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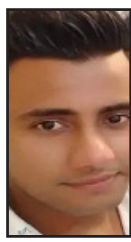
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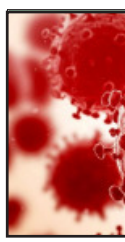
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MONDAY 22 FEB 2021



**Rinku Sharma Murder Case : 4 More Arrested By Delhi Police**

2



**New COVID Strains: 'Schools To Be Shut In Odisha If Emergency Arises'**

3



**Mahesh Manjrekar Shares His Take on OTT Censorship**

6



**Analysis: Already a star, on court and off, Osaka eyes more**

7

PM Modi will visit Assam, Bengal on today to launch several projects



New Delhi, Feb 21: The PMO said he will dedicate to the nation important projects of the oil and gas sector in an event organised at Silapathar in Assam, and also inaugurate and lay the foundation stones of engineering colleges during the event. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit the poll-bound states of Assam and West Bengal on Monday to launch and lay the foundation stones of several projects. Later in the day, he will inaugurate several railway projects at Hooghly in West Bengal. In Assam, the PMO said, Modi will inaugurate the INDMAX unit at Indian Oil's Bongaigaon refinery, Oil India Limited's secondary tank farm at Dibrugarh and a gas compressor station at Hebeda village in Tinsukia. He will also inaugurate the Dhemaji Engineering College and lay the foundation stone for Sualkuchi Engineering College. These projects will usher in an era of energy security

and prosperity, and open bright avenues of opportunity for local youth, the PMO said, asserting that they are in line with Modi's vision of "Purvodaya" to drive eastern India's socio-economic growth. The INDMAX unit at Bongaigaon leverages the technology developed indigenously to produce a higher LPG and high-octane gasoline yield from heavy feedstocks. The unit will increase the refinery's crude processing capacity from 2.35 MMTPA (million metric tonnes per annum) to 2.7 MMTPA. Its commissioning will also significantly enhance LPG production from 50 TMT (thousand metric tonnes) to 257 TMT and motor spirit (Petrol) production from 210 TMT to 533 TMT. In Bengal, the prime minister will inaugurate the extension of the metro railway from Noapara to Dakshineswar, and flag off the first service on this stretch. The PMO said this 4.1-km extension

has been constructed at a cost of ₹464 crore and is fully funded by the central government. This extension will ease up access to the two world famous Kali temples at Kalighat and Dakshineswar for lakhs of tourists and devotees, it noted. Modi will also inaugurate a third line between Kalaikunda and Jhargram over a stretch of 30 km of the 132-km-long Kharagpur-Adityapur third line project of south eastern railway, which was sanctioned with an estimated cost of 1,312 crore. The four stations between Kalaikunda and Jhargram have been redeveloped by constructing four new station buildings, six new foot over bridges and eleven new platforms, along with renovation of the existing infrastructure, the PMO said. This will help ensure seamless movement of passenger and freight trains on Howrah-Mumbai trunk route, it added.

Odisha Budget 2021-22: What FM Pujari Will Offer Today!

Bhubaneswar, Feb 21: With the Economic Survey 2020-21 having virtually sounded the decade-worst contraction bugle in Odisha economy on Saturday, all riveting attention is on the State Finance Minister Niranjana Pujari who will be tabling his third, but first pandemic, budget in the State Assembly on Monday. The State budget is coming at a time when the 'once a lifetime' pandemic had dealt a lethal blow to the job creation in the State. The intensity of distress in the employment scenario has been to the fore recently when the CMIE's (Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy) unemployment report revealed how the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) in Odisha had witnessed a

sharp dip last year. As per the report, the LFPR in March (before lockdown) was 41 per cent but by the end of October, the number tumbled down to around 39 per cent. In contrast, the national average was measured higher at around 42 per cent. "An over 2 per cent dip in LFPR is not good. There may be two reasons behind the swift fall. A dip could happen if large-scale job shedding has taken place in an economy or, it could be so that very few go for job search owing to high despondency in the employment sector in the State," explained Niraj Kumar, former Rural Development Professor, XIMB. In order to pump-prime the State economy, it seems the mantra of FM Pujari is higher spending.

The budget size has been hiked by around Rs 20,000 crore from Rs 1.5 lakh crore in 2020-21. The



Budget 2021-22 is likely to give focus on the following sectors. As per highly placed sources, to spur economic growth and jobs, the Budget 2021-22 will hike the capital expenditure to a massive around Rs 40,000 crore. The all-important Capital Outlay will touch around Rs 29,000 crore.

Water Supply, Housing and Urban Development will see the highest hike in Capital Outlay (a hike of

around Rs 2.3k crore). The allocation for water supply and sanitation may see around a 40 per cent hike in 2021-22. Health and family welfare allocation may be increased by around 19 per cent to cross Rs 9k crore. Allocation for Agriculture and Allied services may cross Rs 13k

crore (up by 10 per cent). The Education sector is likely to see an allocation of around Rs 23k crore (up over 9%). The budgetary allocation for the welfare of ST/SC/OBC will be up by around 5 per cent to touch Rs 3.8k crore. Allocation for police will cross Rs 4.1k crore. No significant increase in outlay for Rural Development. The outlay for Irrigation and Flood control will be around Rs 10.2k crore. As per experts, in the backdrop of the contraction in the State economy and its consequent gloomy shadow on the job creation in Odisha, the budget needs to spend higher on economic services sectors like agriculture, irrigation, urban and rural development, housing, energy, and construction of roads and bridges.

Weather Alert: Minimum Temperature To Dip By 2 Degree Celsius In Odisha



Bhubaneswar, Feb 21: After witnessing fluctuations in weather conditions in the past one week, the minimum temperature (night temperature) across Odisha is likely to witness a further drop, predicted India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday. Though

weather is most likely to remain dry, the minimum temperature across the State is likely to fall by 2 degree Celsius for the next 48 hours. "Minimum temperature (Night temperature) very likely to fall by about 20 C at many places over the districts of Odisha during

next 2 days and no large change thereafter," read an IMD release. As per IMD, the highest maximum temperature of 33 degree Celsius was recorded at Sundergarh and the lowest minimum temperature of 11 degree Celsius was recorded at Phulbani in the past 24 hours.

Similarly, there has been an appreciable fall in the minimum temperature at a few places over the districts of Coastal Odisha and at one or two places over the districts of interior Odisha. "The trough in low levels easterlies over west-central Bay of Bengal now lies over southwest & adjoining west-central Bay of Bengal and runs from south Sri Lanka coast to north Andhra Pradesh coast across north Tamil Nadu coast at 1.5 km above mean sea level," said IMD. Weather forecast and warning for districts of Odisha for next two days: Day 1 (Valid from 1330 hrs IST of

21.02.2021 up to 0830 hrs IST of 22.02.2021): Shallow to moderate fog very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Khurda, Mayurbhanj, Angul, Boudh, Kandhamal, Koraput and Malkangiri. Day 2 (Valid from 1330 hrs IST of 22.02.2021 up to 0830 hrs IST of 23.02.2021): Shallow to moderate fog very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Kandhamal, Nayagarh, Khordha and Mayurbhanj.

COVID-19 Spike: Odisha Govt Issues Fresh Guidelines To Avoid Possible Resurgence

Bhubaneswar, Feb 21: In the wake of fresh spike in number of COVID-19 infection in some States, Odisha Government today issued fresh guidelines to avoid possible resurgence of Coronavirus in the State. Even as the Government has relaxed most of restrictions and allowed educational and training institutions to function with adherence to COVID-19 guidelines, people are found disobeying the safety protocols to contain spread of the deadly virus. "It is observed that people at many places are showing complacency in observing the basic safety protocols such

as mandatory wearing of mask or other face covering while in public place, frequent hand-washing or use of hand sanitizer, maintaining minimum one meter physical distance, avoiding congregation, etc," stated a release by the State Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) today. In view of detection of some cases in Maharashtra and some other States with new variants of COVID-19, SRC Pradeep Jena instructed the district collectors, municipal commissioners and Superintendents of Police (SPs) to ensure strict enforcement of the COVID-19 safety protocols in all public places

including workplaces to avoid any chance of resurgence of the dangerous disease in Odisha. He issued a 10-point guidelines for the district authorities, civic bodies and SPs to be followed at all levels. Here're the guidelines by the SRC for strict implementation of COVID-19 safety protocols in the State: 1. District and Police Authorities shall check and ensure strict observance of COVID-19 safety protocols such as mandatory wearing of mask, maintaining physical distancing in all public places including workplaces and educational institutions. 2.



Public awareness through loudspeaker announcements is to be made frequently in all market places, haat and other places. 3. Concerned authorities of Government and private offices/ institutions including educational institutions shall be responsible for due compliance of the COVID-19 safety protocols in their re-

spective establishments. 4. Large congregations must be avoided and wherever permission has been granted for marriages, other social/ religious functions, sports, entertainment/ academic/ cultural/ any other gathering/ congregations, compliance of the COVID-19 safety protocols and crowd size in such gather-

ings shall be strictly monitored. Under no circumstances, persons more than the number permitted shall be entertained in all such gatherings. 5. Adequate and strict sanitation measures are to be maintained in schools, colleges, other educational institutions and Anganwadi Centres. The teachers and concerned authorities shall ensure observance of "COVID-19 safety protocols such as mandatory wearing of mask, maintaining physical distancing and provision of thermal scanning & hand wash or use of sanitizer by the students, teachers, staff and others. 6. Any person

found with COVID-19 symptoms must be immediately reported to the nearest health institution and necessary further action be taken as per advice of the health authorities. 7. Nothing other than the curricular activities shall be allowed in educational institutions. 8. Hotels, restaurants, dhabas and other places of public eating must be closely monitored by the police authorities so as to ensure strict compliance of physical distancing norms and other safety protocols. 9. Senior officers of the district administration will visit different places/institutions to ascertain and ensure COVID-

19 safety protocol compliance. Persons violating the COVID-19 Guidelines/ Protocols may be penalised under the relevant provisions of law. 10. Strong penal action shall be taken against the persons violating the COVID-19 Guidelines/ safety protocols. Shops and other commercial establishments found violating such norms may be sealed and action as per law be taken against such violators. The district authorities have been asked to submit a weekly report on enforcement measures to the SRC every Monday.



