



BRIEF



Devotees not adhering to social distancing norms arrive to pay obeisance to Lord Bankey Bahari at Sri Bankey Bahari temple, in Vrindavan, Sunday.

Mishap

Balalore: Four personnel of the West Bengal Police were injured on Sunday when a vehicle they were travelling in collided head-on with a passenger bus in Odisha's Balalore district, an official said. All four of them were on their way to Dhenkanal district in a police vehicle. The incident occurred on National Highway-16 at Jamujhadi in Simulia block of the district, the official said. Locals rescued the injured and rushed them to a nearby healthcare facility, from where they were later shifted to the district headquarters hospital, he added.

Chargesheet

Jammu: The Crime Branch of the Jammu and Kashmir Police has filed a chargesheet in a court here against four persons for allegedly duping an unemployed youth on the pretext of providing him a government job, an official said on Sunday. The chargesheeted persons included an employee of the Fire and Emergency Services and a daily wagger in the Public Health and Engineering Department (PHE), a spokesperson of the Crime Branch Jammu said.

Injured

Jammu: At least 10 people were injured on Sunday when an under-construction bridge collapsed in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The bridge was being constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in Vijaypur area of the district, the officials said. They said 10 people were rescued and shifted to hospital by police.

Suicide

Shahdol: Unable to bear the trauma of the death of his elder brother who drowned in a river, a 22-year-old man committed suicide by hanging from a tree at a village in Madhya Pradesh's Shahdol district, police said on Sunday. Shivendra Mishra's body was found hanging from a tree at Kotma village late on Saturday night. Sohagpur police station in-charge Yogendra Singh Parihar said.

Watery grave

Mandsaur: Three women of a family drowned while crossing the backwater of the Chambal river to reach a temple in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur district on Sunday, police said. The women, identified as Mohanbai (55), her daughter-in-law Karibai (31) and the former's sister Ramibai (42), were going to Bardia village to pray at a temple when the incident took place in Tolakhedi, Chandwas Police Post in charge Shaileendra Singh Kanesh said.

Weather
High 24 Low 13

Govt to states on 15-18 age grp vaccination

'Take measures to avoid mixing-up of vaccines'

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Sunday said states and union territories should take necessary measures, including setting up separate vaccination centres, to avoid mixing-up of Covid vaccines during administration of shots to those in the 15-18 age group.

Inoculation of children in this age category will start on January 3.

The vaccine option for those in the 15-18 age group would only be Covaxin, according to a set of new guidelines issued by the Union health ministry. Besides



A health worker shows Covaxin vial during preparation for 15-18 age group vaccination drive, in Patna.

Covaxin, the adult population of the country is being administered Covishield and Sputnik V. To ensure smooth im-

plementation of the guidelines, Mandaviya held an online interaction with health ministers and principal secretaries and

Sonia dials Baghel, seeks update on COVID-19 preparedness

Congress chief Sonia Gandhi on Sunday called Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel to seek an update on the state's preparedness to tackle the possible third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Gandhi voiced concern over the sharp increase in coronavirus cases across the country, particularly those of Omicron variant, officials said. Baghel briefed Gandhi on the availability of hospital beds and oxygen in the state. He assured the Congress president that the state was fully prepared to deal with the emerging situation, they said. Chhattisgarh reported 279 new cases of COVID-19 on Sunday morning, but is yet to report a patient of the Omicron variant.

additional chief secretaries for health of states and union territories (UTs).

He advised them to ensure orientation of vaccinators and vaccination team members for the in-

oculation exercise for those in the 15-18 age group and for identification of dedicated vaccination session sites for this category of beneficiaries, a health ministry statement said.

CENTRE TELLS SC

EWS quota: Govt to retain Rs 8 lakh income criteria

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The Centre has told the Supreme Court that it has decided to accept the recommendation of a three-member panel to retain the current gross annual family income limit for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of Rs 8 lakh or less.

The government said that the panel has recommended that family income is a "feasible criterion" for defining EWS and in the current situation, a threshold of Rs 8 lakh of annual family income seems reasonable for determining EWS. In its affidavit filed in a matter re-

lated to admissions for NEET-PG, the Centre said the panel has recommended that "only those families whose annual income is up to Rs 8 lakh would be eligible to get the benefit of EWS reservation".

"I respectfully submit that the central government has decided to accept the recommendations of the committee, including the recommendation of applying the new criteria prospectively," Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, R Subrahmanyam, who filed the affidavit on behalf of the Centre told the top court.

STF jawan injured in encounter with Naxals

Gariaband/Mainpur, Jan 02:

A Special Task Force (STF) jawan was injured in a gun-battle between Naxals and security personnel at a forest in Gariaband district on Sunday, a police official said.

The encounter broke out early morning in Devdongar forest area under Mainpur police station limits, located over 200 km from the state capital Raipur, when the STF was out on an anti-Maoist operation, he said.

Acting on a specific input about the movement of ultras in the area, bordering with Odisha, two teams of the STF had launched the operation there on Saturday night,



Injured jwan being taken to the hospital.

he said. When one of the patrolling teams was advancing through a hill, it came under fire from a group of armed Naxals that led to the encounter, he said.

After a brief exchange of fire, the rebels fled into the dense forest towards Odisha, he said.

An STF jawan, identified as Yuvraj Sagar, suffered bullet injury in his abdomen. He was rushed to a local hospital from where he was referred to Raipur for further treatment," the official said.

A team of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) and Central Reserve Police

Naxals kill mentally challenged man

On suspicion of being informer

Bijapur, Jan 02 (PTI):

Naxals killed a 38-year-old mentally challenged man in a village in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district while accusing him of acting as a police informer, a senior police official said on Sunday. A group of Maoist jammilitia members on Saturday night dragged the victim, identified as Hemant Bandi, out of his house in Timmapur village under Basaguda police station limits, located about 400 km from the state capital Raipur, and brutally killed him with sharp-edged weapons, he said. After being alerted, a team of security personnel rushed to the spot on Sunday morning. The body is being shifted to Basaguda for postmortem, he said.

Virtual mode

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Sunday decided to conduct all hearings in virtual mode for two weeks starting from January 3, in view of rising number of cases of the Omicron variant of COVID-19. The Supreme Court administration issued a circular announcing the decision on Sunday evening. It stated that an earlier circular prescribing standard operating procedure (SOP) for physical hearing (hybrid hearing) will remain suspended for the time being. "It is hereby notified for the information of the members of the bar, party-in-person and all concerned that keeping in view the rising number of cases of Omicron variant (COVID-19), the competent authority has been pleased to direct that modified Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) notified on October 7, 2021, for physical hearing (hybrid mode) will remain suspended for the present, and all hearings before the courts for a period of two weeks from and with effect from January 3, shall be through virtual mode only," the circular read.

Over 6.35 lakh registrations on CoWIN

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The CoWIN platform has till Sunday evening recorded over six lakh registrations in the age group of 15 to 18 years whose Covid vaccination is set to begin from January 3. Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya advised states and Union Territories to provide separate vaccination centres, session sites, queue and different vaccination teams for the 15-18 year age group to avoid the mixing-up of vaccines. The vaccine option for this age group would only be Covaxin, according to guidelines issued by the Union Health Ministry on December 27.

About the incident

The encounter broke out early Sunday morning in Devdongar forest area under Mainpur police station limits, located over 200 km from the state capital Raipur, when the STF was out on an anti-Maoist operation. When one of the patrolling teams was advancing through a hill, it came under fire from a group of armed Naxals that led to the encounter. After a brief exchange of fire, the rebels fled into the dense forest towards Odisha.

Force (CRPF) was rushed to spot and the Odisha police were also intimated, he said adding that search operation was underway in the area.

WINGED VISITORS



A man (unseen) feeds seagulls at Mahim Beach in Mumbai, Sunday.

'Yogi govt now plays 'jail-jail' with criminals'

Meerut, Jan 02 (PTI):

Hitting out at previous governments in Uttar Pradesh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said gangsters and criminals used to play their own games here earlier but the Yogi Adityanath government now plays "jail-jail" with them.

Addressing a public meeting after laying the foundation stone for Major Dhyana Chand Sports University here, PM Modi said, "During previous governments, criminals used to play their games and the mafias used to play their own." Earlier, there used to



be tournaments of illegal land grabbing. People making obscene remarks at daughters used to roam freely," he said, adding people living in Meerut and adjoining areas can never forget how houses used to be set ablaze here. The result of these games played by

earlier governments was that people were forced to leave their ancestral homes and there was an exodus, the prime minister claimed.

"Now, the Yogi government is playing 'jail-jail' with such criminals. Five years ago, the daughters of Meerut used to fear leaving their homes after evening. Today, the daughters of Meerut are bringing laurels to the entire country," Modi said.

Taking an apparent dig at Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav, Modi said, "The role of the government should be that of a guardian. Competence should be encouraged.

HUNG VERDICT

Days after polls, Cong Chandigarh municipal councillor joins BJP

Chandigarh, Jan 02 (PTI):

Newly elected municipal councillor from the Congress Harpreet Kaur Babla joined the BJP on Sunday, days after Chandigarh Municipal Corporation polls threw up a hung verdict.

Harpreet, the councillor from ward number 10, switched over to the saffron party along with her husband and senior Congress leader Devinder Babla in the presence of Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, local MP Kirron Kher, Chandigarh BJP chief Arun Sood and former Chandigarh BJP president Sanjay Tandon here. Khattar welcomed the

Babla into the BJP fold and said it was a matter of happiness that both quit the Congress. The results of the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation polls which were declared on December 27, gave a hung verdict, with the AAP winning 14 of the 35 wards and the BJP bagging 12.

The Congress had to be contented with eight seats while the Shiromani Akali Dal got one.

A party is required to win 19 wards to have its councillor elected as the mayor. Besides 35 councillors, the Chandigarh MP, who is an ex-officio member in the municipal corporation, has a voting right. Kirron Kher is the incumbent MP from Chandigarh.

Delhi records 3,194 fresh Covid cases

New Delhi, Jan 02:

Delhi logged 3,194 new coronavirus cases over the last 24 hours, 15 per cent higher than Saturday. One person has died, taking the total number of fatalities since the beginning to pandemic to 25,109. The city logged 2,176 cases on New Year's day - a 50 per cent spike. The positivity rate rose to 4.59 per cent, according to data from the city's health department.

Under the Graded Response Action Plan or GRAP - approved in July by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority - if the positivity rate is over five per cent for two consecutive days a 'Red' alert can be sounded. This would lead to "total curfew" and halting of most economic activities. Today's figure is the



A health worker conducts COVID-19 testing of a man amid concern over a third wave of the coronavirus pandemic in India, in New Delhi, Sunday.

highest daily surge since May 22. The city has also reported the second-highest cases of the highly transmissible Omicron strain after Maharashtra. The infection rate is also the highest in 7.5 months. Positivity rate was 5.50 per cent on May 20. The number of

8,063 new cases in Mumbai

Mumbai: Mumbai reported 8,063 new cases of coronavirus in the last 24 hours, 27 per cent higher than Saturday. With this, the total cases count has increased to 7,99,520, according to a bulletin by civic body Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation.

The Covid-related fatality count stands at 16,377 in the city with no more deaths reported in the last 24 hours. Currently, there are 29,819 active cases in the city.

active coronavirus patients is now 8,397 - the highest in about seven months.

Smugglers held with illicit liquor worth Rs 1.27 lakh

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 02: Police have arrested two ruffians on charges of liquor smuggling. The accused were illegally transporting liquor in two different cars. Police seized 30 crates of liquor worth Rs 1.27 lakhs from their possession.

ASP (Rural) Anant Kumar Sahu informed that on the directions of SSP Badri Narayan Meena, the teams of all the police stations are making sustained efforts to curb the illegal transportation and trade of liquor. Cops are maintaining vigil on the activities of



suspects and regular checking of vehicles is also being conducted. The network of informers has also been activated for the purpose.

In this sequel, Bori

Police Station received a tip off regarding a Toyota Innova car which was going to move across the Bori Police Station area. Under the directions of SSP Badri Narayan Meena,

ASP Anant Sahu and DSP (Head Quarters) Abhishek Jha, the team of Bori Police Station laid a check-point at Parsadakhurd near Aamner River.

While checking a Toyota Innova (MH14BC9860), police recovered 24 crates of liquor. The car driver Gopal Rao was strictly questioned after which he informed that another car was following him and illicit liquor is loaded in that vehicle also.

Later, police intercepted a Maruti Suzuki Car (MH01 AR 6275) and recovered 14 crates of liquor from it. The car driver

Mangal Singh was also taken in custody. Total value of recovered liquor is around Rs 1.27 lakhs.

The accused Gopal Rao (45) son of Vijay Sadashiv a resident of MP Housing Board Colony, Jamul and Mangal Singh (23) son of Late Kashmir Singh a resident of Chatai Quarters, Camp-2, Chhawani have been booked under the provisions mentioned in Section 34(2) of Excise Act.

One of the accused has managed to escape. Police are trying to search the absconding accused. Both the vehicles and illicit liquor have been seized.

Vaccination of 15 to 18 year children begins today

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 02: Under the National Covid-19 Vaccination Campaign, vaccination of 15 to 18 years old school children is going to commence from January 03. Vaccination sessions will be in the schools. Around 105182 children will receive the first dose of the vaccine.

Under the National Covid-19 Vaccination Campaign, all the preparations are being made in the schools for administering the first dose of vaccine. The arrangements have been made as per the action plan under the guidance of District Collector Dr Sarveshwar

Narendra Bhure and Additional Collector Nupur Rashi Panna.

To realize the vision of a corona-free nation, the beneficiaries of the prescribed age group of the district must ensure their participation. The parents of the children of the 15-18 years group shall be motivated to get their children vaccinated.

Chief Medical and Health Officer Doctor Gambhir Singh Thakur informed that corona virus is being found only in humans and also spreads among children. At present, in view of the spread of Omicron infection as a third wave, the Government of India has directed the administrator

Covaxin to the age group of 15 to 18 years.

District Immunization Officer Dr CBS Banjare informed that they have set a target to vaccinate a total of 1.05 lakh children in schools under this campaign. In this regard, preparations have been completed. Health Department has conducted meetings of concerned departments at the district level.

Officers and employees have been deployed for monitoring. He urged the citizens to play active role and participate in this campaign so that not a single beneficiary of the age group of 15 to 18 years is deprived of the vaccine.

Nagar Kirtan taken out on Prakash Parv of Guru Gobind Singh



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 02: On Sunday, the 356th Prakash Parv of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Maharaj was celebrated in a grand manner. Nagar Kirtan was taken out from Camp-2 Gurudwara which moved across vari-

ous localities. The Nagar Kirtan was accorded rousing welcome at various spots amidst shower of flower petals.

The procession began from Gurudwara Shri Guru Hargobind Sahed situated at Camp-2 Power House and moved across Railway Over Bridge,



Sector 1, Sector 2 and concluded at Sector 6 Gurudwara. Panj Pyaras led the procession which was participated by hundreds of devotees. The devotees swept the entire route of the procession.

People of Muslim Community also welcomed the Nagar Kirtan

at Nandini Road. Vaishalinagar MLA Vidyaratn Bhasin, MP Vijay Baghel and other political leaders also welcomed the procession at different places. Stalls were setup at different places on the route to distribute cold drinks and Prasad.

CMM Mazdoor Karyakarta Samiti takes out torch rally

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 02: Demanding justice for the retrenched workers of Chandulal Chandrakar Memorial Medical College, the activists of Jan Swasthya Karmachari Union and Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha Mazdoor Karyakarta Samiti took out a torch rally from Sirsa Gate Bhilai-3. The rally was intercepted by cops near Dr Khubchand Baghel College. The demonstrators continued to raise slogans and finally the rally concluded at Panchasheel Nagar.

CMM leader Kaladas



Dahariya alleged that the state government is overlooking the struggling workers of this private medical college which has been acquired by the state government. Through this torch rally, they tried to attract the attention of the state government towards

the woes of the retrench workers. They are demanding job security and amicable resolution in this matter.

He further alleged that the erstwhile manager of the private medical college has not paid even the minimum wages of the work-

ers. The government authorities are now indicating towards fresh recruitment of nursing staff in a situation when the existing non-regular nursing staffs are struggling for their job for the last four months. The aggrieved workers have been trying to meet the Chief Minister and narrate their woes.

Anita, Mohan, Deepa, Misi, Monika, Sunita, Mamta, Dhanush, Devraj, Laxman, Guha, Neelkanth, Geeta, Ruchi, Rukhmani, Hublal, Jai Prakash Nair, Surendra Mohanty, Neera, Khemin, Kaladas Dahariya and others were present.

43 students selected in placement drive

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 02: Sanjay Rungta Group of Institutions organised a pool campus placement drive of Maxion Wheels Aluminum India Pvt Ltd. Maxion Wheels Aluminum India Pvt Ltd is a manufacturer of Aluminum wheels for light vehicles and is a subsidiary of lochpe-Maxion, a world leader in manufacturing of Steel & Aluminum wheels for light, commercial & off road vehicles.

Diploma students of Mechanical, production and Automobile branch form various polytechnic colleges participated in this pool campus placement drive. Drive started with pre placement talk by Bharat Mali, Deputy Manager Human Resource, Maxion Wheels Aluminum India Pvt Ltd. He gave a brief introduction about the company, its

policies and recruitment process and cleared various doubts asked by students related to positions offered, job location and career growth. Total 117 students appeared in the interview process and 43 students were finally selected after the PI round with CTC of 2.34 lacs per annum.

After completion of placement process Bharat Mali said "This is the first time that Maxion Wheels Aluminum India Pvt Ltd has visited Chhattisgarh for campus Recruitment and I am very happy to see such a good number of talented candidates available here and will continue to visit the campus to provide job opportunities to the candidates in the coming future". The Director of the Group, Saket Rungta stated that the Sanjay Rungta group has been constantly striving for a bright future for students.

Two thieves and a looter arrested

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 02: Police have arrested three ruffians in three different cases of thefts and loot. Inspector Durgesh Sharma (SHO, Khursipar) informed that on the directions of SSP Badri Narayan Meena, ASP (City) Sanjay Dhruv and CSP Vishwas Chandrakar, they are taking swift action on the thefts and loot cases. Contact numbers of all the Beet Incharges and Police Officers have been displayed in different localities through posters and banners. People are being urged to immediately inform the police about the suspicious activities and offences. Action is being taken against habitual offenders, goons and anti-social elements.

Detailing about the first case, he informed that a ruffian had looted a motorcycle on the point of knife from Mohammad Danish and Arbaaz near Canal



Road on the intervening night of Sunday. On receiving complaint, police team swung into action and the accused Miraj Alam (19) son of Mehtaab Alam a resident of Zone 1, Khursipar was arrested. Police recovered the looted Motorcycle from his possession and booked him under the provisions mentioned in section 394 of IPC. In the second case, one P Aseem Ali (31) of Zone 3, Khursipar had lodged a complaint regarding theft of his Scooter. He had parked his Honda Activa (CG07BD8072) in-

front of his house on the intervening night of Saturday. The scooter was stolen by some unknown thief. Khursipar Police activated its network of informers and soon the accused was rounded up. Police recovered the stolen scooter from the possession of the accused identified as Deepak Kumar (23) son of Rajesh Kumar a resident of Shiv Shankar Nagar, Chhawani. He has been booked under section 379 of IPC. In the third case, police received a complaint from Jai Prakash Mandal

(28) regarding theft of his video camera. The victim did video shooting at Baba Balaknath Mandir after which the video camera of Panasonic brand was stolen by unknown thief. During investigation of this case, police received a tip off regarding a ruffian who was trying to sell a video camera in Zone 1 area.

Police team swung into action and the suspect was taken in custody. During interrogation, the suspect confessed to have committed the crime. The accused is identified as N Aryan (20) son of Penraj a resident of Street 8, Sector 11, Chhawani. He has been booked under the provisions mentioned in section 379 of IPC. Inspector Durgesh Sharma, Inspector Vishal Sone, SI Satish Sahu, ASI Lakhani Lal Sahu, SI Mahendra Jai Singh, Constables Rakesh Anna, Hemant Sahu, Deepak Singh, Rakesh Chaudhary, D Prakash, Chandan Singh, Nitin Singh played vital role in solving the cases.

Inauguration of 21-day yoga programme marks New Year celebration at PBIV

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 02: The Brahma Kumaris celebrated new year with the opening of the 21 day yoga programme with the traditional lighting the lamp ceremony at the Peace Auditorium located in Sector 7. BK Asha, the director of Bhilai Sewa Kendra, while stating the goal of the 21-day intensive yoga austerity program "Jeena Hai Baba Jaise" said that we have to become a knowledgeable soul and make the time successful. Surrender the ego and become humble. Always have a cheerful smile, so that those who see us, those who have received us should also have a feeling of happiness. Stay in complete silence for

one day a week and remove the shortcomings through self contemplation with the power of silence. In daily life, the spiritual power has to be increased by practicing yoga while walking. With the guidance received from senior Brahma Kumari didis, the goal is to become like Brahma Baba by imbibing the proof-of-characteristics. All the Brahma Vatsa also promised victory in the self-transformation year with certainty by lighting the flame of spiritual condition. In this 21-day yoga austerity program, there will be online inspirational classes of experienced senior Rajyogi teachers and sisters of various service centers across India.

BMC Commissioner reaches out to destitute, homeless on New Year



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 02: Bhilai Municipal Commissioner Prakash Surve reached among the poor, destitute, homeless on the occasion of New Year. He visited the shelter homes and interacted with those taking shelter there. He spoke about the facility with the elderly people.

He took information if those residing there were getting proper treatment of diseases the facility of meals twice a day and snacks etc. Surve gave

fresh fruits and other food items to the young children, women and elders and congratulated them on the New Year. In return he got the blessings of the elders.

Everyone expressed their happiness at the Commissioner for having visited them and thanked him. He sat with them for about an hour and also inquired about the reason for their staying at the shelter.

The commissioner inspected all the rooms on the ground floor and first floor of the shelter home,

met all the people staying in the room. He took stock of the food preparation, cleanliness of toilets, cleanliness of rooms, drinking water, availability of bedding, blankets and mosquito nets.

