selected as a venue for

the 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup." Patnaik, during his visit to Sundergarh district today inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of various development projects worth over Rs 5000 crores, including the hockey stadium. The stadium is to be the largest hockey stadium in the country of international standard. Its sitting capacity will be 20,000. It is established in an area covering 15 acres. The construction work of

the proposed ultra-modern hockey stadium has been targeted to be completed by mid of 2022. The Chief Minister had earlier announced that the proposed world-class hockey stadium has been slated as another venue apart from Kalinga Stadium for hosting the 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup. The design of Rourkela Hockey Stadium is being made keeping in view the world-class experience to be provided to both the

hockey players and spectators. This stadium will have main pitch, flood light, practice pitch, gym hydro therapy, media centre, wireless centre, parking lots and other ultra modern facilities. Since Sundergarh district is famous for its hockey players and as they have significantly contributed to the India Hockey Team, this proposed world-class hockey stadium in the district is a mark of honour to such a remarkable contribution.

MP: 47 dead after bus falls into canal near Satna; seven rescued



Bhopal, Feb 16: The bus carrying 54 passengers was heading from Sidhi to Satna when it fell into the canal in Shardhpathak village after the driver lost control of the vehicle. Forty-seven passengers — 24 are male, 21 female and two children — have died after a bus fell off a bridge into a canal near Satna village in Madhya Pradesh's Sidhi district on Tuesday morning. Seven people have been rescued so far, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said. The search and rescue operations have been

called off for now and are set to resume at 5 am on Wednesday. The bus carrying 54 passengers was heading from Sidhi to Satna when it fell into the canal in Shardhpathak village after the driver lost control of the vehicle. Talking to The Indian Express, Sidhi Collector Ravindra Kumar Chowdhary confirmed that a 4-year old child was among the casualties. The rescue operation has been nearly completed. However, the patrolling team has been sent up to 20 Kms along the canal to look for more people. CM

Chouhan condoled the deaths and announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh for the family of the deceased. He tweeted that teams of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and local authorities were conducting rescue operations at the spot. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also called the incident "horrific." An ex gratia of Rs 2 Lakh from PM's National Relief Fund has been approved for the next of kin of the deceased along with Rs 50,000 for those seriously injured in the bus accident, Prime Minister's office said on Tuesday.

PM @narendramodi has approved an ex gratia of Rs. 2 lakh each from Prime Minister's National Relief Fund for the next of kin of those who have lost their lives due to the bus accident in Sidhi, Madhya Pradesh. Rs. 50,000 would be given to those seriously injured. — PMO India (@PMOIndia) February 16, 2021. Eyewitnesses had said that the bus sank completely into the water and was not visible in the morning hours. Later, the district administration stopped the release of water into the canal from the Banganga project, which brought the water level down. The bus was then spotted at some distance away from the spot where it fell into the water, eyewitnesses said, news agency PTI reported. In view of the accident, the CM has cancelled a housewarming ceremony to be attended virtually by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Jumbo Herd Of Over 50 Crossing NH 55

Dhenkanal, Feb 16: A massive herd of elephants was seen passing NH-55 near Haladiabahal Gadasila Section under Dhenkanal Forest Range early this morning. A video capturing the jumbo herd passing through the road is certainly a treat to the eyes. Reportedly, around 50 elephants, including calves, were found crossing the NH early this morning disrupting vehicular



movements. Road traffic on Cuttack-Sambalpur route was affected. Sources said the pachyderms had strayed out of Mahabirod forest range in Parjang and headed towards Matharagadi reserve forest crossing Brahmani river. The pachyderms often pass through the NH, for which the forest officials help them cross the four-lane road, sources added.

Study For 14-15 Hours A Day! - Minister Advises Class 10 Students



Bhubaneswar, Feb 16: This is not the time to take the foot off the pedal rather students should give their best effort to increase the chances of success in the first milestone of their lives, advised Odisha school & mass education minister Samir Ranjan Dash to the students of Class 10 as annual high school certificate (HSC) examination is just a little over two months away. Students should make a timetable and accordingly follow the routine for better results. Of the 24 hours, a possible division could be 14:4:6, which suggests that students should devote 14 hours in a day for studies, four hours for ancil-

lary works, and the rest 6 hours is for a good sleep between 10 PM to 4 AM or 11 PM to 5 AM, apart from the break hours. "Even during our times, before the exams, we used to study for at least 14-15 hours a day. And the nap time and night sleep combined was somewhere around 4-5 hours, as per the schedule we had set. This (matric exam) is considered a student's first big step, so they

should take the exams seriously. Hard work is the need of the hour and that is what will help them in moving forward in life," said the minister. With the exams fast approaching, Principals and teachers of all schools have been asked to pass on the information to the students. Students have been further asked to go through the sample papers for better understanding of the subjects and the pattern of the exam. As per the announcement of the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha, the matric exam this year will begin on May 3 and will continue till May 15. Similarly, examination for Madhyama Sanskrit will be held between May 3 and May 12, 2021.



Puducherry: Congress govt loses majority as one more MLA resigns

Chennai, Feb 16: The Congress government in the Union Territory of Puducherry lost its majority in the legislative Assembly on Tuesday as MLA A John Kumar tendered his resignation to Speaker V P Sivakolunthu. With the latest development, both the ruling Congress-DMK alliance and AIADMK-BJP alliance have 14 MLAs each in the 33-member House — the Assembly, which includes three nominated MLAs, currently has 28 active MLAs. The Congress has 10 MLAs besides three



DMK MLAs and an Independent supporting the ruling coalition. The Opposition comprises three nominated MLAs of the BJP, seven MLAs of NR Congress, and four of AIADMK. The Op-

position has demanded a floor test in the House, charging that the Narayanamsamy government is already in minority. Speculations were rife about Kumar quitting the ruling coalition following

his recent meetings with BJP leaders in New Delhi. Kumar was considered close to Chief Minister V Narayanamsamy. He had won the 2016 Assembly polls from Nellihope constitu-

ency and vacated the seat for Narayanamsamy. Kumar, later, won the Kamaraj Nagar byelection in 2019. John Kumar's resignation comes a day after former health minister Malladi Krishna Rao, who quit the cabinet earlier, posted his resignation letter on Twitter. The exits also come a day ahead of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's visit to Puducherry to draw up an election strategy, his first visit since to the UT since the party came to power. Elections are due in Puducherry in May.

Previous govts ignored deserving leaders: PM Modi



Lucknow, Feb 16: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted that his government was trying to rectify the "mistakes" of the previous governments which did not honour deserving warriors and leaders as he laid the foundation stone for a statue of warrior king Suheldev of Shravasti in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich. He also unveiled through video conferencing programmes for beautification of Shravasti, Chittora Lake and Bahraich. Speaking on the occasion, he accused previous governments of not honouring deserving leaders like Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and B R Ambedkar. "It is unfortunate that deserting leaders were not given the place of pride they deserved," Modi said, adding his government was trying to rectify the mistakes of the past governments. The projects, which include construction of a 4.20-metre high equestrian statue of the warrior

king Suheldev, will also focus on the development of various tourist amenities including a cafeteria, guest house and a children's park. Besides the projects, Modi inaugurated a medical college in Bahraich named after Suheldev. He also lauded the efforts of the Uttar Pradesh government in tackling the coronavirus pandemic and leading the state on the path of development. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath attended the event. King Suheldev, an icon of the Rajbhar community, had defeated and killed the Ghaznavid general Ghazi Saiyyad Salar Masud in a battle on the banks of the Chittora lake in Bahraich in 1033. After coming to power, the Modi government has taken concerted steps to popularise Suheldev. Before the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the prime minister had released a postal stamp in the memory of Suheldev and flagged off a superfast train 'Suheldev Express' that runs tri-weekly between Ghazipur in

Purvanchal (UP) and Anand Vihar in Delhi. Earlier, in February 2016, then BJP chief Amit Shah had unveiled a statue of Suheldev and also launched a book on him, in Bahraich district near the Indo-Nepal border, where the medieval king enjoys a legendary status. During his tenure as UP chief minister, Rajnath Singh, the present Defence minister, had unveiled the statue of Suheldev at an important road crossing in Lucknow. Rajbhar community members, who consider Suheldev as their icon, constitute a significant percentage of the Purvanchal electorate and are regarded as the second politically dominant force to reckon with after the Yadavs in eastern Uttar Pradesh. Since the Rajbhar vote bank is not intact, different parties try to woo them for electoral support from time to time, say political observers, pointing out that Tuesday's event was taking place when UP assembly polls were less than a year away.