## 'Have fought guns, not afraid of fighting rats': Mamata after CBI notice to Abhishek's wife

Kolkata, Feb 21: "As long as there is life in me, I will not be afraid of any intimidation," Mamata Banerjee said at a programme in Kolkata on the International Mother Language Day. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said Sunday that she is not scared of anyone and cannot be intimidated by 'jail or something else'. Throwing a challenge without taking any names, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo said that they have not

learnt to lose. "Don't try to intimidate us with jail, we have fought against guns and are not afraid of fighting against rats," she said in a veiled reference to the BJP, with which her party has locked horns ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections in the state. "As long as there is life in me, I will not be afraid of any intimidation," Banerjee said at a programme in Kolkata on the International Mother Language Day. The CM's chal-



lenge comes after the CBI served a notice in the name of her nephew TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee's wife and sister-in-law Sunday in a coal pilferage case. "Let there be challenge in 2021,

let us see whose strength is more; there will be only one game in '21. I will be the goalkeeper in that match and want to see who wins and who loses," Banerjee said. "We have not learnt to

lose and they won't be able to defeat us," Banerjee said. In response to the CBI summons issued to his wife and sister-in-law, Abhishek too said they are not the ones to be cowed down (by any threats). "At 2 pm today, the CBI served a notice in the name of my wife. We have full faith in the law of the land. However, if they think they can use these ploys to intimidate us, they are mistaken. We are not the ones who would ever be cowed down," he tweeted.

## Rinku Sharma Murder Case : 4 More Arrested By Delhi Police

New Delhi, Feb 21: Delhi Police's Crime Branch has arrested 4 more accused in the case of 25-year-old Rinku Sharma Murdered in Mangolpuri. According to Crime Branch officials, in the CCTV footage (Cctv Footage) of the attack on Rinku Sharma, these four accused are seen to be attacking him. Let us tell you that Rinku Sharma was killed by entering the house in the Mangolpuri area of Delhi a few days ago. Police have arrested 5 accused in this murder case. The crime branch is investigating the case. The



crime branch of Delhi Police has already arrested 5 people in this case. Today the number has increased to 9 with the arrest of 4 more. Delhi Police's Crime Branch arrested Deen Mohammed (40), Dilshan (22), Fayaz (21), and Faizan (21 years)

among the four accused arrested in the Rinku Sharma murder case. Crime Branch officials say that they have been arrested on the basis of video clips found in the Rinku Sharma case. In the video, these four are seen attacking Rinku Sharma.

## Adar Poonawalla Stresses On The Fact That India's Huge Vaccine Need To Be Prioritized

New Delhi, Feb 21: In a major announcement, the Serum Institute of India (SII) has asked the vaccine maker to prioritize India's vaccine needs and balance it out with the supplies to the rest of the world who are procuring the AstraZeneca vaccine doses from India. SII CEO Adar Poonawalla has said, "Serum Institute of India has been directed to prioritize the huge needs of India and along with that balance the



needs of the rest of the world." Poonawalla has asked countries and

governments to "be patient" while waiting for the supplies of the vaccine.

## All gatherings banned in Maharashtra from Monday due to COVID-19 spike: CM Uddhav

Mumbai, Feb 21: With COVID-19 cases on the rise, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has said all political, religious and social gatherings will be prohibited in Maharashtra from Monday. The decision comes at a time when Maharashtra is once again witnessing a spike in the number of COVID-19 cases. Six districts — Ratnagiri, Beed, Sindhudurg, Raigad, Satara and Amravati — have witnessed a noticeable rise in average daily deaths. For the past week, more than 200 COVID-19 cases are

being reported daily in the state. In a televised address, Thackeray said that political agitations will not be allowed for the next few days as they attract crowds. "The pandemic is raising its head in the state, but whether it is another wave will be known in eight to 15 days," he said. "Lockdown may not be the solution to COVID-19, but it is the only option to break the cycle of the virus," he added. The chief minister said that COVID-appropriate behaviour is a must and those violating the rules will be punished. According to him, a face mask is



the only "shield" in the war against coronavirus. "Wear mask, maintain discipline and observe social distancing to avoid a lockdown," Thackeray said. Due to the spike in the number of cases, Amravati district in Maharashtra's Vidarbha region will be placed under a week-long lockdown from 8 pm on

February 22, minister Yashomati Thakur said on Sunday. The lockdown will be in force till 8 am on March 1, Thakur added. Apart from the week-long lockdown in Amravati, certain restrictions will be in place in four other districts of Amravati division — Akola, Washim, Buldhana and Yavatmal

— with a view to curb the spread of the virus, an official said. Health experts and government officials are putting the onus for the surge on people not wearing face masks and violating social distancing norms. In Pune, the district administration has decided to enforce certain curbs, including restriction on movement of people from 11 pm to 6 am for non-essential activities. Schools and colleges have been closed till February 28, while hotels and restaurants will have to shut their establishments by 11 pm every day.

## Pakistan unlikely to exit 'grey list' as FATF meets to decide its fate: Report



Islamabad, Feb 21: The Paris-based Financial Action Task Force had placed Pakistan on the grey list in June 2018 and asked Islamabad to implement a plan of action to curb money laundering and terror financing by the end of 2019 but the deadline was extended later on due to Covid-19 pandemic. Pakistan is unlikely to exit the 'grey list' of the FATF as some European countries have taken the stand that Islamabad has not fully implemented all the points of a plan of action set by it, a media report said on Sunday, on the eve of the plenary meeting of the global watchdog for money laundering and terror financing. The Paris-based Financial Action Task Force had placed Pakistan on the grey list in June 2018 and asked

Islamabad to implement a plan of action to curb money laundering and terror financing by the end of 2019 but the deadline was extended later on due to Covid-19 pandemic. The virtual FATF plenary will be held in Paris from February 22 to 25 to consider cases of various countries on the grey list, including Pakistan, and a decision will be made at the conclusion of the meetings, Dawn newspaper reported. In the last plenary held in October 2020, the FATF concluded that Pakistan will continue in its "grey list" till February 2021 as it has failed to fulfil six out of 27 obligations of the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog that include failure to take action against two of India's most wanted terrorists

— Jaish-e Mohammad chief Maulana Masood Azhar and Jamaat-ud-Dawah head Hafiz Saeed. Azhar and Saeed are most wanted terrorists in India for their involvement in numerous terrorist acts, including 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks and bombing of a CRPF bus at Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir last year. An official source close to these developments told the paper on Saturday that Pakistan had complied with the six recommendations and also submitted details to the FATF secretariat. The members would now evaluate Pakistan's responses during the meeting, the source said, adding that the decision would be taken after a consensus among the members. The paper, quoting a journalist covering the

FATF said that some European countries, especially the host France, had recommended to the FATF to continue to keep Pakistan on the grey list and had taken the position that not all points had been fully implemented by Islamabad. Other European countries are also supporting France, he said. France was not happy with the recent response of Islamabad on the cartoon issue, he said. Pakistan has not even posted a regular ambassador in Paris, he said, adding that diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries were not up to the mark. The US has also expressed concern over the acquittal of the accused in American journalist Daniel Pearl's kidnapping and murder case. It is feared that the US may also lobby for continuation of Islamabad on the grey list at least until June this year. Pakistan's Supreme Court last month ordered release of British-born al-Qaeda terrorist Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh and his three aides in the 2002 Pearl murder case, a judgement denounced by the American journalist's family as "a complete travesty of justice." An official, who is not willing to be quoted, told the paper that Pakistan

had submitted a compliance report to the FATF. "We can't say what will be their response to it; let's wait for the day," he said. The official said Pakistan had already done major legislation regarding punishment of terror financing, which was around one year in the old legislation. In October 2020, Minister for Industries and Production Hammad Azhar, who is the government's point man on the FATF, announced that Pakistan had made progress across all action plan items and had now largely addressed 21 of the 27 action items. When the minister was approached for comments on the implementation status of the remaining six recommendations, he said he would make no comment until the plenary was over. "There is a strict confidentiality rule," he said. With Pakistan's continuation in the 'grey' list, it is increasingly becoming difficult for Islamabad to get financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the European Union, thus further enhancing problems for the debt-ridden nation which is in a precarious financial situation.

## One more body recovered from tunnel at flood-ravaged NTPC's Tapovan-Vishnugad project site

Tapovan, Feb 21: One more body was recovered from a tunnel at the NTPC's flood-ravaged Tapovan-Vishnugad project site on Sunday, taking the toll in the disaster that struck Chamoli district a fortnight ago to 68. The body recovered from the "intake adit" tunnel was identified as that of 27-year-old Sunil Bakhla from Lohardaga district in Jharkhand, official sources said. It takes the number of bodies pulled out of this tunnel so far to 14. There is another tunnel in which around 35 people are suspected to have been trapped, but rescuers have not been able to reach it till now, said officials, adding



the route to the second tunnel goes via this "intake adit" tunnel. Five bodies were recovered from the Tapovan barrage site on Saturday. They were identified as those of Amrit Kumar and Jyotish Wasla of Jharkhand, Munna Kumar Singh of Bihar, Jalal of Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh and Jivan Singh of Kalsi in Dehradun district. Chamoli District Magistrate Swati S

Bhadoria on Sunday pressed into service additional excavators at the Tapovan barrage site to speed up search operations. The toll in the calamity that hit the Rishiganga valley on February 7 has now risen to 68 while 136 people are still missing. The NTPC's Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project had been extensively damaged in the flash flood while the Rishiganga hydel project was totally destroyed.

## 4,070 new Covid-19 cases, 15 deaths recorded in Kerala

New Delhi, Feb 21: At 552, Kozhikode reported the highest number of cases, followed by Ernakulam at 514 and Kottayam at 440. As many as 29 health workers tested positive for the virus on Sunday. Kerala, one of the states where the coronavirus is resurging, recorded 4,070 new cases of the infection and 15 deaths on Sunday, according to news agency ANI. The total number of active cases in the state



stood at 58,313 while recoveries reached 9,71,975. At 552, Kozhikode reported the highest number of cases, followed by Ernakulam at 514 and Kottayam at 440. As

many as 29 health workers tested positive for the virus on Sunday, where the cases are on the rise, it zeroed in on the areas which need to exercise special caution.



## Samarpan inaugurated it's annual ceremony at Gopabandhu ayurvedic Hospital conference hall

(A.O. Bureau)  
Puri, Feb 21: The Annual ceremony of Samarpan Puri man can become from God is serve the human being the leading organization of odisha Samarpan inaugurated it's annual ceremony at G o p a b a n d h u ayurvedic Hospital conference hall discuss the topic of Seva re samarpan the local MLA Mr Jayanta ku Sarangi praised the activities of the institution regarding blood donation , plan-



tation ,tabaco free odisha and oxygen service to the needy people the chairman of Samarpan Dr Abhimanu bhuyan presided of the first session the secy Jayanti Mrs jayanti

Mohapatra spoke of annual report of the organization the chief guest Padma B i b h u s h a n Sudarshan Sahu encouraged the young mass to serve with dedication other guest

were Dr Manoj ku Sahu , Dr Dipankar Das Gupta, Dr Arnav Pattanaik , Social worker Madhu Sudhar Das,Dr K V Mohapatra ,Dr Deva Prasad Dash ,Join as guest Siba narayan

Senapati , Krishna ch Patra Bibhu Dutta Subudhi , Rasmi Ranjan Das , Journalist Madhusudan Mishra ,Badri Mishra Kedar Mohapatra , Soumya Ranjan Patra were on The dias and Badri Mishra , Niranjan Mishra ,and others were felicitated Shyama prakash Senapati,Akhya Rout , arranged the meeting cashier Govinda Patra gave the vote of thanks in between Mahamad wazir ,of Lions Club Donated an oxygen cylinder.