It is noteworthy that in the shelter, such people who are thrown out of their homes due to family discord, who do not have any home and place to live, in whose family there is no one to look after live in shelters. During the lockdown, the corporation has launched a campaign to find such persons and shelter them in the shelter home. At present 47 people are residing in the shelter located at Priyadarshini Complex.

Apart from this, small children are also included in the family. Assistant Project Officer Phanindra Bose, Mission Manager Aman Patel and Rekha Baghel and others were present during the inspection.

Youth stabbed to death at New Year's party



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 02: A 19-year-old youth was stabbed to death by a notorious ruffian late evening on Saturday. The victim was celebrating the New Year Day with his friends when the accused reached there and stabbed him with a sharp knife. The victim was declared brought dead in the hospital. Levelling allegations of negligence in treatment, kin of the deceased ransacked the hospital premises. On complaint of hospital manage-

ment, police have lodged an FIR against the people who ransacked the hospital. The murder accused is a habitual offender and has been arrested.

Inspector ML Shukla (SHO, Bhilai Nagar) informed that the incident occurred in Oriya Basti situated near Bhilai Nagar Railway Station. Around 22:00 hrs on Saturday, some youth of this locality were boozing to celebrate the New Year. In the meanwhile, the accused Ketan alias Tolu Bagh (20) reached there and started



abusing Prince Dongre alias Diju (19) son of Suresh Dongre over some dispute. Suddenly, Tolu Bagh took out a knife and

stabbed Diju on left chest. The knife pierced deep into the chest after which Diju fell down on the ground.

His friends informed the family members after which Diju was rushed to Chandulal Chandrakar Memorial Hospital, Nehru Nagar. After examination, the doctors pronounced him brought dead.

The friends and relatives were shocked to hear that Diju had died. Alleging negligence in treatment, they created scene at the hospital and

ransacked the premises. On information, police reached the spot and diffused the tension.

On the other hand, tension prevailed in Oriya Basti also. Locals attacked the house of the accused and have shattered all the household items. Family members of the accused have fled from the locality. Police have arrested the accused Tolu Bagh. He is a habitual offender and is accused in several criminal cases. Police have lodged a complaint and investigations are on.

FUN & FROLIC



On first Sunday of the New Year, many families and groups went for outing to gardens and enjoyed family get-together.

Those going against party will face action: Punia

To hold working committee meeting today and review party's activities

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 02: PCC State in-Charge PL Punia arrived here on three-day tour to state and would be holding state working committee meeting tomorrow and review party's activities and works of the in-charges. Commenting about results of Baikunthpur Nagar Paalika, Punia said that this should have happened and termed it as incorrect and added that by forming a committee it will be probed.

Speaking further Punia said that those who have



done wrong with the party would face action within a week's time. It is notable here that in Baikunthpur Nagar Palika results, the Congress party despite having majority of corporators lost the polling and a BJP corporator was appointed as its President. The Congress corporators have been charged with cross-voting. Along with

this about UP polls, PL

Punia said that for every atrocity or issues of corruption, Priyanka Gandhi has strongly raised her voice and protested the same at different levels. In UP, the party's booth-level organization is ready.

About the religious Guru derogatory remarks against Mahatma Gandhi, PL Punia said that many Seers and religious Gurus have come and none have so far passed such objectionable words and those who have done have faced strict action.

Committee to probe cross voting

Raipur: Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) Chief Mohan Markam has constituted a committee to look into cross voting in the election for the posts of Baikunthpur-Charcha Municipal Council President and Vice President. The committee comprising Ex-MLA Chunnilal Sahu and general secretary Arjun Tiwari will be headed by Ex-MLA Bodhram Kanwar. The committee will submit its report to PCC after taking note of the situation with discussion with local office bearers.

Protest by contract workers at CSEB turns violent



Central Chronicle News

Janjgir-Champa, Jan 02 (PTI): Some 20 police personnel were injured when a protest staged by contractual workers of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Thermal Power Plant in Madwa in Janjgir-Champa district of Chhattisgarh turned violent on Sunday.

The contractual workers of the plant, operated by Chhattisgarh State Power Company, were protesting for the past several days demanding that their services be made permanent.

However, it turned violent when police and the local administration tried to remove them from the site citing the rise in COVID-19 cases in the region and state, an official said.

"As many as 20 police personnel suffered injuries and the windshield of several police vehicles were damaged during the incident. A private vehicle was also set on fire. The situation is under control now, Janjgir-Champa Superintendent of Police Prashant Thakur said.

Police had to use water

cannons to remove the protesters as some workers at the Madwa plant, who were suffering from high blood pressure and diabetes, had to be evacuated immediately, other officials said.

While the protesting workers were supposed to talk to the chairman of Chhattisgarh State Power Company on January 4, some of them demanded that this session be held on Sunday through video conferencing, and even after this was arranged, those taking part in the stir refused to vacate the area, they added.

CM pays tribute to Savitri Bai Phule on her birth anniversary

Raipur, Jan 02: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel paid homage to India's first lady teacher, social reformer and Marathi poetess Late Savitri Bai Phule on her birth anniversary on 03rd January. Baghel said that Mrs Phule dedicated her entire life for women's empowerment and education and eradication of untouchability. She not only inspired people for women's edu-

cation but also gave education to many women, said Baghel. Apart from her own studies, Mrs Phule opened the doors of education for other women and showed them the way to study and move forward by breaking the shackles of age-old customs and traditions. Her remarkable work done in the field of women empowerment has made her memorable, Baghel added.

State govt allotting land to an institution registered in Pak: Brijmohan

Raipur, Jan 02: Former Minister and MLA Raipur (South) Brijmohan Agrawal charged that Chhattisgarh government is going to allot land to an institution in Boriyakhurd area of capital city, which is registered in Pakistan and is reportedly involved in terrorist and violent activities.

Addressing media person at party's head office, Brijmohan Agrawal said that an institution 'Dawat-e-Islami' had submitted an application in 2020 for 25 acre land in Boriyakhurd and there are about 5000 different applications pending from different institutions for purchasing of land. If any institution is even allotted land, be it for community building or any other social work then it is not more than 7.50 acre. But here the leaders talking about prestige and honour of Chhattisgarh have agreed to allot 25 acre land and that too on the piece of land on which there is massive plantation. Claims and objections have been invited on this till Jan 13.

Brijmohan informed that the state government has decided to



allot the land to an institution registered in Pakistan and on this the government should reply as to what is the connection of this institution with Pakistan. Funds come to this institution through Pakistan and Brijmohan charged that it works for spreading terrorism and violence in India. Former Minister and MLA informed that it is under some pressure that the Tehsildar is being forced to pursue this procedure further. Brijmohan Agrawal further said that few people from Congress have called 'Dharm-Sansad' in Raipur and since there was word 'dharm sansad' mentioned, few leaders from our party too participated in it. Religious Guru Kalicharan Maharaj earlier too has expressed his views through Youtube and after which he was invited in this 'dharm-sansad'

and this very effort went against Congress.

Brijmohan Agrawal charged that the thoughts and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi are not being targeted by people like Kalicharan, but by Congress party itself. It is the same party which used to close anti-nation law and now the Congress party has registered the same act against Kalicharan. Mahatma Gandhi was follower of Lord Shri Ram and he questioned as to why the Congress party does not file case against those speaking against Lord Ram and about finishing of Hindu religion. Brijmohan demanded immediate bail to Kalicharan Maharaj and if he is not issued bail, there are chances that other 'Sadhus-Sants' may get agitated and this will have direct effect on state's law & order.

CRPF neutralized 8 hardcore naxals, arrested 300 naxals

326 naxals surrendered

CRPF IG Prakash D extends New Year greetings to people of Chhattisgarh

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 02: IG CRPF Prakash D, IPS, has conveyed his New Year greetings to the people of Chhattisgarh and all the security agencies involved in anti naxal operations in the State. He mentioned that due to admirable co-operation and coordination, CRPF was able to achieve remarkable successes in ops in South Bastar. CRPF men have neutralized 8 hardcore naxals, arrested 300 naxals and due to the consistent efforts of the jawans, 326 naxals have surrendered.

The force was able to restrict the naxals into one corner of the State. In the process, many naxal hide-outs were busted and ille-



gal naxal memorials were destroyed. CRPF has successfully established 21 new base camps in the core area of naxals and by this, the people living in these areas have been provided access to developmental activities and government schemes. IG also paid homage to the eight brave-hearts who lost their lives during the operations this year and has assured all support and help to the martyrs' families.

The past one year was remarkable to CG Sector as the personnel have been decorated with 3 Shaurya Chakras, 28 Police Medals for Gallantry(PMG), 1

Police Medal for Distinguished Services(PPM), 1 Police Medal for Meritorious Service(PM), 18 Parakram Padak and 125 DG's Discs.

As part of the welfare measures to the jawans, six Field Hospitals with improved and modern medical infrastructure have been established in the interior areas. It is also pertinent to mention that the local public of these villages visit these Field Hospitals regularly as CRPF Field Hospitals are the only medical facilities in these areas. CRPF is acting as a catalyst for infrastructure and developmental activities such as road construction, erection of mobile towers, rural electrification, supply of potable water, school education, in the violence hit areas.

In addition to the ops duties, CRPF officers and men have contributed tremendously in improving the standard of life of the local populace by conducting regular health

camp, literacy camps, skill developmental programmes, training of youth for recruitment rallies, environmental awareness, water conservation, aid to handicapped people etc. The units have planted more than two lakh fifty thousand saplings and this has helped in increasing the green cover of the State.

CRPF Family Welfare Association (CWA) has conducted various seminars and workshops on different topics such as Beti Bachao, Alternate Energy, Women Empowerment, Self Care, Start Up, Health, Suicide Prevention. Besides these CWA organized online programs for the welfare of families and men.

The Sector has earned praise from many state/central departments in all the annual/ monthly programs. IG in his review stated that CRPF personnel are working hard to bring peace in the naxal violence hit areas of South bastar.

Cartoon Festival: First place given to Ch'garh CM Baghel in caricature exhibition

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 02: Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has been given the first place in the caricature exhibition held in Bangalore during the Cartoon Festival. This exhibition will last for 21 days. Gallery director VG Narendra said that since this cartoon festival is being held in collaboration with the car-



toon magazine published from Chhattisgarh, this honor has been conferred on the head of the state.

Nanjunda Swamy has

created this caricature. Narendra said that so far more than 175 exhibitions have been held in this gallery but this is the first time 3x2 feet cartoon has been put up at the exhibition.

Moreover Chief Minister of any state has been mentioned for the first time. Caricatures of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam and Balasaheb Thackeray have also been put up in this exhibition.

Municipal tax payment made easy

POS machines given to employees of 70 wards of the city

Facility for on-the-spot payment through ATM card

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 02: Paying the tax of Raipur Municipal Corporation is going to be very easy for the people. To this end POS (point of sale) machines have been given to employees of revenue department of Raipur Municipal Corporation. POS device which like an ATM swipe machine, will do on-the-spot billing. Cashless payment will be done with the help of ATM card. Training to operate this machine was given to the employees at the corporation headquarters here recently.

The RMC employees will now come out with this de-



vice for recovery of tax dues. After contacting the people, they will receive payment through POS machine at their whereabouts and the official receipt will be printed from the machine on the spot. This receipt will be the main proof of payment of tax. Revenue inspectors of all 70 wards of the city have been trained for this.

Meanwhile a list of 110 big defaulters who owe RMC more than Rs 1 lakh in all 10 zones has been prepared on the order of the Raipur Municipal

Corporation Commissioner Prabhat Malik. Six major defaulters in Zone-5 and Zone-6 have tax dues amounting to Rs 35,77,732 while six major defaulters in Zone-6 have tax dues amounting

to Rs 10,97,946 and seven major defaulters in Zone-7 have tax outstanding of Rs 16,38,978. A total of 110 big defaulters have not given Rs 4 crore 29 lakh 99 thousand 83 to Raipur Municipal Corporation.

CM meets Arjun Hirwani, inquires about his well-being



Raipur, Jan 02: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel today visited

Shri Narayana Hospital in Raipur this morning to meet Sahu Samaj State President Arjun Hirwani admitted in the hospital. While talking to Arjun Hirwani the Chief Minister inquired about his well-being and prayed for his early recovery. CM's political advisor Vinod Verma was also present on the occasion.

पल्स हॉस्पिटल

शहर के जाने माने यूरोलॉजी विशेषज्ञ डॉ. निखर जैन की सेवाएं अब पल्स हॉस्पिटल में उपलब्ध हैं।

- प्रोस्टेट बायो, किडनी एवं ब्लैडर कैंसर
- गुर्दे और मूत्राशय में विकार
- बार बार पेशाब होना, पेशाब में जलन
- नपुंसकता
- बाइपसन
- गुर्दे के रोग एवं गुर्दे में पथरी
- मूत्र पथ का संक्रमण और यूटीआई
- प्रोस्टेट बायो एवं सभी प्रकार की पथरी का दूरबीन द्वारा ऑपरेशन

0788 401 4141

डॉ. निखर जैन

एम.बी.बी.एस., एम.एच., एम.डी., एच. एच.एस. (यूरोलॉजी) (यूरोलॉजी) (यूरोलॉजी) (यूरोलॉजी)

पारामर्श प्रत्येक मंगलवार, गुरुवार एवं शनिवार दोपहर :- 3 से 5 बजे तक

2/4 नेहरू नगर (वेस्ट) मिलाई, दुर्ग (छ.ग.)

Two new campaigns started in Ch'garh on the first day of New Year

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 02: In Chhattisgarh, two new campaigns were started by the School Education Department on the first day of the new year. Panchayat and Rural Development Minister T.S. Singhdeo and School Education Minister Dr. Premsai Singh Tekam launched both these campaigns. From the program organized at the Government Higher Secondary School, District Headquarters Ambikapur, both the ministers joined the virtual program and started a 100-day campaign for the development of children's reading and mathematical skills, vocational education course for school children - Skill Hub Initiative program. In the program organised at the Mayaram Surjan Government Girls Higher Secondary School in the capital, School Education Secretary Dr. Kamalpreet



Singh, Managing Director, Samagra Shiksha, Narendra Dugga along with the principal, teachers and parents of the concerned school as well as the teachers, students and teachers of virtually all the districts. Panchayat and Rural Development Minister T.S. Singhdeo while congratulating everyone on the new year, said that the state government has decided to start both these schemes with foresight as per the need keeping in mind the present time for the children. During the Corona period, children's education and

their mental development were most affected. Announcing the launch of both the schemes, School Education Minister Dr. Premsai Singh Tekam said that a state-wide 100-day reading and mathematical skill development program will be started from today to reduce the learning loss of children due to closure of schools due to corona. This hundred day program has been designed in three levels. The first level covers children from Anganwadi to class II, the second level from classes III to V and the third level

includes children from classes VI to VIII. This program is divided into 14 weeks. For each week, a separate theme will be shared in Language and Mathematics. All necessary efforts will be made by the teachers to make them essentially proficient by making this theme very well practiced throughout the week by all the children of the class.

The material prescribed for the week will be practiced in collaboration with the community, both inside and outside the classroom. Dr. Kamalpreet Singh has asked the teachers to work on a war footing in the Hundred Days Campaign. Children should also pay special attention to studies for 3 months. On the instructions of Chief Minister Bhupash Baghel, the Skill Hub Initiative program is being conducted to provide employment oriented training to the school drop out children.

Skill Hub Initiative program will start in 18 schools of Ch'garh

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 02: Skill Hub Initiative program is being started in 18 schools of the state as a pilot project to connect the out-of-school children and youth to employable education. This program will start from the new year. It has been started by the Ministry of Human Resource Education, Central Government. This program will start in the first phase in 18 schools of Chhattisgarh state. Under the program, short term certification courses for skill training will be conducted after school hours and on weekends to pro-

vide vocational education to the school dropouts. For this new initiative being started for employable education and skill upgradation, school dropouts and youth will be given training for various job oriented tasks. People in the age group of 15 to 29 years will be selected for the training. In this regard, necessary guidelines have been given to all the district collectors for the preparation of the programme. Arrangements will be made in selected schools for training the children in various employable work. Interdepartmental cooperation will also be taken in this work. The District

Education Officer and the nominated officers attached to the Education Department will monitor the training. Vocational trainers posted in the school will make training and other arrangements. After the training, the trainees will also be linked with employment.

Along with this, skill certificates and academic credit will be obtained through skilling, re-skilling, upskilling courses. Schools affiliated to the Skill Hub Initiative will be registered on the Skill India portal. In the pilot phase of this program limited duration training will be conducted.

Ch'garh's COVID-19 tally rises by over 100 for 3rd consecutive day

■ 190 COVID-19 cases detected on Friday

Raipur, Jan 02: Chhattisgarh recorded over 100 COVID-19 cases for the third consecutive day on Friday, with the overall tally in the state reaching 10,08,187 after 190 people were detected with the infection, an official said. The death toll remained unchanged at 13,600, while the recovery count increased to 9,93,818 after seven people were discharged from hospitals and 11 completed home isolation, leaving the state



With rise in number of Corona cases in city, the testing has gained momentum at various centres.

with an active tally of 769, he said.

"Raipur recorded 51 cases, followed by 43 in Bilaspur, 32 in Raigarh, 14 in Korba and 11 in Durg. No fresh cases were reported in 9 districts. With 25,332 samples being examined during the day, the number of tests in the state went up to 1,49,36,727," the official said.

Chhattisgarh's coronavirus figures are as follows: Positive cases 10,08,187, New cases 190, Death toll 13,600, Recovered 9,93,818, Active cases 769, today tests 25,332, Total tests 1,49,36,727.

SKF announces seizure of counterfeit products in Raipur

Raipur, Jan 02: SKF India, as a part of its ongoing initiative to ensure genuine and reliable products to its customers, announced the seizure of a number of products marked "SKF" from three counterfeit sellers and one branding workshop in the main bearing market of Raipur.

Based on the initial information shared with the authorities, a thorough investigation was conducted, and enforcement action then planned. The raid was carried out by the local police authorities in cooperation with SKF India. A large number of counterfeit SKF packed

bearings of various types and sizes, used across industrial & automotive applications, a number of empty cartons and packaging material, printed labels for cartons were seized. Counterfeit bearings continue to be a challenge in recent years and all markets are now susceptible to receiving these unpredictable quality products, of all brands, unknowingly. These counterfeit products may lead to production and other losses due to unplanned shutdowns. While lost sales and loss of image are some of the consequences, the total financial damage resulting from counterfeit products is dif-

ficult to quantify. SKF India shows no tolerance for counterfeit products and continues to work hard to keep counterfeit away from the market. SKF India works at educating its customers on the importance of buying genuine bearings. This raid was carried out on a tip-off received from the end customers who suffered production losses due to counterfeit bearings. Counterfeit products lookalike to genuine products and only trained SKF personnel can recognize if a product is genuine. The best way to safeguard authenticity is to source products from authorized sources.

Ch'garh govt formulating schemes to strengthen the rural economy: Patel

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 02: Higher Education Minister Umesh Patel reached various villages of Kharsia development block as a part of public relation. During this, he laid the foundation stone of works worth Rs 17.25 lakh. Higher Education Minister Umesh Patel, while addressing the villagers during public relations in the villages, said that infrastructural development works are being done in the villages keeping in mind the local needs. Construction works like CC road construction, community building, Muktidham, water tank, Anganwadi building, school building, SHG shed are being done



in villages. Due to which the basic facilities in the villages are being expanded. He said that the Chhattisgarh government is formulating schemes to strengthen the rural economy.

The government has started many schemes on priority for the people living in the village, along with providing them the means of livelihood according to their needs. Work is being done keep-

ing in mind the development of everyone, including farmers, labourers and tribal families. The Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana got higher prices for other crops including paddy.

The government has also started a scheme for landless labourers, under which landless labor families are going to get 6 thousand annual assistance from this financial year. The main source of

livelihood of the residents of tribal areas was increased by expanding the scope of purchase in support price of forest produce as well. The forest dwellers are getting the benefit of this. The price of Tendupatta standard bags has been increased from 25 hundred to 4 thousand, and 52 forest produce have been brought under the support price.

Along with this, work is also being done on a large scale in the direction of education, expansion of health facilities, eradication of malnutrition.

Under the Swami Atmanand Yojana, children are being educated in English medium in government school fees.

Players should make the state proud at national level: Agarwal

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 02: Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Jaisingh Agrawal said that along with development works, sports are also being given attention by the Chhattisgarh government. He appealed to the players to play with sportsmanship and make the state proud at the national level through excellent sports. Agrawal inaugurated the 16th State Level Taekwondo Competition 2021 held at Bilaspur Sarkanda. Players from 22 districts

of the state participated in this competition, which continued till December 29. In the program, Mr. Jaisingh Agrawal announced to give two thousand rupees each to 80 children and 20 members of the sports organizing committee who were selected for the national Taekwondo competition with voluntary donation. He hoped that the residents of Bilaspur would get an opportunity to watch excellent sports. Agarwal said that the state government is working to promote sports. Chief Minister Bhupesh

Baghel has gifted four sports academies in Bilaspur. Due to which the players of the region will get a chance to move forward and they will bring glory to the state by bringing laurels in the country and abroad.

Addressing the program, Chairman, District Co-operative Central Bank Bilaspur, Mr. Pramod Nayak while addressing said that children from different parts of the state are participating in sports.

Take full advantage of the platform that they have got and showcase

your talent to the best. Mayor Ram Sharan Yadav presided over the program.

This competition is organized for Sub Junior Cadet, Junior Boys and Girls, Senior Women and Men categories.

Chhattisgarh State Taekwondo Federation, Bilaspur President Mr. Manoj Bhivgade, General Secretary Rampuri Goswami, former Mayor Mrs. Vani Rao and sports officials, coaches, managers and players of various sports associations were present in the program.

We need to move forward following the right path of Guru Ghasidas: Daharia

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 02: Urban Administration, Development and Labour Minister of Chhattisgarh Government Dr. Shiv Kumar Daharia has said that we need to move ahead by following the path shown by Baba Guru Ghasidas, who was a symbol of love and goodwill. He gave the message of truth, non-violence and equality among human beings. We all should inculcate these messages in our lives.