BJP slams Rahul, calls him a 'migrant leader' who has taken refuge in Kerala after being rejected in Amethi

Thrissur, Feb 16: Pralhad Joshi claimed that the national leadership and state leadership of the Congress have taken two different stands over the entry of women to Sabarimala. BJP on Tuesday attacked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, calling him a "migrant leader" who has taken "shelter" in Kerala after being rejected by people of Amethi, once a stronghold of his family. Targeting Gandhi, who represents Kerala's Wayanad seat in Lok Sabha, on the Sabarimala women entry issue, senior BJP leader and Union Minister Pralhad Joshi claimed that the national leadership and state leadership of the Congress have taken two different stands on the matter. He urged Gandhi to clear his position on the issue of faith. In a bid to



woo Christian votes in the state, Joshi, who is the party's election incharge for Kerala, also cited the "appeasement of Islamist fundamentalists" by the Congress and ruling Left in the state while raking up the issue of conversion of the Hagia Sophia church into a mosque in Turkey. In this context, he cited the statement of a leader of Muslim League, a key Congress ally, reportedly favouring the Turkish President Erdogan's controversial decision. Addressing a press conference here to highlight the

preparations for the BJP's 'Vijay Yatra' from Kasaragod on February 21, Joshi claimed Rahul Gandhi was a migrant leader who did nothing for the development of Amethi constituency in Uttar Pradesh despite being elected thrice from there. "There was no development. In fact, there was no X-Ray machine in the public health facility in his constituency," Joshi alleged. He said after being rejected by the people there, Gandhi has now taken "shelter" in Kerala and claimed people of the state will

also understand that by supporting Congress party, they are not going to gain anything. On the Sabarimala issue, the BJP leader alleged Gandhi supported the Supreme Court verdict granting entry of women of all age groups into the ancient hill shrine. However, the state leadership of the Congress took a different stand on the matter, he said. This shows that they have no commitment towards Hindu sentiments, Joshi alleged. "So far Rahul Gandhi has not uttered a single word on Sabarimala. I challenge Rahul Gandhi... what is your stand on the issue? You clarify your stand," he said. Accusing the Congress of indulging in appeasement of Islamist fundamentalists in Kerala, the BJP leader alleged senior IUML leader Panakkad Sadiq

Ali Shihab Thangal had justified the Turkey government's controversial conversion of Istanbul's Hagia Sophia into a mosque. The BJP leader also attacked the ruling CPI(M) in Kerala and the previous Congress-led UDF government, alleging both had failed to address the issues of the people. "We will expose the failures of the LDF government and previous UDF government. Both the LDF and the UDF have failed miserably," Joshi said. He said Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will flag-off the party's Vijay Yatra, led by state president K Surendran, at Kasargod on February 21. Senior party leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah will attend the yatra when it reaches Thiruvananthapuram on March 7, he added.

Greta Thunberg toolkit case: Bombay HC reserves order on Nikita Jacob's transit bail plea



New Delhi, Feb 16: The Bombay High Court Tuesday reserved order on a transit anticipatory bail application moved by lawyer and climate activist Nikita Jacob after Delhi police issued non-bailable warrants against her and Shantanu Muluk, an engineer. The court will pronounce the order on February 17. To Mukul's appeal — filed in the Aurangabad bench of the Bombay High Court — a single-judge bench of Justice Vibha V Kankanwadi granted him a transit anticipatory bail and passed an order giving him a 10 day bail period so that he can approach the competent court seeking reliefs. According to the Delhi Police, the duo along with 22-year-old Bengaluru resident Disha Ravi allegedly created the "toolkit" document on the farmers' protest

which touched upon "Prokhalistani elements". This document was also shared on social media by Swedish teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg. Jacob had appealed for interim protection from coercive steps taken by the Delhi Police. Her plea, filed on February 12, says that the Cyber Cell of Delhi Police, accompanied by personnel from Vanrai police station in Goregaon (East) in Mumbai, had come to her home with a search warrant, and seized personal documents and electronic gadgets. "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," the plea

further read. While Jacob's plea was filed in the principal HC seat in Mumbai, Muluk, who hails from central Maharashtra, submitted his application in the Aurangabad bench of the High Court. Both the pleas sought transit anticipatory bail for a period of four weeks so that they can approach the court concerned in Delhi to apply for pre-arrest bail. The pleas also claimed the "political vendetta" involved in their arrests. Mukul's application said that vendetta has trickled down from politics to the house of a common man making a mockery of the rights and principles enshrined in the Constitution of India. Jacob and Mukul are latest to be associated with the "toolkit" case. Before them, Disha Ravi, a 21-year-old climate activist from Bengaluru was arrested with the Delhi Police stating that Ravi was a "key conspirator" in the formulation and dissemination of the document and she collaborated with pro-Khalisatani Poetic Justice Foundation to "spread disaffection against Indian state."

ED files chargesheet against Hooda, 4 retd IAS officers for money laundering

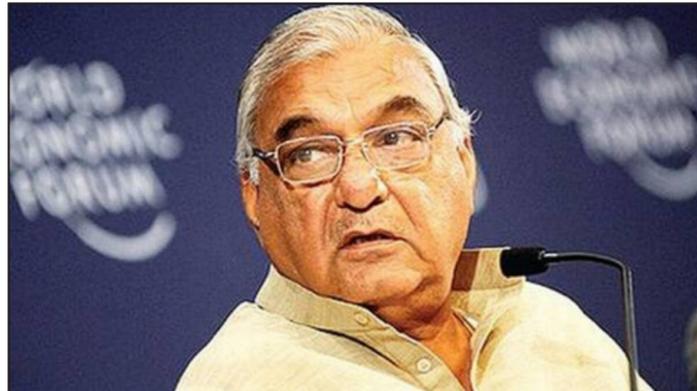
Chandigarh, Feb 16: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a chargesheet against 22 accused, including former Haryana chief minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda, four retired IAS officers and some others, in a money-laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in the allocation of 14 industrial plots worth more than Rs 30 crore in Panchkula in 2013. The central agency has claimed that "worthy applicants were driven out of merit and applicants who were closely connected to Hooda, in terms of his personal capacity and also in terms of the political party he belongs to, were allotted these plots". The Haryana Vigilance Bureau had registered an FIR in 2015 to probe the alleged irregularities. Later, the case was transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation following which the CBI and the ED registered their respective cases. Hooda

termed the case as politically motivated. "It is an old case that has been going on since long. It is nothing but a politically motivated case. We will contest it in the court. The matter is sub-judice. I would not like to comment any more on it," Hooda told The Indian

Chandra Kansal (former chief controller of finance, HUDA), Narinder Kumar Solanki (former zonal administrator, Faridabad zone of HUDA), besides Bharat Bhushan Taneja (the then superintendent, HUDA) and all the 14 allottees and

criminal conspiracy, the then chief minister of Haryana and ex-officio chairman of HUDA (Hooda), the retired IAS officers and other office-bearers of HUDA in Panchkula illegally benefitted pre-selected acquaintances of the then state CM by allot-

and the allocation took place in 2013. "All 14 industrial plots stand attached as per the provisions of PMLA, 2002 by the ED in August 2019 and the attachment was confirmed by the PMLA Adjudicating Authority in February 2020," the statement read. It was found during the ED's probe "that the price fixed for the subject allotment were kept four-five times below the circle rate and seven-eight times (higher than) the market rate". "The criteria for allotment was altered 18 days after the last date of application and when all the applicant data was in the possession of HUDA. The criteria was altered in such a way to favour the pre-selected applicants by increasing the discretion at the hands of the interview committee. The entire interview process was vitiated and compromised as no formal record of marks allocation was kept," the ED further said.



Express when reached for comments. The agency, in the chargesheet, has named Hooda, retired IAS officers Dharam Pal Singh Nagal (the then chief administrator of the Haryana Urban Development Authority or HUDA), Surjit Singh (the then administrator of HUDA), Subhash

beneficiaries of the industrial plots. "The prosecution complaint has been filed under various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 before a special court in Panchkula," the ED said in a statement. It said the probe found that as "a result of a

ting them 14 industrial plots and denying allotment to more worthy applicants". "All the 14 allottees and beneficiaries of the industrial plots have been involved in the commission of the offence of money laundering," the agency added. The plots are located in Panchkula

Odisha CM Announces Rs 2 Lakh Ex-Gratia For Kin Of Gajapati Road Mishap Victims



(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 16: Expressing deep grief over the death of two persons in a road mishap at R Udayagiri in Gajapati district Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh each for the next of kin of the deceased persons. The Chief Minister announced that the injured will be

provided free of cost treatment. Patnaik while expressing his heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved families, has wished speedy recovery of the injured persons. Two of a baraat party were killed and several others injured when a mini-truck carrying them turned turtle after its driver lost control over the wheels at

Kankadaguda under R. Udaygiri police limits in Gajapati district today. As many as 12 members of the baraat party, who were critically injured have been shifted to the MKCG Medical College and Hospital at Berhampur. Reports said that the mini-truck was carrying over 40 persons when the mishap took place.