## Odisha STF Seizes Brown Sugar From Cuttack Hotel, Two Arrested

(A.O. Bureau)  
Cuttack, Feb 21: A team of Special Task Force (STF) of Crime Branch arrested a hotel owner and its employee in Ankula near Athgarh on old Cuttack-Sambalpur road after seizing 164 grams of brown sugar from their possession. The approximate market value of the contraband recovered is estimated to be over Rs 7 Lakh. It is worthwhile to mention here that, the Odisha Police has intensified its drive to crackdown against narcotics trade in the State. The Excise de-



partment had arrested a woman during raid at one of the hideouts of a notorious smuggler in Palasuni area on February 17, 2021 and seized Brown Sugar weighing 185 Grams from her. Similarly, two drug peddlers were arrested at Panikoili in Jajpur on

February 15, 2021 after 10 gram of brown sugar worth Rs 1 Lakh was seized from their possession. During interrogation, the two drug peddlers admitted that they procured the brown sugar from Balasore and planned to sell it in Jajpur.

## After Kotia, Andhra Now Constructs Road In Rayagada

(A.O. Bureau)  
Bhubaneswar, Feb 21: Even though the border dispute in Kotia of Koraput district is largely seen as a product of administrative negligence, the Odisha government does not seem to have learnt from its mistakes. The State government is yet to reach out to the bordering villages and address issues of the locals prompting Andhra Pradesh to take more villages under its administrative control. According to sources, after Koraput and Gajapati, Andhra is now trying to take some bordering vil-

education, health, telecommunication and other basic amenities. "There is scarcity of drinking water in our village. During rainy season, we drink rain water by trekking more than one kilometre. We do not have access to safe drinking water," said Rani Kalaka, a woman of Palamtulsi. Unlike Palamtulsi residents, those living on Andhra side are way ahead. They have better amenities and avail government benefits like ration, pension much more than the residents of Odisha villages. The huge disparities in the govern-

ment has reportedly started constructing road and bridges in the border areas to attract the residents. The Andhra government put up poles in order to construct road at Palamtulsi village connecting it with two of its villages- Kitilang and Jiranga. However, the move faced stiff resistance from residents of Palamtulsi. While they vowed not to let Andhra enter the Odisha territory, the State government seems least bothered and has not reached out to address various issues of the residents.



lages of Rayagada district under its administrative control. The neighbouring state is allegedly trying to lure the residents of Palamtulsi village of Rayagada through various means. Though summer is yet to come, the residents of Palamtulsi have already started reeling under acute shortage of drinking water. Carrying pots on their heads, the women of the village are forced to walk miles to fetch water. Not only drinking water, the residents are reportedly deprived of road communication,

ment benefits have reportedly lead many villagers to move to other side of border and adopt Andhra citizenship. "Residents in border area of Odisha do not get basic facilities from the government. The administration turns blind eyes on the problems of the residents. Therefore, I moved to Andhra Pradesh to get better facilities," said Siri Puala who is now settled in Andhra side of the border. Taking advantage of the administrative apathy in the bordering villages of Odisha, the Andhra

Raju Pual of Palamtulsi village said, "The officials of Andhra government had demarcated the area and erected poles for road construction. However, we have decided not to let Andhra enter our territory and removed the poles." Speaking on the issue, Rayagada sub-collector Pratap Chandra Pradhan said, "We have advised the villagers not to panic. We are vigilant on the issue and if the villagers inform us about such activities, we will take action immediately and stop such works."

## New COVID Strains: 'Schools To Be Shut In Odisha If Emergency Arises'

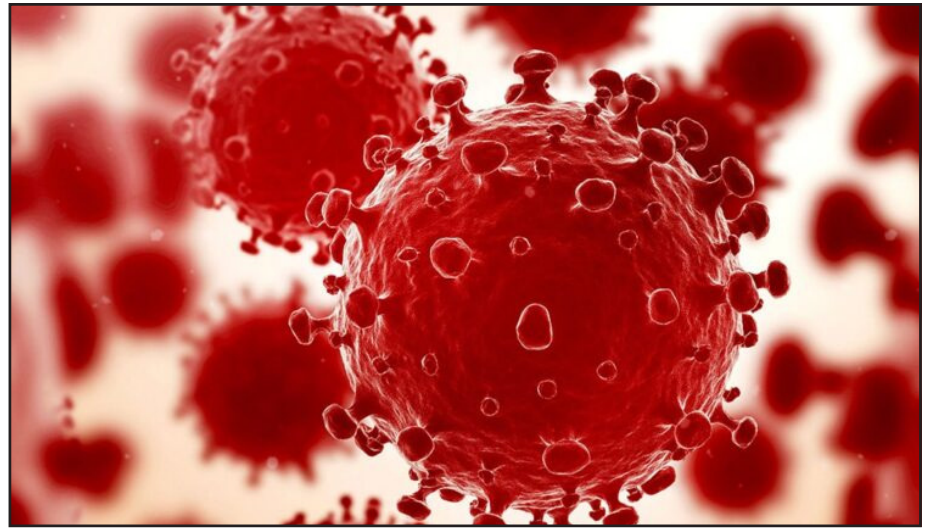
(A.O. Bureau)  
Bhubaneswar, Feb 21: As the new strains of COVID found in India are said to be more infectious, the schools are likely to be shut again with possible resurgence of Coronavirus in the State. Speaking to media, the State School & Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash hinted it today. He said that the State has achieved success in battle against COVID-19. Though, there is no such threat in Odisha, the possible resurgence of COVID could not be taken casually. "As the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik appealed to the State people yesterday to strictly follow

COVID guidelines, we need to be extra careful. Currently, the schools are operating as per the SOP. The department is reviewing the situation. We will think about closing the schools again if lockdown situation arises in near future," Dash told media. Yesterday, Ganjam district administration had issued fresh guidelines in the wake of sudden spike in COVID cases in Maharashtra and some other States in recent past. Amid massive COVID vaccination drive in the country, new strains of Coronavirus emerged posing another challenge to health authorities to deal with the pandemic. Dr.

Randeep Guleria, Director of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences Delhi, on Saturday had said that the new strain of Coronavirus in Maharashtra is highly

people who have developed antibodies to the virus," he told NDTV. He said that herd immunity for Coronavirus is a "myth" in India because at least 80 per

ected. It is pertinent to mention here that 240 new strains of Coronavirus have surfaced across India. Besides Maharashtra, the spike in numbers is found in four more



transmissible and dangerous. "The new variant can even cause re-infections in

cent people need to have antibodies for the whole of the population to be pro-

states — Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Punjab.

## Police Shuts Down Jatra Show Running Without Permission

(A.O. Bureau)  
Khordha, Feb 21: Concerned over the surge of COVID-19 cases in other States, the district administration of Khordha on Saturday night closed down a jatra party for staging shows without permission at Begunia. As per reports, a jatra party named Ranga Mahal was performing at Begunia when the police, after getting a complaint, played spoilsport and shut it down. Sources said, the jatra party arrived at Begunia on February 19, 2021 and staged its first show on the same night. However, following a fresh order by the State government to enforce strict imple-



mentation of COVID guidelines, a team led by the Tehsildar of Begunia and accompanied by the police shut it down on the second day, February 20, 2021. It was also found that the jatra party was performing without a permission from the administration. Speaking about the

clamp down, District Collector of Khordha, Sanat Kumar Mohanty said, "After getting a complaint about a jatra party operating without permission, I directed the IIC of police station to intervene. After reaching there, we found that it was operating without permission indeed

and no social distancing was being maintained there." "They can be allowed to perform the show if they apply for the same following due process. However, they will have to adhere to COVID guidelines laid out by the Government of Odisha," said Mohanty. In addition to this,

Mohanty has also directed all the field officers to keep a close vigil on social gatherings and enforce the COVID guidelines strictly. It is worthwhile to mention here that the jatra artistes on Saturday had threatened to launch 'fast on to death' agitation near Odisha Assembly from February 22 seeking permission from the State government to allow them to organise jatra with 2,000 spectators. Though the State government has allowed staging of jatra with 500 audiences, the jatra artistes claim that it is not enough to run shows and earn a decent living with such crowd.

## One More Elephant Found Dead In Karlapat; Toll Reaches 7 In 20 Days

(A.O. Bureau)  
Bhubaneswar: One more elephant calf was found dead near a nullha at Ghururigudi in Karlapata wildlife sanctuary taking the toll to seven within a gap of 20 days. The death was due to suspected haemorrhagic septicaemia, sources

said. Earlier, six elephants-all pregnant-died of the bacteria infection. Carcasses of five pachyderms were recovered from Ghururigudi while one from Tentulipadar in the sanctuary. A central team from Delhi, which visited the places on Saturday,

had confirmed septicaemia as the reason of elephants' death. Following back to back death of the jumbos, district administration and forest department stepped up measures to check further deaths. Precautionary measures like vaccination to domestic animals,



disinfection of water bodies and awareness

programme have been put in place to prevent

further infection. "These activities will be continued for a month," said Gavali Parag Harshad, Kalahandi Collector. Elephant Cell national coordinator Prajna P Panda, who was a part of the Central team that visited the sites on Saturday, said that high

stress level in the body of the pregnant elephant has led to the spread of septicaemia. "As they were pregnant, stress level in their body was high which was very sensitive to infection," Panda said. Centre for Wildlife (ICAR-IVRI Bareilly) scientist Karikalan Mathesh,

head of department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine at OUAT Prof Niranjan Sahoo were other members of the expert team. The team collected samples from five sites and sent them to Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) for testing.