By following the path shown by Guru Babaji, mutual brotherhood, social harmony, love and goodwill can be further strengthened in the society.

He said that following the ideals of Guru Baba, we are working for public

development in the society and the state. These views were expressed by Dr. Daharia while addressing the program of Param Pujya Guru Ghasidas Jayanti celebrations at village Korasi and Paraspani (Dhombhati) of Arang assembly constituency of Raipur district. On this occasion, he also announced to conduct various development works of the area. In the program of Guru Ghasidas Jayanti, Guru Vandana and Chauka Aarti were presented. An attractive presentation of Panthi dance and other cultural programs was given in the program.

Minister Dr. Daharia was warmly welcomed by the villagers. Dr. Daharia also announced to provide one thousand five hundred rupees to the cricket team. During the program, District President Arang, Khilleshwar Devangan, District Panchayat member Mrs. Durga Rai, Mrs. Hemlata Dumendra Sahu, Shriaju Ram Banshe, Nandu Sahu, Mohan Sahu, Komal Sahu and Bablu Bhatia, including various public representatives, Sarpanch and representatives of Panchayats, and citizens were present.

Two arrested for smuggling banned drugs

Konta/Sukma, Jan 02: Under the guidance of Superintendent of Police Om Chandel and under the supervision of SDOP Tongpal Rajat Nag, on the information of the informer on 01/01/2022, under the supervision of SD OP Tongpal Rajat Nag, on the information of the informer, the staff of Pramod Kashyap police station in-charge from the police station, 02 suspicious persons were seen coming from the motor cycle, after stopping and interrogating and searching, found the narcotic substance (ganja) in a white colored bag. Sarkar age 21 years, (2) Ranjan Haldhar father Deepak



Haldhar age 23 years, both from Sakinan Umarkot Orissa.

The total weight of the received narcotic substance (ganja) was 09 kg 591 grams, whose estimated price is 63000 = 00 rupees (sixty three thousand

rupees). 01 motor cycle was seized with narcotic drug Ganja. In this regard, a crime was registered under the narcotics act in the police station, up no. 01 / 2022, section 20 (b) and was presented before the honorable court.

BRIEF

Two suspended

Jhabua: A police station in-charge and an assistant sub-inspector were suspended after some video and audio clips surfaced in which they were purportedly seen and heard cane-charging and abusing people in Madhya Pradesh's Jhabua district, officials said. The incident took place at a square in Raipur town, about 40 km from the district headquarters, following which some people also thrashed the police station in-charge on duty.

Excise policy

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh government has released a new excise policy for the year 2022-23 to help farmers generate more revenue with their produce. The move is aimed at generating employment and providing market for farm produce, besides attracting large scale investors, Additional Chief Secretary Excise and Sugar Industry Sanjay Bhusha Reddy told.

Tiger captured

Kolkata: After eluding hordes of forest personnel for hours, a full-grown Royal Bengal Tiger was captured from a village in Kumirmari area of Sundarbans. Forest Minister Jyotipriyo Mallick told PTI that the male tiger could be tamed after two tranquiliser darts hit the animal. The tiger will be examined by vets and released in the jungle if everything is okay in another two days.

Attracts tourists

Jammu: The two-day Patnitop winter carnival witnessed a huge footfall of tourists who visited Sanasar, Kud and Batote to celebrate the New Year. Chief Executive Officer, Patnitop Development Authority (PDA), Sher Singh, the carnival was organised to promote tourism in Patnitop and its surrounding areas. He said the carnival was organised by the PDA in collaboration with the Tourism Department and the district administrations.

Court stays

New Delhi: A court here has stayed an order directing registration of a first information report (FIR) against several police officials over alleged custodial torture of a man arrested in a robbery case, molestation of his family members, and staging of a dog fight in his house. Additional Sessions Judge Rajesh Malik stayed the Dec 22 order on a revision petition filed by three police constables who claimed that robbery accused not trustworthy.

Factory busted

Ghaziabad: An illegal arms factory was busted with seizure of 20 fully-built and 16 semi-built country-made pistols. The unit was busted with the joint action of Special Operation Group (SOG) and Bhojpur Police of the district. The illegal unit was set up in a long-abandoned semi-constructed building at a road which connects Machri chowk to Patti village, a senior police officer said.

Experts call notion dangerous that omicron is natural vaccine

● Say doesn't take long COVID into account

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The notion that Omicron is a natural vaccine is a "dangerous idea" spread by irresponsible people who don't take into account "long COVID" about which very little is understood, experts have said. The Omicron variant of COVID-19, which is said to be much more infectious than the other variants, is, however, causing milder infections, less hospitalisation and deaths which is leading to the notion that it can act as a natural vaccine. Recently, a Maharashtra health official also claimed that Omicron will act as a natural vaccine and may help in COVID-19's progression towards the endemic stage.



Health workers check monitoring devices inside a COVID-19 isolation ward to treat patients infected with the Omicron variant, at Patliputra Sport Complex in Patna, Sunday.

Noted virologist Shahid Jameel said the notion that Omicron is a natural vaccine is a dangerous idea spread by irresponsible people. "It breeds complacency and is rooted more in pandemic fatigue and the inability to do more, than in evidence available at this

time," he told PTI. Jameel, the former head of the advisory group to the Indian SARS-COV-2 Genomics Consortia (INASACOG), said those who advocate this don't take into account "long COVID" about which very little is understood. "Especially in India,

where malnutrition, air pollution and diabetes are rampant, to willingly let people be exposed to a virus about which you understand little is not good science and public health," he said.

Giridhara R Babu, professor and the Head of Lifecourse Epidemiology at the Public Health Foundation of India, said however mild Omicron is, it is not a vaccine.

"There are deaths and hospitalisations due to this variant. Stay away from misinformation. Compared to vaccination, natural infection cannot protect the population (against death or hospitalisation) against any variant (Alpha, Beta, Gamma or Delta). Proponents of herd immunity are saying it again that Omicron would provide herd immunity. Evidence matters, not opinions," he said.

'NCB official called up 'panch' to sign back-dated papers'

Mumbai, Jan 02 (PTI):



Nawab Malik

Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik on Sunday fired a fresh salvo at the Narcotics Control Bureau, alleging that an NCB officer called a 'panch' to sign backdated panchnama papers in a case.

Malik's comments came days after the NCB approached the Bombay High Court to cancel the bail granted to his son-in-law in a drugs case.

When contacted, an NCB official refuted Malik's allegations and termed them as "false and baseless". Addressing reporters, Malik also released two audio clips - one of a conversation purportedly between an NCB officer calling a panch (witness) 'Maddy' to sign backdated papers related to a case. Another audio was of a phone call purportedly between the panch and NCB's Mumbai zonal director Sameer Wankhede, whose tenure with the central anti-

drugs agency ended on December 31.

The NCB's falsehood doesn't seem to stop...the way officers have made bogus cases by getting signatures from witnesses on blank papers, implicating people in false cases. And now, to set the cases right, they are calling the panchs to sign on backdated panchnama papers, Malik said. I am going to approach a court in this matter, the NCB spokesperson said. Malik said his son-in-law Sameer Khan arrested in a

drugs case last year and later released on bail was being singled out to put pressure on him, but he will continue to expose the falsehood of NCB officials.

"The agency has the right to appeal in a higher court if they are not satisfied with the order, but appeals are pending in (actor) Rhea and Showik Chakraborty's case (a drugs case linked to death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput). It would have been better had the papers (pertaining to Sameer Khan's case) come (in public domain) from court," he said. But, the way PR agencies circulated unsigned papers of the NCB reflects malafide intention behind this, the minister claimed. Malik, without taking any name, also claimed that a "very senior BJP leader" in the state has been lobbying with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs for Wankhede's extension in the central agency in Mumbai.

AAP slams Channi Govt for not arresting Majithia

● As his photos surface online

Chandigarh, Jan 02 (PTI):



Raghav Chadha

AAP leader Raghav Chadha on Sunday slammed the Charanjit Singh Channi government in Punjab for not arresting Akali leader Bikram Singh Majithia who has been booked under the NDPS Act.

Alleging that Majithia is roaming around openly, Chadha claimed that pictures of the Akali leader surfaced on social media showing him paying obeisance at the Golden Temple. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader alleged the Channi government did not want to arrest Majithia as there was a

setting between it and the Badals. Even as the Punjab Police is hunting for Majithia, booked under the Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substance (NDPS) Act, his pictures at the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar went viral on social media.

Without mentioning when they were clicked, the Youth Akali Dal, the youth wing of the

Shiromani Akali Dal, shared the leader's photos on its official Facebook page. The pictures surfaced at a time when the Punjab Police has been conducting raids to arrest Majithia, who is a former state minister.

Last month, Majithia was booked under the NDPS Act on the basis of a 2018 report of a probe into a drug racket in the state. He is the brother-in-law of Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal and brother of former Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal. Addressing the media here on Sunday, Chadha said nearly two weeks have passed since the registration of FIR against the Akali leader but he has not been arrested yet.

Statements regarding D.Litt for Prez are irresponsible: Kerala Gov

Kochi, Jan 02 (PTI):



Arif Mohammed Khan

Terming as "irresponsible" and "ignorant" the statements that he had recommended conferring of Kerala University's honorary D.Litt on President Ram Nath Kovind, Governor Arif Mohammed Khan on Sunday said he was seeing a "disturbing trend" which impinges the national institutions, dignity and prestige.

"What I have to speak, I have spoken. I am not going to respond to irresponsible statements. I cannot react to ignorant statements. I am not going to respond to statements made out of sheer ignorance," Khan said to reporters when asked whether he had made any recommendation to confer D.Litt on President Kovind. The Governor said that as far as making any

recommendation was concerned, it was either within the ambit of the university authorities or the Chancellor.

He further said, "I have already said that I am seeing a disturbing trend which impinges on our national institutions, national dignity and national prestige, apart from other

things."

He also added that the President and Governor are considered as national institutions and under Article 51A of the Constitution, national institutions are to be respected. "We should not discuss national institutions in a light manner. We should not. It is a question of national prestige and dignity," Khan also said.

His remarks came in the wake of senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala's allegations that the Left-front government had rejected the recommendation from the Governor to confer Kerala University's honorary D.Litt on the President and the subsequent statement by Leader of Opposition in the state assembly VD Satheesan that "if the Governor had inappropriately recommended any-

one's name for D.Litt, then it's illegal".

"If the Governor as the Chancellor had asked the vice chancellor to award D.Litt to anyone, then it's a misuse of his official position," Satheesan had said.

Kerala CPI(M) secretary Kodyeri Balakrishnan, on the other hand, had denied the allegation that the party was against the recommendation to give a honorary doctorate to the President.

On being asked whether he will change his decision to step down as Chancellor of universities, Khan said that as per the statutory law, the Governor was given the position to limit interference of the executive in universities.

"However, if those who made the law are breaking the law, then there is no point in my continuing as Chancellor," he said.

Focus on WB, instead of Goa, Tripura: BJP to TMC

Kolkata, Jan 02 (PTI):

BJP vice-president Dilip Ghosh on Sunday questioned Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee's visit to Tripura, claiming that there was nothing left for the party in the Northeastern state following the civic polls there.

Maintaining that the TMC should instead pay attention to the development of West Bengal, he claimed that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's pet project 'Duare Sarkar' (government at doorsteps), whose another edition was to commence from Sunday, was cancelled owing to paucity of funds.

"TMC has nothing left in Tripura, why is he

(Abhishek Banerjee) going? People of Tripura have made it clear that such party will not survive there," Ghosh told reporters here.

He said that instead the TMC government should ensure that the people of West Bengal do not have to go outside in search of jobs. "Whether TMC will flourish in Tripura or Goa will be seen later, but as of now they should pay attention to Bengal," he said.

The TMC is trying to spread its wings in different parts of the country and has said that it will fight the assembly polls in Goa and Tripura.

Ghosh claimed that government projects were hitting roadblocks in West Bengal owing to lack of planning and funds.

FOG SITUATION



A small fire burns as a man stands in the background amid low visibility due to fog on a cold winter morning, in New Delhi, Sunday.

Suspected goat lifter lynched in Assam, two held

Golaghat, Jan 02 (PTI):

A 45-year-old man was lynched by three persons in a remote village of Golaghat district on the suspicion that he had stolen a goat, a police officer said on Sunday.

Two persons have been detained in connection with the incident, which took place at Mamarani village in Dergaon police station area, reportedly in the presence of locals.

Prodip Choudhury, the officer in-charge (OC) of Dergaon Police Station, said no complaint was registered in the first 12 hours of the attack. "The family members the victim, identified as Sanjay Das, visited the police station only a while ago. They have filed a complaint. We have just registered a

case," Choudhury told PTI.

According to the police, Das was attacked by three persons, who resided in the same village as him.

He was first taken to Dergaon Civil Hospital following the attack, but doctors there referred him to Jorhat Medical College and Hospital (JMCH).

The 45-year-old, however, succumbed to his injuries early on Sunday.

Two accused, who have been picked up by the police, are being interrogated to find out more details about the case. "As per our information, a goat that belonged to one of the culprits went missing and Das was suspected to have stolen it. The goat owner along with his friends thrashed the victim, leading to his death," Choudhury explained.

'Modi can't claim to be 'fakir' after NGT resolved to address environmental disputes

Rs 12 cr car in his cavalcade'

Mumbai, Jan 02 (PTI):



Sanjay Raut

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut on Sunday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should not call himself a 'fakir' now with the addition of a "Rs 12 crore" car in his cavalcade.

In his weekly column 'Rokhthok' in the Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana', Raut also praised former prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru for always using an Indian-made car, and late PM Indira Gandhi for not replacing her security guards despite a threat to her life. On December 28, media reported pictures of a Rs 12 crore car for Prime Minister Modi. A person who calls himself a fakir, a pradhan sevak, uses a foreign made car," Raut said.

The prime minister's security and comfort are important, but from now on, the pradhan sevak should not reiterate that he is a fakir (ascetic), the Rajya Sabha member said.

A Mercedes-Maybach S650 Guard was recently added to the prime minister's cavalcade by the Special Protection Group.

The price quoted for a Maybach car in a section

of the media is over Rs 12 crore.

However, government sources had said the new car was a replacement of the BMW used by the prime minister as the German carmaker stopped production of the vehicle.

Official sources had also said the SPG security detail has a six-year norm to replace vehicles used for the protectee and that Modi has not given any preference on which cars to use. They also said that the car costs about one-third of the price quoted in the media.

Raut on Sunday said Modi, who started 'swadeshi' initiatives like 'Make in India' and 'Start-Up India', is using a foreign manufactured car.

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The National Green Tribunal in 2021 not only flagged key environmental issues of the country but also brought a new dynamic functioning style as it sensitised the government machinery to act fast and intensify its surveillance and vigilance mechanism.

The NGT cracked the whip on industrial units causing pollution and stressed on cleaning of the Ganga and the Yamuna.

With courts switching to the virtual mode in the wake of COVID-19, the NGT continued to hear the cases through video conferencing and it even advanced its summer vacation for 2021 in the light of exponential surge in coronavirus cases in April and May.

The year gone by also saw imposition of heavy

compensations on public authorities for failing to discharge their "statutory" obligations and corporate houses for damaging the environment and ecology.

Expressing dissatisfaction over the cleaning of Ganga, the NGT said innocent citizens drink water of the river out of reverence without knowing the harmful contents and the least expected from the authorities is to notify the extent of harmful contents at appropriate locations.

Observing that the challenge of cleaning Ganga remains in spite of monitoring for the last 36 years, the tribunal said time has come for accountability to be fixed for proper and timely utilisation of funds allocated for the purpose.

Based on water quality data, the Central Pollution

Control Board (CPCB) identified 351 polluted river stretches and rejuvenation plans were prepared according to the directions of NGT and with a view to bring water quality of these rivers to at least bathing level.

On the issue of pollution in Yamuna, the tribunal said water quality remains highly deteriorated as pollutants are still being discharged into the drains.

It rapped the authorities in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh over discharge of polluted water in the Yamuna saying they are meant to protect the public health and environment and not just enjoy position and perks.

The tribunal also took suo moto cognisance of matters relating to industrial accidents which resulted in fatalities and in-

juries.

Pan-India directions were issued in various matters ensuring prevention of industrial accidents, putting on-site and off-site disaster management plan in place, assessing environmental compensation and formulation of restoration of plan.

It also slapped a penalty Rs 20 crore on four units of Dhapur Sugar Mills Ltd and Rs 10 crore on a pharmaceutical manufacturing company in Uttar Pradesh for violation of environmental norms.

On non-compliance of safety norms by industries dealing with hazardous chemicals, the NGT directed the Kurnool administration in Andhra Pradesh to take remedial steps to restore the damage caused to the environment due to ammonia gas leak accident at Nandyal.

BRIEF

Judge blocks

Monroe: US President Joe Biden cannot require teachers in the Head Start early education program to be vaccinated against COVID-19, a Louisiana federal judge ruled, handing a victory to 24 states that had sued the federal government. US District Judge Terry Doughty wrote that the Biden administration unlawfully bypassed Congress when ordering that workers in Head Start programs be vaccinated and that students to be masked.

Hit targets

Jerusalem: Israel's military said Sunday it launched strikes against militant targets in the Gaza Strip, a day after rockets were fired from the Hamas-ruled territory. Video filmed in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip, showed three huge explosions and fighter jets could be heard flying overhead. There was no immediate confirmation on possible casualties.

Iran clashes

Tehran: Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard and an armed criminal gang clashed in a restive southeastern province, leaving three Guard members and at least five bandits' dead. Fighting took place in the district of Kourin near the Pakistani border. It also said that at least five other bandits were wounded. There were no further details. The area is in Sistan and Baluchistan province, has been scene of occasional clashes.

Cars burned

Paris: Hundreds of empty, parked cars go up in flames in France, set afire by young revelers, a much lamented tradition that appeared in decline this year, which saw only 874 vehicles burned. The number of cars burned overnight has declined compared to 2019 when 1,316 vehicles went up in flames, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin. Fewer arson attacks occurred because of massive police presence on cities' streets.

Lanka inflation

Colombo: Sri Lanka's inflation hit a double digit in December by increasing to 12.1 per cent year on year from 9.9 per cent in the previous month, the Central Bank announced, adding to the financial woes of the country. The monthly inflation measured by the Colombo Consumer Price Index was driven by monthly increase in prices of items in both food and non-food categories.

Policeman shot

New York: A New York City police officer was shot while sleeping in his personal vehicle in a police parking lot between shifts but is expected to fully recover, authorities said. Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell, sworn in just hours earlier, said the officer has a fractured skull and is undergoing treatment at Presbyterian hospital. The officer got out of his vehicle and was aided by a sergeant who saw blood coming from his head, Sewell said.

France eases some restrictions as UK says curbs last resort

Paris, Jan 02 (AFP):

France announced an easing of COVID restrictions this week and UK's health minister said curbs were an "absolute last resort", as governments face tough choices between controlling the virus and keeping economies open.

Coronavirus cases have surged globally in recent weeks, fuelled by the emergence of the highly transmissible Omicron variant, and the pandemic dampened New Year's celebrations yet again.

Europe crossed 100 million known cases, and governments there are keen to prevent healthcare systems from becoming overwhelmed by COVID-19 while also avoiding punishing restrictions.

Fully vaccinated people in France who test positive will only have to isolate for seven days, and can leave quarantine after five days if they show a negative test.

The change in rules should allow a "benefit-risk balance aimed at ensuring the virus is controlled while maintaining socio-economic life", the French health ministry said.



A COVID-19 testing site in Paris.

According to an AFP tally of official figures, 17 out of 52 countries or territories in Europe beat their previous record of most cases in a single week.

The countries with the highest ratio of infections per 100,000 inhabitants in the world were all in Europe too, with Denmark showing the worst figure of 2,045.

However, some studies have sparked hope that Omicron does not cause COVID as severe as the Delta variant, with some governments factoring that into their decisions to ease curbs.

Mass migration batters Balkans

● Economic and social reasons for people leaving

Valandovo, Jan 02 (AFP):

Abandoned shops and mostly empty streets offer few signs of life in North Macedonia's Valandovo, where young people are fleeing in large numbers hoping to find a better life abroad. Like much of this impoverished corner of southeastern Europe, this tiny Balkan nation is sitting on a demographic time bomb fuelled by an ageing population, sinking birth rate and mass migration.

North Macedonia has shed 10 percent of its population in the last 20 years. Around 600,000 Macedonian citizens now live abroad, according to World Bank and government data.

Abysmal economic

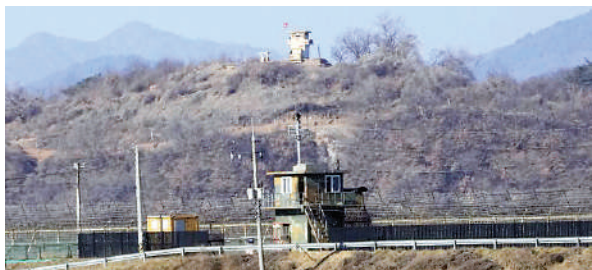


Students walking in a street of the North Macedonian town of Valandovo.

growth and a lack of investment have clobbered the country, now home to just 1.8 million people, in its 30 years of independence. "If you have a little over 2.4 million citizens and more than a quarter have left, then you have to seriously be worried about what is happening," says Apostol Simovski, director of the

country's statistics office. Villages and small towns such as Valandovo, 146 kilometres (90 miles) from the capital, offer few jobs, pushing the ambitious and able to search elsewhere. "The spirit of young people has been systematically destroyed," Pero Kostadinov, the newly elected 33-year-old mayor tells AFP.

Unidentified person crosses border into North Korea



Military guard posts of North Korea, rear, and South Korea, front, are seen in Paju, near the border with North Korea, South Korea, Sunday.

Seoul, Jan 02 (AP):

South Korea's military said Sunday that an unidentified person crossed the heavily fortified border into North

Korea. South Korea had earlier spotted the person with surveillance equipment at the eastern portion of the border and sent troops to capture him or her. But the troops failed

US seeks new 5G delay to study interference with planes



A 5G telephone tower in US.