Magha Saptami: Section-144 To Be Clamped Around Chandrabhaga Beach

(A.O. Bureau) Puri, Feb 16: The district administration of Puri has decided to enforce prohibitory order under Section 144 around Chandrabhaga beach in Konark in view of Magha Saptami dip scheduled to be observed on February 19, 2021. The decision to impose the prohibitory order has been taken to prevent spread of COVID-19 during the festival that witnesses a mass gathering every year.

As per reports, the prohibitory order will come in to effect from 11 am of February 18 and remain in force till 1 pm of February 19. The administration has warned the public against taking the holy dip in Chandrabhaga. However, the deities will take the customary dip as per the rituals. As per the tradition, the presiding deities of Konark, Lord Tribeniswara, Lord Aisaneswara and Lord Dakhineswara



embark on a grand procession to the Tirtha Mandap at Chandrabhaga on the auspicious occasion.

The deities then march to the NAC Bhoga Mandap and later they are taken for their customary bath early in the

morning. The devotees then take holy dip at the beach before sunrise and offer their obeisance to the Sun God.

Sarathi Gets Permission From Odisha HC For 'Pravachan'

(A.O. Bureau) Cuttack, Feb 16: The Orissa High Court today granted permission to self-proclaimed godman Sarathi Baba for preaching sermon (Pravachan). As per the conditions laid down by the High Court, a maximum of 200 persons can participate in his

Pravachan programmes with strict adherence to COVID-19 protocols. Sarathi had in 2019 moved the High Court seeking permission for the same. Sarathi was released from Choudwar Circle Jail here on July 25, 2019 after getting bail on July 17, 2019. The court had



directed him not to influence witnesses

and cooperate in the investigation pro-

cess. This apart, he was prohibited from going to his ashram at Barimula in Kendrapara district. Notably, Sarathi Baba was arrested by the Crime Branch on August 8, 2015 from his Barimula ashram on charges of sexual and physical exploitation of women apart from cheating devotees.

1982 BJB High School Matric Batch Get Together at Barunei



(A.O. Bureau) Khordha, Feb 16: 1982 Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhara (BJB) High School, Khordha, Matric Batch get together held at Barunei Khordha. Mr. Sameer Ranjan Mohapatra Co-ordinator the

programme. In this programme discussed about the celebration of Quasiquicentennial (125 year) of BJB High School and decided all the students of 1982 Matric Batch were actively participated in this programme. Satya Sundar Mohanty,

D. Rajesh Patra, Akshaya Mohanty, Brajabandhu Behera, Niranjana Badjena, Umakant Barik, Kishore Chandra Rajguru give their valuable suggestion. Girija Shankar Pattnaik tender vote of thanks.

Devotee Donates Over 4.8 Kg Gold Jewellery To Puri Shree Jagannatha Temple

(A.O. Bureau) Puri, Feb 16: The Shree Jagannatha Temple in Puri received a record quantity of gold jewellery as donation from a devotee of the deities. A representative of the devotee

met the Shree Jagannatha Temple Administration (SJTA) Chief Administrator Krishan Kumar at his office today and handed over him the gold jewellery weighing about 4.875 kg.

who paid the former Rs 15.30 lakh in lieu of an MBBS seat for his son. According to the complaint, apart from promising Udgata a medical seat for his son, Samantray also managed to forge 'provisional allotment letters' with the seal and signature of Odisha JEE (authority). His acts and

Penal Code. We nabbed him from outside a bar in Bhubaneswar late at night on Monday. An SUV used by Samantray has also been seized," Nayapali IIC Sarat Sahu said. The police added that similar cases have been registered against Samantray at Infocity and Chandrasekharpur

He had taken Rs 15.30 lakh and returned Rs 10 lakh. Samantray is not returning the rest of the amount," the complainant said. Sources said the accused holds an identity card of a journalist. According to this identity-cum-Press card Sunil Samantray is a Special Correspondent posted in Bhubaneswar.



Rituals For Initiation Of Chariot Construction Performed In Puri On 'Basant Panchami'

(A.O. Bureau) Puri, Feb 16: On the occasion of auspicious 'Basant Panchami' today, the 'Ratha Katha Anukula' ritual, the initiation of the chariot construction for the annual Rath Yatra was performed. The Shree Jagannatha Temple's Rajapurohit conducted the ritual in presence of the temple administra-



tion officials, the District Collector and Servitors. Three 'Dhaura' logs that will be used

for construction of the chariots were placed in front of the Shree Jagannath Temple Ad-

ministration (SJTA) office. Acting as per the tradition, the Rajapurohit and Strotiya Brahmins worshipped the three 12-ft 'Dhaura' logs. Chief Administrator of the SJTA, Krishan Kumar said, "On Basant Panchami, the 'Ratha Katha Anukula' ritual, the initiation of the chariot construc-

tion, was performed today. The logs have been brought from Nayagarh." The 'Ratha Katha Chirata' ritual will be held on 'Rama Nabami' and construction of the chariots will begin from 'Akshaya Tritiya'. The annual world-famous Rath Yatra will be held in Puri on July 12 this year.

Beauty With A Purpose: Odisha Girls Shine At Miss Teen Universe India 2021

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 16: The trailing times are gone for Odisha when it comes to the beauty pageants. Of late, many have made their presence felt in the fashion industry and it looks as if the models from the State are right on track to

dominate the ramp. Two girls from Bhubaneswar have brought laurels for the State by shining at the Miss Teen Universe India 2021 beauty pageant held in Delhi last week. Preetika Jena, a Class 9 student from DAV Unit-8 in Bhubaneswar was



adjudged the winner of the contest. Tammanna Dash, who is in her Grade-8 in Been School of Bhubaneswar became the first runner-up. Interestingly, both these representatives from Odisha were mentored by Lavanya Das, the winner of Miss Teen India Diva

International 2019, who was crowned in the same platform. And the mentor, Lavanya Das, was also declared the Brand Ambassador of Virus Films Entertainment 2021 during the event. She further happens to be the state coordinator of Odisha. Beauty

pageants, one like this, are organised to give wings to the girls, who by the exposure and the experience gained, gradually realise their personal, professional and philanthropic goals which build self-confidence in them for future endeavours, say organisers.

EDITORIAL

At cross-purposes

A Governor-State Govt spat belittles the dignity of both the titular and the real head. The Governor of a State should not ideally be a political appointee; however, with the Centre planting its trusted lieutenants as “puppets” at the Raj Bhawans, the status of the coveted post has only spiralled downwards. Although a Governor is only a nominal head with no real power vested in him, s/he can play a decisive role at crucial junctures much to the discomfiture of the State’s dispensation. The titular head can “dilly-dally” approval to important Bills passed by the State Assembly, or can sit over these Bills indefinitely. And this is what makes the position really significant at times, with the Centre expecting the Governor to “call the shots” on its diktats while the State Government looks for fair play. Especially, if the Centre and the State are at loggerheads, the cold war between the Governor and the Chief Minister can turn ugly and that belittles the dignity of both the titular and the real head. The ongoing tussle between Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) Government led by Shiv Sena is a case in point. The existing friction between the Governor and the State Government led by Shiv Sena’s Uddhav Thackeray escalated when Koshyari, much to his embarrassment, was made to disembark a State Government carrier because the plane did not have the approval to fly. Koshyari finally had to board a commercial flight to Dehradun. It would have added to the grace of the Chief Minister’s Office (CMO) had it shown some modicum of decency by allowing the Governor to use the State aircraft. The State Government must understand that even if the Governor is working as the Centre’s “stooge”, the reputation of the State and its institutions suffers from such shows of disagreement. It must be mentioned that West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankar and firebrand Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee are often at loggerheads. Likewise, daggers are drawn every now and then between Puducherry Lt Governor Kiran Bedi and Chief Minister V Narayanasamy. Both West Bengal and Puducherry have non-BJP Governments while Dhankar and Bedi have been rewarded for their loyalty towards the saffron party and are toeing its line. The latest incident points to a new low in the politics of Maharashtra. Sena’s outspoken spokesperson Sanjay Raut has said that it is an “open war” and that the BJP is pressuring Koshyari to destabilise the MVA Government spearheaded by the Shiv Sena supremo. The party has urged the Centre to recall Koshyari, asserting that it is necessary for upholding the Constitution, the laws and the norms. On the other hand, the Governor had a “closed-door” meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi. More action, therefore, is expected in the ongoing war between the Raj Bhawan and the CMO, with the people, democracy and ethos standing at a crossroads.