## EDITORIAL

## Sexual harassment at workplace remains a problem of institutions, not individuals

It was a relief to see Priya Ramani, a victim of sexual harassment, acquitted of the charge of defamation laid on her by former editor and BJP leader M J Akbar in a brazen attempt to silence women's testimonies of being molested by him. But the acquittal verdict, achieved by the courageous testimonies of Ramani and Ghazala Wahab, and the stellar feminist lawyering by Rebecca John, is pathbreaking because it did much more than refuse the attempt of a perpetrator to punish his victim. The verdict went beyond a mere refusal to convict Ramani for criminal defamation. The verdict vindicated Ramani and, by implication, the other women who had variously come forward to accuse Akbar of sexual violence, by accepting Ramani's truth as a defence to the charge of defamation. The verdict's reasoning for accepting Ramani's and Wahab's testimonies as truthful is vindication for scores of women. Women speaking up against sexual harassment are often disbelieved, often asked, "what proof do you have?" Other questions women face include: "Why did you not speak up immediately after it happened?" and "Why did you take to media or social media to tell your story, instead of filing a criminal case?" The Ramani judgement is worth celebrating because for once, a court of law took on the burden of offering a definitive answer to these questions. Survivors and feminist activists will now find their burden a little lighter: They will be able to ask all questioners to find the answers in this landmark judgement. The verdict urged society to "understand that sometimes a victim may for years not speak up due to mental trauma," and underlined that a woman has a right to speak up about the abuse, even after decades. It pointed out that since sexual harassment typically takes place in private, women's testimonies cannot be dismissed as untrue or defamatory simply because they are unable to provide other witnesses to back their allegations. Institutional mechanisms have systemically failed to protect women or provide justice, the verdict reasoned, and, therefore, survivors are justified in sharing their testimonies on media or social media platforms as a form of self-defence. This insightful reasoning is possibly the most significant and precious part of the verdict. Men from privileged classes, when accused of sexual violence, are quick to accuse women of injuring their reputation and status. There have even been campaigns (across political aisles) claiming that the amendments to India's sexual violence laws in 2013 are "draconian" when applied to privileged men. The unspoken (and sometimes outspoken) assumption has been that these laws were meant to be used only to convict slum or street-dwelling "thugs" like the accused in the 2012 Delhi bus rape case. When women professionals seek justice against "respectable" and even celebrated men, their influential friends raise a cry of outrage, and promptly accuse the complainants (and their feminist supporters) of injuring the reputations of such men. (The reputations of the women are held as too puny to count). The Ramani verdict cuts the "injured reputation" argument to size, pointing out that sexual abuse violates the constitutionally recognised rights to dignity (Article 21) and equality (Articles 14 and 15), and that (a man's) right to reputation cannot be protected at the cost of (a woman's) right to dignity. Akbar had argued that Ramani's public testimony had harmed his "stellar reputation". Citing the testimonies of Ramani and Wahab as convincing and truthful, the court "accepted the contention of the accused (Ramani) that the complainant (Akbar) is not a man of stellar reputation." The Ramani verdict is a huge moral vindication of the #MeToo movement, and will, hopefully, serve to deter powerful men from using the defamation law to silence survivors. But we are still very far away from ensuring workplaces free of sexual harassment for every woman, every transperson. In the media and social media, it is the cases involving well-known individual men that tend to receive attention. But sexual harassment is a problem of institutions rather than of individuals alone. The world over, employers deploy sexual harassment as a means to discipline and control women workers. In India and Bangladesh, at least 60 per cent of garment factory workers experience harassment at work. In Guangzhou, China, a survey found that 70 per cent of female factory workers had been sexually harassed at work, and 15 per cent quit their jobs as a result. Dina Siddiqi, writing about women garment workers in Bangladesh, notes that "a highly sexualised regime of verbal discipline, as well as more overt forms of sexual harassment, also serves to keep women in their place." Many studies have established that this is equally true of India. In November 2018, the All India Progressive Women's Association, along with other trade unions, organised the event, "#MeToo: Working Class Women Share", in Bengaluru. For factory workers, domestic workers, street vendors, sanitation and waste workers, construction workers, sex workers, labour laws or laws against sexual harassment exist only on paper. Calling out their boss as a perpetrator means an instant loss of job and pay. The women who spoke were unanimous that individual complaints were not an option: They needed unions to fight collectively.

## Migrant protection: Biden takes challenge

There is a vociferous demand for the immediate dismantling of the inhuman Migrant Protection Protocol introduced by the then Donald Trump Administration. Though it is not a cakewalk as the fault lines of the 21st century America have been laid bare, President Joe Biden has taken initiatives. Maybe, the new US Administration wants Biden to tread carefully. Although Donald Trump left the White House on January 20, some of his policies like the crucial Migrant Protection Protocol (MPP) remain a "choke point" for thousands of migrants awaiting entry into the US. The Trump Administration is formally gone, but the shadow of Trumpism has perpetuated. Both critics and fans of Trump agree on the fact that Joe Biden has inherited a largely "Divided America". Although the Biden Administration has tried to reposition America at the heart of globality, the wounds of the Trump days would take longer than what Biden and the liberals are expecting. The MPP is a US Government action whereby citizens and nationals of countries other than Mexico arriving in the US by land from Mexico, whether or not at a port of entry, may be returned to Mexico, pursuant to Section 235 (b) (2) (C) of the Immigration National Act (INA), while their US removal proceedings are pending under Section 240 of the INA. But the Government of Mexico has committed to providing aliens place into MPP with appropriate humanitarian protections, including immigration documentation and access to education, healthcare and employment. In fact, the Section 235 of the INA addresses the inspection of the aliens seeking admission into the US and provides specific procedures regarding the treatment of those not clearly entitled to admission. Further Section 235 (b) (C) (2) provides that "in the case of an alien... who is arriving on land, (whether or not at a designated port of arrival) from a foreign territory contiguous to the US, the Secretary of Homeland Security may return the alien to that terri-



Makhan Saikia

tory pending a removal proceeding under Section 240 of the INA. But individuals in such removal proceedings have the ability to seek relief or protection from removal, including asylum. It has been regarded as one of the most controversial pieces of legislation of the Trump era. But now the question is that how does it work? The aliens subject to the MPP are placed into removal proceedings under Section 240 of the INA before an immigration judge, just like any other alien in removal proceedings pursuant to Section 240 of the INA. The aliens generally remain in Mexico throughout the duration of their removal proceedings. Only issue is that while waiting for the final decision of the immigration trial, the immigrants, particularly women, children and aged people suffer a lot in the hands of the authority. Once their removal proceedings are completed, the aliens who receive final orders of removal are turned over to the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement authorities. Further, the aliens who are granted relief from removal including asylum will be allowed to remain in the US, consistent with the existing laws and policies. The origin of the MPP goes back to December 2018. On that very month, the Trump Administration announced the creation of a new programme known as 'Migrant Protection Protocols' (MPP). It's often referred to as the "Remain in Mexico". Under the jurisdiction of the MPP, individuals who arrive at the southern border of the US i.e. US-Mexico Border and ask for asylum, (either at a port of entry or after crossing the borders between the port of entry) are given notices to appear in

immigration court or sent back to Mexico. Meanwhile they are instructed to return to a specific port of entry on a specific date and time for their next court hearing. However, the MPP is different from another process regarded as "Metering". Under Metering, it takes months for migrants before they are even allowed to approach US border officials to just start the process of asylum. The waitlist of these migrants are managed by themselves and by local shelters or Mexican authorities. Finally the US Government only decides how many people are allowed to request asylum each day. But the disheartening fact is that on some particular days, the US officials do not call anyone for processing their applications in certain locations. This uncertain wait today is prolonging and the migrants have to experience the worst of the tragedies at times. It is worth noting why America has introduced the MPP. During the Fiscal Year 2019, America encountered a security and humanitarian crisis in its South West border when nearly one million migrants who entered the country illegally or without proper documentation were apprehended or encountered by the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Therefore, to address this imminent crisis, the Trump Administration used all appropriate resources, and authorities to secure the borders, enforce immigration and customs laws, facilitate legal trade and travel, counter traffickers, smugglers and transnational criminal organisations and finally to interdict drugs and contraband. Thus to restore the normal process of safe and orderly immigration, and to

reduce incentives for aliens to try illegal entry methods and to make meritless case for entry or removal from protection, the legislation called the MPP was brought into practice. Migration, to be precise, is an unending process. Since time immemorial, people have moved from one part to the other parts of the globe, either looking for a better life or to escape adversities in life. With globalisation, the process of migration has become easier, better and transparent. The first World Migration Report was released by the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), a UN agency, in the year 2017. A lot has happened since then across the world. In the last two years, the world has witnessed historic changes at the international level: the member states of the UN have come together to finalise two global compacts on the international manifestations of migration and displacement, which are: a) Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and b) Global Compact on Refugees. The finalisation of these two historic compacts is the result of sustained efforts brought by states, international agencies, human rights bodies, civil society organisations, and even private actors to improve how the process of migration is governed at the global level. All these actors demand a safe, humane and affordable process of migration. Today, what is happening to the thousands of migrants at the US-Mexico border is drawing the attention of the entire world. Most of these migrants are coming from the Central American countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, etc. The steady flow of immigrants leaving these North Central American countries simply reflect the grim realities of life for millions of children and their families. The root causes of this pervasive migration are manifold: crushing poverty, endemic crime, environmental crises, gang-related violence, extortion, high rates of domestic violence, sexual abuse of girls and forced recruitment in various street gangs.