Washington, Jan 02 (AFP):

US authorities have asked telecom operators AT&T and Verizon to delay for up to two weeks their already postponed rollout of 5G networks amid uncertainty about interference with vital flight safety equipment.

The two companies said they are reviewing the request. The US rollout of the high-speed mobile broadband technology had been set for December 5, but was delayed to January 5 after aerospace giants Airbus and Boeing raised concerns about potential interference with the devices planes use to measure altitude. US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and the

US seeks new 5G delay to study interference with planes

head of the Federal Aviation Administration, Steve Dickson, asked for the latest delay in a letter sent to AT&T and Verizon, two of the country's biggest telecom operators. The US letter asked the companies to "continue to pause introducing commercial C-Band service" — the frequency range used for 5G — "for an additional short period of no more than two weeks beyond the currently scheduled deployment date of January 5."

Asked by AFP for comment, Verizon spokesman Rich Young replied, "We've received the government's letter after 6 pm on New Year's Eve. We're in the process of reviewing it." AT&T also said it was reviewing the government request.

In the letter, the US officials assure the companies that 5G service will be able to begin "as planned in January with certain exceptions around priority airports."

Pakistan reports spike in numbers of omicron cases

Islamabad, Jan 02 (PTI):

Pakistan's Planning Minister Asad Umar has said that there are clear indications of the beginning of a new wave of the pandemic amidst a spike in the number of the new cases of COVID-19's Omicron variant in the country.

Umar, who is also the chief of the country's anti-pandemic body National

Egypt pushes for calm after flare-up in Gaza hostilities

Jerusalem, Jan 02 (AP):

Egyptian officials Sunday pushed for Israel and Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip to rein in hostilities and adhere to a cease-fire in place since the war in May.

The Egyptian efforts came a day after Hamas militants launched rockets into the Mediterranean Sea off central Israel, prompting Israel to carry out airstrikes on militant positions in Gaza early Sunday. No casualties were reported. The Israeli military said it struck a rocket manufacturing site and military posts belonging to Hamas in the Gaza Strip overnight in response to rocket fire.

CLEARs DAMAGE



A man clears damaged or destroyed goods from a store after a flood caused by heavy rainfall in Jiquirica, Bahia State, Brazil.

Fire burns South Africa's Parliament building

Cape Town, Jan 02 (AP):

Firefighters battled a blaze at South Africa's national Parliament complex on Sunday that sent a dark plume of smoke and flames into the air above the center of Cape Town.

The fire started on the third floor of a building that houses offices and spread to the National Assembly building, where South Africa's Parliament sits, Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure Patricia de Lille said.

The fire is currently in the National Assembly chambers, De Lille said. This is a very sad day for democracy for Parliament is the home of our democracy.

City of Cape Town Fire and Rescue Service spokesman Jermaine Carelse said no injuries have been reported. Security guards first re-



Firemen spray water on flames erupting from a building at Parliament in Cape Town.

ported the fire at around 6 a.m., he said, and 35 firefighters were on the scene.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa was briefed on the fire, De Lille said. The president and many of South Africa's high-ranking politicians were in Cape Town for the funeral service of

the Parliament complex gates. Before announcing that the flames had advanced to the National Assembly building, she had said that firefighters have the situation under control. Authorities feared that parts of buildings, some of them first built in the late 1800s, might collapse because of the heat. The bitumen on the roof is even melting, an indication of the intense heat. There have been reports of some walls showing cracks, which could indicate a collapse, News24 website quoted Carelse as saying. Police cordoned off the complex and closed roads. Some of the blocked-off areas were near where people had left flowers and other tributes to Tutu. Images seen on social media showed a mass of flames licking through what appeared to be the roof of one of the parliament buildings.

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता, लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खांड राजेन्द्र पार्क चौक, दुर्ग (छ.ग.)
दूरभाष क्र. 0778-2323633 E-mail:eedurg-phe-cg@nic.in

// ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट निविदा सूचना (द्वितीय आमंत्रण) //

छत्तीसगढ़ के राज्यपाल की ओर से लोक निर्माण विभाग छ.ग. शासन में एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत 'बी. सी. डी' एवं 'एच.ओ' में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से प्रयत्न 'ए' में प्रतिशत दर पर दुर्ग जिले के विकासखंड दुर्ग/धमचा/पाटन के निम्नलिखित ग्रामों में जल जीवन मिशन रेट्रोफिटिंग नवयुग प्रदाय योजना योजनांतर्गत विभिन्न कार्य हेतु ऑनलाइन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है :-

क्र.	नि.सू.क्र./दिनांक	सिस्टम क्र.	विकास खंड	ग्राम का नाम	अनुमानित लागत (रु. लाख में)
1	197/30.12.2021	89851	दुर्ग	पुरई	153.24
2	198/30.12.2021	89852	दुर्ग	कुथरेल	144.18
3	199/30.12.2021	89853	दुर्ग	कोटनी	59.21
4	200/30.12.2021	89854	दुर्ग	दौर, करंजा मिलाई	144.25
5	201/30.12.2021	89855	दुर्ग	धनोरा	304.45
6	202/30.12.2021	89856	दुर्ग	खाड़ा, चंगोरी, झोला, विरेजर, तिरंगा	392.34
7	203/30.12.2021	89857	धमचा	डोमा, पुरदा	144.25
8	204/30.12.2021	89858	धमचा	दारगांव	88.75
9	205/30.12.2021	89859	धमचा	मुडपार (ओखला), परसादा, पिटीरा, विकुड़िया, सेमरिया (बाग)	315.37
10	206/30.12.2021	89860	धमचा	मालाकोडी, पेण्डी (कु.), करेली, गोबरा, खपरी (प.), तितुपुरघाट, सिल्ली	373.42
11	207/30.12.2021	89861	पाटन	सिपकोना, खन्हरिया (डी), केसरा	313.15

नोट- उपरोक्त कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापन, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट वेबपोर्टल <http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> दिनांक 10.01.2022 से देखे जा सकते हैं तथा बिड सबमिशन की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक 14.01.2022 है।

कार्यपालन अभियंता, लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खांड दुर्ग (छ.ग.)
G-66407/1

Government Polytechnic Bhatapara (C.G.)
शासकीय पॉलिटेक्निक भाटापारा (छ.ग.)

Main Road Deori, District Balodabazar-Bhatapara 493118 (C.G.) India
मेन रोड देवरी, जिला बलौदाबाजार भाटापारा 493118 (छ.ग.) भारत

क्रमांक/शा.पं.मा./दंडर/2021/731 भाटापारा, दिनांक 29/12/2021

// सूचना //

सूचित किया जाता है कि संस्था द्वारा smart interactive board, projector and pen tablet के क्रय हेतु निविदा सूचना क्रमांक/GPB/Store/Tender/2021/655 भाटापारा दिनांक 08.12.2021 जारी किया गया है। उक्त निविदा सूचना की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक 03.01.2022 को संशोधित कर दिनांक 10.01.2022 की जाती है। उक्त निविदा को रजिस्टर्ड पोस्ट अथवा स्पीड पोस्ट अथवा पी एण्ड टी विभाग से अधिकृत कोरियर के द्वारा अथवा संस्था कार्यालय में उपस्थित होकर जमा कर सकते हैं।

प्राचार्य
शासकीय पॉलिटेक्निक भाटापारा

G-66418/1

N.M.D.C. LTD.
(A GOVT. OF INDIA ENTERPRISE)
BAILADILA IRON ORE MINE, BACHELI COMPLEX
TRAINING, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT.
BACHELI - 494553, DANTEWADA (CHHATTISGARH)
Corporate Identity Number: L13100TS1958GOI001674

No.BC/DGM(MIN.)/T&S,E/APPR-301-A/Vol-X/2021-22/3495 Date:25.12.2021

Apprenticeship Training Vacancy Notification 2021 (Amendment)

In supersession to our earlier advertisement No. BC/DGM(MIN.)/T&S,E/APPR-301-A/Vol-X/2021-22/1500 dated: 10.05.2021, M/s. NMDC Limited BIOM, Bachel Complex is organizing walk-in-interviews for Graduate (Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, Electrical & Electronics and Mining Engineering), Technician (Mechanical, Electrical, Electronic & Tele communication, Mining, Modern Office Practice Management and Computer Science & Application) and Trade Apprentices (Computer Operator and Programming Assistant) under Apprenticeship Act-1961, Eligible candidate having the requisite qualification as mentioned against the respective category may attend walk-in-interview.

Interested and eligible candidates are advised to carefully read the full advertisement for details of educational qualification, eligibility criteria and schedule of interview at official website www.nmdc.co.in

Asst. General Manager (Min)T,S&E



CENTRAL Chronicle

Established 1974 Volume 47 No. 91

Cyber bullying of women

Acting on a complaint filed by a woman journalist alleging she is being targeted by an unidentified group of people on an app called 'Bulli Bai' using software code sharing website, GitHub, the Delhi Police have registered an FIR under Section 509 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) at South East district's Cyber Police Station. Union Information and Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has said the perpetrator's account had been blocked by GitHub, adding the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) and police authorities are coordinating further action. This is not first time that women, particularly from minority communities have been targeted online. It forms a kind of cyber bullying of women. Last year, on July 4, Afreen Fatima participated in an online forum about the persecution of Muslims in India. No sooner had she wrapped up her session than her mobile phone was flooded with messages, informing the 23-year-old student activist that she had been 'put up for sale' on a fake online auction. And she was not alone. Photographs of more than 80 other Muslim women, including students, activists and journalists, had been uploaded on an app called 'Sulli Deals' without their knowledge. In May last year, an Indian YouTube channel 'Liberal Doge' livestreamed Eid pictures of Indian and Pakistani Muslim women, inundated with vulgar, immoderately misogynistic comments. A report said that nearly 100 female Indian politicians on Twitter were subjected to unprecedented levels of online abuse. The women were targeted not only for their views expressed online, but also for elements of their identities such as gender, religion, caste and marital status.

It is important to frame these offences in terms of hate speech, because it needs to recognise the communal angle of the offence, the derogatory use of 'Sulli' or 'Bulli' and how it is used to target Muslim women. It is in these contexts that harassment of Muslim women both online and offline takes more graphic overtones. While it is true that women face an excruciatingly large amount of online harassment on a day-to-day basis, the practice augments itself in its worst form for women coming from religious minorities and historically marginalised caste identities. The dual jeopardy of being a Muslim, and then a woman, brings Muslim women in a systematically and strategically targeted place where they are openly harassed and abused for their Muslim identity. These incidents should not be viewed in isolation. It is rooted in a wider extremist agenda of using violence against Muslim women for controlling their religious identity. Those women who were listed in the apps were mostly established, assertive and educated Muslim women who are students, activists, journalists, researchers and artists. This sort of online abuse was an attempt at seizing the already limited space they have access to, it was meant to demean and intimidate them, as is the culture in hypermasculine societies. In a communally polarised society, categorising the 'deals' incident as solely an issue of gender-based violence would be misleading. It is an example of misogyny interspersed with identity. The limits imposed on Muslim women by the cultural, social, economic and political systems extend to their agency being curtailed. Such sporadic cases of hounding Muslim women for their religious identity and political opinions reinforces these systems of control. A large number of these women do not have the social and economic capital to liberate themselves from this trope. And those who do, are consequentially battling with misogyny and a dehumanising Islamophobic rhetoric wherein they are made a deal of; debasing their identity as a commodity available to be auctioned and bargained.

Investment in intangible economy

From the nineteenth century until about 25 years ago, businesses largely invested in physical infrastructure and machinery, from railroads to vehicles. But in the past quarter-century, investment in so-called intangible assets such as intellectual property, research, software, and managerial and organizational skills has soared. Intangibles accounted for 40 percent of all investment in the United States and ten European economies, up 29 percent from 1995. And intangibles investment appears to have surged again in 2020 as digitalization accelerated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that this trend strongly hints at the emergence of a new model of capitalism, in which companies' success will be measured more by their people and their capabilities than by their machines, products, or services. Intangibles may well be driving this phenomenon. After all, there is certainly a correlation between investment in intangibles and higher productivity and growth. Economies in which intangible investment is increasing are also posting growth in total-factor productivity. Notably, the only companies that were able to maintain rates of growth after the pandemic hit were those that had invested significantly in the full range of intangibles: innovation, data and analytics, and human and brand capital.

In a dematerialized, digitized, knowledge-driven world, corporate returns, productivity, and economic growth will increasingly be tied to such assets. But unlocking their true value requires not only investing in them, but also developing the skills and managerial know-how, or human capital, needed to make effective use of them. The growing salience of intangibles thus makes the imperative of raising skills and capabilities even more acute. This emerging new form of capitalism is potentially marvellous for qualified people with highly portable skills, but somewhat scarier for the less skilled and less digitally savvy. Companies that lack the resources to make necessary investments in intangibles also could fall further behind. The dematerialized economy, if not managed well, thus risks being a recipe for inequality. But the growing concentration of revenue and profit in a small group of successful firms risks increasing disparities of income and wealth. Intangibles-heavy superstar firms tend to employ fewer, more highly skilled, and better paid people who are generally more productive than employees in less digitized businesses. If these superstars pull even further ahead, then labour's share of national income the percentage that goes to worker compensation could decline even more. Governments should do everything to spread the skills that will open up opportunities in the digital economy.

Central Chronicle welcomes, articles, write ups, comments on different issues for editorial page (800-900 words), Letter to editor for this page. It can be sent by e-mail at: editor@centralchronicle@gmail.com
The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity of thoughts.

ROSE PARADE



The Sierra Madre Rose Float Association, 'Nature's Classroom,' float in the 133rd Rose Parade Presented in Pasadena, California, US.

Microbial boost to Himalayan dry toilets can help mainstream organic farming

SAHANA GHOSH



Aesthetically, they may not quite cut it, but these two-tiered sanitation structures, set against the sprawling cold deserts of the Indian Himalayas, have supplied organic manure to local communities for their agricultural needs, in this water-limited region, for generations. These structures are water-conserving dry toilets that compost human excreta to natural manure (night soil compost) by the addition of a mixture of dry materials, such as dried livestock dung, ash and wood chips. The night soil compost comes in handy for the local agricultural requirements, particularly in the dry cold desert regions such as Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul and Spiti valley and the Union Territory of Ladakh. But social apprehensions, unhygienic conditions of dry toilets, urbanisation, modernisation, and increase in tourism have led to the popularisation of septic toilets and the decline in the use of these traditional structures since the 1980s, the easy availability of chemical fertilisers catering to cash crops has also impacted its practice, experts, government officials and local community members said.

However, scientists at CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT), may have an answer to ensure the continuance of dry toilets with improvements. They are tinkering around with beneficial bacteria extracted from the night soil compost to cobble together a 'compost booster' with carrier materials that substitutes the dry materials to speed up the degradation of the night soil to manage human waste in cold desert areas. And carrying on the tradi-

tional system is also one among the suite of efforts suggested by Ladakh's action plan on organic development and to make the union territory carbon-neutral. The plan nudges users to continue using the traditional composting toilets, with improved aesthetics and composting. 'Since the booster is prepared using beneficial cold-tolerant bacterial consortia with plant growth-promoting characteristics, it plays a role in boosting the productivity of crops when applied to fields. The product is very user-friendly as the dry-toilet users have to use a handful of the material after defecating,' said scientist Rakshak Kumar Acharya, at the Biotechnology Division, CSIR-IHBT, Palampur, India.

The booster is safe for use in terms of pathogenicity. According to the institute's director Sanjay Kumar: 'The technology saves water, produces quality compost from the faecal material to help sustain the agroecosystem of the region providing opportunities for the generation of local start-ups.' Acharya and colleagues have distributed the compost booster to households in Himachal for field trials since 2018 and have recently started a collaboration with the armed forces to solve the issue of sewage disposal in the soakage pits at their unit at Leh in Ladakh. They are in touch with Ladakh authorities to use the product in Chaksa or Ladakhi dry toilets. Tashi Tsetan, chief agriculture officer, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council elaborated that a mix of solutions such as the compost booster-bolstered dry toilet system, vermicompost and bio-fertilisers will underpin the union territory's strategy to mainstream organic farming in Ladakh by 2025 with one of its objectives to enable farmers to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The total cropped area in Leh is 10,223 hectares and only 0.2 percent of the geographical area is under cultivation. Temperatures drop to minus 30 degree Celsius in the winters. 'We have a very narrow window for agriculture (in the summer) when we use the snow and glacial melt for farming wheat and barley which are our sta-

temperature (warming) may ease the process of composting as warmer temperatures may speed up the microbial degradation process in night soil compost. 'In cold regions, the low temperature poses a big hurdle in composting due to the limited load of microorganisms and lower metabolic activity. This can be resolved with the addition of the cold-adapted bacteria as it accelerates the rise in temperature at the onset of composting,' he said referring to the compost booster. Sustainable farming strategies are advocated as one of the ways to shore up climate resilience for vulnerable communities. The limited success of the Green Revolution in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region represents one of the biggest opportunities for developing successful rural communities that rely on organic farming and agroecology, states the Mainstreaming of Organic Agriculture And Agroecology in the Himalaya Region report released at the United Nations Desertification summit in 2019.

Documenting the existing political support to organic farming in India, Nepal and Bhutan, it notes that institutional interventions facilitate 'better access to organic inputs, especially organic fertilisers, the creation of governmental units dedicated to organic farming and support for specific research, training and extension service programmes.' Scientists have flagged that rising temperatures and reduced winter snowfall are tied to loss of mass of glaciers in the western Himalayas based on long-term observations of the Chhota Shigri Glacier in the Lahaul-Spiti valley. Their research shows that summer-monsoonal snowfall plays an important role in maintaining glacier mass in the western Himalayas and if this snowfall is more frequent and stronger in the years ahead, the health of glaciers (in the western Himalayas) will most likely sustain. Factors like wood burning and forest fires and not the carbon emitted from the use of fossil fuel are the primary drivers behind the carbon-induced melting of glaciers in the western Himalayan region.

Acharya suggests that an increase in

(Sahana Ghosh writes on climate change, biodiversity, environmental health and planetary health.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Past blunders

The historical previous government not only gifted back POK so gallantly won by our Army but also returned 93,000 POWs to Pakistan without bothering about our 54 Bravehearts who were languishing in the jails of Pakistan. Even today their fate or whereabouts are not known. An earlier government handed over the Kailash Mansarovar with 90,000 sq km of land to China and brazenly stated in Lok Sabha that land is of no use. Today, India is envisaging putting up the world's largest solar panel. The "Satyam Shivam Sundaram" logo was removed from Doordarshan, "Auto Ma Sat Gamay" verse removed from Kendriya Navodaya Vidyalaya, opposed singing of "Vande Mataram" by the previous government. The biggest genocide occurred during the earlier era like the massacre of Sikhs in 1984 post assassination of Indira Gandhi, hundred of Sadhus were killed in 1966 when they were agitating for the protection of Holy cows. The subsidy was given on Haj but the tax was imposed on Amarnath Yatra. The then government gave an affidavit in the court saying that Sri Ram was an imaginary character and they even tried to break Ram Setu. Politicians opposed the reconstruction of the Somnath temple plan of Sardar Patel and later on opposed the then President Dr Rajendra Prasad who went on to inaugurate the Somnath Temple and later made sure that Dr Rajendra Prasad never got any government perks after completion of his term. The decorated and respected war Hero Lt Manekshaw was debarred from his salary for over 30 years since he dared to hurt the ego of Indira Gandhi, but when ex-President APJ Kalam came to know about it while visiting ailing Manekshaw in the hospital, APJ Kalam immediately gave a cheque of Rs 1.30 crore to him. Even the jihadi terrorists involved in the atrocious Mumbai attack on 26/11 were projected as Hindus and colour the attack as 'safron terror'. A previous government gifted the veto power offered to India to China. Lastly, the respective governments bled the country with enormous corruption.

Julie, email

Transparent cylinders

Public-sector Indian Oil introduced 5kg free trade LPG (FTL) cylinder conveniently named Chhotu last year to be available on production of an ID proof. Indian Oil should also implement its long-back decision to introduce new-look translucent LPG cylinders to replace age-old iron-cast cylinders also to effectively check pilferage of LPG from supplied LPG cylinders. There are always complaints that LPG gas is unauthorisedly taken out of new refilled LPG cylinders to be supplied to consumers. For future, production of new iron-cylinders for LPG should be immediately stopped and even replacing existing old iron-cylinders by transparent ones gradually in a phased manner to start from metro cities. Net payable price including of all central and local taxes should be rounded in multiples of rupees ten or fifty, because delivery-persons never return balance-money. System will further reduce financial-burden on the exchequer because of LPG subsidy. At least LPG, if not petrol and diesel, can be brought under GST network for uniformity of prices throughout the country.

Madhu Agrawal, Delhi



WHAT THEY TWEET!

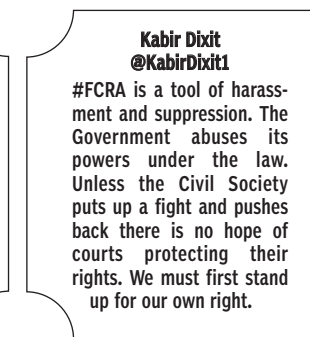


Sushant Singh@SushantSin
Chinese embassy's political officer writes to elected Indian MPs, including a union minister in Modi's council of ministers, for attending a Tibet event. Leave alone calling the Chinese ambassador to issue a demarche, we haven't even heard a word of protest from the government.

AshwiniDeshpande@Ashw
Needed to transfer money to a travel agent in Egypt. Was having problems with the transfer. He said: you are from the country of @iamsrk. I trust you. I will make the booking, you pay me later. For anywhere else, I wouldn't do this. But anything for @iamsrk. and he did!



Hussain Haidry @hussainhaidry
Around 100 muslim women who have strong vocal presence on Twitter, have been identified with their handles, and their photos are being displayed and forwarded under "Bulli Bai." This is Sulli Deals 2.0, but worse because it shows emboldenment after the last case went unpunished.