Anti-Valentine Week

Here’s to all those people who have had to grind their teeth this past week and live amid saccharinely sick displays of love and affection all around, simply because they didn’t have a choice in the matter: The Valentine’s Week is officially over and the Anti-Valentine Week, or rather brutally called the “unromantic week”, is here! Enough of red roses, candlelight dinners, red heart balloons and gifts. Some of us don’t really believe in the notion of soulmates, nor in concepts such as love, romance or trust, just like some of us grownups don’t believe in that jolly rotund fellow called Santa Claus, maybe because these ideas never really took root deep inside us or maybe because we grew a dislike for these following a particularly racking heartbreak. The singletons of any gender, who were made to feel guilty just because they didn’t have a “significant other” or BAE to gift chocolates and roses to, or to hug, can now rejoice and breathe normally. If you are a person who hasn’t been very lucky in matters of the heart and steers clear of the idea of love, romance and public displays of affection (PDA), then this is your week. The polar opposite of the mushy week preceding it, Anti-Valentine Week begins on February 15 (Slap Day) and ends on February 21 (Breakup Day). Along the lines of the Valentine’s Week (which has Rose Day, Propose Day, Chocolate Day, Teddy Day, Promise Day, Hug Day and Kiss Day preceding Valentine’s Day), this week celebrates Slap Day, Kick Day, Perfume Day, Flirting Day, Confession Day, Missing Day and Breakup Day. But it is not as dangerous as it sounds; it refers to slapping and kicking out negative feelings about an ex-partner or a cheating mate out of the mind. In that sense, the Anti-Valentine Week actually works as an outlet to release negative feelings that could have been lying dormant deep within against a (former) love interest. Better to speak out and let go rather than hold onto these feelings and allow them to fester. That said, moderation is an important component for everything in life. One must take care to ensure that such discharge of negativity doesn’t hurt either oneself or anybody else: There’s no point, after all, in beating yourself down emotionally so much that you would then need to go see a shrink, or make a fool of yourself walking angrily into a crowded restaurant and slapping your current or former partner for whatever injustice you believe they meted out to you. Now, is there?

Why object to the farm laws?

They free farmers and traders from archaic laws, lift the barrier on inter-State and intra-State trade and bring in healthy competition. A cold and detached assessment of the three farm laws will indicate that politics rather than logic is driving the opposition to these enactments, which seek to empower farmers and open up the markets while ensuring a safety net by way of continuing the minimum support price (MSP) system and the Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs). The first of these laws, The Farmers’ Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, enables farmers to sell their produce outside the notified APMC yards. Section 3 of this Act gives the farmer the freedom to carry on inter-State or intra-State trade, while Section 4(3) says every trader who transacts with farmers shall make the payment within three working days. The law enables the Government to develop a Price Information and Market Intelligence System for farmers’ produce and provides for a time-bound dispute redressal mechanism. Therefore, the grower gets the option to either stick to the APMC or look for markets outside. It is difficult, therefore, to fathom the opposition to these provisions from farmers because the only ones hurt by this law are the commission agents and dalals, who are allegedly misleading the farmers and funding the agitation. The second law is the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, which gives farmers the right to enter into a contract with retailers, wholesalers and agribusiness firms, processors, wholesalers or exporters for the sale of future farming produce at a pre-agreed price. Section 3(1)



A Surya Prakash

of the Act says the minimum period of the farming agreement should be one crop season or one production cycle of livestock with a maximum period of five years. The payment for farm produce should be on delivery but, for seed production, the buyer has to pay two-thirds of the agreed amount on delivery. But the most important provision in the Bill relates to inalienability of farm land. It declares that no agreement shall be entered into for any transfer, including sale, lease and mortgage of the land or premises of the farmer. Here again, a dispute redressal mechanism is envisaged and provided for in Section 13(1). The third law is the amendment to the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The amendment says the supply of foodstuff, including cereals, pulses, potato, onions, edible oilseeds and oils, “may be regulated only under extraordinary circumstances which may include war, famine, extraordinary price rise and natural calamity of grave nature”. How can any farmer have any objection to this major initiative? In short, the laws free the farmers and traders from archaic laws, lift the barrier on inter-State

and intra-State trade, bring in competition so that farmers are no longer at the mercy of the cloistered taluk-level market and are exposed to prevailing prices. In other words, market forces will take charge and mandis will become more competitive while the MSP system will continue. This liberates farmers from the stranglehold of the APMC and commission agents and cartels. If there is any section of the population which should be worried about the consequences of the new farm laws, it should be the consumers. Now that the Government has amended the Essential Commodities Act and deprived itself of the right to intervene in respect of stocks and prices of some key essentials, the consumers will be at the mercy of market forces. How are the farmers affected? Finally, a word about the UPA’s hypocrisy with regard to the laws. Since many Governments, including the ones run by the UPA and steered by the Congress for 10 years, have dabbled in farm law reforms over the last 20 years, their protests today sound hollow. The politician who has done the biggest somersault is the NCP’s

Sharad Pawar. As the Union Minister for Agriculture in 2010, he strongly advocated amending the APMC Acts by the States to encourage the private sector to provide “alternative competitive marketing channels in the overall interest of farmers/producers and consumers...”. He argued then that agriculture needs “well-functioning markets to drive growth” and the involvement of the private sector “is essential”. He also drew the attention of Chief Ministers to his earlier letters to them in 2005 and 2007 and to the draft APMC Rules formulated by his Ministry. In November 2011, he returned to this subject and, in a letter to Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, reiterated that the agriculture sector needs well-functioning markets to drive inclusive growth and “the private sector needs to play an important role in this regard”. Pawar is now singing a different tune. He says the mandis will be affected and MSP is not guaranteed to farmers who sell to corporates. This is difficult to understand because farmers will never lose the option to sell to the Government at MSP. Also, the contention that this has been suddenly thrust on the farmers is totally baseless. The opening up of the agriculture market has been in the air for 20 years. The Centre circulated a model Agriculture Marketing Act in 2017 and 11 States adopted it fully and six States, partially. Finally, the farmers of Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh have to realise that India comprises 28 States and eight Union Territories. Farmers in many States have expressed happiness over the new farm laws. Mere geographical proximity to Delhi cannot mean that they have the last word

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 context, XVFC has, in its approach, recalibrated the relative shares of

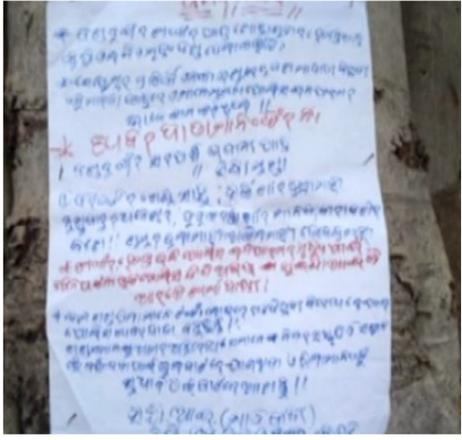
Haseeb A Drabu

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 being 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.