## Fuel Price in India is fair or high!

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Mr. Agadhu Nayak is a small farmer tells fuel price is okay because he feels he has no car to fill. Few common people also think like Agadhu but news channels are making noise saying it's not at all fair. Few intellectuals of our country predict that within this financial year it will cross all time high magic figure i.e. Rs 100/- per liter in all states very soon. Few recall the speech of our prime minister before assigning the highest chair in Delhi office in 2014. In most of the election rally he had questioned public, 'HSD price should reduce or not?' This was also a major cause of the congress party defeat at that time in center. Few are comparing our nation with France, UK and America while few leaders in ruling side blaming covid-19. However, now there is a huge criticism over high fuel prices in India from all most all sectors. After partial success of half day strike called by Congress, the graph of criticism is increasing sharply day by day. Sometimes despite of having low crude oil prices internationally, our cost here remains unchanged. The common people have started targeting government for this hike in fuel

price. No government so motto coming forward to sacrifice little percentage of their share to relieve this fuel hikes pressure from common people, which has adverse effect on all commodities. Leaders are here to serve the public, not to annoy them to loose in elections. So they might have some limitations which all may be beyond their control to control the fuel price. Let's analyze few of those for common understanding. Petrol and diesel pricing depends on several factors. Final retail price = crude oil price (international price of crude oil) + refinery charges + transport charges + dealers' commission + Central Excise Duty (Imposed by Central government) + Value Added Tax (VAT) & surcharges (Imposed by state government). Among all these factors, the main thing is crude oil, which is a raw material for petrol and diesel. The crude oil retail price was more in 2014. But the present retail price of petrol and diesel are higher than the prices in 2014 only because taxes on petrol and diesel are continuously increasing. At present, approximately close to 50% of final retail price is taxes (Excise duty, VAT & surcharges). This is the main reason for the high fuel prices in India despite low crude oil prices internationally. Petrol and diesel are not in the ambit of GST (Goods & Services Tax). If they come under GST, taxes would be lower and hence the retail prices. The efficiency of petroleum

refineries in India are one of the worst in the world. This is contributing to the price rise of petrol and diesel. Now intellectuals are having a big say, 'Why Government is imposing high taxes on Petroleum products?' India is third in the top countries that use crude oil after USA & China. But the problem is that India don't have much oil reserves. 80% of the crude oil we use is imported. This is a huge burden on foreign exchange reserves (with which we import goods from other countries). To tackle with this situation, government is imposing high taxes to discourage usage of petroleum products. Government is of the opinion that high prices will force people to conserve oil and to use alternatives such as electric vehicles and renewable energy resources. More and more people are buying their own vehicles and hence the demand for petrol and diesel is increasing and thereby the pressure on foreign exchange reserves and 'Trade deficit' are increasing. This will further lower the value of rupee. To deal with this, government had to increase taxes. Majority of the revenue from fuel is spent on improving infrastructure facilities, which is the most important need for the present India. Indian government is giving subsidies to electric vehicles. So, to compensate that expenditure it had to increase taxes on fuel. Vehicles that run on petrol and diesel are con-

tributing to pollution. So, what to do now? Reducing taxes on petroleum products will result in reduction in costs of transport and thereby reduces the price of many consumer goods. This will result in increase of markets and economy. Instead of depending on these taxes on petrol & diesel, Indian government needs to create more revenue sources such as increasing the number of people that pay income tax (Right now approx 5% of the population is paying income tax), collecting bad loans of public sector banks etc. There is a dire need to encourage people to conserve oil and to use renewable energy resources. This will reduce the burden on foreign exchange reserves as well as leads us towards eco-friendly living. We know the international market rate is not in our hands. So now despite of low cost of crude oil in international market if we cross 100 mark then if the crude oil prices are increased in the coming days, there will be a huge burden on people whether they own a vehicle or not. Because high fuel prices increases the cost of transport and thereby increases the price of consumer goods. Leaders shouldn't forget that Mr. Manmohan Singh government had voted out of the power due to this in past, so to avoid that situation, present government needs to work on reforms in petroleum pricing as early as possible to relieve the common people.



## The UJA Malkangiri Dist Branch celebrates Mother Language Day



(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Feb 21: Today Utkal journalist Association Malkangiri branch celebrated Mother Language Day at 6 pm on 21.02.21 in the conference hall of the Utkal Journalists Association. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Duryodhana Patra. The Chief Guest was Mr. Prakash Patnaik, Retired Teacher, Literary senior Citizen, Mr.

Rabindra Maharana, Retired Educator, Mr. Manoj Sahu Teacher and Literary and Chief Speaker. Satyajit Mishra, a young talent, started the program with a beautiful song about mother language. Mr. Maharana explained why Mother tongue and motherland are so important to us that February 21 is celebrated as Mother Language Day. Mr. Prakash Patnaik and

Manoj Sahu then explained how to be idealistic and admiring of the mother tongue and how to be attracted to the mother tongue at a young age. Was done. The UJA has faliciated with certificate to the writers Oriya literary novelist. More than 30 journalists were present. Finally, Mr. Sonu Anugu, Joint Secretary, Utkal Journalists' Association, thanked everyone and joined the meeting.

## A landmine blast in Malkangiri has killed a BSF youth



(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Feb 21: A BSF Javan was seriously injured when a landmine exploded in the for-

est near Gogpadar village near Kartanapalli in Mathili block of Malkangiri district. Javan was admitted

to the hospital with serious injuries to his leg. As usual, 160 BSF battalions, stationed at Kartanpalli, went to the combing operation this morning. So while returning from a combing operation, a young man was seriously injured when a landmine planted by the Naxals exploded in the forest. The injured Javanese was identified as Dharmendra Sahu and has now been admitted to Malkangiri HQ Hospital. Now the BSF Javanese have intensified combing operations at the scene

## 41st Anniversary Celebration Of INS Chilka

(A.O. Bureau) Chilka, Feb 21: Indian Navy's premier ab initio training establishment celebrated the completion of 41 years of yeoman service to the Navy and the nation on 20 - 21 Feb 21. Since its commissioning on 21 Feb 1980, this alma mater of sailors has evolved in leaps and bounds keeping abreast with



latest training methodologies and technological developments. The unit had conducted various activi-

ties in the build up to its anniversary which witnessed exuberant participation from all the members of the

unit. The entire Station community comprising Service Personnel, DSC, MES and Defence civilians along

with their families actively and wholeheartedly participated in Walkathon flagged off by the Commanding Officer, Commodore NP Pradeep on 20 Feb 21. Various sports activities were organised for the ladies and children of the station on 20 - 21 Feb 21 and prizes were distributed to all winners. The customary Cake Cutting Ceremony was held.

## Sex Racket Busted In Odisha's Bhadrak, 4 Women Rescued

(A.O. Bureau) Bhadrak, Feb 21: The Bhadrak police have busted a sex racket operating in the town and rescued four women besides arresting two persons in this connection. According to reports, locals had detected suspicious activities at a rented house located at Dagamunda, where

four women were residing and men used to visit the house frequently. On being informed about the incident, a team of Bhadrak Town police raided the place last evening and rescued the four women engaged in the flesh trade. The two arrested men will be forwarded to court, police sources said.

## Ganjam On Toes As Country Witnesses Surge In COVID-19 Cases



(A.O. Bureau) Berhampur, Feb 21: On the heels of releasing new Standard Operating Procedure to tackle possible spurt of COVID cases in Odisha, Ganjam Collector on Sunday urged people to be alert and informed about the dis-

ease by saying, "Our health is our responsibility." Ganjam Collector, Vijay Amruta Kulange said, "We have relaxed the COVID norms keeping in view the impact the lockdown had on our economy and developmental works. Livelihood is also important for us. But people should not get carried away and drop their guard to attract another wave of COVID infections in the district."

## Little sincerity of GoO needs to win the hearts of Jum dang people



(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Feb 21: Malkangiri Kudumulgumma Block Education Officer Mrs. Gayatri Devi, Assistant Block Education Officer Anjan Chowdhury, and community Resource Center Coordinator C.R.C. pitambara Khara and other teachers visited the village Jumudang for inspection. Neighbouring Andhra Pradesh has the highest impact at various times in the region. There are 25 Kandha tribe families living in the village and speaking the Kui language. According to Ground Zero, ten students stayed in a hostel in

Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh and finished fourth. Others are illiterate, as there is no school system in the village, so students do not want to go to school to study or drop out of school. Andhra Pradesh is also benefiting from both the two states in various eye-catching schemes. The village of Jum Dang, located on a high hill, has no paved roads, making it easier for people to travel to Andhra Pradesh than to Odisha and collect oil and salt for daily use. Like Kotia, the lives of the people here are being cut short. Therefore, the state government has to take legal action. Educa-

tion, health, transportation, drinking water supply, forest land lease, construction of Biju Pakka houses will all be in the spotlight. However, Gayatri Devi, a female block education officer, has been praised in all quarters for climbing such a high mountain to study the education situation at the grassroots level. It remains to be seen what action the block administration and the district administration will take in the coming days, and the villagers of Jum Dang, which is facing towards Andhra Pradesh, are winning the hearts of the people.

## 1093 bags of Ragi from Mathili area seized in Khairput Ragi Mandi

(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Feb 21: Two days ago, some traders and sharecroppers from the Mathili block brought their Ragi in a vehicle for sale at the Ragi Mandi in the Khairput block of Malkangiri district and put it in the Khairput Mandi. While there was a mandi in Khairput today, the mandi was filled with a large number of Ragi bags and the mandis were filled with government mandis and the locals were skeptical when they saw the media, the block and district administration said. Khairput Tahsildar Ramakrishna Nayak, BDO Hridayaranjan Sahu, Mudulipada po-



lice officer Kamalkant Kanhar, block civil supply officer Prabhakar Dora arrived at the mandi to investigate the incident as magistrates. Asked by night watchman Ramchandra Nayak there, some people brought him in a Mahindra pick up two days ago and put him

in a government bag, but he said he did not know who and what area the Ragi was from. Asked by TDCC Supervisor Sanjeev Padiari in this regard, he said the Ragi was placed in the Mathili area on the orders of the TDCC Branch Manager. However, after the block administration's investi-

gation revealed that there were no farmers in the Ragi Khairput area and some businesses and sharecroppers of Mathili kept all the Ragi, the block administration confiscated 1093 bags of Ragi that were kept there as illegal and filled in government bags. However, the police officer called BM

Premananda Majhi of TDCC and inquired about the incident. It is learned that the Ragi was kept in Khairput Mandi due to heavy rains in Mathili area. Khairput residents have appealed to the administration to investigate the incident and take firm action against the culprits.

## Death Threats To Jaleshpata Ashram Chief: Prime Accused Held

(A.O. Bureau) Baliguda, Feb 21: Within 24 hours after Jaleshpata Kanya Ashram Chief Swami Jivanmuktananda Puri received death threats twice from an anonymous caller, the Kandhamal Police formed a special team to probe the matter. During the course of investigation, the police nabbed a person in Bisamcuttack area in Rayagada district, who is suspected to be the prime accused. This was informed by the Kandhamal SP Vinit Agarwal today. As per latest reports, the arrested person, Mahadeb Maharaj was brought to

the Tumudibandha police station where a complaint was lodged by the Jaleshpata Kanya Ashram Chief after getting a death threat over his mobile phone yesterday. The police will question the arrested person to elicit more information about the case. However, preliminary investigation shows Mahadeb issued death threats to the Swami Jivanmuktananda over past enmity, the Kandhamal SP said. Initially, the Ashram Chief got a threat call at around 5 pm yesterday and 9 am today over his phone today. Also, the person on the other side

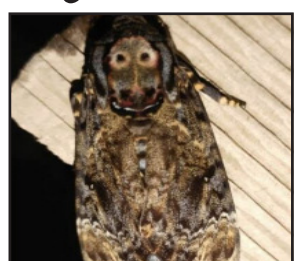
threatened to bomb the ashram. Following this, Swami Jivanmuktananda lodged a complaint at the Tumudibandha police station. The police tightened security at the ashram after the complaint was filed. The SP also visited Tumudibandha and reviewed the probe progress. Worth mentioning, in August 2008, Swami Laxmananda Saraswati, the then Chief of the Jaleshpata Ashram and four of his aides were killed. The incident triggered communal violence in the State due to which at least 38 people were killed.