Kabir Dixit @KabirDixit1
#FCRA is a tool of harassment and suppression. The Government abuses its powers under the law. Unless the Civil Society puts up a fight and pushes back there is no hope of courts protecting their rights. We must first stand up for our own right.



Yashni Nagarajan@NagarajanYashni
Soar high over one of the most breathtaking site for Paragliding at Papu Valley, #ArunachalPradesh.



Bhramar Mukherjee
Bhramar Mukherjee@ Bhramar BioStat Cases are likely going to increase very rapidly in India over January. Important to track hospital admissions and we REALLY need that data reported daily. Rushing to the hospital in panic of a + test and mild symptoms is going to hurt, not help. Choose prudence over panic.

Mohamed Zeeshan@ZeeMohamed
I hope political scientists & historians are studying this, because this could be the most spectacular unraveling of a liberal democratic order in centuries. In the modern age, no major country has truly gone from a liberal constitutional democracy to a theocratic banana republic.

BRIEF

Consistent growth



New Delhi: Lamborghini is driving into 2022 looking to deliver consistent growth in India building on the momentum of a record year achieved in 2021, Lamborghini India Head Sharad Agarwal told PTI. With all the efforts, we also have a good order bank, he said.

To pitch

Dubai: A delegation from Jammu and Kashmir led by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will woo business leaders to invest in key sectors like tourism and handicrafts and showcase investment opportunities in the Union Territory during the J&K week starting in Dubai. The India Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai, one of the largest trade and technology exhibitions in the world, gears up to host the J&K week that will conclude on January 13.

Smart meter



New Delhi: IntelliSmart is eyeing new smart prepaid meter installation projects in multiple states where tendering process is at advanced stage, its managing director Anil Rawal told PTI. The bids have been invited by states and power distribution companies.

NTPC plans

New Delhi: State-run power giant NTPC is mulling acquiring 5 per cent equity stake in Power Exchange of India Ltd (PXIL) that provides various electricity trading options. The PXIL is India's first institutionally promoted power exchange, which has been providing various electricity trading solutions and connecting buyers as well sellers since 2008.

Units sold

Mumbai: Greaves Electric Mobility on Sunday said it sold over 10,000 units in December 2021, with the e-three-wheelers clocking a 101 per cent growth in sales a year ago. Greaves Electric Mobility strengthens its position as a market leader in both E-2W and E-3W segments, with Ampere reporting a record almost 6X growth in revenue in December 2021 compared to the same month last year and E-3W business seeing 101 per cent growth.

Misses payment

New Delhi: Future Retail said it has missed the due date for payment of Rs 3,494.56 crore to banks and lenders as it could not sell assets due to its ongoing litigation with Amazon, impacting its monetisation plans.

Govt may hike agri credit target to about Rs 18 lakh crore

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

With a view to give a boost to the agriculture sector, the government is likely to raise farm credit target to about Rs 18 lakh crore in the Budget 2022-23 to be presented on February 1, according to sources.

For the current financial year, the government has set a credit target of Rs 16.5 lakh crore.

The government has been increasing the credit target for the farm sector every year and this time also, the target is likely to be increased to Rs 18-18.5 lakh crore for 2022-23, the sources said.

The number will be frozen at the time of giving final touches to the Budget figure in the last week of the month, the sources said.

The government fixes annual agriculture credit, including crop loan tar-



gets for the banking sector. The agricultural credit flow have increased consistently over the years, exceeding the target set for each fiscal. For instance, credit worth Rs 11.68 lakh crore was given to farmers in 2017-18, much higher than the Rs 10 lakh crore target set for that year.

Similarly, crop loans worth Rs 10.66 lakh crore were disbursed in the financial 2016-17, higher than the credit target of Rs 9 lakh crore.

Credit is a critical input in achieving higher farm output. Institutional credit will also help delink farmers from non-institutional sources where they are compelled to borrow at usurious rates of interest, the sources added.

Normally, farm loans attract an interest rate of nine per cent. However, the government has been providing interest subvention to make available short-term crop loan at an affordable rate and help

boost farm output.

The government is providing a two per cent interest subsidy to ensure farmers get short-term farm loans of up to Rs 3 lakh at an effective rate of seven per cent annum.

An additional incentive of three per cent is being given to farmers for prompt repayment of loans within due date, making the effective interest rate four per cent.

To enhance coverage of small and marginal farmers in the formal credit system, the RBI has decided to raise the limit for collateral-free agriculture loans from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.6 lakh.

The interest subvention is given to public sector banks (PSBs), private lenders, cooperative banks and regional rural banks (RRBs) on the use of their own funds and to Nabard for refinancing RRBs and cooperative banks.

M-cap of nine of top-10 most valued firms jump over Rs 1.11 lakh cr

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

Nine of the top-10 most-valued firms together added Rs 1,11,012.63 crore in market valuation last week, with Tata Consultancy Services and HDFC Bank emerging as the biggest gainers.

Reliance Industries Ltd was the only laggard from the top-10 list.

The valuation of Tata Consultancy Services jumped Rs 24,635.68 crore to reach Rs 13,82,280.01 crore.

HDFC Bank's market valuation gained Rs 22,554.33 crore to Rs 8,20,164.27 crore.

The valuation of Hindustan Unilever Ltd zoomed Rs 14,391.25 crore to Rs 5,54,444.80 crore and that of Infosys went up by Rs 10,934.61 crore to Rs 7,94,714.60 crore.

India appeals against WTO ruling on sugar export subsidies

It would take over one year to take up India's appeal

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

India has appealed against a ruling of the World Trade Organization's (WTO) trade dispute settlement panel which ruled that the country's domestic support measures for sugar and sugarcane are inconsistent with global trade norms, an official said.

The appeal was filed by India in the WTO's Appellate Body, which is the final authority on such trade disputes.

India has stated that the WTO's dispute panel ruling has made certain "erroneous" findings about domestic schemes to support sugarcane producers and exports and the findings of the panel are completely "unacceptable" to it. The panel in its ruling on December 14, 2021 recommended India to withdraw its alleged prohibited subsidies under the Production Assistance, the



Buffer Stock, and the Marketing and Transportation Schemes within 120 days from the adoption of this report. Ruling in favour of Brazil, Australia and Guatemala in their trade dispute against India over New Delhi's sugar subsidies, the WTO panel has stated that the support measures are inconsistent with WTO trade rules.

The official said that the dispute panel's findings are unreasonable and not supported by the WTO rules and also evaded key issues which it was obliged to determine. "The panel's findings on alleged export subsidies undermine logic and

rationale. India has appealed in the appellate body of the WTO against the panel's ruling," the official added. In 2019, Brazil, Australia and Guatemala dragged India into the WTO's dispute settlement mechanism alleging that New Delhi's domestic support measures to producers of sugarcane and sugar and export subsidies are inconsistent with global trade rules including various provisions of the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture, Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT).

India to log high growth rate with support to vulnerable sectors

India is in better position to survive US monetary policy exit

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

Eminent economist Ashima Goyal on Sunday said India is likely to have one of the highest rates of growth in the world as there are gradual moves towards normalisation, even as stimulus and support for vulnerable sectors continue.

Goyal further said sticking to the announced consolidation path by the government in the upcoming budget will give a good signal of control and predictability. "India has come out of a very diffi-



Ashima Goyal

cult time with good macro-economic parameters. It is likely to have one of the highest rates of growth in the world, while inflation remains within the tolerance band," she said.

Goyal, who is also a member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI, in an interview to PTI said monetary-fis-

cal coordination has worked well and stimulus has been adequate but not excessive. "There are gradual moves towards normalisation, even as some stimulus and support for vulnerable sectors continues," she said, adding that the financial sector is healthy. The RBI has lowered the growth projection for the current financial year to 9.5 per cent, while the IMF has projected a growth of 9.5 per cent in 2021 and 8.5 per cent in the next year. On threat from the new COVID-19 variant to the economy, Goyal said the recovery should be durable, with productivity enhancing reforms and the appropriate policy support.

Indian streaming industry expected to grow USD 13-15 billion

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The Indian OTT streaming industry is expected to grow to USD 13-15 billion over the next decade at a CAGR of 22-25 per cent, according to a joint report on media and entertainment.

The OTT (over-the-top) industry is constantly growing and is one of the most competitive amongst emerging markets with over 40 players representing all types of content providers, said the report from industry body CII and Boston Consulting Group (BCG). This has been led by "strong tailwinds" from basic enablers being in place for digital video streaming such as affordable high-speed mobile internet, doubling of internet users in the last six years, increased



adoption of digital payments. Moreover, it has been also helped by India specific price points offered by global players here such as Netflix, Prime Video, Disney+ offering plans in India at 70-90 per cent cheaper than the US.

Besides, the OTT sector is also witnessing a rise in investments in Indian original content. This has led to growth in hours of original content available to users.

"Strong content also helping capture eyeballs outside

India," the report said, adding Indian OTT can cater to international demand by targeting the Indian diaspora and markets that have language similarities.

There has been a remarkable surge over SVOD (subscription video on demand) content over the last few years and is expected to overtake AVOD (advertising-based video on demand), it added. "This strong growth in the subscription is due to various initiatives taken to expand the user base through bundling and pricing innovations, amply supported by significant investment in content," said the report titled "Blockbuster Script for the New Decade: Way Forward for Indian Media and Entertainment Industry".

NBFCs to witness revival in growth this year

May see slight uptick in NPAs

Mumbai, Jan 02 (PTI):

Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) showed resilience in 2021 despite the coronavirus pandemic woes and are expected to witness continued momentum in growth this year.

This year, the growth will be driven by the uptick in the economy, stronger balance sheet, higher provisions and improved capital positions of NBFCs.

On the other hand, gross non-performing assets (NPAs) of NBFCs are likely to rise, following the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) move to tighten the NPA norms in November 2021. "Our baseline as-



sumption is that the worst is behind them (NBFCs) and things will start improving here on. We expect NBFCs to show higher growth and they will benefit from the economy moving up," Crisil Ratings Ltd Senior Director and Deputy Chief Ratings Officer Krishnan Sitaraman said.

The asset under management (AUM) of shadow banking players is expected to grow at 6-8 per cent in the current financial year and 8-10 per cent in the next financial year,

Sitaraman said. Recently, the Trends and Progress of Banking of India in 2020-21 report released by the RBI said, "With increased pace of vaccinations and the broadening revival of the economy, the NBFC sector is expected to remain buoyant."

ICRA Ltd Vice-President and Sector Head A M Karthik said the NBFC sector, including housing finance companies (HFCs) but excluding infra-focused and government-owned entities, experienced a roller-coaster trend in the past 12-18 months. The rebound in the second-half of FY2021 on the back of the pent-up demand and after relaxation of the COVID-19 lockdown supported growth and earnings performance, he said.

IPO craze to continue in Mar quarter

23 cos line up public issues worth Rs 44,000 crore

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The IPO rush is far from over and the primary market will see frenetic activity in the March 2021 quarter with nearly two dozen companies are looking to collectively raise nearly Rs 44,000 crore through initial share-sales, merchant bankers said.

Of the total fundraising, a large chunk will be garnered by technology-driven companies. This comes after 63 companies mopped up a record Rs 1.2 lakh crore in 2021 through initial public offerings (IPOs) even as the pandemic gloom shadowed the broader economy. Apart from these



firms, PowerGrid InvIT (Infrastructure Investment Trust) mopped up Rs 7,735 crore through its IPO, while Brookfield India Real Estate Trust raised Rs 3,800 crore through REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust).

Excessive liquidity, huge listing gains and increased retail investor participation spurred a persistent euphoria in the IPO market in 2021. The firms that are expected to raise funds through their IPOs during the March quarter include hotel aggregator OYO (Rs 8,430 crore) and supply chain company Delhivery

(Rs 7,460 crore), the merchant bankers said.

In addition, Adani Wilmar (Rs 4,500 crore), Emcare Pharmaceuticals (Rs 4,000 crore), Vedant Fashions (Rs 2,500 crore), Paradeep Phosphates (Rs 2,200 crore), Medanta (Rs 2,000 crore) and Ixigo (Rs 1,800 crore) are expected to float their initial share-sales, they added.

Also, Skanray Technologies, Healthium Medtech, and Sahajanand Medical Technologies are likely to come out with their IPOs during the period under review, the merchant bankers said.

These firms are raising funds for organic and inorganic growth initiatives, debt payments and giving exits to existing shareholders. "Initial public listing by the companies is done to

raise capital through the public which increases the liquidity of the share as well as helps in valuation discovery," said Eklavya, founder, Recur Club.

LearnApp.com founder and CEO Prateek Singh said the tech companies now want to expand globally and to do that, they will require capital; and this capital is being picked up through the IPO route.

Besides, anchor investors in these companies have been waiting for an exit to get rewarded, this exit is being offered to the anchor investors through the IPO route, he added.

The continued activity in the primary market comes at a time when Sebi has decided to tighten the IPO rules to tackle the extreme volatility in the stock prices on their listing day.

Confident of retaining leadership position in SUV segment: Hyundai

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

Having dominated the segment in 2021 with the sale of over 2.5 lakh SUVs, Hyundai Motor India looks to maintain its leadership in the segment this year as demand for its models like Creta and Venue continues to be robust, according to a senior company official.

The auto major has led the sports utility vehicle (SUV) space in the country for two consecutive years now (2020 and 2021) and now expects to dominate the segment in 2022 as well. The company sold 1.8 lakh SUVs in 2020 and has closed 2021 with a dispatch of 2.52 lakh units. The



Hyundai plant in Chennai.

SUV sales have been growing in the country at a fast clip. In 2020, SUVs accounted for around 29 per cent of the overall passenger vehicle sales. The share has gone up to 37 per

cent in 2021. In an interaction with PTI, Hyundai Motor India Director (Sales, Marketing and Service) Tarun Garg said the company is confident of sustaining its leader-

ship in the segment this year as well.

"We have the technology, we have design and we have products. The company has managed to create a great SUV customer base.

"Over the past five years, we have sold over 8.34 lakh SUVs. So, we feel confident that we should continue to do well as far as the SUV space is concerned. We have a complete range which puts us in an advantageous position," he noted.

Garg stated that the SUV segment continues with its unabated growth and the company is well-positioned to lead the space.

Housing sales up 71% in top 7 cities

Sales down 10% from 2019 pre-COVID level

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

Housing sales across top seven cities rose 71 per cent year-on-year in 2021 to 2,36,530 units, but demand fell short of pre-Covid levels by 10 per cent, according to Anarock.

Housing sales stood at 1,38,350 units in 2020 and 2,61,358 units in the 2019 calendar year.

Mumbai-based Anarock attributed the rise in housing sales to very low interest rates on home loans, pent-up demand, surge in aspiration for home ownership, cut in stamp duty by a few states including Maharashtra and dis-

counts offered by builders.

The fourth quarter contributed nearly 39 per cent to overall sales during the last year, on festive demand and other positive factors.

According to the Anarock annual data, housing sales in Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) rose 72 per cent to 76,400 units in 2021 from 44,320 units in the previous year. Sales in Hyderabad jumped nearly three-folds to 25,410 units last year from 8,560 units during 2020. Delhi-NCR witnessed 73 per cent rise in sales to 40,050 units in 2021 from 23,210 units in 2020.

Housing sales in Pune increased by 53 per cent to 35,980 units in 2021 from 23,460 units in 2020.

Bengaluru saw 33 per cent increase in sales to

33,080 units in 2021 from 24,910 units in the previous year. Housing sales in Chennai were up 86 per cent to 12,530 units in 2021 from 6,740 units in 2020. In Kolkata, sales increased to 13,080 units in 2021 from 7,150 units in 2020.

"Extrapolating on the performance in 2021, 2022 will see very satisfactory growth as long as the coronavirus pandemic remains in check in India," Anarock Chairman Anuj Puri said.

He hoped sales to reach pre-COVID level in 2022 and noted that demand would further consolidate towards trusted developers. "Input cost pressure and supply chain issues may induce a 5-8 per cent increase in property prices," Puri pointed out.

Sayantani completes a year with 'Tera Yaar Hoon Main'

It is a special time for Sayantani Ghosh aka Daljeet Bagga of Sony SAB's light-hearted family show Tera Yaar Hoon Main, as the actress completes one year with the show. Audiences have been loving her feisty, outspoken Punjabi at-heart persona as she takes us through her exciting journey with her husband Rajeev and their kids.



Talking about her journey as Daljeet on the show, Sayantani said, "I still remember I was at home in Kolkata on a Christmas break when I got the call to play Daljeet. I have a special equation with Shashi Sumeet Productions, and I got to be a part of Sony SAB for the first time in a light-hearted comedy genre and also play a Punjabi girl, which I've never done before, so it was a no brainer for me and I jumped onto the opportunity. I also received an award for 'The Most Popular Face' last week, so I'm very grateful that the fans connected with Daljeet and showed

her so much love. My entire journey has been absolutely great, and I've juggled between two contrasting emotions - getting married in real life and being the happiest that I have ever been, as well as playing a distressed mother in reel life. It was chal-

lenging yet a gratifying experience for me as an actor." Sayantani further talks about her character Daljeet and her equation with her co-actors, "What makes Daljeet so special is that she wears her heart on her sleeves and speaks her mind.

Ramcharan reveals his secrets on 'The Kapil Sharma Show'

South Indian superstar Rama Charan is not only the son of famed veteran actor Chiranjeevi but also related to mega stars like Pawan Kalyan and Allu Arjun. On this note, host Kapil Sharma in an engaging conversation asks Ram Charan who had come to promote his upcoming 2022 release RRR with legendary star Rama Rao, Alia Bhatt and director S. S. Rajamouli if he and his superstar family members get confused when fans come to meet them. Hilariously responding to Kapil's question, Ram Charan laughed and said, "Definitely, we do get confused sir but not because of fans. When directors come, we get confused as to whom will they sign amongst us." Don't miss all the fun on The Kapil Sharma Show - this weekend at 9:30 pm only on Sony Entertainment Television.



Soha celebrates new year with family



Kapoor: She took to her Instagram and shared a photo dump from the dinner with happy faces.

Captioning her pictures, Soha wrote, "To new beginnings #happynewyear #2022 Be kind."

This is the second time that Kareena has gone to a family gathering after her Covid recovery. Earlier, she attended the customary Christmas lunch at her uncle Kunal Kapoor's Juhu home.

Kareena tested positive for the bug in December after she attended a party at Karan Johar's house along with her friend Amrita Arora.

'This year I want less police complaints and more love letters'

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut shared what she wishes for 2022. She says this year she wants less of police complaints and FIRs and more of love letters.

The actress, who is known for speaking her mind, took to Instagram, where she shared a motley of pictures praying at a temple, very close to Tirupati Balaji. She even performed some rituals. Kangana captioned the images: "There is only one Rahu Ketu temple in the world.... It's very close to Tirupati Balaji... performed some rituals there Out of five elemental Lingas, Vayo (air element) Linda is also situated here ... Quite a re-

markable place." She added: "I went there to have the mercy of my beloved enemies, in this year I want less of Police complains / FIRs and more love letters.... Jai Rahu Ketu ji ki." Speaking about her work, Kangana is gearing up for her next 'Dhaakad', an action thriller, which was slated for an April 8, 2022 release. It has now been pushed to May 2022. She also has 'Tejas'. The movie revolves around a daring female pilot played by Kangana and is based on how women pilots can play an important role in keeping our nation safe from external forces. It is a tribute to the brave soldiers of the country.

Versatile Actress Delnaz Irani needs no introduction. Being part of the industry for more than a decade now, Delnaz Irani has outshined in the various roles she portrayed to date. She plays Goli Bua aka Kiran (Hero's Aunt and Big Role) in the upcoming show 'Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey'

Excerpts of interview:
Tell us something about your character in the show 'Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey'?

Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey is a very 'feel-good, 'slice of a life' kind of show. There are absolutely no negative characters in it. It is an extremely sweet story of a joint family and my character on the show is called 'Kiran', a.k.a 'Goli Bua', who is the aunt of the kids in the family. This is by far the most different as well as the most difficult role I've had to essay as even if it's a fun show, it's not an out-and-out comedy which is the genre that people have mostly watched me in. Kiran is a teacher, who is an extremely strong-headed woman. She has her mind in place; also her heart. She is the link between the elders and the younger ones in the family, being a friend and a confidant to the kids in it. People are going to see Delnaz in a very different light this time and that utterly excites me.

Tell us about the various preparations that you have done for your character in the show?

Honestly, I haven't really prepared to play Kiran. As Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey is a remake of a very popular Bengali show, many asked me to watch it in order to incorporate what my character should be like but I truly wanted to make this character my own and act it out my way. Watching someone else would highly influence my ways and hence I wanted to avoid that and give the role my own dimensions as I am doing something like this for the first time. I have definitely prepared for the look though. It is a very real show and a more real character so I have gone for a very minimalistic saree look, with straight long hair; minimal oxidized jewelry and extremely expressive kohled eyes. I've finished the look with a big round red bindi which I think gives the whole look just the right amount of edge it needs.



Perneet Chauhan wishes to break stereotypes

Actress Perneet Chauhan was last seen in the show 'Humkadam' and the one thing that is noticeable is the gap in her professional career.

She talks about the reason behind this gap and also expresses her willingness to play substantial characters on-screen.

"I had just taken a short break of 3-4 months in 2018 after which I actively started looking for work. When it's not your time I guess it's not. Sometimes luck is just not on your side. I was almost about to do a show with a leading production house but at the last minute things changed. Ironically that show shut in three months. Again I took up a show and when my part was about to pick up the show shut down.

So the reason behind such a long gap is that I guess my time wasn't running well. It can happen to anyone. I am sure 2022 will bring new opportunities," she says.

The actress was born in Vasco Da Gama, Goa, and raised across Delhi, Goa, Chennai and Mumbai. Coming from a family where her grandfathers, uncles and even her father are in the Army and Navy, getting into acting was not the obvious choice.

She has been living in Mumbai for over two decades and has done shows such as 'Love Ne Mila Di Jodi', 'Geet', 'Mile Jab Hum Tum', 'Yam Hai Hum', among others. Perneet is looking for substantial roles. "I really want to break the stereotype that this industry creates and do something out of the box. I would love to play a strong character on screen, be it a doctor, lawyer, cop, defence officer... it will be a challenge to take up a role that I've never done before," she adds.