Mao Posters Warning 'Gond' Community Members Surface In Kandhamal Six elephants die in 14 days in Odisha sanctuary; CM asks authorities to take steps



(A.O. Bureau) Kandhamal, Feb 16: After a few days of lull, Maoist posters have once again surfaced in some panchayats of the district warning people belonging to the Gond community to stop 'aiding' security forces

deployed on counter-insurgency operations. The fresh warning posters have been spotted at Jhiripani and Bhandarangi panchayats under the Belaghara police limits. According to sources, the CPI (Mao) BGN Divisional Committee posters were found at these locations stating that some people belonging to the tribal Gond community were joining hands with security forces by working as informers. In the posters, the rebels go on to threaten the community members with death for aiding the security forces. To drive home their point, the rebels in the posters have pointed out the

murders of Bhabani Shankar Patra, who they identified as the son of a village Sarpanch and Hemanta Patra, who belonged to nearby Guchiguda village for their alleged police links. Citing the two revenge killings, the Maoists have warned youngsters from Gond community with a similar fate if the latter sided with the police. The propaganda poster also go on to add how young Gond people are turning into police informers for the lure of a little money and food, and thus ending up losing their precious life at the hands of the rebels. They have also mentioned the recent shootout in the Sirki

forest with security forces where five of their cadre had been killed. They have claimed that both the parties were equally responsible for the shootout and loss of life. Though the posters have caused panic among locals, but it is not the first time Mao posters surfaced in the tribal pockets of Kandhamal, Koraput and Malkangiri districts. Analysts believe such public posture of the rebel group is a clear sign of their nervousness as scores have been killed in police encounters recently while the group ranks have been rattled by a spate of desertion and surrender before security forces.

deaths, the chief minister directed the departments of Forest and Environment and Animal Resources to consult experts of the Odisha and outside in order to stop further death of jumbos. During a review meeting held through video conference, Patnaik also directed the district administration of Kalahandi and the DFO to ensure vaccination of cattle in villages close to the sanctuary. He said that all the water bodies in the sanctuary should be disinfected and water

(A.O. Bureau) Bhawanipatna, Feb 16: After six elephants died in just 14 days at Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary in Odisha's Kalahandi district, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Monday asked the authorities to take immediate measures to stop the fatalities. One more female elephant was found dead near a waterbody in the Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary, a forest official said. Earlier, four female pachyderms and a calf have died there since Feb-

eruary 1. According to the 2018 census the sanctuary had 17 elephants. Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Kalahandi South Division Ashok Kumar and his team and veterinary doctors are camping in the area undertaking surveillance. "The death of elephants is due to Haemorrhage Septicemia (HS)," the DFO said. However, the DFO said that there was no report of the death of other animals in the sanctuary and the cattle entering the forest from nearby villages. Expressing concern over the series of pachyderm

samples should be sent to labs for tests. Official sources said that there are at least 43 water bodies in the sanctuary of which 25 have been disinfected so far. Coordinator from Centre for Wildlife Health, OUAT (Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology), Bhubaneswar, Niranjan Sahu after visiting Karlapat sanctuary said: "The death of elephants is believed to be by HS. The postmortem report and laboratory report of one dead elephant is hinting at HS." Cattle get infected by HS if not vac-



The first meeting of the Youth for Action was held in Malkangiri

(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Feb 16: Inspired by the ideals of Bhubaneswar MP

Podal, Baja Madkami, Srikant Chowdhury, Rahul Tawari were elected as vice-presidents while Srinivasa



Aparajita Sadangi, her thoughts and public works have been hailed by the people of the state. Whether in various areas through the assembly committees or the failure of the state government. The Youth for Action team has been highly praised for extending a helping hand in times of distress. A team for Youth for Action has been formed in Malkangiri district. Balaji

Patra, Rajkishore Mandal, Hrishikesh Maharana, Sanjay Dhali, Saroj Patra, N. Prakash Kumar were the general editors. Pray Brat Raut and Dilip Dandapati have been selected as the treasurer. In the coming days, the Youth for Action team will be present in all districts of the district. The goal is to integrate members from one block to another and engage in social work.

Crores of rupees of cashew corporations have been exposed

(A.O. Bureau) Kendrapada, Feb 16: Cashew forest burning at Bahakud in Mahakalpada block of Kendrapada district is a heinous conspiracy. Who reported the burning of 30 acres of cashew forest to half an acre of weeds? The Bahakud cashew forest will be uncovered. Conflicting media is revealing the truth from Ground Zero. The Ramnagar Gram Panchayat is located in the Mahakalpada block of Kendrapada district. The panchayat has more than 600 acres of cashew forest from Ramnagar to Mahanadi Chaumuhani side Bahakuda. A ranger of the corporation is also employed in the new colony of Ramnagar to

guard it. On the night of February 2, a fire broke out in the cashew forest near Bahakud Chaumuhani Ghat. Firefighters were called to the scene and the fire was extinguished. The cause of the fire is not yet known. The blaze,



which killed more than 300 acres of cashew forest, caused damage to 2.5 crore rupees. Our camera team arrived at Bahakud Ground Zero to verify the truth. The fire burned only half an

acre of hay, while only 70 to 80 cashew trees were found to be on fire. Let's hear what the locals of that left village are saying. It is suspected that this is a legitimate conspiracy by the corporation to run the government fund. Local mafias are growing dissatisfaction with the illegal trafficking of hundreds of tractors of sand from the cashew forest land and the capture of forest land, deforestation and logging on a daily basis.

Kendrapada SP Mandakar Sandip Sampad's humanity

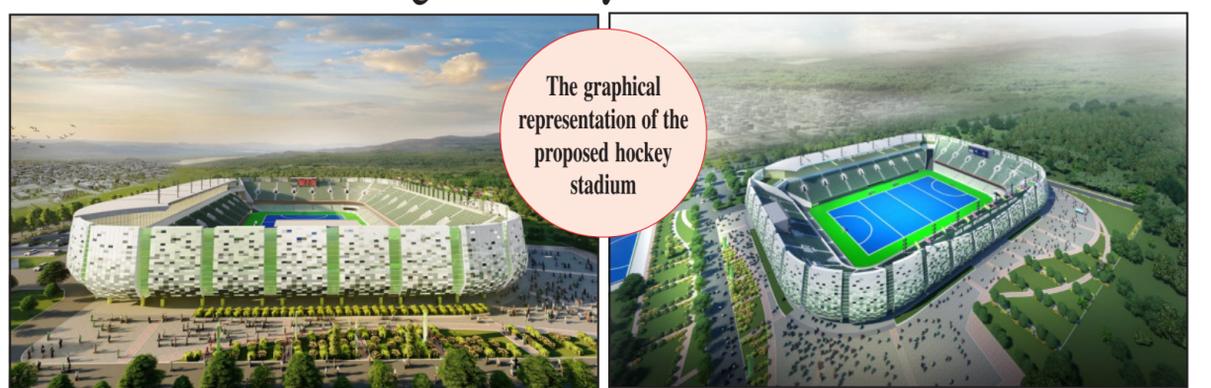


(A.O. Bureau) Kendrapada, Feb 16: Manoranjan Nath, a young man who was involved in a scooter accident on Kathiapada

main road under Pattamundai block, was spotted by the Kendrapada SP at the time and was immediately rescued

from his vehicle at Pattamundai Hospital. "The rescue squad wasn't called for him," showing humanitarian gesture Mr. Mandakar Sandip Sampad, a Superintendent of Police, Kendrapada. Congratulations from various quarters for this great work of SP Mandakar Sandip Sampad.

This Is How India's Largest Hockey Stadium In Odisha To Look Like



The graphical representation of the proposed hockey stadium

(A.O. Bureau) Rourkela, Feb 16: The foundation stone of India's largest hockey stadium in Rourkela city was laid by Odisha Chief

Minister Naveen Patnaik today. It will be named after freedom fighter Birsu Munda. The stadium here and the Kalinga Hockey Sta-

dium in Bhubaneswar will jointly host the Men's Hockey World Cup-2023. The stadium to be developed over 15 acres of land inside the

Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT) campus here will have a seating capacity of 20,000 with allied facilities. Odisha chief secre-

tary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra had said that the proposed hockey stadium will be developed within one year.