## Butterfly With Pattern Of Lord Jagannatha's Face Spotted In Odisha Village

(A.O. Bureau) Tentulikhunti, Feb 21: Hundreds of villagers made a beeline to the house of one Bhimsen Bisoyi at Dengapadar village under Tentulikhunti block of Nabarangpur district today

to witness a butterfly with the pattern of Lord Jagannatha's face. As the news about the rare butterfly's presence at the house of Bhimsen broke out, people gathered at his place and worshipped the insect with the pattern of



Lord Jagannatha's face. They blew conchs and offered flowers to the insect. Initially, family members of Bhimsen spotted the rare butterfly at his garden. They brought the butterfly to the house and worshipped it. A

local said, "I am so delighted that the Lord Jagannatha descended on Dengapadar village. The villagers are extremely happy finding the Lord of Universe close to their place."



# Rakhi Sawant is shocked as Salman sends Riteish inside the house

New Delhi, Feb 21: Rakhi Sawant was left shocked on the grand finale episode of Bigg Boss 14 after Salman Khan announced the entry of a Riteish inside the house. While she was expecting her husband Ritesh to enter the house, it was someone else who paid her a visit. On the grand finale episode of Bigg Boss 14, Salman Khan will surprise Rakhi Sawant with a special gift. In a new promo released by ColorsTV, the host is seen telling Rakhi that her husband Ritesh will soon enter the house. Rakhi gets surprised at the announcement, hoping to meet her enigma of a husband after months. Soon, a man in a sehra



enters the house. He is wearing an orange shirt and gets tackled by other housemates. When he reveals himself to be actor Riteish Deshmukh, Rakhi put her hands on her head, visibly disappointed. "Arre main toh apne pati ko dhund rahi thi (I was hoping to meet my husband)," she screams at the actor.

Riteish then drops to the floor, doing a pranaam for her. Riteish took to Instagram on Sunday to build up the craze for the show's finale. "Time for @BiggBoss Finale," he wrote, retweeting Colors' post. Rakhi's husband has been a matter of mystery ever since she claimed to have tied

the knot with him. Ritesh hasn't visited Rakhi on the show, and many, including former contestant Rahul Mahajan, have doubted his existence. Recently, comedian Bharti Singh said that she has seen Ritesh on a video call, which Rakhi confirmed. Rakhi had earlier said on the show that Ritesh

hadn't met her in over a year, and had distanced himself from her after their marriage. She also said that Ritesh has a child from a previous marriage. Rakhi's brother Rakesh, however, said that he had no idea about Ritesh being married. "Why would she lie about her marriage? Ritesh very much exists and I was present at their wedding with my mom. Rakhi made us meet him for the first time at Taj and I found his personality great. As a brother, I had my apprehensions but that was also over after meeting him. I feel it's Rakhi's best decision to marry him," he had said in an interview to SpotboyE.

# Manish Verma: I never had plan B, it was acting or nothing for me

New Delhi, Feb 21: Model-actor Manish Verma believes that reliving your parents' dreams is most rewarding. Model-actor Manish Verma believes that reliving your parents' dreams is most rewarding. "I remember when my father told me that how he got an acting offer but due to various reasons had to re-

Talking more about his journey, Manish said, "For me, I had no plan B when I decided to take up acting as a full-time career. I knew this was it! I had to make it work and find some projects. Then, the show 'Jamai Raja 2.0' and 'Ishq...' happened. I was at ease that finally I got work that too important

nani was from Lucknow and paternal side from Chandigarh while I was staying in Delhi before shifting to Mumbai. So, you can say I'm related to all these cities and I love adding their imbibed qualities to my characters." The young actor now plans to take up some positive characters and try



# Shibani Dandekar and Farhan Akhtar mark three years of togetherness

Mumbai, Feb 21: It has been three years since Shibani Dandekar and Farhan Akhtar began dating. To mark the occasion, Shibani shared a chic picture of the duo and wished her beau. Shibani's sister Anusha Dandekar took to the comments section and showered the couple with love. "OMG I LOVE THIS LOOK, I LOVE YOU GUYS! Happy 3!" she said. Four More Shots Please! star Maanvi

Gagoo shared a heart emoji adding a green chili and a lemon emoji, indicating that they are protected from bad vibes. The couple kept their relationship lowkey in the initial days of their relationship. Back in 2019, speaking to Hindustan Times, Shibani said, "I don't feel anything about that (rumours of dating and marriage) at all. We are putting out what we put out. People are going to take



it however they want to. Anything they have gathered is from social media handles anyway, so it's not something 'uncovered' kind of. I just post what I want to, it's as simple there's no

strategy or trying to send out a message in any way..." The actor eventually confirmed her relationship with the actor-director on social media before going all out with PDA on

the 'gram. The lovebirds have been spotted gushing over each other from time to time. On the work front, Farhan was last seen in The Sky Is Pink with Priyanka Chopra. Before the Covid-19 induced lockdown, the actor was working on Toofan. The actor plays a boxer in the movie. He reunites with his Bhaag Milkha Bhaag director, Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra for the movie.

turn from Mumbai. So, this thing was always in the back of my mind that if he couldn't fulfill his dream then I can do it for him," said the Ishq Aaj Kal actor. So, he started with modelling. "I thought it's an extension to acting but soon I was proved wrong. I had to go through numerous auditions for over a year before getting a cameo in 'Kundali Bhagya'."

roles. Then the big turning point came with my first grey character in 'Beyhadh-2' that was followed by my current project where I play a negative role of Gulshan in 'Teri Meri Ikk Jindri'." Manish, who has a strong connect from cities like Delhi, Chandigarh and Lucknow, says playing characters from these places comes easy to him. "My

web as a medium. The young actor now plans to take up some positive characters and try web as a medium. "After doing two antagonist characters now, I am all prepared to take up some positive roles and try web as a medium. As a lot is happening on OTT in terms of great content and storytelling, I have a couple of offers and soon I'll take my pick."

# 6 Amazing Benefits of Foot Massage



New Delhi, Feb 21: Massaging the right way stimulates nerves, soothes your mind and body, by ensuring improved circulation, relaxed muscles, reduced tension, and most importantly eases pain. Foot massages have been an indispensable part of a wholesome healthy fitness regime since ancient times. Ayurveda gives immense importance to foot massages. Massaging the right way stimulates nerves, soothes your mind and body, by ensuring improved circulation, relaxed muscles, reduced tension, and most importantly eases pain. For a quick pick-me-up, you can also get those foot rollers and relieve your feet off the stress. Massage at right pressure points to get body-part specific results. There is heart point, lung, neck point which when massaged provides much-needed relief from pain, exhaustion. See how a

little pampering of your foot takes you a long way: Stress-buster, sleep-inducer: Foot massages reduce anxiety, depression. Massaging boosts up blood circulation in the body, activates the nerve endings. Especially the tip of the top foot when massaged induces great relief. Your body feels rejuvenated. Foot massaging also helps to battle insomnia. Beneficial for PMS, menopause: The mood swings, the discomfort experienced during menopause can be easily kept at bay with foot massager. Press the arch of the inside of the foot, a thumb-width from the ball of the foot while massaging to get desired results. Helps during pregnancy: Swollen feet, pain, postpartum stress are common after and before labour. Hence, reflexology-based foot massages aid the woman's body to heal faster and achieve normal metabolic activity

sooner. Massage helps to reduce the effects of edema. Beneficial for multiple sclerosis: Patients often experience double vision, blindness in one eye, muscle weakness, dimmed sensation, trouble with coordination and crippling fatigue due to multiple sclerosis. But foot massages, especially the ones that are reflexology-based massages are great in such cases. It gets you rid of the exhaustion. Relief from headache: At times headache is sinus generated, or due to tension build up in the neck and shoulders or it's in your temple or the front or back of your head-but if you put pressure on the outside base of your big toe on both your feet and then the front and back of each toe using the squeeze and release technique, you will instantly see the difference. Nervous system strengthens: Our feet has innumerable nerve endings that go way back to the spine. The insides of both our feet can be mapped to the spine, with the first vertebra being right below the big toe. So, if you put pressure on the foot and massage for about 30-45 seconds by rubbing in a circular motion, your spine will be rejuvenated.

# 'If you slap me, I will slap you back': Kangana Ranaut on how her relationship with her dad changed

New Delhi, Feb 21: Kangana Ranaut has opened up on her relationship with her father, and how it irrevocably changed years ago. Kangana Ranaut took to social media on Sunday to explain how she can go to any extent to 'break free'. The actor had earlier spoken about leaving home at a young age to work in the film industry and how it affected her relationship with her family. Talking about her relationship with her father, she wrote on Twitter, "My father has licensed rifle and guns, growing up he didn't scold he roared, even my ribs trembled, in his youth he was famous for gang wars in his college which gave him a reputation of a gunda, I fought with him at 15 and left



home, became first Baaghi Rajput woman at 15." My father has licensed rifle and guns, growing up he didn't scold he roared, even my ribs trembled, in his youth he was famous for gang wars in his college which gave him a reputation of a gunda, I fought with him at 15 and left home, became first Baaghi Rajput woman at 15. Kangana, who often

alleges that the some sections of the film industry have systematically targeted her, again took a pot-shot. "This chillar industry thinks success got to my head and they can fix me, I was always Baaghi its only after success my voice got stronger and today I am one of the most prominent voices in the nation. History is a witness whoever tried to fix me I fixed them in-

stead." My papa he wanted to make me the best doctor in the world, he thought he was being a revolutionary papa by giving me education in best institutions, when I refused to go to school he tried to slap me I held his hand and famously told him 'if you slap me I will slap you back'." She said their relationship changed from that day. "That was it end of our relationship something changed in his eyes, he looked at me then my mother and left the room, I knew I had crossed the line and never found him back again but one can only imagine the extend i can go to break free, nothing can keep me caged," the actor added.

her to pursue medicine, she added, "My papa he wanted to make me the best doctor in the world, he thought he was being a revolutionary papa by giving me education in best institutions, when I refused to go to school he tried to slap me I held his hand and famously told him 'if you slap me I will slap you back'." She said their relationship changed from that day. "That was it end of our relationship something changed in his eyes, he looked at me then my mother and left the room, I knew I had crossed the line and never found him back again but one can only imagine the extend i can go to break free, nothing can keep me caged," the actor added.