HOROSCOPE MONDAY JANUARY 03

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18
Today, you will speak and everyone else will listen! Your eloquence will bring you recognition. But you must take it a step further. You will also manage to impress someone, and Ganesha sees the beginning of a new relationship. But don't forget to listen sometimes.

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20
Good times are coming your way, and this could be in the form of a promotion or a pay hike, says Ganesha. You will devote time equally between your work and family, taking a little time off to take them out on a leisure trip. Enjoy!

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20
Today, you are raring to go. It's best you put that adrenaline to good use. This is the time to WORK and not plan. It's a day you can lift mountains and cross the seas. You can party hard later, says Ganesha.

Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21
Spontaneity, predicts Ganesha, is the need of the hour. Ignore the negative aspects and focus on the positive side. Your action rather than thoughts will yield results today. Listen to some light music to soothe your soul, suggests Ganesha.

Gemini: May 22 - June 21
God helps those who help themselves. Maybe. But He definitely helps those who help others. Support your colleagues and they will be grateful to you. This way, even your bosses will notice your talents, if they haven't already. They will shower praise on you, and favours too.

Cancer: June 22 - July 22
Today, you are likely to address all problems with a human touch, predicts Ganesha. You are likely to play Agony Aunt to one and all. But for that, you will have to learn to leave your problems at the workplace. In relationships, you need to open up to your near and dear ones.

Leo: July 23 - Aug 23
Something piques the demon within you today, says Ganesha, making you emotional and zealous. But then, we must all wage a war against our personal demons every time they rear their ugly heads. Ganesha foresees you emerging victorious in this battle today, and regaining your happy-go-lucky attitude in the latter part of the day.

Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22
Helping your colleagues will bring loads of good will. Your superiors will be super happy with your work. Interaction with friends will be special. Revel in the company of your loved one, says Ganesha.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23
It's all about family today. In fact, the bigger the better since Ganesha foresees it is quite likely that both close and distant relatives will fill your heart with glee today. It might be some good news worthy of raising a toast to. However, you might be doubtful about getting along with your peers at work.

Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22
Today, you are likely to make a fine show of your knack of organising things, predicts Ganesha. At the workplace, you will develop a special liking for your job. Later in the day, you may find lasting solutions to pending problems. Take the trouble to research any decisions you make so that you are liable to make well-informed decisions about your future.

Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 31
Handicraft business is likely to draw your attention. People around you will marvel at your commitment and dedication to work and family alike. Ganesha advises you to bite the apple of love and share some romantic moments with your spouse.

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20
Not many know how stupendous is your wealth of wisdom; today will be a good day to make a display of it, says Ganesha. You will have your wits about you and will impress many with your show of intellect. In the social circuit, you will indulge in spreading the message of love while at work, your excellent managerial skills will ensure that everything is under control.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Junior reporter
- Corrosive substances
- Noted trial location
- Geneticist's letters
- Exhibited sudden elation
- Still with us
- Senator's pickup line?
- Clash of heavyweights
- "But only God can make a ___" (Kilmer)
- Cenozoic, for one
- Rule of personal conduct
- Not a happy camper
- Sunset Park locale, briefly
- The euro's Japanese counterpart
- More bombastic
- Windshield cover, sometimes
- Printer type
- Albacore and others
- Advertiser's pickup line?
- Terrible twos, e.g.
- Amass clues

DOWN

- Like fresh potato chips
- Diffident
- British military orderlies
- Fourth caliph of Sunni Islam
- U.S.S.R. successor
- Possessive pronoun
- "Up Where We Belong," for one
- Meager
- Far from famished
- Menu words, perhaps
- Comparing or equating
- Your average Joe
- Imperils
- Word with post or ad
- Patch target
- Send to seventh heaven
- Free ticket
- Four is superior to it
- Rum and water drinks
- Downfall
- After everyone else
- Pre-revolution leaders (Var.)
- Polar weather condition
- Shooting irons
- It's near the radius
- Feel dizzy
- Tall fan palm used for thatching
- British nobleman
- Entry requirement, at times
- It's self-evident
- "Tristan and Isolde" composer
- Where to find the best actors and directors?
- Momma's mate
- Unit of electrical resistance
- Large, flat-bottomed boat
- Feel regret
- Navigational dir.
- Poetic homage
- Scottish legend Roy

SOLUTION 175

Bangladesh scores 175-2 in reply to NZ 328

Mount Maunganui, Jan 02 (API):

Day 2- First Test

Bangladesh had one of its best days on tour in recent years Sunday when it won all three sessions on the second day of the first cricket Test against New Zealand.

The tourists' bowlers first captured New Zealand's last five wickets for 70 runs, dismissing the home side for 328 after it had resumed at 258-8.

Mahmudul Hasan Joy and Najmul Hossain Shanto then made half centuries in a 104-run partnership for the second wicket which occupied most of the last 1 1/2 sessions and guided Bangladesh to 175-2 in its first innings at stumps.

Shanto lived up to his considerable reputation with his second half century, to go with two centuries in his 12 tests to date. He was out for 64 within sight of stumps and his innings was punctuated by several class shots through the

off side.

Joy played the innings anchor and compiled his first test 50 from 165 balls in more than 3-1/2 hours. He was 70 and had batted almost five hours by stumps when he had been joined by captain Mominul Haque, who was on 8.

Though New Zealand still leads by 153, the initiative the match has shifted to Bangladesh after its confident, deliberate approach on day two.

The Bangladesh spinners first wrapped up the New Zealand first innings in 25 overs before lunch. Joy then combined in a 43-run opening partnership with Shadman Islam which blunted the new ball and allowed the second wicket pair to strongly consolidate the innings.

The pitch at Bay Oval has only provided assistance for the seam bowlers in the first hour Saturday when Bangladesh cap-

tured the wicket of New Zealand captain Tom Latham and had the home side 1-1.

Devon Conway's 122, his second century in four Tests, gave New Zealand slightly the upper hand at the end of day one. But the failure of the tail, in spite of the efforts of Henry Nicholls who was the last man out for 75, tipped the balance of the match slightly in the tourists' favour.

After Shoriful Islam removed allrounder Rachin Ravindra (4), off spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz quickly captured the wickets of Kyle Jamieson (6), Tim Southee (6) and Neil Wagner who was out for a first ball duck.

Mominul bowled only four overs of orthodox left-arm spin but captured the two big wickets of the New Zealand innings, removing Conway and Nicholls and finishing with 2-6 from 4.1 overs. Mehidy had 3-86 after being wicketless on

day one and Shoriful took 3-69. Joy and Shadman steered Bangladesh through three overs before lunch and then to drinks in the middle session when the tourists were 43 without loss. But Shadman was out to the first ball after the break for 22, undone by Neil Wagner who lured him into a false stroke and dived forward to claim a sprawling catch off his own bowling. Wagner had 2-27 from 16 overs at stumps.

Wagner was again the best of New Zealand's bowlers, mostly bowling fuller and finding a little swing away from the right handers. But for the last two sessions Bangladesh largely defied the attack that won the World Test Championship final in June.

Kyle Jamieson, a prodigy who took 52 wickets in his first 10 tests, struggled in unrewarding conditions Sunday and finished the day with 0-35.

On Cusp of History: Kohli's India ready to roll over SA for elusive series win



Johannesburg, Jan 02 (PTI):

India's formidably consistent match-winners have a date with history in the New Year when they take on an out-of-sorts South Africa in the second Test here from Monday in pursuit of a coveted first-ever series win in the 'Rainbow Nation'. If the 'Boxing Day Test' was used to breach the Proteas' fortress at the Centurion, the New Year's game will be all about stoutly defending the 'Bull Ring' bastion which has been a 'home' away from home for the Indian team. Also, it was right here in 2018 when the foundation of one of India's greatest Test teams was laid with a solid win on a track that bordered on under-prepared and perhaps gave this unit self belief to take on the world.

'It feels harsh at times but we need to get better at it'

■ Dravid after India's over-rate penalty

Johannesburg, Jan 02 (PTI):

India head coach Rahul Dravid on Sunday admitted his team needs to do better at maintaining over rate after being docked one WTC point following the first Test against South Africa in Centurion though he felt "leeway" can be given in certain cases.

Points deduction from the World Test Championship tally for over-rate offences could prove costly for any team in its bid to reach the final.

England were recently fined eight WTC points for being eight overs short in the Brisbane Test against Australia.

"The ICC is trying something obviously. It does feel harsh as a coach and it does feel a bit tough at times but it certainly gets us thinking, gets us wanting to quicken it up," said Dravid ahead of the second Test here. Dravid said he doesn't mind the new rule



put in place by the ICC but officials must have full understanding of situations before they decided to dock points. "They've tried fines in the past and that doesn't seem to work, tried other methods or methodologies in the past that didn't seem to work," he said.

"The ICC is trying to go down the points route which I am fine with...as long as there is a bit of leeway and bit of understanding when the game is on. We had a few injury issues last time...of course we were given some leeways but sometimes it's not ex-

actly, it's difficult to pinpoint how many minutes you lose." Explaining the areas which the team can work on to get better regarding over rate, Dravid said, "When you have Bumrah roll over an ankle and the physios got to go and spend a lot of time (in the middle). There were other issues with the ball change last time.

"So you know there were a few small areas that maybe we can get a little bit better at but as a principle, we are fine with it, we just need to react and respond better."

Odisha face stern Mumbai test in bid to steady ship

Vasco, Jan 02 (PTI):

Desperate to snap a four-game winless run, Odisha FC will face their sternest test yet when they play defending champions Mumbai City FC in the Indian Super League here on Monday.

Odisha suffered a heavy defeat to Hyderabad FC in their last outing, underlining their drop in form since the first few games when they looked very good. The Kiko Ramirez-coached side have been poor defensively, conceding 20 goals in eight games this season, the worst record so far.

In the 2020-21 season, Odisha ended with the worst defensive record in ISL, conceding 44 goals in 20 matches with just one clean sheet. "There are

some moments where we made individual mistakes and that cost us the game. But we cannot blame anyone," assistant coach Kino Garcia said at the pre-match press conference.

"The coaching staff will take the responsibility first and then the players. We will keep trying to find a solution and we are confident of getting better."

On Mumbai, he added: "Mumbai are league leaders and they are a strong team. We have done our homework and we will be ready." Ramirez remains suspended for the game for accumulating his second caution from the bench in the last match.

For Mumbai, it will be about consolidating their lead at the top of the heap after dropping points in the last two matches.

Playing against SA teams gave us confidence ahead of Asian Cup: Manisha Kalyan

Kochi, Jan 02 (PTI):

Indian women's team forward Manisha Kalyan believes that playing against technically superior sides in South America in the lead-up to the AFC Asian Cup has raised the side's confidence level ahead of the continental showpiece.

Speaking during a live chat with AIFF TV, Manisha delved into the three matches that India had played against Brazil, Chile, and Venezuela a little over a month.

"Playing against those sides was truly a unique experience for us. These are teams that have players who are technically more superior to us, and just keeping up with the pace of the games was so



incredibly difficult," said Manisha. "We had to stick together and fight like one unit, and I think we gave a good account of ourselves in those three games. That gave us a lot of confidence

at the end of the day," she added.

"Now we know that no matter the quality of the opposition that we face, we can all put up a fight together and do well. That spirit of togetherness has really pumped everyone up ahead of the Asian Cup."

Just a day ahead of her 20th birthday, Manisha had scored a memorable goal against Brazil, the first by a woman footballer from India against a top-10 ranked side in the world.

"It was a special moment, for sure. I have always been a fan of the Brazilian team. I grew up watching Ronaldinho, and Neymar, and Brazil's style of football has always intrigued me," said Manisha. "It was a big moment,

but that's not just the end. The main aim still remains to qualify for the FIFA Women's World Cup. And also I want to keep scoring more goals for my country."

It has been five months since the Indian team has been training under new head coach Thomas Dennerby, and the forward from Hoshiarpur, Punjab, feels that the attackers in the side have been given a certain level of freedom.

"Ours is not a rigid system, as the coach always wants us to think on our feet and make our own decisions in the attacking third. He guides us in training as to what kind of decisions could be better, but he gives us that freedom of decision making," she said.

'It's certainly my ambition to keep playing all three formats'

Sydney, Jan 02 (PTI):

His abysmal showing so far in the Ashes notwithstanding, England's flamboyant batter Jos Buttler has no plans to give up Test cricket and has expressed his disappointment over South African Quinton de Kock's sudden retirement from the five-day game.

One of the finest white-ball batters at the moment, Buttler has averaged only 19.20 in the three Ashes Tests against Australia so far, including a horrendous dismissal in the Boxing Day match in Melbourne.

Besides, he has also dropped several catches behind the stumps, including a shocker in Adelaide.

However, ahead of the New Year's Test here from January 5, Buttler has pledged his commitment to all the three formats of the



Jos Buttler

game. "It's certainly my ambition. I don't think I'd have put as much into it as I have done if it wasn't," he was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo. "I have fantastic family support they're very supportive of me and my career and make a lot of sacrifices for that. That's one thing that gives you a lot of motivation and drive to try to make it all worth it. It's certainly maintained my drive and ambition to try and play

Elgar wants Proteas to handle De Kock's Test retirement in professional manner

Johannesburg, Jan 02 (PTI):

South Africa skipper Dean Elgar says he was initially "shocked" at Quinton de Kock's sudden retirement from Test cricket but insisted that the team will take the setback in its stride and strive to level the ongoing series against India.

De Kock, only 29, announced his retirement from the traditional format at the end of the opening Test against India, which the hosts lost by 113 runs at Super Sport Park on Thursday.

"I was pretty shocked. But sitting down with Quiney (Quinton de Kock), he explained his reasons and I respect and fully understand his decision," Elgar said at a virtual press conference on the eve of the second Test.

"I don't think there will be any," Elgar responded when asked if there will be any hangover on the players about his retirement.

"The responsibility for us is to carry and conduct ourselves as international players. We still have to be professional around this. We still have a Test series to level, so I don't think there will be any hangover or shock over Quiney's retirement.

"Players respect the environment. We realise that we had a few setbacks in recent times and we need to obviously have to be



South Africa skipper Dean Elgar.

clever around it and get over it. I don't see this affecting the players of still being shocked about his retirement."

Asked if it will set a dangerous precedent for Test cricket with talented players giving up red-ball game for big bucks through white-ball tournaments, Elgar said: "I don't think his decision is going to jeopardise Test cricket going forward.

"His reasons are his reasons and his choice to retire, we as a group fully respect it and we as a group have to get over it and move on now.

"The game moves on, when guys retire. I have been fortunate enough to experience some of the big guys retire, one thing I realised, the game doesn't stop for you, we have to get over it quickly and respect the position Quiney is in."

Elgar, who has seen many top cricketers retire during his stint with the team, said it is disappointing to not have de Kock

around. "If it was up to me, I would not have any of these guys retirement but it is part and parcel of the game, it is out of your hand. Don't get me wrong, not having Quinton around is disappointing for me, something I need to get over," he said.

"I know there are many other talented cricketers within our squad and the system whom I have to give attention now. It is perfectly fine as tough as it is." Elgar feels spinner Keshav Maharaj will retain his place in the playing XI in the second Test as he has a big role to play in the series.

"I am a fan of a frontline spin bowler and Keshav put up his hand, he has played domestic game and Test series against Australia. I think he will retain his spot, he didn't have a horrible game.

"I can throw the ball to him and he can bring down the run rate down, so I think he will retain his spot."

Sydney, Jan 02 (API):

The United States beat Canada and defending champion Russia defeated France at the ATP Cup on Sunday, with the Americans taking a much easier route.

John Isner and Taylor Fritz beat their Canadian singles opponents and then clinched the match in doubles for a 3-0 win.

Isner beat Brayden Schnur 6-1, 6-4 in 66 minutes to give the Americans the early lead.

Schnur was a late replacement for Denis Shapovalov, who withdrew from the opening singles match Sunday due to fa-

'Quinton's test retirement has crippled further SA batting'

Johannesburg, Jan 02 (PTI):

A weakened South African batting line-up has been "crippled further" by the sudden retirement of the seasoned Quinton de Kock, feels the country's former star batter Hashim Amla.

At 29, de Kock called time on his Test career last week citing family reasons, although the wicketkeeper-batter will continue to play in the shorter formats of the game.

Amla is concerned with the development, coming at



Britain's Cameron Norrie hits a backhand to Germany's Alexander Zverev during their match at the ATP Cup tennis tournament in Sydney, Sunday.



Hashim Amla

a time when the home team is down 0-1 against a formidable Indian side in the ongoing three-match Test se-

US wins over Canada easily, Russia beats France at ATP Cup

tigue. The Canadian is recovering from having contracted COVID-19 at a recent tournament in the Middle East.

Fritz then came from a set down to beat No. 11-ranked Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-7 (6), 6-4, 6-4 and clinch the match before the Americans won the doubles 6-4, 6-4 over Auger-Aliassime and Shapovalov.

Russia, meanwhile, needed the deciding doubles match to clinch victory over France.

Roman Safiullin beat Arthur Rinderknech of France 2-6, 7-5, 6-3 before No. 35-ranked Ugo Humbert evened the

match for France with an upset 6-7 (5), 7-5, 7-6 (2) win over No. 2 Daniil Medvedev.

But Medvedev and Safiullin came back to beat two fresh opponents in the doubles Fabrice Martin and Edouard Roger-Vasselin 6-4, 6-4.

In night matches, Britain and Italy took early leads. Daniel Evans beat Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff 6-1, 6-2 while Italy's Jannik Sinner defeated Australia's Max Purcell 6-1, 6-3 in opening singles.

Isner saved the only break point he faced against his Canadian opponent.

England head coach Chris Silverwood tests positive for COVID-19



Melbourne, Jan 02 (PTI):

Under-fire England head coach Chris Silverwood has tested positive for COVID-19 while quarantining here with his family but he is expected to join the team ahead of the

fifth Ashes Test in Hobart. Silverwood was due to miss the fourth Test against England starting in Sydney on Wednesday after he was forced into isolation when a family member tested positive for COVID-19.

"Silverwood has been isolating in Melbourne since December 30 following a positive test from one of his family members. He will remain in isolation until January 8," the England and Wales Cricket Board said in a statement according to Skysports. The ECB said Silverwood is asymptomatic and is fully vaccinated.

'Prepared to contest polls from wherever party says'

Lucknow, Jan 02 (PTI):

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has said he is ready to contest the upcoming assembly elections from wherever his party decides. The BJP leader also said he has fulfilled whatever was promised and has no regrets about his tenure. "I am ready to fight the election from wherever the party says," Adityanath told reporters when asked whether he will contest from Ayodhya, Mathura, or from his home district Gorakhpur.

The chief minister, who is currently a member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council, was interacting with the media here on Saturday night. After former UP CM



Mulayam Singh Yadav fought the state elections in 2003, none of his successors have contested the assembly polls. BSP chief Mayawati, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav and Adityanath were members of the legislative council during their tenure as chief minister.

Adityanath's challenger Akhilesh Yadav had recently indicated that he might

not contest polls. He, however, had later said the party would take a call on it. Asked if there was any work he could not do in his five-year tenure, the BJP leader said, "Whatever was said, was done. There is no work left for which there should be any regret."

To another question, Adityanath said, "Work is under progress in Mathura as in Kashi and Ayodhya."

He also tried to allay concerns among some of the sitting MLAs over distribution of party tickets saying the BJP was a very big family and people's role in it may change with time.

"Every person's role is different at different times. It is not necessary that one person should always be in the government, sometimes he can also do the work of the organisation," he said. The chief minister said COVID-protocol will be followed to the hilt whenever the dates for the election are announced. Asked about what changed since the 2017 election, Adityanath said: "In 2017 we fought on the failures of the state government. This time we are contesting on the basis of our achievements."

OBC QUOTA STIR

Bhim Army chief, others detained in Bhopal

Bhopal, Jan 02 (PTI):

Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad and a dozen other people were detained on Sunday ahead of their plans to gherao (encircle) Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's residence to seek 27 per cent reservation for the Other Backward Classes, police said.

Azad was detained at the airport upon his arrival along with 12 to 13 people, though the exact number of detainees will be known by late evening, Bhopal police commissioner Makarand

Deoskar told PTI. Denying that over 150 people were detained, he said Azad was at the airport lounge having his meal.

We have stopped around 1500 protesters and sent them back. We suspect they were going to assemble at Roshanpura square from where they were going to head for the Chief Minister's house," the commissioner added.

Meanwhile, OBC Maha Sabha national general secretary Tulsiram Patel said they were planning to give a memorandum to the CM peacefully but the local administration has

detained people and the police have manhandled some of them.

"The population of OBCs in MP and India was 65 per cent and 85 per cent respectively, but they are not getting reservation according to their numbers. The Centre claims OBCs are getting 27 per cent reservation and the state says it is giving 14 per cent quota. However, OBC communities are not even getting 8 per cent reservation," he claimed. He said the Bhim Army and tribal outfit Jai Yuva Adivasi Shakti were allies in their struggle for OBC quota.

'India's Covid vaccination programme one of world's most successful'

New Delhi, Dec 02 (PTI):

India's vaccination programme against COVID-19 has been one of the most successful and largest in the world, the Union health ministry said on Sunday and termed as misleading some media reports that claimed the country has missed its COVID-19 inoculation targets.

Since the start of the national COVID-19 vaccination drive on January 16 last year, India has administered to over 90 per cent of its eligible citizens first doses and 65 per cent second doses.

"In a recently published news article by a reputed international

agency, it has been claimed that India has missed its vaccination target. This is misleading and does not represent the complete picture," the ministry said in a statement.

In the fight against the global pandemic, India's national vaccination programme has been one of the most successful and largest vaccination programmes when compared to many developed western nations with significantly low population base to vaccinate, it said.

In the vaccination drive, so far, the country has achieved several milestones, which have no precedent in the world, including administering

over 100 crore doses in less than nine months, administering 2.51 crore doses in a single day and several times administering one crore doses in a day, the ministry said.