CM Naveen Patnaik lays foundation stone of country's largest hockey stadium in Rourkela

Salma Hayek on shooting Desperado scene: I started crying



Los Angeles, Feb 16: Hollywood star Salma Hayek has detailed about her experience shooting the sex scene in the 1995 film Desperado, directed by Robert Rodriguez and also starring Antonio Banderas. Desperado is the second installment in Rodriguez's Mexico Trilogy, which also includes the films El Mariachi (1993) and Once Upon a Time in Mexico (2003). Mexico-born American Hayek broke out from the action movie in which she played the role of Carolina, a tough book cafe owner who teams up with Banderas' El Mariachi seeking revenge on the drug lord who killed his lover. Hayek, who has previously spoken about how she struggled with the very graphic sex scene, on Monday cleared the air that her trauma had nothing to do with Rodriguez or Banderas. On Armchair Expert, the popular weekly

podcast hosted by Dax Shepard and Monica Padman, the 54-year-old actor said when she landed the role, there was no mention of a sex scene between her character, Carolina and El Mariachi (Banderas) in the script. It was brought to her attention after production began. The Oscar-nominated actor said she agreed to do the scene on a closed set as Rodriguez was her "bro" and his then-wife, producer Elizabeth Avellan, was her "best friend". There would be just the four of them while shooting the scene. "So, when we were going to start shooting, I started to sob," Hayek recalled, adding she kept saying to the trio, "I don't know that I can do it. I'm afraid." She said one of the things she was afraid of was Banderas, now her close friend and frequent collaborator. "He was an absolute gentleman and so nice, and we're still super close

friends — but he was very free. It scared me that for him, it was like nothing. I started crying, and he was like, 'Oh my God. You're making me feel terrible.' And I was so embarrassed that I was crying." Hayek made clear several times that Rodriguez and Banderas "were amazing" and that the director "never put pressure on me." Despite everything, the moment was very traumatic, she said. "I was not letting go of the towel. They would try to make me laugh. I would take it off for two seconds and start crying again. But we got through it. We did the best with what we could do at the time. 'When you're not you, then you can do it. But I keep thinking of my father and my brother. And are they going to see it? And are they going to get teased? Guys don't have that. Your father will be, 'Yeah! That's my son!'" The actor also recounted taking her father and brother to see the film, but said they left the theatre during the scene in question and returned when it was over. "You want your father to be nothing but proud of you," Hayek, who reprised her role in Once Upon a Time in Mexico, added.

Kriti and Nupur Sanon's Unbelievable Transformation Leaves Everyone Amazed



New Delhi, Feb 16: A throwback picture of Kriti Sanon and her sister Nupur Sanon before they entered Bollywood has recently surfaced on social media and is leaving everyone in surprise. Actress Kriti Sanon and her sister Nupur Sanon are one of the most loved sibling-duo of Bollywood. The two sisters often take the

internet by storm with their stunning pictures. However, a throwback picture of them before they entered the glamour world has recently surfaced on social media and is leaving everyone in surprise. A collage of Kriti and Nupur's 'Then and Now' picture was shared by FitLook magazine on Instagram and their



unbelievable transformation leaves everyone amazed. In one of the pictures, which seems to be from their teenage, the sister duo look like just two common girls. However, in the second picture, the duo can be seen slaying in comfy nightwear. Well! everyone needs that glow up like Sanon siblings. The picture

has grabbed a lot of attention as netizens couldn't believe their eyes and have shared their surprise in the comments section. Meanwhile, Kriti has been creating a lot of buzz from her ravishing look in the upcoming film Ganapath. The actress will be collaborating with Tiger Shroff for the second time after her debut

film Heropanti. Taking to her Instagram handle, she unveiled her first look from the film where she can be seen in a never-seen-before biker avatar. Kriti in the caption mentioned her character's name 'Jassi' and wrote that she is super-duper excited for this one. As soon as she unveiled her look, Kriti's friends and fans went gaga over the post. While Sophie Choudry calls her 'Smoking Hot', Hrithik Roshan, Varun Sharma, Stebin Ben and many others have dropped fire emoji in the comment. The film is likely to go on floor soon and is slated to release next year. Kriti will also be seen in Bachchan Pandey, Mimi and Second Innings. Meanwhile, Nupur is an aspiring actress. She has starred alongside Bollywood star Akshay Kumar in the music video of the song Filhall.

Santanu Hazarika Says He is Close to Shruti Haasan, Refuses to Comment on Rumoured Relationship



Mumbai, Feb 16: In a recent interview, artist Santanu Hazarika said that he and Shruti Haasan are quite close, but refused to confirm or deny if

they are in a relationship. Actress Shruti Haasan has been rumoured to be dating artist Santanu Hazarika. The duo have been spotted together on multiple occasions. She has also previously shared pictures with him on Instagram. In a latest interview with Pinkvilla, Santanu said that they are quite close, but refused to confirm or deny that they are in a relationship. "I would just say that I really don't discuss my relationships. I like to keep things personal, and prefer to talk about my art and work. Having said that, Shruti and I share a very passionate relationship when it comes to art, music and culture. It's a beautiful friendship and bond that we share. In fact, we met because of our similar taste in music, fashion and culture and that's the

most beautiful part about this," he said. "I wouldn't like to comment on that," he said, when asked about the rumours. He also said that Shruti got to know about him through his work, and hence they connected. He added that the duo connected over music, and that the actress sometimes paints and draws with him. "So yes, we are quite close," he added. On Shruti's 35th birthday, Santanu shared a loved-up picture of the two. He could be seen hugging the actress with balloons in the background. Meanwhile, Santanu was crowned the Best Doodle Artist in the 2014 'Doodle Art Competition' and has also worked on independent projects for hip-hop artists like Raftaar and Divine. He quit engineering and began a career in doodling in 2014 during an art competition in South Africa. Shruti will be next seen in the Telugu anthology Pitta Kathalu on Netflix. The show will stream from February 19.

Here are Some Breathing Exercises to Lose Belly Fat Naturally

New Delhi, Feb 16: Various 'pranayama' methods have been practiced since ages to bring about holistic well-being. Deep breathing is a must to ensure a healthy body and mind. Breathing correctly is not just associated with mindfulness, it also helps enhance concentration and relieve stress. There are breathing techniques that boost your overall health and facilitate weight loss. Various 'pranayama' methods have been practiced since ages to bring about holistic well-being. Besides gym, pilates, and diet plans, making room for these breathing exercises are going to enrich your life. So, take a deep breath and embark on one of the most peaceful breathing exercise journeys which will furnish long term benefits. Not only will you experience a fit, healthy body with extra pounds shredded, but also feel calm, centred, relaxed after doing the breathing exercises. Here are some techniques for you: Diaphragmatic breathing - Shallow breathing accumulates toxins and prevents ample oxygen supply to cells. Follow this deep diaphragmatic breathing by simply lying and observing your stomach move up and down. It tones



the abdomen and decreases belly fat, ensures smooth bowel movements, relaxes the muscles in our body. Kapalbhathi or skull shining breathing - The most amazing breathing technique, skull shining, is highly recommended for one's well-being. Practicing this brings about exceptional positive changes to the body aiding in improved digestion, and weight loss. Alternate nostril breathing or Nadi shodhana - It balances the right and left channels of the body, purifies system, stimulates digestive fire. Oxygen enters cells and rejuvenates the body, aiding in weight loss. The Bellow's Breath aka Bhastrika pranayama - It is a powerful breathing exercise that enhances the metabolism at the cellular level of the body. It

generates heat and opens up energy pathways. Practice this for energizing your body and head for shedding the stubborn fats. Agnisar - This technique tightens the abdominal muscles which further helps in relieving the digestive disorders. It produces heat/fire in the stomach that burns all the excess fat in the abdomen. The name comes from the Sanskrit, Agni, meaning "fire"; sar, meaning "essence"; and kriya, which means "action". Bhramari - It increases oxygen flow and vitality. Exhale slowly, keeping the mouth close and make a low humming sound like bees from your throat while you breathe out. Try to feel the vibrations of the humming on your fingers. It improves metabolism and subsequently help in getting a toned body.

Bumrah may be rested for white ball matches against England

New Delhi, Feb 16: India's senior speedster Jasprit Bumrah is likely to be rested for the eight white ball matches against England as part of the team's extensive workload management programme. The matches are scheduled in March. Bumrah was rested for the second Test at Chepauk, which India won by 317 runs to level the four-match series 1-1. However, Bumrah will be back in action for the upcoming two high-stakes Test matches in Ahmedabad, which will decide New Zealand's opposition in the inaugural World Test Championship final. It is almost certain that the Indian think-tank (head coach Ravi Shastri, skipper Virat Kohli and bowling coach Bharath Arun) along with the trainers and physios would take a final call on resting the pace spearhead, keeping a gruelling season in mind. "Jassi has already bowled close to 180 overs, in-



cluding nearly 150 overs (149.4 overs) in four Test matches (till first Test versus England) since the start of Australian tour. "Add to that, the number of hours spent on the field. It is only logical that after these two Tests in Motera, where he will have a big role to play, he should be given rest for white ball leg," a senior BCCI official, privy to the developments, told PTI on condition of anonymity. The logic

behind resting Bumrah for the white ball leg is simple. The five T20 Internationals and three ODIs against England will be the last chance for Indian team management to have a look at all potential players going into this year's World Cup. "Bhuvneshwar Kumar might make a comeback and Mohammed Shami after a break will play a few white ball games. Nattu (T Natarajan) and Saini will also come back in

the white ball teams. As far as Jassi is concerned, he can well get ready playing 14 to 16 high intensity IPL games for Mumbai Indians," the source said. Will Ashwin get a white ball look-in: Ravichandran Ashwin had a good IPL 2020 for Delhi Capitals and it will be interesting to see if the senior off-spinner has a Rahul Dravid-like comeback (2011 England series) in the white ball games against En-

gland. By 2011, Dravid had not played white ball cricket for close to three years but his stupendous Test-match performance led to a surprise recall in the ODI teams. The batting great, though, decided to retire just after that series as he didn't want any uncertainty about his place in the shorter formats. In the case of Ashwin, when he was dropped, Kudeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal became India's go-to bowlers in the shorter formats. Ashwin's current form and the England team, especially Ben Stokes' inability to read him, could excite the team management as well as the selection committee. His case will be strengthened if Ravindra Jadeja doesn't get fit in time. "Chahal is a certainty among slow bowlers across two formats but in case Jadeja is not fit in time for the white ball games, it won't be a bad idea to test Ashwin," the source said.