# Mahesh Manjrekar Shares His Take on OTT Censorship

New Delhi, Feb 21: Manjrekar's upcoming web series 1962: The War In The Hills, is a 10-episode war drama that offers a glimpse into the lives of soldiers who stood rock solid against Chinese troops, dedicating their lives for the security of the nation. "I feel we should

be very particular and careful about what we want to show. I have no worries because my series is one which the entire family can sit and watch together without feeling uncomfortable. But I feel we should be a little more responsible about what we are showing. Yes, I

would not like to see censorship on OTT content but there are some people who really take advantage of this," Mahesh Manjrekar told. The filmmaker also feels that OTT platforms should not be a reason of insecurity for cinema theatres because the two can easily coexist.





## Analysis: Already a star, on court and off, Osaka eyes more



Melbourne, Feb 21: Naomi Osaka already is a star at age 23. She has the four Grand Slam titles, the record-breaking endorsement deals and the willingness to speak her mind to prove it. It was telling that the second question posed to Osaka at the news conference following her 6-4, 6-3 victory over Jennifer Brady in the Australian Open final Saturday — after she took a sip of celebratory bubbly that she said made her "feel a little bit funny" — was about turning in better performances at Wimbledon and the French Open. After all, each of her major

championships so far came on hard courts at Melbourne Park (2019, 2021) or the U.S. Open (2018, 2020). She never has been past the third round at the All England Club or Roland Garros. Even more revealing was Osaka's response. Asked whether her first non-hard-court Slam trophy will come on clay or grass, she said: "Hopefully clay, because it's the one that's sooner." She is not about biding her time or patient improvement. And she's been thinking about where she needs to improve. "It was one of her goals this year to play well

outside of the hard courts. She's still very young. It's time to grow on those surfaces. She also believes she can do well and, I'm sure, with the right preparation, with a few, maybe, tactical (and) technical adjustments, we're going to do well," said her coach, Wim Fissette. "She's the person that wants to grow." Part of what makes Osaka special is embracing challenges and knowing what she stands for. That's been the case off the court and on. With a racket in her hand, it's about, as Fissette put it, being able to "love big matches and big moments." Osaka wanted

to face 23-time major champion Serena Williams in the semifinals, for example. No fear there. "She was like when I bring my kids to the toy store: They are very excited. And Naomi was excited to go on court with Serena. It's just beautiful to see," Fissette said. "At the end, this is what you train for, right? To be on the biggest stage with the best player of all time, Serena." Away from the game, Osaka says, it took time to find her voice and express her views. She was born in Japan to a Japanese mother and Haitian father, and she moved to the United States when she was 3. Last August, she was the first tennis pro to join athletes from other sports in walking out to protest the police shooting of a Black man in Wisconsin. "Before I am an athlete," Osaka tweeted at the time, "I am a black woman." On her way to the U.S. Open title in September, Osaka wore masks bearing the names of seven Black victims of violence to draw attention to racism and police brutality. On Saturday, Osaka was asked whether there was a message she wanted associated with her latest triumph, which made her 4 for 4 in Slam finals. "Honestly, for me, when everything happened in New York, I got really scared, because I felt like it put me into this

light that was a non-athletic light that I've never been in before," she said. "So I feel like there is a lot of topics that people suddenly started asking me about that I completely didn't know about at all. For me, I only like to talk when I'm knowledgeable about the subject or at least know, like, one tiny grain of what I'm about to start talking about. So for me, I just came into this tournament just thinking purely about tennis." And yet, in the aftermath of winning the trophy, she was ready to think about a larger role, too. Many looked at her win against Williams as a passing of the mantle. Osaka also won their meeting in the 2018 U.S. Open final — who could forget that one? — and has eclipsed the 39-year-old American as the highest-earning female athlete because of millions in sponsorship deals. But to Osaka, Williams is still, and always will be, an idol and an inspiration, a player whose example she wanted to follow. And the best way to repay that, Osaka figures, is to hold that role for others. "Hopefully I play long enough to play a girl that said that I was once her favorite player or something," Osaka said. "For me, I think that's the coolest thing that could ever happen to me. ... That's how the sport moves forward."

## Novak Djokovic wins record-extending ninth Australian Open title

New Delhi, Feb 21: Novak Djokovic beat Daniil Medvedev 7-5 6-2 6-2 to win a record-extending ninth Australian Open title on Sunday. The win at Rod Laver Arena gave Serbian Djokovic his 18th Grand Slam title. Novak Djokovic's Australian Open dominance is intact — nine finals, nine championships. And he keeps gaining on Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal in the Grand Slam standings, now up to 18 overall, two away from the men's record shared by his two rivals. Djokovic used superb serving and his usual relentless re-

picture, Djokovic has won six of the last 10 major tournaments and is assured of remaining at No. 1 in the rankings at least through March 8. That will give him 311 weeks in the top spot, breaking a mark held by Federer. The No. 4-ranked Medvedev was appearing in his second Grand Slam final — he was the runner-up to Nadal at the 2019 U.S. Open — but is still left trying collect his first such championship. Djokovic ended the 25-year-old Russian's 20-match winning streak. Medvedev also had won his previous 12

if to ask, "What can I possibly do here?" It is a familiar sentiment in this stadium, on this court, at this tournament. Federer, Nadal, Andy Murray, Stan Wawrinka, Dominic Thiem — all Grand Slam champions, all defeated by Djokovic in semifinals or finals in Melbourne. So place the nine triumphs in Australia alongside five at Wimbledon, three at the U.S. Open and one at the French Open for Djokovic. The math looks good for Djokovic. He is about a year younger than Nadal and 6 1/2 younger than Federer, who turns 40 in



turning and baseline excellence to grab 11 of 13 games in one stretch and beat a visibly frustrated Daniil Medvedev 7-5, 6-2, 6-2 on Sunday for a third trophy in a row at Melbourne Park. The 33-year-old from Serbia improved to 18-0 combined in semifinals and finals on the hard courts of the Australian Open. Looking at the bigger

matches against Top 10 opponents. But going up against Djokovic in Australia is a much different challenge. By the second set, as things slipped away, Medvedev bounced his white racket off the blue court, then absolutely destroyed it with a full-on spike. By the third, he kept looking up at his coach with palms up as

August. Federer hasn't competed in more than a year after having two knee operations but is expected to turn to the tour next month. On a cool, cloudy evening, an event delayed three weeks because of the coronavirus pandemic concluded with an announced attendance of 7,426 at Rod Laver Arena.

## 'The feeling is surreal': Suryakumar Yadav after receiving maiden Team India call-up

Mumbai, Feb 21: Suryakumar Yadav, who has captained Mumbai in Ranji Trophy and other domestic tournaments, has played 77 first-class matches and amassed 5,326 runs. Finally rewarded for his consistency, prolific Mumbai batsman Suryakumar Yadav described his feeling as "surreal", a day after he earned a maiden India call-up for the upcoming T20I series against England. Suryakumar was overlooked for the limited-overs matches in Australia late last year despite a fine IPL, leaving many in the Indian cricket fraternity sur-

prised. "The feeling is surreal," tweeted Surya along with his picture at the DY Patil Stadium. The 30-year-old Mumbai batsman, who has been a constant performer in the Indian Premier League for his franchise Mumbai Indians and also in the domestic circuit, was rewarded for his performances on Saturday. Surya, who has captained Mumbai in Ranji Trophy and other domestic tournaments, has played 77 first-class matches and amassed 5,326 runs. Some former India cricketers also took to Twitter to express their satisfac-

tion at the right-handed batsman's selection in the national team. "So good to finally @surya\_14kumar in Team India. Good Luck," wrote veteran off-spinner Harbhajan Singh. "Finally the wait is over for @surya\_14kumar congratulations buddy. Goodluck @ishankishan51 @rahultewatia02 for your debut guys," said former India seamer Irfan Pathan. India are scheduled to play England in five T20 Internationals after the conclusion of the ongoing four-match Test series.



## More Liverpool misery: 1st home loss to Everton in 22 years

Liverpool, Feb 21: A first win at Anfield since 1999 for Everton. The worst form for Liverpool at home in the league since 1923 after a fourth straight loss. The English title that took 30 years to win again is being surrendered far too easily by Liverpool. Richarlison scored after three minutes and Gylfi Sigurdsson netted a late penalty to give Everton a 2-0 victory in the Premier League on Saturday. A first Merseyside derby win since 2010 put Everton behind sixth-place Liverpool only on goal difference with a game in hand, while the champions are 16 points behind leader Manchester City. Chelsea is three points ahead in the fourth and final Champions League place after drawing 1-1 at Southampton. Even worse for Liverpool was losing yet another center back option as Jordan Henderson was forced off injured in the first half. October's derby was the start of Liverpool's defensive problems when Virgil Van Dijk was ruled out for the season with an ACL injury after a reckless tackle by Everton goalkeeper Jordan



Pickford. Henderson's problem appeared to be a groin injury as he pulled up running the ball out of defense in the first half, leaving his side with an 18th different — and most inexperienced — pairing of Ozan Kabak and substitute Nat Phillips. But by then the damage had already been done as Everton had made its intent clear. Straight from kickoff, the ball was hit forward and, under no pressure, Kabak conceded a corner after six seconds. The on-loan Schalke player was immediately targeted by Richarlison. It paid off

after just three minutes as two weak headers, one from Thiago Alcantara and another from Kabak on his Anfield debut, saw the ball fall to James Rodriguez. He slipped in a pass behind the new boy for Richarlison to run onto and fire an angled drive across Alisson Becker. The Brazilian also gave the visitors their first lead in a derby since October 2010, the date of their last victory which came at Goodison Park. Kabak's edgy nerves were not eased when he allowed Pickford's clearance to drop over his head straight to the feet of

Richarlison, before moments later clattering James Rodriguez after a mistimed challenge and he finished the half with a booking — for the third successive match — to cap a poor 45 minutes. His confidence would also not have been helped by the loss of Henderson just before the half hour, with the 23-year-old Phillips arriving off the bench as the senior partner despite making just his eighth appearance for the club. At least Alisson, responsible for three errors in his last two league matches, was back on

form with a good save to deny a diving Seamus Coleman header from Lucas Digne's cross. Pickford was also in good form. He flew to his right to tip Henderson's swerving volley around the post before the Liverpool captain's exit. The England No. 1 was in action again catching Sadio Mane's header early in the second half. Pickford dived at the feet of striker Mohamed Salah as Liverpool turned up the pressure without really laying siege to the Everton goal. More holes opened up in Liverpool's defense and, from a counter-attack, substitute Dominic Calvert-Lewin was adjudged to have been brought down inside the box by Trent Alexander-Arnold. Substitute Sigurdsson stroked home the penalty to spark wild celebrations among the Everton contingent. The only disappointment for Carlo Ancelotti's side will have been not having any fans allowed into the home of its greatest rival, due to the pandemic, to see the landmark triumph.