"Compared with other developed nations, India has done a better job in administering Covid vaccination to its eligible adult citizen of 93.7 crore (as per the RGI (Registrar General of India) across all its states and UTs (union territories)," it underlined.

"In case of first dose coverage to the eligible population, the US has covered only 73.2 per cent of its population, the UK has covered 75.9 per cent of its population, France

has covered 78.3 per cent of its population and Spain has covered 84.7 per cent of its population, the ministry said.

India has already covered 90 per cent of its eligible population with first dose of vaccine against COVID-19, it said in the statement.

Similarly, for the second dose, the US has covered 61.5 per cent of its population, the UK has covered 69.5 per cent of its population, France has covered 73.2 per cent of its population, and Spain has covered 81 per cent of its population, the ministry said.

India has covered over 65 per cent of its eligible population with second dose of vaccine.

Gadchiroli cops come up with comic strip

To create awareness against Naxalism

Nagpur, Jan 02 (PTI): In a bid to create awareness against Naxalism, police on Sunday launched a comic strip under 'Gadchiroli Files' which reflects the ground realities of the affected area in this east Maharashtra district, an officer said. Gadchiroli superintendent of police Ankit Goyal said the comic strip is mainly based on the theme of harassment of people by Maoists and how they try to stall development.

"The Gadchiroli Police are launching 'Gadchiroli Files' comic strip today. This will try to reflect on the happenings in the Gadchiroli district. This will be a creative way to reflect the ground realities of this district," Goyal told PTI. This idea is the brainchild of Goyal. The comic strip will be available in Gondi, Marathi and English languages. It will be issued every fortnight online in social media format, he added.

CHILLY WINTER



People sit around a small fire to warm themselves on a cold winter morning, at a wholesale vegetable market in Gurugram, Sunday.

'Most COVID-19 cases are mild, do not need hospitalisation'

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said that though the number of daily COVID-19 cases and active cases are increasing in the city, there is no need to panic as those are very mild and do not need hospitalisation.

He presented data to show that despite an increase in the number of cases, bed occupancy in hospitals is even lesser than one per cent and is very low as compared to last year's deadly second wave of coronavirus in April.

"Active COVID-19 cases rose from about 2,000 on December 29, 2021 to 6,000



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal waves towards supporters during Kejriwal Ki Maharally in Lucknow, Sunday.

on January 1, but the number of patients in hospitals dipped during this period. On December 29, 2021 as many as 262 beds were

occupied while on January 1 it was 247 only," Kejriwal said in a virtual press conference.

He said that on March 27 last year, Delhi had 6,600 active cases and 1,150 oxygen beds were occupied. As many as 145 patients were on ventilator compared to five now, he said. Kejriwal said that COVID-19 cases are increasing rapidly in Delhi, but there is no need to panic.

"Currently, the number of active cases in the city is 6,360 and today (Sunday) 3,100 new cases are expected to be reported. All cases are mild and in most of them patients don't need hospitalisation," the CM said.

In pandemic-hit 2020-21, rlys earned over Rs 500 cr from Tatkal, premium Tatkal tickets

New Delhi, Dec 02 (PTI):

The Railways earned Rs 403 crore from tatkal ticket charges, an additional Rs 119 crore from premium tatkal tickets, and Rs 511 crore from dynamic fares during 2020-21, even as much of its operations remained suspended through most of the year due to the Covid pandemic, revealed an RTI reply. Passengers in these three categories are usually last minute travellers who avail these services mostly for emergency travel by paying premium charges.

In a reply to a RTI filed by Madhya Pradesh-based Chandra Shekhar Gaur, the Railways said that it earned Rs 240 crore from dynamic fares, Rs 353 crore from tatkal tickets

and Rs 89 crore from premium tatkal charges in the financial year 2021-22 till September.

In the 2019-20 financial year, when there were no restrictions in train operations, the national transporter earned Rs 1,313 crore from dynamic fares, Rs 1,669 from tatkal tickets and Rs 603 crore from premium tatkal tickets.

The data from the railway ministry comes a month after a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways remarked that the charges levied on tatkal tickets are "a little unjustifiable" and put a huge burden particularly on those passengers who are financially weak and are forced to travel in urgency to meet their kin and kin or so for a very short distance also.

Katra, Jan 02 (PTI):

Unfazed by the Saturday stampede that left 12 devotees dead, people were flocking to the Mata Vaishno Devi hill shrine where authorities have deployed security personnel in full strength and are greeting pilgrims with chants of "Darshan Karo, Katra Chalo" to encourage them not to linger on after paying obeisance.

The yatra that registered a footfall of over 55.77 lakh in 2021, compared to 17 lakh the previous year due to the coronavirus pandemic, was going on

smoothly, with visitors expressing satisfaction over the arrangements of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. Twelve people lost their lives and 16 others were injured in the stampede in the early hours of Saturday after a scuffle between two groups of pilgrims during the New Year rush. Many eyewitnesses said that there was overcrowding as people were staying back on the shrine premises after darshan instead of returning to the base camp at Katra. It was the first such tragedy at the revered shrine located atop the

Vaishno Devi stampede

Authorities tighten arrangements, pilgrims flock to shrine



Devotees stand in queue outside Darshani deodi while on their way to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, in Reasi district, Sunday morning.

Trikuta hills in Reasi district, about 50 km from Jammu. As we entered the sanctum sanctorum of the

Mata to offer our prayers, we were greeted by the words 'Darshan Karo Katra Chalho' (pay obeisance and

leave for Katra) from the deployed policemen, Motiya Rani (58), a resident of Panipat in Haryana, told PTI on Sunday. Rani, accompanied by her two sons, their wives and five grandchildren, said the yatra was going on smoothly and they did not face any problem. I have been visiting Mata to seek her blessings on the first day of every year for many years. I reached Katra on December 31 and was scheduled to visit the shrine on Saturday but the unfortunate incident delayed our visit by a day this time, she said.

बैद्यनाथ
असली आयुर्वेद

असहनीय जोड़ो का दर्द

स्वर्ण भस्म से युक्त होने से अधिक असरकारक।

► पुराने से पुराना जोड़ों का दर्द

► कमर दर्द

► घुटनों का दर्द

► मासपेशियों का अकड़ना

► मोच आदि दूर करने में सहायक।

Now Improved Strong Formula



रूमार्थो गोल्ड + कॅप्सूल

शुद्ध स्वर्ण भस्म से निर्मित

बैद्यकीय सलाह : 848444935
www.baidyanath.co



BRIEF



Devotees not adhering to social distancing norms arrive to pay obeisance to Lord Bankey Bihari at Sri Bankey Bihari temple, in Vrindavan, Sunday.

Mishap

Balalore: Four personnel of the West Bengal Police were injured on Sunday when a vehicle they were travelling in collided head-on with a passenger bus in Odisha's Balalore district, an official said. All four of them were on their way to Dhenkanal district in a police vehicle. The incident occurred on National Highway-16 at Jamuhadi in Simulia block of the district, the official said. Locals rescued the injured and rushed them to a nearby healthcare facility, from where they were later shifted to the district headquarters hospital, he added.

Chargesheet

Jammu: The Crime Branch of the Jammu and Kashmir Police has filed a chargesheet in a court here against four persons for allegedly duping an unemployed youth on the pretext of providing him a government job, an official said on Sunday. The chargesheeted persons included an employee of the Fire and Emergency Services and a daily wagger in the Public Health and Engineering Department (PHE), a spokesperson of the Crime Branch Jammu said.

Injured

Jammu: At least 10 people were injured on Sunday when an under-construction bridge collapsed in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The bridge was being constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in Vijaypur area of the district, the officials said. They said 10 people were rescued and shifted to hospital by police.

Suicide

Shahdol: Unable to bear the trauma of the death of his elder brother who drowned in a river, a 22-year-old man committed suicide by hanging from a tree at a village in Madhya Pradesh's Shahdol district, police said on Sunday. Shivendra Mishra's body was found hanging from a tree at Kotma village late on Saturday night. Sohagpur police station in-charge Yogendra Singh Parihar said.

Watery grave

Mandsaur: Three women of a family drowned while crossing the backwater of the Chambal river to reach a temple in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur district on Sunday, police said. The women, identified as Mohanbai (55), her daughter-in-law Karibai (31) and the former's sister Ramibai (42), were going to Bardia village to pray at a temple when the incident took place in Tolakhedi, Chandwas Police Post in charge Shaileendra Singh Kanesh said.

Weather
 High 24 Low 13

Govt to states on 15-18 age grp vaccination

'Take measures to avoid mixing-up of vaccines'

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Sunday said states and union territories should take necessary measures, including setting up separate vaccination centres, to avoid mixing-up of Covid vaccines during administration of shots to those in the 15-18 age group. Inoculation of children in this age category will start on January 3. The vaccine option for those in the 15-18 age group would only be Covaxin, according to a set of new guidelines issued by the Union health ministry. Besides



A health worker shows Covaxin vial during preparation for 15-18 age group vaccination drive, in Patna.

Covaxin, the adult population of the country is being administered Covishield and Sputnik V. To ensure smooth implementation of the guidelines, Mandaviya held an online interaction with health ministers and principal secretaries and

Sonia dials Baghel, seeks update on COVID-19 preparedness

Congress chief Sonia Gandhi on Sunday called Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel to seek an update on the state's preparedness to tackle the possible third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Gandhi voiced concern over the sharp increase in coronavirus cases across the country, particularly those of Omicron variant, officials said. Baghel briefed Gandhi on the availability of hospital beds and oxygen in the state. He assured the Congress president that the state was fully prepared to deal with the emerging situation, they said. Chhattisgarh reported 279 new cases of COVID-19 on Sunday morning, but is yet to report a patient of the Omicron variant.

additional chief secretaries for health of states and union territories (UTs). He advised them to ensure orientation of vaccinators and vaccination team members for the inoculation exercise for those in the 15-18 age group and for identification of dedicated vaccination session sites for this category of beneficiaries, a health ministry statement said.

CENTRE TELLS SC

EWS quota: Govt to retain Rs 8 lakh income criteria

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The Centre has told the Supreme Court that it has decided to accept the recommendation of a three-member panel to retain the current gross annual family income limit for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of Rs 8 lakh or less. The government said that the panel has recommended that family income is a "feasible criterion" for defining EWS and in the current situation, a threshold of Rs 8 lakh of annual family income seems reasonable for determining EWS. In its affidavit filed in a matter re-

lated to admissions for NEET-PG, the Centre said the panel has recommended that "only those families whose annual income is up to Rs 8 lakh would be eligible to get the benefit of EWS reservation". "I respectfully submit that the central government has decided to accept the recommendations of the committee, including the recommendation of applying the new criteria prospectively," Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, R Subrahmanyam, who filed the affidavit on behalf of the Centre told the top court.

STF jawan injured in encounter with Naxals

Gariaband/Mainpur, Jan 02:

A Special Task Force (STF) jawan was injured in a gun-battle between Naxals and security personnel at a forest in Gariaband district on Sunday, a police official said. The encounter broke out early morning in Devdongar forest area under Mainpur police station limits, located over 200 km from the state capital Raipur, when the STF was out on an anti-Maoist operation, he said. Acting on a specific input about the movement of ultras in the area, bordering with Odisha, two teams of the STF had launched the operation there on Saturday night,



Injured jwan being taken to the hospital.

he said. When one of the patrolling teams was advancing through a hill, it came under fire from a group of armed Naxals that led to the encounter, he said. After a brief exchange of fire, the rebels fled into the dense forest towards Odisha, he said.

An STF jawan, identified as Yuvraj Sagar, suffered bullet injury in his abdomen. He was rushed to a local hospital from where he was referred to Raipur for further treatment," the official said. A team of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) and Central Reserve Police

Naxals kill mentally challenged man

On suspicion of being informer

Bijapur, Jan 02 (PTI):

Naxals killed a 38-year-old mentally challenged man in a village in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district while accusing him of acting as a police informer, a senior police official said on Sunday. A group of Maoist jammilitia members on Saturday night dragged the victim, identified as Hemant Bandi, out of his house in Timmapur village under Basaguda police station limits, located about 400 km from the state capital Raipur, and brutally killed him with sharp-edged weapons, he said. After being alerted, a team of security personnel rushed to the spot on Sunday morning. The body is being shifted to Basaguda for postmortem, he said.

Virtual mode

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Sunday decided to conduct all hearings in virtual mode for two weeks starting from January 3, in view of rising number of cases of the Omicron variant of COVID-19. The Supreme Court administration issued a circular announcing the decision on Sunday evening. It stated that an earlier circular prescribing standard operating procedure (SOP) for physical hearing (hybrid hearing) will remain suspended for the time being. "It is hereby notified for the information of the members of the bar, party-in-person and all concerned that keeping in view the rising number of cases of Omicron variant (COVID-19), the competent authority has been pleased to direct that modified Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) notified on October 7, 2021, for physical hearing (hybrid mode) will remain suspended for the present, and all hearings before the courts for a period of two weeks from and with effect from January 3, shall be through virtual mode only," the circular read.

Over 6.35 lakh registrations on CoWIN

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

The CoWIN platform has till Sunday evening recorded over six lakh registrations in the age group of 15 to 18 years whose Covid vaccination is set to begin from January 3. Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya advised states and Union Territories to provide separate vaccination centres, session sites, queue and different vaccination teams for the 15-18 year age group to avoid the mixing-up of vaccines. The vaccine option for this age group would only be Covaxin, according to guidelines issued by the Union Health Ministry on December 27.

About the incident

The encounter broke out early Sunday morning in Devdongar forest area under Mainpur police station limits, located over 200 km from the state capital Raipur, when the STF was out on an anti-Maoist operation. When one of the patrolling teams was advancing through a hill, it came under fire from a group of armed Naxals that led to the encounter. After a brief exchange of fire, the rebels fled into the dense forest towards Odisha.

Force (CRPF) was rushed to spot and the Odisha police were also intimated, he said adding that search operation was underway in the area.

WINGED VISITORS



A man (unseen) feeds seagulls at Mahim Beach in Mumbai, Sunday.

'Yogi govt now plays 'jail-jail' with criminals'

Meerut, Jan 02 (PTI):

Hitting out at previous governments in Uttar Pradesh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said gangsters and criminals used to play their own games here earlier but the Yogi Adityanath government now plays "jail-jail" with them. Addressing a public meeting after laying the foundation stone for Major Dhyana Chand Sports University here, PM Modi said, "During previous governments, criminals used to play their games and the mafias used to play their own." Earlier, there used to



be tournaments of illegal land grabbing. People making obscene remarks at daughters used to roam freely," he said, adding people living in Meerut and adjoining areas can never forget how houses used to be set ablaze here. The result of these games played by

earlier governments was that people were forced to leave their ancestral homes and there was an exodus, the prime minister claimed. "Now, the Yogi government is playing 'jail-jail' with such criminals. Five years ago, the daughters of Meerut used to fear leaving their homes after evening. Today, the daughters of Meerut are bringing laurels to the entire country," Modi said. Taking an apparent dig at Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav, Modi said, "The role of the government should be that of a guardian. Competence should be encouraged.

COVID CURBS

Bengal shuts schools, colleges; offices allowed with 50% workforce

Kolkata, Jan 02 (PTI):

The West Bengal government brought back stricter COVID-related restrictions amid a steep rise in cases, shutting all educational institutions from Monday and allowing offices to operate with 50 per cent workforce. At a press conference on Sunday, Chief Secretary HK Dwivedi announced that only essential services will be permitted between 10 pm and 5 am in the state. Local trains would be allowed to operate with 50 per cent capacity till 7 pm, while all shopping malls and markets would be allowed to remain open till 10 pm but with half their capacities, he said. Long-distance trains will operate as per their

usual schedule. Metro trains in Kolkata will also operate as per their usual timing but with 50 per cent capacity. All tourist attractions, including the zoos, would remain closed. Besides, swimming pools, parlours, spa, wellness centres and gyms were also told to shut down, he added. Flights from Mumbai and New Delhi will ply only twice a week, and no flights from the UK will be allowed for the time being, Dwivedi said. Cinema halls and theatres have been allowed to operate with 50 per cent capacity. Meetings and conferences have been allowed with a maximum of 200 people at a time or 50 per cent capacity of the hall, whichever is lower.

Delhi records 3,194 fresh Covid cases

New Delhi, Jan 02:

Delhi logged 3,194 new coronavirus cases over the last 24 hours, 15 per cent higher than Saturday. One person has died, taking the total number of fatalities since the beginning to pandemic to 25,109. The city logged 2,176 cases on New Year's day - a 50 per cent spike. The positivity rate rose to 4.59 per cent, according to data from the city's health department. Under the Graded Response Action Plan or GRAP - approved in July by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority - if the positivity rate is over five per cent for two consecutive days a 'Red' alert can be sounded. This would lead to "total curfew" and halting of most economic activities. Today's figure is the



A health worker conducts COVID-19 testing of a man amid concern over a third wave of the coronavirus pandemic in India, in New Delhi, Sunday.

highest daily surge since May 22. The city has also reported the second-highest cases of the highly transmissible Omicron strain after Maharashtra. The infection rate is also the highest in 7.5 months. Positivity rate was 5.50% on May 20. The number of

8,063 new cases in Mumbai

Mumbai: Mumbai reported 8,063 new cases of coronavirus in the last 24 hours, 27% higher than Saturday. With this, the total cases count has increased to 7,99,520, according to a bulletin by civic body Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. The Covid-related fatality count stands at 16,377 in the city with no more deaths reported in the last 24 hours. Currently, there are 29,819 active cases in the city. active coronavirus patients is now 8,397 -- the highest in about seven months.

HUNG VERDICT

Days after polls, Cong Chandigarh municipal councillor joins BJP

Chandigarh, Jan 02 (PTI):

Newly elected municipal councillor from the Congress Harpreet Kaur Babla joined the BJP on Sunday, days after Chandigarh Municipal Corporation polls threw up a hung verdict. Harpreet, the councillor from ward number 10, switched over to the saffron party along with her husband and senior Congress leader Devinder Babla in the presence of Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, local MP Kirron Kher, Chandigarh BJP chief Arun Sood and former Chandigarh BJP president Sanjay Tandon here. Khattar welcomed the

Bablas into the BJP fold and said it was a matter of happiness that both quit the Congress. The results of the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation polls which were declared on December 27, gave a hung verdict, with the AAP winning 14 of the 35 wards and the BJP bagging 12. The Congress had to be contented with eight seats while the Shiromani Akali Dal got one. A party is required to win 19 wards to have its councillor elected as the mayor. Besides 35 councillors, the Chandigarh MP, who is an ex-officio member in the municipal corporation, has a voting right. Kirron Kher is the incumbent MP from Chandigarh.



CENTRAL Chronicle

Since 1974 Volume 9 No. 273

Cyber bullying of women

Acting on a complaint filed by a woman journalist alleging she is being targeted by an unidentified group of people on an app called 'Bulli Bai' using software code sharing website, GitHub, the Delhi Police have registered an FIR under Section 509 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) at South East district's Cyber Police Station. Union Information and Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has said the perpetrator's account had been blocked by GitHub, adding the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) and police authorities are coordinating further action. This is not first time that women, particularly from minority communities have been targeted online. It forms a kind of cyber bullying of women. Last year, on July 4, Afreen Fatima participated in an online forum about the persecution of Muslims in India. No sooner had she wrapped up her session than her mobile phone was flooded with messages, informing the 23-year-old student activist that she had been 'put up for sale' on a fake online auction. And she was not alone. Photographs of more than 80 other Muslim women, including students, activists and journalists, had been uploaded on an app called 'Sulli deals' without their knowledge. In May last year, an Indian YouTube channel 'Liberal Doge' livestreamed Eid pictures of Indian and Pakistani Muslim women, inundated with vulgar, immoderately misogynistic comments. A report said that nearly 100 female Indian politicians on Twitter were subjected to unprecedented levels of online abuse. The women were targeted not only for their views expressed online, but also for elements of their identities such as gender, religion, caste and marital status.

It is important to frame these offences in terms of hate speech, because it needs to recognise the communal angle of the offence, the derogatory use of 'Sulli' or 'Bulli' and how it is used to target Muslim women. It is in these contexts that harassment of Muslim women both online and offline takes more graphic overtones. While it is true that women face an excruciatingly large amount of online harassment on a day-to-day basis, the practice augments itself in its worst form for women coming from religious minorities and historically marginalised caste identities. The dual jeopardy of being a Muslim, and then a woman, brings Muslim women in a systematically and strategically targeted place where they are openly harassed and abused for their Muslim identity. These incidents should not be viewed in isolation. It is rooted in a wider extremist agenda of using violence against Muslim women for controlling their religious identity. Those women who were listed in the apps were mostly established, assertive and educated Muslim women who are students, activists, journalists, researchers and artists. This sort of online abuse was an attempt at seizing the already limited space they have access to, it was meant to demean and intimidate them, as is the culture in hypermasculine societies. In a communally polarised society, categorising the 'deals' incident as solely an issue of gender-based violence would be misleading. It is an example of misogyny interspersed with identity. The limits imposed on Muslim women by the cultural, social, economic and political systems extend to their agency being curtailed. Such sporadic cases of hounding Muslim women for their religious identity and political opinions reinforces these systems of control. A large number of these women do not have the social and economic capital to liberate themselves from this trope. And those who do, are consequentially battling with misogyny and a dehumanising Islamophobic rhetoric wherein they are made a deal of; debasing their identity as a commodity available to be auctioned and bargained.

Investment in intangible economy

From the nineteenth century until about 25 years ago, businesses largely invested in physical infrastructure and machinery, from railroads to vehicles. But in the past quarter-century, investment in so-called intangible assets such as intellectual property, research, software, and managerial and organizational skills has soared. Intangibles accounted for 40 percent of all investment in the United States and ten European economies, up 29 percent from 1995. And intangibles investment appears to have surged again in 2020 as digitalization accelerated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe that this trend strongly hints at the emergence of a new model of capitalism, in which companies' success will be measured more by their people and their capabilities than by their machines, products, or services. Intangibles may well be driving this phenomenon. After all, there is certainly a correlation between investment in intangibles and higher productivity and growth. Economies in which intangible investment is increasing are also posting growth in total-factor productivity. Notably, the only companies that were able to maintain rates of growth after the pandemic hit were those that had invested significantly in the full range of intangibles: innovation, data and analytics, and human and brand capital.