India jump to 2nd spot in WTC rankings after big win over England in 2nd Test

Chennai, Feb 16: The resounding 317-run win over England in the second Test here on Tuesday propelled India to second in the World Test Championship standings issued by the ICC. After the series-leveling win at Chepuak,

have already qualified for the WTC final to be held at the Lord's June. New Zealand have 70.0 PCT and 420 points. India, who had lost the first Test by 227 runs at the same venue, need to win the one more and at

result. Virat Kohli's men are currently playing in their sixth series of the WTC cycle, having won 10 matches, lost four and drawn one. Australia are at the third spot with 69.2 PCT and 332 points while England are fourth with



India have 69.7 percentage of points (PCT) and 460 aggregate points, behind New Zealand who

least drawn another to make it to the WTC final. They were fourth on the table before Tuesday's

67.0 PCT and 442 points. The third Test -- a day/night affair -- begins in Ahmedabad on February 24.

FC Goa captain Edu Bedia show-caused by AIFF for alleged biting incident

Margao, Feb 16: During FC Goa's clash against Chennaiyin FC, Edu Bedia allegedly bit Deepak Tangri while getting up after the opposition player fell on top of him while competing for the ball. FC Goa captain Edu Bedia was on Tuesday show-caused by the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) Disciplinary Committee for an allegedly violent foul on an opponent during his side's Indian Super

League match against Chennaiyin FC last week. The incident occurred during the injury time of the match on February 13 at Bambolim, which ended in a 3-3 draw. Video footage of the incident seemed to show Spaniard Bedia allegedly biting Deepak Tangri while getting up after the Chennaiyin FC player fell on top of him while competing for the ball. Even the Spanish media reported the inci-

dent. "Bedia was reported of 'unsporting behaviour towards CFC player Deepak Tangri.' The Committee has given the Spaniard time till 17th February to submit a reply," the ISL said in a statement. "The player, who was shown a yellow card for the offence is suspended for FC Goa's next assignment against Odisha FC on Wednesday, after picking his fourth caution of the season," the ISL said.



Serena Williams powers past Simona Halep to reach Australian Open semi-final

Mumbai, Feb 16: A second serve, a 130 kmph kicker to Serena Williams' forehand was returned cross court at blistering pace. Simona Halep, the World No 2, had barely finished her service motion before the ball raced past her. The point was the first on Halep's serve in the match. And in many ways, it set the tone for what was about to follow. This quarterfinal Australian Open tie was the first time the two former World No 1s met since Halep beat Williams for the 2019 Wimbledon title. The American has since continued her search for the elusive 24th Grand Slam title that will take her level with Margaret Court for the all-time record. On Tuesday, after an hour and 21 minutes, Williams took another step towards a major final after outlasting and out-defending Halep in a 6-3, 6-3



win. Jim Courier asked Williams after the match about that thunderous forehand winner on Halep's first serve of the match. "I just saw it, looked like a donut, I went for it," came her answer. It's a given that whenever the attack-minded 39-year-old takes to court, her groundstrokes will travel fast and heavy. But she turned things up a notch in the Rod Laver Arena, pulling the trigger early on her shots and giving Halep, a defensive baseliner, not much time to settle. Though she conceded

33 unforced errors, Williams' 24 winners (compared to Halep's nine) paid greater dividends, and on the crucial points. "This was the best match I've played in this tournament, for sure," Williams said. "Obviously, I had to, going up against the No 2 in the world. I knew that I had to do better, and that's what I did." The diminutive Romanian, who stands at 5-foot-6, can run all day and play shots with great depth. But her serve is not the quickest and most rewarding. Her second

serve in particular was easy pickings for Williams - starting from the first point on the two-time Grand Slam champion's serve. Overall, Halep won just nine of the 23 points on her second serve - a rate of 39 percent. The saying, 'attack is the best form of defence' has run true for a great part of her illustrious career. On Tuesday though, it seemed like she had added a dogged defensive quality to her arsenal. Halep started to push her opponent on either side of the court in ral-

lies, and Williams would chase it down and force the Romanian to play another shot, only to retrieve that as well. Halep eventually finished the match with just nine winners, a credit to Williams' tenacity. But her defensive skills were best displayed when Halep was serving at deuce, 3-3 in the second set. The American scrambled from left to right in a rally that lasted 20 shots (the longest in the match) until the 29-year-old played an unforced error into the net. It gave Williams her sixth break point opportunity in that game, which she would convert to take the lead. Halep's impressive fitness and playing style involves her running the opponent down and winning the long rallies. But in the rallies that lasted nine shots or more, Williams won 16 to Halep's seven.

Novak Djokovic edges out Alexander Zverev to reach Australian Open semi-final

Melbourne, Feb 16: Novak Djokovic, who will next face Aslan Karatsev in the last four, hit back strongly after losing the opening set but trailed in both the third and fourth sets before turning them around. Reigning champion Novak Djokovic overcame some dips in form to beat Alexander Zverev 6-7(6) 6-2 6-4 7-6(6) and book his place in the Australian Open semi-finals on Tuesday.

The Serbian world number one hit back strongly after losing a tight opening set on a tiebreak but trailed in both the third and fourth sets before turning them around. Germany's Zverev will rue allowing Djokovic back from 4-1 down in the third set and he was also up 3-0 in the fourth. Djokovic again wore tape on his abdominal area, a legacy of the injury picked up in his third-round win over

Taylor Fritz. But it did not appear to bother him as he reached his 39th Grand Slam semi-final, where he will face an unlikely opponent in Russian qualifier Aslan Karatsev. The 23-year-old Zverev began in confident fashion and secured the first break of the match but failed to convert a set point on Djokovic's serve when leading 5-3. He wavered on his own serve at 5-4 though, and Djokovic



took the set into a tiebreak, only for some uncharacteristic errors to allow Zverev to sneak a 59-minute set. Djokovic

needed only 29 minutes to win the second set but his level dropped at the start of the third, and he destroyed a racket in an-

ger as he slipped 4-1 behind. Zverev was 0-30 ahead on Djokovic's serve in the next game but Djokovic found another gear, winning 20 of the next 24 points to move one set from victory. Another momentum shift saw Zverev take a 3-0 lead in the fourth set and have three points to move 4-0 ahead, but Djokovic dug in to haul himself back into contention. Zverev threatened to

take the match into a decider but Djokovic saved a set point at 5-6 with an ace and a powerful first serve brought up match point in the day's second tiebreak. Djokovic netted a backhand but forced a volley error from Zverev to earn another chance, this time on his own serve, and he wrapped up the match with his 23rd ace. Qualifier Aslan Karatsev continued his stunning run

into the Australian Open semi-finals on Tuesday, beating an ailing Grigor Dimitrov 2-6 6-4 6-1 6-2 to become the first man in the open era to reach the last four in his maiden Grand Slam. The world number 114 was also only the fifth qualifier to reach the last four of a men's major in the open era and the lowest-ranked player to reach a Grand Slam semi-final for two decades.