# Magma resumes Highway Heroes programme, to provide road safety training to 5000 Truckers in Q4 Farmers announce series of events to further escalate protest

(A.O. Bureau) Kolkata, Feb 21: Magma Fincorp Ltd resumed the flagship CSR programme, Magma Highway Heroes, after a halt due to the Covid pandemic, with camps held in Faridabad and Jamshedpur on 15 February 2021. Between February and March, over 30 camps will be held and about 5000 truckers will get road safety training in Haryana, NCR Delhi, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Magma has been running the programme since 2015 and has already offered road safety and fuel efficiency training to over 1.85 Lac truckers in 300 locations



around the country. The programme has been recognised with several national level awards at CSR forums and in March 2020, it entered the LIMCA Book of records as the largest road safety training programme

for truckers in India. Magma Highway Heroes aims at improving road safety awareness and better mileage for vehicles among the truckers. The programme is held in association with Petroleum Conservation &

Research Association (PCRA), Ministry of Petroleum, Government of India. The Training camp addresses the following challenges faced by the community: • Road Safety and lack of skilling • Vehicle

Maintenance and Environmental pollution • Low income, leading to lack of motivation and aspiration • Fatigue & Health Hazards • Improper sanitization and medical care. Speaking on the resumption of the program, Mr. Kaushik Sinha, Head - CSR, Corp Comm. and Corp Services, Magma Fincorp Ltd said, "We are delighted to resume the camps yet again. Highway Heroes camps have made such a sustainable difference to the lives of the Truck Drivers, the catalysts of our economic growth. We plan to provide the training to 5000 truckers before 31st March 2021". He added.



New Delhi, Feb 21: Protesting farmers Sunday announced a series of events from February 23-27 to further intensify their agitation against the three new agricultural laws as they accused the government of adopting "repressive" measures against them. They also said they will soon devise a strategy to

keep the protest going for long. The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), which is spearheading the protests, told a press conference here that under their proposed escalation programme, February 23 will be observed as 'Pagadi Sambhal Diwas' and February 24 as 'Daman Virodhi Diwas', essen-

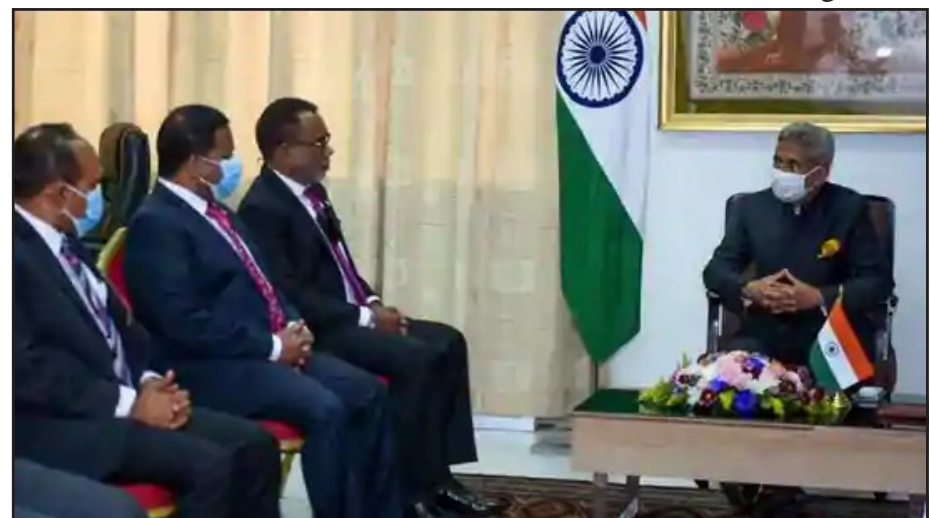
tially to underline that farmers must be respected and no "repressive measures" should be taken against them. The Morcha said February 26 will be observed as 'Yuva Kisan Diwas' (youth farmers day) and February 27 as 'Mazdoor Kisan Ekta Divws' (farmer-labourer unity day).

## India, Maldives sign agreements for developing naval harbour, boosting defence

(A.O. Bureau) New Delhi, Feb 21: India on Sunday extended a \$50-million line of credit to the Maldives for defence projects and the two countries signed an agreement to develop and maintain a key naval facility for the armed forces of the Indian Ocean archipelago. The agreements for the defence line of credit and developing the harbour at Uthuru Thila Falhu naval base were signed on the second and final day of external affairs minister S Jaishankar's visit to the Maldives. Five other agreements, including one for a \$25-million line of credit for the development of roads, were signed on Saturday. The agreement between India's

Jaishankar said India "will always be a reliable security partner". Didi said the harbour and dockyard will mark "another significant milestone" in bilateral defence cooperation, while Jaishankar said the facility will strengthen the capability of the Maldivian Coast Guard and facilitate regional humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts. The Maldives doesn't have a navy and the Coast Guard functions as the armed maritime component of the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF). There is strong maritime cooperation between India and the Maldives, and in the past, New Delhi has provided patrol vessels and maritime surveillance air-

ment on developing the harbour was in line with several requests made by the Maldives since 2013 for India's support to enhance the capability of its defence forces to effectively control and conduct surveillance in its exclusive economic zone. The agreement is also in line with a bilateral action plan for defence cooperation signed in April 2016 and subsequent discussions held during 2016-19. Jaishankar held a joint meeting with Maldives' finance minister Ibrahim Ameer, national planning minister Mohamed Aslam and economic development minister Fayyaz Ismail to review various infrastructure projects and economic activities being under-



EXIM Bank and the Maldivian government for the defence line of credit will facilitate capability building in the maritime domain, Jaishankar said without giving details. Jaishankar and Maldives defence minister Mariya Didi signed the agreement to "develop, support and maintain" the Coast Guard harbour in Uthuru Thila Falhu. The two ministers also reviewed various facets of defence and security cooperation during their meeting.

craft to bolster MNDF's capabilities. In addition to the harbour and dockyard, India will support the development of other infrastructure, communications resources and radar services at Uthuru Thila Falhu and provide training to Maldivian personnel. MNDF officials told the media that no foreign military personnel will be stationed at the facility, which will be used to dock, maintain and repair Coast Guard vessels. A joint statement said the agree-

taken in the Maldives with Indian support. During a meeting with Jaishankar on Saturday, Maldives' foreign minister Abdulla Shahid sought a second tranche of funding under India's "high impact community development projects" scheme. The ministers also agreed on the importance of peace and security in the Indian Ocean, and decided to strengthen co-ordination for regional maritime security, combating terrorism and ensuring freedom of navigation.

## Celebration of World Social Justice Day at CUO

### Webinar on a Call for Social Justice in the Digital Economy

(A.O. Bureau) Koraput, Feb 21: Forum for Social Justice, Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput in collaboration with Youth for Inclusive and Sustainable Society, University of Hyderabad organized a Webinar on 'World Social Justice Day' on 20th February 2021 at 5 am. The main focus of the programme was the World Social Justice Day theme for 2021 'A Call for Social Justice in the Digital Economy' and to promote social justice. An eminent Political Scientist and a champion of Social Justice, Prof. E. Venkatesh, Professor, Dept. of Political Science, University of Hyderabad deliberated a lecture on the above subject as the Chief Speaker. Vice-Chancellor of the Central University of Odisha Prof. I. Ramabrahmam shared his perspectives and experience. The webinar was inaugurated by Prof. P. Durgaprasad, Visiting Professor, Department of Sociology, CUO. Prof. Venkatesh spoke



about social justice and its historical context and how social justice became part of the Indian constitution. His main focus was on the idea of Social Justice, Digital Economy and the role of the State, Market, Civil Society and Academic Institutions. At the backdrop of social justice in India, he spoke about the agrarian revolution, industrial revolution and information revolution. In his deliberation, he spoke about wealth inequality and pointed out how a small percentage of the population owns a major part of the resource in In-

dia. Emphasizing the digital divide and digital economy he discussed how the world economy, has been divided due to globalization. He said, "Globalization of capital leads to globalized inequality" The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the micro-level intervention with a bottom-top approach. He emphasized on the policy-level intervention for reducing inequality in education, income, gender relations, and promote social justice. He shared his strategy of identification of 14 schools in 14 Blocks of Koraput as part of the

University's mission to achieve the educational goal of Aspirational Districts as stated by NITI AAYOG, Government of India. Prof. P. Durgaprasad raised the issues of sustainable development, poverty alleviation eradication, gender inequality, employment, UN Sustainable Development Goals and to fight against all forms of discrimination. Digital Divide must be bridged was his resolve. He elaborated how Covid-19 created an increasing level of inequality in different

spheres of social and economic life. Students of Central University of Odisha Mr. Niranjan Majhi, M.Phil Scholar, Mr. Maurya Teja, MA 3rd Semester, Manisha Mohapatra, MA 1st Semester of Sociology shared their views and discussed various perspectives of social justice. The programme was coordinated by Dr. Kapila Khemundu, Assistant Professor and Head I/c., Department of Sociology, Central University of Odisha and Mr. G. Kiran the Convener of Youth for Inclusive and Sustainable Society, University of Hyderabad.

## Kerala government 'sleeping' over "love jihad": Yogi Adityanath

Kasargod (Kerala), Feb 21: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday slammed the Left front government in Kerala for allegedly not taking any constructive steps to stop "love jihad" in the state. Though the Kerala High Court had made remarks against love jihad in 2009, the state government had done nothing so far to check it, he claimed here. However, his (Uttar Pradesh) government had brought out legislation to regulate "love

jihad" and forceful conversions, Yogi said after inaugurating the state-wide "Vijay Yatra" led by BJP state unit president K Surendran ahead of the state assembly elections expected to be held in April-May. "In 2009, the Kerala High Court had said the love jihad would turn Kerala into an Islamic state. Despite this, the state government is sleeping," the UP CM alleged. "Love Jihad" is a term used by right wing activists to refer to the alleged campaign of Mus-

lims forcing Hindu girls to convert in the guise of love. BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have recently brought religious freedom laws to stop conversion through marriage or by any other fraudulent means. Adityanath also criticised the Kerala government over the increasing COVID-19 positive cases and claimed that his state had effectively tackled the pandemic. The 15-day-Vijay Yatra, covering all major constituencies in 14 districts, is



seen as the official launch of the saffron party's poll campaign. Various union ministers and the saffron party's popular leaders and star campaigners at the national level are

expected to join the yatra in various days. Union Minister Amit Shah is expected to inaugurate the finale of the yatra at the state capital on March 7, party sources said.