In a dematerialized, digitized, knowledge-driven world, corporate returns, productivity, and economic growth will increasingly be tied to such assets. But unlocking their true value requires not only investing in them, but also developing the skills and managerial know-how, or human capital, needed to make effective use of them. The growing salience of intangibles thus makes the imperative of raising skills and capabilities even more acute. This emerging new form of capitalism is potentially marvellous for qualified people with highly portable skills, but somewhat scarier for the less skilled and less digitally savvy. Companies that lack the resources to make necessary investments in intangibles also could fall further behind. The dematerialized economy, if not managed well, thus risks being a recipe for inequality. But the growing concentration of revenue and profit in a small group of successful firms risks increasing disparities of income and wealth. Intangibles-heavy superstar firms tend to employ fewer, more highly skilled, and better paid people who are generally more productive than employees in less digitized businesses. If these superstars pull even further ahead, then labour's share of national income the percentage that goes to worker compensation could decline even more. Governments should do everything to spread the skills that will open up opportunities in the digital economy.

Central Chronicle welcomes, articles, write ups, comments on different issues for editorial page (800-900 words), Letter to editor for this page. It can be sent by e-mail at: editor@centralchronicle@gmail.com
The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity of thoughts.

ROSE PARADE



The Sierra Madre Rose Float Association, 'Nature's Classroom,' float in the 133rd Rose Parade Presented in Pasadena, California, US.

Microbial boost to Himalayan dry toilets can help mainstream organic farming

SAHANA GHOSH

Aesthetically, they may not quite cut it, but these two-tiered sanitation structures, set against the sprawling cold deserts of the Indian Himalayas, have supplied organic manure to local communities for their agricultural needs, in this water-limited region, for generations. These structures are water-conserving dry toilets that compost human excreta to natural manure (night soil compost) by the addition of a mixture of dry materials, such as dried livestock dung, ash and wood chips. The night soil compost comes in handy for the local agricultural requirements, particularly in the dry cold desert regions such as Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul and Spiti valley and the Union Territory of Ladakh. But social apprehensions, unhygienic conditions of dry toilets, urbanisation, modernisation, and increase in tourism have led to the popularisation of septic toilets and the decline in the use of these traditional structures since the 1980s, the easy availability of chemical fertilisers catering to cash crops has also impacted its practice, experts, government officials and local community members said.

However, scientists at CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT), may have an answer to ensure the continuance of dry toilets with improvements. They are tinkering around with beneficial bacteria extracted from the night soil compost to cobble together a 'compost booster' with carrier materials that substitutes the dry materials to speed up the degradation of the night soil to manage human waste in cold desert areas. And carrying on the tradi-

tional system is also one among the suite of efforts suggested by Ladakh's action plan on organic development and to make the union territory carbon-neutral. The plan nudges users to continue using the traditional composting toilets, with improved aesthetics and composting. 'Since the booster is prepared using beneficial cold-tolerant bacterial consortia with plant growth-promoting characteristics, it plays a role in boosting the productivity of crops when applied to fields. The product is very user-friendly as the dry-toilet users have to use a handful of the material after defecating,' said scientist Rakshak Kumar Acharya, at the Biotechnology Division, CSIR-IHBT, Palampur, India.

The booster is safe for use in terms of pathogenicity. According to the institute's director Sanjay Kumar: 'The technology saves water, produces quality compost from the faecal material to help sustain the agroecosystem of the region providing opportunities for the generation of local start-ups.' Acharya and colleagues have distributed the compost booster to households in Himachal for field trials since 2018 and have recently started a collaboration with the armed forces to solve the issue of sewage disposal in the soakage pits at their unit at Leh in Ladakh. They are in touch with Ladakh authorities to use the product in Chaksa or Ladakhi dry toilets. Tashi Tsetan, chief agriculture officer, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council elaborated that a mix of solutions such as the compost booster-bolstered dry toilet system, vermicompost and bio-fertilisers will underpin the union territory's strategy to mainstream organic farming in Ladakh by 2025 with one of its objectives to enable farmers to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The total cropped area in Leh is 10,223 hectares and only 0.2 percent of the geographical area is under cultivation. Temperatures drop to minus 30 degree Celsius in the winters. 'We have a very narrow window for agriculture (in the summer) when we use the snow and glacial melt for farming wheat and barley which are our sta-

ple and some vegetables. We anticipate that with future climate change impacts and with glaciers receding, we will need to strengthen our water conservation measures and traditional measures such as dry toilets, with scientific interventions, will have an important role to play in organic farming,' Tsetan added. Tek Bahadur Sapkota, agricultural systems and climate change scientist at International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre, Mexico, points out that organic farming can be seen as a nature-based climate solution to climate change as long as there is sufficient land to grow food for the growing population.

'Organic farming, if combined with minimum soil disturbance, can sequester carbon. The non-requirement of chemicals on organic farms not only avoids chemical-induced emissions from the field (e.g. carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and nitrogen oxides) but also the emissions associated with production and transportation of such chemicals,' Sapkota told. There are trade-offs to be considered between organic farming objectives and climate action and food security goals: it is a challenge to produce sufficient food without applying sufficient soil nutrients through chemical fertilisers. 'If we rely too much on animal manure for organic farming and if greenhouse gas emissions associated with livestock production are included, this may be even higher in some cases,' Sapkota adds. Currently, residents or farmers have to rely on the research institution to source the compost booster as no local entrepreneurs have come ahead to implement the technology in the Lahaul valley. 'We are trying to help them with Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises clusters and also encouraging unemployed youth to take up this venture as the demand in the local area is huge,' Acharya of CSIR-IHBT, added. Besides, the regular supply of the compost booster is disrupted during extreme winters due to snowfall and difficulty in transportation.

Acharya suggests that an increase in

temperature (warming) may ease the process of composting as warmer temperatures may speed up the microbial degradation process in night soil compost. 'In cold regions, the low temperature poses a big hurdle in composting due to the limited load of microorganisms and lower metabolic activity. This can be resolved with the addition of the cold-adapted bacteria as it accelerates the rise in temperature at the onset of composting,' he said referring to the compost booster. Sustainable farming strategies are advocated as one of the ways to shore up climate resilience for vulnerable communities. The limited success of the Green Revolution in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region represents one of the biggest opportunities for developing successful rural communities that rely on organic farming and agroecology, states the Mainstreaming of Organic Agriculture And Agroecology in the Himalaya Region report released at the United Nations Desertification summit in 2019.

Documenting the existing political support to organic farming in India, Nepal and Bhutan, it notes that institutional interventions facilitate 'better access to organic inputs, especially organic fertilisers, the creation of governmental units dedicated to organic farming and support for specific research, training and extension service programmes.' Scientists have flagged that rising temperatures and reduced winter snowfall are tied to loss of mass of glaciers in the western Himalayas based on long-term observations of the Chhota Shigri Glacier in the Lahaul-Spiti valley. Their research shows that summer-monsoonal snowfall plays an important role in maintaining glacier mass in the western Himalayas and if this snowfall is more frequent and stronger in the years ahead, the health of glaciers (in the western Himalayas) will most likely sustain. Factors like wood burning and forest fires and not the carbon emitted from the use of fossil fuel are the primary drivers behind the carbon-induced melting of glaciers in the western Himalayan region.

(Sahana Ghosh writes on climate change, biodiversity, environmental health and planetary health.)



WHAT THEY TWEET!



Sushant Singh@SushantSin
Chinese embassy's political officer writes to elected Indian MPs, including a union minister in Modi's council of ministers, for attending a Tibet event. Leave alone calling the Chinese ambassador to issue a demarche, we haven't even heard a word of protest from the government.

AshwiniDeshpande@Ashw
Needed to transfer money to a travel agent in Egypt. Was having problems with the transfer. He said: you are from the country of @iamsrk. I trust you. I will make the booking, you pay me later. For anywhere else, I wouldn't do this. But anything for @iamsrk. and he did!



Hussain Haidry @hussainhaidry
Around 100 muslim women who have strong vocal presence on Twitter, have been identified with their handles, and their photos are being displayed and forwarded under "Bulli Bai." This is Sulli Deals 2.0, but worse because it shows emboldenment after the last case went unpunished.

Kabir Dixit @KabirDixit1
#FCRA is a tool of harassment and suppression. The Government abuses its powers under the law. Unless the Civil Society puts up a fight and pushes back there is no hope of courts protecting their rights. We must first stand up for our own right.



Yashni Nagarajan@NagarajanYashni
Soar high over one of the most breathtaking site for Paragliding at Papu Valley, #ArunachalPradesh.



Bhramar Mukherjee
Bhramar Mukherjee@ Bhramar BioStat Cases are likely going to increase very rapidly in India over January. Important to track hospital admissions and we REALLY need that data reported daily. Rushing to the hospital in panic of a + test and mild symptoms is going to hurt, not help. Choose prudence over panic.

Mohamed Zeeshan@ZeeMohamed
I hope political scientists & historians are studying this, because this could be the most spectacular unraveling of a liberal democratic order in centuries. In the modern age, no major country has truly gone from a liberal constitutional democracy to a theocratic banana republic.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Past blunders

The historical previous government not only gifted back POK so gallantly won by our Army but also returned 93,000 POWs to Pakistan without bothering about our 54 Bravehearts who were languishing in the jails of Pakistan. Even today their fate or whereabouts are not known. An earlier government handed over the Kailash Mansarovar with 90,000 sq km of land to China and brazenly stated in Lok Sabha that land is of no use. Today, India is envisaging putting up the world's largest solar panel. The "Satyam Shivam Sundaram" logo was removed from Doordarshan, "Auto Ma Sat Gamay" verse removed from Kendriya Navodaya Vidyalaya, opposed singing of "Vande Mataram" by the previous government. The biggest genocide occurred during the earlier era like the massacre of Sikhs in 1984 post assassination of Indira Gandhi, hundred of Sadhus were killed in 1966 when they were agitating for the protection of Holy cows. The subsidy was given on Haj but the tax was imposed on Amarnath Yatra. The then government gave an affidavit in the court saying that Sri Ram was an imaginary character and they even tried to break Ram Setu. Politicians opposed the reconstruction of the Somnath temple plan of Sardar Patel and later on opposed the then President Dr Rajendra Prasad who went on to inaugurate the Somnath Temple and later made sure that Dr Rajendra Prasad never got any government perks after completion of his term. The decorated and respected war Hero Lt Manekshaw was debarred from his salary for over 30 years since he dared to hurt the ego of Indira Gandhi, but when ex-President APJ Kalam came to know about it while visiting ailing Manekshaw in the hospital, APJ Kalam immediately gave a cheque of Rs 1.30 crore to him. Even the jihadi terrorists involved in the atrocious Mumbai attack on 26/11 were projected as Hindus and colour the attack as 'safron terror'. A previous government gifted the veto power offered to India to China. Lastly, the respective governments bled the country with enormous corruption.

Julie, email

Transparent cylinders

Public-sector Indian Oil introduced 5kg free trade LPG (FTL) cylinder conveniently named Chhotu last year to be available on production of an ID proof. Indian Oil should also implement its long-back decision to introduce new-look translucent LPG cylinders to replace age-old iron-cast cylinders also to effectively check pilferage of LPG from supplied LPG cylinders. There are always complaints that LPG gas is unauthorisedly taken out of new refilled LPG cylinders to be supplied to consumers. For future, production of new iron-cylinders for LPG should be immediately stopped and even replacing existing old iron-cylinders by transparent ones gradually in a phased manner to start from metro cities. Net payable price including of all central and local taxes should be rounded in multiples of rupees ten or fifty, because delivery-persons never return balance-money. System will further reduce financial-burden on the exchequer because of LPG subsidy. At least LPG, if not petrol and diesel, can be brought under GST network for uniformity of prices throughout the country.

Madhu Agrawal, Delhi

'Prepared to contest polls from wherever party says'

Lucknow, Jan 02 (PTI):

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has said he is ready to contest the upcoming assembly elections from wherever his party decides. The BJP leader also said he has fulfilled whatever was promised and has no regrets about his tenure. "I am ready to fight the election from wherever the party says," Adityanath told reporters when asked whether he will contest from Ayodhya, Mathura, or from his home district Gorakhpur.

The chief minister, who is currently a member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council, was interacting with the media here on Saturday night. After former UP CM



Mulayam Singh Yadav fought the state elections in 2003, none of his successors have contested the assembly polls. BSP chief Mayawati, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav and Adityanath were members of the legislative council during their tenure as chief minister.

Adityanath's challenger Akhilesh Yadav had recently indicated that he might

not contest polls. He, however, had later said the party would take a call on it. Asked if there was any work he could not do in his five-year tenure, the BJP leader said, "Whatever was said, was done. There is no work left for which there should be any regret."

To another question, Adityanath said, "Work is under progress in Mathura as in Kashi and Ayodhya."

He also tried to allay concerns among some of the sitting MLAs over distribution of party tickets saying the BJP was a very big family and people's role in it may change with time.

"Every person's role is different at different times. It is not necessary that one person should always be in the government, sometimes he can also do the work of the organisation," he said. The chief minister said COVID-protocol will be followed to the hilt whenever the dates for the election are announced. Asked about what changed since the 2017 election, Adityanath said: "In 2017 we fought on the failures of the state government. This time we are contesting on the basis of our achievements."

OBC QUOTA STIR

Bhim Army chief, others detained in Bhopal

Bhopal, Jan 02 (PTI):

Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad and a dozen other people were detained on Sunday ahead of their plans to gherao (encircle) Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's residence to seek 27 per cent reservation for the Other Backward Classes, police said.

Azad was detained at the airport upon his arrival along with 12 to 13 people, though the exact number of detainees will be known by late evening, Bhopal police commissioner Makarand

Deoskar told PTI. Denying that over 150 people were detained, he said Azad was at the airport lounge having his meal.

We have stopped around 1500 protesters and sent them back. We suspect they were going to assemble at Roshanpura square from where they were going to head for the Chief Minister's house," the commissioner added.

Meanwhile, OBC Maha Sabha national general secretary Tulsiram Patel said they were planning to give a memorandum to the CM peacefully but the local administration has

detained people and the police have manhandled some of them.

"The population of OBCs in MP and India was 65 per cent and 85 per cent respectively, but they are not getting reservation according to their numbers. The Centre claims OBCs are getting 27 per cent reservation and the state says it is giving 14 per cent quota. However, OBC communities are not even getting 8 per cent reservation," he claimed. He said the Bhim Army and tribal outfit Jai Yuva Adivasi Shakti were allies in their struggle for OBC quota.

'India's Covid vaccination programme one of world's most successful'

New Delhi, Dec 02 (PTI):

India's vaccination programme against COVID-19 has been one of the most successful and largest in the world, the Union health ministry said on Sunday and termed as misleading some media reports that claimed the country has missed its COVID-19 inoculation targets.

Since the start of the national COVID-19 vaccination drive on January 16 last year, India has administered to over 90 per cent of its eligible citizens first doses and 65 per cent second doses.

"In a recently published news article by a reputed international

agency, it has been claimed that India has missed its vaccination target. This is misleading and does not represent the complete picture," the ministry said in a statement.

In the fight against the global pandemic, India's national vaccination programme has been one of the most successful and largest vaccination programmes when compared to many developed western nations with significantly low population base to vaccinate, it said.

In the vaccination drive, so far, the country has achieved several milestones, which have no precedent in the world, including administering

over 100 crore doses in less than nine months, administering 2.51 crore doses in a single day and several times administering one crore doses in a day, the ministry said.

"Compared with other developed nations, India has done a better job in administering Covid vaccination to its eligible adult citizen of 93.7 crore (as per the RGI (Registrar General of India) across all its states and UTs (union territories)," it underlined.

"In case of first dose coverage to the eligible population, the US has covered only 73.2 per cent of its population, the UK has covered 75.9 per cent of its population, France

has covered 78.3 per cent of its population and Spain has covered 84.7 per cent of its population, the ministry said.

India has already covered 90 per cent of its eligible population with first dose of vaccine against COVID-19, it said in the statement.

Similarly, for the second dose, the US has covered 61.5 per cent of its population, the UK has covered 69.5 per cent of its population, France has covered 73.2 per cent of its population, and Spain has covered 81 per cent of its population, the ministry said.

India has covered over 65 per cent of its eligible population with second dose of vaccine.

Gadchiroli cops come up with comic strip

To create awareness against Naxalism

Nagpur, Jan 02 (PTI): In a bid to create awareness against Naxalism, police on Sunday launched a comic strip under 'Gadchiroli Files' which reflects the ground realities of the affected area in this east Maharashtra district, an officer said. Gadchiroli superintendent of police Ankit Goyal said the comic strip is mainly based on the theme of harassment of people by Maoists and how they try to stall development.

"The Gadchiroli Police are launching 'Gadchiroli Files' comic strip today. This will try to reflect on the happenings in the Gadchiroli district. This will be a creative way to reflect the ground realities of this district," Goyal told PTI. This idea is the brainchild of Goyal. The comic strip will be available in Gondi, Marathi and English languages. It will be issued every fortnight online in social media format, he added.

CHILLY WINTER



People sit around a small fire to warm themselves on a cold winter morning, at a wholesale vegetable market in Gurugram, Sunday.

'Most COVID-19 cases are mild, do not need hospitalisation'

New Delhi, Jan 02 (PTI):

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said that though the number of daily COVID-19 cases and active cases are increasing in the city, there is no need to panic as those are very mild and do not need hospitalisation.

He presented data to show that despite an increase in the number of cases, bed occupancy in hospitals is even lesser than one per cent and is very low as compared to last year's deadly second wave of coronavirus in April.

"Active COVID-19 cases rose from about 2,000 on December 29, 2021 to 6,000



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal waves towards supporters during Kejriwal Ki Maharally in Lucknow, Sunday.

on January 1, but the number of patients in hospitals dipped during this period. On December 29, 2021 as many as 262 beds were

occupied while on January 1 it was 247 only," Kejriwal said in a virtual press conference.

He said that on March 27 last year, Delhi had 6,600 active cases and 1,150 oxygen beds were occupied. As many as 145 patients were on ventilator compared to five now, he said. Kejriwal said that COVID-19 cases are increasing rapidly in Delhi, but there is no need to panic.

"Currently, the number of active cases in the city is 6,360 and today (Sunday) 3,100 new cases are expected to be reported. All cases are mild and in most of them patients don't need hospitalisation," the CM said.

In pandemic-hit 2020-21, rlys earned over Rs 500 cr from Tatkal, premium Tatkal tickets

New Delhi, Dec 02 (PTI):

The Railways earned Rs 403 crore from tatkal ticket charges, an additional Rs 119 crore from premium tatkal tickets, and Rs 511 crore from dynamic fares during 2020-21, even as much of its operations remained suspended through most of the year due to the Covid pandemic, revealed an RTI reply. Passengers in these three categories are usually last minute travellers who avail these services mostly for emergency travel by paying premium charges.

In a reply to a RTI filed by Madhya Pradesh-based Chandra Shekhar Gaur, the Railways said that it earned Rs 240 crore from dynamic fares, Rs 353 crore from tatkal tickets

and Rs 89 crore from premium tatkal charges in the financial year 2021-22 till September.

In the 2019-20 financial year, when there were no restrictions in train operations, the national transporter earned Rs 1,313 crore from dynamic fares, Rs 1,669 from tatkal tickets and Rs 603 crore from premium tatkal tickets.

The data from the railway ministry comes a month after a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways remarked that the charges levied on tatkal tickets are "a little unjustifiable" and put a huge burden particularly on those passengers who are financially weak and are forced to travel in urgency to meet their kin and kin or so for a very short distance also.

Katra, Jan 02 (PTI):

Unfazed by the Saturday stampede that left 12 devotees dead, people were flocking to the Mata Vaishno Devi hill shrine where authorities have deployed security personnel in full strength and are greeting pilgrims with chants of "Darshan Karo, Katra Chalo" to encourage them not to linger on after paying obeisance.

The yatra that registered a footfall of over 55.77 lakh in 2021, compared to 17 lakh the previous year due to the coronavirus pandemic, was going on

smoothly, with visitors expressing satisfaction over the arrangements of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. Twelve people lost their lives and 16 others were injured in the stampede in the early hours of Saturday after a scuffle between two groups of pilgrims during the New Year rush. Many eyewitnesses said that there was overcrowding as people were staying back on the shrine premises after darshan instead of returning to the base camp at Katra. It was the first such tragedy at the revered shrine located atop the

Vaishno Devi stampede

Authorities tighten arrangements, pilgrims flock to shrine



Devotees stand in queue outside Darshani deodi while on their way to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, in Reasi district, Sunday morning.

Trikuta hills in Reasi district, about 50 km from Jammu. As we entered the sanctum sanctorum of the

Mata to offer our prayers, we were greeted by the words 'Darshan Karo Katra Chalho' (pay obeisance and

leave for Katra) from the deployed policemen, Motiya Rani (58), a resident of Panipat in Haryana, told PTI on Sunday. Rani, accompanied by her two sons, their wives and five grandchildren, said the yatra was going on smoothly and they did not face any problem. I have been visiting Mata to seek her blessings on the first day of every year for many years. I reached Katra on December 31 and was scheduled to visit the shrine on Saturday but the unfortunate incident delayed our visit by a day this time, she said.

बैद्यनाथ
असली आयुर्वेद

असहनीय जोड़ो का दर्द

स्वर्ण भस्म से युक्त होने से अधिक असरकारक।

- ▶ पुराने से पुराना जोड़ों का दर्द
- ▶ कमर दर्द
- ▶ घुटनों का दर्द
- ▶ मासपेशियों का अकड़ना
- ▶ मोच आदि दूर करने में सहायक।

Now Improved Strong Formula



रूमार्थो गोल्ड + कॅप्सूल

शुद्ध स्वर्ण भस्म से निर्मित

बैद्यकीय सलाह : 8448444935
www.baidyanath.co