Vedanta Jharsuguda supports District Health Administration in Filariasis Elimination Awareness campaign



(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 16: Vedanta, India's largest producer of aluminium and value-added products, extended its support to the District Health Administration (DHA) in Lymphatic Filariasis Elimination Awareness campaign at Jharsuguda. The company conducted a rathayatra for Lymphatic Filariasis Elimination Awareness from 9th - 13th February 2021 covering 80 villages of the district which was flagged off by Dr. Lal Mohan Routray, Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO), in the presence of Dr. DM Patel, Additional District Medical (ADM) and Public Health Officer

(PHO), and Mr. Bulunath Sahu, District Programme Manager (DPM), National Health Mission (NHM) at District Health Headquarter, Jharsuguda. Besides that, information materials were distributed and visual aids were put up at prominent locations across the district for greater awareness and information retention among the community. The company also ensured the administration of drugs to employees and families by implementing DHA's Mass Drug Administration (MDA) programme at its township. Referring to the company's community development endeavours, Mr. CN

Singh, CEO - Vedanta Ltd., Jharsuguda, said, "As India's largest aluminium producer, Vedanta is not only committed to the nation's economic prosperity but also dedicated to the socio-economic development of the communities around its operations. We are conscious of our social responsibilities and strive to fulfil them through structured interventions in various public domains with Health & Sanitation being the pivotal dimension among our social outreach efforts. From the Mobile Health Unit, which provides doorstep primary healthcare services across the Jharsuguda district, to public

awareness campaigns on various diseases, we have undertaken several initiatives under it." Dr. Lal Mohan Routray, Chief District Medical Officer for Jharsuguda, appreciated the company's support in carrying out the awareness drive saying, "Rathayatra for Lymphatic Filariasis Elimination Awareness was a commendable effort by Vedanta's CSR team as it ensured community's awareness of the disease and successful implementation of the programme. We appreciate and welcome more such participation by the company in Jharsuguda's welfare." Vedanta's social interventions in the domains of sustainable livelihood, women empowerment, quality education, health, water and sanitation, bio-investment and community infrastructure reach out to a total of 72 villages in Jharsuguda and nearby areas, benefiting nearly 80,000 people in a year. It empowers more than 4000 women from over 330 SHGs,

provides doorstep healthcare services to about 32,000 people annually, gives educational support to more than 6400 students, has planted more than 1.48 lakh trees in partnership with the community, and built 570 plus infrastructural projects at community level. Vedanta is India's largest producer of the green metal, aluminium, operating a world-class 1.6 MTPA aluminium smelter and 3615 MW thermal power generation facility in Jharsuguda, Odisha. The only Indian smelter in the global '1 Million Tonne' production and export club, Vedanta Jharsuguda is a leader in value-added aluminium products that find critical applications across core industries. With one of the largest technically qualified and diverse workforces in the country, the company is working towards a sustainable and greener future for all by spurring emerging applications of aluminium, the 'Metal of the Future'.

India is building a global model for energy justice: Dharmendra Pradhan

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 16: "India is building a global model of energy justice and is preparing its own policy and path for green energy conversion," he said at the 11th World Petroleum Congress and World Future Fuel Conference 2021 via video conference on Tuesday. Mr Pradhan said India's energy demand would increase in the future and be green in this regard. The Government of India has taken a number of steps to address energy shortages and reduce pollution. According to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), OPEC and British Petroleum, the world's total primary energy demand is expected to grow by less than 1 percent annually by 2020. India's energy demand, on the

other hand, is projected to grow by 3 percent annually by 2040. It is up to the Modi government to provide clean fuel to all households in the country to end energy justice. Debt policy has become a key. The LPG landscape in the country has completely changed in the last four years. In 2017,

under the Ujjala scheme. The Ujjala Yojana has transformed and empowered women as well as social and economic. Similarly, the announcement of the addition of one crore more beneficiaries to the Ujjala scheme in the current general budget will help achieve coverage at the national level. To



the number of LPG users was 18.5 crore, but by 2021, it has increased to 28 crore. LPG coverage is 56 in very few years. Increased from 7.5 percent to 7.5 percent. As per the record, 4 crore BPL families have been provided gas

improve the production of clean fuels such as BS-4. State-owned oil companies have invested Rs 37,000 crore. He also said that \$ 40 billion is being spent on India's gas-based economy and strengthening its gas infrastructure.

The Congress impact of the Odisha shutdown has been seen in Kendrapara

(A.O. Bureau) Kendrapara, Feb 16: The call for a shutdown in Odisha at Monday in protest of the hike in oil prices across Odisha at the behest of the state Congress committee has seen the impact of the shutdown in Kendrapara district. With Congress workers blocking major roads in Kendrapara in the

morning. All government and private offices, petrol pumps were rallied by workers and party leaders, and the shutdown in Kendrapara in the morning saw the effects of the shutdown. All shops, markets and vehicles were closed. In front of District Collector Office, Congress leaders protested by burning the coffin of Narendra

Modi. This program attend Former minister Ganeswar Behera, senior congress leader Fakir Charan Khatua, Advocate Haladhar Sethi, Bidu Bhusan Mohapatra, Sarat Kumar Behura, Muktar Khan, Pitabas Behera, Niranjan Parida, Prabhat Kumar Udhan Singh were present and protested.



Valedictory Function of "Oil and Gas Conservation Awareness Drive - Saksham'21 (Sanrakshan Kshamata Mahotsav 2021)

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Feb 16: SAKSHAM is a significant annual event which is organized jointly by Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) and Oil Industry under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Govt. of India and guidelines of PCRA with sole purpose of bringing awareness among the people on need of Oil & Gas conservation and means to do it. During this period various activities are carried out in sectors like Transport, Industrial, Agriculture and Household to spread the message on Fuel Conservation. The valedictory function of Saksham-21 was conducted at Indian Oil Bhavan, Odisha State Office, Bhubaneswar and the function was graced by State Level Co-ordinator, Shri

Subhajit Ghosh, Chief General Manager & State Head, Indian Oil Corporation Limited. In his keynote address, he has stressed upon the need to conserve petroleum products which not only saves money, but also the Environment. He stressed upon need of conservation of oil and gas as our country is not self dependent in case of petroleum products. So, Oil Industries along with PCRA should organize such programme in a bigger way for the noble cause to create awareness among all sectors of people about the importance of Oil and Gas conservation. In his welcome address, he presented a capsule on programmes conducted during one month commenced from 16th January'2021 to 15th February'2021. During last one month, the Oil



& Gas industries collectively conducted many mass awareness campaigns like training programme for drivers, quiz, debate and painting competitions among school children across the state, conservation seminars in industries, auto emission check campaigns, health check up camp for truck drivers etc. Apart from these awareness programmes, Oil Industries organized

Cyclothons on 31st Jan 2021 at 13 districts of Odisha. Apart from that CNG Auto & Car Rally, PUC check-up, Mega Driver Training workshop were also organized jointly with PCRA and Oil & Gas Industries to sensitize the masses about the conservation and efficient use of petroleum products towards achieving twin objectives of better health & environment and securing availability of

Oil & Gas for future generations as well. Other dignitaries who were on the dias were Mr. Dinabandhu Soren, CGM - GAIL, Odisha, Shri Beerum Suresh, State Head (LPG) and Territory Manager, BPCL, Shri Abhayankar Das DGM Retail HPCL, Shri A.D. Jamjute GM (LS) IOCL and Sri Pradeep Kumar Panda, Add. Director, PCRA. Sri Amar Kumar Balabantray Chief Manager (TS) Indian Oil had taken initiative and organized the whole event on behalf of Oil Industry to make the event successful. The valedictory function of Saksham 2021 is concluded with vote of thanks by Sri Pradeep Kumar Panda, Add. Director, PCRA. The Theme of Saksham 2021 is "Green & Clean Energy".

10 years passed the construction of the new Anganwadi has not been completed

(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Feb 16: The state government is providing a lot of schemes and financial assistance to connect the tribal backward districts like Malkangiri to the mainstream. A naked example of this

has been found in Tegdapalli village under Materu gram panchayat under Padia block of Malkangiri district. There are about a hundred families living in the village. The work has not been completed. The construction



work of the Anganwadi has been carried out by a contractor

named Singh Babu from the Padia area, while the villagers revealed

that the roof was twice demolished. Although the field tried to contact the BDO for more than a week, no response was received from the BDO and Mr They have appealed to the government to present the case to the media.

'Everyone would like if prices do not rise': Nitish Kumar on rising fuel prices

New Delhi, Feb 16: Talking about the rising fuel prices across the country, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Tuesday said that even though everyone would like if the prices do not rise, but for now the prices are rising. "Everyone would like if the prices do not rise but right now the prices are on a rise. Everybody can see that," he was quoted as saying by ANI. Responding to journal-



ists in a video, the Bihar Chief Minister can be heard saying that it is his choice to use an electric vehicle as it does not

have a harmful impact on the environment. "However, petrol and diesel vehicles do have some kind of an impact," he added.